

2022 CONTACT CENTRE

BEST PRACTICE REPORT

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SMAART
RECRUITMENT



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INTRODUCTION

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The contact centre industry is one we can all be proud to be associated with. Throughout the changes of the last two years the industry has been responsive, adaptive, innovative and resilient in the face of great external and internal change.

Due to the scope of change there is great demand for industry benchmarking data. What is “normal”? What is “best practice”? What does the future look like? This report aims to answer these questions many times over.

We couldn't produce a report without industry participation. Over 250 contact centres contributed to this report totalling close to 1,200 individual submissions. The breakdown included:

- 200 + Senior Leaders (Contact Centre Manager or similar)
- 200 + Team Leaders/Manager
- 600 + Frontline Agents
- 50 + Workforce Managers
- 30 + Recruiters

As per previous reports, the responses from senior leaders make up the majority of the report (pages 6 - 119 and 213 - 227). For the first time we sought responses from individual role types listed above, and these can be found from pages 120 - 213.

Producing a report of such scale is no small task and requires a lot of resources. In an effort to provide this report at no cost to the industry, we are very grateful to our partners who have helped to fund its production. In no particular order these organisations are; AP Psychology, MaxContact, Attune, Aspen Solutions, The Agile Contact Centre, VERINT, Clevertar, 8x8, Call Design, Datagamz and The Australian Customer Experience Professionals Association.

Please note there is also a digital version of this product. It is our vision that the digital product will continue to be updated with new research, information and trends throughout 2022 and beyond. To access the digital report or to discuss anything further, please reach out to me.

On behalf of the team at SMAART Recruitment we hope you get great value from the third edition of our Contact Centre Best Practice Report.

CONTRIBUTORS



Over 250 Australian contact centres contributed to this report. The majority of them contributed anonymously however the following were happy to be named.

86 400 Bank	Dyson	Open Universities Australia
ADICA	Easy Weddings	Origin Energy
AFG Securities	Feros Care	PetSure
Ahpra	Frizelle Sunshine Automotive	RAA of SA
Allianz Australia Limited	Genie Solutions	SAIG
Allianz Partners	Graymont	Scenic
Anglican Community Services	Great Southern Bank	Serco
Australian Red Cross Lifeblood	Hastings Deering Ltd	Smart Health Australia
Australian Unity	HelloFresh	St Vincent's Hospital
BCD Travel	Hostopia Australia	Startek
Bega Dairy & Drinks	Humm Group	Sumo
Bendigo and Adelaide Bank	ING	Teachers Health Fund
BGIS	iSelect	Telstra
Bingo Industries	Jim's Group Customer Contact Centre	The Deaf Lottery Australia
Blackwoods	LeasePlan Australia	Torrens Global Education Services
Candlefox	LGIA Super	Toshiba (Australia) Pty Limited
Cascade Australia	M3 Logistics	Transurban
Cbus Super	Mazda Australia	Unitywater
Claro - Age Care and Disability Services	Medibank	University of South Australia
Compare Broadband	Mercedes-Benz Financial Services	Viking Cruises
Compare Club Life Insurance	Momentum Energy	Vivid Services
Compassion Australia	Monash University	Westpac
Connectnow	MYOB	WINconnect
Diabetes Victoria	Navy Health	Woolworths
Domain Group	Nisbets	Youi

DEMO- GRAPHICS

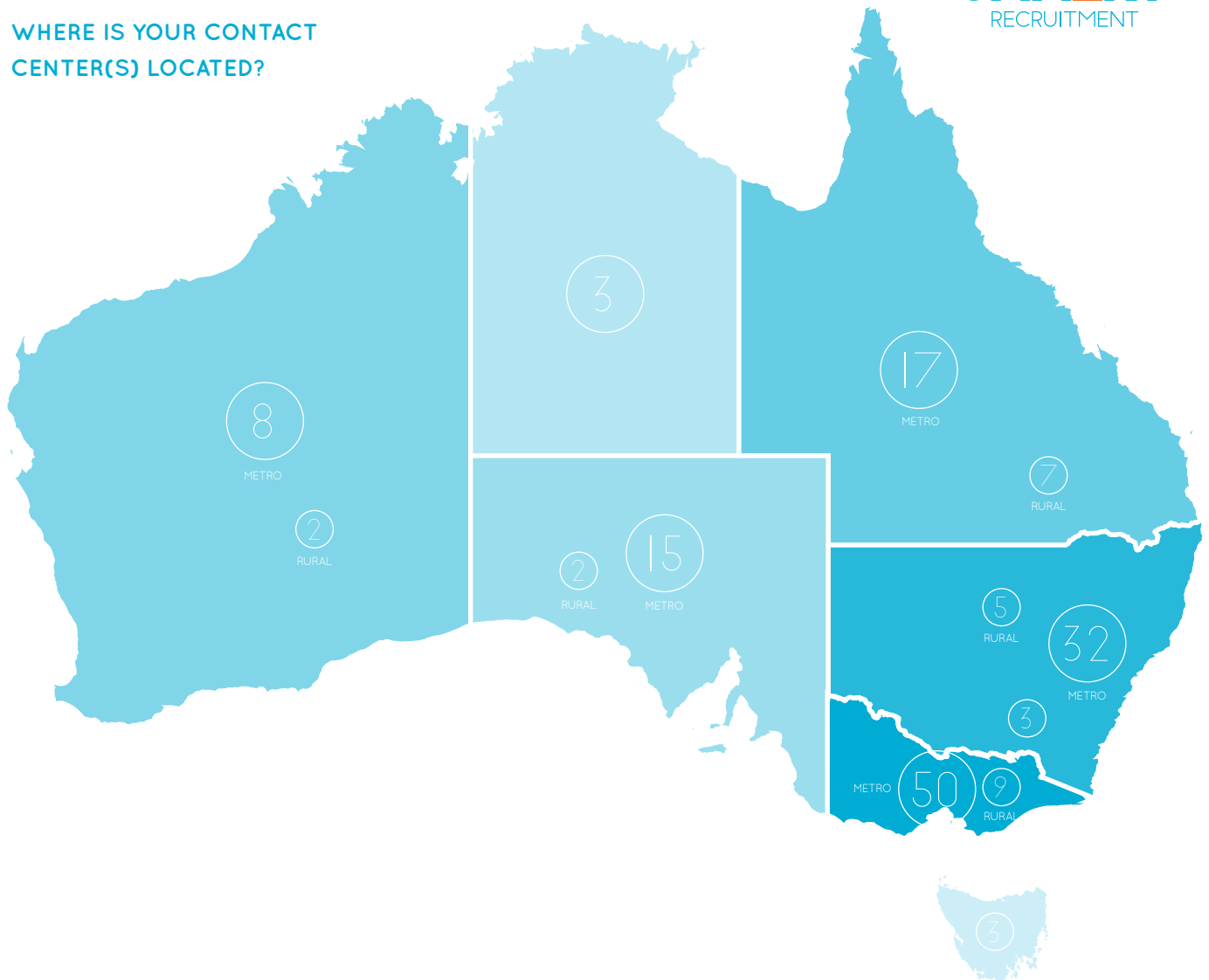
BEST PRACTICE REPORT



DEMOGRAPHICS

SMAART
RECRUITMENT

WHERE IS YOUR CONTACT
CENTER(S) LOCATED?



STATE	VIC METRO	VIC REGIONAL	NSW METRO	NSW REGIONAL	QLD METRO	QLD REGIONAL	SA METRO	WA METRO	WA, SA REGIONAL	NT, ACT, TAS
% CENTRES	50%	9%	32%	5%	17%	7%	15%	8%	2%	3%



Over 250 contact centres contributed to this report, with a strong mix of contact centres from right around Australia. Melbourne was the most popular location, with 50% of respondents having a contact centre there, followed by Sydney (32%), Brisbane (17%) and Adelaide (15%). Over 31% of respondents had a regional contact centre.

DEMOGRAPHICS



WHICH TYPE OF CONTACT CENTRE DOES YOUR ORGANISATION OPERATE:

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Inhouse	72%
Outsourced/BPO	13%
Both inhouse and outsourced/BPO	14%
Other	1%



INHOUSE



OUTSOURCED
/ BPO



BOTH INHOUSE
& OUTSOURCED
/ BPO

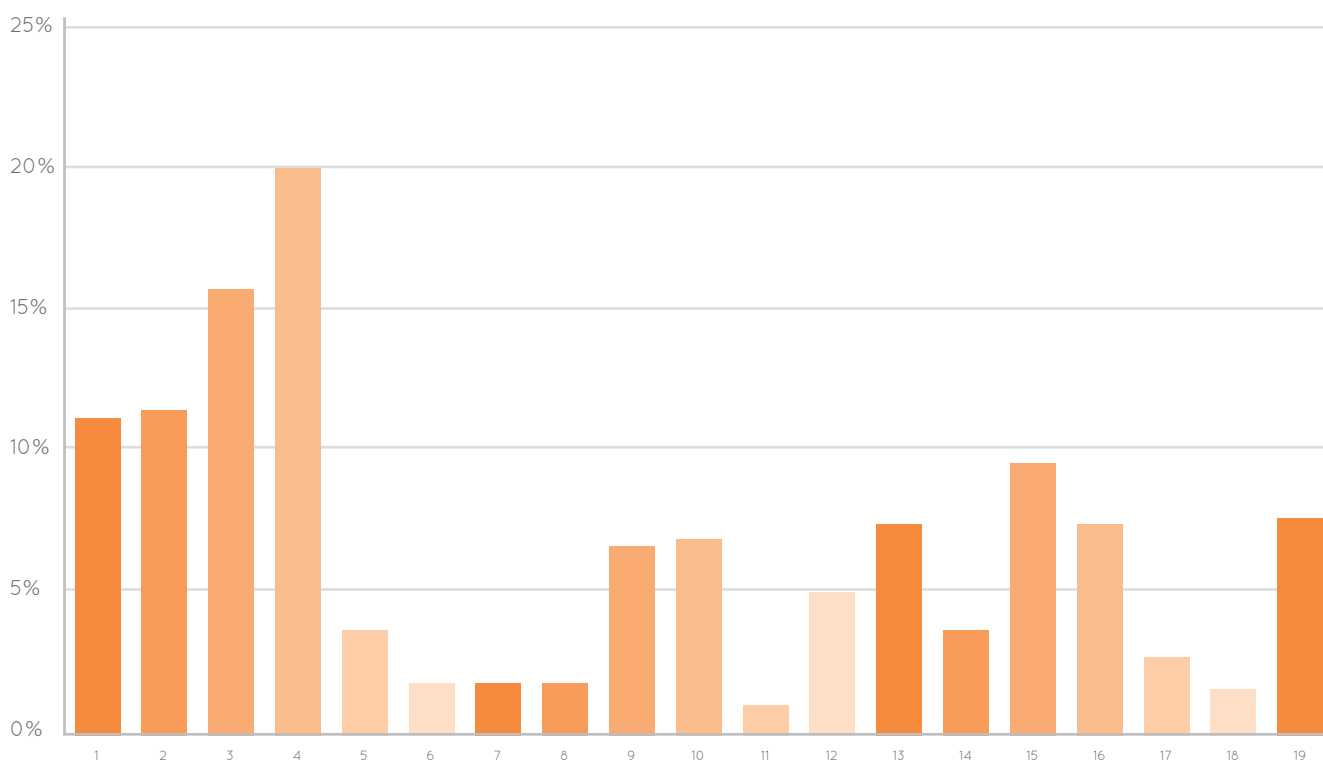
WHAT INDUSTRY (OR INDUSTRIES) DOES YOUR CONTACT CENTRE WORK IN?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
Public service	1	11%
Insurance	2	12%
Utilities – gas, electricity, telco	3	16%
Banking and finance	4	20%
IT Support	5	3%
Fundraising	6	2%
Advertising	7	2%
Manufacturing	8	2%
Automotive	9	6%
Education	10	7%

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
Entertainment	11	1%
Not for profit	12	5%
Retail/FMCG	13	8%
Facilities, property management, cleaning	14	4%
Healthcare	15	9%
Transport and logistics	16	7%
Travel	17	3%
Real Estate	18	2%
Other	19	7%



This report deliberately sought responses from contact centres of all shapes and sizes across all industries. 48% of responses came from contact centres working across utilities, banking, finance and insurance.

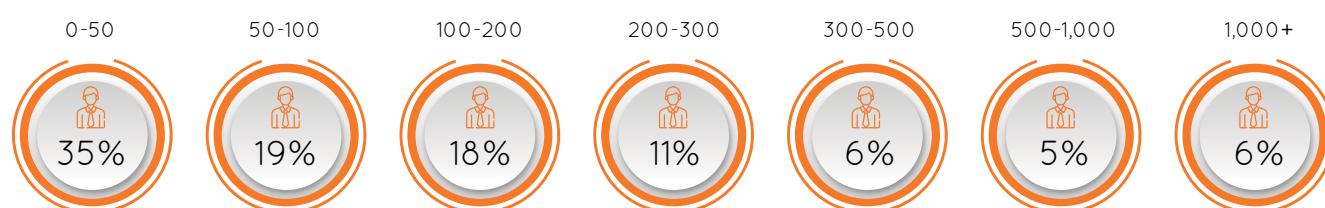


DEMOGRAPHICS

HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE EMPLOYED BY THE CONTACT CENTRE?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
0-50	35%
50-100	19%
100-200	18%
200-300	11%

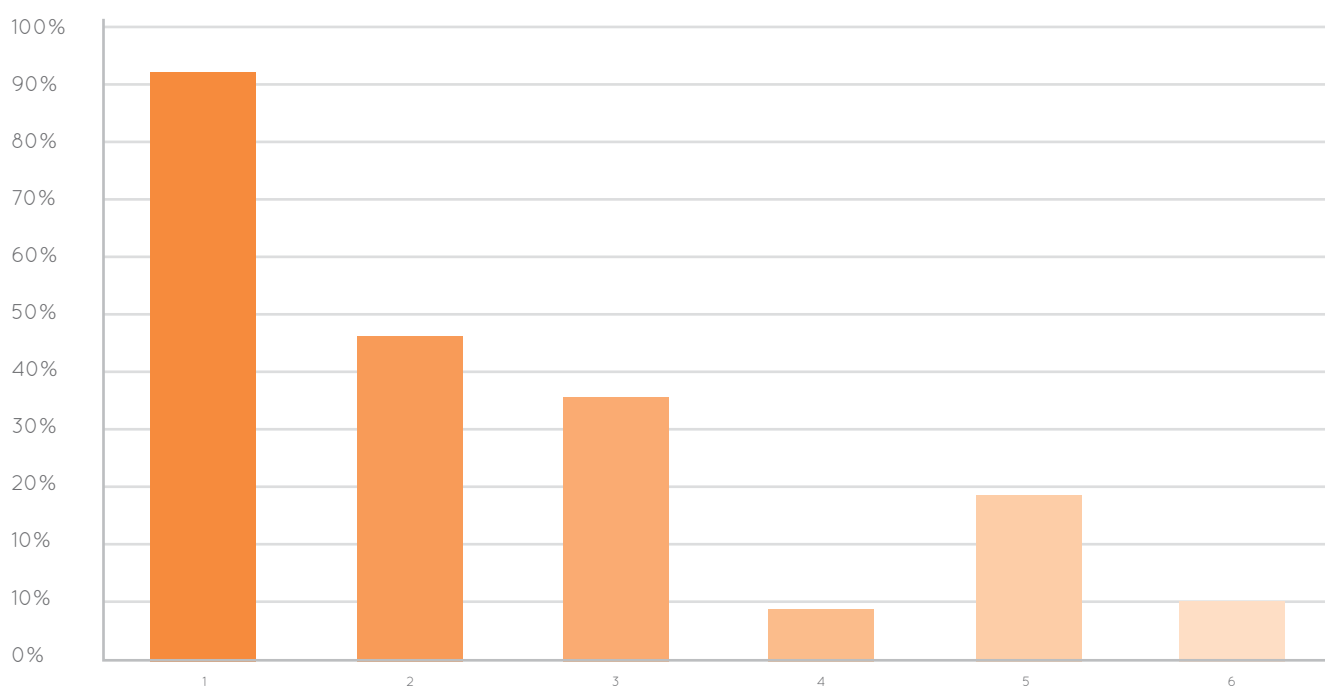
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
300-500	6%
500-1,000	5%
1,000+	6%



WHAT CALL TYPES DOES YOUR CONTACT CENTRE HANDLE?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Customer Service	92%
Sales – inbound	46%
Sales – outbound	35%

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Debt collection	9%
Technical support/help desk	19%
Other	10%

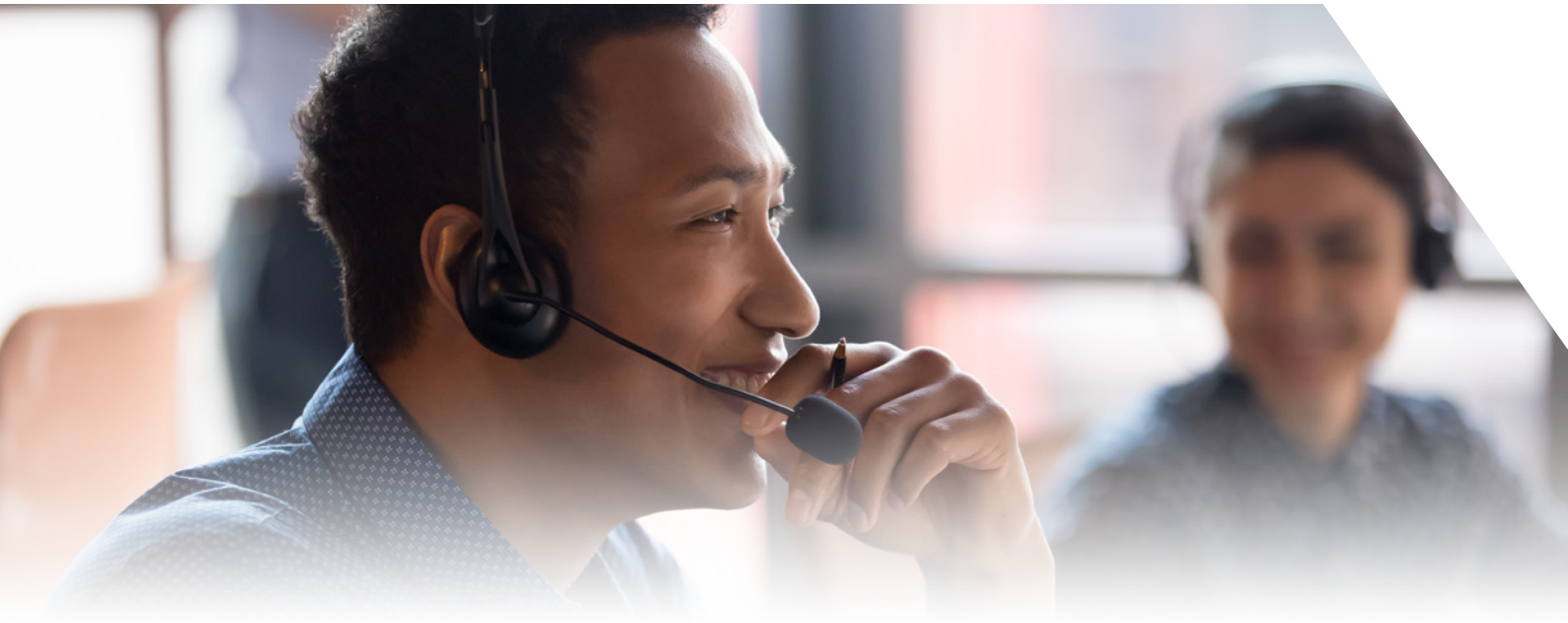


REMOTE WORKING

BEST PRACTICE REPORT



REMOTE WORKING



AT THE MOMENT, WHAT % OF YOUR CONTACT CENTRE WORKFORCE IS WORKING-FROM-HOME ON ANY GIVEN DAY?

75.8% people



This survey was completed during October and November 2021, during which time Victoria and New South Wales endured long lockdowns. This contributed to the high percentage, however many contact centres continue to have a high percentage of staff working-from-home after the lockdowns ended.

“POST COVID19” WHAT % OF YOUR CONTACT CENTRE WORKFORCE DO YOU EXPECT TO BE WORKING-FROM-HOME ON ANY GIVEN DAY?

48.1% people



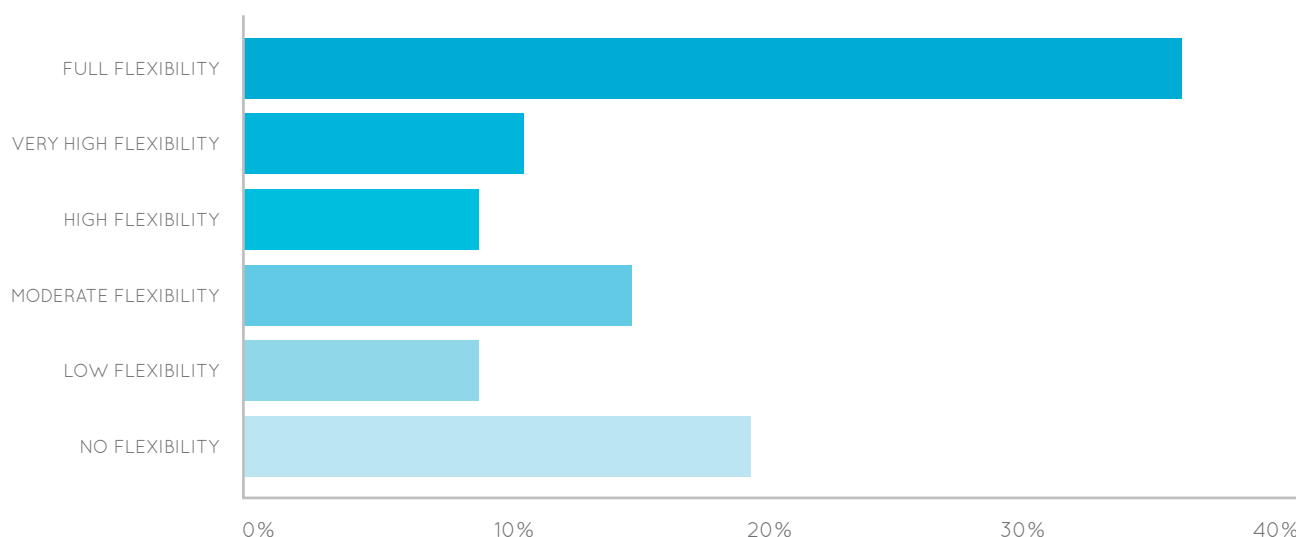
It is clear that the contact centre industry has experienced a change like never before. For many contact centres they will never return to their pre-Covid workforce, highlighted by the expectation that 48.1% of employees are expected to be working-from-home post-Covid. Later in the report we learn that Frontline Agents are heavily in favour of this.

AT THE MOMENT WHAT LEVEL OF FLEXIBILITY DO YOU GIVE YOUR CONTACT CENTRE AGENTS WITH REGARDS TO WORKING FROM HOME?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Full flexibility Agents choose where to work at least 90% of the time	37%
Very High flexibility Agents choose where to work at least 80% of the time	11%
High flexibility Agents choose where to work at least 60% of the time	9%
Moderate flexibility Agents choose where to work at least 40% of the time	14%
Low flexibility Agents choose where to work at least 20% of the time	9%
No flexibility Agents do not get to choose where to work at any time	20%



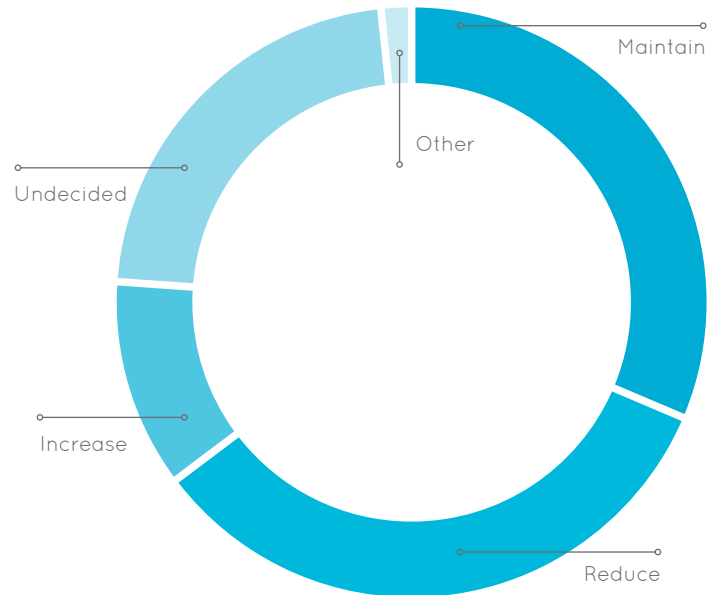
58% of contact centres are offering high-to-full flexibility. This is now a sort after requirement for many people when changing jobs.



REMOTE WORKING

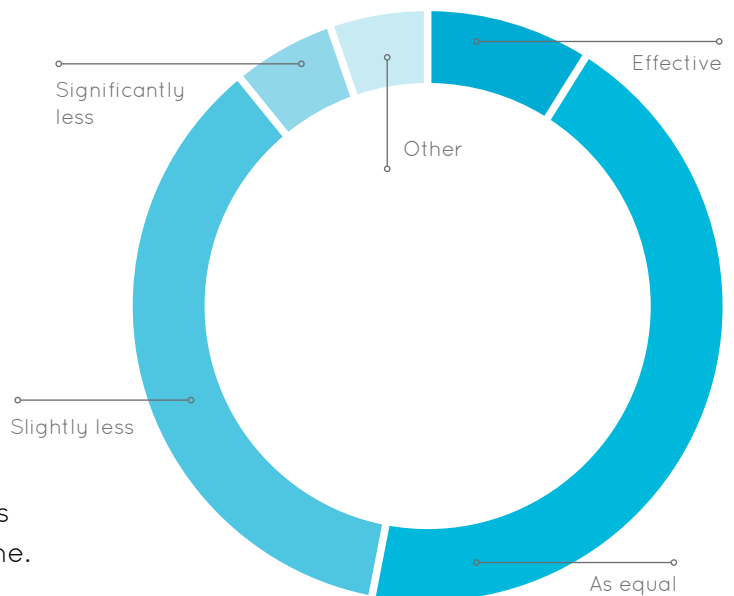
“POST COVID” HOW DO YOU EXPECT THE FLEXIBILITY OFFERED TO AGENTS TO LOOK?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
We will maintain the current level of flexibility (same as it currently is)	31%
We will reduce the level of flexibility and ask agents to come into the centre more	34%
We will increase the level of flexibility	11%
Undecided/under review	22%
Other	2%



WHEN OUR CONTACT CENTRE PERSONNEL PREDOMINANTLY WORK-FROM-HOME IT IS:

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
More effective than a work from office contact centre	9%
As equally as effective as work from office contact centre	44%
Slightly less effective than a work from office contact centre	36%
Significantly less effective than a work from office contact centre	6%
Other	5%



Overall, senior leaders feel the contact centre is slightly less effective when it is work-from-home.

Interestingly, this is in contrast with Frontline Agents reported, with only 19% reporting they are more productive when working from home (see page x)

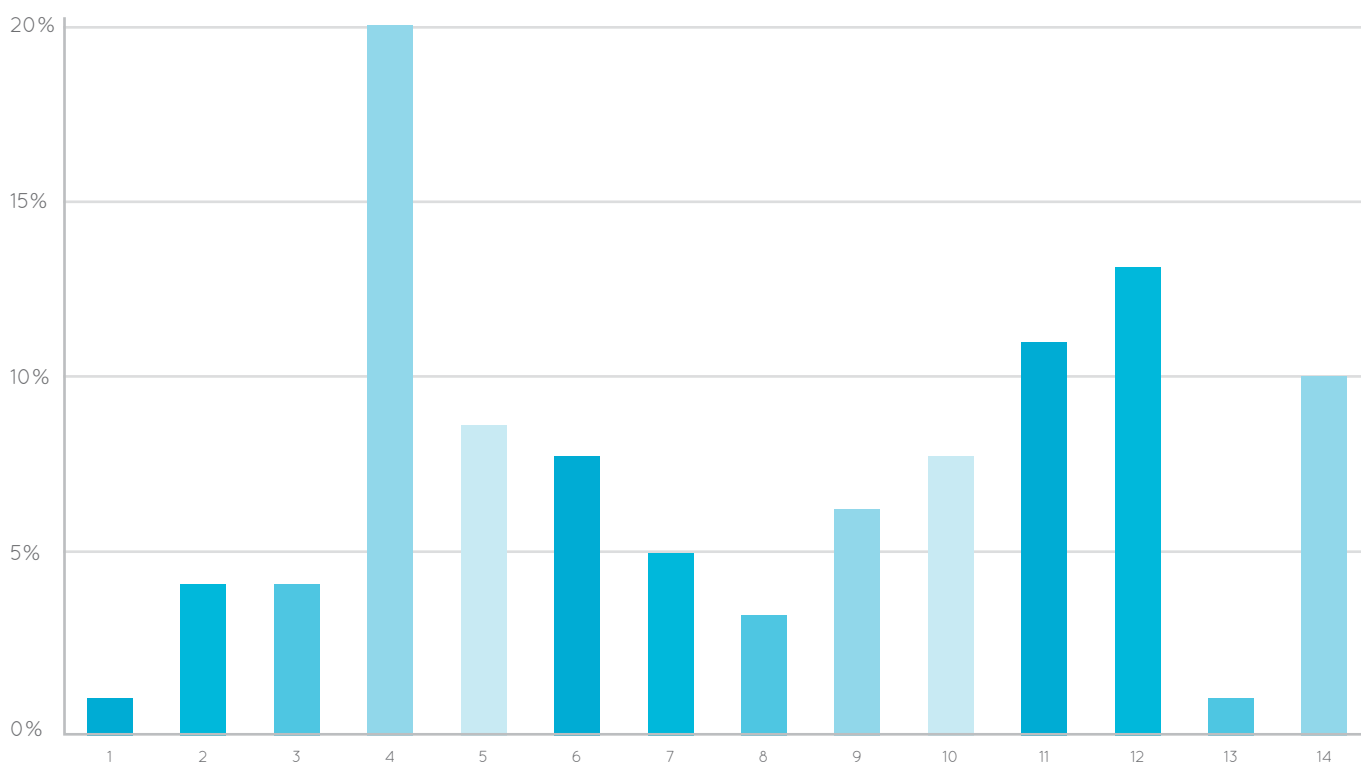
WHAT ARE YOUR TOP CONCERNS WHEN HAVING A REMOTE WORKFORCE?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
Loss of control	1	1%
Lack of visibility	2	4%
Internal communication	3	4%
Mental health	4	20%
Increasing challenges for Team Leaders	5	8%
Maintaining consistency across the contact centre	6	7%
Agent work from home setup	7	5%

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
Data security	8	3%
Cultural impacts	9	6%
Maintaining performance standards	10	7%
Disconnected workforce	11	11%
Employee engagement	12	13%
Customer satisfaction/ outcomes	13	1%
Training and development	14	10%



The top three concerns all focus on people: mental health, disconnection and employee engagement. Customer satisfaction scores are a very low concern.

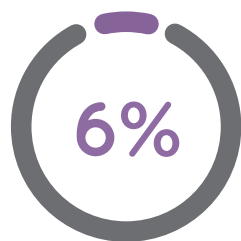


REMOTE WORKING



IS ABSENTEEISM LOWER OR HIGHER FOR THOSE WORKING FROM HOME?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Higher	6%
About the same	42%
Lower	52%



HIGHER



ABOUT THE SAME



LOWER



This is a significant finding, and is elaborated on in the Absenteeism and Attrition section of this report. The contact centre industry traditionally has struggled with higher than average absenteeism.

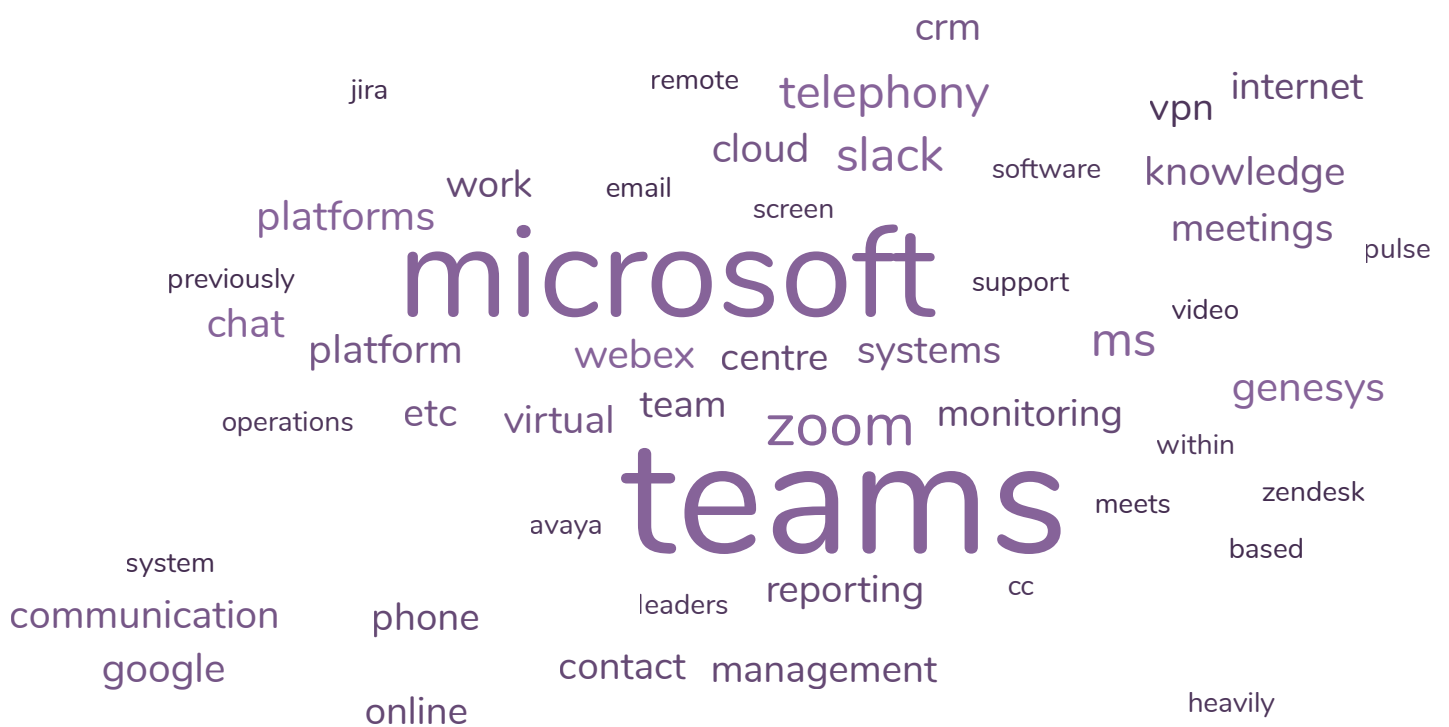
WHAT HAS BEEN THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO IMPROVE (OR MAINTAIN)
EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT FOR THOSE WORKING FROM HOME?



REMOTE WORKING



WHICH TECHNOLOGY PLATFORM OR SOFTWARE HAS INCREASED THE MOST IN ITS IMPORTANCE DUE TO WORKING FROM HOME?

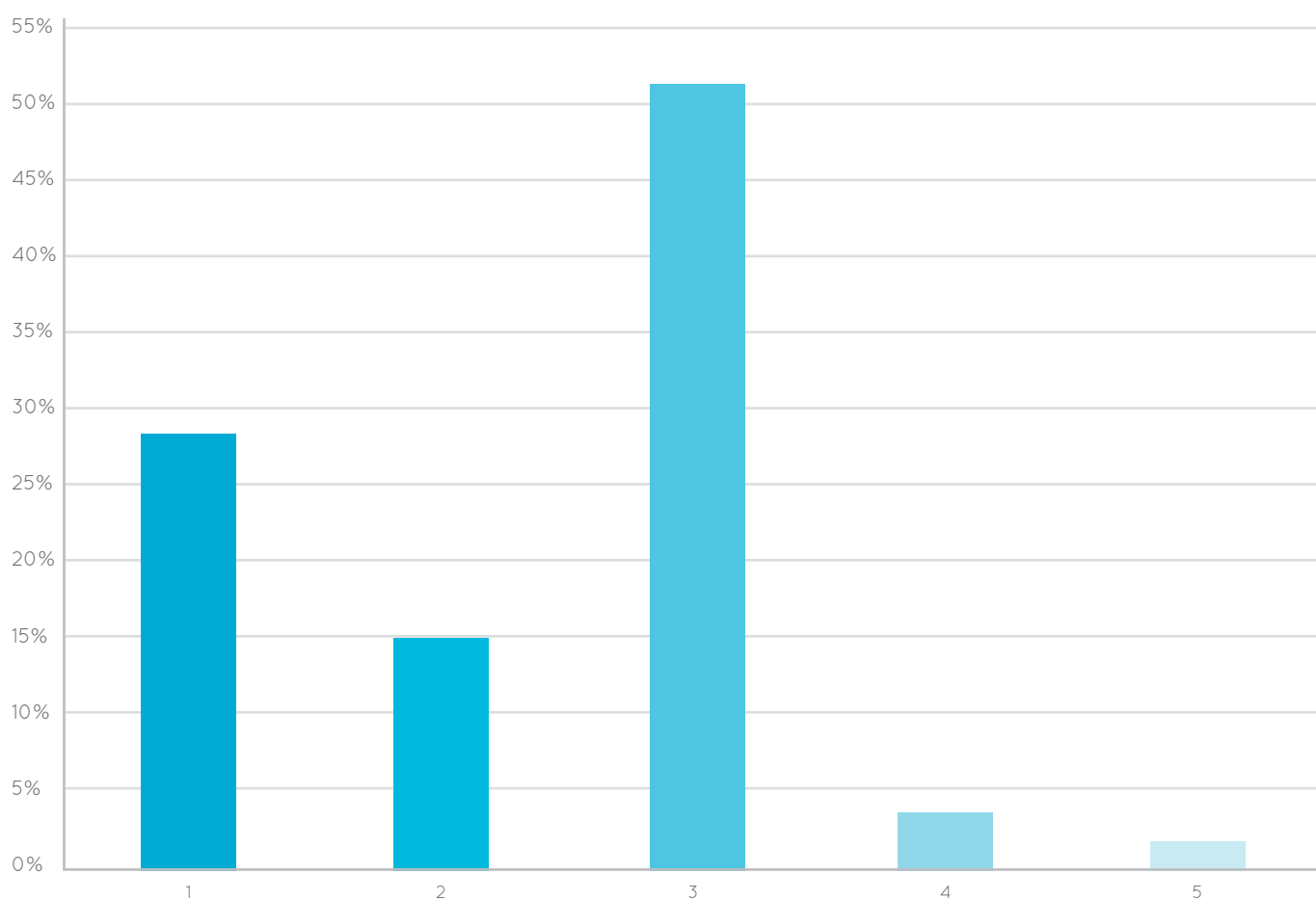


HOW CONCERNED ARE YOU THAT AGENTS ARE NOT ALWAYS WORKING WHEN WFH?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Not concerned at all	28%
Slightly concerned	16%
Slightly concerned - but only about certain individuals	51%
Very concerned	3%
Other	2%



In this day and age contact centre managers should have full visibility of their agents work, so it is interesting to see that there is some concern.



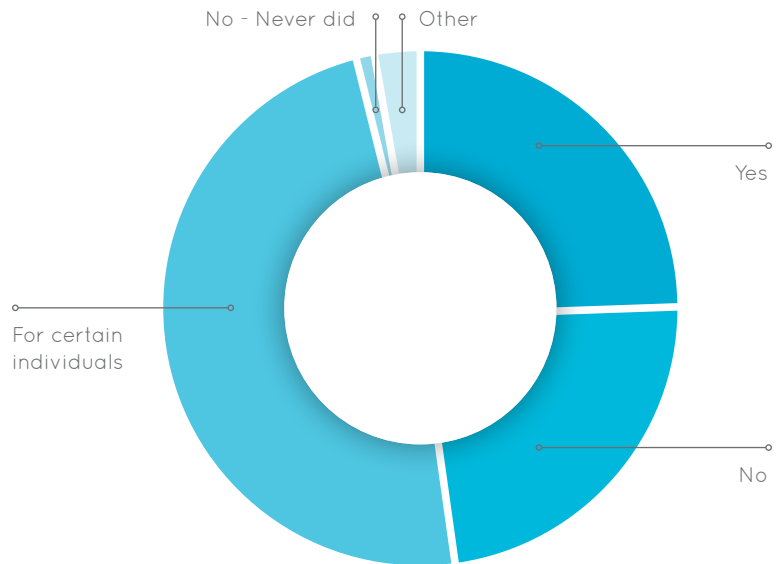
REMOTE WORKING

HAS YOUR MONITORING OF STAFF WORKING HABITS INCREASED FOR THOSE WORKING REMOTELY?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Yes	24%
No	23%
For certain individuals	48%
No – we have never monitored	1%
Other	3%

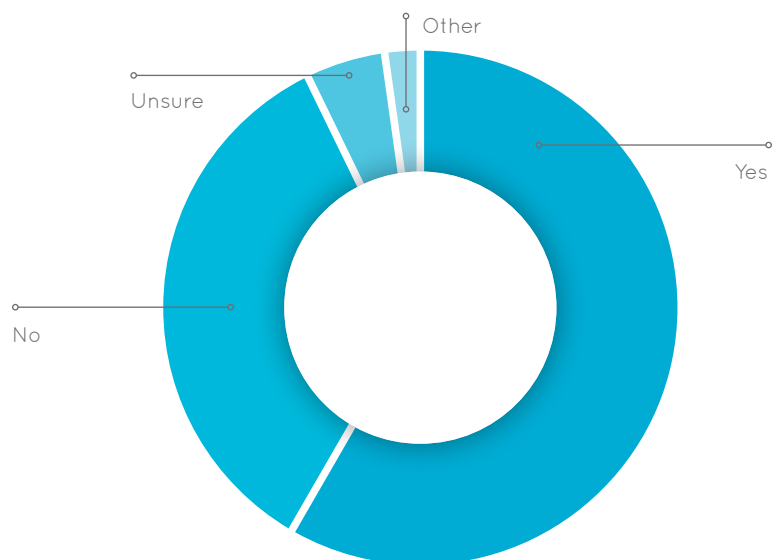


Team Leaders and Managers have lost the ability to walk the floor during the pandemic.



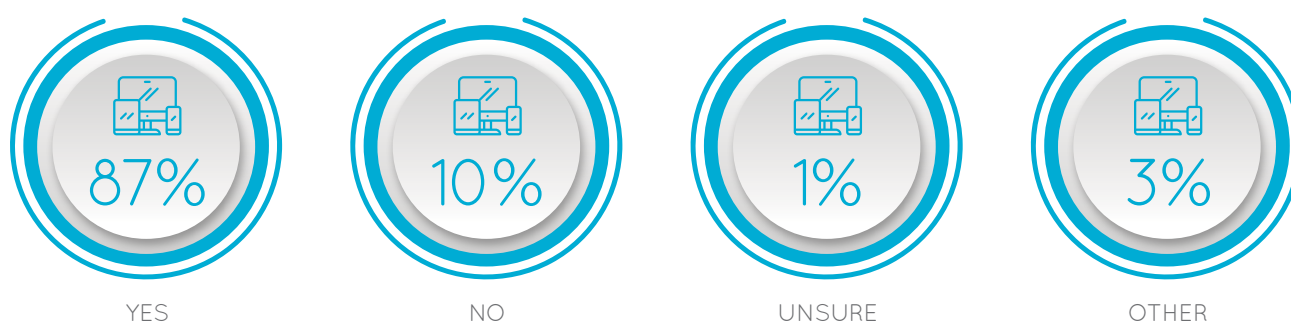
HAVE YOU IMPLEMENTED NEW POLICIES, PROCEDURES OR TOOLS TO INCREASE DATA SECURITY FOR REMOTE WORKERS?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Yes	58%
No	35%
Unsure	5%
Other	2%



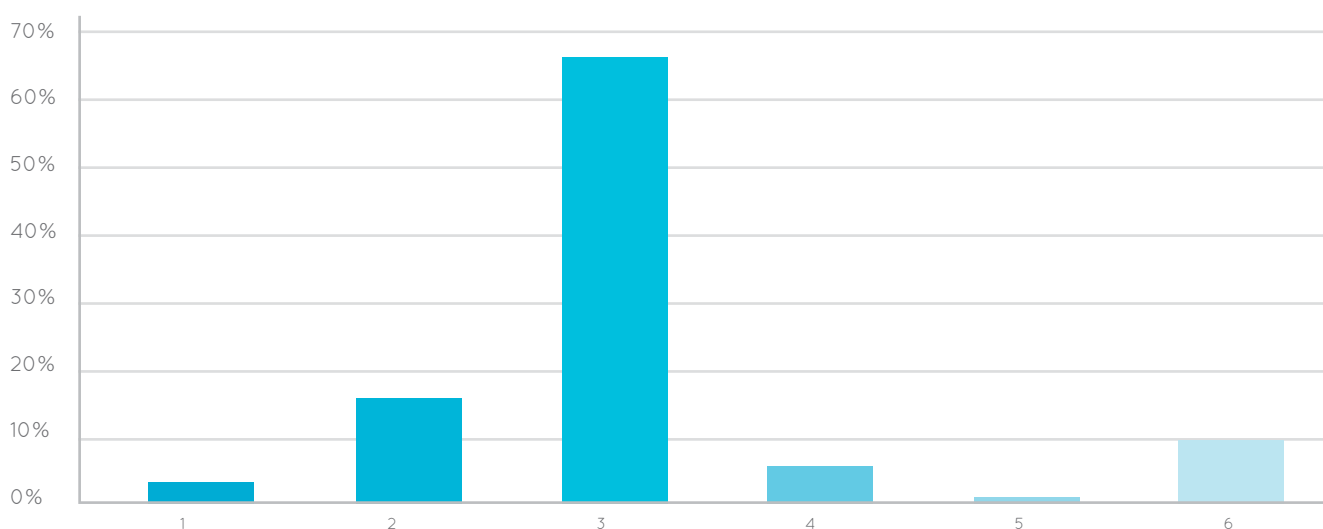
DO YOU HAVE THE TECHNOLOGY FOR TEAM LEADERS OR QA'S TO LISTEN IN ON LIVE CALLS AND THEN GIVE COACHING TO STAFF WORKING REMOTELY?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Yes	87%
No	10%
Unsure	1%
Other	3%



HAVE YOU SEEN A CHANGE IN YOUR CUSTOMER SATISFACTION RESULTS (CSAT) AND IN WHICH WAY?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
CSAT results are significantly higher when agents work in the contact centre	2%
CSAT results are slightly higher when agents work in the contact centre	15%
No change	66%
CSAT results are slightly higher when agents work from home	6%
CSAT results are significantly higher when agents work from home	1%
Other	10%



REMOTE WORKING SUMMARY

Daniel Harding

Head of Australian Operations
MaxContact Australia



Since the pandemic raged through the world the normal working habits that had been created over many years were suddenly tipped upside down overnight.

In an industry that has traditionally worked at on-premises locations and in teams and groups, it is unsurprising that the contact centre industry has been impacted. However as we look through the findings of this year's report we can see that the impact has not necessarily been negative and there are many positives to take. Who would not want to see a decrease in agent absenteeism? We have reported a decrease from 10% in the 2020/21 report to 9.2%. A small change in number, but a big impact in real terms. 35% of agents reported that the best thing about WFH is not having to travel to and from work – this could be the motivation to work rather than call in sick on those cold mornings.

With long term home working comes new challenges. Contact Centre Managers are stating that their top three concerns are mental health, employee engagement and a disconnected workforce. These challenges also correlate with the agents' responses that a lack of social interaction and boredom from living and working in the same place are the biggest challenges with working from home. So, what do we do as an industry to combat these? We have seen an overwhelming response for regular chats, hangouts, and other team-based activities such as quizzes, fun activities, and lunches to drive engagement. The challenge for WFH contact centres over the next 12 to 24 months is how they maintain this engagement as it becomes more normal.

The report does highlight a strange paradox whereby 51% of Contact Centre Managers are slightly concerned about certain individuals not always working when WFH, but 87% have access to technology that allows live coaching and monitoring. In fact, 48% say that they have increased their monitoring of certain individuals.

Agents generally enjoy working from home with almost 40% of agents responding that they are more productive at home. This is in contrast with management whereby 42% responded that their contact centre is less effective when working from home. It must be stated that a healthy 44% see equal effectiveness.

The report highlights that there is currently 76% of the contact centre workforce working from home on any given day. But what about the future? "Post Covid19" Contact Centre Managers expect this to drop to 48%. In fact, this report highlights that while 29% of the respondents will maintain the current level of flexibility, 34% will reduce the level of flexibility and ask agents to come into the contact centre more. It will be interesting to see how this decrease in flexibility effects agents considering that 46% currently have full flexibility and if they could choose, agents would opt to work from home 73% of the time. This could be the next big challenge for contact centres to navigate the journey back into the centre, or at least into a hybrid environment.

REMOTE WORKING CASE STUDY



Markus Pedersen

Contact Centre Manager

Surge Direct - surgedirect.com.au



Case Study: Surge Direct Powers Ahead With MaxContact

Surge Direct have quickly become one of the most successful and highly esteemed direct Fundraising companies across the country. Our business is built on quality conversations and transparency for our charity partners. The Surge Group work alongside several fantastic charity organisations, both Australia based and globally recognised. The Surge Group are thankful to be able to work with some of the World's greatest humanitarian organisations, animal welfare groups, and research-focused institutions.

Before

During 2020 we made the decision to build on the success experienced with our direct sales and marketing companies and expand into the tele-fundraising space. With the challenges of the pandemic, we found this area to be one that we could rely on in uncertain times. We strive to create mutually beneficial relationships built on trust, understanding, and complete transparency for our clients and as part of this vision we wanted to onboard a contact centre solution whose team met our vision and whose product could deliver.

I was fortunate enough to have seen the MaxContact platform in use in a former role and had gotten to know the product and the product owners. As a senior management team it was important we still do our due diligence on possible platforms and conducted extensive research, product demonstrations, and case studies of several platforms to ensure that we were partnering with a solution that could meet our needs to start with but also future proof the business.

The key areas that we focused on prior to launching a new contact centre were:

- 1 Location** – we have decided as a business to always operate at the contact centre and only use working from home in the last scenario.
- 2 Our people** – we have a low staff turnover in the overall business, and we wanted this to be the case in the contact centre too. We have focused on high quality recruitment and training.
- 3 Our culture** – as a new contact centre we had a fantastic opportunity to create the culture we desired from day one. We have sought a rewarding culture where our team want to be at work.
- 4 Our partners** – from the charities we work with to the suppliers we use, we wanted to ensure we were working with partners that shared our vision and beliefs.
- 5 Our technology** – it is important for Surge Direct to find technology partners that are willing to work closely with us, to understand our purpose and to be aligned with this.

REMOTE WORKING CASE STUDY

During

We were fortunate that the onboarding of the MaxContact platform coincided with the fit out of our new office in Brisbane. This allowed the team time to fully understand the solution, develop our KPI's and structure a roadmap plan for the project.

We made use of this period by really structuring the solution to make sure its configuration and settings were fine-tuned to the Surge Direct way of working. As a leading FIA member (Fundraising Institute of Australia) it is vital for us that the system is configured to be compliant with the code of ethics. We also made use of this time to train all our staff in the code of ethics, and likewise, any new members of the team are required to go through this course.

Our team, from agents to senior managers, have bought into our vision and this has allowed us to nurture a team that is committed to having positive interactions. The MaxContact product gives complete transparency so our agents can see how they and the team are trending for the day and gives the team the true accountability for the charity partner we serve.

Continuous improvement is vital when operating any business, never mind a contact centre in its infancy. We have utilised the QA system and have regular team meetings to highlight great calls, and to digest and learn from calls that could have been handled differently. Over the last year we have built up a catalogue of these interactions which are also used during the training period for new recruits.

We have a company Bulletin that is released weekly and highlights moments of exceptional quality – this is circulated throughout the entire Surge Direct family so extends far beyond the contact centre.

After

We are seeing increased functionality continually being rolled out on the contact centre platform. In 2021 this has included a new inbuilt softphone, advanced dynamic and live data filtering, agent messaging and much more. We are excited by what is to come and the fact that we can have an input into the product.

As our reputation grows so does our team and plans. We have been fortunate to work closely with all stakeholders for the past year and we're putting in plans together for the next 2 to 4 years. We partnered with a technology provider with a strong development roadmap that meets our needs as we begin to offer expanded services to our charity partners including omnichannel interactions, digital campaigns and inbound services enquiries that we can easily operate in a blended environment.

Our plans also include bringing more agents into our Melbourne office. Since going live we have operated from Brisbane, and although we have a platform that enables our agents to work from home, we have found that as a team we have preferred working together. That is not to say that it will always be this way – in the future we may operate in a hybrid environment – but while we can we are sticking with our ambition of driving an in house culture.

ABSENTEEISM & ATTRITION

BEST PRACTICE REPORT



ABSENTEEISM & ATTRITION

IS ABSENTEEISM LOWER OR HIGHER FOR THOSE WORKING FROM HOME?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Higher	5%
About the same	42%
Lower	52%
Unsure	1%



HIGHER



ABOUT THE SAME

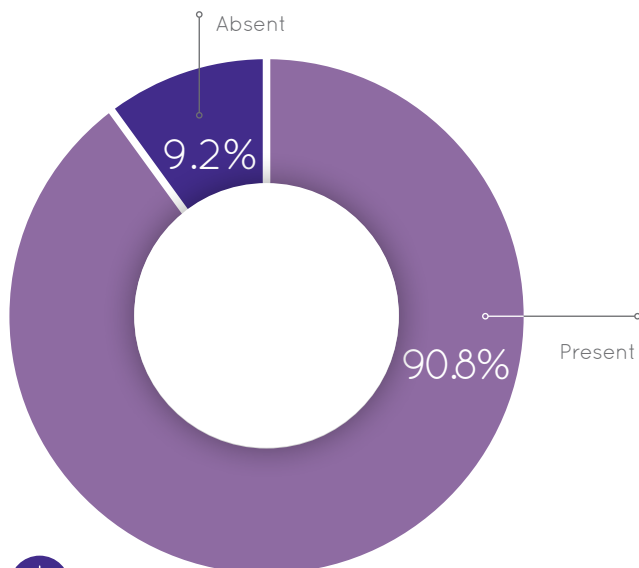


LOWER



UNSURE

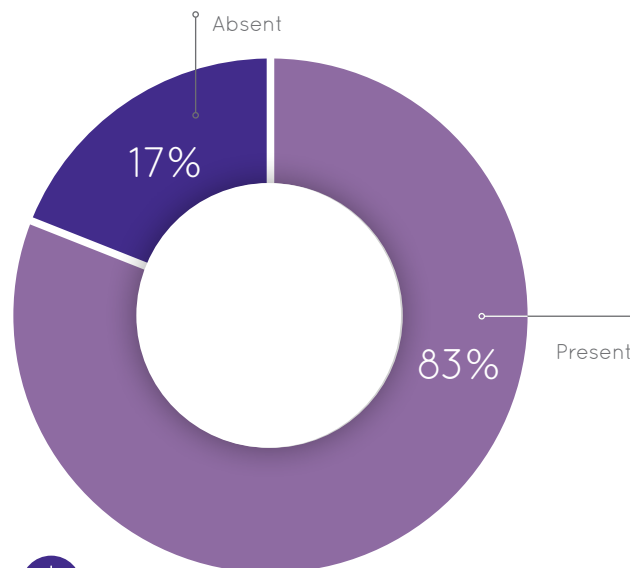
WHAT IS YOUR AVERAGE AGENT ABSENTEEISM THROUGHOUT 2021 SO FAR?



Average absenteeism has reduced from 10% in last years report to 9.2%.

Best Practice: 30% of contact centres averaged absenteeism of 5% or less throughout 2021. At the other end of the spectrum those with an average absenteeism of 15% or higher were in the bottom 18% of contact centres.

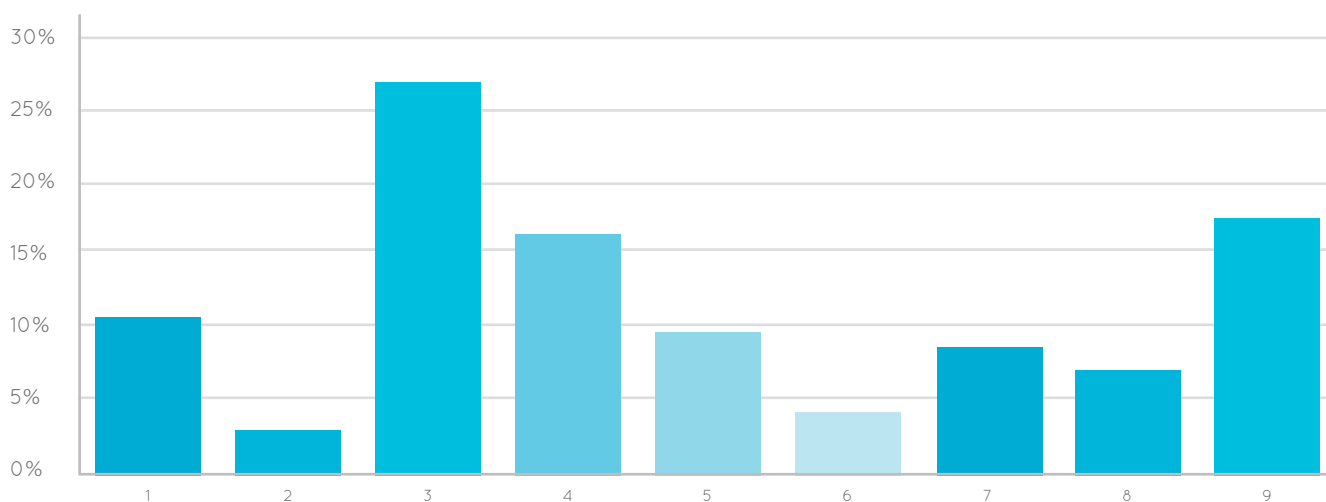
SINCE JANUARY, HOW HIGH DID AGENT ABSENTEEISM REACH AT ITS WORST?



“Peak absenteeism” (the time of the year when absenteeism was at its worst) has also has dropped from 19% to 17%

WHAT LEAD TO THE SPIKE IN ABSENTEEISM?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
A seasonal spike in work	1	11%
Post a seasonal spike in work	2	3%
Increase in illness due to winter etc	3	26%
An increase in the challenge of the work	4	16%
A sudden transition to WFH due to a lockdown	5	9%
A return to working from the office	6	4%
Covid realted issues	7	8%
Mental health or fatigue	8	7%
Other	9	17%



ABSENTEEISM & ATTRITION

OVERALL, HOW HAS AGENT ABSENTEEISM COMPARED IN 2021 TO PRE-COVID19 TIMES?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Higher	25%
Lower	47%
The same	28%



HIGHER



LOWER



THE SAME

DO YOU FEEL THAT GREATER WFH FLEXIBILITY REDUCES ABSENTEEISM?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Yes	73%
No	13%
Unsure	10%
Other	4%



YES



NO



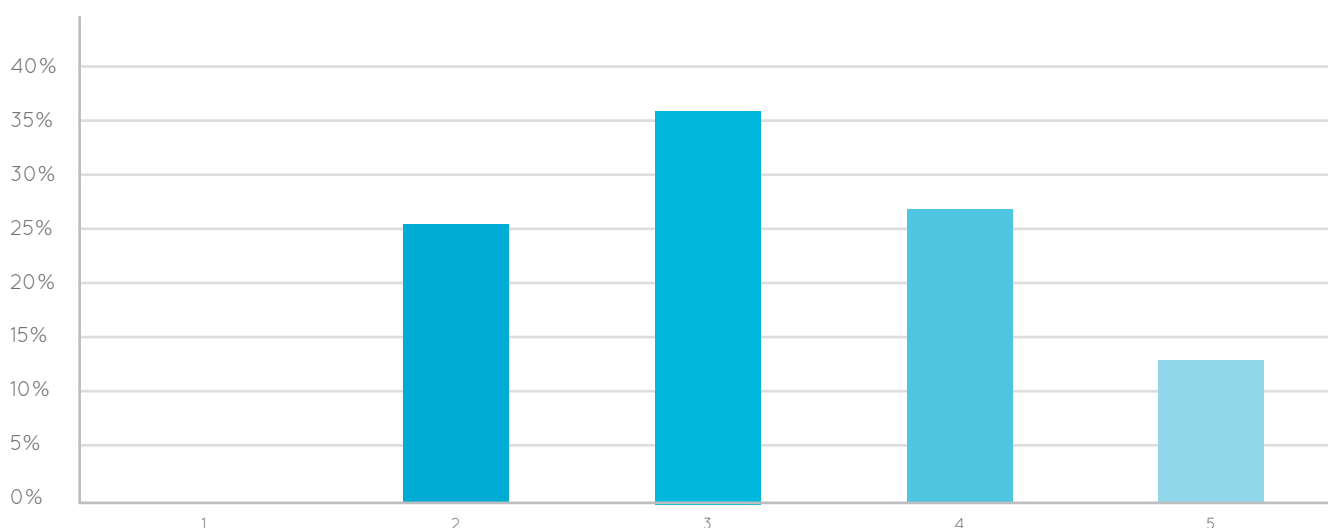
UNSURE



OTHER

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR OVERALL LEVEL OF ABSENTEEISM?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
It is out of control and we really don't know how to reel it in	1	0%
It's a real challenge that we are struggling with	2	24%
It's about normal	3	36%
We feel our level of absenteeism is good	4	27%
We feel it is very good	5	13%



In line with absenteeism numbers being lower, the number of contact centres reporting absenteeism as “a real challenge” or “out of control” has decreased from 33% to 24%.

40% of contact centres feel their level of absenteeism is “good” or “very good” compared with 23% in the previous report.

ABSENTEEISM & ATTRITION

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR OVERALL LEVEL OF AGENT ATTRITION OVER THE PAST 12 MONTHS?



Best Practice: 20% of contact centres overall level of attrition over the past 12 months was less than 10%

52% of contact centres averaged attrition between 10-30%

17% of contact centres averaged attrition of 50% or higher.

WHEN AN AGENT LEAVES YOUR CONTACT CENTRE, WHERE DO THEY GO?

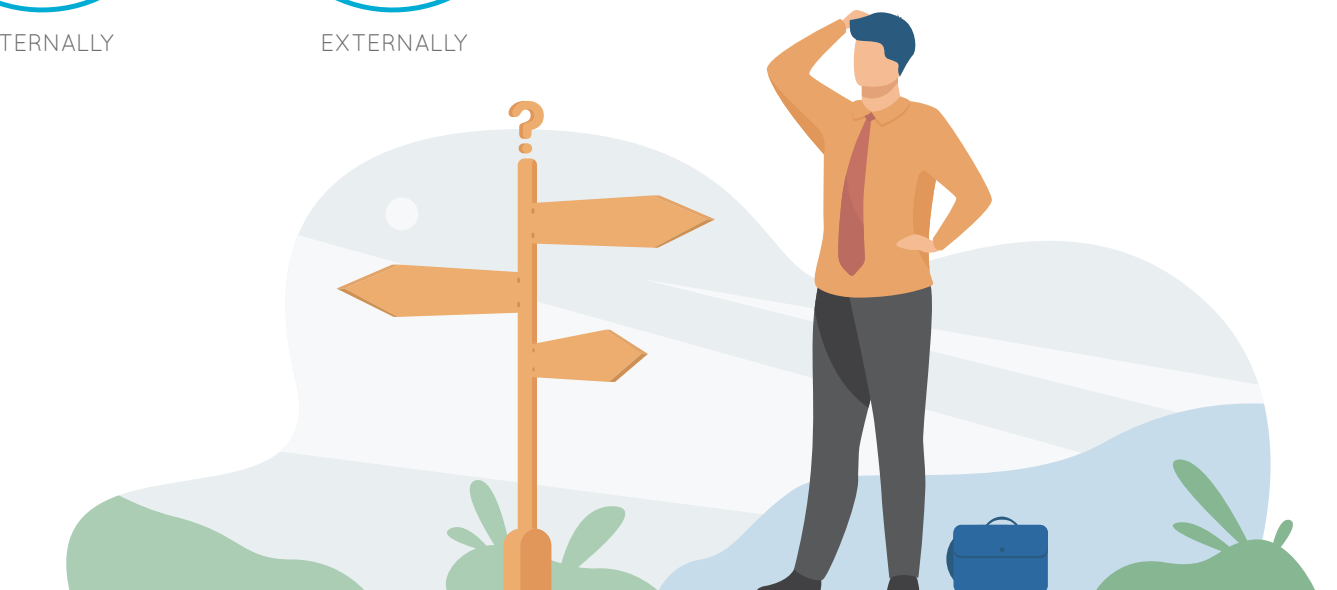
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
% move internally (to another department)	39%
% move externally (leave the organisation)	61%



INTERNALLY

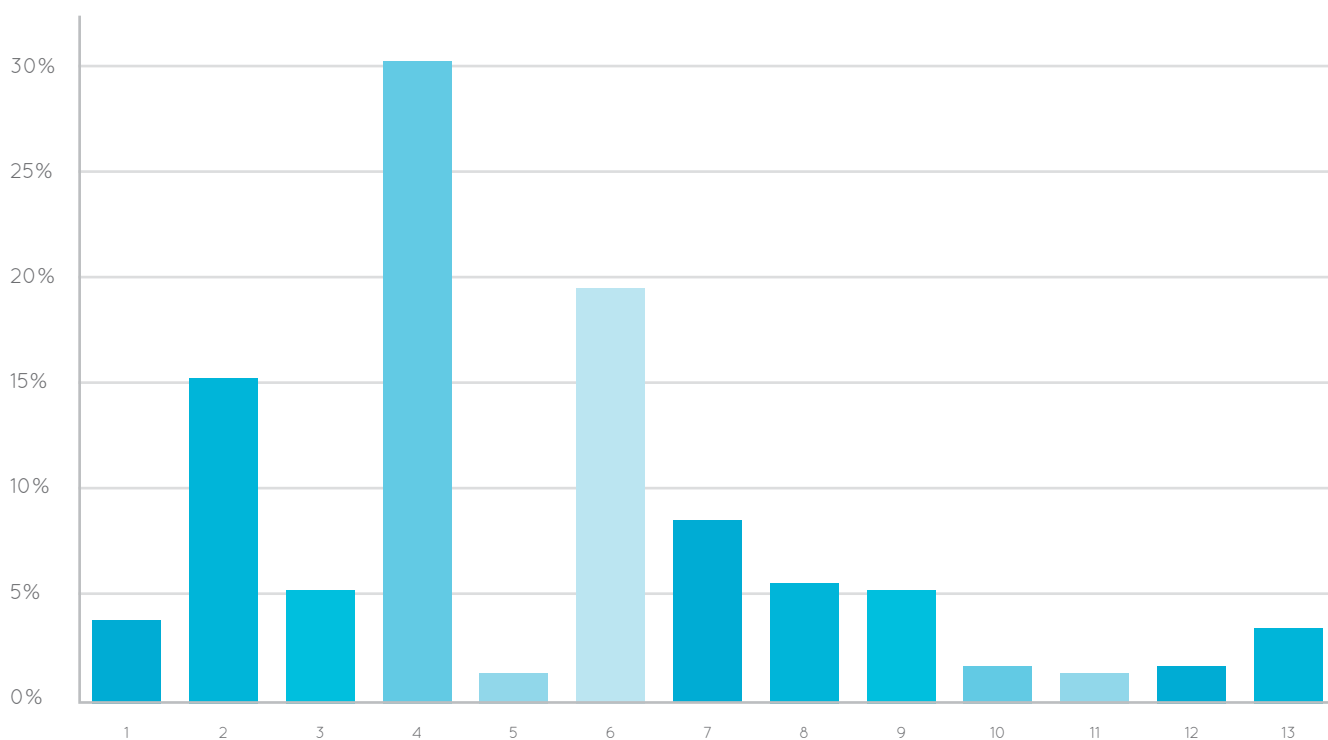


EXTERNALLY



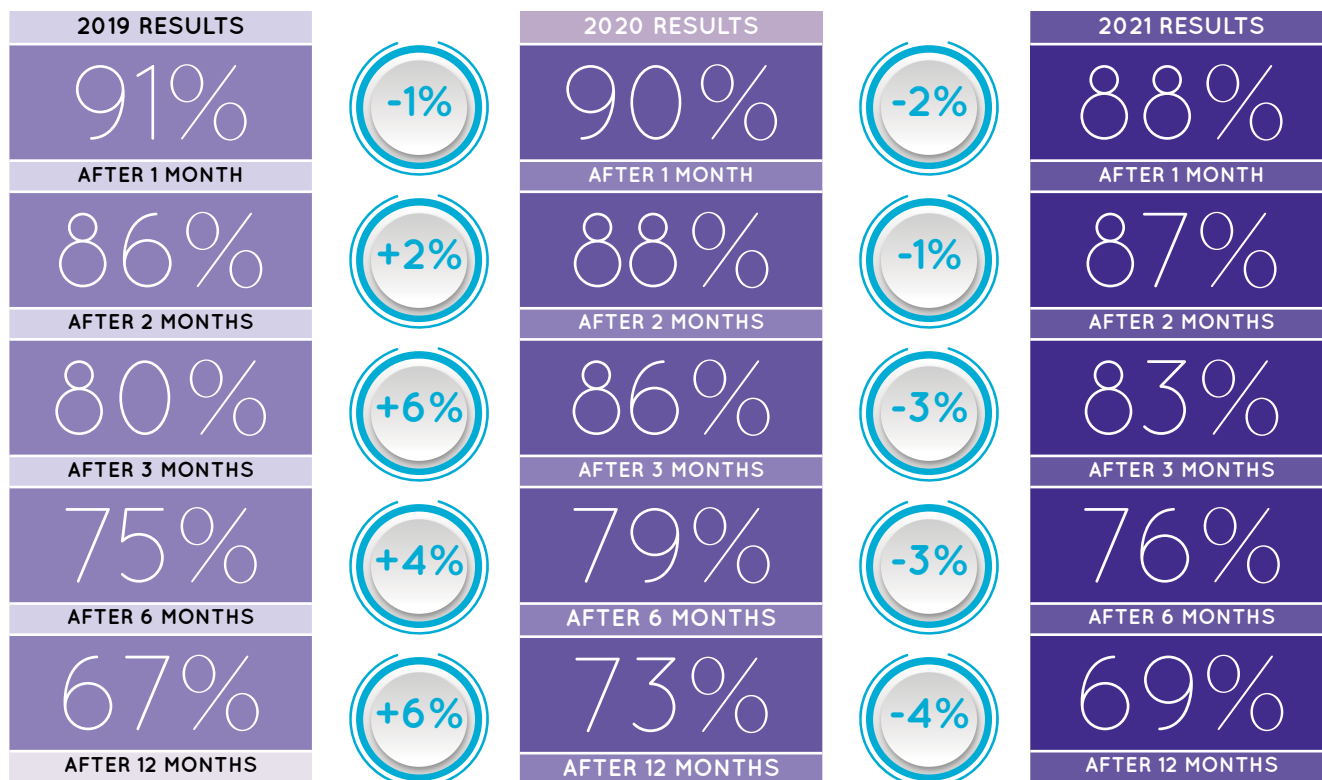
WHAT ARE THE TWO MOST COMMON REASONS THAT AGENTS CHOOSE TO LEAVE

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
Their relationship with their Team Leader	1	3%
Financial reasons	2	16%
Only a short term position	3	5%
Pursue a different career	4	30%
Pursue study	5	1%
Personal reasons	6	19%
Dissatisfaction with the work	7	8%
Cultural mismatch	8	6%
Not aligned with organisational purpose	9	5%
Too hard to tell	10	2%
Lack of remote working/flexibility	11	1%
Health impact	12	2%
Other	13	3%



ABSENTEEISM & ATTRITION

WHAT PERCENTAGE OF NEW FRONT LINE AGENTS WERE STILL EMPLOYED AFTER:



Our 2020 report showed a small but steady increase in retention at the 3, 6 and 12 month mark. This report shows the opposite - a small but steady decrease in the number of agents employed at each measuring point. Overall retention after 12 months has dropped from 73% to 69%.

