

Customer Service is “Recycled” at the Fort Hood Recycling Center

A recent visit by the Fort Hood Customer Service Officer proved to be worth the trip. Most people are aware of the importance of recycling; however, the Plans, Analysis and Integration Office (PAIO) wanted to find out how customer service tied into the organization itself. “Customer service is our life” says Jaycee Turnquist of the Fort Hood Recycling Center. He goes on to say, “Our customers are our number one priority.”

Mr. Turnquist revealed that their priorities are based on “what’s going on at the time.” From the time I walked on to the grounds of the facility, it was very apparent to me that customer service is their “number one priority.” I was greeted immediately and asked how I could be assisted. I was amazed that I was actually greeted by every employee I passed. A tour of the facility proved to be worthwhile as I now have a greater appreciation for not just the operation, but how this organization views customer service.

The Recycling Center uses the Interactive Customer Evaluation (ICE) program to gauge how they are supporting their customers. They use ICE as a public awareness tool, which provides excellent feedback in regards to how they are touching the community. The feedback received through the ICE program, both positive and negative, has resulted in changes to the way the Recycling Center operates. Mr. Turnquist says they use the feedback to “obtain information from our customers that indicates we are doing the right things.” He went on to say that they appreciate the positive feedback, but also consider the negative feedback to be just as important.

As the manager of the Recycling Center, Mr. Turnquist uses positive feedback as a tool for employee evaluations in support of their established organizational performance standards. In addition, when an employee is mentioned by name in an ICE comment, the employee is contacted in person so they are aware of the feedback.

After talking to other managers in the facility, I quickly realized that the Recycling Center uses the ICE program extensively to promote customer feedback. Each driver is given ICE Comment cards in which they are required to provide to the public as they make contact out on the streets. “Face to face involvement with our customers creates a bridge for two-way feedback” says Rufus Walker, Assistant Business Manager. In addition to the face-to-face interaction with customers, information is pushed out through attendance to other events such as semi-annual Hood Howdy, the monthly Community Services Council meeting, and the weekly newcomer’s briefing.

Recycling Center customers not only consist of Soldiers, Family members and civilians on and off Fort Hood, but numerous customers off the installation as well, such as retirees and businesses from the surrounding communities. "Our employees are asked to go out of their way to meet and greet the public, to show that they are a valuable asset to this organization" says Mr. Turnquist. Pollyanna Reedy, Sales Manager stated "we constantly remind our customers that we are more than just a Recycle Center; we are a customer based organization."

Bringing in new customers generates revenue; therefore, customer service is extremely important to all 47 employees at the Recycle Center. "Our goal is to reach out and touch as many people as we can and to get the message out that recycling is important" says Mr. Walker. The management at the Recycling Center takes a holistic approach to reaching their audience. They portray their message though the use of the Sentinel, Phantom Distro, TV and radio, the Family and MWR Happenings magazine as well as attending numerous meetings scheduled throughout the year.

When asked how they measure effectiveness, Mr. Turnquist stated it was by "the amount of material they have kept out of the landfill." In 2010, they collected and sold 8,960 tons of material. Their goal for 2011 is 11,000 tons. Although the Recycle Center generates annual revenue, their real goal is the diversion of recyclable material from the landfill to the Recycle Center. The mentality of the Recycle Center is that they can control material, not money, because of the fluctuation of the market.

Mr. Turnquist and his team are very proud of the fact that the Recycle Center meets and/or exceeds industry standards and achieve over 100% of market value for all materials they sell. Buyers come in from all over Central Texas because of the quality of the material they produce. All equipment used in the Recycle Center has been purchased with funds received from the sale of recyclable material and the money made from recycling goes back to Fort Hood to pay for the Recycle Program and in support of various community events and projects. With the huge emphasis that management places on customer focused service, it's no wonder they achieve the success they do. Stop by the center today, not just to turn in recyclable material, but to experience great customer service as well.

Article by Dale Cowan, Fort Hood Customer Service Officer

See Photos of the Fort Hood Recycling Center on next page.



The Recycle Center hand sorts all material, the major reason why they produce a high quality product, resulting in over 100% market value on resale.



All employees pay special attention to the recycle material that comes into the center. All materials are sorted into their proper containers in preparation to be bundled up and loaded into trucks.





The above bundles are the result of extensive sorting and packaging. The buy-back value is determined by the quality of the bundles produced.



The machine above is the best of its kind and it was purchased by funds from the resale of recyclable material.

Whether it is paper, cardboard, printer cartridges, or plastic, it all gets sorted by type and resold, with the money poured back into the community. Not only is the operation of the Recycle Center extremely proficient, the employees all believe their efforts are making a difference in keeping our landfills clean and our environment safe.