

ENTERPRISE PULSE



**Customer Service Survey
Customer service focus-2003
Gender report**

Total Number of respondents: 200

Wednesday, February 05, 2003



Introduction

This summary report presents the organization's aggregated results of the Enterprise Pulse - Customer service Survey. Your organization's results are presented graphically in a number of ways, which reveal whether the responses were net positive or net negative on an overall basis.

This summary report also details the aggregated feedback results for each of the twelve categories measured in Enterprise Pulse - Customer service Survey, and each of the individual questions that comprise the Survey instrument (72 in total).

When looking at your organization's results, it is important to understand that people may have opinions or views that are relatively positive and opinions and views that are relatively negative. Both provide opportunities for better organizational performance by taking the data seriously and by acting firmly and quickly on the results.

In broad terms, this Summary Report contains the following:

- An introduction to the importance of rigorously and systematically gathering people's opinions on Customer service matters and acting on the results (whatever they may be).
- Your organization's graphic profiles plus supporting statistical summary
- A category by category report that summarizes your organization's results in twelve major customer service areas (two for each of the six key success factors).
- A report that summarizes results at individual question level
- Brief action intervention suggestions to provide ideas on what you may like to consider in action planning terms for each of the six key factors involved in lifting overall Customer service performance and creating and sustaining organizational success.

We hope that this report will be a powerful tool in your action-planning process. Thank you for participating in the Enterprise Pulse- Customer service Survey.

The importance of gathering and acting upon Employee Opinions and Feedback

Every organization, however large or small it may be, will have a range of underlying opinions, attitudes, beliefs and values held by the members of the enterprise. These informal and often underlying or invisible views form what is generally seen to be the service culture of the organization.

Some aspects of organizational culture, such as individual behavior or group behavior norms, are easily visible, or open for all to see. This might be seen in the relative formality of the organization in terms of using first or last names to address people or in the dress or attire standards that are expected etc. Other aspects of culture are harder to spot, since they represent the hidden or private assumptions, values and core beliefs that people hold. Examples of this less visible level of culture might be seen in beliefs about how to get up to date information (from the 'normal' communication channels or the 'grapevine') or what kind of behavior it takes to get noticed (obtain a pay rise or promotion etc.).

Whether they are in the open or not, the more people's opinions or attitudes can be understood, the more the organization can take account of its employee feedback, the better. After all, contented, focused, cooperative and empowered employees are likely to achieve better results than those employees who are clearly discontent, lacking in teamwork and morale and who are generally dispirited. Of course, the key is to be able to measure the extent to which either of these extremes may apply (and why) and to diagnose in which particular topics or subject areas about the organization, most satisfaction or dissatisfaction may exist.

The importance of careful and incisive diagnosis cannot be emphasized enough. Doctors routinely make diagnostic judgements prior to prescribing a course of treatment. As the situation changes, they also recognize that the treatment may need to change also. In order to carry out their diagnosis task accurately, doctors have to use a systematic, ordered, rational and fully repeatable process (taking the temperature, feeling the pulse, listening to the heart etc). In exactly the same way, an organization needs a systematic, ordered, rational and fully repeatable process to take the organizational 'temperature', feel the organizational 'pulse', and listen to the organizational 'heart'. Then, and only then, can we prescribe the course of treatment to deal with any ailments and optimize future performance.

The Enterprise Pulse - Customer service Survey is a highly systematic diagnostic process, based on over 8 years of research in over 75 organizations in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand. It uses 72 questions to focus on six key factors that are seen to be critical to effective organizational performance and success. The Survey measures each of these six key factors in two sub categories per factor (making twelve sub categories in total). These six key factors and the twelve sub categories are detailed overleaf.

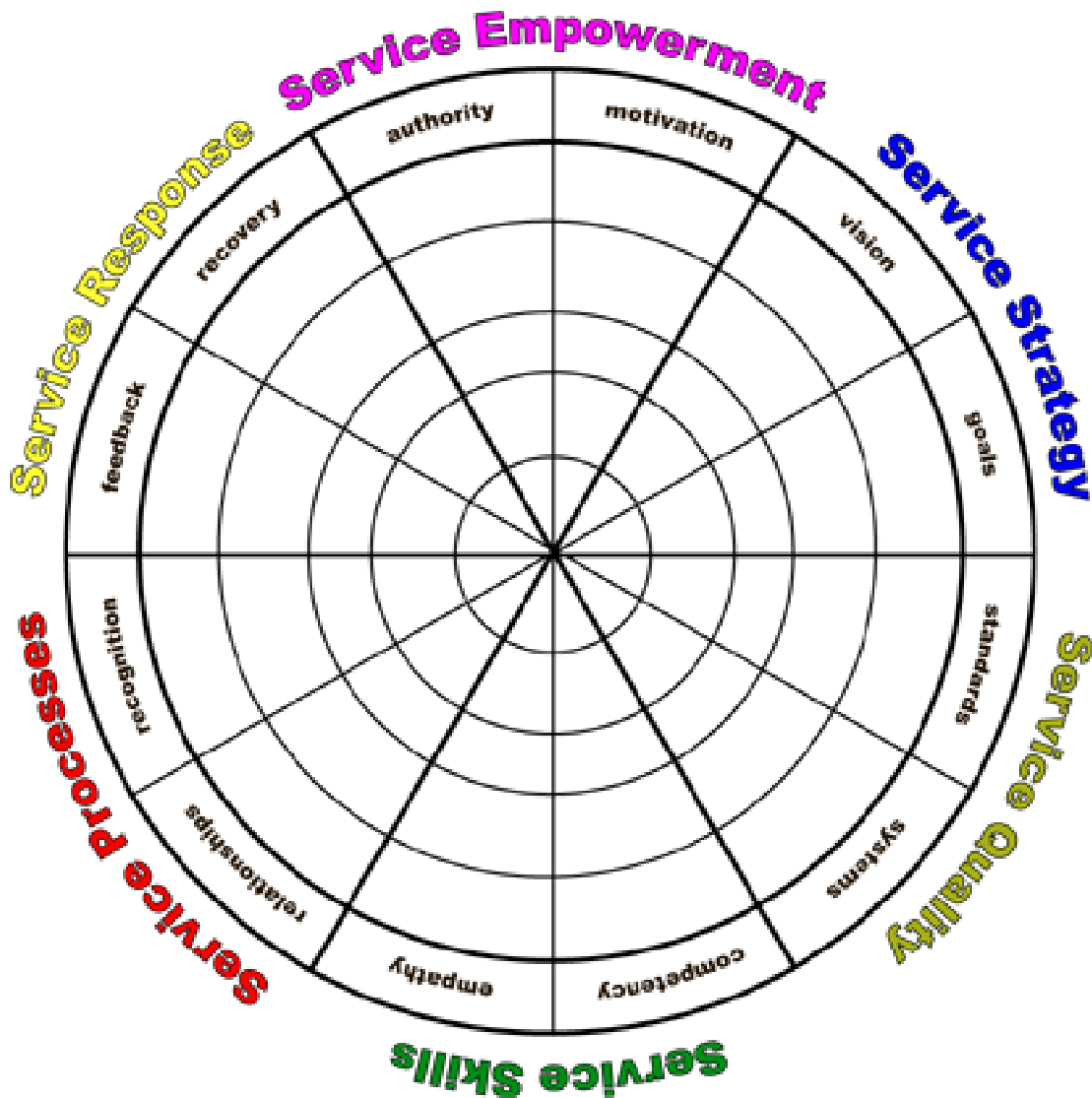
The Customer service Survey sub category definitions

Many years of progressive research have indicated that high organizational performance and success in terms of Customer service are significantly based on six key factors. These are that:

- That a clear Service strategy of what constitutes superior service should be communicated to all employees at every level.
- That concrete standards of excellent service quality should be established and regularly measured.
- That Service skills should be paramount when people are selected (particularly those in the front line), and should be coached carefully and extensively so that they have the knowledge and skills to achieve the service standards and are empowered to work on behalf of customers.
- That customer service responses and feedback must be heard, understood, and the organization should respond – often in unique and creative ways – to their evolving needs and constantly shifting expectations.
- That customer serving processes and systems should be widely understood and consistently improved by motivated and enthusiastic teams of employees across the organization.
- That employees are fully empowered to give what it takes to give excellent customer service, and recognized for their service accomplishments

The Customer service Survey sub category definitions

The six key factors are shown in the circular diagram below, together with the two individual sub-categories that comprise each factor. The Enterprise Pulse - Customer service Survey asks questions in each of these twelve sub-categories to create a rich and meaningful analysis and output report.



The Enterprise Pulse - Customer service Survey assumes that an effective or high performance service focused culture should be looking to create high levels of efficiency and effectiveness in all six key factors (and therefore all twelve sub categories). This means ensuring that people rate the organization positively by getting team and enterprise performance as near to the outer layers of the above wheel as possible. We therefore need to understand these twelve sub categories in greater detail.

Service Strategy

A clear vision of what constitutes superior service is widely communicated to ensure that service quality is personally and positively important to everyone in the enterprise. This is effectively translated into specific strategy and goals.

The two sub categories of Service strategy are:

Service Vision

The extent to which a tangible vision of what service excellence should look like when it is achieved exists and the extent to which this has been actively communicated to all individuals at all levels.

Service goals

The extent to which service goals and objectives are carefully developed and appropriately acted upon across teams and the whole enterprise.

Service Quality

Clear standards of service excellence are established and systems are carefully designed to ensure that customers can obtain consistently high levels of service performance whenever they deal with the enterprise.

The two sub categories of Service quality are:

Service standards

The extent to which standards of service excellence are widely known and met in every area at all times, and are driven into every part of the organization and communicated, including the customer, so that what can be expected is fully appreciated.

Service systems

The extent to which every system of work is designed and to run smoothly or according to plan in order to deliver excellent customer service (ensuring that every process is flexible enough to 'bend' and adapt but continue to deliver service every time).

Service skills

People have the knowledge and skills to achieve the service standards set by the organization and demonstrate high levels of empathy with customer needs and expectations.

The two sub categories of Service skills are:

Service competency

The extent to which people are appropriately trained and able to offer effective and efficient service at all levels in the most competent way possible.

Service empathy

The extent to which excellence in service is achieved through 'warm' and 'empathetic' relationships between individuals and his or her internal and external customers

Service Processes

Internal and external processes which help put customers first are regularly 'mapped' and adjusted where necessary to ensure that they are as efficient and effective as possible in achieving service excellence.

The two sub categories of Service processes are:

Service relationships

The extent to which key customer relationships and all other customer interfaces in general are appropriately managed to ensure high levels of service quality and performance consistency

Service recognition

The extent to which superior performance in service is rewarded and/or recognized and regularly offered at every available opportunity. This includes public opportunities for recognition, where these service achievements can become a role model for others.

Service Response

The customer's voice is heard loud and clear in across the organization, the messages are fully understood, and the enterprise responds appropriately to the changing expectations that arise (including when things do not go according to plan).

The two sub categories of Service response are:

Service feedback

The extent to which the organization has developed 'listening posts' or listening channels to ensure that the ever changing voice of the customer is constantly heard and understood, and feedback is used to make any changes that would create benefit and be of value.

Service recovery

The extent to which service mistakes and shortfalls (when they occur) are quickly and effectively acknowledged and rectified, and active steps are systematically taken to recover customer 'favor'.

Service Empowerment

People are given as much responsibility as they need in order to offer their internal or external customers the most flexible service possible and are actively motivated by the enterprise to do they best they can at all times.

The two sub categories of Service empowerment are:

Service authority

The extent to which individuals are given the room or delegated the appropriate authority to offer high levels of service excellence on a consistent basis.

