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City Brights

## Good customer service from Georgia state employees



Looks like the state employees and Governor Perdue of Georgia have made a big difference in customer service. This story isn't getting out, and it should, it's really impressive. I'll try to tell their story.

Several years ago, like in many companies, they found that many employees were cynical, beat down by the system and didn't seem to care (because no one cared about their opinion or what they were doing). I hear now that Georgia state employees are very engaged, and PROUD of what they're accomplishing.

What they've learned and accomplished are a really big deal, so here's what's worked for them, and might work for any large organization, from their perspective:

- one VISION & and a BOLD GOAL: all agencies have committed to providing the Best service of any state. We're all aligned around three strategies which are understood by all employees:

*- speeding up service delivery (without spending money) - simplifying access to employees and programs (professional management of call centers - and soon, web sites) and - creating a culture where employees are consistently: Helpful, Courteous, Accessible, Responsive and Knowledgeable - we call this being Faster.Friendlier.Easier. It starts with all employees being on the same page.*

- we do not find fault or look to place blame. We're merely focused on driving improvements. This is very important to creating an atmosphere of TRUST and Team work.

- we measure and "keep score" reporting on where we stand. This is done in two areas: customer service satisfaction and employee job satisfaction. We have strong improvements (statistically valid) in both areas.

- we guide and partner with 165 change agents in our 70 executive branch agencies: 50 customer service (CS) champions, 32 call center manager and people responsible for process improvement (RPI) and folks who's job is to implement our customer service training program. This is a very powerful "grass roots" network that's Accountable for results.

- we speed up processes using the principles of Lean Management with Rapid Process Improvements (RPI). This mirrors the way Toyota runs their business. Our office does not "fix" agency problems. We train agency employees to do this themselves. We require that their solutions do not cost money. The results, some of which I've attached have been dramatic. We're asking our own employees (not consultants) what's broken. Management sets down any ground rules and then supports employees making Immediate changes (not waiting for some "review process"). Employees know what needs to be done. Historically, their opinion was never solicited or if asked, not acted on. Therefore, many government employees have "given up" trying to go the extra mile, since no one (in management) cared. This culture results in, what I call, a "risk averse" workforce ..... innovation is not appreciated and sometimes punished.

If you want to hear more, contact Joe Doyle, [jdoyle@ocs.ga.gov](mailto:jdoyle@ocs.ga.gov)

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