



Communication Initiatives

Presented to the Board of Directors:

**Customer Service, Operations, and Safety
Committee**

October 11, 2007





Communication Initiatives

- To achieve our vision of giving our customers "*The Best Ride In The Nation*," we must improve how we communicate with our customers and employees during major delays and incidents – especially unplanned service disruptions.





Communication Initiatives

- Snow/weather events – relatively smooth:
 - Great cooperation
 - Shared expectations
- Unplanned service interruptions, we don't do as well:
 - Focus is on the incident: discovery and recovery
- Metro has created unrealistic expectations:
 - Shuttle bus service
 - “We will do better, we promise”



Communication Initiatives

- The root of the issue is customers' sense of lack of control of situations:
 - Customers need information – clear, consistent, and honest – to regain control and feel a sense of relief.
 - “We stop, we tell” – We stopped!
- Previous Market Research has disclosed:
 - *“Whatever the delay period is, it is a lot less frustrating if you know.”*
 - *“First get the information out there, get it right, get it to everyone – then worry about the ‘pleasantries’ of greetings and apologies.”*



Communication Initiatives

- We need to re-focus our efforts on clear, consistent, and honest communication with our customers:
 - Use everyday language they understand, not transit or Metro-speak.
 - Tell customers what we know, even when we don't have all the details.
 - Help customers understand what their transportation options are during delays, disruptions, and incidents.
 - Tell the truth and tell it often!





Communication Initiatives

- Immediate Solutions:
 - Communications personnel in the OCC at all times
 - Customer Communications Matrix Team
 - Outreach to organizations and agencies that can help us





Summary

- How we communicate with our customers must be an ongoing, ever-evolving process -- continually improving:
 - We must communicate early and often, with clear, consistent, and easy to understand messages.
 - We have to be willing to admit we don't know when we don't know!
 - Customers need to have options and a back-up plan so they can make better decisions and re-gain their "loss of control."
 - It starts today.