

Customer Shadowing

Customer 1

At 10:50 AM, a middle-aged female customer arrived directly at the bill collection desk to submit her bill. She appeared emotionally neutral and required no guidance, moving straight to the counter and waiting in a formed queue. Her issue was simple, and she carried all necessary documents. The interaction involved two staff members and lasted about six minutes. Although the staff appeared rushed, they were supportive, and the problem was resolved immediately. Customer satisfaction was observed as moderate. However, she verbally expressed frustration afterward, suggesting a perception of unnecessary movement or inefficiency in the system.

Customer 2

At 10:59 AM, a middle-aged male customer approached the front desk for bill submission and a mobile number change. He was calm, confident, and did not require guidance. While the bill submission was straightforward, the mobile number change required redirection to the third floor and interaction with multiple staff members. Over a 22-minute period, he interacted with four staff members, with support provided through computer systems. Staff communication was clear and supportive throughout. The issue was resolved immediately, and the customer displayed high satisfaction, indicating effective handling of moderately complex customer-specific services.

Customer 3

At 11:08 AM, a middle-aged male customer entered the facility with a meter-related issue. He appeared confused and frustrated and initially wandered without clear direction, relying on guidance from other customers rather than staff. His journey involved multiple redirections and interactions with five staff members over 36 minutes. While some staff initially ignored him, others were supportive once the appropriate personnel arrived. The issue was complex and delayed due to the responsible staff member being out of station, leading to confusing communication. Eventually, the problem was resolved immediately upon handling, resulting in moderate customer satisfaction.

Customer 4

At 11:47 AM, a middle-aged male customer went directly to the third-floor customer-specific problem room to report a stolen transformer. He was visibly angry and frustrated. Despite not needing guidance initially, he experienced repeated redirections and unclear processes. The interaction lasted 17 minutes and involved two staff members, but staff responses were confusing and lacked clarity. The absence of the primary responsible official caused delays, and the case was eventually forwarded to a general complaint room. The problem was only partially addressed, with no clear outcome time communicated, leading to low customer satisfaction.

Customer 5

At 11:58 AM, a young female customer visited the third floor to file a complaint regarding an excess bill. She remained emotionally neutral and moved directly to the counter without requiring guidance. The interaction lasted approximately 10 minutes and involved a single staff member. While the staff communication was clear, it was delivered in a loud manner. The issue, although simple, was not resolved despite an immediate response being given. As a result, customer satisfaction was observed to be low.

Bill Collection Desk

The Bill Collection Desk is clearly marked with a visible signboard, making it relatively easy for customers to identify upon entry. Customers primarily use this desk to collect their electricity bills, and in some cases, to make bill payments as well. Two staff members are stationed at the desk throughout the observation period.

Despite the desk's importance as a primary customer touchpoint, staff interaction remains largely passive. Communication is minimal and mostly transactional, limited to accepting bills or providing them when requested. There is little proactive engagement, guidance, or clarification offered to customers, even when they appear uncertain. As a result, while simple tasks are handled efficiently, the desk does not function as an informational or supportive node within the broader customer service system.

One Point Service Desk

The “One Point” desk is officially presented by the authority as the central hub for resolving all customer-related issues. As a result, the majority of customers naturally gravitate toward this point, forming long queues during peak hours. However, despite its prominence, the actual role and scope of One Point are not clearly communicated, particularly to first-time visitors.

While the name “One Point” suggests a comprehensive, all-in-one solution, its functionalities remain ambiguous. Newcomers frequently appear confused about what services are offered and what types of problems can be resolved there. Four staff members sit behind the desk primarily engaged in passively receiving bills, while only one staff member handles personalized or customer-specific problems using a computer system.

Due to limited capacity for individualized problem-solving, customers with specialized or complex issues are often redirected to the third floor. This redirection process is verbal and informal, with no written instructions or visual cues, increasing customer uncertainty and reliance on trial-and-error navigation within the building.

Third Floor: Customer Complaint Handling

The third floor serves as the designated area for handling various customer complaints, including technical and service-related issues. However, the space lacks formal organization and clear distinctions regarding where customers should go or whom they should approach. There are no visible counters, signage, or structured flow guiding customers through the complaint resolution process.

As a result, customers tend to approach staff members randomly, hoping that the person they engage will be able to address their concern. While some customers successfully resolve their issues through this approach, others are redirected multiple times to different personnel or departments. This inconsistency leads to prolonged interaction times, confusion, and frustration, especially for customers with complex or urgent problems.

Customer Short Interviews: Key Insights

Short informal interviews with customers reveal a widespread sense of confusion regarding the service system. Most customers expressed uncertainty about whom to approach for specific problems and demonstrated limited understanding of how the overall process operates.

