



Customer Service and Operations Committee

Board Information Item IV-B

July 10, 2014

Customer Service Initiative

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
Board Action/Information Summary

Action Information

MEAD Number:
200893

Resolution:
 Yes No

TITLE:

Customer Care Initiative

PRESENTATION SUMMARY:

This presentation describes the Customer Care initiative which supports both the Board's strategic goal to meet and exceed customer expectations, and the Board's customer value statement, as well as, the General Manager/Chief Executive Officer's (GM/CEO), business plan.

PURPOSE:

To inform the Customer Service and Operations Committee of the approach Metro is taking to improve customer satisfaction through actions that include; new human capital strategies, delivering consistent customer service training authority wide, developing clear expectations and accountability for customer service for every employee, and creating new business tools and local working groups which empower front line employees and promote ownership of service delivery solutions that match the rider experience. These actions are needed to achieve and sustain Metro's customer satisfaction performance target of 84%.

DESCRIPTION:

Key Highlights:

The Customer Care initiative includes a multilevel approach to bolster and sustain customer satisfaction by:

- Strengthening employee engagement (via communications, training and development, accountability, and performance recognition).
- Developing new business intelligence tools that provide staff with a clear picture of the customer experience at the local (station/stop) level.
- Empowering front line employees with better information about repairs to systems and equipment, and creating cross functional local working groups; and
- Focusing the organization on the customer experience, while maintaining our strong safety culture.

Background and History:

Earlier this year, the GM/CEO directed the establishment of an interdepartmental working group to determine how to transform Metro's culture into one that values

customer satisfaction and puts a premium on service delivery that meets or exceeds customer expectations. The working group consisted of members of Rail, Bus, Labor Relations, Training, Human Resources, and Customer Service Departments as well as the GM/CEO's Office. Building on the success of the GM/CEO's two-year customer service action plan, the working group spent six months conducting research with employees, reviewing customer satisfaction data for challenges and opportunities, conducting a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (S.W.O.T.) Analysis, reviewing best practices and identifying barriers to quality service that are unique to Metro. To chair the working group and provide leadership in developing the initiative, Metro hired a Director of Customer Care.

The twice monthly meetings resulted in an initiative that reflects a passion for customer service and enthusiasm across the organization to make improvements – from the way we orient new hires, to the way we organize information to prioritize station repairs. The working group also recognizes the need to build a new external and internal customer focus that continues the General Manager/Chief Executive Officer's push to move the organizational culture to one that more closely resembles a collaborative, customer-focused business model.

Discussion:

Building upon the success of the customer service improvements to date such as:

- Investment in system safety and reliability
- Establishment of a customer satisfaction Index - KPI 84%
- Completion of the GM/CEO's two year customer service action plan, e.g.:
 - Improved incident communications
 - Upgraded SmarTrip® functionality
 - Focused on audio announcements
 - Delivered better real time info via alerts/NextBus/kiosk screens

The working group then embarked on SWOT Analysis assessing the internal strengths, and weaknesses of Metro, and the external opportunities and threats if we were to take no action. A robust plan was developed as a result that leverages our strengths and opportunities and mitigates the threats and weaknesses. The plan focuses first on employee engagement, ensuring all employees understand and appreciate their role in the customer experience; second, emphasizes development of useable business intelligence tools that reflects the customer experience at the station and bus stop level; third, empowers frontline employees to improve the customer experience; and finally, focuses actions and resources on drivers of customer satisfaction including reliability, security and quality.

There are a multitude of tasks and activities such as, developing consistent customer service training throughout the organization, creating new business intelligence tools for management and front line employees, and establishing local customer service committees, that, when done collectively, will institutionalize customer care values and change service delivery. Expanded interdisciplinary working groups will be created to ensure Rail, Bus, MetroAccess, HR, IT and Customer Service all work toward common

customer care goals. A standing Executive Leadership Team steering committee will ensure that objectives are met on schedule and that customer feedback continues to be considered in decision-making. Each working group/subcommittee will include front line/supervisory staff to optimize the solutions that work on the ground.

FUNDING IMPACT:

The impact on budget has yet to be determined for FY16 and beyond	
Project Manager:	Barbara Moulton
Project Department/Office:	Office of Customer Care/ Customer Service Communication and Marketing

TIMELINE:

Previous Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board approval of FY14 budget that included Customer Care Initiative • Hiring of new Director to lead the initiative • Interdepartmental working group proposal to GM /CEO
Anticipated actions after Presentation	<p>Establish working group subcommittees, with appropriate subject matter experts and cross functional representation. Map specific tasks, producing timelines and evaluating budget impacts in the first 90 days. The launch of an internal customer care communications plan is planned for fall 2014.</p>



Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

Charting a Course to Customer Care Excellence

Customer Care Working Group

July 10, 2014



Value Statement

The safety and security of our customers is our fundamental commitment. Metro is committed to quality transit service, including clean transit vehicles and facilities, as well as courteous customer service. Metro strives to meet customers' expectations of reliable service and recognizes the importance of timely and accurate communication, especially during service disruptions. To be responsive to our customers, we will regularly incorporate their feedback in decision making.



Customer Service Improvements To-Date

- Invested in system safety and reliability
- Established a customer satisfaction Index – KPI (84%) & tracking
- Completed the GM's 2-year Customer Service Action Plan
 - Improved incident communications
 - Upgraded SmarTrip functionality
 - Focused on audio announcements
 - Delivered better real-time info via alerts/nextbus/kiosk screens



S.W.O.T Analysis

Strengths

- A strengthened safety culture exists
- Investments in service reliability underway
- Diverse and talented employees understand the mission
- Dedicated change agents via ELT/Senior team
- Board of Directors is committed to customer service as a top priority
- Engaged customer service advocates via RAC

Weaknesses

- Historically, customer care not institutionalized
- Seniority determines placement in customer facing positions
- Employee engagement: More than 40% of front line employees express concerns about supervisor/leadership communications & recognition
- Salary compression issue, limits internal management candidates
- Internal communications constrained by geography/technology access



S.W.O.T Analysis

Opportunities

- Improve customer service at WMATA
- Empower the most valuable asset: human capital
- Become customer service leaders in the industry
- Evolve the internal culture into a collaborative client/service model.

