

an **UNLIMITED** agency

Customer
Licence
Condition
Research

Research stimulus

**WAL
NUT**

The human understanding agency.

Putting things right

Result 1: When something does go wrong, affected customers have confidence their company will put it right

This meant that the water company would...

1. Fixing the issue quickly and permanently
2. Advanced warning of planned works
3. Tell customers as soon as possible
4. Use customers' preferred communications channels
5. Regular updates throughout works
6. Dedicated phone number/web page
7. Alternative water supplies when needed
8. Different departments talk to each other

And to learn from their experiences they would...

1. More / better monitoring to identify problems before they happen
2. Carry out reviews of incidents to learn for the future
3. Tell customers when incidents have been resolved
4. Listen to customers to improve they way they work in the future
5. Publish reviews of incidents and how they will improve
6. Admit their mistakes and apologise where needed

Examples of things going wrong

- A. One customer has a leak outside their property from the water company's pipes, which has caused some damage to their property
- B. A burst pipe cuts off supply for a residential street with 50 houses
- C. 5,000 customers are sent incorrect bills which are for double the amount they are due to pay
- D. A series of burst pipes cuts off water for 20,000 people in a town

Customers' diverse needs

2. Understand and meet the diverse needs of all their customers

This means they would...

1. Be proactive to find out about different people's needs
2. Include disabled people, elderly people/pensioners, parents of young children (including single parents), and people on low incomes
3. Make sure vulnerable customers are looked after during incidents
4. Take into account possible mental health problems, and that people may not speak English as a first language
5. Identify customers who are struggling to pay their bills and offer affordable payment plans
6. Carry out house visits if customers aren't responding to other channels
7. In extreme cases, be prepared to write off debt
8. Show patience and compassion dealing with vulnerable people

Customers are well informed

3. Customers are well informed

This means water companies would...

1. Contact customers using the channels they prefer (depending on the situation)
2. At a minimum, keep customers informed about bills, incidents and maintenance work in the area
3. Tell customers how they can save water, and any deals or offers to support customers
4. Have extra information for people who want it (e.g. about environmental protection or upgrading infrastructure)

And they would...

1. Make it easy for customers to find your contact details
2. Have a variety of channels that customers can use to contact you (including phone, email, text, web-chat, online account and app)
3. Option to deal with a 'real person' (a human not reading a script)
4. Short waiting times on the phone
5. Not being passed from person to person
6. Dedicated communications channel (phone/web) during incidents

Thank you!