Customer Care Assignment

“For years, British organizations have ignored their customers” (Institute of Management, 1995), yet to improve the quality of service, an organization must understand the fundamental issues which concern their customers. Put simply, “excellent customer care is a commercial must for the next millennium” (Management Today, 1996)

Critically discuss this statement.

In this assignment the author will aim to develop an awareness of, and sensitivity to, customer care processes by considering changing nature of customer service and exploring the importance of Customer Relationship Management for organizational survival. They will also investigate what a business needs to do in order to achieve good customer care. The author will firstly look into what customer care is and how to achieve it; they will then give examples of previous good and bad customer care to show how businesses should be applying their customer policies.

It seems logical to think that the sales and profitability of a business depends upon keeping customers happy, but nowadays it costs five times as much to acquire a new customer than it does to keep and existing one, so customer care should be of the upmost importance for all businesses. Customer care involves putting systems in place to maximise your customers’ satisfaction with your business. The international engineering consortium defines customer care as “a customer service that seeks to acquire new customers, provide superior customer satisfaction, and build customer loyalty.” In spite of this some companies customer care policies are still of a poor standard and do not meet these simple needs. Mullins (1989:164) argues that “to many people, responsibilities to consumers may be seen as no more than a natural outcome of good business.” This could be the reason for some businesses poor customer care policies, as they don’t consider the broader social responsibilities of customer care. Mullins (1989:164,165) found such social responsibilities to be “providing good value for money, the safety and durability of products, prompt and courteous attention to queries and complaints and full and unambiguous information to potential customers.”

However some evidence has shown that it is the attitudes and work ethics of business staff that is the real key to customer satisfaction. Mullins (1989:255) found that “The starting point for customer satisfaction is good manager-subordinate relationships. Supportive and harmonious working relationships are more likely to create a working environment which results in high levels of both staff and consumer satisfaction.” Agreement into these thoughts are shown by Peters and Waterman (1984) who suggested that “the essence of excellence is the thousand concrete, minute actions performed by everyone in an organisation to keep a company on course” The author believes that singly both social responsibilities and good working relationships within a business would produce customer satisfaction to some degree, however real customer