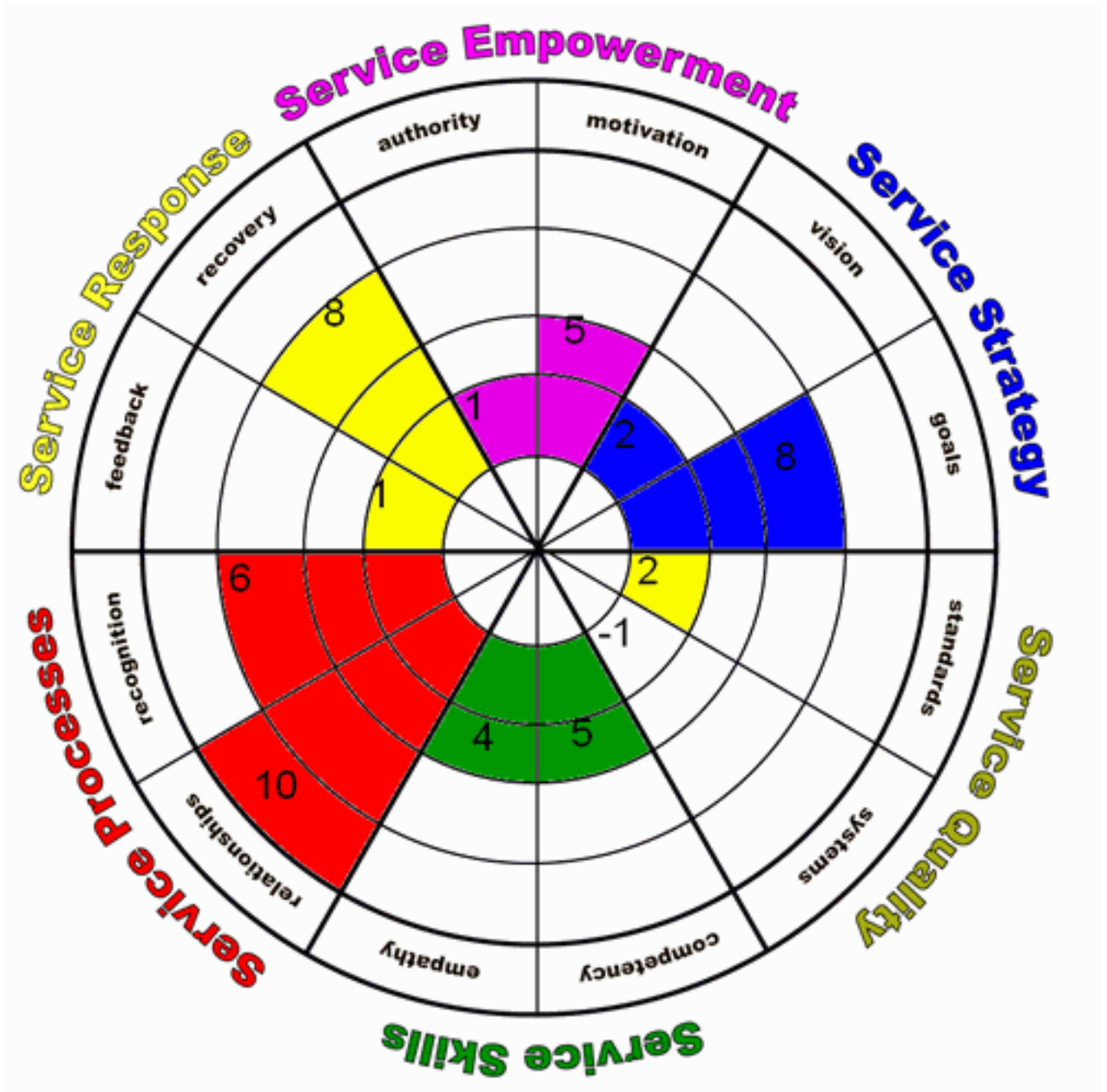
Service motivation

The extent to which the enterprise engages in regular and varied processes to help motivate and encourage individuals to give of their best to customers at all times.

It should always be remembered that no one key factor or one sub-category is more important than any of the others. In a high performance organisation, the enterprise will seek to work on any and every appropriate area. This means building on the strengths and addressing the negative views or weaknesses that are perceived by employees.

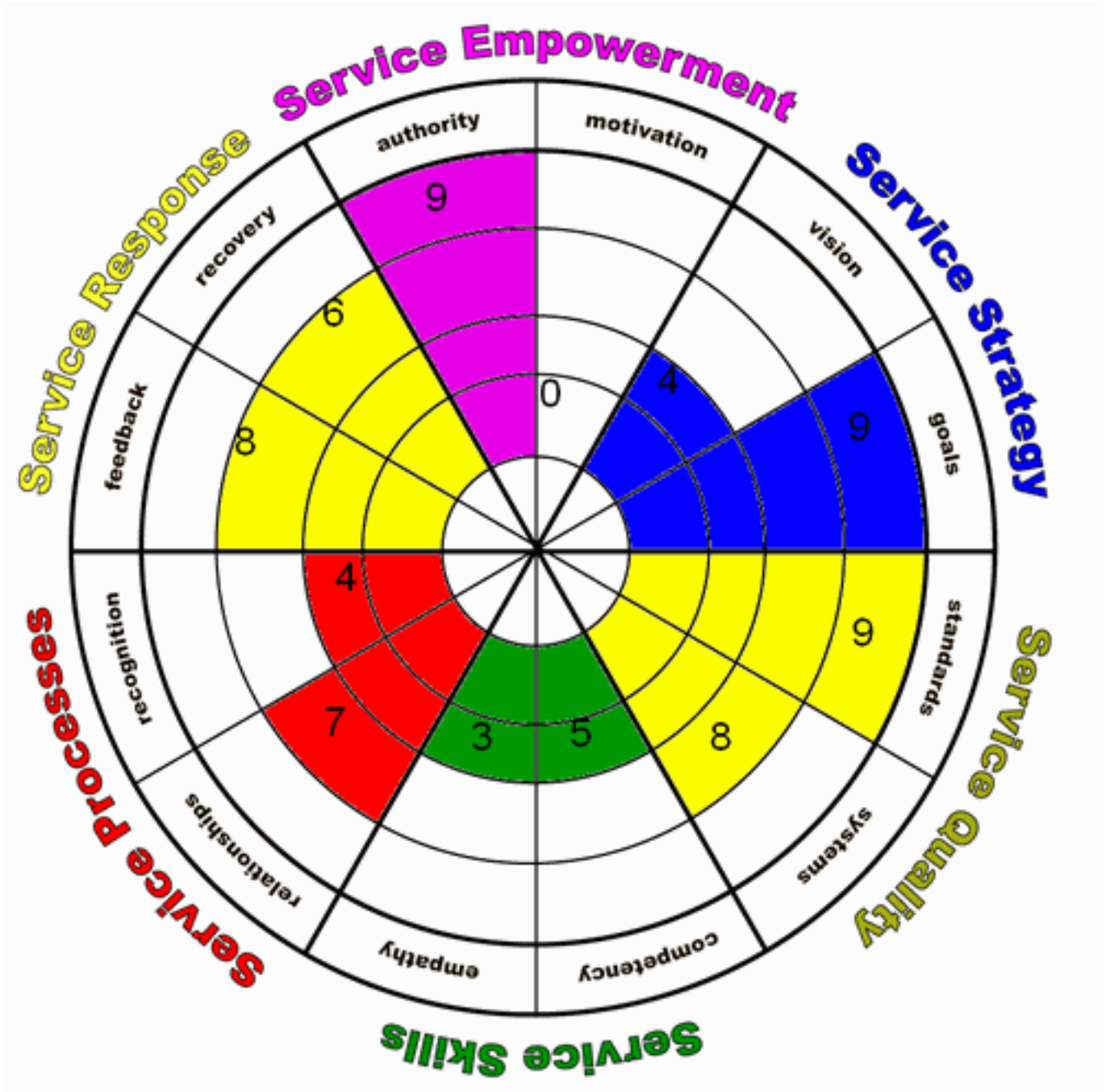
The next section of this summary report details the specific Survey results of your organisation in graphical form. Following this, the report ends with some suggested interventions that you may like to consider as part of your future action planning.

Customer Service Survey Customer service focus-2003 graph for males



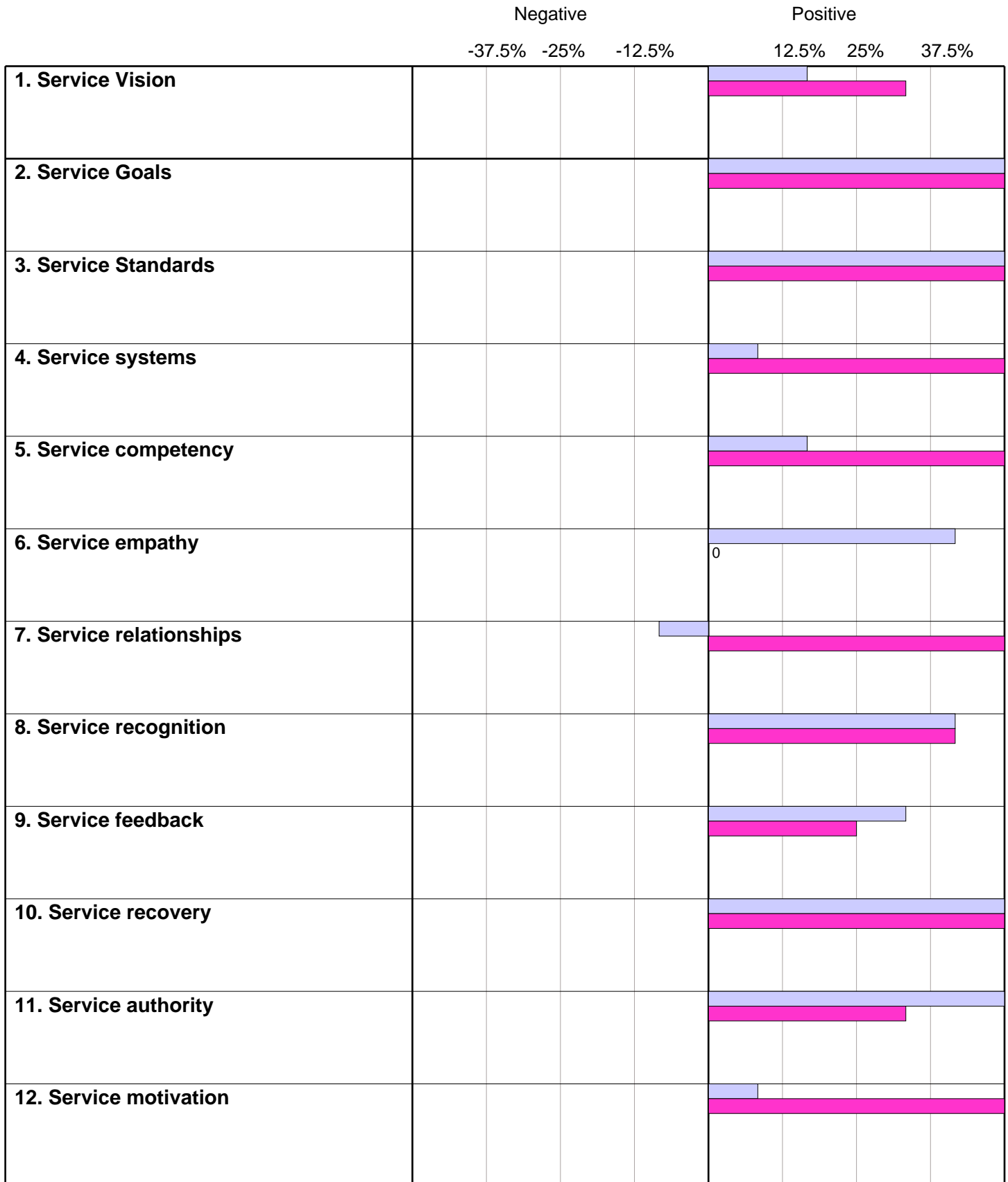
February 2003
Survey Population= 100

Customer Service Survey Customer service focus-2003 graph for females



February 2003
Survey Population= 100

OVERALL SUMMARY



■ males ■ females

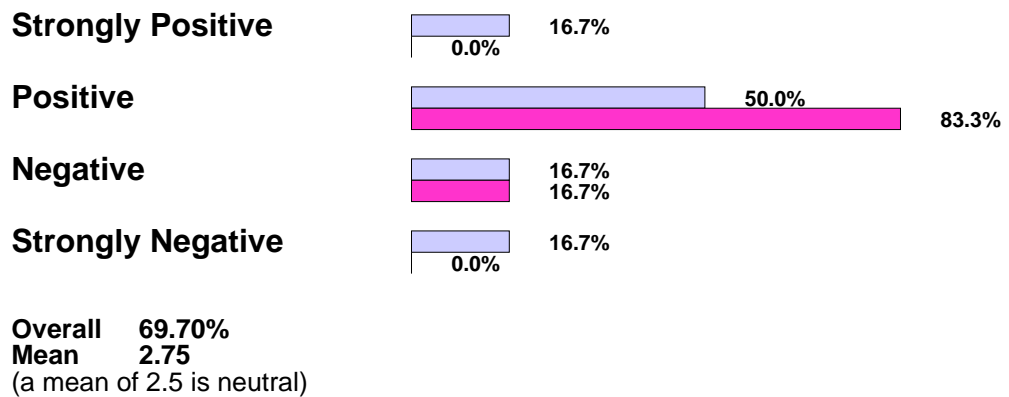
Service Vision

The extent to which a tangible vision of what service excellence should look like when it is achieved exists and the extent to which this has been actively communicated to all individuals at all levels.

The questions that make up this category:

1. Knows exactly what a clear vision of service excellence should look like
2. Translates customer service improvement strategies into specific goals and objectives
3. Ensures that regular debate and discussion takes place about different customers and their needs
4. Ensures that service role modeling consistently occurs to demonstrate what good customer commitment should look like
5. Treats the customer as the number one priority
6. Values life long learning about customers and feeds this learning into overall service strategy

Average score:



Interpretive notes

Net Positive

The organization is likely to have invested in some quality time to help clearly determine its vision and strategic intent in relation to service giving, and has discussed this vision at many levels across the enterprise.

Net Negative

The organization is likely to have invested little or no time in considering what kind of service strategy or vision it should adopt or pursue (and therefore little or no time in discussing it with organizational employees).

