

Step 3 to Establish Your Own Benchmarks

Because cost-effective, profitable, quality customer service is the strategic imperative for all businesses (regardless of what non face-to-face media your organisation uses), establishing appropriate benchmarks is “mission critical”.

Last week we looked at the first two steps to laying the foundation for your own benchmarking: How to identify present (though sometimes hidden) benchmarks; How to take initial results, review them, consider the level of service you can afford and then, if you feel it will be helpful begin to investigate and compare your results with other standards for like activities in similar industries.

Step 3 – Keep Measuring Progress

Benchmarks are not just for the boardroom or senior-level decision makers, rather everyone needs to be involved with observing and reviewing activities, looking for new ways to accomplishing results. This includes internal staff and external service and product providers – anyone who could contribute to maximising or minimising benefits to your customers.

Time to observe and review measures should be regularly scheduled to ensure this vital activity is not pushed out of the way by more “urgent” tasks.

Explain how critical benchmarking and improvement is to the company and ask for volunteers to help. People who want to contribute typically will do a better job with this than those who are recruited!

Create and empower specific (or rotating) teams of staff to be responsible for monitoring and measuring individual tasks. (I recommend a great book to help with this: I-Power, by Martin Edelston and Marlon Buhagiar, Barricaid Books, USA)

But that’s not enough. You also need to keep improving and then never rest, until the good is better and the better best. Next week we will look at a process to keep improving and how “blowing it all up” and starting all over again can ensure your benchmarking is effective and profitable for all involved.

Read about the author, Darlene D. Richard, at www.CallCentreINTEGRITY.com/articles.htm