



**FASTER. FRIENDLIER. EASIER.**

January/February 2007

## Georgia Service Quality Index: Ready To Use

Customer satisfaction can now be measured across state government services using the Georgia Service Quality Index (GSQI), developed by OCS in partnership with research experts from the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies at Georgia State University, with input from pilot agencies.

The GSQI is a research-based, validated survey tool and method for gauging customer satisfaction. It is designed for annual use, as one method of soliciting customer feedback.

The fall 2006 testing of the instrument and process resulted in a set of survey questions that have been validated by customers. Surveys were mailed to a random sample of

*In a letter to agency heads, Governor Perdue encouraged the use of the GSQI and the Employee Job Satisfaction Survey. "We'll have valid data across the state to guide future decision making," said Perdue.*

1,000 service users in each of four agencies. A 10% response rate is required to be statistically valid. Responses in the pilots ranged from 10.7% to 19.5%.

Data sampling methods were also tested to ensure that surveys were sent to a random sample of recent users of each service. Safeguards for maintaining customer confidentiality are in place. Reporting and analysis of data by a third party meet research standards.

The survey process resulted in the creation of a service quality "score" based on questions

measuring five key dimensions: accessible, courteous, helpful, knowledgeable and responsive. A scale of 1-10, standard for customer research, was used.

A different set of three questions assesses customer satisfaction. This measure includes both customer expectations and service quality. Together, the scores can be used by an agency to better understand its service.

The survey questions and methodology will be used to develop a statewide report card of customer service. As more data is collected, results can be viewed across organizations with similar business.

The GSQI is now available to all agencies. The cost to the agency varies depending on whether the survey is expanded to include service-specific questions and how it is administered—by web, postal mail or telephone.

### For more information:

About the GSQI:  
Contact Deon Locklin at GSU (404-651-3509 or [dlocklin@gsu.edu](mailto:dlocklin@gsu.edu))

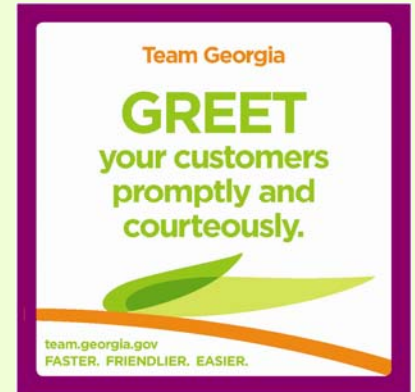
About the Employee Job Satisfaction Survey:  
Contact Gwen Wiggins at GMS (404-657-2158 or [gwiggins@gms.state.ga.us](mailto:gwiggins@gms.state.ga.us))



Champions from the 35 campuses of the University System of Georgia gathered at Macon State College on January 18 to learn about process improvement methods and discuss customer service improvement plans for FY 08. Here, the USG Champions greet the camera with new posters promoting Team Georgia's four standards of service.

## Call to Action

### Colorful Coasters



### Collect all Four!

### Great Service Starts with "Greet"

Look around state offices these days, and you'll see plenty of colorful posters and table tents promoting four new messages. These are our shared standards of service—the actions we take to deliver the best customer service of any state in the nation:

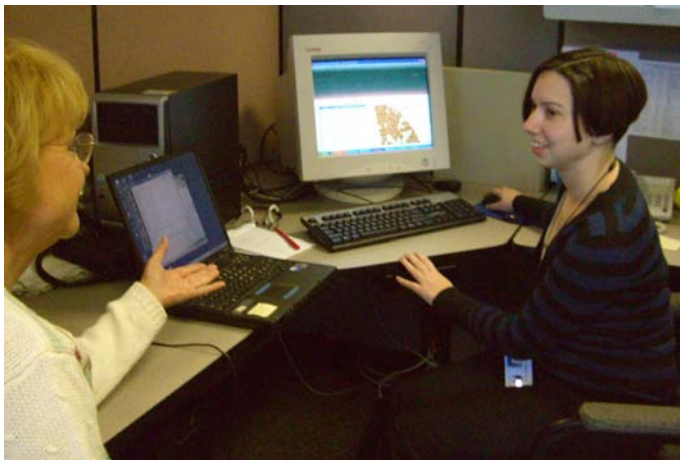
- GREET**  
your customers promptly and courteously.
- LISTEN**  
and verify your understanding of the customer's needs.
- HELP**  
customers with your answers and actions.
- HONOR**  
your commitments in a timely manner.

