



SAMPLE CLIENT SATISFACTION REPORT

Your Hospital Number:

1121

Your confidential report was prepared by the Veterinary Hospital Managers Association. All the information is strictly confidential. If you have any questions about your report, please contact Darren Osborne at 800-670-1702.

CLIENT SATISFACTION REPORT

WHY BOTHER WITH CLIENT SATISFACTION?

Client satisfaction is important to your hospital or practice because truly satisfied clients are loyal clients. Loyal clients are critical to the profitability of service-oriented businesses. Loyal clients contribute to the profitability of your practice in many ways:

1. Repeat business is derived from subsequent visits.
2. Loyal clients become less price sensitive. Loyal clients learn to trust the service provider and concentrate on the quality of service instead of the price. Loyal clients are far less likely to be attracted to lower-priced competitors.
3. Loyal clients purchase more services than non-loyal clients. Loyal clients purchase more professional services (e.g. dentistry), and non-professional services (e.g. diets, grooming and boarding).
4. Loyal clients cost less to serve. Because they are both accustomed to and trusting of the services, less time and effort are required to provide service. Loyal clients book appointments after the first notice and accept treatment recommendations more readily.
5. Loyal clients refer your practice to others. Research has shown that this tendency to refer is much stronger in loyal clients than it is in moderately satisfied clients.

WHAT DRIVES CLIENT SATISFACTION?

Value drives client satisfaction. Every time a transaction is requested or made, clients subconsciously calculate the value through the following computation:

$$\text{Value} = \frac{\text{Service Quality Delivered (process)}}{\text{Financial Cost}} - \frac{\text{Service Expected (core)}}{\text{Non Financial Costs}}$$

When the value is positive, the purchase is made. When two competing services or products are offered, the one with the higher value will be purchased.

Clients have expectations. Clients will attempt to assess the quality of the service expected (core) and how the service was delivered (process).

CORE SERVICE

Realistically, few clients can judge how well core veterinary services are performed. Despite high expectations, most clients have very limited medical knowledge. Clients must trust that the core of the service is performed to high standards, similar to their expectations. Clients who have facts or even suspicions that the core of the service does not meet their high expectation will lose this trust. They will immediately become dissatisfied and motivated to seek services elsewhere.

Delivering the expected core services is essential in driving client satisfaction.

SERVICE PROCESS

Service process is the manner in which the service is delivered. The components of service process are described as:

Physical Evidence

Appearance of the facilities
Appearance of the staff
Equipment used to provide the service

Empathy

Caring and individual attention
Listening to needs of clients
Caring about clients' interests
Providing personalized attention

Responsiveness

Readiness or willingness of employees
Returning phone calls
Providing prompt service
Handling urgent requests

Assurance

Knowledge and competency of staff
Ability to convey trust and confidence
Name and reputation
Personal characteristics of employees

Service process differs from core service in the following ways:

1. Clients' expectations of the service process are much lower than they are for the core of the service.
2. The service process is not a component of the veterinary experience that can be judged ahead of time by the client. However, by the completion of the visit, the client will have assessed this component and rated it relative to their expectations.
3. The service process varies widely from practice to practice and represents a differentiating factor between veterinarians.

High quality service process is what differentiates you from others.

YOUR RESULTS

Response Rate:

Of a possible 200 surveys 103 were returned, representing a 52% response rate.

The following personalized information comes from the Client Satisfaction Surveys distributed to your clients. The responses from their surveys accurately show how satisfied your clients are with the level of service you provide at your hospital.

Your clients were asked to rate their satisfaction with various attributes of the service in your hospital. Additionally, they were asked to indicate which attributes were most important to them as consumers.

ARE YOUR CLIENTS SATISFIED WITH THE SERVICE AT YOUR HOSPITAL?

It is always difficult to put a quantitative measure on an attitude. To arrive at a usable estimate of your clients' attitude towards the customer service at your hospital, your clients were asked to respond to a number of statements about the level of service in your hospital. These statements used strong adjectives and adverbs (e.g. began promptly, extremely friendly and courteous, exceptionally clean, listened closely). For each statement, your clients were asked to rank their experience on a comparative scale labelled "Strongly Agree," "Agree," "Disagree" and "Strongly Disagree." Only the responses that strongly agreed with the statement were considered to be satisfied clients.