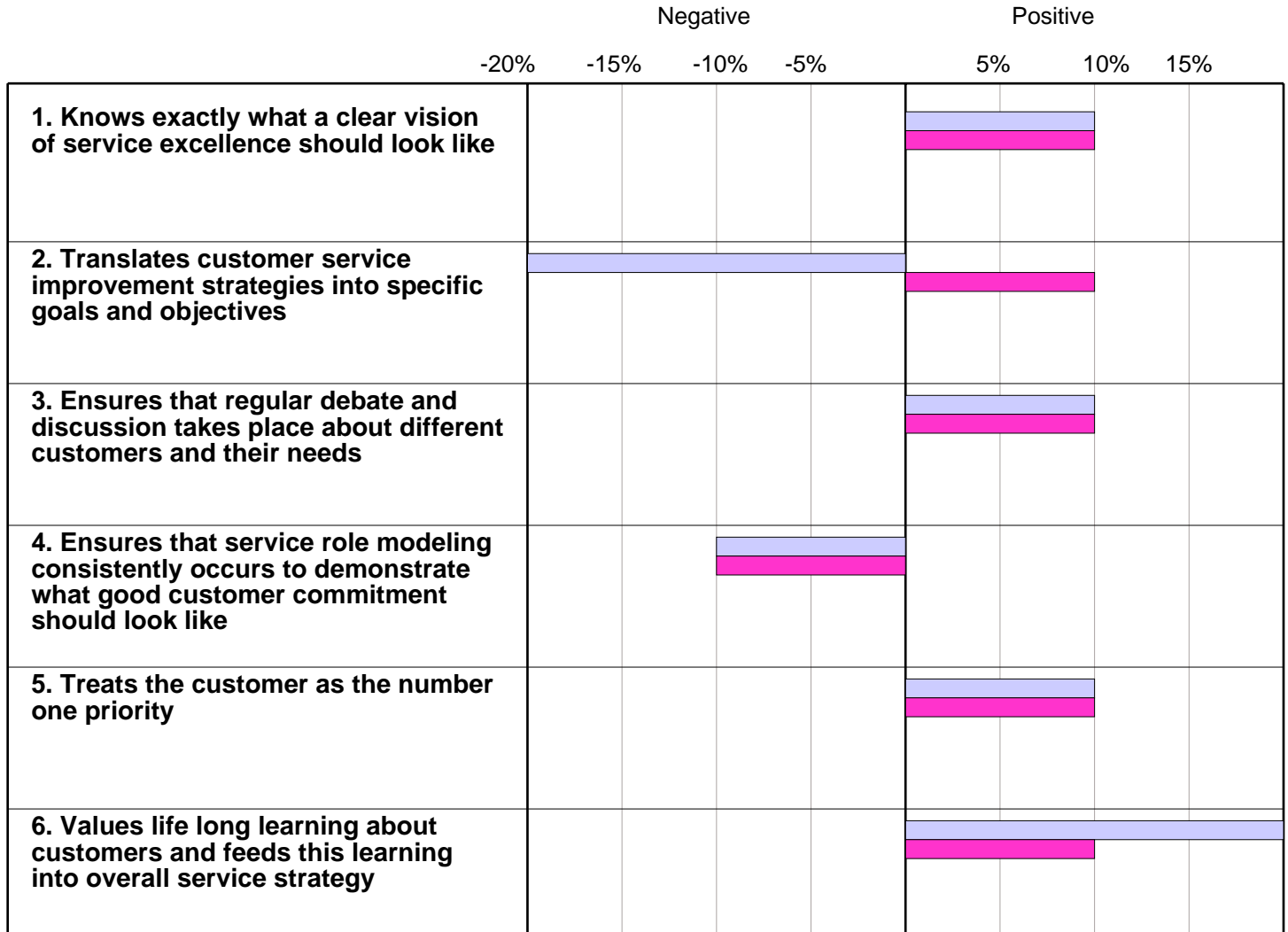
■ males ■ females

Individual question analysis

Service Vision

The extent to which a tangible vision of what service excellence should look like when it is achieved exists and the extent to which this has been actively communicated to all individuals at all levels.

Overall score for this category= 69.70%



■ males ■ females

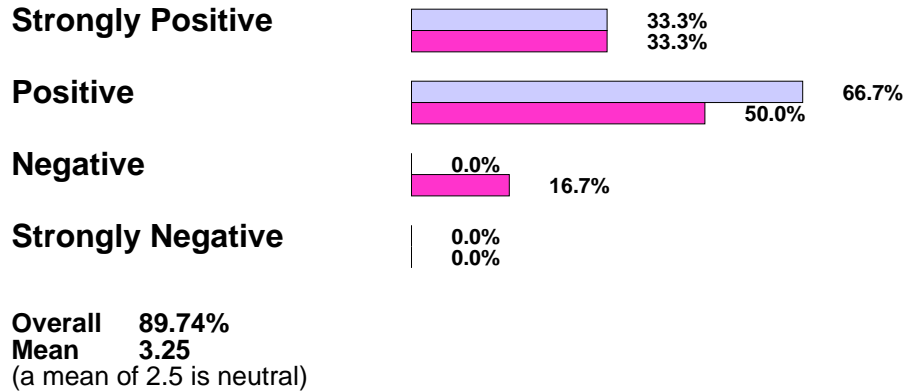
Service Goals

The extent to which service goals and objectives are carefully developed and appropriately acted upon across teams and the whole enterprise.

The questions that make up this category:

1. Actively communicates the service values of the enterprise and ensures that they are widely understood
2. Does not tolerate service mediocrity at any level and develops improvement projects to lift performance
3. Encourages individuals to set specific objectives to improve service
4. Develops plans to avoid small but frequent service errors from occurring
5. Is clear and precise about what should be done to serve the customer well
6. Sets particular service improvement targets and follows through until they are achieved

Average score:



Interpretive notes

Net Positive

The organization is likely to set specific goals in relation to customer service (both particularly and in general). These are also likely to be based on known service problems and are written as a result of direct customer feedback on what could be improved.

Net Negative

The organization is likely to develop its goals and objectives with little or no reference to customer feedback (good and bad) and/or as a result of known service problems and shortfalls within the enterprise.

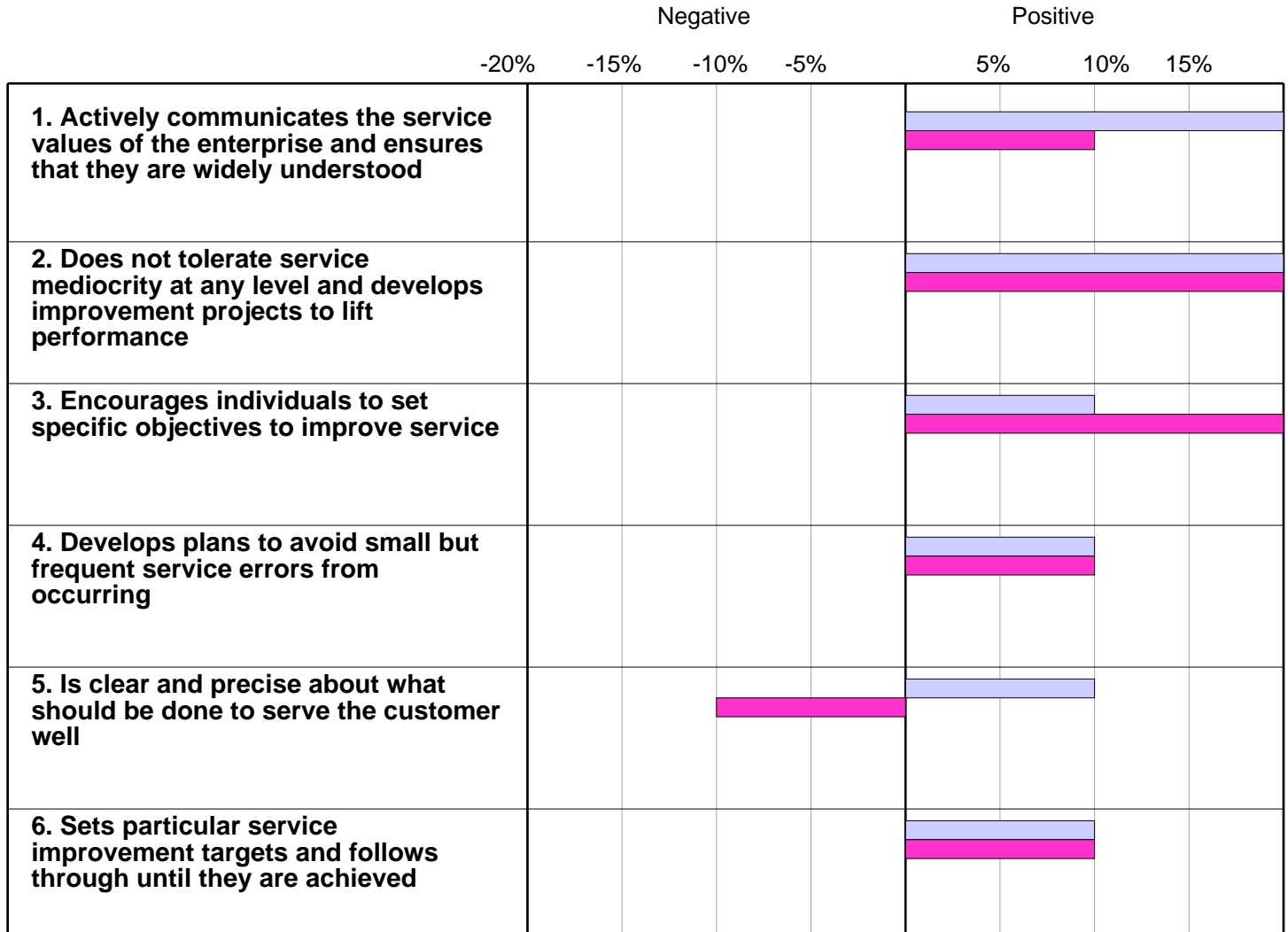
■ males ■ females

Individual question analysis

Service Goals

The extent to which service goals and objectives are carefully developed and appropriately acted upon across teams and the whole enterprise.

Overall score for this category= 89.74%



■ males ■ females

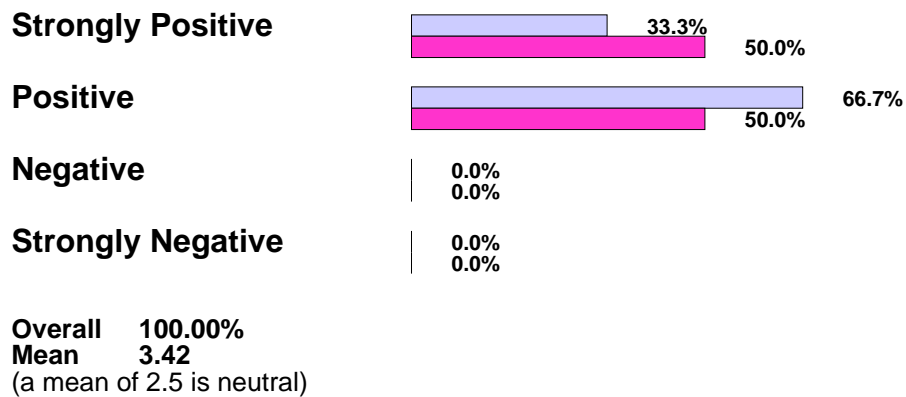
Service Standards

The extent to which standards of service excellence are widely known and met in every area at all times, and are driven into every part of the organization and communicated (including the customer) so that what can be expected is fully appreciated.

The questions that make up this category:

1. Ensures that customers well understand the standards of service that are sought by the enterprise
2. Makes customer service excellence a prime part of everyone's job description
3. Ensures that policies and procedures on customer service excellence are available and readily understood
4. Quickly adjusts service standards according to customer comment and feedback
5. Ensures that the difference between poor, average and excellent service is always very clear before setting standards and targets
6. Demonstrates a high commitment to quality and professionalism in all customer dealings

Average score:



Interpretive notes

Net Positive

The organization is likely to enjoy a reputation for distinctive service quality and consistently meeting their customers' expectations. Far from leaving anything to chance, they are likely to establish consistently clear, customer-oriented service performance standards, and then constantly and meticulously measure performance against those standards.

Net Negative

The organization is likely to spend insufficient time in setting clear and stretching standards to meet their customers' expectations. This is likely to mean that service standards and targets form little or no part of organizational policies, procedures, job descriptions and other documented systems.

■ males ■ females

Individual question analysis

Service Standards

The extent to which standards of service excellence are widely known and met in every area at all times, and are driven into every part of the organization and communicated (including the customer) so that what can be expected is fully appreciated.

Overall score for this category= 100.00%



■ males
 ■ females

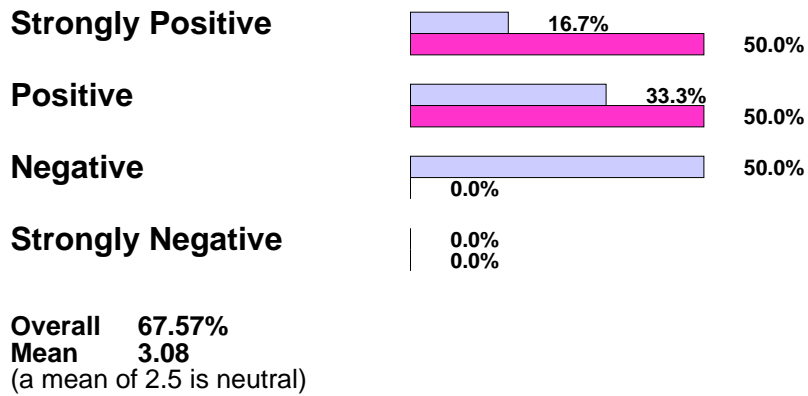
Service systems

The extent to which every system of work is designed and to run smoothly or according to plan in order to deliver excellent customer service (ensuring that every process is flexible enough to 'bend' and adapt but continue to deliver service every time).

The questions that make up this category:

1. Has a sound knowledge of who can help and assist customers on issues or questions that need resolving
2. Often holds discussions with suppliers to find ways to improve overall service quality for customers
3. Tracks and measures customer service performance over time.
4. Helps customers to gain easy and friendly access to the enterprise to meet their needs in many and different ways
5. Ensures that sound systems are in place to help prevent the same customer problem from re-occurring
6. Maintains a systematic process for actively seeking information to help continuously improve service quality

Average score:



Interpretive notes

Net Positive

The organization is likely to have carefully considered what drives service quality and to have therefore designed a range of different but complementary systems to ensure that customers can consistently get what they want in many and various flexible ways.

