

S.E.E.K.E.R.TM

How do your customers see you?



**S.E.E.K.E.R. Survey
Customer views-2003
Gender report**

Total Number of respondents: 40

Tuesday, February 04, 2003



Introduction

This summary report presents the organisation's aggregated results of the S.E.E.K.E.R.TM customer feedback survey. S.E.E.K.E.R. stands for Systems, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Knowledge, Empathy and Responsiveness. These are the six key factors or clusters under which data from this survey is collated.

The results for your enterprise are presented graphically in a number of ways, which reveal whether the responses were net positive or net negative on an overall basis. This summary report also details the aggregated feedback results for each of the twelve categories measured in S.E.E.K.E.R.TM customer feedback survey, and each of the individual questions that comprise the survey instrument (72 in total).

When looking at your organisation's results, it is important to understand that customers' may have opinions or views that are relatively positive and opinions and views that are relatively negative. Both provide opportunities for better organisational performance by taking the data seriously and by acting firmly and quickly on the results.

In broad terms, this Summary Report contains the following:

- An introduction to the importance of rigorously and systematically gathering customer's opinions on service matters and acting on the results (whatever they may be).
- Your organisation's graphic profiles plus supporting statistical summary
- A category by category report that summarises your organisation's results in twelve major customer service areas (two for each of the six key success factors).
- A report that summarises results at individual question level
- Brief action intervention suggestions to provide ideas on what you may like to consider in action planning terms for each of the six key factors involved in lifting overall service performance to the customer and creating and sustaining organisational success.

We hope that this report will be a powerful tool in your action-planning process. Thank you for participating in the S.E.E.K.E.R.TM customer feedback survey.

The importance of gathering and acting upon Customer Opinions and Feedback

Every customer organisation, however large or small it may be, will have a range of opinions, attitudes and beliefs about the service they experience from a particular supplier organisation. Although some of these opinions are sometimes known, they are often restricted to only a few customers and mainly consist of both unstructured and informal data. This makes the feedback difficult to validate or make use of as a means to improve overall service levels.

The more that an organisation can take account of its customer feedback, the better. After all, a contented and satisfied customer is much more valuable than one that is dissatisfied or generally unhappy. Of course, the key is to be able to measure the extent to which either of these extremes may apply (and why) and to diagnose in which particular topics or subject areas about the organisation, most satisfaction or dissatisfaction may exist.

The importance of careful and incisive diagnosis cannot be emphasised enough. Doctors routinely make diagnostic judgements prior to prescribing a course of treatment. As the situation changes, they also recognise that the treatment may need to change also. In order to carry out their diagnosis task accurately, doctors have to use a systematic, ordered, rational and fully repeatable process (taking the temperature, feeling the pulse, listening to the heart etc). In exactly the same way, an organisation needs a systematic, ordered, rational and fully repeatable process to take the service performance 'temperature', feel the service 'pulse', and listen to the service 'heart'. Then, and only then, can we prescribe the course of treatment to deal with any ailments and optimise future performance.

The S.E.E.K.E.R.TM customer feedback survey is a highly systematic diagnostic process, based on over 3 years of research in a wide range of organisations in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom and Australia. It uses 72 questions to focus on six key factors that are seen to be critical to effective organisational performance and success. The survey measures each of these six key factors in two sub categories per factor (making twelve sub categories in total). These six key factors and the twelve sub categories are detailed overleaf.

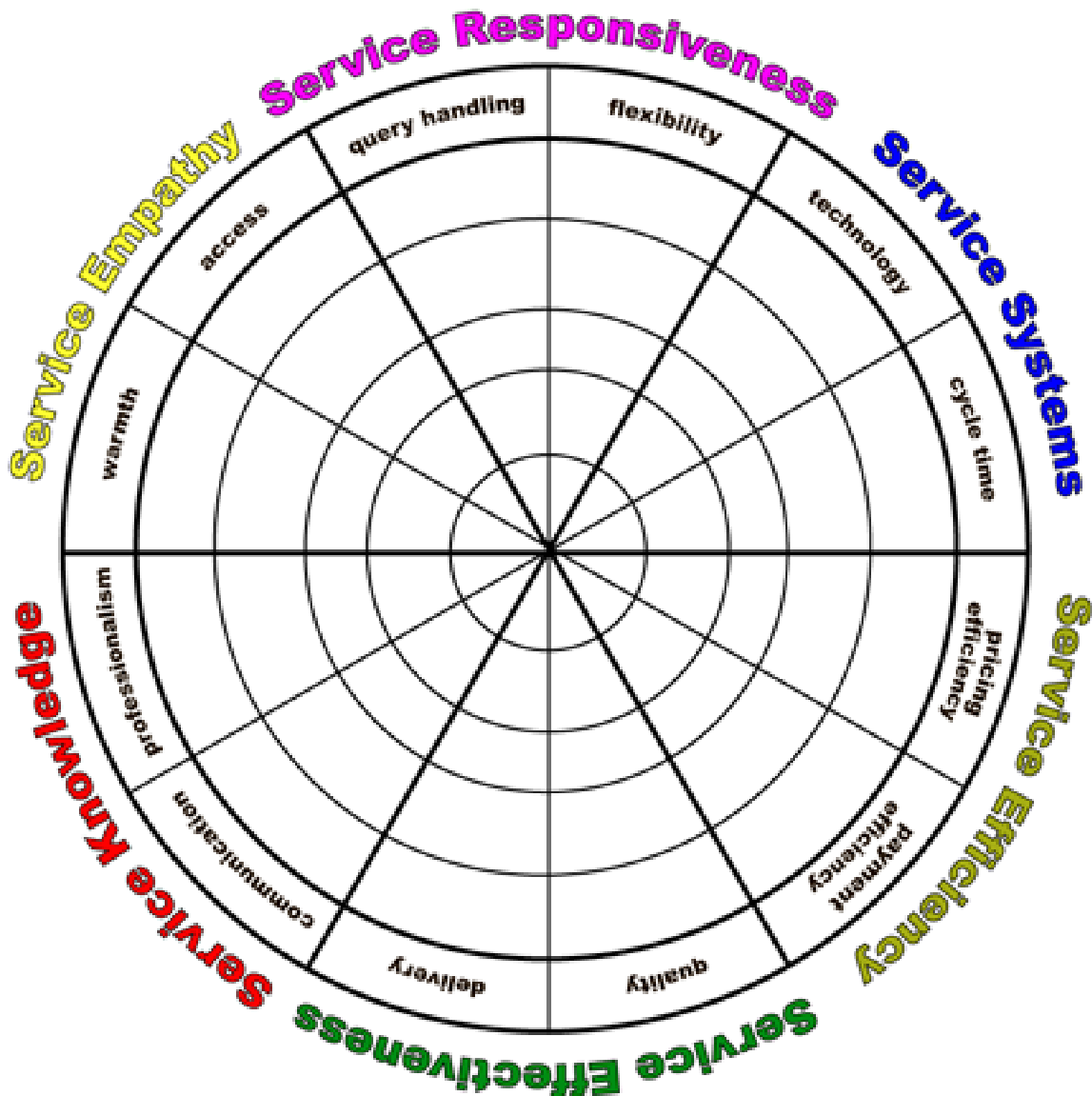
The S.E.E.K.E.R.TM Customer service feedback survey sub category definitions

Many years of progressive research have indicated that high organisational performance and success in terms of Customer service are significantly based on six key factors. These are that:

- Service systems should be well designed and regularly reviewed to ensure they are optimised
- Service Efficiency should be constantly tracked, particularly in relation to the perceived value of the products and/or services offered
- Service Effectiveness should be continuously reviewed and improved wherever possible
- Service Knowledge should be carefully established in all employees (and in particular for all customer contact staff)
- Service Empathy should be built with customers through warm and courteous relationships at all times
- Service Responsiveness should be fast and flexible

The S.E.E.K.E.R.™ Customer service feedback survey sub category definitions

The six key factors are shown in the circular diagram below, together with the two individual sub-categories that comprise each factor. The S.E.E.K.E.R.™ customer feedback survey asks questions in each of these twelve sub-categories to create a rich and meaningful analysis and output report.



The S.E.E.K.E.R.™ customer feedback survey assumes that an effective or high performance service focused culture should be looking to create high levels of efficiency and effectiveness in all six key factors (and therefore all twelve sub-categories). This means ensuring that customers' rate the organisation positively by getting team and enterprise performance as near to the outer layers of the above wheel as possible. These six factors and twelve sub categories are described overleaf.

Service Systems

Every system of work is designed to run smoothly and efficiently in terms of overall cycle time in order to deliver excellent customer service (including the sensible use of the best and latest technology where appropriate)

The two sub categories of Service Systems are:

Service Technology

The extent to which the customer perceives that the organisation uses technology intelligently to help improve overall levels of service

Service Cycle time

The extent to which the customer perceives that the organisation is actively focused upon reducing overall process cycle times to offer quicker, more cost effective or better service

Service Efficiency

Products and/or services are offered at prices that are seen to give good value for money by customers. Customers are subsequently happy to pay their invoices (as long as they are consistently clear and free from error)

The two sub categories of Service Efficiency are:

Pricing efficiency

The extent to which the customer perceives that pricing is clear and offers value for money for the products/services offered

Service Billing/payment efficiency

The extent to which the customer perceives that billing is clear and accurate and offers sufficient payment flexibility

Service Effectiveness

Quality standards have been set at appropriate levels to meet customer needs and expectations, and products and services are consistently delivered to meet these standards

The two sub categories of Service Effectiveness are:

Service Quality

The extent to which the customer perceives that product/service standards and specifications offer sufficient levels of quality to meet changing needs and expectations

Service Delivery

The extent to which the customer perceives that product/service delivery is sufficiently fast, prompt and complete

Service Knowledge

All staff in the enterprise that have any dealings with the customer are well trained, knowledgeable about product and/or service offerings, and operate in a professional manner in every communication

The two sub categories of Service Knowledge are:

Service Communication

The extent to which the customer perceives that the organisation listens and communicates clearly with high levels of product/service knowledge

Service Professionalism

The extent to which the customer perceives that people in the enterprise demonstrate high levels of professionalism in everything they do for their customer

Service Empathy

Long-term excellence in service and a positive reputation is readily and easily achieved through building a variety of 'warm' and 'empathetic' relationships between service focused individuals in the enterprise and their customers.

The two sub categories of Service Empathy are:

Service Warmth

The extent to which the customer perceives that people with which they deal in the enterprise (on the phone and face to face) are warm, courteous and empathetic

Service Access

The extent to which the customer perceives that the enterprise makes it easy to deal with it in many different ways or using multiple access points through which to obtain service

Service Responsiveness

The enterprise is proactive is both treating all feedback in a positive way (as a means to improve in the future) and is proactively talking to their customer often in order to modify products and/or service or tailor their offerings where necessary

The two sub categories of Service Responsiveness are:

Service Query handling

The extent to which the customer perceives that the queries they make (positive and negative) are appropriately handled by the enterprise