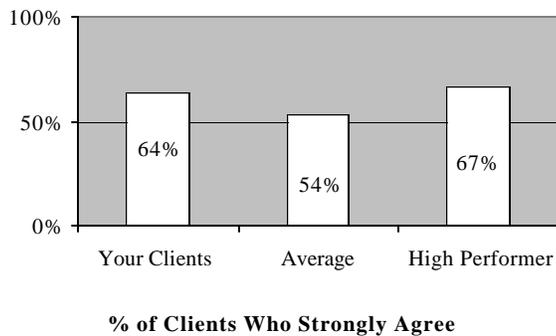
Market research by Xerox Corporation has shown that highly satisfied and truly loyal clients are the ones who "Strongly Agree" on satisfaction surveys. Many of the respondents to this survey indicated that they "Agreed" with the statements. However, research has shown that most people will respond favorably because they fear recrimination from you, they don't want to have to explain negative feelings, or they simply do not want to jeopardize their chance of winning the prize that they are eligible for as a survey participant. The only responses that really count are the ones who strongly agree with the strongly worded questions about service.

Several attributes of service at your hospital were scored based on the percentage of truly satisfied clients who indicated that they "Strongly Agreed" with the related affirmative statement. Your hospital's score is compared to the "Average" score of all the hospitals in the study and to a "High Performer" score. The "High Performer" score represents the score of the hospital that ranked just better than 85% of all other hospitals within the study.

SERVICE QUESTIONS

	Your Clients	Average	High Performer
My appointment began promptly at the scheduled time.	64%	54%	67%
The attending veterinarian was extremely friendly & courteous.	89%	87%	94%
The other hospital staff were extremely friendly & courteous.	83%	79%	89%
The veterinarian really cares about my pet(s).	79%	83%	90%
Other hospital staff really care about my pet(s).	73%	72%	81%
The veterinarian listened closely to what I had to say.	84%	84%	90%
The veterinarian explained any problems & treatments clearly.	83%	83%	89%
The hours of operation meet all my needs as a client.	67%	69%	77%
The veterinary hospital was exceptionally clean.	72%	72%	84%
The services I received were reasonably priced.	62%	38%	47%
I will strongly recommend this veterinary hospital to others.	75%	74%	83%
This veterinary hospital provides good value for my money.	65%	52%	63%

My appointment began promptly at the scheduled time.



Promptness of service will either increase or decrease clients' non-financial cost. Failing to serve clients promptly increases this non-financial cost and decreases their perception of value and related satisfaction.

Those areas of your service that must be scrutinized are as follows:

- Service Flow:** The flow of staff and clients in your hospital may make it difficult for the staff to process clients in an efficient manner. Small changes, such as an additional terminal for invoicing, may resolve such problems. Altering staff utilization, such as the use of technicians to prepare appointments, may help process clients. Utilizing a flow chart may help staff members identify their roles in the delivery of service and will help identify "bottlenecks." Constant review of the blueprint relative to service delivery problems will permit constant improvement.
- Appointment Scheduling:** The time you allocate to appointments must match the time spent in appointments. If you are spending 25 minutes in each 20 minute appointment, you can't stay prompt for long. If these two times do not match, you must lessen the time spent in appointments or allocate more time in your appointment schedule for appointments. Scheduling problems may also arise if your reception staff is not booking enough time for difficult appointments.

- 3. **Reorganizing the Day:** There is typically a pattern as to the times of the day when there is more client demand. It is often possible to schedule work such as surgery away from these times. Doing so ensures the maximum number of staff are available to serve clients at times of peak demand.
- 4. **Adding Staff Members:** In situations where existing staff are already being used efficiently, adding staff may be an appropriate mechanism to enhance service promptness.

The attending veterinarian was extremely friendly and courteous.



