# Performance Analysis Report for JKKL Consulting

November 7, 2020



*“Our mission is to provide customer satisfaction through quality and knowledgeable customer service to offer customers the most unique products in the marketplace.”*

## Introduction and Background - KD

Happy Products and More (HP&M) is a mail-order and Internet catalog business marketing high-quality gifts, apparel, and home accessories. In operation for six years, HP&M is seeking to aggressively grow their company while remaining profitable. To reach this goal, they would like to focus efforts on improving the quality of customer service and resulting customer service scores by 10% and improve the quality of the work environment through staff development and recognition.

Management has identified several areas of concern. Employee retention and morale are low. Customer service complaints have increased 30% since the same period in the previous year. In the coming year, HP&M will be updating its current technology including new hardware configurations and equipment. Additionally, new HR policies were recently introduced along with a new company handbook. HP&M has designated a budget of $400,000 to employ JKKL Consulting to assist the company in reaching their determined growth goals through training to address these concerns.

JKKL Consulting has conducted a full gap analysis to assess current conditions at HP&M and identified key sources impacting telephone operator performance and customer service. The analysis results are presented in this report, followed by recommendations, proposed solutions, and an evaluation strategy. At the end of this document is a request for proposal that JKKL Consulting be invited to implement the prospective plan to address the identified areas of need and develop focused training to remediate areas of need.

## Purpose of the Report - KD

This report has been generated for use as a strategic company evaluation tool for HP&M. Summaries and descriptions of data points were collected through several methods of analysis of various company resources to identify and provide solutions for the root causes of customer service complaints, which have increased significantly over the past year. The purpose of this report is to show data results of the Performance Gap Analysis of the current condition of the company. Proposed solutions have been outlined in prioritized order by JKKL Consulting based on this comprehensive performance analysis.

## Analysis Methods - KD

JKKL Consulting employed several methods of analysis to generate this report. Details of results from each research method are presented in summaries and include charts and graphs as appropriate. The following four types of analysis methods used were:

* + **Observations**: Observing telephone operators as they worked showed data not obtainable by surveys. The observations included the Telephone Operator’s customer service interaction.
  + **Individual Interviews**: Individual interviews with employees provided in depth, qualitative data to supplement the Likert Scale surveys with greater detail. Interview questions were designed to find factors impacting design, delivery, and assessment of current training of Telephone Operators, decision making regarding number of products offered and frequency of issuing catalogs, Perspective on training issues and suspected problems beyond training, support received from Customer Service Supervisors, implementation of new software, the incentive program and opportunities and challenges at HP&M. These employees were interviewed individually:
    - Telephone Operators
    - Trainers
    - Customer Service Supervisors
    - Management
    - Human Resources
    - Technology Staff
  + **Surveys:** Likert Scale surveys completed by employees allowed for the collection of quantitative data to inform initial decisions for recommended solutions. The survey questions were structured to measure data to show employee job satisfaction based on provided resources, relationship with management, technology equipment and skills, product and technology training, quality of training received, and professional development. These employees were included in the survey analyses:
    - Telephone Operators
    - Customer Service Supervisors
  + **Artifact Analysis:** Analysis of company documents provided both quantitative and qualitative data collection used to supplement results from observations, interviews, and surveys. The analysis included resources such as current training documents, job aids, exit interviews, customer service evaluations, employee demographics, performance evaluations, employee awards history, company handbook, and staff schedules. Additionally, previous customer service survey data and reports generated by the phone system were examined. The Artifact Analysis included documents and materials from:
    - Human Resources
    - Company Records
    - Training Materials
    - Secret Shopper

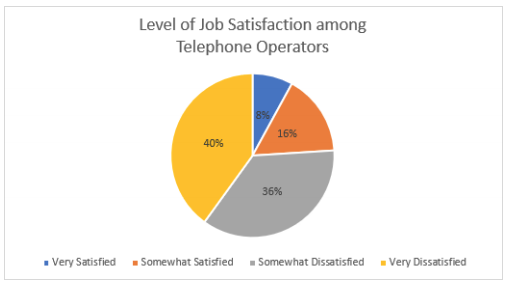
## Data Summary: Interview with Jane MacKenzie - KD

Data gathered from the interview revealed five major themes.