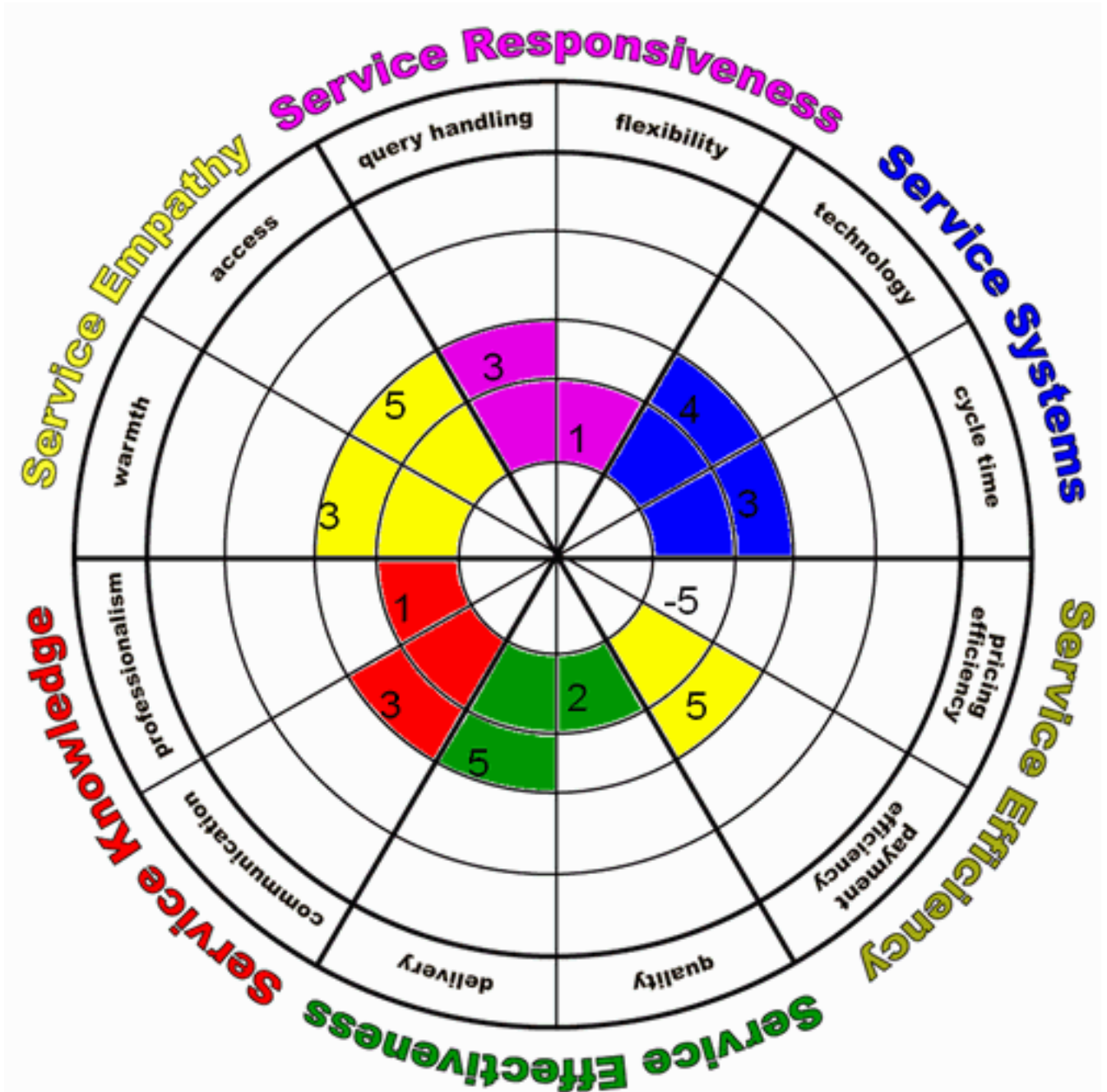
Service Flexibility

The extent to which the customer perceives that the enterprise offers flexible or tailored service to its customers (including recovery after a problem has been experienced)

It should always be remembered that no one key factor or one sub category is more important than any of the others. In a high performance organisation, the enterprise will seek to work on any and every appropriate area. This means building on the strengths and addressing the negatives views or weaknesses that are perceived by customers.

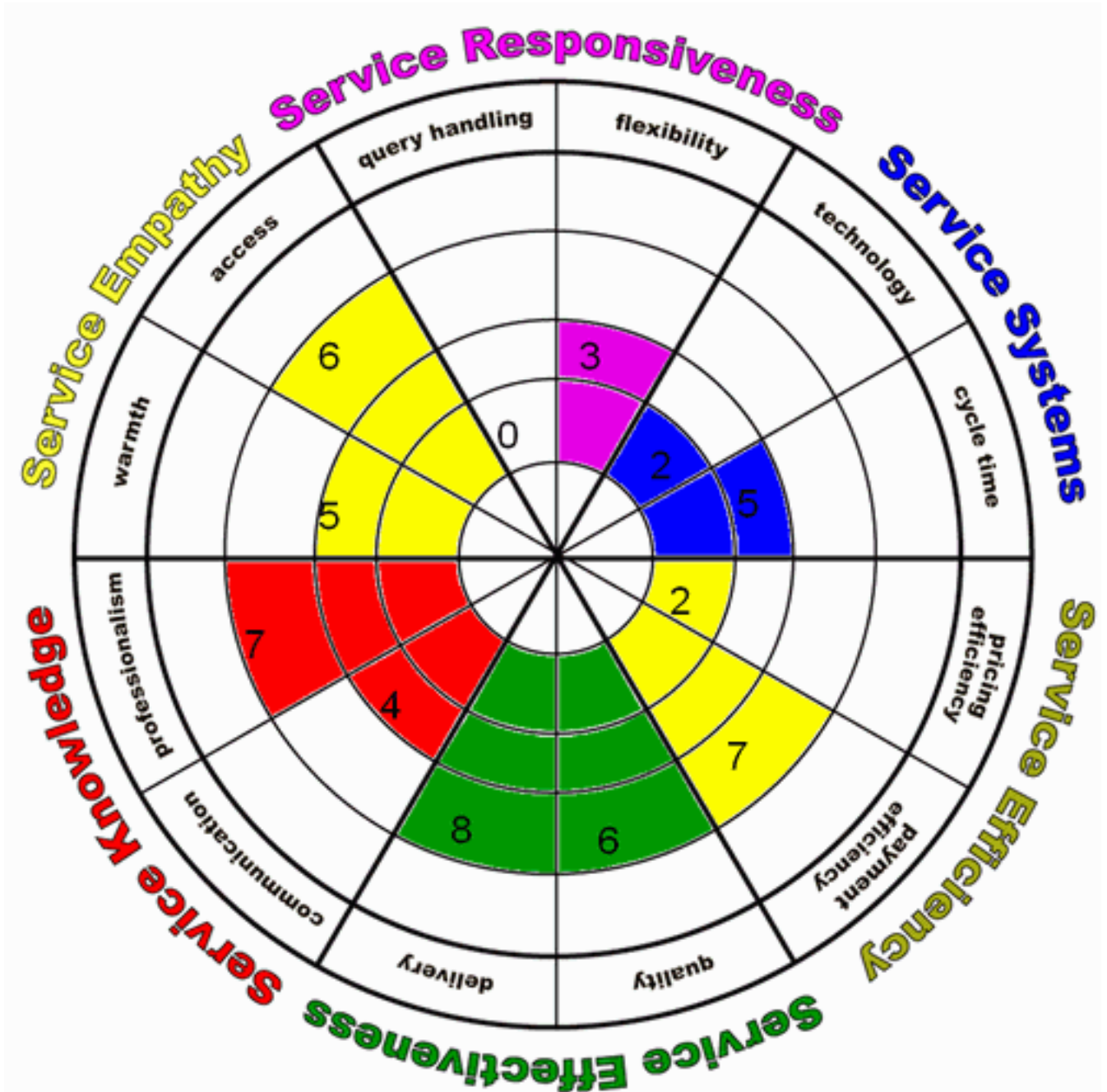
The next section of this summary report details the specific survey results of the feedback on your organisation in graphical form. Following this, the report ends with some suggested improvement interventions that you may like to consider as part of your future action planning.

S.E.E.K.E.R. Survey Customer views-2003 graph for males



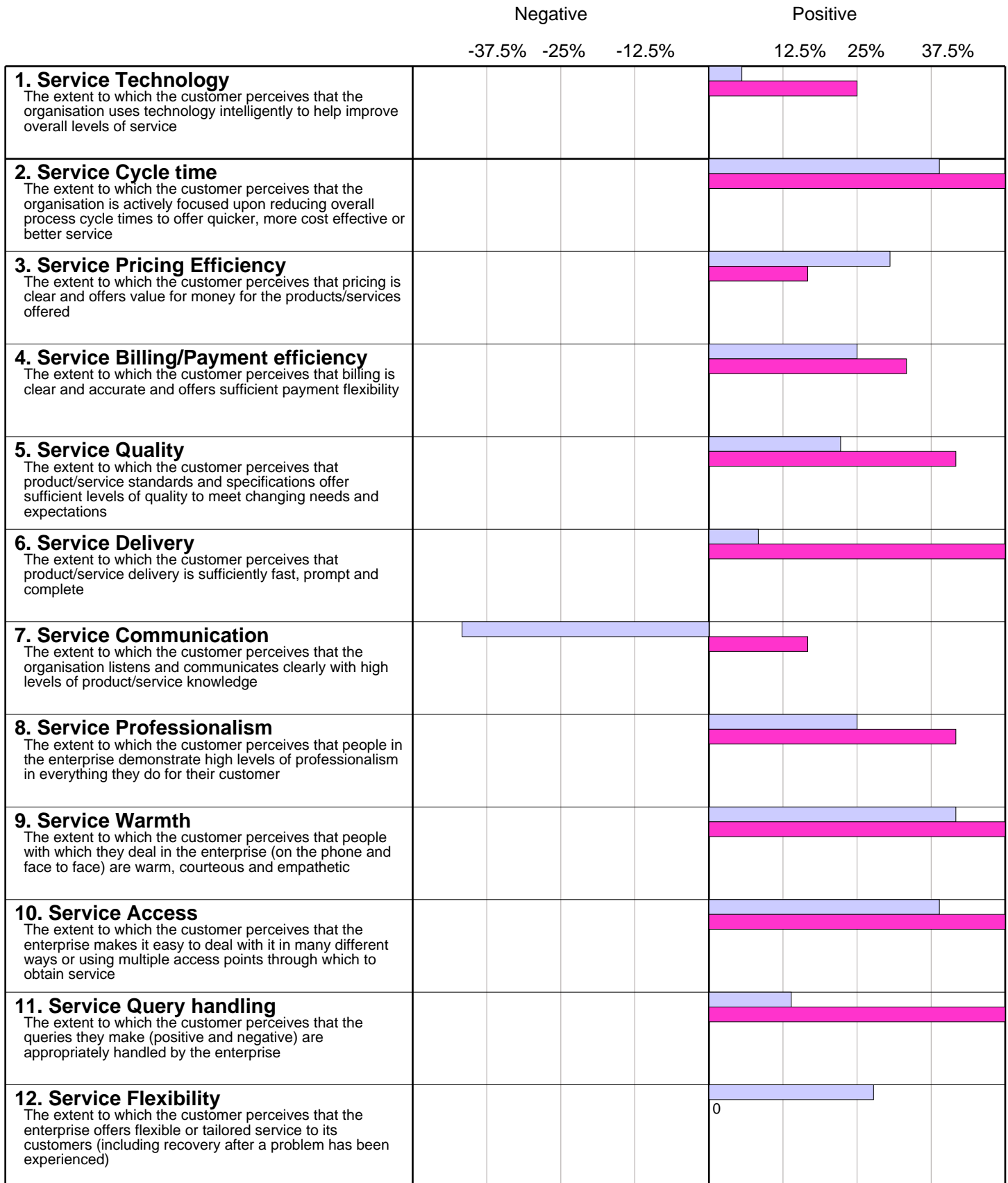
February 2003
Survey Population= 30

S.E.E.K.E.R. Survey Customer views-2003 graph for females



February 2003
Survey Population= 10

OVERALL SUMMARY



■ males ■ females

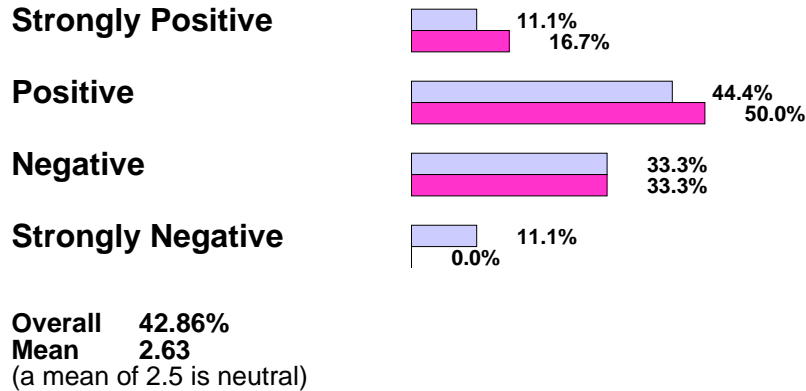
Service Technology

The extent to which the customer perceives that the organisation uses technology intelligently to help improve overall levels of service

The questions that make up this category:

1. Communicates with its customers using modern technology
2. Delivers its products and/or services using the most up to date technology and systems
3. Collects payment for products/services with effective technology and systems
4. Demonstrates that it is aware of new or different technology or systems that could create a better customer result
5. Explains new processes clearly when new technological approaches are introduced
6. Applies technology sensibly when it can create a better service offering

Average score:



Interpretive notes

Net Positive

The organisation is likely to use up to date technology and systems to ensure that service is offered efficiently and effectively. This will also include maintaining a constant vigilance for new technology that could increase overall customer satisfaction

