USING AN AGENT SATISFACTION SURVEY FOR A SERVICE DESK METRIC

The service desk serves the important purpose of capturing incident management requests and tracking them to resolution. A functional service desk provides a method of communication between service users and service technicians. This makes it easy for users of a service or software to report issues and make requests, while receiving acknowledgment of how the request is being handled. For this reason, the service desk performs a crucial role in any IT organization.

If you are an operations manager or data professional in a company with a service desk, you may be familiar with a number of key metrics, including:

- Business hours lost
- Measures of infrastructure stability
- Trends in ticket volume
- Changes in success rate
- Percentage of calls resolved in one call
- The average cost per ticket
- Software asset utilization
- Agent satisfaction

Defining the Agent Satisfaction metric

Agent satisfaction is a measurement that tells you how well your company is performing with your internal customers, or agents, who work within the service desk. It's defined as the percentage of service agents that have above-average job satisfaction.

There are a few ways companies measure agent satisfaction. Among them is scheduling one-on-one conversations between management and employees or having an anonymous "suggestion box". Another common way companies can accurately measure employee or agent satisfaction is with an agent satisfaction survey.

In this article, we'll look at the usefulness of agent satisfaction surveys at capturing this metric and why it's important for the service desk.

Why is Agent Satisfaction an important service desk metric?

Agent satisfaction is a foundational concept impacting other areas of business while influencing additional metrics. For instance, when agents feel satisfied with their role they provide better customer service, a cornerstone of the service desk. When employees are not satisfied with work absenteeism might be higher. At the foundation of a service desk are the agents. For that reason, agent satisfaction should be prioritized.

When agents are satisfied, companies benefit. Having happy employees offers a number of advantages to your service desk organization:

- **Better productivity:** People who are happy perform better at work leading to greater productivity.
- **Impacts company culture:** Happiness can be encouraged at a cultural level that benefits all employees and the organization as a whole.
- **Stress reduction:** Having a happier workforce can reduce the individual stress of your employees.
- **Encourage innovation:** When employees are happy they feel more inclined to take business risks that can lead to greater innovation as a part of company culture.
- **Better teamwork:** When employees work with other happy employees, they get along. This encourages teamwork and collaboration.

Service desks are customer driven, benefitting tremendously when agents are happy and more productive at their jobs.

How to conduct an Agent Satisfaction survey

An agent satisfaction survey allows companies to quantify how their service desk agents feel about their jobs while determining metrics based on those numbers. Using the data from agent satisfaction surveys, businesses make decisions that help them achieve greater agent satisfaction.

When companies conduct agent satisfaction surveys, they encourage the following benefits:

- They understand employee satisfaction in a quantifiable way.
- They measure engagement of employees.
- They understand workplace culture better.

- They have a better understanding of why employees leave for other opportunities.

Because of these major benefits, it's important employers understand how to conduct an agent satisfaction survey. Here are steps to take:

Step 1: Choose someone to manage the survey

Typically, this is a senior HR director or it may be an IT professional depending on how the survey is built and distributed to service desk team members.

Step 2: Structure the survey to receive proper feedback

To get proper feedback, you should ensure that your survey includes certain elements. For one, it's recommended you use clear and concise language to drive the best, most accurate results. It's important that respondents understand your survey. Clear language, good grammar and sentence structure will help.

Next, decide if the survey is anonymous or not, and guarantee confidentiality. Employees will feel more comfortable answering questions if they know the responses are confidential.

Step 3: Use technology

Survey participation is essential to establishing accurate service desk agent satisfaction metrics. Using technology to create and distribute surveys to agents can increase engagement and participation with the survey, yielding better results. This is especially true in service desks because these employees often have a higher level understanding of technology.

Step 4: Choose thoughtful questions

To understand how employees feel about their service desk jobs, it's essential you ask the right questions. Here some example questions you could include on a service desk survey:

- Rate your stress in a typical week?
- How likely are you to look for opportunities outside this company?
- Rate your work-life balance.
- How much do you feel you contribute to the service desk team?
- Would you refer a friend to work here?
- How likely are you to look for opportunities within this company?
- How challenging is your job as a service desk agent?
- How meaningful is it to perform service desk work?

Often times, questions will appear in the form of a statement and employees will be asked to agree or disagree in a quantifiable way. For example, a respondent may be asked to answer a question by entering 1 for strongly agree, 2 for agree, 3 for neutral, 4 for disagree, 5 for strongly disagree.

Step 5: Analyze results and determine metrics

Once you've collected quantifiable results, you can tally them to determine a percentage of agents who have above-average job satisfaction. Looking at industry trends, you can analyze results and determine if your service desk workforce is more or less satisfied with their job than agents in similar

roles at other companies. Using these insights, business leaders can plan for greater success.

Tips for Agent Satisfaction surveys

Below are some tips for conducting agent satisfaction surveys with your service desk agents and determining metrics:

- Decide which leaders should provide input to establish important metrics for the service desk
- Establish clear deadlines for completing the survey
- Thoroughly examine potential survey questions to make sure they are essential to establishing and analyzing key metrics

Additional resources

BMC Blogs has many resources on IT service desk metrics and best practices. Browse our Enterprise IT Glossary or see these articles:

- Help Desk vs Service Desk: What's The Difference?
- How to Improve Service Desk Performance
- Mean Time to Resolve (MTTR) as a Service Desk Metric
- Introduction to Critical Incident Response Time (CIRT): A Better Way to Measure Performance
- Creating a Service Desk Code of Conduct
- Introduction to the Enterprise Service Desk