

**Special Topic 4** Continuing the Challenge — Improving customer satisfaction

## Bringing Out Hidden Customer Comments



### Identifying Customer Needs

Transportation is a service that JR East provides to customers, so, at the front line we must listen sincerely to small or even hidden customer comments and use them to make steady improvements. We believe it is the duty of each and every member of our front line staff not only to listen to clearly expressed opinions and requests, but also to dig out and pay attention to customers' less overtly expressed murmurs and wishes. It is also our duty to immediately make improvements on the spot if this can be done, and if immediate measures cannot be taken, to implement changes at the appropriate branch office or the Head Office, and pass on the details of improvement measures to all workplaces. Such a cycle of actions will not only improve customer satisfaction but also upgrade the overall level of company services. It is critical for us to be constantly aware that the essence of some problems can be determined from comments made by customers as well as from major requests, and that such apparently insignificant comments may well express major problems felt by individual customers.

### Each Individual Customer's Satisfaction

It is our duty to provide a pleasant environment to all our customers, and in April 2009, after receiving an increasing number of calls for us to prevent the effects of passive smoke, we instigated a total smoking ban at stations in the Tokyo metropolitan area. We believe this ban has helped to create more pleasant spaces for all customers using our services. Also, in order to enable customers with baby strollers to use our services more safely, we have posted notices that ask people to be considerate of other passengers.

### Improved Employee Skills

JR East has been promoting customer service improvement initiatives since 2003, as we believe it is necessary to understand individual customer needs when serving them. Although the services customers demand differ according to station and by station area, such as at ticket gates, ticket counters and platforms, and by their situations, we believe it is vital for our staff to constantly recognize and consider what the individual customer in front of them wants and to respond accordingly. Also, it is important for management to recognize and compliment employees who have noticed a customer need and taken the necessary steps to satisfy it. We also believe it is vital for branch office and Head Office staff to work in concert with frontline employees in the process of improving customer services, so that customer satisfaction ultimately becomes a part of each employee's individual sense of achievement, and the results are returned to customers in the form of improved services.

We are committed to creating an environment that meets the diverse needs of our customers, and provide services that guarantee a pleasant railway experience and, therefore, customer satisfaction.



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