

SERVICE DESK BEST PRACTICES FOR CREATING MORE VALUE



An effective [Service Desk](#) keeps digital enablement running. The Service Desk identifies flaws in IT deployments and enables fixes. It also rolls out new offerings, such as accounts, equipment, services, and software. Digital enablement dies without an effective Service Desk supporting it.

Unfortunately, management does not always understand this. They may reluctantly budget the Service Desk at current levels or view the Service Desk as creating non-revenue expenses that rank below more valuable revenue-producing activities. This approach is short-sighted. Leaders of all companies must understand that a Service Desk is a customer product that your users consume—it's not an expense. It needs to be understood, strategized, and well-funded as a product.

To help enable Service Desk management as a product, here are three essential best practices:

1. Experience your Service Desk for yourself

Managers and leaders should experience personally and directly how your company's Service Desk operates, verifying your customers' grassroots reality. In addition to providing *tourist* visits where you show off the support center, take a seat in the middle of the operation and invite interested management to do the same. Better yet, have IT management take a few calls as a Level 1 [service desk agent](#).

Most [Service Desk software](#) also allows management to listen to calls for training purposes. Use this feature. Train your management in what the customer experiences when using the Service Desk. Listen to the conversations, hear the buzzing sounds yourself, watch where the techs go while they

solve customer incidents and fulfill service requests.

Managers who experience the Service Desk gain a truer context of the data within reports and the metrics you receive each month. You'll be better equipped to make more positive and timely decisions about the Service Desk. This practice provides you with better information to make the Service Desk a true strategic product asset.

2. Examine your customers' behaviors and expectations

IT support continues to rapidly evolve, sometimes under C-Level radar. Witness the number of changes occurring just within the first few months of 2020, where large companies shifted the workplace from the office to employees' homes, creating new support requirements.

Even with rapid unexpected change, customers still expect immediate access to services and answers, which requires increased capability on the Service Desk.

The other behavioral issue to watch for is customers who want to bypass the process because they do not want to deal with the Service Desk. This can happen for several reasons:

- The feeling that the Service Desk doesn't understand *our* issues.
- It takes too long to get an answer.
- Someone else figured it out for them.
- "It never got solved so I just live with it."

If this happens often, you'll need to reevaluate and improve your Service Desk capabilities. Failure to do this will negatively impact your business and its bottom line.

The most common way to ferret out these issues is by customer survey and ticket follow-up, using automated surveys or personal follow-up. A consistent surveying process will provide a clear indication of how well your Service Desk is doing in meeting user needs. [Service Level Agreements \(SLAs\)](#) are another common and enforceable way to ensure that the Service Desk is providing the services that were contracted for, in the agreed upon solution window.

3. Locate support knowledge closer to the user

Assess your support knowledge, figure out how far your customers must travel to access it—then reduce the distance.

If [Level 0](#) contains all your [self-service capabilities](#) and boosting customer productivity is your organization's primary concern, it is natural to view both Level 0 and Level 1 as the next most important focuses in capability.

You can increase customer satisfaction by increasing your [First Contact Resolution \(FCR\)](#) rate. As the Service Desk shifts from being an **expense** to becoming a **product**, customer satisfaction and FCR rates become more important. The more items that can be resolved in Level 0 and Level 1, the higher your FCR rates and customer satisfaction will be as the customer will not have to "travel far" to get a solution.

The most common way to increase FCR is to push more tasks down to a lower Service Desk level, reducing the travel distance to a solution. Implement more automation techniques—such as automated password resets and [AI-based resolutions](#)—in Level 0/self-service to alleviate ticket

demand in Level 1. You may also be able to create more [knowledge documents](#) that a user can access to solve problems without a technician's support.

Empower Level 1 technicians to accomplish Level 2 tasks, decreasing demand for Level 2 services in the process. Examples include providing Level 1 access to Windows AD and enabling Level 1 to make email changes. Updating Level 1 skillsets to perform Level 2 tasks moves your support knowledge closer to the user and can increase product satisfaction.

Knowledge is product—share it!

There is plenty of proof supporting the concept of [knowledge as the true product](#) of the Service Desk, making the Service Desk a—surprise!—actual product. Focusing on building and unleashing the knowledge capability of your Service Desk increases your support success, improves your customers' experience, and, therefore, your bottom line.

BMC for service desk management

It's also well worth an investment in improving the Service Desk's front and back end experience by implementing Information Technology Service Management (ITSM) tools [such as BMC Helix](#). ITSM-based tools enables you to better meet customers' expectations of immediate, knowledgeable service with rapid response and accurate results.

For more on establishing and managing a successful, knowledge-sharing Service Desk in your company, check out these BMC Blogs:

- [Knowledge Centered Support: The Framework For Service Desk Transformation](#)
- [Knowledge-Centered Service \(KCS\) Explained](#)
- [Self-Service IT Thrives in the Clouds](#)
- [Creating a Strong Service Desk Culture](#)
- [How to Improve Service Desk Performance](#)
- [Service Desk TIPS Explained: Ticket, Incident, Problem, Service Request](#)
- [Service Desk and Support Manager: Role Description and Responsibilities](#)

For more ITSM topics beyond the service desk, see our [BMC Service Management Blog](#).