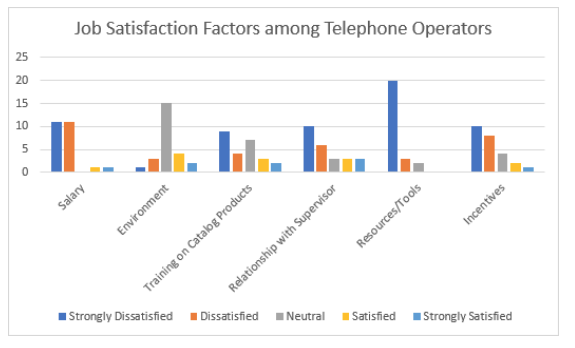
* Training frequency was found to be too limited to address acquisition of product information for the 50-100 new products each quarter, especially for new hires. •
* No training has been provided to Telephone Operators or Customer Service Supervisors regarding phone etiquette or appropriate responses for dealing with challenging customers.
* Customer Service Supervisors have received no management or supervisory training. • Take-away training materials, including job aids and reference sheets, beyond the copies of the slides, are not provided for further reference. •
* Current training lacks learner engagement and assessment strategies and is not employing best practices of andragogy, such as hands-on practice.

## Data Summary: Telephone Operator Feedback Sessions - KD

One of the challenges HP&M is experiencing is a high turnover rate among Telephone Operators. All 25 Telephone Operators were surveyed on their overall level of job satisfaction. There is a direct correlation between job satisfaction and turnover rate. According to the survey, 76% of Telephone Operators are very or somewhat dissatisfied with their jobs. Please refer to the following graph.



Many factors can affect job satisfaction. Telephone Operators were surveyed on the most common factors. They were asked to rate how satisfied they were with their salary, environment, training, work relationships, resources, and tools available to perform their job, and incentives. Those who disagreed with the statements presented are dissatisfied and those who agreed with the statements are satisfied. Please refer to the following graph.



## Data Summary: Observe Customer Interaction of Telephone Operators KP

JKKL Consulting observed Telephone Operators during each shift for two hours. We observed a variety of interactions with customers, each other, Customer Service Supervisors, and managers. During that time, two overall themes emerged surrounding Telephone Operators’ knowledge and environment.

Knowledge

1. Customer Service Skills:

* The Telephone Operators do not answer or end each call in a consistent manner or tone. There does not appear to be a script, though a few have written their own.
* The operators take the interaction with the previous customer (positive or negative) into the next call with the customer. For example: if they had a difficult call with the last customer, the Telephone Operator might be short with the new caller.
* Telephone operators stumble when dealing with a difficult customer and what to say when transferring the call to a supervisor.
* When a customer needs to return or exchange item/s, it appears Telephone Operators automatically need to send these calls to Customer Service Supervisors. Again, they appear to stumble in knowing what to say when transferring these calls.
* At the end of calls, when administering the customer service survey, Telephone Operators are uncomfortable asking the questions and receiving answers.

1. Order Entry System:

* Overall, Telephone Operators are proficient using the system.
* They struggle when they need to find product information, do data entry, and speak with the customer at the same time.

1. Products:

* Telephone Operators have varying levels of knowledge when it comes to products. They seem to know information regarding some of the more commonly ordered items, but have difficulty finding information about products in the system.
* From what JKKL observed on the screens, it appears the information appears inconsistently from product to product. The information in the system is not well organized and minimal.

Environment

1. Physical:

* The room Telephone Operators work in is large and very bright. It echoes a bit when the night shift is working since there is less staff.
* They are seated in rows, close together and not cubicles. It looks like this is so they can ask each other questions.
* The computers appear to be 3-4 years old.
* Since the Telephone Operators are sitting close together in a large room, the noise level is a little high. While the HP&M provides headsets, it appears some Telephone Operators have purchased higher quality ones to perform their job better.

1. Collegial:

* The Telephone Operators interacted a lot with one another in this environment and are supportive of each other.
* Most of the conversations were about finding product information or other items related to their job.
* Some of the chatter was personal (i.e., how is your child doing, weekend plans).

1. Customer Service Supervisors:

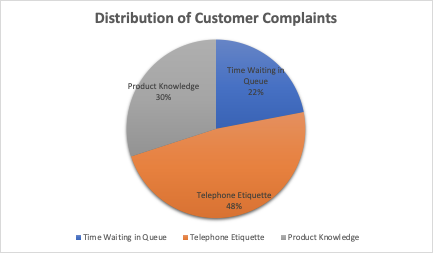
* The Custom Service Supervisors answered calls transferred to them by the Telephone Operators.
* However, they never interacted with the Telephone Operators outside of meetings as they were so busy in their offices answering calls.
* There did not seem to be any camaraderie between the Supervisors and Telephone Operators.

