

Facilitated InnovationSM Mini Case Study

CLIENT:

The Aurora Health Care Call Center

CHALLENGE:

Use Facilitated InnovationSM's methods and tools to enable Aurora's own people to turn around the performance and morale within their call center, a critically important but failing unit of Aurora Health Care's Business Office.

THE FACILITATED INNOVATIONSM PROCESS:

1. Information Gathering and Systemic Understanding
2. Functions Analysis using System & Process Modeling Tools
3. Create By Function using TRIZ-based Inventive Principles and Patterns of System Development
4. Evaluation of Innovation Concepts
5. Development Phase, using FME/VASM
6. Implementation Planning

RESULTS:

As participants in a Facilitated InnovationSM engagement conducted in December 2000, twelve customer service representatives (CSRs) from the call center were guided through a proprietary systematic process that harnessed their knowledge and analytical skills, empowering them to develop a tremendous number of innovative ideas to improve the call center from within. Further, during the Implementation Planning phase, the CSRs transformed their "innovation concepts" into practical, disciplined project plans.

BENEFITS:

From an operational perspective, call abandonment rates (the number of customers who do not connect with a CSR) are now at or under industry benchmarks. The call center's new, dramatically improved performance and satisfaction levels have been long-lasting.

In surveys published 8, 16 and 24 and 36 months after the Facilitated InnovationSM, call center employees' satisfaction with both their job and management remained on average over 45% higher than in 2000.

Bob Mueller, Director of Patient Financial Services for Aurora Health Care, says: "The results of this project exceeded my expectations in every way. We came out of the process not only with several implementable concepts, but a staff that was—and has remained—empowered to implement them.

Empowerment is the critical idea here. Our staff found that they could not only identify problems, but also the resources they need to resolve the problems, and how to get them. Their prevailing attitude became: 'If it's going to be, it's up to me,' when the historical attitude had been one of blame shifting and demoralization."

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