

The Royal Treatment

Session: TU303

Practical Suggestions for Achieving
Customer Service Improvement in
Your Organization

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About our Culture

Employee Survey Results 2006

100% Are committed to seeing the organization succeed

98% Are committed to delivering the results outlined in the annual performance plan

98% Agree that ConnectiCare provides very high quality service to its members

97% Know what needs to be done in their job to contribute to ConnectiCare being recognized as "Best in Class"

97% Believe that it is their responsibility to maintain a friendly, member focused culture

96% Understand the link between what they do and ConnectiCare's goals and objectives

NOTES

Important Stats! 2006

Total # of ConnectiCare Employees = 503
Total # of Employees in Operations = 205
Total # of Call Center Employees = 70 FTE

Member Services:

- **Service Level = 88.25%**
- **Quality Audit Average = 84.97%**
- **Staffing = 30 FTE**

Provider Services

- **Service Level = 88.08%**
- **Quality Audit Average = 84.30%**
- **Staffing = 21.5 FTE**

Annual Call Center Turn-over Rate = 10.50%
Annual Turn-over Rate for Operations = 7.10%
Annual Turn-over Rate for all of ConnectiCare = 8.50%

The Royal Treatment

NOTES

Background Information

“The Royal Treatment” was a year long customer service initiative seeking to improve performance of Call Center Representatives.

This program continued the philosophy that our organization differentiates itself by providing exceptional service, unsurpassed customer satisfaction, and continuous performance improvement.

The Training Specialists, along with the Call Center Management Team, created this program to focus on specific aspects of the service interaction as measured by our Quality Assurance Service Observation Form.

The program was segmented into several 6-8 week activities or challenges, each with defined tasks.

Taken together, Call Center Representatives who mastered each of the activities/challenges would deliver “The Royal Treatment” to his/her customers.

What was most unique about the program was the promotion of self-assessment and self-analysis by each representative relative to each call. The major premise of the program was that each representative identified calls that he/she believed showed mastery of a particular aspect of the service interaction; positive attitude, handling of difficult or upset callers, and going the extra mile for the customer.

How did we do it?

Preparation/Prerequisite

- Business-Training alignment
- Member-focused culture
- Experienced instructional design team with integrated skill set
- Screening process for customer service positions (Talent + [®])

Foundation

- New Hire Training Program weaves customer service skills and expectations throughout the program
- Customer service training is customized to job function
- Jointly developed, accepted and piloted Quality Assurance Service Observation Form (audit form)
- Annual planning process

Innovation

- Flip the auditor/representative role
 - Encourages self-assessment and analysis
 - Put representatives in the driver's seat
 - Identify call positives
- View the program holistically
 - Pay attention to supporting activities
 - Continually ask the question- "How can we take customer service to the next level"?
 - Provide weekly reinforcement of knowledge and skills
- Encourage creativity
 - Promote bold thinking - let talented people run with their ideas
 - De-emphasize hierarchy - anyone can have a good idea

NOTE

Implementation

The Devil's in the Details!

- Present as a package
 - Visual displays
 - Reinforcement and peer recognition at weekly staff meetings
 - Low \$ rewards tied to theme
- Training Specialists wear many hats

Evaluation

- Ongoing mid-course corrections
- Training Specialists meet monthly with managers/supervisors to assess program and identify issues
- Program post-mortem
- Weekly tracking of audit results

What are we doing now?

Three years after implementing “The Royal Treatment”:

- Representatives are being rewarded and recognized for exceeding goals based on the whole call interaction
 - additional break time
 - off-site luncheon
- Training Specialists have “handed off” the program to Call Center Supervisors
- Goal has been raised again in '07
- Continuing to look for ways to “raise the bar”

NOTE

Questions to Develop Your Program

Preparation / Prerequisites

Is your organization committed to superior customer service?

- ✓ Is it part of your value proposition?
- ✓ Is your bonus structure tied to customer satisfaction?
- ✓ Do you walk the talk with internal customers?
- ✓ Are you talking about service at staff meetings?
- ✓ Do you model the behaviors that you are looking for?
- ✓ Are you identifying ways in which your organization can promote a customer-focused culture?
- ✓ How thorough is your search for customer service talent?
- ✓ Are your Training Specialists knowledgeable about the business area to which they are aligned? Don't rely solely on SMEs!
- ✓ Do your Training Specialists know their audience?
- ✓ Do your Training Specialists build partnerships with managers, supervisors, and representatives?
- ✓ Do your Training Specialists have strong consulting skills?

Foundation

Is there a customer service foundation from which you can build?

- ✓ Is customer service a part of your New Hire Program?
- ✓ Is customer service a part of your Corporate Orientation?
- ✓ Is customer service woven through product training, technical training, etc...?
- ✓ Do you have ongoing customer service training reinforcement?
- ✓ Does your auditing program have a coaching component?
- ✓ Do representatives feel comfortable asking for help?
- ✓ Do you have "buy in" from impacted areas?
- ✓ Does Senior Management support your goals and activities?

Innovation

How can you take customer service to the next level?

- ✓ How are you going to allow the representatives to own their success?
- ✓ How can your representatives assess themselves?
- ✓ Are Training Specialists measured on their ability to surface new ideas, improve processes and bring forth the best quality?
- ✓ How are you going to encourage bold thinking?
- ✓ What analogies can you create? How are you going to encourage personnel to make connections among "unrelated" things?
- ✓ Can you reinvent your current world so that it is new and bold and has potential for better results?

Questions to Develop Your Program

Implementation

What are the details of the program? **Package It!**

- ✓ How long will the program last?
- ✓ Will there be multiple stages to the program?
- ✓ How are you going to monitor the program?
- ✓ How are you going to measure the success of the program?
- ✓ Did you prepare the materials needed to implement the program? (i.e. job aids, handouts, posters) **BE CREATIVE! Turn paper into objects!**
- ✓ Did you prepare visual displays? (Create the “theme” in and around participant work stations.)
- ✓ Did you schedule a kick-off meeting? (i.e. Create a WIIFM, define rules, set expectations and requirements, announce rewards and recognition programs.)
- ✓ Are you using staff meetings to reinforce your program and activities?
- ✓ Are you using all of your communication channels to promote and report your program?
- ✓ Are you rewarding and recognizing both individual and team performance?
- ✓ Can you treat everyone equally?
- ✓ Are you sure that you did not create a MONSTER?
- ✓ Are you committed? Do not let your representatives down!

Evaluation

Are you willing to put your program under the microscope?

- ✓ Will you meet regularly with key stakeholders to monitor and review the programs progress?
- ✓ Will you surface issues and make modifications as needed?
- ✓ Are you looking at metrics?
- ✓ Will you do a full review (post-mortem) at the end of the initiative (gather feedback from everyone involved - managers, supervisors, representatives, auditors, and training)?
- ✓ Have you created a program that you can build on?
- ✓ If successful, are you capitalizing on the internal and external communication opportunities? For example, have you looped back to your Sales Team so that they can use your achievements as selling points?

Notes / Questions