

## RAPID ACTION FOR STRATEGY EXECUTION CASE STUDY

### Elevating Customer Service with Frontline Employee Engagement

Resolving persistent customer satisfaction issues across a widely-dispersed field service organization is a tall order even in the best of times. Add a profitability downturn to the challenge and you have a service executive's worst nightmare. Read how a national appliance repair company met the challenge of turning around profitability while simultaneously reducing customer complaints in just six months by tapping the ingenuity of its frontline service workforce.

It's a story familiar to anyone dealing with a broken washing machine, air conditioner, or other home appliance. The repair technician shows up only to find out that the needed repair part isn't in the van and the job gets rescheduled for next Tuesday. The customer is left dissatisfied and the costs are a nightmare for the service provider.

Unfortunately, this was a common occurrence for the largest home appliance repair provider in North America. But reducing repeat repair trips would be no small undertaking for an organization with more than 10,000 service technicians spread across hundreds of service locations.

“It was clear to me that engaging our frontline employees had to be central to our performance turnaround plan in order to sustain results.”

The Director of Quality and Compliance at the time explained, “I knew from experience that the problem of multiple trips-per-repair was complex and solving it would require improvements on many fronts. It was clear to me that engaging our frontline employees had to be central to our performance turnaround plan in order to sustain results.”

#### Tapping Local Employee Know-How to Jumpstart Improvement

In order to solve the trips-per-repair problem, the Director hoped to multiply the impact of his small cadre of Lean Six Sigma Black Belts by empowering teams of frontline field supervisors and employees to attack problems not requiring extensive data gathering and analysis. The Director selected Leap Technologies' **Rapid Action** as the vehicle for executing his frontline engagement strategy.



Rapid Action for  
Customer Service  
Turnaround



54

Teams deployed over six months in 60-day intervals

275

Employees engaged

288

Solutions implemented

\$2,599,322

Annualized first year cost savings

# RAPID ACTION FOR STRATEGY EXECUTION

## Elevating Customer Service with Frontline Employee Engagement

**Rapid Action** is Leap Technologies' "all in one" team engagement toolkit for accelerating results that is easily scaled to productively involve hundreds of employees in short timeframes in focused strategy execution. What particularly appealed to the Director was Rapid Action's learn-as-you-improve design and short weekly meetings over a 60-day project calendar, which would minimize time "off the clock" at the frontline.

Rapid Action launched in a large urban area service branch with the goal of testing the opportunity for improving trips-per-repair performance through "local action" before investing in an organization-wide rollout. Results from the first campaign came about quickly. Within 60 days, the run-rate on repeat repair calls began declining.

The solutions for reversing the trend seemed basic, but were extremely effective. For example, the Rapid Action team assigned to the problem of "lacking parts" as the reason for repeat repair trips quickly zeroed-in on the fact that repair trucks in the branch did not have a standard parts stocking procedure or layout for parts inventory. The service technicians and parts clerks on the team developed a solution based on their experience in the field, combined with a briefing on Lean 5S techniques for workplace organization provided in the Rapid Action Toolkit.

“ I thought we would have to deal with a lot of resistance and finger-pointing. But the teams immediately embraced the Rapid Action concept of 'Here's the problem – you tell us how to fix it'.

According to the Branch Manager, "I was pleasantly surprised by the response of our people. I thought we would have to deal with a lot of resistance and finger-pointing. But the teams immediately embraced the Rapid Action concept of 'Here's the problem – you tell us how to fix it'."

### From Local to Branch-Wide Improvement

Rapid Action provided the platform to eventually launch a total of 54 improvement teams made up of frontline field technicians, dispatchers, inventory managers and supervisors involving all branch locations. Launched over a six month timeframe, these teams used the Rapid Action Toolkit and 60-day Roadmap to attack the problem of repeat service trips.

Examples of Rapid Action solutions elevated for organization-wide adoption included:

- Increased stock inventory on service trucks for the top 25 highest-usage parts
- Clear and easy parts transfer process for technicians in the field to optimize truck inventories
- Rerouting of the same technician back for multiple-attempt service orders
- Institution of courtesy calls to customers after a recall or after multiple service calls

### The "DNA" of Faster Improvement



*Simplify the change process to engage more people.*



*Use "sprint" timeframes to keep employees motivated.*



*Empower employees with clear direction and support their ideas.*



*Use teams to build confidence and accountability for action.*



*Celebrate completions, not activity.*

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These solutions, while commonsense, were not previously standardized across all branches. As these practices were implemented organization-wide, the impact was remarkably similar: An average decline of 36% in repeat calls-per-branch and an even larger decline in customer complaint calls.

### Changing the Culture

Equally as important as the bottom-line benefits was the impact on culture in the field service organization. For the first time in their careers, service employees were being asked for their ideas and assistance to solve shared problems.

“*Rapid Action not only jumpstarted solutions to a persistent problem, it also helped us build teamwork and a spirit of cooperation, both within and across our service branches.*”

According to the Director, “We had good people to begin with, but we weren’t working together and we weren’t tapping the know-how readily available to fix common problems. Rapid Action not only jumpstarted solutions to a persistent problem, it also helped us build teamwork and a spirit of cooperation, both within and across our service branches.”



**20+**

YEARS EXPERIENCE

**250+**

CLIENT USERS

**5,000+**

COMPLETED PROJECTS

**35,000+**

EMPLOYEES ENGAGED

**\$250M**

DOCUMENTED SAVINGS



## The “All in One” Team Engagement Toolkit for Accelerating Results



Prelaunch Planner



Action Accelerator



Scripted Meeting Guides



Quick Read Booklets



Idea Sorting, Prioritizing and Tracking Posters



e-Templates & Tools



## LEARN MORE ABOUT RAPID ACTION FOR STRATEGY EXECUTION

*Are you interested in accelerating results and increasing engagement from your organization's change management and continuous improvement initiatives? Take a look “inside the box” of the most reliable process available for rapid, team-based improvement.*



Call 800.254.6805 or email to [request@improvefaster.com](mailto:request@improvefaster.com) to schedule a demo of the Rapid Action Toolkit.



For more information including Case Studies and White Papers please visit [www.improvefaster.com](http://www.improvefaster.com).

## Leap Technologies

*Improve faster through better team engagement!*

*Since 1993, Leap Technologies has helped organizations get on the path to faster, more effective strategy execution through better team engagement.*

*For more than two decades, organizations such as CBRE, Pfizer, Spirit Airlines, the Small Business Administration, Veolia Environmental Services, and U.S. Department of Defense among others have deployed Leap Team Engagement Toolkits to support the toughest strategy execution challenges.*

*For organizations looking for to execute strategy faster and better, Leap Technologies is the resource of choice.*