



## What's Happening?

The newsletter for switched on people  
Autumn issue 80 - from Samuel Day

### Customer Service

The strength of the Australian economy can have a significant impact on an organisation's customer service delivery.

Undersupply of skilled employees means:

- organisations need to fill customer contact roles with inexperienced people or people with lower capability/knowledge than required when dealing with customers,
- lead times to fulfill roles lengthens and response/fulfillment times for customers increase,
- wages increase putting pressure on employee turnover and resourcing if competitors pay more, again increasing response times for customers.

Addressing these points presents an opportunity for organisations to capture greater market share and increase performance if they are prepared to focus on customer service differentiation within the realities of their industry.

Customer service (internal and external) includes how

customers are greeted, how fast rapport is built with customers at each 'moment of truth' etc.

Yet it is far more than these behavioural skills. So what can managers do to ensure customer service helps differentiation and organisational performance in a tight labour market?

1. Increased employee turnover means implicit customer knowledge is lost. Effective Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems are therefore critical.
2. Undersupply puts more pressure on other employees who need to be rewarded and motivated.
3. New unskilled employees need fast up-skilling and coaching to better fit roles.
4. Poaching from competitors and loss of knowledge requires retention programs.
5. Seamless internal processes are needed including cross functional team work to achieve best practice customer fulfillment.

### Personally speaking

Our anecdotal evidence suggests that improved customer service is a key focus for organisations differentiation strategy hence the topic in this issue. If you are not onto this yet you could end up too far behind. Please let us know if you need any help.

### New Professional Development Show

Check our new online professional development show about people management, leadership and organisational cultures. It includes interviews with Bernie Brookes CEO of Myer and Major John Simmonds CEO of the Salvation Army Employment Plus. *Please remember to tell others what you like about this company and if there is something you don't please tell us.* Kind regards, Sam  
PS I hope everyone in Adelaide are enjoying their extended summer!