

# 15 Steps to a Service Culture

We take a more holistic approach to improving service quality in an organization. Many organizations create customer service “programs” or “initiatives” in order to improve their level of service. However, we surveyed employees for years and found that they perceive that a “program” or “initiative” will go away in about 90 days. In the minds of the employees a program will get replaced by another program or initiative (they have perceived expiration dates). So it is critical to focus on the word “culture” which creates the perception that customer service is woven deep within the fabric of the entire organization. It also embraces the concept that it is just as important to exceed our internal customer’s expectations as our external customer.

Our approach is in alignment with the profit chain which helps our clients achieve long lasting results:

**Great Leaders = High Employee Advocacy = High Customer Advocacy = High Profits**

It is important to begin at the start of the chain and methodically address each of the steps. When done properly, the results are long lasting and create a huge return on your investment. The steps required to create a strong sales and service culture are:

**Step 1: Baseline Mystery Shopping:** It is important to have a current base-line of the customer’s experience, so we recommend a comprehensive sweep of all departments or locations that could be either telephone or in-person assessed. This should be done prior to any training or coaching in order to measure its long term affects.

**Step 2: Employee Surveys:** As noted above in the profit chain, it is important to measure employee advocacy (would your employees tell others that it is a great place to work?), because there is a direct correlation between employee advocacy and customer advocacy (would customers tell other people how great your business is?). This will be done on-line, anonymously and be requested of all employees.

**Step 3: Employee Interviews & Report:** Based on the responses from the employee survey, we will interview a selection of employees throughout the organization in different departments or locations. We will interview employees about the “symptoms” which stand out on the employee survey and try to more clearly identify the “problems.” Reducing employee anxiety, feelings of hypocrisy, or misperceptions is important before training; otherwise it will negatively impact its effectiveness.

**Step 4: Customer Surveys:** As noted above in the profit chain, it is important to measure your current customer advocacy, so we would suggest a post transaction telephone survey for best results. We would call customers who visited within the last couple of weeks and seek their opinions.

**Step 5: Leadership Developmental Assessment:** We will assess each of the people in advance who are scheduled for leadership training, so that they could receive their results highlighting their strengths, weaknesses, best-fit work situations, worst-fit work situations and suggestions for development. This provides great feedback in advance of the training so they can apply greater focus on the training modules that apply to their developmental needs. This assessment is done on-line and the results are immediate. The results can be delivered to anyone you choose, however we suggest they be given to each supervisor’s direct report who can use them for coaching purposes.

**Step 6: Strategic Planning:** Creating a specific plan of action for the coming year to insure success.

- Define Core Values
- Review Mission Statement
- Review Vision Statement
- S.W.O.T. Analysis
- Clarify Your Unique Differentiating Factor
- Establish S.M.A.R.T. Goals
- Determine Who, What and When

**Step 7: Leadership Training – Phase One:** (titled; “*Turning Managers into Leaders*”). Everyone who supervises people should be in this class in order to learn how to lead people in a service culture. It will help motivate people to move from being “managers” to “leaders” and from “trainers” to “coaches”. This four-hour seminar is not about complex personality quadrants and paradigm shifts; it provides simple easy-to-use tools that they can initiate immediately. The result will be reduced office politics, increased employee performance, increased employee retention and an overall happier work environment for the employees. This step is critical to the entire process or the culture, more than likely, will not sustain itself.

**Step 8: Group Leadership Coaching – Phase One:** Specialized leadership coaching should be provided to anyone who went through the “*Turning Managers into Leaders*” seminar as a follow-up. Coaching will help increase employee productivity by as much as 300% (compared to training alone). Coaching provides your leaders with both a personal coach and business consultant to help them through the periods of change required by a leader. Brad would coach each group via a once a month conference call for up to five months (assuming about 8 people in a coaching group). We would set a specific date and time each month for the one-hour calls and discuss their progress and challenges. Each of the calls is recorded and attendees can listen to the recording for up to 30 days (even if they miss the call).

**Step 9: Personal Development Training – Phase One:** (titled; “*Simple Steps to an Extraordinary Career & Life*”). All employees, regardless of their duties should attend this powerful four-hour session. The focus is on removing any self-limiting thoughts or feelings of victimization by reinforcing their personal power. Everyone has an inner saboteur and this seminar will awaken each person to the inner voice that keeps them from greatness. The result of this seminar is employees who are engaged, powerful, accountable and ready to take on the world. It also opens them up emotionally, breaks down barriers and creates the desire for deeper learning.

**Step 10: Monthly Mystery Shopping – Phase Two:** Mystery shopping is also recommended after the Phase One training is complete as a tool to “inspect what you expect”. This is a critical component to motivating employees to break old habits and learn new habits. Mystery shopping all departments or locations monthly will impact behavior modification dramatically because it provides individual accountability. You cannot manage what you cannot measure, so this component is critical to long term success.

**Step 11: Leadership Training – Phase Two:** (titled; “*How to Coach Your Employees, Peers & Supervisor*”). This four-hour session is the second step in the leadership development process and covers many of the tools and techniques used in communication. This will provide all attendees with the technical process of becoming a personal coach. It drives the earlier learning deeper and provides advanced methods to take their leadership skills to the next level and also teaches the skills needed to communicate better with all generations. Phase Two should be done six months after the Phase One training so that new habits (from Phase One) have a chance to develop before learning more.

**Step 12: Group Leadership Coaching – Phase Two:** This is the same as described earlier in Step 8, except the coaching would be focused on “*How to Coach Your Employees, Peers & Supervisor*”. Brad would coach each group via a once a month conference call for five months. We would set a specific date and time each month for the one hour calls and discuss their progress and challenges.

**Step 13: Customer Service Training – Phase Two:** (titled; “*Exceeding Customer Expectations*”). All employees, regardless of their duties should attend this two-hour session. The focus is on customer service with both the internal and external customer and how to exceed their expectations. This session is more about “attitude” than “aptitude” and is very powerful in content, plus very motivational and fun. Everyone will benefit from the content regardless of their position and enjoy the experience.

**Step 14: Training DVDs:** It is important for people new to the organization to be able to step into their role and understand the culture from the very first day. You want everyone to be singing from the same song book and the training DVDs can help you do that. The DVDs come with comprehensive worksheets so moderating the video training is optional (it walks them through it just like a live seminar).

- DVD Set #12: A four DVD set of the seminar “Exceeding Customer Expectations”
- DVD Set #13: A four DVD set of the seminar “How to Coach Your Employees, Peers & Supervisor”
- DVD Set #14: A four DVD set of the seminar “Turning Managers into Leaders”

**Step 15: Pre-Employment Testing (Sales, Service & Leadership):** The tests are taken on-line by the job candidates and will take about one hour to complete. The results are immediately e-mailed to the hiring manager, providing them with about 17 of the candidate’s personality characteristics plus their cognitive skills such as numeric reasoning, verbal reasoning, and abstract reasoning.