

THE ROLE OF THE AGENT

BEST PRACTICE REPORT

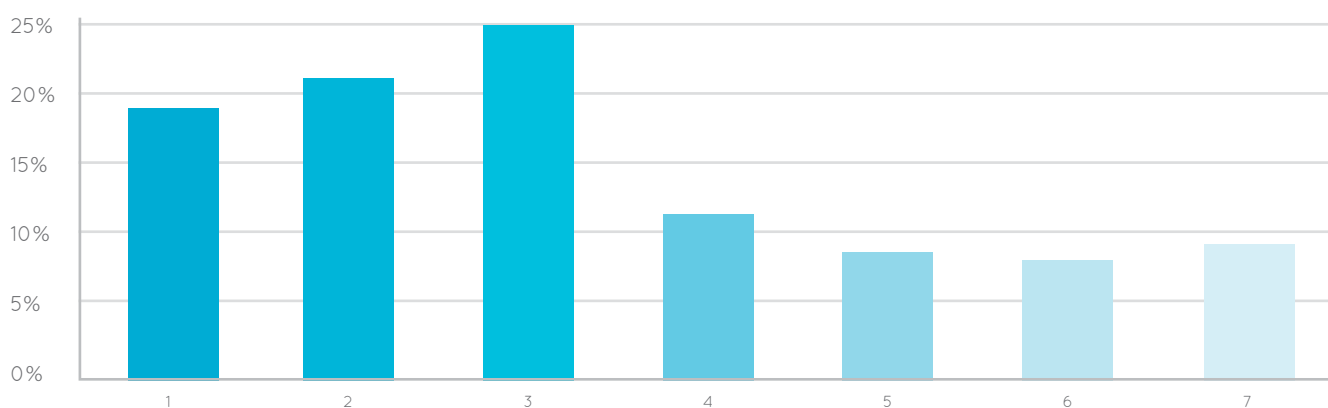


HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE EMPLOYED BY THE CONTACT CENTRE?

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%

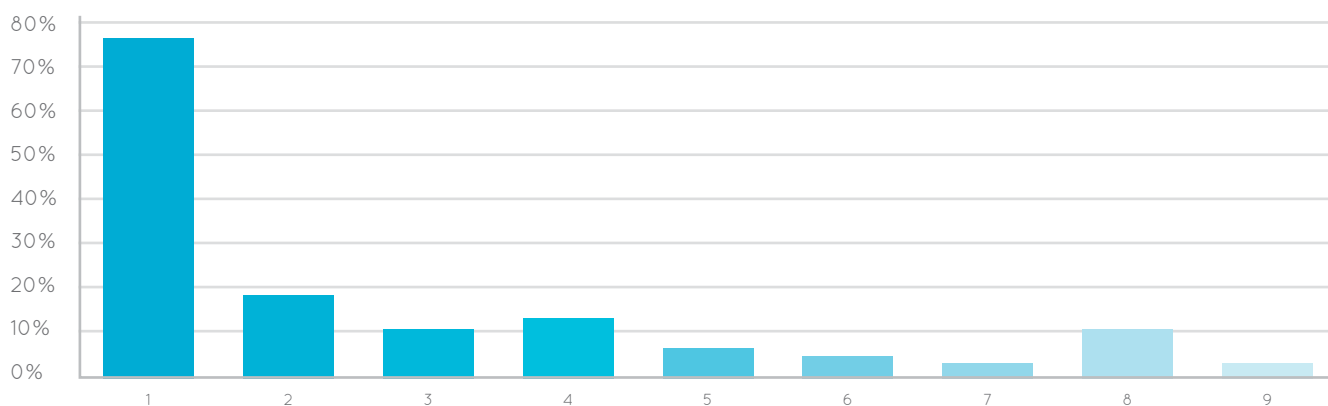


Over 600 Frontline Agents participated in this research, from all different sized contact centres.



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

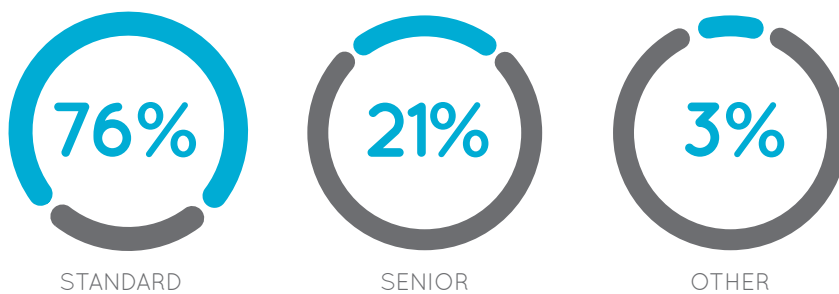
ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Customer Service	1	74%
Blended Customer Service & Sales	2	19%
Inbound Sales	3	10%
Outbound Sales	4	11%
Outbound Retention	5	6%
Lead Generation/Appointment setting	6	3%
Collections	7	2%
Helpdesk	8	10%
Claims consultant	9	2%



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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%

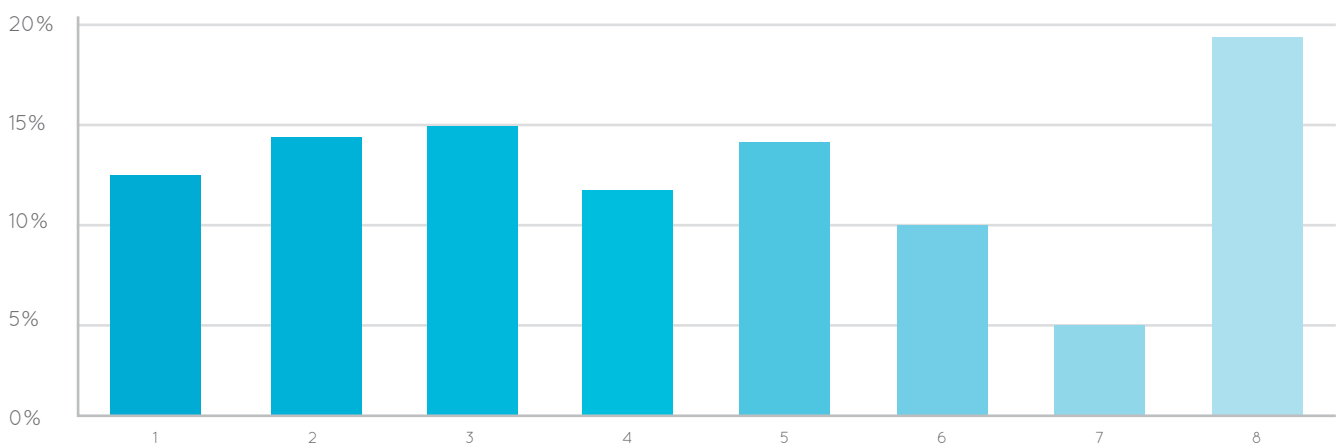


WHICH CALL TYPE BEST DESCRIBES YOUR ROLE? (SELECT UP TO 2):

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%

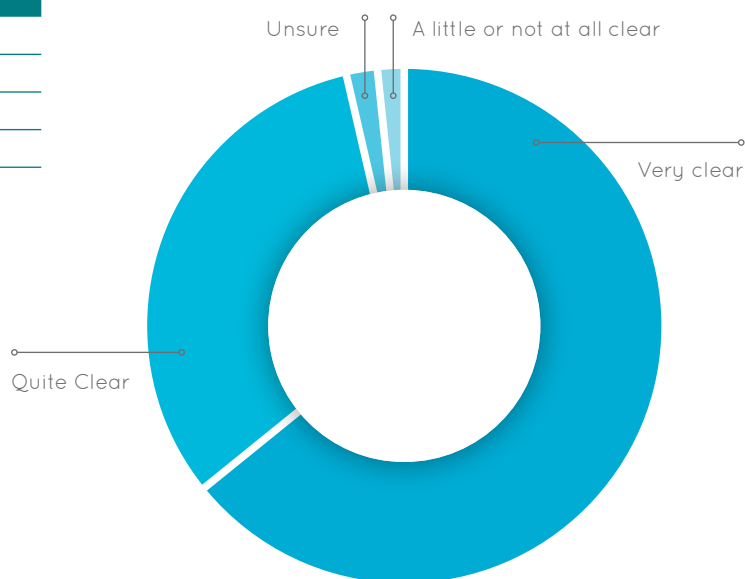


34% of respondents have been working in their current contact centre 3 or more years.



