

# **Insight into** Contact Centre People

## Improving people's performance



*"It is the responsibility of the leadership and management to give opportunities and put demands on people, which enable them to grow as human beings in their work environment".*

*Sir John Harvey Jones*

The expectations of the consumer are constantly being raised, the phenomenal rise in the access to information, coupled with the changes seen in the UK economy, have dramatically changed the way we all conduct our personal business. Telephone banking, online auctions etc have become the more popular. Utilities implore us to pick up the telephone or to visit their website. Insurance companies have now almost totally migrated to telephone and Internet sales and service. The UK is now one of the leading service industry driven economies in Europe. With this background its little wonder that the pressure is on to provide more efficient and effective contact centres, with a wider range of services mindful of the P&L and linked to the financial plan.

### **The consequences of failure to motivate the team**

*People can and often do vote with their feet*

If a contact centre fails, it loses a chance to win a new customer or loses an existing customer. Consequently a motivated team in a contact centre is of paramount importance. Yet we do not have to look far to experience poor or average performance from contact centre personnel. Not only does this put the customer's loyalty at risk, it

also contributes to low staff retention. The cost of recruitment and training has a negative impact on the bottom line. A professionally managed contact centre with a motivated team can operate with a lower headcount. This reflects the massive impact that repeat calls can have on contact centre efficiency and staff motivation. *First contact resolution is king.*

### **How to achieve a quality customer experience**

The team need to be motivated and fulfilled to maintain a high quality of service. All key performance indicators should encourage *"first contact resolution"*. Customer satisfaction must dominate incentive schemes, as hitting targets for answering calls quickly does not alone satisfy the caller's needs. Call ownership and first contact resolution is the only valid target.

To provide first contact resolution the contact centre operative will need access to information and authority to act on behalf of the caller.

Ensure the working environment is clean, comfortable safe and professional, do not tolerate broken chairs, ripped carpets and shabby furniture. You should run a facility that everyone in the organisation would be proud to show to important visitors.

Wear your heart on your sleeve put results key performance indicators and recommendations up on the notice board for all to see. Do not hide performance measurements these are one of the most powerful motivational tools at your disposal providing they are not used as part of a blame culture focus on "look how well we are doing".



### **Getting it right:**

- Motivation comes from feeling good about oneself don't set targets and goals that detract from that feeling
- Job satisfaction comes from delivering, not from hitting targets, focus on call resolution
- Health and safety and the well being of your staff is a critical component of delivering good customer service
- Be very clear to all about the need to meet the caller's needs and uphold the organisations values involve both sales and marketing
- Use motivating performance measurements to drive a culture that encourages call ownership and first contact resolution
- The Key performance Indicators (KPI) must serve the caller and uphold the organisations values
- The call centre operative needs access to the appropriate information

# Insight into Contact Centre People

## So what does the ideal contact centre look like?

### *From the caller's point of view:-*

- The phone is answered within 15 seconds by a human being who isn't stressed, is friendly and empowered to act on the caller's behalf.
- The customer's question or request for action is dealt with by the first person they speak to and that person has sufficient knowledge, authority to act and access to information to answer their questions.
- The caller is given choice and kept informed of what happens next
- The caller feels good about themselves, the call and the organisation after the call.
- Answer the question the caller asked before giving out sales information

### *From the organisations point of view*

- *The team are motivated to uphold the caller's needs and the organisation's values*
- *Contact centre operatives have access to the information they need and authority to act*
- *Contact centre operatives are motivated to resolve requests at the time of first contact or retain ownership of the call and manage the caller's journey through the organisation.*
- *Records are kept and used to identify trends, reduce the number of calls and provide positive motivation to the team.*
- *The contact centre is an effective operational unit delivering benefit to the organisation's bottom line, a profit centre not a cost centre.*

## An example



A private sector call centre faced an overwhelming number of calls per day; the operatives were targeted on answering all calls within 3 rings. Some 30% of those calls overflowed to voice mail. The management team thought it needed to increase headcount by 20% to meet demand. They had an unacceptable number of complaints and a high turnover of staff.

Andante conducted an audit, obtained the "sign off" for the deployment of an improvement plan which was delivered with the assistance of the Andante consultant

## The result

The numbers of inbound calls were reduced by two thirds, 98% of calls were answered within 10 seconds, lost calls and overflow calls to voice mail became almost none existent. Staff levels remained constant, staff retention improved and customer complaints were reduced significantly.

*The head of technical Support said, "The consultant from Andante provided a clear and methodical approach to investigations and recommendations. This was important to the team and the business as this, in turn, increased the performance and quality of service as seen by the customer.*

Our professional advisors are committed to enhancing your customer's journey through, your people, your processes and your systems. This is achieved by providing you with best practice, managing change and delivering practical and effective assistance. We have reduced costs, motivated teams and assisted many companies like yours to acquire incremental business, retain customers and lock out the competition.

**"Independent, Objective, Effective"**

**Andante [UK] Ltd**

48 – 50 Melbury Road, Woodthorpe, Nottingham NG5 4PG

T: 0115 952 3016 [www.andanteuk.com](http://www.andanteuk.com) E: [business.solutions@andanteuk.com](mailto:business.solutions@andanteuk.com)



RECOGNISED PRACTICE