

# Breakthrough Service Performance ("BSP")

## What Makes Service "Breakthrough"?

Breakthrough service means different things to different organizations.

For organizations constantly in "firefighting mode" due to a merger or acquisition or any other internal change that has external repercussions, breakthrough service might mean focusing on the behaviors that enable your people to resolve client/customer issues in the easiest possible way...to protect your clients from the change or upheaval so that they feel it only minimally. For other organizations, breakthrough service means getting the fundamentals right, such as taking ownership, proactivity, and teamwork.

Cohen Brown contacted managers worldwide to discover what customer service behaviors they thought made service truly breakthrough!!

We asked them the following 3 questions:

- **What do you perceive as truly Breakthrough Service?**
- **What 3 Service Behaviors would you wish to experience consistently with any of your service providers?**
- **What do you consider poor customer service, or what irritates you the most when dealing with service providers?**



Cohen Brown is proud to present the consolidated results of our research on the following pages.

We would like to thank all of you who took the time to respond and share your personal perspectives.

For your convenience, we are including our Big Five Service Process Implementation Tips and a short overview of our *Breakthrough Service Performance* solution after the consolidated results.

Are you interested in learning more about how we can support you and your organization in creating a true service culture? Find out more on our website or contact us!



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## Consolidated Research Results

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### *What do you perceive as truly Breakthrough Service?*

Effortless proactive taking care of service & claims topics.

When you provide customers with what they need when they need it and in a manner or channel that they choose.

It's when the person on the other end is responsive to customers' needs and treats customers with care, dignity, and respect.

It is about providing consistent and seamless service across the different touchpoints.

It is about recognizing who your customers are and anticipating their needs.

We have seen several and rapid changes through the last years that are really breakthrough, and we could extensively talk about technology, environment, behaviour, Globalisation, etc. We could mention rapid digitisation, the Millennium generation...

However, as a pillar of any change, I would say that a truly breakthrough Service would be the one that the customer would feel good about and eventually would make him become loyal and become a promoter of the brand.

Despite the complex environment in which we live, the Breakthrough Service would be the one that would consistently adjust the internal processes & policies to focus on 2 following basic pillars from the customer standpoint:

1. "Know me" – identify me when I get to you, and anticipate my needs based on what you asked me before.
2. "Make it Simple" – clean up the process from my perspective, so that I can easily understand how and when my request will be fulfilled.



**Service which is based on knowledge from earlier experiences and exceeds my expectations. A simple example is the service provided by my car dealer, who while making the appointment for a service session says to me: If you deliver your car at 8:30 we can bring you directly to your office for your first appointment at 9.**

**Exceeding customer expectations: very personalized customer service approach, very specific to the customer's needs, and done correctly and concisely on time.**

**Service where my known and hidden service needs are preempted, addressed, and fulfilled the first time. Where the staff are knowledgeable, friendly, professional, and courteous. Where any promises made are fulfilled ahead of expectations.**

**Breakthrough service occurs when the relationship transcends the merchant customer arrangement. Some relationship builder efforts create perception of feeling special and that something was created just for me.**

**Truly breakthrough service changes the initiation point – for the most part this is driven by the customer in the form of a post, call, email, and/or chat regarding a service concern. In order to shift that paradigm and actually delight the customer, businesses need to have greater visibility of their order management lifecycle and proactively communicate with customers at the right time and on their platform of choice.**

**Friendliness & Friendly atmosphere/people/environment. Personalised but not intrusive. Genuine interest in needs. Honesty. Consistent Experience. Know what to expect/set expectations well. Value: Price I pay, How I feel, Quality of the Product or Service. Timely.**

**Conclusion:**

Truly breakthrough service is having a consistent, seamless service approach throughout the organization; treating the client in a personal, caring, and courteous manner; identifying the client's needs and taking care of them correctly in a qualitative, simple-to-understand way and trying to exceed the client's expectations.