Net Negative

The organization is likely to allow customer needs and expectations to be met in a variety of ways without creating any kind of service certainty or consistency. This means that the potential for service errors or problems arising is considerably heightened.

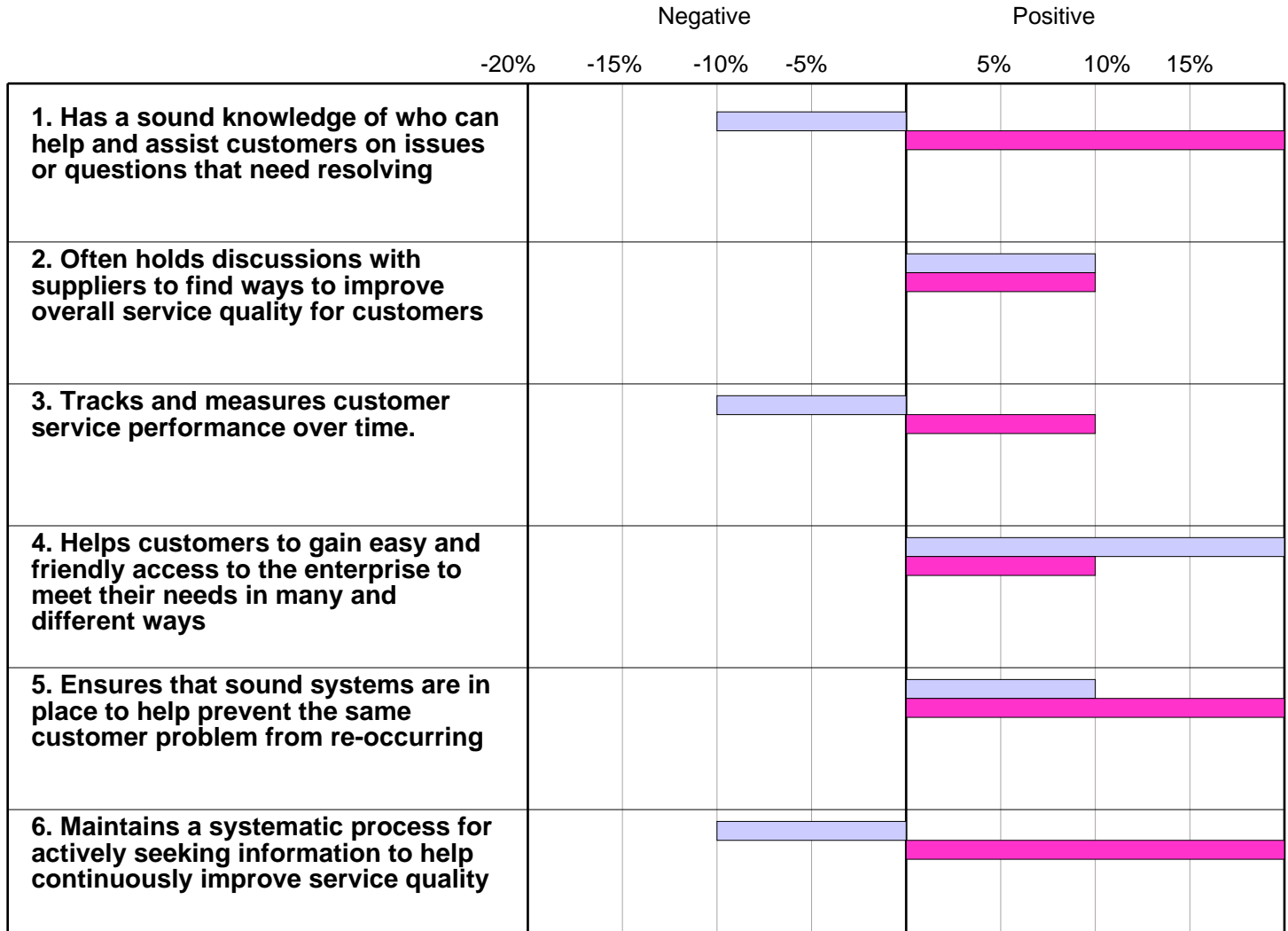
■ males
 ■ females

Individual question analysis

Service systems

The extent to which every system of work is designed and to run smoothly or according to plan in order to deliver excellent customer service (ensuring that every process is flexible enough to 'bend' and adapt but continue to deliver service every time).

Overall score for this category= 67.57%



■ males ■ females

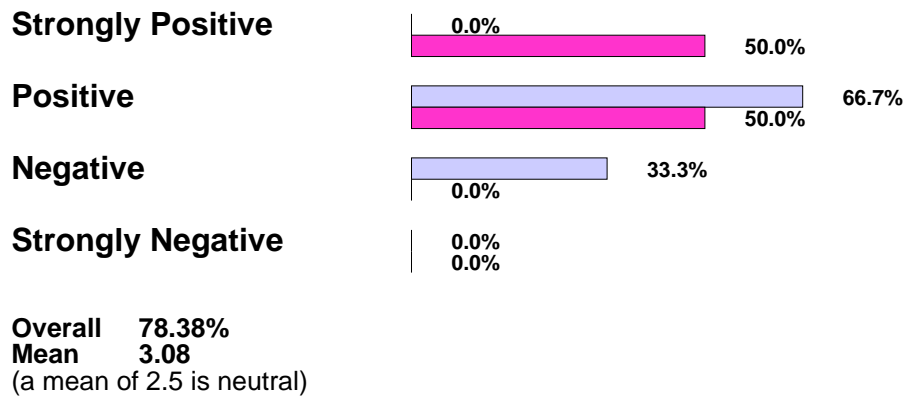
Service competency

The extent to which people are appropriately trained and able to offer effective and efficient service at all levels in the most competent way possible.

The questions that make up this category:

1. Engages in regular formal and informal training to help lift general service skills
2. Rigorously audits the existing ability of people to perform their work efficiently and effectively
3. Makes training in customer service excellence readily available and ensures regularly attendance, where appropriate
4. Can clearly identify highly competent service skills whenever they are demonstrated or shown
5. Makes training in active listening is available for those that need it.
6. Encourages individuals to engage in continuous efforts to improve their overall levels of competence in the service area

Average score:



Interpretive notes

Net Positive

The organization is likely to have a good understanding of the prevailing skills of employees at all levels in terms of giving efficient and effective service and to have therefore used the information gathered to have established and deployed a comprehensive training strategy to help people wherever needed.

Net Negative

The organization is likely to have spent little time in rigorously auditing the skills or competencies of employees at any level and therefore typically may provides any training given in only a random or unplanned way at best.

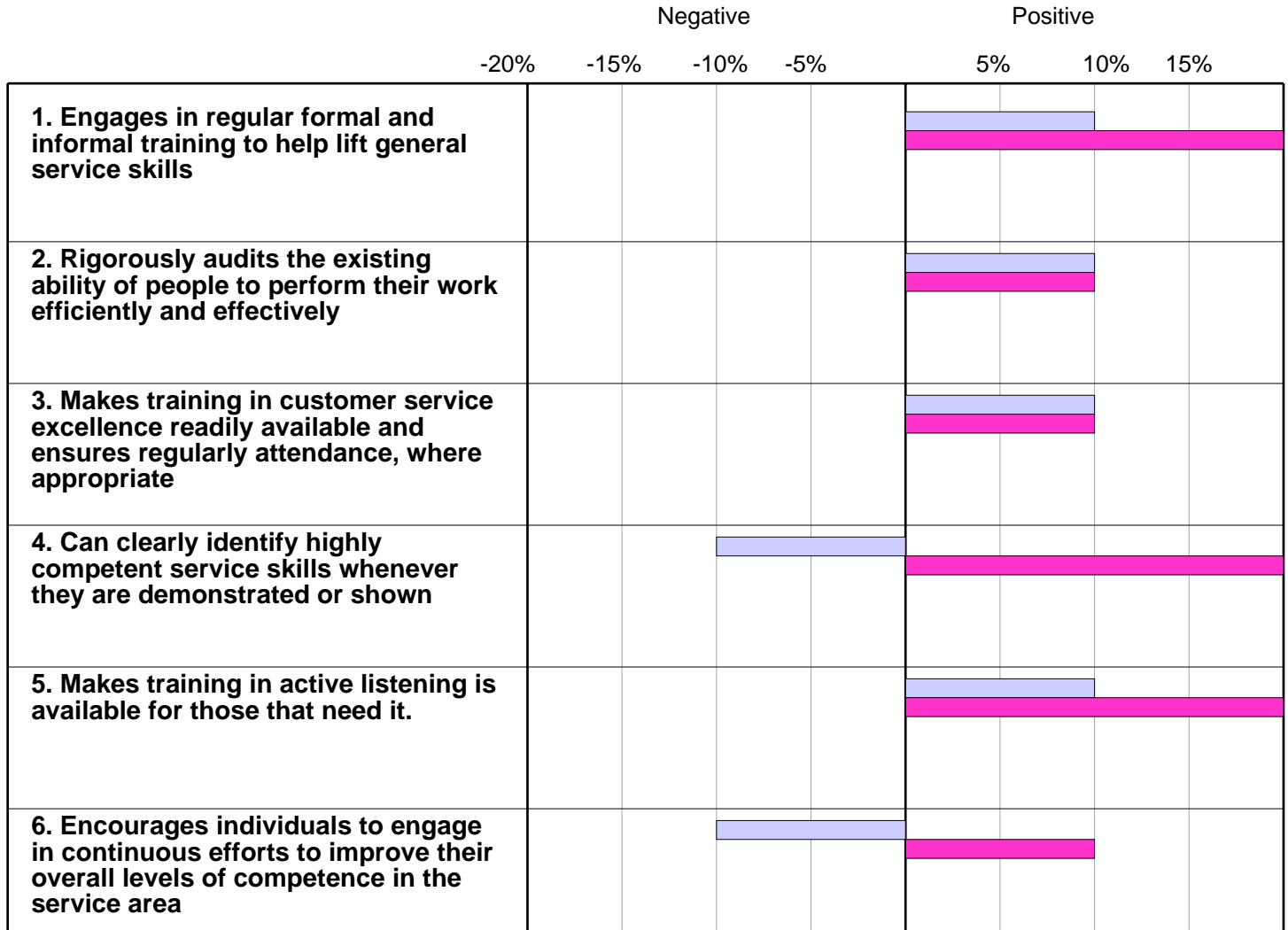
■ males ■ females

Individual question analysis

Service competency

The extent to which people are appropriately trained and able to offer effective and efficient service at all levels in the most competent way possible.

Overall score for this category= 78.38%



■ males ■ females

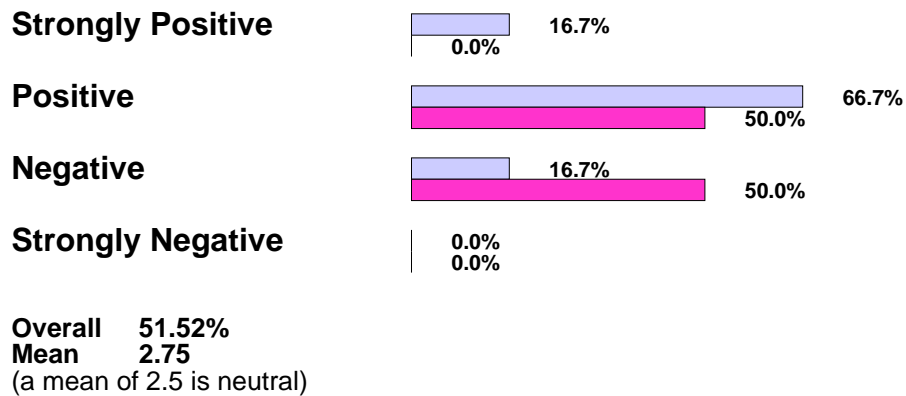
Service empathy

The extent to which excellence in service is achieved through 'warm' and 'empathetic' relationships between individuals and their internal and external customers.

The questions that make up this category:

1. Fully appreciates that the concept of the "internal customer"
2. Has a strong commitment to and accountability for doing whatever it takes to meet customer needs
3. Carefully considers customer service improvement suggestions and takes them up where appropriate
4. Knows how to identify all key 'moments of truth' with the customer and acts given the needs of each situation
5. Works hard to ensure that customers have a positive sense of service warmth and empathy in all of their dealings with the enterprise
6. Fully appreciates the stresses and strains of dealing with some customer contact and complaints

Average score:



Interpretive notes

Net Positive

The organization is likely to clearly recognize that service excellence is most significantly achieved through its people demonstrating positive, warm, and empathetic behavior towards customers at all times. Individuals are therefore likely to be fully supported in exhibiting such behavior as much as possible.

Net Negative

The organization is likely to be insufficiently aware of the need to support individuals in building positive, warm and empathetic behavior with its customers. Front line staff in particular may therefore feel that more support from the organization is needed.

