

Dispatches From Afar: Building and Managing a Distributed Desktop Support Team

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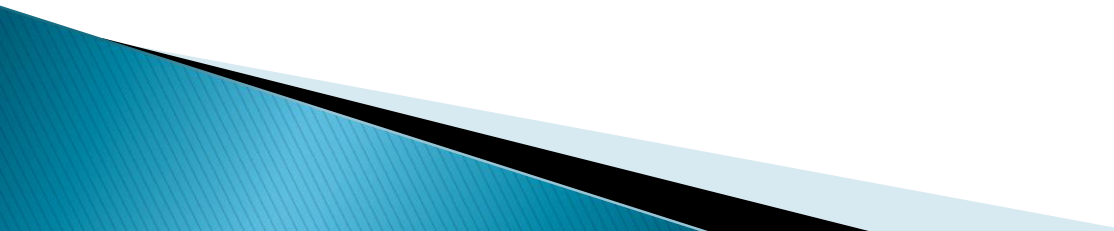
OVERVIEW

- ▶ Nationwide Desktop Support teams are, by their nature, “scattered groups.”
- ▶ Business demands on Desktop Support are ever-increasing.
- ▶ We don’t have team-building budgets that once existed.

Challenge: *How to build an effective, cohesive team?*



OVERVIEW

- ▶ This session will look at strategies, techniques and tips for building and maintaining a distributed Desktop Support team.
 - ▶ Uses many of the same tools as building a local team.
 - ▶ Since contact in a Distributed Team is all electronic or virtual, the task of binding such a team together becomes much trickier.
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YOUR PRESENTER

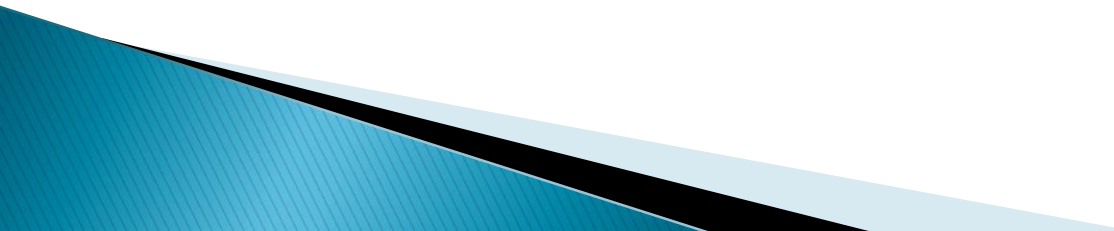
- ▶ **Michael Fisher**
 - Has worked in and led distributed IT teams for much of his IT career
- ▶ **Reed Business Information**
 - Global organization, managed IT for San Jose, Scottsdale and LA offices. Company HQ on East Coast, nationwide presence
 - Managed distributed team developing single Disk Image for AD migration
- ▶ **FOX Networks Group**
 - Nationwide Help Desk & Desktop Support
- ▶ **Molina Healthcare...**

Molina Healthcare

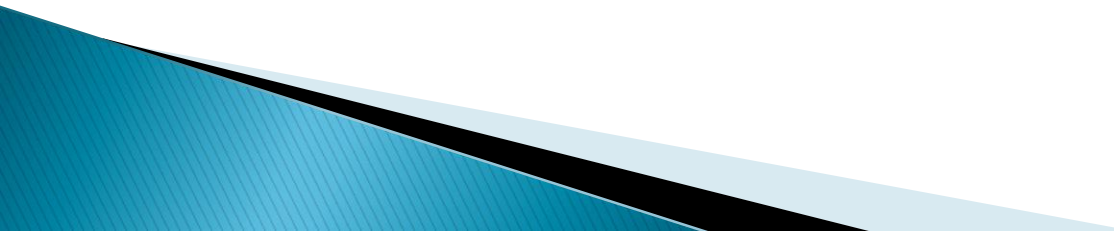


- ▶ Medicare/Medicaid operations in 16 states
- ▶ Currently ~5000 employees
- ▶ Nationwide Desktop Support team
 - DTS has grown from 19 in 2009 to 31 in 2012
 - Company grew from ~2500 in 2009 to ~5000 in 2012
- ▶ No single-point Service Desk. Blended Tier 1 between Phone Support & Desktop Support
 - ∴ Desktop has a larger Tier 1 presence
- ▶ DTS Team initially forged by Peter Schnack starting in 2008

WHAT DOES DESKTOP DO?