Net Negative

The organisation is likely to use old-fashioned or relatively traditional technology to serve its customers. This is likely to mean that service may not be as efficient or as effective as it is from some other customer suppliers

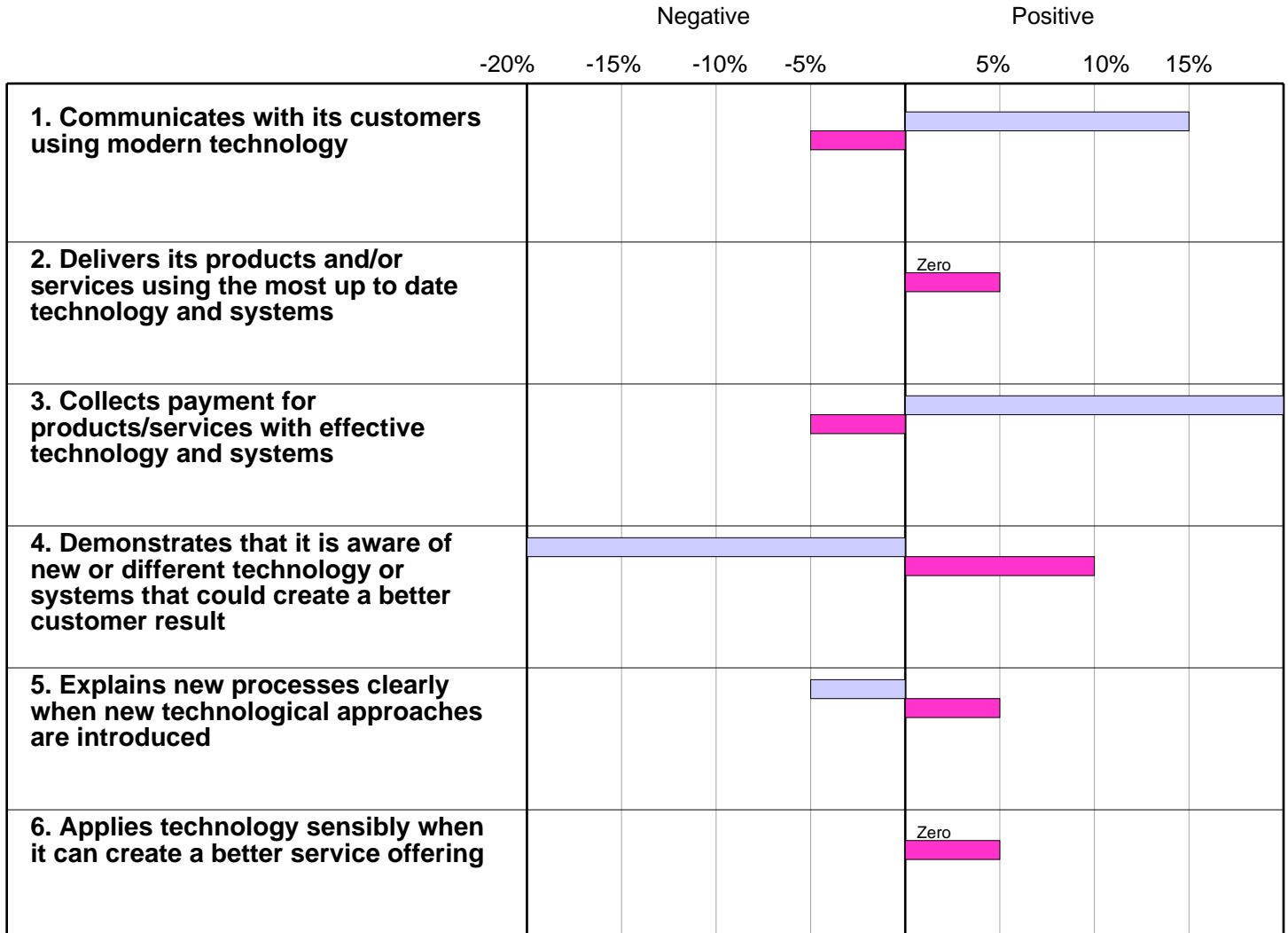
■ males ■ females

Individual question analysis

Service Technology

The extent to which the customer perceives that the organisation uses technology intelligently to help improve overall levels of service

Overall score for this category= 42.86%



■ males ■ females

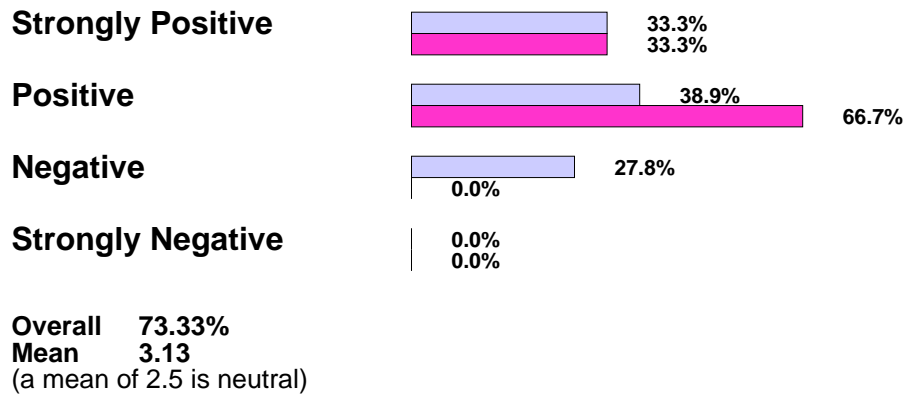
Service Cycle time

The extent to which the customer perceives that the organisation is actively focused upon reducing overall process cycle times to offer quicker, more cost effective or better service

The questions that make up this category:

1. Offers fast turnaround from customer order to delivery
2. Answers the phone within four rings the majority of the time when contacted
3. Is quicker to deliver than most organisations
4. Invites feedback from its customers on where it can improve service cycle times
5. Sends out invoices promptly
6. Actively seeks to improve overall service cycle times

Average score:



Interpretive notes

Net Positive

The organisation is likely to work constantly on most, if not all of its major customer service processes, and regularly identifies ways in which to reduce overall cycle times (without negatively affecting quality).

Net Negative

The organisation is likely to be relatively unaware of whether its overall service cycle times are meeting customer expectations, and are broadly in line with other competitors. Little or no cycle time improvement work is therefore carried out.

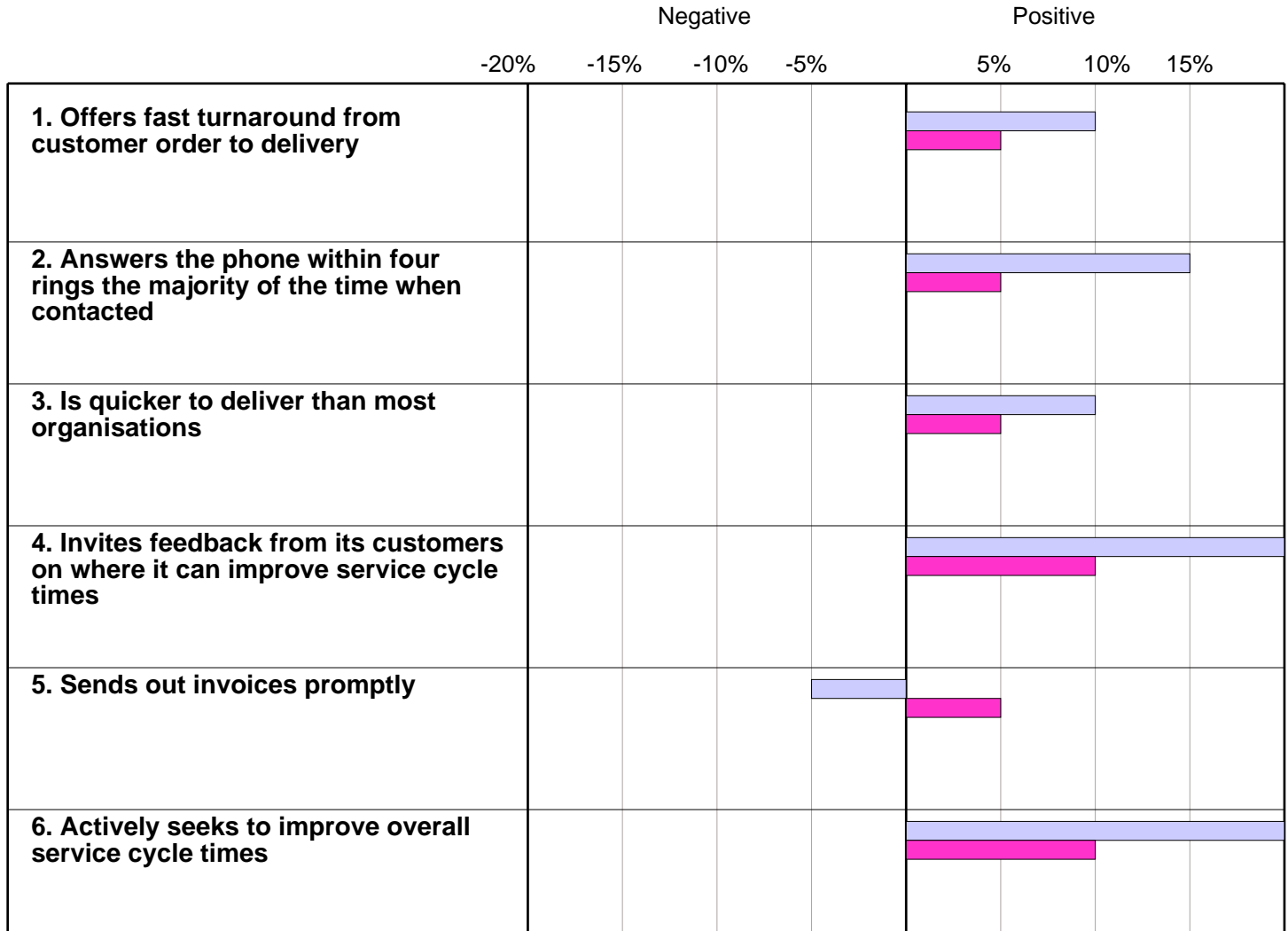
■ males ■ females

Individual question analysis

Service Cycle time

The extent to which the customer perceives that the organisation is actively focused upon reducing overall process cycle times to offer quicker, more cost effective or better service

Overall score for this category= 73.33%



■ males ■ females

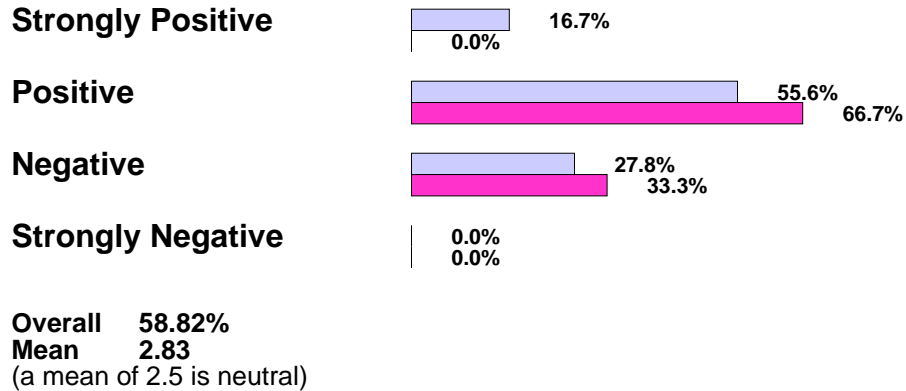
Service Pricing Efficiency

The extent to which the customer perceives that pricing is clear and offers value for money for the products/services offered

The questions that make up this category:

1. Makes prices for products/services easy to obtain
2. Ensures that prices for products/services are clear and easy to follow
3. Is efficient in notifying customers promptly when price changes occur
4. Offers value for money for the products/services offered
5. Changes overall pricing policy infrequently
6. Provides reasonable pricing flexibility (including discounts, special deals etc)

Average score:



Interpretive notes

Net Positive

The organisation is likely to offer good value for money for the products and/or services that it provides to customers and ensures that its pricing policy is both simple and clear to understand.

Net Negative

The organisation is likely to operate a relatively complex pricing policy for its products and/or services and from time to time may create the view in some customer's eyes that value is not always as high as it could be.

