

How to make the **boat go faster?**

BEST PRACTICE GUIDE TO “MAKING YOUR BOAT GO FASTER”



**ENGHOUSE INTERACTIVE & OLYMPIC GOLD MEDALIST SHARE BEST
PRACTICES FOR ENHANCING CUSTOMER SERVICE PERFORMANCE**

“GOING FOR GOLD”

A BEST PRACTICE CUSTOMER SERVICE GUIDE TO “MAKING YOUR BOAT GO FASTER”

As a business, you continuously looking to stand out, add value for your customers, drive competitive advantage and deliver enhanced profitability. Each year, you take time to reflect and consider what strategies you can put in place to achieve your goals. Often, the key to success will be a focus on performance improvements designed to deliver results. This was one of the key issues, we explored at a recent Enghouse Interactive event with sporting legend and Olympic star, Ben Hunt-Davis.

At the outset, Hunt-Davis explained that the GB Men’s Eight, in which he competed for the best part of a decade, had not won the Olympic Gold Medal in Rowing since 1912. The team consistently finished between sixth and eighth in major competitions in the period 1991-98. In the two years leading up to the Sydney Olympics of 2000, however, everything changed, thanks to a new focus on performance and ‘making the boat go faster’.

Following the disappointment of finishing eighth in the Cologne World Championships of 1998, Hunt-Davis and the rest of the GB team realised that their tactics and strategy needed an overhaul. Prior to 1998, there had never been a fundamental modification of the crew’s approach, so it was essentially a case of ‘if you do what you have always done, you’ll get what you always got.’ After Cologne, there was a collective sense that something needed to change. The team decided to find a new way to **make ‘their boat go faster’**.

They adopted three clear principles:

FOCUS ON WHAT’S IMPORTANT NOT WHAT HAS BEEN DONE BEFORE

Find your ‘concrete’ and ‘crazy’ goals, and ‘what floats your boat’.



FOCUS ON PERFORMANCE IN ORDER TO GET RESULTS

Concentrate your full attention on driving improvements in performance. Ask yourself, are you doing the right things and how can you improve your performance every day? If the performance is good, the rest will come.



WORK EFFECTIVELY WITH OTHERS TO ACHIEVE GOALS

Work out who to listen to and what attitudes to avoid. No one does it alone.



The strategy paid dividends on September 24th 2000 at the Penrith Lakes in Sydney when the GB Rowing Eight won Olympic Gold. The result was sensational, but it was the work done leading up to the final that was the determinant factor, not what happened on the day itself. The same principle holds true in business. Companies need to focus on performance that drives results rather than results per se.

The Eight recognised that to go from solid performances in 1991-98 to winning Gold in Sydney was going to require a fundamental change in approach and unswerving commitment to the new philosophy. In the two years leading up to Sydney, what had changed for the crew was an agreement that the goal was of paramount importance, and in this case the goal was to win Gold.



Every conversation, every decision, every action focused on moving the Eight to that objective. The team knew success would only happen if they made it happen and they were constantly looking for opportunities to advance their aim. In line with this, every exercise and training routine was analysed to ask: how did we do; what went well; what went less well and what can we learn from it to make sure we do better next time? It was all about setting up a culture of learning and improvement.

The plan required total honesty from all members of the crew. Every member had to be prepared to continually challenge the approach. The strategy was ruthlessly executed throughout the two years. There was no room for compromise or 'meeting in the middle'. A decision was taken on how to proceed and then all members of the team fully committed to, and supported that decision.

RACE TO THE FINISH LINE

When the team was on the starting line in the Olympic Final, they were aware of how much they had changed; how far they had come; and that gave them the confidence to win. But while the intensive preparation unquestionably provided 'the Eight' with the potential to win gold, it was also vital that the crew had a clear strategy for the race - 'hit the first 500 metres hard and fast; get into the lead but don't use all of your energy, etc.' - and were able to execute that strategy fully. It was an approach that worked perfectly for Team GB as they ended up clear winners of the race and the gold medal. Success was achieved through complete commitment to the three key goals: focus on what's important; focus on performance in order to get results and work effectively with others to achieve these goals

'Today is going to be a good day because I am going to make it a good day.'

TEAM GB

TRANSLATING SPORTING LESSONS TO THE WORLD OF CUSTOMER SERVICE

The good news is that all the lessons of 'making the boat go faster' in elite sport can be transposed and shown to work in the world of customer service. Here are our top tips for ways in which businesses can win gold by enhancing the way they manage and interact with their customers.

FOCUS ON WHAT'S IMPORTANT

- Make sure that when your customer-facing teams turn up to work they are clear about the goals they are working to. In large organisations, complexity is often used as an excuse for lack of clarity.
- In fact, whatever the size of business, people need to be working on what is important rather than simply what is in front of them.
- To work effectively, they need to be aiming at specific goals and they need to be 'crystal clear' about the direction of travel.
- In the period leading up to the Sydney Games, the GB team became increasingly proficient at 'focusing on stuff that would make a difference rather than what was done previously.
- "It is important for sales and service teams to also have clear goals – 'look at what the competitors are doing that they are not'.

GARY BENNETT, SALES MANAGER ADDS

Enghouse Interactive can help here by understanding the business and customer engagement strategy, and providing ongoing support. Analyse your customer journey and experience to work out where enhancements can be made. Finally, look at ways of working collaboratively in partnership with channel players and vendors in order to more successfully achieve end goals."

LESSON ONE

LESSON TWO

FOCUS ON PERFORMANCE TO GET RESULTS

- Just as in a sporting context, players being interviewed typically focus on how they performed; what they did to get the result they achieved, business people also need to concentrate on the performance that led to the result rather than the result for its own sake.
- Its always critically important to focus on getting the execution right.
- Test your performance with customers, be a customer and test out your customer journey across all channels.

