

PR STRATEGY IN HANDLING CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS (COMPLAINT HANDLING) IN MAKASSAR CITY REGIONAL DRINKING WATER COMPANIES (PDAM)

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui strategi humas PDAM Kota Makassar dalam menangani keluhan pelanggan, serta untuk mengetahui faktor pendukung dan penghambat humas PDAM Kota Makassar dalam menangani keluhan pelanggan. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode penelitian kualitatif dengan pendekatan deskriptif. Sumber data yang diperoleh yaitu data primer dan data sekunder. Teknik pengumpulan data menggunakan tiga cara yaitu, observasi, wawancara dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa strategi Humas dalam menangani keluhan pelanggan pada PDAM Kota Makassar adalah dengan penanganan secara konsisten menggunakan pedoman SOP/Skema penerimaan keluhan pelanggan, selain itu penanganan keluhan pelanggan secara teknis serta dengan pelayanan yang sopan dan ramah. Penanganan keluhan pelanggan oleh Humas PDAM Kota Makassar terbukti cepat tanggap dan responsif. Faktor pendukung humas dalam menangani keluhan pelanggan adalah seluruh aspek yang terlibat dalam proses penanganan keluhan, sedangkan faktor penghambatnya yaitu adanya pelanggan yang komplain secara emosional, keterbatasan pelatihan SDM Humas PDAM, jaringan dan juga sistem IT yang error. Dengan adanya komunikasi yang baik maka hubungan antara perusahaan dengan pelanggan dapat membangun hubungan yang baik sehingga keberlangsungan hidup bisnis Perusahaan Daerah Air Minum (PDAM) Kota Makassar dapat berjalan secara terus menerus.

Kata Kunci: Strategi Komunikasi, Humas, Keluhan, Pelanggan, Pelayanan

Abstract

This study aims to determine the public relations strategy of PDAM Makassar City in handling customer complaints, as well as to determine the supporting and inhibiting factors of PDAM Makassar City Public Relations in handling customer complaints. This study used a qualitative research method with a descriptive approach. Sources of data obtained are primary data and secondary data. Data collection techniques using three ways, namely, observation, interviews and documentation.

The results of the study show that the Public Relations strategy in handling customer complaints at PDAM Makassar City is to handle them consistently using SOP guidelines/Customer complaint acceptance schemes, in addition to handling customer complaints technically and with polite and friendly service. The handling of customer complaints by PDAM Makassar Public Relations has proven to be responsive and responsive. Factors that support public relations in handling customer complaints are all aspects involved in the complaint handling process, while the inhibiting factors are customers who complain emotionally, limited training in PDAM Public Relations HR, network and also an IT system that has errors. With good communication,

Keywords: Communication strategy, Public Relations, Complaints, Customers, Service

INTRODUCTION

Makassar City Regional Drinking Water Company (PDAM) is one of the companies in Makassar city which operates in the clean water sector. PDAM Makassar has the role and responsibility to manage, maintain, distribute and optimize clean water services for the survival and basic needs of the community in its operational area. As the spearhead in the field of clean water, PDAM Makassar City continues to struggle to continue to exist in line with the increasing demands of the customer community for water service needs. Makassar City has rapid population growth, so the demand for water as a vital community need has increased significantly. For this reason, as the only water supply company in its operational area, PDAM Makassar City continues to receive complaints in carrying out its operational business. The problems generally faced are: limited water supply, considering that population growth and infrastructure development in the city of Makassar continues to increase, causing several areas to experience a water crisis. This can cause customer dissatisfaction. Existing problems such as poor water quality, problems related to water quality that does not meet health standards, and cloudy water are sources of customer complaints. Some areas experience problems such as low water pressure, damaged pipes, or inefficient distribution systems. This causes customers to complain. Customer complaints related to customer service also often arise, slow response to customer complaints, late arrival of field officers.

Public relations or what is abbreviated as public relations at the Regional Drinking Water Company (PDAM) of Makassar City is the part that acts as the company's mouthpiece with customers who must provide complete information and explanations regarding complaint handling procedure policies to the public or company customers. The role of public relations in companies like PDAM is very important in this problem. Public Relations acts as a liaison between PDAM and customers. Considering that handling customer complaints is crucial and customer complaints tend to be negative, it is necessary to handle them optimally and be able to provide solutions to existing customer complaints. For this reason, in order to achieve successful delivery and dissemination of information, of course PDAM Public Relations must have an effective communication strategy in handling customer complaints so that the problem solutions provided are right on target.

METHOD

The type of research used in this research is descriptive. using a qualitative approach. The location in which this research was conducted in the Public Relations section of the Makassar City

Regional Drinking Water Company (PDAM) located on Jalan DR. Ratulangi No. 3, Makassar, South Sulawesi, for one month.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As a company engaged in the clean water services business, the Regional Drinking Water Company (PDAM) of Makassar City continues to strive to achieve service quality in order to increase the company's credibility and integrity in the eyes of stakeholders, especially in the eyes of customers. One strategy that can be used by the Public Relations section is to improve the quality and quality of services in a more effective and structured manner. This is done so that all customer needs, desires and interests can be met optimally. In the PDAM Makassar City customer complaint data, there are the most complaints every month, namely TDA or Not Getting Water, the total number of complaints is TDA (Not Getting Water). Scheme or So The reception of customer complaints owned by PDAM Makassar Public Relations is an operational tactic and management strategy for PDAM Makassar Public Relations in receiving and handling customer complaints. Based on the research results, researchers found that the SOP for receiving customer complaints serves as a guide for public relations staff from the stage of receiving complaints to evaluation/reporting. The purpose of this SOP for receiving customer complaints is to ensure that the actions taken by PDAM Public Relations run consistently and with integrity.

