

## - Multi-Value Code of Conduct -

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### ✓ **Mystery shopping: an introduction**

#### What is mystery shopping?

Multi-Value clients often wish to know just how friendly and service orientated their shop personnel are towards customers.

A shop is visited, or a telephone call is made, whereby the observer (mystery shopper) acts as a normal customer. During the visit the mystery shopper observes and registers everything which is happening in the shop.

Usually the visit takes places completely anonymously and the shop personnel do not realize they are being observed.

Every visit is different. It is therefore most important to study the briefing and the questionnaire carefully and to adhere to each particular script.



To accomplish Multi-Value's mission, you need to have 2 essential things :

- The software Acrobat Reader. Our briefings are written in pdf and you can only read them with this application. Your computer doesn't have Acrobat Reader? Then, download this software for free on <http://get.adobe.com/reader/?promoid=BUIGO>

It can happen that you have to do a purchase during your visit. We need a digital copy of your receipt in order to process your questionnaire. It's then very important that you have access to a scanner or a digital camera to make a copy of the receipt, so that you can upload it when filling in the questionnaire.

## What is the goal of mystery shopping?

In general mystery shopping is aimed at improving customer service. This can be implemented by various means:

- ✓ **Infrastructure improvement;** is the company concerned easy to reach? Are there sufficient parking slots? Etc.
- ✓ **Product appeal;** does the company sell popular brands? Is the price right? Etc.
- ✓ **Customer service improvement;** is the customer greeted in a friendly fashion? Does the customer feel welcome? Is the customer served satisfactorily? Etc.

## What is the importance of objectivity during a mystery visit?

Objectivity is essential to a mystery visit. The report should be a reflection of the facts and not the mystery shopper's own opinion or interpretation. It is therefore of the utmost importance that you supply only the actual facts relating to a visit unless otherwise requested. The report should include detailed information, allowing the principal (our client) to read the exact details pertaining to a visit.

## ✓ Where can I find which surveys are available?

Every mystery shopper registered with our company receives a mail 24 hours prior to a survey becoming available online. The following are included in the mail:

- ✓ The principals for whom the surveys will become available on-line
- ✓ The target group of the survey
- ✓ A description of the assignment
- ✓ The period during which the visit should take place
- ✓ Payment for the visit

If you are interested in taking part go to our web-site [www.multi-value.com](http://www.multi-value.com) at the time indicated in the mail and log in with your name and password. Click on "I want to visit a shop" and a list comprising all shops to be visited will appear. You can select a list according to the client or the area/region. This list is sometimes very long and sometime quite short and depends on the number of shops to be visited.



You then click on the mystery visit you would like to carry out and you indicate the date on which you would like to carry it out. Later, can alter this date to another one providing it is within the period in which the visit must take place.

You then confirm this and from that moment onwards you will have accepted a visit and we expect you to carry it out (unless you contact us and inform us to the contrary).

**Attention:** it is not permitted for you to allow another person to shop using your account! We must be certain that the person registered with our company actually carries out the visit(s).

When viewing the list of mystery visits you should pay special attention to the following:

- ✓ **Name and address of shop:** be careful to visit the right shop; sometimes there are several branches of the same chain in one town and, sometimes, even in the same street. Check the number of the building before entering the shop.
- ✓ **The briefing:** should you require more background information regarding the survey in question, click on the icon in this section where you will find a detailed description of this script. In order for our client to accept your report, you will need extra instructions and these are specified in the briefing. You may also put any questions you may have to the Customer Support Manager who is mentioned in the briefing.
- ✓ **Visiting period:** if you are not entirely sure that you will be able to visit the shop during the specified period, please leave the survey for somebody else. Select only those shops which you are sure to be able to visit. If you have selected a visit and are then unable to carry it out, please let us know immediately in order that we can find an alternative shopper.
- ✓ **Payment:** when you provide a report which is acceptable to our client, Multi-Value pays the appropriate amount into your account.
- ✓ **Short briefing:** the main information pertaining to the survey is described here. For instance, the client may have specified that the shop should only be visited on certain days, or, that the visit should be carried out by a man or by a woman. Read this description first before confirming that you would like to carry out this survey.