GARY BENNETT, SALES MANAGER ADDS TO THIS

“Performance can mean many things in customer service, it’s not all about metrics.”

WORK EFFECTIVELY WITH OTHERS TO ACHIEVE GOALS

LESSON THREE

- The two principles outlined are relatively obvious in theory but hard to execute well in practice, especially if working in isolation.
- The inherent practical difficulties in successfully achieving the first two principles helps to explain the importance of the third.
- It's important to get help wherever possible, towards achieving core goals.
- In the case of the Men's Eight, it was key that they were able to draw on significant support from many people that were not actually in the boat during the final.
- The wider training group numbered 16. More than 30 people in total circulated through that group during the lead-up to the Games.
- There was also an extensive team of technical coaches, medical teams; sports psychologists; logistics people, etc. on hand. Many would not even be paid, let alone have the opportunity to win a medal, but all wanted to be involved in a dynamic team .
- It was important to build mutual understanding across the wider team and make sure everyone was working towards that common goal.
- Again, this key sporting principal applies equally in the world of business.

GARY BENNETT, SALES MANAGER CONCLUDES

“Organisations can adopt the concept of the connected business, putting the right technologies and processes in place to ensure all departments are able to work together to achieve the same goals.”

WORK WITH OUR PARTNERS TO MAKE YOUR BOAT GO FASTER SAY

Inspired by Ben Hunt-Davis's speech at the recent Premier Partner Event in London, Enghouse Interactive channel partners expressed a broad range of views on their specific technology and business focuses; on how best to help you achieve **"making your boat go faster."**



Distributor provider, 5i identified a couple of key focus areas for 2016 which it believed would be key to success in terms of making its own boat go faster during 2016. First, a growing emphasis on PureCom, its managed telephony and communications service for partners, as a key differentiator. Second, developing a distinct model for verticals which can be readily repeated and delivered to similar types of organisations over time. According to Steve Ellis, Managing Director, 5i, "over the next year, we are looking forward to working with Enghouse Interactive to develop integrated software solutions targeted at specific industry sectors."

Gold partner, Virgin Media Business, Business Sales Manager, Shane Tranter an enthusiastic attendee of the Premier Partner Event, highlighted the importance of having clear goals and repeatable processes in place in order to 'drive the boat' forward.



Platinum partner, BT Global Services offers complete management solutions for organisations aspiring to world class customer service. According to John Holden, Principal Sales Engineer, BT, "we see continuing to work in partnership with Enghouse as key to 'making our boat go faster' in 2016. We need to pool

resources to put the optimum solution forward to our clients – and that needs to be across the whole organisation - from sales to marketing to service delivery to engineering.

"Moving forward, it's also about having a clear view about the direction of travel," he continues. "We are clear about our own targets and goals and we value Enghouse's ability to track market trends and monitor areas of peak demand and to share those insights with us."

Westcon™

For unified communications and collaboration solutions distributor, Westcon, the event helped further clarify its business goals. "We are clear on our core objectives," said

Garry Boon, General Manager Westcon. "Next year, we will be looking to make the boat go faster by making small incremental changes and realignments in how we interact with our customers and engage with our vendor partners in order to achieve better results. It's about working smarter, rather than harder, focusing on the things that really matter and making sure that we are doing those things correctly."

"We have a mature trusting relationship with Enhouse and we really value that," continued Boon. "We understand each other well, we have shared goals and we are honest and open in all of our dealings and that will be crucial in making 2016 a success."

Enhouse Interactive recently signed Voyager Networks, a leading provider of managed services and network technology solutions, as a silver partner on its EMEA channel programme. Looking positively to the future, Peter Howells, Director, Voyager Networks, said: We've made the first move to making our own 'boat' go faster by signing up with Enhouse and using their solutions. We see teamwork as key to success – by working together in partnership we can address our business needs and make sure we achieve our strategic goals."



Vodafone sees "reducing complexity" as the key goal, the achievement of which would help them make the boat go faster in 2016. Success over the coming year will be dependent on good preparation, developing the sales team and working with Enhouse to develop a general solution to take to customers.



vodafone

According to Les Huett, Product Manager at Vodafone, go-to-market execution will be key to us to get the boat to go faster this year – and we see

Enhouse as part of a key competitive mix that should give us increased edge and business advantage in the future."

**WE VALUE OUR PARTNERS TO OFFER CUSTOMERS COMPLETE
END-TO-END SOLUTIONS.**

MAKING THE CONNECTION

The three key principles outlined: focus on what's important; focus on performance in order to get results; and work effectively with others to achieve goals, translate seamlessly from the world of elite sport to the equally results-driven world of customer communications and service.

Of course, the lessons intoned by Ben Hunt-Davis apply just as much to the salespeople themselves as they do to the businesses they work. The best salespeople in the world of customer communications technology focus their attention on 'making a difference'. Just like the Men's Eight at Sydney, they get up every day and make sure 'their boat goes faster'.

Equally, it is worth highlighting that the 'boat' itself will be different in each case. "For CEOs and MDs, it's the business itself; for contact centre managers, it's about raising the overall performance of their teams while keeping to budgets and for the agents themselves, it's about driving up their sales figures or the quality of customer service they deliver. In each and every case, however, the individual focus on personal performance helps drive the success of the business as a whole.

Both in elite sport and in business, that success also typically involves trust, honesty, and sometimes difficult conversations, but critically too and, most important of all, shared goals; a shared commitment to enhancing performance and a willingness to work together to 'make the boat go faster'.

WILL IT
MAKE THE
BOAT GO
FASTER?™

Thank you to Ben Hunt-Davis for his contribution and winning success



Enghouse Interactive

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