1. Company:

* No upper-level management ever came to visit, observe, or interact with the Telephone Operators during the observations.

## Data Summary: Survey Customers - KP

According to the customer service surveys, two out of three customers had complaints regarding Telephone Operators. Below is the calculated data based on the reasons for customer dissatisfaction from the surveys.



JKKL Consulting also reached out to thirty customers for our customer service survey. Similar results emerged regarding dissatisfaction with product knowledge and etiquette of Telephone Operators and spending fifteen minutes or longer waiting in the queue to speaker to someone. Most were willing to wait that time to order products due to the unique items Happy Products & More carries. However, seventy eight percent of the respondents commented they would hang up longer than a fifteen-minute wait. Forty percent of customers also noted when speaking with the Telephone Operators it was noisy or difficult to hear them.

## Data Summary: Interview Information Technology - LF

JKKL Consulting interviewed Tsien Yun and Ted Higgins via Zoom meetings. The current computer stations for TOs are four-year-old and equipped with Microsoft Edge. To keep a company’s tech up-to-date is essential. JKKL Consulting recommends replacing machines every 3 to 5 years. An older, slower computer can influence employee productivity, and a machine that has not been recently updated can fall victim to security attacks and viruses. When organizations get infected with malware, it is often because the machines are not adequately updated. HP&M only provides TOs with basic headsets with no noise canceling features and expects TOs to purchase higher quality ones themselves. The training for the SimplyOrder system will start from the second week of July, at the same time the Product training for the Fall catalog will start, TOs might feel overwhelmed and overly stressed with too many learning resources.

## Data Summary: Interview High Performing Telephone Operators – LF

JKKL Consulting conducted interviews with top-five performing TOs. All of them are interested in becoming a mentor for new telephone operators. They provided five tips they have learned to better serve customers:

 To listen attentively to what the other person is saying without interrupting.

 Ask appropriate questions and to seek for clarifications on issues not well understood.

 Avoid unnecessary distractions whenever I am about to make a phone call.

 To always speak in an inviting and positive tone to make the conversation relaxed and appealing.

 Manage emotions well especially when handling an irate or upset caller.

## 9A. Data Summary: Likert Scale Survey - Telephone Operators - JW

One of the challenges HP&M is experiencing is a high turnover rate among Telephone Operators. All 25 Telephone Operators were surveyed on their overall level of job satisfaction. There is a direct correlation between job satisfaction and turnover rate. According to the survey, 76% of Telephone Operators are very or somewhat dissatisfied with their jobs.

Other areas explored in the Likert Scale Survey of telephone operators were:

* Professional development
* Job duties and expectations
* Understanding of organizational goals
* Management encouragement to meet goals
* Work relationships with peers

The data in these areas shows that 72% of survey participants were strongly disagreed/disagreed with professional development opportunities offered by HP&M. In the area of organizational support, the results mirrored the job satisfaction overall score with 76% strongly disagreeing/disagreeing that they are satisfied with the support received from the organization.

Job duties and organizational goals followed the same pattern, with more than 70% responding that they strongly disagreed/disagreed that they understood what was expected from them at work, they have an understanding of the organization’s business goals, that they were encouraged to meet their goals.

The final area that showed encouraging results in contrast was the relationship with peers. where 82% (strongly agreed/agreed) indicated they have a positive relationship with their co-workers.

## 9B. Data Summary: Interview and Likert Scale Survey - Customer Service Operators (Supervisors) – JW

The four Customer Service Operators/Supervisors were asked questions related to their role as supervisors of the telephone operators. These supervisors previously were telephone operators and were promoted because of their sales performance. Overall, they agreed (100%) with the statement that they were quite satisfied with their job in contrast to the 24% of telephone operators on the same metric.

The supervisors indicated that they somewhat agreed that have the product knowledge to help customers (100%). Along the same lines, they strongly disagreed that the performance of operators improved after the training (75%, 25% undecided). When using a probing question about why they thought this was the case, the supervisors stated that the operators have limited time to train, and the material is covered quickly. They must pay attention to be able to leave the training with a familiarity of the products. They are also given the handouts which they can use afterward to refresh their memories. When asked how they felt the training could be improved they were uncertain as there are limited time and resources for training. The staffing on the phones is very tight so to take operators away from answering calls creates a larger backlog of calls and longer wait times for customers.