## ✓ **How to prepare for a visit?**

How should I prepare for a visit?

After you have confirmed an intended visit, we ask you to carry out the following:

- ✓ Consult the briefing and study it carefully. Check that everything is clear.
- ✓ Consult the questionnaire and read it through carefully. Check that everything's clear. If you have any queries at this stage of preparation, feel free to contact us and we will answer your queries.
- ✓ Imagine the answers you may have to give to possible questions from a shop assistant. The script should always be followed. Don't be surprised by unexpected questions, be prepared and identify yourself with the role of the shopper.



## The visiting period

The date on which the visiting period starts is the first date on which you may carry out the survey. You should never do this prior to the starting date as this would render your visit invalid. The last date on which you may carry out a visit is the last date of the visiting period.

**When you confirm an assignment, we expect you to respect the last date on which the visit may be carried out.** If this is not possible, please contact us immediately and, together, we will try to find a solution.

Multi-Value can decide to cancel your assignments (including those which are still in the visiting period) if you failed to carry out an assignment within the given time without notifying us! We then presume that you will not carry out other assignments within the given time.

## I still have questions after reading the briefing and the questionnaire

If you still have questions after reading the briefing and the questionnaire, please do contact us. We are more than willing to answer any questions you may have. We too wish to learn and appreciate any feedback. We will take any comments into account when amending the briefing or the questionnaire.

## I am unexpectedly unable to carry out an assignment

It is always possible that you are unable to carry out an assignment due to unforeseen circumstances. We understand this and are prepared to look for a solution together with you. Naturally it is imperative that you contact us as soon as possible in such cases.

**Attention: not carrying out an assignment without have warned us in plenty of time, could lead to our decision to discontinue using your services. We must be able to rely on you carrying out the assignment and sending us the report. There are always other mystery shoppers who would have liked to carry out the assignment.**

## ✓ How do I carry out the visit in the correct manner?

### The ideal mystery shopper

As a mystery shopper, you follow the script and allow the shop assistant to perform his/her work well. You should remain friendly, enthusiastic about the product and interested in the shop assistant's explanation.

If you show too much or too little initiative, you will be depriving the shop assistant's chance to obtain a good score. It is therefore of the utmost importance that you appear to be an "ordinary" customer. Make sure you belong to the target group. If, after having read the briefing you are doubtful, please contact Multi-Value and ask for the Customer Support Manager for that particular survey.

You should not be looking for the shop assistant's mistakes or shortcomings or those of the company concerned. The glass is always half full and not half empty.



## Precautions

Prepare yourself by carefully reading the briefing and the questionnaire. Consider the various possibilities ahead of your visit.

- ✓ Which name and address will you supply? Should you give your own name and address or a false name and address? If you have to give a false name and a false address, make sure that you learn the street, number and postal code prior to the visit.
- ✓ If you have been asked to note the shop assistant's name, pay attention to this requirement. If you do not know the name, you should ask "With whom have I spoken in case I have any more questions?" on leaving the shop.
- ✓ Sometimes you have to note whether the shop assistant asked for your name and whether he/she used it during the conversation.
- ✓ You must keep all receipts, brochures, offers, etc., for a period of three months. Multi-Value may ask for these as proof of your visit.
- ✓ Take care to dress in keeping with the script you have to follow in order that you appear credible to the shop personnel.
- ✓ Pay attention to the shop's address. Some towns have several branches of the same chain. Sometimes there are even two branches of the same chain in one street. If you visit the wrong shop, we will not be able to use your report and we cannot pay you for that visit.
- ✓ Only a report covering the right shop, using the right questionnaire and the script supplied by our client, will be recompensed.

