

**CITY COUNCIL  
COMMUNICATION:**

**ITEM \_\_\_\_\_**

**OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER  
CITY OF DES MOINES, IOWA**

**99-210**

**SYNOPSIS -**

**AGENDA:**

MAY 17, 1999

**SUBJECT:**

CUSTOMER  
SERVICE TRAINING

**TYPE:**

**RESOLUTION**  
ORDINANCE  
RECEIVE/FILE

**SUBMITTED BY:**

WILLIAM STOWE  
HUMAN  
RESOURCES  
DIRECTOR

The Strategic Training and Development Committee, a cross functional City of Des Moines team, recommends implementation of Customer Service training utilizing materials purchased through Development Dimensions International (DDI) (owned by Harcourt Brace, Pittsburgh, PA). This employee development approach looks to both providing better service to residents and improving employee citizen interaction.

The training will consist of three half-day sessions and will be offered to City employees throughout all departments.

**FISCAL IMPACT -**

The total fiscal impact is \$127,375. Of this amount, \$114,375 covers the following: Facilitator Training for ten employees, Master Training for one employee, wallcharts and videos, master material for reproduction, and reproduction rights for 18 months or 1,600 copies. The remaining \$13,000 is anticipated for consumables, reproduction costs, freight, and travel for the DDI facilitator not to exceed \$4,000 (\$2,000 per trip).

The fiscal impact has increased \$13,000 due the City's need to certify additional facilitators to provide training to all 1,600 employees and 250 supervisors.

**RECOMMENDATION -**

**Approve Customer Service training for City employees and to purchase the Customer Service Program from DDI.**

**BACKGROUND -**

In the summer of 1997, the Strategic Training and

Development Committee established four training initiatives based on a survey of 10 percent of all City employees. The initiatives identified were as follows:

- Computer and Software Training (began December 1997)
- Supervisor/Leadership Training (began October 1998)
- Customer Service Training (to begin May 1999)
- Change/Stress Management Training (in review)

The focus groups and Strategic Training and Development Committee recommended the utilization of DDI training materials for supervisor/leadership training. DDI was selected based on the strength of the research behind the materials as well as alignment with other City initiatives, including CQI (Continuous Quality Improvement).

The City is currently using DDI materials in Interaction Management for supervisor/leadership training. City employees are facilitating this training. Having these classes lead by City employees adds to the value of the training because the facilitator is able to relate directly with the concerns of the participants and has a clear understanding of the environment in which the participants function. Interaction Management training has been well received and the evaluation of both the DDI materials and the City facilitators have been favorable to continuing this teaching style, with DDI curricula.

The Strategic Training and Development Committee sees the value in continuing the presentation style and material format of DDI to maintain consistency and clarity of message. The DDI material lends itself to building an organization's culture around the key principles of building or enhancing self-esteem; listen and respond with empathy; ask for help or encourage involvement; share thoughts, feelings, and rational; and provide support without removing responsibility presented during each program.

Approximately 1,600 City employees will have an opportunity to attend the seven-hour customer training program beginning May 1999. Training will be conducted by in-house staff who will complete a train-the-trainer course presented by DDI.

During this training a City employee will be trained to facilitate the train-the-trainer program for future programs.

As a follow-up to the Interaction Management and to reinforce Customer Service training, supervisors and approximately 250 employees will be enrolled in "Creating A Service Culture: A Service Leaders Role". This program is a four-hour session to start in November 1999.

It is the recommendation of the Strategic Training and Development Committee to purchase the Customer Service program from DDI.