



Customer Experience Award

Entry Guideline

This award recognises businesses that consistently deliver outstanding customer experiences through service excellence, innovation, leadership, responsiveness, and resilience.

Great customer experience can look different across sectors. A retailer, café, tradie, tourism operator, farm business, professional service, or manufacturer may each create excellence in their own way. Judges are encouraged to consider impact relative to the size, capacity, and context of each entrant.

Award Categories and Weightings

1. Vision (25%)
2. Innovation & Problem Solving (20%)
3. Culture & Leadership (15%)
4. Responsiveness (15%)
5. Resilience (25%)

Section One: Guidance for Entrants

How to prepare a strong entry

- Use clear and specific examples.
- Focus on outcomes, not only activity.
- Use recent examples where possible.
- Include customer feedback, data, testimonials, or improvements.
- Avoid repeating the same example across all questions.
- Keep responses concise and relevant.

1. Vision & Standards (25%)

Question

How do you define and deliver excellence in customer experience within your business?

What strong responses include

- Your service philosophy or standards
- How customer experience links to business purpose
- What customers can consistently expect
- Examples of excellence in action

Avoid

- Generic statements without evidence

Judging Guide

Exemplary (5): Clear and distinctive customer experience standards embedded across the business, with strong evidence of consistent delivery. **Very Strong (4):** Strong standards and regular examples of excellent delivery.

Positive (3): Clear intent and some examples of good service, though less consistent. **Emerging (2):** Basic understanding of service with limited examples. **Limited (1):** Little evidence of clear standards or delivery.

2. Innovation & Problem Solving (20%)

Question

Describe a customer experience challenge you faced and the creative or innovative steps you took to solve it. What was the result?

What strong responses include

- Clear challenge identified
- Creative or practical solution implemented
- Why this approach was chosen
- Positive outcomes for customers and business

Avoid

- Changes with no demonstrated result

Judging Guide

Exemplary (5): Challenge addressed through innovative action with clear measurable improvement. **Very Strong (4):** Strong example of problem solving with clear positive results. **Positive (3):** Sound response to a challenge with some improvement evident. **Emerging (2):** Limited or reactive response with unclear results. **Limited (1):** No meaningful example provided.

3. Culture & Leadership (15%)

Question

How do your leadership, team culture, and staff practices consistently create great customer experiences?

What strong responses include

- Leadership role modelling service excellence
- Staff training and support
- Empowerment to solve customer issues
- Recognition of good service
- Positive team culture

Avoid

- Reliance on one owner or manager only

Judging Guide

Exemplary (5): Leadership and culture strongly embedded, with staff consistently enabled to deliver exceptional experiences. **Very Strong (4):** Strong culture and leadership with regular evidence of positive outcomes. **Positive (3):** Supportive culture with some examples of good practice. **Emerging (2):** Limited systems or inconsistent culture. **Limited (1):** Little evidence of leadership or culture supporting service.

4. Listening & Responsiveness (15%)

Question

How do you gather customer feedback or identify changing needs, and how do you use this to improve the experience?

What strong responses include

- Formal or informal feedback systems
- Examples of customer insights used
- Changes made as a result
- Ongoing review and improvement

Avoid

- Saying you listen without examples of change

Judging Guide

Exemplary (5): Strong systems for listening and clear examples of continuous improvement driven by customer insight. **Very Strong (4):** Regular feedback gathered and acted on with clear benefits. **Positive (3):** Some feedback processes with occasional improvements. **Emerging (2):** Limited feedback methods or weak follow-through. **Limited (1):** No clear evidence of listening or adapting.

5. Resilience & Future Readiness (25%)

Question

How has your business adapted its customer experience to changing market or economic conditions, and how has this strengthened long-term resilience?

What strong responses include

- Awareness of changing conditions
- Smart service adaptations
- Digital or operational improvements
- Customer retention or growth outcomes
- Long-term sustainability thinking

Avoid

- Describing difficult conditions only, without response

Judging Guide

Exemplary (5): Highly effective adaptation that strengthened customer loyalty, resilience, and future success. **Very Strong (4):** Strong examples of adaptation with clear business benefits. **Positive (3):** Reasonable adjustments with some positive outcomes. **Emerging (2):** Limited or reactive adaptation. **Limited (1):** No clear adaptation or resilience approach demonstrated.