

Investing for Efficient and Effective Customer Service:

A plight that often affects customer service groups is that they often lack the support or investment required to achieve a satisfactory level of effectiveness and efficiency within their function.

Because service managers are often driven by a passion to provide the best customer service they can, they will often do whatever it takes to take care of the customer as the top priority. In an unfortunate irony, however, this determination in some cases may actually result in a prolonged state of struggle for the function and that very manager. Because the manager is reluctant to sacrifice the customer experience for process improvement investments along the way, they end up managing a function that is largely inefficient. Senior managers who feel that the function is generally effective but costly, then try in vain to improve cost efficiency by simply cutting costs; hoping the manager will figure out a way to make it work. The frustrating part of this, all too common situation, is that the outcome of this approach is a more stressed out service function that becomes increasingly cost inefficient. Increasingly, effectiveness too wanes as burned out service professionals begin to lose the battle in which they are ill equipped to participate.

Achieving efficiency in any function requires investments in process refinements and technology. Service functions generally have significant elements of repetition. Even mere seconds of an inefficient processes multiplied many times can add up to significant waste.

Senior managers, who make the effort to understand this function, and make the requisite investments up front, will be able to realize

more long term success from the function. Arming your service people with the tools that they need can positively impact the bottom line, both due to increased customer loyalty, and in improved cost effectiveness.

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For additional insights on Customer Relationship Management and Customer Care, visit www.ladoveassociates.com