***What 3 Service Behaviors would you wish to experience consistently with any of your service providers?***

**Personal rapport with a smile**

**Showing understanding of my personal needs**

**Good follow-up**

**First time right, ease of use and reliability. In behaviour terms: Fast, to the point and fixing mentality.**

**Have the level of knowledge to understand my request and level of empowerment to fulfill my need**

**Be kind and truly value me as a customer**

**Don't ask me to repeat my request in every channel I use or every representative group I talk to**

**Helpfulness (i.e., listening and understanding what I need and providing me with a solution)**

**Keeping your promise (if you say you will do something then do it)**

**Friendliness**

**Concrete information/status update regarding the issues relevant to the relationship**



**One-stop service**

**Proactively be neutrally informed about potentially better/other options**

**Consistency**

**24/7 service that provides me real help when I need it and on my platform of choice**

**Stand behind your brand or products**

**Taking Ownership/Following Up**

**Empathy/compassion**

**Knowledge**

**Transparency of costs and coverage**

**Conclusion:**

The service behaviors we value the most as clients are: a personal and friendly approach, for questions/issues to be dealt with correctly the first time, for employees to be proactive and knowledgeable, take ownership, and keep their promises. Organizations should aim for a consistent, helpful, proactive, fast, and to-the-point service culture throughout the whole organization.



***What do you consider poor customer service, or what irritates you the most when dealing with service providers?***

**Standard letters/emails**

**Need to call again/long waiting time**

**Limited individual solution seekers**

**Bad attitude (if my issue is dismissed or not taken seriously)**

**Non-responsiveness (if I ask for or need service and I get no feedback)**

**Dishonesty**

**The lack of empowerment and attitude to attend to my request, fulfill my need or solve my issue**

**The fact that I need to repeat my history several times depending on what channel I use and/or what group of representative I talk to**

**Badly managed expectations**

**Not first time right**

**Lots of work for an easy job**



**One-fits-all approach.**

**Cool and robotic tone/behavior.**

**Poor listening skills.**

**Wrong spelling or pronouncing of customer name.**

**Getting passed around without any ownership being taken.**

**Soft skills matter – pleasant, knowledgeable, helpful, effective listener, empathy when necessary. Failure to provide these service basics often results in customer attrition.**

**Self-service – non-existent or hard-to-find features to handle simple transactions – where is my item, I need to make a return, etc.**

**Service relay race – “I am going to need to transfer you to...”, “I am unable to...” – these killer phrases heighten customer frustration.**

**Time investment – when an issue turns into an event and an overinvestment of time.**

**Conclusion:**

For clients, poor service includes dishonesty, having a bad attitude, not managing or incorrectly managing our needs and expectations, not effectively listening, not being responsive, and the lack of a personal approach. What irritates us the most is waiting times, not achieving the right solution the first time, being forced to repeat our questions/complaints each time we talk to a new person at an organization, and standardization in approach and communication.



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## Cohen Brown's Big Five Successful Service Process Implementation Tips

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### 1. *Cohen Brown's Leader-Led Methodology*

Adopting a leader-led process to launch and embed the culture change and maximize motivation. Having line managers personally engaged in a Service Process starting with facilitating the service training sends a clear message of management's active involvement in the culture change process and provides built-in accountability for participants to implement what they have learned in the training.

### 2. *Reverse Engineering*

Utilizing Reverse Engineering by beginning with a client-centric focus regarding what it will take to produce results at the client–employee interface. Then working “backwards” up through the organization and management ranks regarding which behaviors management must implement to make sure that what is necessary actually occurs at the client–employee interface (both internal and external clients).

### 3. *Cohen Brown's Rubber Band Principle*

Utilizing the “Rubber Band Principle.” The “Rubber Band Principle” is that regardless of how long a well-oiled, humidified rubber band is stretched, it will snap back if you let go. The same applies to a culture change. Once management stops managing it, the culture will snap back. Therefore, behavioral change needs to be continuously managed.