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

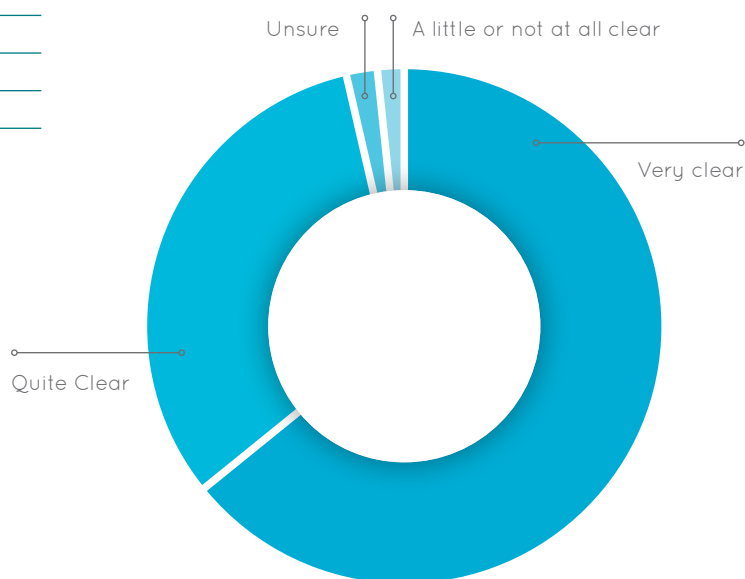
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Very clear	64%
Quite clear	32%
Unsure	2%
A little clear	1%
Not at all clear	0.5%



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?

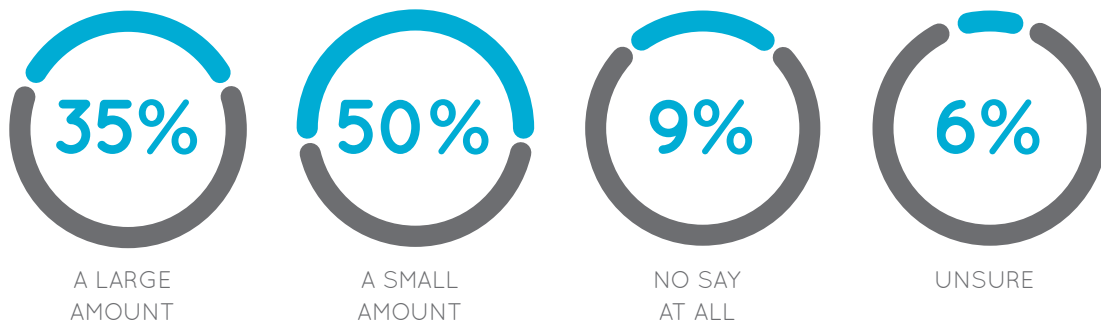
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Very clear	66%
Quite clear	31%
Unsure	2%
A little clear	1%
Not at all clear	0.2%



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):

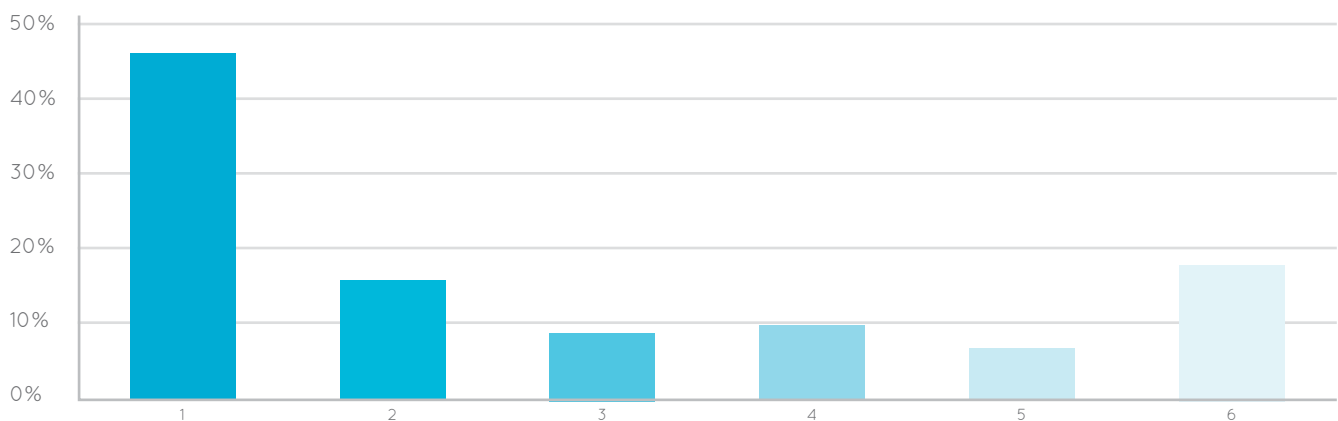
ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Full flexibility – I choose where to work at least 90% of the time	1	46%
Very High flexibility – I choose where to work at least 80% of the time	2	13%
High flexibility – I choose where to work at least 60% of the time	3	8%
Moderate flexibility – I choose where to work at least 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?**

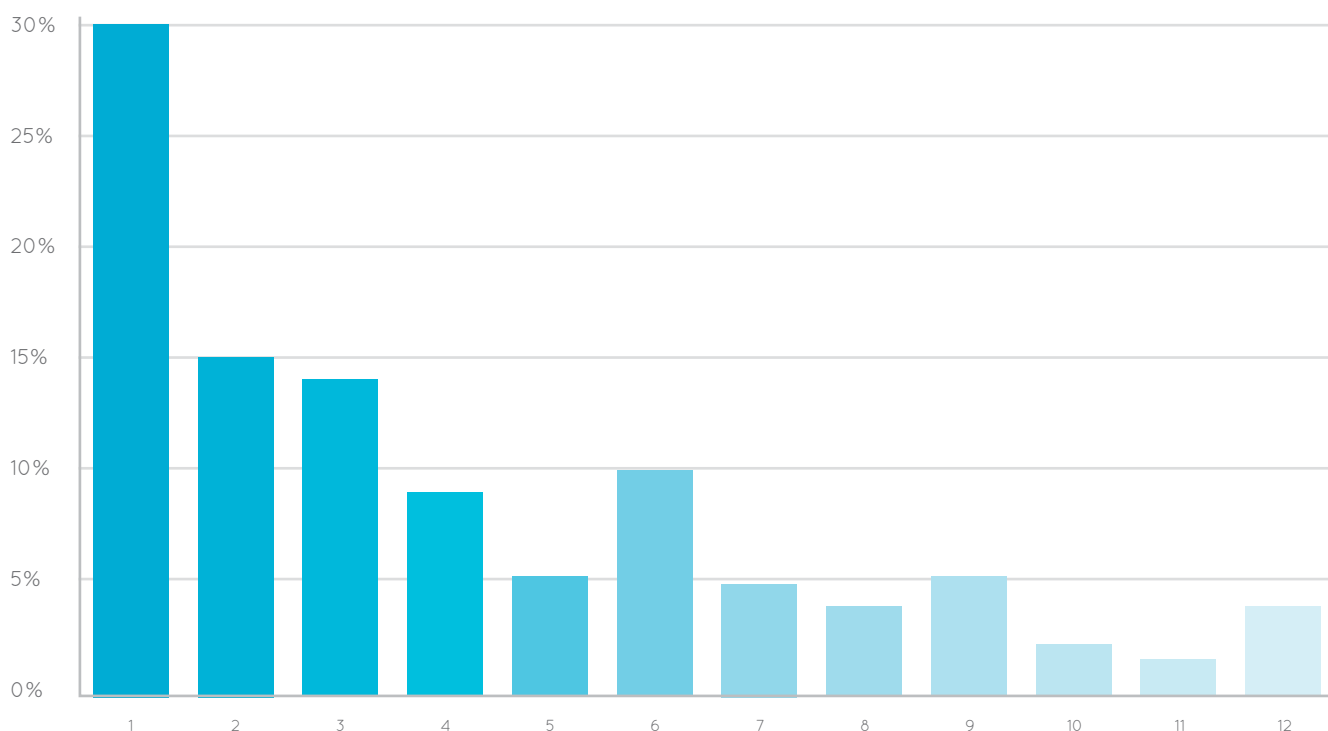
ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
100%	1	30%
90 - 99	2	15%
80 - 89	3	14%
70 - 79	4	8%
60 - 69	5	5%
50 - 59	6	10%
40 - 49	7	4%
30 - 39	8	3%
20 - 29	9	5%
10 to 19	10	2%
1 to 9	11	1%
0%	12	4%