The supervisors mentioned operators “chit-chatting” and when asked they stated that meant both with the customer and with one another. In order to meet the call volume goals, the operator must be focused on what the customer needs and finding the information in the computer system. They understand and support the policy of having calls that need further action transferred to them. The supervisors stated that the guidelines for operators are straightforward – be polite and handle the call promptly. No training is given on directly answer the calls as they feel the applicant’s demonstration of handling calls is sufficient.

They strongly agreed that the calls they receive are customers who are already angry with the operators (100%). Much of their time is spent calming down irate customers before they can address the reason for the call. As department leaders, they disagreed with the statement that they were on able to observe and coach during work hours (75%, 25% undecided), as again they are spending the majority of their time fixing problems for customers on the phone. They also strongly disagreed (100%) that the operators were receptive to feedback, however, they felt the feedback they provided was fair and useful (100% agree).

They felt that training was delivered in the best way possible, and that they had management support in terms of training and infrastructure (100% agree). They believe they have cordial working relationships with their subordinates and peers (75% agree, 25% undecided), and they are satisfied with their work hours and conditions (100% agree). They have confidence in their computer skills (100% strongly agree). Finally, they agreed the company recognized hard work and good performance (100%) agree.

These results are in contrast to the telephone operators as noted in the previous section. This leads us to recognize there is a disconnect between the supervisors and telephone operators regarding training, coaching and feedback, and recognition programs.

**10A. Activity: Interview with Susan Turner and Artifact Analysis: Human Resources - JW**

A review of human resources documents and records was conducted, supplemented by an interview with Susan Turner, Director of Human Resources. Topics covered included the hiring and on-boarding process, turnover, retention strategies, performance evaluations, and job responsibilities. The focus of this interview, data collection and document review were on the telephone operators and customer service supervisors.

Employee demographics:

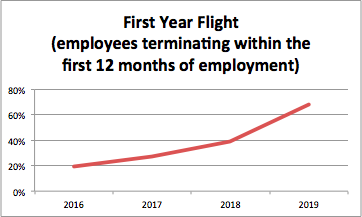
Education: High or GED school: 94%; Undergraduate college credit: 6%.

Experience: Previous call center experience: 8%; Previous retail experience: 39%

Ages of current employees: 18 – 62-years-old: 56% are under 30-years-old, 28% are over 40 years old.

Job Requirements: High school diploma or GED; 1-3 years previous call center or retail experience

Hiring and on-boarding: Turnover and first-year flight is an issue for the organization, where intention to leave can begin at hire if onboarding is not conducted to encourage retention. The recurring theme was individuals are hired because they are “polite.” There does not appear to be a formal interview process for applicants, therefore it is difficult to determine if the individual selected is a good fit for the job. Once hired, the new employee attends a one-day orientation which covers the company’s history, demonstrations of the work order system, training on current products, and completion of required paperwork. Orientation is conducted bi-monthly based on the number of new individuals hired. There does not appear to be any follow-up post-orientation to ensure employees feel they are equipped to handle their job responsibilities. In line with this, records indicate first year flight, or employees who terminate within 12 months of hire has increased year-over-year as indicated below:



**Turnover:** The average telephone employee tenure is 1.6 years. The longest tenured employees are the customer service supervisors who have worked for the company for an average of 4.3 years. The newest telephone operator started in the previous orientation; the longest tenured telephone operator has been with HP&M for 3.9 years. Voluntary terminations accounted for 78% of terminations. Exit interviews with voluntarily terminating employees are conducted on the individual’s last worked day face-to-face by the HR Assistant. Data from exit interviews substantiated the statements made in interviews with several leaders that individuals who voluntarily terminated employment did so because of money. When asked what they liked about the company, the majority cited their friendships with their co-workers. The most often cited things they disliked about the company were having to work through lunch regularly, not being informed of products to be knowledgeable with customers, pressure to achieve call volume targets, and the difficulty of using the computer system. The exit interviews were conducted with only 37% of the voluntary terminating employees. When asked why the number is so low, the response was that the employees left before the HR Assistant could meet with them.

**Retention strategies:** The incentive program was cited by several leaders as being a tool to boost employee morale and motivate employees to increase call-handling volume. Incentives are given based on call volume with the goal being six (6) calls per hour per telephone operator. During the interview with telephone operators and supervisors, the individual’s stated they would prefer time off or money instead of the current incentive program of discounts on purchases of products sold by the company which was only good for one week. This leads us to question to efficacy of the incentive program as a tool for motivation.

