**Task 7 HD CLIENTSUPPORT**

**Service Level Agreements**

**Websites:**

examples of SLAs.

<http://helpdesk.wyopub.com/2005/07/service-level-agreement-sla-boot-camp.html>

<http://www.service-level-agreement.net/>

 helpdesk site links

<http://www.best-management-practice.com/>

ITIL sources site: <http://www.best-management-practice.com/IT-Service-Management-ITIL/?trackid=002094>

<http://www.akibia.com/documents/articles/ReduceDataCenterSupportCosts.pdf> approach to analysing support costs.

**Other resources**

Web search engines such as:

* http://[www.google.com](http://www.google.com/)
* <http://www.answers.com>
* http://[www.yahoo.com.au](http://www.yahoo.com.au/)
* http://[www.lycos.com](http://www.lycos.com/)
* http://[www.webwombat.com.au](http://www.webwombat.com.au/)
* http://[www.excite.com.au](http://www.excite.com.au/)

1. What is the purpose of a service level agreement?

**Answer:** The purpose of a SLA is to have a contract of terms and conditions between the supplier and the client. A SLA will often include a penalty and reward system to ensure a timely resolution of issues.

1. What are the typical services provided in a Service Level Agreement (SLA)?

**Answer**: Typical services provided include

* Deliverables
* Priorities
* Responsibilities
* Guarantees and warranties
* Levels of service
* Billing
* Minimum levels of service / targets
* Penalties and rewards

1. Identify critical infrastructure in a typical medium sized business:

* Communications – including telephone, internet, hosting, emails
* Database including financial records, customer relationship management (CRM)
* IT System – external storage devices, customised applications and servers
* People and their knowledge.
* Security of infrastructure.

1. Explain how/why the service provided can fall short of the required standards

**Answer:** A SLA can fall short of the required standards if:

1. If it is poorly written it will be difficult to enforce or understand.
2. If it favours one side more heavily such as the provider, it will be unfair.
3. If it is too complicated it will be difficult to enforce or understand.
4. If there are too many types of SLA within the organisation it will be too complicated to enforce and understand which SLAs are relevant.
5. Why is it important for a business to have a Service Level Agreement with its vendors/suppliers?

**Answer:** It is important because it sets expectations and boundaries for the delivery of service for both the provider and the client and it clearly defines the level of services between them. It ensures these targets are met within expected standards and budgeted costs.

1. Identify the main sections in the Service Level Agreement and the criteria which need to be addressed for each section

**Answer;**

* Introduction
  + Purpose and objectives
  + Parties to the agreement
  + Commencement date and duration

* Scope
  + Standard and non standard services
  + Service availability
  + Place of service availability
  + Changes to services
  + Client delays
* Performance, tracking and reporting
  + How services will be monitored
  + Minimum targets
  + Service level reporting
  + Service level review meetings
* Problem management
  + Support and service desk services
  + Problem definitions
  + Problem escalation
* Compensation
  + Professional fees
  + Reimbursable expenses
  + Invoices
  + Payment terms
  + Penalties for late payment
* Customer duties and responsibilities
  + Processing of invoices
  + Training

1. Why is it important to regularly review and monitor service level agreements?

**Answer**: It’s important to regularly review and monitor service level agreements because the company can have changes to its infrastructure. These changes could be hardware or software. It will be important to keep details of the changes as they occur and to add them to the existing SLA or to draught a new one to reflect these changes.

1. What is the purpose of a maintenance history log of problems and how can this be used when reviewing the service level agreement?

**Answer:** The purpose of a maintenance history log is to ensure that time is not wasted by trying to solve an issue that already has a solution. If a help desk technician has to research the same issue time and time again that will mean that their time and resources are wasted. It will also allow the help desk personnel to ensure that the problem isn’t a currently open issue.

When reviewing a service level agreement it is important to consider this history log because time and resources can be saved by using this resource, which will enable the targets to be met more easily.

1. What criteria can be used by a business to evaluate vendor support for software, hardware and other critical IT resources?

**Answer:**

1. Service level agreement
   1. Warranty
   2. Business requirements
   3. Technical support
   4. Cost
   5. Reputation and history of vendor
   6. Documentation
   7. Training
   8. Functionality
   9. Ease of use
   10. Availability of patches and upgrades
   11. Maintenance
   12. Licenses
   13. Feasibility
2. How do changes to IT systems and support requirements impact upon the service level agreement? Explain:
   1. How would you acquire the resources to support a change to an IT system
   2. How could you incorporate changes to client support procedures
   3. Advise clients of the new organisational processes for answering their request or enquiry
   4. Walk the client through the process of changes
   5. Conduct a session with the client to present the draft service-level agreement

**Answer:**

* Form a project team
* Meet with client to discuss business requirements and pros and cons of change.
* Decide on budget.
* Decide on changes to service level agreement
* Compile new service level agreement
* Decide on installation time and procedure; recommend staged installations, availability of user documentation, training procedures and a roll back plan should something go wrong.
* Present draft service level agreement to client for sign off and explanation of new procedures.
* Present completed service level agreement to client.