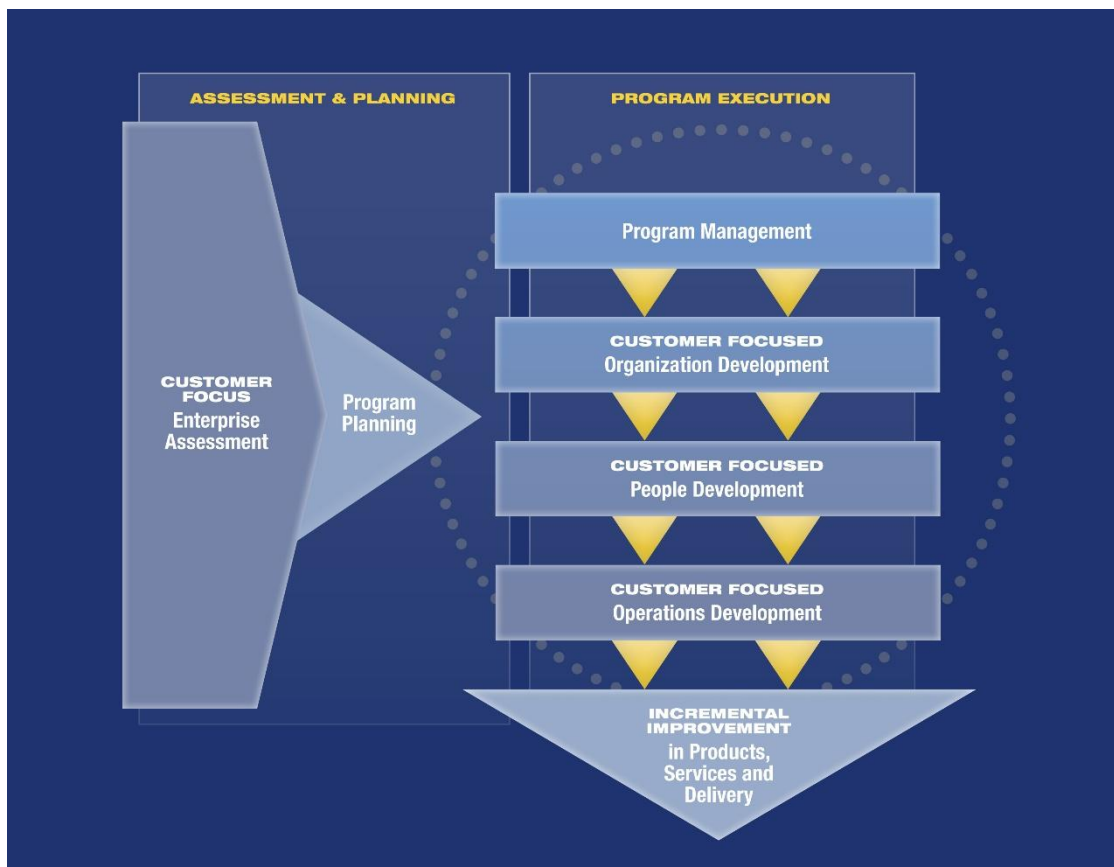


DESIGNING YOUR CUSTOMER FOCUS PROGRAM

Every business has its own particular strengths and weaknesses with regard to customer focus, so a one size fits all strategy doesn't work. In addition, it is clearly important to consider your organization's budget, appetite for change, and level of urgency when designing your customer focus program. With this in mind, Advance Consulting offers a set of customer focus program components that can serve as the "building blocks" for your custom program. Your company may choose to use some or all of the components, depending on its needs and circumstances.

The diagram below illustrates the timeline and components of a customer focus program. As shown in the diagram, the program starts with a comprehensive customer focus enterprise assessment to identify the "customer focus gaps" in the business. The program is then scoped and planned with a target of filling the "gaps" and achieving customer focus goals.



The major program components include Program Management, and Customer Focused Organization, People, and Operations Development. The vertical arrows pointing down cut through these program components to indicate that as things are accomplished across these components, incremental improvements in products, services, and service delivery are generated. This is important because we don't have to wait until the end of a program to realize benefits.

The sections that follow outline each of our major customer focus program components. Our experts are available to work with you and your company in designing your optimal program.

CUSTOMER FOCUS ENTERPRISE ASSESSMENT

Every program begins with an assessment of the various elements of the enterprise to determine current state and identify the gaps between current and desired state in each area. While the Enterprise Assessment is comprehensive in nature, it is rapidly deployed by our consultants to provide timely information and build program momentum. The ultimate result of the assessment will be a prescriptive set of recommended actions within the Organizational, Operational, and Individual (People) components of the enterprise.

PROGRAM PLANNING

This element picks up where the assessment leaves off with the development of a program plan defining the scope and work activities within each of the major program components, Organization, People, and Operations, as well as the program oversight activities within the Program Management component. We work with clients to help them find their optimal balance between scope and budget while ensuring risks are understood, avoided where possible, and well planned for with contingencies should they occur.

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

The Program Management element spans all program activities, and provides comprehensive program tracking and oversight, as well as quality control mechanisms. Also included are status reporting, problem resolution, and communications support in managing change. Advance Consulting can provide this entire function, or can support your company in performing it in whatever capacity is desired.

CUSTOMER FOCUSED ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

This element starts with helping leaders prepare for and execute on the leadership activities necessary to build a customer focused business. In service to the people, and the customers, there are three roles leaders play in building a customer focused organization.

- First, actively build a culture that motivates and encourages employees to behave and create with the customer in mind - to understand and satisfy the needs of their customers.
- Second, remove obstacles to affect necessary change and support people in adopting new skills and methods.
- Third, listen to and communicate with people about the customer. An organization is only customer focused when everyone is modeling the behavior.

With the stage set, this element continues with any necessary adjustment to organizational structure while providing for alignment of stakeholders and ongoing communication to help drive and assess change.

CUSTOMER FOCUSED PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT

The People element of customer focus programs includes technical and customer service training, as needed, as well as any work necessary to redefine roles and performance expectations, and address attitudes and motivations with incentives and other measures.

People are developed over time, so activities to reinforce skills and behaviors, provide feedback, and create experiential learning opportunities are embedded throughout.

CUSTOMER FOCUSED OPERATIONS DEVELOPMENT

The Operational element includes, as necessary, activities such as redefining major processes, building capability and capacity in the functional areas, fortifying project operations and delivery capability, refining systems, managing knowledge, and enhancing operational planning and budgeting. Each of these areas may contain customer focus obstacles.

CUSTOMER FOCUSED PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

This element essentially sums up the ongoing results of the customer focus program, including the collective impact of all of the above activities. While we believe that building products and services is best left to your company, Advance Consulting can advise your company in this area and help “keep score” on the success of the program by supporting the measurement and tracking of what we call customer focus imperatives. These include:

- Improving Customer Loyalty and Retention
- Innovating to Expand Market Share
- Enhancing the Customer Experience
- Improving Marketing ROI
- Identifying New Markets and Growth Opportunities

FOR MORE HELP

For more information on how to create your own customer focused business, download our free eBook on *Customer Focus*, by Greg Baker, President and CEO of Advance Consulting.



If you would like to discuss your customer focus goals and/or program with one of our experts, or if you would like help avoiding common customer focus pitfalls, please contact us, or give us a call at (831) 372-9444.

