



CUSTOMER REACH®

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 6

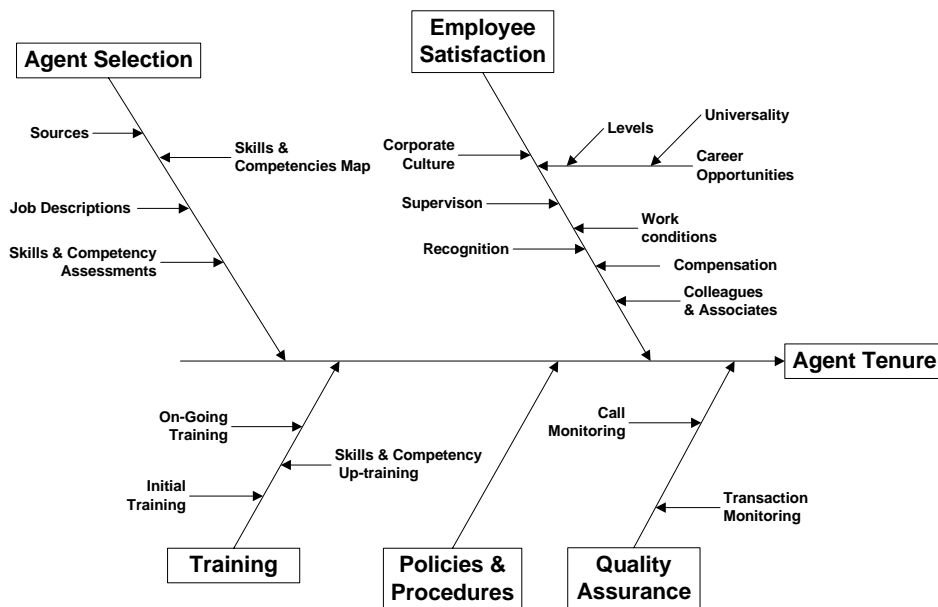
JUNE 2006

ISSN 1718-8938

Attrition Management

This document discusses a few of the factors that affect turnover and presents ideas and approaches that reduce turnover to more acceptable levels. These ideas and approaches are based on TRG's experience and are a starting point for discussions of a specific strategy to deal with this issue. The specific areas covered in this document are agent selection; training; employee satisfaction and quality assurance/monitoring.

To effectively manage staff turnover requires an assessment of all of the factors that influence turnover within a center or organization. The diagram below shows the 'interconnectedness' and some of the cause and effect relationships in operation in a call center.



Inside this Issue

Attrition Management.....	1
Survey of the Month.....	7
Poll of the Month.....	7
Career Opportunity.....	8
Newsworthy.....	9
Ask the Experts.....	11
Inside TRG.....	12
Case Study.....	14



Some of the factors are universal in that they affect the entire organization. These would include 'Policies and Procedures' as well as 'Employee Satisfaction'. The remaining factors specifically impact staff retention and agent tenure for call centers.

Staff Selection:

In examining the process from the beginning, first assess the staff selection process. The staff selection process should identify and qualify staff that has the abilities, skills and competencies to complete the job functions as well as the personality and temperament to work in a call center environment. First review the job descriptions for the agent positions and compare and contrast these with the requirements of the role. To determine what are the desired attributes, examine the best performers in the call center, classify their skills and competencies and review other skills and competencies that are appropriate to a call center environment. This exercise develops a skills and competency map.

Before this map can be implemented and employed, suitable objective tests and assessments must be created. It is not always possible to develop objective assessments for certain skills or competencies. When an objective test is not possible, the skill must be reassessed for significance and a determination made as to whether it should be included in the absence of the ability to assess the skill objectively. Once we have determined which are the desired skills and competencies and how we can test for each objectively, the skills and competency map is completed.