- ▶ Moves
 - ▶ Break/Fix
 - ▶ Hardware Issuance & Recovery
 - ▶ New Hires
 - ▶ Inventory Management
 - ▶ Physical Security
 - ▶ Onsite resource for Networking, Infrastructure, etc.
 - ▶ *...whatever needs doing that other teams aren't doing.*
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Five Essential Steps for an Effective Remote Desktop Team



ESSENTIAL STEP #1:

Get The Right People

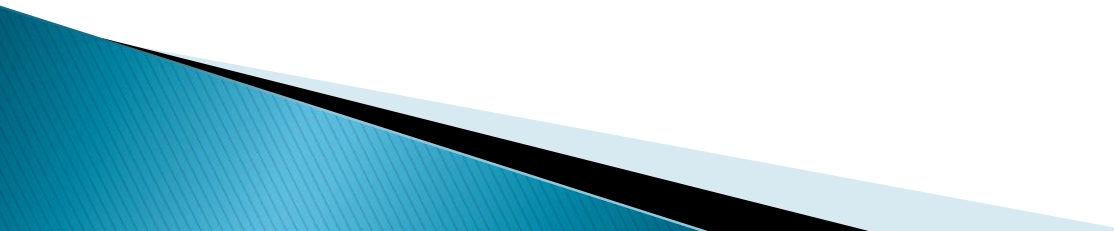


Get the Right People

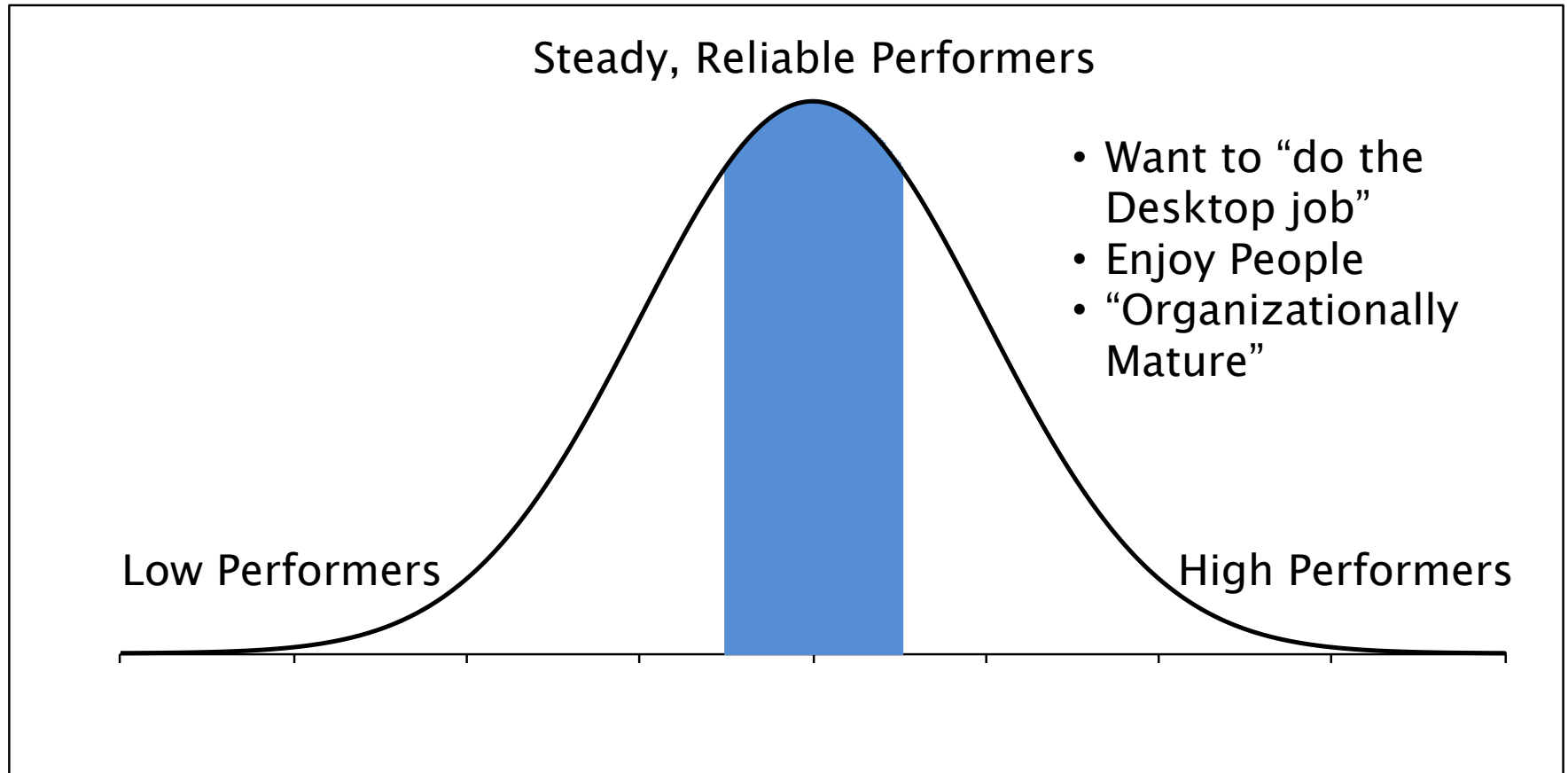
- ▶ In many cases, your Desktop Support resource in the field may be the only IT person on site. This means:
 - They are likely to be called on to assist network, telecom and server teams
 - They are also likely to be the main liaison between IT and the local business.
- ▶ The successful remote DS tech will assume a high degree of ownership for their IT environment

