

Client's Corner

Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards (FSMTB)

FSMTB Background: In early 2005, a meeting of regulators and educators recognized the need for an organization to formally bring the regulatory community together. Concerns of most significance were the need for the provision of a valid, reliable licensing exam and the desire to bring commonality in licensing requirements to assist with reciprocity and professional mobility.



In September 2005, the Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards held its formalizing meeting in Albuquerque, New Mexico. After the bylaws were adopted, a mission was solidified – To support Member Boards in their work to ensure that the practice of massage therapy is provided to the public in a safe and effective manner. As part of fulfilling their mission, the FSMTB developed a licensing examination that provides a unified set of nationally verified, entry-level standards for safe and competent practice of Massage & Bodywork.

The first Massage & Bodywork Licensing Examination (MBLEx) was given in July 2007 during the Pilot Testing Phase of development. The MBLEx was developed during an eighteen-month period with the help of leading Massage & Bodywork professionals throughout the nation. Throughout this development period, the FSMTB followed national guidelines and best practices for testing in order to ensure a fair, valid, and reliable examination. The first administration of the MBLEx was a milestone event in the growth of the profession in the United States.

FSMTB and PCS

FSMTB partnered with PCS in 2007. PCS provides FSMTB a candidate management database; application processing and candidate care services; and design and production of the MBLEx candidate handbook. In addition to these services, PCS also maintains the FSMTB website and content (www.fsmtb.org). PCS also provides a spectrum of meeting services for FSMTB such as hotel site consultations for annual conferences, videography and on-line meeting registrations, through to smaller details such as designing name badges and distributing meeting support materials. The professional staff in the state-of-the-art call center at PCS provides telephone support for the FSMTB as well as skilled staff to manage some of the day-to-day operations for FSMTB.

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Solutions That
Exceed
Expectations

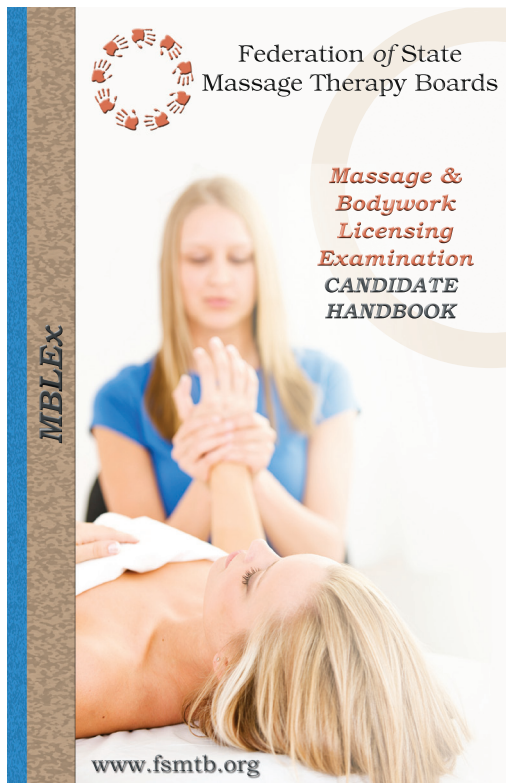
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PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

In 2007, FSMTB started with only one state that adopted the MBLEx as the preferred licensing examination. Today, 37 states accept the MBLEx for licensure. This remarkable accomplishment in such a short period of time is the direct result of the zealous efforts and mission-focused work performed by FSMTB's Executive Director and Board of Directors, and the tremendous need that existed to have a licensing examination that provides a unified set of nationally-verified, entry-level standards for safe and competent practice of Massage & Bodywork. The MBLEx is the only examination that is supported by the two major professional organizations, ABMP and AMTA, as the exclusive examination for licensure in the massage and bodywork profession.

Debra Persinger, PhD, FSMTB's Executive Director, had this to say about the past, present and future of FSMTB: "In our early days, the FSMTB was much like a diamond in the rough and through our collaborative teamwork with PCS we have been able to quickly and expertly provide the polish for delivery of our services to the regulatory community. The FSMTB values people – it's even highlighted as an utmost priority in our strategic values – so it is a perfect fit for the FSMTB to align with the customer-focused service delivery that PCS provides. We shall continue to build on our accomplishments and remain equally tenacious with PCS in managing and ensuring future successes as a result of this valuable partnership."

Solutions That Exceed Expectations

Great business leaders know that a great product plus a mediocre staff do not equal a great organization. A great organization in many ways is like a great recipe. A great recipe needs special ingredients to transform those ingredients into a mouthwatering & delicious dish. Like a great recipe, a great organization needs dedicated and enthusiastic professionals (the special ingredients) who are committed to solutions that exceed expectations.

