RM (Customer Relationship Management) is a system which improves relationships between organisations and their customers. There are multiple benefits of CRM from helping organisations appreciate their customer’s value to understanding the importance of customer retention over customer acquisition.

The turnaround in customer service made by Cell C through Trevor Noah’s sense of humour is an example of what can happen in a customer-driven organisation, which listens to their customer’s complaints and rectifies their mistakes.

The Soccer World Cup is an example of where South Africans stood together to offer world-class customer service.

It’s clear that even when finances are tight, people still value good service. Surveys show that 87% of consumers stopped doing business with a company due to a negative customer experience, while 58% of consumers said that they would pay more for a better customer experience even during a downturn in the economy. It is very clear that consumers feel that the most important thing that companies could do to encourage them to spend more, is to improve their customer experience.

The Consultative-Selling approach is now the recommended method of selling. In this approach, a rapport is established with the client, as
opposed to the old method of selling. The client needs to build up trust in the
salesperson. This can be achieved through the client obtaining the type of
service/product that he/she wants. The salesperson needs to create a desire
for the product, to have integrity and focus on the client and NOT on the
product or service. They should relate to the customer’s way of thinking, so
that they can understand and anticipate what is required to provide the best
solutions. It is important to give clients what they need, in the way they want it
and to monitor customers wants and needs at all times.

Building customer relationships and maintaining them, takes both time
and effort, so that the customer/client will become confident in buying the
service/products. It also requires a lot of effort to find out what your clients
need and how you can best deliver it to them.

Loyal customers do not just happen! Honesty, reliability, good quality
products and excellent customer service - establish a strong reputation and
build a loyal customer base.

Your employees can make or break you. They create the first impression
for a customer, so they need to look and behave the way you’d like your
company to be seen.

Word of mouth advertising is the best marketing tool. Ensure every client
walks away happy and that satisfied clients refer friends and family to you. All
employees in an organisation should offer the same level of customer service
which sorts out all customer problems and queries.

The importance of receiving feedback from customers is of extreme
importance: this could be in the format of service usage or customer
satisfaction questionnaires.

The Batho Pele principles of putting other people’s needs before
considering one’s own were discussed. Although this is the South African
Government’s commitment to service delivery, it can be implemented in
other organisations, especially if services are supplied to the government. By
identifying small, important things that can immediately improve the quality of
service provided to customers. These principles cover: Consultation, Service
Standards, Access, Courtesy, Information, Openness and Transparency,
Redress, Value for Money, Encouraging Innovation and Rewarding
Excellence, Customer Impact, Leadership and Strategic Direction.