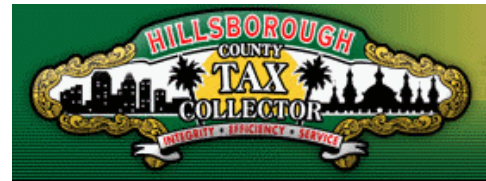




## Governor’s Sterling Award & Sustained Best Practice



### Title of Best Practice: Creating a Customer-Focus

**Description of Best Practice:** The public does not usually look forward to visiting a Tax Collector’s office. They are not particularly fond of paying taxes or getting a driver license. The Hillsborough County Tax Collector’s office strives to change the public’s perception of “government as usual” by constantly looking for ways to make visiting our office a positive experience for our customers. This can be difficult in these times of budget cuts impacting government. However, the Hillsborough County Tax Collector’s office works to create a customer experience where the public can expect the unexpected regardless of the state of the economy. We create this customer-focused culture through integrated processes for listening to customers; strategic planning; training; recognition; and measuring customer-related business results.

**Results:** (What key results have been achieved as a result of best practice?)

	2008	2009	2010	2011
Branch Customer Engagement	91%	91%	91%	90%
Branch Customer Satisfaction	99%	99%	97%	96%
Branch Customer Wait Time	10.87	12.55	13.74	23.27
Branch Transaction Cycle Time	9.01	9.03	9.32	<b>10.01</b>
Call Center Customer Satisfaction	94%	95%	98%	98%
Abandoned Call Rate	2.3%	2.4%	1.7%	1.6%
Calls Answered in 20 Seconds	91%	86%	92%	91%
Average Call Answer Speed (seconds)	18	18	13	14
Business Customer Satisfaction	100%	98%	98%	94%
Government Customer Satisfaction	98%	100%	100%	100%
Payments Processed Same Day	77%	83%	86%	86%

**Application:** (How could this best practice be replicated in other organizations?)

To create customer-focus, organizations must:

- Identify customers and customer groups. Different customer groups have different needs and expectations.



- Establish listening mechanisms and frequency of communication for each type of customer. These can include comment cards, online surveys, phone surveys, complaints, etc.
- As part of strategic planning, gather and analyze feedback for all listening mechanisms and establish a list of customer requirements to be addressed.
- Provide customer service training for all staff. Some should be mandatory and some optional. These can include Customer Service, Dealing with Difficult Customers, Conflict Resolution, etc.
- Create recognition programs that reward excellent customer service. At the Hillsborough County Tax Collector's office, these programs include:
  - Performance Days Off – all eligible employees meeting performance standards get an extra day off work every 6 months if customer satisfaction targets are achieved
  - Gift Cards awarded for going above and beyond
  - Quarterly Customer Service Certificates awarded to one employee in each branch quarterly
- Establish customer-related performance measures based on what's important to customers. These should include both in-process and outcome measures.