Threats (if action not taken)

- Customer satisfaction KPI may decline, and complaints rise
- Productivity may decline
- Possible future funding challenges
- Image of may WMATA suffer



Actions Needed To Achieve And Sustain KPI

Employee Engagement	New Business Tools	Customer Satisfaction
<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Enhance communications via ELT/line management throughout the entire organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Develop business intelligence reporting tools that reflect customers' local experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Strengthen reliability via Metro forward plan infrastructure/equipment
<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Bolster training – From NEO to Metro “University”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Create “local” customer service/station committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Increase security – MTPD officer visibility/cameras in key areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Establish employee recognition program for outstanding customer service	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Promote ownership and authority to prioritize open items, drive resources, deliver solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Develop front line employees with clear performance expectations (job descriptions) and accountability (performance reviews)



Customer Care Rocket for Success

With exceptional customer service as our guiding principle, WMATA strives to be a premier public transit authority through its talented and valued workforce

mission

objective

strategy

tactics

Increase customer satisfaction
Achieve/sustain KPI 84% customer sat over 24 mos.

Measurably improve internal communications/performance recognition/accountability

Develop new holistic station/stop outlook and management of local customer experience

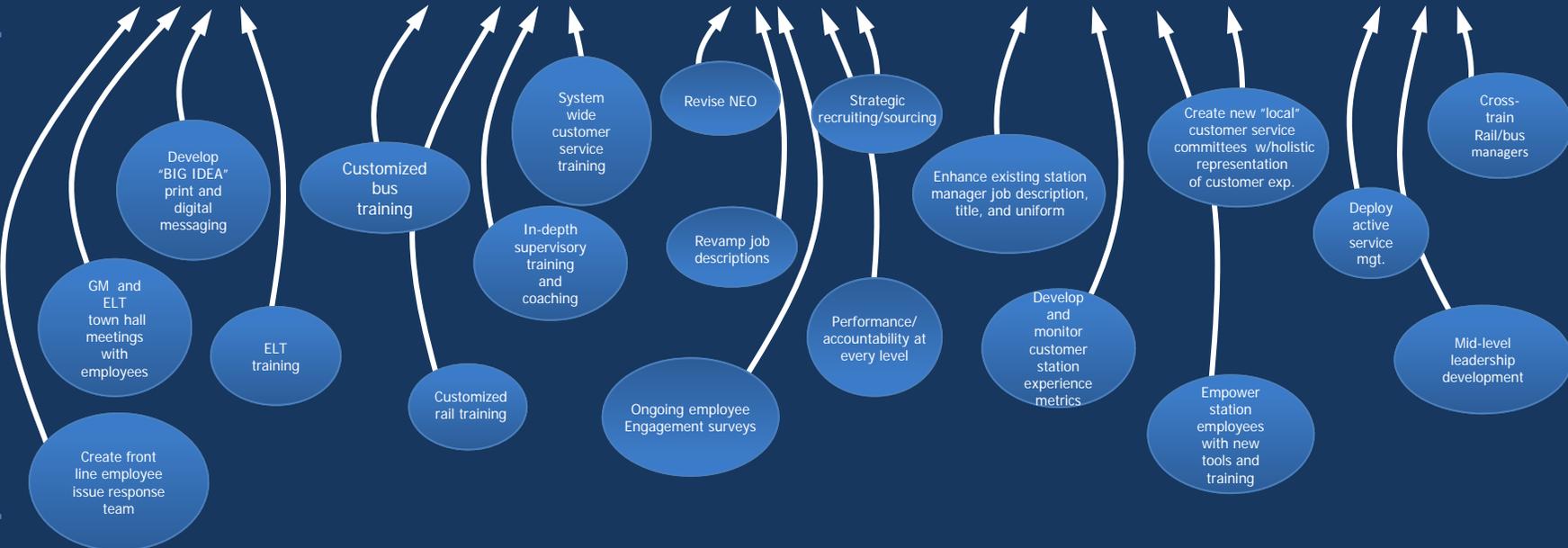
Communicate vision & values from the top

Training reform to include core customer service curriculum & Title VI

Re-engineer human capital strategies

Pilot "station teaming" concept for rail line

Enhance SOM





Proposed Working Groups

ELT Customer Care Steering Committee

Customer Care Working Group (Interdepartmental)

Rider Experience
Performance
Metric & B.I. Tools

- IT
- Office of Performance Mngt
- Access Dept.
- AFC
- NEPP
- ELES
- Plant & building
- BTSS
- Parking
- Bus
- Rail
- Research
- Front line employee/supervisor

Employee Training
& Development

- Training counsel
- Corporate training
- Bus training
- Rail training
- HR
- Access Dept.
- Customer service
- OEE0
- Front line employee/supervisor

Employee
Performance
Review

- Labor
- Bus
- Rail
- HR
- Performance mngt
- OEE0
- Front line employee/supervisor

Internal
Communications

- CSMC
- Bus
- Rail
- HR
- Front line employee/supervisor



Next Steps

- Committees develop implementation schedules/assess budget impacts
- Get input from RAC/AAC (September)
- Report progress to Board CSO Committee (January)



Exhibit A: Station Teaming Concept