The two-way communication strategy carried out by PDAM Makassar City Public Relations has also become the company's mainstay strategy which is a bridge in knowing the expectations of customers who make complaints. Apart from that, customer service staff provide friendly and polite service as the main guard who deal directly with customers who make complaints. The customer complaints staff has a special strategy in dealing with customers, namely emotional control, always maintaining mental and emotional control whatever happens, is the customer service staff's strategy in receiving such dynamic customers. Apart from that, involvement with other parties such as the quick response team and also technicians in handling customer complaints needs to be done with good communication so that information or a message is conveyed.

In handling customer complaints, PDAM Makassar City Public Relations formed a Quick Response team. The PDAM Makassar Public Relations Quick Response Team is an effort made by PDAM to ensure customers are handled quickly. This team is part of the Public Relations Department so that in handling complaints, the quick response team conducts surveys to the locations of customers who complain directly. Excellent service provided by every public relations practitioner in a company cannot be separated from the dimensions of service quality which consist of reliability, assurance, tangibles, empathy and responsiveness. This dimension of service quality is often used by companies to improve customer service. Based on the Service Quality theory which lies in five main dimensions used to measure service quality from the perspective of PDAM Makassar Public Relations customers, namely:

1. Physical Evidence (Tangible)

Physical evidence (Tangible) or direct evidence is a physical evidence service of PDAM Makassar's public relations ability to demonstrate its existence to external parties in various forms. PDAM Makassar City Public Relations has physical evidence in handling customer complaints in the form of the appearance of physical facilities and infrastructure, equipment that supports the implementation of receiving complaints from customers, daily reporting and monthly reports carried out by each PDAM Makassar public relations staff.

2. Reliability

The reliability of PDAM Makassar's public relations in customer service refers to PDAM's public relations ability or service reliability to provide reliable and consistent services to customers. The following are several forms of reliability implemented by PDAM in customer service; Responsiveness to Disruptions or Complaints, Outage or Maintenance Planning Notifications, Clear and Open Communication and Accurate Payment and Billing Systems.

3. Responsiveness (responsive)

Responsiveness or responsiveness is a willingness to help and provide fast and responsive service. PDAM's public relations in customer service reflects their ability to respond quickly, effectively and proactively to customer needs, complaints or requests.

4. Guarantee (assurance)

In this guarantee service, researchers asked through interview sessions to informants about whether you received good service as promised by PDAM? Then the informant answered in the affirmative, thus it can be said that the service provided was in accordance with what was promised. So that service guarantees for customers ensure they get quality and adequate water services.

5. Empathy

PDAM Public Relations' sense of empathy in customer service reflects their ability to understand and feel the feelings, needs and problems faced by customers. In this context, here are some ways in which PDAM Public Relations shows empathy in customer service: Listening Carefully: PDAM Public Relations has active listening skills. They give customers their full attention, understand their complaints or needs, and provide opportunities for customers to express their thoughts and feelings freely.

PDAM Makassar Public Relations supporting factors in the acceptance process, handling up to the realization stage, namely all aspects involved. Facilities and infrastructure such as computers, telephones, social media, spare parts or technical equipment are supporting factors for handling complaints from customers. Meanwhile, the inhibiting factors for PDAM Makassar Public Relations in handling customer complaints are from the customers themselves, such as making complaints in an emotionally unstable manner, the house of the customer who complained was empty for days so that handling was postponed or delayed, network limitations, this is also one of unavoidable obstacles. So when conveying information to customers, noise can occur and result in the information being conveyed not being transferred properly.

CONCLUSION

1. Makassar City PDAM's Public Relations strategy in handling customer complaints is to implement a flow scheme for handling and receiving customer complaints. This aims to serve as a Public Relations guideline so that complaint handling can be consistent. Other strategies include forming a quick response team unit, providing excellent service by customer service staff, and implementing PDAM Makassar's flagship program, namely 'Simultaneous Meter Reading'. Based on the theory put forward by Cutlip, Center and Broom (2006) Public Relations Management, the research results show that PDAM Makassar Public Relations has succeeded in realizing all public relations activities starting from problem definition (finding) to evaluation.

2. PDAM Makassar City Public Relations has supporting and inhibiting factors in promoting local musicians. Based on the theory put forward by Valarie A. Zeithaml et al, namely the service quality theory, it shows that Public Relations of PDAM Makassar has provided information services that can satisfy customers. Meanwhile, inhibiting factors such as weaknesses and threats that the Public Relations of PDAM Kota Makassar have are obstacles that exist when customers show an emotional attitude when making complaints, limited human resource capabilities related to the activities of public relations practitioners caused by a lack of special routine training for handling and receiving customer complaints, uncontrolled network systems and technical water supply services to customers.

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