

October 2009 SatisFacts ELetter

Resident Relationship Coach's Corner: Maintenance Focus

In June's SatisFactoid Quick Poll, we asked how maintenance service requests are typically submitted by residents.

How are maintenance service requests most often submitted at your property?	Percent
Called into the property management office	84.0%
Submitted in writing	12.0%
Submitted online	4.0%

Source: SatisFacts Research (www.satisfacts.com)

The overwhelming majority of respondents indicated service requests are called into the property management office, which highlights the critical need to look at the service request completion process as a team effort, not just a maintenance team effort.

In order for the maintenance team to be able to complete as many service requests as possible in a day, these things must happen:

- The service request must be completed in detail
- It must be entered in the property management system immediately

However, we often find that leasing teams don't always receive much training when it comes to asking all the right questions needed for a detailed service request. A quick and easy solution is to have the maintenance supervisor give a quick tutorial to the entire team to let them know what information is always necessary, why it is important, as well as some troubleshooting questions to ask regarding some of the most common service requests at your particular property.

Source: SatisFacts Research, LLC and Jen Piccotti

How satisfied are your residents with how quickly you respond to their requests? Find out through a SatisFacts Annual Resident Survey, because sometimes it's easier to voice your concerns through a third party survey.

Resident Retention Rx: How to Do It Right the First Time

On average, 76% of residents indicate their service request was completed right the first time. That means nearly a quarter of residents believe their service request was not done right the first time!

It's easy to just point fingers at the maintenance team and say, "Hey! Get your act together!" The reality, though, is that resolving a service request requires the participation of the entire

team. Take a look at your service request process from start to finish. How well are each of the following areas covered?

1. The office team takes detailed service requests and inputs them immediately in the system.
2. The maintenance supervisor picks up and assigns incoming service requests frequently.
3. The maintenance team has the training, parts and tools necessary to be able to complete the most common requests quickly and effectively.
4. Completed service requests are closed out in the system daily by a designated team member.
5. Each completed service requests receives a follow-up call or email by a designated office team member to ensure it was completed to the resident's satisfaction.

Just as your car needs an oil change and tune-up every several thousand miles, your service request process needs a quick check from time to time to ensure things continue to run smoothly.

Each area listed above is equally important to ensure the greatest number of service requests is completed right the first time or to catch those few situations that didn't meet the resident's expectation.

Source: Jen Piccotti

Find out what impacts your residents' renewal decision through our Insite™ and Insite+™ Move-In, Pre-Renewal and Work Order Follow Up Websurvey Programs, because retention is the key to NOI growth in this economy.

Team Builder: Beware the Demotivators!

Despair, Inc. has built a business poking fun at the inspirational and uplifting posters, plaques, and paperweights that companies often offer employees as a reward or motivational boost. While I am definitely 'guilty' of indulging in these same inspirational chotchkies, I have appreciation for what Despair, Inc. is doing. Just as the comic strip, Dilbert, can be painfully true a little too often, these sayings with accompanying photos can help us laugh at ourselves and also give an important reality check. Some good examples found at <http://despair.com/viewall.html>:

APATHY If we don't take care of the customer, maybe they'll stop bugging us.

BLAME The secret to success is knowing who to blame for your failures.

BURNOUT Attitudes are contagious. Mine might kill you.

DEMOTIVATION Sometimes the best solution to morale problems is just to fire all of the unhappy people.

FAILURE When your best just isn't good enough.

PRESSURE It can turn a lump of coal into a flawless diamond, or an average person into a perfect basketcase.

Source: Jen Piccotti and www.despair.com

Did you know SatisFacts offers Employee Surveys? Ask SatisFacts for a demo today, because it's important to know what motivates your team!

Productivity Pointers: The Power of Because

Telling people the reason why you are doing something has a major influence on how they react to you because, more often than not, people willingly comply with requests when given reasons why they should. Ellen Langer, a social psychologist at Harvard University, demonstrated that people respond automatically and without thinking when given the proper stimulus.

Here's how it went: In a busy library, one of her subjects would approach the person at the front of the line for the photocopier and say, "Excuse me, I have five pages. May I use the Xerox machine because I am in a rush?" This request was successful 94 percent of the time. Later, when the subject returned to ask another group of people lined up at the same machine and said, "Excuse me, I have five pages. May I use the Xerox machine?" her success rate dropped to 60 percent. No big surprise here. What was a big surprise was that when the subject approached the front of the line a little later and asked, "Excuse me, I have five pages. May I use the Xerox machine because I have to make these copies?" the compliance rate whizzed back up to 93 percent!

Automatic response is based on reason, or at least the appearance of reason. People need to have reasons to make decisions and justify their actions even when the reason is not really a reason, but only looks like a reason. For most people it's powerful enough to set in motion a patterned response, in this case a "yes" response, even in the absence of concrete information.

When you want to connect quickly, offer your contact a "because" and chances are you'll be successful. For example, if you're aiming to do business with company Q, and you meet a key contact there, instead of simply saying, "I'm delighted to meet you," add "because I've read so much about your pioneering work with XYZ . . ."

Source: Nicholas Boothman's Blog, August 3, 2009,
http://nicholasboothman.typepad.com/my_weblog/2009/08/the-power-of-because.html

Ask SatisFacts about a Work-Time Analysis, because we know you are wondering, "Where does all my time go?"