**Performance evaluations/compensation**: Performance evaluations are conducted annually by the immediate supervisor. A new process was implemented within the last few months. The next-up manager signs off on each evaluation prior to submitting the final evaluations to Human Resources. Merit increases have historically been part of the performance evaluation process, with the average increases being between 3% and 5% of the base pay. There are no pay increases for tenure. The evaluation is a two-part process where the employee rates themselves on courtesy, timeliness, and accuracy. These ratings are then compared against the supervisor’s ratings. If there is a disparity where the employee rates themselves higher than the supervisor, a discussion is held. If the reverse occurs and the supervisor rates the employee higher, no action is taken. The HR policy manual states that 90-day work performance improvement plan (PIP) will be created for those who achieve an overall “needs improvement” rating, however, only one of seven employees had a PIP in their HR file.

**Employee development:** There are no opportunities for employee development and promotion among the telephone operators except for the movement from telephone operator to customer service supervisor. There is no career ladder or succession plan in place.

**Company handbook:** The handbook is approximately 8 pages in length, covering the company’s history, mission, and product lines. It was last updated in 2014. Policies and procedures are found on the company intranet, which covered attendance, the characteristics of acceptable behavior, non-harassment statement, and non-discrimination. The required EEOC posters were found in the employee breakroom but were dated 2016.

**Staffing and scheduling:** A review of the telephone operator staffing plan was reviewed. The interviews indicated that there were 25 telephone operator positions covering 24/7 shifts. The shifts are 8 hours each. It was not clear in the interviews how vacations or other absences are covered given the current staffing pattern. It is also not clear how employees are scheduled for their shifts in advance, who designs the schedule, how time-off requests are prioritized and how schedule change requests are handled.

Employees are allowed two (2) ten-minute breaks and a 30-minute lunch per 8-hour shift. The time stamp of the employee’s shift is recorded when they sign on to their computer and clock in using the timekeeping software. Their shift is closed when they sign off in the time-keeping system. If an employee has an unexpected absence for whatever reason, they are to contact their immediate supervisor at least two hours before the scheduled start of their shift. Full-time employees (36 hours or more a week) earn vacation and sick time as paid-time-off (PTO) at a rate of 7.69 hours per pay period (bi-weekly) for a total of 200 hours annually which includes 11 paid holidays. However, as the operation is 24/7, the only observed holidays where the phones are not answered are Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day. PTO is rolled over with the maximum accrual of 320 hours.

**Employee communication:** Monthly meetings are held to discuss new policies and procedures or other important issues. The meetings are poorly attended and are not mandatory. The meeting is held on the second Tuesday of each month in the company meeting room. Susan Turner leads the meeting, with other directors/managers sharing information as needed. A section of the Intranet is dedicated to employee news but this area has not been updated in over a year. When asked how the employees learn about new policies or procedures, Susan stated that they are discussed in the meetings and it is up to the supervisors to communicate the information to their staff.

**Training materials:** The current training materials were reviewed as noted in the Data Summary: Review of Existing Training Materials previously discussed in this report. There were no records of leadership, teamwork, or soft skills training. A handout is used for post-training reference on the order entry and telephone system. There were no records of handouts or other materials from the monthly employee meetings. The job aids that were located were taped onto the workstations and were inconsistent from person-to-person.

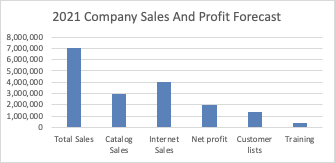
**Other observations:** After reviewing the documentation and the data collected in the interviews and surveys, we would be remiss as consultants if we did not address a recurring theme regarding leadership. In the leader interviews, several times when asked a question, the response was that we would have to ask another leader, leading us to believe there is a disconnect between leaders. In addition, there appears to be little opportunity for front-line employees to have a voice in company policies, procedures, and workflow. In the survey of telephone operators, 85% strongly disagreed or disagreed that management is easy to approach and they feel that their questions regarding new products are answered in a timely, effective manner (see figure XX). There was no evidence of the front-line supervisors receiving any formal leadership or management training. The qualifications for this job were not clear other than they had started as telephone operators and were promoted because of their sales skills. This was reflected in the data collected from the supervisors who overall felt that leaders were not visible through regular rounding in departments and were not concerned about their well-being.

