



Recognized for Service Excellence in Ontario's Highlands

CASE STUDY: Overcoming visitor experience disparity by building a regional customer service standard

In 2012, OTEC was chosen by the Ontario Highlands Tourism Organization (OHTO) to develop a "Community Concierge" Customer Service Program" for businesses in their region.

OHTO's goal was to develop a comprehensive Service Excellence designation program that would improve the quality of service delivery in the Ontario Highlands region and equip tourism and hospitality operators with a means to become customer service leaders.

The OHvation Designation Program was created as a result of world-wide research and industry consultations. The development team spent some time exploring what visitors really value when they travel to the region, and they found visitors valued excellent customer service and tourism professionals who have strong knowledge of the region and could

recommend activities and places to see. This program included creating a designation framework & evaluation criteria for 4 key areas: Environment, Service Process, Service Recovery Process and Attitude.



The OHTO decided it was going to commit itself to assist organizations within the region to improve their quality of service delivery and equip them with a

means to become leaders in customer service. The result of this commitment was to develop a customer service designation program, and accompanying training workshops, that would challenge tourism organizations to deliver quality customer service and become knowledgeable ambassadors of the region.

Specific objectives of the project include enhancing and promoting service excellence by providing recognition, and developing community tourism ambassadors through demonstration of knowledge for regional products and services.

Otec built a designation program framework for the OHTO that addressed the unique customer service needs of the Ontario Highlands region. It was comprehensive and competitive, yet attainable, through the development of

evaluation criteria based on tourism industry standards and best practices.

Otec's 20 years of customer service development experience working with over 2,000 businesses, provided a means for businesses to improve their delivery of customer service through a self-assessment checklist which identifies service gaps, comprehensive training opportunities/resources on both service and regional product knowledge, and a varied evaluation process conducted via mystery shops and surveys.

In addition to the OHTO project, for the last several years, Otec has also been heavily involved in the development of standards and criteria for the overall improvement of customer service in the hospitality and tourism industry.

A leader in Hospitality and Customer Service Training and Community Workforce Development, Otec is an independent, not-for-profit Training, Consulting, and Workforce Development organization that delivers innovative, high quality solutions for the development and growth of a professional, skilled workforce.

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