■ males ■ females

Individual question analysis

Service Pricing Efficiency

The extent to which the customer perceives that pricing is clear and offers value for money for the products/services offered

Overall score for this category= 58.82%



■ males ■ females

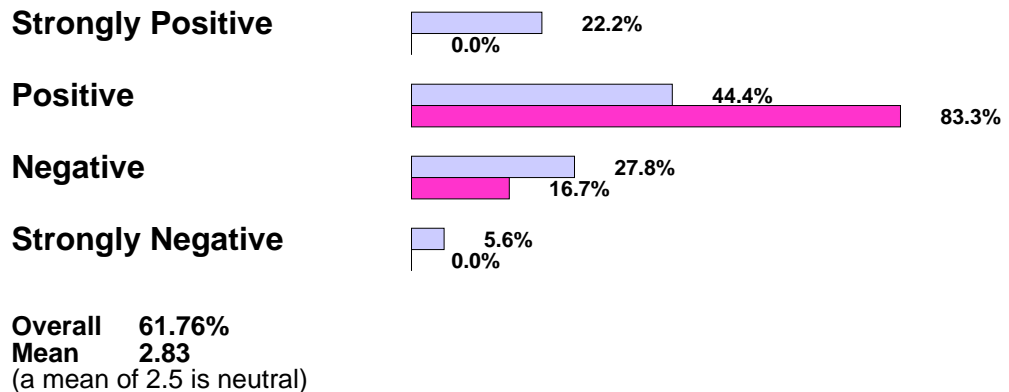
Service Billing/Payment efficiency

The extent to which the customer perceives that billing is clear and accurate and offers sufficient payment flexibility

The questions that make up this category:

1. Provides invoices that clearly itemise products/services supplied
2. Is accurate in its billing practices
3. Offers flexible payment methods and approaches
4. Rectifies invoice errors efficiently and effectively
5. Provides incentives for early invoice payment
6. Offers reasonable payment terms and conditions

Average score:



Interpretive notes

Net Positive

The organisation is likely to ensure that invoices for products and/or services provided are promptly issued, clear and accurate. They will also typically offer a range of flexible payment options to the customer.

Net Negative

The organisation is likely to have designed its invoice system to be overly slow, hard to follow and on occasions inaccurate in relation to the products and/or services provided.

■ males ■ females

Individual question analysis

Service Billing/Payment efficiency

The extent to which the customer perceives that billing is clear and accurate and offers sufficient payment flexibility

Overall score for this category= 61.76%



■ males ■ females

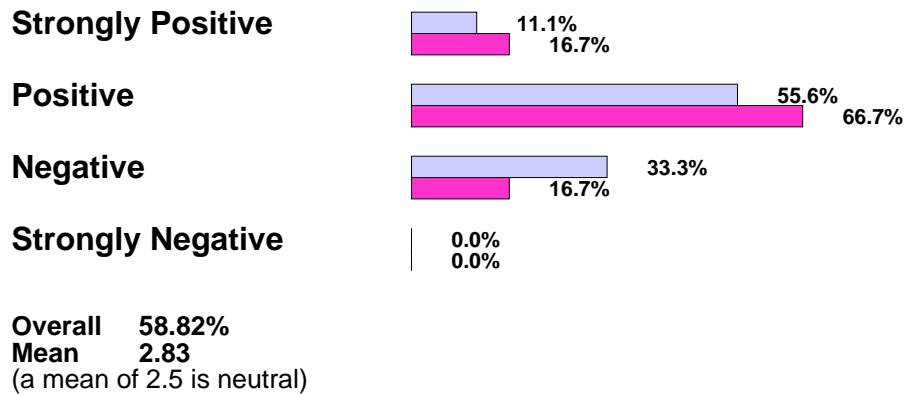
Service Quality

The extent to which the customer perceives that product/service standards and specifications offer sufficient levels of quality to meet changing needs and expectations

The questions that make up this category:

1. Ensures that quality meets changing customer needs
2. Has high standards of quality in everything that they do
3. Seeks to continuously improve its product and service offerings
4. Tailors product/service offerings according to customer feedback
5. Addresses any quality concerns positively
6. Actively invites feedback from customers on product/service quality

Average score:



Interpretive notes

Net Positive

The organisation is likely to take quality seriously at all levels. This includes not only product and service quality but also the processes that operate inside the organisation that deliver service to consistently high standards.

Net Negative

The organisation is likely to have variable quality standards in terms of products and services. In addition the relative consistency of internal process performance will go relatively unmonitored with customers therefore likely to experience varied quality results.

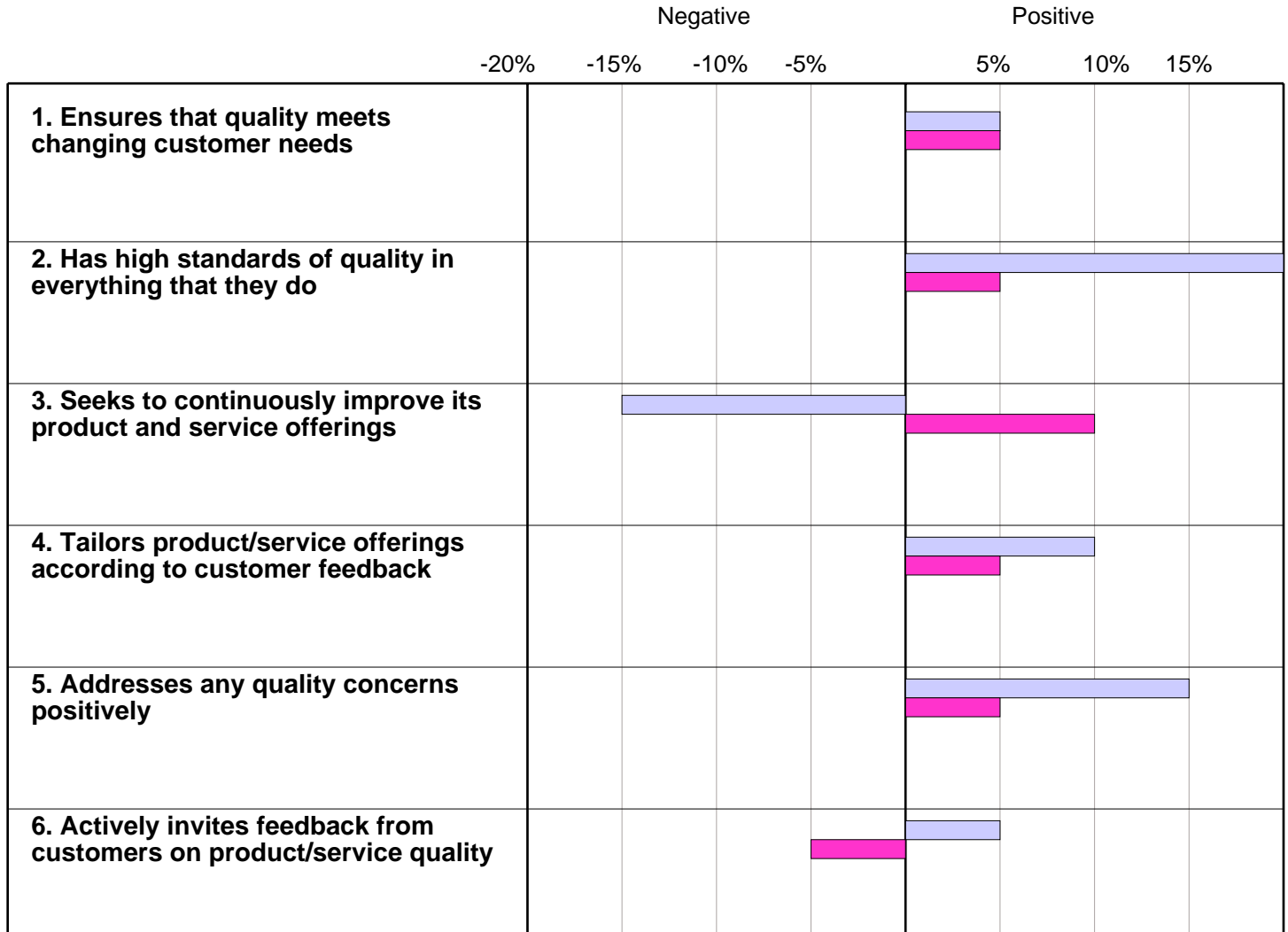
■ males ■ females

Individual question analysis

Service Quality

The extent to which the customer perceives that product/service standards and specifications offer sufficient levels of quality to meet changing needs and expectations

Overall score for this category= 58.82%



■ males ■ females

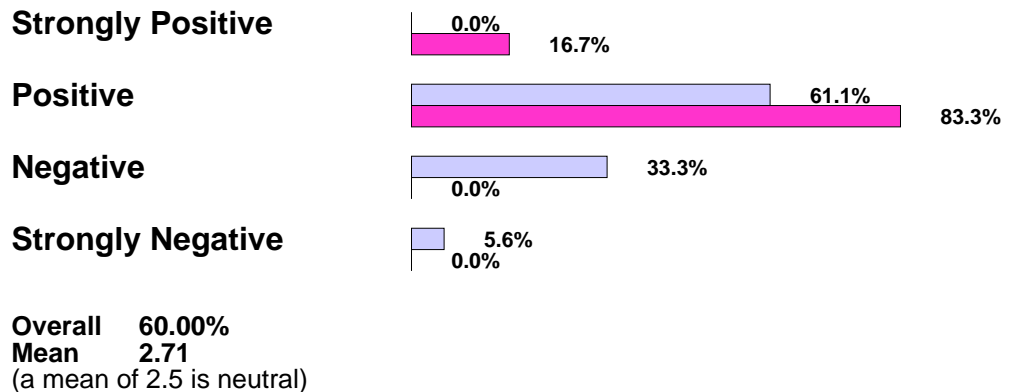
Service Delivery

The extent to which the customer perceives that product/service delivery is sufficiently fast, prompt and complete

The questions that make up this category:

1. *Supplies product/services in an appropriately fast manner*
2. *Delivers products/services on time*
3. *Delivers products/services that are consistent with what was ordered*
4. *Packages products/services efficiently and effectively*
5. *Follows up to ensure that customers are satisfied after purchase or delivery*
6. *Offers delivery flexibility where needed*

Average score:



Interpretive notes

Net Positive

The organisation is likely to have designed an efficient and effective delivery system from the initial order to final delivery to the customer. This typically means that products and/or services are well packaged and can be supplied flexibly where required by customers.

Net Negative

The organisation is likely to focus upon delivery as only one part of the overall 'order to supply' process and therefore often finds it difficult to offer delivery flexibility or consistency.

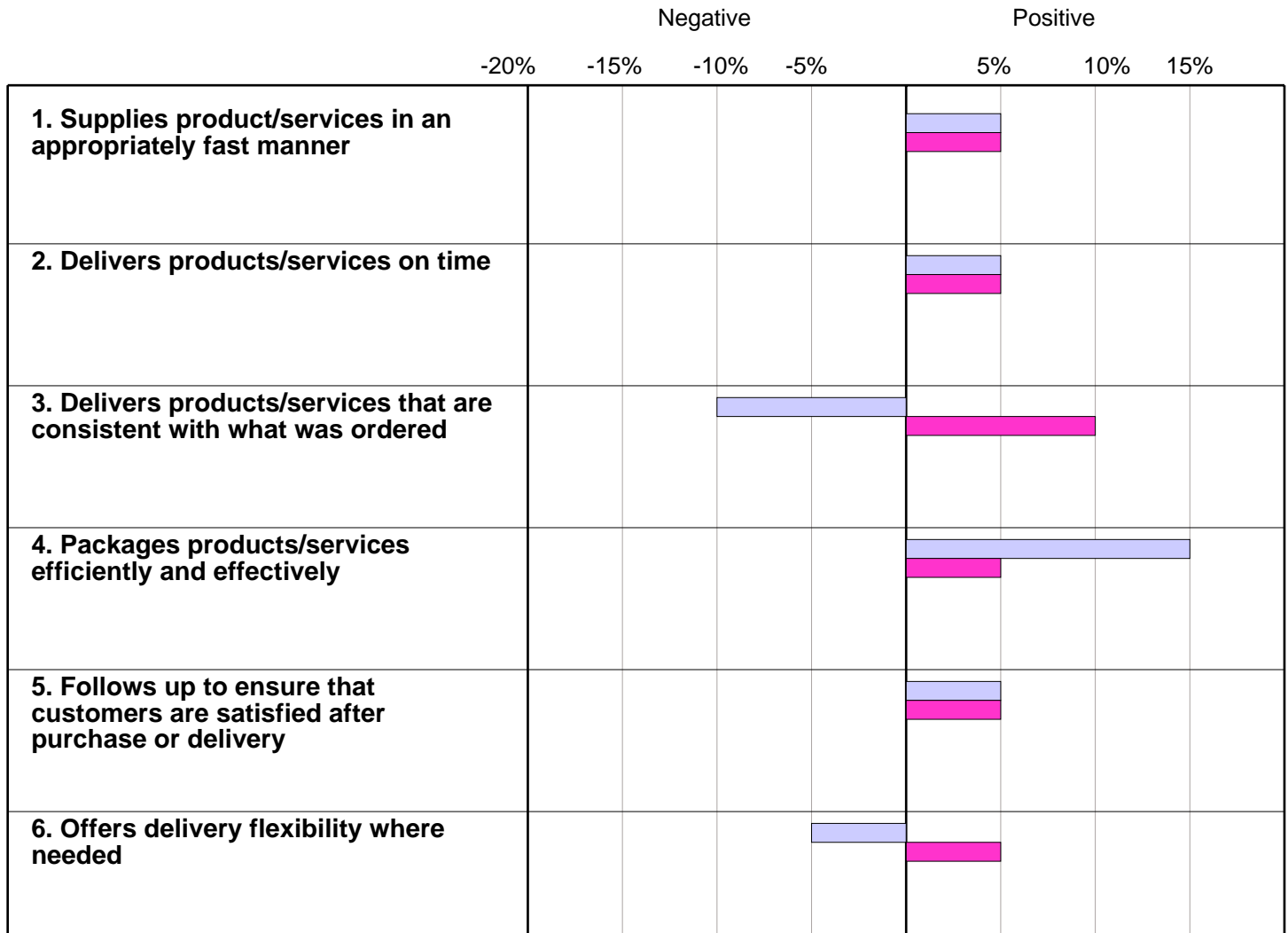
■ males ■ females

Individual question analysis

Service Delivery

The extent to which the customer perceives that product/service delivery is sufficiently fast, prompt and complete