With the skills and competency map completed review the job description and roles and responsibilities documents for accuracy and completeness. In most organizations, where TRG has supported the development of skills and competency maps, a finalized list of 12-15 desired skills and competencies was the result. There is no single correct number of skills but the majority of skills and competency maps include many skills and competencies from the following list:

-  Ability to multi Task
-  Ability to take direction
-  Ability to work independently
-  Accepts responsibility/Ownership
-  Active Listening Skills
-  Articulate
-  Completes projects begun
-  Conceptual thinker
-  Cooperative Learner
-  Customer Focus
-  Detail Oriented
-  Empathy
-  Inquisitive
-  Keyboarding
-  Language
-  Patience
-  Problem Solving Skills
-  Process Thinker
-  Product Knowledge
-  Professionalism
-  Respectful
-  Results oriented
-  Schedule Adherence
-  Service Oriented
-  Stress Tolerance
-  Tack
-  Takes Responsibility
-  Team Focus
-  Telephone Etiquette
-  Visualization
-  Voice Tone/Modulation



Staff recruitment can begin once the skills and competencies have been identified, the assessment tools sourced or developed and the job descriptions aligned. Working with your HR team, identify appropriate sources for staff; such as job postings, job fairs, employee referral campaigns etc. Many of the initial staff assessments may be completed in advance of a formal interview and can be done at a job fair or on-line.

Assess the local job market in terms of wages paid for similar positions at other companies in your specific labor market. Identify the number of other companies operating call centers within your local labor marketplace. The total number of agent positions in a specific geographic market as a percentage of the total workforce will provide you with the 'saturation level' of the market. Generally speaking the lower the saturation percentage the easier it will be to recruit. Ideal markets have saturation levels of below 3%.

With the staff selection process completed examine the training elements that impact on the retention and tenure of high quality agents.

Training:

Training is critical to the success of any call center operation. The staff selection process enables us to hire staff that has the potential to be successful in a call center role it is the training that will equip them to be successful. By taking an analytical approach to training we would examine the process as follows:

- What are the types of calls/contacts that a new agent is expected to be able to handle successfully?
- What knowledge and/or technical proficiency will they need to possess to handle these calls?
- What tools will they need to utilize and how do they get trained to operate these tools effectively and efficiently?
- How can we illustrate and demonstrate the overall processes that underlie the specific call types to provide greater context and comprehension for the agent?
- How can deficiencies in agent skills and competencies be improved?
- How can we develop a curriculum that allows the agent to employ their learning to most effectively gain retention?

The above questions plus many others frame the development of a training curriculum. As with staff selection it is important to work backwards from the outcomes desired, or in this case, the knowledge and capabilities wished for the agents to possess when they first begin working on the phones. By establishing training materials, employing role-playing exercises and written and oral tests you can assess the effectiveness of the training in meeting these goals and objectives.

Of course training is not a one time process, or a single training curriculum, but rather an ongoing exercise. We cannot train everything at once and we need to ensure that we don't overwhelm the new staff with too much information.

By examining the calls and issues that the call center deals with it is possible to develop a hierarchy that can form the basis of a training outline with new staff being trained initially to handle the most frequent and easiest inquiries and receiving future training to deal with less common call/more complex or inquiry types. Over time the staff progresses from being new and inexperienced to becoming very experienced and knowledgeable.

Generally staff progress through three broad stages in the center. Those stages are Adequacy, Competency and Mastery, often referred to as ACM.

Adequacy is the first level at which most people in call centers can take calls with an excellent chance of achieving success for the company and the customer. While their delivery and skills may be rough they can get through without help most of the time. From time to time, they need help with uncommon transactions or questions and need to put the caller on hold to research for an answer.

Competency is where the agent has been through one complete business cycle and therefore is capable of understanding the business and customer requirements for all calls. Only a modest few need escalation or referral to supervisor. They are good at handling irate callers, difficult questions, uncommon requests, and have an understanding of the unique issues or practices that being part of the call center means. They would be asked to take part in a special project or two per year. Possible take the lead in a training session or work on a process evaluation. The Competent agent usually exhibits a level of involvement with the work and centre that is beyond the "just a job".



Mastery level for most CSR's requires experience and exposure to a wide variety of transactions and other work in the call center. They are very knowledgeable on all aspects of calls and transactions within center. Generally has training and exposure to business issues, process, cause and effect. A Mastery level agent has worked on a special project or social growth opportunity grooming for supervisor or lead functions. They have the theory and knowledge about the call center operations and supervisory skills. They are usually good candidates for promotion within company. A Mastery level agent can be offered an apprenticeship or secondment with other company's sections or divisions. They often help with training other CSR's, monitoring, initial hiring and intake functions.

