



# HOW TECHNOLOGY AND CUSTOMER EXPECTATIONS IMPACT PWC'S WORKFORCE

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▶ **PWC mirrors what Steve talked about....**

- Aging workforce – average age 45 years and over 10 years of service.
  - 40% of PWC employees can retire in less than 10 years
- Changing customer base.. Below are results for Fayetteville from the ElectriCities customer survey.

Status Quo	35.0%
Technology Cautious	15.0%
Savings Seekers	12.5%
Movers and Shakers	9.1%
Green Champions	28.3%

- ▶ **On May 12, 2010 the PWC Commissioners adapted a new Strategic Plan and included in its priorities was the development of a “Comprehensive IT System Plan” and “Smart Metering/Grid Program & Plan”**
- ▶ **We quickly realized that while these where two separate projects they were interdependent and had to be planned with an eye for the future**
- ▶ **This began a journey that continues today that changed how we operate, interact with our customers and how we hire and train our workforce**
  - July 2015 final phase of Oracle IT Systems go-live
  - In August 2017 finished deployment of AMI electric and water meters

## ▶ **Employees**

- Some long term employees didn't want to deal with the changes and retired or resisted the changes that were coming
- Opened door for PWC to attract new employees because of technology utilization, but some were impatient at slow pace of implementation

## ▶ **Customers**

- Some customers wanted to have “old ways” maintained
  - Liked meter readers in neighborhoods
  - Don't trust technology
  - 13% of customers still pay bills in person (same % as auto-draft)
- Some Customers wanted change
  - Just want an app for that....
  - Convivence and choice
  - Want to use technology for “smart home” applications

## ▶ **Employees**

- Employee surveys
- Employee meetings
- Employee Involvement in projects
- Training and Change Management – This is key to success

## ▶ **Customers**

- Customer Surveys
- Use Community Advisory Group as proxy and test group
- Detailed multi-faceted customer communication and education plan
- Previewed technology and advantages of it at various community events

- ▶ **Knowing customers helps to put expectations in context**
- ▶ **PWC has over 115,000 individual accounts**
- ▶ **Fort Bragg has huge impact on PWC customer base**
  - **20 % annual customer turnover**
  - **Deployments**
  - **High % of rental properties**
- ▶ **Cumberland County is ranked as a Tier 1 county**
- ▶ **Two Universities – FSU and Methodist**

- ▶ **Customer expectations driven in 3 primary ways with AMI**
  - Press and hype around smart meters and smart grid
  - Experience of customers new to PWC that had service from early AMI adapters
  - Expectations set by PWC itself
- ▶ **The hype in some ways created an unachievable expectation, but helped with acceptance and anticipation of getting AMI... also concerned some customers**
- ▶ **With 20% annual customer turnover customers previous experiences play a role in setting the bar for PWC with customer service**
- ▶ **We knew best way to manage expectations with customers and anxieties with employees was to frame and set those expectations ourselves as early as possible and as much as possible**

- ▶ **Expectations we set early on..... AMI would.....**
  - Empower customers to better understand and manage their electric and water usage and bills
  - Provide customers with more **options**
    - New enhanced offerings for “Green Champions”
    - Keep existing offerings for “Status Quo”
  - Get information directly to customers through Customer Portal
  - Allow for advanced rate structures; TOU and Coincident Peak
  - Enhanced customer service; water leak detection, energy audits, conservation and demand side management
- ▶ **Key to success was setting many expectations early**
  - Customers knew what to expect – comprehensive communication plan(s)
  - Employees knew what to expect
  - Allowed Management team to plan ahead for changes
- ▶ **Keep finding new ways to leverage technology and meet customer needs**



- ▶ **Decided to keep status quo offerings but offer new ones**
  - Kept in person bill payment – but offered new 24/7 payment kiosk
  - Kept existing bill payment options but added new ones through an enhanced customer portal
  - Keep offering in-home energy audits but added interactive conservation tools in customer portal
  - Kept walk-in face to face customer service but also added a Portal App
  - Changed bill design that not only has simplified front page, but then has more detail on second page
- ▶ **Slowly we have seen growing acceptance of new tools and declining (but still steady) use of status quo methods**

- ▶ **By setting expectations early we were able to systematically plan out many of the changes needed**
  - Looked at how internal processes would change
  - Learned from others how customer expectations manifested themselves in day to day operations
- ▶ **In 2012 reorganized and created Customer Programs Group which would be a catalyst for many of the customer facing AMI based programs (5 years before deployment was completed)**
- ▶ **Identified positions that would be eliminated, modified, retooled as well as new ones to be created**

## ▶ **General Workforce Implications**

- Generally the minimum position requirements for many jobs increased due to the technology adaption – resulted in some higher pay grades
- Giving customers more information empowers them... so customer relation dynamic changes
- Don't underestimate the need for change management – just like customers some employees like change and others are status quo
- Used new technology adaptation as a tool to attract new hires
- Increased training requirements

- ▶ **Following are a (very) few of the position specific changes**
  - Customer Service Representatives – new training to interpret and explain daily and hourly consumption patterns to customers
  - Meter Technicians - enhanced training; meters are programmable data collectors
  - Conservationists (new) – use AMI data to do home energy audits
  - Data Management – Multiple new and retooled positions
    - Analyst positions at department level to interpret data to improve operations
    - Central Data Analytics group just formed
    - Just started a Data Governance project
  - Eliminated most meter reader positions now do remote turn-on/shut offs
  - IT hired new skill sets for new systems
  - New Outage Management System integrated with AMI put enhanced outage information in hands of Lineworkers

**Questions ?????**