Overall score for this category= 60.00%



■ males ■ females

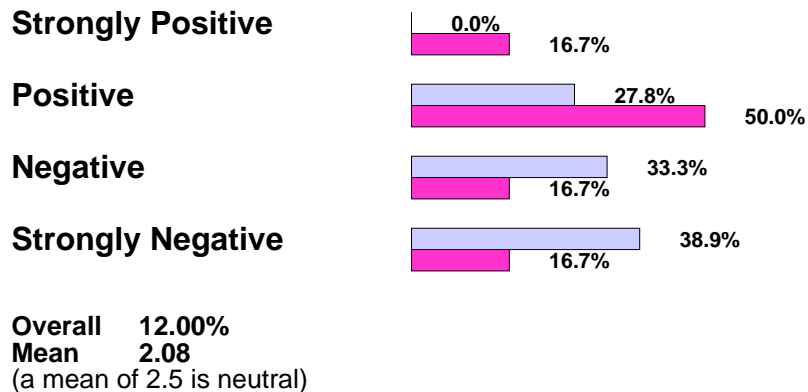
Service Communication

The extent to which the customer perceives that the organisation listens and communicates clearly with high levels of product/service knowledge

The questions that make up this category:

1. Offers full and clear information about its product/service offerings
2. Has knowledgeable customer contact people
3. Provides clear product/service brochures, leaflets and other explanatory material
4. Can quickly provide detailed product/service information when required
5. Clearly communicates product/service advantages and benefits when requested
6. Can offer high levels of product/service expertise when it is required

Average score:



Interpretive notes

Net Positive

The organisation is likely to listen attentively to customer comment and feedback on a regular basis and also engage in clear, open communication about products and/or services wherever necessary.

Net Negative

The organisation is likely to both listen to its customers too infrequently and communicate information about products and/or services with insufficient clarity. Customers are therefore likely to want more information than is typically given

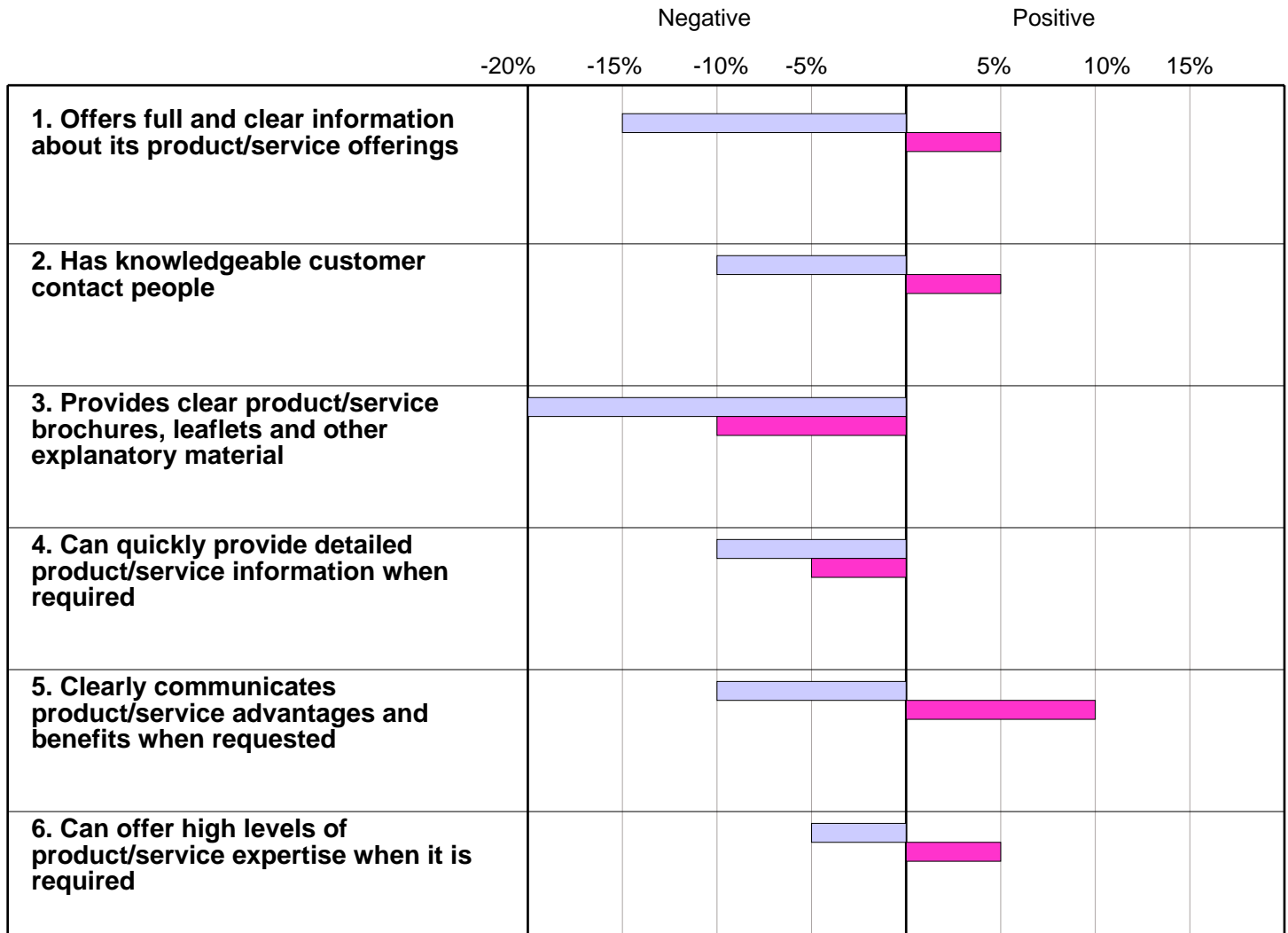
■ males ■ females

Individual question analysis

Service Communication

The extent to which the customer perceives that the organisation listens and communicates clearly with high levels of product/service knowledge

Overall score for this category= 12.00%



■ males ■ females

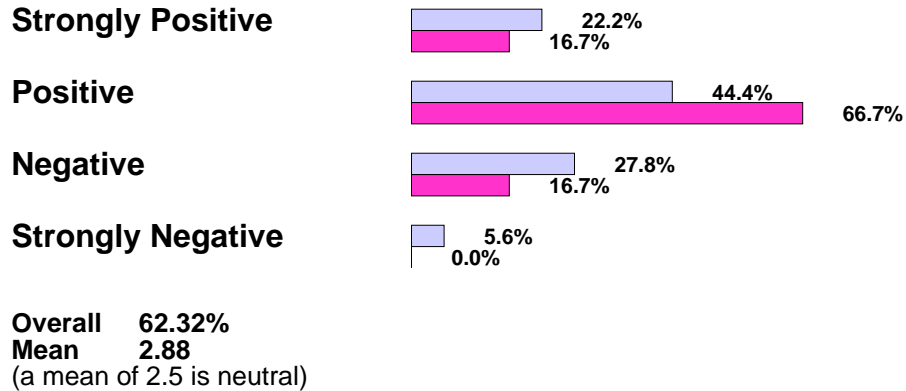
Service Professionalism

The extent to which the customer perceives that people in the enterprise demonstrate high levels of professionalism in everything they do for their customer

The questions that make up this category:

1. Deals with customers in a highly professional manner
2. Has contact staff who are calm and helpful at all times
3. Actively demonstrates that customer needs and expectations are paramount
4. Ensures that customer contact people are good ambassadors for the whole organisation
5. Regularly goes the 'extra mile' for the customer
6. Employs people who are highly skilled and knowledgeable

Average score:



Interpretive notes

Net Positive

The organisation is likely to invest quality time in coaching and/or training its employees to be as professional as possible in dealing with customers. This is likely to extend to any individual that has any customer contact whatsoever.

Net Negative

The organisation is likely to spend insufficient time in coaching and/or training its employees to be as professional as possible in all of its customer dealings. Customers may therefore have very different service experiences, according to the individual to whom they speak.

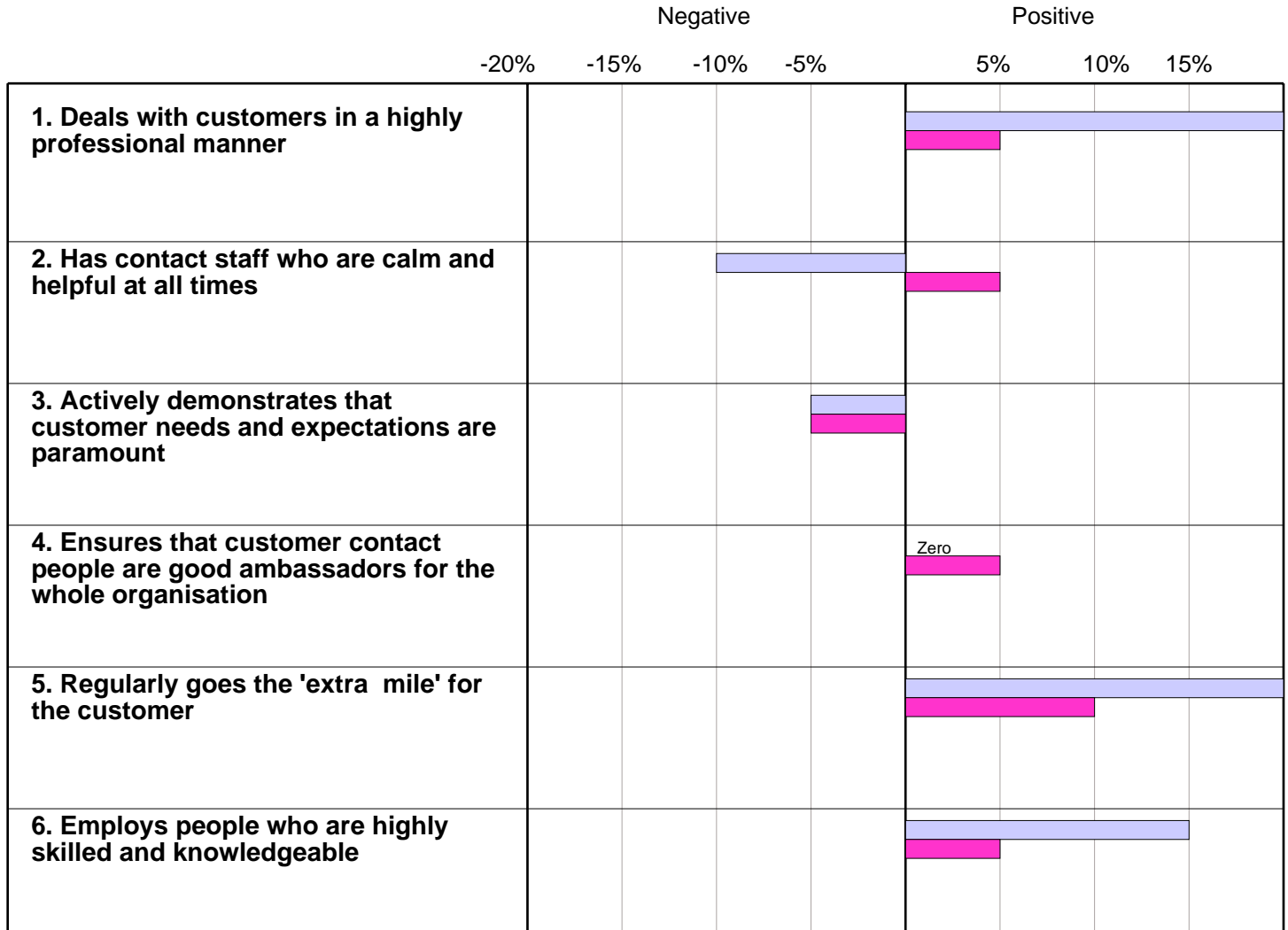
■ males ■ females

Individual question analysis

Service Professionalism

The extent to which the customer perceives that people in the enterprise demonstrate high levels of professionalism in everything they do for their customer

