

- » Should the help desk prioritize the needs of some users over others when deciding how to allocate resources? For example, is one department, such as factory production or payroll, a higher priority than other, less time-critical departments? Should executive management get higher-priority response than other users?
- » Are there specific performance metrics you can identify to measure the effectiveness of the help desk? Is it the total number of calls handled, the percentage of problems solved, on the first call? Or is it a positive score on user satisfaction surveys?
- » How responsive do you expect your help desk to be? Is it important that a live human being always answers the help desk phone? Does that person need to be a technician who can actually solve problems, or is it acceptable to have a nontechnical person field the calls and assign the calls to the appropriate technician?

The help desk charter should be developed by a team representing all the stakeholders. This should include not just IT staff and executive management, but also representatives from the various departments that will be supported by the help desk.



REMEMBER

The charter should be reviewed periodically to assess whether the help desk is meeting the needs of its users. This assessment should also include representation from all the stakeholders.

Tracking Support Tickets

The most important tool that a help desk uses to manage support requests is the *support ticket*. A support ticket tracks the status of a support request, from inception to completion, and should record every pertinent detail related to the request, including the following:

- » **Basic identification information for the person requesting the ticket:**
This may include name and contact information, a short title (which can be created by the user requesting the support or by help desk staff), the date and time the ticket was created, a detailed description of the problem, and identification of the support technician initially assigned to the ticket.