Providing solutions that exceed expectations can only begin when you have committed people. The best customer specialist not only inherently possesses a strong "people" skill set, but they have a desire to commit to all challenges and the capability to deter problems for customers in the future. A few of the key components that aide in improving customer service in any organization are:

- **Top Priority:** Deciding that customer service will be a top priority of an organization. It is imperative this decision begins at the very top and is passed down and accepted by all levels.
- **Acquire Talent:** People who exhibit the ability to help customers and maintain a true customer service approach should be acquired, recognized and retained. This will normally include individuals that possess the ability to understand what the customer is trying to convey to them and the ability to respond in the correct tone and manner to solve problems and to deter an escalation of "issues".
- **Training:** With any position, training can aid in a person's ability to efficiently work with customers when they have to respond to difficult situations. Identifying individuals within the organization who possess the necessary skills and having them coach others can be an effective strategy. At PCS, one of our guiding principles is to have fun and to keep a positive attitude. This helps with customers at every level....having a smile on your face can be easily "felt" on a phone call.

- **Evaluation:** It is important to remember that the plans that are being effectively implemented are also being evaluated. It is not enough to believe that once an idea or philosophy has been brought to light, that it is going to stick on its own. The reality is that the likelihood of this happening is very low. New ideas and plans should be evaluated after 3-6 months and again on a regular basis to ensure that they are meeting the goals for which they were intended.
- **Motivate:** Encourage others and motivate your team to want to help others. Occupational advancement and monetary incentives can only motivate a person for so long. Creating a positive environment where people want to help others to give outstanding customer service can work wonders.
- **Empowerment:** Everyone in the organization should be able to make decisions within boundaries. The degree and types of decisions that can be made should vary by title and responsibility. However, each employee, no matter what their rank, should be empowered to make decisions for the company. A great place to start is to make a list of five things people can do without having to escalate to their supervisor. This list can be generated by the leaders. Place appropriate guidelines around the actions that can be taken, and trust your people to make the right decisions.

Zig Ziglar, an American author, salesman and motivational speaker once said, “the quality of a person’s life is in direct proportion to his or her commitment to excellence, regardless of his or chosen field of endeavor.” Once your organization begins providing great customer service and people are happy in the environment in which they work, implementing solutions that exceed expectations will “stick” because they will want to provide this kind of service.

Behind the Scenes of PCS

Carmen Mann

Carmen began her journey with PCS as a Candidate Service Representative in 2009. She holds a Bachelors degree in Communications and Public Relations from the University of Wisconsin La Crosse, has over nine years of customer service experience and coordinates the activities for the Federation of Massage State Therapy Boards, Pennsylvania Psychology, Massachusetts Funeral and Sanitarians, Accreditation Council for Accountancy and Taxation, American Association of Daily Money Managers, as well as being the Team Leader for PCS’ small exam’s group. In January she will have been with PCS for three years. In her downtime, Carmen likes to bake, craft, run, and take boxing classes.



Gustavo Rodriguez

For the last seven years, Gustavo has been instrumental in helping PCS grow. Currently, he serves as the Coordinator Supervisor for forty-eight professions. Previously, Gustavo was a Client Coordinator for three years and also worked as a Candidate Service Representative. Among Gustavo’s other talents, he is also fluent in both English and Spanish and possesses the managerial skills needed to lead the coordinators who report to him. Gustavo attended both Volunteer State Community College and Cumberland University in Middle Tennessee and is a licensed Real Estate agent.



Mark's ReMarks

from the desk of Mark Setash


This month I've chosen to write about three "things" that I'm passionate about. So, if I get a bit sentimental or overly dramatic, it could be due to late September's beautiful harvest moon and I hope you'll forgive me. Our last newsletter featured the first of these. The National-Interstate Council of State Boards of Cosmetology (NIC) is a customer of PCS. However, I've known and worked with this fine organization for many years. All of us at PCS think of NIC more as a partner than a customer. And, like any organization, it is the people who give it an identity. In the case of NIC, the organization is loaded with fine individuals who are dedicated to their industry and we're proud to call them friends.

Similarly, and a newer "passion" of mine is the Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards (FSMTB). They are featured in this newsletter and are a more recently "discovered" passion of mine. While I've only known Debra Persinger, FSMTB's Executive Director and the FSMTB Board for a short time, I've rapidly developed a real admiration for their work and, more importantly, for the people themselves. Again, by any business definition, FSMTB is a customer of PCS. But, like NIC, we consider the individuals that "make-up" FSMTB to be our friends and our partners. If any organization had the opportunity and luxury of choosing its customers, NIC and FSMTB would top any list.

Finally, in this newsletter we feature an article on customer service. This is a long-time passion of mine and something that I demand and expect. Sometimes we do not meet our customer service goals. So, we are constantly working to ensure that we do. I like to cite examples of exemplary customer service from my personal life; companies like American Express, the Ritz, Zappos and Amazon set an example that I hope to duplicate at PCS. We're not there yet but every day we're working towards this goal. We hope you continue to provide feedback in this area and we're very open to your input as to how we might do a better job for your organization and the individuals you serve.

Mark Setash
President and CEO

SOLUTIONS THAT
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