### 4. *Clarity and Capability*

Providing clarity and capability by:

- Establishing quantitative and qualitative goals for both management and front-line staff that will produce the desired business objectives.
- Setting a vision, expectations, goals, and behaviors and following up with motivation through incentives, compensation, and a management follow-up plan.
- Aligning expectations, goals, behaviors and the ability to perform those skills and behaviors to increase motivation.
- Ensuring that management and the line understand why they should change, what that change means behaviorally, and providing them with the skills, tools, and time to change.
- Delivering proven best practice training and skill building.

Reinforcing capabilities to ensure that everyone (managers and front-line) are capable of implementing desired behaviors.

### 5. *Structured Empowerment*

People are empowered within the rules of a structure, so that they are liberated to be creative within a consistent context. Structured Empowerment increases creativity while total empowerment leads to anarchy and assures there is not a consistent “branded” delivery expectation within and across all delivery channels.





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## Breakthrough Service Performance Solution Overview

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*Breakthrough Service Performance* was designed to reinforce the message that sales and service are inextricably intertwined. It teaches that to achieve Breakthrough Service Performance, organizations must constantly reinforce high service standards, develop a culture of superior service delivery, and involve the entire organization in the commitment to enhancing the customer experience for external and internal clients. *Breakthrough Service Performance* helps organizations promote customer-centricity and create constant service excellence through use of microbehaviors, consistently displayed by all staff and reinforced by all managers, so that clients perceive they have received breakthrough service. The goal is to create maximum client satisfaction and to cushion client dissatisfaction, thereby improving profitable retentions and increasing bottom-line revenue. *Breakthrough Service Performance* achieves the following:

- Explains why breakthrough service is of critical importance. Reinforces that servicing internal and external clients and service partners in a courteous, proactive way is not only critical to achieving breakthrough-service goals, but is the right thing to do.
- Provides an overview of the Breakthrough Service Conceptual Model and teaches the importance of taking preventive measures.
- Suggests nine fundamental behaviors for providing Breakthrough Service Performance.
- Emphasizes the necessity of courteous communication through five steps of client interaction: greeting, assessing, helping, concluding, and following up.
- Explains the proactive courtesy elements of the greeting, including an acknowledgement of the client, an offer to help, and use of the client's name.
- Explains the elements of assessment, including active listening, consultative questioning, and showing empathy for the client's needs.
- Helps organizations master the skills and techniques required to provide options and implement plans.
- Helps organizations master the essential skill of concluding the interaction with the client in such a way that the client knows he or she has been shown breakthrough service. Organizations will also master the skills required to deal with dissatisfied clients.
- Pulls together all the behaviors learned in the program through extensive practice and interactive exercises.



- **Welcome and Setting the Scene**

Provides an introduction to the entire *Breakthrough Service Performance* program, including

- Desired output of the program
- Brand differentiation
- Client satisfaction
- “Clients” vs. “Customers”
- The Service Performance Continuum
- The Breakthrough Service Performance Conceptual Model

## **Fundamental Service Behaviors**

- **Module 1: Positive Attitude**

Discusses the effect of a positive attitude on providing Breakthrough Service Performance, and the importance of demonstrating a positive attitude through what participants Say, Ask, and Do.

- **Module 2: Proactivity**

Discusses the topic of proactivity:

- The “rule” for making proactivity work
- Avoiding the two Service Sins

- **Module 3: Caring and Courtesy**

Focuses on implementing caring and courtesy behaviors as a means to providing Breakthrough Service Performance for all personnel.

- **Module 4: Consistency**

Emphasizes how consistency in predictable behaviors impacts service quality. Participants also learn that, although consistency brings about the need for systemization, it does not eliminate the need for flexibility.

- **Module 5: Accuracy, Responsiveness and Timeliness**

Addresses the importance of Accuracy, Responsiveness, and Timeliness and the effect they have on the quality of service received by internal and external clients. Discusses using the Five Key Responsiveness Behaviors to build trust between front-line and support staff.

- **Module 6: Effective Interpersonal Communication**

Teaches participants the benefits of each of the four key elements of interactive, interpersonal communication:

- Listening and Observing
- Probing
- Confirming Understanding
- Providing Feedback

Provides recommendations for both verbal and written communication.