Most call center managers would ask that all staff be at the Mastery level. This is neither realistic nor practical. There is turnover in a center. Turnover is good if kept in bounds. Experience shows that between 5 to 20% is an optimal range. This provides new blood in center with new ideas. It gives the average job life in the center about 5 plus years. In practice this means that on an average year a center with a 100 staff will have 20 to 25 new staff members.

An examination of the remaining staff will show that between 30 and 60 of them will be at the differing levels of competency. The skills and competency map along with the training curriculum for each person provides a clear means of evaluation and progression for their skills and knowledge. As each achieves levels of mastery they in turn provide training and guidance to the new and more junior staff.

The ACM model forms the basis of a career path for agents within a center with defined and specific tests, quality scores; first call resolution, customer satisfaction scores and productivity levels being established as minimum criteria for advancement to the next level.

The following is an example of an actual matrix developed for a TRG client.

Job Descriptions & Skills Matrix

Agent Level	Skills/Competencies	Universality	Performance	Tenure
Adequacy	Agent possesses 'meets requirements' for 10 of 13 Skills & Competencies.	Agent possesses successful completion on 1 area of Universality	Adequately performs tasks, escalates calls with accepted norms, regularly requests assistance from peers and superiors. Rarely provides support to peers. Monitor scores regularly at 60% or better. Closes sales opportunities at 50% or better. First Call Resolution is at 70% or better.	Generally has less than 12 months experience
Competency	Agent possesses 'meets requirements' for all Skills & Competencies. Agent possesses 'Exceeds requirements' in at least 3 Skill/Competency areas	Agent possesses successful completion on 3 areas of Universality	Performs tasks without errors, escalates few calls, and occasionally requests assistance from peers and superiors. Occasionally provides support to peers. Monitor scores regularly at 80% or better. Closes sales opportunities at 70% or better. First Call Resolution is at 85% or better.	Generally has more than 18 months of experience
Mastery	Agent possesses 'meets requirements' for all Skills & Competencies. Agent possesses 'Exceeds requirements' in at least 10 Skill/Competency areas	Agent possesses successful completion of all areas of Universality	Performs tasks without errors, rarely escalates calls, and rarely requests assistance from peers and superiors. Provides regular support to peers. Monitor scores regularly at 90% or better. Closes sales opportunities at 85% or better. First Call Resolution is at 95% or better.	Generally has more than 24 months of experience.



Assessment Source(s)	Agent Assessment of Skills/Competencies	Agent Assessment of Universality Capabilities	Agent Assessment of: 1) Call Monitors-Monitoring form in place scoring methodology in place, 2) Sales Calls to Success Rate-Total sales/orders attained by agent as a percent of all calls identified as Sales Opportunities, 3) First Call Resolution- determined through system query to identify all customers whose account is accessed on more than once within 72 hours (3 days).	Tenure tracked by HR
Assessment Status	In Place	In Place	In Place	In Place

As illustrated in the table above the role of quality assurance and call monitoring is an important aspect of measuring the performance of the agents and assessing their capability to move to a new level.

The link between what is hired and trained for and what is used to judge how well CSR's perform once taking calls is clear in this table. If these kinds of tools are developed and distributed to the supervisory staff (but most importantly, to the staff themselves) it builds trust and transparency in and for the next key factor.

Quality Assurance:

Quality Assurance (QA) is a method for assuring management, owners, customers or anyone that the organization is producing products or services at a predetermined level of quality. A Call Center QA program should include the following components:

- Customer Listening & Satisfaction
- Customer Relations
- Failure Analysis and Process Improvement
- Monitoring
- Mystery Calling



Typically QA is the gathering, analysis and reporting function of an overall approach to quality in an organization. Quality assurance is not primarily a performance management program, but rather an organization benchmarking and assessment process. Quality improvement efforts can be part of a QA program but are not necessarily a component.



For the purposes of this document we will discuss only a portion of quality assurance, the sub-process monitoring. This can be used as a coaching and staff development tool, but it must be aligned with both the staff selection and training components to deliver the desired results.

