

## AREA I EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Kansas Department of Commerce (KDOC), in partnership with Wichita State University's Public Policy and Management Center, conducted a study to assess employees' perceptions of customer service throughout the Workforce Centers in Kansas. Online surveys and telephone interviews were used to evaluate those perceptions. This summary is a brief overview of the study findings for Area I.

Highlights include the following:

- The vast majority of employees (97%) agreed that the Workforce Center communicates effectively with the public, makes an effort to attract customers with diverse backgrounds, and cooperates to provide professional customer service for everyone.
- All employees (100%) agreed that customers at the Workforce Center are usually served promptly, and the customers have access to timely and accurate information about job postings.
- All employees (100%) were confident that they can recognize when customers are upset, handle the stress of difficult interactions with customers, and use appropriate body language when interacting with customers.
- All employees (100%) believed the work they do plays an important role in providing quality customer service, and were proud of the service they provide to customers.
- An employee stated, *"I do feel that high quality customer service for job seekers AND employers is the number one goal at my Workforce Center."*

Areas with opportunities for improvement include skills and training, in-take services, customer service as an organizational priority, and the physical environment. Specifically:

- The majority of employees (78%) are not confident that they can successfully meet the needs of non-English speakers, and some employees (29%) are not confident that they can successfully meet the needs of persons from other cultures or those with low literacy skills (25%). Additionally, 17% think they are not cross-trained to assist with customer intake when needed.
- Some employees (10%) note the Workforce Center does not have an efficient intake process for customers and (17%) of employees report they are not cross-trained to assist with customer intake when needed.
- About 21% of employees think their Center does not share information with other Workforce Centers to improve services or assist customers, and some (7%) do not think that management is focused on improving customer service. About 10% of employees do not think customer service performance is very important when evaluating Workforce Center employees' job performance.
- Some employees (17%) think their physical workplace (technology, furniture, etc.) does not meet their needs, and the same number (17%) think the physical workplace does not meet most of the customers' needs. More than 30% of employees report their Workforce Center is not easy to locate.

Overall, the findings for Area I indicate that while there are some opportunities for improvement, most employees have positive perceptions about the customer service that is currently provided by the Workforce Center.

## AREA II EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Kansas Department of Commerce (KDOC), in partnership with Wichita State University's Public Policy and Management Center, conducted a study to assess employees' perceptions of customer service throughout the Workforce Centers in Kansas. Online surveys and telephone interviews were used to evaluate those perceptions. This summary is a brief overview of the study findings for Area II.

Highlights include the following:

- Most employees (96%) agreed that the Workforce Center communicates effectively with the public, makes an effort to attract customers with diverse backgrounds (100%), and cooperates to provide professional customer service for everyone (100%).
- All employees (100%) agreed that customers have access to timely and accurate information about job postings and that it is worthwhile for customers to come to their Center because additional services are provided, beyond what they can get from KansasWorks.com.
- All employees (100%) agreed that they strive to use community partnerships to better serve customers, and they think most customers leave the Center satisfied with the service they receive.
- All employees (100%) believed the work they do plays an important role in providing quality customer service, and were proud of the service they provide to customers.
- Employees in Area II self-reported strong interpersonal skills and customer relations, with 100% of employees agreeing that they try to understand their customer's point-of-view, being confident in recognizing when a customer is upset, knowing how to problem-solve when serving an upset customer, and being confident that they can handle the stress of difficult interactions with customers.

The areas with opportunities for improvement in Area II pertain to skills and training, in-take services, customer service as an organizational priority, and the physical environment. Those opportunities include:

- The majority of employees (55%) are not confident that they can successfully meet the needs of non-English speakers, and some employees are not confident that they can successfully meet the needs of persons with low literacy skills (18%), persons with disabilities (9%), and persons with incarceration history (9%).
- Some employees (17%) disagreed that their physical workplace (technology, furniture, etc.) meets their needs, and 13% do not think that the physical workplace meets most of the customers' needs. One respondent stated: *The arrangement of the Workforce Center is such that it is difficult to concentrate on administrative tasks. The open floor allows for several interruptions...this can prove to be challenging for staff to refocus on what they were doing...I'd be strongly in favor of adding an administrative assistant position in order to handle all intake and control customer flow throughout the Workforce Center.*
- More than 30% of employees do not think that their Workforce Center is easy to locate.
- Almost one-third (30%) of employees disagreed that there are sufficient procedures to ensure the safety of both customers and staff. One respondent said: *There should be a safe way to share suggestions/concerns. We should not have to serve threatening or sexually inappropriate customers. It shouldn't be so difficult to bar them from the building.*

