

Lesson Two: FOCUS - Organize a Performance Improvement Effort

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A. Who will lead improvement of this process?

The Performance Improvement Steering team assigned leadership to the manager responsible for this business process/function.

- Customer Care director

B. Who are the managers and employees most responsible for performance of the work process? Who will be on this FOCUS team?

The Customer Care director tapped the following staff who are responsible for or support success of customer service processes/

- Customer Care team leader
- Customer Care representative
- Sales representative
- Logistics representative
- Information Systems staff member
- Human Resources coach/facilitator

C. How will you develop, agree upon, and communicate this FOCUS team's purpose and performance improvement objectives?

At its first meeting the Customer Service FOCUS Team reviewed the work and directives from the Performance Improvement Steering Team. The FOCUS group focused specifically on and committed to the Business Performance Improvement Goal Statement:

We will improve satisfaction with our customer service processes

with specific focus on these measures:

- decreasing backlog of orders to be entered
- increasing the percentage of calls resolved/handled on the first call
- decreasing the percentage of calls abandoned

D. How will you orient improvement team members to the FOCUS approach to process improvement?

The Human Resource coach/facilitator will provide a 3 hour fast-track training session for the FOCUS team that emphasizes use of quality tools and FOCUS approach for measurable performance improvement.

E. When this FOCUS team succeeds at improving this process, how will your business be different and more profitable?

We will improve satisfaction with our customer service processes
with specific focus on these measures:

- decreasing backlog of orders to be entered
- increasing the percentage of calls resolved/handled on the first call
- decreasing the percentage of calls abandoned

When we succeed at this, customer satisfaction with service will improve. This will happen because we respond to customer requests faster and more accurately. Increased speed and accuracy will help our overall productivity and cost-effectiveness which will contribute to overall business sales performance and profitability.

F. What is the FOCUS team's most significant shared beliefs, expectations, and ground rules?

The team discussed and agreed to the following shared beliefs/expectations for their high-performing team.

- See it from the customers' perspective.
- Effort is good. Results are better.
- Work smart.
- No bad ideas.
- Don't make it, or take it personally.
- Start on time. End on time.
- Be honest. Be direct.
- No excuses.

G. What is the timeline for process improvement?

3 months – We will achieve at least 10% improvement in target performance measures by the end of business quarter

2. References and Links to Others Sources

Richard Chang and Mathew Niedzwiecki, *Continuous Improvement Tools, Volumes 1 & 2*. (Richard Chang Associates)

Dianne Galloway, *Mapping Work Processes*. (ASQ Quality Press)

GOAL/QPC, *The Memory Jogger II: A Pocket Guide of Tools for Continuous Improvement and Effective Planning*. (Telephone 1.800.643.4316)

GOAL/QPC, *Problem Solving Machine for the Memory Jogger II*. (Telephone 1.800.643.4316)

Peter Mears, *Quality Improvement Tools & Techniques*. (McGraw-Hill)

3. Questions for Reflection and Discussion

How does team membership impact prospects for successful performance improvement? If you were a performance improvement team leader what do you think would be your biggest challenge? How would you address this challenge?