## ✓ How should I prepare for unexpected situations?

**I am asked if I am a mystery shopper. What should I do?**

Firstly, it is highly unlikely that you will be asked this question if you adhere to the instructions relating to the survey. However, if you are asked whether you are a mystery shopper, behave normally and say that you do not understand what the shop assistant is talking about. You could also ask what a mystery shopper is. Continue the conversation you were having with the shop assistant prior to the question. Behave in a normal manner and say that you don't know what that person is talking about. Do not pursue the subject of mystery shopper.

Always behave as a normal customer would and never take notes in the shop if there is anyone close to you. You should never say that you are a mystery shopper or that you are on a visit on behalf of Multi-Value. Should you contravene this rule, Multi-Value will be forced to terminate working with you.

**The shop is closed or the shop assistant, whom I have been asked to observe, is absent.**

If the shop is closed or the shop assistant, whom I have been asked to observe, is absent, you should immediately contact the Customer Support Manager at Multi-Value. He or she will then inform you how to proceed. It is therefore always useful to have Multi-Value's telephone number with you so that you can discuss (out of view of the shop assistant) the matter. We will then look together for a solution.

## ✓ **What should I do after I have carried out the visit?**

After you have carried out the visit, you must complete the questionnaire on-line within 24 hours. In this manner, all the information is fresh in your memory and you can supply an excellent report. If you are unable to comply with this rule, please contact the Customer Support Manager to look for a suitable solution.

**If a report is not submitted on-line within the 24 hours, the Customer Support Manager may choose to offer the assignment to someone else. If this is the case, you will not receive payment for your visit.**

Every report is reviewed by a so-called quality checker. You should check your mail-box and your personal page regularly to see if the quality checker has requested any amendments and in order that you meet the 24 hours requirement.

You should make the requested amendments to the report and not send them to us by e-mail. If you have any questions, you can always contact us and we will be pleased to assist you.

## ✓ **Completing the questionnaire**

You will find the questionnaire and the briefing on your personal page which you can reach via [www.multi-value.com](http://www.multi-value.com). You can also complete the questionnaire there and see if your report has been accepted by the quality checker.

Log in with your own data and click on the link "complete questionnaire".

The "clipboard" (see icons at the bottom of this page) contains the briefing and, by clicking on the small printer, you will see the print version of the questionnaire. The questionnaire, which you should complete on-line, is available from the first day of the visiting period and is located after the address of the shop to be visited.

You can complete the questionnaire in one go but you can also stop and save it at any given moment. It will then be saved and you may continue at a later time.

What do the **icons** on your personal page mean?



This icon indicates there is a questionnaire available for you to complete. This questionnaire is available from the first day on which the visit may take place.



This is the briefing containing important information. Read it through carefully before you go shopping.



This is the print version of the questionnaire. This version is useful to take with you. It is intended to act as an aid for you.



You can open the questionnaire here.



After you have completed the report, you may see the following icons. They indicate the following:



This icon indicates that your report is with the quality checker and waiting to be reviewed.



This icon, which the quality checker has marked with a comment or question, indicates that the questionnaire is not fully completed and that extra information is required before our client accepts it. The quality checker clearly describes the required information next to this icon.



This icon indicates the amended report is with the quality checker for the second time for review.



This icon indicates that the report has been approved by the quality checker for client acceptance. We can then proceed with payment to your account.



This questionnaire should be more detailed or improved.

## ✓ **How do I write a good report?**

Once you have carried out the assignment, you should complete the report on your personal page within 24 hours.

Your efforts will only be rewarded if you have submitted a neat and complete report and, at the same time, kept to the briefing specifications. It would hardly be practical if you were to go to great lengths to carry out an assignment correctly but could not be recompensed due to an untidy and incomplete report or to not adhering to the briefing instructions.

✓ **Comments should be clear and the multiple choice answers should not be contradictory;**

E.g. Was the shop tidy and clean:  
 Answer: Yes

Comments: Advertisement material was spread across the counter.

The answer under 'comments' contradicts the answer to the multiple choice question.