Overall, the findings for Area II show that while some important improvements may be necessary, the majority of customer service perceptions are positive.

## AREA III EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Kansas Department of Commerce (KDOC), in partnership with Wichita State University's Public Policy and Management Center, conducted a study to assess employees' perceptions of customer service throughout the Workforce Centers in Kansas. Online surveys and telephone interviews were used to evaluate those perceptions. This summary is a brief overview of the study findings for Area III.

Highlights include the following:

- All employees (100%) think the Workforce Center has effective communication processes.
- All employees (100%) agreed that customers at the Workforce Center are usually served promptly, have access to timely and accurate information about job postings, and think that most customers leave the Workforce Center satisfied with the service they receive.
- All employees (100%) agreed that customer service performance is very important when evaluating Workforce Center employees' job performance.
- All employees (100%) agreed that their co-workers have positive attitudes. They are committed to providing customers with excellent service, and they think the work they do plays an important role in providing quality customer service.
- All employees (100%) are proud of the service provided to customers and are proud to tell people that they work for the organization.

The areas with opportunities for improvement in Area III pertain to skills and training, in-take services, customer service as an organizational priority, and the physical environment. Those opportunities include:

- Some employees are not confident in their ability to successfully meet the needs of customers with special circumstances, specifically persons with incarceration history (33%), non-English speakers (25%), and persons who have low literacy skills (17%). One respondent stated: *We need translators for Spanish speaking clients.*
- Twenty percent of employees did not think their Workforce Center has an efficient intake process for customers, and nearly 27% did not agree that staff are cross-trained to assist with customer in-take when needed.
- Seven percent of employees do not think that they know how to problem-solve when serving an upset customer. One respondent stated: *Some of our staff need assistance on how to defuse the upset customer.*
- Some employees (20%) report that their Workforce Center does not share information with other Workforce Centers in order to improve services or assist customers, and nearly 7% think that management at the Workforce Center is not focused on improving customer service.
- In regards to the physical environment, about 13% of employees do not think that, given the type of work they do, the physical workplace (technology, furniture, etc.) meets their needs.
- About 7% think that customers report the Workforce Center is not easy to locate.
- Some employees (27%) do not think there are sufficient procedures to ensure the safety of both customers and staff.

Overall, the findings for Area III revealed a positive perception of customer service and some opportunities to make it even better. As one employee put it into words: *We do a lot of good work and it makes me feel really good to be a part of it. I love helping people.*

## AREA IV EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Kansas Department of Commerce (KDOC), in partnership with Wichita State University's Public Policy and Management Center, conducted a study to assess employees' perceptions of customer service throughout the Workforce Centers in Kansas. Online surveys and telephone interviews were used to evaluate those perceptions. This summary is a brief overview of the study findings for Area IV.

Highlights include the following:

- All employees (100%) agreed that their customers have access to timely and accurate information about job postings.
- All employees (100%) believe the work they do plays an important role in providing quality customer service.
- All employees (100%) are confident that they understand the needs and expectations of customers, and they view every customer as a unique individual with a need or problem that requires their assistance.
- All employees (100%) agreed that they know how to problem-solve when serving an upset customer, and they agreed that they are confident that their body language is appropriate when interacting with customers.
- All employees (100%) indicated they are proud of the service they provide to the customers, and they are committed to providing customers with excellent service.

The opportunities for improvement in Area IV pertain to communication, skills and training, in-take services, customer service as an organizational priority, and the physical environment.