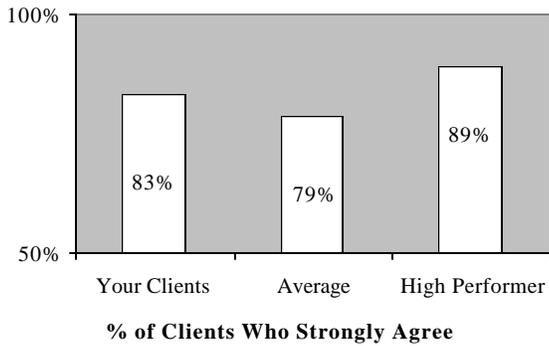
This attribute of service relates primarily to the empathy component of the service process. Although courtesy seems self-explanatory, a hurried or "matter of fact" explanation of information on a sensitive topic may be perceived as discourteous.

Empathy is defined as the ability to be aware of, understand and appreciate the feelings and thoughts of others. Empathy is "tuning in" (being sensitive) to what, how and why people feel and think the way they do. Empathetic people care about others and show interest in and concern for them.

Clients want and need empathetic caregivers. Showing empathy is not equivalent to sympathy. It is highly probable that a client's circumstances cannot be altered and clients are not wishing sympathy. Nor is empathy found in the act of cuddling pets or "kissing up to a client." These acts often replace the more difficult emotional task of being empathetic.

Despite a heavy schedule and many professional and business demands, it is imperative that there is ample time to allow for taking an interest in each and every client and pet.

The other hospital staff were extremely friendly and courteous.

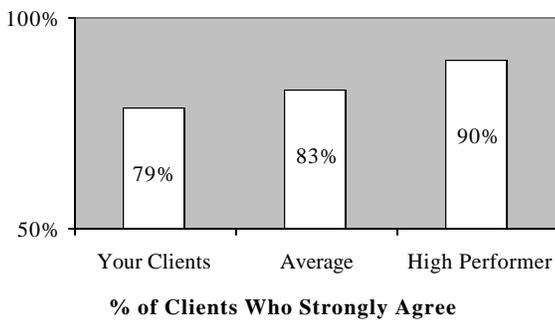


Clients expect empathy from the entire staff of the hospital. Empathy was defined in the discussion on the preceding service attribute.

You may be able to improve the levels of satisfaction relative to this service attribute by:

- 1. Staff Training:** The staff need to be trained relative to the nature of and importance of empathetic service. Once understood, the staff may be able to identify reasons why they are perceived as not being empathetic. Those reasons need to be removed so there are no hindrances to delivering the services as understood to be important.
- 2. Staff Selection:** In choosing new staff members, it is important to choose applicants that are able to deliver service in an empathetic manner.
- 3. Motivation:** Constant measurement of and improvement in client satisfaction may serve as significant motivation for staff to improve this attribute of service. Further motivation may be derived by basing bonuses and rewards on measures of client satisfaction.

The veterinarian really cares about my pet(s).

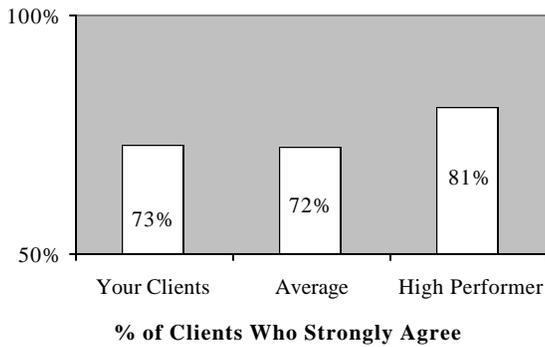


Really caring for pets also relates primarily to the empathy component described previously. Clients are more sensitive to how their pets are handled and treated than to how they themselves are treated.

It is important to recognize and acknowledge each pet as an individual, and to deliver care to each pet in a thoughtful, kind and respectful manner appropriate to the individual. It is necessary to perceive the nature of the relationship between owner and pet and proceed as appropriate to this relationship.

Like the approach to owners, the approach to pets cannot be done on a “cookie cutter” basis. Each pet is different and the service must be modified and personalized for each.

