

## Case Study 5

### **Situation**

A major Housing Association planned and made some significant changes to the way in which it handled customer contact and decided to rationalise several geographic units into a single operational customer service centre.

Whilst the changes were in large part successful, aspects of the processes needed more attention and in the event the performance of the service centre required some considerable focus.

A major need was identified - to bring about some major change in the end-to-end 'customer experience' with particular regard to the contact centre, its processes and the resultant management information.

### **Action**

- Conducted a high level operational review, from which was identified the need to dramatically improve contact handling performance, to implement change in a controlled fashion and also to provide help in actually achieving a single service centre with multi-skilled staff, handling all aspects of the customer interface.
- Established a structured programme plan embracing several different organisational functions and mapping all the dependencies between them
- Established and managed a Programme/Project Board with the CEO as the main sponsor.
- Designed and delivered an initial 20 day recovery plan – intended to rapidly improve call handling performance, increase the centre opening hours, review the back office administration associated with the contact centre and to do this by a clear focus on people and operational review disciplines.
- Focused on a return to basic operational principles.
- Listened to and actively involved the customer service staff before initiating change (for example, to make more information available so that they understood their role and its importance).
- Changed call routing, placing an emphasis on the telephony solution – VoIP – by ensuring its design and delivery against user requirements rather than IT needs
- Delivered process changes
- Mapped core skill sets and improved training plans.
- Active involvement in helping the business following a major disaster by helping manage offsite resourcing and by providing practical, hands-on advice and involvement in project managing the rebuild of the computer room and the co-ordination of the business recovery.
- Design and management of several of the essential management interfaces and development of granular management information
- Facilitation of the design and mapping of core business processes, many of which changed in a short to medium-term timeframe as a result of a new system initiative;
- Providing interim management – acting in the capacity of Customer Service Manager for the short-term.

### **Result**

- Dramatic reduction in abandoned calls from high double digits to low single figures.
- Considerable improvement in staff motivation and morale.
- Consistent operational management.
- Focus on proper project and programme management disciplines.
- Design and Implementation of granular management information and reporting packs, highlighting a considerably improved understanding of customer behaviours and patterns.
- Improved call routing and handling.
- Identification of skills gaps, competencies and training needs
- Recovery from a disaster with improved business continuity plans.
- A business which is more user –driven than previously.
- Improved resource planning.
- Improved communications and inter-functional working.