In preparation for their visits, most customers bring copies of their electricity bills, while some also carry videos of their meters on their mobile phones to demonstrate technical issues or

irregularities. Despite these efforts, many customers reported being repeatedly redirected from one desk or floor to another, often without clear explanations.

Several customers described the service environment as disorganized, highlighting the absence of structured guidance or personalized assistance. A recurring complaint was that staff rarely take ownership of a customer's problem from start to finish, leaving customers to navigate the system independently. This lack of coordinated support contributes significantly to dissatisfaction and erodes trust in the service process.

Customer Pain Points and Remedies

1. Lack of Clarity on Where to Go

Pain Point:

Customers are often confused about which desk or floor handles specific services. The names of service points (e.g., "One Point") do not clearly communicate their functions, especially to first-time visitors.

Remedy:

Introduce clear service categorization through visual communication. Each service point should explicitly state what problems it handles, supported by simple language and symbols.

2. Excessive Redirection Between Desks and Floors

Pain Point:

Customers are frequently sent from one desk to another or from one floor to another without proper explanation, leading to frustration and increased time spent in the office.

Remedy:

Implement a first-contact resolution approach where the initial desk takes responsibility for correctly directing or resolving the customer's issue instead of passing them along repeatedly.

3. Passive Staff Behavior

Pain Point:

Staff members tend to wait for customers to approach them and rarely offer proactive assistance, even when customers appear confused or distressed.

Remedy:

Encourage active customer engagement by assigning staff members specifically responsible for observing and assisting confused or first-time visitors.

4. Poorly Defined Complaint Handling Process

Pain Point:

On the third floor, customers randomly approach staff due to the absence of a structured complaint-handling system.

Remedy:

Create a formal intake process where complaints are registered, categorized, and routed systematically rather than through informal, person-to-person attempts.

5. Inconsistent Communication

Pain Point:

Customers receive unclear, rushed, or conflicting information depending on which staff member they interact with.

Remedy:

Standardize communication scripts and procedures so that all staff provide consistent and accurate information.

6. Lack of Personalized Support

Pain Point:

Customers feel that no one takes ownership of their problem from beginning to end, forcing them to navigate the system independently.

Remedy:

Introduce a case-ownership model where a single staff member or desk tracks the customer's issue until resolution.

Proposed Remedies: Technical and Non-Technical Solutions

A. Technical Remedies

1. Digital Token and Queue Management System

- Introduce a token system that categorizes customers based on service type.
 - Display real-time queue information on digital screens.
 - Reduce overcrowding and confusion at desks.
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2. Centralized Customer Service Software

- Use a simple digital system to log complaints, assign case numbers, and track progress.
 - Allow staff across desks and floors to access the same customer information.
 - Prevent repeated explanations by customers.
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3. Service Categorization Kiosk

- Install a touch-screen or tablet-based kiosk at the entrance.
 - Customers select their issue (bill payment, meter issue, complaint, correction, etc.).
 - The system prints directions or assigns the correct queue automatically.
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4. Internal Communication Dashboard

- Enable staff to see availability of responsible personnel (e.g., technical officers).
 - Prevent sending customers to unavailable staff members.
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5. Data-Based Performance Monitoring

- Track common complaint types, average resolution time, and repeat visits.
 - Use insights to improve staffing and process design.
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B. Non-Technical Remedies

1. Clear Signage and Wayfinding

- Use large, multilingual signboards with icons and simple wording.
 - Color-code floors and service categories.
 - Place floor maps at key points.
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2. Customer Help Desk / Greeter Role

- Assign one trained staff member near the entrance to guide customers.
 - Especially useful for elderly, first-time, or distressed customers.
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3. Staff Training in Customer Communication

- Conduct short training sessions on:
 - Active listening
 - Clear explanations
 - De-escalation of frustration
 - Emphasize empathy and clarity over speed alone.
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4. Defined Roles and Accountability

- Clearly define what each desk and staff member is responsible for.
 - Display desk responsibilities publicly to reduce ambiguity.
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5. Complaint Ownership System

- Ensure each complaint is “owned” by a staff member until closure.
 - Customers should know who is handling their case and where to follow up.
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6. Printed Information Materials

- Provide simple leaflets explaining:
 - Common problems
 - Required documents
 - Step-by-step service flow

- Reduce repeated verbal explanations.
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Conclusion

The core service issues at the electricity zonal office stem not from customer behavior but from **systemic design gaps**, including unclear service roles, passive engagement, and lack of coordination. By addressing customer pain points through a combination of **technical systems** and **non-technical process improvements**, the office can significantly enhance efficiency, transparency, and customer satisfaction.