

New Hanover County Customer Service Committee Meeting Notes 01/14/2009

Members in Attendance:

Tracy Dawson	Kim Roane	Christine McNamee	Cindy Kee-MacPherson
Melissa Hight	Dennis Ihnat	Jane O'Brien	Leslie Stanfield
Carolyn Batts	Tony Roberts	Mark Boyer	

Summary:

- Dennis welcomed everyone to our first online meeting using WebEx.
- Approved December meeting notes.
- Discussed everyday examples of customer service.
 - Anthony Thomas of the IT Department was instrumental in getting the Gallery of Excellence webpage up and running. His instruction, ideas, and patience made the process much easier.
- Discussed customer service training.
 - Discussed offering Cultural Competency class with Dr. Flood. Approximately half of county employees have taken this class. By offering it again, new employees and the remainder of employees will have the opportunity to attend.
 - Discussed budget concerns and if we have the money to offer this class and the De-escalation course. The next De-escalation courses will be presented by employees who are part of a train the trainer program. This way there will be no additional cost and the training will be sustainable.
 - ◇ The feedback for this class has been positive, but there were comments concerning improving the role playing section of the class.
 - ◇ It was decided that if funding is available for both classes, the Cultural Competency course would be a worthwhile program to present again.
 - Discussed online training courses offered through Point and Click University. The customer service courses are more of an overview, covering some of the basics.
 - It was suggested that the location of the courses is important since travel is limited due to budget restrictions.
 - Most employees at DSS and the Health Department have taken the Cultural Competency course.
 - The last Cultural Competency classes we offered did not reach full enrollment. It was suggested that we ask how many people would be interested in taking the class to determine if there is enough interest.
 - Discussed Customer Service 101. This is a course being developed by Andy Atkinson utilizing an online component, such as PCU, and an experiential piece to present a blended learning opportunity.
 - The committee reviewed the course content. This class would be more in depth than Customer Service the NHC Way, which is currently being presented in-house by our Speakers Bureau.
 - Discussed the differences between this class and the PCU customer service courses. The PCU courses are more “nuts and bolts” while Customer Service 101 would offer a more experiential learning experience, Since all people don't learn the same way some people

may benefit from the opportunity to experience panel discussions and share experiences. One benefit of PCU courses is you can take them at your convenience and at your own pace. There appears to be a place for both styles of learning.

- The challenges are going to be travel expenses. Training at your desk is more economically feasible than traveling to take a course.
 - It was suggested that if we were not in the current budget situation, it would be in the county's best interest to have in-house trainers, but that is not an option now.
 - PCU classes might be more effective if interactive. It was suggested that we could get groups of employees together in a WebEx meeting to take on-line courses. There would be the ability to pause the course for group discussion.
 - This may be the direction things are moving, especially with the availability of webcams.
 - We will look at the customer service course to create higher level content directed toward county employees.
 - This is a way to show that customer service can be creative and present quality training courses without spending a lot of money.
 - Discussed De-escalation Course. We will meet with UNCW to discuss train the trainer course with possible video component and determine how this might affect our proposal.
 - The challenge of in-house training is finding the time to fit that into your regular work responsibilities as well as ensuring that the training is consistent.
 - Lisa Bohne has been trained to create PCU courses and could assist with this.
 - Committee members will help us with the vendors to make sure we are capturing everything we want to do and continue moving the training program forward.
 - Leslie Stanfield, Angelina Bernard and Melissa Hight volunteered to assist with the development of these courses.
- Discussed the RISE to Excellence Award Ceremony.
 - The intention was to present the awards in December, but several factors resulted in the awards being presented in January at the Department Heads meeting.
 - The feedback was very positive and the award recipients liked it as much, if not more than they would have if presented at a Commissioners meeting. They mentioned that the award seemed more personal and there was more camaraderie this way. They also commented that there was more attention and peer recognition.
 - One positive aspect is that it was motivational to Department Heads who could go back to their departments and talk about the award with staff.
 - Discussed the Health Department and the culture of recognition they have established.
 - Discussed the Gallery of Excellence.
 - It was suggested that the name of the award recipient and their department be added to the Gallery webpage. This has already been done and will be updated on the webpage tomorrow.
 - Discussed the length of time photos should remain on the page. It was suggested that all photos remain on the page and be divided by year and that the Gallery be ongoing.
 - Discussed the difference between the Gallery of Excellence and the higher level RISE to Excellence Award. Even though there have been several e-mails and the nomination form explains this, we may still need to clarify that these are 2 different awards.
 - Also discussed the nomination pamphlet. The cover features photos of employees, but it appears there may have been a misunderstanding that the pamphlet is a ballot for the employees who appear on the cover. Even though their names and information to do not

appear anywhere in the pamphlet, we may need to redesign the cover. It was suggested that group photos of employees could be added to the cover to help minimize the chance for misunderstanding. The committee will review the pamphlet and make suggestions.

- Evaluated meeting:
 - The difficulty of not being able to see people was discussed, as well as the problem of other people not being aware you were part of a meeting and knocking on your door or talking to you. One positive aspect was that there was no travel time involved thus increasing the possibility of more people attending meetings.
 - Webcam capability would improve the face to face aspect of meeting participation.
 - It was recommended that putting a sign on your door that says “In Conference” and closing your door is helpful to prevent interruptions.
 - It was also suggested that the type of agenda would dictate whether this type of meeting was effective.

- Action Items:
 1. Meet with Train the Trainer group to discuss de-escalation training.
 2. Meet with Andy Atkinson and UNCW to develop PCU/online and experiential course content.
 3. Change RISE to Excellence nomination form to reflect change in venue for award ceremony.

Next Meeting:

Date: February 11, 2008

Time: 3:00 – 4:30 PM

Place: Department of Social Services