A recent ICMI and AC Nielsen study of 735 call centers showed that:

- 93 percent reported monitoring agent calls.
- There is a wide variance in the number of calls monitored per month per agent. The most popular frequencies are 4 to 5, and 10 or more.
- Apart from agent calls, other types of contacts are also monitored. Four out of 10 call centers monitor email responses, one in six monitor fax correspondence, and one in 14 monitor Web text-chat sessions
- More than one-third of call centers devote one to five hours per week to monitoring, and a quarter devoted six to 10 hours weekly. However, it is not surprising that the larger call centers (200 or more agents) devote significantly more time per week to monitoring and coaching than the smallest call centers (fewer than 50 agents).

Most centers only conduct monitoring for the voice channel and do not examine the transactional process that is underlying the call itself. It is important to examine the transactions to effectively map, communicate and revise call center processes.

Monitoring starts by assessing how each transaction is done. Is the transaction done according to the specifications process flow and standards defined by the organization? For each of the observed transactions, track the results to success or failure. Monitoring with this approach focuses first on what the system is producing and not whether or not an agent is performing.

Assessing the individuals' performance in following the defined process, procedures and flow of the particular transaction provides an assessment of how well the agent performed, or adhered to the expected processes. Deficiencies identified in the course of this monitoring can then be shared with the training and coaching staff for individual coaching and training.

It must be kept in mind that any assessment of individual performance almost certainly lacks statistical validity. The majority of centers will only monitor their agents on 10- to 20 calls per month. If an average agent handles 50 calls a day then this represents only 1 – 2% of the agents' calls. This is sufficient to identify significant issues but is unlikely to uncover minor issues or misinterpretations by the agent.

In most call centers monitoring provides a mini-performance review of the agent. The manner in which these monitors are tabled and presented can positively or negatively affect the employee's morale and job satisfaction.

Employee Satisfaction:

The overwhelming majority of people who leave any company because of the way they are treated every day. Surveys consistently show that more than 40 percent of people who quit do so because they feel they weren't appreciated for their contributions regardless of position. These surveys show that lack of appreciation, lack of teamwork and the perception that the company doesn't care about employees are consistently the highest-rated reasons for low job satisfaction.

Management is often shocked when confronted with poor job satisfaction data or exit interview data. Few employers actually intend to mistreat anyone; many go to great lengths to have happy employees. There are several reasons for this discrepancy. First, lack of appreciation is itself a negative. There are many managers who are very nice people, but manage almost exclusively by negative reinforcement not because of what they do but because of what they don't do. If you can't identify times when you have overtly told individuals that you appreciate their contributions, then you can count on the fact that they think you don't.

Second, when giving out positives, whether it is a pat on the back or a raise in pay, if you give them equally to all performers you end up punishing the best performers. Most employees think that it's unfair that they work hard every day, while others do just enough to get by yet get the same pay and recognition. The lack of transparency to the rewards and recognition means that resentment builds and the perception of mistreatment grows. Treat people on the basis of merit, not seniority or position and make sure that the process for doing so is clear and communicated to all regularly and repeatedly.

A third reason that employee's feel negative about the workplace is that even though managers think they are creating a positive environment, they frequently fail to deal effectively and efficiently with problems and problem performers. When poor performance is tolerated, other employees don't understand it. When they try to figure out why, they often conclude that there is favoritism for some unknown reason or that the supervisor or manager is weak. Both reasons are problems for the organization.



Finally what is the intrinsic value of the work or is the employee just working for the pay check? Is the work itself satisfying and is that demonstrated and promoted by the organization? Is there enough challenge in the work or within the workplace to simulate and engage the employee? Too many fluffy parties, campaigns or puffery make the employee focus on the incentive, the prize and not on the value and pleasure of doing good work for its own sake. That professional pride in the quality of ones work is a powerful incentive to remain where one is so as to be able to do such work in the future.

We have reviewed most of the key components that will assist in the reduction of attrition in the call center. By identifying and addressing the underlying factors in agent selection, agent training, career path, employee satisfaction and quality assurance the organization can systematically reduce the turnover in the call centers. Review and align the policies and procedures within the call center to reflect the culture and performance desired. This needs combining with regular reviews of employee satisfaction. Employee satisfaction is a good benchmark for progress, the higher the level of employee satisfaction the lower the level of attrition. There is also a correlation between employee satisfaction and a company becoming an employer of choice and a destination career.

