

## Serco's Public Service Ethos

Public service accounts for over 90% of our business. If we couldn't convince our customers that we understand what public service is all about, we would not still be here. And we will only succeed in the future if we and our staff continue to deliver not only high-quality services and value or money, but also the values and passions that motivate public sector managers.

We've prospered over the past 40 years only because we've been imbued with a spirit of public service. And we'll only succeed in the future if we and our staff maintain that spirit and continue to deliver high quality services. A significant proportion of our senior managers, and a high percentage of our staff who work directly for our customers, began their careers in the public sector. As a company, we understand the particular demands of public sector operations and identify closely with the ethos and values associated with delivering public services.

In the past, much of this service was delivered unnoticed and unannounced in the support offices of public agencies. Today, Serco is increasingly involved in delivering services directly to the public – in supplying information to rail users, in supporting teachers, in providing correctional services. It is also about serving the public in the way it wants to be served and working collaboratively with others to ensure we fulfil our commitments professionally, efficiently, effectively and in a spirit of public service.

These changes have created new challenges. The public service ethos that has helped the company to succeed in the past has enabled us to prosper in this new environment. We believe that since our core business is public service, Serco cannot succeed financially if it does not have a strong public service ethos.

### **Trust is at the very heart of public service**

To gain the trust of the general public we must both do the right thing and be seen to do the right thing. We must recognise that, unlike customers for commercial enterprises, many users of public services have restricted choice over where and how they receive the services they require. This places a special responsibility on those who plan and deliver public services. We are therefore committed to solutions and services that genuinely meet the needs of service users while at the same time representing best value for the taxpayer. The range and diversity of the public services we provide on worldwide gives us an extensive range of expertise and knowledge to draw on.

### **We are passionate about safety**

It is fundamental – to our employees as well as our customers – that the services we deliver are safe and reliable. Safety has always had a dominant role in our corporate culture. We work in fields such as education, healthcare, justice, transport, defence and science. Inevitably, many of our activities involve a responsibility for the safety of the public as well as our staff. And because we take a long view, we do not see a conflict between safety and profits: ultimately, a responsible approach to safety is the only way to safeguard profits. In fields from food hygiene to nuclear safety, governments trust us not just to maintain existing standards, but also to improve on them.

## **We are passionate about people**

Public sector customers expect us to treat our employees fairly and equitably. A high proportion of our staff are from the public sector and fully understand the importance of the public service ethos. We have excellent relations with our employees and their unions. We aim to gain competitive edge by attracting the best workers and ensuring they are well motivated. Our employees work within a devolved management style that reflects Serco's passion for real staff empowerment. This means that we can work to the spirit of the contract rather than to the letter. We believe that the solutions to most management problems can be found in the thinking and ideas of the staff who deliver services and those who use the services they provide.

We operate in many countries, jurisdictions and cultures. But wherever we work we apply the same principles of equal opportunity, honoring the rights of the individual and fostering partnership and trust in every relationship. Not just because that it is a good thing to do, but also because our competitive edge depends on attracting, developing and motivating the best people. We train and develop our people as well as we can. We empower our people to do what it takes to deliver a noticeably superior service.

## **We are passionate about accountability**

Public sector agencies are spending taxpayers' money. They demand a high level of performance assessment and accountability. We are happy to work with open books, as we do with a number of existing clients. For example, in our contract to manage the National Physical Laboratory in the UK, the Department of Trade and Industry has remote access to our accounts, in real time, 24 hours a day.

## **Our values and culture**

The public expects those involved in delivering public services to have high ethical standards. As well as applying our code of ethics, we foster the kind of climate that ensures it is observed. The culture is open, people communicate freely and there are clear channels for voicing concerns.

## **We are socially responsible**

Apart from our responsibilities to our staff and customers, we recognise our wider social obligations. We try to interact with everyone who is affected by our operations. This creates greater business success – through improved customer satisfaction, greater commitment on the part of employees, and an enhanced reputation in the community at large.

We've developed our own corporate responsibility (CR) model and process, built around the three themes of people, communities and the environment. Designed to accommodate our diversity and devolved structure, it ensures that wherever in the world we work we apply the same standards and values. Each division, company and contract has responsibility for maintaining processes and procedures for applying and reviewing our CR model. Divisions are required to report on CR related issues through the company's quarterly reporting procedure to the Corporate Assurance Group that keeps the Group Board updated. A global network of CR Champions manages the application of our CR process, regularly sharing knowledge and resources.