



## Using Business Principles to support ethical communication

### External communication with customers



Vodafone has developed a set of ten Business Principles. These Business Principles give a plain and moral pathway to help guide the actions of employees.

One principle relates to communications where Vodafone states: 'We will communicate openly and transparently with all of our stakeholders within the bounds of commercial confidentiality.' Vodafone expects these Principles to help reduce barriers to communication. They ensure that its messages, verbal and non-verbal, are clearly understood.

#### Verbal communication

Vodafone needs to be in direct contact with its customers through verbal communication. The company, through its stores or contact centres, has many opportunities for its trained staff to talk to customers about all issues.

#### Non-verbal communication

Non-verbal communication covers a wide range of methods. These include visual elements such as the Vodafone logo, adverts in newspapers, TV and other media, as well as the company's image. This helps to determine brand positioning. This is how others view the company in relation to its rivals. Brand positioning involves creating an image by which people recognise what a brand stands for. Vodafone's is: 'Vodafone helps people enjoy richer communication, anywhere, any time. Always reliable, always easy, always great value€|passionately delivered.'

Other forms of non-verbal communications may include the sales and information literature found in Vodafone's shops. The company also uses the short message service (SMS) or texts to contact some customers.

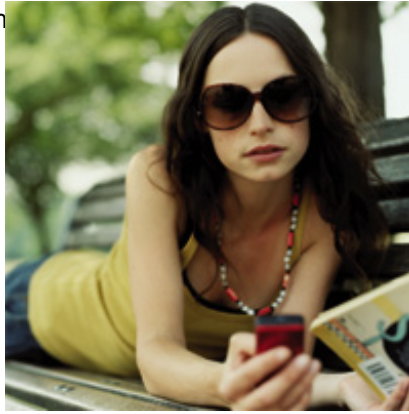
#### Keeping customers loyal

Gaining the loyalty of customers is not just about giving them products and services. According to Vodafone's Principles, it is also about connecting 'openly and transparently'. One of the key challenges is how to shorten complex arguments so that customers and other stakeholders understand them easily. Vodafone has to convey details of a range of technical data about phones, networks and base stations.

[quote]Vodafone is committed to providing clear details for customers about new developments in research. This is so it can remain true to its communication Principles.

## **Forms of communication**

Vodafone engages in many forms of comm



include:

\* Promotion and sales material. This involves making sure that all Vodafone's advertising material is accurate, clear and understandable. The content of these materials closely follows Vodafone's Business Principles in providing open, accurate and transparent information. They help to inform stakeholders responsibly as well as promote Vodafone's range of products and services.

\* Awareness and information. Vodafone was fully behind the government's legislation to promote the responsible use of mobile phones in cars. It took complex legal material and translated it to make it easy to understand. It created a campaign to raise customer awareness both of the new law and appropriate use of a mobile phone in relation to it.

\* Explanation and guidance. Some customers are concerned about alleged health effects from mobile phones. Vodafone needs to convey clearly the findings of the latest scientific research. This is a very complex technical area. Vodafone needs to ensure that it explains the jargon, communicates complex science and points out the relevance without losing the sense of the science.