✓ **Unless specifically requested, your comments should not include your own opinion, assumption, comparison or conclusion;**

E.g. Did the shop assistant work efficiently?

Comments: No, he was inefficient. It seemed as if he could use some training. The sales techniques he used did not meet the expectations I had in another shop of this type.

**(personal opinion)**

Comments: The shop assistant was friendly and polite but worked inefficiently.

**(these characteristics have nothing to do with each other and this is, therefore, not an explanation)**

Comments: Two weeks ago I visited another shop and the service there was much better. The shop assistant there was much more efficient.

**(comparison to another experience is not allowed)**

Comments: the shop assistant was inefficient. It was nearly lunchtime so he probably didn't feel like working.

**(this is an assumption and not allowed)**

Beware of words such as "apparently". This type of word usually precedes an assumption.

Incorrect: The shop assistant was apparently not interested.

Correct: The shop assistant yawned and kept checking his watch.



✓ **Comments should be objective, complete and without too many punctuation marks;**

E.g. Incorrect: This was the worst I have ever experienced, the shop assistant was very rude, ignored me and didn't thank me once!!!!!!!

Correct: The shop assistant seemed impolite and did not greet me. Furthermore he did not thank me. (In this instance the word 'impolite' should be illustrated by an example showing why you experienced an action as being impolite).

It is very important to limit your report to objective observations. You should not add any emotional value to the text by using capital letters, punctuation marks, exclamation marks, smiley's, etc.

E.g. Did the shop assistant have a neat appearance?

Answer: NO

Comments: the shop assistant wore a bright yellow suit. I thought this was DREADFUL. Her clothes were neat but the color did not suit her at all. I felt like putting sunglasses on. Less bright colors would have suited her better. My friend said that this shop assistant always wore strange clothes. Perhaps she's color-blind????

The comments do not add any value to the text:

- ✓ The remarks do not answer the question, we did not want to know about her taste in clothes only if they were neat or not;
- ✓ The answer contains a personal opinion (I thought this was DREADFUL);
- ✓ The answer contains sarcasm (I felt like putting sunglasses on);
- ✓ You base your opinion on hearsay (my friend said that this shop assistant always wore strange clothes);
- ✓ You supply uninvited advice (less bright colors would have suited her better);
- ✓ You make an assumption (perhaps she's color-blind?);
- ✓ Your answer contains too many capital letters and punctuation marks (DREADFUL and ????).

✓ **Subjective questions.**

It is sometimes difficult to give an objective answer if you are asked whether or not someone's appearance was neat or if someone was enthusiastic or polite, etc. After all you are being asked to give an opinion.

Always make sure your opinion is constructive. If you describe someone's appearance as untidy, you should explain how you arrived at this opinion.

✓ **Informative.**

It is important that a report gives a detailed and accurate picture of the visit. Both the good and less good points should be mentioned in a report. After all, the points mentioned in the report will be used by the client to improve their customer service.

The answers listed in the explanatory questions are examples of added value to the report. Try to avoid giving a general commentary or repeating the question or answers you gave in the confidential questions.

The less positive (multiple choice) questions and answers which you fill in on the NA (not applicable) , should always be accompanied by an explanation in the open questions.

Reports should be written in a **motivated and constructive** manner.



Take care to avoid insulting or negative remarks. The glass is always half full. We prefer to speak of "less clean" rather than "dirty", and of "less tidy" rather than "untidy".

A sentence always begins with a capital letter and ends with a full-stop. A sentence has a subject and a phrase. We are not looking for 'turbo' language and/or telegram style, but well written sentences in good Dutch. Always answer the questions in the present tense. If you have to write about an article, describe what the article looked like. This makes for better reading. For instance, "the black shoe with a small heel" instead of "the article", or, "the red bra with a floral pattern" instead of "the bra".

**Tip:** Use the Google spelling check or type your answer first in Word and copy it with ctrl+c and ctrl+v to the questionnaire.

Always put the time you entered the shop in the **time of visit**. The time at which the visit finishes is printed on the cash receipt.

