Different Strokes:
Providing Help Desk Services Internally or Outsourcing
Presenters

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#NERCOMP18
Dear HelpDesk. My computer kept telling me I have an invalid username or password and now my keyboard doesn't work.
Approaches

• Internally Staffed
• Student Staffed
• Outsourced
• Hybrid Solutions
Pillars of Help Desk Structure

- Structured workflow
- Knowing your IT environment
- Simplify/automate tasks
- Communication with end users
- Help clients help themselves
- Monitor support staff performance
- Surveying clients
Best Practices for Help Desk

• Set expectations
• Response SLAs
• Parameters for different services (accounts, moves, break/fix)
• Publicize the agreed upon expectations
Setting Support Parameters

- Staffing levels
- Quantity of requests
- Type of request (can it be scheduled?)
- Vendor supported technology
- On premise / cloud offerings
Handling of Emergencies

• Direct phone number of a tech(s)
• Contact central source and dispatch
• What happens off-hours?
• Monitoring – know before it happens and deliver the message
Communication

• Policy location – do they read?
• Website gives status [red, yellow, green]
• Send email? [What if email is down!]
• Send emergency text message
Internally Staffed

• Pros
  • Hands-on customer service
  • IT professionals with understanding of your culture

• Cons
  • Expensive
  • Continuity
  • Hiring process is a hassle

• Best practices
  • Coverage – what is expected? (24/7 – some weekends)
  • Responsiveness
Student Staffed

**Pros**
- Affordable
- Available
- Good work experience for students

**Cons**
- Not IT professionals – need training
- Difficult to train
- Scheduling and continuity
Outsourced

• Pros
  • Professional staff with professional tools
  • Economical 24/7/365 coverage

• Cons
  • Lack of familiarity with local environment and culture
  • Reduced opportunities for users to build relationships with in-house staff

• Best Practice
  • Create “one team.” Avoid us vs. them.
  • Have visibility into systems and metrics
  • Low bidder not always best choice
Hybrid Solutions

- Professional staff during times of peak demand
- Students/off-site solution for off-hours
- Pros / cons
- Best practices
  - Ticketing system critical – transparent hand-offs
  - Timing of professional staff (8-5 Weekdays)
Good Technology Impressions

• Low cost =/ good vibrations  
• Best non tech processes  
• Account hygiene issues  
  • Creation timing  
  • Inactive / disabled  
  • Self-service  
• All one Technology Team!!
EMAIL FIXED!

HELP DESK IS AWESOME!
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