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**11. Activity: Artifact Analysis: Company Records – LF**

JKKL Consulting reviewed company records together with the Vice-President of Sales. Topics include company sales target, budget for technical improvement and training, problems discovered in phone system reports, and customer complaints about misinformation in the catalog.

* $400,000 for training for the next year with four separate pieces of training should be conducted before the mailing of each seasonal catalog.

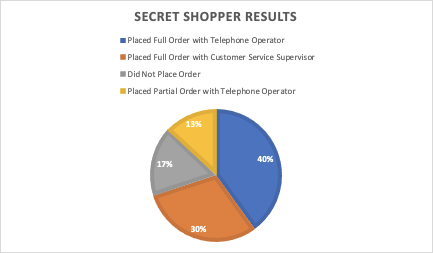


 The busiest time for a TO is between 11 am and 3 pm on weekdays. Between 4 pm-6 pm, and early in the morning, between 8 am-10 am. The best days to place business calls are Wednesday and Thursday. Guided by the end-of-month sales target, OTs felt sometimes they may be pushing too hard to close deals when customers aren’t ready to buy certain products.

 Customer complaint reports show that customers felt they received better customer service on Wednesday and Thursday. The worst days are Monday and Tuesday.

**12. Data Summary Secret Shopper Customer Service Experiences [KP]**

JKKL Consulting conducted Secret Shopper customer service experiences with the Telephone Operators to gain first-hand knowledge of the customer experience. The secret shoppers called three times during the peak times for each shift. The shoppers had three different scenarios/products they tried to order during each shift.



In 40% of the calls, the Telephone Operators were able to answer product questions and the secret shopper placed their full order. In 30% of the calls, the Telephone Operators had to escalate them to the Customer Service Supervisor because they could not find the answers or were getting frustrated with the shopper and placed their full order with them. In 17% of the calls, the secret shopper ended up not placing an order due to lack of assistance from Telephone Operator or long wait time for Customer Service Supervisor. 13% of calls placed partial orders due Telephone Operator getting frustrated with questions.

## Current State, Desired State, and Recommended Solutions [KD, JW, KP, LF]

The following table provides the current state, or findings, of the performance analysis along with needs and recommendations for the management of HP&M to consider.

