

Implementation of a Second Shift to Reduce “On-Call” Costs and To Improve Customer Service

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ABSTRACT

On October 30, 2000 Baylor Facility Services (BFS) began a second shift to better serve the campus community. This change recognized the need to better serve the campus during a time period when campus activities were still going strong after normal working hours. The shift is M-F, 4pm to midnight, plus a weekend tech for daytime hours. Prior to this, any after-hour calls were handled by on-call techs and they were paid premium rates. Moving daytime workers to this shift created the second shift. No additional FTE's were added. Included in this move were general building mechanics, one hvac tech, and all the painters. A total of 10 employees. To support this operation, the Service Response Center, our customer contact point for service requests, extended their hours to 10 PM on weekdays.

Results of this change include reduced overtime costs, faster response time to after hours service requests, an increase in painting efficiency, and better customer relations with the residential life community.

INTRODUCTION OF THE ORGANIZATION

Chartered in 1845 by the Republic of Texas and affiliated with the Baptist General Convention of Texas, Baylor is the oldest institution of higher learning in the state and the largest Baptist university in the world. The beautiful 432-plus acre campus is located on the banks of the Brazos River in Waco, Texas, a metropolitan area of 215,000 people. While remaining true to its heritage, Baylor has grown to more than 13,000 students, who originate from all 50 states and some 85 countries. The high quality of the student body allows Baylor to be ranked among the nations top 1 percent in the number of freshmen National Merit Scholars enrolled. Students may choose from 162 baccalaureate degree programs, 73 masters programs and 19 doctoral programs. Baylor is a nationally acclaimed teaching institution and an emerging research community where both the dissemination and discovery of knowledge are important. With a student/faculty ratio of 18:1, Baylor maintains small classes averaging 29 students, and faculty rather than graduate students teach approximately 92 percent of all classes.

INITIATIVE, DESIGN, AND IMPLEMENTATION

Baylor University is a small, very active community that has a very busy population, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Prior to October of 2000 the Physical Plant was normally staffed 8 hours a day, five days a week. Any maintenance issues that came up out side of those hours were handled on overtime and if the occurrence was unexpected, one of the four “on-call” Techs had to be called in. This was a cumbersome process that often caused a very slow response time and was quite expensive.

There were four Techs on-call at all times, HVAC, Plumbing, Electrical and Zone Maintenance (general maintenance). Participation in the on-call program was basically a volunteer program. Compensation consisted of 1.5 hours per day (per Tech at premium time) just for carrying the pager plus a two-hour minimum for each call out with travel time being paid. All call out time was at the premium rate. Very costly.

The rule-of-thumb was; the Zone Maintenance Tech was called in first for all requests and he would call the other disciplines in if the situation he found were beyond his skills and abilities. This practice worked in the majority of cases however when the problem was beyond the ZMTs ability; another Tech would have to be called in. This caused the correction of the problem to take even longer.

The goal was to provide better all-around service during non-normal hours and reduce the cost of the call out program.

The task was to increase the service level, reduce cost and accomplish this using existing staff and equipment. Once we gave up on finding the top hat with the rabbit in it, we looked at peak hours of call outs and the nature of the call outs. We found that

most of our after hour calls were before midnight even on the weekends and that the majority of the calls were resolved by the Zone Maintenance Tech or the HVAC Tech.

We also realized that most of our painting activities on campus were very difficult to schedule, especially while school was in session. Even with careful planning and scheduling there were many complaint of odors and occasionally, wet paint on the clothing of students or faculty who had made contact with a freshly painted surface. We have learned that anything adversely effecting indoor air quality or personal property is an opportunity for improvement.

With this insight, we decided we could break out 5 of the Zone Maintenance Techs from the normal shift and re-divide the building assignments between the remaining ZMTs for day shift coverage. We moved 5 ZMTs, our 4-man maintenance paint crew and a new supervisor to a new second shift that would cover campus from 4:00 p.m. to Midnight. We also moved 1 HVAC Tech from the normal shift to a new 2:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. shift. These were the peak hours of call outs for HVAC problems. An administrative assistant was moved to a 2:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. shift to cover the Service Response Center (work control and dispatcher) during peak hours. The Service Response Center is the point of contact for campus to report maintenance needs and problems during normal hours of plant operation. After normal hours calls go to the Baylor Energy Complex (central plant) which is manned 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The primary purpose of the 4:00 p.m. to Midnight shift was to provide an on-campus presence to handle unplanned maintenance and repair needs during those hours. The 2nd shift Zone Maintenance Techs were also assigned groups of buildings along with day shift ZMTs to help with the routine duties in larger zones. This made the larger zone

assignments that were necessary when 5 Techs were pulled out of the campus coverage, more manageable. This also helped tremendously in dealing with the day to day routine maintenance activities in classrooms that were generally in use during the day.

Personnel assigned to the 2nd shift are paid through their lunch period as an incentive/differential for working an other than normal shift. The Techs also take turns (one employee per week) working day shift on Fridays. This allows them to have an occasional Friday evening for a family function.

BENEFITS AND RETROSPECT

There are many benefits to this program. The 2nd shift presence is just taken for granted today and we can't imagine servicing this campus without it.

Scheduling our maintenance painting activities is much smoother and we have not received a complaint of odors or of any students or staff getting wet paint on their clothing since the paint crew was moved to the 2nd shift.

The on-campus presence until Midnight has been a very positive change. The campus Department of Public Safety and the Campus Living and Learning Department (residence hall) are both big fans of this service. The savings in call out service cost are great. We have gone from 4 Techs on call to 3 on call and reduced the compensation for just being on call from 1.5 hours a day per Tech (average of \$336 per week per Tech) to a flat weekly rate of \$100 per Tech. The number of overtime hours due to call outs has been reduced by 60-70 % (conservative estimate) by having the extra coverage from 4:00 p.m. to Midnight.

The 2nd shift was so successful that we have added a weekend shift with 2 Techs (1 ZMT and 1 HVAC) that work 8 hours on Fridays and Mondays and 12 hours on Saturdays and Sundays. This improvement in the service we provide has also increased customer satisfaction and reduced overtime cost due to call out overtime.

The addition of the 2nd shift of Techs along with the weekend shift has improved response time and service provided to campus while at the same time reducing operating cost significantly. As all service providers know, this is what it's all about.

The one thing that could have been done differently to make this even better is to have started it sooner.