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.



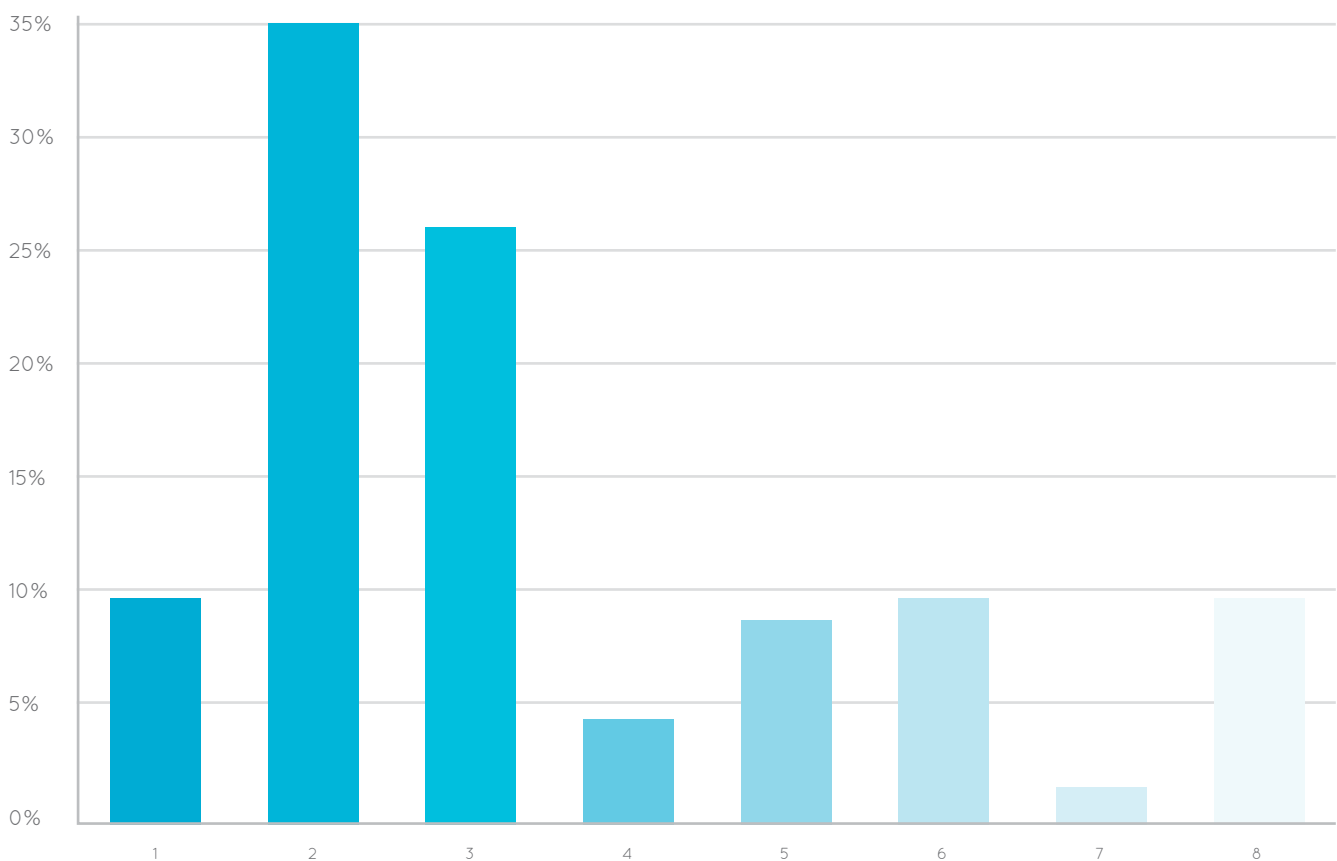
THE ROLE OF THE AGENT

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".

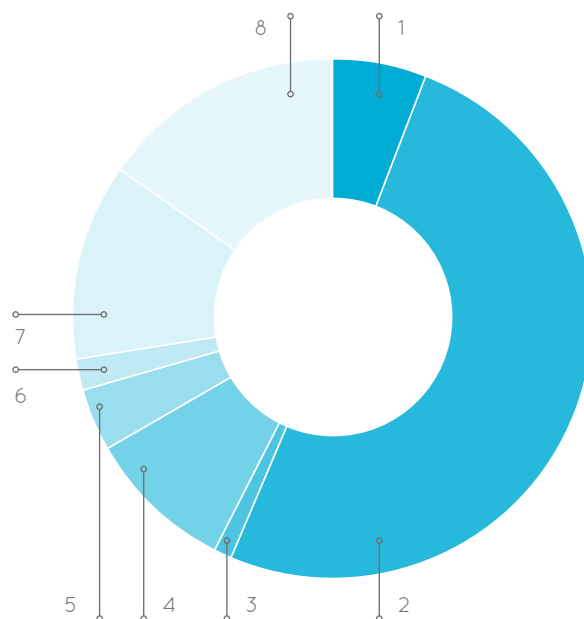


WHAT IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE WHEN IT COMES TO WFH?

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%

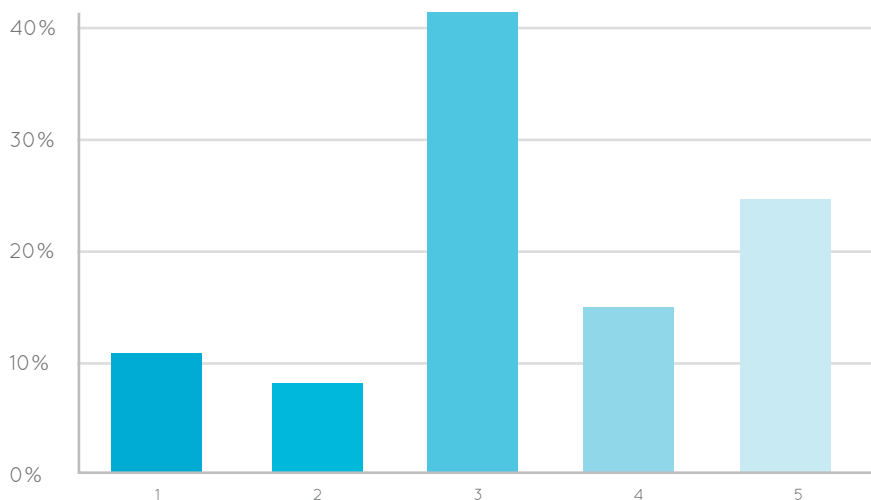


The lack of social interaction is a huge challenge for everyone when working from home. Frontline Agents typically work in teams with high levels of interaction and socialisation in the workplace, and this has been hard (at times impossible to replicate) during lockdowns.



