Learning Resources for Action Planning

Denison Leadership Development

Competency	Definition
Emphasizes Customer Focus	*The individual is driven to* **clearly understand the present and future needs of the customer**, *seeks ongoing input from the customer, continuously strives to improve customer service, and ensures that all employees are driven by a* **concern to satisfy the customer.**

Self-Directed Learning (Books | Articles | Blogs)

Customer-Focused Leadership	The Best Way to Get What You Want? Focus on Your Customers' Needs.	How Customer Obsession Creates Accountability for Change
Harvard Business Review	Entrepreneur MAGAZINE	MITSloan Management Review
Is Your Company as Customer-Focused as You Think?	The Quest for Customer Focus	Focus on the Customers You Want, Not the Ones You Have
MITSloan Management Review	Harvard Business Review	Harvard Business Review

7 Keys to Building A Customer-Focused Culture **Forbes**	The CEO Guide to Customer Experience McKinsey&Company	What is Customer-Focused Leadership? The **TRAINING**Bank
30 Ways to Align Your Business Strategy with Customer Needs **M** Medium	The Power of Internal Guarantees Harvard Business Review	Internal Customer Service Best Practices: Ten Principles for A Stronger Company Culture **Forbes**

Learning On-The-Job

Practice this competency on-the-job. Try out ideas for what other leaders are doing to develop this competency for themselves and their teams.

- Create customer personas to help the team better understand customer (internal or external) wants and needs.

- Create a program or workshop to "walk a mile in the customer's shoes" and collect customer stories that are then shared within the organization.

- Have a recognition program that is based on exceptional customer service.

- Start every meeting with a customer story or update to reinforce the importance of the customer.

- Conduct customer satisfaction surveys and require corrective actions for any teams that fall below a targeted percent satisfaction.

- Use stories and examples to encourage team to challenge customers when it is in their (and/or the organization's) best interests to do things differently from their expectations.

- Share/cascade examples of customer expectations to the team.

- Interview customers to get a clear picture of their expectations and feedback on the current service/deliverables.

- Do periodic check-ins with the customer and show visible course-correction, when needed.

Social Learning

Identify a suitable form of learning from others through mentoring and/or coaching.

1:1 Mentoring	Group Mentoring	Training-Based Mentoring
Identify or ask your manager to match you with an executive mentor or a peer mentor based on your action plan focus area.	Join or create a group of 4-6 peer leaders who engage a senior mentor and meet as a group once or twice a month to discuss various topics and do structured group activities. Group mentoring combines senior and peer mentoring, as mentees learn from both the mentor and each other.	Join a training program that matches you with (or take the initiative to identify) a mentor based on the specific skills taught in the training program.
Community of Learning – In-Person	**Community of Learning – Virtual**	**Coaching**
Community of learning is a great way to network and learn from peers and leaders about a common area of interest. Join or start a group of employees who are interested in strengthening a particular competency. Identify specific topics, formats (e.g., talk, panel, discussion, etc.) and meet periodically.	Similar in concept to "in-person" community of learning, except where in-person interaction is impractical or impossible due to different geographic locations. Instead, members use electronic methods such as email, instant messaging, and video conferencing. Join or start a community of learning that is virtual and build your global network and expertise.	Identify a professional coach to help you improve, grow, and develop skills to overcome obstacles and strengthen your competencies.