If you spend a few more minutes on completing the report, you will probably not have it returned by the quality checker with questions and/or remarks. This saves time in the long run.

You should never mention matters you have discussed with Multi-Value personnel or agreements you have made with them or scripts from the briefing. After all, the report is forwarded to our client after approval.

If you have any questions regarding completing the questionnaire, do not hesitate to contact us. We are always pleased to assist you.

#### ✓ **The purchase**

If our client requests information regarding the cash-desk, you will be required to make a purchase. This will always be mentioned in the briefing. Payment for the purchase is included in the total shopping payment. You will always be advised of the minimum amount you should spend. If the minimum amount to be spent is not respected, the report will be rejected and the visit will not be recompensed.

If you are requested to make a purchase you should always fill in all the information on the cash receipt and keep it for three months. Multi-Value may ask you for this information. You are not allowed to return the article to the shop (unless otherwise stated in the briefing).



## ✓ **Why will a visit sometimes not be recompensed?**

There are various reasons why a visit is not recompensed, namely:

- ✓ During a visit you told a shop assistant that you are a mystery guest;
- ✓ You did not adhere to the script;
- ✓ You did not make the visit during the stipulated visiting period;
- ✓ Multi-Value was unable to reach you with questions concerning your assignment for two days;
- ✓ Your report was not on-line during the designated 24 hour period;
- ✓ You damaged Multi-Value's credibility due to your incorrect behavior.

## ✓ **Multi-Value's financial compensation**

After your report has been approved by one of our quality checkers, for acceptance by our client, the report is removed from the list of questionnaires.

You may then find this visit under the link: "payments".

Payments take place between three and four weeks following the date of approval by the quality checker.

You receive the compensation, which is known to you beforehand, for completing an acceptable report. Multi-Value pays this amount directly into your account and no intermediary agents are used.

***There is no question of an employer-employee relationship.***

You should manage your own tax declarations. Multi-Value informs the fiscal authorities once a year of the amounts paid out and to whom.

## Summary and date of payments.

After the report has been approved by the quality checker, we prepare the payment confirmations once a week on the Monday. You can find these under "payments".

You will see four columns:

- ✓ **"details"** : Here you will find a detailed summary of all your shops;
- ✓ **"reference number"** : This number is unique and will be mentioned on your bank statement;
- ✓ **"amount"**: This is the (total) amount of compensation;
- ✓ **"week number"** : This is the week in which your payment will be made.



## Invoice

If, in your personal details, you have indicated that you will invoice us, we shall await your invoice by post. Invoice is only possible if you have a VAT number and if you are registered with the Chamber of Commerce. We will send you invoice confirmations. You can find these under "Payments".

You will see four columns:

- ✓ **"details"** : Here you will see a detailed summary of all the visited you have made;
- ✓ **"reference number"** : this is the unique number you must add to your invoice as no payment can be made without this number;
- ✓ **"amount"**: this is the amount for which you can invoice and corresponds to the reference number;
- ✓ **"your invoice number"**: this is your internal number which should be added to your invoice (to be completed by Multi-Value upon receipt of your invoice).

## Contact

If you have any questions regarding a shop you have selected, please feel free to `phone or mail us. We are always willing to assist you!

### **Contact UK / Norway / Finland / Sweden / Denmark:**

Multi-Value The Netherlands  
Eindhovenseweg 84  
NL-5554 AD Valkenswaard  
T: +31 (0)40 20 13 328 (option 1, option 2)  
F: +31 (0)40 20 41 838



## ✓ Code of Conduct

A number of conditions are covered by the Code of Conduct and these are explained here below. We always ask you to agree to these conditions after having completed your report. Included are:

- ✓ Conditions concerning the type of mutual cooperation.
- ✓ Conditions concerning the payments.
- ✓ Conditions concerning the truthful contents of the visit reports.
- ✓ Conditions regarding confidentiality and ethnically responsible mystery shopping.

