Creating a Customer Service Culture

A Human Resources Approach
Introductions

• About the presentation
• About me
Customer Service Basics

• What is customer service?
  – Definition

"Ok, how about this motto: 'If you are unhappy for any reason, we will feel really bad'."
Customer Service Basics

Providing genuine service that ANTICIPATES customer’s needs
Customer Service Basics

• What is customer service?
  – Definition of a customer
Customer Service Basics

Anyone that impacts the business operations at your location
Customer Service Basics

• What is customer service?
  – The Customer Service Principle

You do not work for your company. You work for your customers.
Customer Service Basics

- What is customer service?
  - **Who** is responsible for Customer Service at your organization?

EVERYONE
Make sure your organizational chart does NOT look like this!
Customer Service Org Chart
Customer Service Basics

• Four elements of Customer Satisfaction
  – A perfect ‘product’
  – Delivered by caring, friendly people
  – In a timely fashion
  – With the support of an effective problem resolution process
Let’s Talk about Expenses

• Creating the culture is not a cost – it is an investment

• Advertising / promotions
• Cost to recruit a new customer
• Cost to train a new employee
Customer Service Basics

• The Culture Defined
  – The elements of a successful culture
    • Must have **buy-in** from everyone
    • You must know your **current situation**
    • You need **support** from the “top”
Customer Service Basics
Customer Service Basics
The Customer Experience

• Assessing your current experience
  – Experience and **Loyalty**
  – **Meeting** needs?
  – **Solving** problems?
  – **Anticipating** wants?
  – Knowing the ‘**whys**’ and expected outcomes

• **Tools**
  • Mystery shopping, surveys, competitor visits
The Customer Experience

• Planning for Improvements

  – Find **gaps** between actual experiences and expected outcomes (perception vs reality)

  • What went **wrong**?
  
  • What went **right**?
  
  • Identify **obstacles** to change

  • **Brainstorm** on changes
The Customer Experience

You must involve those who actually interact with the customers
The Customer Experience

- Implementing the Plan
  - Make the changes
    - **Train** first
    - Get **buy-in**
    - **Show** expectations
    - Get **input**
    - Management must **model** the behavior
The Customer Experience

• Reviewing the Situation
  – 360 degree review
  – Develop feedback tools
  – Back to plan for improvements
Get the Right People on Board

• **Recruit better**
  - Select **talent** not skills
  - **Resist** temptation
  - Develop **Selection Discipline**

Positive Passengers Wanted!
Top 5 Traits for Service Positions

1. **Genuine** personal warmth
2. **Empathic** skill
3. **Optimistic**, upbeat attitude
4. **Team** orientation
5. **Conscientiousness**
Dear Sainsburys,

Why is tiger bread called tiger bread? It should be called giraffe bread.

Love, from Lily Robinson age 3½
Response Received

Definitely written by a leader with a service culture.

What stands out about this letter to you?

How can you create a ‘Lily Moment’ at work?
Get the Right People on Board

• **Train better**
  
  – **Powerful** orientation process
  
  – Build ‘brand ambassadors’

Know what the first day of work is like for your employees

The STORY OF JIM

You never get another DAY ONE!
Get the Right People on Board

• **Replace Better**
  - Cannot get *buy-in*? Gift them!
  - **Daily** routine
  - **Non**-performers
Right People on the Bus

• Get the right people on board
  – Find the right talent
  – Constantly search
Right People on the Bus

• Get the wrong people off the buss
  – **Prevent** you from moving forward
  – **Ditch** or neutralize
Right People on the Bus

• Get the right people in the right seats
  – Use **talent matching**
  – Seek new **roles**, then **empower**
Get the Right People on Board

• Leadership by Example
  – Leaders need to set the tone
  – Must be part of the orientation process
  – “Walk the walk”
Great Service Leaders

• Five Characteristics
  – Vision
  – Alignment
  – Standard Setting
  – Support
  – Motivation
Get the Right People on Board

• **Deal with Cynics**
  
  – I will kill all the cynics with my great optimism...
The Best Moral Leaders

- **Involve** people in the design of their work
- Enhance **pride** in their work
- Enhance **purpose**, not just function
- Support ‘**communities**’
- Support **involvement**
Creating the Culture

- Saying the Right Things
- Function vs Purpose
- Doing the Right Things
Saying the Right Things

- **Phone Etiquette**
  - Need to set standards
    - **Number** of rings
    - Standardized *greetings*
    - **Personal** conduct
    - Usage of a **name**
    - **Promises** and deliveries
Saying the Right Things

• **Face-to-Face Etiquette**
  - Establish **language lexicons**
    - Words and phrases you do say
    - And those you DON’T
  - **10-Foot-Rule**
  - Conflicts with **Ringing Phones**
  - **Body Language**
Saying the Right Thing

- **Signage**
  - **Tour** your facility
  - Get **creative**
  - **Engineer** language
  - No **NEGATIVES**
Saying the Right Thing
Saying the Right Thing

• **Policies**
  - Set by humans, can be changed by humans

• **NEVER EVER EVER EVER** say ‘because it is policy’

• Make sure your **policies are fair**, reasonable and implemented consistently
Let Me Tell You What I CAN Do

• When you can’t fulfill the customer’s request
  – Explain the reason
  – Show empathy
  – Let the customer know what you CAN do (offer an alternative solution)
Let Me Tell You What I CAN Do

• **1st COLOR**
  – You can’t give the customer information on his ex-wife’s account balance because it would be illegal

• **2nd COLOR**
  – You can’t wire flowers to the customer’s sister in Boston without first receiving payment

• **3rd COLOR**
  – You can’t sell weight loss products to the customer because she must first be evaluated by a dietician
Function vs Purpose

• **Function**
  - *What do you do* at work each and every day?

• **Purpose**
  - *Why do you do* what you do each day?
Doing the Right Things

• Job Descriptions
  – What are they?
  – In a customer service culture, they need to be different
  – Other duties as required? NOPE
  – Follow Southwest Airlines lead... they say

Whatever YOU need to do to enhance the overall operation
Doing the Right Things

• **Empowerment**
  - Means keeping *promises*
  - Must have *empowered* front line employees
  - **Trust them** to make the right call
  - **Train them** to handle situations
A Customer Service Story
Recap

- Customer service principle
- Organizational chart
- Customer service culture
- Assess your current experience
- Load the bus
- Saying the Right Things
- Function vs Purpose
- Doing the Right Things