



Award Winner 2000

MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE

simplify
Missouri Department of Revenue

A vision to “*simplify*” its operations and processes to make life easier for its customers has guided the Missouri Department of Revenue over the last three years. The department, which is responsible for the collection of taxes, titling and registration of motor vehicles, and the licensing of drivers throughout the state, has more interaction with the citizens of Missouri than any other state agency. In fiscal year 2000, approximately 4.3 million customers were served at the department’s 11 motor vehicle and driver licensing branch offices, 168 fee offices, eight tax assistance centers, and 12 field audit offices located throughout the state and over \$11.2 billion in revenue was collected.

Some of the results that the department has realized due to its improvement efforts, and its customers have benefited from, include:

- Sped up income tax refunds by 80 percent, making Missouri the fastest in the nation
- More than 550,000 Missourians filed their income tax return electronically in 2000, a 48 percent increase over 1999

- Reduced customers’ wait time in motor vehicle offices by over 50 percent; legislation was passed that cut the lifetime cost to citizens in half
- Moved 50 percent of tax filers off the 1040 long form to simpler, shorter, customized forms and filing options
- Rescinded 107 tax rules and proposed 33 new rules to ensure simplicity and consistency

The leadership of the Department of Revenue is committed to achieving performance excellence and proving that state government can be run like a business. Led by its Executive Leadership Team, the department has undergone a dramatic transformation in order to develop a customer-centered culture.

Since 1998, the department has focused its efforts on defining its priorities, retooling its products, changing attitudes, and redesigning its structure - all with the intent to better meet customers’ needs.

While the department’s vision to “*simplify*” has guided the department during the last three years, its values have served as the department’s conscience.

Bottom Line: Focus on measurable results and create accountability for achieving them.

Front Line: Front line employees have important insights into what customers want and how to make improvements.

Customer Line: Ask customers what they want and ensure that the lines of communication are open so they can tell us.

All improvement efforts at the department have been designed with the following *desired outcomes* in mind.

- Increased voluntary compliance
- Reduced citizen cost to comply with laws, regulations, and licenses
- Increased customer satisfaction
- Performance excellence



Changing attitudes have also played a pivotal role in the department achieving its desired outcomes. To shift from enforcing compliance to voluntary compliance, the department developed a variety of strategies to encourage customers to comply with tax, motor vehicle, and driver licensing laws. Some of the strategies implemented by the department include increasing public and business education on tax laws and rules, providing greater field and phone support to assist taxpayers, conducting educational courses for businesses, working with new businesses to help them set up their books to avoid errors and audits, opening the department's auditor training manuals to the public, and rewriting tax rules and regulations for simplicity, clarity and consistency.

The Department of Revenue consists of three divisions: The Division of Administration, Division of Taxation and Collection, and the Division of Motor Vehicle and Drivers Licensing. The Division of Taxation and Collection was redesigned by tax type to increase accountability and innovation. Essentially entire "businesses" were created to administer each different tax type. This structure ensures that for each tax, someone is accountable for the entire tax process from policy, to forms, to processing, and account resolution. This structure also ensures that a taxpayer has one point of contact. In addition, it gives the department flexibility to shift staff within a tax unit as seasonal demands shift. The Division of Motor Vehicle and Drivers Licensing has also undergone a reorganization. Four bureaus were

consolidated into three bureaus and functions were reorganized within the division to simplify its processes and enhance delivery of products to customers.

Employee input is encouraged at the department through the IDEA (Improvements Designed to Eliminate Aggravation) program. In its first year, employees submitted over 1,500 IDEAS regarding how the department could improve customer service. IDEAS ranged from simplifying a form to redesigning a process to save time and money.

Employees' training needs are met through Rev'N U, a workforce and career development program. Rev'N U links educational programs and training opportunities to the department's outcomes. The Leadership Development Program was also designed to improve the skills of managers and the operations of the department.

Listening to customers and responding to their needs, involving employees in the transformation and reorganization of the department, and focusing on results are at the core of the department's improvement efforts that began in 1998 and continue today. While much progress has been made in simplifying the department's operations, much work is still to be done. Winning the Missouri Quality Award assures the department that they are on the right path that will lead to even further improvements and continued performance excellence.



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