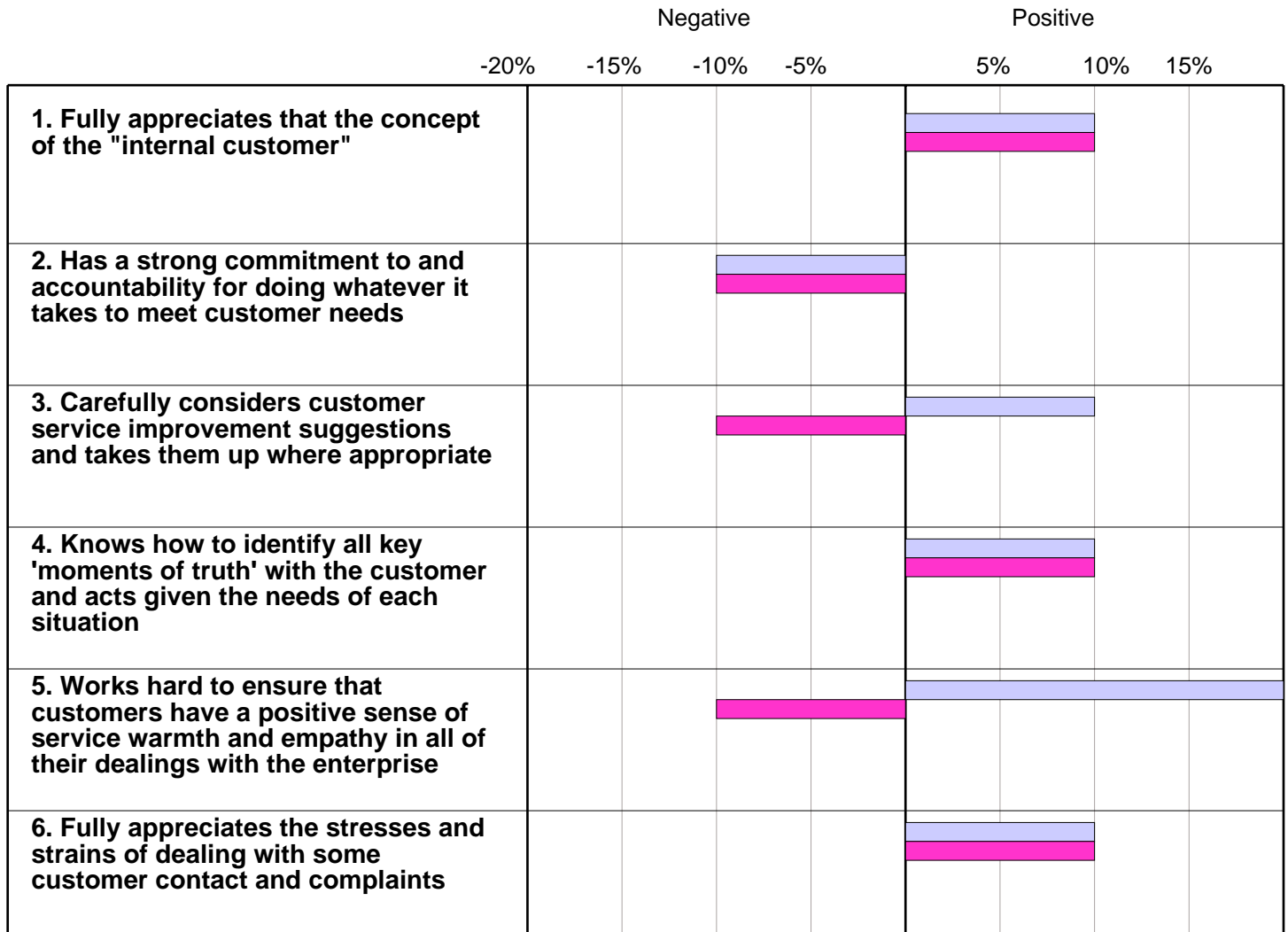
■ males ■ females

Individual question analysis

Service empathy

The extent to which excellence in service is achieved through 'warm' and 'empathetic' relationships between individuals and their internal and external customers.

Overall score for this category= 51.52%



■ males ■ females

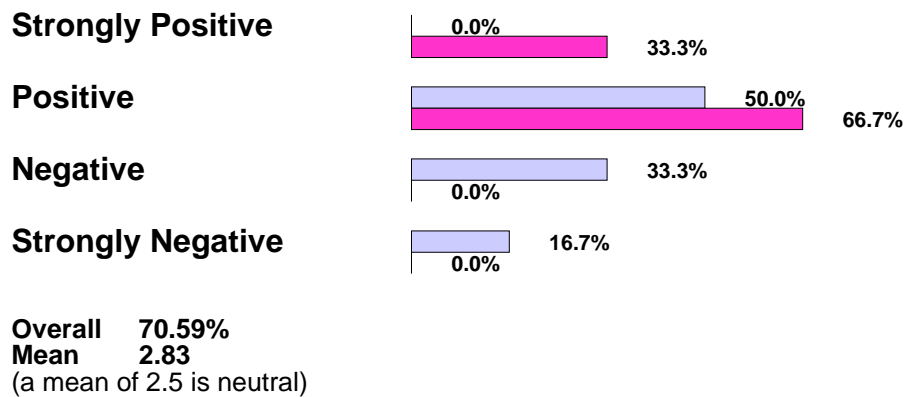
Service relationships

The extent to which key customer relationships and all other customer interfaces in general are appropriately managed to ensure high levels of service quality and performance consistency.

The questions that make up this category:

1. Identifies key customer relationships in order to ensure that service is managed well at every interface point
2. Regularly invites customers to offer direct input on on-going service performance, in order to improve overall processes
3. Gives 'front-line' customer contact people as much support and resources as they need to do their job
4. Ensures that product or service knowledge is high
5. Well understands the whole supplier to customer chain (including the internal customer chain) in their organization
6. Actively makes Customer service awareness 'events' a regular part of workplace activities

Average score:



Interpretive notes

Net Positive

The organization is likely to have a clearly defined customer relationship management (CRM) strategy involving detailed plans based upon the number and type of interactions with major customers. The CRM strategy is therefore likely to be a comprehensive approach which provides seamless integration of every area of business that touches the customer including marketing, sales, customer service and field support-through the integration of people, process and technology.

Net Negative

The organization is likely to have no clear customer relationship management (CRM) strategy. This means that customers are likely to deal with various parts of the enterprise in many different and often unique ways. This has the potential implication that people, process and technology may not all be used in an integrated and seamless way to help make customer service as good as it could be.

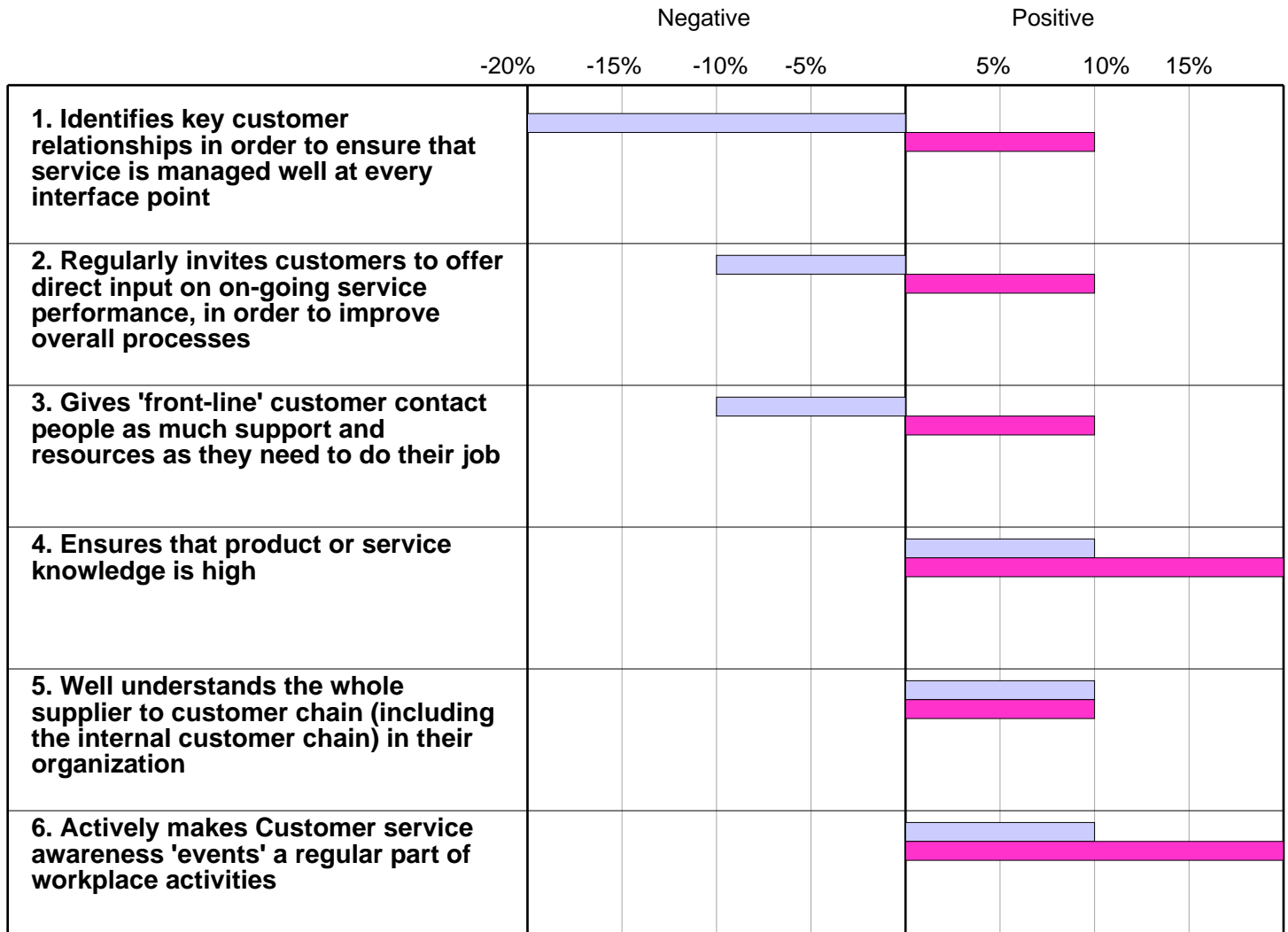
■ males ■ females

Individual question analysis

Service relationships

The extent to which key customer relationships and all other customer interfaces in general are appropriately managed to ensure high levels of service quality and performance consistency.

Overall score for this category= 70.59%



■ males ■ females

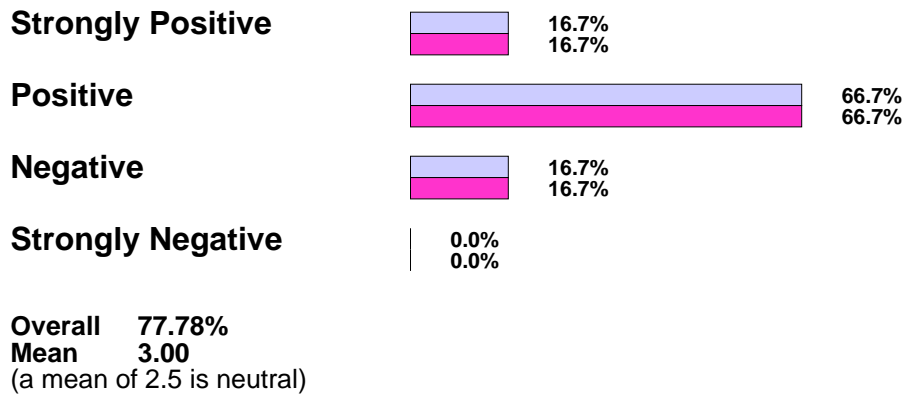
Service recognition

The extent to which superior performance in service is rewarded and/or recognized and regularly offered at every available opportunity. This includes public opportunities for recognition, where these service achievements can become a role model for others.

The questions that make up this category:

1. Openly values performance excellence in serving internal customers
2. Makes tangible rewards available for "going the extra mile" for the customer.
3. Points out excellent service givers as role models for others.
4. Shows open and personal appreciation for service excellence when it occurs or is shown.
5. Often catches people "doing something right" rather than "doing something wrong".
6. Celebrates outstanding customer commitment individually and with the team.

Average score:



Interpretive notes

Net Positive

The organization is likely to be quick to spot individuals and teams who offer outstanding customer service and has a range of approaches to recognize or reward the people involved (in both tangible and intangible ways).

Net Negative

The organization is likely to often fail to spot superior service performance when it is achieved by individuals and teams, and may therefore miss the opportunity to reward the people involved and to promote the positive behavior as a role model for others to emulate.