| Current State | Desired State | Recommendation to Achieve Desired State |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Most employees do not know the company’s mission “to provide customer satisfaction through quality and knowledgeable customer service to offer customers the most unique products in the marketplace,” or their role in fulfilling this mission | Employees know the company’s mission and their role in fulfilling it. | **Staff Development Program**  Create an employee handbook that specifies the company’s mission, hierarchical structure, how employee roles and responsibilities fulfill the mission., |
| Upon hire, new employees participate in a one-day orientation, of which four hours is dedicated to train them on products and order entry system.  This training is on PowerPoint led by an instructor, slide-by-slide. Employees are not provided time to ask questions. Common customer services scenarios/script and telephone etiquette are not covered.  There is no hands-on practice on the telephone or order entry systems. | New employees are trained in operating order entry system, telephone system, marketing products, telephone etiquette, and customer service. Employees are provided time to ask questions. Common customer services scenarios/script and telephone etiquette are covered, as well as hands-on practice with the telephone and order entry systems. Role play allows employees a chance to practice working with difficult customers. | **New Employee Onboarding Process**  Day One – Cover paperwork, benefits; company structure, history, and mission; employee handbook, and training on phone system. A knowledge check quiz will be provided at the end of the day.  Day Two – Training on products for current catalog – provide hands-on samples, materials for notetaking, and Q&A.  Day Three – Training and practice using new order entry system.  Day Four – Training and practice using workstations.  Day Five – Knowledge Check using role play scenarios taking calls, talking to customers, and placing orders. They will receive feedback from supervisors on etiquette, response time, accuracy, and properly escalating calls to supervisor.  Create jobs aids for Telephone Operators to use including training manual, scripts, etiquette guidelines, and escalation process/transitions. |
| The performance evaluation process is incomplete as there is not feedback or follow-up loop for every employee. | All employees have a one-on-one discussion with their supervisor regarding the ratings of their performance evaluation. Employees are given the opportunity to comment on the ratings. All work improvement plans are tracked with appropriate follow-up and action. | **Performance Evaluation Process**  Revise the current process to include a feedback component. Also include an employee development plan with each evaluation.  Provide leadership and staff training on the performance evaluation process |
| Employee perception is that management is not approachable or engaged in daily operations. | Leaders are visible and work together toward the company’s mission. | **Staff Development Program**  Leadership training based on “The Five Dysfunctions of a Team” (see addendum A). (6 half-day workshops)  Training for supervisors and above on “Crucial Conversations” (see addendum B). (16-hour workshops with flexible scheduling.) |
| First-year flight has increased year-over-year to 68% in 2019 | Reduction in first year-flight to less than 20%. | **Revise Hiring Process**  Revise the hiring process to use behavioral-based interviewing and role-playing.  Implement team interviews.  Train supervisors in interviewing.  Provide job previews for potential new hires.  Follow-up with new employees at the 30-day, 60-day, and 90-day mark. |
| During the observation, Customer Service Supervisors did not interact with Telephone Operators. They were in their offices the whole-time answering calls.  In Telephone Operator survey, they indicated Customer Service Supervisors are not easy to communicate with or approachable. | Supervisors interact with and support Telephone Operators daily. | **Daily Huddles**  Customer Service Supervisors lead daily huddles to answer questions and highlight one new product physically so TOs can touch, feel, and interact with it. During this time, supervisors also will provide a customer service skill tip through role plays or talking through scenario.  **Management Training**  Supervisors are required to round on telephone operators at least twice per shift. |
| Telephone Operators are using outdated equipment and systems that are slow. | Equipment is updated to capitalize on current technology. | **Update Network and Broadband System**  Ensure that broadband and networking systems are optimized to improve customer response time |
| They do not receive a training manual during orientation or catalog trainings. | All employees, including Telephone Operators, Customer Service Supervisors, and managers are fully trained in the operation of the SimplyOrder system, locating product information, processing returns and exchanges, and cross-marketing techniques. | **Employee Training on New Systems**  Provide a hands-on, interactive training on SimplyOrder in July using new workstations.  Provide training manual to Telephone Operators before training, so they can take notes in it and refer to it after their training. |
| Thirty percent of customer complaints are the result of the Telephone Operator’s lack of product knowledge.  Telephone Operators also indicate during their interviews they have difficulty locating product information and it is not organized consistently. | Telephone Operators are able to locate products quickly so they can respond to customer questions quickly with the goal of meeting six calls per hour. | **Improve Product Information in Order System**  Input from telephone operators on the format of the product database in SimplyOrder to ensure it meets their needs. |
| Operators do not use a consistent script in dealing with customers. | Operators use scripts to ensure consistent messaging with customers. | **Scripts**  Create scripts for common customer service and telephone etiquette scenarios. Train Telephone Operators by providing scripts and role playing. Supervisors can supplement with more scenarios or practice during monthly meetings or daily huddles. |
| Telephone Operators are responsible for asking customers questions from the Customer Service Survey at the end of a phone call. | The Customer Service Survey is moved to another system and anonymous. | **Automate Customer Service Survey**  Place Customer Service Survey in new ordering system. |
| Each quarter a new catalog is released. Prior to that release, Telephone Operators receive a four-hour training on benefits and features of new products. Telephone operators report they struggle with retaining information and have no opportunity to take notes since they receive training materials after the training.  Customers ask detailed information about products including shipping costs and timeframe, type of materials, washing instructions, etc. that Telephone Operators must look up. | Trainings help TOs retain information, improve behavior/attitudes, and help them remember product information or easily locate it in system. | **Redesign Product/Catalog Training**  Focus training on catalog’s new/featured products including physically seeing and touching them. Provide product manual prior to training, so they can take notes.  The training will also include role-playing scenarios on phone etiquette, locating new product information, and marketing (i.e., cross-selling, upselling.)  Optimally the training could take place through a store-setting where employees can see and touch actual products. This would allow them to see the actual product the customer is purchasing. The store would be open 24-hours-a-day with badge in access required. Descriptions of the products would be placed next to the item for easy review. This way they would see the size, shape, colors, and feel the weight of the product. Sales people are given demonstration items, and if the telephone operators are being asked to up-sell, then they need to know what products complement each other. |
| All computers have had soundcards removed to prevent TOs listening to music when they should be listening for the phone to ring. | Employees can access training materials (Text, audio, and video) in the product digital database on workstations with soundcards, and at the same time, they will also be able to answer phones on the same computer. | **Digital Office Phone System**  Implement digital phone system with soundcards in employee workstations. |
| TOs are only provided with basic headsets at work, and they are encouraged to purchase higher quality ones themselves. | Company provides high quality headsets for TOs. | **High Quality Wireless Headset**  A high-quality headset can prevent physical pains and increase work productivity for workers.  When using a hands-free headset, TOs can do a product search on a computer, handle documents, make notes, etc., which makes their work more productive.  To provide a better customer call experience, if a TO use a headset with noise-canceling technology the microphone can filters out up to 75% of background sounds so that the callers hear only the TO’s voice, even in noisy environments. |
| TOs have difficulty finding product details and order delivery information. | TOs can easily access product details and order delivery information.  Sales can track product sales record and customer buying trend. | **Digital Product Database**  It can provide basic functions as follows:  Edit, update, and export product information.  Search product details and track delivery information.  Search product sales data, generating inventory and sales report. |

