



The Courage to Ask

By Marshall Goldsmith

I once heard Peter Drucker remark, "The leader of the past knew how to tell; the leader of the future will know how to ask." Why is asking so important? Today all leaders manage knowledge workers. It is hard to tell people what to do and how to do it when they already know more than we do! Today, we need to ask, "What needs to be done?" listen, and learn from everyone.

Leaders who ask co-workers for suggestions, listen to them, learn from them, and consistently follow-up, are seen as more effective. Similarly, customer satisfaction goes up when service reps ask, listen, learn, and follow-up. When people ask us for input listen to us, learn from us, and follow-up, our relationship with them improves.

As a rule, leaders don't ask! One reason is an inflated ego. When I ask leaders to rate themselves relative to their peers, about 85 percent of them rank themselves in the top 20 percent! And the performance of the company has little to do with their assessment.

When we succeed, we tend to attribute good results to our own motivation and ability and attribute poor results to environmental factors, bad luck, or random chance.

The main reason why we don't ask is fear. I once asked a VP of Customer Satisfaction, "Should your employees be asking their key customers for feedback-and listening, learning, and following-up to

ensure service keeps getting better?"

"Of course!" he exclaimed.

"If you believe in asking so much, why don't you do it? I inquired.

"Because I am afraid of the answers," he ruefully admitted.

We don't ask because, deep down inside, we are afraid of the answers.

As a leader, start asking key co-workers for their ideas on what needs to be done. Thank them for their input, listen to them, learn as much as you can, incorporate the ideas that make the most sense and follow-up.

As a coach, encourage the people that you are coaching to ask, listen and learn from everyone around them. Be a great role model, then ask the people you coach to learn in the same way.

As a friend and a family member, ask the people you love how you can be a better partner, friend, parent, or child. Listen to their ideas and apply some.

Improving interpersonal relationships doesn't have to take a lot of your time. It does require having the courage to ask for people's opinions and the discipline to follow-up and do something about what you learn. Who do you need to ask, "What needs to be done?" When are you going to start asking?

February 2006 Issue

The Courage to Ask

President's Commentary

Meeting Agenda

Meeting Location

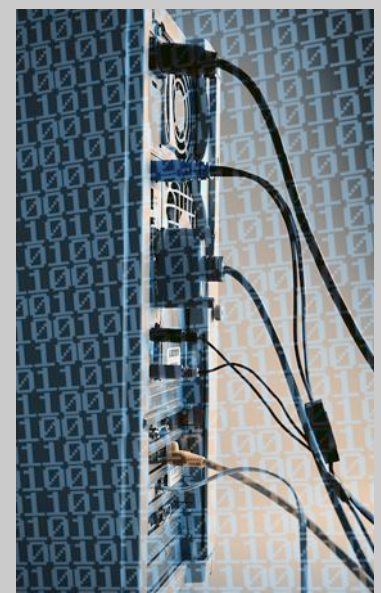
Definition of E-Support Tools

Hold Vendors Accountable

Calendar

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A Message from the President

Oscar Gomez – Help Desk Manager



President Commentary

Happy New Year!!

With every New Year come new resolutions. I am sure that you are like me and resolved to start working out or begin a new health food diet. Whether it be watching less television or cleaning out the garage, we all have suggested that in the “new year”, something was going to change.

Well this year is no different for me, and thankfully for board members of the Sacramento Chapter of the Help Desk Institute. Our goal this year is to provide best in class programs, attract the “big hitters” of our industry, show off new technology and ideas right here in our own backyard. We realize that the Sacramento region is a market full of technical service centers (Help Desks) that we want to reach. We also realize that it is important to our members and guests that networking with new talent promotes growth not only in what we do professionally, but also in our personal growth as well. We agree that if we build programs that are attractive to the local Help Desk industry, that we have an great opportunity to grow and learn from each other as never before.

As most of you know, The Sacramento Chapter of the Help Desk Institute is a local affiliation of Help Desk professionals in our area. This group meets on a monthly basis and is a great resource of information to Help Desk Directors, Managers, Supervisors and Analysts. Most meetings are cost free and the upside is to attending is learning what works in today's Help Desk, Networking with local Help Desk Professionals as well as some very good presentations. As a 13-year veteran in the Help Desk, I still find these meetings as a value add and continue to learn something to take back to the office. I invite you to attend these meeting's to check it out and come see for yourself what you can learn. This affiliation is supported by many Industry recognized companies and State and Local Government agencies. If you have been to a meeting before, I invite you to visit us again, and if this is your 1st visit, we welcome you!

Make it a New Year's resolution you will commit to!