BEST PRACTICE - CONTACT CENTRES WHO HAVE 100% RETENTION

RETENTION	2019 RESULTS	2020 RESULTS	2021 RESULTS
After 1 month	38%	53%	44%
After 3 months	23%	36%	26%
After 6 months	16%	23%	18%



Important to note that the 2020 results were recorded towards the end of the initial first few rounds of long lockdowns when job security had increased in its importance. Therefore it is not surprising to see 2019 and 2021 results are fairly similar.

WHAT IS YOUR PERCEPTION OF YOUR ATTRITION COMPARED WITH OTHER CONTACT CENTRES?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
It's lower (our attrition is better than the average)	45%
It's about the same	37%
It's higher (our attrition is worse than the average)	19%



LOWER



SAME



HIGHER

HOW DIFFICULT DO YOU BELIEVE IT IS FOR FRONTLINE AGENTS TO MAKE CHANGES TO THEIR ROSTER?

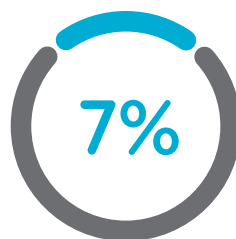
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
It is easy	43%
It is moderately difficult	45%
It is very difficult	7%
Other	5%



EASY



MODERATELY
DIFFICULT



VERY
DIFFICULT



OTHER

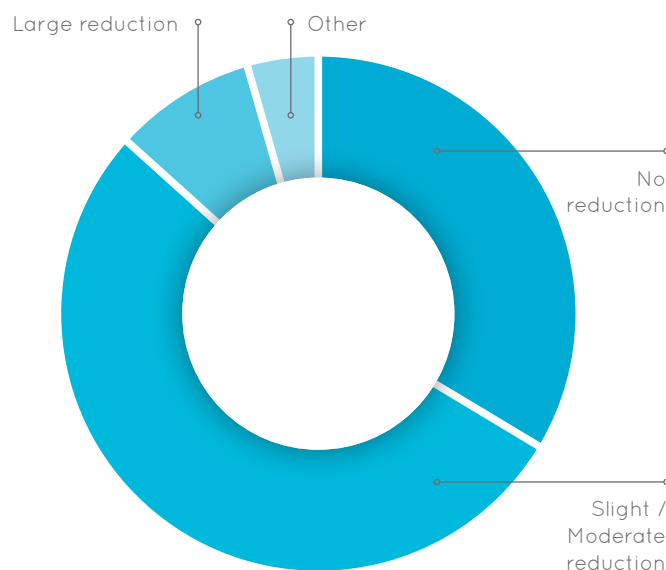
ABSENTEEISM & ATTRITION

IF IT WERE EASIER FOR TEAM MEMBERS TO MAKE CHANGES TO THEIR ROSTER, WHAT IMPACT DO YOU BELIEVE IT WOULD HAVE ON THEIR SICK LEAVE?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
No reduction	34%
A slight to moderate reduction	53%
A large to significant reduction	9%
Other	4%



Reductions in absenteeism have historically been difficult to achieve and even harder to maintain. 62% of respondents believe that making it easier for team members to make changes to their rosters would reduce sick leave.



DO YOU BELIEVE TEAM MEMBERS WOULD BE LESS LIKELY TO LEAVE THE ORGANISATION IF IT WERE EASIER FOR THEM TO MAKE CHANGES TO THEIR ROSTER?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Yes	43%
No	57%



Contact Centre Managers did not consider roster flexibility as important as Frontline Agents (see The Role Of The Frontline Agent) with 61.6% of Agents agreeing that they would be less likely to leave the organisation if roster changes were easier, while only 43.4% of Contact Centre Managers agreed that team members would be less likely to leave.

ABSENTEEISM & ATTRITION SUMMARY



Tim Buzza

Chief Customer Officer

attune.work



The contact centre has traditionally had high levels of absenteeism, however things improved throughout 2021.

Average absenteeism has reduced from 10% to 9.2% and “peak absenteeism” (the time of the year when absenteeism is at its worst) has dropped from 19% to 17%. While an improvement in normal absenteeism of 0.8% sounds like a small amount, to a contact centre with 500 staff that equates to 10 extra staff working per day (around 2,400 days worked per year). Almost one in three contact centres averaged absenteeism of 5% or less throughout 2021.

The lower levels of absenteeism coincide with the overwhelming response that 51.7% of contact centres have lower absenteeism from those working from home, 41.7% reporting it to be the same and only 5.6% of Australian contact centres reporting that absenteeism is worse for those working from home. Overall only 24% of contact centres reported absenteeism as being a challenge – a decrease from 33% in last year’s report.

Peaks in absenteeism continue to be driven by regular occurrences (increase in illness due to winter accounted for 26.1%) however a wider range of Covid-19 impacts such as sudden transitions to WFH (8.7%), Covid related health issues (8.1%), mental health or fatigue (6.8%) were measured and recorded for the first time.

When it comes to attrition, contact centres on average reported a loss of 26% of their agents throughout 2021. Leading the way was around 1 in 5 contact centres that reported attrition of less than 20%. At the other end of the scale 17% of contact centres have a “revolving door” of sorts with attrition at 50% or higher. We hold our breath and wait to see what impact the “great resignation” will have throughout 2022.

Year on year there has been small fluctuations in the tenure of new contact centre agents with 83% still employed after 3 months and 69% after 12 months. Around one quarter of contact centres report 100% retention of new agents at the 3 month mark.

Looking forward, we anticipate that the tightening labour market coupled with the trend towards reshoring work back into Australia will keep absenteeism and attrition high on the agenda of call centre leaders. The battle for talent has perhaps never been more challenging and businesses will need to keep innovating and evolving their employee value proposition to gain a competitive edge.

ABSENTEEISM & ATTRITION

CASE STUDY

Just as it has helped our people at IAG, we know that Attune has the potential to benefit many different businesses and bring about meaningful change to the lives of their employees.

IAG, Australia's largest general insurer and owner of NRMA Insurance and CGU Insurance, implemented Attune to support flexible working in their contact centres.

IAG believes that a flexible workplace is important for attracting and retaining the best talent.

IAG recognised that flexibility is different for everyone and that empowering employees to make shift changes on their own terms is the best way to provide work-life balance.

Existing solutions for flexible scheduling - shift swaps, shift bidding etc. - did not provide the flexibility needed for employees to fit work into their lives.

Before introducing Attune shift changes in the IAG contact centres were quite manual and often involved several conversations between the employee, their manager and colleagues.

How Attune is helping IAG

Attune is used by more than 350 employees in the NRMA Sales and Service contact centre, enabling more than 2500 shift changes per month. That is a 10x increase in the number of shift changes being made prior to Attune.

In FY20 Attune helped the call centres achieve a 23% decrease in absenteeism and a 30% reduction in attrition.

"What we've seen is that some people are making small changes that can make a big difference to their lives. For example, we had one person changing their shift by just 15 minutes so they could leave a bit earlier, which allowed them to beat the traffic and make it home in time for the after-school pick-ups and dinner".

Amanda Whiting Group Executive – IAG

How Attune is helping people

Users of Attune said they "feel more in control of their lives" and reported a significant improvement in self-assessed mental wellbeing (WEMWBS).

"As a mother of a child with ongoing medical needs, flexibility is everything to me. Her medical care, coupled with the needs of all my children, meant that prior to Attune I was absent from work a lot.

Attune empowered me to take control of my work time and I'm no longer torn between being there for my family or our customers".

Megan Wedderburn – IAG

ABSENTEEISM & ATTRITION CASE STUDY



How does Attune work?

- Before Attune, the process of changing shifts at IAG contact centres often involved several conversations, which was time consuming and labour intensive.
- Attune uses an algorithm and digital economy to manage supply and demand for different work times, automating the process. This empowers contact centre employees to make changes to their shifts without seeking manager or workforce planning approval.
- Employees can earn 'flexcoins' by opting to change their shift and help the business. Once they have enough coins, they can then use these to make shift changes when they need to. If the employee has enough coins in their wallet, the shift change is automatically and instantly approved.

About Attune

Attune is a radically better way for call centre agents to manage their rosters.

Attune provides up to a 10x increase in roster flexibility by empowering agents to make changes to their shifts, in real-time, without lengthy or restrictive approval processes.

- Attune integrates directly with existing workforce planning systems.
- Shift changes are gamified, earning and spending flexcoins with each shift change.
- Attune algorithms price each workload interval, factoring service levels, call volumes, required staff and more to compute the flexcoin cost of each shift change.
- The business is never worse off.



EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

BEST PRACTICE REPORT

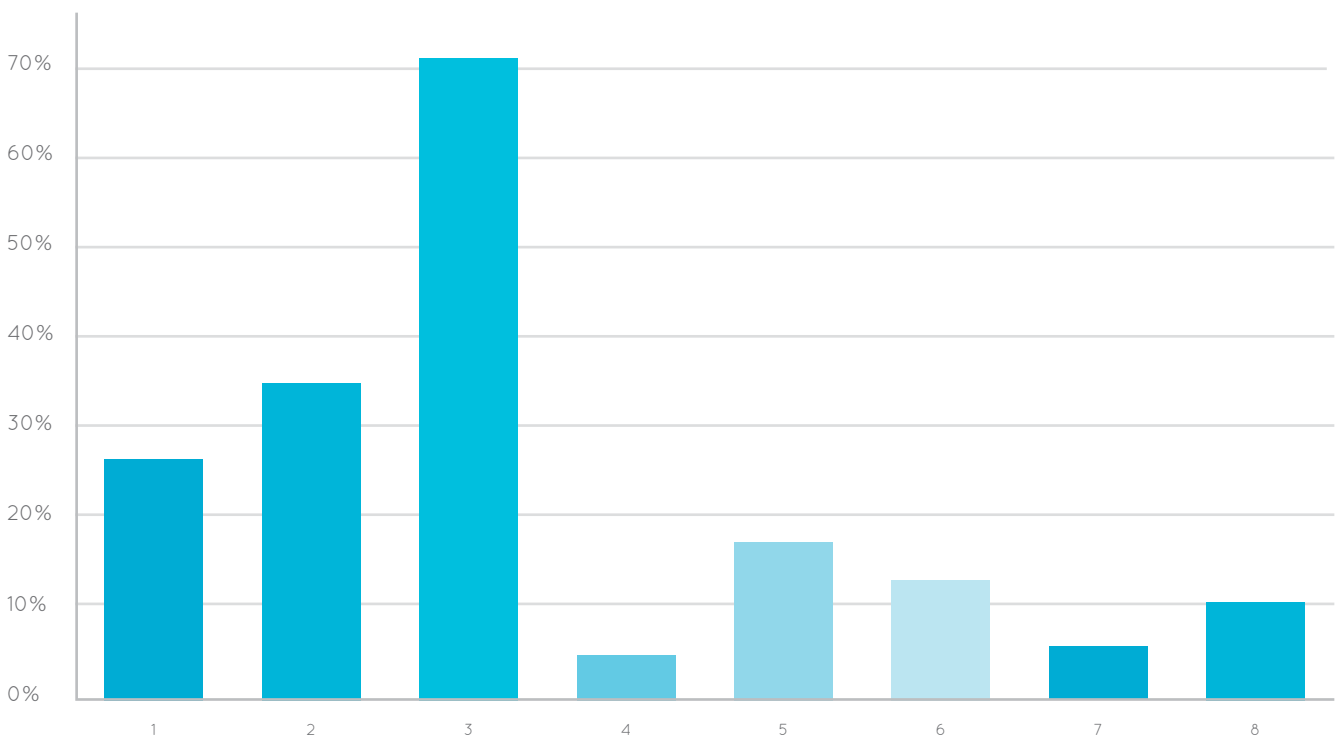


EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT



WHAT TOOLS DO YOU HAVE IN PLACE TO MEASURE EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT? PLEASE TICK ALL THAT APPLY.

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
Real time pulse surveys (such as Teamgage)	1	25%
Contact Centre specific Engagement Survey	2	34%
Organisational wide Engagement Survey	3	72%
Government or Department Engagement Survey (Government Contact Centres only)	4	3%
Employee Net Promoter Score (eNPS)	5	18%
No formal measurement, but we do monitor other data such as absenteeism, attrition, etc.	6	12%
We do not have any tools to measure Engagement	7	4%
Other	8	10%

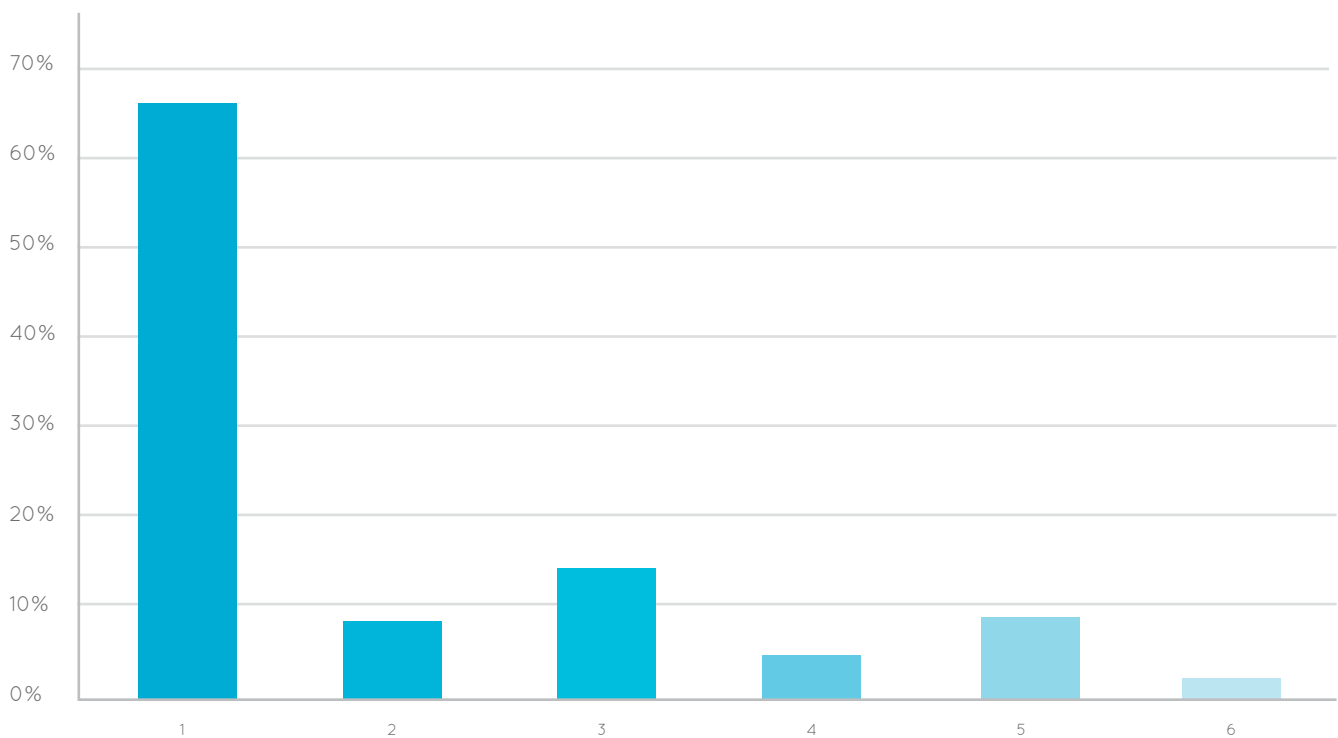


Close to 60% have tools to specifically measure employee engagement within the Contact Centre, with 25% of them being real time pulse surveys. Over 70% of Contact Centres use organisational wide surveys to measure employee engagement. Whereas 15% have no formal way to measure this. As Peter Drucker says “you can’t improve it, if you can’t measure it”. So the key to being able to improve employee engagement and positively impact on culture, is to first have mechanisms to be able to measure this - preferably in real time, with immediate access to results wherever possible.

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

HOW ARE EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT RESULTS SHARED WITH CONTACT CENTRE STAFF?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
Results are made available to all staff, and they have input into actions and initiatives	1	64%
Results are made available to all staff, but there is no input into actions and initiatives	2	9%
Results are shared with the Contact Centre leadership team, but not agents	3	13%
Results are only shared with Contact Centre Manager and above	4	4%
We do not measure, or results are not shared	5	9%
Other	6	1%



“Close to 65% of Contact Centres not only share the results of employee engagement surveys, they also allow staff to have input into suggesting and implementing initiatives. 26% do not share results with anyone other than leaders, if at all. Research shows that when people feel that they are not being heard, they will quickly lose interest in providing feedback and over time, survey response rates may decline. No matter how good, bad or downright ugly the results may be, hiding the results or sweeping them under the carpet will only be detrimental in the long run. Whereas being open and transparent with the results, and seeking input and feedback into improvements, will go a long way towards building trust and increasing employee engagement.”

IF YOU MEASURE EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT, WHAT WAS YOUR LATEST ENGAGEMENT SCORE? PLEASE USE A NUMBER OUT OF 100.

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Out of 100	75.6



The average employee engagement score is 75.6 across the industry. The top 10% of contact centres had employee engagement scores of 88 or higher.

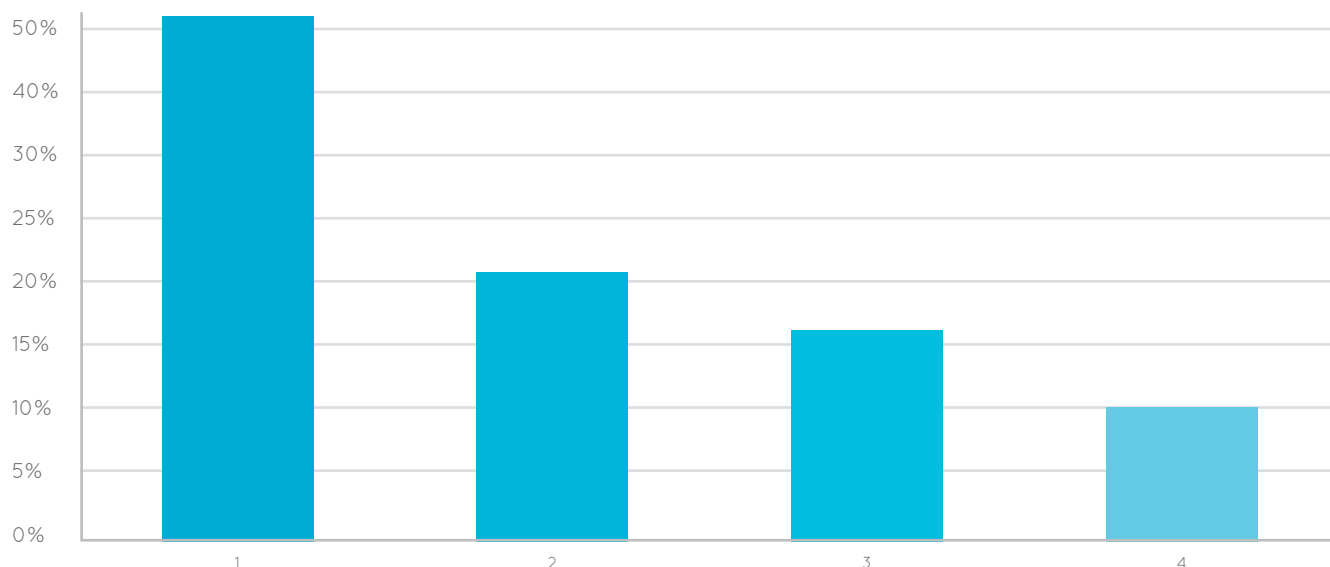


Contact Centres With Very High Employee Engagement Scores



HOW DOES YOUR LAST SCORE COMPARE WITH THE PREVIOUS SCORE?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
It is higher (engagement has improved)	1	52%
It has remained the same	2	22%
It is lower (our staff are less engaged)	3	16%
N/A. We do not measure	4	10%



EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

HOW MUCH DO YOU AGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT: STAFF ARE ENCOURAGED TO PUT FORWARD THEIR IDEAS AND FEEDBACK

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Completely agree	73%
Somewhat agree	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	1%
Somewhat disagree	2%
Completely disagree	0%



COMPLETELY
AGREE



SOMEWHAT
AGREE



NEITHER



SOMEWHAT
DISAGREE



COMPLETELY
DISAGREE



This report shows that across all three levels (Frontline Agents, Team Leaders and Contact Centre Managers) psychological safety is generally present. This should be called out as a positive, especially given the challenges of the last few years.

HOW MUCH DO YOU AGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT: IT IS A SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR STAFF TO PUT THEIR HANDS UP WHEN THEY HAVE MADE A MISTAKE

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Completely agree	73%
Somewhat agree	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	1%
Somewhat disagree	0.65%
Completely disagree	0%



COMPLETELY
AGREE



SOMEWHAT
AGREE



NEITHER



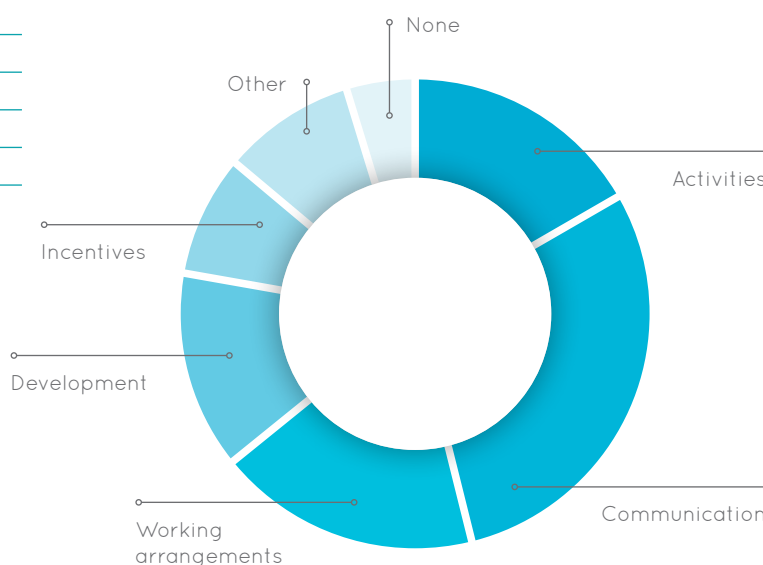
SOMEWHAT
DISAGREE



COMPLETELY
DISAGREE

WHAT ACTIVITIES / INITIATIVES HAVE YOU IMPLEMENTED OVER THE PAST 6-12 MONTHS THAT HAVE HAD THE MOST POSITIVE IMPACT ON EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
Activities	1	17%
Communication	2	30%
Working arrangements	3	18%
Development	4	14%
Incentives	5	8%
Other	6	9%
None	7	5%



30% of Contact Centres cited an improvement in communication, or the implementation of a targeted and varied communication strategy, for the increase in employee engagement. Offering flexible working arrangements also improved engagement, with planned and fun activities and providing development opportunities also being successful engagement strategies.

Those initiatives that were most valued by agents were:

- Virtual Activities 33%
- Gifts 22%
- Flexible working arrangements 18%
- Development opportunities 16%
- Incentives 15%
- Health & Wellbeing programs 14%

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

ON A SCALE OF 1 – 10, HOW ENGAGED DO YOU BELIEVE THE MAJORITY OF YOUR STAFF CURRENTLY FEEL?

ANSWER CHOICES	CONTACT CENTRE MANAGER RESPONSES
1	0%
2	0%
3	1%
4	2%
5	4%
6	12%
7	35%
8	36%
9	10%
10	0%



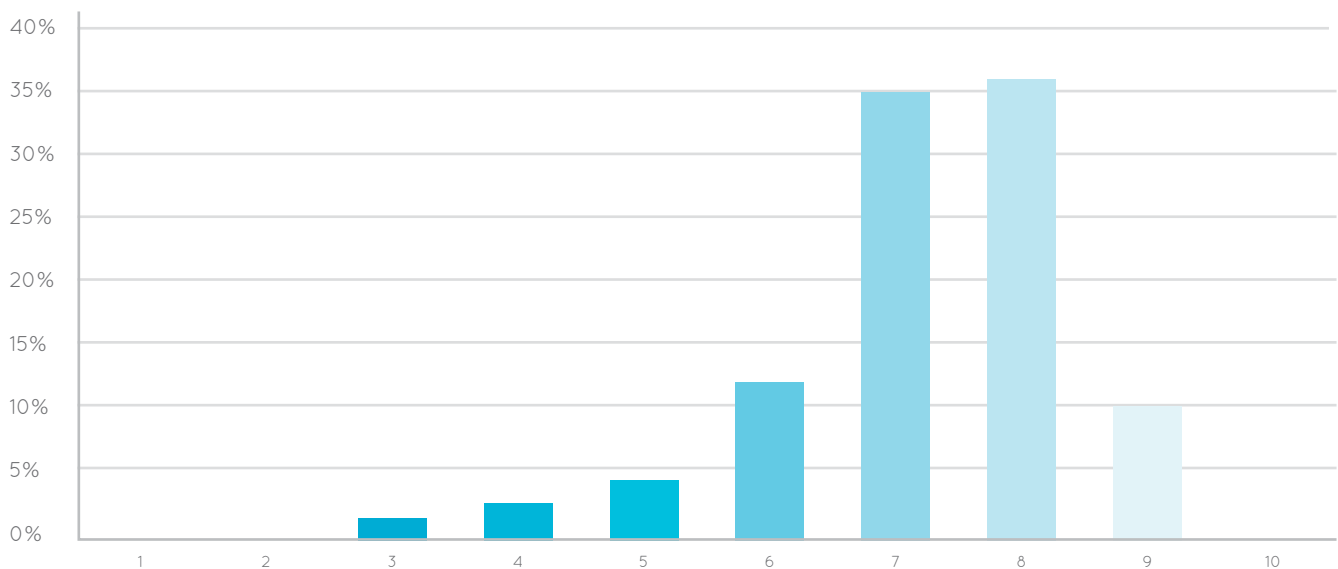
CONTACT CENTRE
MANAGER SCORE



TEAM LEADER
SCORE



FRONT LINE
AGENT SCORE



ON A SCALE FROM 1-10, HOW LIKELY ARE YOU TO RECOMMEND YOUR ORGANISATION AS A PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT TO YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS?

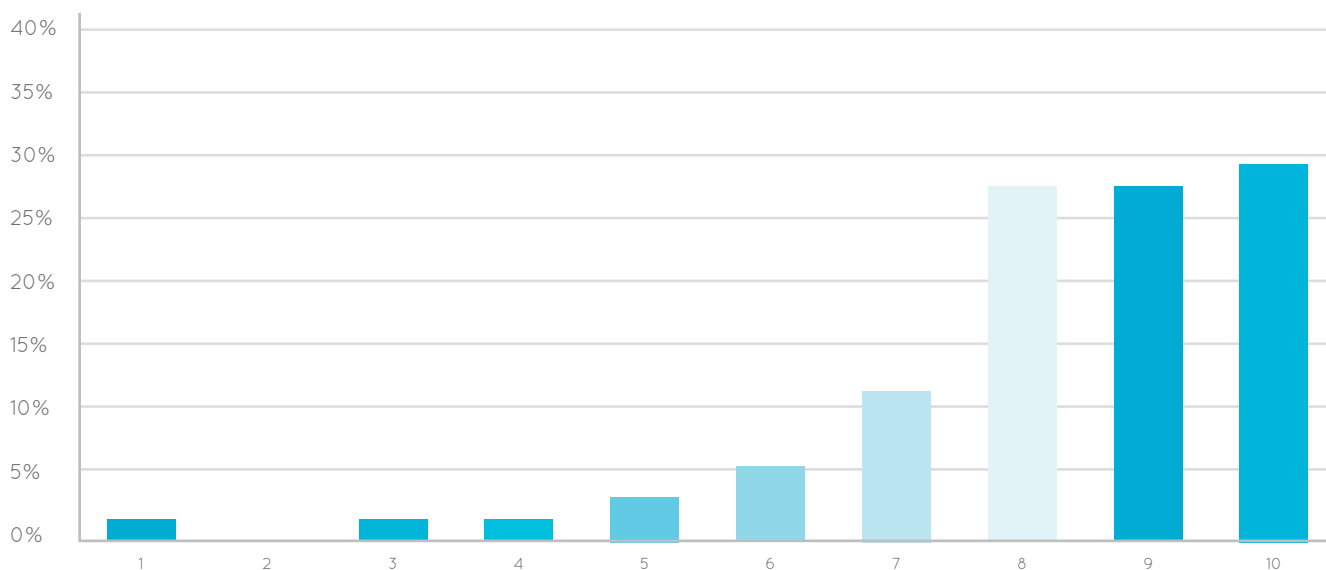
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
1	1%
2	0%
3	1%
4	1%
5	3%
6	5%
7	11%
8	27%
9	22%
10	29%



AVERAGE SCORE



CONTACT CENTRES
THAT GAVE THEMSELVES
THE HIGHEST
POSSIBLE SCORE



The average score here was quite high at 8.3 (the equivalent of an Employee Net Promoter Score of +38). 29% of Contact Centre Managers gave their organisation the maximum possible score.

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

**Leanne Robinson
& Daniel Panozzo**

Founders & Directors
Aspen Solutions



Often when we think of ‘employee engagement’ we think of ping pong tables, fruit bowls in the kitchen and Casual Friday. And sure, those things are hygiene factors that help make a workplace more enjoyable – but they aren’t really what’s at the core of truly determines whether your employees are “engaged” with your organisation.

Employee engagement is actually defined as being the ‘strength of the mental and emotional connection employees feel towards their place of work’.

There are a number of factors that help to determine this connection, including;

- Do I align to the purpose of the organisation and what it stands for?
- Do I feel as if I am making a meaningful contribution?
- Do the values of the organisation match my personal values?
- Do I trust the leaders in my organisation, and feel that they trust me?
- Do I feel seen, heard and valued?
- Is it safe for me to speak up and share my opinions and suggestions?
- If I admit that I have made a mistake, will I be punished?

Interestingly, a 2017 study of Gen Z (those born after 1996) has shown that they are a purpose driven generation. The study revealed that...

- 44% are seeking a career they feel passionate about
- 36% want to make a difference
- 63% want to do something they love
- And only 16% are driven by money

When you consider that Gen Z are making up larger and larger portions of our Contact Centre workforces, allowing them to contribute, connect and communicate will all help to drive employee engagement.

So, what does this data from this survey show us?

Firstly, close to 60% of Contact Centres surveyed have tools in place to specifically measure Employee Engagement. This really is the first step. As Peter Drucker says “you can’t improve it, if you can’t measure it.”

Measuring the results is one thing, but what we do with that data is just as important. It's great to see that close to 65% of those Contact Centres who have engagement data, share the results with all staff – and actively invite employees to have input into creating initiatives and improvement strategies. That's awesome!

But the flip side is that 26% do not share the results with anyone other than leaders, if at all.

No matter how good, bad or downright ugly the results may be, hiding the results or sweeping them under the carpet will only be detrimental in the long run. Whereas being open and transparent with the results, and seeking input and feedback into improvements, will go a long way towards building connection and trust and increasing employee engagement.

The good news is that over 50% of Contact Centres reported an increase in engagement over the past 12 months, compared to just 16% who say it has decreased.

The strategies that were felt to have the greatest impact were communication, flexible working arrangements (including options to work from home), activities to create and maintain connection between team members and providing development opportunities.

These all rated highly with front line agents, along with the offer of health and wellbeing programs. And while gifts were appreciated, the opportunity to connect with other staff through virtual activities was still more highly valued.

So, in summary if you're looking to increase your employee engagement here are a few key tips:

- 1 Regularly check in and ask people how they are feeling...and then actually share the results!**
- 2 Show them how their role and the work they do contributes to the overall purpose.**
- 3 Continue to find ways to communicate and create connection.**

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT CASE STUDY

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT CASE STUDY

Leanne Robinson
& Daniel Panozzo

Employee Engagement Boost with Aspen Solutions

BACKGROUND

Due to the privatisation of some services that were previously managed by the state government, a new joint venture organisation was created. Several staff were transitioned across from the government to the new enterprise, while a range of new employees and roles were recruited externally.

THE CHALLENGE

A culture of 'us and them' quickly emerged. Newer staff members kept hearing about "the good old days" and were shut down with cries of "but we've always done it that way" each time a new suggestion was raised. While the staff who had transitioned across from the government department, felt as if their years of experience were not valued and they felt cast aside. Two separate cultures were emerging, and employee engagement was low.

THE SOLUTION

A two-day off-site retreat was planned, and Aspen Solutions was engaged to help bring this group together to create a unified, cohesive and collaborative team - all working towards a common goal, and with respect for the experiences and views of one another.

THE PROCESS

Based on Simon Sinek's Golden Circle "Start with Why" we set about identifying the purpose of the organisation. Why at its very core did this organisation exist? Involving all members of the team in a structured and facilitated workshop, the team were able to finish off day one with a shared understanding and consensus that their core purpose was "connecting communities".

Next up was to establish the company values that would act as the guiding light for all members of the organisation to have a shared understanding of the observable and tangible behaviours that everyone agreed to live and work by. And just as importantly - those not negotiables that just simply weren't ok. This wasn't just about creating words on a page; it was bringing those words to life with meaning and examples and operationalising them into a shared and agreed "Rules of Engagement".



The values of Teamwork, Respect, Accountability, Customer Driven and Safety soon took on a life of their own, and over the coming months became embedded into the DNA of all staff across the organisation.

A peer nominated Values based rewards program was established, where staff nominate each other for awards aligned to each of the values, and each quarter a large organisational wide celebration occurs where everyone comes together to recognise and acknowledge the simple acts that occur every day across the business that live and breathe the values.

Aligned to the purpose of “connecting communities” the organisation has undertaken a range of community programs and initiatives to actively promote and embrace diversity and inclusion, with ways for the staff to be able to give back to the community they service and connect.

Where are they today?

Every person in the organisation from the top down connects with the company values. They are more than words on the back of the toilet door. They are lived and breathed by every person across the business. They are embedded into training, meetings, decisions and conversations. There is a level of ownership and accountability of the values as everyone was involved in their creation and hold themselves and each other to account for ensuring they are upheld.

And with the community at the heart of everything they do, there is a shared alignment and commitment to the purpose, and no longer is there “us and them” – there is only “we”.

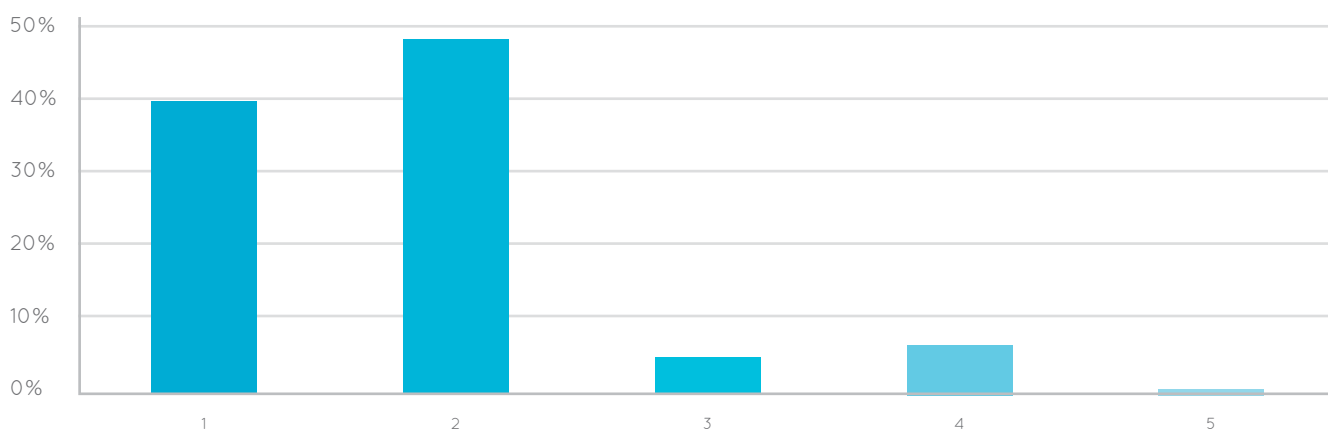
MODERN WAYS OF WORKING

BEST PRACTICE REPORT



HOW CLEAR IS YOUR ORGANISATIONS PURPOSE TO YOUR TEAMS?
(IN ANSWERING CONSIDER IF YOU AND YOUR TEAMS COULD
EXPLAIN HOW THEIR ROLE DIRECTLY SUPPORTS THE PURPOSE).

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
Very clear	1	40%
Quite clear	2	48%
Unsure	3	4%
A little clear	4	7%
Not at all clear	5	1%



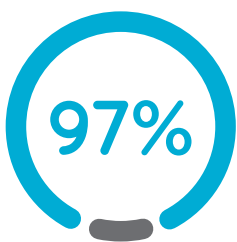
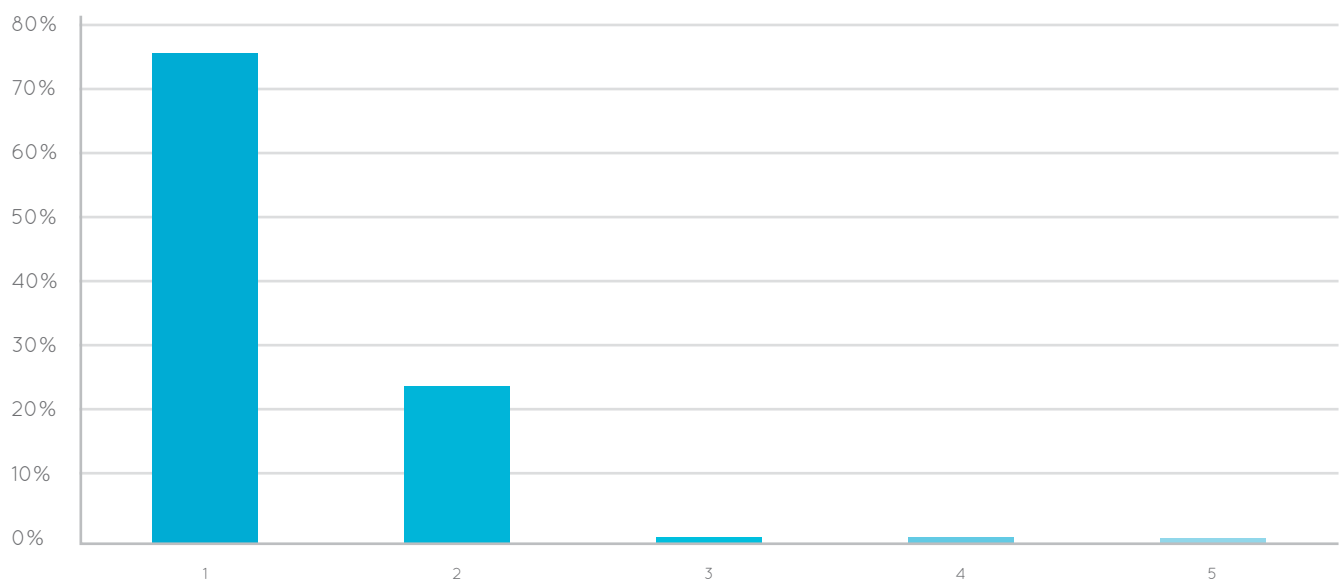
88% of respondents are clear about the purpose of their organisations



MODERN WAYS OF WORKING

HOW CLEAR ARE YOU ON HOW YOUR ROLE CONTRIBUTES TO FULFILLING THE PURPOSE?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
Very clear	1	75%
Quite clear	2	22%
Unsure	3	1%
A little clear	4	1%
Not at all clear	5	1%



97% of respondents are clear on how their role brings the the purpose to life

HOW FULFILLING IS THE WORK YOU DO?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Very fulfilling	46%
Quite fulfilling	44%
Unsure	1%
A little fulfilling	8%
Not at all fulfilling	1%



90% of Managers say they are fulfilled by their work



VERY
FULFILLING



QUITE
FULFILLING



UNSURE



A LITTLE
FULFILLING



NOT AT ALL
FULFILLING

HOW EFFECTIVELY DO YOU FEEL YOUR TEAM IS AT GETTING ALIGNMENT ON THEIR PRIORITIES AND GETTING THEM DONE EFFECTIVELY?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Very effective	28%
Somewhat effective	61%
Unsure	3%
Somewhat ineffective	7%
Not effective	0%



72% of Managers say they could be better aligning and delivering goals



VERY
EFFECTIVE



SOMEWHAT
EFFECTIVE



UNSURE



SOMEWHAT
INEFFECTIVE



NOT
EFFECTIVE

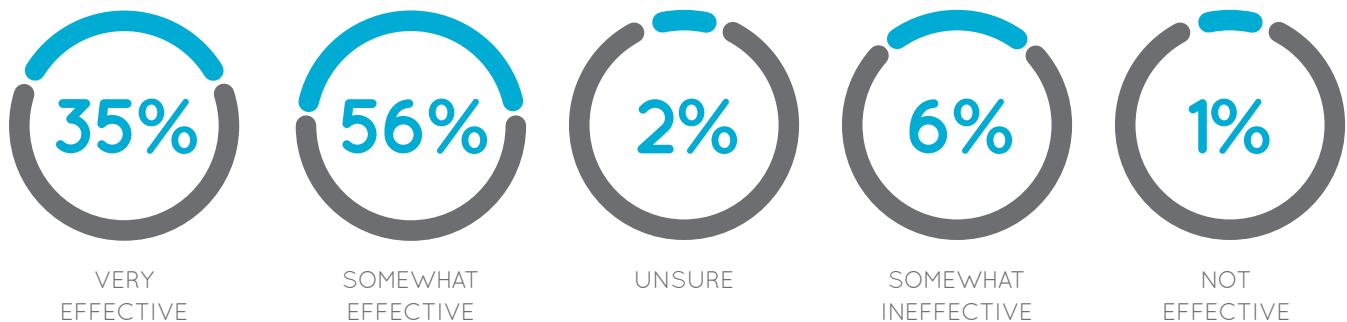
MODERN WAYS OF WORKING

HOW EFFECTIVE DO YOU FEEL YOUR TEAMS ARE AT RESPONDING TO CHANGE THAT OCCURS WITHIN YOUR ORGANISATION?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Very effective	35%
Somewhat effective	56%
Unsure	2%
Somewhat ineffective	6%
Not effective	1%



65% of Managers say that change responsiveness could be better

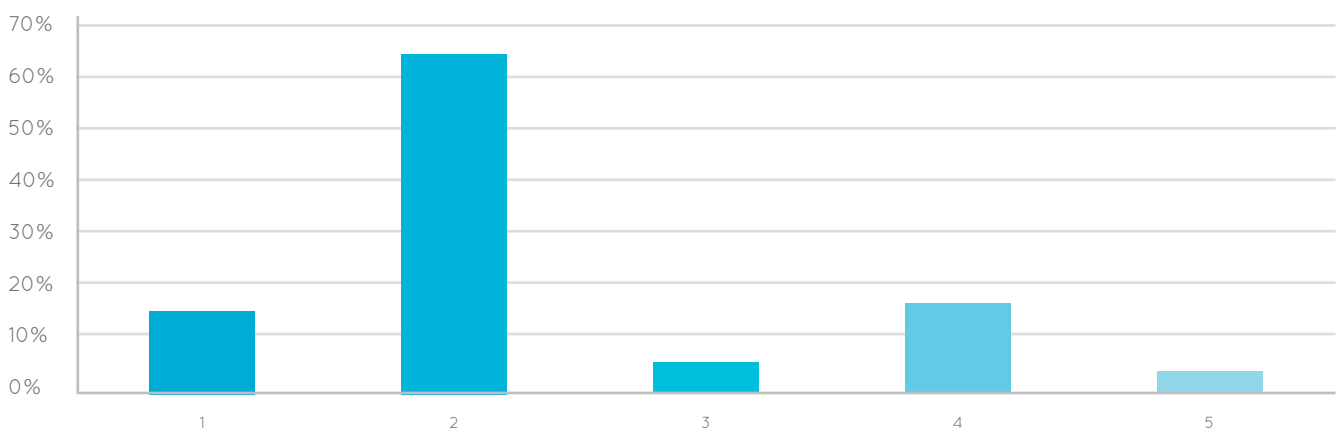


HOW EFFECTIVE IS THE COLLABORATION BETWEEN YOUR TEAMS AND THE REST OF THE ORGANISATION WHEN IT COMES TO DELIVERING CHANGE SUCCESSFULLY?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
Very effective	1	14%
Somewhat effective	2	64%
Unsure	3	4%
Somewhat ineffective	4	15%
Not effective	5	3%

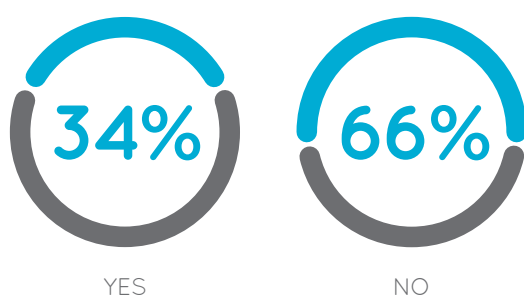


85% of Managers say that collaboration between their teams and the rest of the organisation could be more effective



**ARE YOU SPENDING AS MUCH TIME WORKING 'ON THE BUSINESS'
(NEXT 1-3 YEARS STRATEGY) AS YOU WOULD LIKE TO?**

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Yes	34%
No	66%

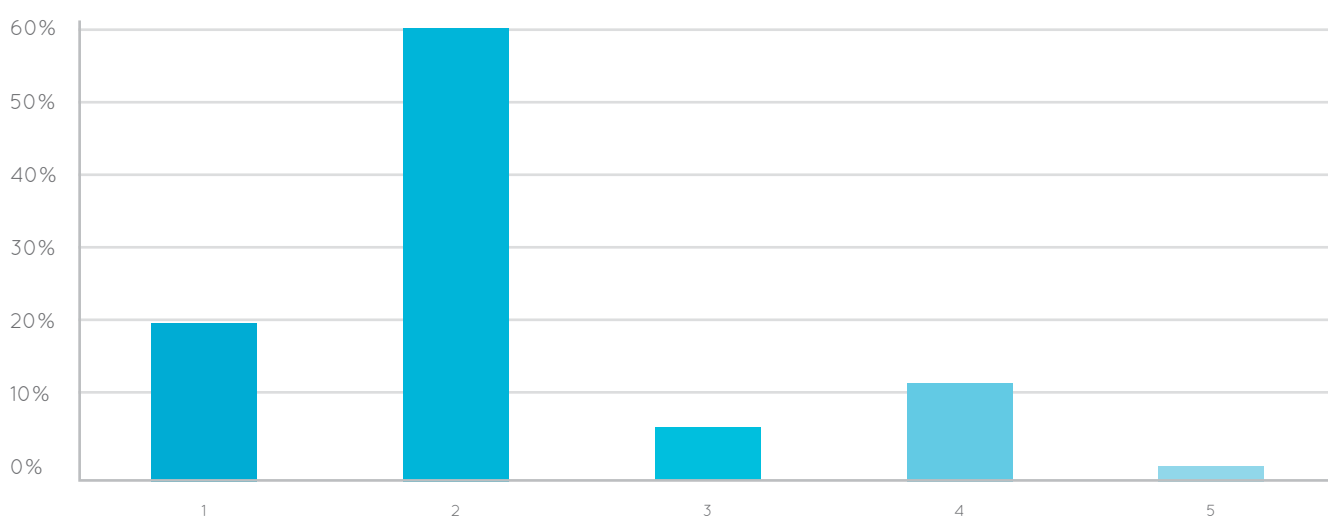


**HOW WELL DO YOU UNDERSTAND THE SOURCES OF WASTE IN YOUR OPERATION?
(E.G.- SUB-STANDARD PROCESSES, HAND-OFFS, REWORK, REPEAT CALLS)**

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
Very well	1	20%
Quite well	2	60%
Unsure	3	7%
A little	4	12%
Not at all	5	1%



79% of Managers have a good understanding of the sources of waste



MODERN WAYS OF WORKING

IN YOUR OPINION - WHAT % OF ALL INTERACTIONS INTO YOUR CONTACT CENTRE ARE DRIVEN BY FAILURE? (Failure is the result of something not working the way it was supposed to, causing the customer to having to make contact. Failures can be caused by a system or technology issue, process breakdown or even human error).



AVERAGE



On average 35% of all interactions are driven by failure demand. However 4 out of 10 contact centres say it is higher. So while 35% is the average, plenty are doing far worse!

DO YOU HAVE A CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT (CI) PROGRAM IN YOUR CONTACT CENTRE?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Yes	71%
No	26%
Unsure	3%



More than 1 in 4 contact centres do not have a structured approach to continuous improvement



YES



NO



UNSURE

DO YOU HAVE A CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT (CI) PROGRAM IN YOUR BROADER ORGANISATION?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Yes	63%
No	23%
Unsure	14%



YES



NO



UNSURE



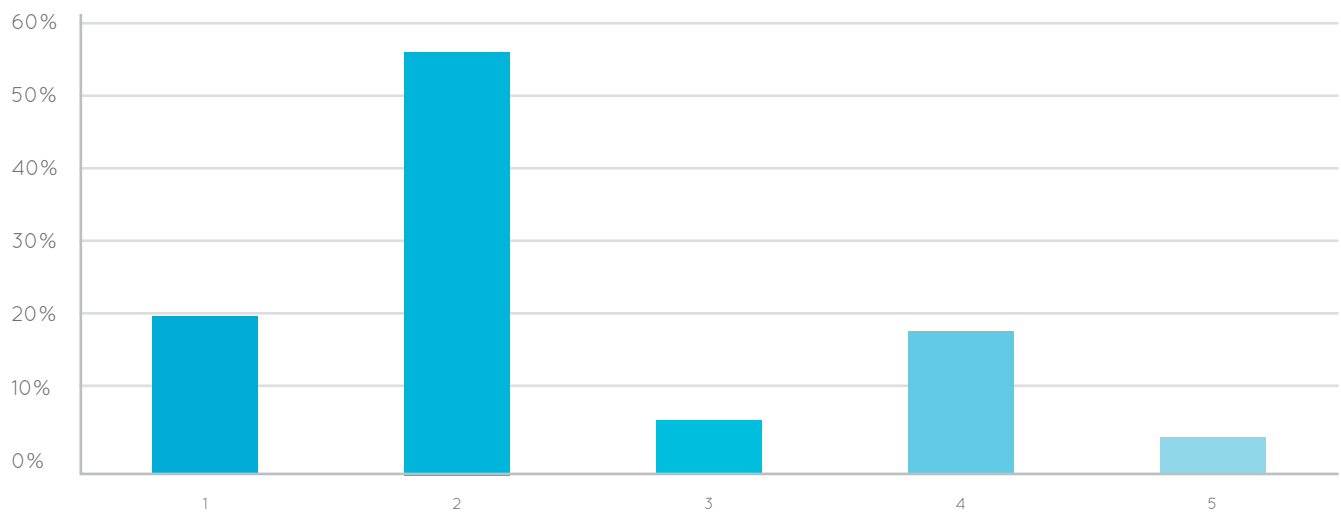
WHAT ARE YOUR MAJOR CHALLENGES IN IDENTIFYING AND REMOVING WASTE FROM YOUR OPERATION?



MODERN WAYS OF WORKING

HOW WELL DO YOU FEEL THE VALUE OF YOUR CONTACT CENTRE IS UNDERSTOOD BY THE BROADER ORGANISATION?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
Very well	1	19%
Quite well	2	55%
Unsure	3	5%
A little	4	18%
Not at all	5	3%



More than 1 in 4 contact centres feel like the true value they deliver is not well understood by the organisation.



Sean McGinn

Director | Enterprise Agile Coach
The Agile Contact Centre

The disruption of last two years and the speed at which contact centres have had to respond and adapt has become a powerful force to rally teams behind a common cause. The modern contact centre is more focused than ever before on reflecting the purpose of the organisation in the way it delivers services to customers in times of need.

Purpose

This is reflected in a big increase in the way teams feel about how they connect to the purpose, with a 22% increase on last year's results. This year we heard from Team Leaders and Agents for the first time and 95% of them say they are very clear on the purpose of their organisation and how their roles contribute to achieving that purpose.

The transformation many contact centres have undergone has no doubt refocused everyone on what's important and why they do what they do, and the low levels of attrition has also meant teams have been able to remain together, form stronger bonds and focus on what's important.

This is a very encouraging place for the industry to be in and the challenge for Leaders is to leverage this energy and focus into 2022, where the pressure to retain talent is at its most competitive in the industry's history.

Collaborative leadership

We do see a downside to this disruption, Contact Centre Managers are not spending the time they would like on the business, with 66% saying they should be spending more time on strategy and exploring new ways of working, an increase of 4% on last year. And we see this a key contributor to the low levels of collaboration reported across the organisation, where 85% of Managers say it should be better.

Successful change in contact centres can only happen with strong cross functional collaboration and alignment between Operations, Projects and Product teams and 65% of Managers say responsiveness to change is suffering as a result of low levels of collaboration.

When teams work effectively together the flow of information improves as does feedback and this leads to more effective decision making. In times of ambiguity, change and disruption cross functional teams flourish because they can adapt faster.

Cross functional teams have a shared view of what success looks like, so they are motivated to achieve one common cause across the organisation.

MODERN WAYS OF WORKING SUMMARY

These teams, also called 'long lived teams' in the agile world, have a wide array of people across different functions and different reporting lines, but all work towards one common cause. They use team charters to create a social contract that binds the team together around a common purpose, and the high levels of collaboration improve the delivery of outcomes.

Failure Demand

When asked about the level for failure demand, Managers told us that anywhere from 5% to 95% of all interactions are driven by a failure of some type, 35% on average, and what we know about failure demand is that it uses up precious capacity and diverts time away from continuous improvement as leaders spend time firefighting.

Despite most contact centres having a continuous improvement program, Managers have reported that it is not delivering the change they need, and they attribute this to two key challenges, resourcing, and having time to work on improvements.

So where do you start? Get the attention of your Executive team by telling a story that resonates and this should cover customer, people, and financial impacts.

Failure demand is a high effort interaction and a key driver of customer attrition, so linking the failure drivers to business outcomes is your first step.

Failure demand also has people impacts, Team Leaders have reported spending too much time on dealing with escalations at the expense of leading, coaching and spending quality time with their people.

And 44% of contact centres say they are not achieving service levels, with one-third of frontline agents saying they are not fulfilled by the work, leading to low engagement and attrition, and in our experience, this is driven by high levels of failure demand.

In summary, the modern contact centre has an opportunity to be more relevant than ever as it steps out of the shadow of the last 2 years. And we see a strong connection to purpose, collaborative leadership and effectively solving for failure demand being the biggest predictors of success.

MODERN WAYS OF WORKING CASE STUDY

Sean McGinn

Purpose driven teams at UniSuper

The Member Services team, like many contact centres, experience a lot of change and were about to embark on a 3-year strategic plan that would transform the fund and introduce yet more change.

The leadership team had a sense that building a strong connection to purpose, providing clarity on roles and responsibilities, and creating shared accountability for the customer experience would be the key to thriving through this change.

Purpose & DNA

To support their purpose of 'creating value in every interaction', the team turned their attention of identifying their DNA. This is the characteristics that define what the team will be known for, their value proposition both within the organisation and with their members. The DNA helped guide the team to stay true to their purpose and forms part of their daily conversations, to help make decisions and to call out good and bad behaviours and reward and recognise performance.

Role clarity

They reviewed each role in the contact centre and ran several workshops to ensure everyone could co-create the responsibilities that would align them with their purpose. They also implemented shared KRA's for the first time to foster a culture of collaboration and accountability for the member experience.

Change

They had over 30 projects in flight at any time across the organisation and they all impacted the contact centre in some way. Their teams often felt like they were the last to know and had little input into the change, so they looked for way to empower their teams and better support leaders so they could effectively support the change with their people. They set up a visualisation board in MS Teams that can be seen by any member of the team and has all the information they need to understand each change and how it impacts them and members. This transparency led to higher engagement with the change and more successful change adoption. It also results in better outcomes when you invite the people that will deliver the change to have input into how it is delivered.

MODERN WAYS OF WORKING CASE STUDY



Strategic Planning

They then set about turning a strategy on paper into a living breathing process. As a team they created a number of initiatives and then broke these down into manageable chunks of work, used a simple prioritisation method to ensure they worked on the right work, assigned owners and then met regularly to track the progress of the work, and remove any obstacles and celebrate success. They now have an effective strategic planning and delivery rhythm aligned to the 3-year plan.

What have they achieved?

They achieved these amazing results in a 100% remote environment.

- Employee Engagement improved from 67% to 83%, a 24% improvement in 6 months.
- 15% increase in Values alignment, 79% to 91%
- 29% increase in Leadership, 69% - 89%
- 23% increase Alignment & Involvement, 72% - 89%

Their journey has really just begun, but they are already seeing the benefits of building a strong alignment to a common cause and then empowering their teams to play an active role in change management and bring their strategy to life everyday.

CENTRE PERFORMANCE

BEST PRACTICE REPORT



CENTRE PERFORMANCE

WHAT IS YOUR AVERAGE SPEED OF ANSWER?

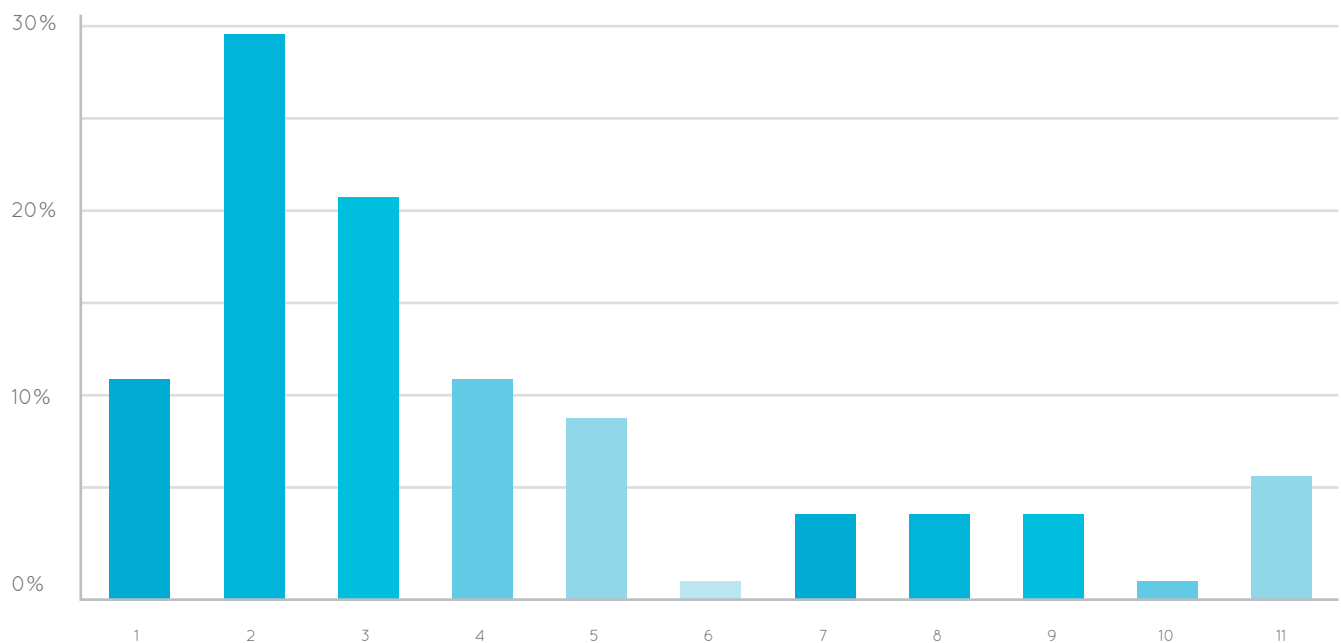
ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
0 - 10 seconds	1	11%
11 to 30 seconds	2	29%
31 to 60 seconds	3	21%
1 to 2 minutes	4	11%
2 to 3 minutes	5	8%
3 to 4 minutes	6	1%
4 to 5 minutes	7	4%
5 to 6 minutes	8	4%
6 to 7 minutes	9	4%
7 to 8 minutes	10	1%
8 + minutes	11	6%



Average speed of answer across the industry is 132 seconds.



11% of contact centres have an average speed of answer of 10 seconds or less.



WHAT IS YOUR CALL ABANDONMENT RATE?

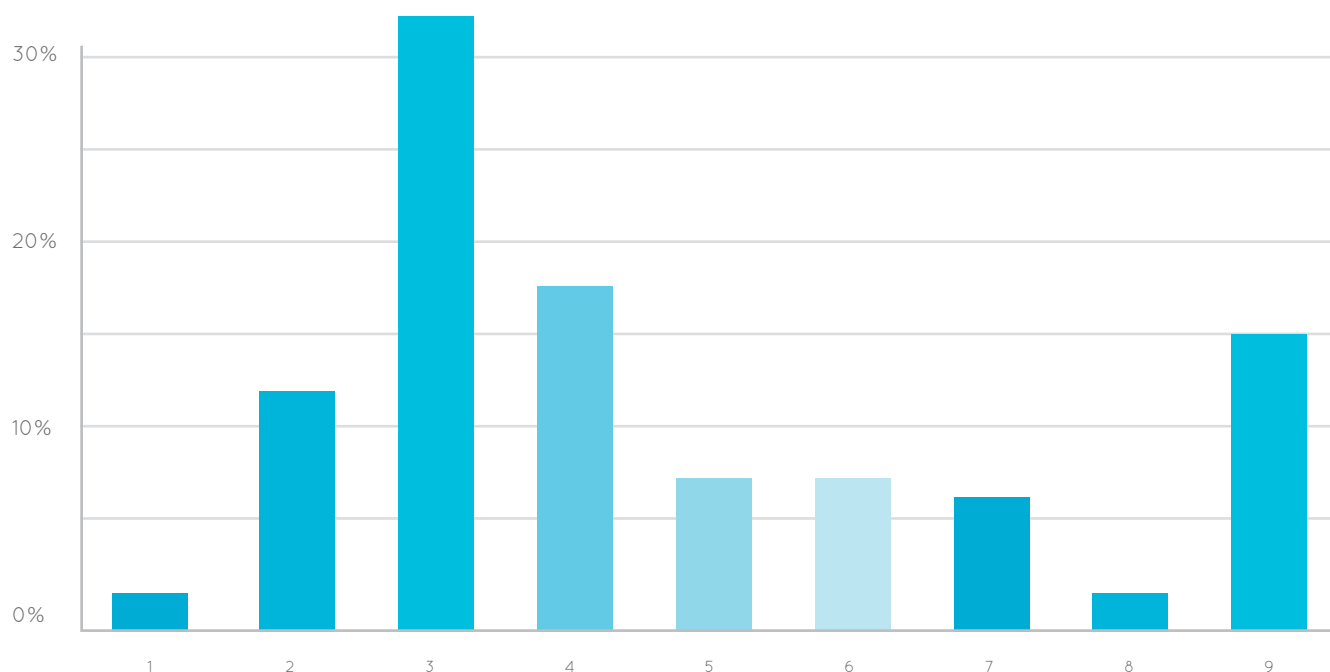
ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
0%	1	2%
1-2 %	2	12%
3-4%	3	33%
5-6%	4	17%
7-8%	5	7%
9-10%	6	7%
11-12%	7	6%
13-14%	8	1%
15% or higher	9	15%



The average call abandonment rate is 7% however there is a large spread or responses.



At the top end, 14% of contact centres have less than 3% of calls abandoned whereas at the bottom end 14% of contact centres have 15% of calls abandoned.



