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**100% Effective Natural Hormone Treatment**  
**Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances**  
**Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!**

**Customer Focus Teams**

**By Richard D S Hill**

To be more responsive to customer needs, emphasise customer satisfaction, develop closer

relationships with their customers and flatten the management structure some companies have adopted Customer Teams or Customer Focus Teams. These are cross-functional, customer focused teams exist to provide customers a 'one-stop shopping' service.

Teams have complete ownership of their accounts, with each team empowered to decide how to work with each of their customers and bring together each service function such as accounting, sales and service into a single team structure to serve all the needs of the specific customers assigned to them based on a mindset of continuous improvement in customer experience. Teams are empowered to take corrective actions to resolve day-to-day problems and have direct access to information that allows them to plan, control and improve their operations. The teams manage themselves and work within the team is generally allocated on the basis of skills and strengths, rather than just job title. This enables a team to provide fast turnaround on all a customer's issues and concerns. By self managing, like players on a pitch during a team game, the managers' role becomes that of coach, developing skills and knowledge rather than simply directing and controlling actions.

Working in customer focused teams interdependence and joint responsibility for outputs become the goal and thus instead of organizing work traditionally from the top down, reducing processes to individual steps work becomes structured around whole processes. Traditional approaches reduce the required skill at every level of work leading to boring and repetitive tasks, but team based approaches are more likely to consider the fit of team members with the work to be done with those closest to the jobs agreeing the jobs specifications.

The advantages of ownership and self management include customers being more comfortable knowing who they will deal with, and teams gaining in-depth knowledge of the needs of each customer because of improved internal communications as team members understand the customer's expectations and share information, realizing there is no advantage in hoarding knowledge - as their pay will be affected by their customers' results on their own company's profitability.

## Customer Focus Teams

Self managing teams do not just happen and they are not 'an easy answer'. Teams go through several stages on their way to self-management and it can take two or more years to achieve this objective. Comprehensive training in basic management skills such as problem solving and decision making is critical, as is functional cross training so they can manage their own processes.

To fully realize their potential, teams need not only to be cross-functional but also need to be managed by entrepreneurial and experienced managers who understand that they exist to provide greater profitability for their company by providing better customer experience to their company's clients or customers and to this end support and drive team initiatives, including playing an active role in building an ongoing working relationship with the customer's management.

Teams also must not become 'customer silos' rather than 'functional silos' and must work on sharing policies, systems and processes and people so that the results of 'winning teams – those that provide increased customer satisfaction together with superior profitability and increasing volume - are quickly tested and replicated elsewhere. To achieve this senior management needs need to fine tune

structure, roles, processes and systems to meet the ever-changing needs and increasing complexity of both the customer's business and their own.

Senior management also have to set the tone and reality - teams exist to provide greater profitability for their company by providing better customer experience to their company's clients or customers.

To achieve these corporate goals teams must:

1. Make customer satisfaction their top priority.
2. Have a common understanding of the organization's vision and mission and their role in that.
3. Understand the roles of individual members within the team as well as its role with the organization.
4. Work together to plan, make decisions and resolve differences and build trust.
5. Understand what is and is not possible and walk before they try to run
6. Set goals for continuous improvement in inputs, processes, outputs and measured results.

It is in this last area that CRM software such as Customer FOCUS [

[http://www.e-crm.co.uk/crm/customer\\_focus/customer\\_focus.htm](http://www.e-crm.co.uk/crm/customer_focus/customer_focus.htm)

] can really help.

Richard Hill is a director of E-CRM Solutions and has spent many years in senior direct and interactive marketing roles. E-CRM –

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– helps you to grow by getting you more customers

that stay with you longer. We provide practical solutions that pay for themselves. We help you to make sure that your marketing works.

## **Characteristics of High Performance Teams**

**By Terence R. Traut**

Abstract: Based on significant research, Entelechy has defined characteristics of effective teams.

Entelechy reviewed over 50 studies on high performance teams and compiled a list of high performance team characteristics. We grouped characteristics into eight categories as indicated on the graphic below.

Participative Leadership  
Aligned On Purpose And Vision  
Task Focused  
Shared Responsibility  
Innovative  
Problem Solving  
Strong Communication  
Responsive  
Self Monitoring

See if your team shares characteristics of High Performance Teams. Circle the characteristics that describe your team; cross off those that don't describe your team.

### **PARTICIPATIVE LEADERSHIP**

Envisioning leadership and organizing leadership  
Clear leadership role that is shared  
Enables people to make choices  
Shared norms  
Shared values  
Members drawn to the team  
Team identity  
Belonging/membership  
Synergism  
Future focused

### **ALIGNED ON PURPOSE AND VISION**

Common shared purpose  
Clear shared vision

## Customer Focus Teams

Self directing  
High morale  
Team goals align with personal goals and organization goals  
Problem solving, not laying blame  
Clear, shared understanding of team members' roles

### TASK FOCUSED

Challenging tasks  
Individual accountability/ownership  
Equality in workload  
Quality focus  
Clear tasks and milestones  
Mutual respect for ability  
Commitment

### SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

Shared decision making  
Rewards linked to team performance  
Recognize expertise/value added in individuals  
Cooperation  
Clear standards of acceptable performance  
Celebrates success  
Clear authority and responsibility  
Contribution  
Members responsible for team success

### INNOVATIVE

Creative talents  
May promote personal relationships  
Respect for individuals  
Empowered and empowering

### PROBLEM SOLVING

Upfront and direct; confronts issues not people  
Trust  
Clear decision-making process  
Conflicts managed well  
Freedom to express ideas  
Freedom to share opinions

### STRONG COMMUNICATION

Superb communication  
Open communication  
Openness

## Customer Focus Teams

Clear communication channels  
Share common language and terminology  
External communications  
Time managed well  
Structure, purposeful meetings (facilitator, timekeeper, recorder, scribe)

### RESPONSIVE

Unite/partner with other teams  
Flexible  
Outward focused  
Focus on the customer  
Allows risks and mistakes

Promotes group learning

### SELF MONITORING

Self correcting; evaluates its own performance  
Individuals pleased with work results  
Assigns opposing views

Terence R. Traut is the president of Entelechy, Inc., a company that helps organizations unlock the potential of their people through customized training programs in the areas of sales, management, customer service, and training. Check out our 40 customizable modules, training tools, and eGuides at

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### Characteristics of High Performance Teams

Stars In A Sea Of Sameness  
Teamwork – Does It Always Work?  
Evaluating Your Team Building Activities  
League Has Significant Rivalries?

### How to Gain and Retain More Customers

ScrollPops  
Mind Power Creative Thinking  
One Million a Year  
About Niches



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