

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.

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- 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