CENTRE PERFORMANCE



DO YOU HAVE A CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT (CI) PROGRAM
IN YOUR BROADER ORGANISATION?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Yes	69%
No	24%
Unsure	2%
Other	5%



YES



NO

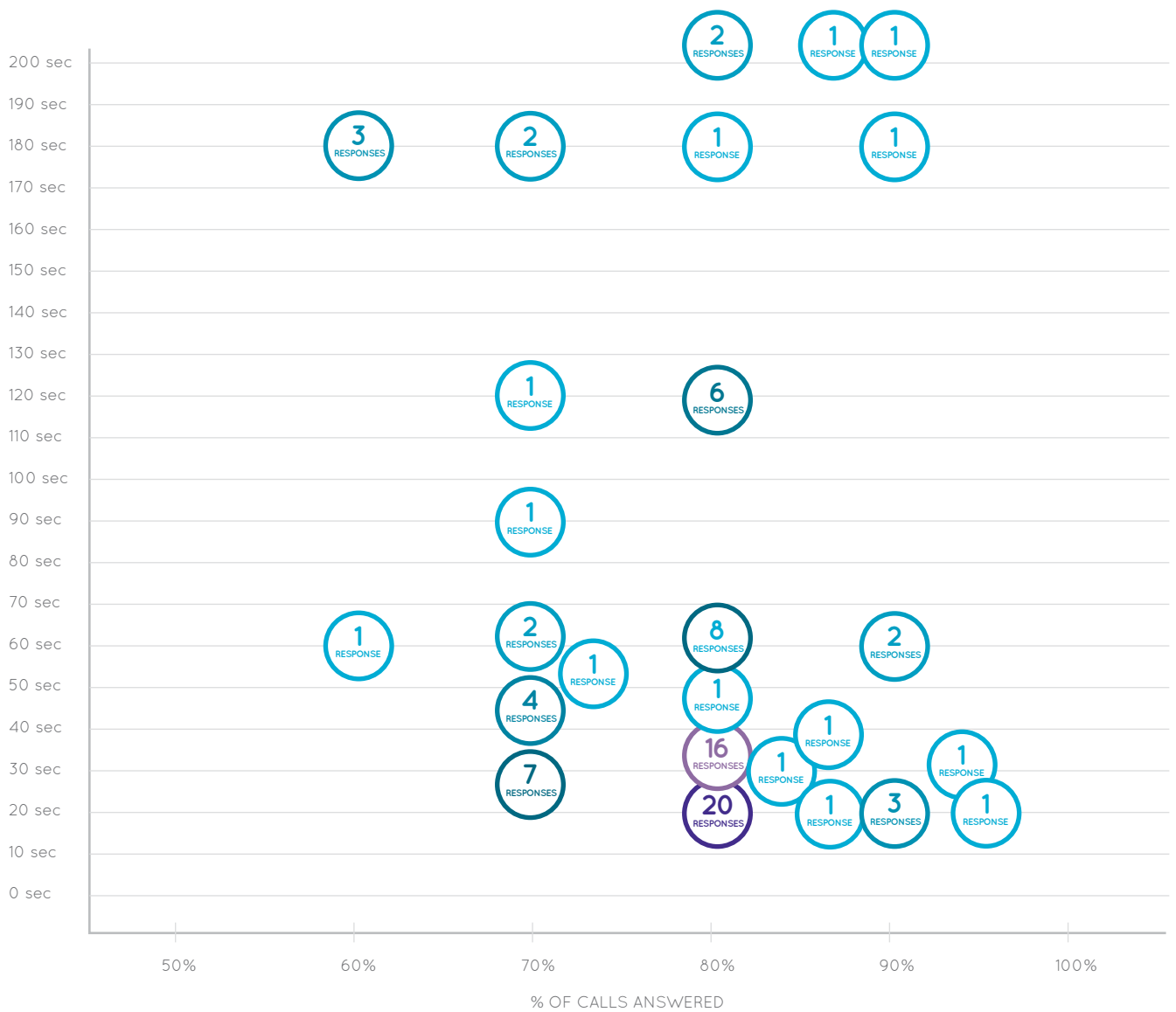


UNSURE



OTHER

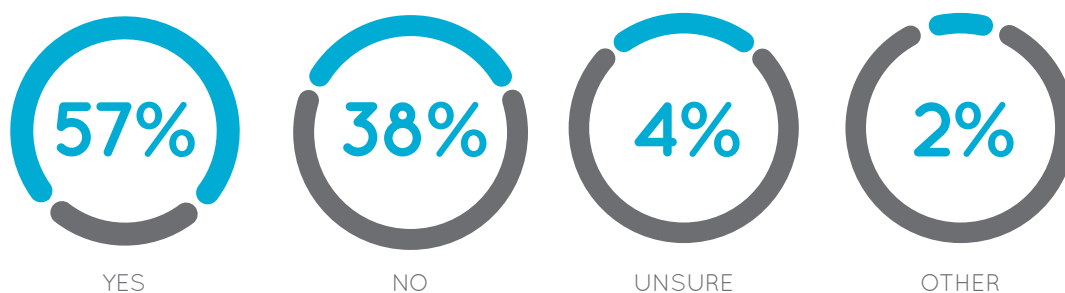
WHAT IS YOUR GRADE OF SERVICE METRIC? Grade of Service refers to the percentage of calls answered within a given time frame. E.g. 90/30 – meaning a GOS target of 90% of calls answered within 30 seconds).



CENTRE PERFORMANCE

ARE YOU CURRENTLY ACHIEVING THIS GRADE OF SERVICE METRIC?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Yes	57%
No	38%
Unsure	4%
Other	2%



WHICH METRIC DOES YOUR CONTACT CENTRE PLACE GREATEST IMPORTANCE IN?

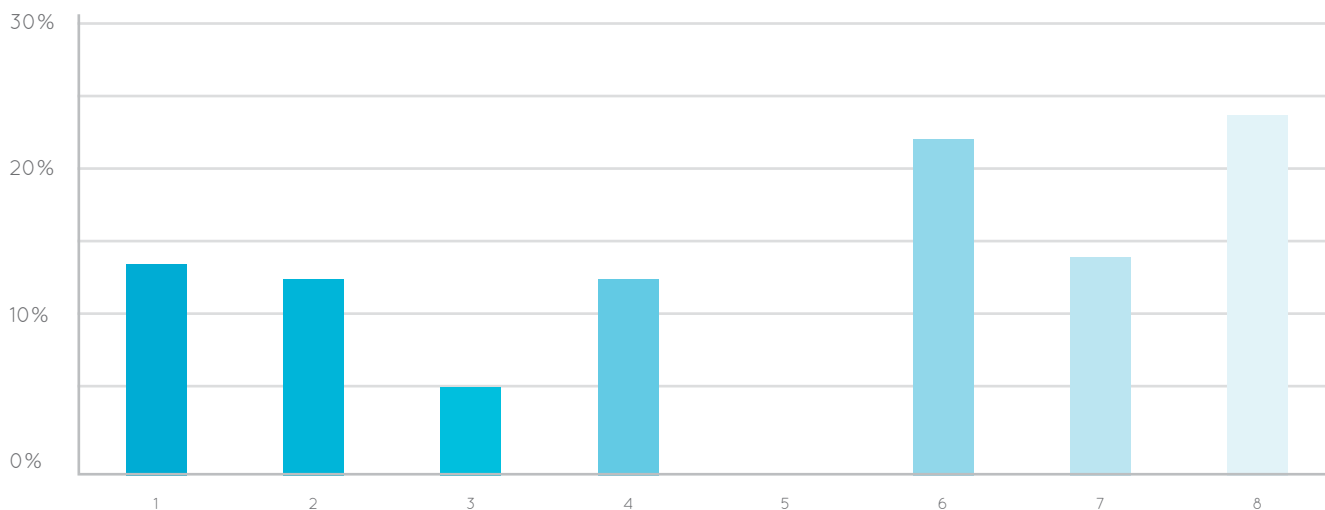
ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
Average speed of answer	1	13%
Abandonment rate	2	12%
Average handling time	3	5%
First call resolution	4	12%
After call work	5	0%
NPS or CSAT score	6	22%
Sales or conversions	7	14%
Grade of service	8	23%



45% of contact centres place greatest importance in customer focussed outcomes, which increases to 55% when adding First Call Resolution



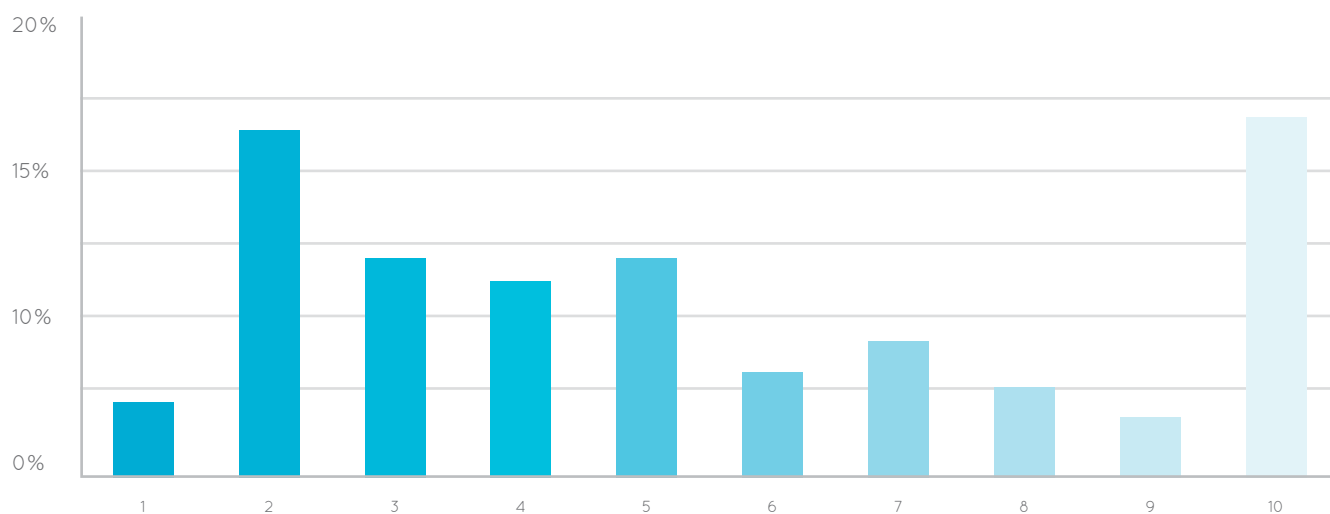
30% of contact centres place greatest importance on speed and operational efficiency.



WHAT IS YOUR OVERALL “CUSTOMER SATISFACTION” SCORE AT PRESENT, IF IT WERE SCORED OUT OF 100?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
96 - 100	1	4%
91 - 95	2	17%
86 - 90	3	14%
81 - 85	4	13%
76 - 80	5	14%
71 - 75	6	6%
66 - 70	7	7%
61 - 65	8	5%
56 - 60	9	3%
Less than 56	10	17%

Sample of companies who have scored 91 or above



The average customer satisfaction score is 75.



21% of contact centres are performing very well, scoring 91 or higher.



20% of contact centres currently have a customer satisfaction score of less than 60.

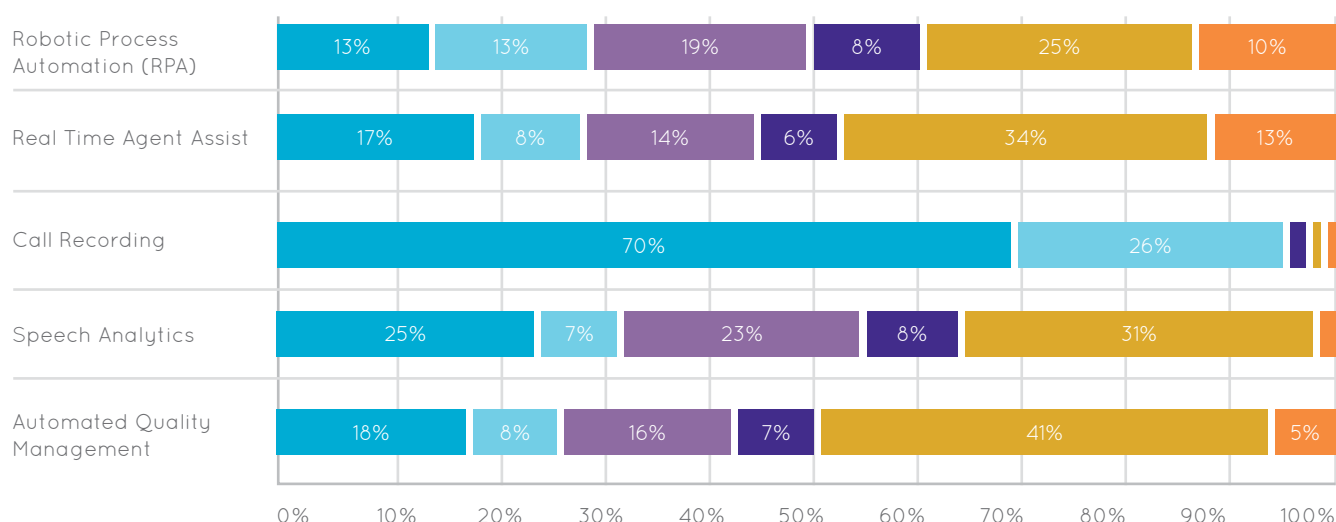
TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION

BEST PRACTICE REPORT



VERINT.

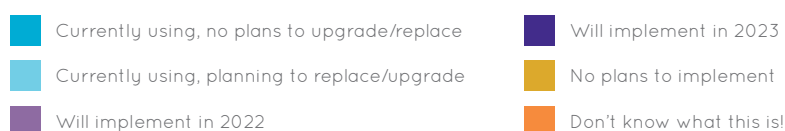
DESCRIBE YOUR LEVEL OF ADOPTION WITH THE FOLLOWING TECHNOLOGIES



Call Recording and Automated Quality Management

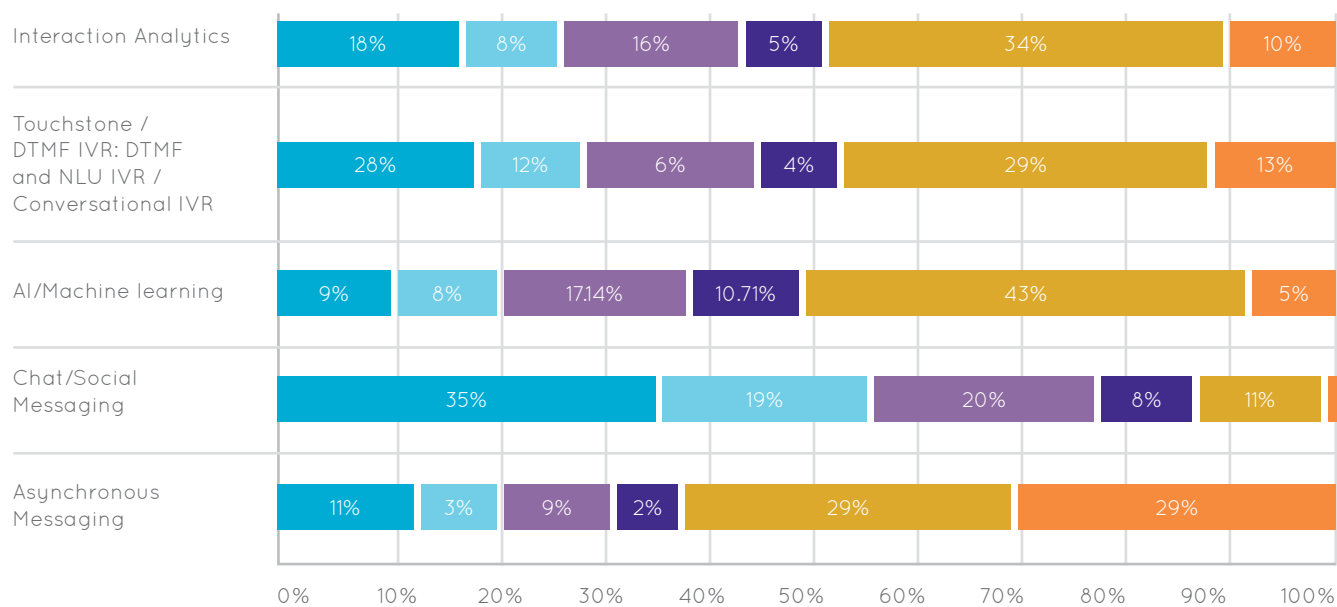
Call Recording has the largest future technology upgrade percentage of any category in the survey. Almost 70% of CCM responders indicate that they have no plans to upgrade their call recording. However, given the small numbers looking to tackle this in 2022 & 2023 it looks to be that the remaining 26% are thinking about upgrading now, perhaps driven by the speed of cloud adoption throughout the pandemic. Those responding may be wanting to improve their existing functionality or to enhance the technology to take account of all the new interaction channels that now need recording and analysing. It is not sufficient to upgrade just voice and screen recording as most organisations will need to record all interaction types - all unstructured data! For example, MS Teams has become prolific and is now used as a servicing channel for customers and needs to be recorded as per other more traditional service offerings.

With almost 41% of those surveyed having no plans to implement Automated Quality Management (AQM) it is assumed that most contact centres will need alternate means to address the issues that would have been addressed via an AQM roll out. Using call recordings and the associated quality management practices in contact centres to handle risk and compliance issues is critical. (AQM) can auto score up to 100% of recorded voice and text-based interactions. It therefore offers greater insight, objectivity, and consistency than traditional sampling techniques. The automation allows users to re-allocate quality resources from scoring evaluations to higher value activities such as coaching agents. CCMs need to consider what else can be done to ensure regulatory adherence and help address these issues as randomly sampling around 2% of all callers will be less and less acceptable as the complexity of the interactions arriving at the contact centre increases.



TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION

DESCRIBE YOUR LEVEL OF ADOPTION WITH THE FOLLOWING TECHNOLOGIES

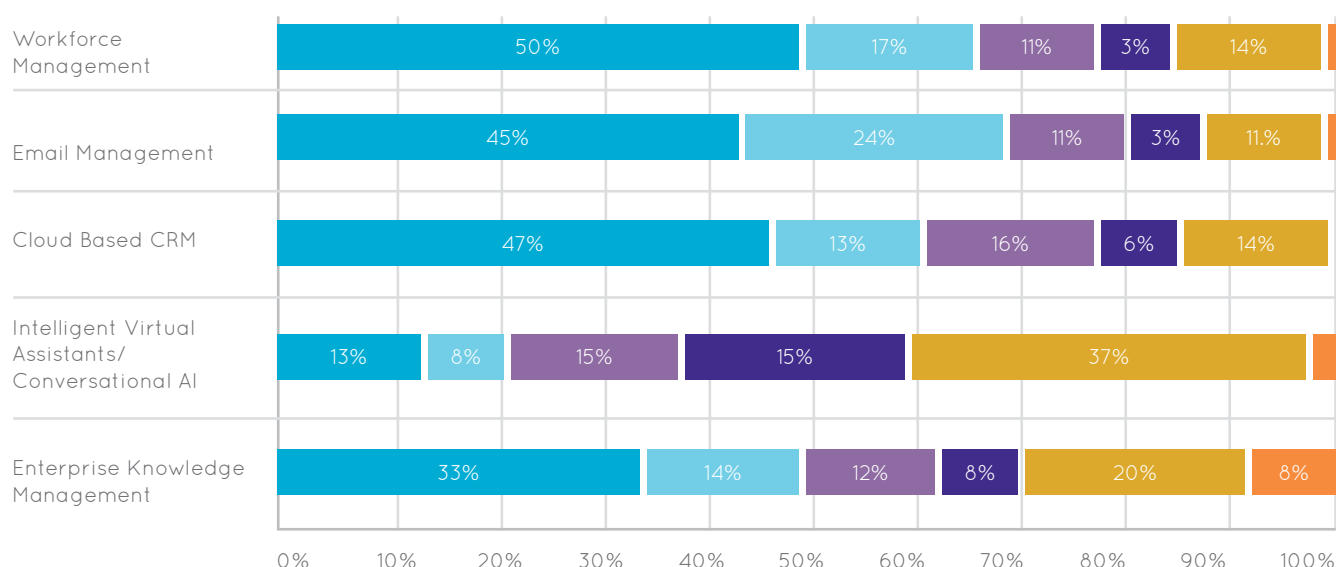


Analyzing Unstructured Data

While 25% are using speech analytics it is interesting to note that almost a third expect to add speech analytics to their technology suite over the 2022-2023 calendar years. Contact Centres are usually the biggest generators of unstructured data for an organisation: what did the customer say, why did they call, did they seem happy, where they vulnerable or at risk etc. Thousands of interactions a day that, if addressed, enable the business to adjust course by pivoting quickly by tweaking an IVR, informing an IVA, identifying where to remove customer effort and failed demand from a customer journey, or remediating a pain point. Also of note is that, in the responses on Artificial Intelligence (AI) (Q74) almost 41% of respondents think that speech analytics is an AI solution when it is not; Speech Analytics do not use, or need to use, any AI or machine learning. Speech Analytics transcribes 100% of recorded calls to automatically discover and analyse words, phrases, categories, and themes. Analysis of these insights can assist to identify drivers of dissatisfaction to reduce churn, identify customer contact drivers and self-service opportunities, and discovery trends and unknowns in interactions.

It is also noted that 70% of users do not currently use speech analytics to tackle customer insights or drive quality management practices. Without Speech Analytics as a tool to gain these insights, understand quality issues etc, it is assumed that users are recording calls and are then expending large amounts of manual effort to trawl through the interactions for regulatory and compliance purposes - painstakingly searching for and assessing calls for themes and trends within the conversations. In effect looking for a needle in a haystack and they would be missing a huge number of regulatory compliance issues.

DESCRIBE YOUR LEVEL OF ADOPTION WITH THE FOLLOWING TECHNOLOGIES

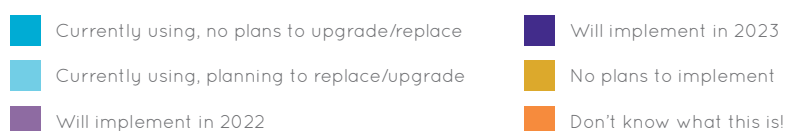


Agent Support Technologies

With increasingly tech-savvy customers accelerating through the sales and service journey, organisations are dealing with more complex queries. On the other hand, organisations are dealing with a hybrid workforce, meaning contact centre agents can no longer simply put their hands up to get assistance from team leads or colleagues. Additionally, retaining staff in a contact centre by offering state of the art technology is as important as currency in customer facing technology platforms. AI enabled technology to support agents will in the future be critical to attract and retain employees.

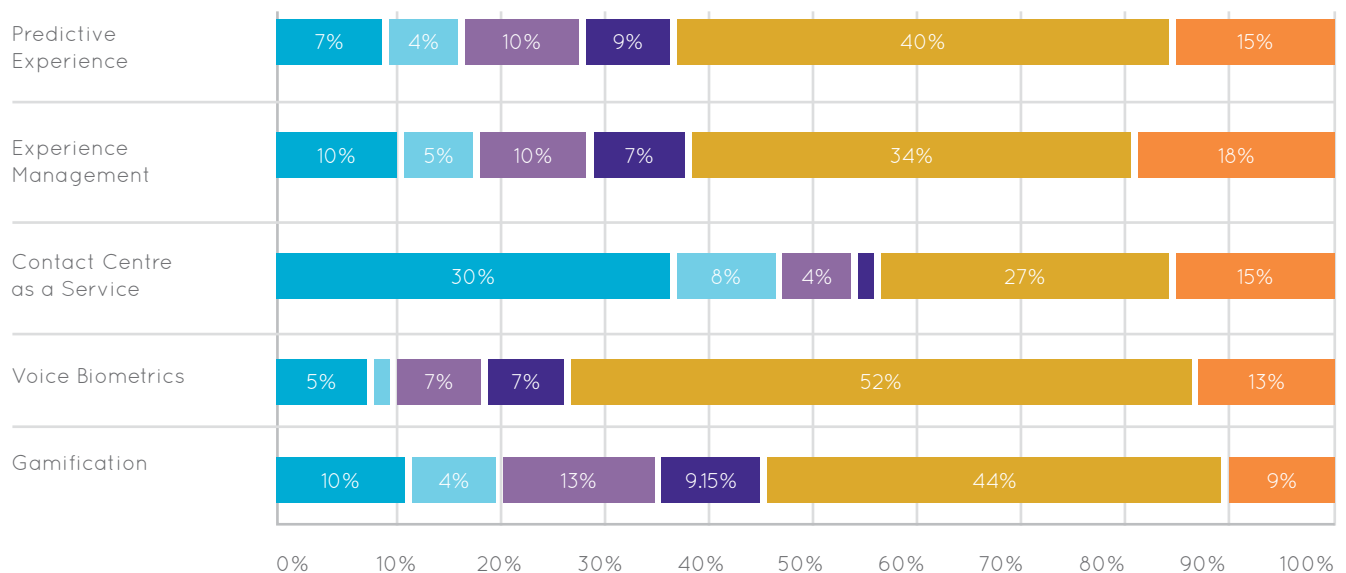
Real-Time Agent Assist (RTAA) can bridge this gap by listening to conversations and providing instant access to information and knowledge in sync with the conversation. This not only means a reduction in handling time and a faster speed to competency but also higher compliance. We have seen a recent shift in remote on boarding of agents who take their first call from the comfort of their homes. Having RTAA means they have a personal coach to guide them every step of the way. This means agents no longer must learn internal systems and procedures to the same extent but shift their focus to using their empathy and soft skills to build enduring relationships with customers. The technology already increases automation during the call by providing real-time recommendations to the agents, alerting supervisors when agents are on a call that might need their assistance and summarising the call outcomes, including follow up actions post-interaction. The next generation of RTAA solutions is starting to focus on employee motivational aspects that align with their personal and organisational goals.

Surprisingly the survey reveals a low number of organisations that plan to implement RTAA in 2022 and 2023 and a larger than expected cohort (approx. 13%) that do not know what RTAA is. As the contact centres go through the next evolution and battle with the change in customer dynamics, complex working environments and increase in compliance regimes, technologies like RTAA will become a must have. Our recommendation is to use speech analytics to identify the right use cases, experiment with a department or subset of users to prove the technology to internal stakeholders and expand from there.



TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION

DESCRIBE YOUR LEVEL OF ADOPTION WITH THE FOLLOWING TECHNOLOGIES



Knowledge Management

Knowledge Management has always played an interesting role in Contact Centre operations with a broad mix of solutions being deployed within contact centres and the broader organisation. These range from robust file storage solutions based on directories and email through to formal, robust Knowledge Management platforms.

The last two years have placed significant stresses on the older directory approach, as organisations have struggled to provide current and accurate information to work from anywhere employees, with clear, demonstrable impact on operational performance and efficiency, employee experience and compliance to process. These issues along with the continuing drive to digital transformation and self-service, and the concomitant need for a single source of truth, is reflected in the survey's findings that over a third of all respondents (33.8%) are looking at upgrading their knowledge capability over the next two years, with most of these organisations (77.1%) either actively working on the upgrade or intending to do so in 2022.

These organisations are looking to take advantage of significant developments in the Knowledge Management space and ensure that their investment in Knowledge Management align with their corporate object of improved Customer & Employee Experience, Digital Transformation, and enhanced Compliance.

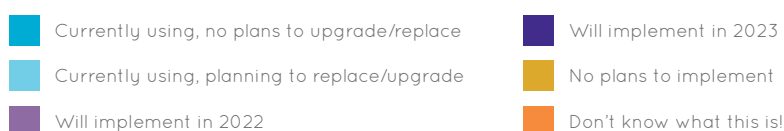
These organisations have realised that knowledge management is more than "search and storage" with the understanding that a knowledge management solution needs to deliver four critical components. Simply put these are: Creation: the ability to create multi-faceted, user friendly content with a enterprise level approval and publishing work flow; Search: the ability to allow users to find content using their own language, breaking free from the old keyword model, and if possible leverage Zero Click Knowledge, where the system derives context from the users actions to proactively present suggested content; Curation: the ability to receive and action feedback and suggestions, maintain strict publishing and version control and access reporting on what content is being used (and which is not being used); and finally; Presentation: the ability to deliver content to multiple internal and external end points from a single, controlled, source of truth.

Social & Asynchronous Messaging

These solutions support customer and workforce requirements for digital-first experiences by providing consumers with a choice of engagement channels—and empowering your workforce to support them as they shift channels, depending on what consumers find most convenient. It is a misnomer to assume only younger generations are willing to engage in a messaging experience as there has been a considerable shift in the last 3-4 years on the uptake of technology with specificity to mobile experiences through phones and tablets. The percentage of those amongst the different age groups will vary to some extent with heavier weighting towards the younger groups as a greater overall percentage of those willing to use messaging/self-service to solve their problems.

In general terms, for repetitive, low value high volume interactions you will see a greater overall uptake in the usage of messaging as opposed to high value, lower volume interactions where the human connection is required (e.g. purchase of an expensive or high value item or complex customer service issue). What we see as the bigger shift is the focus towards differentiation in digital channels to attract new customers. Traditionally consumers are left on their own post click of a digital ad to simply navigate the website to track down FAQ's or a self-service quote tool which ends in a call back from being filled out as opposed to engaging with the customer at that specific moment. AI can help nurture sales leads, guide the customer through an end-to-end sales process addressing specific questions at each stage of the buying process including the ability to escalate to a live agent whether onshore (business hours) or offshore (non-business hours) to complete the transaction. If an agent is unavailable, the customer journey, along with the conversational history and intent (sale of X item) is passed to the agent the following shift for immediate follow up. Rich experiences can be enabled such as videos helping to explain the product, visualisations of comparable products and end to end functionality to complete the transaction such as collection of personal data, one click payment options (apple pay) and ability to send any legal notices or documents via SMS or email for adherence to customer experience legislative requirements.

The customer can continue their journey without having to repeat themselves and have the flexibility to deal with real life as it comes while allowing the simplicity of getting what they need from your organisation in the most efficient convenient manner possible all with a few clicks on their mobile device.



TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION SUMMARY

Ian Harrison

Director, Customer Experience Optimisation
Verint



As customer interactions touch an increasing set of organisational interfaces it is interesting that most CCM's have not turned their attention to experience management and understanding across the enterprise. Concepts like Experience Management and Predictive Experience are becoming more prevalent and yet many of those surveyed have little idea as to what this is! Many organisations capture an overwhelming volume of experiential data in customer and employee interactions across all channels and touch points. How do you figure out where to prioritise resources effectively and ensure every action taken has the maximum possible impact on the customer experience?

Future interactions will progressively move to multi-channel and therefore the need to have insights from more than just contact centre interactions will become increasingly critical. This also raises the issue of the role of the CCM...in the future they will be required to demonstrate how contact centre interaction data, post call surveys, text verbatims etc adds value, and integrates to, the wider enterprise data set. No longer will post call survey and speech analytics etc (from the contact centre) be enough. Information will be required from the various channels, how the customer started their journey with the organisation, why did the website or self-service not provide them with what they needed, where did they get stuck in the online channel and, when they ended up in the contact centre, what did they say, how was their sentiment etc.

Critically with the plethora of devices and Operating systems...was there an issue with a certain sales campaign on a particular device for some customers. Digital Behaviour Analytics will be increasingly used to capture millions of clicks, gestures, and taps across digital assets – independent of surveys – to visualise the holistic customer experience and opportunity for improvements. These visual and quantitative analytics tools assist to identify anomalies and problem areas, explain where users struggle, analyse problems or hesitation, and uncover barriers to successful CX.

The challenge for many of the CCMs is that the technology in contact centres is evolving rapidly into a complex mixture of solutions such as SaaS, Experience management, CCaaS, digital sales and self-service apps to name just few. Additionally, the pandemic has driven more and more customers online. This has not only created a challenge to attract and retain staff it has also brought forward the requirement to have the latest customer experience enabled by the best technology supporting both employees and their customers.



So, what does the future look like? The technologies implemented now need to deliver on the evolving expectations of the customers over the next few years. Customers may not describe or understand what they require in the language that follows, but CX professionals need to offer these sorts of capabilities for their customers:

- A service model delivering personalised service outcomes.
- The provision of proactive help and advice offers fast resolution while keeping customers informed.
- A consistent unified customer interface that accurately overviews the customers interactions.
- Integrated interaction channels enabling seamless movement across channels and a personalised experience
- Self-service channels that have an innate user interface that is enjoyable to use and engenders loyalty.
- Employees supporting customers with desktop solutions that enable them to work from anywhere.

The responses from the Contact Centre Managers indicate that they are largely aligned in how they think about the future CX requirements. The data shows that they are looking to upgrade or invest in Speech Analytics, Chat and Social Messaging, IVAs and knowledge management.

For the agents a single view of the customer needs to be provided via a desktop that removes complexity, automates manual transactions and assists in identifying compliance and conversational adherence issues so that the agent can show care and empathy as opposed to becoming preoccupied with ticking off regulatory obligations. Agents increasingly need the support of AI enhanced real-time insights and reporting to facilitate better customer service and provide intuitive information when it is needed.

Revamping Customer Engagement Using Integrated Technology

Opportunity

IAG has revamped its customer engagement efforts to support its plans to be a digital-first business. The company wanted to create world-class experiences for customers and employees and transform the way it interacts with customers in an increasingly digitally-driven and interconnected world.

With its workforce supporting 14 brands operating across five countries, IAG is Australia's and New Zealand's largest general insurer. The company has various policy and claims platforms, as well as multiple customer relationship management systems, making it difficult to create a cohesive and seamless customer experience irrespective of the customer's specific brand, product, or channel of engagement.

The company is pioneering the now, next, and future state of insurance to keep pace with the phenomenal changes brought about by the digital age and industry disruption. At the forefront of this initiative are the company's efforts to provide inspired, personalised, and frictionless customer experiences.

Historically, IAG handled sales, service, and claims processing predominantly through assisted channels such as telephone or face-to-face via multiple complex systems. Through digital, the goal has been to flip this equation so that more business is handled via digital channels.

Alongside simplifying and reducing costs across its core technology platforms and processes, the company aspires to leverage customer insights to deliver highly personalised and relevant omnichannel experiences.

Solution

Leveraging Verint® Workforce Engagement™ technology integrated with its systems of record, IAG developed "ORBIT." ORBIT is a consolidated customer engagement platform supporting a frictionless and connected experience across its brands, products, and customer touchpoints, in turn helping to eliminate disjointed customer interactions and transfers.

The system provides a full view of the customer and their insurance relationships, with contextual information to simplify customer interactions and streamline customer engagement processes.

Telephony integration supports call line identification and automatic screen pop and customer identification. Web chat capability and email routing is also supported. Co-browsing allows agents to assist customers online as needed, while infused knowledge management provides relevant articles and FAQs to further help improve customer interactions.

Optimised agent allocation is achieved through skills-based routing. Agents no longer need to toggle between multiple screens and systems, as all is accomplished seamlessly in one portal.

Benefits

Digital once accounted for just 10 percent of all interactions with IAG customers. Digital channels now account for roughly 50 percent of all customer interactions.

“This would not have been possible without the customer engagement platform we have today,” says Nicole Shobbrook, executive manager of digital at IAG. “Powered by Verint, the platform has enabled us to simplify and continue to digitise our business.”

IAG now supports more than 75,000 online self-service visits weekly. By enabling customers to access information and transact business online, IAG has seen a dramatic impact to its annual phone and in-branch transaction volumes. The company has achieved an 18 percent call volume reduction. At the same time, the growth in online self-service has resulted in fewer customer visits to its branches. Collectively, this has enabled the insurer to increase efficiency in the call centres on shore and off shore while making the teams more effective.

Additional operational efficiencies have also helped trim call handling times. Plus, IAG’s digital-first efforts continue to deflect more and more call types to self-service. For example, with intelligent automation and digitisation supporting “smart renewals,” over 40 percent of renewals are now handled via digital channels.

“Customers interact with us through our numerous brands and many channels and distribution partners,” explains Shobbrook. “When a customer comes to our business with certain needs, we must be able to access the entire group to service that need. ORBIT helps us service customer needs via automated smart triage queues across our personal insurance lines and our small business offering.”

With a full view of the customer relationship, IAG can hold rich customer conversations via intelligent messaging based on predictive analytics, which facilitates improved agent interactions in the insurer’s contact centres, branches, kiosks, and digital channels, Shobbrook concludes.

“ORBIT, with all of the Verint technology under the covers, gives us a powerful tool we have never had before, with enormous intelligence about our customers, products, and interactions. It is crucial to helping us execute on our simplification and digitalisation journey.”

Nicole Shobbrook, Executive Manager of Digital, IAG

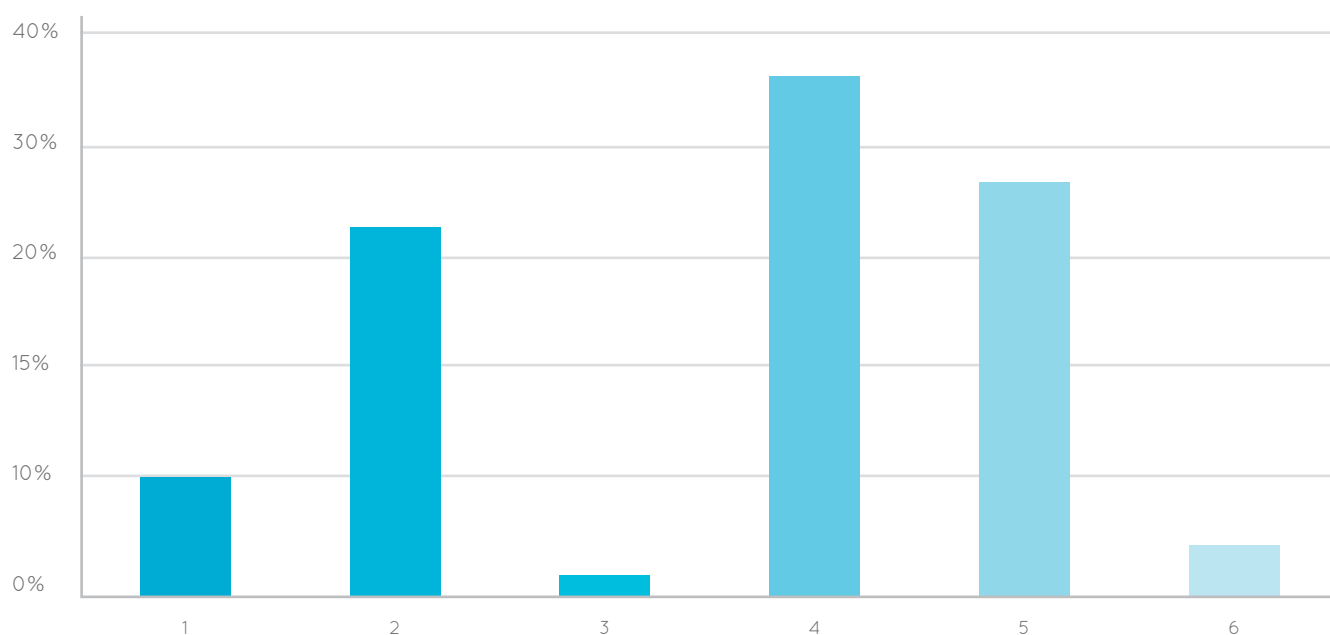
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

BEST PRACTICE REPORT



WHAT WOULD BEST DESCRIBE YOUR USAGE OF AI IN THE CONTACT CENTRE AT THE MOMENT?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
Currently using AI in an experimental way	1	10%
Currently using AI to a low-to-moderate level	2	23%
Currently using AI to a high level	3	1%
Not using AI, will implement in 2022/23	4	35%
No plans to implement	5	27%
Don't know/NA	6	3%

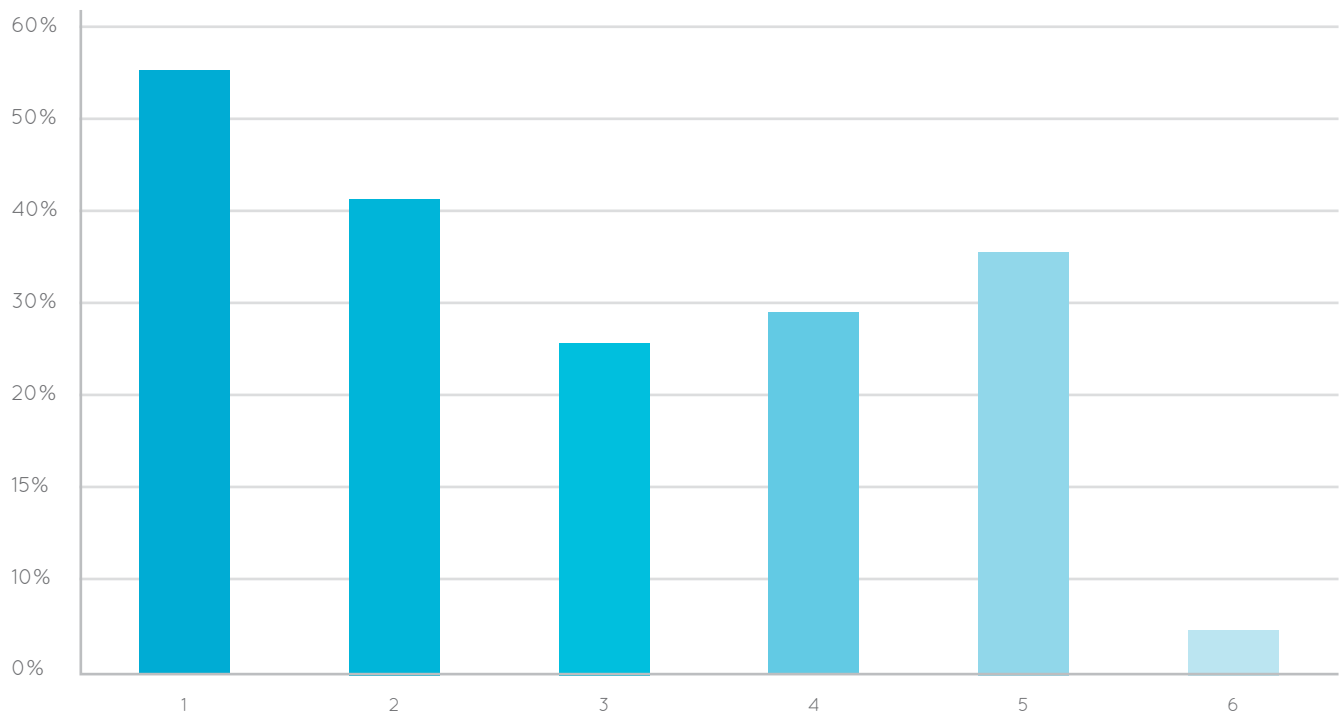


A form of AI is being used by 33% of people surveyed. 35% of survey respondents are planning to implement it in 2022/23 while a slightly smaller 27% have no plans for AI at all. These figures are similar to other non-contact centre focussed industries where AI is beginning to be embraced, but half of the audience is still planning for the near future.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

WHICH FORMS OF AI ARE YOU USING AT THE MOMENT?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
Chatbots or Virtual Assistants	1	54%
Speech analytics	2	41%
Natural Language IVR's	3	24%
Robotic Process Automation	4	30%
Predictive call routing	5	35%
Other	6	4%

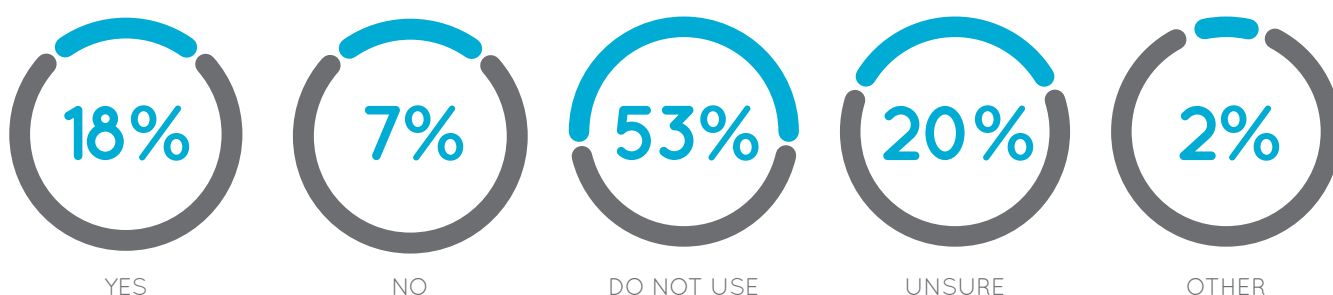


53% of all AI being used is covered by chatbots and virtual assistants. Other forms include speech analytics (40%), IVR natural language (35%) and predictive call routing (30%). This differs from the majority of other industries where the chatbot and customer assistant tools are used more often.

The increase in “web-based AI” to bridge the gap with the service/support team is an area of growth. Technology surges forward with a more “client focused approach” to enhance the customer experience.

HAS AI HELPED TO INCREASE CONVERSIONS?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Yes	18%
No	7%
We don't use it for this purpose	53%
Unsure	20%
Other	2%



The survey shows a solid 18% agreeing that AI contributed to conversions. We expect to see this number rise as adoption surges over the next two years. For 52% of respondents AI is not used to increase conversions, but for different purposes. 20% replied “unsure” - this highlights a possible gap in many installation’s ability to track and align interactions with business goals.



ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

HAS AI HELPED YOU EXTEND YOUR SERVICE REACH AND AVAILABILITY?

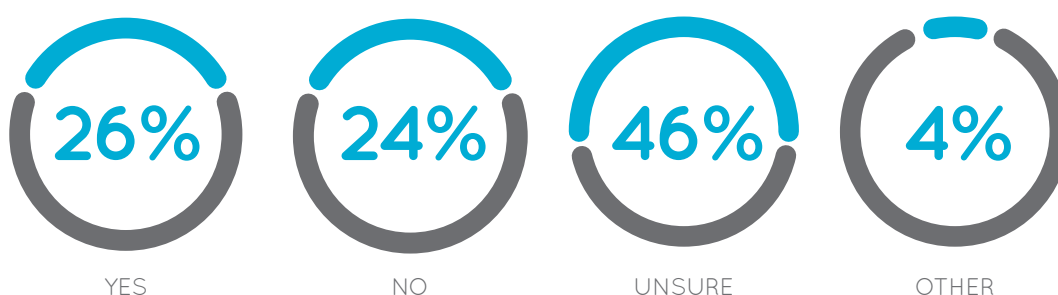
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Yes	48%
No	7%
We don't use it for this purpose	28%
Unsure	17%
Other	0%



Although this result is lower than expected, 48% responded that AI helped extend service reach and availability. Interestingly, this is where chatbots are primarily used. IVR uses and voice routing typically don't extend reach and availability. We also expect this area to increase as adoption and cross-platform support is expanded through other channels like web, social, and so forth.

HAS AI HELPED YOU IMPROVE YOUR CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SCORES?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Yes	26%
No	24%
Unsure	46%
Other	4%



An almost even feedback of yes and no (26% versus 24%) for helping with customer satisfaction is an interesting result. At 46%, the largest number of respondents was unsure. This further underlines the disparity that many AI installations have lagging reporting indicators. Our customers have also informed us that reporting projects often gets de-prioritised over “new things”. This is a hard challenge as numbers that are aligned with new initiatives can help organisations double down on success or indicate when there is a need to pivot.

AI projects aren’t that much different when it comes to the importance of defining what success looks like. It might even be more important for tracking the right metrics, as it demystifies some of the “black box” thinking around how AI is helping the business.

How AI is being used in businesses is also often an internal marketing challenge, as outlined in Gartner’s Hype cycle. It shows AI’s effectiveness is still not something that has been fully realised and still has a high rate of innovation for many organisations.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

HAS AI ASSISTED YOU TO REALLOCATE RESOURCES TO WHERE THEY ARE BETTER SUITED?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Yes	53%
No	17%
We don't use it for this purpose	17%
Unsure	13%
Other	0%



AI helping reallocate resources is a common thread in other industries. This is encouraging, as AI can sometimes be associated with the fear of job loss. The survey has positively reported that 54% of respondents agree, and have reallocated resources to best help achieve their goals.

WHO IS PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE FOR MANAGING THE AI TOOLS YOU CURRENTLY USE?

ACTUAL RESPONSES, IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER:
Call center
CCMs
CI team
Client
Client Services Manager
Collaboration between Operations, Data Analytics and Dev
Combination of enablement, within the contact centre and technical teams
Contact centre manager
Contact Centre/Marketing
Continuous Improvement Team
Data team
Dialler Operator
Digital
Digital
Digital strategy manager
Digital Team
Digital team
Digital team
Digital Transformation Team/Operations
Engagement platform manager
Head of Supporter Analytics
Headoffice - Salesforce dev team
I am - Head of Customer Service, Support & Complaints Management

ACTUAL RESPONSES, IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER:
Internal
IT
IT
IT and Continuous Improvement teams
IT and innovation
It sits within our Customer Contact space
Joint project team (workforce/real time team)
Liveperson
Manager
Me
My team
myself
Myself
Myself and our operations team
N-a
Operations Manager in conjunction with 3rd party providers
Quality and training
Service Support team
Team manager
Tech
Telstra
The General Manager
WFM



AI tools are becoming more customer focussed compared to earlier AI projects. Before, these tools were often more data “IT” focussed. A slow shift in roles managing the assets and projects is similar to other industries.

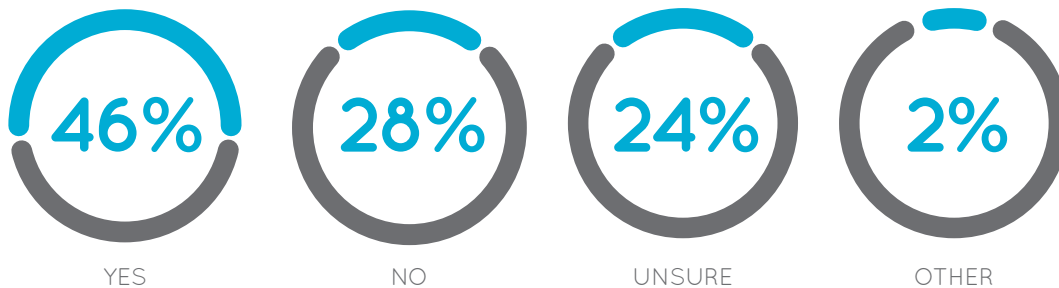
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

HAS AI HELPED YOU TO REDUCE YOUR OVERALL COSTS?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Yes	46%
No	28%
Unsure	24%
Other	2%

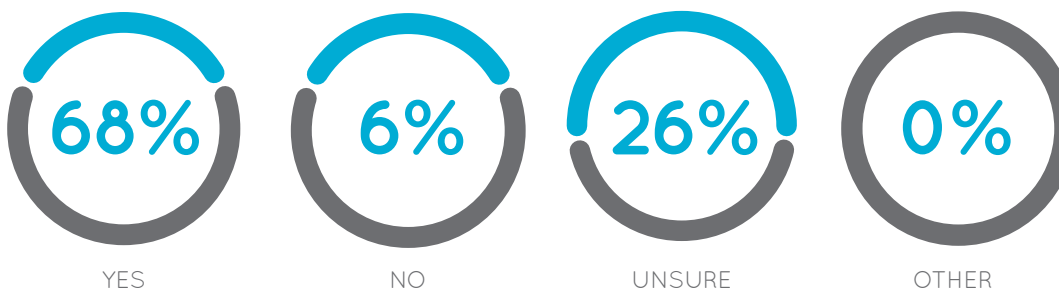


For 46% of respondents, using AI reduced costs. However; the reasons to implement AI are typically around improving services, not in cost savings as reflected here.



DO YOU PLAN TO INVEST MORE IN AI SOLUTIONS IN THE FUTURE?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Yes	68%
No	6%
Unsure	26%
Other	0%



This result of 69% is in line with most larger digital transformation surveys predicting AI solutions to be among the top 5 influences in the next decade. With more than traditional enterprises benefiting, mid-market is also in a position to leverage AI solutions.

DO YOU BELIEVE AI WILL HELP HUMAN AGENTS, RATHER THAN REPLACE THEM?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Yes	80%
No	5%
Unsure	11%
Other	4%



Over the next couple of decades we will see AI assisting humans rather than replacing them. AI empowers teams by suggesting data driven improvements to continuously enhance the customer journey.



YES



NO



UNSURE



OTHER

DO YOU PLAN TO INVEST MORE IN AI SOLUTIONS IN THE FUTURE?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Yes	81%
No	6%
Unsure	13%
Other	0%



YES



NO



UNSURE



OTHER

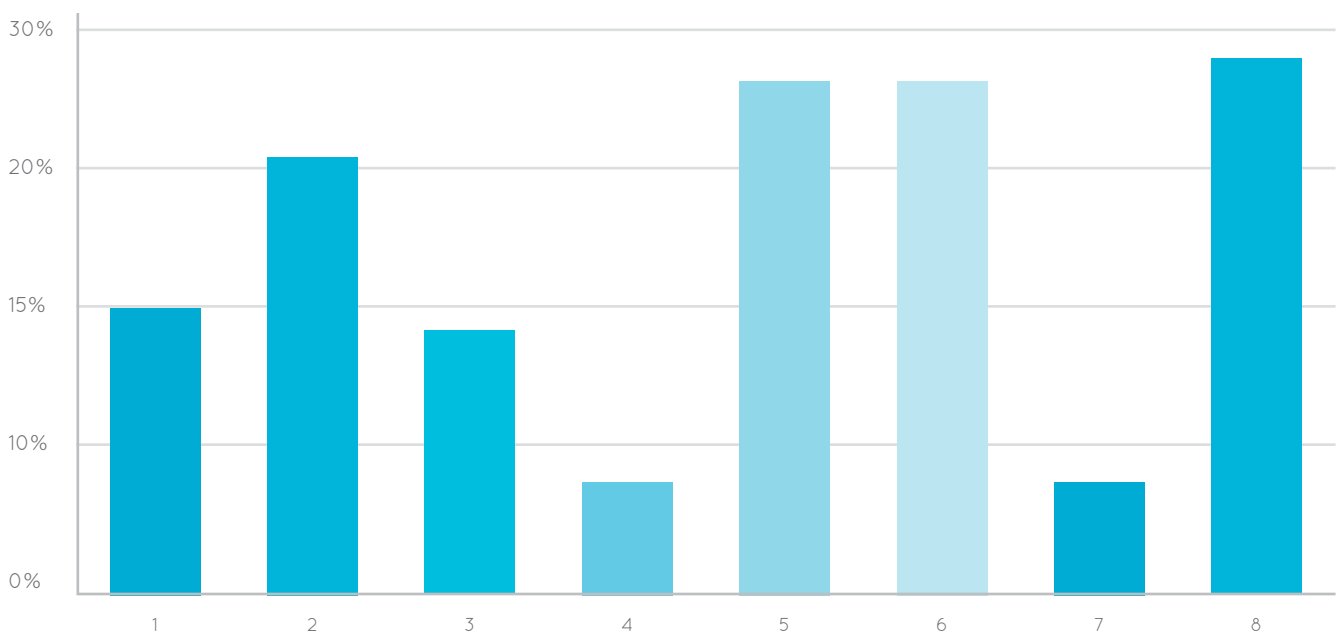


Overwhelming response of 81% think that AI can improve the experience in contact centres.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

WHY AREN'T YOU USING AI AT THE MOMENT? SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
Happy with our current setup/no need to change	1	15%
Cost	2	21%
Unsure where to start	3	14%
We don't have an internal champion	4	7%
Complexity of introducing further change	5	25%
Environment too difficult for further change at the moment	6	25%
Reluctance/hesitation from senior stakeholders	7	7%
Other	8	27%



The reasons for not adopting AI are quite evenly split between complexity, environmental challenges, cost and other.

It's clear that simpler solutions will be attractive to contact centres to combat the variety of challenges.

It will be interesting to observe as this changes over time.

HAS AI HELPED YOU IMPROVE YOUR CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SCORES?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Yes	74%
No	8%
Unsure	18%



YES



NO



UNSURE



10 times the number of respondents see the value in the use of AI vs. those that don't. This mirrors other industries where managers know that AI is a key factor in unlocking efficiencies and scaling up.

Such as including additional channels for their audience, after hours service, and self service empowerment.



ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

James Xuereb

Client Success Manager
Clevertar



AI is in a growth phase within the contact centre industry.

To define AI as we use it isn't SKYNET as portrayed in the Terminator movies... think rather to enhance the services / solutions that organisations provide their audience. Specifically, in being able to learn customer patterns and suggest responses to an enquiry.

The survey data validates that AI can be the bridge between human service / support teams and digital CX channels like websites, IVR's, apps and social networks.

10 times the number of surveyed respondents experienced improved customer satisfaction scores from their AI assets. Furthermore 69% said they will plan to invest more in AI in the future.

In summary the surveyed respondents can be split into 4 similarly sized segments:

- 1 Currently using AI
- 2 Implementing in 2022/23
- 3 No plans to implement
- 4 Skipped the question

The data tells us that 50% of the respondents are using AI with a quarter using it in a moderate way. A further quarter have plans to implement AI in the next 2 years. The most popular type of AI for respondents is "chatbots / virtual agents with 54%.

The overall sentiment is similar to when websites first broke through traditional channels meeting audiences' demand for information and became a staple for organisations. There was an initial uptake by early adopters, before tools and solutions matured to be simpler to deploy and delivered more value and ROI.

The AI toolsets and suppliers are ready to meet the more sophisticated needs of audiences in 2022 and beyond with tools and ROI's being simpler to calculate than the early 2000's.

The survey data shows there is still some work to be done by the AI industry to educate this segment as there were many that skipped some of the detailed AI related questions.

We forecast that the AI solutions that act as a bridge between human teams and their audience are here and returning ROI online with valuable insights on the audience's needs.

"Black box" thinking around AI will become a thing of the past as managers and teams experience growth and continue to invest in tools and solutions that become a staple experience.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE CASE STUDY



The Department for Education aim to achieve quality learning and wellbeing outcomes for children and young people. They manage South Australia's public education system, with the goal of delivering world-class primary and secondary education in all areas of the curriculum.

Introducing Andie

The new chatbot is part of the Department for Education SA (DfE) digital innovation strategy to engage with its community. Andie represents an additional service channel aimed at reducing the number of inbound support requests relating to teacher applications, enabling a new level of self-sufficiency for job applicants.

- Providing a nurturing customer experience for the day to day situations
- Referring and escalating to human resources when it's needed

Challenge

Department for Education SA were investigating ways to:

- Improve customer service to job applicants as it ramped up to a key recruitment period
- Focus contact centre support on more complex enquiries
- Enable digital tools for its community
- Provide after-hours support

Approach

DfE decided to introduce a chatbot as part of its digital innovation strategy. A Proof of concept (POC) project was scoped to focus on recruitment support needs with metrics defined for success. Key aspects:

- Follow an agile methodology to create, shape and transform existing content into nurturing conversations
- Once introduced, set up regular check-ins and monitoring of usage data to enable ongoing learning and improvement of the experience

Solution

Andie was launched in 2021 and represents an additional service channel to support DfE's teacher recruitment drive. This new channel is aimed at reducing the number of inbound support requests plus:

- POC extended to Business As Usual (BAU) for 12 months based on FTE comparison
- Enabling a level of self-sufficiency for DfE's target community
- Referring and escalating to human resources if needed

View the chatbot in action at:

<https://www.education.sa.gov.au/working-us/careers-education>

This case study online can be found at the Clevertar.com website

<https://clevertar.com/case-studies/department-for-education/>

Key features



Artificial Intelligence



Customers serviced 24/7



PowerBI reporting
dashboard



Natural human voice



Targeted call to actions



Custom branding



Human request escalation



3D character avatar

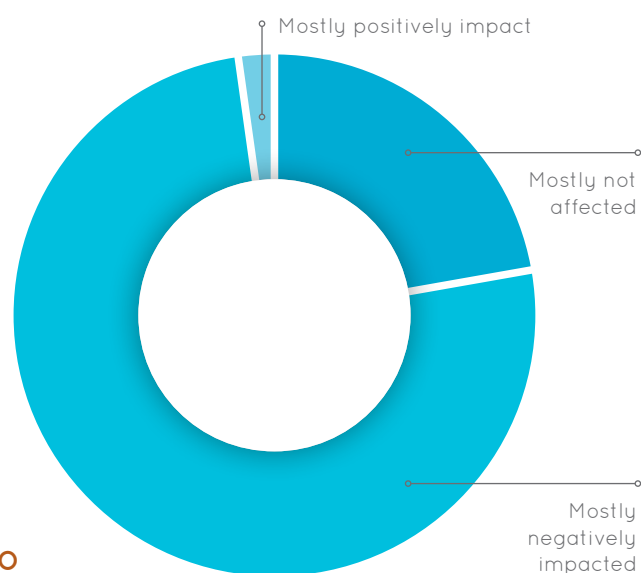
MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

BEST PRACTICE REPORT



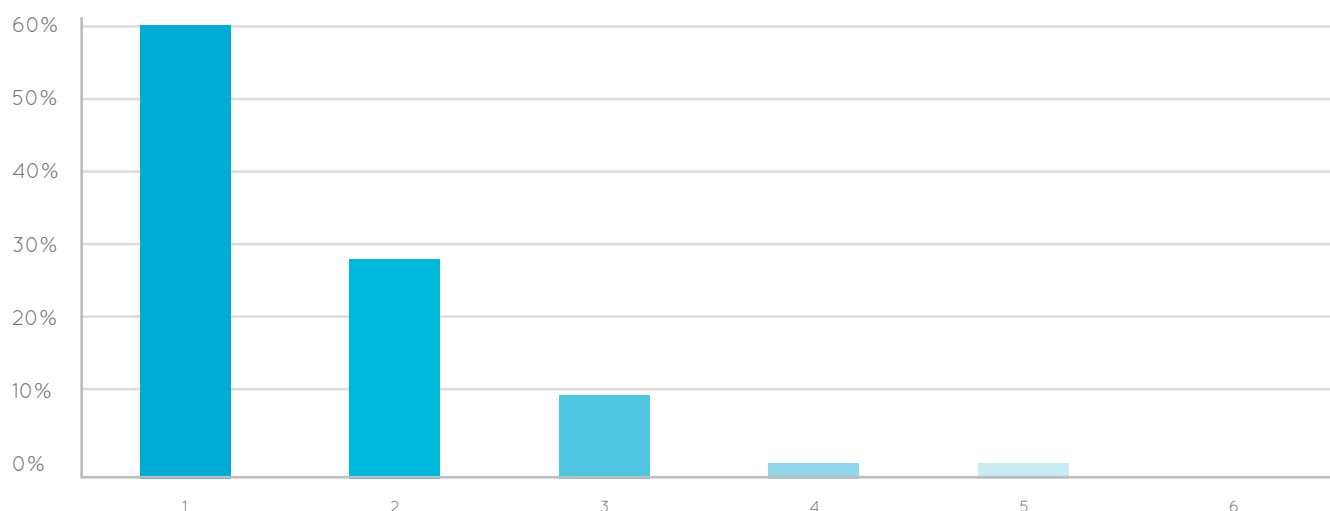
LEVELS OF MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING IN OUR ORGANISATION HAVE BEEN:

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Mostly not affected by Covid	22%
Mostly negatively impacted by Covid	76%
Mostly positively impacted by Covid	2%



IN OUR CONTACT CENTRE, MATTERS RELEVANT TO PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY AND MENTAL HEALTH ARE APPROACHED WITH THE SAME LEVELS OF ATTENTION AND CARE AS MATTERS RELEVANT TO PHYSICAL SAFETY

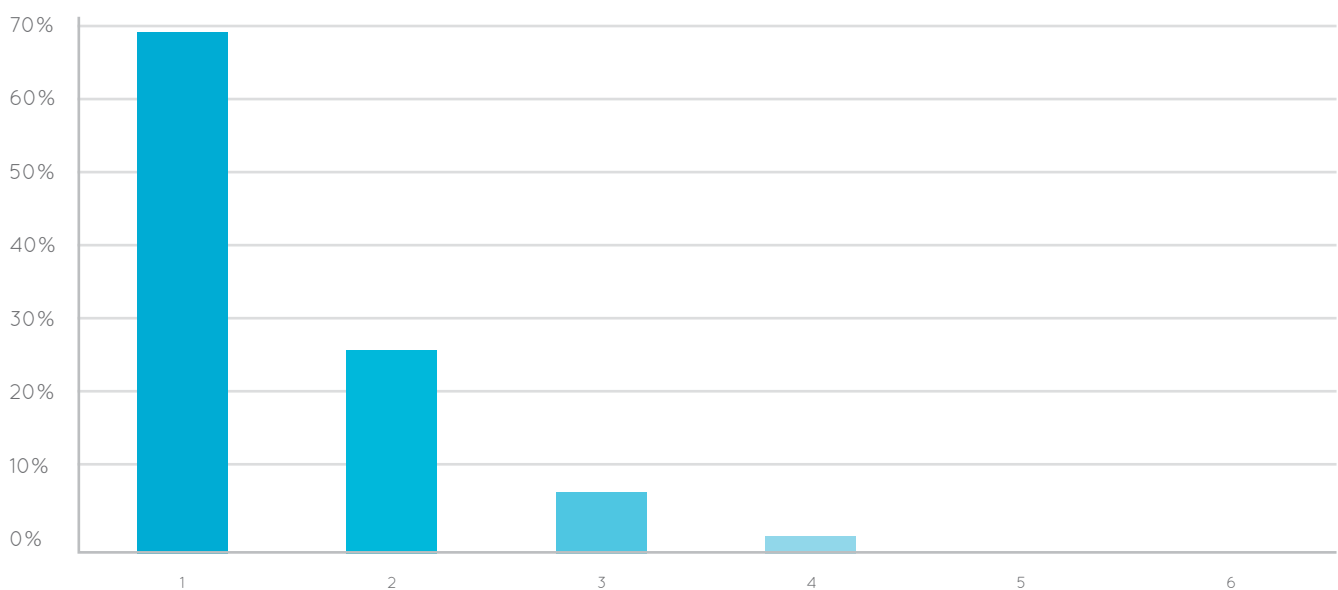
ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
Strongly agree	1	60%
Agree	2	29%
Slightly agree	3	8%
Slightly disagree	4	1%
Disagree	5	1%
Strongly disagree	6	0%



MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

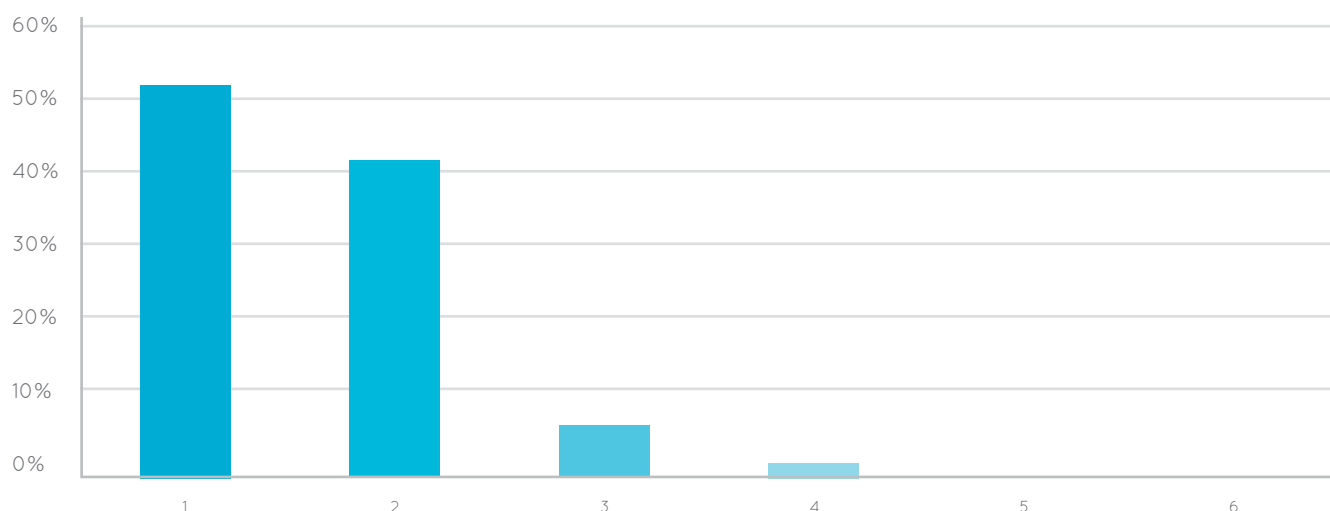
IN OUR CONTACT CENTRE THERE IS A FULL AND IMMEDIATE RESPONSE WHEN PEOPLE RAISE CONCERNS RELATED TO MATTERS THAT MAY IMPACT PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY AND/OR MENTAL HEALTH (E.G. VERBAL ABUSE BY CALLER, DISCRIMINATION, BULLYING, HARASSMENT, WORKPLACE AGGRESSION AND VIOLENCE)

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
Strongly agree	1	69%
Agree	2	24%
Slightly agree	3	6%
Slightly disagree	4	1%
Disagree	5	0%
Strongly disagree	6	0%



IN OUR CONTACT CENTRE MISTAKES ARE VIEWED AS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR LEARNING AND IMPROVEMENT

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
Strongly agree	1	51%
Agree	2	41%
Slightly agree	3	6%
Slightly disagree	4	1%
Disagree	5	0%
Strongly disagree	6	0%



IN GENERAL, PEOPLE IN OUR CONTACT CENTRE TRUST EACH OTHER

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Strongly agree	29%
Agree	54%
Slightly agree	15%
Slightly disagree	1%
Disagree	0%
Strongly disagree	0%



STRONGLY
AGREE



AGREE



SLIGHTLY
AGREE



SLIGHTLY
DISAGREE



DISAGREE &
STRONGLY DISAGREE

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

PEOPLE IN OUR CONTACT CENTRE FEEL SAFE TO TRULY SPEAK THEIR MIND
WITHOUT FEAR OF POTENTIAL NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR DOING SO

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Strongly agree	28%
Agree	55%
Slightly agree	15%
Slightly disagree	3%
Disagree	0%
Strongly disagree	0%