Those opportunities include:

- Fourteen percent of employees think their Workforce Center does not communicate effectively with the public, and nearly 26% think that the Workforce Center does not have effective communication processes.
- About 16% of employees think that the Workforce Center does not make an effort to attract customers with diverse backgrounds.
- Some employees are not confident in their ability to successfully meet the needs of the following customers with special circumstances: non-English speakers (45%), persons from other cultures (18%), and persons with low literacy skills (18%).
- About 27% of employees think customers at the Workforce Center are not usually served promptly. One statement included: *It is unfortunate that we often have people waiting for long periods of time to see a Workforce Professional due to staff shortages.* Nearly 20% of employees do not think the Workforce Center has an efficient intake process for customers, 12% do not think staff are cross-trained to assist with customer intake when needed, and about 14% think it is not worthwhile for customers to come to their Center because they can usually receive additional services, beyond what is provided from Kansas-Works.com.
- More than a quarter of employees (26%) think their Workforce Center does not share information with other Workforce Centers in order to improve services or assist

customers, and about 16% of employees do not think that management at their Workforce Center is focused on improving customer service.

- Some employees (14%) do not agree that, given the type of work they do, their physical workplace (technology, furniture, etc.) meets their needs. Almost 8% do not think that their physical workplace (computers, desk space, signage, etc.) meets most of their customers' needs. Twenty percent of employees think customers find the Workforce Center is hard to locate.

Overall, the findings for Area IV indicate that several opportunities for improvement may exist, but there is a positive perception of customer service in the Workforce Center. One respondent said: *The Workforce Center is a great place to work. It has people that really care for others and have a passion for helping those that walk through our doors needing assistance.*

## AREA V EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Kansas Department of Commerce (KDOC), in partnership with Wichita State University's Public Policy and Management Center, conducted a study to assess employees' perceptions of customer service throughout the Workforce Centers in Kansas. Online surveys and telephone interviews were used to evaluate those perceptions. This summary is a brief overview of the study findings for Area V.

Highlights include the following:

- All employees (100%) agreed that their customers have access to timely and accurate information about job postings.
- All employees (100%) agreed that they strive to use community partnerships to better serve customers.
- All employees (100%) believe the work they do plays an important role in providing quality customer service.
- All employees (100%) were confident that they understand the needs and expectations of customers and agreed that they view every customer as a unique individual with a need or problem that requires their assistance. All employees (100%) also agreed that they try to understand their customers' point-of-view, they felt confident in recognizing when customers are upset, they agreed to knowing how to problem-solve when serving upset customers, felt confident in handling the stress of difficult interactions with customers, and agreed to knowing what to do to fix situations pertaining to customer complaints.
- All employees (100%) are proud of the service they provide to customers, are proud to tell people that they work for the organization, and are committed to providing customers with excellent service.

Opportunities for improvement in Area V pertain to skills and training, in-take services, customer service as an organizational priority, and the physical environment. Those opportunities include:

- Some employees are not confident in successfully meeting the needs of the following customers with special circumstances: non-English speakers (69%), Veterans (15%), persons with complaints (8%), and persons with incarceration history (8%). In addition, nearly 10% of employees do not feel adequately trained on the services, products and programs their Center can provide.
- About 24% of employees do not think their Workforce Center has an efficient intake process for customers, and 10% of employees think that staff are not cross-trained to assist with customer intake when needed.
- Some employees (19%) do not think it is worthwhile for customers to come to their Center because they usually provide additional services, beyond what they can get from Kansas-Works.com.
- More than one-fifth of employees (23%) think that the people they work with do not respect the work of others. About 18% do not think their Workforce Center shares information with other Workforce Centers in order to improve services or assist customers, and nearly 10% think that management at their Workforce Center is not focused on improving customer service.
- About 23% of employees do not think that, given the type of work they do, their physical workplace (technology, furniture, etc.) meets their needs, and about 10% of employees do not think that the physical workplace (computers, desk space, signage, etc.) meets most of their customers' needs.
- Additionally, nearly 23% of employees report their customers do not find the Workforce Center easy to locate.

Overall, the findings for Area V indicate that employees have positive perceptions of customer service, but there are some great opportunities to make improvements and better serve the customers at the Workforce Centers in Kansas.