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%



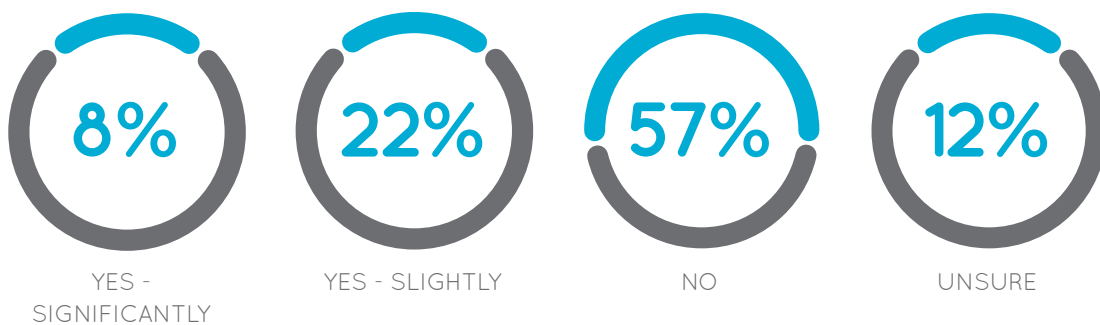
40% of Frontline Agents feel they are more productive when working from home, with 41% feeling their productivity level is the same regardless of whether they are in the contact centre or at home. Only 19% feel less productive when WFH.

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)

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

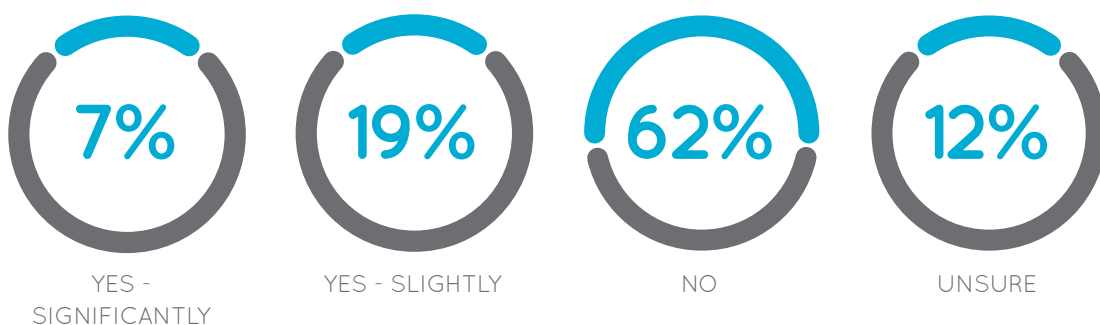
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes – significantly	8%
Yes – slightly	22%
No	57%
Unsure	12%



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.

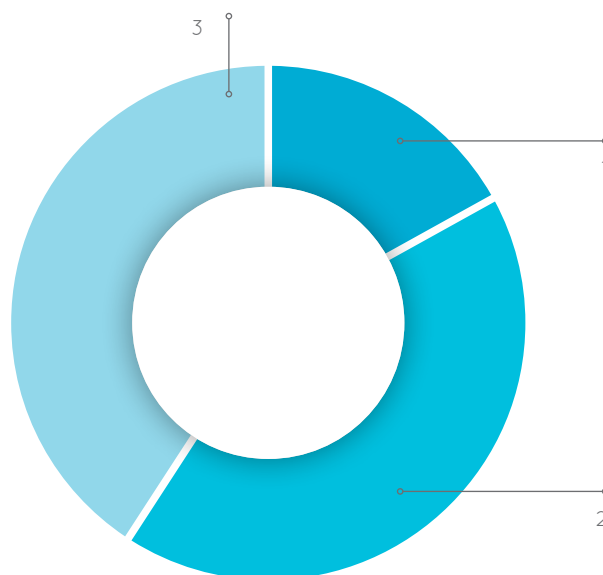


WHAT ENVIRONMENT DO YOU FIND HAS MORE DISTRACTIONS WHEN WORKING?

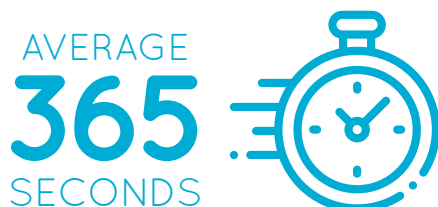
ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
More distractions when WFH	1	17%
More distractions when working from the contact centre	2	42%
It's about the same	3	41%



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)



DO YOU FEEL THIS IS ENOUGH?

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



YES



NO



UNSURE

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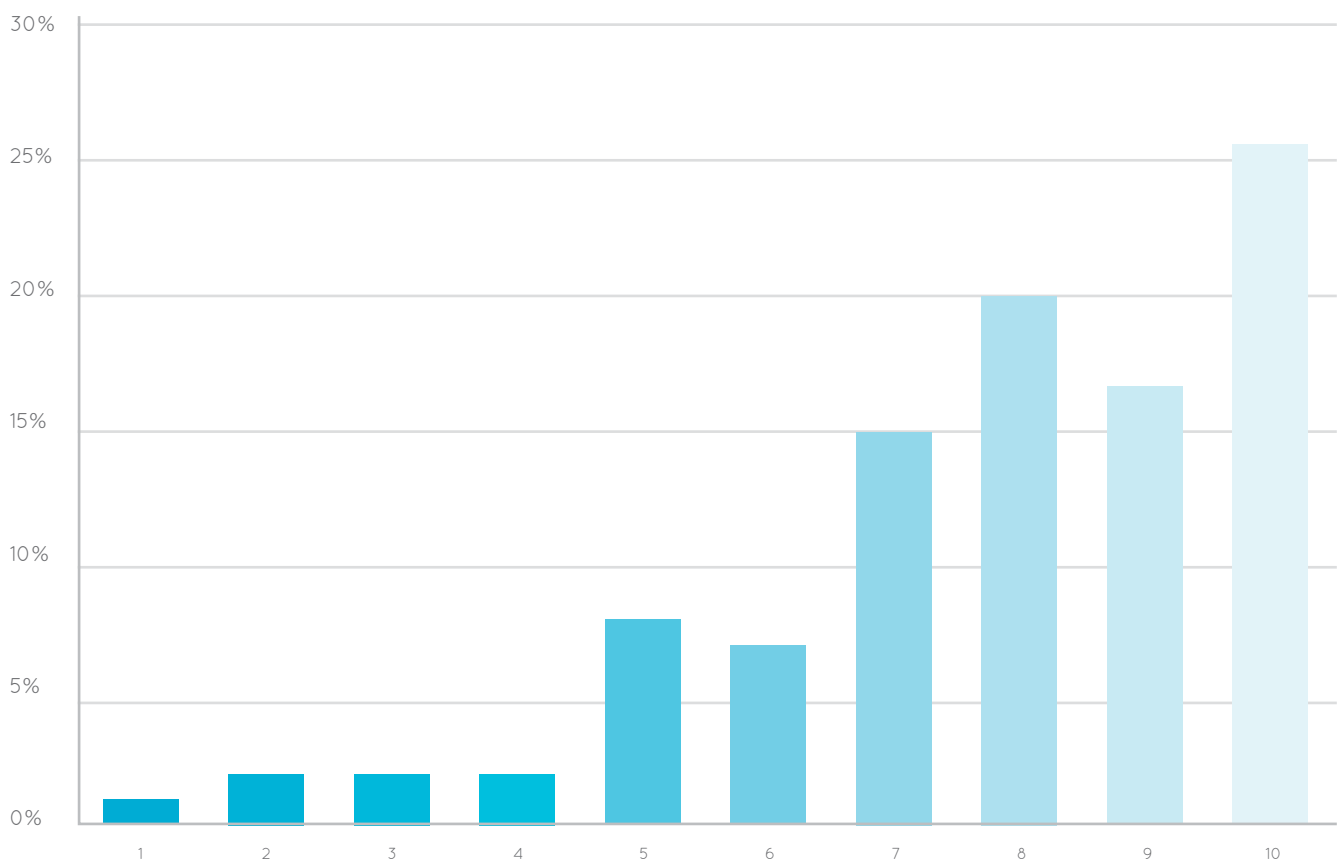
ON A SCALE OF 1 – 10, HOW ENGAGED DO YOU FEEL WITH YOUR CURRENT EMPLOYER?