STRONGLY
AGREE



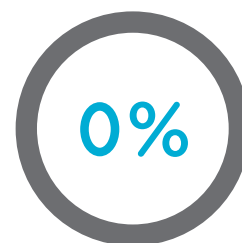
AGREE



SLIGHTLY
AGREE



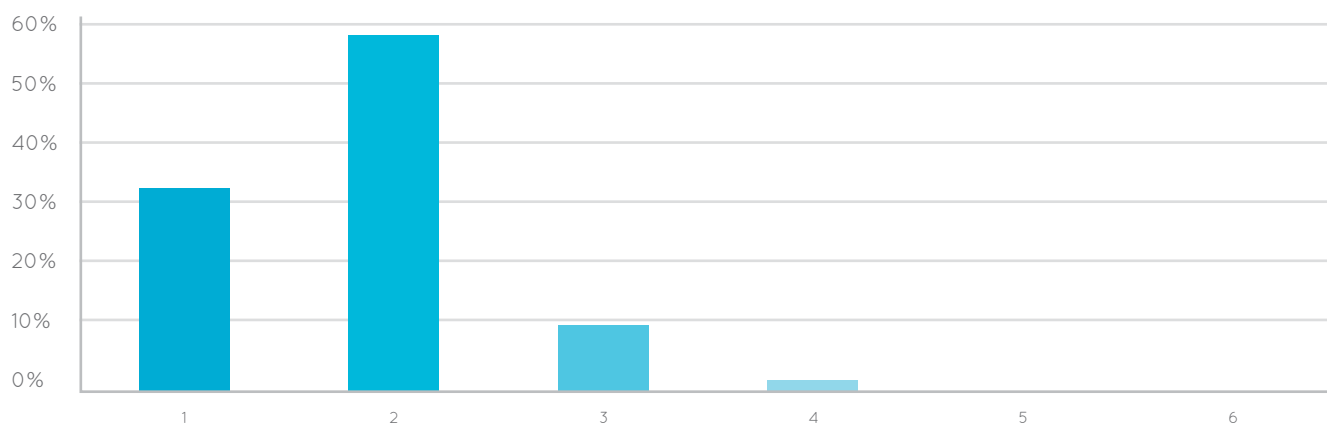
SLIGHTLY
DISAGREE



DISAGREE &
STRONGLY DISAGREE

I KNOW WHAT THE MAIN WORK RELATED RISK FACTORS ARE THAT IMPACT ON PSYCHOLOGICAL
SAFETY AND MENTAL HEALTH IN OUR CONTACT CENTRE

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
Strongly agree	1	31%
Agree	2	58%
Slightly agree	3	9%
Slightly disagree	4	2%
Disagree	5	0%
Strongly disagree	6	0%



**I FEEL CONFIDENT ABOUT HOW I CAN POSITIVELY IMPACT
PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY AND MENTAL HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE**

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Strongly agree	33%
Agree	58%
Slightly agree	8%
Slightly disagree	0%
Disagree	0%
Strongly disagree	0%



STRONGLY
AGREE



AGREE



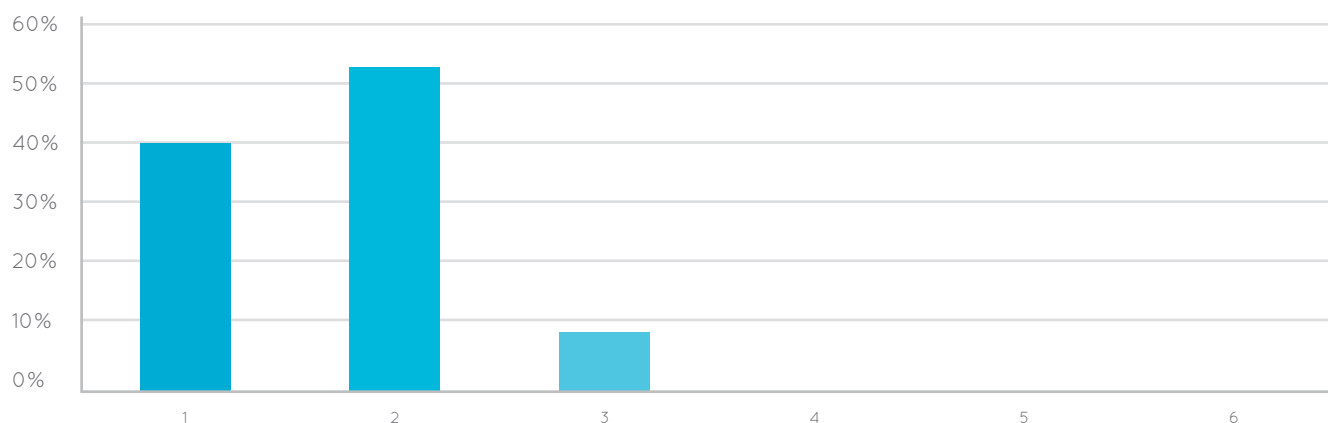
SLIGHTLY
AGREE



SLIGHTLY DISAGREE
DISAGREE
STRONGLY DISAGREE

I HAVE A GOOD UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT DEFINES MENTAL HEALTH AND MENTAL ILL HEALTH

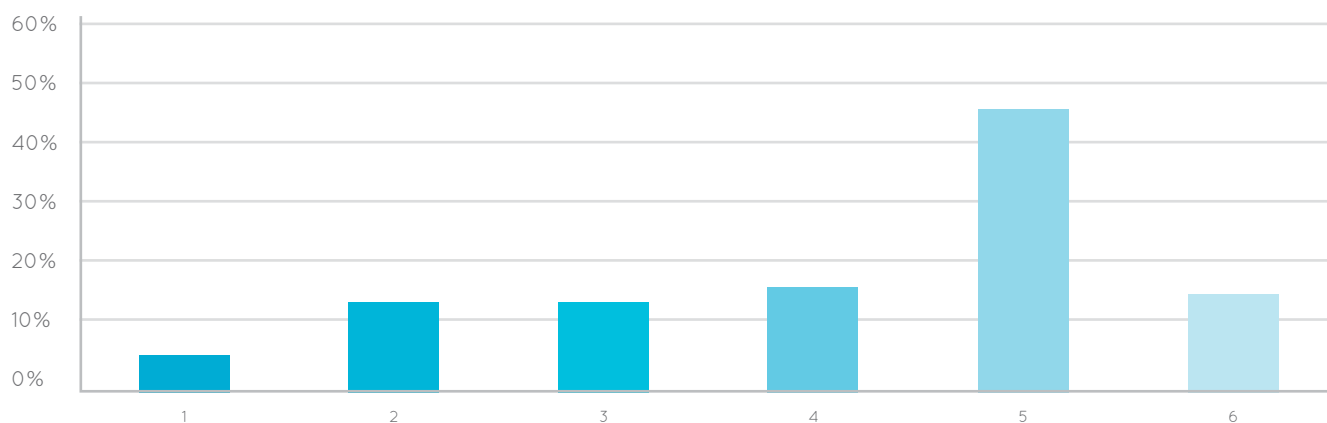
ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
Strongly agree	1	40%
Agree	2	51%
Slightly agree	3	8%
Slightly disagree	4	0%
Disagree	5	0%
Strongly disagree	6	0%



MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

IN OUR CONTACT CENTRE THERE IS STILL A STIGMA SURROUNDING THE TOPIC OF MENTAL HEALTH

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
Strongly agree	1	4%
Agree	2	11%
Slightly agree	3	11%
Slightly disagree	4	15%
Disagree	5	46%
Strongly disagree	6	13%



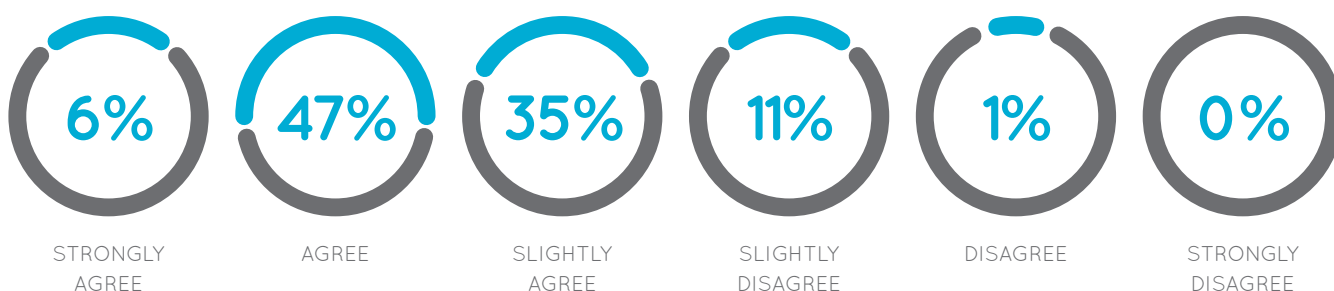
IN GENERAL, WORKLOAD HAS INCREASED DUE TO COVID

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
Strongly agree	1	26%
Agree	2	24%
Slightly agree	3	21%
Slightly disagree	4	10%
Disagree	5	17%
Strongly disagree	6	3%



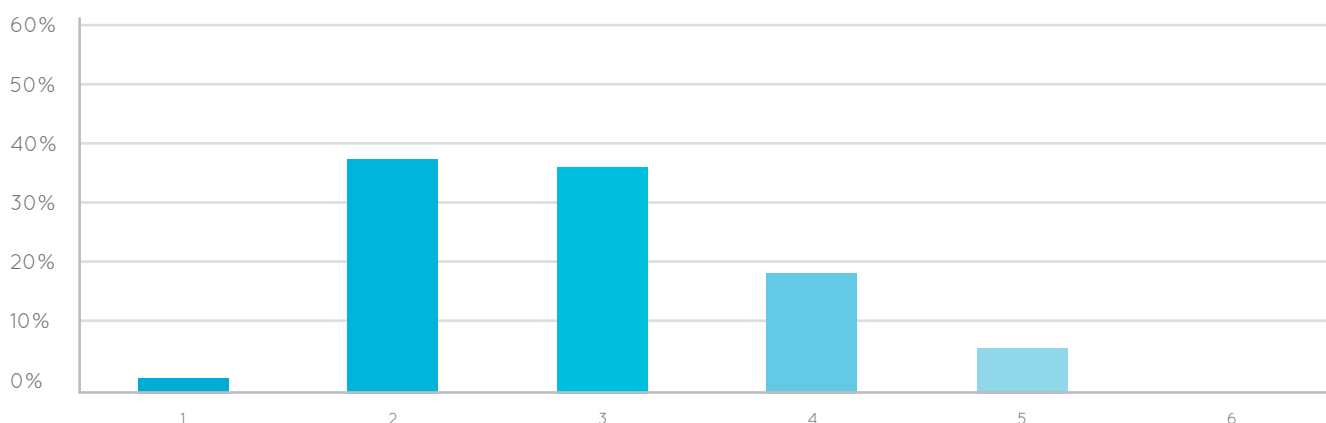
IN OUR ORGANISATION PEOPLE HAVE A SAY IN DECISIONS THAT AFFECT THEIR WORK

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Strongly agree	6%
Agree	47%
Slightly agree	35%
Slightly disagree	11%
Disagree	1%
Strongly disagree	0%



IN OUR ORGANISATION PEOPLE HAVE CONTROL OVER HOW THEY CARRY OUT THEIR WORK

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
Strongly agree	1	1%
Agree	2	38%
Slightly agree	3	37%
Slightly disagree	4	19%
Disagree	5	6%
Strongly disagree	6	0%

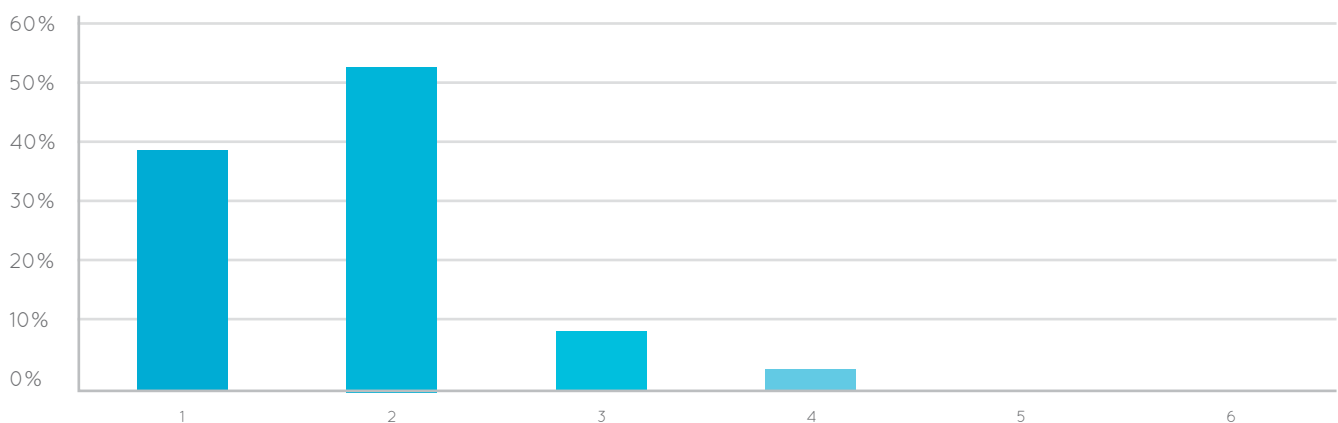


MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING



IN OUR ORGANISATION PEOPLE TREAT EACH OTHER WITH RESPECT

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
Strongly agree	1	39%
Agree	2	51%
Slightly agree	3	8%
Slightly disagree	4	2%
Disagree	5	0%
Strongly disagree	6	0%



mental working wfh members
situations external well-being know
always continuation creates health
lockdowns dont work face
human agents team impact
unless suffering agents individuals
experiencing extended speak getting eap
restrictions admit covid isolation
health schooling reduced due interaction open
continued tell staff challenges hard
feelings isolating lock

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING SUMMARY

Tom Ruijs

Senior Consultant

AP Psychology & Consulting Services



It's not just 'ok to not be ok', it's 'normal to not be ok'...

As we face into a brave new world ahead of us, we all do so a little more aware of what it is like to experience thoughts and feelings associated with stress, uncertainty, anxiety and depression. When we look in our rear-view mirrors, we probably all see the road behind us littered with 'moments' and 'times' where we did it tough and struggled. Or, let's face it... we may just see a really big and long moment, one that hasn't necessarily ended yet either!

For a lot of us it's not that we necessarily are now suffering from burnout or tick the boxes for a diagnosis of depression. It's more that when we get asked how we are, we may respond with a shrug of the shoulders followed by a 'Meh'. Languishing, a sense of stagnation and emptiness or feeling somewhat joyless and aimless, is the word that has surfaced as a rather accurate description for these types of sentiments. It doesn't quite qualify as a serious mental health concern but we are definitely not thriving either!

At the time of writing – December 2021 – we probably still feel, and will continue to feel, the impacts that the pandemic has made on us as a person, and on the way in which we live and work. Quite a few of your people may indeed have been, and may continue to languish or indeed have experienced other, more acute, forms of poor mental health.

Our expanded awareness and lived understanding of how being 'not ok' or having significant stressors in our life will impact us on so many levels, in both our personal and our work life.

My guess is that most of us no longer just appreciate that it's 'ok to not be ok' for others. We now also better recognise and accept that we ourselves may have our moments where we are not 'ok'. In fact it is indeed 'normal to not be ok'.

This expanded awareness and lived understanding in and of itself is a major step in the right direction. It is probably more powerful and impactful than any RUOK campaign could aspire to! Organisations, its leaders and employees alike have all had to face the reality that (poor) mental health is something we can, and given certain circumstances will, all struggle with.

Encouragingly this report shows that close to 75% of the participating contact centres report that they believe the stigma surrounding mental health is starting to lose its impact. It also reports high levels of trust between people (85%). A general perception that people feel safe to speak their mind (81%) and treat each other with respect (90%). These are some of the key ingredients for a psychologically safe and mentally healthy workplace.

It has been no surprise that in the last 2 years mental health awareness and workplace maturity on how to create psychologically safe teams and working environments has increased.

We see 90% of participating contact centres reporting to have a good understanding of what defines mental health and poor mental health as well as feeling confident (91%) about being able to positively impact psychological safety and mental health in the workplace. An overwhelming 90% of call centres also reports that psychological safety and mental health concerns receive the same level of attention and care as matters related to physical safety. This data point suggest that participating call centres acknowledge that the concept of psychological safety is just as real, and important, as physical safety.

The comments section from the report does suggest that participating contact centres still see significant and ongoing challenges with 'identifying signs and symptoms of mental health concerns in people' and 'how to start a conversation and support somebody effectively'. Challenges that are expected to be further complicated by compromised visibility of, and connection with, people who WFH, by people wanting, or not wanting, to return the workplace and of course by the fact that we will continue to operate against a backdrop of ongoing COVID fuelled change and uncertainty.

The growing understanding and maturity in mental health and psychological safety has seen workplaces shift their thinking from a more individual support and recovery focus towards a more pro-active and systemic early intervention and prevention focus at the organisational and leadership level. This is where a systemic and evidence-based approach to workplace psychological safety comes in. It is an approach focussed on supporting the creation, and subsequent sustainability, of work environments and teams that are psychologically safe and conducive to positive mental health by design. In other words, it's an approach where the workplace is consciously designed to address and mitigate psychosocial risk factors (prevention) and to pro-actively leverage and bolster protective factors (protection).

With the earlier mentioned uncertainty and change being something workplaces can't directly control, the focus will have to be on what is within control. Designing and creating a work environment that is conducive to people feeling safe, empowered, supported and resilient enough to still thrive (and not languish) despite the challenges they will continue to face.

Taking a systemic approach to workplace psychological safety and mental health will be key to successfully deliver on this. How well organisations are able to design and ongoingly evolve their cultures, build leadership capability, adjust and refine work design, review job roles and responsibilities and apply policies, procedures and supports to name a few examples will have a big influence on whether people once again thrive in the workplace or continue to languish and/or at risk of developing more serious mental health concerns.

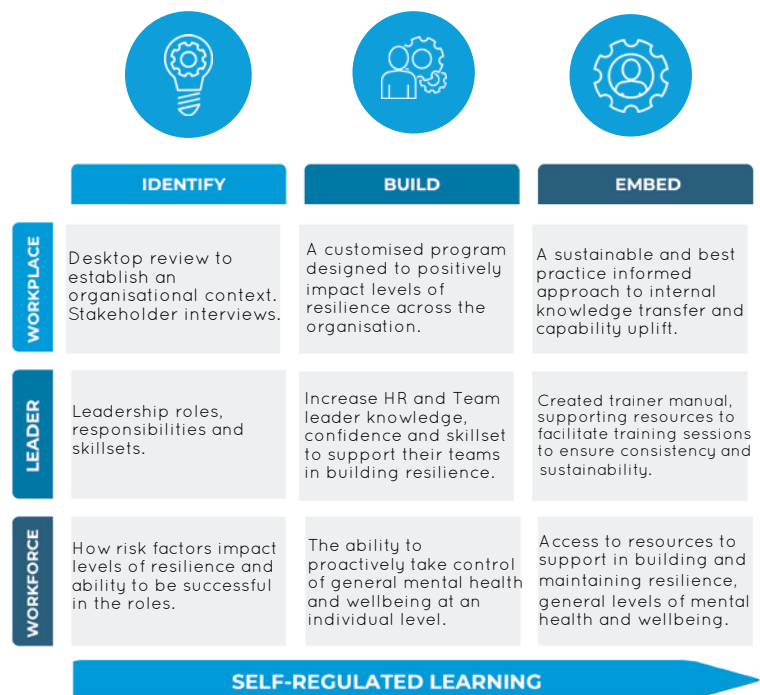
In closing it is encouraging to see most participating call centres have been able to establish an environment where the fundamentals to deliver on a systemic approach are in place. Delivering on this will be an ongoing and no doubt at times challenging journey. We will have to remind ourselves from time to time that we will make the most positive impact if we focus on those things that are within our control. Be that as an organisation, as a call centre manager, as a team leader, as an agent or in general as a human being.

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING CASE STUDY

Train the trainer program to build resilience

Sustainable solution to build and maintain workforce resilience and support general mental health and wellbeing.

AP Psychology & Consulting Services (APPCS) helped identify the need to develop a sustainable and affordable solution for building and maintaining team/individual levels of resilience. The nature of the call centre environment meant there were certain job demands and job design elements that have innate risk factors. We work together with call centres towards a solution that would help their team establish better ownership of, and control over, the innate risk factors present in their jobs and roles. We focussed on uplifting organisational and leadership capability as well as individual empowerment and awareness.



The diagram on the right captures the systemic approach taken to ensure the workplace, the leadership team and the workforce were all considered and connected in the design of the solution.

DELIVERABLES



91%

Participants gained skills and knowledge to enhance the ability to build resilience, support mental health and wellbeing



92%

Participants were confident about implementing the new learnings



85%

Very high likely to apply the skill sets and tools in their day to day activities



100% REACH

Capacity to reach 100% of the workforce



"The engagement was quite tricky at the start, but has well improved"



"It has been AMAZING. We have received overwhelmingly positive feedback"

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

BEST PRACTICE REPORT



CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

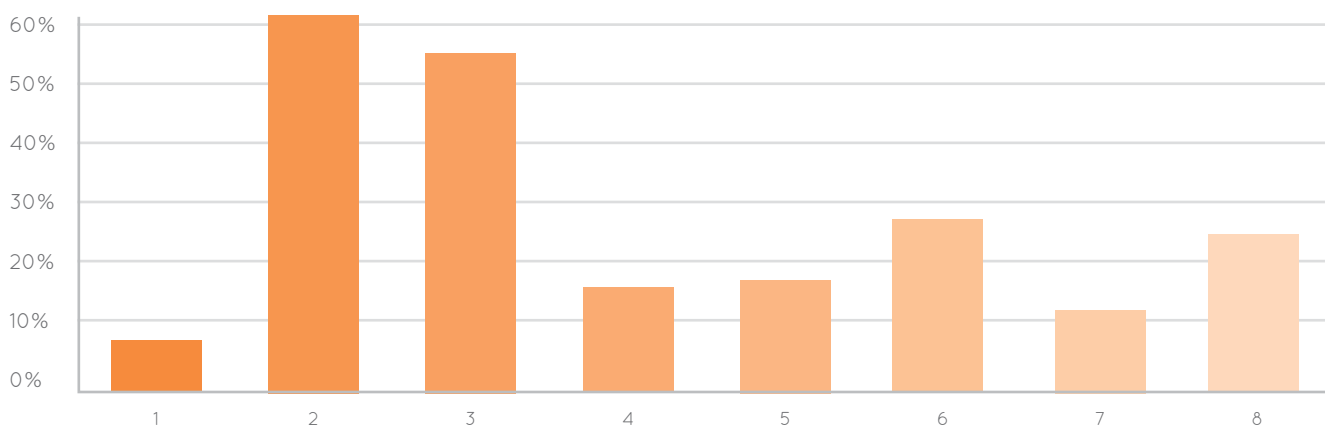
WHAT TYPE OF CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE METRICS/KPIS ARE USED BY YOUR COMPANY? (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
We aren't using any	1	7%
Net Promoter Score (NPS)	2	62%
Customer Satisfaction (CSAT)	3	53%
Customer Effort Score (CES)	4	15%
Customer Churn	5	16%
Retention rate	6	28%
Customer Lifetime Value (CLV)	7	11%
Internally developed metrics	8	24%

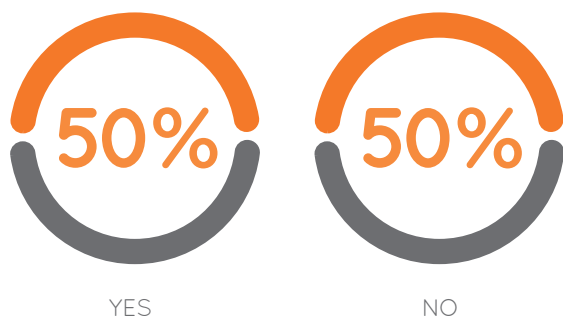


Net Promoter Score (NPS) and Customer Satisfaction (CSAT) continue to be the two most popular metrics used by companies when measuring CX.

Overall we see a positive trend of adoption of CX metrics in businesses. Only 6.94% of companies responded as not measuring CX at the moment, this is down from 15% on 2020 survey's response.



DO YOU USE ANY FORM OF IMMEDIATE AFTER-CALL SURVEY?



There is a slight increase from last year's figures that we see more respondents taking up after-call survey as a means to collect data from customers. This year presented 50% of respondents use after-call surveys, which is 5% higher than last year.

Overall, it seems to be an even split between those who use an after-call survey method and those who don't. Sometimes this comes down to challenges on finding a tool flexible enough to suit businesses to achieve the data collection e.g. how easy is it to access, is it affordable, is it easy to configure/self-manage, is it simple enough to generate decent reporting from it.

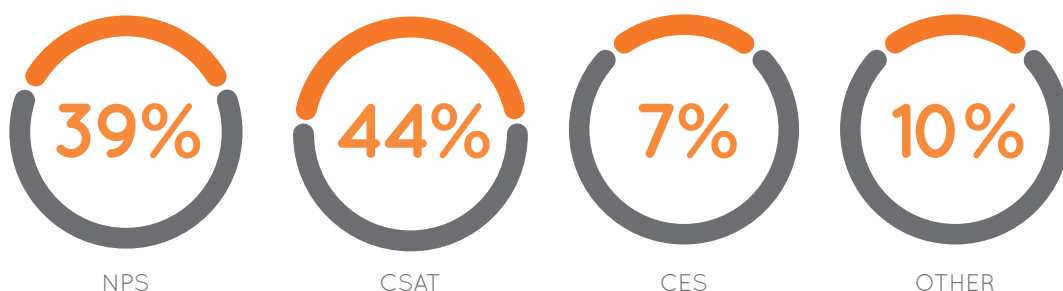
IF YES TO THE AFTER-CALL SURVEY, WHAT METRIC ARE YOU USING?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Net Promoter Score (NPS)	39%
Customer Satisfaction (CSAT)	44%
Customer Effort Score (CES)	7%
Other (please specify)	10%



Of the 50% of businesses that measure CX on voice channels using post-call surveys, CSAT is the preferred method closely followed by NPS.

CES and other methods to capture CX in post-call surveys are not widely used (7.04% and 9.86% respectively).

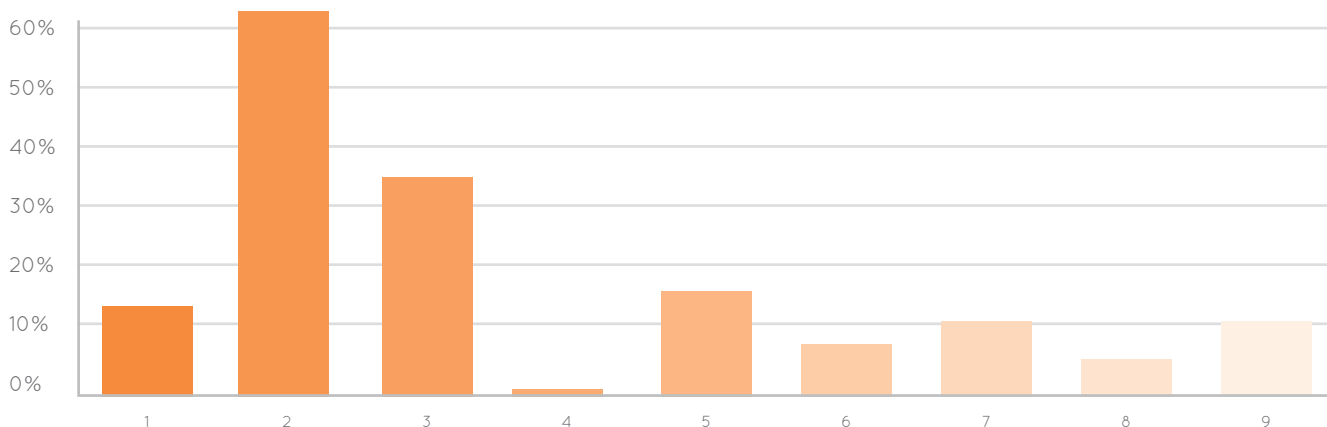


WHAT METHODS DO YOU USE TO CAPTURE CUSTOMER SATISFACTION? (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
We don't do any	1	12%
Email survey	2	62%
Post-call survey	3	35%
During the call survey (agent asks the question)	4	1%
Website survey	5	15%
Outbound Call	6	8%
SMS	7	10%
Mystery Shopping	8	6%
Other	9	10%



Email and post-call surveys lead the way as the most common channels to capture customer satisfaction scores.



CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

WHAT IS THE TYPICAL RESPONSE RATE TO THE FOLLOWING CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEYS:

ANSWER CHOICES	0-2%	2%-4%	5%-7%	8%-10%	11%-15%	16%-20%	21%-30%	31%-40%	41%-50%	51% +
Email survey	10%	10%	13%	16%	19%	7%	12%	5%	2%	6%
Post-call survey	16%	8%	13%	5%	6%	15%	19%	3%	2%	13%
During the call survey	73%	0%	5%	0%	0%	0%	14%	5%	0%	5%
Website survey	32%	6%	6%	12%	15%	0%	12%	3%	3%	12%
Outbound Call	38%	3%	3%	6%	13%	3%	9%	6%	6%	13%
SMS	45%	0%	10%	10%	7%	3%	3%	7%	10%	3%
Mystery Shopping	74%	4%	4%	4%	0%	0%	4%	4%	0%	4%



Post-call surveys are proving to be an effective way to capture customer satisfaction with the highest response rate compared to other channels.

Email which is widely used and selected as preferred channel for surveys (see previous question) is second when it comes to response rates.

ARE YOU CURRENTLY USING SPEECH ANALYTICS TO IMPROVE CUSTOMER INSIGHTS OR TO ASSIST WITH THE QUALITY MANAGEMENT PROCESSES?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Yes	24%
No	70%
Unsure	1%
Other	5%



Speech Analytics can help organisations to analyse the full spectrum of their customer interactions and also to identify trends and hidden patterns.

At the moment only around a quarter of organisations are currently using and realising the benefits of it. We expect to see Speech Analytics to be getting a wider adoption in the contact centre over time.



YES



NO



UNSURE



OTHER

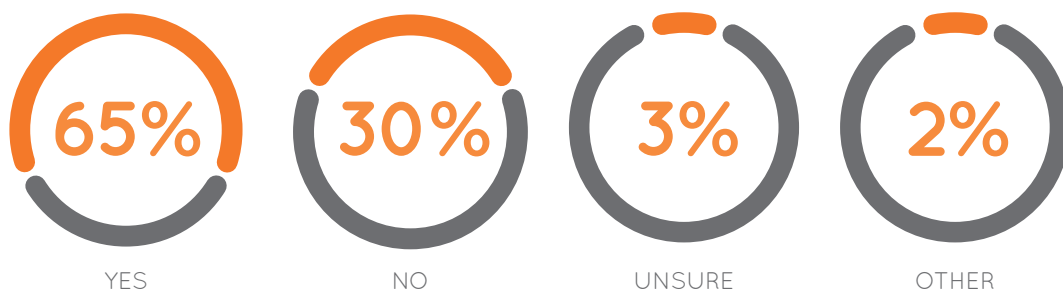
DO YOU HAVE A QUALITY MANAGEMENT APPROACH WHICH IS CONSISTENT ACROSS DIFFERENT CUSTOMER CHANNELS (CALLS, EMAIL, CHAT, ETC)?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Yes	65%
No	30%
Unsure	3%
Other	2%



When it comes to Quality Management, businesses are preferring a consistent approach regardless of the communication channel used during the customer interaction.

This is expected as consistency across channels is key in order to provide high levels of customer satisfaction.



DO YOUR AGENTS HAVE INTEGRATED TOOLS TO COMMUNICATE WITH CUSTOMERS ACROSS MULTIPLE CHANNELS (FOR EXAMPLE VOICE, CHATS, EMAILS, SMS, SOCIAL MEDIA)?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
Yes, we use an all-in-one platform that is used across all our communication channels	1	39%
No, we use independent communication solutions depending on the selected communication channel	2	48%
We only handle customer communications via a single channel (for example voice)	3	8%
Unsure	4	1%
Other	5	4%

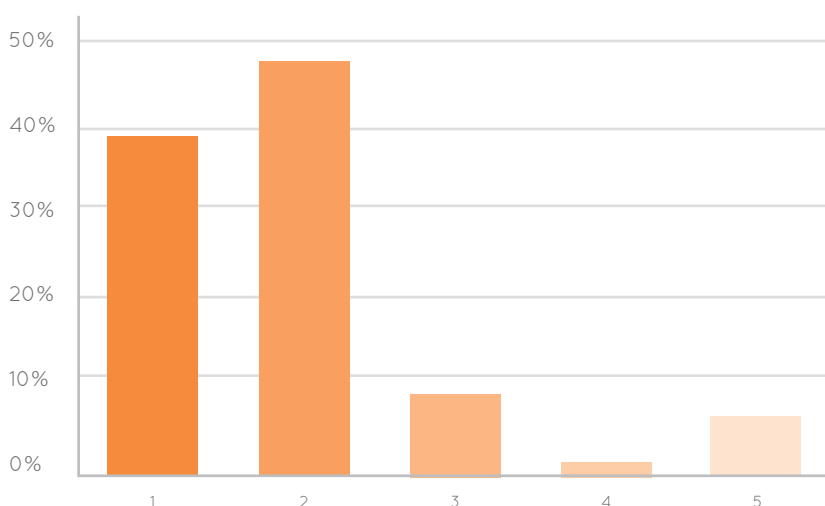


When it comes to customer communications, more than 91% of businesses are providing multiple communication channels to their customers.

To support this multi-channel approach, 48% of businesses are still using separate communication technologies for each channel which could result in the creation of silos of communication in the call centre.

This contrasts with the answer to the previous question, where businesses are yet preferring a consistent approach across channels when it comes to Quality Management.

All-in-one communication platforms can assist businesses to optimise customer communications and align to the desired Quality Management consistency (refer to previous question on Quality Management).



CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

HOW MANY OF YOUR CONTACT CENTRE METRICS ARE REPORTED TO THE SENIOR EXECUTIVE TEAM/BOARD ON A REGULAR BASIS?

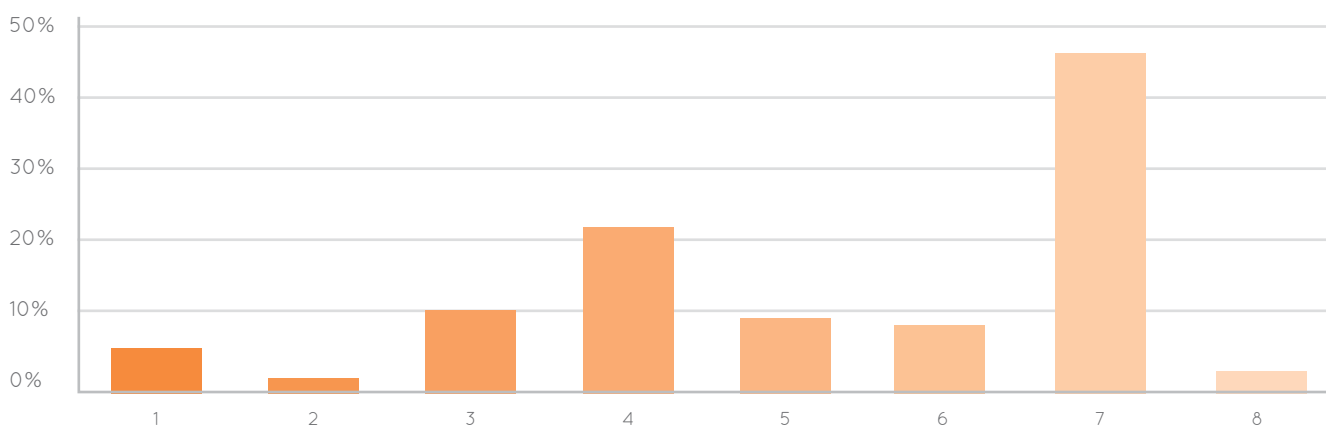
ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
None	1	4%
1	2	2%
2	3	10%
3	4	21%
4	5	9%
5	6	8%
More than 5	7	44%
Other	8	2%



When it comes to contact centre performance, companies continue to increase the amount of information and metrics that is being reported to senior executives.

43% of respondents are reporting more than 5 metrics to senior executives. This is an increase from 34% of last year's result.

This result reflects the increasing focus on customer experience at company direction levels.



DOES YOUR BUSINESS HAVE A DEDICATED SENIOR ROLE WITH ACCOUNTABILITY FOR THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE ACROSS YOUR ENTIRE BUSINESS? E.G. CHIEF CUSTOMER OFFICER

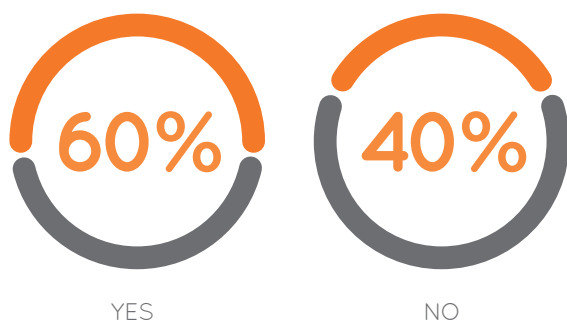


YES



NO

WITHIN THE LAST 12 MONTHS HAS THE CONTACT CENTRE BEEN INVOLVED IN ANY CUSTOMER JOURNEY MAPPING EXERCISES ACROSS THE BROADER ORGANISATION?



About 60% of respondents are indicating that they are involved in customer journey mapping exercises. This seems to follow the trend of organisations becoming much more customer centric, and moving towards enhancing better experiences for customers to enable sustainable growth.

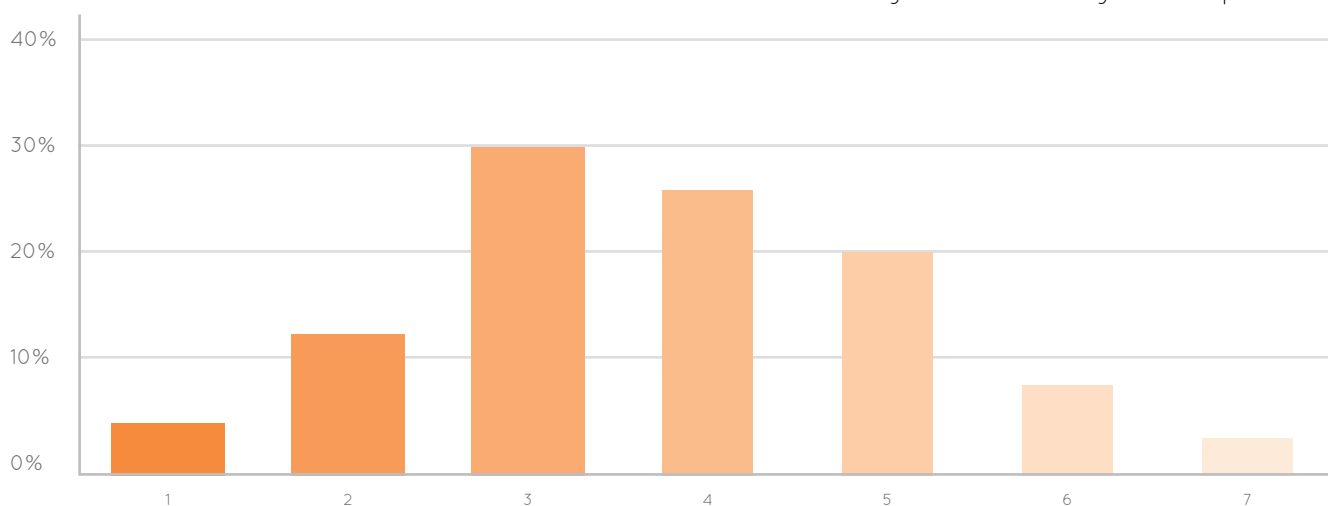
HOW MANY CALLS PER AGENT PER MONTH ARE ASSESSED FOR QUALITY?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
None	1	3%
1 – 2	2	11%
3 – 4	3	30%
5 – 6	4	27%
7 – 10	5	20%
10 – 20	6	7%
More than 20	7	2%



Compared to last years figures, 3-4 assessments per agent per month has dropped slightly but still remain the most common frequency of evaluating agent performance. However we are now seeing an increase of assessments conducted for 5-6 and 7-10, whereas contact centres that conduct more than 10 calls per month has dropped.

There are a number of factors involved in the increase/decrease of the frequency of assessments for contact centres, for example - does the business have the necessary resources (supervisors/quality assessors) to conduct the evaluations? Are companies focusing harder delivering better customer satisfaction as a competitive advantage? Are conversations from callers and agents now becoming more complex?



CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE



DO YOU CURRENTLY USE A KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT PLATFORM TO PROVIDE SCRIPTING AND PRODUCT KNOWLEDGE IN REAL TIME TO AGENTS?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Yes	54%
No	46%



YES



NO



There is a slight increase of about 4% from last year's figures indicating that there are more organisations using a KMS for their agents.

As conversations in the contact centre increase in complexity, it is important that agents are provided with the necessary tools for them to perform at their best. KMS can help save time, improve agent efficiency and provide a better experience for customers.

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE SUMMARY



Brendan Maree

VP APAC, 8x8



Customer Experience (CX) has become such a focus, particularly over the course of the last 18 - 24 months. The global pandemic and subsequent government restrictions, particularly in Australia and New Zealand, placed a great deal of pressure on organisations to become more agile, maintain business continuity by deploying remote workforces, and also remain available to their customers, all the while continuing to deliver great customer experiences.

From our point of view, improving the customer experience starts with one of those assumptions: that you understand what the experience is today. To that end, and looking at the results of the research, it is no surprise that there has been a positive trend as more organisations continue to adopt CX metrics as a way to measure themselves against customer expectations and sentiment. The fact that 43% of respondents are reporting more than 5 metrics to senior executives, which is an increase of 34% from the previous year, is a clear indication of the focus and importance of CX.

According to the research, more than 48% of businesses are using separate communication technologies across their organisation. This is in contrast to the respondent's preference to have a consistent approach across channels when it comes to Quality Management. Therefore, when it comes to CX, IT leaders have a huge role to play, and must broaden their focus and consider how best to support and optimise agent-to-agent, agent-to-customer and agent-to-employee communications. In this newly distributed operational environment, information and organisational silos must be eliminated in order to foster communication and collaboration in a way that helps agents quickly and successfully resolve customer issues. And all of this needs to be done in a secure, reliable, disciplined way that supports the new, stringent and unique requirements of an operate-from-anywhere workforce model.

The bottom line is that, in 2022, customers will expect organisations to have their customer experience house in order. As such, IT and contact center leaders must work together with a sense of urgency like never before. This is where a single-platform approach comes into play. According to Metrics Research, "companies with the highest success metrics who use a single, cloud-based provider see revenue increase by 99.6%, costs decrease by 14.4%, CX ratings improve by 56.6%, and agent efficiency rise by 37.4%."

Source: Metrigy Research: Integrated Communications/Contact Center Drives Measurable Business Metrics.

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

CASE STUDY

Siteminder deploys globally integrated phone and call centre infrastructure with 8x8.

In the highly competitive accommodation market, ensuring room occupancy rates are as strong as possible is a constant challenge for hotels. Many are turning to online booking portals but find the task of managing multiple listings quickly becomes complex and time-consuming.

Siteminder is a technology company that helps hotels overcome this challenge. The firm has developed a guest acquisition platform that automates the listing of rooms across multiple websites to ensure maximum exposure. Siteminder works with more than 35,000 hotels in 160 countries and generates 100 million reservations worth \$US35 billion in revenue each year.

The Challenge: Expand Cloud-First Strategy

As its operations expanded around the world, the company needed to constantly invest in communications infrastructure. Telecommunications and contact centre facilities were deployed in key locations to support staff and allow efficient interactions with clients.

“We had reached the stage where we had four PABX platforms installed around the world,” says Siteminder’s Director of IT, Michael Badham. “While they functioned relatively well, they were not interconnected. This made it difficult to route calls between offices and meant ongoing management was tedious and complex. There was no easy way to configure the systems or make any changes that were required.”

With staff and client numbers continuing to grow, Siteminder’s IT team realised that something had to change. The company has a cloud-first strategy and was keen to find a cloud-based platform that could support both its telecommunications and contact centre activity.

The Solution: One Cloud Platform To Scale For Growth

After examining a number of options on the market, a decision was made to replace the company’s ageing PABXs with a cloud solution from 8x8.

Within four months, Siteminder had deployed 8x8’s single cloud platform, ensuring business continuity and reliability for its Unified Communications and Contact Centres, across Australia, United Kingdom and US offices. Technology partner Arrow Voice and Data assisted in the process by sourcing onsite hardware and arranging relevant licencing.

“The 8x8 offering stood out as they had clearly been designed from the ground up with the cloud in mind,” says Badham. “We could see that it would allow us to scale both our telephony and contact centre capabilities to better match our anticipated future growth.”

Once the platform was fully configured and staff had been trained, the new infrastructure went live around the world initially in Australia followed by the US, Europe and Thailand. Siteminder currently has 100 contact centre seats and 300 unified communications users on the platform.

The Benefits: Employees and Customers Gain New Level of CX Support

With the new cloud-based infrastructure now fully operational, the company has quickly begun to enjoy some significant benefits.

Badham says new users can be easily added to the platform as needed without any need for complex configurations or external support. The platform can also be managed from a single, central location which helps to improve reliability and keep support costs under control.

“Our new 8x8 X Series infrastructure also now allows us to offer ‘follow-the-sun’ support for our customers,” he says. “When one region is closed, support calls are automatically routed to another office in a different part of the world. This has improved our response times significantly and our clients have noticed big improvements.”

The 8x8 telephony platform also offers considerably more features than the old PABXs. Softphones can be used that allow staff to work from any office location or even from home when required. The user interfaces are also readily configurable which allows additional features and options to be added over time.

“We are also enjoying the close integration of 8x8 with our Salesforce platform,” says Badham. “This has served to streamline workflows and means we can be much more responsive to client requests.”

Badham says the company’s future plans include making better use of additional platform features such as speech analytics. This will be used to improve staff performance and ensure high levels of client service are delivered at all times.

“With our 8x8 infrastructure in place, I am confident we now have a telecommunications and contact centre capability that will support our growth well into the future,” he concluded.

Industry

- Software Technology

Headquarters

- Sydney, Australia

8x8 Products:

- 8x8 Work and Contact Centre

Primary Reason Chose 8x8:

- Ageing existing PBX platform across 4 offices globally required constant investing in infrastructure.
- All in one platform to support both its telecommunications and contact centre.
- Ability to scale to support anticipated future growth.

Highlight Metrics

- Ability to provide ‘follow-the-sun’ support has improved utilisation of team members to 90%.
- Multiple staff available in different regions, means more team members available to take calls and less time customers are waiting in call queues — this has improved our dropped call rates to 1%.
- Ability to make changes to IVR used to take several days, now changes can be done in minutes.

OFFSHORING TRENDS

BEST PRACTICE REPORT



HOW DOES YOUR OFFSHORING (AND ONSHORING) COMPARE WITH PRE-COVID (FEBRUARY 2020)?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
We've brought more work onshore, offshoring has reduced	16%
We've sent more work offshore, offshoring has increased	29%
No change	55%



38% of respondents to this survey reported having an offshore contact centre. It's their responses only that are presented in this section.

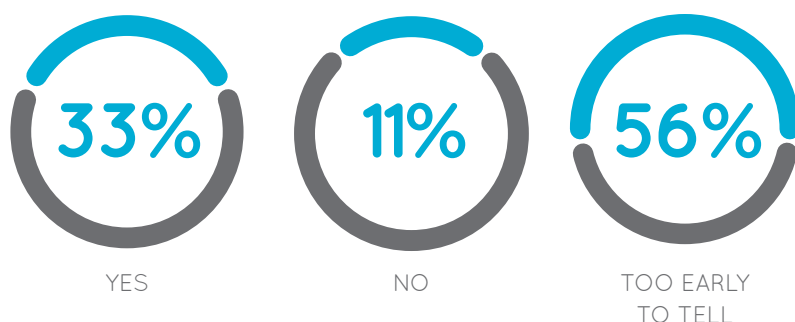
WHAT IS THE MAIN REASON YOU HAVE BROUGHT WORK BACK TO AUSTRALIA SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE PANDEMIC?

For those that brought work back to Australia since the beginning of the pandemic, reasons included:

- Concerns around offshore providers managing of COVID-19
- Too difficult to manage
- Concerns around global instability and long-term impacts
- To improve customer satisfaction/sales
- To support Australian jobs and the flow on effects for our brand
- Already planning to onshore, expedited due to pandemic
- Part of our BPO strategy

IN YOUR OPINION, HAVE THE BENEFITS OF ONSHORING WORK TO AUSTRALIA OUTWEIGHED THE COSTS?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Yes	33%
No	11%
Too early to tell	56%



When reviewing the results in this section it is important to note that this report sought responses only from organisations with Australian based contact centres. Therefore the responses here may not be completely reflective of the whole industry.

Throughout the first half of the pandemic the Australian media highlighted stories of organisations that were "onshoring" contact centres (and jobs) as a result of the pandemic and perhaps the post-pandemic era would see this trend continue. This was lead by Telstra who have fast tracked the scaling down of its offshore contact centres.

This report however finds that while there was some returning of work to Australia, there was still a large number that increased their reliance on offshored centres. Overall 55% made no change.

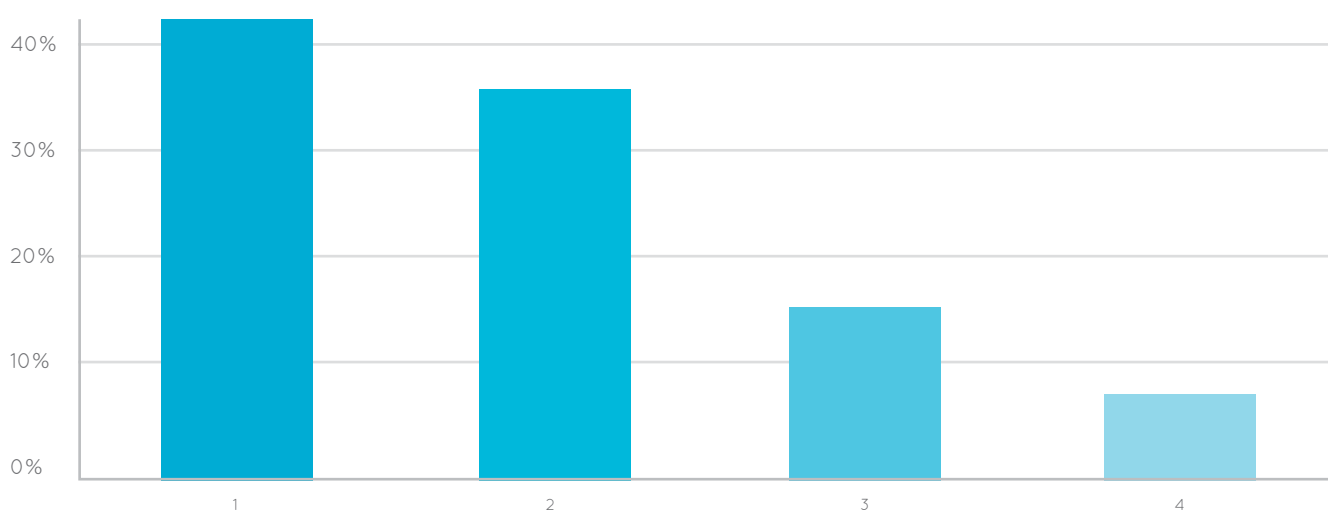
RECRUITMENT

BEST PRACTICE REPORT



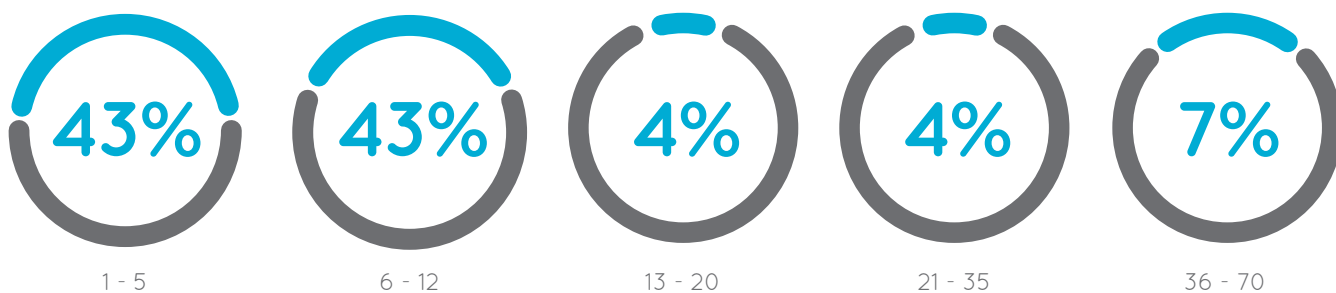
WHAT BEST DESCRIBES YOUR ROLE?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
Leading the Internal Talent Acquisition Team	1	43%
Member of the Internal Talent Acquisition Team	2	36%
Leading HR Function with Recruiting responsibilities	3	14%
Member of the HR Function with Recruiting responsibilities	4	7%



WHAT WAS THE SIZE OF YOUR “RECRUITMENT / TALENT ACQUISITION TEAM” IN FEBRUARY 2020 (PRE-COVID19)?

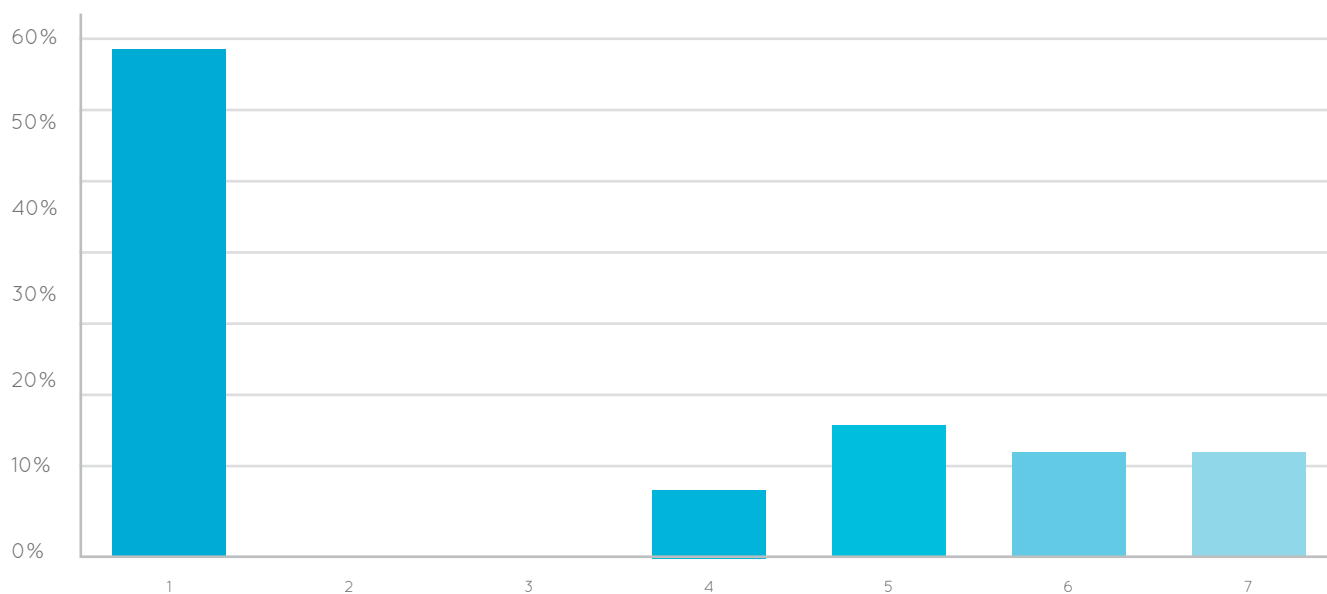
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
1 - 5	43%
6 - 12	43%
13 - 20	4%
21 - 35	4%
36 - 70	7%



RECRUITMENT

WHAT BEST DESCRIBES THE SIZE OF YOUR CURRENT RECRUITMENT / TALENT ACQUISITION TEAM NOW, COMPARED WITH FEBRUARY 2020 (PRE-COVID19)?

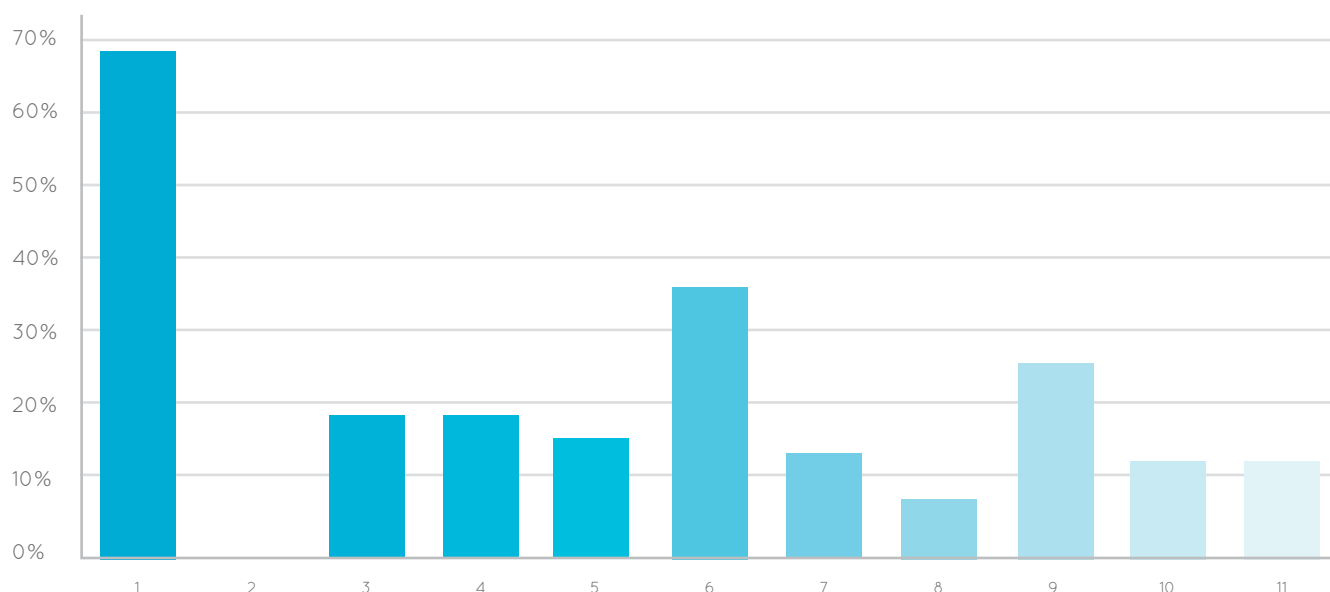
ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
Same / similar to before (within 10%)	1	57%
Reduced by 11-30%	2	0%
Reduced by more than 31% - 50%	3	0%
Reduced by more than 50%	4	7%
Increased by 11-30%	5	14%
Increased by more than 31% - 50%	6	11%
Increased by more than 50%	7	11%



Compared with pre-COVID19 the majority of talent teams have remained the same size, however 36% have increased in size (21% increased in size significantly).

SELECT THE TOP TWO CONCERNS OF YOUR TALENT TEAM AT THE MOMENT?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
Low volume of applications	1	68%
High volume of applications	2	0%
The challenge of hiring remotely	3	18%
The challenge of onboarding remotely	4	18%
Understanding / controlling the remote working environment of the new hire	5	14%
Salaries aren't competitive	6	36%
Hiring Manager expectations are too high	7	11%
The well-being of the Recruitment / TA Team	8	7%
Our workload is too high for our Talent Team headcount	9	25%
Limited budget	10	11%
Other	11	11%



Two-thirds of recruiters working in Australian contact centres listed the low volume of applicants amongst their top two concerns at the moment. Combine this with one third of recruiters also highlighting that salaries aren't competitive and you have a hiring nightmare.

When recruiters need to work harder to fill each individual vacancy they are able to work across less roles, so it's not surprising to see several recruiters report that the workload is too high for their talent team headcount at the moment.

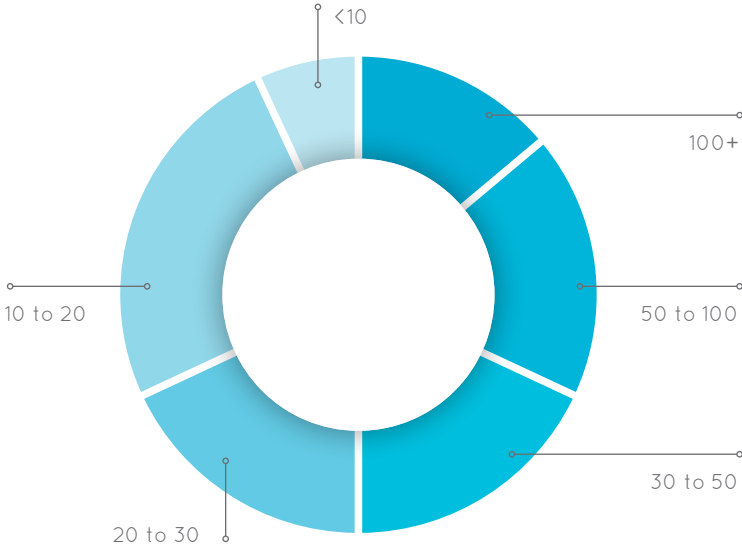
RECRUITMENT

ON AVERAGE, HOW MANY OPEN VACANCIES IS EACH MEMBER OF YOUR TALENT TEAM LOOKING AFTER AT ANY ONE MOMENT (ACROSS THE WHOLE OF THE ORGANISATION)?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
100+	14%
50 to 100	18%
30 to 50	18%
20 to 30	18%
10 to 20	25%
<10	7%

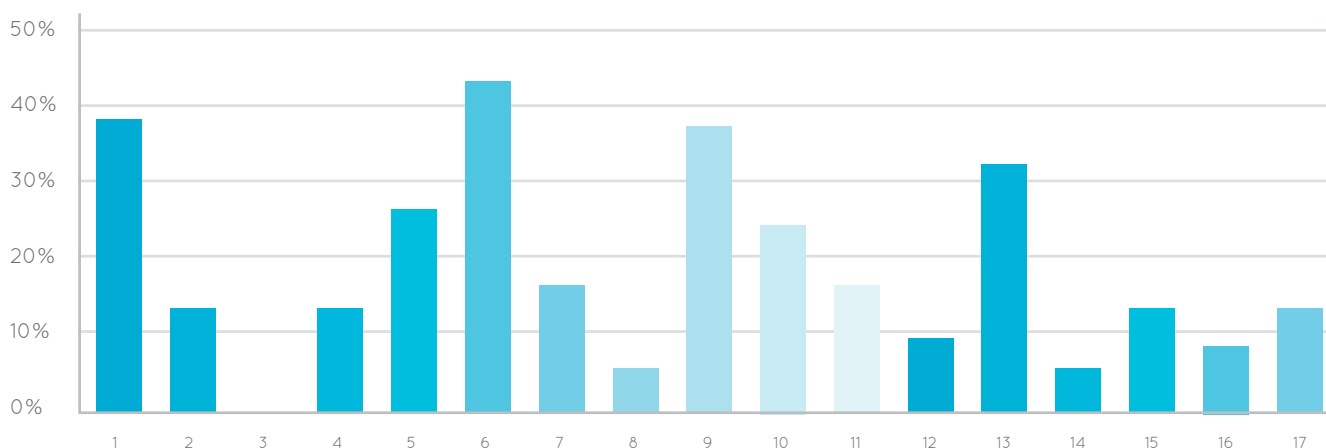


32% of internal recruiters are working on 50 or more vacancies at any one time.



SELECT THREE TOP PRIORITIES PLANNED FOR THE COMING 18 MONTHS:

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
Build talent pools and pipeline	1	38%
Careers Site	2	12%
Compliance - Ensuring workers have all required checks completed	3	0%
Data and Reporting	4	12%
Diversity outcomes	5	27%
Employer Brand	6	42%
Implement a new ATS / HRIS	7	15%
Implement an Onboarding tool	8	4%
Improve candidate attraction methods	9	38%
Improve candidate assessment	10	23%
Improve candidate experience	11	15%
Improve interview process and experience	12	8%
Improve Quality / Supply	13	31%
Increase the size of the Internal Talent Team	14	4%
Reduce agency / external spend	15	12%
Social Media Strategy	16	8%
Total Workforce Management / Blended Workforce	17	12%



The top four priorities for talent acquisition teams within Australian contact centres all go hand in hand. Having a strong and attractive employer brand is central to improving candidate attraction methods, as well as building talent pools and pipelines and the overall quality and supply of candidates. Without a strong employer brand none of these are possible.

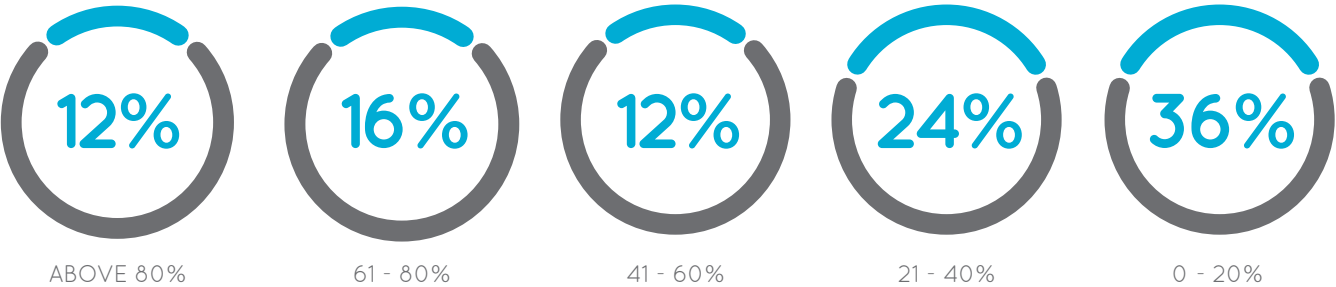
However building a strong employer brand does not happen overnight. Contact centres without an appealing offering and story to tell need to invest in both short and long term strategies to improve, protect and maintain their employer brand.

Diversity outcomes is also on the radar of TA teams right across the Australian economy, and contact centres offer the role types to be able to assist in this area. Improving candidate assessments as well as the overall candidate experience also rank highly.

RECRUITMENT

APPROXIMATELY WHAT PERCENTAGE OF YOUR ORGANISATION'S OVERALL RECRUITMENT DOES THE CONTACT CENTRE TAKE UP?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Above 80%	12%
61 - 80%	16%
41 - 60%	12%
21 - 40%	24%
0-20%	36%



On average, contact centre recruitment takes up 40% of an overall organisation's recruitment. However for some talent acquisition teams (especially BPO's), contact centre recruitment makes up a much higher percentage.

APPROXIMATELY HOW MANY AGENT LEVEL ROLES DO YOU ESTIMATE YOUR CONTACT CENTRE WILL HIRE ACROSS YOUR AUSTRALIAN CONTACT CENTRES IN 2021?



399 - the average number of agent roles recruited in 2021 by Talent Acquisition teams that completed this survey.

DO YOU ESTIMATE TO RECRUIT MORE OR LESS AGENTS IN 2022 COMPARED WITH 2021?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
More	42%
Less	15%
About the same	42%
Unsure	0%



MORE



LESS



ABOUT THE SAME

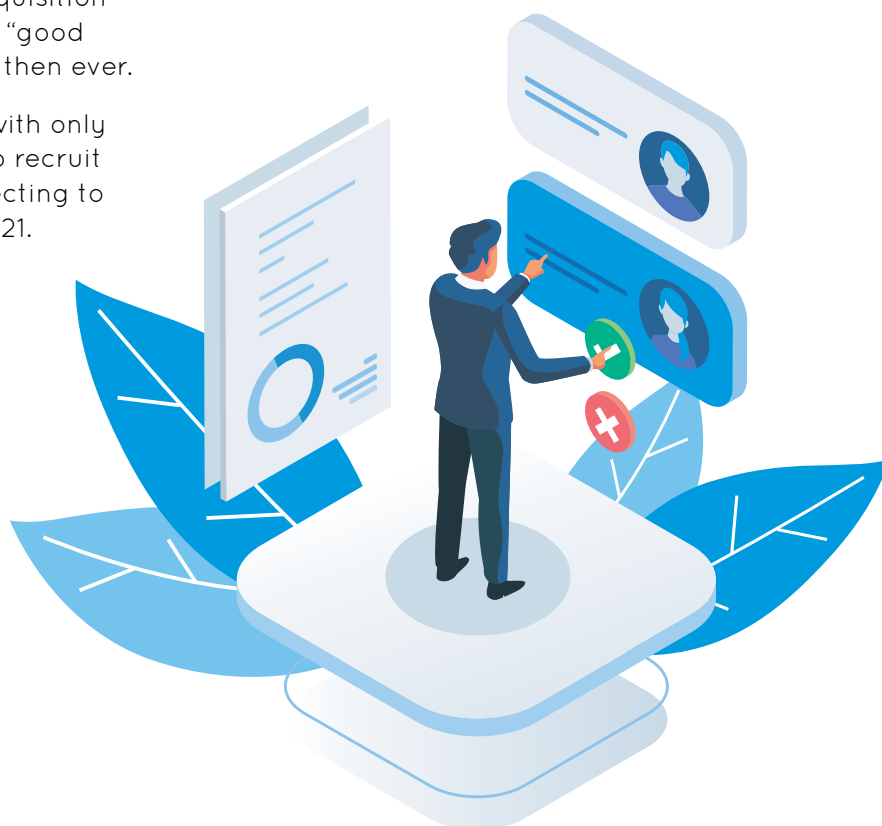


UNSURE



2021 was a year in which talent acquisition teams faced a huge challenge and “good candidates” were harder to recruit than ever.