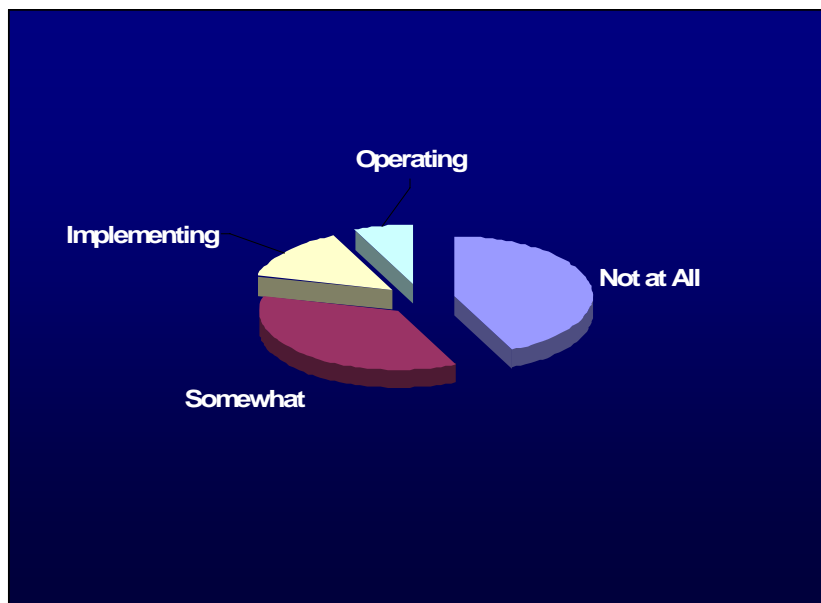
For more information on Attrition Management or other call center strategies please visit www.thetaylorreachgroup.com or send us an email at info@thetaylorreachgroup.com.

Survey of the Month

Poll of the Month

Recent studies published by Dimension Data and Ventana Research have suggested that contact centers are moving from a cost reduction focus to a value creation and retention focus. To what degree have you seen this shift within your organization?

Not at All- Still completely cost focused:	43%
Somewhat- We talk about it:	36%
Implementing- We are planning it:	14%
Operating- we have changed the way we do business:	7%





We received more than 200 responses to last month's poll.

Survey Results:

More than three quarters of those who participated in the survey were not yet operating their call center based upon a 'value focus'. 79% of organizations had done nothing at all or were only at the discussion stage. Only 7% had implemented and a further 14% were in the process of implementing. Clearly while there can be significant benefit from operating from a value rather than cost focus, very few organizations have made this transition.

Visit the TRG website www.thetaylorreachgroup.com and weigh in on this month's survey: Do you have an idea for an upcoming poll? If so we would love to hear it. Please email your suggestions for future surveys to

feedback@thetaylorreachgroup.com



Career Opportunity

From time to time, TRG gets asked by clients to assist them in recruiting senior members of their call center and management team. Below is a job posting that we have recently placed on numerous job boards for one such client. If you are interested or know someone who maybe interested in this role, please email a resume and salary expectations to info@thetaylorreachgroup.com

Vice President, Call Center

The Opportunity:

The Vice President- Call Center, role is to lead the current 120 person operation today, growing by more than 150% in the next 2 years. This is a senior management position with presence on the corporate senior management team. While this position supports both Sales and Service, we are looking for a proven call center (inbound & outbound) sales success.

The Company:

One of the fastest growing companies in the country. Rated as one of the Best Places to Work. This rapidly growing young company will appeal to those who enjoy a fast paced, high growth, spirited team environment where we value results over titles and function over formality. Our culture is unique, we work hard, we can play hard, we value results and where we really want you to enjoy your job and have fun! Without fun work is a four letter word!

The Candidate:

- Understands all aspects of leading a top multi language, 24/7, inbound/outbound call center;
 - People;
 - Process
 - Technologies
 - Methodology
- Makes decisions based on desired outcomes
- Understanding and capable of applying statistical process control methodology
- Analytical fact based decision making
- Proven leadership skills – individual and team leadership experience
- Well networked in the Call Center industry to multiple potential mentors
- Strategic thinker and problem solver
- A process thinker
- Strong negotiation & presentation skills
- Strong verbal, written communication skills
- Strong computer skills (MS Office- specifically strong knowledge of Excel, MS Project)
- Strong Telecommunications knowledge,
- Multilingual an asset,



