

Customer Complaints Management

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This Wiki page summarises the mandatory and best practices when it comes to Customer Complaint Management. While this is a compulsory aspect of any Quality Management System (QMS), it is also a way to ensure that customer satisfaction is and remains a top priority for operations.

1. Principles, Definitions & Prerequisites

1.1. Principles

Customer Complaint Management is not only a requirement for any business which has a Quality Management System (under ISO 9001), but it is also a major tool to ensure that we are and remain customer focused.

There are some principles that are mandatory within the Solvay Group:

- The unique tool to manage customer complaints is Salesforce CRM. Where Salesforce CRM is available, all communication concerning a complaint must be done within the tool, using Chatter if necessary - no separate emails. This will ensure that the reporting of Group KPIs (CCR and Response Lead Time) are satisfactory.
- Each GBU must have a procedure as required by the ISO 9001 standard (incl. clear Roles & Responsibilities (R&R), as well as KPI definition).
- Complaints must be ranked according to severity and/or customer classification.
- Efforts on investigation, follow-up and/or interaction level and response time must be tailored according to the ranking.
- The GBU procedure must indicate which rankings are included in the CCR.
- Completion of action plans and effectiveness checks must be logged in Salesforce CRM.

Some best practices also exist that are not mandatory:

- The GBU procedure can include lead time objectives for each phase or status, and roles and responsibilities for monitoring those lead times and ensuring they are complied with
- Non-Conformance root cause categories of significant complaints can be consolidated at relevant level (site, market, product line, GBU...) to define higher level improvement plans (at entity level, and/or longer term).

1.2. Definitions

What is Customer Complaint? It is any perceived inability to meet customer expectations (specifications or terms); whether explicit or implicit ; whoever it is reported by (customers, account managers,...); regardless of whether there is any formal complaint (letter, email...) or not.

Note : there must be a commercial product sales order associated with the complaint.

1.3. Glossary

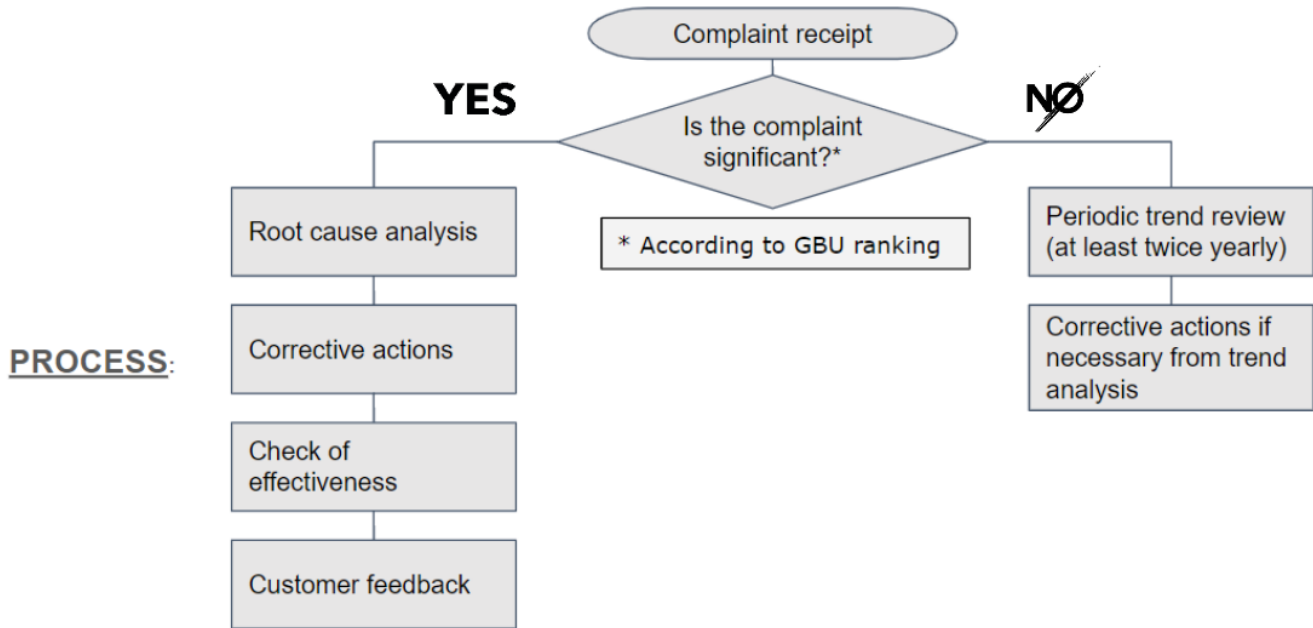
8D	8 disciplines of problem solving. They represent 8 steps to take to solve difficult, recurring or critical problems.
CAPA	Corrective actions and preventive actions
CC	Customer Complaint