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%



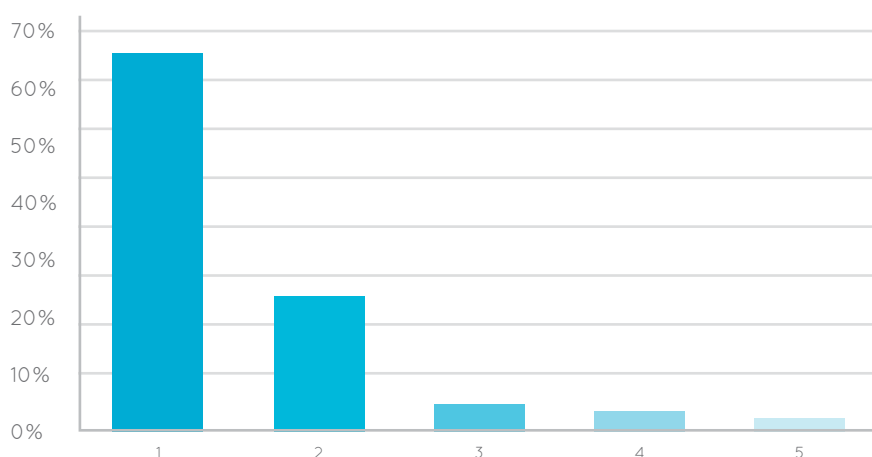
The overall engagement scores from Frontline Agents is 7.8 out of 10.

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?

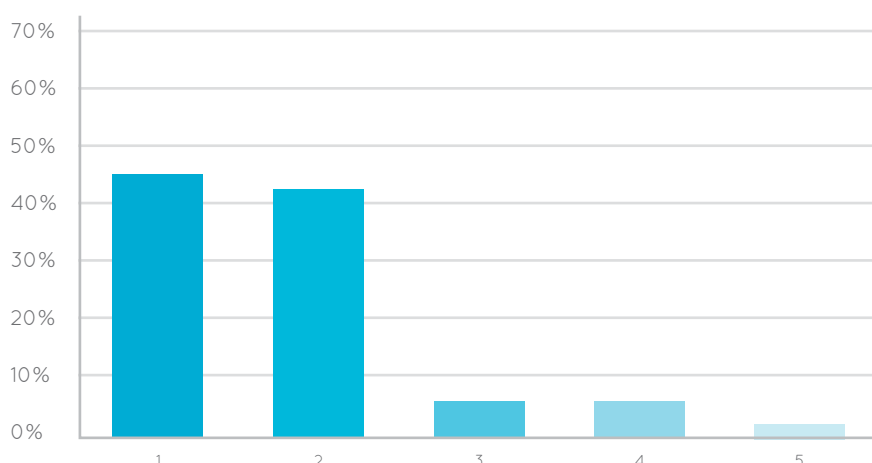
ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Completely agree	1	68%
Somewhat agree	2	23%
Neither agree nor disagree	3	4%
Somewhat disagree	4	3%
Completely disagree	5	2%



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?

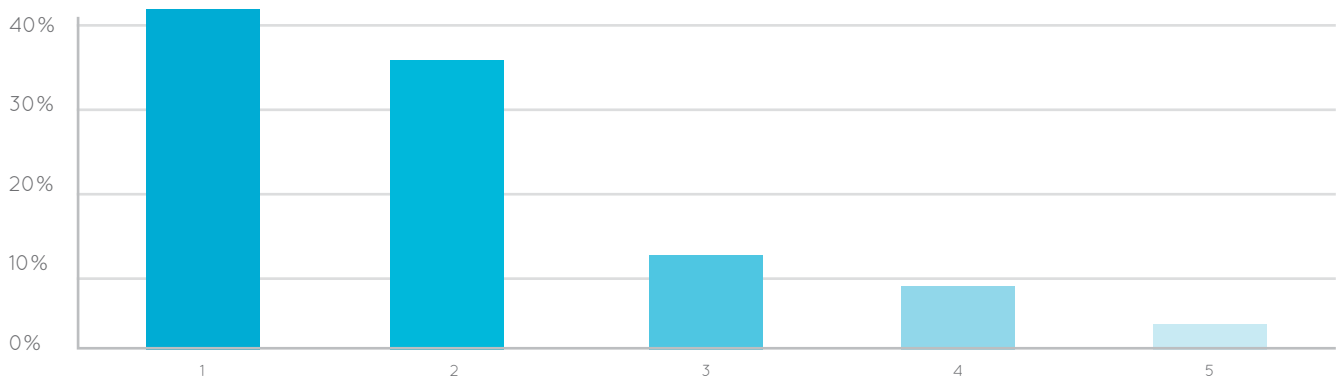
ANSWER CHOICES	#	RESPONSES
Completely agree	1	45%
Somewhat agree	2	41%
Neither agree nor disagree	3	6%
Somewhat disagree	4	6%
Completely disagree	5	2%



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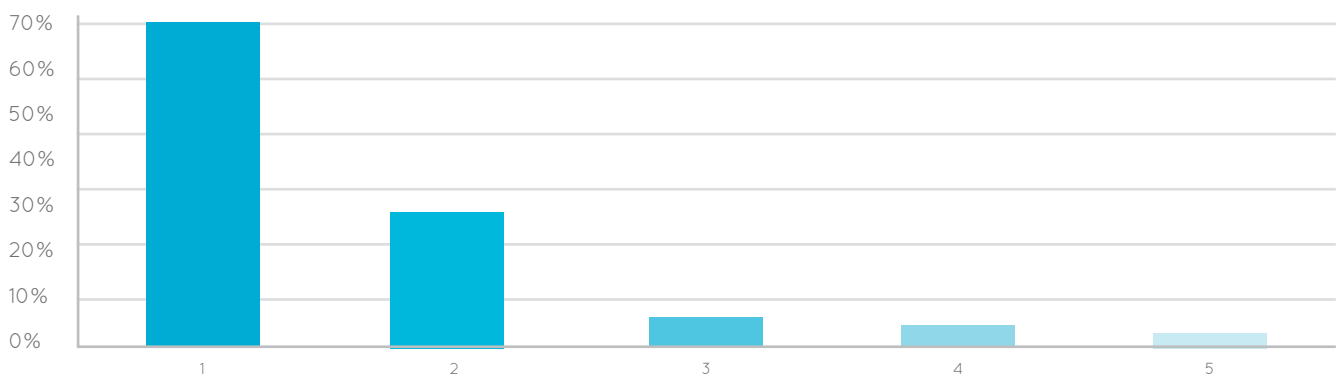
HOW MUCH DO YOU AGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT: I FEEL THAT I CAN PUT FORWARD MY IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS, AND THAT I WILL BE HEARD AND VALUED?