Overall score for this category= 62.32%



■ males ■ females

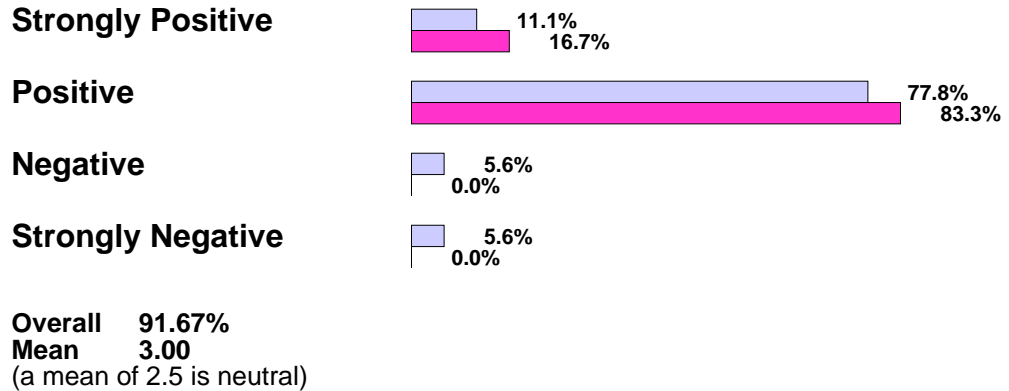
Service Warmth

The extent to which the customer perceives that people with which they deal in the enterprise (on the phone and face to face) are warm, courteous and empathetic

The questions that make up this category:

1. Has well trained customer facing staff
2. Listens attentively to changing customer needs and expectations
3. Is always courteous and helpful in all of its customer dealings
4. Seeks to build friendly relationships with customers
5. Is easy and helpful to deal with on the telephone
6. Has people that can readily put themselves in their customers shoes

Average score:



Interpretive notes

Net Positive

The organisation is likely to have front-line or 'customer-facing' people that are adept at building warm and empathetic customer relationships, on the telephone, in writing and on a face-to-face basis.

Net Negative

The organisation is likely to leave the relative warmth of its customer relationships to chance, spending insufficient time in ensuring that front line staff in particular are as courteous and empathetic as they can be.

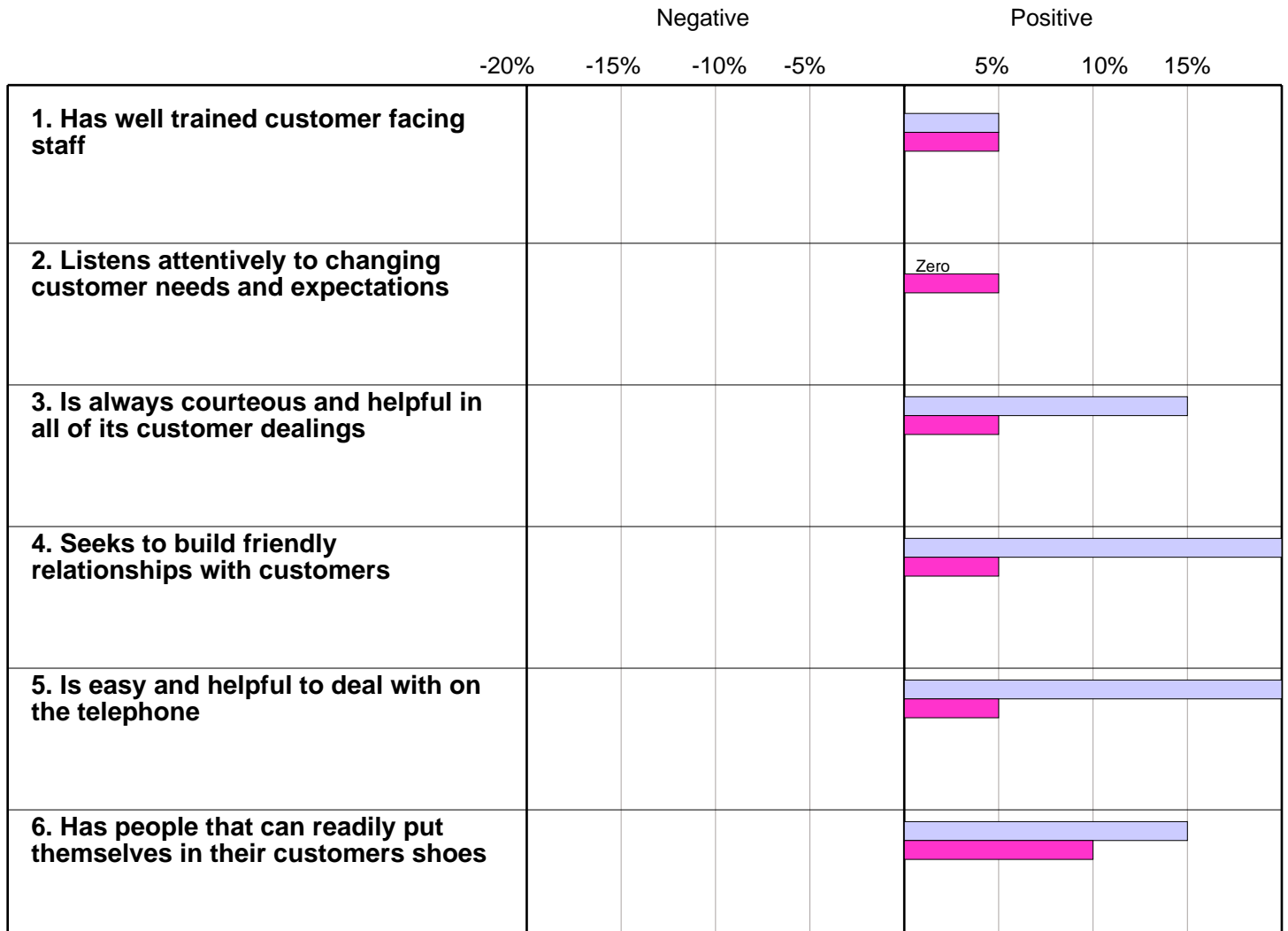
■ males ■ females

Individual question analysis

Service Warmth

The extent to which the customer perceives that people with which they deal in the enterprise (on the phone and face to face) are warm, courteous and empathetic

Overall score for this category= 91.67%



■ males ■ females

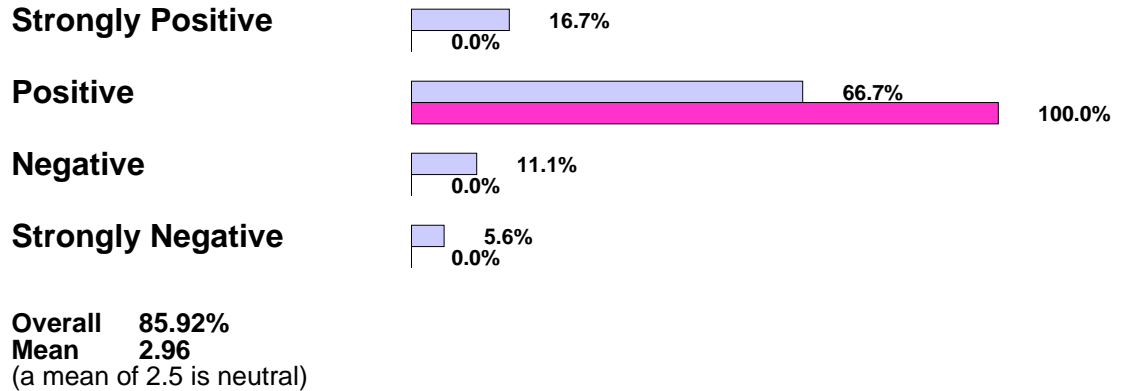
Service Access

The extent to which the customer perceives that the enterprise makes it easy to deal with it in many different ways or using multiple access points through which to obtain service

The questions that make up this category:

1. Makes product/service ordering easy
2. Has several ways in which it can be contacted
3. Offers a range of information channels to help customers understand or order product and/or service offerings
4. Operates an informative and easy to use web site
5. Returns calls quickly after messages are left
6. Responds quickly to customer suggestions and ideas for service improvement

Average score:



Interpretive notes

Net Positive

The organisation is likely to have carefully thought about the different ways in which customers may contact the organisation, and has ensured that each of these access points is efficient, effective and user friendly for the customer.

Net Negative

The organisation is likely to have only one or two main means by which customers are likely to make contact with the organisation. Even these limited contact points have not necessarily been designed for the experience to be as effective and user-friendly for the customer as it could be.

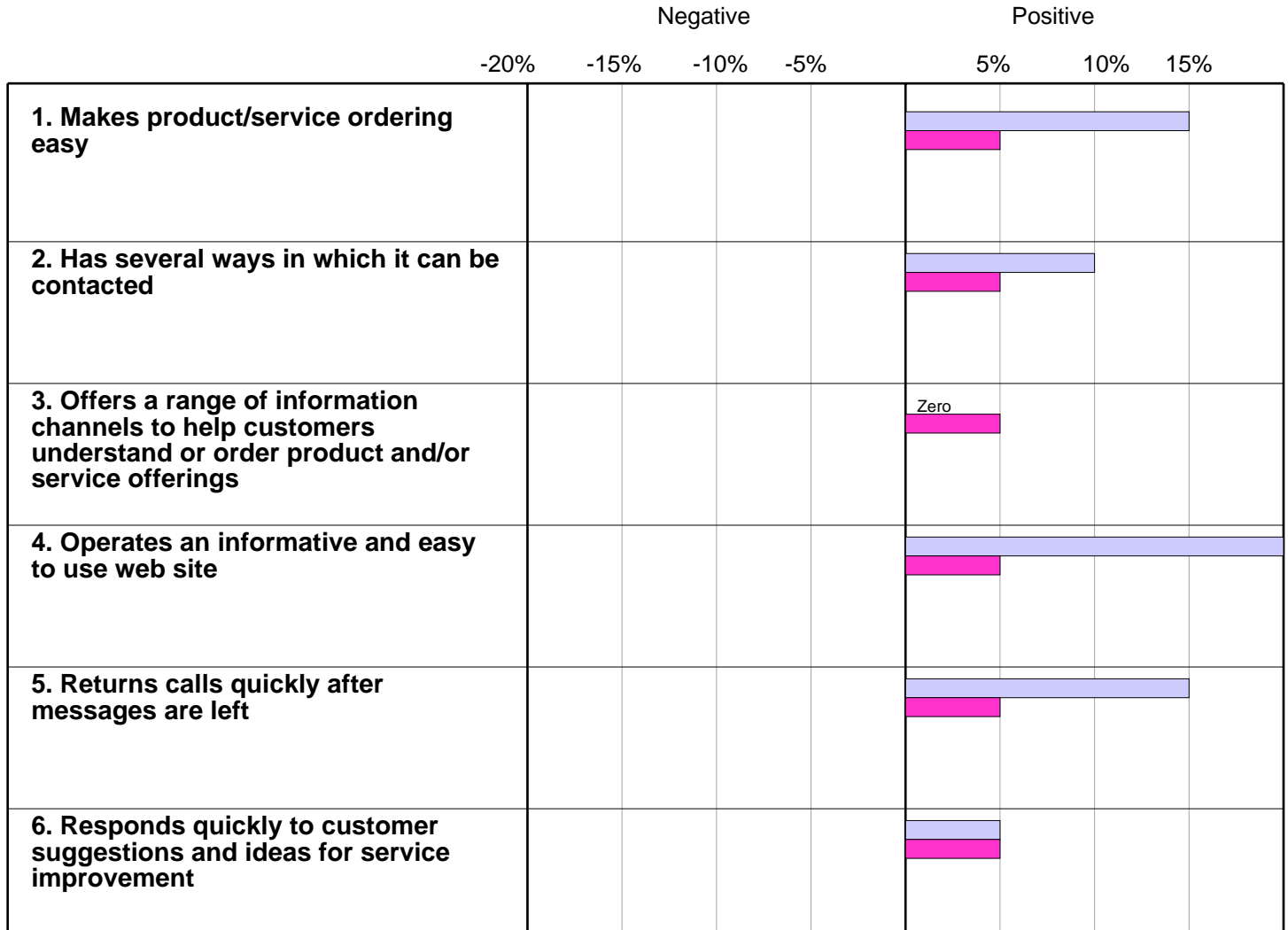
■ males ■ females

Individual question analysis

Service Access

The extent to which the customer perceives that the enterprise makes it easy to deal with it in many different ways or using multiple access points through which to obtain service