The hospital staff really care about my pet(s).

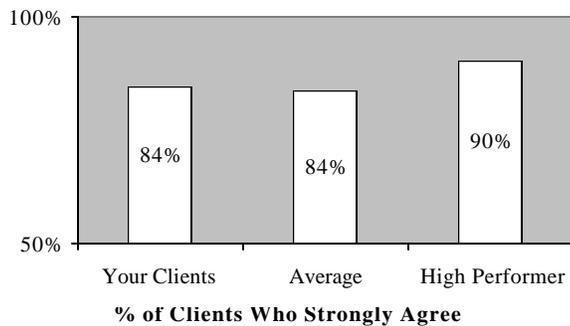


Clients have expectations that the staff of the hospital will care about their pet. This relates primarily to the empathy component of the service process as described previously.

There are some steps that can be taken to improve the satisfaction of this service attribute:

- 1. Staff Training:** The staff need to be trained relative to the nature of, and importance of showing they care for clients' pets. Once understood, the staff may be able to identify reasons why they are perceived as not caring. Those reasons need to be removed so there are no hindrances to delivering the services as understood to be important.
- 2. Staff Selection:** In choosing new staff members, it is important to choose applicants that are able to deliver service in an empathetic, caring manner.
- 3. Motivation:** Constant measurement of, and improvement in, client satisfaction may serve as significant motivation for staff to improve this attribute of service. Further motivation may be derived by basing bonuses and rewards on measures of client satisfaction.

The veterinarian listened closely to what I had to say.



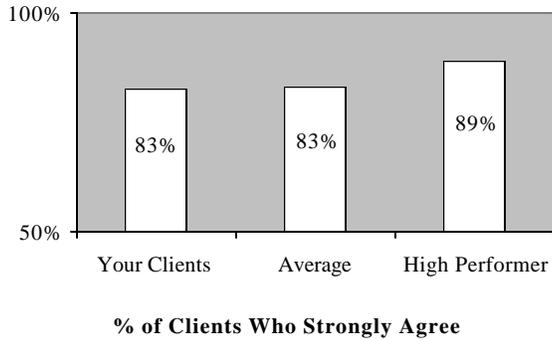
This attribute of service relates primarily to the empathy component of the service process, but also encompasses some degree of the assurance component of process.

Listening to the client expresses courtesy, respect, and empathy towards both owner and pet. Listening also conveys assurance. Clients will feel more assured that the problem they perceive is properly attended to if they believe that the veterinarian understands the problem thoroughly.

Taking the time to listen is imperative. Repeating the problem back to the client will assure the client that their concerns were heard and understood.

Constant improvement of listening and communicative skills will improve satisfaction with this service attribute. Taking the time to listen is imperative. Using techniques of repeating the problem back verbally will assure the client that they have been heard and understood. Several post secondary institutions offer part-time study in communications.

The veterinarian explained any problems and treatments clearly.

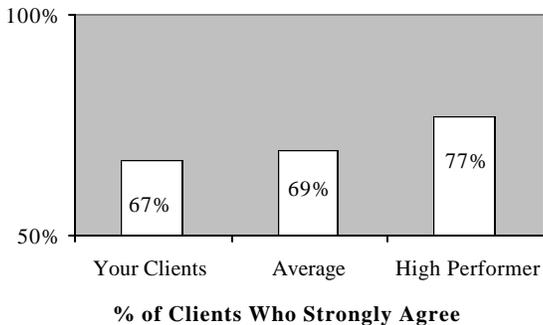


This attribute of service relates primarily to the assurance component of the service process. Explaining problems and treatments is not a matter of competence as much as it is a matter of conveying competence and instilling trust and confidence in the client through effective communication. Doing this repeatedly generates a perception of the hospital’s reputation in the community.

Ways in which the level of satisfaction with this attribute of service could be enhanced:

1. Ensure that enough time is available to communicate effectively.
2. Rely on feedback from the client to ensure that the communication is effective.
3. Post-secondary institutions offer courses in communication.
4. Technicians may converse with the clients following the doctor consultation. This is a chance to ensure that the clients understood the doctor’s message and to answer any question that the client may have been hesitant to ask of the doctor.