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:

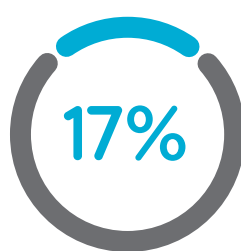
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Less connected to my team and the organisation	28%
About the same level of connection with my team and the organisation	55%
More connected to my team and the organisation	17%



LESS
CONNECTED



ABOUT THE
SAME



MORE
CONNECTED



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):

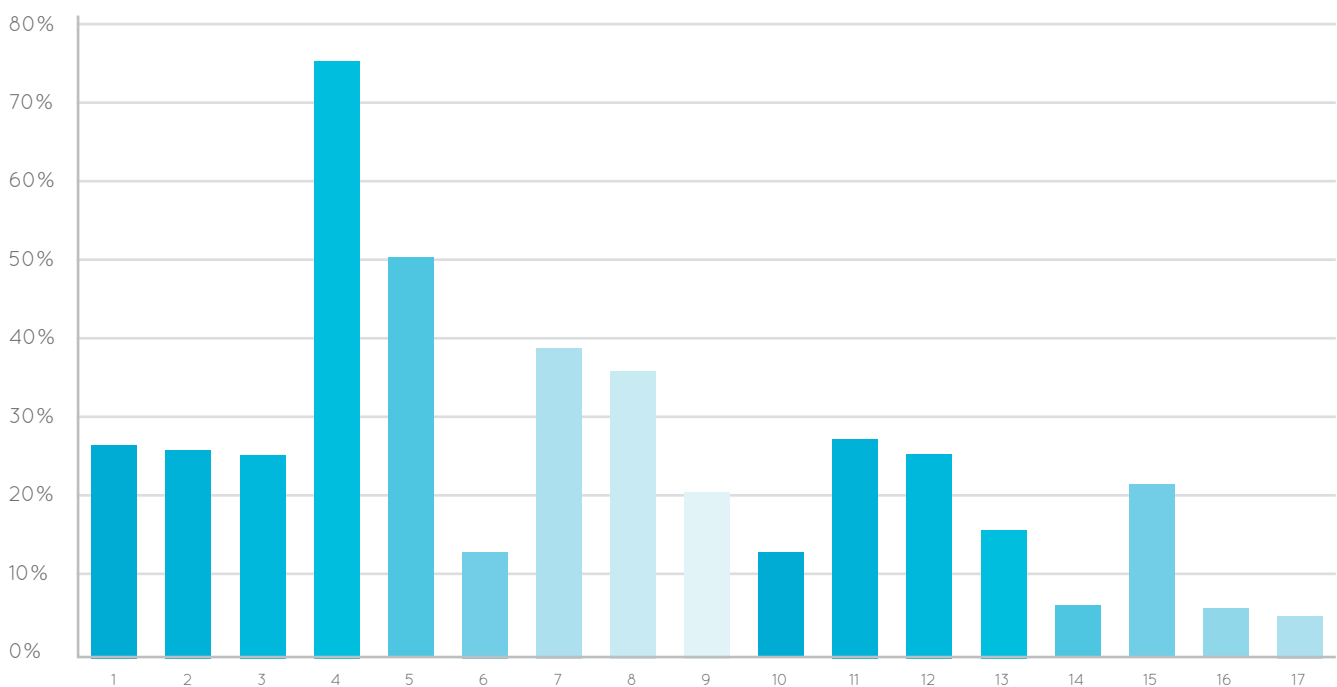
Virtual team activities

Gifts (such as hampers and gift cards)

Increased shift flexibility

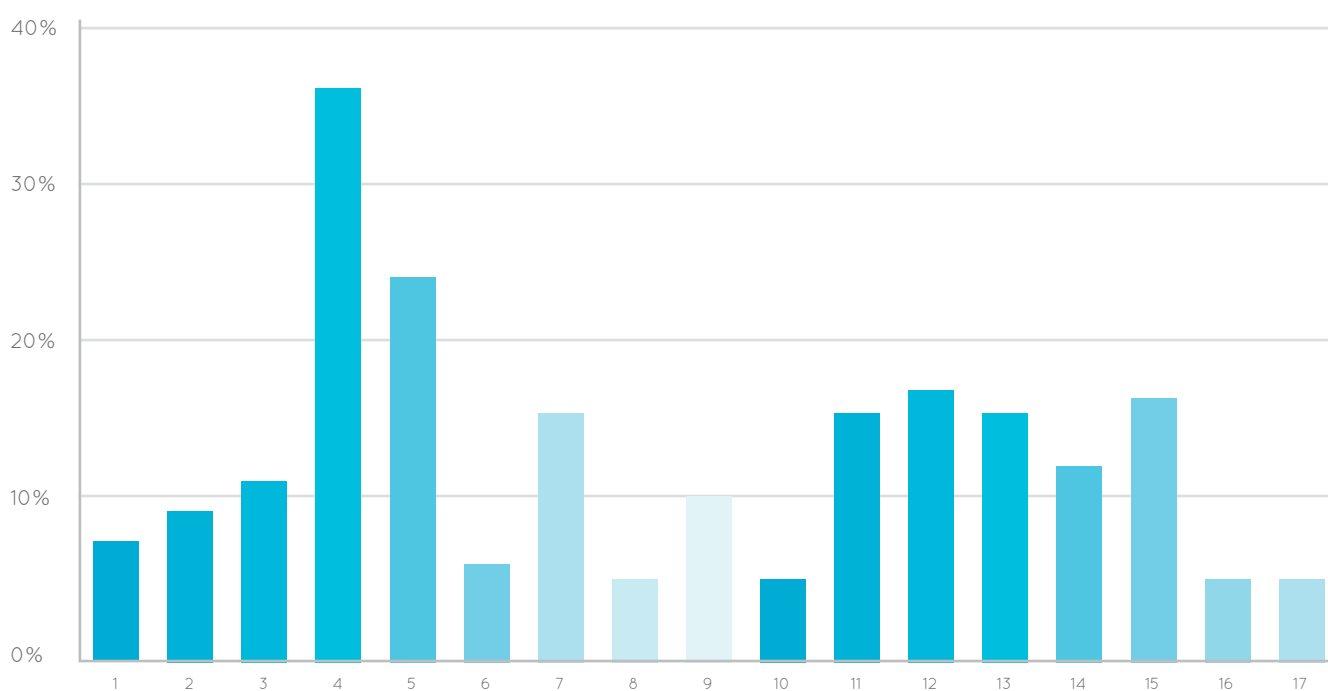
Opportunity for additional professional development

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



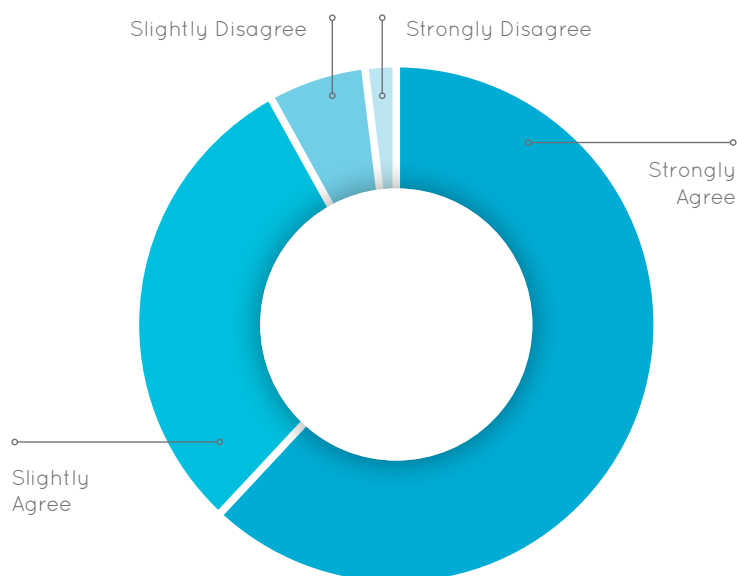
While there is still plenty of area for improvement it is pleasing that 63% of Frontline Agents strong agree that they feel supported to do what they need to do to take care of their mental health and wellbeing.

