

Integrity Impact Story



CLIENT OVERVIEW

Price Chopper®, headquartered in Schenectady, New York, is one of the most honored regional supermarket chains as recognized by the National Grocer's Association, Food Marketing Institute and the American Marketing Association. Operated by parent company The Golub Corporation, Price Chopper employs 23,000 associates in more than 130 stores across six northeastern states.

OBJECTIVES

Create a customer-focused organization in new stores and revitalize customer service in existing stores. Specific goals included:

- Improving employee retention through skill development opportunities
- Building synergy and teamwork within stores to increase communication, productivity and customer-focus
- Reducing “shrink” from product loss and theft

PROCESS

Strong senior management support, led by Executive Vice President Larry Zettle, was the driving force behind Price Chopper's commitment to implementing Integrity Solutions' program Integrity Service®. Priority was placed on giving people the skills to perform and developing the store manager as the leader of customer service in his or her store.

The process included an initial 3 ½-hour workshop and eight 1 ½-hour weekly follow-up sessions, with a number of workshops scheduled to accommodate both day and night shift employees. As part of the expectation that store managers must consistently model the behaviors taught, each store manager became certified in Integrity Service® and facilitated the sessions with support from an Integrity Solutions master facilitator.

Over the course of the 5-year implementation, around 16 of Price Chopper's largest stores participated in the initiative, with more than 3,000 employees graduating from Integrity Service® Program. Momentum and focus were maintained through programs like “Breakfast of Champions,” a monthly awards breakfast implemented by the Zone Manager to spotlight people and positive outcomes within their stores.

Improving employee retention through skill development opportunities

Building synergy and teamwork within stores to increase communication, productivity and customer-focus

Reducing “shrink” from product loss and theft

“I was looking for a program that would put the store manager in a leadership position when it came to customer service. The great thing about Integrity Service® is that it can be tailored to fit any type of business. By having our store managers conduct the training, there was increased interactions between the manager and his or her associates, and the store manager needs to continue to set the tone for service throughout the store, long after the training has been completed.”

– Larry Zettle, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, Price Chopper

IMPACT

Initially, Price Chopper chose Integrity Service® as a way to elevate customer service to a higher level. They chose stores needing a boost in service or stores competing against a new competitor. Some new stores were also chosen to participate in the initiative so that they could open with the best service possible. While each location measures results and accomplishments in its own way, below are the results from one store, which went from being the store with the highest turnover in its division to the lowest:

79%

Decrease in turnover

21.96%

Increase in overall customer
service effectiveness

Increase in all ten customer service skills referenced by course graduates

"I continue to be impressed with the effect that Integrity Service® has on our associates. It is a program that they apply to their work situation, but also in their personal lives. It touches people deeply and promotes personal change and excellence. The repetition built into the program differentiates Integrity Service® from other service programs that too easily are 'flash in the pan.'"

– Joanne Gage, Vice President Consumer and Marketing Services, Price Chopper

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