- Inspiring
- Takes Ownership
- Team Builder- Proven ability to build effective teams and generate sustained sales success.
- Cranks through projects
- Metrics & results oriented
- Fun to work with – feeds and feeds off others energy
- Comfortable with distractions – full open office environment
- International Experience An Asset
- Extensive knowledge and experience in all aspects of call center leadership
 - Technology (ACD, IVR, recording/logging, WFM, Quality, CRM, web-chat, push to talk, elearning, skills based routing, CTI) & Telephony (POTs & IP)
 - Staffing – Recruiting, Hiring, Training, Retaining, developing, succession planning
 - Scheduling (understands the process, practice and the technologies)

If you think that you have what it takes to be a part of our team and are willing to live and work in one of the most beautiful cities in North America then we want to talk to you.

Please email your resume, experience, compensation requirements, and anything else that you feel will impress us to info@thetaylorreachgroup.com. The Taylor Reach Group, Inc. has been retained to assist in this recruiting process, so please direct all inquiries to the email address above.

Newsworthy

In this regular column we review the latest news, predictions and trends impacting on the Call Center / Customer Interaction Industry.

Information overload paralyzes UK contact centres

UK call centres are being paralyzed by an overload of information, new research has claimed. Bosses and team leaders are being forced to wade through 2.3 million lines of information every day — an astonishing 450 reports per contact centre. According to research from communications software provider Exony, a staggering 854 million reports are generated annually, containing more than 10 billion lines of information. And this means that more and more management time is being consumed by unnecessary reporting, which is drastically impacting on delivering improved customer service. "Effective and targeted reporting is obviously critical to efficient contact centre performance, but these figures show that the pendulum has swung too far the other way," commented Ian Ashby, Exony's CEO. "Contact centre managers are being swamped by too much information, bogging them down in detail rather than allowing them to deliver against business goals. Organizations need to rationalize reporting, focusing on getting the right information and key metrics out of their systems and made available to the right people quickly – otherwise managers find themselves trying to find a needle in an information haystack
eCCF.

Customers Say What Companies Don't Want to Hear

A customer research study, titled "Customers Say What Companies Don't Want to Hear," throws a bucket of ice water in the face of some core business management tenets-plus a number of keystone principles of the marketing, advertising and customer relationship management (CRM) industries. The study is co-authored by Dr. David J. Mangen of Mangen Research Associates and Richard A. Lee of High-Yield Methods. Among the study's key findings are #1. The presence of a growing gap between customer expectations and company behavior, which creates opportunity for some companies and increasing risk to others. #2. After 50 years of sellers markets, buyers are taking widespread control of buyer-seller relationships, and many companies don't know how to respond. #3. At a high level, a company's degree of customer focus was the most important purchase decision factor for customers, and by a very wide margin.

CRM Newsletter



At TRG, we believe in happy endings.
To turn your call centre problems into personal and professional triumphs, just call
Colin Taylor at (905) 426-5055 or visit us at www.thetaylorreachgroup.com



31 Barr Road, Suite 2 Ajax, Ontario L1S 3Y1



Record numbers of CSRs want to stay with their jobs

Record numbers of CSRs would stay in their roles if their employers directly addressed their concerns, a new survey has claimed. The Hays Contact Centres Salary and Benefits Survey, carried out in conjunction with CCF, has discovered that more than 80 per cent of call handlers want their bosses to act on their views. While more than a quarter (29.6) per cent said they might stay through in-house development and training, one in two admitted that they would stay for a further two or more years if they were afforded new challenges and more career opportunities. A spokesman for Hays said that this sent out a "positive" message to employers as "high rates of attrition were avoidable". "There are positives for employers here — by indicating that they are leaving for new challenges over increased salaries, staff are showing their employers what can be done to retain their services," he said. "Employers need to examine career paths and career development for staff. Are they getting the most from their workforce? Is some of their workforce pigeonholed? Employers need to address how opportunities for training could re-energise their workforce and make them feel more valued." Elsewhere in the survey, Hays found that the single benefit most workers identified as being vital was a minimum of 25 days annual leave. Overall, more than 70 per cent indicated that this was so important to them that it would impact on a decision to accept or decline a new role. To receive a free copy of the CCF/Hays Salary and Benefits Survey please log on to www.hays.com/contactcentres/survey eCCF.

