Improving Service Culture in the Nigerian Context

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Presentation Outline

• Introduction
• Definition of terms
• Service Culture: Nigerian Experience
• Covenant University Experience
• Ways to improve Service Culture
• Conclusion
“Get closer than ever to your customers. So close, in fact, that you tell them what they need well before they realize it themselves.”

– Steve Jobs
Introduction

• We live in a world of service.
• Virtually all our interactions involve serving others in one way or another.
• We create value through the services we provide.
• The quality of services we provide distinguishes us and defines our level of accomplishment.
• Organisations thrive not just by its products but by the services it provides to people that need them.
• Many great organizations in the world, have leveraged on service to distinguish themselves.

• They have built a culture of service excellence where everyone is consistently taking more action to create more value for everyone else.

• The service culture ensures that all employees are motivated to step up the quality of service they provide which in turn leads to engaged customers having a fulfilling experience.
“Good service is good business”

- Siebel Ad
What is Service?

“Service… is not what you do, but who you are. It is a way of living that you need to bring to everything you do, if you are to bring it to your customer interactions.”

- Betsy Sanders
Service is...

• The performance of work for another.

• Taking care of the needs or concerns of those around us.

• Taking action to create value for someone else.
What is Culture?

“For individuals, character is destiny. For organizations, culture is destiny.”

— Tony Hsieh
Culture is...

- the habits, traditions, and behaviours of people and groups in an organization.
- a way of thinking, behaving, or working that exists in a place or organization.
- the way of life, especially the general customs and beliefs, of a particular group of people at a particular time.
Service Culture is …

• An organizational behaviour that prioritizes customer service in its goals, decisions, actions, and everyday operations.

  ▪ The organization exhibits “a heart for service” – with customer service being the foundation of its business;
  ▪ The organization’s activities are all designed and executed to promote and sustain service delivery – to both internal and external customers.
A Strong Service Culture

• Puts the customer at the centre of everything we do;
• Champions teamwork and motivation for action;
• Promotes innovation and adds value;
• Develops relationships that last longer and are more rewarding over time;
• Creates higher levels of confidence and a respectful workplace;
• Rewards employees who deliver excellent service.
A Strong Service Culture

• Demands that

  ▪ Employees must be motivated to take a customer-centric approach to their regular duties and work activities.
  ▪ Each employee must be connected emotionally to a world-class service outcome.
  ▪ Customer satisfaction must be the top priority for everyone in the organization.
Service Culture: The Nigerian Experience

• Many corporate and public organizations in Nigeria do not have a coordinated and consistent model for excellent customer service delivery.

• This is evident in the unsatisfactory level of service experienced in many sectors of the economy today –
  ▪ Resulting in low levels of patronage when compared to those who view customer service as a major source of competitive advantage.
• There is an urgent need for Nigerian organizations to invest immensely in building customer relationships.
• This will make Nigerian brands more irresistible and their goods and services competitive in the global market place.
• Nigerian brands potentially stand to benefit from any arrangement that would improve the service culture.
SERVICOM

• In March, 2004, the Federal Government of Nigeria established SERVICOM with a focus on improving the quality of life of citizens for better development.

• “SERVICOM - Service Compact with All Nigerians”.

• The Compact” states that: “We dedicate ourselves to providing the basic services to which each citizen is entitled in a timely, fair, honest, effective and transparent manner…”
SERVICOM: Underlying Principles

- Affirmation of commitment to the service of the nation.
- Conviction that Nigeria can only realize her full potential if citizens receive prompt and efficient services from the state.
- Consideration for the needs and rights of all Nigerians to enjoy social and economic advancement.
- Dedication to deliver services to which citizens are entitled, timely, fairly, honestly, effectively and transparently.
SERVICOM INDEX

• The principal target of SERVICOM is Customer Satisfaction with emphasis on:
  - service delivery, timeliness, professionalism, right information and staff attitude.

• All government institutions, ministries and agencies in Nigeria were required to establish SERVICOM office and commit to providing service to the public.

• The efforts have not, however, translated into appreciable improvement in Nigeria’s service culture.
DEFINING A SERVICE CULTURE

Delivery Systems

Service philosophy or mission

Employee roles and expectations

Policies and procedures

Management support

Motivators and rewards

Products and services

Training

Service Culture
Covenant University Experience

• The University is a knowledge Industry with three core areas of operations:
  ▪ Teaching: Knowledge Transfer & Dissemination
  ▪ Research: Knowledge Acquisition & Development
  ▪ Community Service: Knowledge Application

• It impacts the society through her
  ▪ Products - Graduates & Research outputs
  ▪ Services – Consultancy, Medical, Library, Laboratory, etc.
Building Strong Service Culture

• Service culture is everyone's business.

• Building a strong service culture requires ownership and engagement by staff at all levels.

• It allows staff to focus on the right things and offer direct support to staff and students.

• Building a strong service culture is premise on adopting a continuous focus on refining and enhancing how we deliver services to our clients.
Our Clients

• Internal
  ▪ Students: Academics, Welfare
  ▪ Staff: Appropriate tools/information to work with, welfare
  ▪ Parents/Families: Effective communication

• External
  ▪ Partners
  ▪ Supervisory bodies
  ▪ Visitors
“The customer’s perception is your reality”
– Kate Zabriskie
Customer Service perception

- **Reliability:** Performing dependably and accurately
- **Assurance:** Conveying trust and confidence through knowledge of products and services
- **Tangibles:** Creating an impression through appearance (people, facilities) and equipment (efficient and user-friendly systems)
- **Empathy:** Communicating caring and individualized attention
- **Responsiveness:** Helping customers willingly, promptly, and speedily
What the Customers Want

- Personal recognition
- Courtesy
- Timely service
- Professionalism
- Enthusiastic service
- Empathy
- Patience
Improving Service Culture

- Areas that support an effective, efficient, productive and successful service culture include:
  - Aligned Goals: Have set goals
  - Relevant Standards: Code of conducts
  - Actionable Behaviors: Accountability
  - Leadership Effectiveness: Management to set the pace
  - Employee Engagement: All hands on deck
Ways to Improve Service Culture

- Be transparent
- Recognize and reward valuable contributions
- Cultivate strong coworker relationships
- Embrace and inspire employee autonomy
- Be flexible
• Communicate purpose and passion
• Promote a team atmosphere
• Give and solicit regular feedback
• Stay true to your core values
• Give culture building the effort it deserves
Conclusion

• Service culture defines the future and indeed the destiny of any organization.

• ‘Service education’ is the foundation upon which a strong service culture is built.

• ‘Practice by everyone’ keeps the organization aligned so that service providers are encouraged and supported, and service itself is improving.

• This is capped by an active and engaged leadership team - driving, supporting and role-modeling service.