Overall score for this category= 85.92%



■ males ■ females

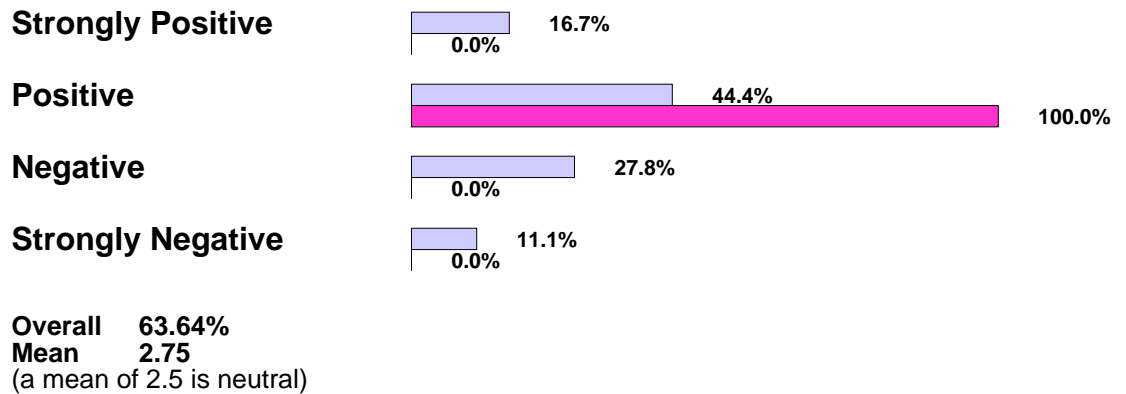
Service Query handling

The extent to which the customer perceives that the queries they make (positive and negative) are appropriately handled by the enterprise

The questions that make up this category:

1. Operates an efficient customer query/complaint handling system
2. Handles complaints positively
3. Responds quickly to all queries made of it
4. Follows through strongly on queries until they are fully dealt with
5. Takes all feedback (good and bad) seriously
6. Shows its appreciation when positive feedback is offered

Average score:



Interpretive notes

Net Positive

The organisation is likely to have established highly effective customer feedback processes, including a well-resourced customer complaint handling system. All feedback (including negative comments) are likely to be viewed as opportunities to positively improve in the future.

Net Negative

The organisation is likely to have no formal system to 'process' customer feedback of any kind and may even see negative feedback or queries as something to be minimised or even ignored.

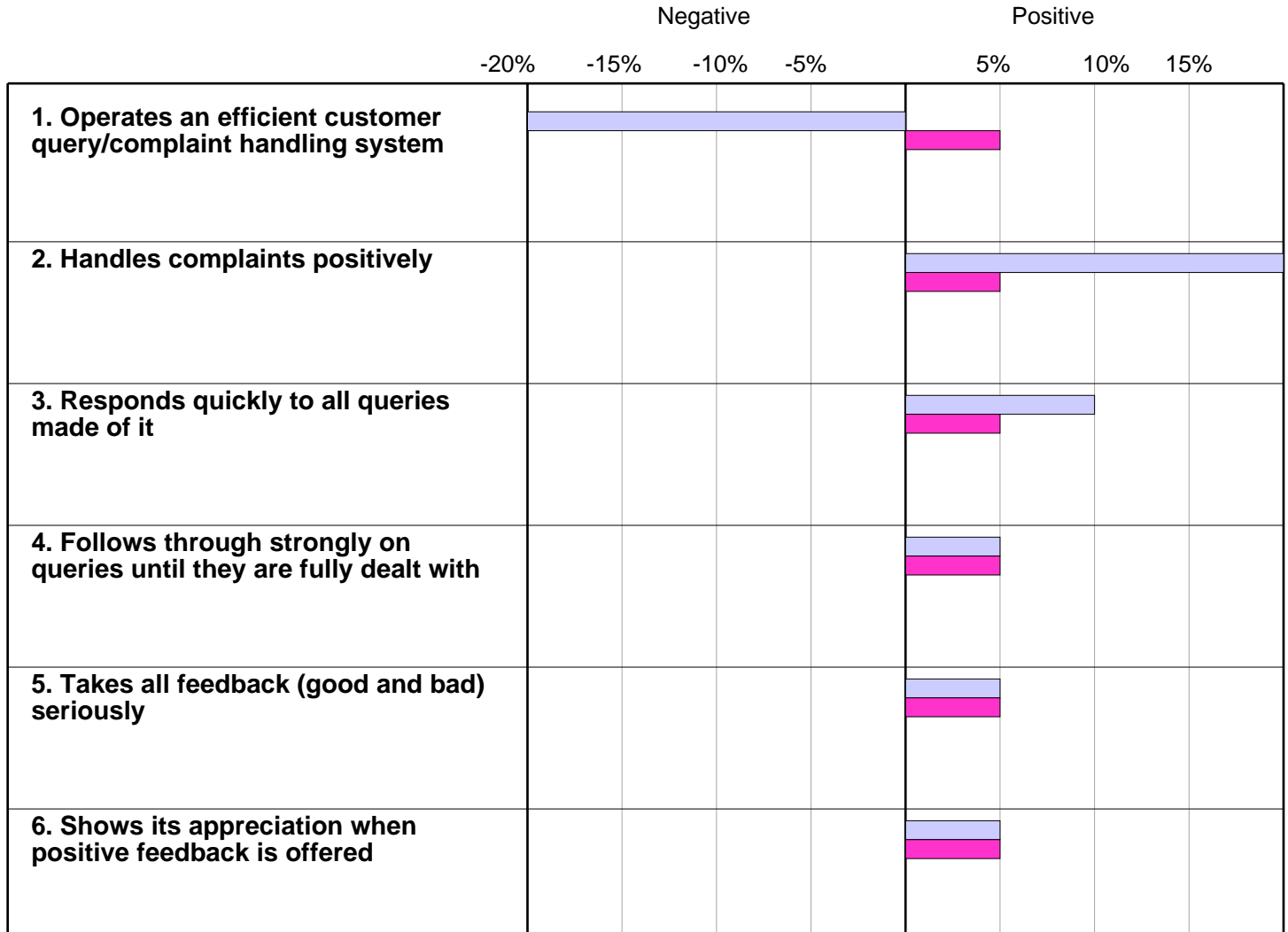
■ males ■ females

Individual question analysis

Service Query handling

The extent to which the customer perceives that the queries they make (positive and negative) are appropriately handled by the enterprise

Overall score for this category= 63.64%



■ males ■ females

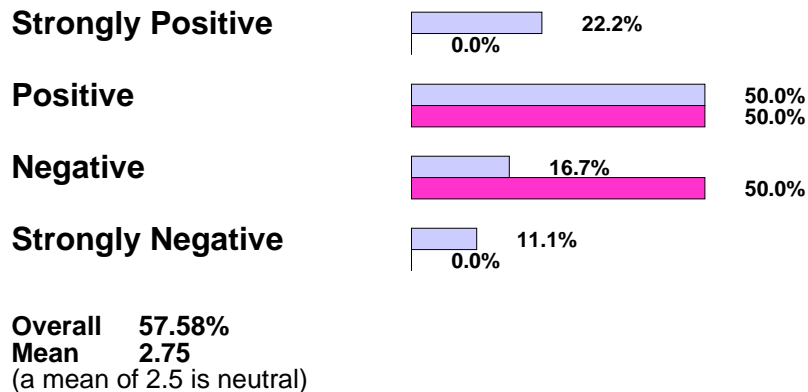
Service Flexibility

The extent to which the customer perceives that the enterprise offers flexible or tailored service to its customers (including recovery after a problem has been experienced)

The questions that make up this category:

1. Is happy to reasonably tailor its products and/or service offerings to customer needs as much as necessary
2. Offers new products and/or services according to customer feedback and needs
3. Recovers positively and well from service errors and mistakes when they are made
4. Is very quick and responsive to new and different customer service expectations
5. Demonstrates service flexibility when unusual requests are made
6. Is proactive in asking for comments and feedback as part of their after sales service

Average score:



Interpretive notes

Net Positive

The organisation is likely to work hard to make its customers feel 'special' by being as flexible to their needs as possible and by tailoring products and/or services wherever it is sensible and helpful to do so.

Net Negative

The organisation is likely to offer customers highly standardised products and/or services and will typically actively resist any kind of customisation or 'special treatment' (even after a customer problem has occurred).

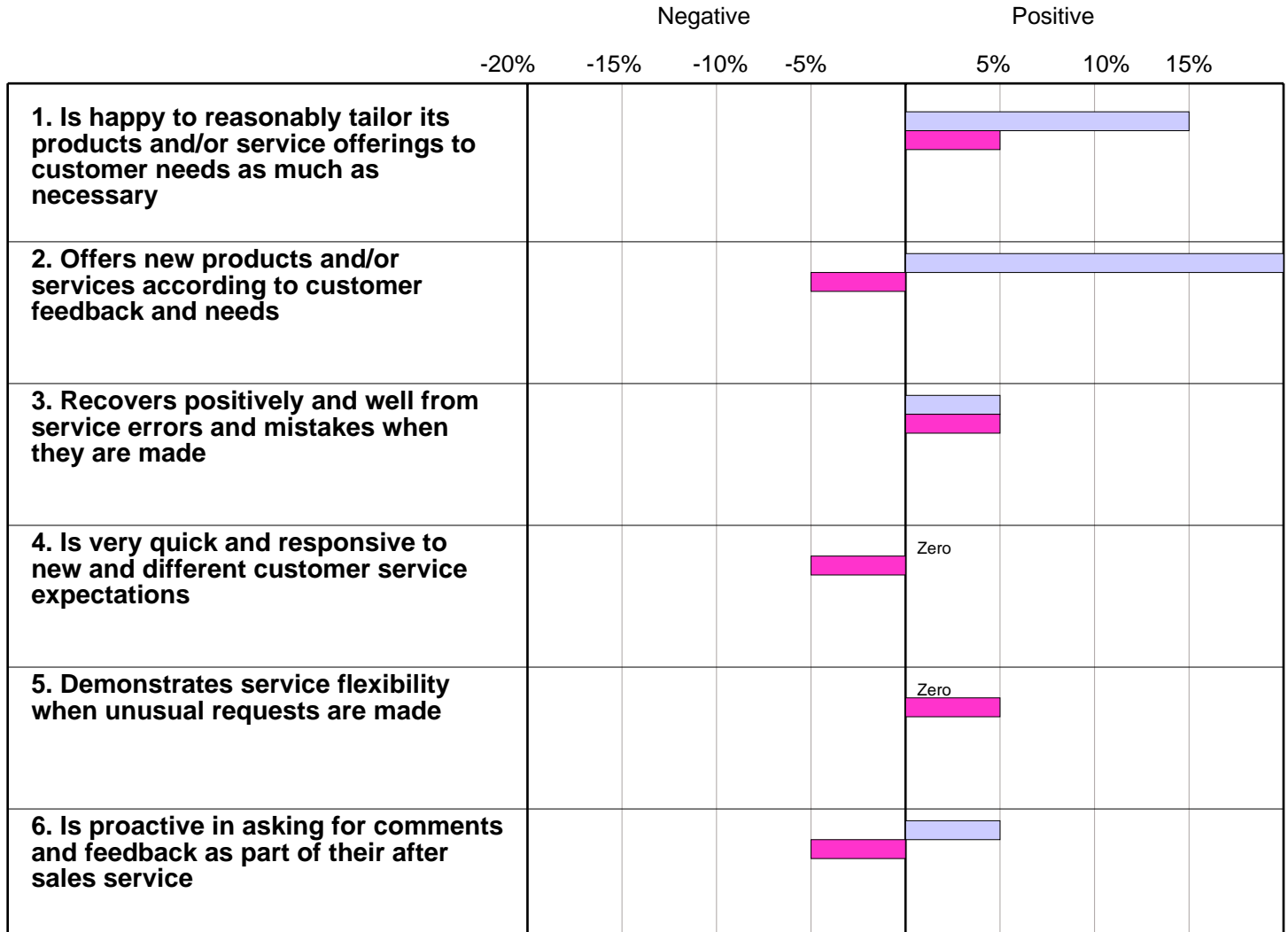
■ males ■ females

Individual question analysis

Service Flexibility

The extent to which the customer perceives that the enterprise offers flexible or tailored service to its customers (including recovery after a problem has been experienced)

Overall score for this category= 57.58%



■ males ■ females



Intervention suggestions

As we indicated at the outset, the first step in a process designed to take serious account of customer opinions and attitudes as they relate to overall levels of service in particular, is accurately diagnosing the prevailing service culture and practices as they are indicated by the collated feedback, and then translating the feedback we gather into firm action to improve. To assist in this process, a set of intervention suggestions has been created for each of the six key factors (Service Systems, Service Efficiency, Service Effectiveness, Service Knowledge, Service Empathy and Service Responsiveness).

