



CUSTOMER SERVICE GUIDE TO BEST PRACTISE PROCESSES

IDENTIFYING THE ROOT CAUSE

Why is this important?

So the staff and management have an opportunity to put local errors and processes right to continually improve their own service performance

So the customer can trust that their feedback has been positively used and will be happy to report their findings/perspectives on future service delivery again

In the case of complaint recording and reporting, the objective of root cause corrective action is to reduce customer risk. This is the amount of business that is at risk as a result of less than perfect service in the eyes of the customer. Typically, this is caused by issues within a company's control and therefore is entirely preventable.

Therefore is it important that the root cause of the problems should be identified through reporting to the right areas and steps taken to eliminate errors on a regular basis as part of a business habit. This will help to ensure that you retain customers.

To ensure that root cause actions are correctly identified, the contact must be recorded on receipt and accurately coded into the system database. Relevant reporting both in detail and summary reports are necessary for departments/areas and senior management to understand and seek to find the root of the cause of the negative feedback to make a change. For positive feedback it is also important to identify where, what and who delivered that experience for the customer to maximise future opportunities.

Finding the actual root cause of that feedback is not easy. It could be local error, process, procedure or company decision to 'do business that way'. Or it could be a training need or customer perspective. Often it is necessary to track back or across the organisation and include more than one area of the business to make a difference and change or improve the actual root cause.

Local actions

Analysing the detailed reporting locally, specific actions should be decided to reduce the errors and the number of contacts by 'doing the job right first time'.

It is essential that the information produced is presented to the different areas of the business in a format that is easy to read and understand and applicable to the department or area it is presented to. Each department/area should recommend ideas to change the way they currently operate to reduce the complaints/queries whilst improving process systems.

The key is to identify the breakdowns in the cycle of service that cause the most risk and to focus resources on those areas. The overall objective is to set up a closed loop self-correcting process.

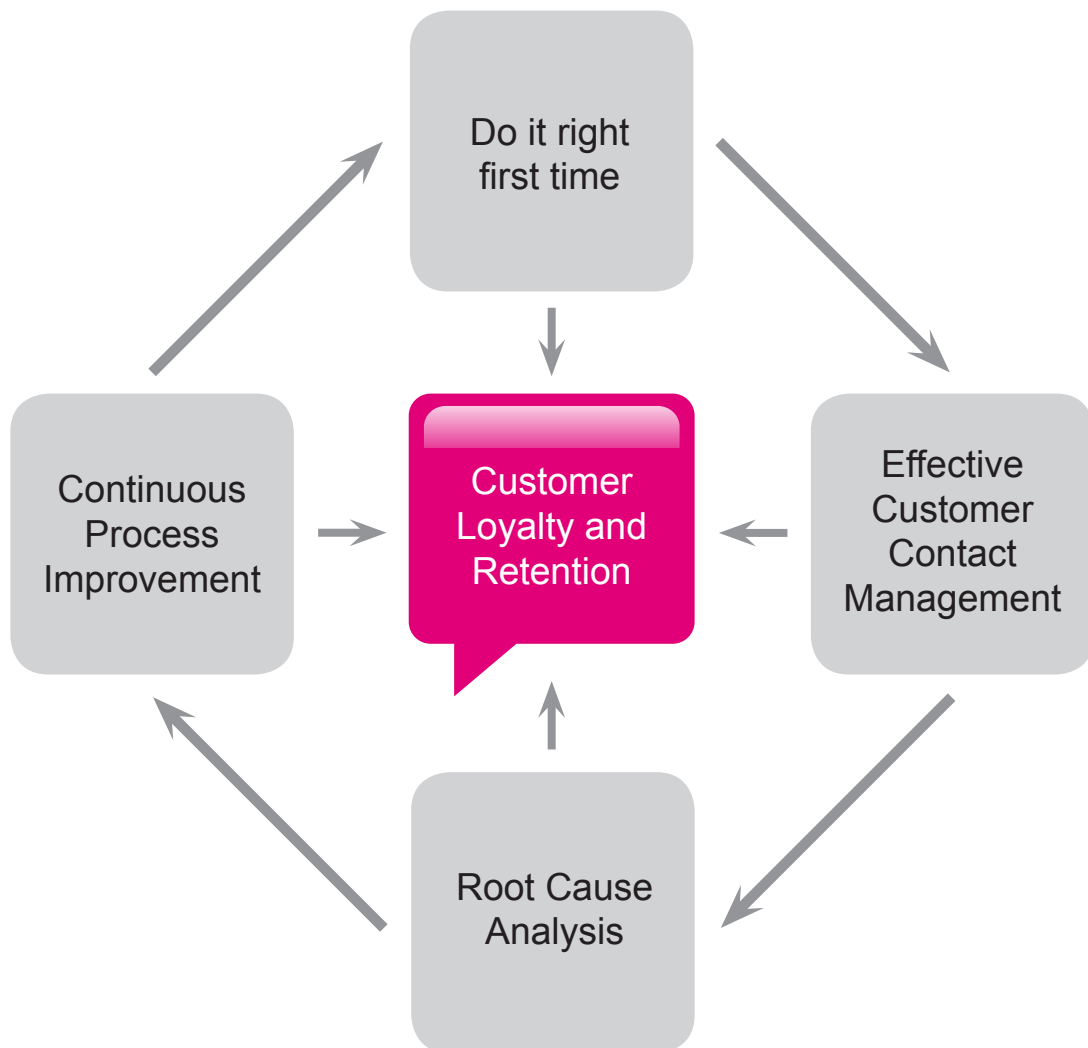
Head Office or Central actions

Summarised reporting showing trends and complaint descriptions will help identify key stations or subject matter for each area. These high level reports will assist Head Office/senior management to find root causes, identify product weaknesses and make decisions on improving or changing processes or procedures.

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IDENTIFYING THE ROOT CAUSE: CONTINUED

Continuous improvement example:



KEY MESSAGES:

- The right information recorded will enable accurate reporting to help identification, analysis and diagnostics to improve service delivery.
- Working locally, centrally and across the organisation will be necessary to deliver successful continuous improvement.