

READING COMPREHENSION

CUSTOMER SERVICE

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Upside down management

Timpson is a family business with a turnover of more than 150 million pounds. Timpson shops offer a variety of services including shoe repair and key cutting. The secret of the company's success, according to company chairman John Timpson, is to make sure you have 'happy customers' and offer 'great jobs'. To achieve this, the company uses an organizational system called 'upside down management'.

'Upside down management' means that the customers are always at the top and senior management are at the bottom. The role of the managers is to support the frontline staff in the middle, who can then serve the customers. This organogram shows how Timpson works with some of its key principles at each level.

Customers

- They come first.
- Make them smile.
- Happy customers will advertise your company, so don't spend money on marketing.

Frontline Staff

- Charge customers whatever you like. The price list is only a guide.
- Try new ideas. If they work, tell management. If they don't work, just stop.
- Staff can use one of the company's five holiday homes.
- High-performing staff can receive a weekly 15% bonus.
- You always get an extra day off on your birthday!

Management

- Serve your frontline staff. Don't give them orders.
- Praise frontline staff ten times more than you criticize.
- Avoid meetings. They waste time.
- Get rid of poor-performing staff quickly.

1. What kind of business is Timpson?

- a) A technology company
- b) A family business
- c) A chain of restaurants
- d) An advertising agency

2. What is the secret of Timpson's success, according to its chairman?

- a) Reducing business costs effectively
- b) Having happy customers and great jobs
- c) Investing heavily in marketing campaigns
- d) Expanding the company as fast as possible

3. What does "Upside Down Management" mean?

- a) Managers are the most important part
- b) Customers are at the top, management at the bottom
- c) Frontline staff make all critical decisions
- d) Marketing strategies are the main priority

4. What should managers do for frontline staff, according to the text?

- a) Give them clear orders
- b) Support them without giving orders
- c) Focus only on customer feedback
- d) Hold frequent meetings

5. Why does Timpson avoid spending money on marketing?

- a) The company doesn't rely on advertisements
- b) Happy customers promote the company for free
- c) Marketing costs are too high for the company
- d) Internal policies are the company's main focus

6. What is a benefit offered to high-performing staff at Timpson?

- a) Extra vacation days
- b) A 15% weekly bonus
- c) Free training programs
- d) Shares in the company

7. What happens if frontline staff try new ideas and they don't work?

- a) They are criticized
- b) They are encouraged to try again
- c) They simply stop using them
- d) Management decides the next steps

8. What do customers represent in "Upside Down Management"?

- a) The middle of the organization
- b) The foundation of the company
- c) The top priority for everyone
- d) A secondary concern in operations

9. How should management handle poor-performing staff?

- a) Train them until they improve
- b) Give them more responsibilities
- c) Quickly remove them from their positions
- d) Let the frontline staff handle them

10. What is the purpose of avoiding meetings, according to Timpson?

- a) Meetings waste time for everyone involved
- b) Meetings are expensive for the company's budget
- c) Meetings lower employee morale significantly
- d) Meetings reduce productivity across departments