2022 looks to continue that trend with only 15% of contact centres expecting to recruit less agents, and 42% actually expecting to recruit in larger volumes than 2021.



RECRUITMENT

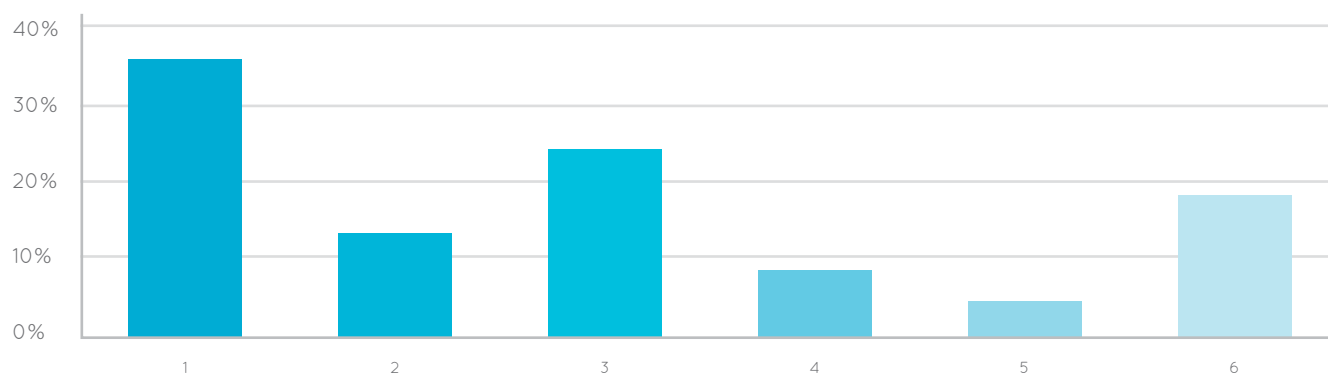


Pre COVID-19 only 24% of contact centres reported that they hired remote workers. And remote workers made up 10% or less of the workforce for the majority of those particular contact centres.

However in 2021, 65% of contact centres have hired remote workers. And remote workers are making up 47% of new hires in these contact centres.

IN 2022 AND BEYOND, DO YOU EXPECT YOUR HIRING OF REMOTE WORKERS TO INCREASE OR DECREASE?

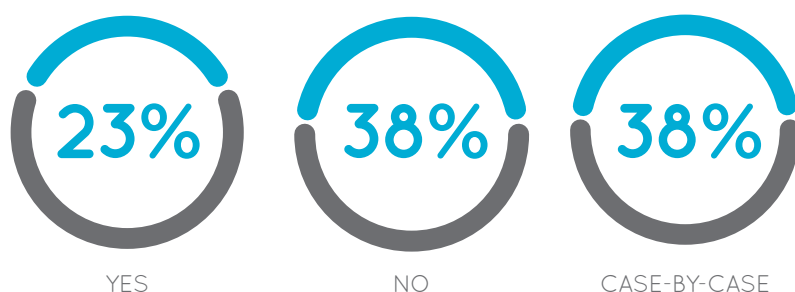
ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSE
Increase a little	1	35%
Increase significantly	2	12%
Remain the same	3	23%
Decrease a little	4	8%
Decrease significantly	5	4%
Too early to tell	6	19%



The hiring of remote workers looks set to continue into 2022 and beyond, with 46% actually expecting their contact centre to increase its hiring of remote workers, and only 12% expecting it to decrease.

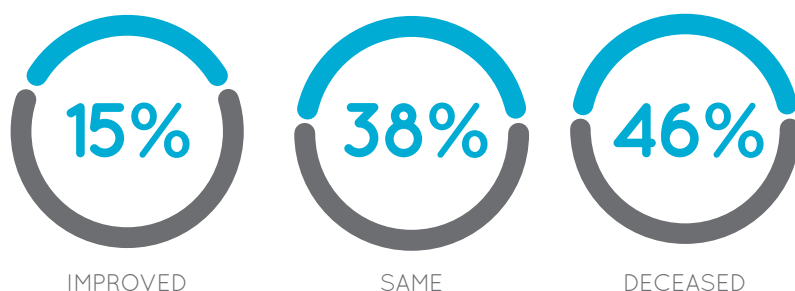
ARE YOU HIRING REMOTE WORKERS FOR MANAGEMENT, LEADERSHIP AND SPECIALIST CONTACT CENTRE ROLES?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Yes	23%
No	38%
Case-by-case	38%



THINKING OF THE CONTACT CENTRE AGENTS YOU HIRED MOST RECENTLY, HOW HAS QUALITY OF CANDIDATE HIRED CHANGED BETWEEN JANUARY 2021 (THIS YEAR) AND NOW?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Improved	15%
Same / Similar	38%
Decreased	46%

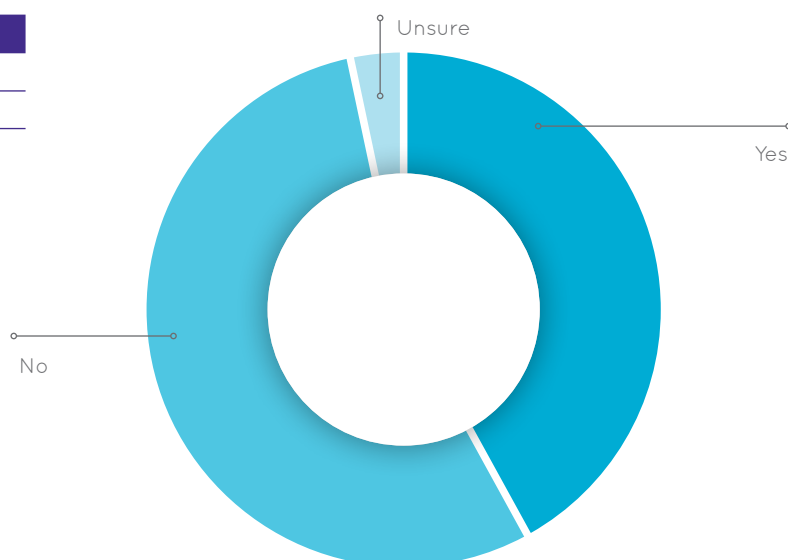


As unemployment and job seeker volumes decrease, many contact centres are reporting a “decrease” in the quality of candidates.

RECRUITMENT

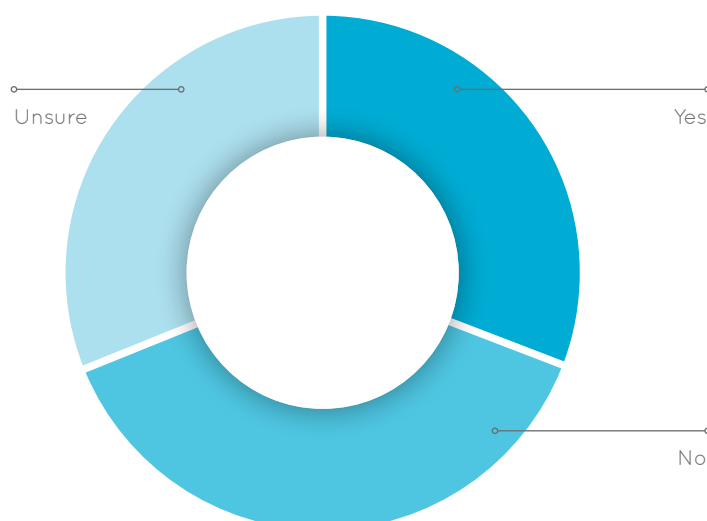
ARE YOU USING ANY PSYCHOMETRIC TESTING WHEN ASSESSING AGENT SUITABILITY?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Yes	42%
No	54%
Unsure	4%

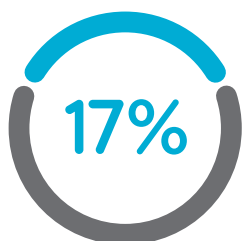


DO YOU FEEL THAT THE PSYCHOMETRIC TESTING THAT YOU USE IS AN ACCURATE INDICATOR OF AGENT SUITABILITY FOR THE ROLE?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
Yes	31%
No	38%
Unsure	31%



WHAT % OF YOUR CONTACT CENTRE RECRUITMENT IS FILLED BY RECRUITMENT AGENCIES?



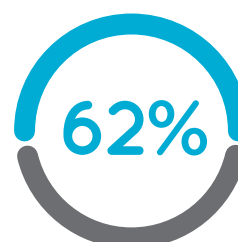
Recruitment agencies fill 17% of contact centre vacancies. Around a quarter of contact centres rely on recruitment agencies to fill 30% or more of their vacancies.

TRUE OR FALSE: MY ORGANISATION DOES NOT UNDERSTAND HOW CHALLENGING IT IS TO RECRUIT HIGH QUALITY AGENTS AT THE MOMENT.

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE
True	38%
False	62%



TRUE

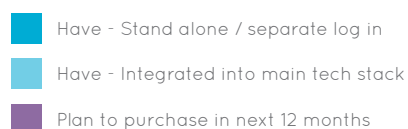
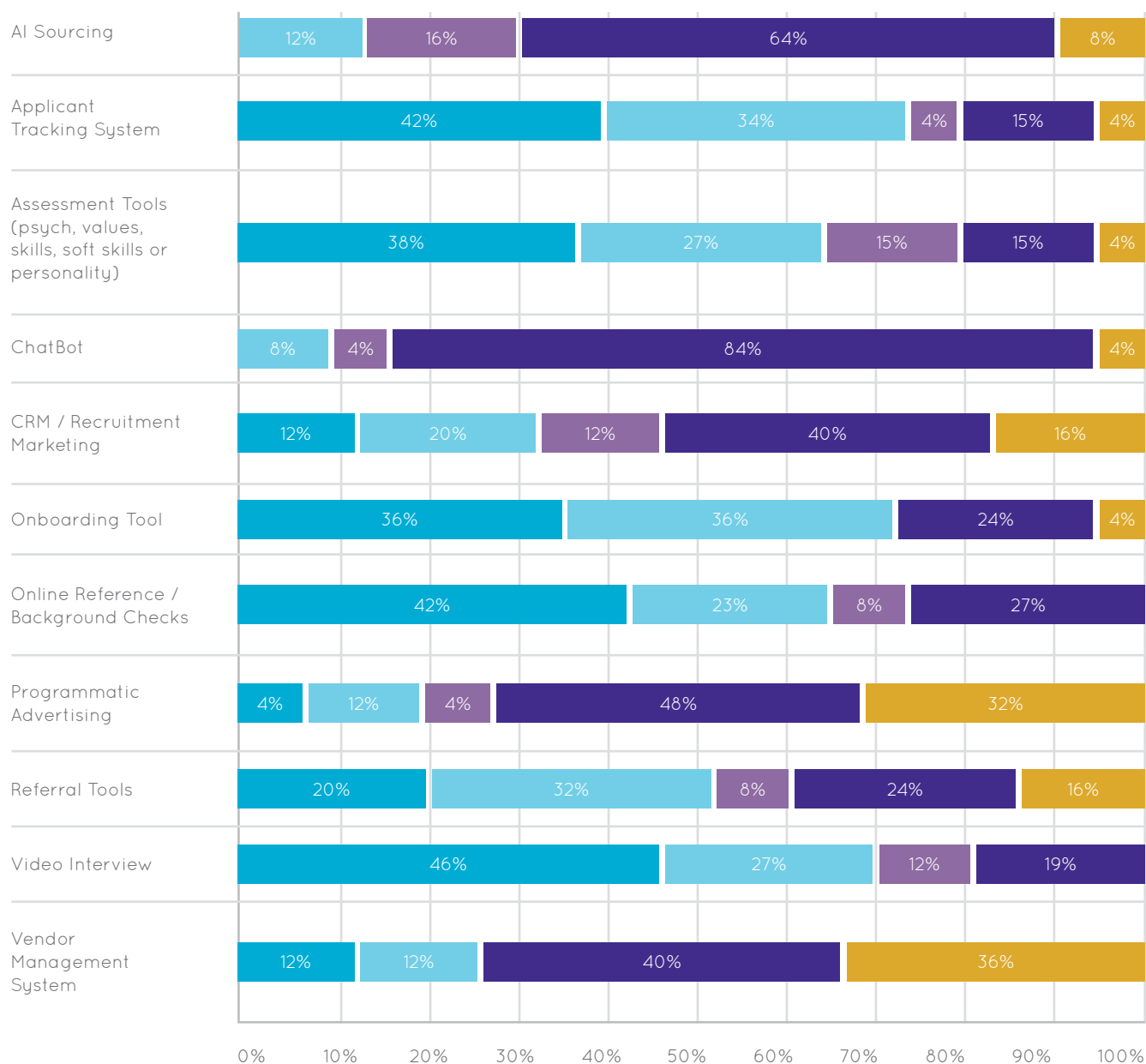


FALSE



RECRUITMENT

WHEN IT COMES TO THE APPLICATIONS / ELEMENTS BELOW,
TELL US IF YOU ARE USING THEM:



High quality, high volume hiring in a tough market

The problem

Throughout 2021 the challenge of attracting and recruiting high quality Frontline Agents increased significantly. Unemployment dropped steadily throughout the year, borders remained closed and job security increased as a priority, especially across New South Wales and Victoria. In October 2021 Seek.com.au reported more jobs on its site than ever before. A record high number of vacancies was available to a continually shrinking pool of candidates. Nearly all contact centres across Australia have felt the pinch.

SMAART Recruitment was engaged by a contact centre in the utilities industry to help them significantly scale up their headcount over a short period of time. Due to significant growth, the contact centre was looking to increase its headcount from 50 to 150-200. The internal talent acquisition team had commenced the process, but had quickly decided that due to the market conditions and low unemployment rate the headcounts required for the crucial start dates would not be met.

It had been decided early on that the contact centre would – for the first time – look to hire some of the new staff as remote workers (work from home). This meant running a virtual recruitment process for remote candidates and an “in person” recruitment process for local candidates.

Timeframes were very tight and any milestone missed would have a knock on effect. The input and availability to be part of the process for a large number of internal stakeholders was crucial. As well as the talent acquisition team, team leaders, trainers and other contact centre leaders needed to be available for interviewing and assessing candidates.

Key to the recruitment drive was finding candidates who had great customer services skills, excellent attention to detail and were able to work in a high call volume environment (expected to take 50-100 calls per day post training).

The solution

SMAART Recruitment worked closely and quickly with the contact centre leaders to establish the core competencies required to be successful in the role. It was decided that the recruitment drive should focus on candidates' attributes. With a strong induction and training program in place, the mantra of “hire for character, train for skill” was adopted.

Great customer service skills, attention to detail and the ability to work in a fast paced environment is not limited to contact centre agents. A long list of industries and job types was made to help narrow the search, but recruiting with an “open mind” was actively encouraged.

SMAART Recruitment then implemented a multifaceted recruitment campaign to attract candidates from traditional and non-traditional backgrounds right across Australia. The “local” campaign involved some old school tactics including advertising in print (newspapers), speaking with employment service providers and paid outdoor advertising. Being extremely responsive to local applicants (calling all applicants within 24 business hours of applying) gave a great first impression and made candidates feel valued and seen.

RECRUITMENT CASE STUDY

The national recruitment drive took a different focus. 60% of placed candidates came via SMAART's internal systems. This included:

- Targeting candidates who had applied for other roles through SMAART Recruitment over the last 3 months to consider this opportunity
- Aggressive marketing of the vacancies to candidates (new and old) in the database via email, SMS and alumni programs
- Attractive referral programs to those already working to share with their network
- An internal focus for all 20 recruiters at SMAART Recruitment to actively "keep an eye out" for any candidate who may be suited

A further 8% of placements came via SMAART Recruitment's social media campaigns (including targeted groups and pages), and 6% through the SMAART Recruitment website. Job boards in total contributed to 21% of overall placements.

SMAART was able to "scale up" and put a large number of recruiters immediately onto the recruitment campaign from the beginning to ensure that recruitment numbers were being hit, and were then able to slowly scale down when appropriate to do so. An additional team of back office support staff were engaged to process reference checks, background checks and other administrative information that was required. This allowed the recruiters to focus their time on sourcing and screening candidates.

Locally, SMAART Recruitment was able to facilitate regular assessment centres in a COVID safe way, still allowing candidates to visit and view the contact centre and get a feel for what it was like to work there. Virtual assessment centres were run online for those applying for WFH roles. These assessment centres were collaborative in nature from the perspective that SMAART would host and manage the process but include various client representatives to help promote the role and workplace while also being able to answer any potential questions from candidates in real-time.

Overall, whether the assessment centre was face-to-face or remote SMAART continues to push for its clients to work alongside them as it results in higher candidate engagement and retention in the short-to-medium term.

The outcome

SMAART Recruitment were able to fill over 75% of the vacancies and the contact centre hit all its recruitment targets and start dates as well as being able to quickly scale up their contact centre to meet an immediate increase in demand without any hiccups.

At the time of writing which was 4 months post the initial start dates SMAART can confirm that there has been an 8% fall-off rate within the initial 3 month probationary period which is extremely low given the large volume of candidates placed. Speed to competency has also been impressive with all new-hires "on the phones" within 4 weeks of commencement.

SMAART continues to actively monitor the progress of its placed candidates via regular post-placement follow-up calls and where possible, onsite visits. Once again, the best long term outcomes from a recruitment perspective, followed by a placement and ongoing employment perspective.

WORKFORCE PLANNING & OPTIMISATION

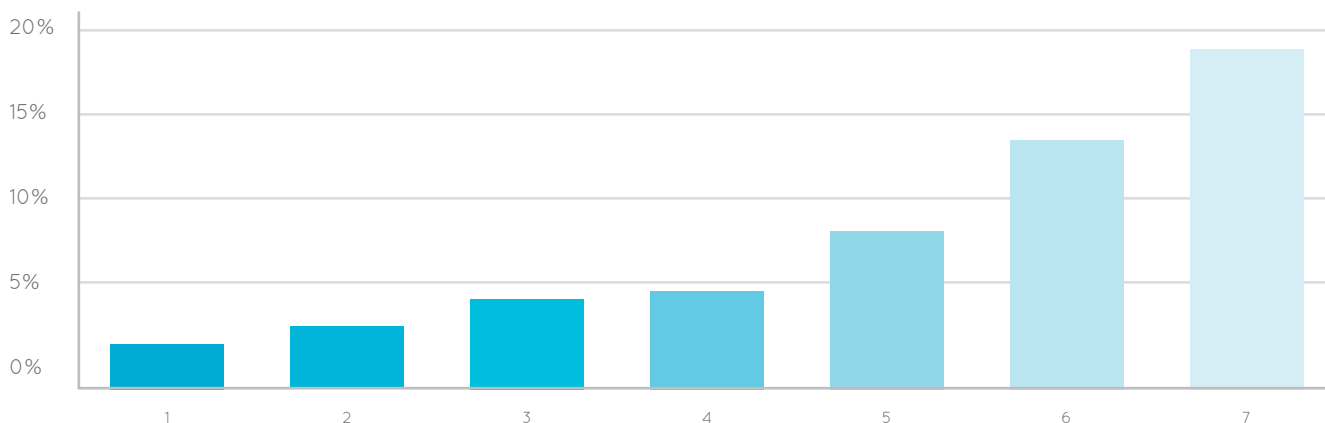
BEST PRACTICE REPORT



WORKFORCE PLANNING & OPTIMISATION

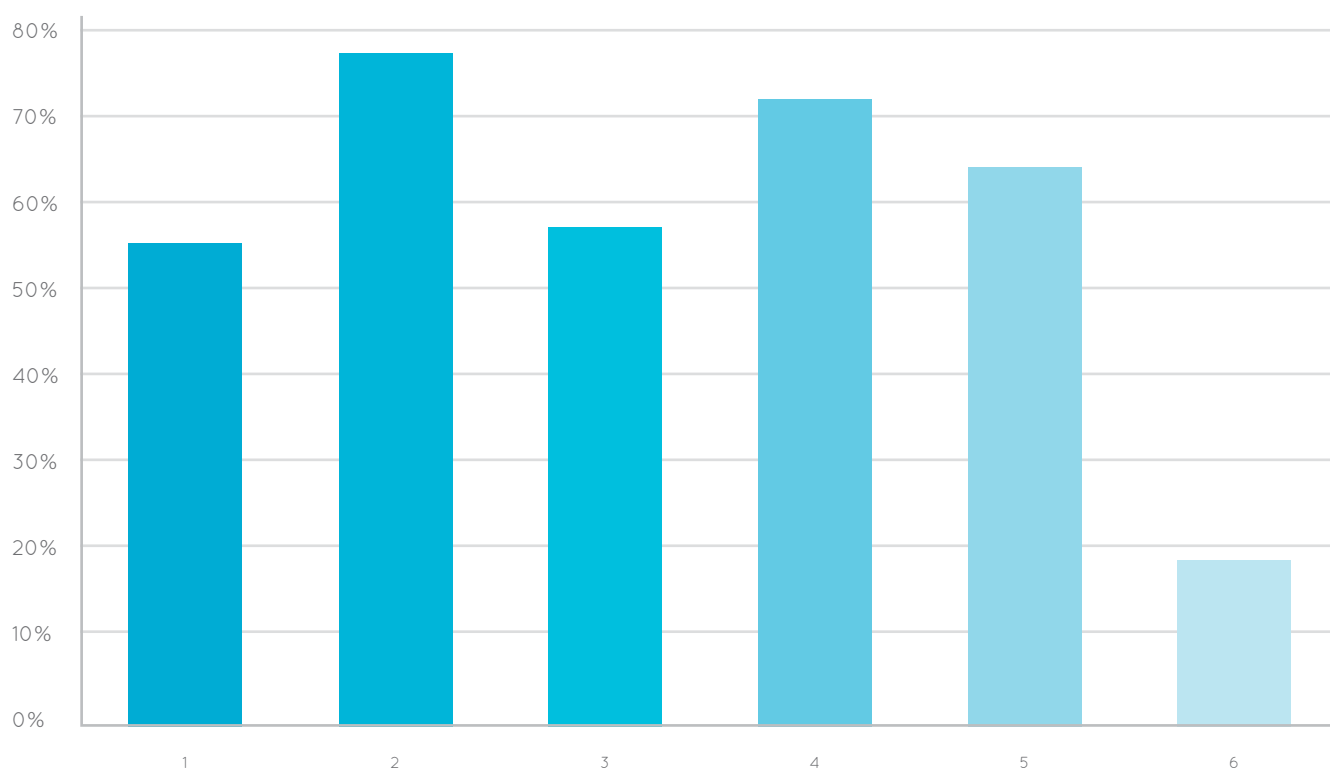
HOW MANY PEOPLE WORK IN THE WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT TEAM INCLUDING YOURSELF?

SIZE OF CONTACT CENTRE	#	AVERAGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT TEAM
0 - 50	1	1.3
51 - 100	2	2.3
101 - 200	3	4.4
201 - 300	4	4.8
301 - 500	5	7.2
501 - 1,000	6	12.7
1,001 +	7	18.5



DO YOU HAVE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT SPECIFIC ROLES IN YOUR CONTACT CENTRE?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Workforce Planning Lead (or similar)	1	54%
Workforce Manager (or similar)	2	77%
Forecaster	3	56%
Scheduler	4	71%
Real Time Analyst	5	63%
Other	6	19%



WORKFORCE PLANNING & OPTIMISATION

WHERE DID YOU START IN THE CONTACT CENTRE?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Agent	50%
Team Leader	6%
Real Time Analyst	6%
Workforce Planning role	30%
Reporting and Analytics	2%
Other	6%



AGENT



TEAM LEADER



REAL TIME ANALYST



WORKFORCE
PLANNING ROLE



REPORTING &
ANALYTICS



OTHER

WOULD YOU SAY YOU HAVE A DEDICATED WFM PROCESS IN PLACE IN YOUR ORGANISATION?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	92%
No	8%



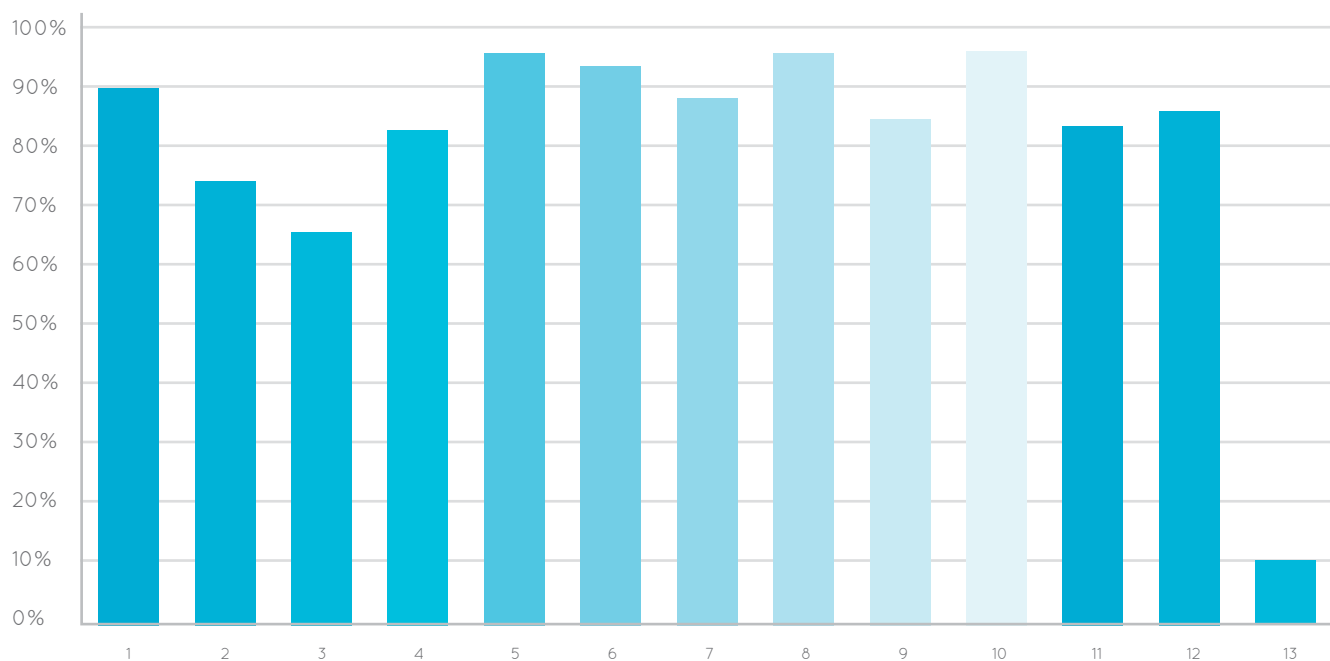
YES



NO

WHAT ARE THE KEY COMPONENTS OF YOUR WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT PROCESS? (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)

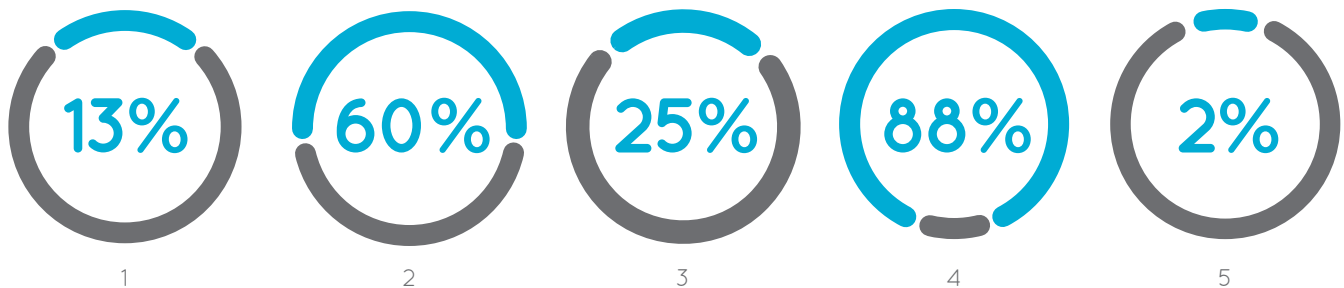
ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
At least one person dedicated to workforce planning	1	90%
At least one real time analyst	2	73%
Induction training for new hires on the importance of adherence	3	65%
Providing recruitment recommendations on the type of shift required	4	81%
Forecasting for short term – up to 6 weeks	5	94%
Forecasting for mid term	6	92%
Forecasting for long term (12 months +)	7	88%
Building agent schedules	8	94%
Making recommendations for new schedules	9	83%
Annual Leave Planning	10	94%
Real Time Adherence Management	11	83%
Reporting and analytics	12	85%
Other	13	10%



WORKFORCE PLANNING & OPTIMISATION

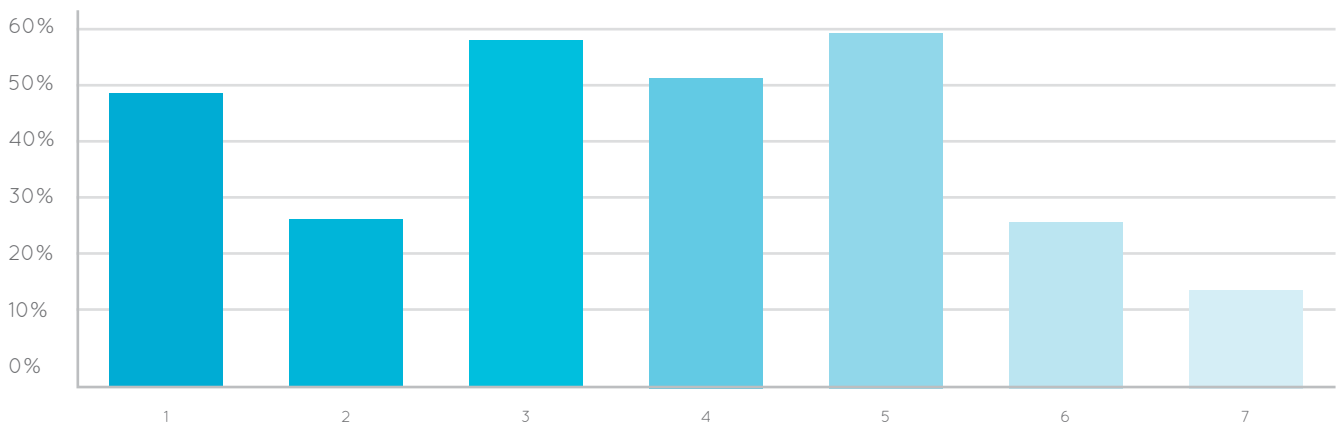
WHAT TRAINING IS PROVIDED TO A NEW PERSON HIRED FOR THE WFM TEAM IN YOUR COMPANY? (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Third Party Training on best practice WFM principles	1	13%
In house training on best practice WFM principles	2	60%
Vendor training on the WFM system	3	25%
In-house or on the job training on the WFM system	4	88%
Other	5	2%



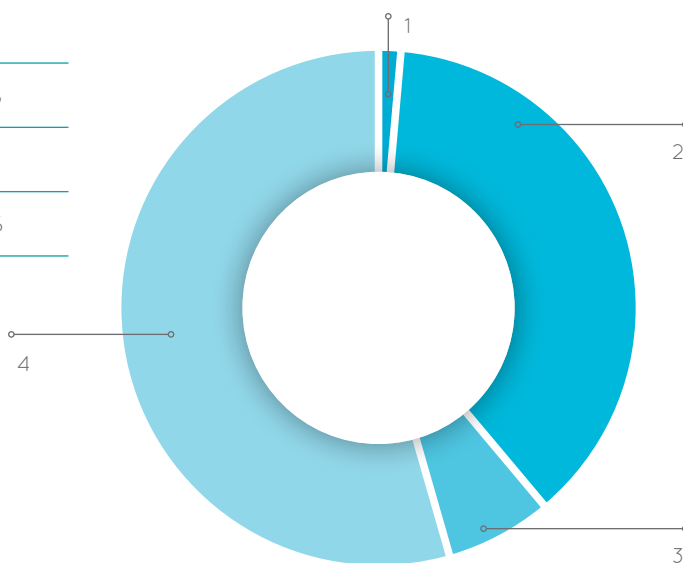
ARE WFM TEAM MEMBERS OFFERED ONGOING SKILLS TRAINING? (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Additional vendor training on topics as requested	1	49%
Third Party Training on WFM processes and best practices	2	25%
Internal training on WFM	3	59%
Leadership training	4	51%
Internal training on other topics	5	59%
External training on other topics	6	25%
Other	7	12%



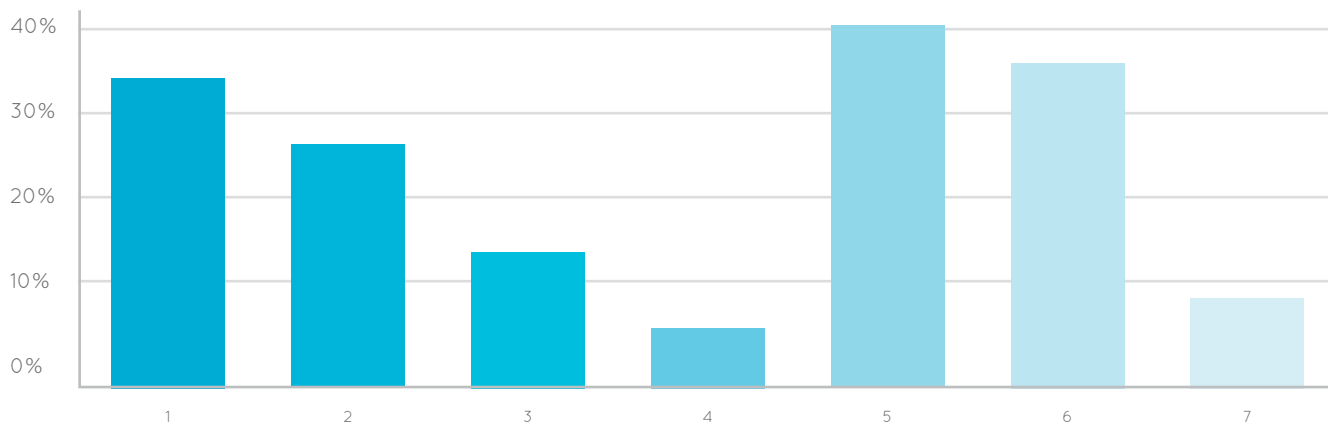
WHAT ARE THE KEY COMPONENTS OF YOUR WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT PROCESS? (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Third Party Training on best practice WFM principles for Team Leaders	1	2%
In house training on best practice WFM principles	2	57%
Vendor training on how to use the WFM tool as a team leader	3	10%
In-house or on the job training on how to use the WFM system as a team leader	4	84%
Other	5	0%



WHICH VENDOR SYSTEM DO YOU USE FOR YOUR WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Aspect/ Alvaria	1	33%
Verint	2	27%
Nice	3	12%
Calabrio	4	4%
Genesys	5	40%
Excel	6	35%
Other	7	8%



WORKFORCE PLANNING & OPTIMISATION

IS YOUR SYSTEM A CLOUD BASED SYSTEM OR ON PREMISE?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Cloud based	58%
On premise	42%



CLOUD BASED



ON PREMISE



THESE NEXT 4 QUESTIONS ARE ONLY ANSWERED BY PEOPLE WHO DO NOT CURRENTLY HAVE A WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM, ARE YOU LOOKING TO INVEST IN ONE?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	67%
No	33%



YES



NO



ONLY ANSWERED BY PEOPLE WHO DO NOT CURRENTLY HAVE A WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

WHAT IS YOUR TIMEFRAME FOR INVESTING IN A WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Within the next year	43%
> 12 months	57%



YES



NO



ONLY ANSWERED BY PEOPLE WHO DO NOT CURRENTLY HAVE A WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

WHAT IS THE MAIN BARRIER?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Cost	1	33%
Senior executives don't see the benefit in the investment	2	0%
Other initiatives have greater priority	3	0%
Size of the contact centre	4	33%
Other	5	33%



ONLY ANSWERED BY PEOPLE WHO DO NOT CURRENTLY HAVE A WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

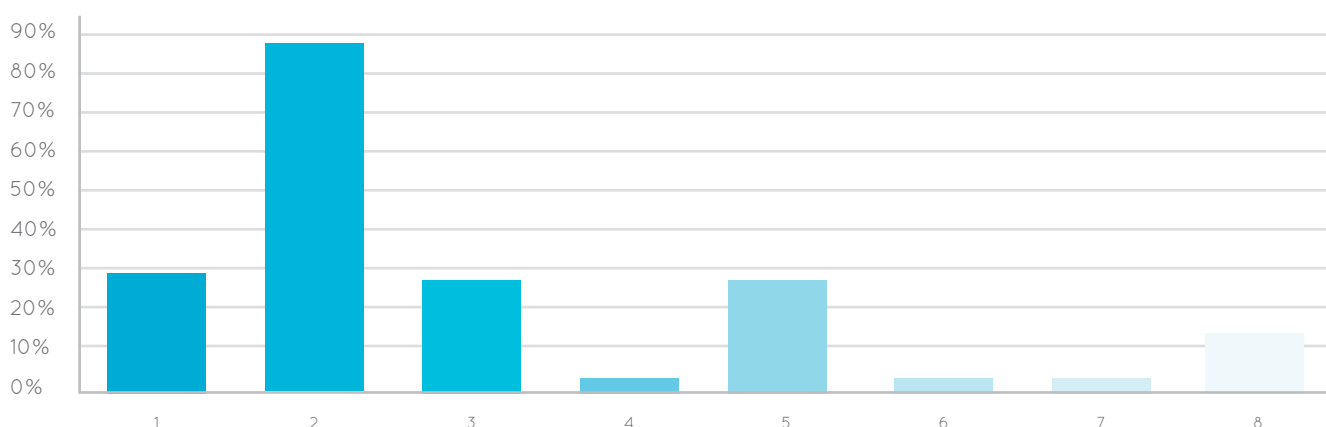


WHAT WERE THE KEY DRIVERS IN DECIDING TO INVEST IN SUCH A WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM? (SELECT UP TO 2).

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Price	1	28%
Features and Functionality	2	88%
Support availability	3	26%
Modern look and feel	4	2%
Scalability	5	26%
References / market opinion about the software	6	2%
Supplier reputation	7	2%
Other	8	12%



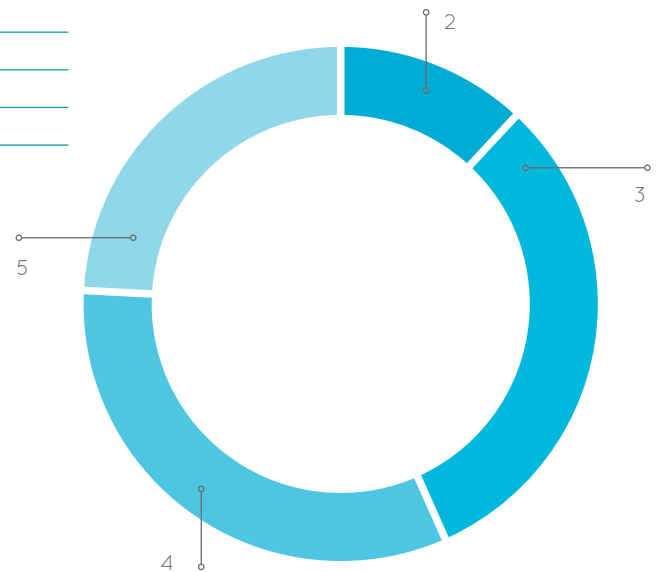
ONLY ANSWERED BY PEOPLE WHO DO NOT CURRENTLY HAVE A WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM



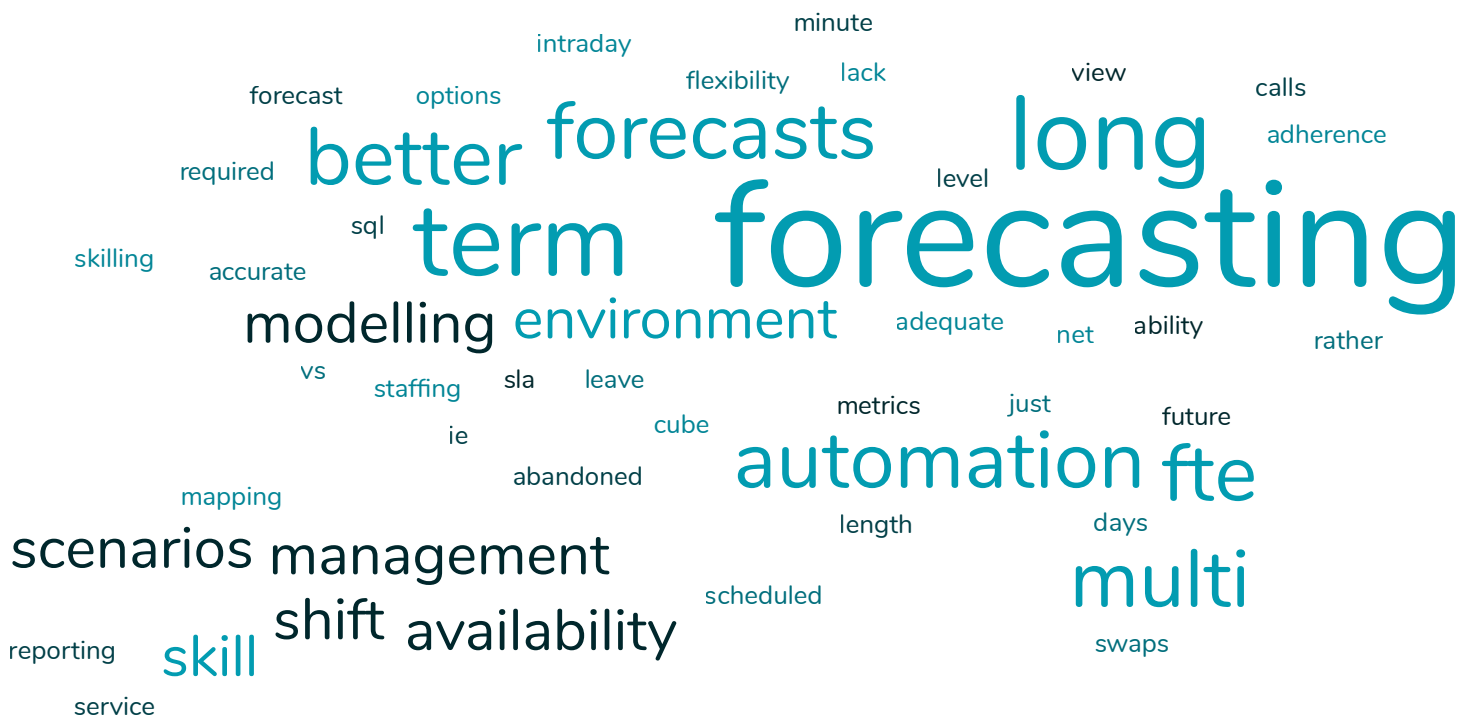
WORKFORCE PLANNING & OPTIMISATION

HOW WOULD YOU RATE YOUR WFM TOOL?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Not sure	1	0%
Poor	2	12%
Average	3	37%
Good	4	33%
Excellent	5	19%
Other	6	0%



ARE THERE SPECIFIC FEATURES YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE IN YOUR WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT TOOL THAT AREN'T THERE?



HOW DO YOU CREATE YOUR FORECASTS

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Excel	46%
Workforce Management System	48%
Other	6%



EXCEL



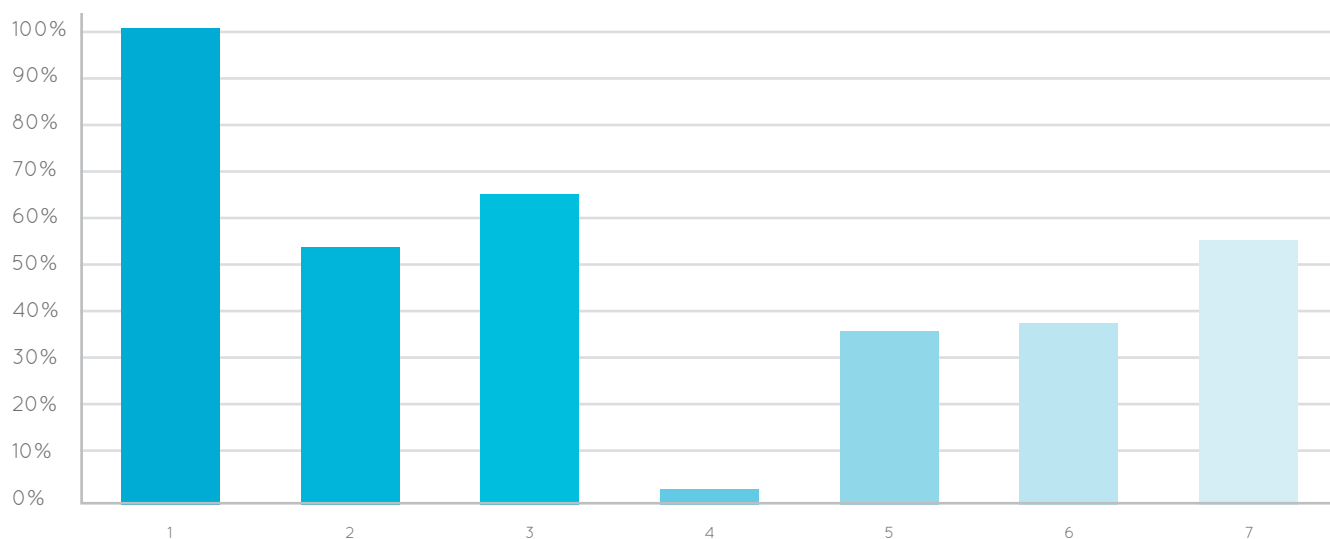
WORKFORCE
MANAGEMENT
SYSTEM



OTHER

WHAT TYPE OF WORK DO YOU FORECAST AND PLAN FOR IN YOUR ORGANISATION?

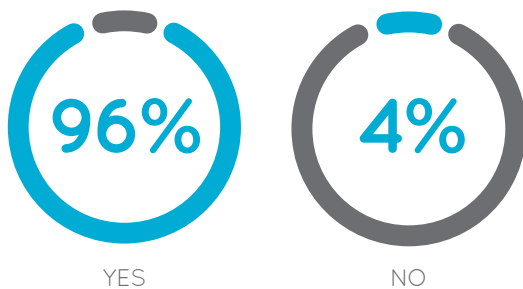
ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Inbound	1	100%
Outbound	2	52%
Email	3	63%
Fax	4	2%
Social	5	37%
Chat	6	54%
Back Office Tasks	7	50%



WORKFORCE PLANNING & OPTIMISATION

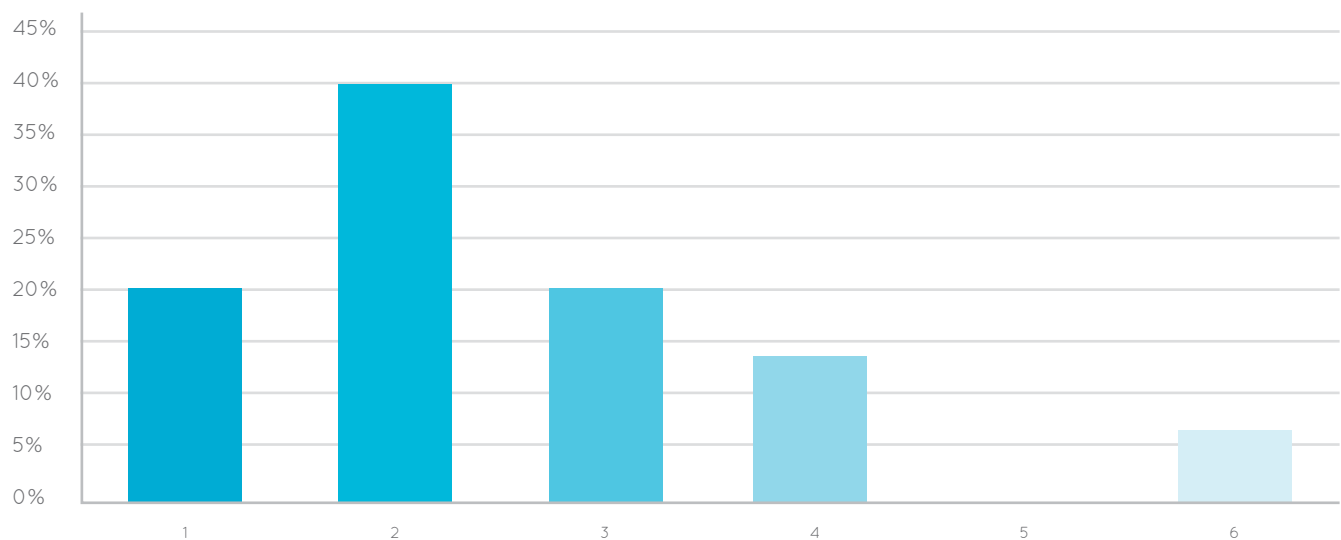
DO YOU MEASURE FORECAST ACCURACY?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	96%
No	4%



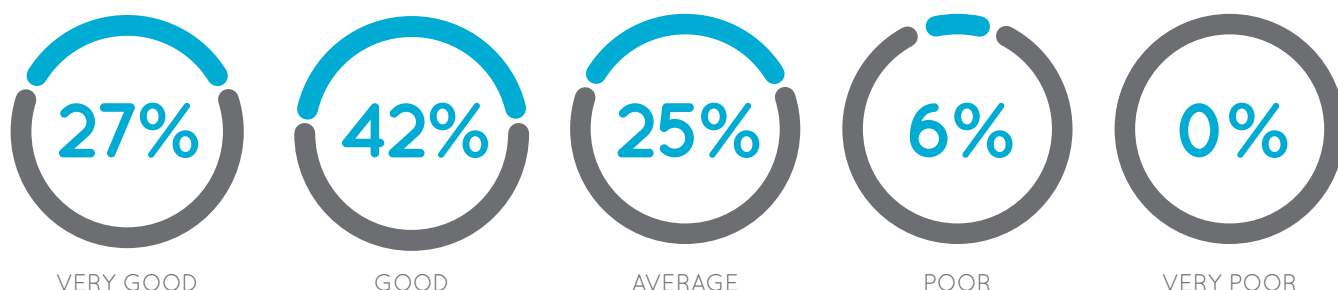
TO WHAT LEVEL DO YOU MEASURE FORECAST ACCURACY?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Interval (15 or 30 minute)	1	20%
Daily	2	40%
Weekly	3	20%
Monthly	4	14%
We do not measure forecast accuracy	5	0%
Other	6	6%



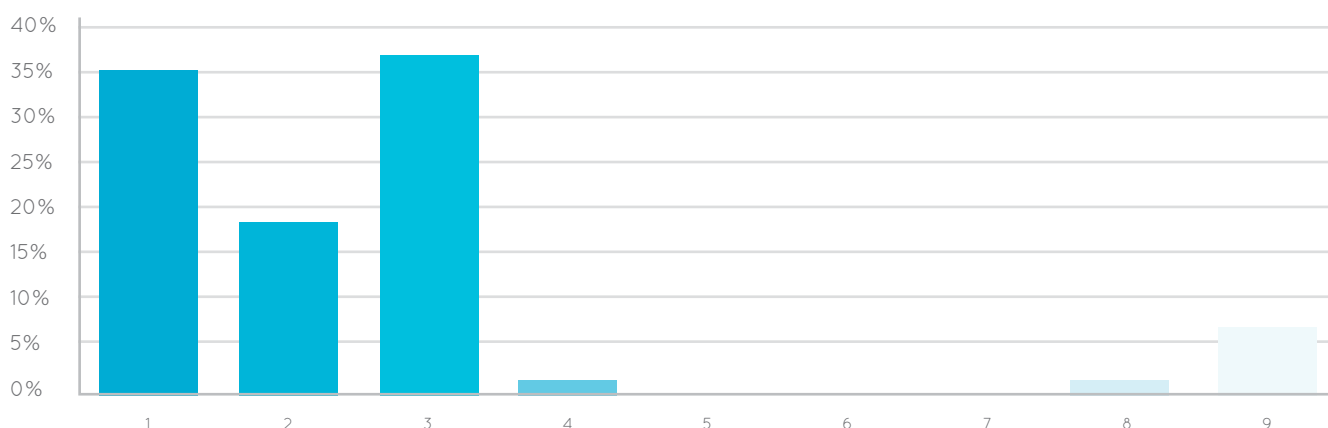
OVERALL, HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE PERFORMANCE OF YOUR FORECASTING PROCESS?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Very good	27%
Good	42%
Average	25%
Poor	6%
Very poor	0%



HOW OFTEN ARE NEW SCHEDULES CREATED IN YOUR CENTRE?

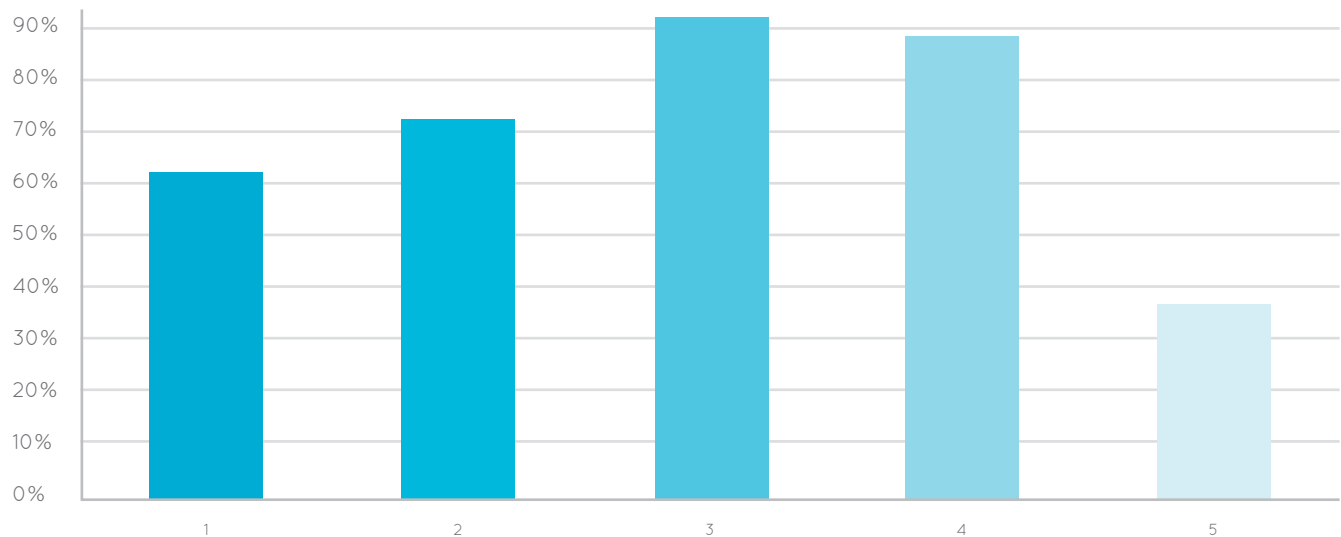
ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Weekly	1	35%
Fortnightly	2	18%
Monthly	3	37%
Every 2 months	4	2%
Every 3 months	5	0%
Every 6 months	6	0%
Annually	7	0%
Not sure	8	2%
Other	9	6%



WORKFORCE PLANNING & OPTIMISATION

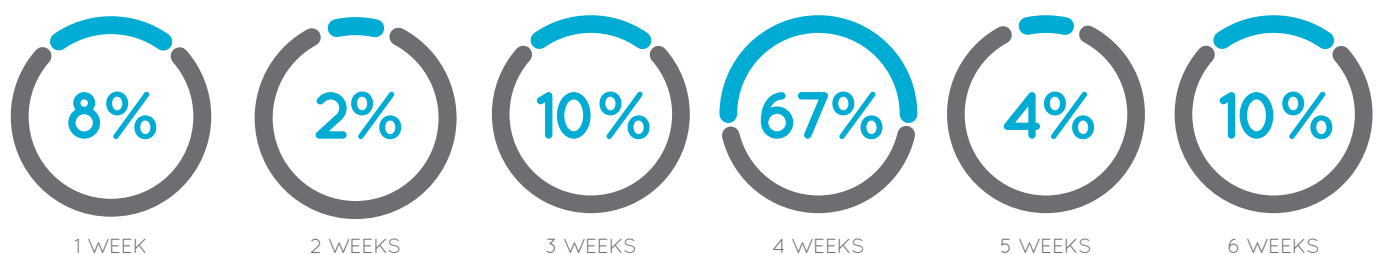
GENERALLY WHAT TYPES OF ROSTER/SCHEDULES ARE USED IN YOUR CENTRE(S)?:

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Fully flexible (agents have a lot of control over the shifts they work)	1	62%
Preference Based	2	70%
Fixed	3	92%
Rotating	4	89%
Other	5	38%



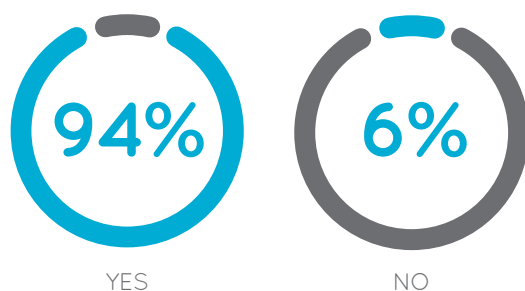
HOW FAR IN ADVANCE ARE SCHEDULES PROVIDED TO AGENTS?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
One week	8%
Two weeks	2%
Three weeks	10%
Four weeks	67%
Five weeks	4%
Six weeks	10%



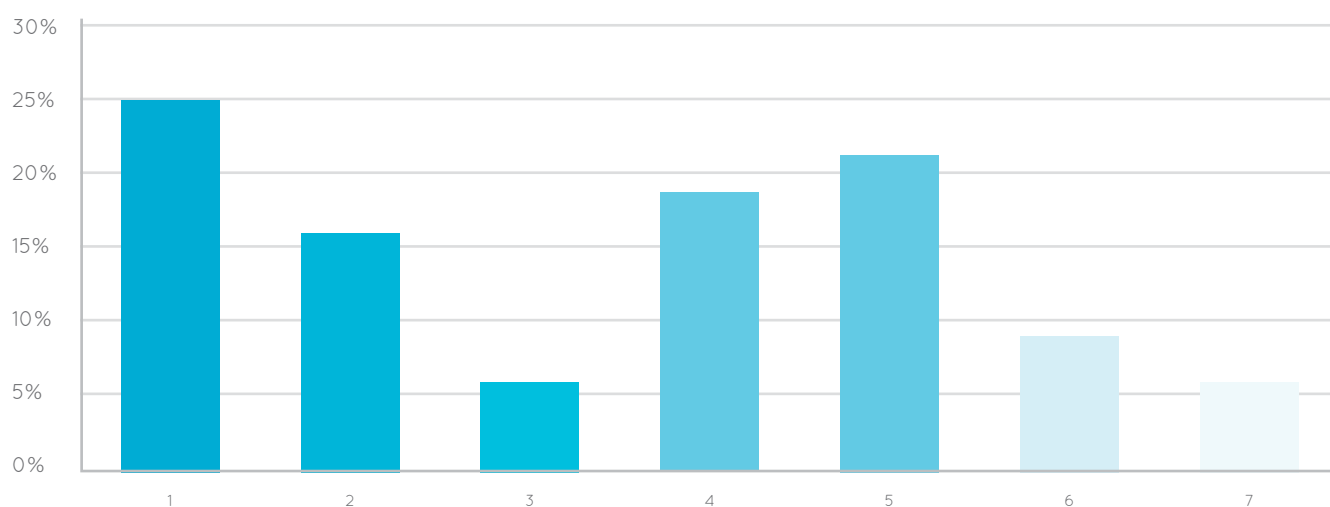
ARE CHANGES TO SCHEDULES CAPTURED AND UPDATED AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	94%
No	6%



WHAT IS THE AVERAGE DELAY IN UPDATING SCHEDULES?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Almost real time	1	25%
1 hour	2	16%
2 hours	3	6%
3 hours	4	18%
The next day	5	22%
Not sure	6	8%
Other	7	6%



WORKFORCE PLANNING & OPTIMISATION

IS THERE A CUT OFF TIME FOR TEAM LEADERS/ REAL TIME ANALYSTS TO UPDATE CHANGES IN SCHEDULES?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
No	57%
Yes – How long?	43%



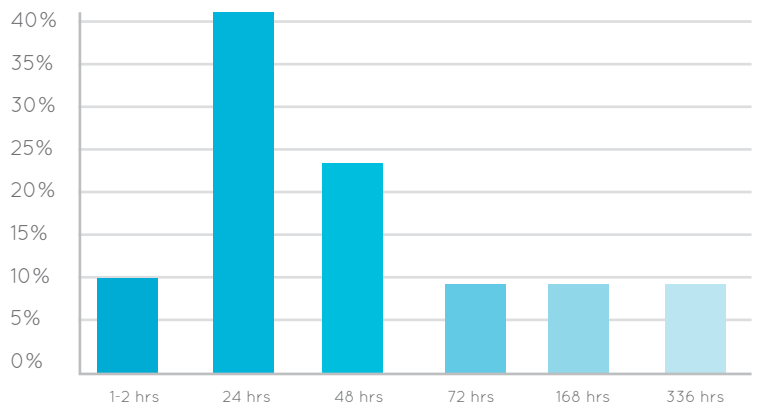
NO



YES

WHAT IS THE CUT OFF TIME?

HOURS:	RESPONSES:
1-2 hours	9%
24 hours	41%
48 hours	23%
72 hours	9%
168 hours	9%
336 hours	9%



WHAT IS THE CUT OFF TIME FOR TEAM LEADERS/REAL TIME ANALYSTS TO UPDATE CHANGES IN SCHEDULES?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Under 1 hour	1	5%
1-4 hours	2	9%
Half a day	3	9%
1 day	4	41%
2-3 days	5	18%
4-7 days	6	9%
1-2 weeks	7	5%



UNDER 1 HR



1-4 HRS



HALF A DAY



1 DAY



2-3 DAYS



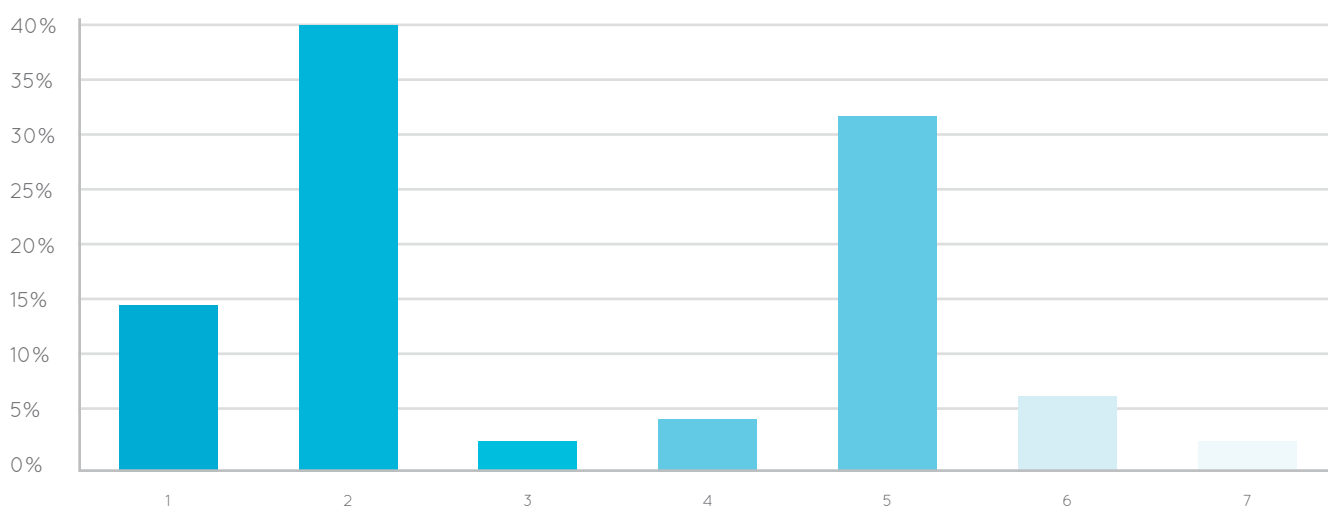
4-7 DAYS



1-2 WEEKS

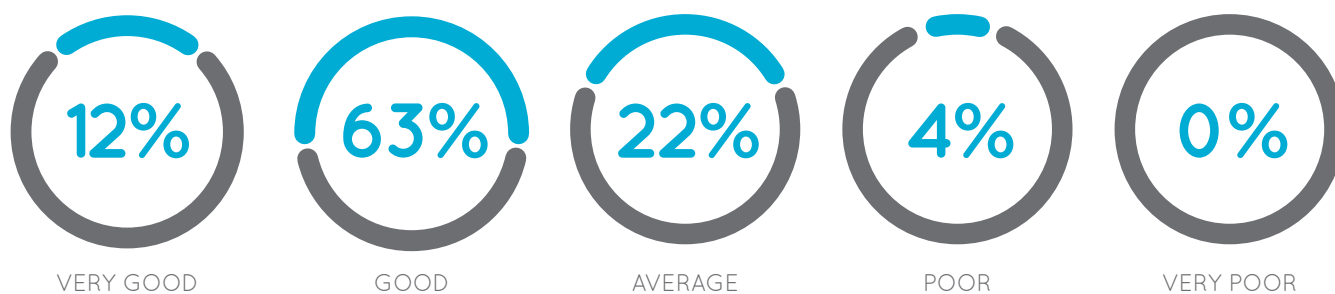
HOW DO YOU MEASURE SCHEDULING SUCCESS?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Occupancy	1	14%
Schedule Efficiency	2	40%
Number of changes made after publishing schedules	3	2%
Agent engagement	4	4%
We do not measure schedule success	5	32%
Abandonment	6	6%
Other	7	2%



HOW EFFECTIVE WOULD YOU RATE THE SCHEDULING PROCESS?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Very good	12%
Good	63%
Average	22%
Poor	4%
Very poor	0%



WORKFORCE PLANNING & OPTIMISATION

IS SCHEDULE ADHERENCE A PERFORMANCE TARGET / INDICATOR FOR AGENTS?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	86%
No	14%



YES



NO

WHAT IS THE ADHERENCE TO SCHEDULE TARGET FOR AGENTS?

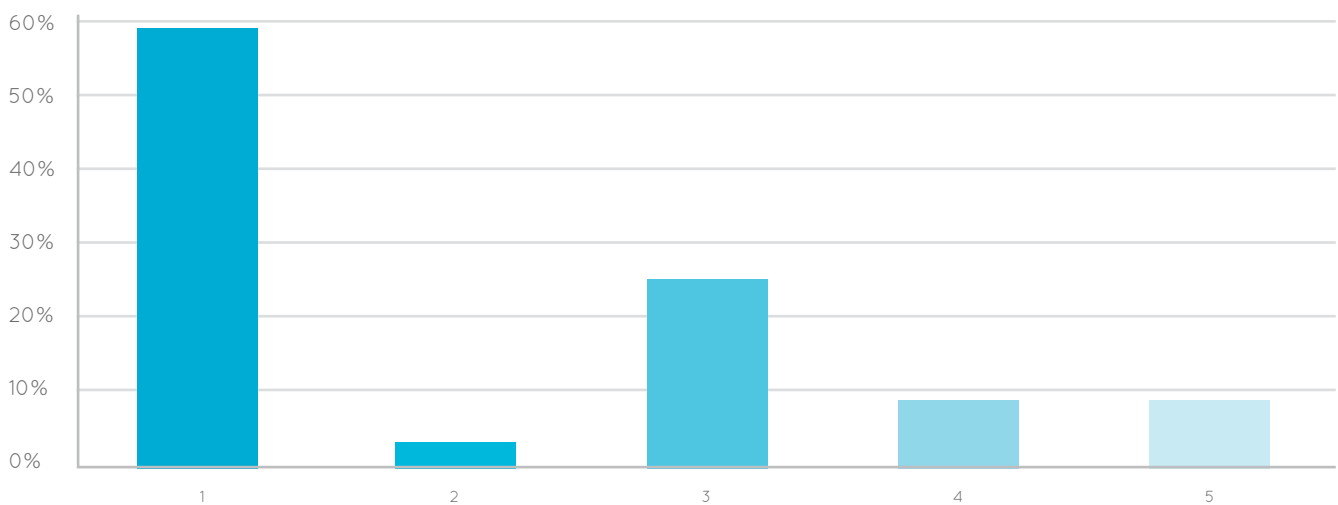


34% of contact centres have an adherence to schedule target of 94% or higher.