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%

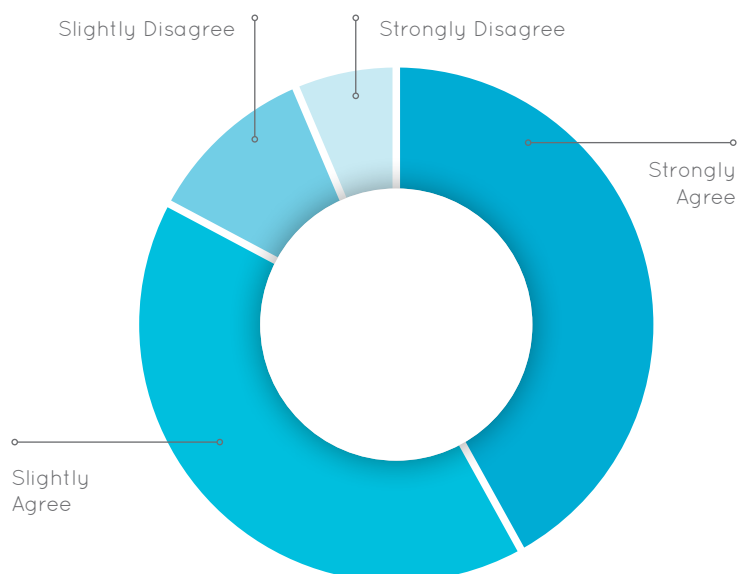


Less than 9% know what relevant supports and policies are available within their organisation.



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.

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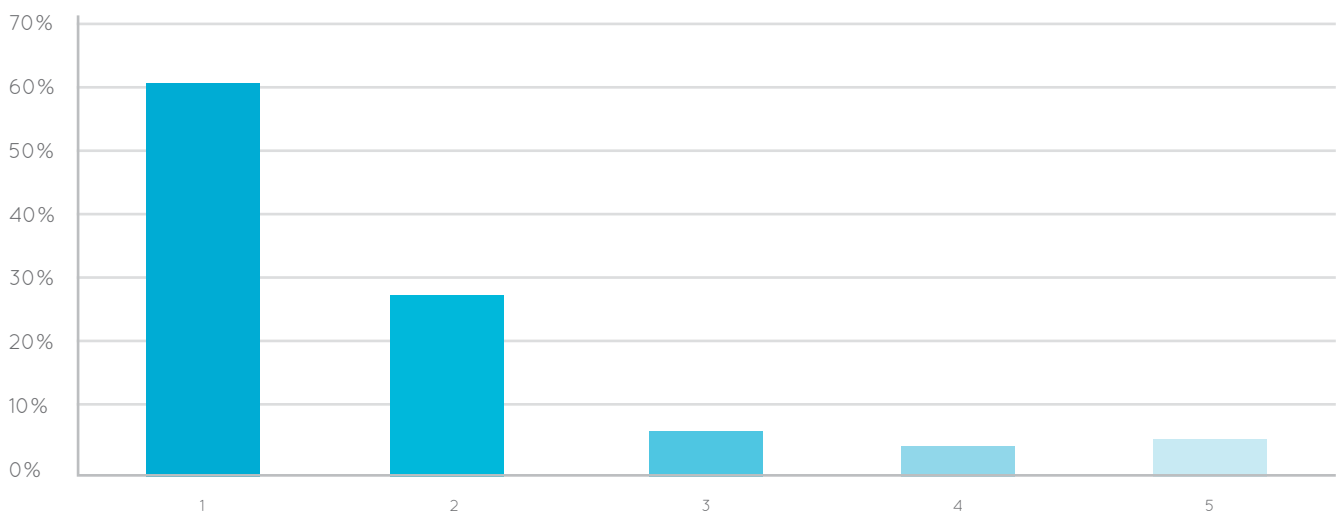
DO YOU FEEL THIS IS ENOUGH?

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



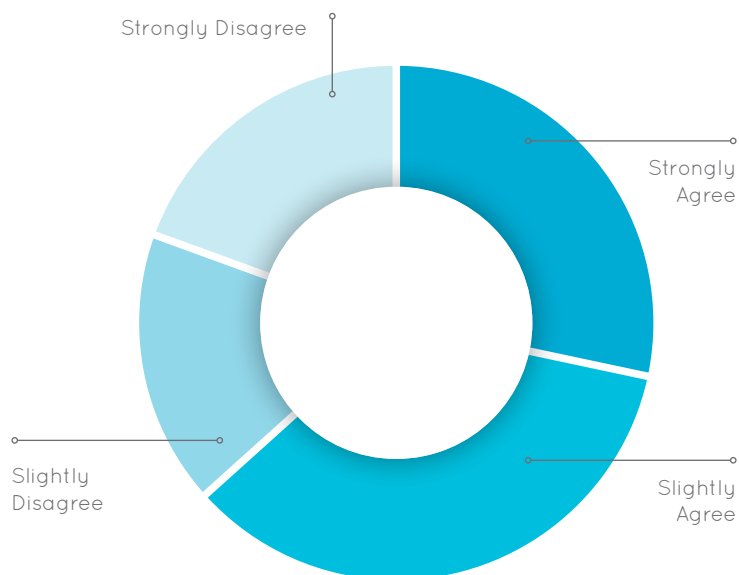
HOW USEFUL IS YOUR MONTHLY/QUARTERLY ONE-TO-ONE CATCH UP WITH YOUR TEAM LEADER?

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



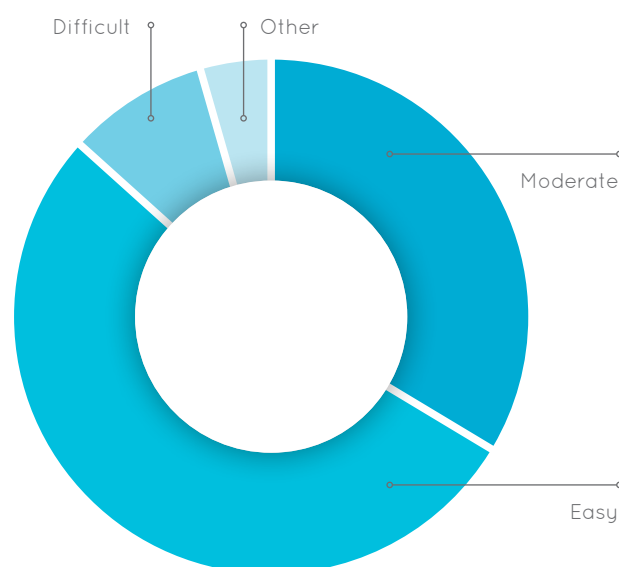
I HAVE A SAY IN THE WAY MY WORKING ROSTERS ARE SCHEDULED AND MANAGED

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?