Report projects major increase in call centre jobs in Caribbean

CARIBBEAN call centre agent positions will reach 50 000 by 2006, with over 80 per cent of this growth coming from contact centres fulfilling projects for Fortune 1000 and large US corporations.

This projection is contained in a report compiled by research firm Research and Markets entitled "Caribbean Call Centre Report 2005: A Customer Care Market".

The report also goes into detail to show the factors driving the high level of satisfaction that US corporate customers and their clients are receiving from leading Caribbean vendors across 20 markets. It also highlights the strategic function the Sphaero Alliance is playing as a pan-Caribbean sourcing platform for call centres in the region.

The report evaluates the entire Caribbean market with complete assessment of the larger locations such as Jamaica, Trinidad, the Dominican Republic, Barbados and Puerto Rico. The report also features a number of Harvard Business Review style case studies on both successful regional call centre vendors and economic development agencies that have prioritized their location as attractive call center destinations.

The report has a complete assessment of market size dynamics and growth rate projections up to 2006. Twenty island markets are evaluated with detail recommendations on both the English and Spanish speaking locations. Detail call centre vendor selection and market risk tools provide valuable handlers for the decision making process, for firms looking to near shore projects or site locate to the Caribbean.

The report features a full demonstration of the productivity gained from assets particularly available in the English speaking Caribbean that are being effectively utilized by corporate clients.

Barbados Advocate

Ask the Experts

Distributed Call Centers

Question: "I currently manage a Wireless Voice support team for a Telecom company. Under a recent re-org I will now also manage a Wireless Data support team as well. Both are call center environments. My challenge is the Voice team is in eastern US, and the Data team



is in Central US. No possibility of consolidating in one state.

I'd like to cross train the two teams to create two regional teams proficient in both Data and Voice support. This includes using a centralized knowledge base tool, cross training forum, and issue tracking tool for statistical trending and analysis.

Any suggestions on "best practices", different approaches, and/or tools to help in my new charge? I'm open to almost anything except off the shelf products (budget constraints). All tool development would have to be in house.


B"

Expert Response:

This is a big task you have before you. My thoughts are as follows;

- 1-First you will need to map the skills/competencies, required for both of these functions,
- 2-Then map the transactional processes that are completed by each group,
- 3-Map the education/knowledge required for each group,
- 4-Develop assessment and testing tools to identify proficiency of each group in each of the above areas,
- 5-Identify agent 'gaps' and develop up-training curriculum to bring the agents up to speed over a relevant period of time.
- 6-Test again to confirm the training has 'taken'
- 7-Start swapping calls.

A few other points to think about;

- 1-You will need to invest resource time to develop the systems (knowledgebase etc.), training and mapping. Remember to budget it appropriately over your year,
- 2- factor in the lost handling time for training/testing in your forecasts and schedules,
- 3- Remember that this type of cross-training or universality can reduce you overall labor expenses (through queue efficiency), but you won't see this for 60-90 days after you have completed the implementation.
- 4-Once you are directing calls to the 'non-native' centers you must continue to deliver these. Skills and training that is not kept current will atrophy and die...losing this capability to handle these calls.
- 5-The agents will expect additional compensation based upon additional skills. I would recommend that you assess not only the 'if they can do it' in the assessments but also the 'how well they can do it' and use an "Adequacy, Competency, Mastery" model to determine compensation or performance pay. Let us know what you think of this response. How would you have answered this question? Let us know at feedback@thetaylorreachgroup.com 

Inside TRG

Colin Taylor appointed as International Judge for the 2006 Asia Regional Call Centre Awards

Colin Taylor will be traveling to Singapore this fall to participate as a judge at the 2006 Asia Regional Call Centre Awards. Simon Kriss is the Chairman for the 2006 Asia Regional Call Centre Awards. Simon Kriss is also the CEO and President of Sagatori, a Hong Kong based call centre specialist consulting company. This is a collective effort from the Associations in Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong, China and Taiwan. We will post more information regarding the Awards as it becomes available.

Customer Reach® continues to gain new subscribers

With this months issue Customer Reach® will be distributed to more than 2,700 subscribers around the globe. Our readers continue to tell us that the publication is meaningful to them and provides them with a wealth of information and great ideas they can implement in their own center. In fact 53% of our readers have implemented change in their center based upon ideas they read about in Customer Reach.

