



Jeff Eilertsen

9 Quick Questions to Improve Your Internal Service

“If only we could get our (*fill in the blank*) department to give us better internal (*fill in the blank*) service, then we could more easily meet our external customer’s needs.” I hear this complaint inside many organizations. Perhaps you have heard it, too.

Internal service is a critical link in the “**service-profit chain**”, which says: To grow profits and revenue you must have loyal customers. To create loyal customers you must offer what customers value. Consistently delivering value to customers requires loyal and satisfied employees. And to develop loyal employees, the employees must be satisfied with the internal service they receive from each other.

Here are 9 quick questions to ask to improve the internal service you provide.

These questions are so effective you can use them today and see valuable results tomorrow. In a world filled with online surveys and lengthy questionnaires, this simple questioning process can produce both great ideas and motivate employees in less than 30 minutes.

We use this process in service workshops with clients. Participants sit in pairs and interview each other about the internal service their departments provide.

You can do this informally with a colleague today. Or, if you are a manager, meet with representatives from other departments and do this together.

The person asking questions must be sure to carefully (and slowly) ask all nine questions in sequence:

1. What do you value most about our department’s service?
2. What else is important when we serve you?
3. What could we do that would create even more value for you?
4. What service could we provide that you normally go elsewhere for?
5. Is there anything we should start doing, or do more of, to serve you better?
6. Is there anything we should stop doing, or do less of, to serve you better?
7. If you could wave a magic wand and change one thing about our department, what would it be?
8. What might cause you to look outside our department for the services we provide?
9. What else would you like to tell us that I have not already asked you about?

Are all these questions similar? Yes. Then why do you need to ask all 9 questions? Well, here is what happens when you ask each question in order. The first few questions bring out obvious concerns and issues. These questions get people thinking clearly about their experience with your service. The next few questions bring out whatever else is on their minds. By the time you reach the middle of the list, the person answering your questions will start thinking more about what you do, and you will get real gems of ideas, insights and recommendations.

Another interesting benefit will also consistently occur. People being asked the questions almost always

comment: “I really appreciate being asked. Your questions make me feel valued, and I wish you had asked this before.” The next step in your positive service partnership has been formed.

Can you also ask questions like these of your external customers? Absolutely. But we encourage you to work on this list with your colleagues and internal partners first. You will be amazed how simple process builds the foundation for changes and great improvements in customer service.

Try it! And let us know what you discover where you work.

© Copyright, Jeff Eilertsen

About the Author

Jeff Eilertsen leads Global Service Education for UP! Your Service, bringing over 20 years of experience working in organizational development, training and human resource firms. As a project leader and Master Trainer, he ensures successful implementation of Actionable Service Education, working with clients to develop the people, processes and best practices to turn learning into action and service improvement.

He also manages a community of Course Leaders from a wide variety of clients, sharing ideas and insights across a global network. As a speaker, Jeff shares the UP! Your Service methodology and experience with audiences seeking to uplift service culture.

Co-ordinates

E-mail:

enquiry@UpYourService.com

Web: www.UpYourService.com



Important Notice

© Copyright 2015, Bizezia Limited, All Rights Reserved

This article appeared in Better Business Focus, published by Bizezia Limited ("the publisher"). It is protected by copyright law and reproduction in whole or in part without the publisher's written permission is strictly prohibited. The publisher may be contacted at info@bizezia.com (+44 (0)1444 884220).

The article is published without responsibility by the publisher or any contributing author for any loss howsoever occurring as a consequence of any action which you take, or action which you choose not to take, as a result of this article or any view expressed herein.

Whilst it is believed that the information contained in this publication is correct at the time of publication, it is not a substitute for obtaining specific professional advice and no representation or warranty, expressed or implied, is made as to its accuracy or completeness. Any hyperlinks in the article were correct at the time this article was published but may have changed since then. Likewise, later technology may supersede any which are specified in the article.

The information is relevant primarily within the United Kingdom but may have application in other locations.

These disclaimers and exclusions are governed by and construed in accordance with English Law.

Publication issued on 1 March 2015