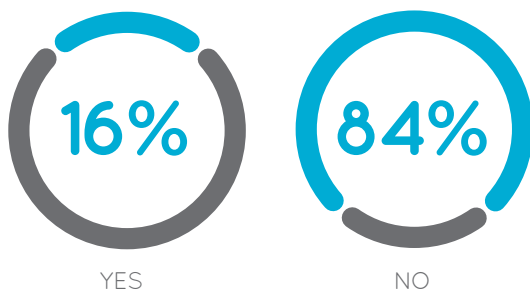
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
It is easy	50%
It is moderately difficult	32%
It is very difficult	13%
Other	5%



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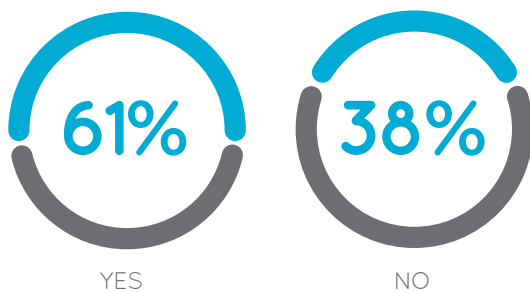
HAVE YOU EVER TAKEN SICK LEAVE BECAUSE IT WAS TOO DIFFICULT AND/OR YOU WERE UNABLE TO MAKE CHANGES TO YOUR ROSTER?

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?

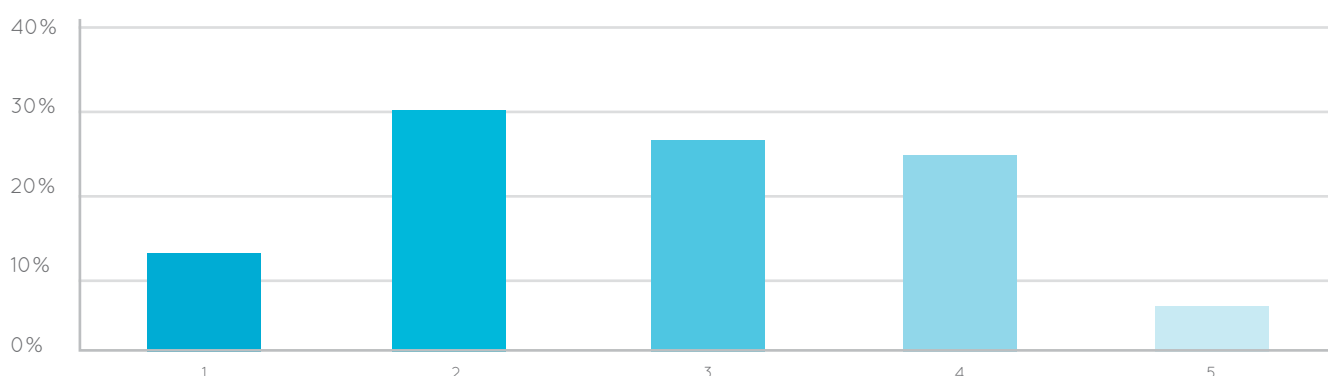
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	61%
No	38%



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



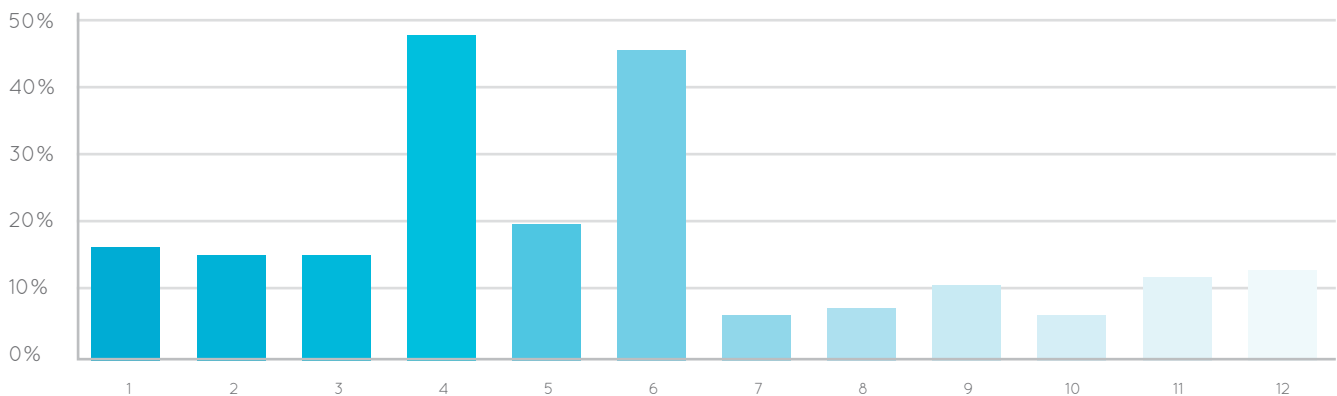
NOT WORKING IN
THIS CONTACT CENTRE



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%

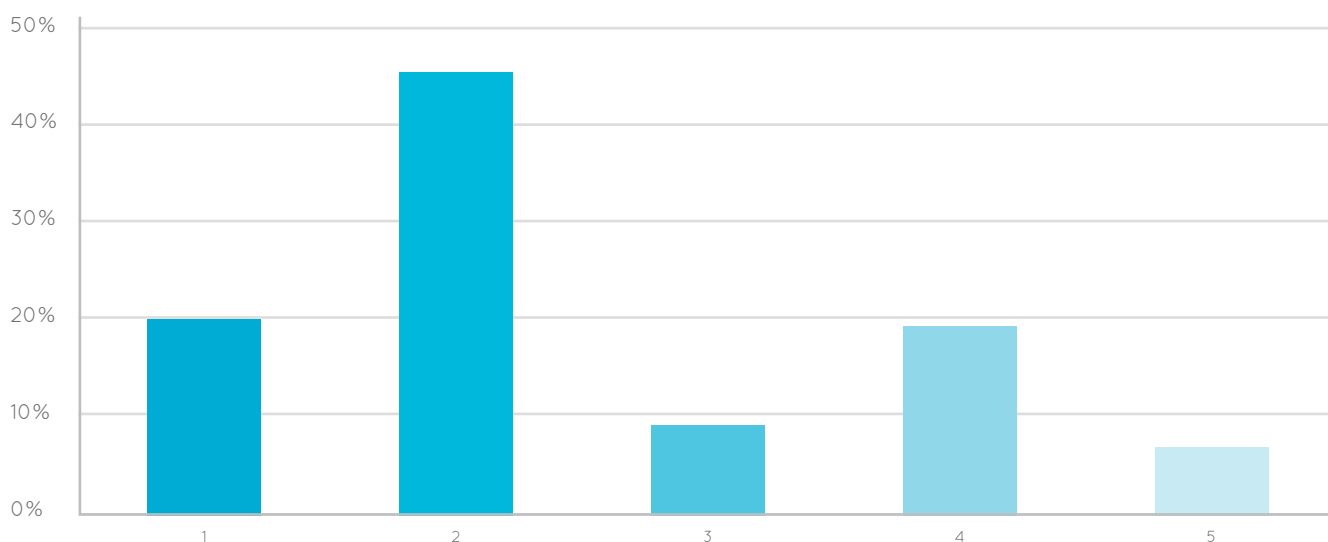


ON A SCALE FROM 1-10, HOW LIKELY ARE YOU TO RECOMMEND YOUR ORGANISATION AS A PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT TO YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS? (10 BEING “ABSOLUTELY”, 1 BEING “DEFINITELY NOT”).



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.