Please pass along your issue to a friend or colleague or suggest they register to receive their own copy they can do so at <http://www.thetaylorreachgroup.com/onlineNewsletter.php>

We need your help. We want to ensure that the articles, polls and questions we feature in Customer Reach are meaningful and applicable to you in your center. Please share with us your comments, ideas and suggestions regarding how we can improve on



our newsletter. Please email Michelle Fernandes the Editor of Customer Reach at customerreach@thetaylorreachgroup.com .


TRG meets with Governor of Virginia

Colin Taylor had the opportunity to meet with Governor Tim Kaines recently at an event in Toronto. The Governor was in town to promote economic development opportunities and tourism in Virginia.



Virginia Governor Tim Kaines, Colin Taylor and Secretary Patrick Gottschalk.

TRG secures four new clients

Our hopes and expectations for a quiet summer have been dashed again. In all honesty it is wonderful that we are able to welcome four new clients in the month of June to our client family. Over the next few weeks TRG will be assisting in a strategic assessment of a call center outsource agency, managing the recruitment of a senior call center officer, managing a customer satisfaction program for a large sporting goods manufacturer and a conducting third party quality assurance program for a financial institution. Each of these clients will benefit from our experience in these areas and we look forward to a long and successful relationship with each new client firm. 



Case Study

In this regular column we review the successes that TRG is part of. TRG Model Drives Service Level Improvement










TRG helped an established services organization dramatically improve their service through an integrated approach to service delivery.

The Challenge:

This very successful services organization faced a number of challenges; high turnover, low agent productivity, incomplete and inadequate training materials. All of these deficiencies lead to continued poor service performance. The company's service level was very unsatisfactory with very few calls being answered in 20 seconds, and more than 35% of all calls abandoning. They sought out the guidance of TRG to improve the service performance of their call center.

The Process:


TRG conducted a complete end to end assessment of the call center, its processes and those processes that impacted on the call center. TRG developed a call center operational model and worked with the center management and staff to implement a model that incorporated new approaches for;

-  Hiring,
-  Training,
-  Monitoring,
-  Coaching,
-  Staffing,
-  Forecasting,
-  Quality assurance,
-  Call routing,
-  Staff Budgeting,

The Solution:

New hiring practices were implemented to recruit for the desired skill sets. The process mapping resulted in revision to many of the processes to align them better with the objectives of the business. A number of these processes involved groups outside of the call center operation. The result of including these non call center processes was a significantly better alignment between the company objectives and those of the call center. Workforce management was introduced to support more accurate forecasting and scheduling.

The Result:

By implementing the TRG Model, the company improved the service level more than 1200%, reduced abandoned calls by more than 75%, Improved First Call Resolution by more than 50%, Reduced Average Handle Time by 25%, increased customer Satisfaction and Loyalty by more than 10%. All of this was achieved in less than 4 months! 



Customer Reach® is published 10 times per year by The Taylor Reach Group, Inc. Customer Reach® may not be reproduced without permission.

Subscription requests can be directed to customerreach@thetaylorreachgroup.com or to;

Customer Reach

31 Barr Rd,

Suite 2,

Ajax ON

L1S 3Y1

Phone - 905-426-5055

Fax - 905-426-6793

The Taylor Reach Group, Inc. provides Strategic and Operational customer interaction consulting services that deliver Operational Innovation breakthroughs in Contact Center operations.

Award winning service and more than 100 years of industry experience serving 'Fortune 1000' companies. Extensive North American and International experience with both captive (in-house) and outsource centers.

Delivering Operational Innovation to your Contact Center

Contact Center Consulting, Customer Satisfaction, Contact Center Technology, Sales & Telesales Consulting and General Management consulting services provided.

Award winning service...Reach Beyond! 

Phone or email Colin Taylor today at 905-426-5055

By email at ctaylor@thetaylorreachgroup.com .

Offices in North America & Australia

TRG are proud members of:



The Taylor Reach Group, Inc.

31 Barr Road

Ajax ON

L1S 3Y1

Phone: 905-426-5055

Fax: 905-426-6793

E-mail: info@thetaylorreachgroup.com

www.thetaylorreachgroup.com 