

CU I&E Submission: Four Voices Framework for Operational Excellence ^[1]

Team Information

Michael Firnhaber, Quality Systems Manager
University of Colorado Boulder.

Description

The Four Voices Framework is a tool designed to help Housing Facilities Services ensure the comprehensive execution of our business strategy while working to foster a culture of continuous process improvement. Each Voice represents a different space within our operating environment. By paying attention to these voices, we are able to understand our operation from a holistic perspective, and we can track how changes in one space affect the voices coming from other spaces.

- The Voice of the Customer comes from surveys, work requests, and other feedback. This voice helps us to understand what our customers value.
- The Voice of the Workforce includes everything that our staff has to say about how we run our operation. Once we understand what our customers value, we solicit the voice of our workforce for help to establish a plan for delivering that value.
- The Voice of the Operation includes all the measures that tell us how effectively our processes are performing, and how efficiently our operation is utilizing the resources available to us.
- The Voice of the Facility represents all the buildings, grounds, and systems that we maintain. The information we receive tells us how our facilities are performing relative to our standards.

How does this benefit the University?

Housing Facilities Services uses the Four Voices Framework to plan the execution of process improvement initiatives, and to verify that the results of those initiatives meet our targets once the improvements are in place. The framework is also used as a discovery tool to help us identify opportunities for improvement in the current state by listening to what each of the voices has to say.

When we purposefully seek feedback from each of the Four Voices before making changes to our operation, we can ensure that our decisions:

- Focus on creating value for our customers, or enhancing the value we already deliver
- Engage our workforce by leveraging their knowledge, skills, and experience when designing work processes
- Promote operational efficiency and effectiveness, and ensure sustainable resource management
- Safeguard facility performance by maintaining asset reliability and reducing downtime

Implementation/Future Plans

The Four Voices Framework has been in development for several years. It was inspired by the central teachings of Lean, Six Sigma, and other quality and process improvement systems, but the framework re-forms those teachings into a model that better suits our operating environment. We have already used the framework as the foundation for several recent projects, and it continues to impress us by how comprehensive and truly useful it is.

The Housing Facilities Services leadership team was formally introduced to the framework in early 2019. Future plans will see the framework rolled out to other levels of our operation in hopes of codifying it in our organizational culture as “the way we think about the work we do”.

With minor modifications, the framework can be made to serve any University of Colorado entity equally as well as it has proven to serve Housing Facilities Services.

File Attachment

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Links

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