CCR	Customer Complaint Ratio
KPI	Key performance indicator
NC	Non Conformance
RCA	Root Cause Analysis

2. How to manage Customer Complaints at Solvay

2.1. Customer Complaint Management Process

The high-level process for the mandatory Customer Complaint Management are the following:



The following flow shows the different statuses of the CC in Salesforce CRM:



Note: there is a Salesforce CRM Customer Complaint training manual that can be found under this [link](#) .

2.2. Problem definition

Gathering the right information according to the type of complaint at the beginning will save time and allow us to answer the customer more quickly. Best practices and examples of templates and checklists related to this critical phase can be found in the playbook.

2.3. Short-term response

Once a CC has been logged, consideration whether containment/immediate actions are necessary is mandatory. These are meant as short-term responses to the problem raised.

Immediate actions are meant to obtain a quick response from Solvay (send CoA, replacement delivery...). They are typically requested by the customer and captured by the originator.

Containment actions are meant to protect the customer and limit the extent of the problem, until we define the root cause and implement permanent corrective actions. These are typically defined by the investigator.

Note : the "Immediate / containment actions needed" fields in Salesforce CRM must be checked if appropriate by the originator (if necessary after discussion with the site contact), and must be reviewed by the investigator.

2.4. Complaint classification

Procedures must include ranking criteria and define how these criteria impact the way complaints are handled. The aim is to focus resources on complaints which have the most impact on customers and / or business.

These classification criteria can be based on the customer importance in the Customer Engagement Model (CEM), the impact on the customer, nature of the issue or its recurrence. Depending on this classification, a Root Cause Analysis (RCA) might be mandatory or a certain expectation of Response Time set.

Moreover, a field is set within the process to identify whether the Complaint was justified or not. If a CC is deemed "Not Justified", it must be checked by a non-biased party or function.

2.4. Long-term response

In the spirit of continuous improvement and customer satisfaction, problems identified during a CC should be properly investigated through a Root Cause Analysis.

Root cause analysis is key to eliminating recurrence of customer complaints. The GBU procedure must define for which categories of complaints this is mandatory. A good practice is to periodically analyze root cause trends at the relevant level(s): site, GBU, product line, etc. in order to detect opportunities for larger scale or longer term improvements and design resulting action plans. Corrective actions will aim to eliminate the root cause of the complaint(s).

Many Group resources exist to support the process of a RCA, including the [Problem Solving Playbook](#). A Lean Six Sigma White Belt training on problem solving is also available for all employees in YouGrow in several languages (3 hour self-training - see links on the right).

For complaints which have not been ranked as significant, root cause analysis and corrective actions are not mandatory. However, a periodic trend analysis is necessary to identify if there is any risk of these complaints potentially creating significant issues for the customers in the future. The responsibility of this trend analysis should be clearly specified in the GBU procedure.

An effectiveness check of the corrective actions is key to eliminating recurrence of customer complaints. The GBU procedure must define for which categories of complaints this is mandatory.

3. KPIs for Customer Complaint Management

The two main KPIs for Customer Complaint Management are Customer Complaint Ratio (CCR) and Response Lead Time.

3.1. CCR

CCR is native in Salesforce CRM and is defined as the number of customer complaints / 1000 sales order lines (this excludes unjustified complaints, internal transfers and sample orders).

This is a global KPI which must include ALL complaints (regardless of their classification).

"CCR+" is the KPI that measures significant complaints (for example, major & critical complaints only). This is a GBU-specific KPI that is difficult to benchmark between GBUs.

3.2. Response Lead Time

This KPI is defined as the time between the reception of the customer complaint (mail, email, telephone call, etc.) as logged in Salesforce, and when the first communication on RCA and action plan is sent to the customer (status "completed").

The common Solvay target is 30 days, although some GBUs can have more ambitious targets.

3.3. Leading KPIs

These are to be defined by the GBUs, but there are two types of leading KPIs linked to Customer Complaint Management:

- KPIs linked to the process (e.g. % of corrective actions completed in time, specific phase lead times)
- KPIs linked to the main root causes. These should not be static in time, but adapted to each individual situation.

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Key Trainings:

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Key contacts:

- [Hélène Vrot](#)
- [Wolf Sanner](#)

Linked pages:

- [Problem Solving](#)