

The customers are :

1. The most important people in the business.
2. Not dependent on the organization. The organization depends on them.
3. Not an interruption to work but are the purpose of it.
4. Doing a favour when they seek business and not vice-versa.
5. A part of business, not outsiders.
6. Life blood of the business.
7. People who come with their needs and jobs.
8. Deserve the most courteous and attentive treatment.

Types of Customers

Customers are two types. They are :

1. Internal customers, and
2. External customers.

1. Internal Customers

1. The customers inside the company are called internal customers.
2. As there is a flow of work, product and service in the organization, each department is dependent on the other. In this, each department or each quality management unit is considered as a customer by the previous department and as a supplier for the next department. Similarly every person in a process is considered as a customer of the preceding operation. This explains the concept of internal customer.

2. External Customers

- The customers outside the company are called external customers.
- In other words, an external customer is the one:
 - who uses the product or service ;
 - who purchases the product or service; or
 - who influences the sale of the product or service.

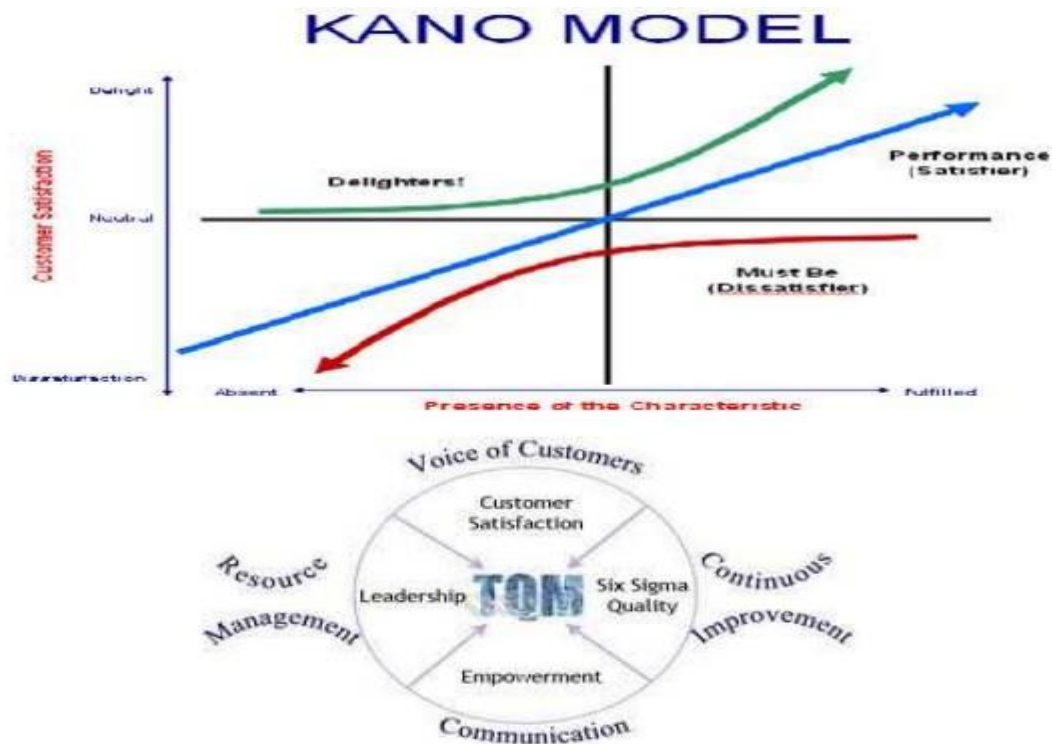
Customer – Supplier Chain

In order to achieve the total customer orientation, TQM requires the better customer – supplier relationship. Figure shows the model of customer – supplier chain.

All processes require inputs, which are provided by the internal or external suppliers.

Similarly all processes delivers outputs, which are used by internal or external customers. Each unit is considered as a customer by the previous unit and as a supplier for the next unit.

Customer satisfaction, a business term, is a measure of how products and services supplied by a company meet or surpass customer expectation. It is seen as a key performance indicator within business and is part of the four of a Balanced Scorecard.



➤ In a competitive marketplace where businesses compete for customers, customer satisfaction is seen as a key differentiator and increasingly has become a key element of business strategy.