

‘Service Education’ and ‘Service Training’ – Is There A Difference?

| Posted by: **Ian Grundy** in Best Practices |

Excellent service stems from the ‘service culture’ of an organization with the CIO playing an important role

Service expert Ron Kaufman believes excellent service stems from the ‘service culture’ of an organization – and that ‘service education’ is very different from ‘service training’.

The CIO, together with peers in senior management, has an important role to play in leading the development of a service culture for the organization.

QUESTION | What is the difference between “service training” and “service education”?

“Service training” teaches someone how to ‘do’ something: to provide quality in a specific situation. Training by its nature is tactical, prescriptive, and usually differs between functions and departments.

This approach can result in a fragmented understanding of service inside the organization. It can also leave employees unsure about what to ‘do’ when they encounter a situation they have not been ‘trained’ to handle. This leads to an inability to meet customers’ needs, and to frequent upward escalations that take valuable management time and resources to resolve.

By contrast, “service education” teaches fundamental service principles that everyone within

“Service education leads to a common service language that can be applied across the organization, and a common understanding of what customers value.”



an organization can apply to their own job. With service education, employees learn to think proactively, then act in an empowered manner to create value for their customers and colleagues.

| QUESTION | How effective is “service education” in improving the service an organization provides?

Service education leads to development of a common service language that can be applied across the organization, and a common understanding of what customers value, and what colleagues value. These are essential components in building a service culture.

A superior service culture is continuously improving environment that educates, motivates, supports and recognizes employees for consistently taking action to create more value for customers and colleagues.

| QUESTION | Why should organizations pay strategic attention to service?

The commoditization of products and services makes competing on price or features hard to sustain. Customers have more choice than ever before, and it is easier than ever to switch suppliers.

Globalization, connective technology and maturing markets also mean customers are increasingly sophisticated and expectations of superior service are rising. Organizations must continuously innovate and improve service performance to create more value for customers and partners.

Focusing on service means

an organization creates more unique experiences that customers value. This leads to opportunities for higher margins and helps create relationships with customers that last longer – and become more profitable over time.

An organization with a service culture is also a better place to work. Employees are engaged and motivated to consistently improve service performance. This helps attract and retain superior talent.

| QUESTION | Can you give an example of excellent service leadership?

Many organizations accumulate measures and metrics to track sales, productivity and service performance. Internal indicators often measure the performance of specific departments, but may be disconnected from the essential components of an outstanding customer experience. This disconnect is exacerbated when internal metrics are linked to pay and promotion and thus encourage internally focused or “siloed” behavior.

To reduce or eliminate historical but non-aligned metrics is a bold move that must be taken by clear-minded leaders with a unwavering eye on creating value for customers.

| QUESTION | What about middle management and their role in building a superior service culture?

Middle management can make or break a service culture. They are the essential link between senior leadership and the rest of the organization. Middle managers must clearly understand the overall

service strategy, then clarify and communicate goals and objectives so everyone can see how their immediate next actions will contribute to service success.

Middle managers are also the connection that can encourage and capture suggestions and recommendations from the frontline, and bring these up for discussion, decisions and support at the highest levels of the organization.



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College courses are quickly deployed for managers and staff at all levels using video-based courseware and in-house Certified Course Leaders.

UP! Your Service combines service education with culture building support in twelve essential areas, providing effective tools, techniques and best practice case studies.

This integrated approach engages employees throughout the organization to build a superior service culture for sustainable competitive advantage.

UP! Your Service was founded by Ron Kaufman, the world's leading educator and motivator for uplifting customer service and superior service culture. Ron is the author of the bestselling “UP! Your Service” and “Lift Me UP!” book series.

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