



OVERVIEW

The BFD programme is a culture change initiative within BA.

The centre piece is a leadership development programme that we provide for all 3,700 BA pilots with four objectives:

- Update the leadership skills of the pilot community
- Engage them on the potential value they offer the BA brand - and the collective impact of individual acts of discretionary effort on customer satisfaction
- Equip them with the skills to engage with customers in authentic ways
- Do this in a way that does not distract them from their primary task of flying safely and efficiently

IMPACT and ROI

Customer satisfaction since the programme started shows:

- 10% uplift in satisfaction scores for BA customers who had had some form of interaction with their pilot before, during or after their flight
- 11% uplift in likelihood to recommend BA
- 11% increase in likelihood to travel with BA again

INNOVATION

Pilots are more used to rigorous technical training. There has never been anything similar attempted within BA before, and there is no other programme like it on either a national or global level.

Whilst the notion of pilots interacting with customers is not new, the real innovation lies in the fact that BFD is being introduced in a consistent, meaningful, authentic and thoughtful way as part of a coherent strategy within the airline around customer experience.

The challenge was to provide an engaging learning experience backed up with real, live tools (that pilots generated themselves) that is accessible via an app and available both on and offline.

INSIGHT

A key challenge of the initiative has been about how to engage a senior and remote section of the BA workforce in a set of behaviours that is not part of their primary role or responsibility. For a pilot, the safe operation of an aircraft always comes ahead of customer service, and thus 'BFD behaviours' cannot be mandated or standardised for all. It was all down to understanding discretionary effort!

INSPIRATION

It is the belief of BA that the delivery of the BFD programme has set the benchmark for customer experience within the airline industry with reference to the role of the pilot.

There is also much broad learning to be drawn from the programme. It requires a rather unique approach to engage and equip a senior leadership population with the mindset, skills and behaviours required to deliver excellent customer service, especially when this is not the primary function of their job description.

This programme recently won the 2014 Peer Awards category for Customer Service.