

Unit XII Assignment II

By Nathan Windisch

PII: Impacts of Organisational Policies and Procedures on Technical Support

There are a few different policies and procedures that can hinder technical support and I shall list some of them, explain what they do and why they will impact the Technical Support services for this company.

Service Level Agreements

Service Level Agreements, or SLA, are a method of ensuring that uptime is maintained by promising to users that if a certain percentage of uptime is not met, certain items that they purchase from the company will be complementary. For example, if an Internet Service Provider promises a 99% uptime, but due to faults on their end, the customer only gets 98% uptime and the ISP is definitely at fault then the user may be rewarded with a free week of Internet, or two times the amount of Internet upload and download speeds may be issued as an apology for breaking the agreement. This is an issue for the Technical Support team as they need to work on the system with minimal downtime to ensure that the SLA is not broken.

Reporting Faults

If there is a fault that is not reported to the IT team then this fault may also be on other machines as well, meaning that the IT team has to spend more time fixing all of them rather than just working on one fix for the system and then rolling the fix out to all devices on the network. Also, if the fault is reported early on, then the fix can be rolled out before the fault affects any other systems. This means that there will be less downtime and thus work will be more productive.

Security

There are a few different types of security that employees should implement when working at the company due to the fact that they allow the users to be more secure. The obvious security feature that everyone should have is a password as it allows users to ensure that their workstation is secure. Users can add to this level of security if the user adds an RFID tag to their keys so that they can quickly and easily without comprising the security benefits of having a long, alphanumeric password. Finally, users with laptops should enable some level of physical security by tying their laptop to the desk using their Kensington Lock slot.

PII: Types of Faults

The following is an email that I sent to my colleague Daniel Eastal about the types of faults that can occur in our businesses.



Nathan Windisch

Today, 15:44

Daniel Eastal ▾



Reply all ▾

Hi Daniel,

I am writing to inform you about various faults that can occur within our company, as far as the IT department is concerned. Please relay this to all of your subordinates for further reading to ensure that everyone is aware of the possible threats and are aware of new policies that may be implemented later down the line as and when these threats become manifested.

The first fault that can occur is if the software that we install is broken. To remedy this, please email me with the program that is broken, the date and time that the incident occurred, the user that it occurred to and the issues that it caused. After this, myself and the IT team will then work on this issue and try to roll out to all users a fix as soon as possible.

The second fault that can occur is a forgotten password. If this is the case, please have the user report to our department and we shall let them enter their new password themselves, at which point it will be rolled out to all of our services within 24 hours.

The third and fourth faults that may occur is that our servers are down, or that the Internet is down. If this is the case, please report to our physical base of operations so that we can ensure that we are fully aware of these issues. Once you have reported the issue, please go back to your department so that we can work in peace without being disrupted.

I hope that this information was useful to you, and if you have any queries do not hesitate to talk to me about it.

Yours,
Nathan Windisch.

MII: Advantages and Disadvantages of Outsourcing Technical Support

Advantages

One of the advantages of outsourcing your technical support is that it is normally much cheaper than having in house tech support. This is because you do not need a physical location within your offices to house the department, and you can pay the outsourcing company a lump sum rather than negotiating many individual salaries. Also, you do not need to pay any extra for any equipment that the outsourced technical support staff use, as this is all covered within the lump sum that was aforementioned.

Another positive is that the outsourced company is more likely to be experienced in what they do as that is what their entire business model is based off of, whereas internal IT support may not know about the latest and greatest technology, such as Group Policy. This means that you will have a more experienced team behind the company.

A third positive is that if the outsourced team is from another country then they will be more likely to be multilingual. This is a benefit as if your company has multiple locations throughout the world, English may not be the primary language, meaning that the technical support team can talk to them in their native tongue rather than having to communicate in a broken language that the customer does not fully understand. This will increase the levels of communication from support team member to customer, meaning that the support team can service more people in a shorter amount of time, thus saving money and increasing productivity.

A fourth positive is that the technology that the company has is likely to be more advanced and bespoke for your companies needs, meaning that the expertise will be more bespoke for your employee's needs. An advantage to this roots back to the original advantage of the fact that it is cheaper. If you hire a team that are already well versed in the possible issues that are relevant to your business then it will be much cheaper than having to hire new people personally and spend time and money training them up to be as good as the outsourced team.

The fifth positive is that the outsourced team is very easy to scale to your business. For instance, if you start off with just one office and ten employees in London, then you may only need one, or maybe two at most, technical support technicians to assist you. If, after six months, your business gains a massive amount of growth and you increase to a hundred employees spread over 5 offices over England, then you can increase the amount of support technicians that you have on the fly, only paying more when you need it.

The sixth and final point is that the outsourced technical support team do that job for a living. They are likely well educated in how to deal with end users and probably have impeccable customer support. This will make your employees experience with IT support much more pleasant than that of an understaffed, undereducated team that you have collated.

Disadvantages

The main disadvantage of this system is that it prevents the amount of control that you have over the employees at the outsourced company. While you can ask them to do things, if they do not perform tasks as required then the most you can do is fire them, at which point you will need to find a new team which will cost time and money. This is an issue as during this downtime you will not have any dedicated, bespoke IT support, which will lower productivity and could cost even more money in loss of revenue due to lack of work as there are severe computer issues.

Another disadvantage is hiring the wrong company. If you do not look through all your options thoroughly before making a decision then you may hire a company which does not best support your needs. For instance, if there is a bank which uses lots of bespoke software that requires an IT support team with a large knowledge base of this system but they end up hiring an IT support team for general office work by accident, then they will not be able to help with the more technical ins and outs of this custom system. Bolting onto this disadvantage, the company that you hire may claim that they are good with certain bespoke softwares, but they were in fact misrepresenting the truth, meaning that they do not have the experience necessary to perform a good job.

The final disadvantage to outsourcing a technical support company is that they may not be able to do physical support such as fixing cabling or rebooting servers manually. Because of this, it may be better to have a small technical support team nearby so that they can perform all of the necessary physical issues while the outsourced company, which may be in a different country or continent entirely, can work on the software and social aspect of IT support.