

Expectations in IT: Getting Them in Tip Top Shape



John E. Bucher
Oberlin College

john.bucher@oberlin.edu

Bigger!

Better!

Faster!

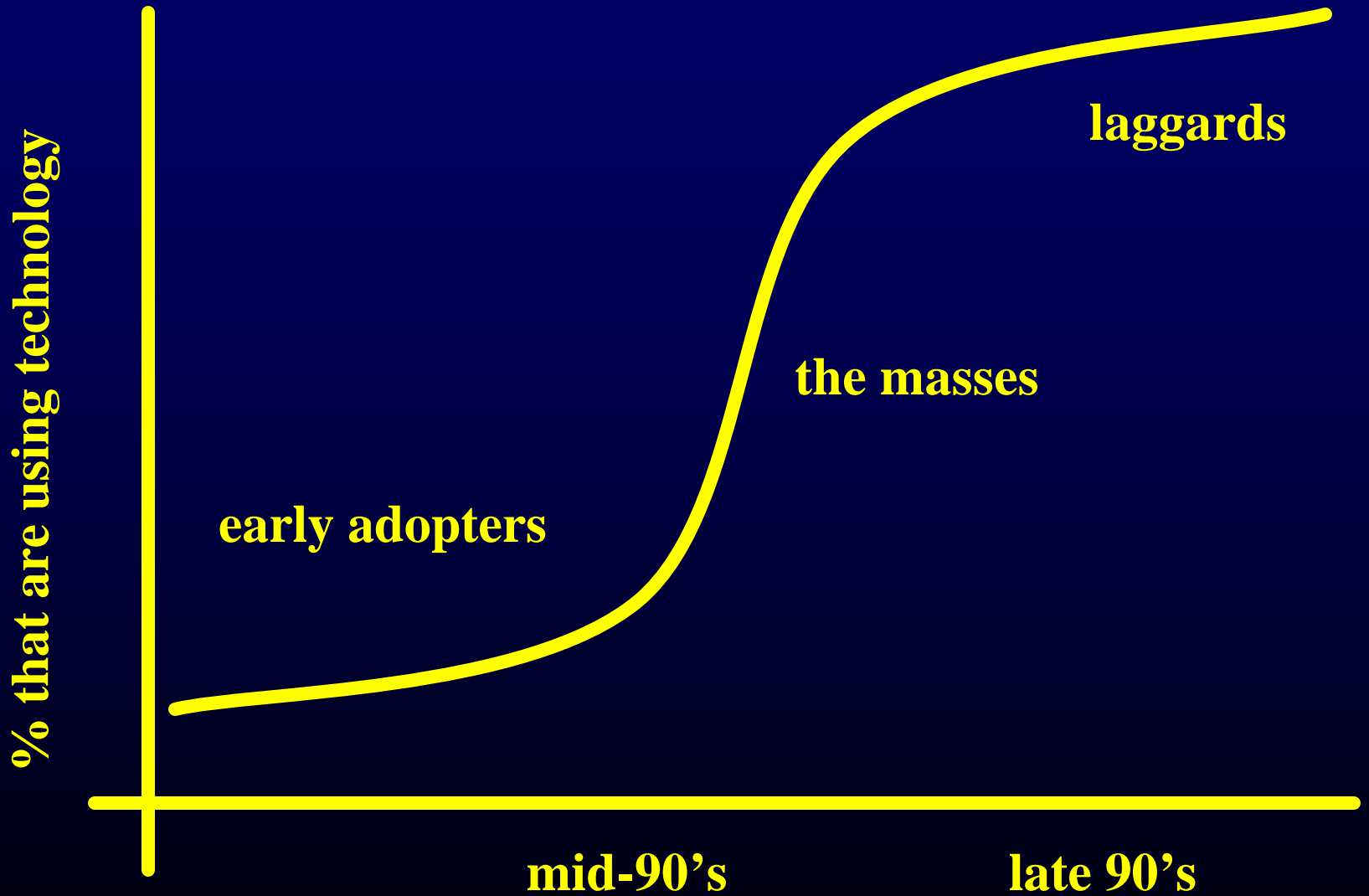
Fancier!

Easier!

Sooner!



