DIGITAL SERVICE DESK DESIGN / ILLUSTRATIVE CASE

Why do support requests keep changing hands?

The management decision

Examine transfers that leave customers repeating their problem. Clarifying which team can resolve the request may improve service without adding staff to the queue.

Customers and colleagues can wait while a ticket moves between teams, explaining the same issue each time. Managers may see that it was assigned quickly without knowing whether anyone solved it. Service desk design sets clear ownership and escalation rules for common requests and gives staff useful standards for closing them. That also gives managers something more meaningful to track than the number of tickets closed.

Worked example

Of 160 support tickets, 32 move to another team after the first assignment. That is 20%. Removing 12 avoidable transfers in an equivalent period would leave 20 transfers, or 12.5%.

Example figure	What it represents
160	Tickets reviewed
20%	Current transfer rate
12.5%	Example improved rate

What changes the answer

Check whether the new period had the same staff coverage and request types. If transfers fall while more customers reopen their tickets, review the conditions used to close them.

Digital service desk design

What to commission

Review one busy support queue using anonymised tickets, including requests reassigned or reopened.

We review where tickets wait or bounce between teams, identify who can resolve each type and set out what information is needed at the time of submission. Sample tickets show how the proposed rules will work in practice.

How to judge the result

Each agreed request type has an owner, escalation route and closure check that staff can apply to sample tickets.

Track transfers, reopened cases and time to resolution together. Compare equivalent ticket types and staffing levels before attributing a change to the new routing.

Decision worksheet

Project detail	Starting point for your team
Decision owner	Head of service operations. Name the person who will approve the next step.
Records to gather	A sample of anonymised requests, existing support queues and current response targets.
Agreed output	A queue and routing plan, ownership rules and measures for tracking responses.
Decision date	Record the deadline, any unresolved assumption and who will confirm it.

Discuss this case

Tell us which requests take longest to reach the right person, which teams currently handle them and who experiences the delay. If a change to staffing or the ticketing system is planned, mention it so we can discuss a design the team will be able to operate.

Email info@oxetc.co.uk and mention IT-17. All figures in the worked example are illustrative.