Get The Right People

Characteristics of a Good Remote Desktop Worker

- ▶ Self-Motivated
 - ▶ Good Communicator
 - ▶ Good at Connecting With Others
 - ▶ Sense of Ownership
 - Independent...*but Respects the Organization*
 - Takes Initiative...*but Communicates*
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Get The Right People



Seek people who will stick around.

ESSENTIAL STEP #2:

Establish Standards



Establish Standards

▶ UNIFORMITY

- Uniformity and standardization are key.

▶ TOOLS

- Standardized Imaging Procedures
- Packaged Software, Standardized Procedures

▶ DOCUMENTATION

- Team “Run Book”
- Single Reference Library
 - Build it in SharePoint
 - Refer to it regularly in Team communications

If your company lacks standardization, create your own.

Establish Standards

▶ METRICS

- Customer Satisfaction ratings
- Ticket Documentation Quality
- Compare Production to Levels of Business Activity

▶ BUT BE CAREFUL...

- Avoid metrics that can be easily “Gamed”
- Be careful about pitting your team against each other

Establish Standards

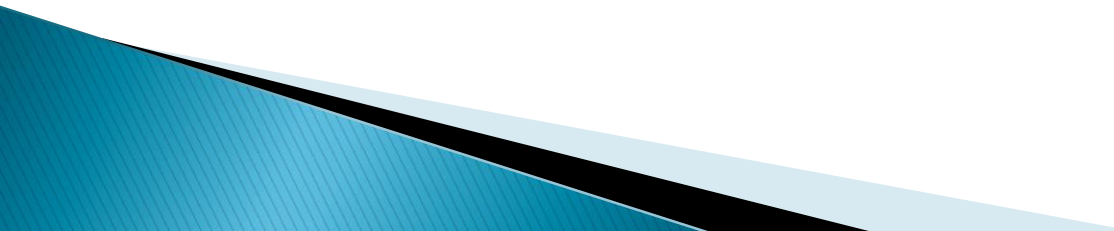
▶ PEOPLE TOOLS

- Scheduled 1:1 Meetings
- Defined Format for 1:1 Meetings
 - Forms documenting items discussed
 - Consistent and Regular
- *The point is to become a solid, predictable foundation for your remote Team Members*

ESSENTIAL STEP #3:

Build Relationships

Build Relationships

- ▶ Between yourself and your team members
 - Call and Check In
 - Take Interest, Learn Your Team
 - Be Interested and Be Involved
 - ▶ Between the various team members
 - Encourage Team Interdependence
 - Make them each other's Technical Resources
 - Cover for each other
 - "Buddy List"
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Build Relationships

- ▶ Between yourself and the local business at each location
 - Get to know the key people at each remote location
 - If needed, you can advocate on your Remote Desktop worker's behalf
 - If you have a problem with your Remote Desktop worker, the Local Business can assist with “boots on the ground”