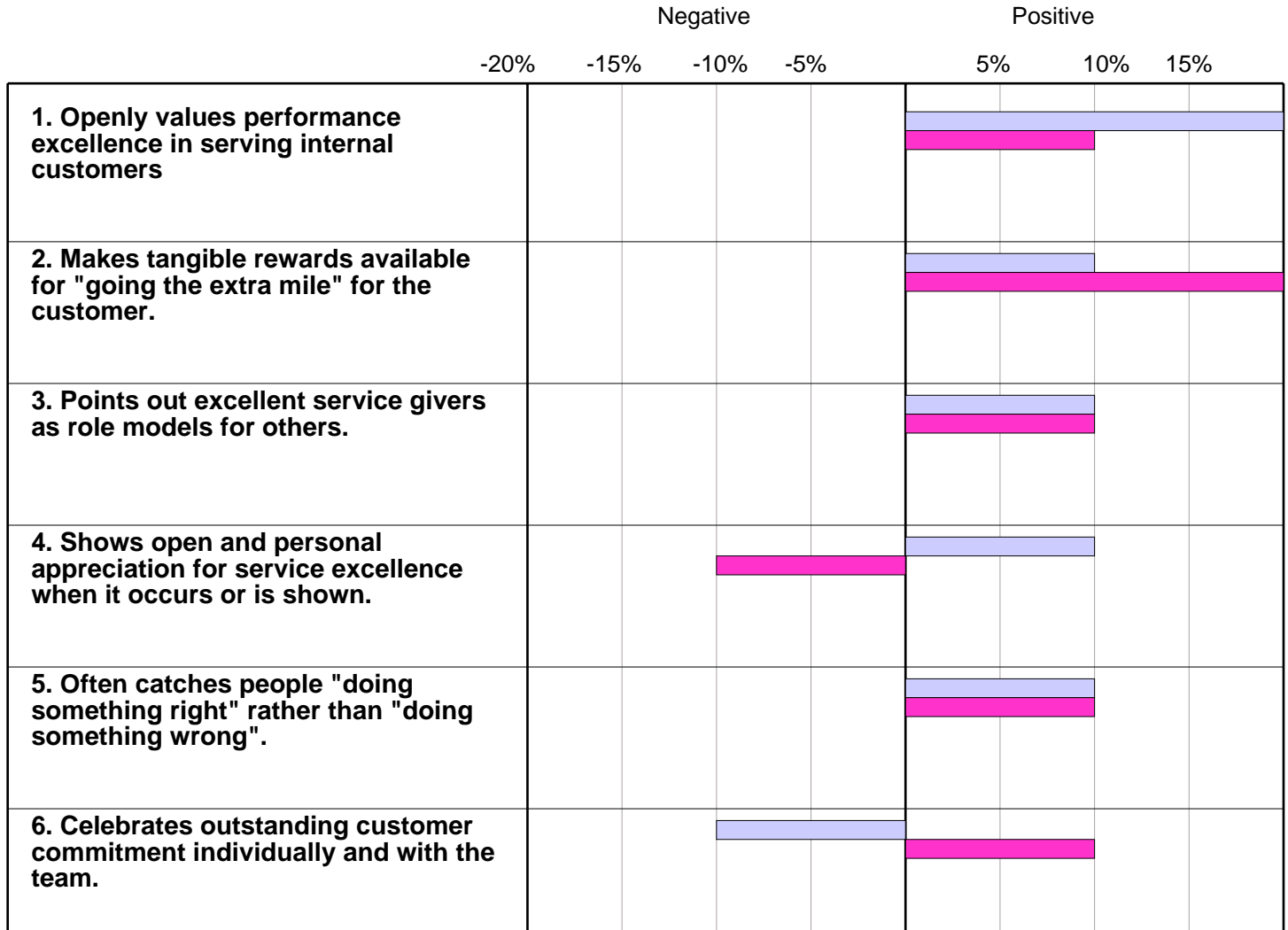
 males  females

Individual question analysis

Service recognition

The extent to which superior performance in service is rewarded and/or recognized and regularly offered at every available opportunity. This includes public opportunities for recognition, where these service achievements can become a role model for others.

Overall score for this category= 77.78%



■ males ■ females

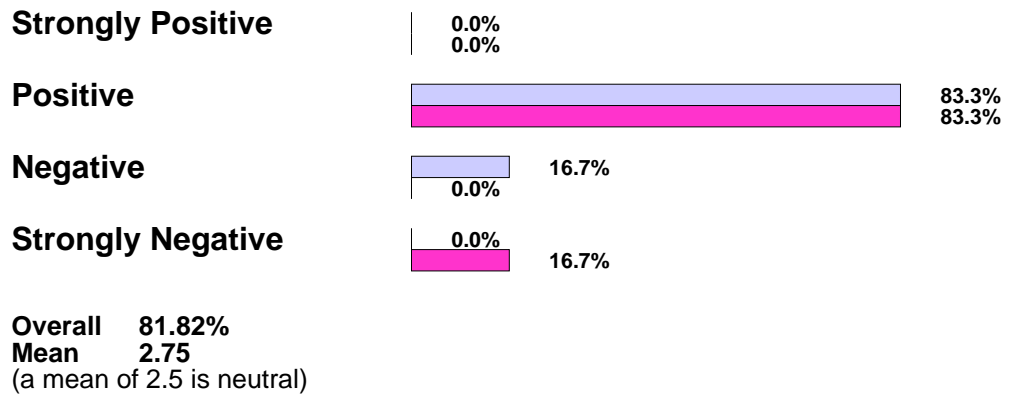
Service feedback

The extent to which the organization has developed 'listening posts' or listening channels to ensure that the ever changing voice of the customer is constantly heard and understood, and feedback is used to make any changes that would create benefit and be of value.

The questions that make up this category:

1. Regularly seeks customer feedback, both formally and informally
2. Takes regular time to talk with customers directly
3. Welcomes customer complaints as a chance to improve
4. Systematically collects and categorizes customer comments for proper analysis and action
5. Measures customer satisfaction in different ways
6. Regularly shares customer feedback and discusses it openly

Average score:



Interpretive notes

Net Positive

The organization is likely to have developed a range of different mechanisms to capture the voice of a wide variety of its customers (both formally and informally) and intelligently uses the information gathered to drive its overall strategy for continuous service improvement.

Net Negative

The organization is likely to have no planned strategy or tactics for collecting customer feedback and therefore mainly has to rely on specially designed exercises (where they occur at all) or just anecdotal feedback to learn whether service performance is good or bad in the customer's eyes.

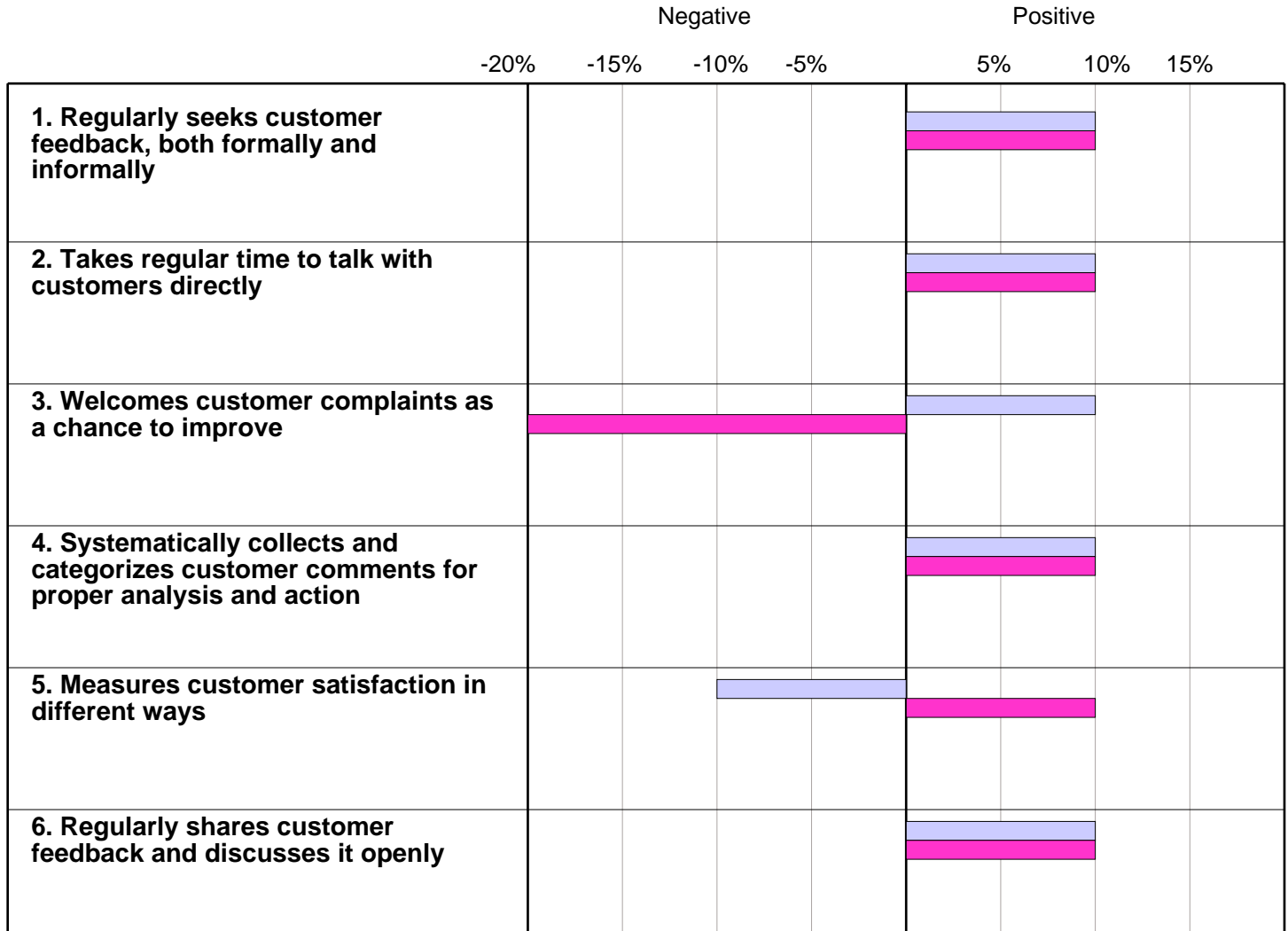
■ males ■ females

Individual question analysis

Service feedback

The extent to which the organization has developed 'listening posts' or listening channels to ensure that the ever changing voice of the customer is constantly heard and understood, and feedback is used to make any changes that would create benefit and be of value.

Overall score for this category= 81.82%



■ males ■ females

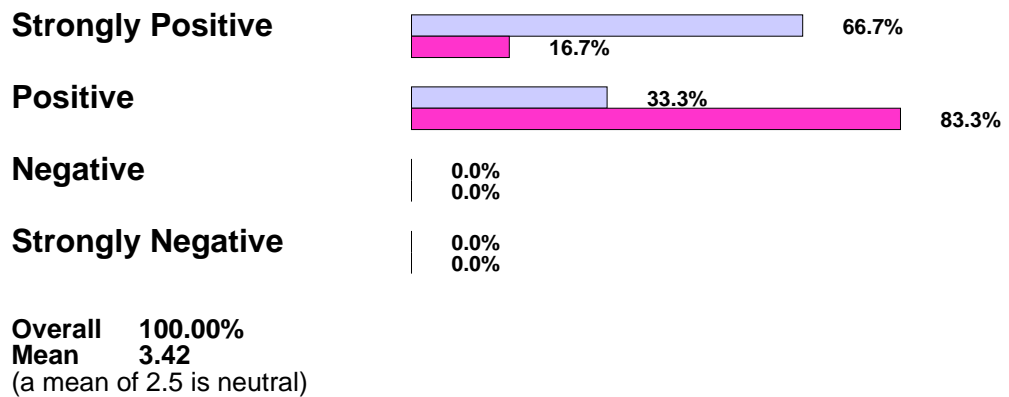
Service recovery

The extent to which service mistakes and shortfalls (when they occur) are quickly and effectively acknowledged and rectified, and active steps are systematically taken to recover customer 'favor'

The questions that make up this category:

1. Has developed clear policies and procedures for dealing with service recovery after a customer problem has arisen
2. Gives front line or customer facing staff the freedom to use their personal judgment to deliver a better customer service result, where necessary.
3. Works continuously to remove or reduce unnecessary 'red tape' when a superior service result could be achieved
4. Regularly exchanges ideas on how to serve the customer more effectively
5. Learns from service mistakes as quickly as possible in order to help retain or win-back customer favor
6. Clearly understands exactly what to do when poor service has occurred or a customer is unhappy

Average score:



Interpretive notes

Net Positive

The organization is likely to have accepted that service mistakes will occur from time to time, but has used their past experience to develop a range of flexible processes to ensure that any performance shortfalls are quickly remedied and steps can be taken to help the customer to feel that the enterprise cares about giving them the best possible service in the long term.

Net Negative

The organization is likely to have done little or nothing to analyze service mistakes or problems that regularly occur within the enterprise and therefore tends to leave any opportunity to effect service recovery entirely to chance (leaving front line staff in particular to do the best they can without enough direct support from the organization).