The hours of operation meet all my needs as a client.

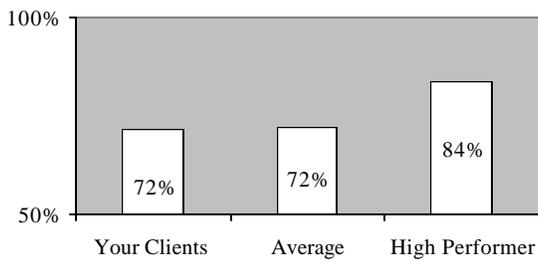


This attribute of service influences primarily the non-financial cost in the clients’ value computation.

Satisfaction with this attribute of service can be enhanced by extending hours to accommodate the schedules of your clients. It may be advisable to obtain feedback from your clients before extending hours to ensure you meet the needs of the clients. One must be cognizant of the fact that increasing the hours of operation will significantly increase operating expenses. Once hours are extended, they are more difficult to retract.

If your score of overall satisfaction is average or less, resources might better be spent on improving other aspects of service and enhancing the overall value. When the overall level of satisfaction is increased, clients will perceive satisfactory value and accept this non-financial cost as part of the cost of the value they receive. This option eliminates additional operating costs and maintains a better lifestyle for all members of the hospital staff.

The veterinary hospital was exceptionally clean.



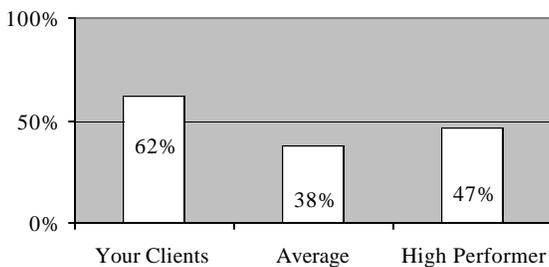
This attribute of service relates to the physical evidence component of the service process.

% of Clients Who Strongly Agree

Whether the facility is characterized as modern and low maintenance or as older and make-do, clients have an expectation that it will be spotlessly clean. The level of cleanliness is a client’s surrogate gauge of the quality of service offered by the hospital. It is important to remember that tidiness is often associated with cleanliness.

Low scores on cleanliness should help identify where the hospital is falling short of clients’ expectations. New standards of cleanliness and tidiness must be established and upheld.

The services I received were reasonably priced.



This is the financial cost component of the clients’ value computation.

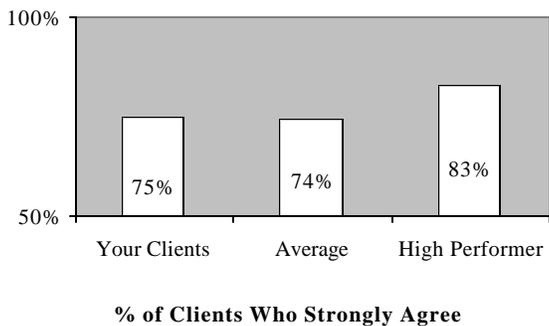
% of Clients Who Strongly Agree

There is no denying that the cost of medical care, veterinary or otherwise, is a considerable expense for some clients. However, it is important to recall that this is only one component of the value computation. Reducing non-financial costs and increasing the quality of service will enhance the perception of value and reduce the significance of price.

It is important to keep in mind that people complain about prices because they do not know how to complain about the service and the overall value received. Two hospitals charging identical prices may experience extremely different levels of client complaints regarding prices. The difference arises from the difference in value received not from the prices, which are known to be identical.

There is more to be gained (for yourself and your clients) by increasing value then by decreasing fees.

I will strongly recommend this veterinary hospital to others.