Build Relationships

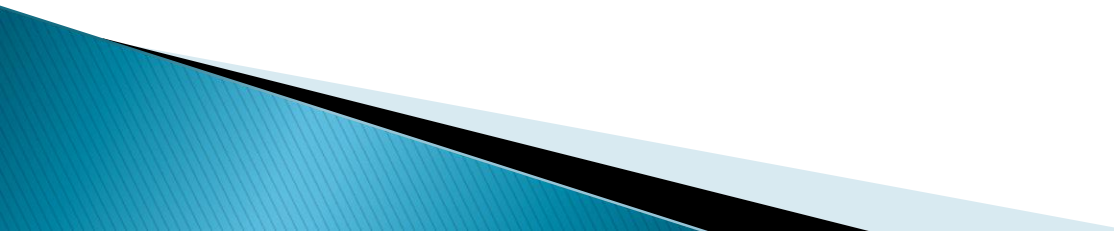
- ▶ Between yourself and the organization as a whole
 - Human Resources
 - *Payroll*
 - *Expense Reimbursement*
 - *Asset Procurement*
 - Facilities
 - **Get to know the people who “get things done”**
 - **Become the person who knows how things happen**

ESSENTIAL STEP #4:

Be A Resource



Be a Resource

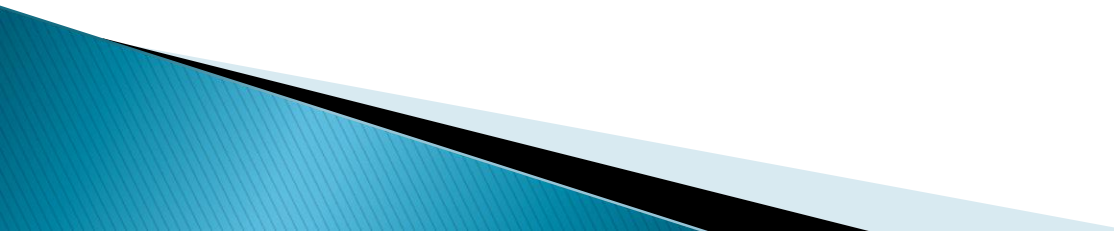
- ▶ Remote Staff are at a distance from Corporate Resources
 - ▶ Leverage your relationships with “Action People” in Corporate departments
 - Become a liaison between your Remote Team and the “mother ship”
 - This will strengthen their relationship to you
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ESSENTIAL STEP #5:

Create a Team Identity



Create a Team Identity

- ▶ “Brand” your team
 - Email Signatures
 - Name
 - Logo
 - T-shirts, hats, mousepads
 - ▶ Create team legends, histories, traditions
 - ▶ Identify and celebrate “Team Heroes”
 - ▶ Celebrate personal events
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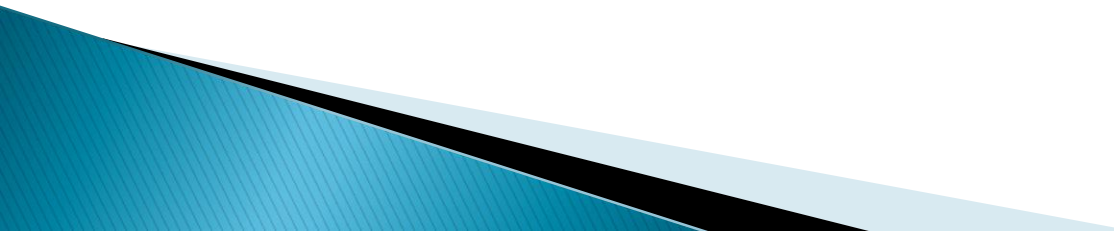
Create a Team Identity

- ▶ Use technology to bring your team together.
 - Regular team conference calls
 - Engage different team members to present “cool geek tricks”
 - Video Conferencing
 - Facebook page
 - Twitter feed / Team hashtag
- ▶ **Ask your team for their ideas.**

Create a Team Identity

- ▶ Create an all-team DL and use it regularly to send communications to the team.
- ▶ Encourage people to reach out to the team for advice or with technical questions.
 - Buddy System
- ▶ Employ humor.

5 ESSENTIAL STEPS:

- ▶ **Get the Right People**
 - ▶ **Establish Standards**
 - ▶ **Build Relationships**
 - ▶ **Be A Resource**
 - ▶ **Create a Team Identity**
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REMEMBER...

- ▶ **Tailor Your Solution To Your Team**
 - ▶ **There is no “One Magic Bullet”**
 - ▶ **COMMUNICATE**
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Questions?



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∞ Thanks for your time! ∞