



MD for success

Great service starts with dedicated employees *By Marcy Woodhull*

As a fleet support chief for Commercial Aviation Services in Long Beach, Calif., Ed Carter is the point person for questions from airlines about any issue they might be experiencing with DC-9 and MD-80 aircraft. In this *Frontiers* series that profiles employees talking about their job, Carter discusses why he is so passionate about meeting the needs of customers. PHOTO: PAUL PINNER/BOEING

The key to excellent customer service is getting to the root of what a customer is really asking for. It may not be as straightforward as we first think. Being able to understand exactly what a customer is asking for—and why—comes from experience and understanding your customer. Without that, we can't give our customers what they really need.

Airlines make an enormous commitment of money and resources in purchasing our airplanes and services. They demonstrate faith and trust in us, and we must return that with the best possible support—and do it in a professional, friendly and caring manner. We have a chance to share our Boeing values every time we interface with these customers.

As fleet support chief for Boeing heritage DC-9 and MD-80 aircraft, I manage technical and operational issues airlines have. The MD-80 is the workhorse of the American and Delta airline fleets, and these two carriers operate the bulk of my fleet, though our team supports airlines all over the world. The level of support Boeing provides for these older aircraft could affect decisions the airlines make when purchasing new fleets.

I attribute my success to having been a field service representative for 10 years. I spent five years in Germany, supporting Lufthansa, Aero Lloyd and others. As field service reps are colocated with airlines, I learned to look at support from the customers' perspective, and got a real appreciation for what's important to them.

When hundreds of MD-80s were grounded in the spring of 2008 to perform maintenance checks on wiring bundles, we worked 24 hours a day for almost a week to resolve the issues and safely get airplanes back in the air. That cemented an already very strong relationship we had with American and Delta.

Because of my involvement, I was appointed to the Federal Aviation Administration's Airworthiness Directive Aviation Rule-making Committee. I appreciate the opportunity to be on this committee and, along with other industry professionals, to implement solutions to enhance the Airworthiness Directive process. ■

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