

# THE 12 VOICES OF THE CUSTOMER



**How to uncover, translate, balance, measure and deliver what constituents want**

Presented by **Robin Lawton**, President  
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Achieving success with less is a never-ending challenge in government. The taking stuff away part is easy. The hard part is to create innovative success in the eyes of our constituents. Success depends more than ever on understanding and delivering what constituents and other customers want in ways we'd never considered possible. Making that easy is what this workshop is all about.

***The notion that we should listen to "the voice of the customer" is well meaning, but an insult to our intelligence. Everyone knows there is no such thing as the customer, especially in government. This necessarily means there must be more than one voice to listen to. Yet we can make potentially fatal assumptions about:***

- 1. Who "the customers" really are***
- 2. What questions to ask***
- 3. How to prioritize their answers***
- 4. How to measure success***
- 5. What the perceived constraints on innovative change really are.***

The majority of managers will agree that customer satisfaction and excellent service are keys to government success. But ask any ten employees what "service" means or who "the customer" is. Finding consensus is not easy. Get agreement on basic definitions like these, though, and your goals for understanding, measuring and satisfying customers are suddenly simplified and magic happens. Achieving the best with less is the purpose of this workshop.

This session gives you the launch pad for better achieving your mission objectives related to satisfaction, service quality, problem-solving and measuring success. You will be equipped to go beyond traditional approaches that rely on surveys, reactive problem-solving and Industrial Age methods that are so last century.

See how to solve voice-of-customer problems with amazing clarity, in a simple, entertaining and robust manner not addressed elsewhere. The advanced, easy-to-apply concepts and tools are

particularly well-suited to government knowledge work. That's because Robin Lawton, the creator of this methodology (called C3) began his career in government, not industry. Many industries now use it, confirming the unconventional conclusion that government can be a model for industry. What a concept!

Too bad not everyone in industry has this insight. Consider the top auto executive who understood customers to say they wanted more miles per tank of gas. Did this lead to (a) more efficient engines, (b) lighter weight materials, (c) innovative propulsion, (d) aerodynamic design, or (d) bigger gas tanks? The executive's design team rushed to market with bigger gas tanks. No kidding!

This session shows how easy it is to confuse what you heard with what they said (not to mention what they want but didn't say). Mistaking the literal voice of the customer with the untapped mind of the customer is tragically common. Naturally, this workshop is the cure.

You'd never tolerate ambiguity in the answer to the math problem,  $7+5=X$ . We've had years of math training, but little or none in linguistics. The ambiguity of our language and weak linguistic discipline remains a largely untouched challenge. This course supplies the needed rigor without needless complexity.

Your top-rated presenter uses humor, practical "word formulas" and new tools to eliminate confusion and create insight into the unspoken minds of your constituents. You will want to attend this fast-paced and interactive session if you are responsible for projects or initiatives related to service excellence, satisfaction measurement or innovative ways to do the best with less.

*“Louisville MSD has considerably advanced our ability to satisfy customers, improve products and bring about sustainable change within our organization. Executive leadership [has seen] success such as:*

- *450% improvement in problem diagnosis related to customer calls*
  - *Annualized operations savings of \$468,000*
  - *Delinquent account collection of \$1.21 million*
  - *Recognition in a prestigious national team competition.*
- I am pleased.” Herbert Schardein, Executive Director, Louisville/Jefferson County*

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

You will work in a team, learning how to:

- Identify who your customers really are (hint: they're not necessarily citizens)
- Determine which voices you should be hearing
- Avoid common survey failures
- Ask the critical three questions that always uncover what customers want
- See when standards, specifications and requirements are beatable constraints
- Measure seemingly immeasurable expectations
- Apply new, easy-to-use tools to acquire, translate, prioritize and measure VoC
- Connect all this to customer satisfaction, energized employees and innovation

## OUTLINE

- The practices most often used to understand customers
- Why surveys fail and the essential keys to success
- The four dimensions of excellence customers want satisfied
- How to define service and knowledge work as concrete, tangible and measurable
- The specific steps to uncover customer priorities
- “Word formulas” you didn’t learn in school that are as powerful as math equations, but easier
- How to distinguish performance, perception and outcome expectations and why it matters
- The three roles a customer can play, and which one tends to have most power
- How to translate fuzzy perceptions into objective performance measures
- Cases of how this methodology has resulted in better than 20-to-1 ROI

## THE PRESENTER

Robin Lawton, president of International Management Technologies, Inc. (IMT), is a best-selling author and internationally recognized expert in creating rapid strategic alignment between enterprise objectives and customer priorities. He has over 25 years experience directing both strategic and operational improvement initiatives. His powerful but easy-to-understand principles and tools are outlined in his first book, **“Creating a Customer-Centered Culture: Leadership in Quality, Innovation and Speed”** (5-star rated at Amazon). Some of his other books and articles are described at [www.imtC3.com](http://www.imtC3.com).

Rob was ranked #1 of 88 speakers by an international organization in 2007. He has been a featured presenter at international and domestic conferences sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce, Japan Management Association, American Management Association, Federal Executive Board, American Quality Institute, International ISO Conference, Minnesota Healthcare Association, American Society for Quality (ASQ), Association for Manufacturing Excellence (AME) and many others. Rob is a provocative, humorous and engaging speaker with a wealth of practical application experience.

**Sign up today!**

[www.imtc3.com/events/UpcomingEvents.cfm](http://www.imtc3.com/events/UpcomingEvents.cfm) Please call 941-907-0666 for answers on this or related programs on excellence.

*“During my long career, I was an intern to Dr. Edwards Deming and was one of the few people in the world to study under Peter Drucker, Joseph Juran, Philip Crosby, Russell Ackoff, Tom Peters and Michael Hammer. This makes me uniquely qualified to [say that] Mr. Lawton’s work clearly places him in a position to be **today’s premier thinker and practitioner** of quality as defined by customer satisfaction. It causes revolutionary new managerial thinking and decision making.”*

*Bruce E. Laviolette, Ph.D., Corporate Director of Management Systems, Naval Air Systems Command*