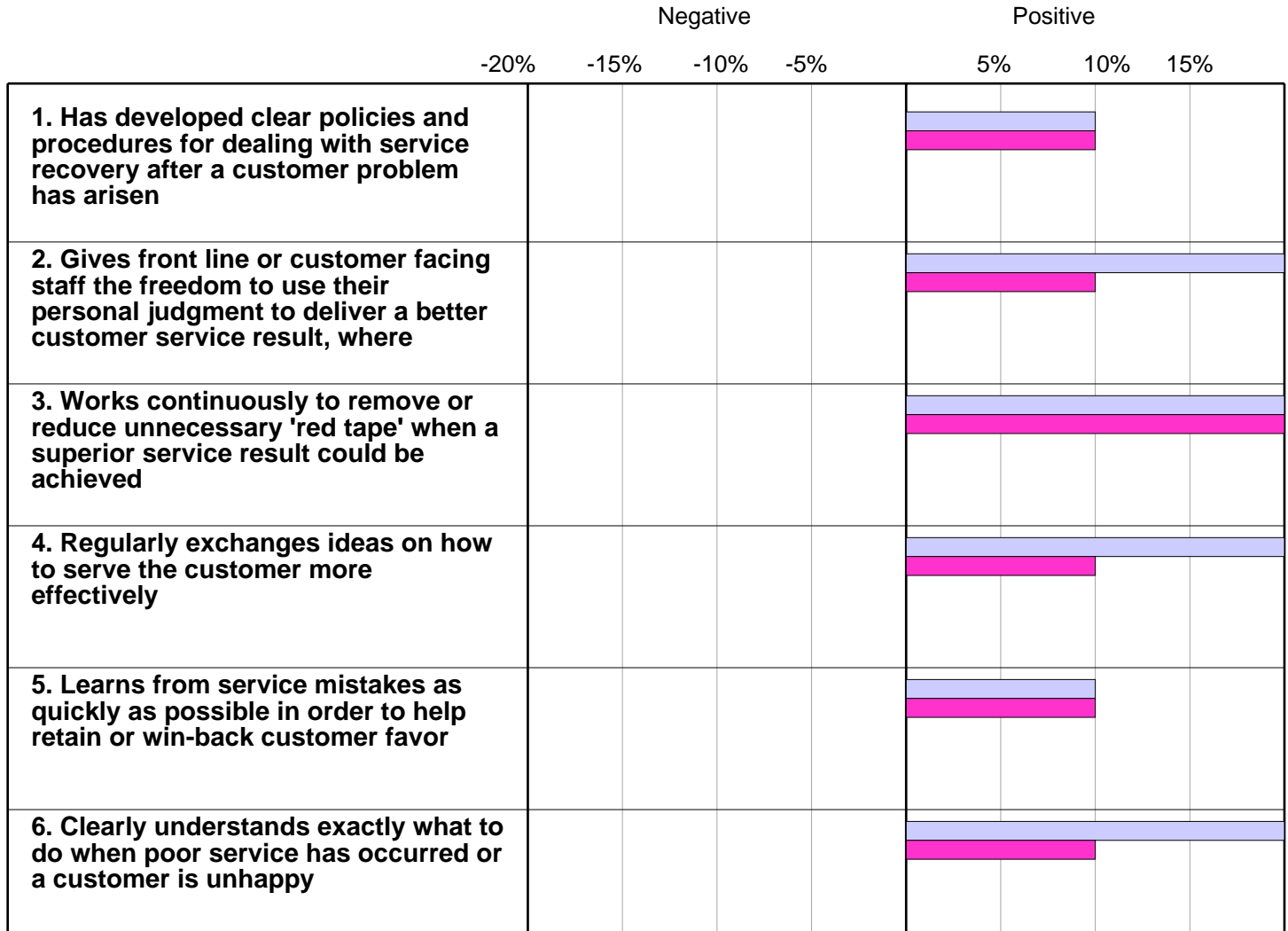
■ males
 ■ females

Individual question analysis

Service recovery

The extent to which service mistakes and shortfalls (when they occur) are quickly and effectively acknowledged and rectified, and active steps are systematically taken to recover customer 'favor'

Overall score for this category= 100.00%



males
 females

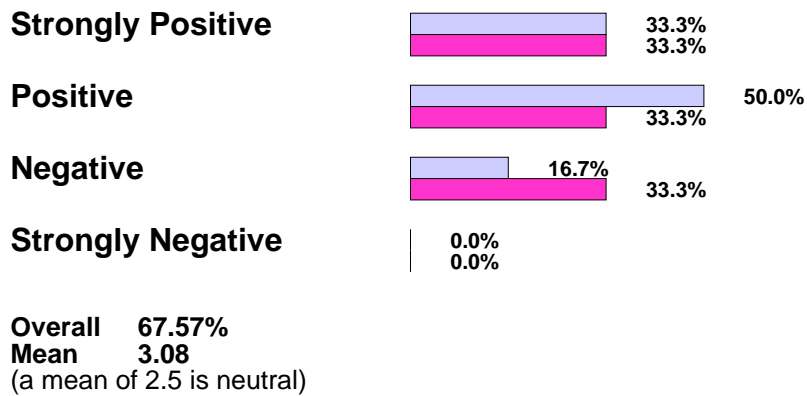
Service authority

The extent to which individuals are given the room or delegated the appropriate authority to offer high levels of service excellence on a consistent basis

The questions that make up this category:

1. Asks front line staff what room they need to deliver service excellence
2. Empowers individuals to make decisions to help internal or external customers quickly and without unnecessary bureaucracy
3. Creates as much reasonable freedom to act as possible
4. Delegates as much authority as necessary to meet customer needs and expectations at their first point of organizational contact
5. Keeps adjusting the balance between appropriate levels of control and individual levels of empowerment in the best interests of the customer
6. Ensures that all customer facing individuals are given sufficient authority to meet customer needs effectively

Average score:



Interpretive notes

Net Positive

The organization is likely to have thought extremely carefully about the balance between the need for efficient business controls to be applied and the need for a reasonable amount of individual freedom to act in order to meet ever-changing customer needs. This information is therefore used to delegate sufficient authority to those who need it most.

Net Negative

The organization is likely to have established a hierarchy of business controls or an authority structure that may often restrict or limit some individuals within the organization unnecessarily, when they are trying to offer flexible service to their customers.

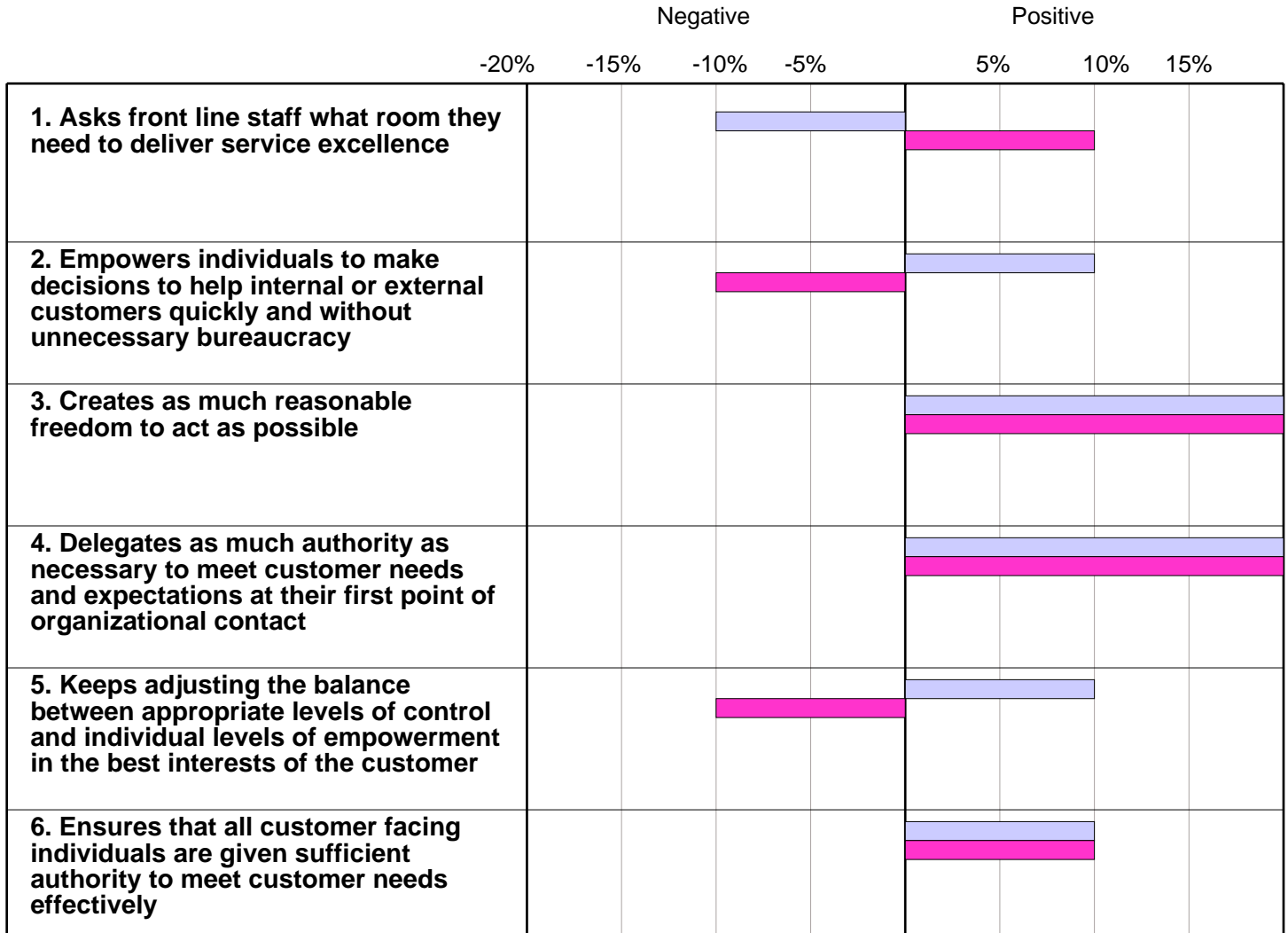
■ males ■ females

Individual question analysis

Service authority

The extent to which individuals are given the room or delegated the appropriate authority to offer high levels of service excellence on a consistent basis

Overall score for this category= 67.57%



males
 females

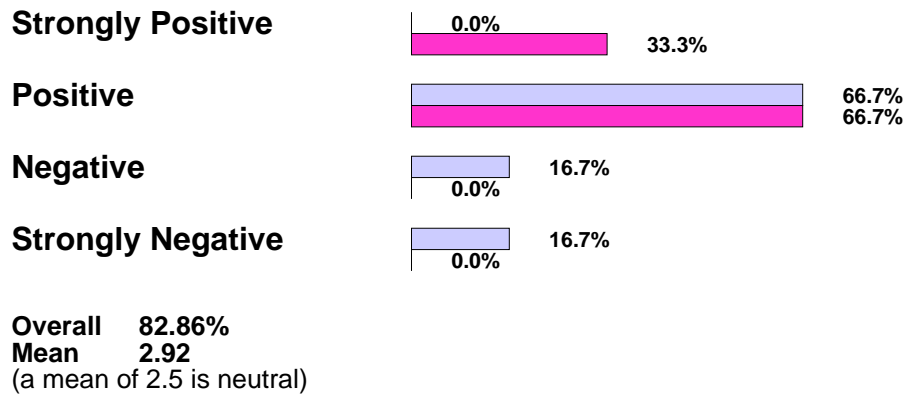
Service motivation

The extent to which the enterprise engages in regular and varied processes to help motivate and encourage individuals to give of their best to customers at all times

The questions that make up this category:

1. Actively invites input and suggestions on how processes or cycle times might be improved.
2. Looks for opportunities for everyone to achieve their best for the internal or external customer
3. Encourages individuals and the team to innovate and take initiative to improve service
4. Demonstrates clear customer service focus and encouragement every day through "walking the talk"
5. Actively learns what customers are saying by listening to front line service staff and acting upon their feedback
6. Sets stretching but realistic service targets to encourage the highest individual service performance

Average score:



Interpretive notes

Net Positive

The organization is likely to fully appreciate that individuals (particularly in customer facing roles) are likely to need specific efforts to motivate and support them in their efforts to offer high levels of service excellence. A range of motivational approaches are therefore likely to be frequently applied to help empower people to make that extra effort, or to use their imagination and initiative.

Net Negative

The organization is likely to leave individuals (and customer facing staff in particular) to their own devices in terms of offering the appropriate service to their customers. In some cases, unrealistic targets or a lack of visible support and empowerment by organizational leaders may be demotivating to some people.

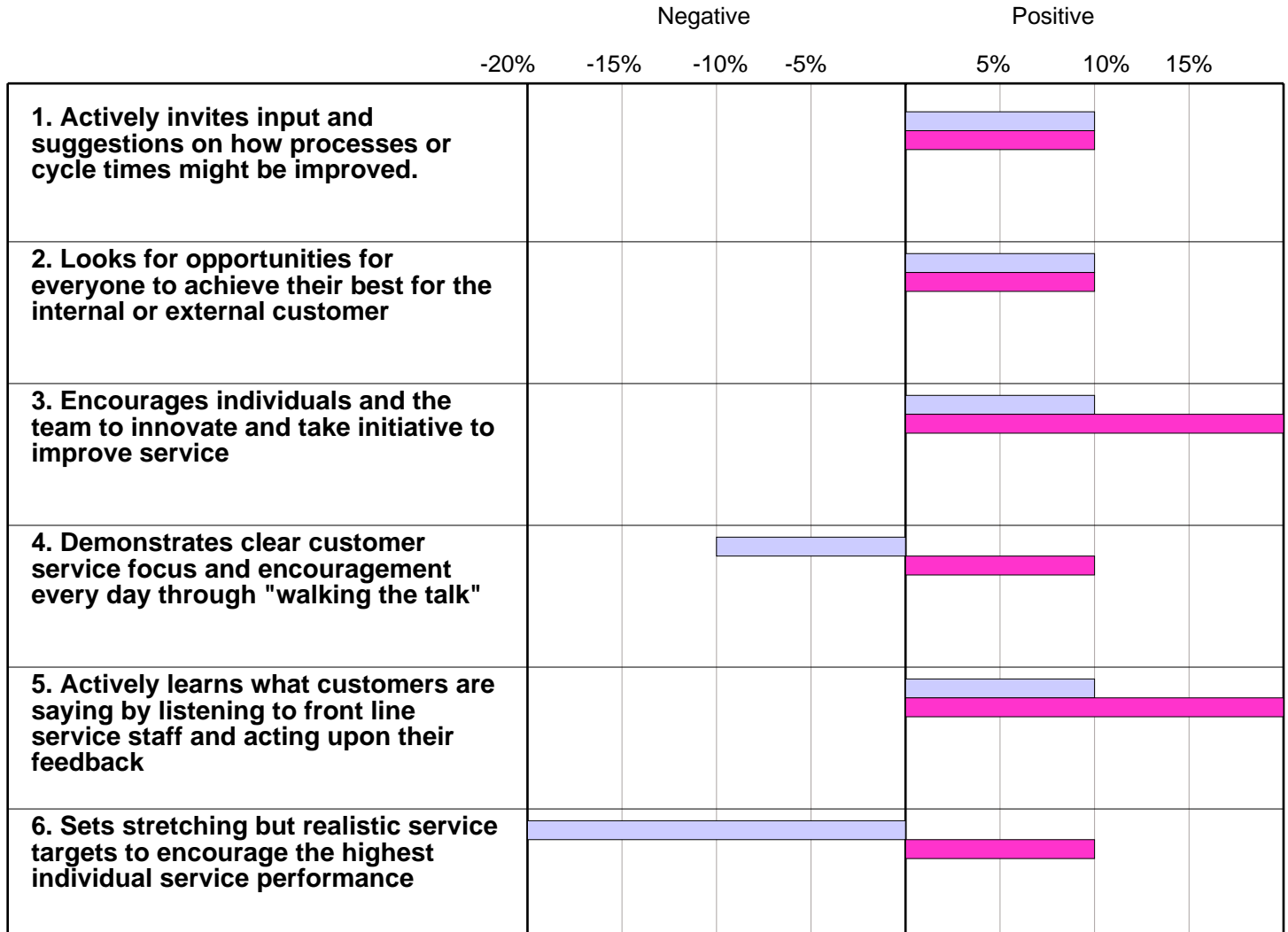
■ males ■ females

Individual question analysis

Service motivation

The extent to which the enterprise engages in regular and varied processes to help motivate and encourage individuals to give of their best to customers at all times