14% of contact centres have a target of 85% or lower.

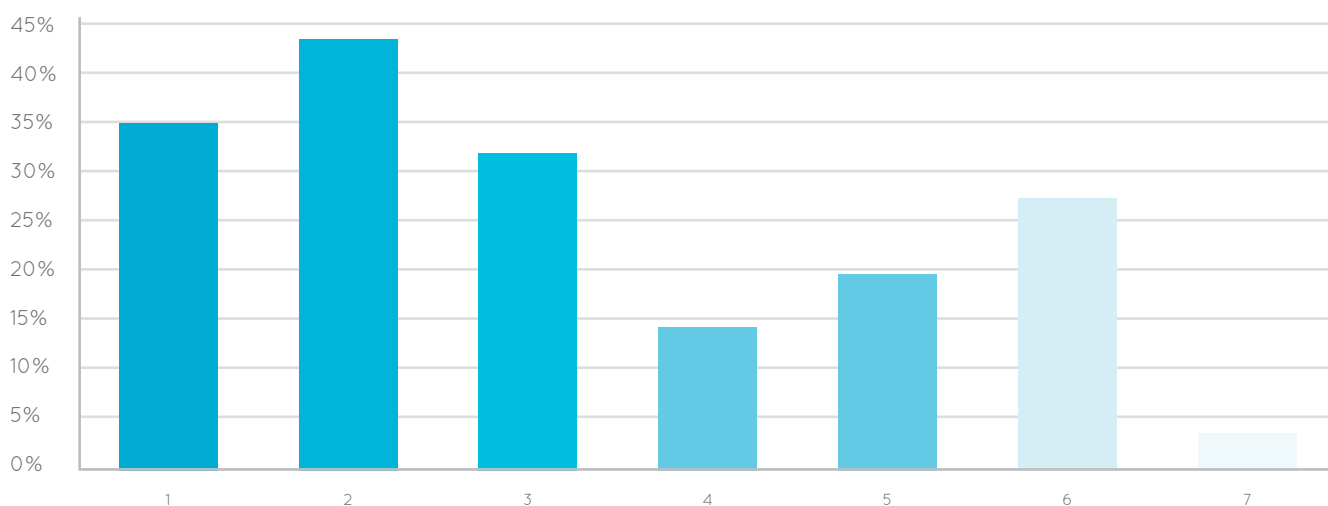
HOW DO YOU MEASURE SCHEDULING SUCCESS?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Service Level only	1	59%
Average delay only	2	2%
Both	3	24%
Abandonment	4	8%
Neither	5	8%



ARE YOU USING ANY OF THE FOLLOWING TECHNOLOGIES TO HELP IMPROVE AGENT ENGAGEMENT? SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

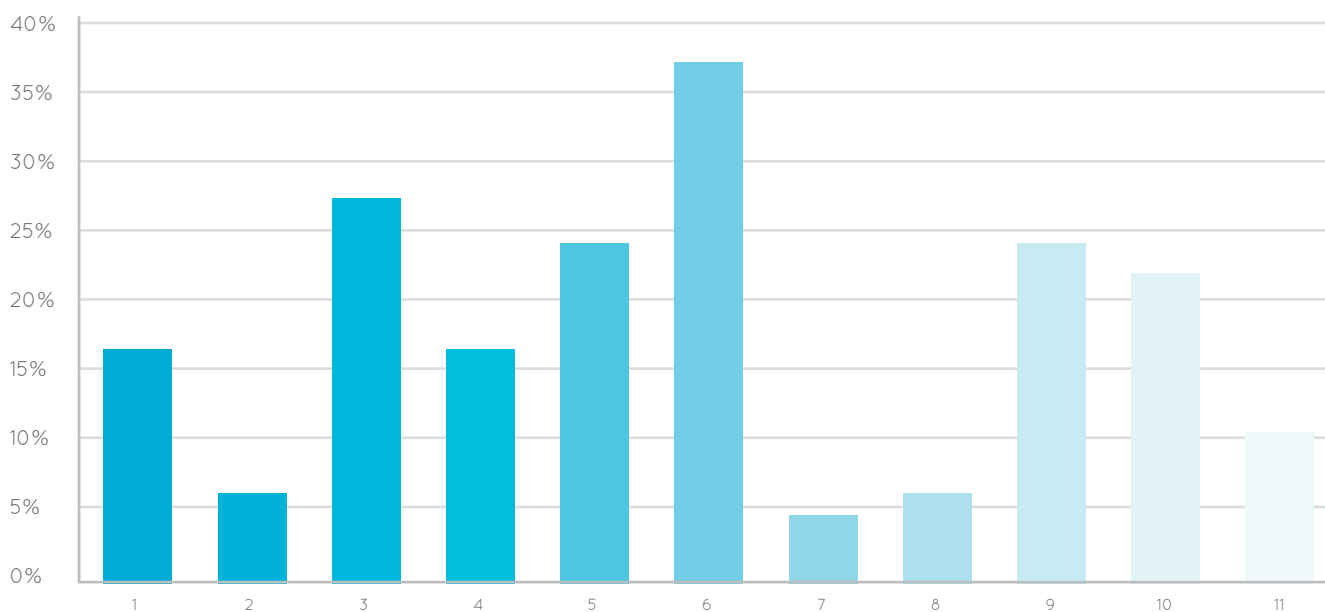
ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Technology that will offer more flexible schedules.	1	35%
Workforce Management mobile app so staff can view their schedules and apply for leave etc.	2	43%
Payroll integration so staff can apply for leave through your workforce management system	3	32%
Gamification of learning and development to improve performance	4	14%
Automating Real Time Management of schedules in line with changes in demand	5	19%
Automating changes in queues based on demand	6	27%
Automating agent learning and development based on demand and other prescheduled events	7	3%



WORKFORCE PLANNING & OPTIMISATION

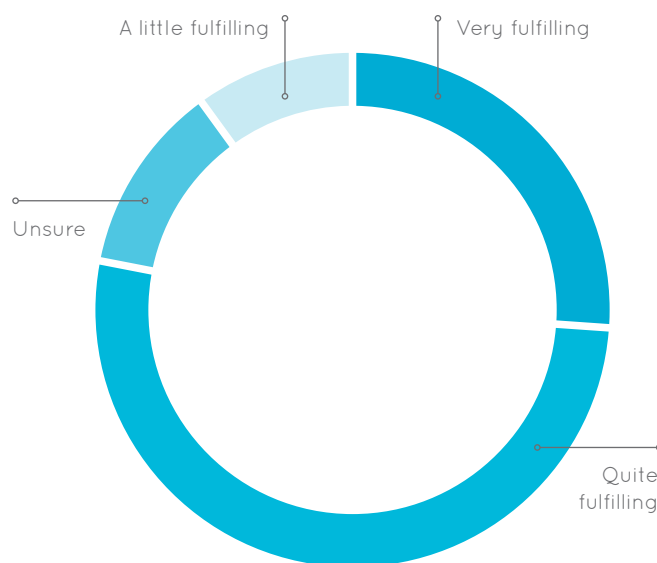
WHAT ARE YOUR TWO BIGGEST WORKFORCE PLANNING CHALLENGES?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Accurate forecasting	1	16%
Providing staff with flexible schedules	2	6%
Meeting service level goals	3	27%
Accurate intraday management of staff	4	16%
Inability to recruit staff	5	24%
Attrition	6	37%
Lack of training for the workforce planning team	7	4%
Recruiting workforce planners with the right skills	8	6%
Ineffective workforce planning tools	9	24%
Communication with marketing and departments that impact contact demand	10	22%
Other	11	10%



HOW FULFILLING IS THE WORK YOU DO?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Very fulfilling	28%
Quite fulfilling	48%
Unsure	14%
A little fulfilling	10%
Not at all fulfilling	0%



WORKFORCE PLANNING & OPTIMISATION SUMMARY

Workforce Management and Optimisation Summary

Nimesh Dhanak

Head of Sales – APAC

Call Design



The role of workforce management in today's new-norm world is ever critical, with 90% of the contact centres participating in this report having a dedicated workforce planning process in place. The proliferation of the remote workforce has meant our contact centres here in Australia as well as the world over have had to get increasingly creative in striking a balance between optimising company performance while ensuring they remain flexible and keep their staff engaged. The fundamentals of right person, right place, right time are at the core of doing just that however more flexible scheduling options and tools to improve engagement have also become essential.

One interesting finding was that of those surveyed, most of the responses were from inhouse contact centres. As you would expect, inbound voice and email channels still hold the top spot on the list of most planned customer contact channels with chat, outbound, back-office and social media closely following. What also emerged is that more and more workforce planning teams are doing the planning for back-office tasks as was highlighted by 50% of those surveyed.

Finding highly skilled workforce planners remains a challenge. Therefore, opportunities to grow are often given to staff internally. In fact, 50% of workforce planners started as agents. What is concerning is the lack of investment in specialist education and training for staff in this role and in the contact centre in general. Only 13.5% of the workforce planners who responded had external skills training which is not good for the industry. Furthermore, only 2% of those surveyed had 3rd party training on best practice WFM principles, again as most WFP's and TL's are being taught internally, on the job. This is far from ideal as bad habits can be passed down to new hires and information is inadvertently filtered or watered down especially when it comes to getting the most from your workforce planning tool and what it can and can't do.

While most businesses have adopted a purpose-built Workforce Management Solution, it is interesting to note that Excel still seems to play a relatively significant role both in forecasting and scheduling.

The migration to cloud-based systems continues with many organisations having already opted for cloud based WFM tools (57.7%). The benefits speak for themselves here with cost efficiency, scalability, more robust DR, evergreen versions being front of mind for most businesses.

When deciding on a tool, features and functionality are the key drivers. Only 2.3% looked at references and supplier reputation. This is interesting as not all vendors provide the same level of service and many users complain that they do not get the help they need once the tool has been installed. It would be interesting to understand who decides on the functionality list

and how much investigation is done on how these features would work, before the system is installed. This is further compounded by the fact that most workforce planners only receive internal training and upskilling. As a result, only 18.6% rated their workforce planning tool as excellent with most rating it as average (37.2%)

Of those surveyed and even those that are using a tool, it was almost a 50/50 split between using Excel or the WFM tool to forecast. That said, almost 70% rated the forecasting process as good or very good. Almost everyone (96%) measures forecast accuracy however only 20% measure to an interval level. The disadvantage of not measuring this at an interval level is that your customers are likely to receive inconsistent service throughout the day, depending on the time they try to contact you.

Most organisations create new schedules either weekly or monthly and provide these to staff 4 weeks in advance. However, these are not necessarily a completely new build to meet staffing requirements as most schedules are fixed or rotating. We expect this will need to change as we move forward with a remote workforce that is almost certainly here to stay and the increasing requirement to provide staff with more and more schedule flexibility.

Some quick stats: It is good to see that 94.1% of people capture changes to schedules quickly and update schedules almost in real time because this helps with the real-time decision-making process. 58% use Service Level as their primary goal while 23.5% are targeting SL and ASA. Hopefully this is for different lines of business within an organisation as service level and average delay do not align therefore cannot be targets for the same line of business. What we did find striking is that 7.8% use abandonment rate as a measure of scheduling success. Unfortunately, the reasons for customers abandoning are often external and out of the workforce planning team's control. Lastly, a few years ago contact centres were looking at removing adherence as a target for agents. It is good to see that this has returned with 86.27% measuring this.

Mobile apps are seen to have become an important way to improve agent engagement and address the attrition problem with 43.24% providing their staff with access to an app to view their schedules, apply for leave and do shift swaps. Offering staff more flexible schedules is key to retaining them, particularly in the new world of a flexible, mobile workforce.

Moving forward, we believe there will be more movement towards further enhancing the agent experience with increasing interest in solutions to either improve the experience such as gamification or streamlining processes with increased automation. Integrated systems are becoming more and more necessary and in particular, integration to payroll systems is critical to reduce human error and to keep payroll and workforce planning aligned.

WORKFORCE PLANNING & OPTIMISATION CASE STUDY

Information about nib

nib Group is one of Australia's largest and fastest growing health and medical insurance providers and constantly seeks to provide high-quality services through tentative bespoke customer service. Established in 1952, nib has a long-standing reputation in the healthcare industry and has continued to grow through the most challenging market landscapes. The customer support team at nib works hard to ensure the customers' expectations are exceeded in the most friendly and efficient manner.

nib provides health and medical insurance to over 1.4 million Australian and New Zealand residents and serves more than 190,000 international students and workers on temporary visas. nib is one of Australia's largest players in the travel insurance industry and is publicly listed on the ASX.

The nib contact centre is based across multiple locations with over 300 consultants. The company aims to continually improve brand experience through high quality customer service support, providing quotes and setting up insurance policies for new customers, all in a timely and efficient manner.

Motivation for Change

As a fast growing company, nib Group required ways to improve customer service experience and help lower costs. With nib's member base expanding, nib required more from their workforce management solution to continue the streamlined customer service experience on a more sustainable scale.

nib Group made the decision to change workforce management solutions to Alvaria Workforce Engagement Management with the Perform (real time adherence and agent productivity) module and WFO (online schedule and mobile app) modules.

Desired Solutions

Prior to nib using Alvaria Engagement Management, nib was in search of a solution that could:

- Boost agent engagement
- Create comprehensive forecasts
- Evaluate schedule adherence easily and provide employees with visibility of this
- Accurately forecast while encompassing a large number of variables
- Optimise schedules based on a large array of employee's skills and preferences
- Use the cloud to drive flexibility and provide remote access to information
- Quickly adjust schedules and breaks to manage customer contact demands
- Automatically schedule breaks and projects at the best times
- Help boost agent productivity without inducing burnout
- Use a mobile app to allow consultants to access their schedule information remotely

Why Alvaria?

The team at nib requires software to accommodate the complexity and large array of skills in their contact centre. They need a solution that can handle the various skill combinations and contact channels to forecast accurate staffing requirements. Having the ability to automate certain tasks, to save the team time and enable them to do more analysis, is also important.

Alvaria's WEM solution provides nib with the tools they need to test out the impact of different changes on their forecasts, as well as helping them find ways to provide better schedule flexibility for their staff, regardless of whether they are working in the contact centre or from home.

nib needs to provide different access to Workforce Planning information to various roles within the contact centre. The comprehensive security features in Alvaria WEM have enabled them to do this easily.

Call Design has taught us so much about workforce planning...they have a wealth of knowledge and that really helps the team here to do their jobs better.

Michael Stonehouse, nib Group Planning Expansion Lead

Why Call Design?

While Alvaria WEM delivers extensive benefits for nib's contact centre, having access to a team of highly experienced consultants at Call Design has helped the workforce planning team expand their knowledge, integrate the software with other technologies such as payroll and ensure staff continue to deliver high-quality customer service, without interruptions. nib wanted to work with a provider that would help get the most out of their solution and provide measurable ROI for their investment.

The knowledge provided to nib by Call Design continues to be highly informative and allows them to expand their knowledge of workforce management and apply this directly when using the new features released every year in the Alvaria WEM platform. During their recent upgrade, Call Design provided a service that nib described as being seamless. "We hardly noticed the transition at all, which is what we want when relying on the system to plan out our day." - Michael Stonehouse, nib Group Planning Expansion Lead.

The Results

With the implementation of the Alvaria WEM Suite, by Call Design, nib has been able to continually grow, and deliver best practice workforce planning.

The comprehensive capabilities of Alvaria WEM have enabled the workforce planning team to get the insights they need to make continual improvements across all member channels.

Tools specific to Alvaria WEM such as 'Employee Data Center' and 'Superstates' have made reporting on any staff activities, regardless of where the employee is working from, easy.

The 'what-if' features in Alvaria WEM enable nib to evaluate the viability of any forecast or schedule situation before going live. This enables nib to continue delivering high-quality customer service to their members across all channels.

THE ROLE OF THE AGENT

BEST PRACTICE REPORT

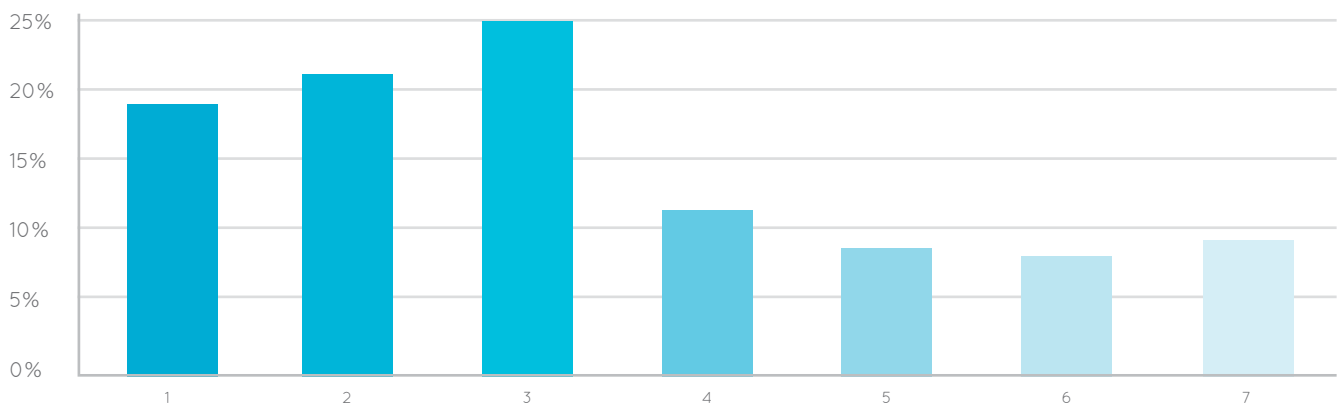


HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE EMPLOYED BY THE CONTACT CENTRE?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
0-50	1	19%
50-100	2	21%
100-200	3	25%
200-300	4	11%
300-500	5	8%
500-1,000	6	7%
1,000+	7	9%

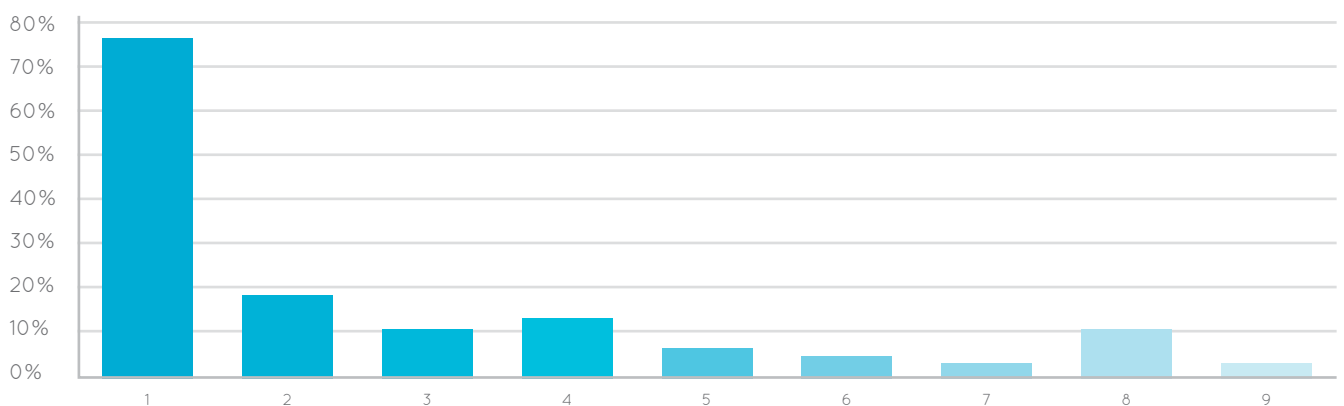


Over 600 Frontline Agents participated in this research, from all different sized contact centres.



WHICH CALL TYPE BEST DESCRIBES YOUR ROLE? (SELECT UP TO 2):

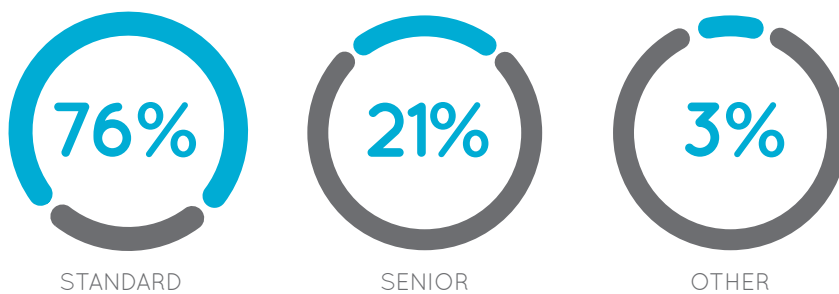
ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Customer Service	1	74%
Blended Customer Service & Sales	2	19%
Inbound Sales	3	10%
Outbound Sales	4	11%
Outbound Retention	5	6%
Lead Generation/Appointment setting	6	3%
Collections	7	2%
Helpdesk	8	10%
Claims consultant	9	2%



THE ROLE OF THE AGENT

WHAT LEVEL IS YOUR ROLE?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Standard	76%
Senior (e.g. Senior Customer Service, Helpdesk Level 2, Senior Collections Officer)	21%
Other	3%

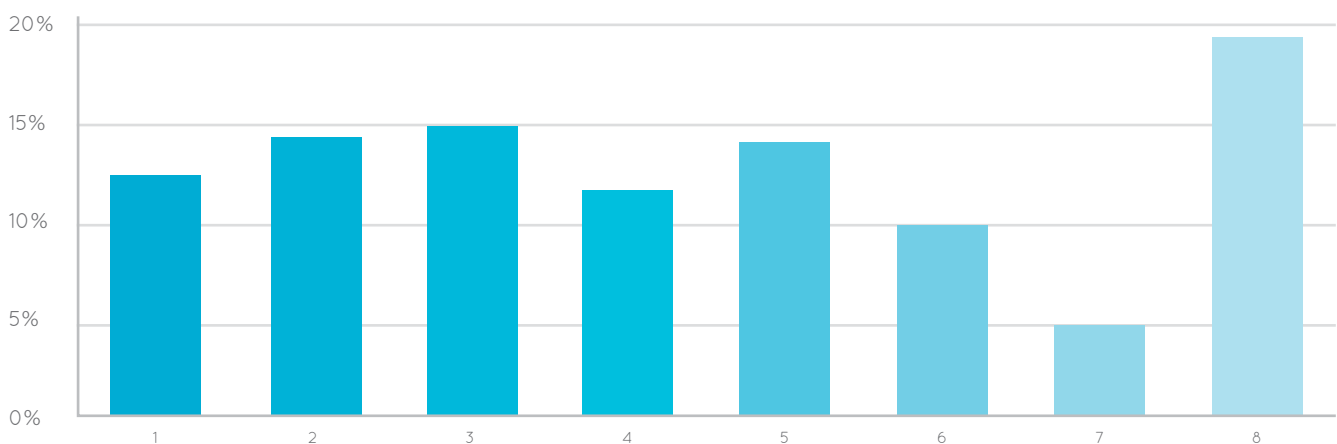


WHICH CALL TYPE BEST DESCRIBES YOUR ROLE? (SELECT UP TO 2):

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
1-3 months	1	12%
4-6 months	2	14%
6-12 months	3	15%
1 year	4	12%
2 years	5	14%
3 years	6	10%
4 years	7	5%
5+ years	8	19%

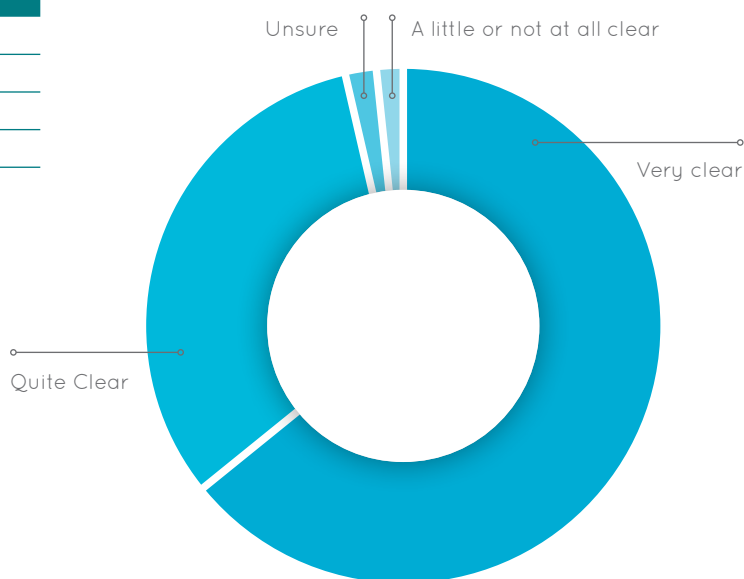


34% of respondents have been working in their current contact centre 3 or more years.



HOW CLEAR IS YOUR ORGANISATION'S PURPOSE TO YOU? (IN ANSWERING CONSIDER IF YOU COULD EXPLAIN HOW YOUR ROLE DIRECTLY SUPPORTS THE PURPOSE).

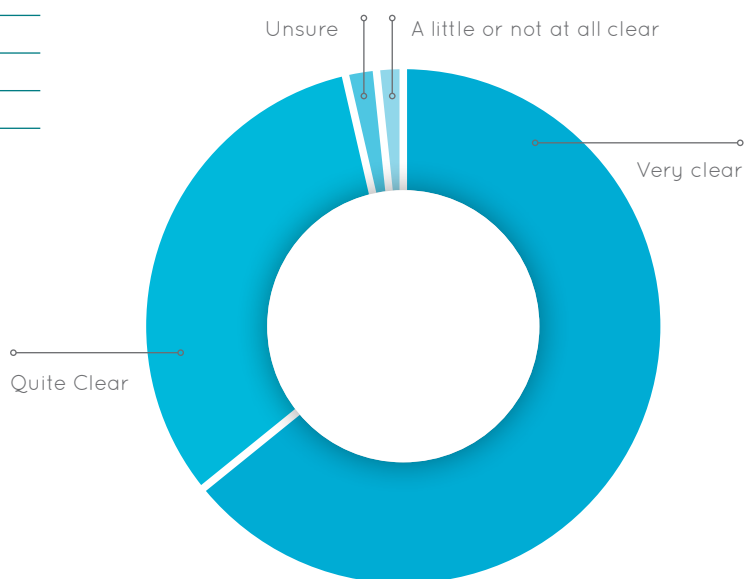
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Very clear	64%
Quite clear	32%
Unsure	2%
A little clear	1%
Not at all clear	0.5%



Overwhelmingly, Frontline Agents understand their organisation's purpose and how their role contributes to fulfilling the purpose.

HOW CLEAR ARE YOU ON HOW YOUR ROLE CONTRIBUTES TO FULFILLING THE PURPOSE?

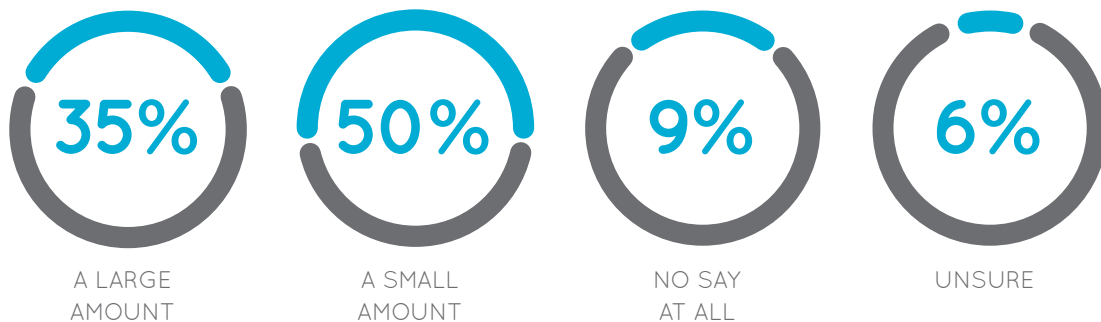
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Very clear	66%
Quite clear	31%
Unsure	2%
A little clear	1%
Not at all clear	0.2%



THE ROLE OF THE AGENT

HOW MUCH SAY DO YOU HAVE IN HOW YOU AND YOUR TEAM GO ABOUT DELIVERING ON THE PURPOSE/WORK?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
A large amount	35%
A small amount	50%
No say at all	9%
Unsure	6%



WHICH CALL TYPE BEST DESCRIBES YOUR ROLE? (SELECT UP TO 2):

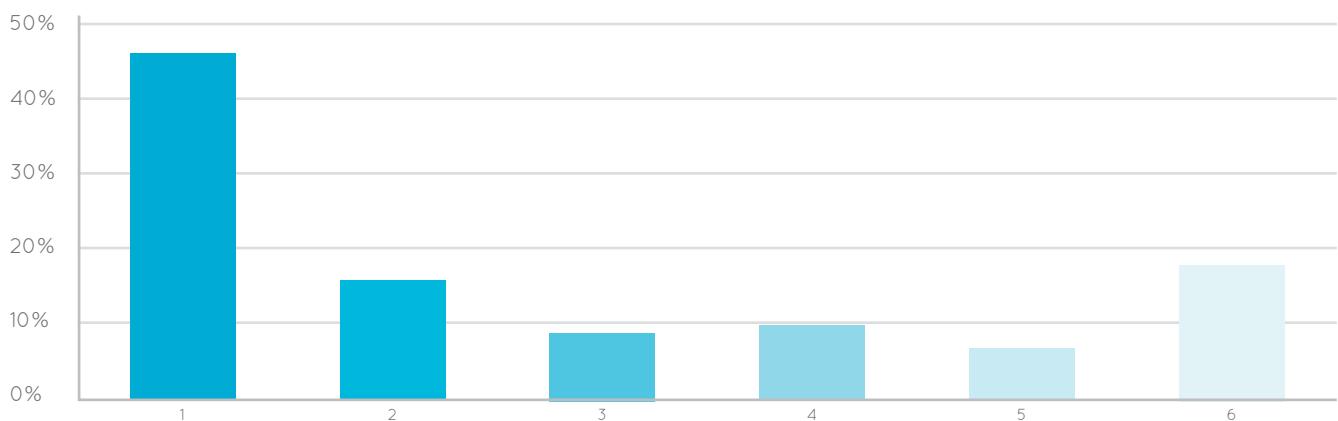
ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Full flexibility – I choose where to work at least 90% of the time	1	46%
Very High flexibility – I choose where to work at least 80% of the time	2	13%
High flexibility – I choose where to work at least 60% of the time	3	8%
Moderate flexibility – I choose where to work at least 40% of the time	4	9%
Low flexibility – I choose where to work at least 20% of the time	5	6%
No flexibility – I do not get to choose where to work at any time	6	18%



Close to 60% of Frontline Agents reported that they have full or very high flexibility with regards to working from home.

This is in contrast with Contact Centre Managers, who reported that 47% of Frontline Agents had full or very high flexibility.

Perhaps this is a perception difference, as the majority of Frontline Agents enjoy the flexibility that WFH offers.



**IF YOU COULD CHOSE, WHAT PERCENTAGE OF THE TIME
WOULD YOU CHOOSE TO WORK FROM HOME?**

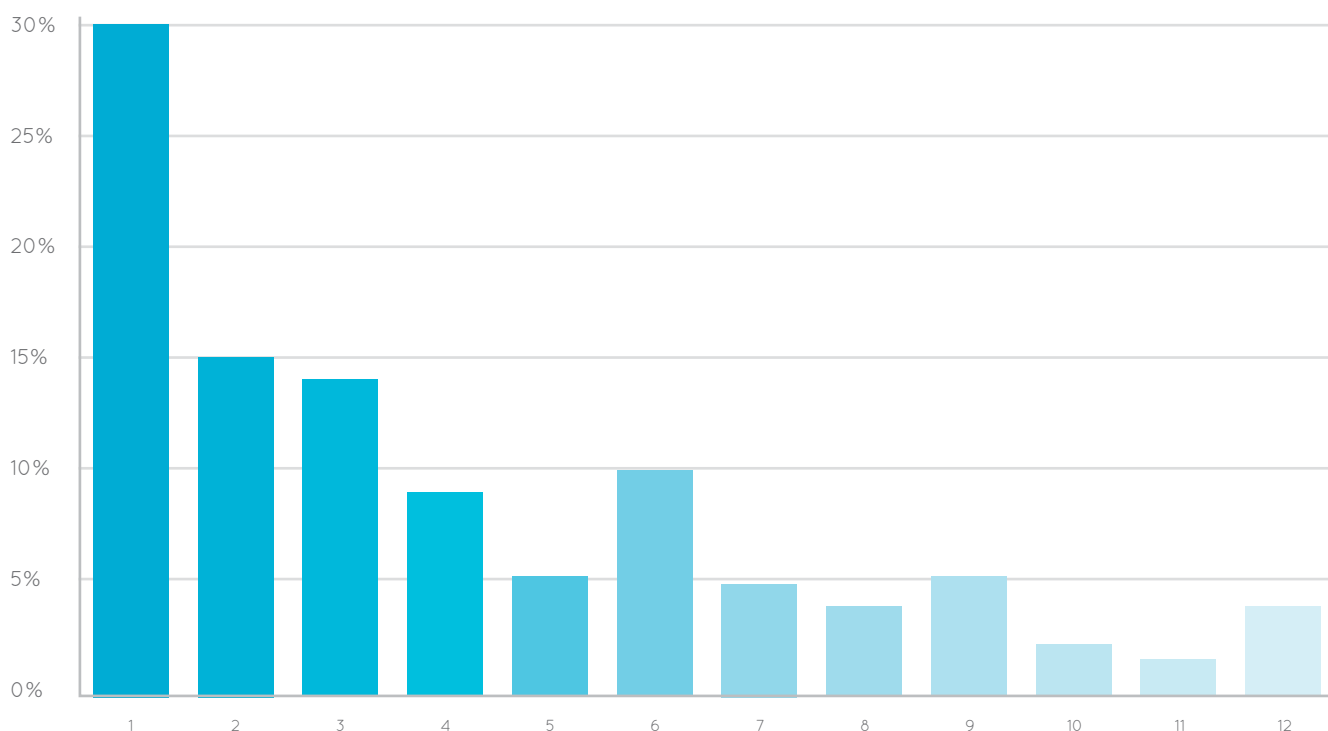
ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
100%	1	30%
90 - 99	2	15%
80 - 89	3	14%
70 - 79	4	8%
60 - 69	5	5%
50 - 59	6	10%
40 - 49	7	4%
30 - 39	8	3%
20 - 29	9	5%
10 to 19	10	2%
1 to 9	11	1%
0%	12	4%



On average, Frontline Agents would like to work from home 73% of the time.

Over 30% of Frontline Agents would like to work from home 100% of time.

Less then 4% of Frontline Agents want to work from the contact centre 100% of the time.



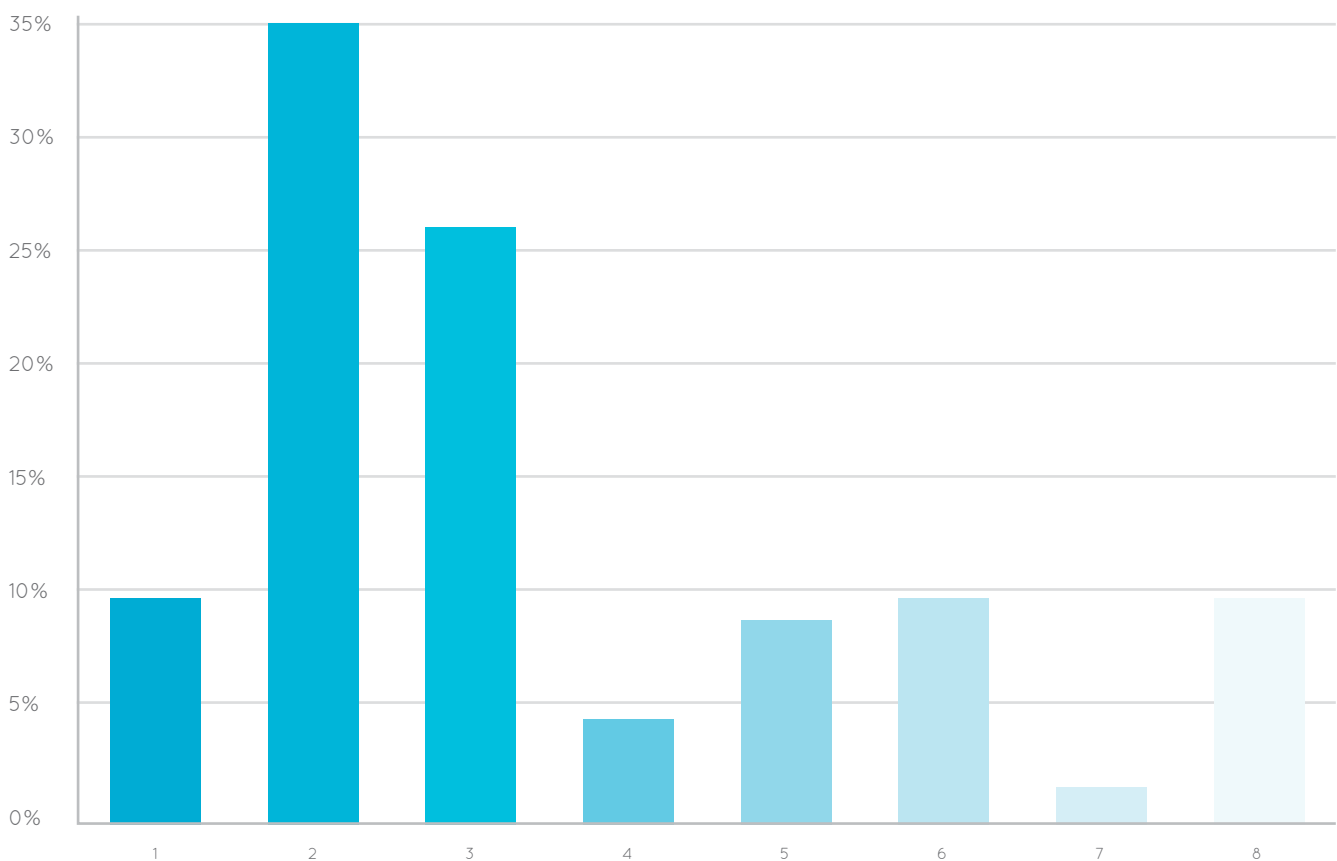
THE ROLE OF THE AGENT

WHAT IS THE SINGLE BEST THING ABOUT WFH?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
The sense that I am trusted/treated like an adult	1	9%
Not having to travel to and from work	2	35%
The overall convenience	3	26%
Not having to "get ready" (dress up etc) for work	4	4%
The comfort of working in my own environment	5	7%
Getting my work done more effectively	6	9%
Being able to work amongst my family/friends	7	1%
Other	8	9%



61.5% of Frontline Agents said that the single best thing about working from home was not having to travel to and from work and the overall convenience. The most common response from those who selected "Other" was "all of the above".

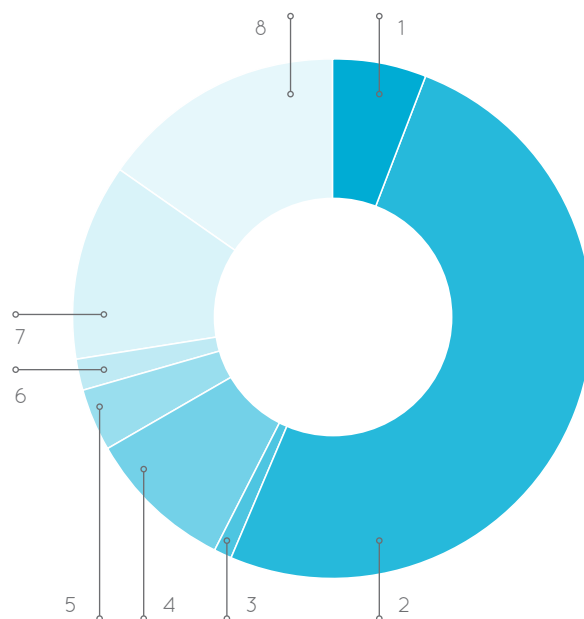


WHAT IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE WHEN IT COMES TO WFH?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Other people in the house	1	6%
Lack of social interaction	2	50%
Lack of access to Team Leader	3	1%
Harder to get assistance	4	9%
Harder to learn/develop	5	4%
Lack of infrastructure	6	2%
Boredom - living working in the same place	7	12%
Other	8	15%

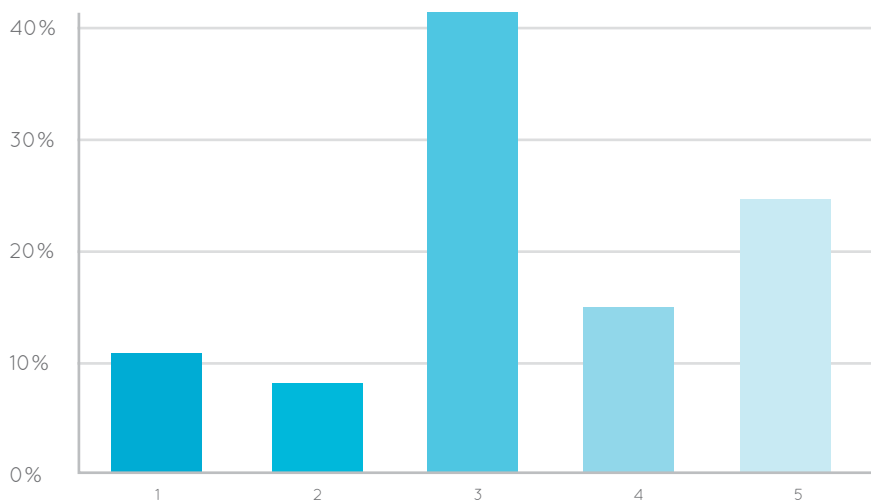


The lack of social interaction is a huge challenge for everyone when working from home. Frontline Agents typically work in teams with high levels of interaction and socialisation in the workplace, and this has been hard (at times impossible to replicate) during lockdowns.



HOW DOES YOUR PRODUCTIVITY COMPARE: WORKING FROM HOME V WORKING FROM THE CONTACT CENTRE?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
I'm a lot more productive in the contact centre	1	11%
I'm a little more productive in the contact centre	2	8%
Same output	3	41%
I'm a little more productive when I WFH	4	16%
I'm a lot more productive when I WFH	5	24%



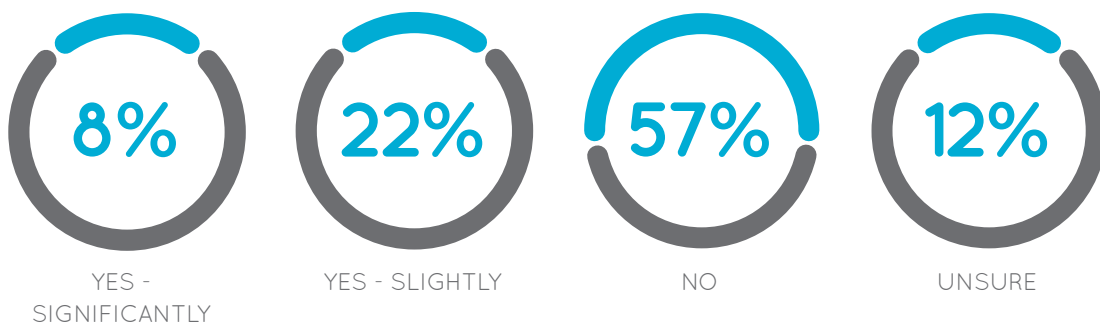
40% of Frontline Agents feel they are more productive when working from home, with 41% feeling their productivity level is the same regardless of whether they are in the contact centre or at home. Only 19% feel less productive when WFH.

Contact Centre Managers feel a little different when it comes to the overall running of the contact centre. While 44% feel it is equally as effective, only 9% feel the WFH model is currently more effective, 42% believe it is less effective (see page 14)

THE ROLE OF THE AGENT

WHEN WORKING ONLY FROM HOME FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD (4 WEEKS OR MORE) DOES YOUR MOTIVATION AND OUTPUT DECLINE, EVEN IF JUST SLIGHTLY?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes – significantly	8%
Yes – slightly	22%
No	57%
Unsure	12%

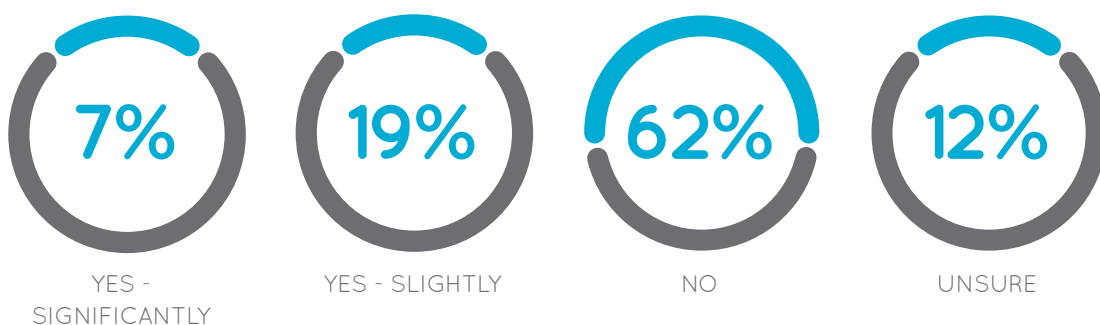


HAVE YOUR LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES DECREASED SINCE WORKING FROM HOME?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes – significantly	7%
Yes – slightly	19%
No	62%
Unsure	12%



The majority of contact centres have done well to ensure that learning opportunities have not decreased while working from home.

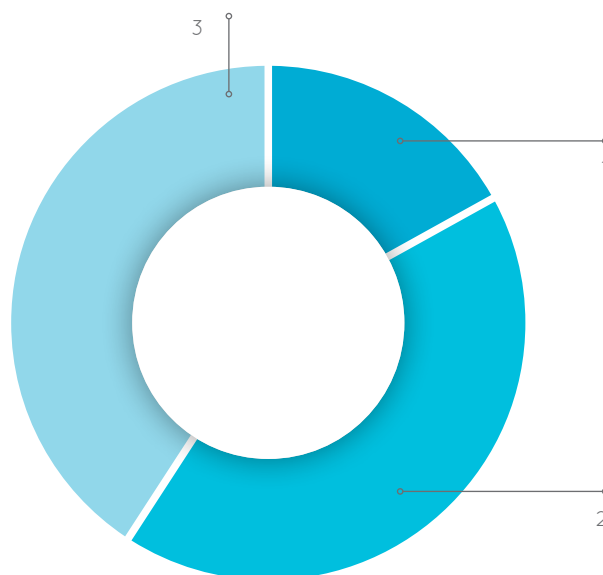


WHAT ENVIRONMENT DO YOU FIND HAS MORE DISTRACTIONS WHEN WORKING?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
More distractions when WFH	1	17%
More distractions when working from the contact centre	2	42%
It's about the same	3	41%



Many managers naturally consider the working from home environment to be full of distractions (family members, house mates, Netflix etc). However WFH can also offer a more isolated, private and quieter environment to work from. Only 16.7% of Frontline Agents feel their WFH environment has more distraction than the contact centre itself.



HOW MUCH TIME DO YOU HAVE FOR “AFTER CALL WORK” OR SIMILAR? (IN SECONDS)

AVERAGE
365
SECONDS



DO YOU FEEL THIS IS ENOUGH?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	48%
No	31%
Unsure	21%



YES



NO



UNSURE

THE ROLE OF THE AGENT

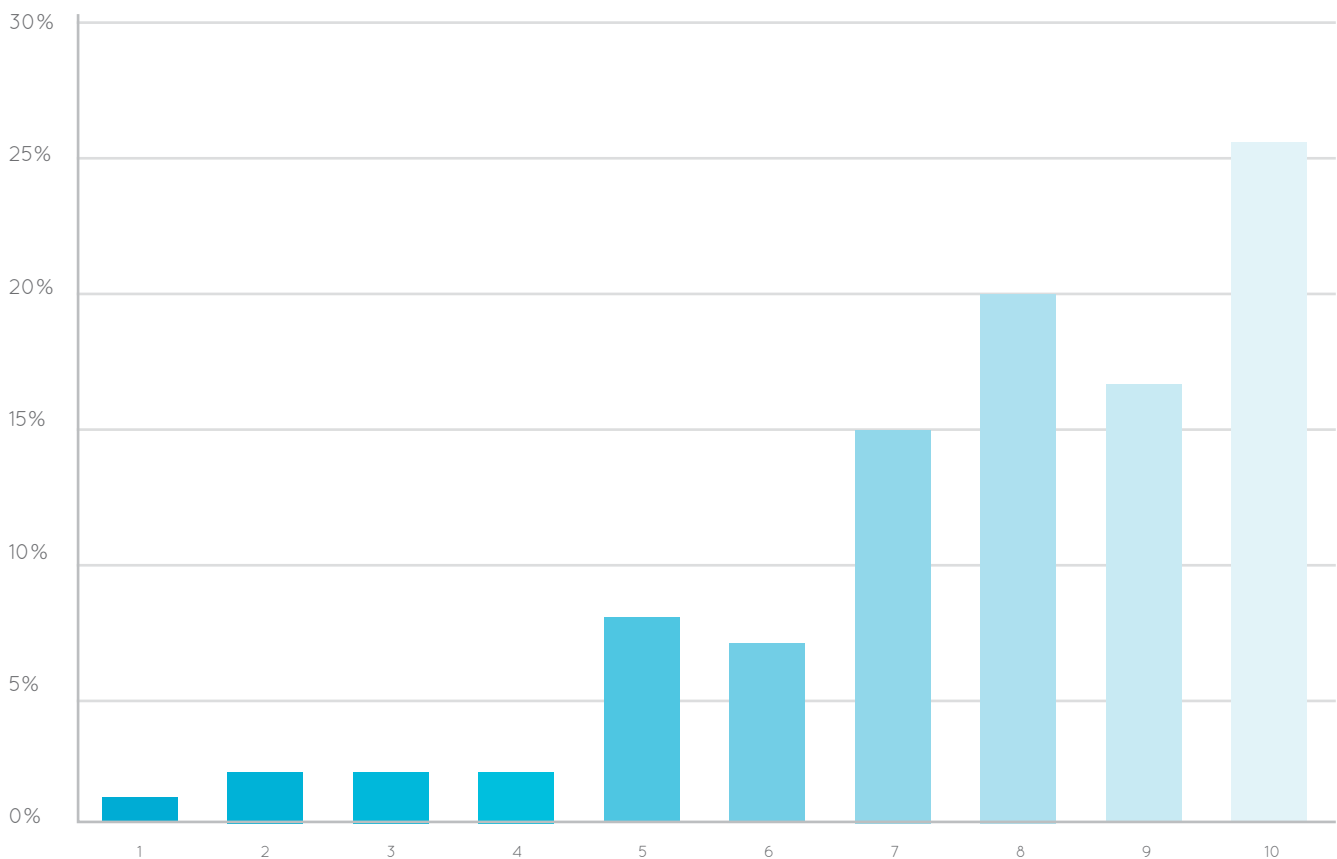
ON A SCALE OF 1 – 10, HOW ENGAGED DO YOU FEEL WITH YOUR CURRENT EMPLOYER?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
1 - Completely disengaged I am looking for another job	1%
2	2%
3	2%
4	2%
5 - Neutral / Neither engaged nor disengaged	8%
6	7%
7	15%
8	20%
9	17%
10 - Completely engaged. I love this role / company!	26%



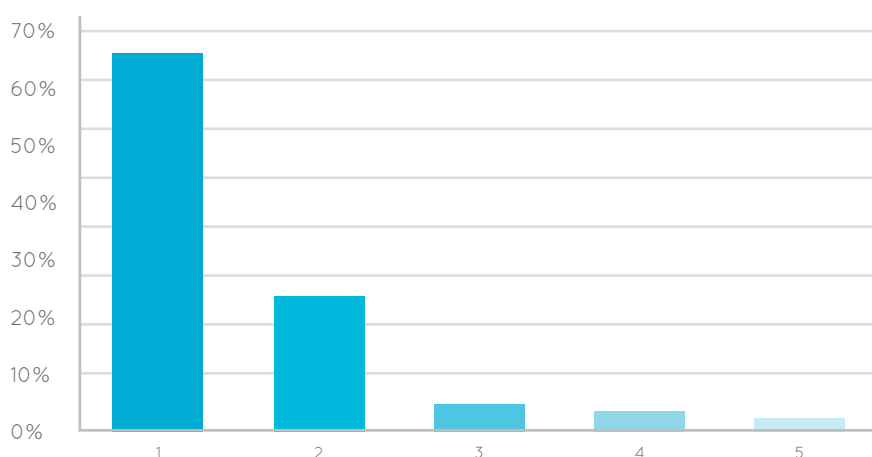
The overall engagement scores from Frontline Agents is 7.8 out of 10.

43% of Frontline Agents said their current engagement is 9 out of 10 or higher.



**HOW MUCH DO YOU AGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT:
I HAVE TRUST IN MY IMMEDIATE LEADER?**

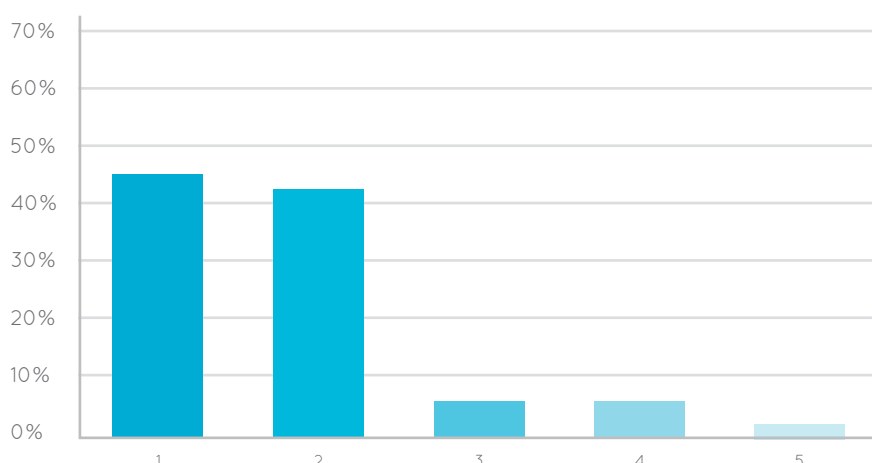
ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Completely agree	1	68%
Somewhat agree	2	23%
Neither agree nor disagree	3	4%
Somewhat disagree	4	3%
Completely disagree	5	2%



Frontline Agents completely trust their immediate leader (68%) far more than they do their organisation (45%).

**HOW MUCH DO YOU AGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT:
I HAVE TRUST IN THE ORGANISATION?**

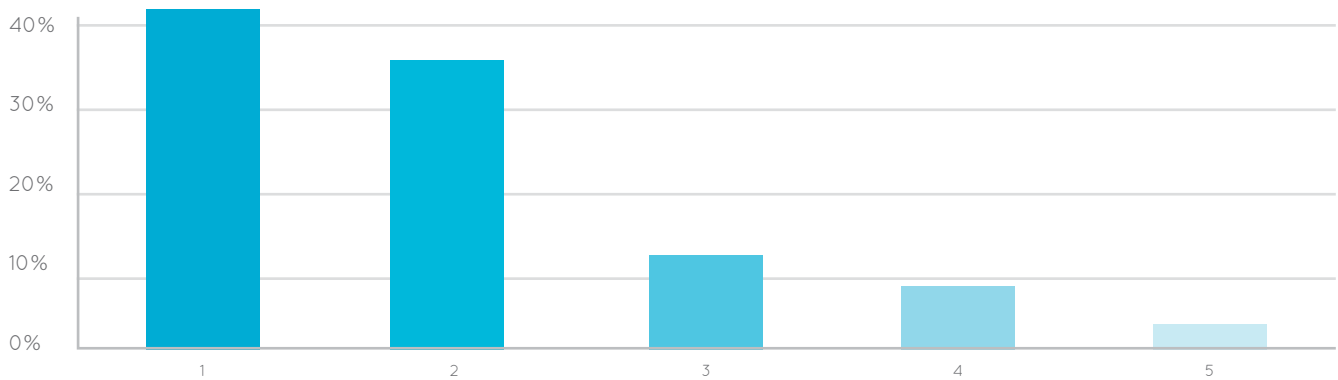
ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Completely agree	1	45%
Somewhat agree	2	41%
Neither agree nor disagree	3	6%
Somewhat disagree	4	6%
Completely disagree	5	2%



THE ROLE OF THE AGENT

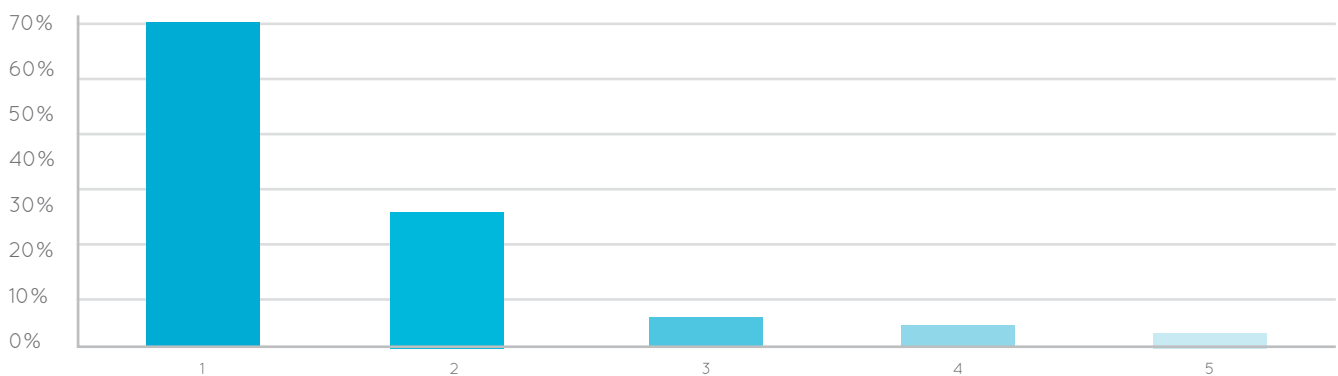
HOW MUCH DO YOU AGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT: I FEEL THAT I CAN PUT FORWARD MY IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS, AND THAT I WILL BE HEARD AND VALUED?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Completely agree	1	42%
Somewhat agree	2	37%
Neither agree nor disagree	3	11%
Somewhat disagree	4	8%
Completely disagree	5	2%



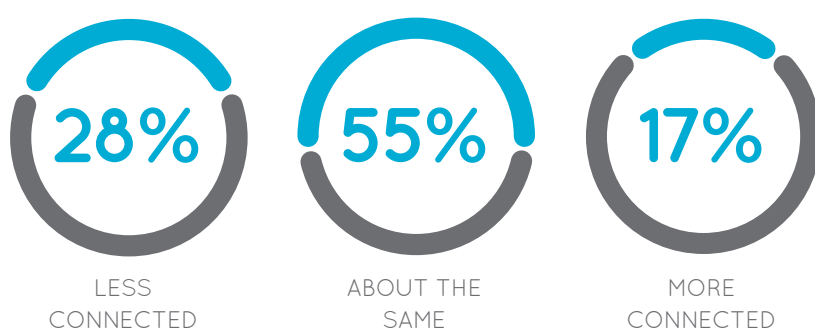
HOW MUCH DO YOU AGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT: I FEEL THAT IT IS SAFE FOR ME TO PUT MY HAND UP AND SAY THAT I HAVE MADE A MISTAKE?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Completely agree	1	70%
Somewhat agree	2	26%
Neither agree nor disagree	3	3%
Somewhat disagree	4	2%
Completely disagree	5	1%



SINCE COVID, I HAVE FELT:

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Less connected to my team and the organisation	28%
About the same level of connection with my team and the organisation	55%
More connected to my team and the organisation	17%



THE ROLE OF THE AGENT

WHAT ACTIVITIES/INITIATIVES HAS YOUR CONTACT CENTRE OR ORGANISATION PROVIDED IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS IN AN ATTEMPT TO INCREASE EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT? SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Social club	1	24%
Face to face team activities within the office	2	23%
Face to face team social activities	3	22%
Virtual team activities	4	74%
Gifts (such as hampers and gift cards)	5	50%
Experiences (such as massages, meditation classes)	6	11%
Health and wellbeing programs	7	39%
Theme Days	8	36%
Delivered "care packages"/hampers to me	9	20%
Gamification	10	12%
More rewards for performance	11	27%
Increased shift flexibility	12	24%
Additional days of paid leave	13	16%
Unexpected pay rise	14	6%
Opportunity for additional professional development	15	21%
There have been no engagement initiatives	16	4%
Other	17	3%



Pleasingly, there is a strong correlation between the employee engagement initiatives that contact centres are offering and those that Frontline Agents are wanting. The top 5 initiatives that have meant the most are (in order):

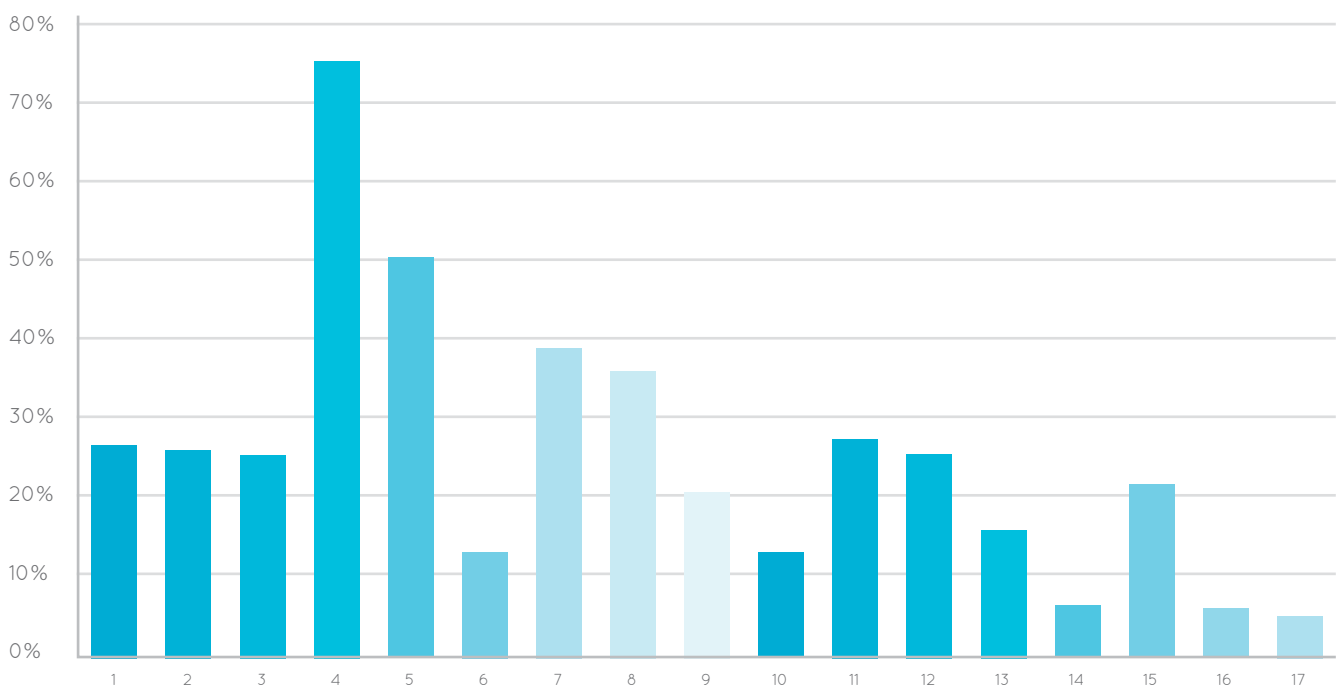
Virtual team activities

Gifts (such as hampers and gift cards)

Increased shift flexibility

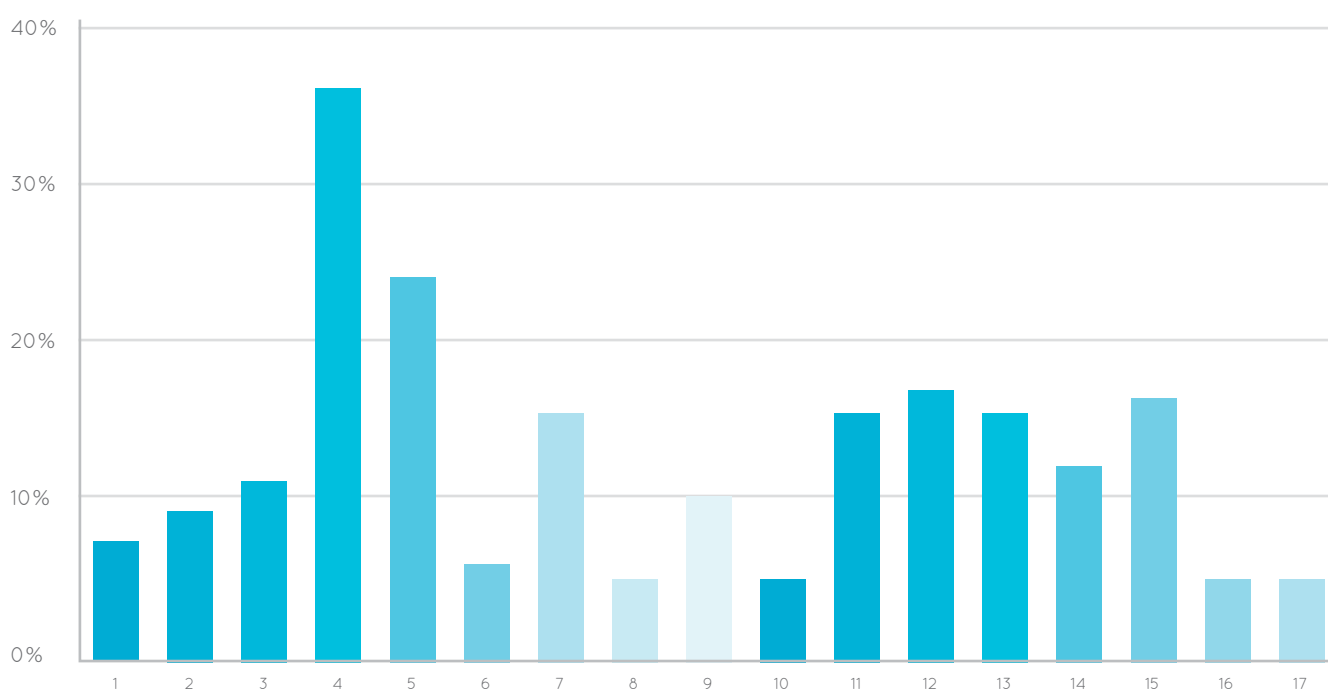
Opportunity for additional professional development

More rewards for performance



WHICH TWO ACTIVITIES/INITIATIVES MEANT THE MOST TO YOU?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Social club	1	6%
Face to face team activities within the office	2	9%
Face to face team social activities	3	11%
Virtual team activities	4	36%
Gifts (such as hampers and gift cards)	5	23%
Experiences (such as massages, meditation classes)	6	5%
Health and wellbeing programs	7	14%
Theme Days	8	4%
Delivered "care packages"/hampers to me	9	10%
Gamification	10	3%
More rewards for performance	11	15%
Increased shift flexibility	12	18%
Additional days of paid leave	13	14%
Unexpected pay rise	14	11%
Opportunity for additional professional development	15	16%
There have been no engagement initiatives	16	4%
Other	17	4%



THE ROLE OF THE AGENT

I FEEL SUFFICIENTLY EQUIPPED TO MANAGE CHALLENGING INTERACTIONS WITH CUSTOMERS

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Strongly Agree	60%
Slightly Agree	35%
Slightly Disagree	4%
Strongly Disagree	1%



STRONGLY
AGREE



SLIGHTLY
AGREE



SLIGHTLY
DISAGREE



STRONGLY
DISAGREE

I FEEL SUPPORTED TO DO WHAT I NEED TO DO TO TAKE CARE OF MY MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Strongly Agree	63%
Slightly Agree	27%
Slightly Disagree	7%
Strongly Disagree	3%



STRONGLY
AGREE



SLIGHTLY
AGREE



SLIGHTLY
DISAGREE



STRONGLY
DISAGREE



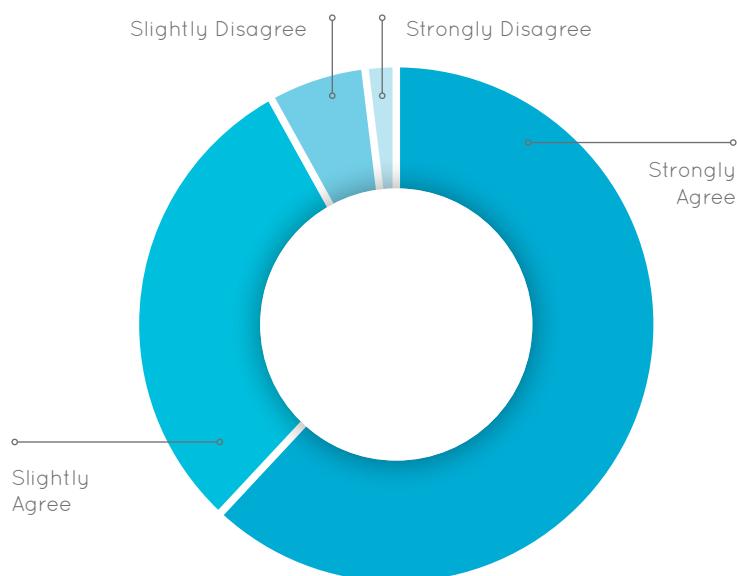
While there is still plenty of area for improvement it is pleasing that 63% of Frontline Agents strong agree that they feel supported to do what they need to do to take care of their mental health and wellbeing.

