



“We had a great environment, we had an award, and we had customer satisfaction. We wanted customer advocacy.”

Travelex (formerly Thomas Cook Global & Financial Services) wanted to make a good operation better. They were merging their award winning global concierge service with their financial services support centre and wanted not just to maintain service levels, but to take a leap forward. To give customers not just what they need, but what they wish for. To make ‘empowerment’ and ‘advocacy’ mean something real and make the concept of ‘anticipating the customer’s needs’ come to life.

The company had the advantage of good morale, a world-class contact centre facility and highly skilled staff that could provide service in 22 languages, 24/7, to customers around the world. Their achievement was built on clear processes and reporting lines with directional management styles. Advisors responded extremely well to customers but only within the confines of what they were being asked for. The

new challenge was how to merge two sets of cultures and management teams, and how to radically improve service levels.

Redefining service

Having worked with Blue Sky in a previous role, the Customer Service Director invited them to help him make the new vision a reality. *“Blue Sky make sure they understand the wider business context as well as the specific operational issues. They work by challenging existing thinking (their own and ours) and bring with them a non-linear yet “real world” approach.”*

The plan for this great leap forward had two central themes: redefining what service actually meant and changing the management style of senior managers. A new developmental quality programme was created to embody the new service

definition. The desired customer experience was broken down and each component re-aligned with performance measures and competencies.

Leadership skills improved, which enabled senior managers to empower frontline staff to deliver the new service levels. Before the merger, customers phoning in with distress calls were simply given local emergency contact numbers, although advisors would offer to notify relatives of the situation.

What follows are extracts from a call received during the first few weeks of the new operating system, which provides compelling evidence of just how far the team had come:

Caller: "Hello, I've just been mugged. They got my wallet, credit cards.....everything. I'm in San Francisco."

Advisor: "OK, are you alright?"

Caller: "I'm fine. Just a bit shocked."

Advisor: "OK, don't worry, we'll sort everything out. Now, do you know whereabouts you are?"

Caller gives location.

Advisor: "OK, I've identified where you are on map and there's a police station just a short walk from where you are. If I give you directions do you feel able to walk there?"

Caller: "Yes."

Advisor: "Good. Now I'm going to call a local taxi and have them meet you at the station and take you back to the Sheraton, which I can see on the system is where you're staying. When you get back to the hotel I'll have a replacement credit card, \$100 in cash, and your replacement airline ticket waiting for you."

“The advisor stayed for two hours beyond the end of his shift to ensure that everything was in order. He never once felt the need to involve his manager.”

In assessing the progress made, the Customer Service Director reflected, *“It was great to win the European Call Centre of the Year Award two years running. But I was most proud of how the managers embraced the opportunity to truly develop themselves and their people to get us where we wanted to be with our customers.”*

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At Blue Sky we are passionate about delivering performance improvement across sales, customer experience and high performance leadership. Our award winning work delivers outstanding ROI by taking staff on an emotional and experiential journey and ensuring operations are set for optimum results. Visit www.blue-sky.co.uk to discover how you can benefit from our approach and learn more about the awards our clients have been winning; 23 in the last 4 years!