



Employee Training

May 2014





Overview of Training Program

New Hire Training

- Five weeks of instructor lead training totaling 200 hours of training
 - 125 hours of classroom instruction
 - 75 hours of trainer supported phone time
- New hire graduates transition to a nesting environment in the call center for 4 to 6 weeks directly after New Hire Training
- 12 hours of Customer Relationship Building training is provided by our Quality Assurance team during the first 3 days of nesting



Overview of Training Program

Training for Existing Agents

- Refresher training is provided as needed
- Training is provided anytime there is a policy or process change
- Weekly huddles are scheduled twice a week to address any issues or changes from the previous week
- Supervisors are on-site with the CSR's and are able to coach through challenging situations
- Supervisors are available to take over any situation that requires upper management approval
- Supervisors have an escalated team available to them to assist as needed



Customer Advocacy Recommendations & Current Training Program Components

Recommendation:

Inquiries and referrals to assistance and conservation and efficiency programs would be part of the conference between the customer and the AE Customer Care employee.

Current Program Components

- New Hire Training includes 15 hours of training on these topics
- Training focus
 - Determining that a customer needs help when it hasn't been explicitly stated
 - Determining the difference between a high bill due to an AE error versus a high bill due to usage patterns
 - Analyzing usage patterns to help customers conserve through changing habits
 - Identifying conservation programs that may benefit the customer
 - Connecting the customer with assistance agencies
- Refresher training is provided to all agents as needed



Customer Advocacy Recommendations & Current Training Program Components

Recommendation:

As part of the referral process, there should be an explanation of any arrearage programs including providing the customer application forms and instructions.

Current Program Components:

- If and when an arrearage program is created and funded, the training curriculum will be updated to include all of the above mentioned items.



Customer Advocacy Recommendations & Current Training Program Components

Recommendation:

Develop training modules to instruct Customer Care employees on performing one to one customer conferences in a compassionate manner.

Current Program Components:

- All newly hired call center employees complete a 12 hour **Customer Relationship Building** class that focuses on improving the customer experience through the way we communicate with our customers.
- The goal of the class is to highlight the importance of communicating in a way that shows we value our customers and we will work to the best of our ability to address the reason for their call.
- Employees are also coached on the concepts from our Customer Relationship Building class during monthly call quality coaching sessions.



Customer Advocacy Recommendations & Current Training Program Components

Some of the points included in the Customer Relationship Building class are:

- Show a willingness to help by always being friendly, professional, and courteous throughout the customer interaction.
- Greetings should always be upbeat and friendly and our tone should always remain professional throughout the call.
- Questions should start with “May I” or “ Can I” and “Please” then “ Thank You”.
- Acknowledge the reason the customer is calling at the beginning of the call to communicate “I heard you, I understand what you are calling about, and I’m here to help you”.
- Find a common interest using a Win\Win philosophy with the customer to find a mutually beneficial, positive solution.
- Be aware of customer expectations, and if we’re not able to accommodate those expectations, explain why, and what other options are available.
- Address the customer as Sir, Ms. or Mr. and use the last name to show respect and professionalism.
- By gauging the customers experience at the end of the call, we ensure the customer’s questions and concerns have been addressed.



Customer Advocacy Recommendations & Current Training Program Components

Recommendation:

Develop referral forms that would tailor contact persons and their contact numbers to greater enable customers with bill paying problems to connect with available resources. Application forms should be provided to the customer.

Current Program Components:

- Referring customers to available resources is covered within the 15 hours of training focused on assistance agencies and conservation.



Customer Advocacy Recommendations & Current Training Program Components

Recommendation:

Ensure AE staff have flexibility in working with customers to develop a realistic and reasonable solution to their utility bill problems.

Current Program Components:

- New hire training includes 12 hours of training related to this topic
- Training focus
 - Working with the customer to create a payment arrangement that sets the customer up for success
 - Engaging other AE workgroups like the Customer Assistance Program agents
 - Tying in topics already covered about conservation and assistance agencies
- Refresher training is provided to all agents as needed