I KNOW WHAT RELEVANT SUPPORTS AND POLICIES ARE AVAILABLE WITHIN OUR ORGANISATION AND HOW TO ACCESS THEM IN CASE I AM DEALING WITH AN ISSUE THAT IMPACTS MY MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Strongly Agree	62%
Slightly Agree	30%
Slightly Disagree	7%
Strongly Disagree	1%

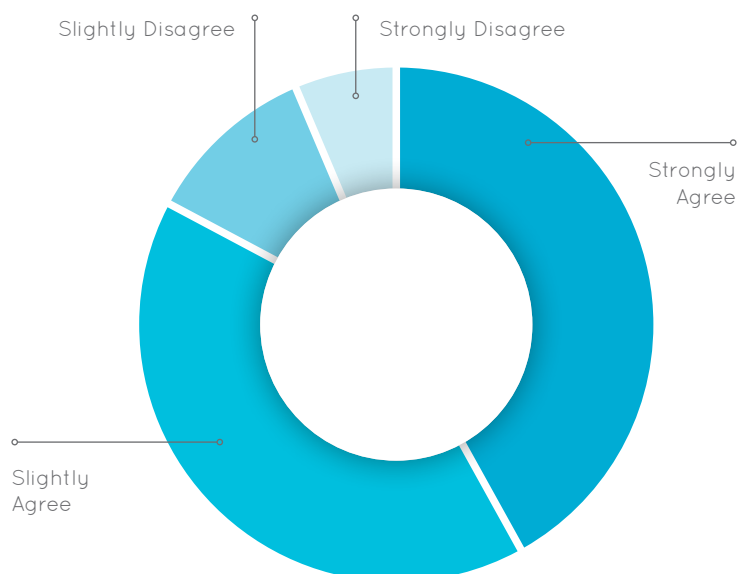


Less than 9% know what relevant supports and policies are available within their organisation.



PEOPLE IN OUR ORGANISATION FEEL SAFE TO TRULY SPEAK THEIR MIND WITHOUT FEAR OF POTENTIAL NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR DOING SO

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Strongly Agree	42%
Slightly Agree	41%
Slightly Disagree	11%
Strongly Disagree	6%



THE ROLE OF THE AGENT



MY BIGGEST CONCERN WITH REGARDS TO PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY AND MENTAL HEALTH AT OUR ORGANISATION IS...



HOW MANY TOUCH POINTS DO YOU HAVE WITH YOUR TEAM LEADER EACH WEEK? (CONSIDER ONE-ON-ONES, GROUP SESSIONS ETC.)



DO YOU FEEL THIS IS ENOUGH?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	72%
No	15%
Unsure	13%



HOW MANY HOURS DO YOU SPEND BEING COACHED EACH MONTH?



On average, Frontline Agents spend almost 4 hours a month being coached.

At the top end 9% reported that they spend 10 or more hours per month being coached.

Disappointingly 39% reported they spend a maximum of 1 hour per month being coached.

THE ROLE OF THE AGENT

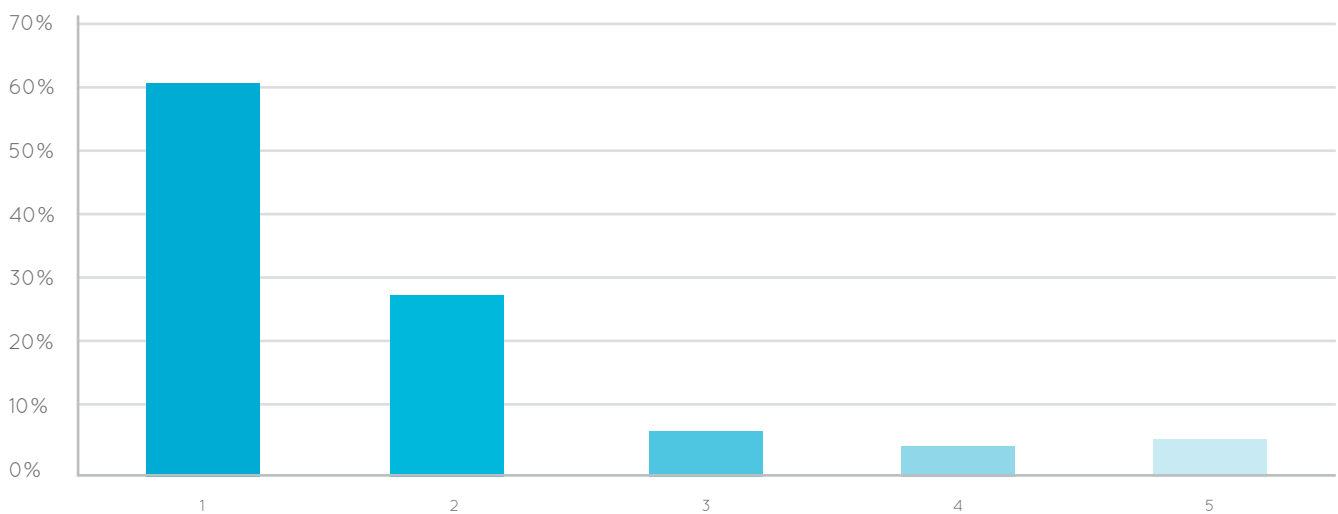
DO YOU FEEL THIS IS ENOUGH?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	61%
No	22%
Unsure	17%



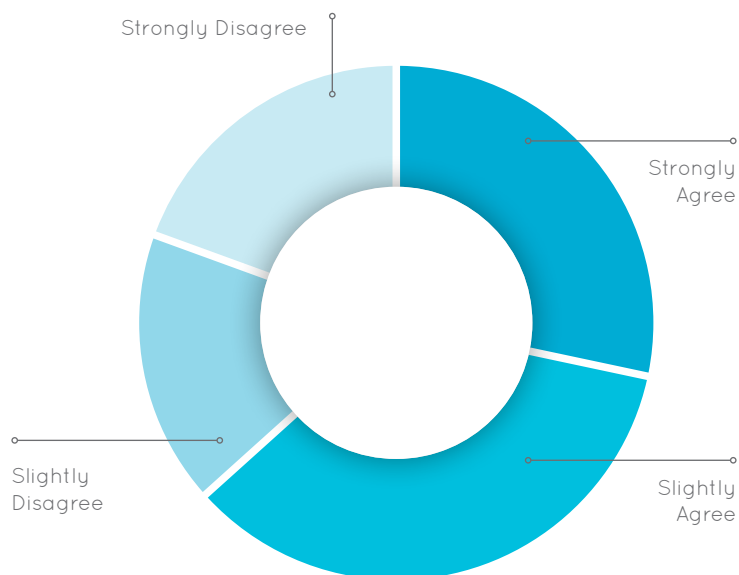
HOW USEFUL IS YOUR MONTHLY/QUARTERLY ONE-TO-ONE CATCH UP WITH YOUR TEAM LEADER?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Very useful	1	60%
Somewhat useful	2	27%
Slightly useful	3	6%
Not useful at all	4	3%
Other	5	4%



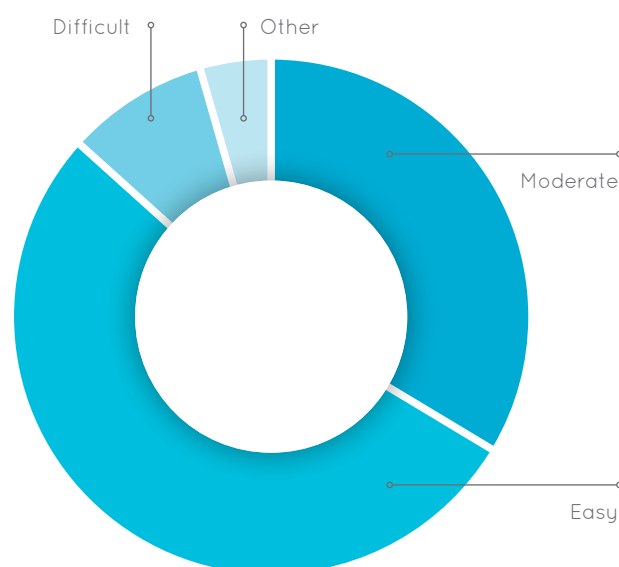
I HAVE A SAY IN THE WAY MY WORKING ROSTERS ARE SCHEDULED AND MANAGED

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Strongly Agree	28%
Slightly Agree	34%
Slightly Disagree	18%
Strongly Disagree	20%



HOW DO YOU RATE THE LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY TO MAKE CHANGES TO YOUR ROSTER?

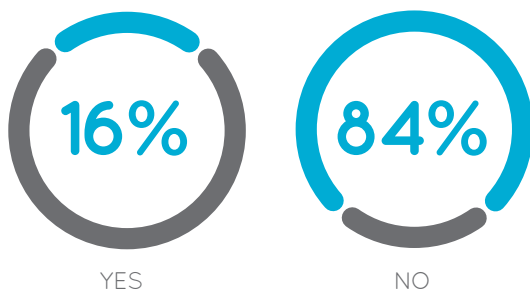
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
It is easy	50%
It is moderately difficult	32%
It is very difficult	13%
Other	5%



THE ROLE OF THE AGENT

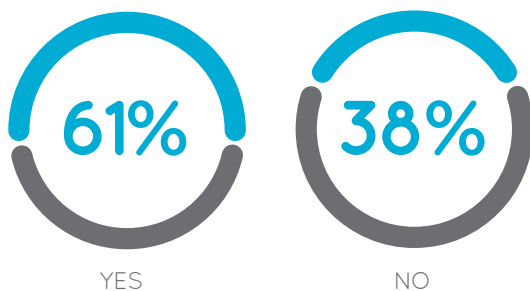
HAVE YOU EVER TAKEN SICK LEAVE BECAUSE IT WAS TOO DIFFICULT AND/OR YOU WERE UNABLE TO MAKE CHANGES TO YOUR ROSTER?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	16%
No	84%



WOULD YOU BE LESS LIKELY TO LEAVE THE ORGANISATION IF IT WAS EASIER TO MAKE CHANGES TO YOUR ROSTER?

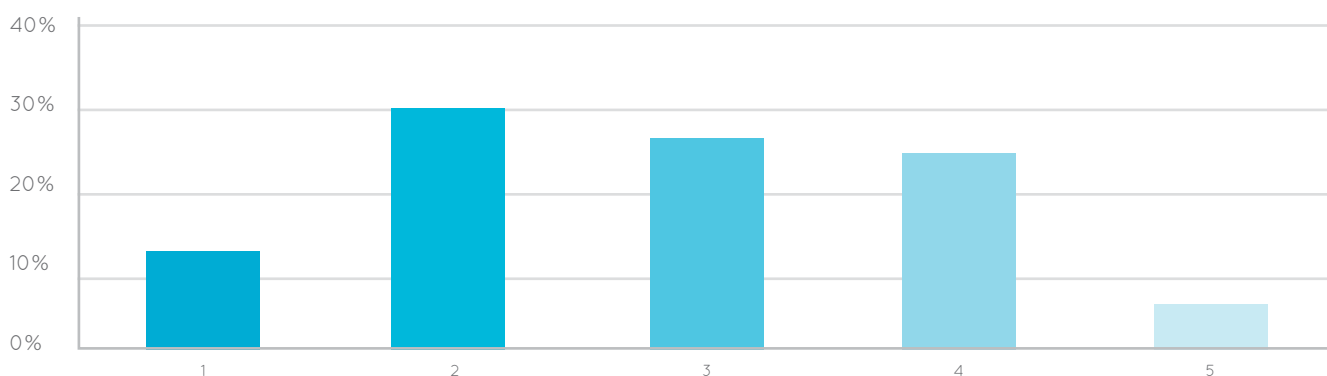
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	61%
No	38%



With contact centres continually looking for ways to improve staff retention, an improvement in the way Frontline Agents can make changes to their roster can have a significant impact.

WHAT ARE YOUR CAREER ASPIRATIONS WITHIN THE CONTACT CENTRE YOU ARE WORKING IN NOW?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
I want to follow a career path to Team Leader in this contact centre	1	12%
I want to follow a career path towards a specialised role within this contact centre	2	30%
I want to follow a career path to a role with this company but outside of the contact centre	3	26%
Not sure – not looking beyond this role yet	4	25%
Not planning to stay in this organisation beyond this role	5	7%



This is an overwhelmingly positive result for the industry, with only 7% planning on leaving their current organisation when they leave their current Frontline Agent position.

Somewhat surprisingly over 30% of Frontline Agents want to follow a career path towards a specialised role within the contact centre that they are currently working in. This presents a huge opportunity for contact centres to maintain staff and IP, but also a challenge when it comes to talent identification and career pathways.

What many automatically assume to be the “normal” career path for a Frontline Agent – progression to Team Leader – is only aspirational for 12.3% for Agents.



THE ROLE OF THE AGENT

IN 12 MONTHS' TIME I EXPECT TO BE:

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Still working in this contact centre	55%
Not working in this contact centre	18%
Unsure	27%



STILL WORKING IN
THIS CONTACT CENTRE



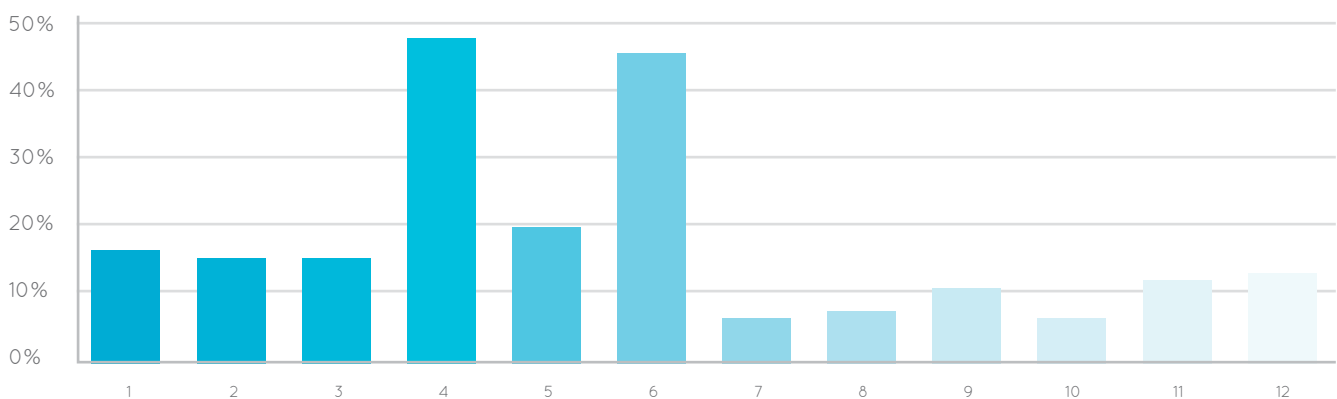
NOT WORKING IN
THIS CONTACT CENTRE



UNSURE

WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE ARE THE TWO MOST COMMON REASONS THAT FRONT LINE AGENTS LEAVE YOUR CONTACT CENTRE?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Their relationship with their Team Leader	1	16%
Financial reasons	2	15%
Only a short term position	3	15%
Pursue a different career	4	47%
Personal reasons	5	19%
Dissatisfaction with the work	6	45%
Cultural mismatch	7	4%
Not aligned with organisational purpose	8	6%
Too hard to tell	9	10%
Lack of remote working opportunities	10	5%
Lack of flexibility with rostering	11	11%
Other	12	12%

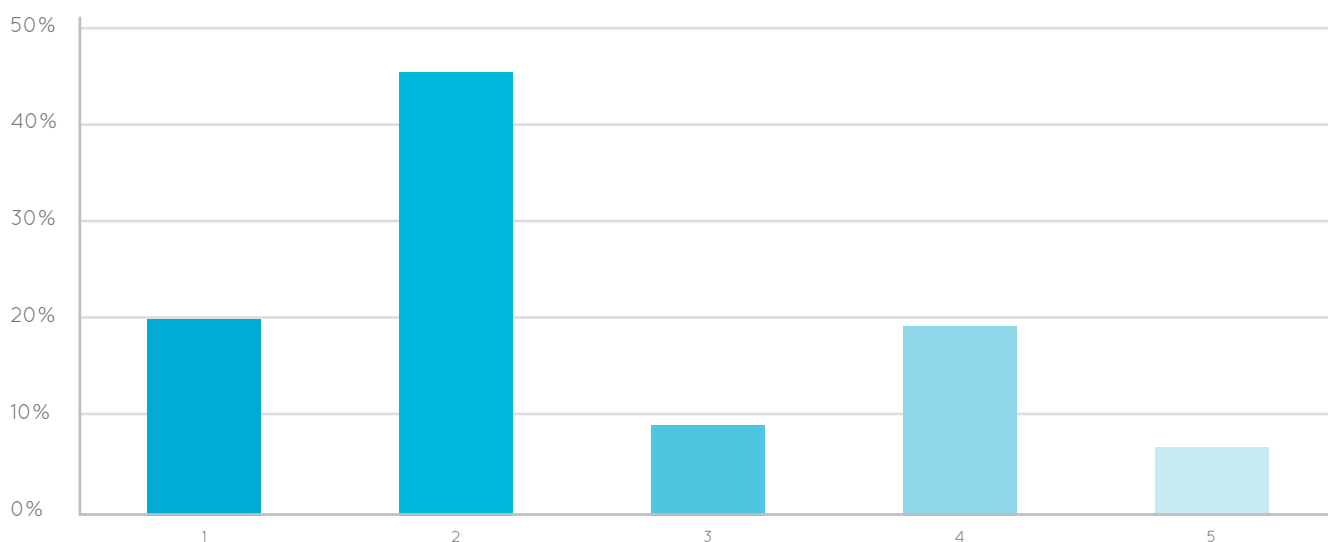


ON A SCALE FROM 1-10, HOW LIKELY ARE YOU TO RECOMMEND YOUR ORGANISATION AS A PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT TO YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS? (10 BEING “ABSOLUTELY”, 1 BEING “DEFINITELY NOT”).



FINALLY, HOW FULFILLING IS THE WORK YOU DO?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Very fulfilling	1	20%
Quite fulfilling	2	46%
Unsure	3	9%
A little fulfilling	4	19%
Not at all fulfilling	5	6%



THE ROLE OF THE AGENT SUMMARY

The Role of the Frontline Agent

Kunal Rahalkar

CEO

Datagamz



Frontline Agents have career aspirations to stay on mass within our contact centres, or within the organisations where our contact centres are based. For many years leaders across the industry have bemoaned the high level of attrition as agents come and go on mass. But perhaps we're all guilty of not being able to see the forest for the trees, with 30% wanting to follow a career path towards a specialised role, 12% follow a career path towards Team Leader and 26% follow a career path within the organisation (but outside of the contact centre).

This strong show of support from Frontline Agents begs the question – are we doing the most to harness these aspirations? Are we identifying talent early and giving them training to develop skills? The danger is that we are going to miss the opportunity that's presented to us (during the predicted “great resignation”) and lose agents because we cannot offer them the career path to keep them engaged.

Frontline Agents have spoken loudly that working from home is their preference. On average, Agents would like to be spending 75% of their time WFH with nearly one-third wanting to work from home 100% of the time. There is a huge warning too for contact centres intending to force a return to the contact centre, with less than 4% of Frontline Agents indicating they want to permanently work from the contact centre.

Contact center supervisors and team leaders are now facing challenges in maintaining employee engagement amongst staff. The link between employee engagement and customer experience is well known and one that is important to remember. We believe there are three factors that will continue to shape the industry while improving employee experience and customer experience. These include:

- Integration of data from various sources to deliver agent engagement/behaviour level information to supervisors and managers regularly and where possible in real time.
- Ensuring salaries, bonuses and reward and recognition offerings are fair for the work done. Many agents cited burnout/fatigue given the last 24 months. Those who feel they are not adequately compensated will be quick to move on.
- Having the right data insights to reduce supervisors/Team Leaders time to deliver agent coaching and training. With agents only averaging one hour of training per week, Team Leaders need to be well equipped to make the most of that time.



Datagamz helped Probe Group reduce call handle time by 42% for its retail customer

Our Client

PROBE Group is a leading business process outsourcing (BPO) and customer experience organisation, operating across the Pacific, Asia, North America and Africa. Probe Group designs and deploys solutions anchored around the delivery of exceptional customer experiences through their Customer Management, Consulting and Intelligent Automation businesses. A large well known Australian retailer is one of their clients.

For more than 100 years this retailer has been dedicated to delivering quality, value and service to Australian families. As one of the country's leading retailers they are committed to making life easier for customers, delivering great value on their weekly grocery shop, as well as offering convenience shopping, fuel, credit cards, simple insurance options, affordable prepaid phone plans and an extensive network of wine and liquor stores.

In 2020 PROBE Group were awarded the Service Champion of the Year Award from this retailer for its outstanding service during COVID-19.

CASE STUDY SUMMARY

The Challenge

- Improving performance
- Enhanced productivity
- Increased systems utilisation

Our Solution

- Identified employee behaviour gaps
- Designed games to improve productivity and knowledge
- Agents given quests to encourage use of knowledge management systems

The Results

- Gamified employee performance connected with employee motivation
- Fair and simple reward systems
- Simple configurations
- Shift in staff behaviour and organisational culture

The Challenge

As a national brand the retailer has offices across the country and needed to find ways of engaging employees to improve overall performance management in maintaining and improving organisational productivity. It was particularly important, as part of this project, to encourage staff across the business to make better use of the IT systems the retailer had invested in. The retailer was already working with PROBE Group to support staff wellbeing, so this work was a natural extension to that project.

THE ROLE OF THE AGENT CASE STUDY

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- Improved staff performance
- Enhanced organisational productivity
- Increased systems utilisation

Implementing Engaging Solutions

It was important, firstly, to understand employee behaviour gaps. We achieved this by mining data from across several platforms including communications networks, WFM, quality and survey tools.

Once we understood the behaviour changes that were needed, we were able to design games to improve productivity and knowledge.

The gamification we designed into business processes were designed to be highly engaging with competitions, points, badges and other interactive features which sustained staff participation and focus.

We then developed quests to encourage staff to engage in different systems to improve their knowledge and, subsequently, to improve call quality.

The Results

This project made a noticeable difference to staff, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic when everyone in non-customer-facing roles were working remotely. The platforms we created proved outstanding for staff performance and motivation, ensuring there was no loss of productivity during the pandemic.

Fair and simple reward structures and simple configuration made it easy for senior staff to manage competitions, challenges and to assess staff progress. Detailed reporting allowed the retailer to monitor the overall impact on the business, providing evidence of a real cultural change within the workforce.



THE ROLE OF THE TEAM LEADER

BEST PRACTICE REPORT



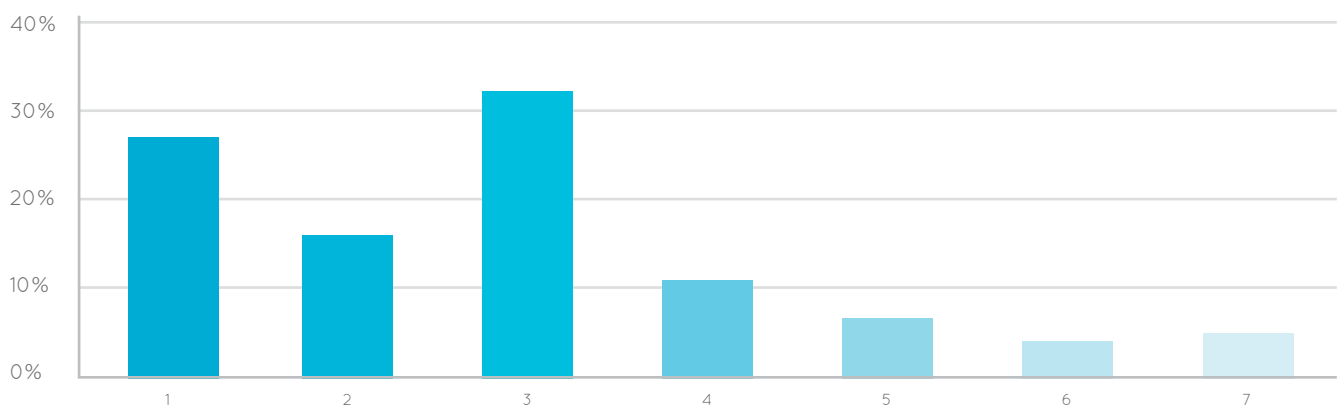
THE ROLE OF THE TEAM LEADER

HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE EMPLOYED BY THE CONTACT CENTRE?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
0-50	1	27%
50-100	2	17%
100-200	3	31%
200-300	4	10%
300-500	5	6%
500-1,000	6	4%
1,000+	7	5%

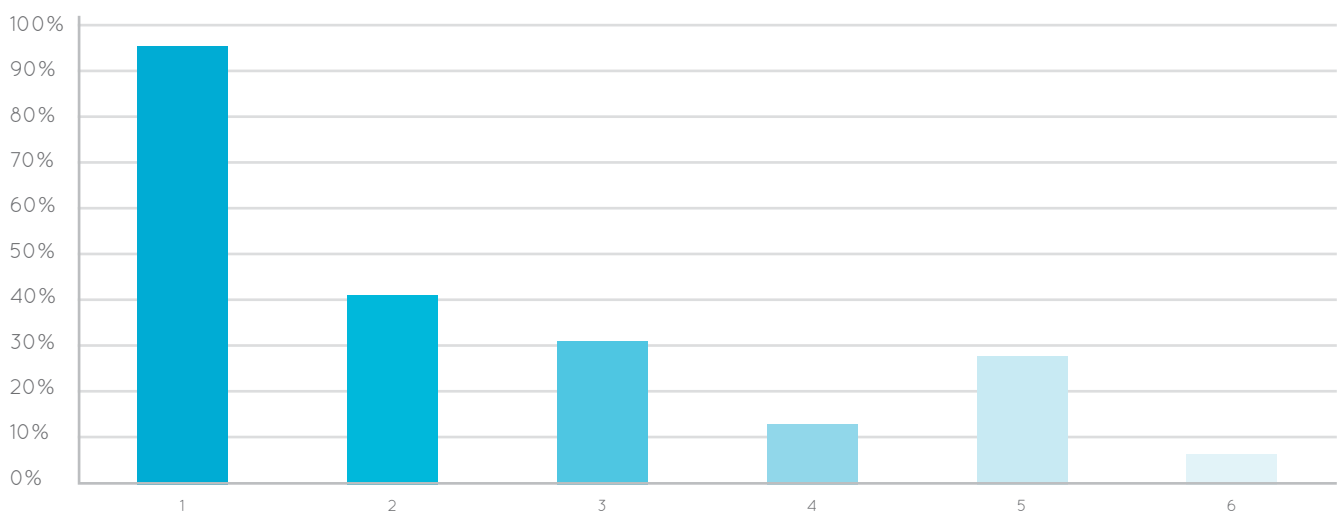


65% of Team Leaders that participated work in a contact centre with 75 or more employees



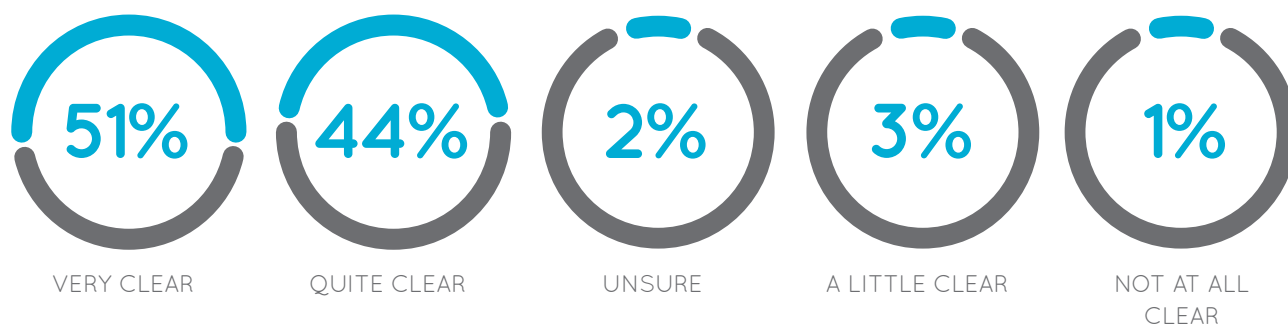
WHAT CALL TYPES DOES YOUR CONTACT CENTRE HANDLE? SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Customer Service	1	93%
Sales - inbound	2	40%
Sales - outbound	3	30%
Debt collection	4	11%
Technical support/help desk	5	28%
Other	6	7%



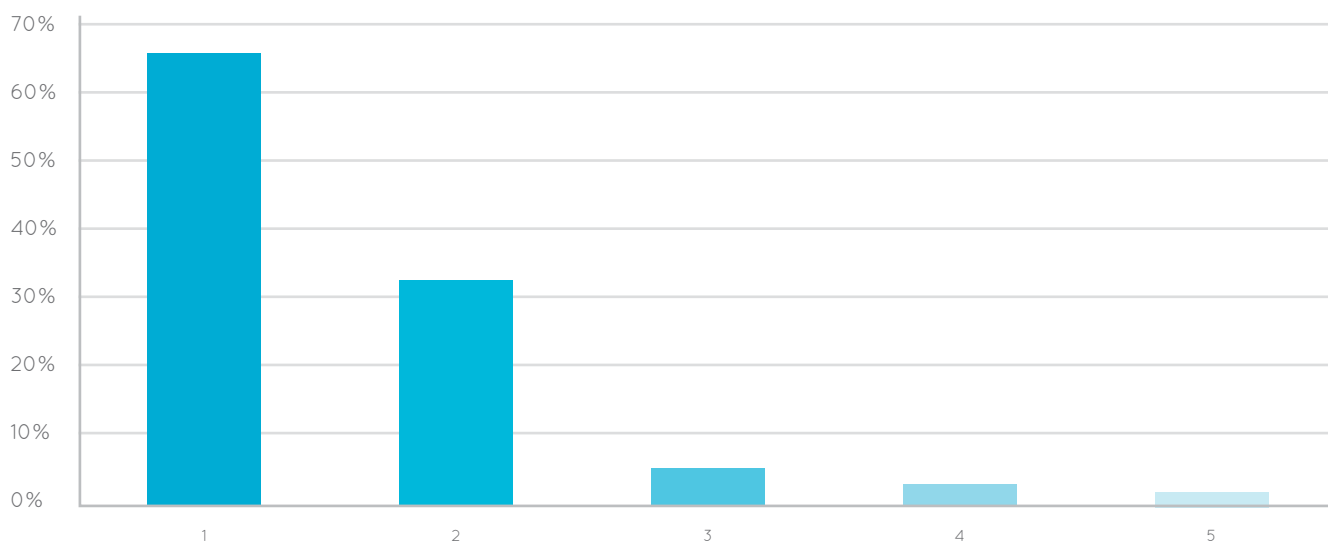
HOW CLEAR IS YOUR ORGANISATIONS PURPOSE TO YOUR TEAMS?
(IN ANSWERING CONSIDER IF YOU AND YOUR TEAMS COULD
EXPLAIN HOW THEIR ROLE DIRECTLY SUPPORTS THE PURPOSE).

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Very clear	51%
Quite clear	44%
Unsure	2%
A little clear	3%
Not at all clear	1%



HOW CLEAR ARE YOU ON HOW YOUR ROLE CONTRIBUTES TO FULFILLING THE PURPOSE?

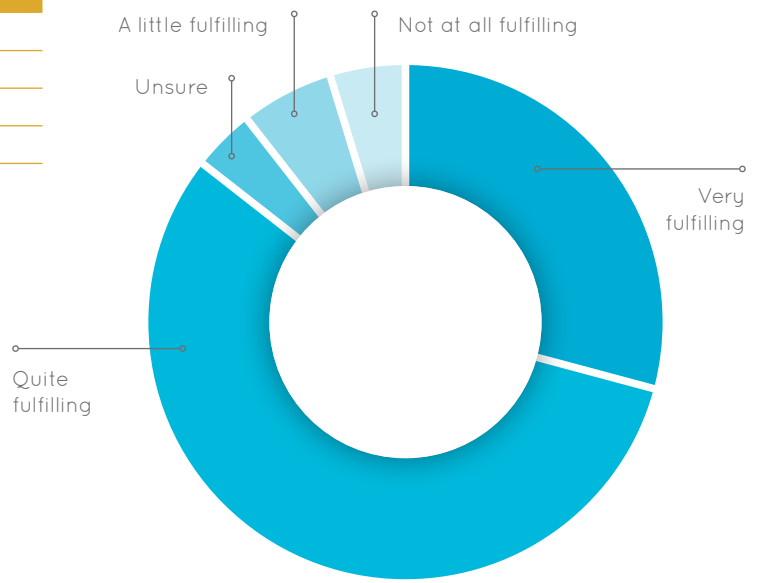
ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Very clear	1	64%
Quite clear	2	31%
Unsure	3	3%
A little clear	4	2%
Not at all clear	5	1%



THE ROLE OF THE TEAM LEADER

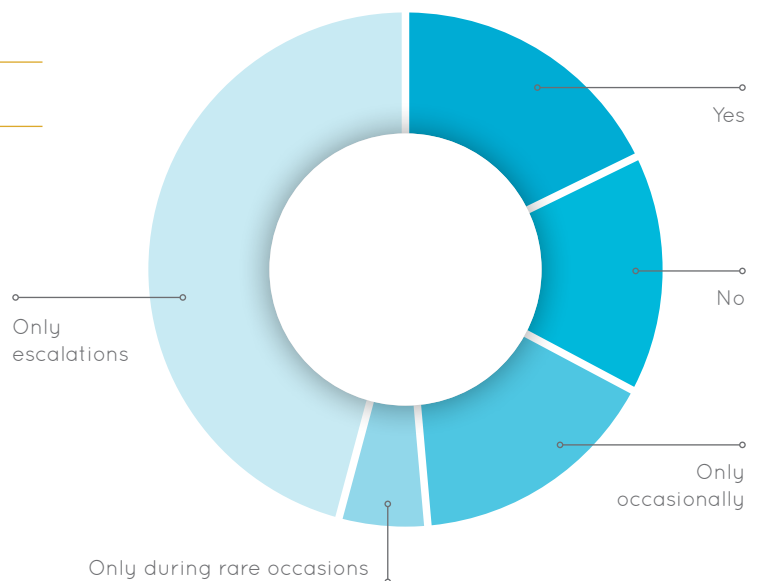
HOW FULFILLING IS THE WORK YOU DO?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Very fulfilling	32%
Quite fulfilling	57%
Unsure	4%
A little fulfilling	6%
Not at all fulfilling	2%



ARE YOU REQUIRED TO TAKE CALLS?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	18%
No	15%
Only occasionally (once or twice a quarter)	16%
Only during rare occasions (once or twice a year)	7%
Only escalations	45%



WHAT PERCENTAGE OF YOUR TIME IS SPENT TAKING CALLS?



AVERAGE



"For those that answered "Yes, we are required to take calls" the average amount of time spent on calls was 22%

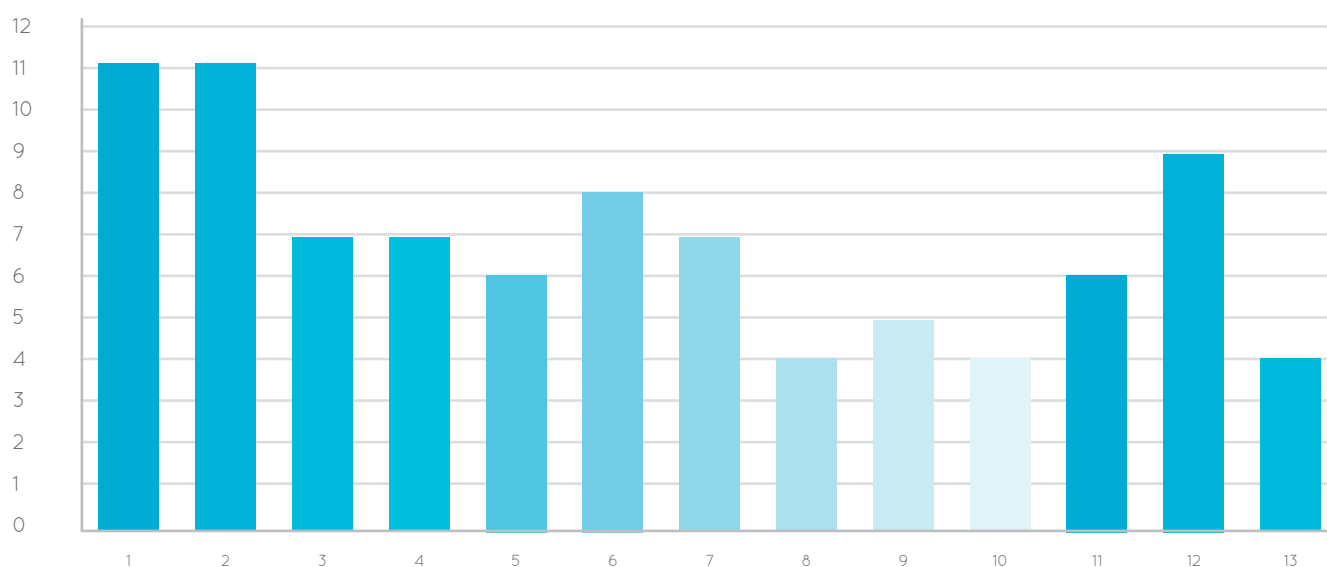
Around one-third of respondents spend under 10% of their time taking calls.

RANK THE FOLLOWING IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE IN THE DUTIES THAT YOU HAVE AS A TEAM LEADER:

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Coaching and development	1	11%
Leadership	2	11%
Reporting and analysis	3	7%
Subject matter expert	4	7%
Dealing with escalations/complaints	5	6%
Hitting KPI's/targets	6	8%
Quality assurance	7	7%
Coordination (rostering etc)	8	4%
In meetings	9	5%
Recruitment	10	4%
Personnel issue (absenteeism, staff issues)	11	6%
"Checking in" with team members	12	9%
Dealing with remote working issues	13	4%

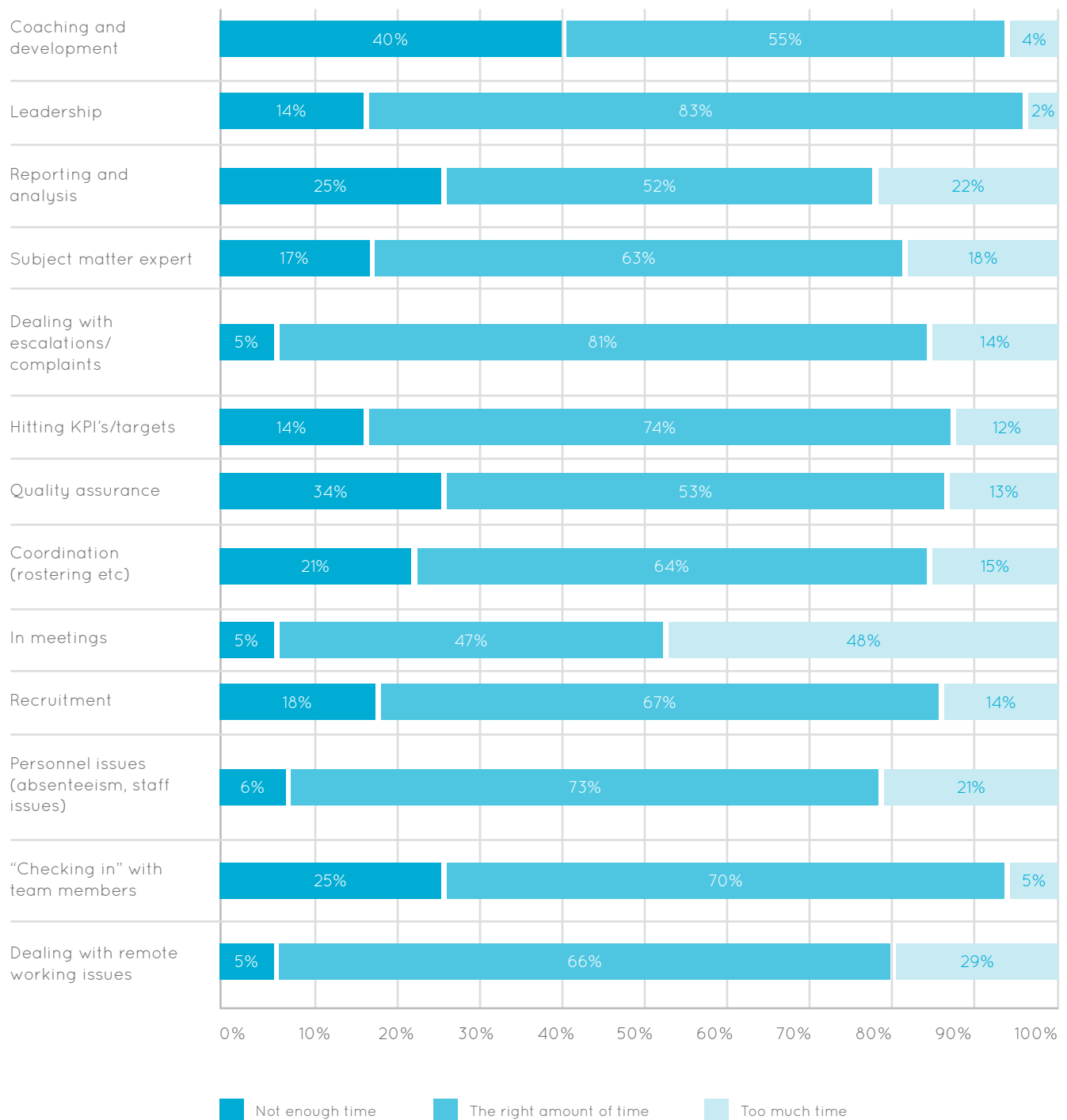


Team Leaders clearly identify leading as well as coaching and development as the most important component of their role.



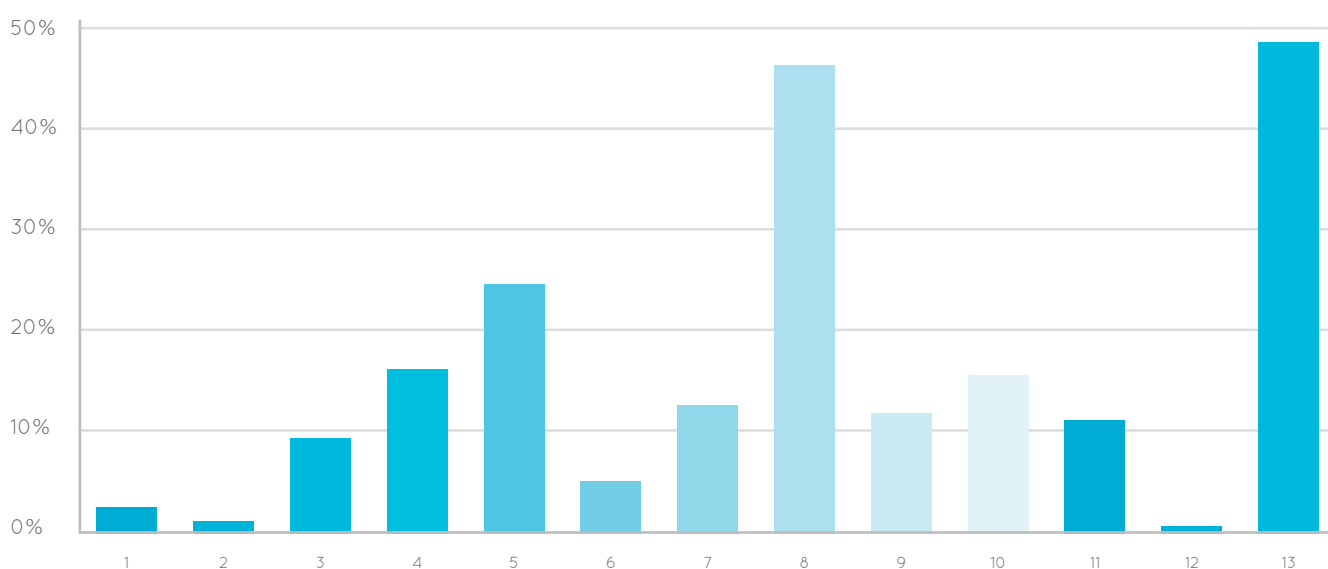
THE ROLE OF THE TEAM LEADER

HOW MUCH TIME DO YOU SPEND ON THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES?



SELECT THE TWO DUTIES YOU WOULD MOST LIKE TO REMOVE FROM YOUR ROLE:

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Coaching and development	1	3%
Leadership	2	1%
Reporting and analysis	3	9%
Subject matter expert	4	16%
Dealing with escalations/complaints	5	23%
Hitting KPI's/targets	6	4%
Quality assurance	7	11%
Coordination (rostering etc)	8	46%
In meetings	9	11%
Recruitment	10	15%
Personnel issue (absenteeism, staff issues)	11	11%
"Checking in" with team members	12	1%
Dealing with remote working issues	13	49%

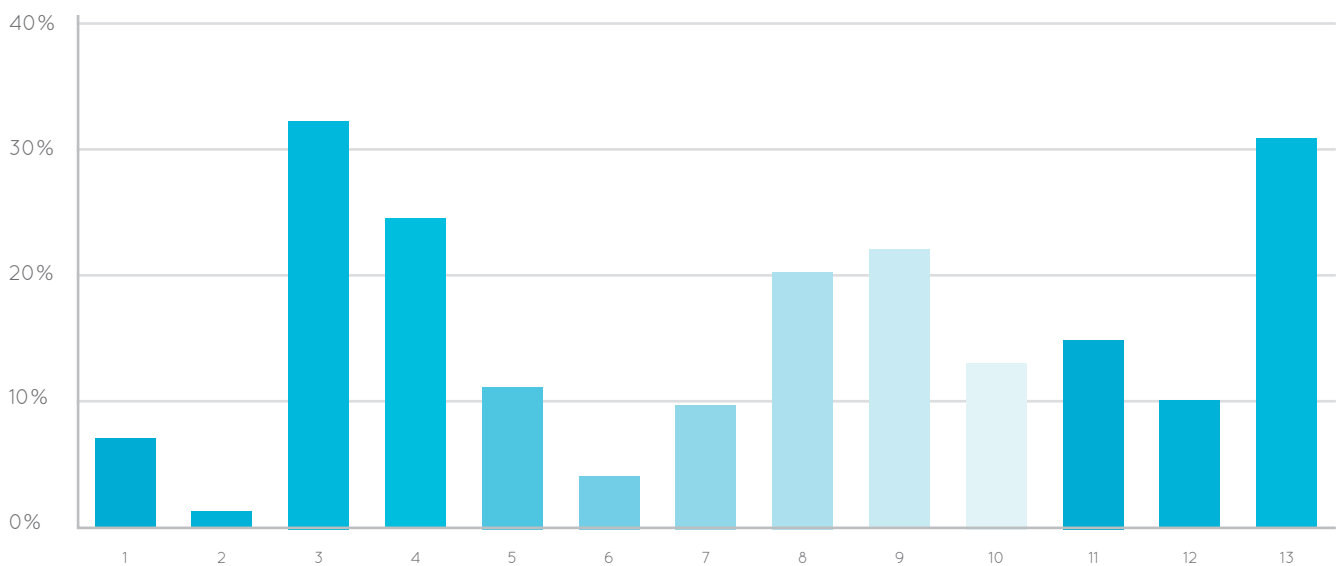


The results on pages 194 and 195 tell us that Team Leaders really dislike some of the “administration” parts to their job – the things that keep them away from leading, coach and developing. The main obstacles include time spent in meetings, dealing with remote working issues and coordination responsibilities, such as rostering.

THE ROLE OF THE TEAM LEADER

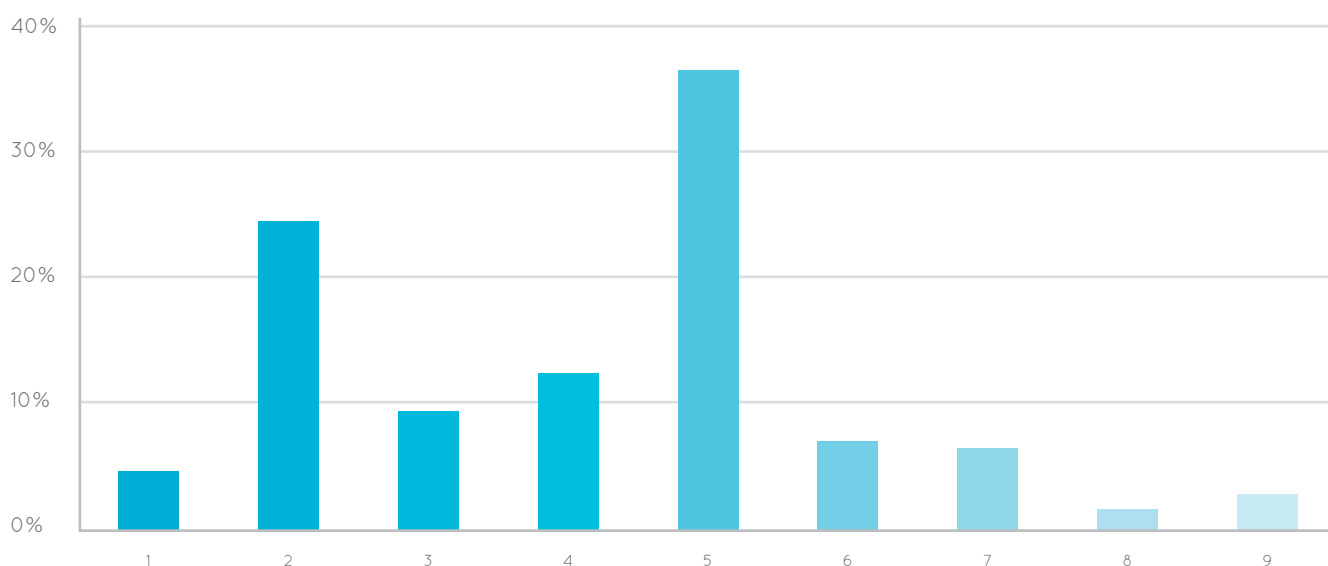
WHAT ARE YOUR TWO GREATEST WEAKNESSES AS A TEAM LEADER?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Coaching and development	1	9%
Leadership	2	2%
Reporting and analysis	3	32%
Subject matter expert	4	26%
Dealing with escalations/complaints	5	11%
Hitting KPI's/targets	6	4%
Quality assurance	7	10%
Coordination (rostering etc)	8	20%
In meetings	9	22%
Recruitment	10	13%
Personnel issue (absenteeism, staff issues)	11	14%
"Checking in" with team members	12	9%
Dealing with remote working issues	13	31%



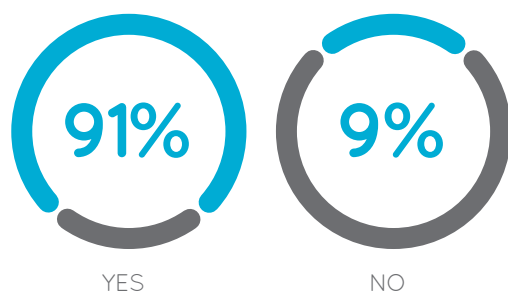
HOW REGULARLY DO YOU HAVE TEAM LEADER GROUP MEETINGS?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Twice a day	1	4%
Daily	2	24%
Three times a week	3	9%
Twice a week	4	12%
Weekly	5	35%
Fortnightly	6	7%
Monthly	7	6%
Quarterly	8	1%
Other	9	2%



DO YOU HAVE KPI'S YOU NEED TO MEET?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	91%
No	9%



THE ROLE OF THE TEAM LEADER

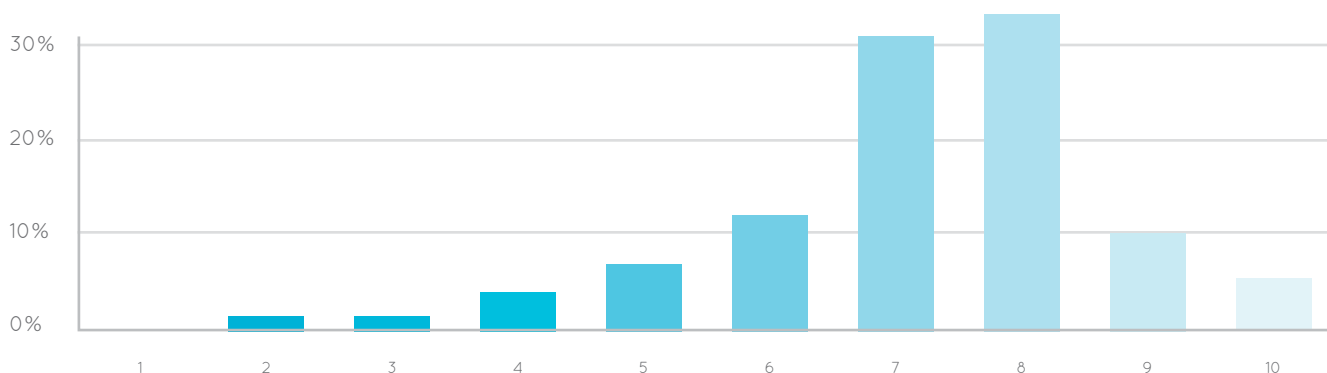


WHAT ARE YOUR TOP 3 KPI'S?

level target meeting complete resolution
satisfaction development **team** performance hour efficiency
email experience engagement compliance
achieve targets **call** per work phone
conversion nps **quality** gos **average**
csat revenue adherence kpi's ensuring
handling productivity rate monthly qa staff
coaching day first sla customer
assurance successful time service leader
sales

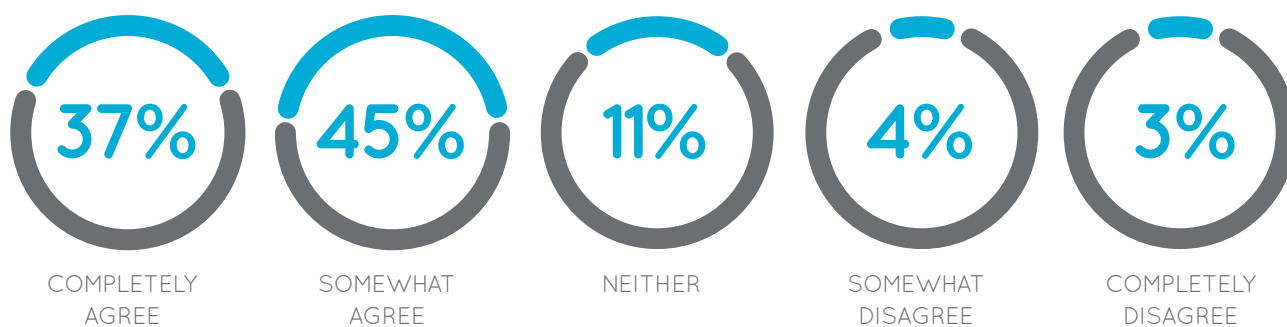
ON A SCALE OF 1 - 10, HOW ENGAGED DO YOU BELIEVE THE MAJORITY OF YOUR TEAM CURRENTLY FEEL?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
1 - Completely disengaged	1	0%
2	2	1%
3	3	1%
4	4	3%
5 - Neutral	5	7%
6	6	11%
7	7	30%
8	8	33%
9	9	10%
10 - Completely engaged	10	4%



**HOW MUCH DO YOU AGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT:
I HAVE TRUST IN THE ORGANISATION?**

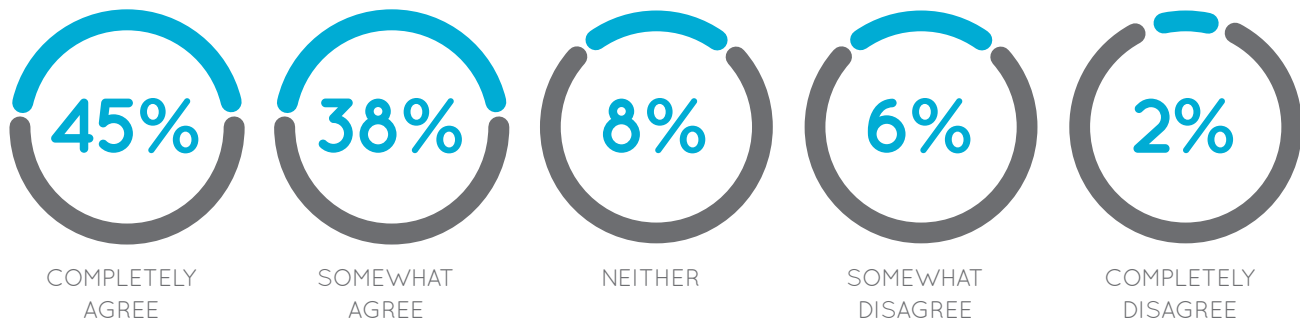
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Completely agree	37%
Somewhat agree	45%
Neither agree nor disagree	11%
Somewhat disagree	4%
Completely disagree	3%



THE ROLE OF THE TEAM LEADER

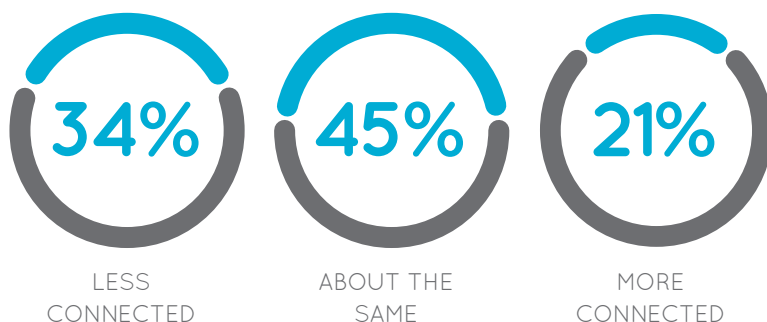
HOW MUCH DO YOU AGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT: I FEEL THAT I CAN PUT FORWARD MY IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS, AND THAT I WILL BE HEARD AND VALUED.

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Completely agree	45%
Somewhat agree	38%
Neither agree nor disagree	8%
Somewhat disagree	6%
Completely disagree	2%



SINCE COVID, I HAVE FELT:

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Less connected to my team and the organisation	34%
About the same level of connection with my team and the organisation	45%
More connected to my team and the organisation	21%





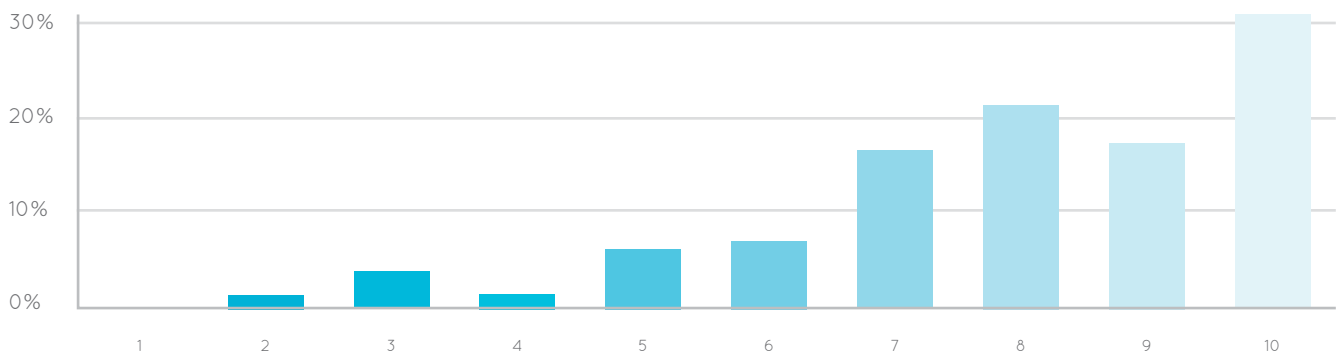
WHAT ACTIVITIES / INITIATIVES HAVE YOU IMPLEMENTED AS A TL OVER THE PAST 6-12 MONTHS THAT HAS HAD THE MOST POSITIVE IMPACT ON EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT?



THE ROLE OF THE TEAM LEADER

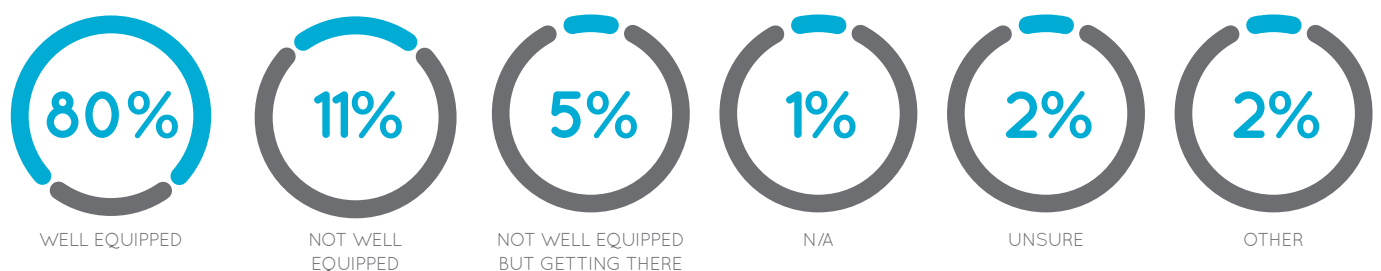
ON A SCALE FROM 1-10, HOW LIKELY ARE YOU TO RECOMMEND YOUR ORGANISATION AS A PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT TO YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
1 - Very Unlikely	1	0%
2	2	1%
3	3	3%
4	4	1%
5 - Neutral	5	4%
6	6	6%
7	7	17%
8	8	21%
9	9	17%
10 - Very Likely	10	30%



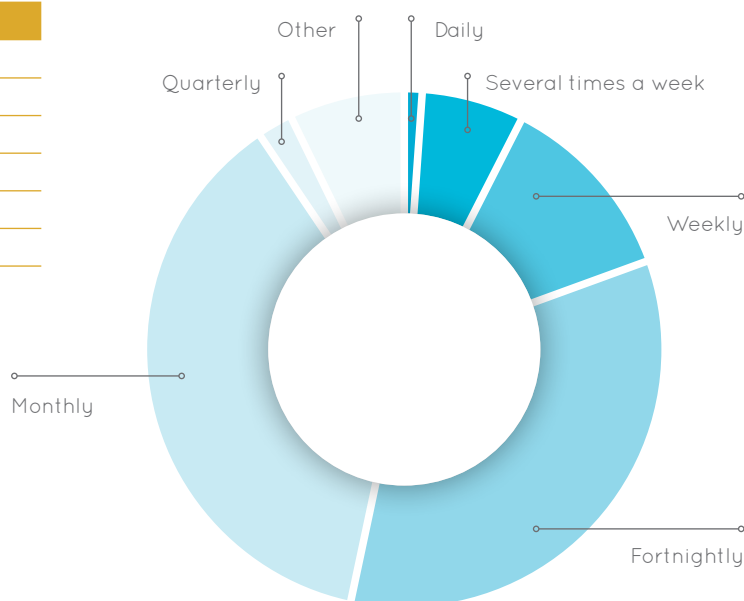
SELECT THE STATEMENT WHICH MOST CLOSELY ALIGNS WITH HOW YOU FEEL?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
I'm well equipped to manage agents remotely	80%
I'm not well equipped to manage agents remotely	11%
I'm not well equipped to manage agents remotely but I'm getting there	5%
N/A - I don't manage remote agents	1%
Unsure	2%
Other	2%



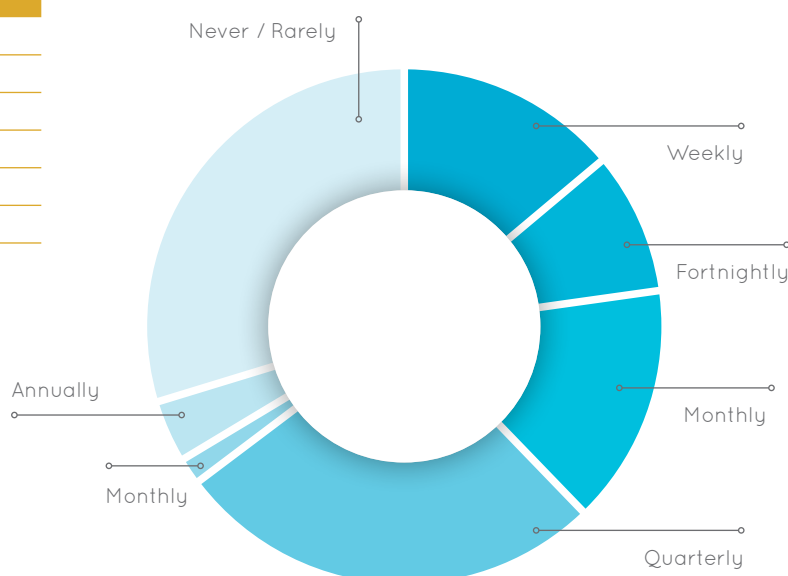
HOW OFTEN DO YOU CONDUCT ONE-ON-ONES WITH YOUR AGENTS (ON AVERAGE?)

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Daily	1%
Several times a week	6%
Weekly	12%
Fortnightly	34%
Monthly	37%
Quarterly	2%
Other	7%



HOW REGULARLY DO YOU HAVE TEAM LEADER TRAINING SESSIONS, TO INCREASE YOUR SKILLS AS A TEAM LEADER?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Weekly	14%
Fortnightly	9%
Monthly	15%
Quarterly	27%
Bi-Annually	2%
Annually	4%
Never/Rarely	30%



There is a big difference in the way contact centres approach Team Leader development.

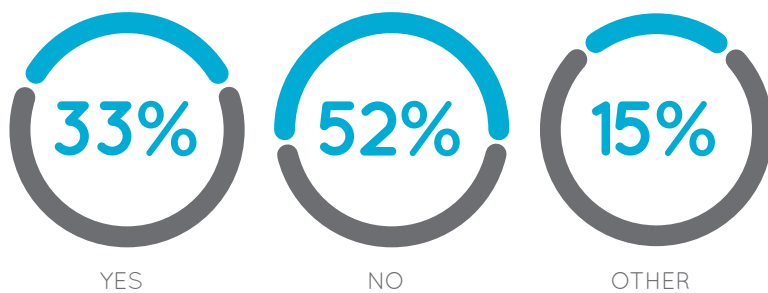
38% of contact centres have training sessions at least once a month, whereas 30% of Team Leaders indicated that training occurred rarely or never.

Those Team Leaders that did not have training sessions provided comments highlighting their level of disappointment.

