



Team Building

Raytheon Teams with Customers to Improve Property Management

Teaming with your customers to improve your processes and your property control system, for most of us, is frightening. The thought of helping your customer discover flaws in your system seems risky, not to mention the thought of losing a customer system certification.

Even though it's quite possible that joint audits with your customer might highlight system flaws, you can turn this experience into a positive one for everyone involved. At Raytheon this approach of teaming has proven to be not only exciting but also presents many opportunities to partner with your customer.

Raytheon Aurora has taken this approach to the next level by inviting our customers to get involved in Raytheon Six Sigma (R6Sigma™), internal property assessments and issues that might arise during the year.

So how does partnering improve customer relationships?

By teaming and jointly resolving deficiencies with your customers you begin to build a partnership and establish an understanding of what your company and your customer expectations are. This allows you to align these expectations and gain a clear understanding of current as well as future needs. It also provides an opportunity to begin an open and honest dialogue to increase your customer confidence that your company is striving to improve and their thoughts are valued and considered. This approach builds trust, a cooperative environment and a feeling of mutual respect in building quality products while safeguarding assets

What are the keys to building a team environment?

First, your company and senior management must be truly dedicated to ensuring property management is a priority and your efforts will be sustained. Without a solid support base to provide the needed tools to improve and focus on customer satisfaction and partnering, it is very difficult to sustain a meaningful program. Your program should include two stages, first an annual briefing to your customer on issues your team has found through self-assessments and second, a joint annual audit, which includes resolving any deficiencies found as a team.

At the beginning of each year Raytheon Aurora invites our Government customer to a briefing which concentrates on the past years achievements and goals for the coming year. Our approach includes a break down of all property elements with details on process improvements and the value it has added. As each element is discussed we detail the deficiencies found, corrective action taken, corrective action results and develop a plan to resolve any pending actions.

This approach paints a clear picture of assessing the current state, looking into the future for improvements, streamlining the process and then taking action to make it happen. It is very critical at this point to have your customer take time to discuss each step, provide advice and concur that your direction is in line with their compliance requirements. By doing so you have highlighted the areas you can improve upon and included your customer as a key stakeholder in the corrective action plan.

The biggest factor to consider when taking this approach is to be very honest and up front about your findings. It is better to bring forth issues, resolutions and corrective actions rather than your customer finding these issues hidden behind closed doors. A proactive approach and customer involvement will go a long way in avoiding an unsuccessful audit. Again, teaming and honesty is the key!

The next step Raytheon takes in this process is to ensure we keep our customers up to date on a regular basis of all corrective action plans. Continual communication of any changes to our plan and soliciting their thoughts in relation to compliance concerns continues to show you value their guidance and advice.

The second stage is performing joint audits and defining solutions as a team when system deficiencies are found. The Raytheon Aurora approach to our customer's annual audits is to create a team environment by working with our customer to define an audit outline. This includes involvement in defining the audit schedule to ensure subject matter experts are available to field questions that arise during the visit. Some of the things you can provide your customer are: sample listings by utilizing a randomizer software, combining processes and special instruction in one manual, providing details on your



subcontractor control program and any other topics which might benefit your customer. Creating a friendly open atmosphere helps reduce the stressfulness audits can create for both your team and your customer.

The final step is resolving deficiencies as a team and working towards developing an industry leading property control system. As mentioned earlier, Raytheon utilizes Six Sigma (R6Sigma™) to ensure all stakeholders are involved in the process and become part of the solution; yes this means your customers as well. Involving your customer is critical in developing solutions that will meet their requirements and your company's as well.

Consider your customer as an invaluable source of information that can provide advice on industry best practices and insight in meeting their requirements while controlling cost. Keep in mind that your company is not the only contractor your customer works with during the year and because of that, they can provide sound advice on process improvements.

In today's competitive industries you need every advantage you can gain and having your customer in a partnering arrangement with your company certainly does not hurt. Raytheon Aurora has had tremendous success with this approach for several years with many different customers and agencies. Realizing the value of teaming with your customer and making them part of the solution will far out weigh the risk.

With the Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) rewrite and the change to move Property Management towards industry best standards, you will be ahead of the game by teaming with your customers for success. As one of Raytheon Auroras customers stated "Your self assessment program and involving your customers has set Raytheon Aurora apart from the rest of the industry." As you can see, teaming with your customers is well worth the effort! And remember, "property is not a big deal until it becomes a big deal," so why not work as a team and have your customer in your corner.

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