### Ad 1.

There is no employer-employee relationship. You act as an independent agent.

### Ad 2.

Multi-Value recompenses approved visit reports. The payment is agreed prior to the visit. The payment is an All-in amount and no extras may be added. You should manage your own tax declarations. Multi-Value informs the fiscal authorities once a year of the amounts paid out and to whom.

The fiscal authorities regard the amounts received in any one year (date on which the amount is received in your account) as the income for that calendar year.

### Ad3.

The agreements made concerning the truth of the visit reports are of special importance. Reports which are not based on the truth or reports which have not taken place could cause considerable damage to our company. By accepting the Code of Conduct you indicate that you are aware of the importance of truthful reports and that visits must actually be carried out and should not be simulated.

- ✓ Article 1: Simulated visits or visits which have not taken place and of which Multi-Value are not aware of the reason for same, will affect Multi-Value's credibility with its clients. Any financial consequences, either direct or indirect, will be recovered from the responsible party.
- ✓ Article 2: All reports which are made following your visit, should be a reflection of the visit as experienced by yourself. The visits should be reported with the utmost care.
- ✓ Article 3: Reports which deliberately don't reflect the visit or which simulate a visit which has not taken place, will be regarded as fraud and forgery by Multi-Value and will be treated as such. A statement can be made about this. Any financial consequences, either direct or indirect, will be recovered from the responsible party.
- ✓ Article 4: Referring to here named condition 3, article 3, Multi-Value will demand direct fixed fine of 750 Euro (said seven hundred and fifty Euro), with the possibility to demand a higher indemnity if the damage demonstrated, caused by the fraud to Multi-Value, is higher than this fixed amount. In case this fixed fine is insufficient, Multi-Value maintains the right to start a legal procedure during which additional costs will also be recouped.



#### Ad4.

- ✓ Article 1: During or after having finished the assignments, it is not allowed to divulge any information obtained during these assignments or pertaining to observation activities or information relating to same.
- ✓ Article 2: The mystery shopper is not acquainted with client's employees and is not employed by client.
- ✓ Article 3: The mystery shopper is not employed by client's competition.

#### Ad5.

- ✓ I agree to perform all shops to the best of my ability
- ✓ I agree to perform all shops with honesty and integrity;
- ✓ I agree to submit all reports on or before the deadline;
- ✓ I agree to honor all confidentiality agreements;
- ✓ I agree to give immediate notice to Multi-Value if I cannot perform a shop for any reason;
- ✓ I agree to return follow up calls or e-mails in a timely manner;
- ✓ I agree to keep paperwork and notes for at least 60 days in case questions arise by the client;
- ✓ I will not perform a shop unless I have thoroughly read each question on the survey and the guidelines provided by the shopping provider;
- ✓ I will not falsify or misrepresent reports;
- ✓ I will not ask or encourage anyone to break confidentiality agreements with other firms for whom they conduct mystery shopping assignments;
- ✓ I will not use any media to publish complaints against vendors, clients, shoppers or mystery shopper providers;
- ✓ I will not share information with others on which company shops which clients;
- ✓ I will not share information with others on shopping fees and reimbursements for specific clients;
- ✓ I will not share the results of a shop with others in order to protect the clients confidentiality;
- ✓ I will not perform any shops under the influence of illegal drugs, or prescription drugs that might impair my abilities;
- ✓ I agree not to become inebriated or drink beyond the legal limits set forth in my state or perform any other activity that may cause harm to myself or others while mystery shopping;
- ✓ I will not contact a client directly without approval of the shopping company;
- ✓ I will not disrupt the normal business flow of an operation in the process of performing a shop (do not cause a scene);
- ✓ I will not announce myself as a mystery shopper to the business being shopped unless given specific instructions by the shopping company;
- ✓ I will not accept a mystery shopping assignment for a business that I, my family or friends work(ed) for;
- ✓ I will not list any shopping company I work for as an "employee" on any forms (especially unemployment forms) if I am hired strictly as an independent contractor for that company.