

Customer service transformation

This summary case study explains how one of Europe's leading sports venues was transformed from being the butt of jokes about the notoriously bad customer services standards to becoming revered as a benchmark for customer service excellence.

Background

Continual bad media coverage relating to poor levels of customer service and a survey on customer service standards putting the venue near the bottom the executive management recognised that this issue had to be addressed.

The solution

The initial brief to CERT was to design and conduct some customer service training courses but a preliminary fact-finding visit revealed that this alone would not achieve the desired outcome.

The approach recommended and adopted involved acting on a number of fronts in a coherent way. This included:

- Engaging senior management in a workshop to agree changes to the way people were managed.
- Re-defining the rules and procedures provided for the use of stewards and other staff into three classifications:
 - RED – Must be complied with at all times.
 - AMBER – Discretion given to senior stewards and managers as to when to apply
 - GREEN – For guidance only and for discretionary use by all staff.
- New selection procedures to ensure people with the appropriate behavioural tendencies were appointed by using the Belbin Team role individual and job assessments.
- Providing customer service training.
- Setting up facilitated *Results Focused Team Working* workshops to engage people in identifying and implementing customer service improvement initiatives.

The Outcome

The result of the above approach was that customer service standards were improved dramatically, and the venue became revered rather than ridiculed for standards of customer service.

Specifically, the following outcomes were achieved:

- Customer service survey showed a 52.4% improvement over two years.
- Venue rated as number one by leading international specialist sports journal.
- Widespread acclaim given by TV, radio and press visitors for the standard of service and facilities provided.
- Increase in demand resulted in decision to undertake major venue development programme.
- Selected as venue of 2012 specialist Olympic events.

There was also a measurable drop in staff turnover as a result of people finding it a desirable place to work.

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