- **Module 7: Interpersonal Preventive Medicine**

Discusses the concept of Interpersonal Preventive Medicine and helps participants learn how they can personally prevent problematic situations from arising.

- **Module 8: Taking Ownership**

Discusses the concept of Do It or Refer It, and the importance of taking ownership of internal and external client interactions.



- **Module 9: Teamwork**

Discusses the importance of teamwork in providing Breakthrough Service Performance—specifically, how to become a better team member and overcoming Siloism.

### **Core Satisfaction Process**

- **Module 10: Greeting**

Covers the key elements of properly greeting both internal and external clients in a variety of situations. Specific telephone techniques are also covered.

- **Module 11: Assessing**

Introduces participants to the Service Needs Analysis Profile (SNAP) and its key components. The SNAP is a tool used to assess client situations and needs. Participants also get the chance to review and expand the skills learned in the Communication module: Listening and Observing, along with Confirming Understanding.

- **Module 12: Helping**

Teaches participants the key elements of the Helping step:

- Communicate solutions and rationales
- Confirm client's agreement
- Implement solutions
- Offer further assistance

In addition, participants are introduced to a tool to help them overcome client objections, the Objections Categorizer.

- **Module 13: Concluding**

Talks about the key elements of the Concluding step:

- Clarify the follow-up plan
- Show client appreciation
- Use the client's name

- **Module 14: Following Up**

Talks about the key elements of Following Up. Using a Three-Way Follow-Up System will help ensure that you

- Follow up on what you agreed to do
- Follow up on what the client agreed to do
- Follow up on what other service providers agreed to do

- **Module 15: Overcoming Dissatisfaction**

Teaches participants how to Overcome Client Dissatisfaction. Topics include

- Expressed vs. Unexpressed Dissatisfaction
- Causes of Dissatisfaction
- Taking ownership with a dissatisfied client
- Anger Triggers
- The Three Cs – Cushioning, Clarifying, Confirming
- The relation of Core Satisfaction steps to Overcoming Dissatisfaction
- The Five Cushioning Techniques
- The Five Types of Difficult Dissatisfied Clients



- Providing evidence of appreciation
- Techniques for relieving the stress from dealing with dissatisfied clients
- **Module 16: Situational Role Plays**  
Demonstrates through role-play exercises how to implement the techniques and concepts learned in *Breakthrough Service Performance*.

### **Maximum Satisfaction**

- **Module 17: Influencing Others**  
Expands on some of the concepts established in *Overcoming Dissatisfaction* and discusses specific techniques for Influencing Others, which will be linked to Relationship Building. Influencing Others presumes that everything covered in the Fundamental Behaviors, the Five-Step Core Satisfaction Model, and *Overcoming Dissatisfaction* is in place.
- **Module 18: Relationship Building**  
Discusses specific techniques for building and repairing relationships with internal and external clients.
- **Module 19: Influencing Perceptions**  
Covers how to adjust the perceptions of the service you provide to internal and external clients, not only by providing great service, but also by communicating the level of service you provide.
- **Module 20: Maximum Satisfaction Proactivity**  
Takes what has been learned already to the next level in order to get truly glowing clients through continuous learning, continuous improvement, and creating an “Institutional Memory.”
- **Module 21: Maximum Satisfaction Team Meetings**  
Builds on Core Satisfaction Teamwork by discussing empowering processes and effective meetings, and it specifically focuses on the topics of
  - Big Fives
  - Service Meetings
  - Clinics
  - Power Triads
  - Rounds
- **Module 22: Process Preventive Medicine**  
Teaches participants how to prevent problems before they arise. By utilizing the layered learning approach, participants will implement the Big Five to identify the critical problems and most appropriate solutions.

### **Structure:**

*Breakthrough Service Performance* includes 24 high-impact modules delivered via **cbway**<sup>®</sup>. The program utilizes Cohen Brown’s proven leader-led methodology and is supported by a Leader’s Guide and detailed Participant Workbook.

### **Participants:**

*Breakthrough Service Performance* is the ideal service program and is applicable to every person in the organization, whether on the front-line or in support areas.