Overall score for this category= 82.86%



■ males ■ females



Intervention suggestions

As we indicated at the outset, the first step in a process designed to take serious account of employee opinions and attitudes as they relate to customer service in particular, is accurately diagnosing the prevailing service culture and perceived practices, and then translating the feedback we gather into firm action to improve. To assist in this process, a set of intervention suggestions has been created for each of the six key factors (Service Vision, Quality, Skills, Processes, Response and Empowerment).

Because it is impossible to apply a broad set of ideas or suggestions across every enterprise, careful analysis of individual results needs to be carried out. However, the following pages of suggested interventions (one for each factor) are offered as possible strategies that may be drawn upon (in their entirety or in part) where they are deemed to be appropriate or useful.

Service Strategy

A clear vision of what constitutes superior service is widely communicated to ensure that service quality is personally and positively important to everyone in the enterprise. This is effectively translated into specific strategy and goals.

Low performance

- *A vision of service excellence has not been developed*
- *Customer service improvement strategies are not translated into specific goals and objectives*
- *Discussion about different customers and their needs rarely occurs*
- *Little or no service role modeling occurs*
- *Customers are clearly not the major priority for the enterprise*
- *Service mediocrity is tolerated in many areas*
- *Service improvement goals and targets are vague and are rarely properly monitored*
- *Service errors occur frequently*

Suggested interventions

- Encourage widespread debate on the topic “The customer is our number one priority” and use the experience to encourage individuals and teams to question their current focus.
- Develop a one, three or even five year service vision and promote it vigorously at all levels of the enterprise.
- Encourage individuals to freely bring service issues or concerns to the attention of organizational leaders so that these can be openly discussed and appropriately addressed.
- Take steps to ensure that the ‘big picture’ service strategies of the organization are known before team and individual goal setting is undertaken.
- Take time to identify individuals who exemplify the sort of service behavior that others can emulate.
- Develop new or innovative ways to promote the importance of customer service to every individual and team in terms that will appeal most to them.
- Invest time in analyzing specific areas of known service mediocrity or poor performance and develop goals to improve substantially.
- Invite widespread input from employees, suppliers, customers and others to suggest how service strategy and tactics should be developed and deployed.
- Build goals and objectives around known areas of service weakness or in situations where service errors frequently occur.
- Invite individuals and teams to explain service strategies and goals in their own terms to ensure that full understanding exists.

Service Quality

Clear standards of service excellence are established and systems are carefully designed to ensure that customers can obtain consistently high levels of service performance whenever they deal with the enterprise.

Low performance

- *Customer service excellence is rarely mentioned in job descriptions*
- *There are few policies and procedures on customer service or they are not easily accessible or understood*
- *Service standards (where they exist) are not quickly adjusted according to customer comment and feedback*
- *The difference between poor, average and excellent service is poorly understood*
- *Discussions with suppliers about ways to improve overall service quality for customers are rarely held.*
- *Customer service performance is not tracked or measured.*
- *Access to the enterprise is made unnecessarily difficult or unfriendly for customers to deal with it.*
- *Sound systems are not in place to help prevent the same customer problem from re-occurring.*

Suggested interventions

- Invite key customers to suggest or feed back how improvements to overall service quality could be made (according to their definition of service quality).
- Based on direct input from customers and their expectations, set service standards in as many key areas as are necessary.
- Review existing service policies and procedures (or develop new ones where they do not exist) and ensure that they are written in clear and easy to understand language.
- Encourage individuals and teams to specifically debate what poor and excellent service to the customer looks like and use the information to assess current performance.
- Establish simple mechanisms and systems to monitor service standards or significant falls in service quality when they occur.
- Invite suppliers to offer feedback on the organization's perceived service shortfalls or on areas they see to be in need of improvement.
- Review all points of contact with the enterprise and design systems that ensure that the service offered is as friendly as possible.
- Invite customers to offer feedback on the organization's service shortfalls or on areas they see to be in need of improvement.
- Challenge service mediocrity in every quarter and encourage people to set higher standards to yield superior quality results.
- Establish a formal process for collecting the service improvement ideas of employees, suppliers and customers (and resource it fully).

Service skills

People have the knowledge and skills to achieve the service standards set by the organization and demonstrate high levels of empathy with customer needs and expectations.

Low performance

- *There is little or no formal and informal training to help lift general service skills*
- *The ability of people to perform their work efficiently and effectively is rarely assessed*
- *Highly competent service skills (whenever they are demonstrated) go mainly unnoticed*
- *Active listening competencies are low*
- *The concept of the “internal customer” is poorly understood*
- *Customer service improvement suggestions are rarely made or acted upon*
- *Key ‘moments of truth’ with the customer are not identified or analyzed*
- *Little effort is invested in ensuring that customers have a positive sense of service warmth and empathy in all of their dealings with the enterprise*

Suggested interventions

- Design an overall service training strategy that helps individuals at all levels of the enterprise to perform at their best when dealing with customers.
- Develop, and widely disseminate service competency descriptions to help individuals and teams to audit their existing skills against the standards that are expected.
- Look to make active listening skills a core competency to be developed by all individuals as a key part of their overall service skills.
- Consider providing an easy to use system whereby individuals can quickly make service improvement suggestions or raise concerns that can rapidly lead to changes, training or any other intervention to lift performance.
- Give people access to the quality coaching and training that they need to offer the best possible service levels.
- Actively invite individuals to comment on their frustrations or concerns about service or quality and discuss ways in which the situation might be improved.
- Conduct regular and rigorous ‘needs analysis’ exercises to identify service training gaps or shortfalls.
- Seek to identify as many of the major ‘moments of truth’ (interface points where customers can form a positive or negative impression of the enterprise) and determine which are the most significant ones to ensure that people are well trained and competent.
- Regularly invite customers to comment upon the overall levels of personal warmth and empathy that they experience in dealing with people in the enterprise (on the phone, face-to-face etc).
- Constantly seek to identify those individuals who are popular with customers or are perceived to be highly skilled in service giving and involve them in customer service training design for others.

Service Processes

Internal and external processes which help put customers first are regularly 'mapped' and adjusted where necessary to ensure that they are as efficient and effective as possible in achieving service excellence.

Low performance

- *Little or no customer input is invited in relation to on-going service performance as a basis to improve overall processes*
- *'Front-line' customer contact people are given insufficient support and resources to do their job properly*
- *Product and/or service knowledge is low*
- *The supplier to customer chain is not well understood within the organization*
- *There are no direct rewards or recognition for "going the extra mile" for the customer.*
- *Technology is not fully utilized as an asset for the organization or the customer to help build better collaboration or relationships.*
- *People are more often caught "doing something wrong" rather than caught "doing something right".*
- *Outstanding customer commitment or performance is rarely celebrated, either individually or in team situations.*

Suggested interventions

- Look to map the major processes that operate in key work areas and evaluate how efficient or effective they seem to be (in cost, administrative difficulty, cycle time etc).
- Carefully assess the use of technology in the business to both analyze the entire customer interface and provide intelligent data in order to help the organization to make better service decisions.
- Regularly assess prevailing levels of product and/or service knowledge and put plans in place to rectify any gaps that are found (with coaching, training etc).
- Develop an active and open interest in talking to other people in teams both inside and organization (to better understand how processes to deliver products and services flow across the enterprise).
- Carefully note where potential system problems or bottlenecks can occur (that might have an impact on the service performance of individual teams and need to be managed).
- Talk regularly to people that supply individuals and teams with information or materials to help it to do its job and use the information to plan improvements
- Regularly invite the customers to comment on the performance they are getting
- Review the performance of major processes and build contingency plans to handle future problems that could arise.
- Invite people to identify all the major 'moments of truth' that exist (when there is a direct interaction with the customer) and review whether processes are optimal for each of these.
- Encourage supervisors and managers to put time aside each week or month to look for service successes and excellent results achieved by people, and publicly recognize the achievements of those individuals concerned.

Service response

The customer's voice is heard loud and clear in across the organization, the messages are fully understood, and the enterprise responds appropriately to the changing expectations that arise (including when things do not go according to plan).

Low performance

- *Customer feedback (either formally and informally) is infrequently collected*
- *Direct customer contact to talk about service performance is limited or non-existent*
- *Customer complaints are seen as a problem to minimized or hidden by any means possible*
- *Any customer feedback that is offered is rarely discussed or shared*
- *No clear policies and procedures are in place for dealing with service recovery after a customer problem has arisen*
- *Front line or customer facing staff are given little or no freedom to use their personal judgment to deliver a better customer service result, where necessary.*
- *Considerable bureaucracy or 'red tape' exists that gets in the way of offering superior service*
- *People rarely learn from service mistakes and past service errors are therefore often repeated*

Suggested interventions

- Discuss and agree the overall enterprise strategy that it is appropriate to adopt in order to capture customer feedback in a variety of ways.
- Determine overall and individualized service recovery strategies and plans when things go wrong (ensuring that rectification is as fast and efficient as possible).
- Review the whole system for handling customer queries and complaints to ensure that systematic problems are identified and quickly remedied.
- Consider setting up a feedback or response system (such as an annual Survey) that ensure that the voice of the customer is regularly captured on a formal basis.
- Encourage teams to engage in direct contact with customers (via visits, discussions on the telephone or focus group sessions) to talk about service performance.
- Carefully determine how much freedom and flexibility will be needed by front line/customer facing staff in order to deal with non-mainstream customer needs or when they experience customer problems.
- Audit all major organizational policies, procedures and processes to ensure that they do not cause problems for internal service providers.
- Encourage internal teams to frequently spend quality time in discussing customer feedback of all kinds (including complaints) in a positive and constructive way.
- Regularly analyze the history of customer response (both positive and negative) and look for trends and patterns in the data.
- Consider setting up a formal suggestion scheme to invite service or quality improvement ideas from people at all levels.

Service empowerment

People are given as much responsibility as they need to offer their internal or external customers the most flexible service possible and are actively motivated by the enterprise to do they best they can at all times.

Low performance

- *Front line staff are given insufficient room or freedom in order to deliver service excellence*
- *Inappropriate or insufficient authority is given to customer facing individuals to meet customer needs effectively*
- *Individuals are not fully empowered to make decisions to help internal or external customers quickly and without unnecessary bureaucracy*
- *Excessive levels of control are exerted, many of which are not in the best interests of the customer*
- *Suggestions or input on how processes or service cycle times might be improved are rarely, if ever invited.*
- *Individuals and teams are rarely given the opportunity or resources to innovate to help improve service*
- *Feedback on what customers are saying is rarely sought from front line service staff*
- *No service targets are set, or if they are, they are too easy achieve and therefore have little impact on overall service performance*

Suggested interventions

- Regularly seek to invite front line staff to comment upon what they think they need in terms of resources and support in order to offer excellent service to their customers.
- Audit the overall system of controls that is in place across the enterprise and make any necessary adjustments where it is appropriate to create a better overall service outcome.
- Openly discuss the extent to which individuals are empowered to make decisions on their own, and if this is not the case, the process by which customer needs can be efficiently and effectively met.
- Consider inviting teams of people that are close to the action to look at major processes and review whether service cycle times could be streamlined or improved.
- Aim to set customer service standards and targets collaboratively with the people that are expected to achieve them.
- Invest effort into discovering how 'free' people feel to offer service excellence to their internal and external customers (and make adjustments accordingly).
- Identify specific opportunities to help to empower people to take decisions without reference to higher authority.
- Encourage supervisors and managers to engage in as much "walking the talk" activity as possible in order to coach or mentor individuals and teams to attain higher service goals.
- Actively support individual initiative and innovation to improve service even in minor ways.
- Work with individuals and teams to set stretching but achievable service targets and publicly recognize and reward successes when they occur.