**JTA and Quality**

**By Demetrius A. Jordan**

**Interviewee Alesia Gee**

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**Quality Interview**

**Introduction**

Jacksonville Transit Authority is an independent agency responsible for public transportation in Jacksonville, FL. In 1955, the Florida Legislature established the Jacksonville Expressway Authority. Their responsibility was limited to highways, bridges and tolls in Duval County until 1971, when the Jacksonville Transportation Authority was formed by a merger of the Jacksonville Expressway Authority with several private bus companies. This interview was conducted via email with Ms. Alesia Gee on April 28th 2011. Ms Gee works at JTA as their planning analysis coordinator, she is responsible for planning routes, gathering data on patron ridership, and coordinating bus schedules.

**Interview**

Does your company have a quality mission statement?

*Yes, Professional Excellence is our quality mission statement.*

In your organization, who is responsible for quality?

*We are all responsible for the quality of service we put out. Everyone has their part to do. It is a team effort.*

How does your organization define quality?

*We define quality as to deliver the right results the first time; be innovative.*

How do you train your employees concerning quality issues?

*Our HR training department handles all training classes. The training department will coordinate the classes for the employees. Class sessions are developed to allow every employee the opportunity to attend the class.*

How do your customers influence your quality program?

*Our quality program is focus around our customer. We are a transit company so anything we do, customer satisfactory is in mind from the beginning to the end. We have to be customer focus.*

QUALITY METHODOLOGY

What methods do you use to ensure quality output?

*We have several mechanisms to evaluate the quality of our service:*

*Analyzing and reviewing ridership, on-time performance and other data from the use of our Automatic Passenger Counter (APC), Farebox, Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) system and GIS mapping software*

*Conducting transit talks and public hearing to obtain the customer input*

*Conduct system-wide surveys*

*Provide commit cards to obtain customers input*

*Conduct surveys on the website*

Does your organization follow Six Sigma or Lean Sigma quality methodologies for process improvement?

*Yes, our HR training department has been trained and is certified in both methodologies.*

Do you routinely collect data on the quality of your product or process? Do you use statistics to analyze the data collected?

*Yes, as stated before, data is collected daily, quarterly and annually. The data collected allows us to evaluate the performance of our service. The data is reviewed by reports and maps.*

How do you monitor incoming materials and/or your suppliers?

*All supplies are handled through approved procurements.*

**Discussion**

The questions that questions that I found to be pertinent to the quality aspects of Ms.

Gee’s job were the jobs that focused on who is responsible to bringing quality to the patrons, what kind of quality techniques does the company use. I found these question and answer provided especially engaging because initially I would not have assumed JTA used any type of quality techniques. Ms. Gee didn't provide me with great depth about the extent of use of six sigma and lean techniques used by JTA. My thoughts on the quality that is provided by the company is that it can defiantly be greatly improved as there are bus drivers that do not always stop for patrons. The impression that I gathered from the interview is that because the company is government funded there is a companywide sense that patrons satisfaction is not the upmost priority. And because of the fact that patron satisfaction is not top priority the company doesn't always look to continuously improve their service. I believe that because their company is not profit driven it has an significant effect on their quality practices. I think that it would be a safe assumption to conclude that any company that is not driven by profits would have similar quality priorities.