TECHNICAL CUSTOMER SERVICE SUPPORT MODULE 5

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Agenda

- <u>Technical Customer Support</u>- different types of issues: Incidents, Informational, Maintenance
- <u>Tools for Technical Customer Support</u> – Issue Life Cycle, Prioritization, Issue Resolution

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- The difference between three types of issues: Incidents, Informational, and Maintenance
- A step-by-step process for solving issues
- How to schedule and prioritize maintenance tasks with incoming issues

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Providing assistance to customers uses technical, issue resolution and management, communication, and problem solving skills.

To respond effectively to customers you will need to:

- Understand different types of technical support issues
- Understand Prioritization, Problem Solving, and Issue Resolution

Technical Customer Support Issues I

Incidents

An Incident is an unplanned interruption of a service. A Problem is a root cause of one or more Incidents.

- Incidents are generated from customers through a ticketing system and by phone, chat, or email messages
- Solutions can be in the form of emergency changes or planned changes.

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Incidents

A installation of software, replacing a router, or issuing a new laptop are Changes – Anything that alters the current configuration.

- Changes need to be approved before implementation.

- Interruptions and changes can be

  - Measured in terms of length of interruptions

  - Counted in terms of frequency

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Informational

Some issues are resolved simply by informing the customer of a policy or explaining how to use an unfamiliar feature. To resolve these issues you may have to rely on a network of support yourself, including specialists and vendors.

- An organization might have an information center, a knowledge base, and/or experts available to help.

- If the user's problem isn't solved quickly, the user may go elsewhere.

- Documenting these issues is just as important as documenting other types of issues.

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Maintenance

Maintenance can be performed by the hardware manufacturer or by in-house experts. Maintenance tasks should be managed in order to minimize impact to the customers.

- Maintenance tasks should be announced well in advance.
- Downtime due to maintenance should be estimated.
- The benefits of maintenance tasks should be communicated.
- Your job might be to validate the maintenance work of an outside vendor.

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Incident Management Process

The following video provides a method for resolving incidents. At first, the steps may seem complex, but it is very logical and easy to follow.

- Incident Management Video
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dZBhI4RGDr8

Technical Support - Review

What factors would you consider when scheduling a maintenance task that requires an interruption of service?

- Peak times when most users are online
- Notifying users in advance
- Making backup copies of the system

Which of these factors are most important?

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Technical Support - Exercise

In this exercise, you break into pairs. One person, the Support Technician, is responsible for informing the other that the network will be unavailable all weekend. The other, the Customer, will try to state as many reasons as possible why the network needs to be up.

- You have three minutes to complete this exercise.
- Track how many reasons the network must be up.
- Track how many reasons the network must be down.

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Technical Support - Quiz

Match the Term to the Definition

TERMS	DEFINITIONS
Incident	Alter Current Configuration
Interruption	An Unexpected Issue
Change	Discontinuance of Service

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Issue Life Cycle

As issues come in from customers, they must be prioritized, solved, and documented; in that order.

- At any given moment, you will be working several issues while new issues are added to your list.

- Issues that are deemed business critical need resolution as fast as possible.

- Some customers may require faster service than others.

- You may have to drop what you are doing in a given moment to respond to an emergency issue.

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Issue Prioritization

Prioritization of issues means sorting and ordering issues: responding immediately, waiting for an optimal solution, or passing the issue to other tiers of support.

- Responding means contacting the customer. This is important to let customers know they are not forgotten.
- You should not hesitate to enlist help.
- When sending issues to other support technicians, be sure to document all the symptoms and any special circumstances.

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Issue Prioritization Video

Watch the following YouTube video to see how issues are prioritized using a software application. Count the number of factors considered during the process.

- Incident Prioritization
  - www.youtube.com/watch?v=G9fb6WV6FuM

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The Problem Solving Process

Once you have determined issue priority, you then move onto solving a given problem.

- Listen to the customer to tell how she or he defines it.
- Think through the details to arrive at a cause.
- Develop and implement the solution.
- Validate the solution yourself.
- Check with the customer to make sure the problem is resolved.

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Issue Resolution

Issue Resolution means documenting what caused the problem and the solution to the problem. Some issues may return due to an underlying cause that is not yet identified.

- Effective documentation means that problems are quickly identified and solutions are found in an efficient manner.
- In order to rule out ineffective solutions, all solutions that have been attempted should be documented.

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Issue Resolution

A series of related issues is called a Problem.

- Problems that will never be fully resolved (due to time or budget constraints) should be documented in order to speed up the process of resolving them one by one.

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In this exercise, you have volunteered to help a fellow Support Technician. The other Technician resolved an Informational Issue by explaining how a feature on a specific web page works. However, the information given was wrong.

- How do you explain that the information was wrong?

- How do you correct the situation without making your fellow Technician look bad?

- Is it important to note that the previous solution was wrong?

- How do you know that your solution is correct?

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Yesterday, you resolved an incident and documented its solution. This morning, another user creates an issue ticket with the same characteristics. What do you do next?

- A – Contact the user from yesterday and see if the problem has returned
- B – Verify with the customer that you heard the characteristics correctly
- C – Notify your manager that you have discovered a problem
- D – Implement the same solution as yesterday

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Match the Term to the Definition

TERMS	DEFINITIONS
Process	The customer says, "It's done."
Resolution	Closing an issue
Validation	A series of steps

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Technical Support - Exercise

It's near the end of the day; only an hour before your shift ends. You have only one more issue to resolve before going home, and it has to be resolved today before it is considered late. You get a call that a Gold Customer has a business critical issue. What do you do?

- What factors do you consider in making your decision?
- How will your choices affect performance reports?
- How will your choices affect fellow Support Technicians?

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An effective Support Technician knows…

- Which customers receive the Platinum, Gold, and Silver Level of Service.
- Currently open issues and the priority for each.
- What to expect in next month's Performance Report.

Why is it important to know these?

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Match the Term to the Definition

TERMS

Prioritization

Service Level

Measure

DEFINITIONS

A ordered listing of issues

Another term for Performance Metric

Something observed and reported

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Module 5 Review

- Issues can be…
  - Planned, such as maintenance, and unplanned, such as incidents
  - Solved by changes to existing systems or information presented to the customer
- A series of related incidents are…
  - Called problems
  - Are solved by following a step-by-step process

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Module 5 Quiz

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- Which of the following is **<u>NOT</u>** a part of Issue Prioritization?
  - Deciding which issues need a response
  - Deciding which issues create a problem
  - Deciding which issues are passed to other tiers of support

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