Team Activity

Identifying Obstacles and Solving Problems
Activity Overview

- To identify things which may be acting as obstacles to us in delivering exceptional service. (Obstacles might be policies or procedures, informal or formal rules or processes or tangibles like insufficient, broken or out-of-date equipment.)

- All previous activities

PREREQUISITES

- Approximately 45 minutes

DURATION

- Flipchart and markers

MATERIALS

- Prepare flipchart #1.

PREPARATION

- See Note below

FOLLOW-UP

- Steps 1 and 2 05 min.
- Step 3 15 min.
- Steps 4 and 5 05 min.
- Steps 6 and 7 15 min.

Note

As a result of this activity you will have a list of potential issues or problems. Some obstacles may have a quick solution which your team can implement. For other more complex obstacles you may want to follow the suggestions/procedures below to generate solutions. Your goal is to remove or minimize the negative impact of problems on internal or external service quality in future meetings.

Work through your list of issues or problems, beginning with those that have the highest priority.
Note

Suggestions/Procedures—to follow in upcoming meetings:

1. Form a sub-team of 2 or 3 people to work on an issue. They can work on the issue, explore possible solutions and present their findings back to your team. The team can then review and agree with recommendations or explore it further to come up with a solution.

2. Set up a meeting to have the entire team work on the problem. If this is your choice, you may wish to follow the steps below in solving the problem as a team.

   1. Identify the problem or obstacle to good internal or external customer service.
   2. Determine the causes of the problem.
   3. Brainstorm a number of possible solutions.
   4. Decide on the best solution and how you will implement it.
   5. Determine how to monitor the solution to make sure it is working.

3. Once the solution has been implemented, complete a copy of the Customer Focus Team Report (below) and send it to Ken Gutierrez (Customer Focus Steering Committee member), and a copy to your manager and to Dr. Tom Watson. You will also need to complete the Cost/Benefits Analysis Form if resources are required.

4. Be sure to monitor the solution to make sure it continues to work; if not, work on modifying the solution or meet again to come up with another solution.

5. Once a problem is solved, implemented and reported, continue to work on other problems on your list.
**Today's Goal**

To proceed on our journey to greater customer focus, today we will:

Identify things which are acting as obstacles to our delivery of exceptional service.

Solve specific problems or issues the Team has identified (in upcoming meetings)
Procedure for Conducting this Activity

Step 1  Welcome the attendees. Display flipchart #1 and introduce the activity.

Step 2  Tell the team what time the meeting will end.

Step 3  Conduct a brainstorming exercise to have the team identify potential obstacles to service quality. Capture these on a flipchart. (Obstacles might be policies or procedures, informal or formal rules or processes or tangibles like insufficient, broken or out-of-date equipment.)

Step 4  Eliminate any items from the list which cannot be changed due to regulatory / compliance requirements (check these out with your manager.)

Step 5  Build a short list of the remaining obstacles.

Step 6  Ask the group to identify which obstacles have an obvious and quick solution which is realistic and which can easily be implemented. Discuss how the changes can be made.

Step 7  For the remaining items on the list, explain that you will be scheduling problem-solving meetings to address these issues.

Step 8  End the meeting by thanking team members for their participation and making appropriate closing remarks.
# Customer Focus Team Report

The purpose of this report is to provide information about an internal or external customer service problem or issue that was solved or needs to be solved in your division or section. A copy should be sent to Ken Gutierrez (Customer Focus Steering Committee member) your manager, and Dr. Tom Watson. Champions should also keep a copy of this report.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Champion Name</th>
<th>Division or Section</th>
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Contact Number</th>
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**What is the purpose of this recommendation?**
- Report results of a problem or issue solved.
- Request for resources to solve a problem or issue.
- *Other (please specify)*

**What was or is the problem?**

**What caused it?**

**What is the solution the team has implemented or recommended?**

**What results have you achieved or expect from the solution, and over what time frame? (how long will it take to solve the problem)**

Check the following if resources are required to solve the problem and complete the attached form.
- Cost/Benefit Analysis
- People
- Equipment
- Management Approval
- Other *(explain)*

**Champion Signature:**
### Customer Focus Cost/Benefit Analysis Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estimated Cost to Solve the Problem</th>
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<tr>
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<td>People</td>
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<tr>
<th>Management Actions</th>
<th>Other (describe)</th>
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<tr>
<th>Benefit to GPA</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is there a cost savings involved?</td>
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<td>Will the solution result in greater revenue?</td>
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<td>Will it help GPA reach its mission and goals?</td>
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<td>Will it improve productivity?</td>
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<td>Will it improve efficiency?</td>
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<td>Will it improve morale?</td>
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<td>Other Benefits (describe)</td>
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**TRACKING** (if resources are requested please complete and return to the Champion)

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<tr>
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<td>CF Steering Committee</td>
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