THE ROLE OF THE TEAM LEADER

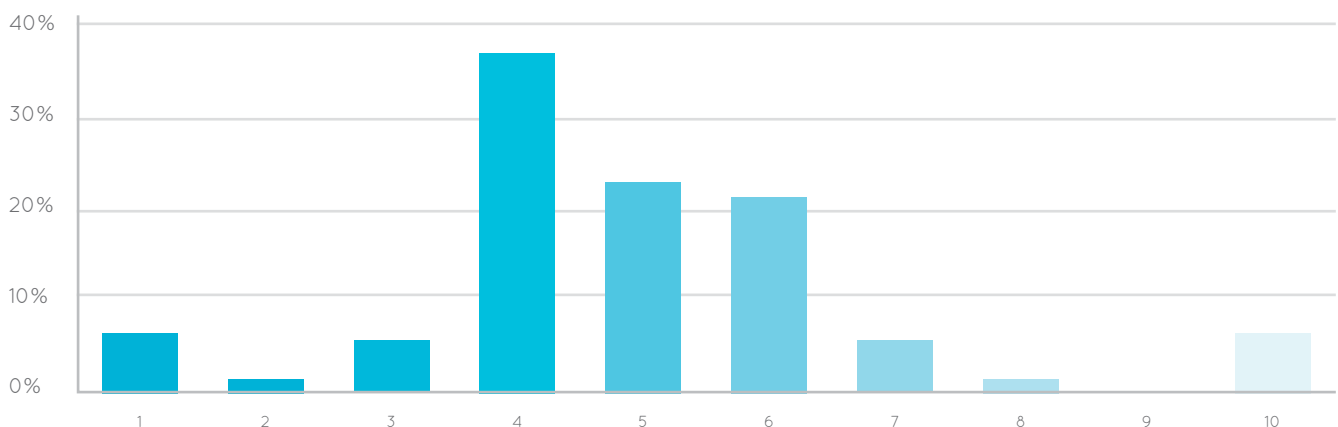
DOES YOUR CONTACT CENTRE HAVE A STRUCTURED AND ONGOING LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FOR TEAM LEADERS?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	33%
No	52%
Other	15%



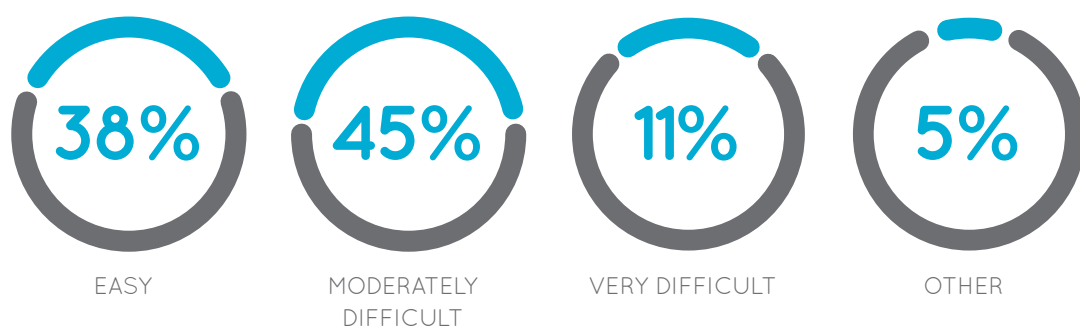
HOW REGULARLY DOES YOUR MANAGER HAVE A ONE ON ONE WITH YOU?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Daily	1	5%
Three times a week	2	1%
Twice a week	3	4%
Weekly	4	36%
Fortnightly	5	22%
Monthly	6	21%
Quarterly	7	4%
Half yearly	8	2%
Yearly	9	0%
Other	10	6%



HOW DIFFICULT DO YOU BELIEVE IT IS FOR FRONTLINE AGENTS TO MAKE CHANGES TO THEIR ROSTER?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
It is easy	38%
It is moderately difficult	45%
It is very difficult	11%
Other	5%



IF IT WERE EASIER FOR FRONTLINE AGENTS TO MAKE CHANGES TO THEIR ROSTER, WHAT IMPACT DO YOU BELIEVE IT WOULD HAVE ON THEIR SICK LEAVE?

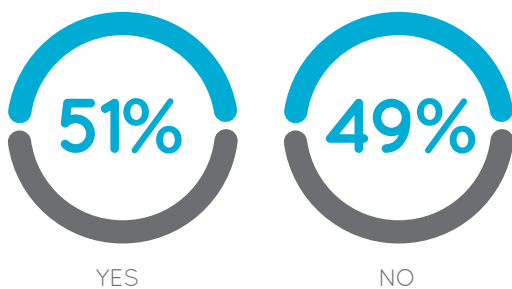
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
No reduction	37%
A slight to moderate reduction	47%
A large to significant reduction	16%



THE ROLE OF YOUR TEAM LEADERS

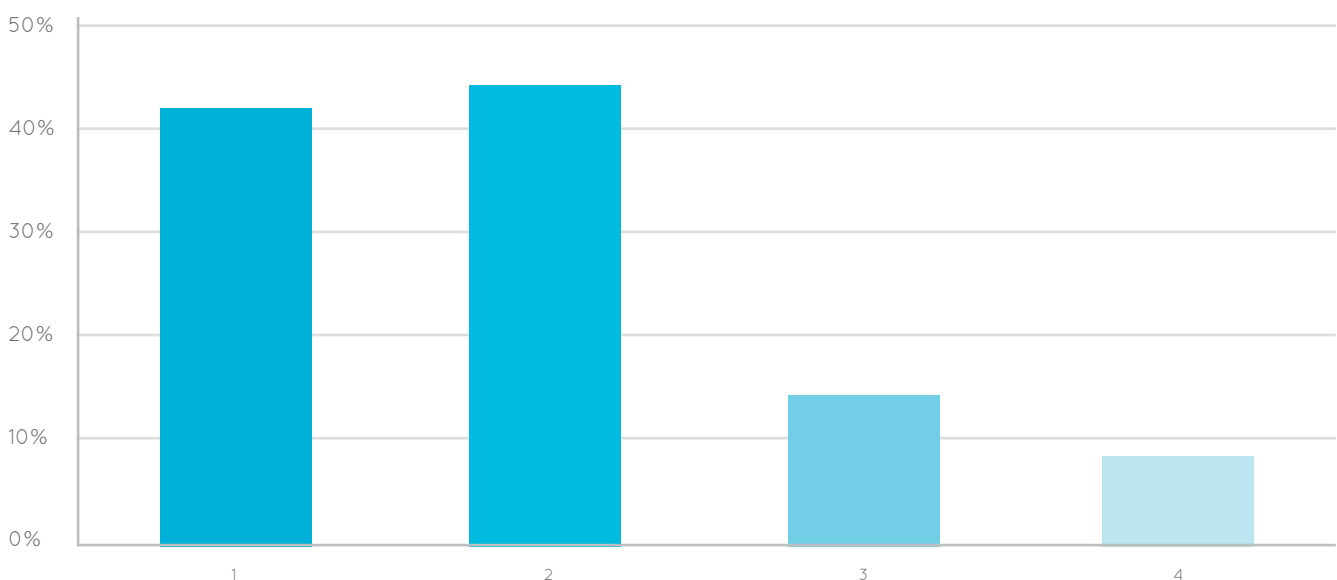
DO YOU BELIEVE TEAM MEMBERS WOULD BE LESS LIKELY TO LEAVE THE ORGANISATION IF IT WERE EASIER FOR THEM TO MAKE CHANGES TO THEIR ROSTER?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	51%
No	49%



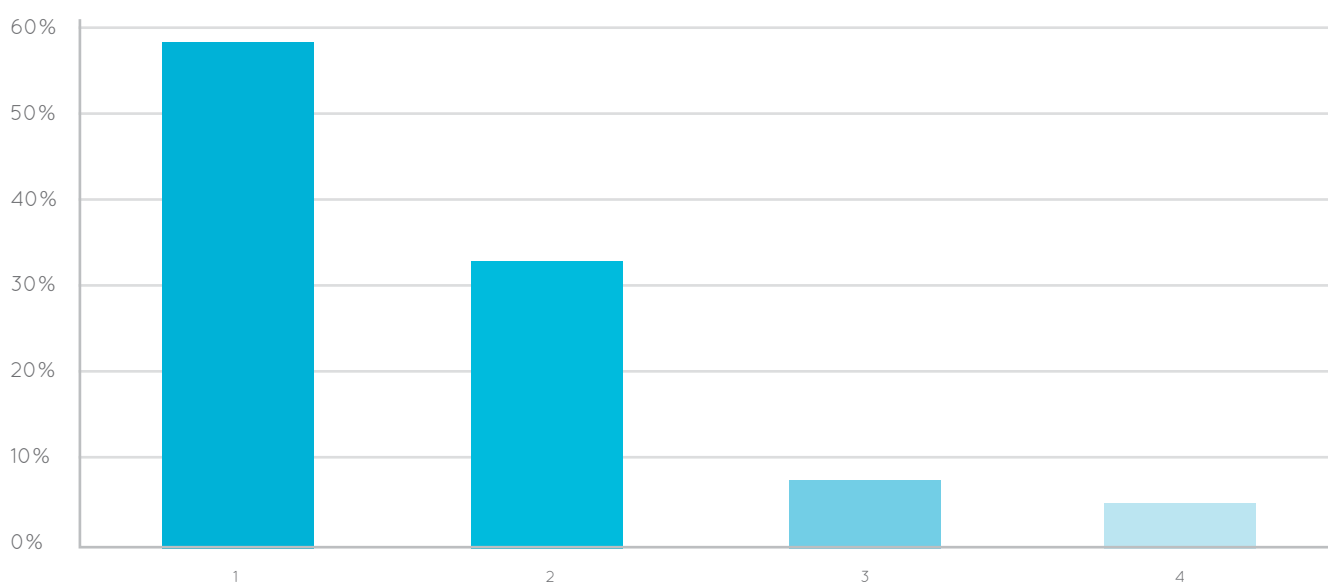
IN OUR ORGANISATION PEOPLE LEADERS ARE WELL EQUIPPED AND CONFIDENT TO HAVE A CONVERSATION WITH A PERSON WHO SHOWS SIGNS OF POTENTIALLY DECLINING MENTAL HEALTH AND/OR WELLBEING

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Strongly Agree	1	41%
Slightly Agree	2	42%
Slightly Disagree	3	11%
Strongly Disagree	4	6%



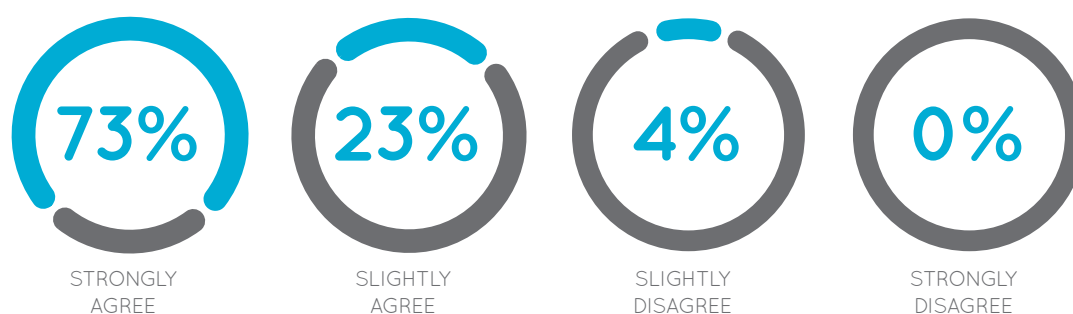
I FEEL SUPPORTED TO DO WHAT I NEED TO DO TO TAKE CARE OF MY MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Strongly Agree	1	57%
Slightly Agree	2	31%
Slightly Disagree	3	8%
Strongly Disagree	4	3%



I KNOW WHAT RELEVANT SUPPORTS AND POLICIES ARE AVAILABLE WITHIN OUR ORGANISATION AND HOW TO ACCESS THEM IN CASE MY TEAM OR I ARE DEALING WITH AN ISSUE THAT IMPACTS THEIR/MY MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Strongly Agree	73%
Slightly Agree	23%
Slightly Disagree	4%
Strongly Disagree	0%



THE ROLE OF THE TEAM LEADER

PEOPLE IN OUR ORGANISATION FEEL SAFE TO TRULY SPEAK THEIR MIND WITHOUT FEAR OF POTENTIAL NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR DOING SO

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Strongly Agree	37%
Slightly Agree	44%
Slightly Disagree	14%
Strongly Disagree	5%



STRONGLY
AGREE



SLIGHTLY
AGREE



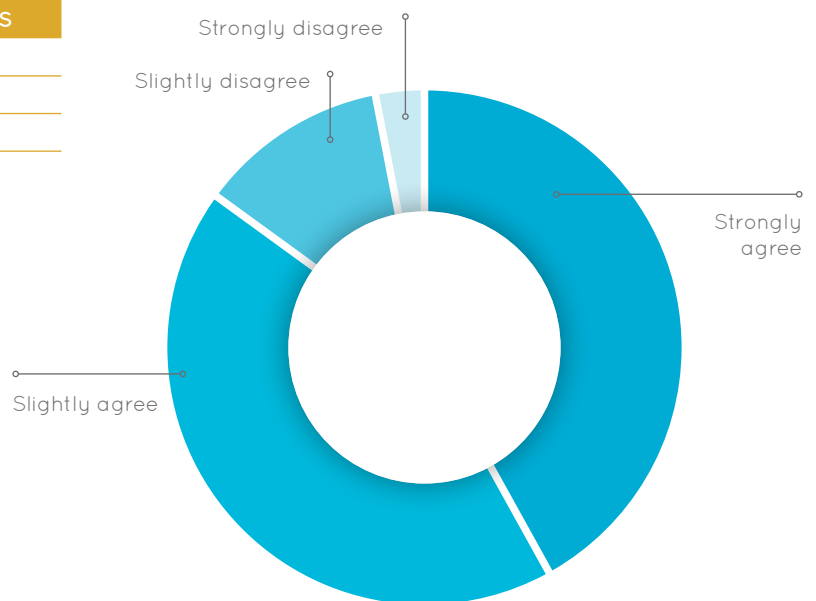
SLIGHTLY
DISAGREE



STRONGLY
DISAGREE

I FEEL CONFIDENT ABOUT THE FUTURE DIRECTION OF OUR ORGANISATION AND MY ROLE IN IT

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Strongly Agree	42%
Slightly Agree	43%
Slightly Disagree	12%
Strongly Disagree	3%





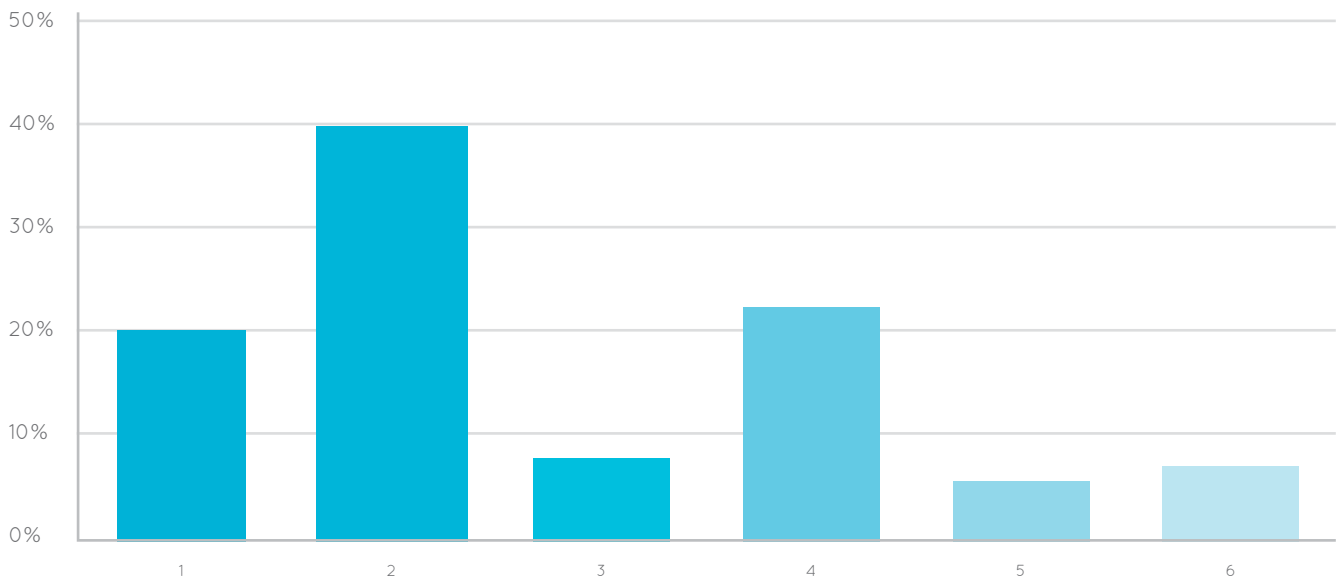
MY BIGGEST CONCERN WITH REGARDS TO PSYCHOLOGICAL
SAFETY AND MENTAL HEALTH AT OUR ORGANISATION IS...



THE ROLE OF THE TEAM LEADER

WHAT ARE YOU HOPING TO ACHIEVE IN YOUR CAREER OVER THE NEXT 3 YEARS?

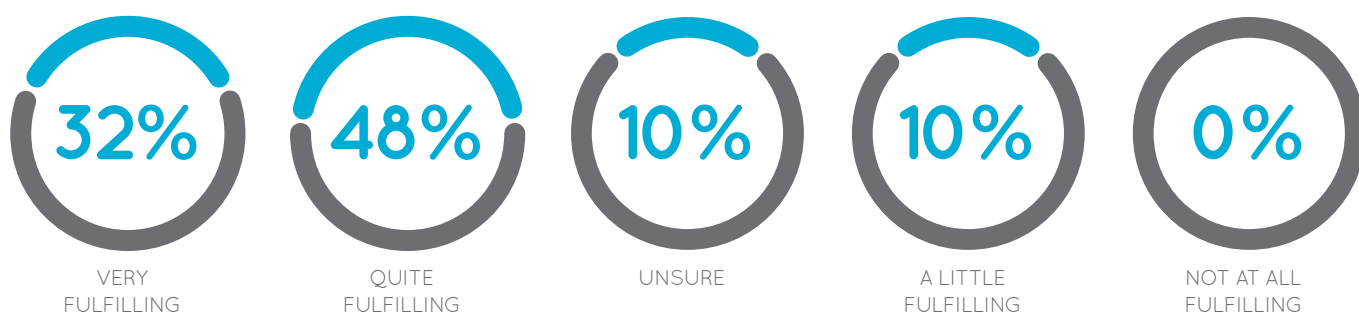
ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Happy just focusing on being a Team Leader	1	20%
Advance my career within this contact centre	2	40%
Advance my career within another contact centre	3	7%
Advance my career within this organisation, but outside of the contact centre	4	21%
Leave the contact centre industry	5	4%
Unsure	6	7%



This is a great result for contact centres and the industry, with 81% of Team Leaders hoping to remain with their contact centre or organisation for the next 3 years.

FINALLY, HOW FULFILLING IS THE WORK YOU DO?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Very fulfilling	32%
Quite fulfilling	48%
Unsure	10%
A little fulfilling	10%
Not at all fulfilling	0%



THE ROLE OF THE TEAM LEADER SUMMARY

TEAM LEADERS - HARD WORKING AND HERE TO STAY

The role of a Team Leader has had the most dramatic of changes over the last 2 years. This report shows that Team Leaders identify Leading as well as Coaching and Development as the most important duties they are required to fulfil in their role. In many contact centres around Australia that delivery of these duties has moved from 100% “in person” to 100% virtually.

Team Leaders are often a loyal bunch. They’ve made it through many years “on the phones” and now feel comfortable and happy in their role. 32% find their work “very fulfilling” and 57% “quite fulfilling”. Many contact centres need to improve their formal learning and development for training, with 30% of Team Leaders reporting they receive very little to no training.

Like everyone, Team Leaders have limited time. Remote working has added extra work, with 29% of Team Leaders reporting that dealing with remote working issues takes up too much of their time. It’s the second biggest area of time loss behind “In Meetings” which 48% reported as being the biggest waste of their time. Coaching and Development (identified as the second most important duty) was identified as the main area that Team Leaders did not spend enough time in, followed by Quality Assurance. 32% reported that Reporting and Analysis was their greatest weakness.

In a great sign for many contact centres and the broader industry, 81% of Team Leaders hope to still be working within their current contact centre or broader organisation in three years time. Only 4% of the 200 Team Leaders that participated in this research expect to leave the contact centre industry in the next three years. We can be confident in developing our Team Leaders as they are unlikely to leave.

THE ROLE OF THE CONTACT CENTRE MANAGER

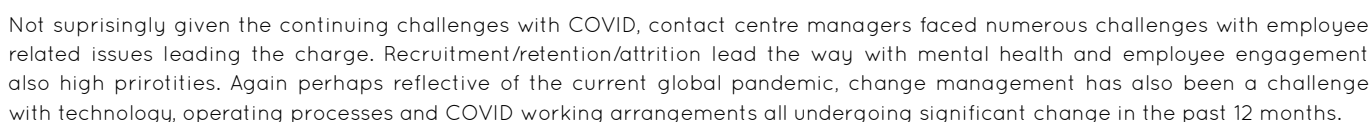
BEST PRACTICE REPORT



AUSTRALIAN
CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE
PROFESSIONALS ASSOCIATION
ACXPA.COM.AU

A group of people are seated around a long white conference table in a modern meeting room. They are all looking towards the front of the room where a woman in a light blue blazer is standing and pointing at a large screen displaying a presentation. The room has large windows and glass partitions. On the table, there are laptops, notebooks, a white mug, and a small potted plant. A sign on the table reads "hertworks EXTENSION WORKERS" and "Need Assistance?".

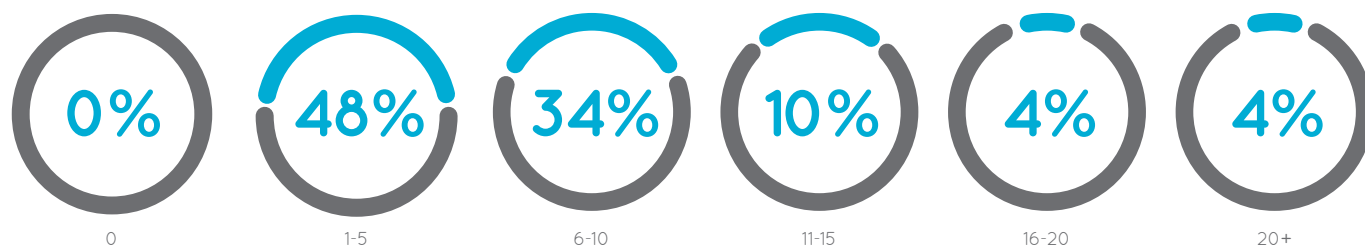
A word cloud of HR and business terms in orange and brown tones. The words are arranged in a circular pattern, with some larger and more prominent than others. The terms include: work, hybrid, attrition, implementing, home, people, call, health, office, due, talent, changes, working, centre, technology, role, change, new, mental, workforce, retention, managing, performance, business, experience, covid, contact, balance, staff, wfh, engagement, ensuring, customer, back, team, growth, right, agent, management, finding, keeping, cost, cx, employee, dealing, ways, one, building.



THE ROLE OF THE CONTACT CENTRE MANAGER

HOW MANY DIRECT REPORTS DO YOU HAVE?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
0	0%
1-5	48%
6-10	34%
11-15	10%
16-20	4%
20+	4%

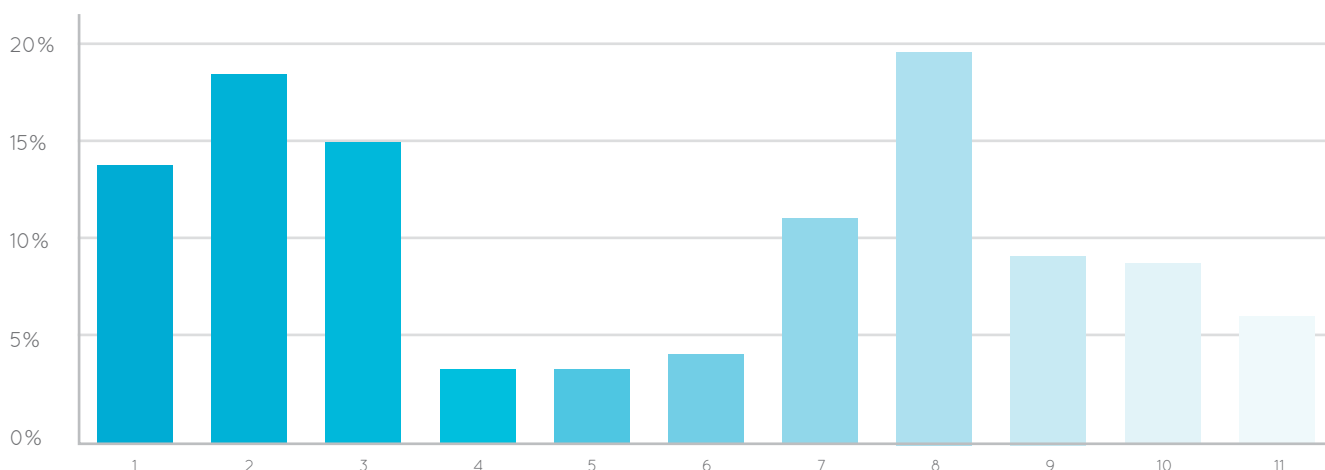


WHAT CHUNKS OF TIME IN YOUR WEEK FIT INTO THESE BUCKETS (% OF YOUR TIME PER WEEK)

ANSWER CHOICES	#	% OF TIME
Strategy	1	13%
Stakeholder engagement	2	18%
Coaching & development	3	15%
Personal development	4	4%
Direct interaction with customers	5	4%
Regulatory reporting	6	4%
Internal reporting	7	10%
Running meetings	8	19%
Engaging in HR related matters	9	9%
Resource planning/work force planning	10	8%
Recruitment	11	6%



Given the diverse nature and functions of contact centres it's not inconceivable that a contact centre manager's time could be consumed in a variety of different ways that were reflective of their working environment. The data however suggests that there is consistency across the majority of contact centre managers with running meetings, engaging with stakeholders, working on strategy and internal reporting the most common tasks.

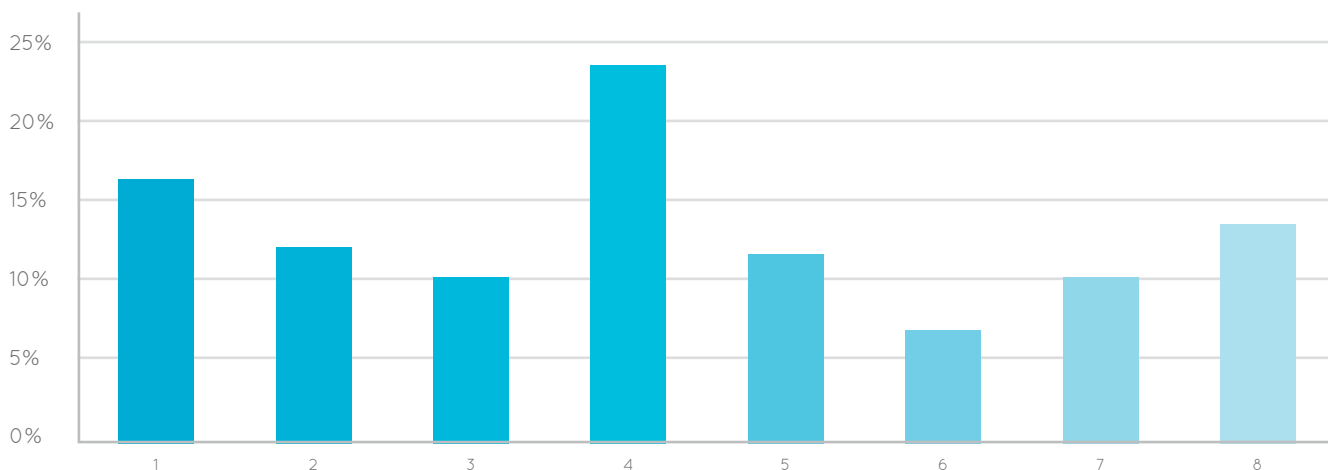


HOW OFTEN DO YOU MEET WITH THE MOST SENIOR EXECUTIVE IN YOUR BUSINESS? E.G. CEO

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
More than once a week	1	16%
Once a week	2	12%
Fortnightly	3	10%
Monthly	4	23%
Quarterly	5	11%
Twice a year	6	6%
Annually	7	10%
Other	8	13%



With contact centres continuing to be a critical function for most businesses, it's now commonplace for contact centre managers to have regular meetings with senior executives. The majority of contact centre managers (23%) meet monthly and 16% meet more than once a week.

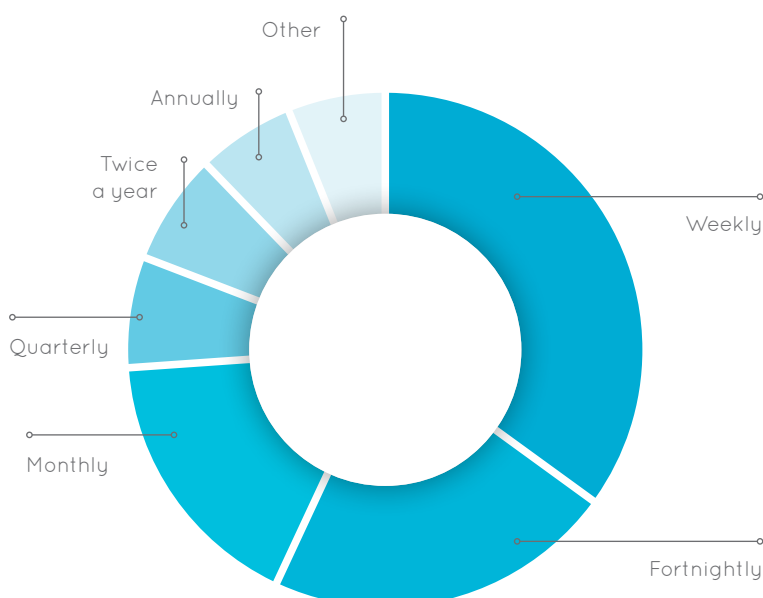


HOW OFTEN DO YOU HAVE A FORMAL FEEDBACK MEETING WITH YOUR MANAGER?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Weekly	35%
Fortnightly	22%
Monthly	18%
Quarterly	7%
Twice a year	7%
Annually	6%
Other	6%



With the fast pace of contact centres and the role they play in the broader business, most contact centre managers (35%) meet formally with their manager once a week, 22% fortnightly and 18% monthly.



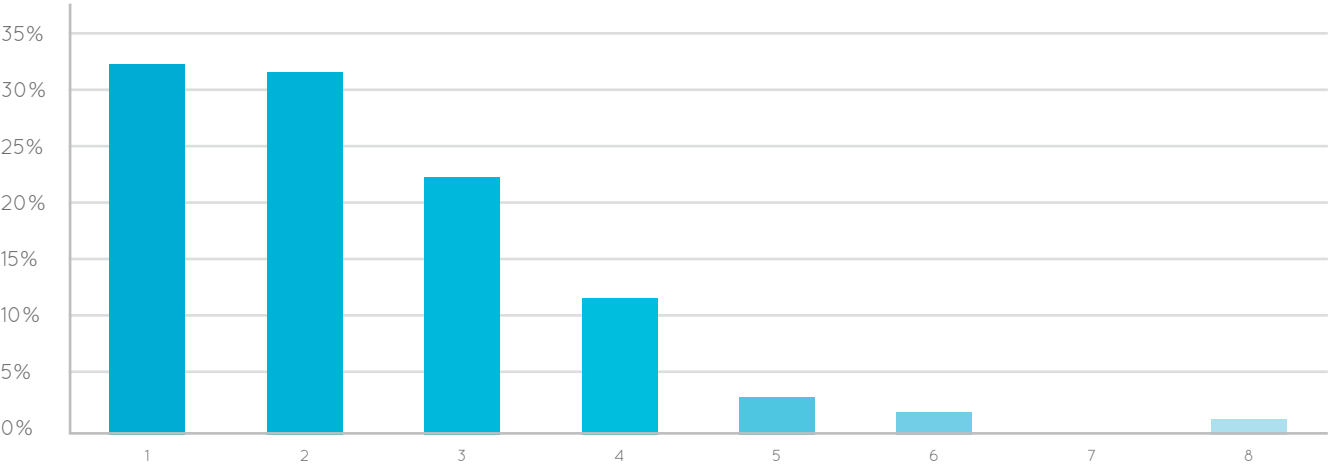
THE ROLE OF THE CONTACT CENTRE MANAGER

HOW OFTEN DO YOU FORMALLY MEET WITH YOUR DIRECT REPORTS?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
More than once a week	1	32%
Once a week	2	31%
Fortnightly	3	22%
Monthly	4	11%
Quarterly	5	2%
Twice a year	6	1%
Annually	7	0%
Other	8	1%

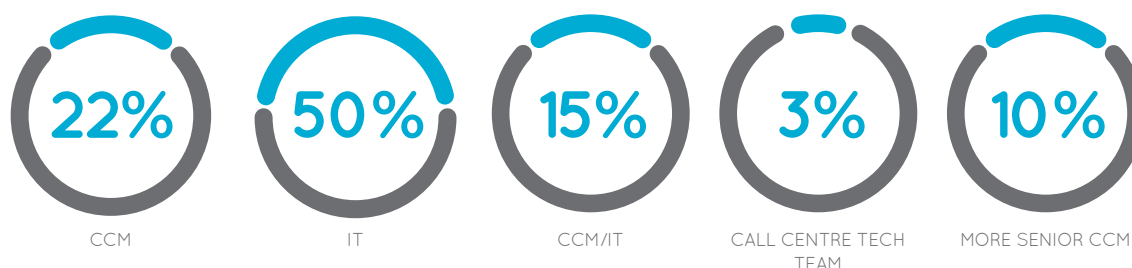


The majority of contact centre managers are actively involved in regularly meeting with their direct reports, with 63% of CCM's meeting with direct reports at least once per week. 22% meet fortnightly and only 10% meet once a month.



WHO IS ACCOUNTABLE FOR THE TECHNOLOGY IN YOUR CONTACT CENTRE? (ACQUISITION, SELECTION, CONFIGURATION, OPTIMISATION)

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
CCM	22%
IT	50%
CCM/IT	15%
Call Centre Tech Team	3%
More senior CCM	10%

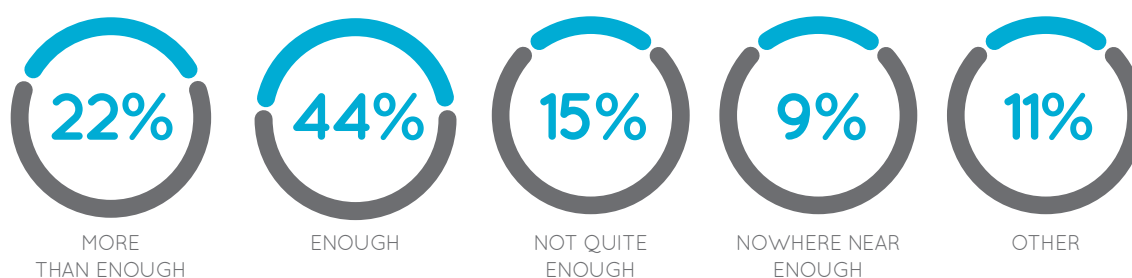


Ensuring the contact centre is equipped with the right technology and support is becoming an increasingly critical strategic and tactical decision for businesses. The responsibility of who is sourcing the right technology, ensuring it is set up and functioning efficiently and supported at all times, can often cross-over traditional lines with IT and the Contact Centre Manager the two most likely departments involved. But who ultimately has accountability? Of the contact centre managers surveyed, half (50%) responded that the IT team is accountable for the technology in the centre with 22% of managers handling it themselves and (15%) sharing accountability between IT and the contact centre.

With the continuing emergence of Customer Experience roles, this could be an area that undergoes significant change as a unified approach is becoming increasingly important for organisational success.

HOW MUCH INTERACTION DO YOU HAVE WITH CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE TEAMS IN YOUR BUSINESS (WHERE APPLICABLE)

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
More than enough	22%
Enough	44%
Not quite enough	15%
Nowhere near enough	9%
Other	11%



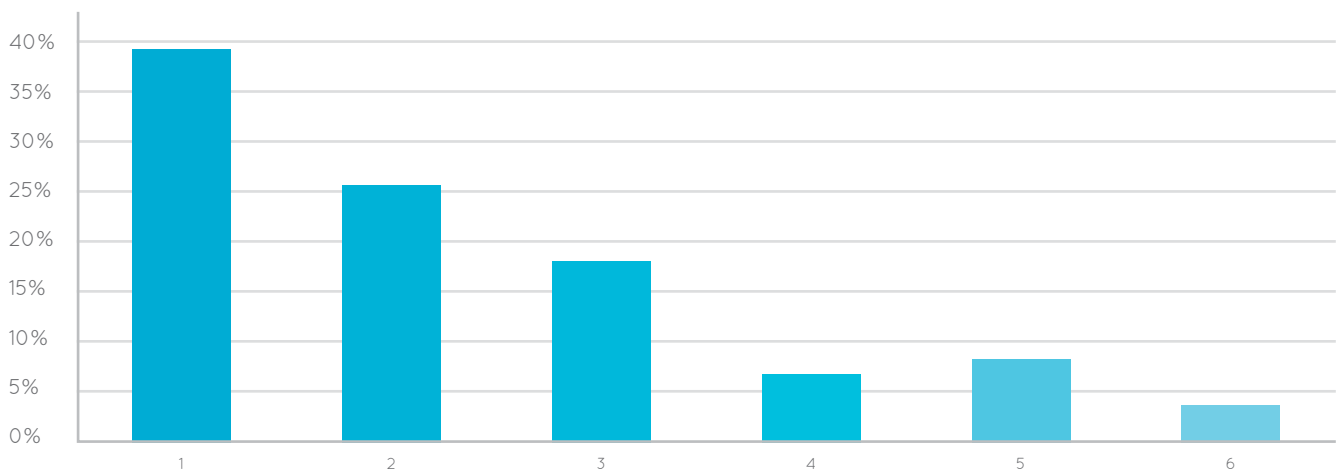
THE ROLE OF THE CONTACT CENTRE MANAGER

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME THERE WAS A CHANGE TO YOUR KPIS?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Within the last 3 months	1	39%
Within the last 6 months	2	25%
Within the last 12 months	3	18%
Within the last 24 months	4	6%
More than 24 months ago	5	7%
Other	6	4%



Perhaps due to COVID driving a range of changes within contact centres (working from home, changing customer demands, offshore call centre reliance etc) 83% of call centres have had some level of change to their KPI's in the previous 12 months.

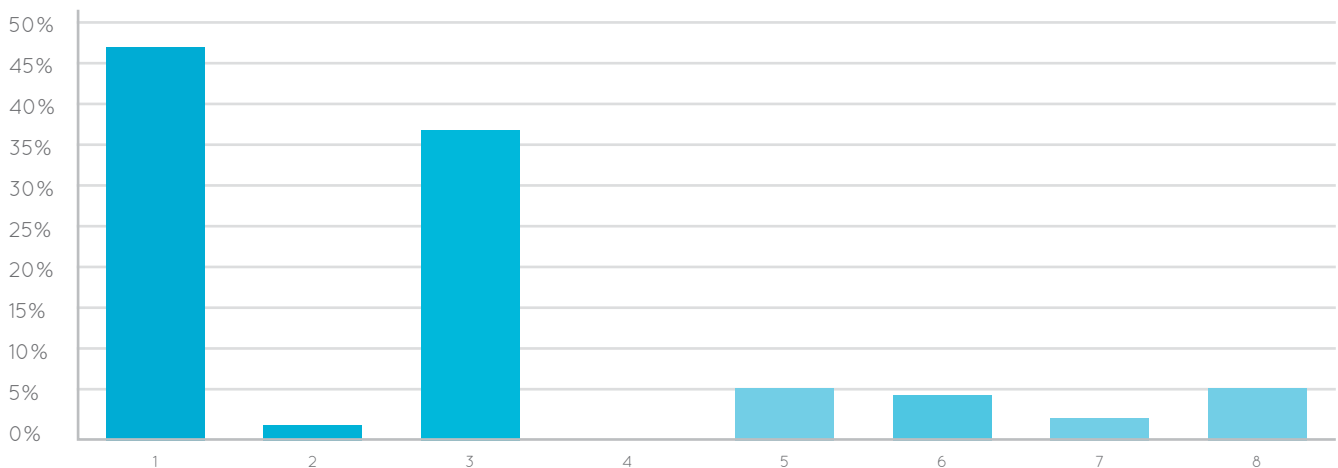


HOW OFTEN DO YOU REPORT ON YOUR KPIS?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Weekly	1	46%
Fortnightly	2	1%
Monthly	3	36%
Bi-monthly	4	0%
Quarterly	5	5%
Every 6 months	6	4%
Every 12 months	7	2%
Other	8	5%

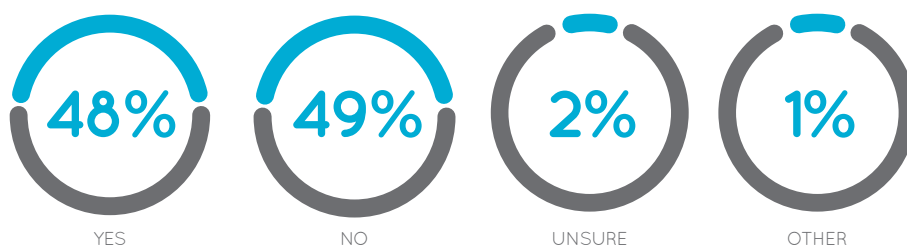


With contact centres often the main link between customers and the business, most contact centres are reporting frequently on their KPI's with 46% reporting weekly and 36% monthly the two most common reporting frequencies.



HAVE YOU EVER ATTENDED FORMAL TRAINING ON CONTACT CENTRE MANAGEMENT FROM AN EXTERNAL PROVIDER?

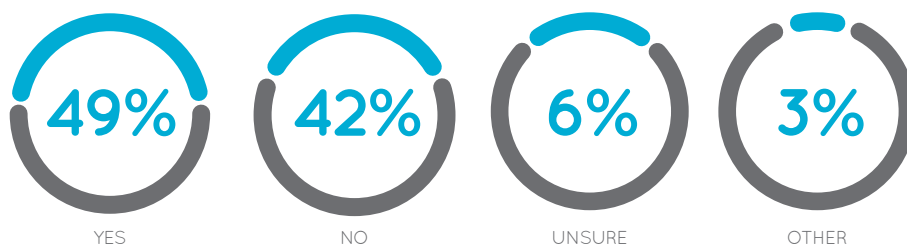
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	48%
No	49%
Unsure	2%
Other	1%



With the majority of contact centre managers starting on the phones (75%) it was surprising that only 48% have attended any formal contact centre manager training courses. While most contact centres are 'tailored' to their organisations, there are some standard best-practices that apply to any sized contact centre that can help contact centre managers improve efficiencies, employee engagement and the customer experience as well as calculate and forecast budgets, set up Quality Assurance Frameworks and lots more.

DO YOU BELIEVE THE CONTACT CENTRE IS PROVIDED WITH THE ENOUGH RESOURCES (BUDGET/FTE/TECHNOLOGY ETC) TO ACHIEVE THE KPIS?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	49%
No	42%
Unsure	6%
Other	3%



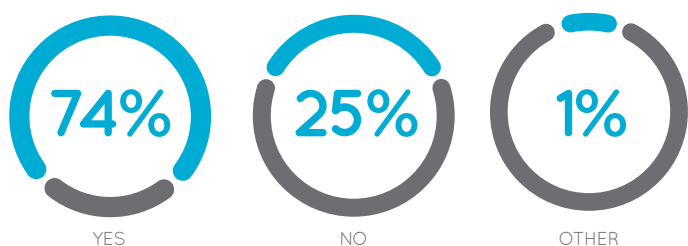
One of the biggest challenges in the contact centre is ensuring you have enough resources to meet the required Service Levels/KPIs. While there has often been a perception that contact centres are often under-resourced and expected to 'do more with less', 49% of contact centre managers believed they had sufficient resources to achieve their KPIs perhaps reflecting a growing importance in organisations investing in the customer experience.

42% of contact centre managers however did not believe their contact centre was provided with the right resources resulting in a less than desired experience for customers and a tougher environment for employees. Contributing to this could be the ability of contact centre managers themselves. Forecasting, calculating and managing budgets was identified as the leading skill contact centre managers felt they needed additional training and support on.

THE ROLE OF THE CONTACT CENTRE MANAGER

DID YOU START YOUR CAREER WORKING ON THE PHONES?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	74%
No	25%
Other	1%



An overwhelming 75% of contact centre managers commenced their career working on the phones - a great testament to the career opportunities available to contact centre agents today.

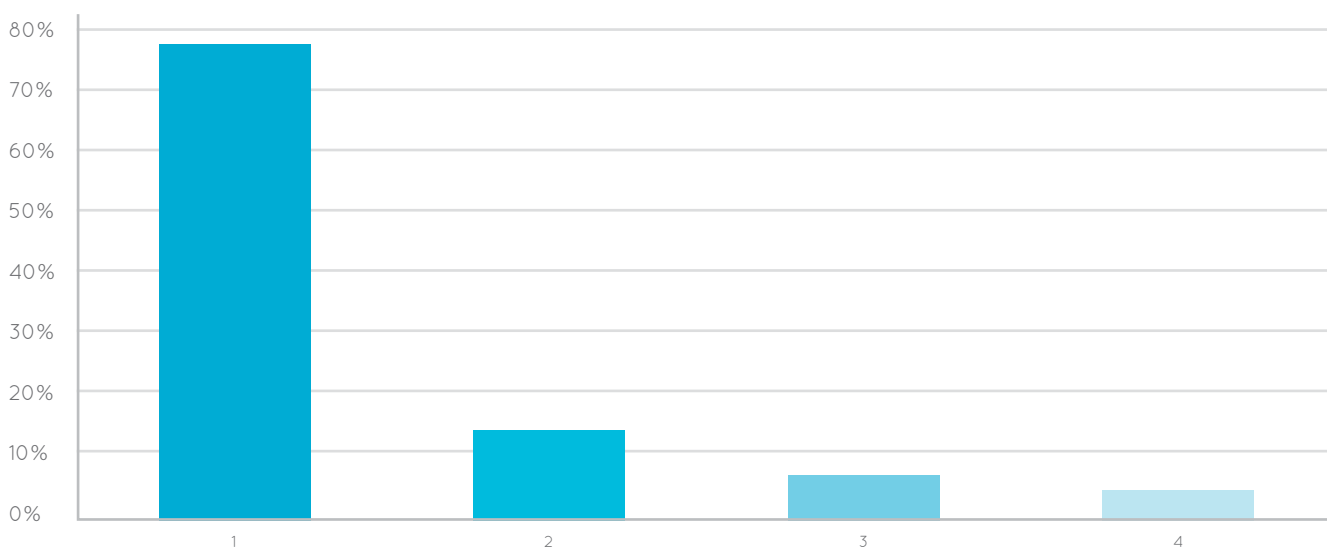
Notwithstanding, with 49% of contact centre managers having never attended any formal contact centre manager training, it represents an opportunity to ensure the managers are equipped with the right skills to help them excel in their current role and further progress their career.

DO YOU BELIEVE THE ROLE OF THE CONTACT CENTRE MANAGER IS VALUED IN YOUR ORGANISATION?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Yes	1	78%
No	2	13%
Unsure	3	7%
Other	4	2%



Contact Centre Managers are increasingly playing a critical function in businesses as Customer Experience continues to be a new battleground to win customers hearts and wallets. Over 78% of contact centre manager felt their role was valued by their organisation, reflecting the contribution a high-performance contact centre can provide to the business.

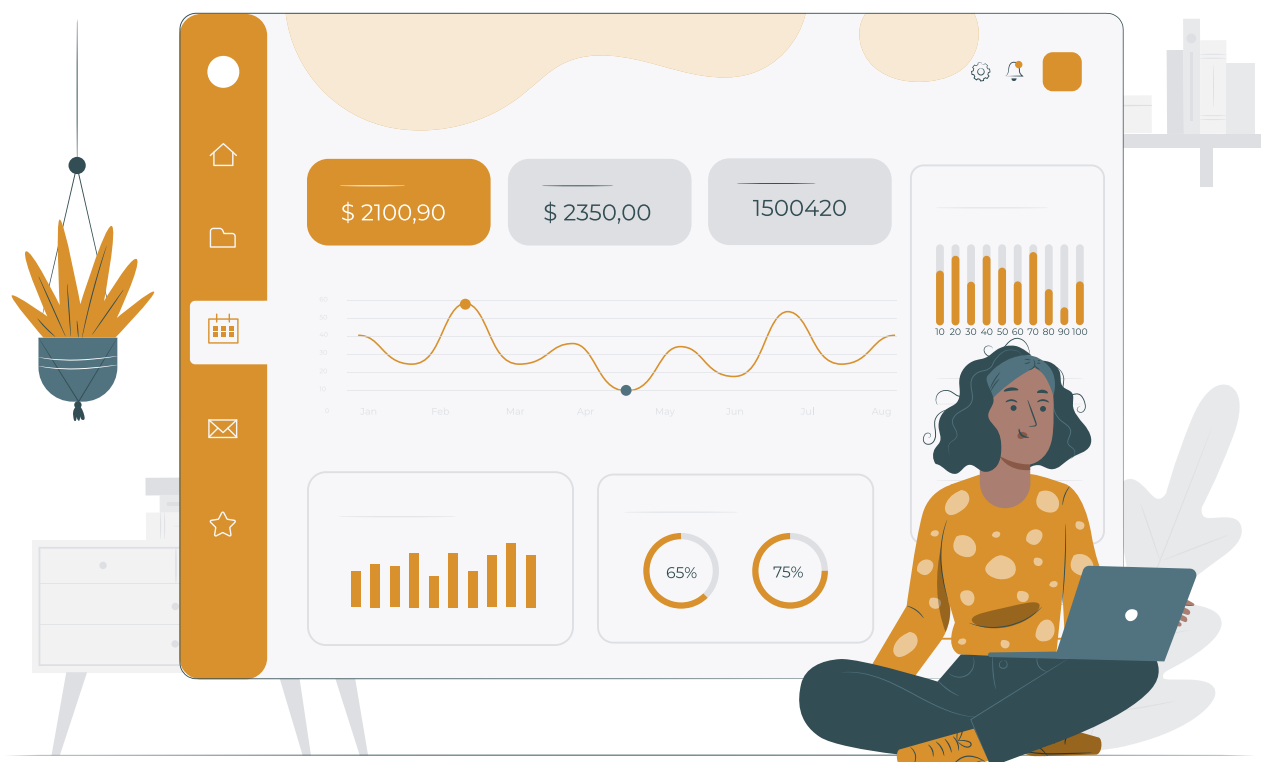
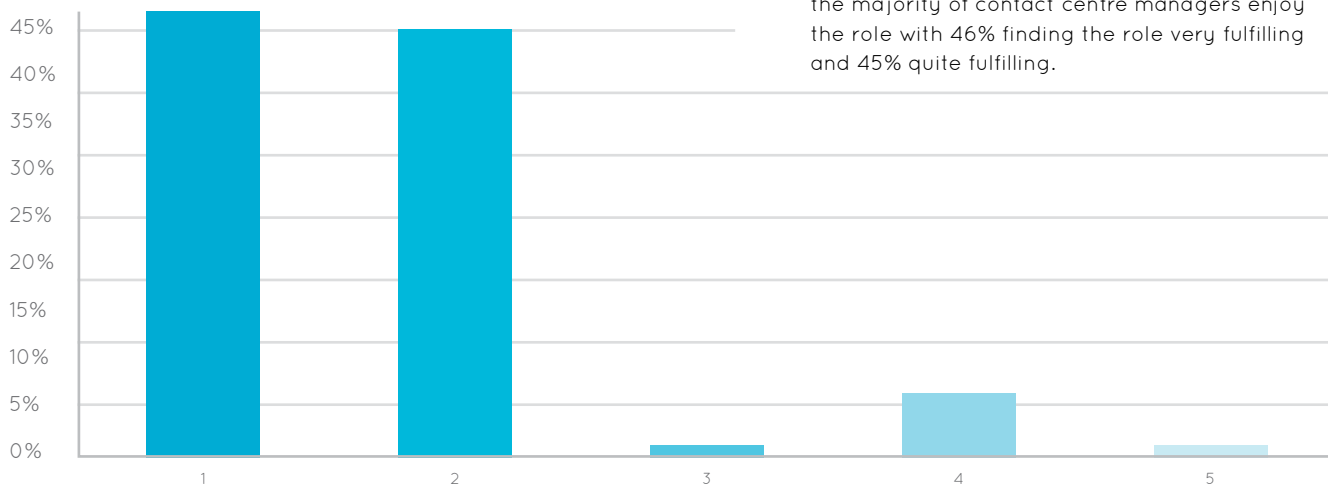


HOW FULFILLING IS THE WORK YOU DO?

ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Very fulfilling	1	46%
Quite fulfilling	2	45%
Unsure	3	1%
A little fulfilling	4	6%
Not at all fulfilling	5	1%



The modern contact centre manager requires a vast array of skills and has to manage a range of competing demands from internal stakeholders, direct reports, technology, customers and so on ensuring there is never a dull day. Despite the challenges with the role, the majority of contact centre managers enjoy the role with 46% finding the role very fulfilling and 45% quite fulfilling.



THE ROLE OF THE CONTACT CENTRE MANAGER

SUMMARY

Contact Centre Managers Summary

Justin Tippet

CEO

Australian Customer Experience

Professionals Association

acxpa.com.au



Over the past few years, we've been able to uncover a range of interesting statistics and benchmarking data to assist contact centre managers in optimising their contact centre operations.

And in this year's survey we've taken it one step further – learning more about the role of the contact centre manager including their challenges, engagement levels, KPIs and more.

One of the most revealing statistics from this year's data was that 75% of contact centre managers started their career on the phones. It was a number I always knew was high (I started there too!) but to see it there in front of you was certainly a stark reminder of the incredible career opportunities available to agents starting their journey in the contact centre industry today.

With an average base salary of \$124,500 + super for Contact Centre Managers and \$155,800 + super for Senior Contact Centre Managers (plus sizeable average bonuses) contact centre management can be a lucrative career choice, particularly given the limited barriers to entry with no degree or qualifications required.

Notwithstanding, the modern contact centre manager still requires a diverse range of skills to be successful and with most managers starting their career on the phones, it's not surprisingly to learn that they have identified a number of general management skills including budgeting, leadership, strategy, change management and stakeholder management as skills that they need additional training and support in.

Of course, knowing the mechanics of how a contact centre should operate is also a core requirement and less than half (48%) of contact centre managers have ever attended any formal contact centre management training.

With the contact centre industry several decades old, there are a number of global best-practices and processes that are applicable to all contact centres no matter how big the size, function or industry sector and they are completely transferable between contact centres (adding to the value of the contact centre manager).

With 42% of contact centre managers reporting they are not provided with adequate resources (i.e. budget, headcount etc.) to achieve their Key Performance Indicators, learning best practices around contact centre management including how to calculate workloads, Erlang C, Quality Assurance Frameworks, Coaching etc could significantly help better articulate their resource requirements, impacts to Service Levels etc. and help their own development, their employees and their customers.

Technology is also playing an increasing role in the modern contact centre with everything from the core contact technology platform through to more advanced tools and channels such as voice analytics, chatbots, live chat and so on. Perhaps recognising this complexity, the accountability of who is responsible for the technology in the contact centre is continuing to change.

Currently, accountability for the technology rests entirely with IT Managers in 50% of contact centres, 22% with the contact centre manager and 15% sharing accountability between IT and the contact centre. Contact Centre Managers have already indicated strong interaction with Customer Experience (CX) teams (66%) as companies look to streamline the end-to-end customer experience and with CX roles continuing to gain traction and taking a more enterprise-wide approach, the shift in accountability for the technology could undergo significant change over the coming years.

The role of the contact centre manager within an organisation has continued to increase in importance and over 78% of managers felt that their role was valued by their organisation. Further emphasising this, over 60% of contact centre managers now meet with the most senior executive in their business (e.g. CEO) at least once a month.

That value largely correlates to the interest in the performance of the contact centre given the impact it has on customers and ultimately, the bottom line. 46% of contact centre managers report weekly on their KPIs followed by 36% reporting monthly and over 76% of contact centre managers indicated that have a “large amount” of input into developing the KPI’s in the contact centre.

And it wouldn’t be a report if we didn’t talk about the impact of COVID! Perhaps reflecting the changing working environment and customer expectations, 83% of contact centres experienced changes to their KPIs in the last 12 months.

Contact Centre Managers also faced numerous challenges throughout the year with most managers consistently rating employee-related issues as the most challenging. Recruitment, retention/attrition, mental health and engagement all featured highly along with technology and working arrangements (working from home, vaccination requirements etc.).

But despite the challenges, job satisfaction was high with over 91% of contact centre managers finding their role either very fulfilling (46%) or quite fulfilling (45%).

So despite a challenging year for our industry, it’s exciting to see that the contact centre manager role, and the performance of the contact centre channel, continues to rise in value providing exciting opportunities for everyone involved in the industry!

THE ROLE OF THE CONTACT CENTRE MANAGER

CASE STUDY

CX Skills Case Study

With most call centre managers starting their careers on the phones (75%), it's not uncommon for contact centre managers to have 'grown up' in the contact centre. From starting on the phones, moving into a Team Leader role or specialist position, and ultimately moving into the contact centre manager role.

Sometimes this involves a few sideway moves in and out of different organisations but more often than not, most people stay within the same contact centre or a similar industry or sector.

For the remaining 25%, most managers come from other areas of the business that end up responsible for the call centre and then try to quickly get their head around a lot of confusing acronyms, jargon and Key Performance Indicators etc.

Unlike many professions, there is no formal qualifications or standards that apply to the contact centre industry. Most Team Leaders and Managers learn on the job, and it's often a case of "you don't know what you don't know".

As most contact centres typically evolve to meet the needs of their business and with no standardised approach across the industry, it's rare that any two contact centres ever look the same from different processes, technology, naming conventions, Key Performance Indicators and so on.

Yet despite having no formal industry standards and contact centres conforming to meet their business needs, contact centres have existed for decades and over time there are a number of fundamental rules and best-practice principles that apply to good contact centre management regardless of the industry sector, location, size or function.

The leading contact centres try to leverage off the learnings from global best practice and apply what works for their call centre – whether it's through attending training courses, engaging contact centre consultants with decades of experience or attending industry functions, conferences etc.

For Digicall Assist, one of Australia's premium outsourced customer assistance organisations, staying ahead of the curve of rapidly changing customer expectations is critical. Digicall Assist is a technology-driven, human-centered business, so hard knowledge and soft skills are essential.

In 2019, Digicall Assist first approached CX Skills with a view to exposing their management team to different ways of thinking and to fast-track the adoption of global-best practice, as part of their mission to build an organisation that's famous for delivering customer experience excellence.

For Michael Curtin, CEO of Digicall Assist, a key decider in engaging CX Skills is that “the courses are designed, continually optimised and delivered by local and global industry experts, not just professional facilitators reading off a course guide. Learning and engaging directly with industry experts with decades of experience has really helped bring the learnings to life for our team and adds credibility and authority to the information being taught”.

“Over the past couple of years, we’ve been able to expose the Digicall Assist team to a range of leading global contact centre management practices through CX Skills including Contact Centre Management Fundamentals, Quality Assurance Frameworks, Leading and Coaching agents and lots more”.

But the benefits of learning from global best practices is not just exclusive to management teams. “Ensuring our frontline team is also equipped with the right skills helps build employee engagement, improve efficiency, reduce turnover and of course, improve the customer experience” said Curtin.

“Digicall Assist has a terrific internal training team but supplementing that with external support on best-practice Customer Service Excellence, How to Manage Difficult Customers and so on ensures our frontline are equipped with global best practices that benefit our entire business”.

Digicall Assist has doubled in size over a short space of time and was recognised in 2021 in three prestigious awards that celebrate customer experience excellence. This includes recognition in the CX Awards, the Genesys Customer Innovation Awards, as well as taking out the Customer Service Project of the Year Award in the Australian Service Excellence Awards.

Of course, winning industry awards requires a lot of moving parts, but equipping your team with global best-practice skills and challenging new ways of thinking is a great foundation for any contact centre.

To see the available CX Skills courses visit cxskills.com.au

SALARIES & BONUSES

BEST PRACTICE REPORT



SALARIES – FRONTLINE AGENTS

In our previous report (published late 2020), 48% of contact centres said they still intended to have an annual salary increase for the frontline agents despite the pandemic. This report confirms that contact centres followed through with that commitment, with modest-yet-consistent salary increases across all frontline agent roles.

The most common frontline role – Customer Service – had an approximate increase of 5% from \$53,066 + super to \$55,800 + super. Over 40% of frontline agents surveyed reported that they received some form of bonus/ commission over the past 12 months, up significantly from our last report. Those identified as senior agents enjoyed a 9% higher pay rate and were more likely to receive a bonus/commission payment (and at a higher amount).

The introduction of recruiting “remote workers” offers a new dynamic and set of challenges with regards to maintaining competitive salaries. Regions that have been traditionally offering lower salaries are now competing with higher salaries sometimes offered to their staff by contact centres from the other side of the country. At the time of writing in late 2021, 12% of all Call Centre & Customer Service jobs advertised on SEEK were work from home positions.

Salaries listed below are the national average. Locations such as Melbourne and Sydney made the largest contribution to the data, so other cities and regional areas may need to adjust accordingly.

	Average Base Salary	Detail 1	Detail 2	The average bonus paid
Customer Service	\$55,800 + super	27% of salaries are above \$60,000 + super	40% of Customer Service Agents reported getting a bonus.	\$4,150 + super
Customer Service – Senior	\$61,750 + super	38% of salaries are above \$65,000 + super	55% of Senior Customer Service Agents reported getting a bonus.	\$5,450 + super
Inbound Sales	\$56,300 + super	-	-	\$9,900 + super
Outbound Sales	\$54,100 + super	15% of salaries are above \$65,000 + super	25% of bonuses paid were above \$35,000	\$9,500 + super
Lead Generation/ Appointment Setting	\$52,100 + super	-	-	\$3,100 + super
Collections	\$62,700 + super	One in three pay a bonus of between \$2,000 - \$5,000	-	\$2,000 - \$5,000 + super
Helpdesk Level 1	\$54,500 + super	30% of salaries are above \$60,000 + super	-	Bonuses are quite rare, and small
Helpdesk Level 2 / Senior	\$66,500 + super	25% of salaries are above \$74,000 + super.	-	Bonuses are quite rare, and small
Claims Consultant	\$60,600 + super	-	-	Bonuses are quite rare, and small

SALARIES & BONUSES

SALARIES – TEAM LEADERS

Team Leader salaries have risen by between 5-10% over the past 12 months. This has been led by a 10% increase in salaries for Customer Service Team Leaders – the most common Team Leader position. Inbound Sales Team Leader (5%), Outbound Sales Team Leader (6%) and Helpdesk Team Leader (5%) all saw increases as well.

Depending on the role type, between 12-25% of base salaries sit at or above \$90,000 + super. On the opposite end, salaries for Team Leaders working for BPOs on average sit 20-25% below the average.

	Average Base Salary	Detail 1	Detail 2	The average bonus paid
Customer Service Team Leader	\$82,200 + super	25% have a base salary of higher than \$90,000 + super	39% of Team Leaders report getting a bonus.	\$10,585 + super
	8% of Team Leaders received a bonus above \$15,000 + super			
Inbound Sales Team Leader	\$78,300 + super	16% have a base salary higher than \$90,000 + super	55% reported getting a bonus	\$9,900 + super
	18% received a bonus above \$15,000			
Outbound Sales Team Leader	\$78,600 + super	12% have a base salary higher than \$90,000 + super	68% reported receiving a bonus	\$11,900 + super
	15% received a bonus of \$25,000 or higher			
Collections Team Leader	\$79,300 + super	23% pay above \$90K	52% reported receiving a bonus	\$6,900 + super
Helpdesk Team Leader	\$80,200 + super	18% pay above \$90K	44% reported receiving a bonus	\$10,100 + super

SALARIES – WORKFORCE PLANNING AND OPTIMISATION

The rise in focus and the importance of workforce planning and optimisation over the past few years has seen inflationary pressure on salaries. At the top end Workforce Planning Managers and Leads are in high demand, with contact centres finding it extremely challenging to find and attract experienced talent if required.

	Average Base Salary	Detail 1	Detail 2
Workforce Planning Lead	\$124,800 + super	25% of salaries are at or above \$150,000 + super	–
Workforce Manager	\$127,000 + super	30% of salaries are at or above \$150,000 + super	18% of salaries are at or above \$170,000 + super
Forecaster	\$88,900 + super	60% of salaries fall between \$80,000 - \$100,000 + super	–
Scheduler	\$78,200 + super	25% of salaries are at or above \$90,000 + super	–
Real Time Analyst	\$74,400 + super	29% of salaries are at or above \$80,000 + super	–

SALARIES – SENIOR LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

Across Australian contact centres there are a variety of different senior leadership positions titles depending on the size of the contact centre, the focus of the work and the nature of the organisation.

What one organisation calls a “Contact Centre Manager” another calls “Senior Operations Manager” and some may now call “CX Manager”. When reviewing the salaries in this section it is important to read through several categories to get the full picture. We’ve dissected the roles as much we can here and gone into great detail (for example recognizing the role “Senior Contact Centre Manager”).

	Average Base Salary	Detail 1	Detail 2	The average bonus paid
Operations Manager	\$121,900 + super	24% reported receiving non-cash bonuses and/or entitlements (e.g. shares etc)	–	\$17,900 + super
Senior Operations Manager	\$146,400 + super	Big spread of salaries – 50% above \$170,000 + super, significant number below \$130,000	–	\$20,500 + super
Contact Centre Manager	\$124,500 + super	29% reported a base of \$140,000 + super or higher 18% reported a base salary of less than \$100,000 + super	53% reported earning a bonus. Top 12% earned reported a bonus of \$40,000	\$22,350 + super
Senior Contact Centre Manager	\$155,800 + super	25% reported receiving non-cash bonuses and/or entitlements (e.g. shares etc)	–	\$16,000 + super
Head of Contact Centre	\$167,500 + super	28% above \$200,00 + super	27% reported receiving non-cash bonuses and/or entitlements (e.g. shares etc)	\$19,300 + super
Head of Customer Service	\$175,100 + super	26% above \$200,00 + super	12% reported receiving non-cash bonuses and/or entitlements (e.g. shares etc)	\$35,100 + super
Head of Sales	\$141,000 + super	Smaller set of data responses compared with other roles	–	\$20,200 + super
Customer Experience Manager	\$133,500 + super	Salaries very evenly condensed	A small number received a small bonus. Other entitlements were not common.	–
Customer Service Manager	\$119,500 + super	–	–	\$13,200 + super
General Manager	\$200,000 + super	–	–	\$66,100 + super

CONCLUSION

BEST PRACTICE REPORT





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This extensive report continues to paint an accurate picture of the present state of the Australian contact centre industry, as does the two reports that have come before it. While we all agree that it has been a challenging two years of dramatic change, there is plenty of cause for optimism right across the industry.

This report finds:

- It's no surprise that working from home is here to stay. What is surprising is how popular it is. Contact Centre Managers on average expect that 48% of their workforce will be working from home on any given day post-COVID. Frontline Agents would actually prefer this to be much higher, choosing (if they could) to work from home 75% of the time. Less than 4% of Agents want to work solely from the contact centre.
- Frontline Agents want to work for us. They have told us they want to remain working in their current contact centre or broader organisation. The challenge is how to harness this enthusiasm and allow them to grow. Internal talent identification as well as learning and development opportunities are key. Specialised roles within contact centres are often the hardest to fill, yet 30% of Agents desire to follow this as a career path at the moment. Employee engagement scores, salary indications and several other findings of this report show that while it has been a challenging two years, Agents are happier in their roles than we may think.
- Team Leaders have had their role more disrupted than any other position in the contact centre over the last two years. Added duties and responsibilities have eaten into their precious time. Team Leaders have told us loudly in this report that their ability to spend time coaching and developing their agents has taken a huge hit. They rank it as the second most important duty, yet it is the main area identified that they don't spend enough time in. Overall they are a happy bunch though, with 81% of Team Leaders still hoping to be working in their current contact centre in three years time. Team Leaders are unlikely to leave and we need to invest in them more.

CONCLUSION



- The modern Contact Centre Manager (or senior leader) requires a diverse range of skills to be successful. They are resilient, quick to adapt and reported the highest level of job satisfaction amongst all groups surveyed. Of concern is that 42% believe they are not provided with adequate resources to achieve their KPI's. The fact that 75% of senior leaders started on the phones is therefore a blessing, giving them deep knowledge and experience and allowing them to be resourceful when they must.
- Employee engagement is in many ways being “re-learned” by contact centres as we adjust to now permanently having a large part of the workforce working from home. Measuring employee engagement is crucial and 60% of contact centres have tools in place to do so. Frequent measuring is key, once every two years is not enough. Understanding how to engage a remote workforce will continue to be a “test and learn” area throughout 2022.

As a recruitment agency we have had a front row seat to the dramatic changes across the Australian contact centre industry. There has never should be “been a time when there have been so many great opportunities and so many great challenges at the exact same time.

When it comes to attracting and hiring for Australian contact centres, those that can understand what this report and conclusion recommends and then offer it as part of a well-articulated and captivating recruitment process will have a significant advantage over the rest of the market. Those that ignore the warnings or fail to embrace what a modern contact centre needs to offer are due to face some extreme challenges when it comes to recruitment and retention of staff in 2022 and beyond.

From all at SMAART Recruitment thank you to our report partners and participants. We hope you've gained great insight from reading it, and encourage you to get in touch to discover the online version which will continue to be updated post the printing of this report.

View the report online, including video presentations of the key findings at:
smart.com.au/bestpractice

NOTES



NOTES

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