Meeting Agenda

Thursday February 16, 2006

Time	Topic
2:15 – 3:00	Meet, Greet and Eat!!! Networking with Local Help Desk Professionals – Sac HDI
3:00 – 3:10	Chapter Announcement – Oscar Gomez
3:10 – 3:15	Sponsor Announcements – RHT
3:15 – 3:45	Laurie Lock – Sutter Health Help Desk Manager 2005 HD Team Excellence Award Winner
3:50 – 4:30	Thomas “Bart” Barthold – AmerIT Learning 1997 HD Runner Up & 1998 HD Team of the Year!
4:30 – 4:35	Survey
4:35 – 4:40	Raffle give away – Oscar and Sponsors

Meeting Location

Computer Associates

10811 International Drive Rancho Cordova, CA 95670



Definition of E-Support Tools

By: Meg G. Frantz | January 2006

E-Support Tools

E-support tools enable the delivery of world-class service, improved customer satisfaction, and dramatically reduced operational costs. Let's take a closer look at the e-support tools currently available.

Web-Based Incident Initiation

A centralized system captures, routes, tracks, manages, and reports all incoming requests received by each channel, enabling agents to streamline processes, prioritize tasks, and respond efficiently, while controlling every aspect of the problem resolution lifecycle. Users experience a higher level of customer satisfaction because they are presented with more options for requesting support, staying informed as to the status of their problem's resolution, and speeding issue resolution.

Web-Based Chat

Web chat solutions typically cost slightly less per contact than traditional voice service, especially when agents can conduct multiple chats simultaneously. Current service desk technology enables users to initiate this type of contact, but innovations are in development that will enable the system to detect problems and initiate the contact, making the Web-based chat functionality much more proactive.

Web-Based Self-Service

Technology is available that enables users, via a portal, to access and search a customer knowledge base or archive of professionally-written knowledge that includes solutions and FAQs that will help them resolve their own issues without the assistance of a live customer service agent. Web-based self-service features automated diagnostics software that ascertains settings and configurations of each user's system. Capabilities such as these provide users with valuable information and additional tools that can help them troubleshoot their own problems.

Self-Healing Capability

Support automation software transforms reactive support organizations into preventive support organizations. Issues are detected, diagnosed, and repaired before they can impact the user, reducing downtime and increasing productivity. Support automation solutions reduce costs associated with the service desk by preventing problems from occurring and reducing time spent on problem deflection and optimization.

Autonomics

Multiple "smart" devices have the capability to automatically generate a trouble ticket when a user's PC has the potential to fail or has already failed. They can also generate replenishment orders at the appropriate juncture so that it arrives at the appropriate time.

Voice Over IP

VoIP provides features such as point-and-click and voice e-mail that allow a service desk to operate more efficiently, and therefore, improve customer satisfaction.

Article provided by:

http://www.compucom.com/wwwimages/Corp/Images/CompuCom_ServiceDeskWhitePaper0106.pdf

Hold Vendors Accountable

By Lorraine Cosgrove Ware | Mar 1, 2003

Every business says it offers world-class service, but what does that really mean? According to a recent study by the Service and Support Professionals Association (SSPA) of 150 IT support managers, world-class service includes four key elements: customer service, customer loyalty, service levels, and people management.

- Customer loyalty: the expression and action that defines the commitment of a customer to maintain an ongoing relationship with the service provider.
- Service levels: effective resolution of customer problems within a mutually agreed upon time frame.
- People management: effective management of support staff.

In many categories, there's little discrepancy between the service of world-class and average providers. However, note the significant difference in call return—something to consider when choosing a provider.

It's what you complain about most—the time it takes to resolve complaints. It's what separates the world-class provider from the average provider. Since it's cited as the biggest concern, seek out world-class service.

Best Practices

Seek out vendors with high-quality support staff. A support staff that has strong skill-set training will most likely have greater business knowledge and a better understanding of your business needs, and will respond and resolve your problem more quickly. Ask your service provider about the support staff's training and certifications, how quickly your case will be escalated and who'll be involved in the resolution process. A world-class service provider should have this documented.

Demand to be heard. Top-notch support providers conduct periodic customer satisfaction surveys based on recent transactions. World-class service providers also conduct surveys of senior-level executives and have representative advisory councils. CIOs should look for support providers that have a process documented for the customer to voice their opinions—both good and bad.

Search for good customer relationship management practices. The IT organization should hear from its support provider any time something interesting or relevant to that client occurs (for example, a patch is released). Tom Sweeny, SSPA research director, suggests that "communication with the client should occur frequently and well before you need money from them." World-class organizations proactively check in with clients when they haven't heard from them in a few months. "Technology makes it so easy to touch base with clients, there's no excuse not to," says Sweeny.

Article provided by:

<http://www.keepmedia.com/pubs/CIO/2003/03/01/295329?emald=120784&olilD=176>

February 2006

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16 HDI Meeting	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				

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