## Proposed Solutions for Consulting Firm to Carry Out - KD, JW, KP

| Priority | Solution | Description |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **1** | Communication Skills Training Program | Design, develop, and lead an instructor-led classroom training session for Telephone Operators and Customer Service Supervisors covering the topics of telephone etiquette, call procedures, difficult customer situations, and upselling. Training will include a presentation, role plays, job aids such as scripts. Job aids will be developed in print and CD format. This training can be subsequently scheduled prior to every catalog release. |
| **2** | SimplyOrder Training Program | Develop training on SimplyOrder. The content will be made in alignment with the new order-entry customizations. It will involve extensive hands-on training. The training will be given in sessions of one-hour two weeks prior to roll-out. A sandbox will be available which employees can use to practice exercises after the training. |
| **3** | Management Training Program | An instructor-led training will be designed and developed to be conducted by the HR to help improve overall management skills of the Customer Service Supervisors. Focus areas will be leadership, coaching and mentoring, communication, and decision-making skills. Quarterly sessions can be scheduled |
| **4** | Train-the-Trainer Course | For successful execution and maintenance of the above trainings along with the product catalog training, Trainers will be trained to develop content, job aids, assessments and evaluation strategies based on ID principles. The following Trainers have been identified:   * Judi Thompson and Sheena Perez (product catalog training) * Susan Turner (communication skills, new-hire orientation, management training) * Tsien Yun (SimplyOrder training) |
| **5** | Design, Usability, and Configuration Consultation for SimplyOrder Implementation | The IT team can be given guidance in screen design principles for SimplyOrder customizations.  Technical writers of HP&M can assist in creating product description templates. These templates can be used for submitting and storing product information in organized standard layouts that operators can access through SimplyOrder.  Provide support to the IT team to conduct usability tests for the customizations to ensure it is user-friendly |

## Evaluation plan - KD

In order to evaluate if the executed solutions have had a positive impact on overcoming challenges that HP&M is experiencing, data needs to be collected following implementation of each solution using the following methods: surveys, checklists, performance reviews, observations, and interviews. Data should be collected according to this schedule: Immediately following the implementation, at three months, at six months, at nine months, and at a year. A determination will be summarized after a period of one year whether the solutions were successful. The data will be collected and evaluated for these metrics:

* + Customer satisfaction with Telephone Operator knowledge
  + Number of customer complaints
  + Types of customer complaints
  + Wait time for customer in a queue to speak to a Telephone Operator
  + Abandoned Calls
  + Time Telephone Operator is on call with customer
  + Number of times call is transferred to Customer Service Supervisor
  + Wait time to speak to a Customer Service Supervisor
  + Number of calls completed in one hour by Telephone Operators
  + Number of cancelled orders
  + Number of returned orders due to incorrect information
  + Number of incorrect orders
  + Number of sales
  + Level of first year turnover in personnel
  + Performance Evaluations completed timely with at least three SMART goals
  + Level of job satisfaction among Telephone Operators
  + Satisfaction of training
  + Consistency among Telephone Operators in using the script

## Request for Proposal - KD

JKKL Consulting conducted a thorough Performance Gap Analysis for the company HP&M to address company concerns and deficiencies. The analysis results, proposed solutions, and recommendations are detailed in this Performance Analysis Report. Also described is the methodology by which the prospective objectives and deliverables to address the identified issues will be achieved. Upon request from HP&M, JKKL Consulting would be pleased to submit a proposal for implementation of the prioritized solutions (as itemized and described in the “Proposed Solutions for Consulting Firm to Carry Out” table.)

Addendum A



Addendum B