The Service Support Crisis



Some symptoms

- high level of user anxiety
- many confused administrators
- shaky staff morale
- high turnover in staff
- high turnover of CIO's

**More people,
doing more
things, more
often, from
more places....**

**Increased
expectations**

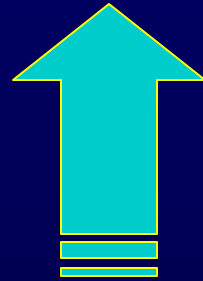
Factors that influence customers' expectations

- the media
- the press
- software co.'s
- a brother-in-law
- a boss
- a co-worker
- a colleague
- what you say
- how you act
- how your staff acts
- what you write
- what you do
- your involvement
- their experiences
- their history
- their knowledge

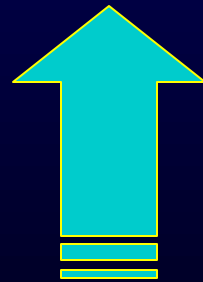
Reasonable, informed expectations

Unreasonable, uninformed expectations

Meet expectations



Set expectations



Shape expectations

Shaping Customers' Expectations.....

- ✓ is not always obvious
- ✓ is often labor and time intensive
- ✓ is sometimes simple
- ✓ is sometimes complex

Shaping Customers' Expectations.....

- ✓ often requires creativity
- ✓ flexibility
- ✓ requires good communication
- ✓ best when it comes from the heart

**Shaping Customers'
Expectations.....**

**Engaged
Responsiveness!**

Let no one say:

“I never hear from them”

“We have no idea what’s going on”

“They only care about

“They’ve already decided about

Things our constituents don't fully understand:

- ✓ **the complexities of I.T.**
- ✓ **the personnel issues**
- ✓ **the political issues**
- ✓ **the management issues**
- ✓ **the budget issues**

So what do we do?

- personal things
- organizational things
- tactical things
- strategic things

Approaches to Shaping Expectations

Personal

Organizational

Strategic

Tactical

personal, strategic

- ✓ **follow up calls**
- ✓ **informal meetings**
- ✓ **event participation**
- ✓ **drop in visits**
- ✓ **sending info**
- ✓ **my campus demeanor**

personal, tactical

- ✓ **phone techniques**
- ✓ **personal contact**
- ✓ **personal style**
- ✓ **correspondence**

organizational, strategic

- ✓ **committees**
- ✓ **mission statement**
- ✓ **planning docs**
- ✓ **service level agr't**

organizational, tactical

- ✓ **newsletter**
- ✓ **web pages**
- ✓ **policies**
- ✓ **look/feel**

Some organizational activities:

- faculty/staff lunchroom meetings
- brown bag forum
- technology “brawls”
- focused newsletters, memos
- web or listserv forum
- standardize & implicate
- make the budget more public
- advertise user self-reliance
- advertise your successes
- yes, no, and whoa!

Some things we've recently done at Oberlin:

The Score

Specific memos, specific audiences

Brown bag lunches

State-of-IT-at-the-College address

Departmental liaisons

“Visits”

The 3 sides of customer service



Good customer service is:

The RIGHT combination of expectations, perceptions, products, actions, and circumstances that result in a good feeling for the customer.

Customers expect :

- ✓ a good product
- ✓ at a good price
- ✓ with timely delivery

**Yeah, there are a
few other things, too!**



The not-so-obvious things...

People want to feel good about themselves.

People want to feel that they're in control.

People want to move toward their goals.

People want to be treated fairly.

People want to be understood.

People want to feel secure.

**People want to be approved
and recognized.**

Techniques for giving personalized service:

remembering names

using names properly

remembering personal things

Techniques for giving personalized service:

immediately sensing their needs

letting them know that you care

making them feel unique

**The person who speaks
first, generally sets the tone
for the conversation**



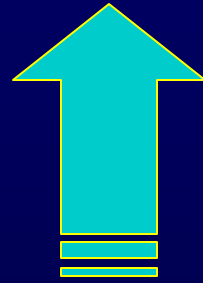
The person who asks good questions, can generally control the content



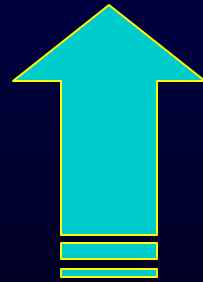
**A good listener can generally
control the outcome**



partnerships, understanding



good relationships



good communication

1. Try to exceed your customers' expectations in the fundamental things.
2. Consistently work to build better relationships through good communication.
3. Move the relationships toward partnerships and better understanding.

**Shaping Customers'
Expectations.....**

**Engaged
Responsiveness!**