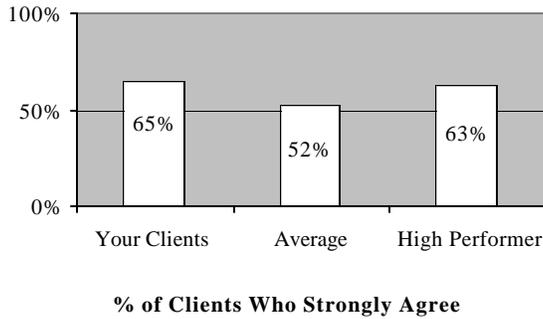


It is recognized that only very satisfied clients refer services to others. In essence, this response is the litmus test for overall client satisfaction. Low levels of client satisfaction will result in a lower market share and reduced profitability.

While a certain degree of human resources is necessary in order to increase service quality, the financial resources necessary to increase service quality are minimal. Higher service quality produces cost savings resulting from time saved in dealing with client complaints and time spent repeating services. Significantly high service quality is an incredible driver of profitability derived through loyal clients.

There is no formula to increase service quality. It is a matter of constant improvement from the level that presently exists. This improvement is derived from constantly altering the service systems mentioned above.

This veterinary hospital provides good value for my money.



In answering this question, your client is asked to consciously calculate the value received. As discussed earlier, this computation has already occurred subconsciously.

Because respondents will try to influence the outcome of the study with their response, scores for this question are typically low. For that reason, the relative score is more important. Value drives satisfaction. Satisfaction drives loyalty. Loyalty drives profitability. Consequently, the clients' assessment of the value provided is very important. Low scores relative to other clinics normally correlate to lower market share and lower profitability than is otherwise possible. Low scores should be a significant motivation to become more involved in the service quality offered by your hospital. Regardless of the score, there is always room for further refinement and improvement.

What is important to your clients

Your clients were asked to indicate which of the following factors were most important to them when choosing a veterinarian or veterinary hospital. They were asked to identify three of 10 factors as “most important.” On the table below, all 10 factors are listed along with the percentage of your clients that chose each factor as most important, the average client response and the highest hospital response. Higher percentages represent higher importance to clients.

This information provides a profile of your clients. It shows that relationship issues like “Is interested in the well being of my pet” and “Excellent medical knowledge” are more important to your clients than “Services are reasonably priced.”

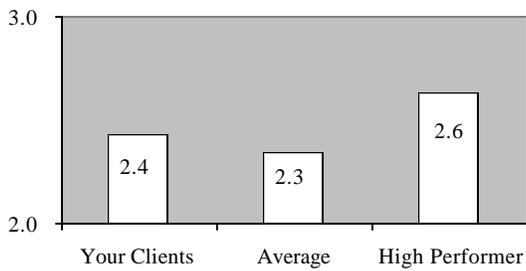
It is important to note that the list of factors below appears in the same order as on the survey. Notice that “Services are reasonably priced” is placed third. Your clients were asked to check off the three most important factors, so even if respondents only checked off the first three things listed, pricing issues would not be overlooked. Clearly, service, not price, is important to your clients.

FACTORS IN CHOOSING A HOSPITAL

	Your Clients	Average	High Performer
Convenient location	27%	26%	40%
Prompt service	10%	14%	21%
Services are reasonably priced	15%	22%	15%
Is comforting to my pet	32%	29%	36%
Is interested in the well being of my pet	70%	68%	74%
Excellent medical knowledge	67%	66%	76%
Explains things thoroughly	50%	38%	48%
Friendly staff	19%	21%	27%
Convenient hours of operation	5%	10%	16%
Exceptionally clean hospital	4%	11%	17%

Conclusion

YOUR CLIENT SATISFACTION RATING



Overall Client Satisfaction Rating

To calculate the overall client satisfaction rating in your practice, the percentage of “truly satisfied” clients (e.g. “Strongly Agree” respondents) was weighted against the reported importance for each factor. For example, the satisfaction score from “The other hospital staff were extremely friendly and courteous" question was weighted with the corresponding "Friendly staff."

Weighting each factor by its importance to clients ensures that the factors that are most important to clients are counted most, and the factors that are least important to your clients are counted least.

Your client satisfaction score is compared to the average practice and the practice with the top score. The best possible client satisfaction score is 3.0.