

Blogs / 311/CRM Systems / Performance measures for local government customer service

Performance measures for local government customer service

November 22, 2013 | 12:25 PM

This past Wednesday (November 20), I led an online discussion on “[Building Customer Service into Local Government](#).” One participant came up with a great but challenging question – what performance measures do you use to evaluate customer service? I suggested customer surveys and comments cards, but I don’t think that alone is enough. After a couple of days of mulling over this question, I have some suggestions and would like to hear a few of your reactions. Are these ideas practical and would they work as part of an annual assessment of customer service for an employee?



- **Organizational Knowledge Tests.** One of the most challenging aspects to local government customer service is making sure a resident is connected with the right person who can answer his/her questions. But it’s not unusual for employees to have little knowledge of local government beyond their department. All too often, residents end up on a wild goose chase trying to find the information they need.
If **all** government employees were required to have a basic knowledge of which department provides which services and programs, it would lead to a lot fewer misdirected calls. So maybe one customer service performance measurement for employees is to have a satisfactory score on an annual test of their knowledge of how their local government works?
- **“Secret Shopper” Evaluations.** “Secret Shopper” programs are very popular in the private sector. Could periodic evaluations by “Secret Shoppers” on how local government employees work with citizens be done?
- **Customer Service Innovations.** Nobody knows local government like employees do. Could a program be developed that recognized employees for their ideas to systematically improve customer service and provide better performance in service delivery?
- **Citizen Satisfaction Surveys.** This idea was brought up during our discussion, but wasn’t fully explored. But many communities do annual or biennial citizen satisfaction surveys, such as the [National Citizen Survey](#), to measure how citizens view the work of different government departments. While questions about the customer service practices of individual employees isn’t practical, customer service is definitely about team work, and the customer service rankings received by departments could be considered as one element in an employee assessment.

So, what do you think of these ideas? And what would you propose as measures for customer service in local government?

COMMENTS



DJ Russell said

Nov 26 2013

I think all these ideas are good. The organizational challenge test is particularly interesting to me and I have always thought the secret shopper idea would work.

Another idea that really shows you are committed to customer service is to incorporate customer service goals and objectives into every employee's job description. Perhaps the way to measure this is by surveys of the customers, internal or external for a particular department or division. And by simply having it as a measurable goal on the evaluation, you send a message to employees that this is important to our locality, not just lip service.



Ian Lucas said

Dec 4 2013

I like all of these ideas, plus the goal-setting/review suggested by DJ Russell.

If you are using a Customer Service system to manage external (Public) service requests, it's a very good idea to also use it for internally generated requests. This brings into to focus, for all Staff, the processes that lead to Customer Service excellence. Consistency of business process really contributes to efficiency and cost containment.

It also helps if the system is configured to enable any Staff member to create a Service Request on behalf of any member of the Public who contacts the Service Provider, and for that Staff person to receive automatic updates to the progression of the Service Request as it goes through to completion. This helps each Staff member to understand how other Departments deal with a variety of Service Requests.

This goes back to the "Organizational Knowledge Test" idea above, and eliminates the "runaround" syndrome.



Niyi Ogunbiyi said

Dec 18 2013

See <http://blog.publicservicerequest.com/index.php/beyond-customer-service-satisfaction-measurement/> for an expansion of this blog post

[Sign in to comment](#) or [comment anonymously](#).

[Sign in](#)

[Subscribe via RSS](#)

POSTED BY



Cory Fleming

311/CRM Program
Director, ICMA

RELATED TOPICS

[Service Delivery](#)

Performance
Measurement

Customer Service
and Satisfaction

International City/County Management Association

777 North Capitol Street NE, Suite 500
Washington, DC 20002-4201

800-745-8780/202-962-3680 | fax 202-962-3500

