



## Customer Alignment

*“Organisations are under increasing pressure to attract and retain valued customers. Customer expectations are rising and customers are now more able to discern between competitors through better information sources”.*

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### About CIS

CIS specialise in helping organisations better understand and meet customer needs and thereby more successfully attract and retain valued customers. Our clients are across a wide range of industry sectors and range from US based Fortune 500 companies - where we reported directly to the Presidents of these companies - to organisations with less than \$4million turnover.

### Why Satisfaction Matters

The trend towards higher levels of customer satisfaction is due to the direct impact it has on long term profitability. The single most consistent driver of company profitability is relative customer satisfaction.

#### Consider the following:

- It typically costs between 5 and 10 times as much to attract a new customer as it does to keep an existing one.
- In competitive markets totally satisfied customers are up to six times more likely to repurchase than just satisfied ones.
- Businesses typically lose between 15% and 20% of their customers annually, yet if they could reduce defections by as little as 5% this would increase profits by between 30%-125%! - This would see a typical business double their customers in 14 years!
- Almost 70% of the reasons why customers leave has nothing to do with quality or price, it has to do with customers feeling they are treated with “indifference”.
- Organisations that customers rate highly on service quality, compared to organisations rated low have: a 9% price advantage, grow market share 8% p.a., achieve 9% greater revenue growth p.a. and enjoy 11% more profitability (as a % return on sales).

### Assessment Objectives

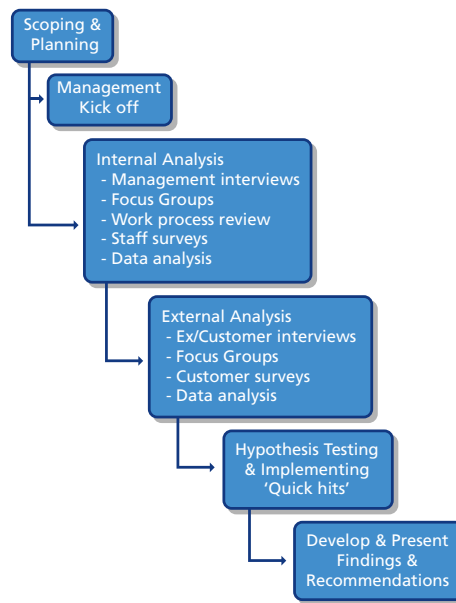
When conducting a customer alignment assessment, typical objectives include:

1. Identifying and understanding what customers value and how the organisation performs in meeting these value drivers;

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2. Developing practical strategies to identify, attract and retain valuable customers;
3. Understanding how customers compare clients to their competitors;
4. Understanding the organisation's customer focus and internal impediments to improving identified areas; and
5. Developing actionable roadmaps that enable organisations to effectively project manage and seamlessly implement our recommendations.

## Assessment Approach



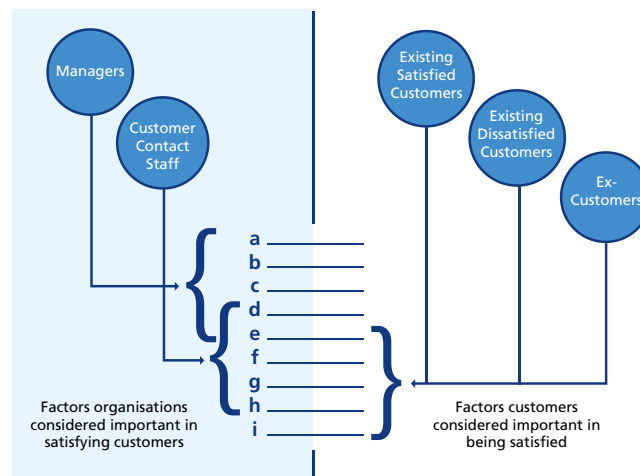
Although our methodology is customised to meet specific organisation needs it typically involves the elements to the left.

Our approach is not theoretical and involves a high degree of staff and customer input. We find that this not only improves the quality of our findings but also significantly increases staff and customer ownership for change initiatives.

## Assessment Outcomes

There are a number of typical outcomes from assessments. Two examples are:

(I) Perception Gaps: Understanding the differences in perceptions is a critical first step in customer alignment. From our assessment we are able to understand the drivers of satisfaction, how well the organisation meets satisfaction needs and how they compare to internal perceptions and focus.



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(II) Internal Impediments: Any recommendations have to be sensitive to and understanding of the organisational constraints. Our assessment process quantifies and qualifies what and where the specific internal impediments to success are.



## Implementation

What differentiates CIS is our focus on providing ‘results and not just reports’. We measure our success by looking at what clients have actually achieved as a result of our involvement. For this reason we pay a great deal of attention to providing practical solutions and consider a solution that is 80% effective and implementable more important than one that is 100% correct but difficult to implement.

Although our implementation strategy is dependant on the findings of the assessment, implementation typically has a high degree of staff input and is planned over an extended period. This long-term focus helps to ensure that what starts with a bang does not end in a fizzle. Implementation typically includes:

- Establishing monthly meetings with staff that have a vested interest in improving identified areas;
- Presenting teams with best practice examples and improvement suggestions;
- Gaining and confirming agreement on improvement actions to be completed over the month;
- Following-up with key stakeholders;
- Project managing customer related improvements; and
- Assisting to build the internal infrastructure to support implementation, which can include changing performance evaluation criteria and the establishment of a steering committee to oversee progress.

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## Tips and Traps

- The speed and scale of change will be proportionate to the degree and breadth of employee involvement;
- Short-term intensive programs do not produce lasting results;
- Implementation must be specific for the organisation and its culture
- Senior management must role model desired behaviors and be visibly supportive of change efforts; and
- You will not change culture by focusing on culture, rather focus on the outcomes of a customer focused culture and reward those outcomes.

## For more information contact:

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