In January and February, we are taking an in-depth look at the "GREET" standard. Agency leaders, champions and staff are encouraged to discuss:

- What does it mean to greet promptly and courteously?
- What should this look like in your agency? In your own role?
- What does your greeting say about you to your customers?
- What can you do to greet more promptly? More courteously? .over-

# OHIP: Following Up With Process Improvement

Judy McDowell, planner with the Office of Health Information and Policy (OHIP), remembers a time five years ago when the office had room for improved customer service. The majority of OHIP's customers are epidemiologists within the Division of Public Health in DHR.



Judy McDowell, left, speaks with Penny Harding, assistant webmaster at the Office of Health Information and Policy in Atlanta.

Improved technology and increased automation helped make OHIP's processes faster and easier. Creating standards and procedures maximized credibility.

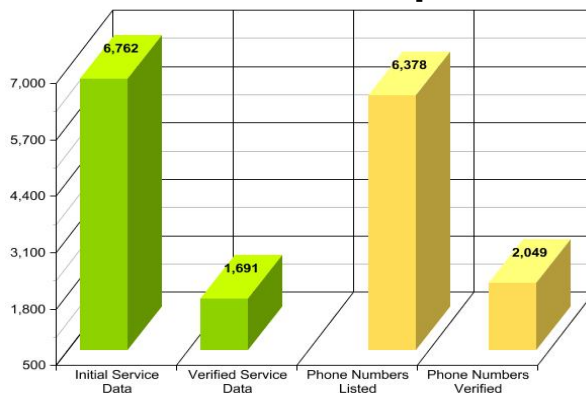
Then came the tough question: Are we getting better? To find out, OHIP implemented a policy where every single customer received a follow-up call from a staff member who did not handle the customer's requested data. In the early stages, McDowell was making over 50 follow-up calls a week.

Since implementing follow-up procedures four years ago, customer satisfaction at OHIP has improved so dramatically that today there are virtually no complaints. Technology has further strengthened OHIP's ties with its customers by making the bulk of OHIP data available in seconds through its online system.

## Knowledge Base Data Collection Complete

Collection of data for the state's first-ever knowledge base of services linked to telephone numbers is complete. OCS is now validating the data, which will first be used by GTA directory assistance.

The collection effort touched 126 state entities, with staff reviewing 9,000+ data records from a wide array of sources. Gathering, evaluating and cleaning the data took three months, resulting in a 77% reduction in the number of services and a 68% reduction in phone numbers.



provided a model for the data collection process. Their numbers alone went from 472 to just 69 key points of public contact.

"DOT became involved in this pilot," said Jim Davis, strategic development administrator for DOT, "because we had been seeking to consolidate all of our phone numbers to fewer points of contact. OCS came to us at just the right time, and we kicked off the project."

"DOT provided the right mix of factors to test the process: regional and centralized services; a large number of call handling centers; and a complexity of service scalable to other agencies," said Marty Hicks, OCS director of call center operations. "DOT had the elements that we would face going forward with all agencies."

## Great Service Starts With GREET!

-continued from page 1-

Here are just a few examples of prompt and courteous greetings:

### Consistency matters.

Employees at the Department of Human Resources voted on a standard telephone greeting for the agency. The winning DHR greeting is: "[Office Name], this is [Name], may I help you?"

### Be easy to reach.

If customers can't reach you quickly and easily, they'll have a negative impression before you can greet them. Using new industry best practices, staff in the state's 27 call centers reduced their average time to answer calls by nearly two-thirds over the last year.

### Identify yourself.

The Department of Driver Services contact center uses an automated attendant to direct callers to the appropriate agents. Agents then greet callers by stating their area and name (for example, "Renewals, this is John"). This confirms that the caller has reached the right place and person.

### Don't keep them waiting.

The Governor's Office of Constituent Services observes a "sundown rule" for returning all calls. "Even if we don't have an answer yet, we make sure to call the customer back before the sun goes down that day to let them know we're working on it and when they can expect an answer," says Director Kay Robinson.

### One represents all.

Many customers judge all of state government by their experiences with a single state worker or agency. Keeping this in mind, employees like Brenda Parker at the Georgia Technology Authority keep notes by their phones that say, "To this caller, I am the state of Georgia."

*Stay tuned for a look at LISTEN in March.*

\*\*\*

Send us *your* best practices! Tell us how you and your colleagues greet customers promptly and courteously, whether on the phone, over e-mail or in person. E-mail us at [success@ocs.ga.gov](mailto:success@ocs.ga.gov).

\*\*\*

The Department of Transportation (DOT)



**Georgia will have the BEST customer service of any state in the nation**

Governor's Office of Customer Service  
404-463-5914  
Jerri Cloud, *Director of Communications*  
Justine Holcomb • Cassie Yoder  
<http://team.georgia.gov>