Because it is impossible to apply a broad set of ideas or suggestions across every enterprise, careful analysis of the feedback needs to be carried out. However, the following pages of suggested interventions (one for each factor) are offered as possible strategies that may be drawn upon (in their entirety or in part) where they are deemed to be appropriate or useful.

Service Systems

Every system of work is designed to run smoothly and efficiently in terms of overall cycle time in order to deliver excellent customer service (including the sensible use of the best and latest technology where appropriate)

Low performance

- *Communicates with customers using slow and traditional methods and approaches*
- *Products and/or services are delivered using old or inefficient technology and systems*
- *Awareness about new or different technology or systems that could create a better customer result is low*
- *New processes are rarely explained when new technological approaches are introduced*
- *Often answers the phone slowly when contacted*
- *Is slower to deliver than most organisations*
- *Rarely invites feedback on where it can improve service cycle times*
- *Sends out invoices late*

Suggested interventions

- Review the ways in which communications are sent out and received to/from customers and assess whether later/newer or better technology could be sensibly introduced.
- Evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the technology being used to ensure that payments from the customer are collected quickly and easily (and plan changes where they are needed).
- Consider appointing specific individuals to be responsible for monitoring new technology that is relevant to the enterprise (and ask them to keep key decision-makers up to date and informed).
- Carefully assess the use of technology in the business to both analyse the entire customer interface and provide intelligent data in order to help the organisation to make better service decisions.
- Invite widespread input from employees, suppliers, customers and others to suggest how service systems strategy should be developed and deployed.
- Build goals and objectives for better technology and systems around known areas of service weakness or in situations where service errors frequently occur.
- Seek to standardise all phone answering (internal and external) within 3 or 4 rings (using coaching and training as much as necessary).
- Benchmark the delivery efficiency of competitor organisations and assess whether better technology or systems could bring about significant improvement in appropriate areas.
- Conduct a sample audit of enterprise invoice practices and check to ensure that system accuracy and speed is as good as it should ideally be.
- Formally and informally invite customers to make suggestions as to where better technology or systems might improve service cycle times.

Service Efficiency

Products and/or services are offered at prices that are seen to give good value for money by customers. Customers are subsequently happy to pay their invoices (as long as they are consistently clear and free from error)

Low performance

- *Prices for products/services are difficult to readily obtain and are confusing and hard to follow*
- *Price changes are notified late or not at all*
- *There is little perceived value for money for the products/services offered*
- *Invoices are not clearly itemised for products/services supplied*
- *Billing is often inaccurate*
- *Flexible payment methods and approaches are not made available*
- *Invoice errors are rectified ineffectively*
- *Payment terms and conditions are complex and inflexible*

Suggested interventions

- Ensure that published price lists are simply written and easy to follow for every customer.
- Consider making clear prices for all products and/or services available in many different places (in brochures, leaflets, web-sites, by e-mail, on invoices etc).
- Put in place a formal notification system to update customers when pricing policy changes.
- Carefully evaluate whether your product and/or service range has sufficient perceived value (in the eyes of your customers) to justify the prices you are charging (but also remember to consider whether you have stressed the relevant advantages and benefits enough to the customer).
- Encourage individuals and teams to specifically debate what poor and excellent service to the customer looks like and use the information to assess current performance.
- Invite customers to offer feedback on the organisation's service efficiency shortfalls or on areas they see to be in need of improvement.
- Consider reviewing your entire billing system to ensure that it is fast, clear and entirely accurate (and commit to making any adjustments that result from your review).
- Invite a sample of customers to make specific comment upon both the value for money they perceive they are getting and the efficiency and effectiveness by which payment is collected. Use the feedback to make any necessary adjustments.
- Challenge service mediocrity in every quarter and encourage people to set higher standards to yield superior quality results.
- Look at previous customer complaints seriously and look for trends or patterns in complaints about overall service efficiency (constant invoice errors, delivery mistakes, poor packaging etc).

Service Effectiveness

Quality standards have been set at appropriate levels to meet customer needs and expectations, and products and services are consistently delivered to meet these standards

Low performance

- *Standards of quality are low or non-existent*
- *Product/service offerings take little or no account of customer feedback*
- *Customer quality concerns are addressed in a negative manner*
- *Customer feedback on product/service quality is not invited*
- *Products/services delivery is often slow and/or late and or inconsistent with what was ordered*
- *Delivery flexibility is rarely offered*
- *Little follow up occurs to ensure that customers are satisfied after purchase or delivery*
- *Product/service packaging is poor or ineffective*

Suggested interventions

- Review overall quality and service standards that are in place (if they are) and ensure that they are sufficiently stretching and known to all relevant people in the organisation.
- Look to map the major service processes that operate in key work areas and evaluate how efficient or effective they seem to be (in cost, administrative difficulty, cycle time etc).
- Establish a formal and effective system to tackle any service or quality concerns that are raised by either the customer or internal staff members.
- Carefully note where potential service problems or bottlenecks can occur (that might have an impact on the service performance of individual teams and need to be managed).
- Specifically evaluate product and/or service delivery processes to ensure that quality is high in all areas.
- Invite people to identify all the major 'moments of truth' (interface points where customers can form a positive or negative impression of the enterprise) that exist (when there is a direct interaction with the customer) and review whether processes are optimal for each of these.
- Consider providing an easy to use system whereby individuals can quickly make service improvement suggestions or raise concerns that can rapidly lead to changes, training or any other intervention to lift performance.
- Actively invite individuals to comment on their frustrations or concerns about service or quality and discuss ways in which the situation might be improved.
- Conduct regular and rigorous 'needs analysis' exercises to identify service training gaps or shortfalls.
- Put in place (where necessary) formal follow up systems to check that service has been effective from the customer's point of view.

Service Knowledge

All staff in the enterprise that have any dealings with the customer are well trained, knowledgeable about product and/or service offerings, and operate in a professional manner in every communication

Low performance

- *Customer contact staff have product/service knowledge gaps*
- *Product/service brochures, leaflets and other explanatory material is poor or non-existent*
- *Product/service advantages and benefits are rarely highlighted*
- *Insufficient professionalism is shown when dealing with customers*
- *Contact staff are often flustered and unhelpful under pressure*
- *Customer needs and expectations are secondary*
- *Customer contact people are poor ambassadors for the whole organisation*
- *People are insufficiently skilled and knowledgeable*

Suggested interventions

- Design an overall service training strategy that helps individuals at all levels of the enterprise to perform at their best when dealing with customers.
- Develop, and widely disseminate service competency descriptions to help individuals and teams to audit their existing skills against the service standards that are expected.
- Encourage widespread debate on the topic “The customer is our number one priority” and use the experience to encourage individuals and teams to question their current focus.
- Look to make active listening skills a core competency to be developed by all individuals as a key part of their overall service skills.
- Give people access to the quality coaching and training that they need to offer the best possible service levels.
- Conduct regular and rigorous ‘needs analysis’ exercises to identify service training gaps or shortfalls.
- Regularly assess prevailing levels of product and/or service knowledge and put plans in place to rectify any gaps that are found (with coaching, training etc).
- Talk regularly to people that supply individuals and teams with information or materials to help it to do its job and use the information to plan improvements.
- Set up and maintain regular product and/or service briefing sessions for all employees to attend (and front-line customer contact staff in particular).
- Train front-line staff in fully understanding specific product and/or service advantages and benefits (not just product and service features).

Service Empathy

Long-term excellence in service and a positive reputation is readily and easily achieved through building a variety of 'warm' and 'empathetic' relationships between service focused individuals in the enterprise and their customers.

Low performance

- *Customer facing staff are poorly trained in interpersonal skills*
- *The organisation rarely listens to changing customer needs and expectations*
- *Relationships with customers are often 'cool' or merely 'transactional'*
- *Rarely puts themselves in their customers shoes*
- *Product/service ordering is difficult*
- *There are limited Information channels to help customers understand or order product and/or service offerings*
- *A helpful web site is either non-existent or poor in information terms*
- *Regularly fails to respond appropriately to customer suggestions and ideas for service improvement*

Suggested interventions

- Regularly invite customers to comment upon the overall levels of personal warmth and empathy that they experience in dealing with people in the enterprise (on the phone, face-to-face etc) and act on the feedback.
- Constantly seek to identify those individuals who are popular with customers or are perceived to be highly skilled in service giving and involve them in customer service training design for others.
- Look to make active listening skills a core competency to be developed by all individuals as a key part of their overall service skills.
- Evaluate all customer contact points (including order receipt) to ensure that the experience is simple and friendly for the customer.
- Review all points of contact with the enterprise and design systems that ensure that the service offered is as friendly as possible.
- Carefully determine how much freedom and flexibility will be needed by front line/customer facing staff in order to deal with non-mainstream customer needs or when they experience customer problems.
- Audit all major organisational policies, procedures and processes to ensure that they do not cause problems for internal service providers.
- Encourage internal teams to frequently spend quality time in discussing customer feedback of all kinds (including complaints) in a positive and constructive way.
- Regularly analyse the history of customer response (both positive and negative) and look for trends and patterns in the data.
- Ensure that customers have several ways in which they can contact or access information from the enterprise (and resource these access points fully).

Service Responsivness

The enterprise is proactive is both treating all feedback in a positive way (as a means to improve in the future) and in talking to their customer often in order to modify products and/or service or tailor their offerings where necessary

Low performance

- *Operates a non-existent or inadequate customer query/complaint handling system*
- *Handles complaints poorly and/or negatively*
- *Fails to take feedback (good and bad) seriously*
- *Is not happy to tailor its products and/or service offerings to customer needs as much as necessary*
- *New products and/or services are offered with little or no regard to customer feedback*
- *Rarely recovers well from service errors and mistakes when they are made*
- *Demonstrates little or no service flexibility when unusual requests are made*
- *Asks for no comments or feedback as part of after sales service*

Suggested interventions

- Determine overall and individualised service recovery strategies and plans when things go wrong (ensuring that rectification is as fast and efficient as possible).
- Review the whole system for handling customer queries and complaints to ensure that systematic problems are identified and quickly remedied.
- Consider setting up a feedback or response system (such as an annual survey) that ensure that the voice of the customer is regularly captured on a formal basis.
- Encourage teams to engage in direct contact with customers (via visits, discussions on the telephone or focus group sessions) to talk about service performance.
- Consider setting up a formal suggestion scheme to invite service or quality improvement ideas from people at all levels.
- Openly discuss the extent to which individuals are empowered to make decisions on their own, and if this is not the case, the process by which customer needs can be efficiently and effectively met.
- Invest effort into discovering how 'free' people feel to offer service excellence to their internal and external customers (and make adjustments accordingly).
- Identify specific opportunities to help to empower people to take decisions without reference to higher authority.
- Encourage supervisors and managers to engage in as much "walking the talk" activity as possible in order to coach or mentor individuals and teams to attain higher service goals.
- Actively support individual initiative and innovation to improve service even in minor ways.