



Involvement

Keep It Short and Simple (KISS)

Involving clients and customers in communication

Background

KISS stands for Keep it Short and Simple. KISS groups are customer and client communication groups that run regularly, in a different location across the country.

Colleagues from across Home Group send documents to KISS groups to be assessed using our KISS standards:

- short and simple
- customer and client friendly
- easy to understand
- involve customers and clients in writing documents.

The author amends the document based on feedback from clients and customers, ensuring that the information we provide is clear, jargon free and easy to understand.

In addition to KISS workshops, we run a virtual KISS group of clients and customers who review and improve documents online. This model increases involvement by making it accessible to those who may struggle to travel and attend workshops.

What happened?

In the last 12 months we:

- delivered eight KISS workshops
- involved 58 customers and clients
- reviewed and improved 66 documents (including The Mag and Homelife magazines, a safeguarding document for clients with learning disabilities, involvement satisfaction report and gas servicing information)
- developed our virtual KISS group of clients and customers who review documents online using the standard KISS format
- involved 26 clients and customers in our virtual KISS group who reviewed and improved 32 documents.

What changed?

Customers and clients have a direct impact on the content, format and style of our documents. The business recognises KISS and the value of involving clients and customers in reviewing and improving our documents. Clients and customers at KISS and Virtual KISS Groups reviewed 22 additional documents in 2013 - an increase of 50% in the last 12 months.

“ I help by making communication between Home Group and customers and clients easier; by making documents more readable and understandable.

Customer

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Virtual KISS

We developed our virtual KISS group to enable clients and customers to get involved from the comfort of their homes. Virtual KISS group members review documents by email using the same standard KISS format and approach. Using this model of involvement we can reach clients and customers from groups previously identified as under-represented in involvement activities, including:

- Older people
- Young people
- Offenders and ex-offenders
- Women.

“ As an elderly pensioner, virtual KISS gives me, with the minimum effort, the opportunity to work with Home Group and help in a small way.

Client

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Virtual KISS group members review documents and information where a short timescale is required; changing, shaping and influencing our communication in a time and cost efficient way.



Impact

On Home Group:

KISS groups continue to raise awareness of the need for clearer communication and plain English across Home Group.

Involving clients and customers in communication and producing accessible information in a range of formats is one of our national equality and diversity priorities and supports the delivery of our Social Housing Equality Framework (SHEF) action plan. Providing clients and customers with clear information and opportunities to influence also supports the delivery of our promise.

“ Our KISS group not only helps us be more effective in communicating with our customers and clients, they have been a huge part of helping our organisational culture focus on how we put customers and clients at the heart of what we do as a business.

Mark Henderson, Chief Executive ”

On clients and customers:

Documents reviewed by the groups are produced in a style, format and language that clients and customers want. As a result, they are more likely to read and understand the documents, and less likely to feel frustrated and excluded.

Customers and clients receive training and gain or develop confidence and skills, enabling them to speak up, give constructive feedback and challenge how they receive information.

85% of client and customer KISS and virtual KISS group members developed confidence to get more involved at Home Group, while 75% developed or gained new skills through their involvement.

“ It gives me insight into the workings of different departments and how they hope to influence and help tenants in general. Being involved makes me feel responsible and important.

Client ”

Cost

Total cost is £1571.92

The average cost per meeting is £196.49, representing a cost saving of £121.51 per KISS Group (this is based on cost comparison with figures from 2012).

Cost includes:

- Venue hire
- Catering and refreshments
- Client, customer and colleague travel and out of pocket expenses and workshop resources.

Is it value for money?

Our independent group of customers and clients said that KISS represents:

- Low cost
- High impact
- **High value for money.**