

SQM Group Has Launched 15 Proven Call Center Best Practices

SQM Group's 15 Proven Best Practices Provide a Comprehensive Guide to Delivering Great Customer Service in Call Centers.



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Many companies have moved beyond competing on products and prices and are now trying to differentiate based on delivering great customer service. In most cases, companies rely on the call center to provide an outstanding customer experience.

SQM's view is that a call center should assess its operating people, processes, and technology practices to determine the effectiveness and then develop a plan of action to improve customer service. Unfortunately, there is no call center cookie-cutter approach to achieving world-class voice of the customer (VoC) service.

[SQM Group](#) has come up with the following top 15 proven call center best practices for delivering great customer service. To get an in-depth look into these best practices, read the [15 Proven Call Center Best Practices blog](#).

1. [FCR](#) Obsess for Delivering Great Customer Service

What is FCR obsessed? FCR obsession entails regularly listening to customers using post-call surveys to enhance and improve customer service. FCR obsession also necessitates a paradigm shift in how a company views customer service for resolving an inquiry or problem using a call center.

2. VoC Listening Posts for Measuring and Benchmarking FCR

When the mission is to achieve high FCR and deliver great customer service, using the VoC listening posts is a must. Call centers that provide outstanding CX use VoC listening posts to measure, track, benchmark, and improve FCR and customer service.

3. Recognizing and Rewarding VoC Performance

Motivating agents to use the desired CX behaviors to achieve high call resolution performance and retaining the best agents are significant challenges. An effective recognition program will

significantly help management motivate agents to excel at providing great CX and high call resolution and retain the top call resolution performing agents.

4. VoC Closed-Loop FCR Improvement Team

The VoC closed-loop improvement process is a well-accepted ongoing business practice for identifying what areas to improve and for implementing people, process, and technology practices that will improve FCR and customer service performance on an ongoing basis.

5. Good Customer Service Metrics Performance Targets

Many senior call center managers ask SQM the following customer service questions, "What key performance indicators are most important, what are the world-call targets, and what is the best customer service employee accountability KPIs?"

6. Hiring Based on Being a Customer-Centric Fit

Agent turnover is the biggest issue hindering call centers in terms of delivering great customer service. A best practice for selecting an agent is to hire based on customer-centric fit. Put differently, hire for attitude versus aptitude.

7. Performance Management Incorporates VoC Data

Agent VoC Performance Management System uses VoC metrics such as FCR, call resolution, and Csat based on post-call survey data for creating agent accountability, performance reporting, improvement plans, annual performance appraisals, and compensation pay.

8. Desktop Applications that Help Agents Achieve High FCR and Great CX

SQM clients who have improved their FCR because of a new desktop application have done so by focusing on improving FCR. Call centers are so complex that they require many different desktop applications to support agents handling calls to provide FCR and a great CX.

9. Subject Matter Experts Help Agents Deliver FCR

Call center helpdesk agents assist frontline customer service agents in resolving calls or taking over a complex or an escalation call from the original frontline agent to resolve the customer inquiry or problem. In most cases, helpdesk agents are subject matter experts and can help frontline agents and customers resolve their inquiries or issues.

10. Supervisors Trained for Coaching Agents for High FCR

SQM agrees with the vast majority of call center professionals' opinion that coaching Agents is critical. However, there is an opportunity to be more effective at Agent coaching to improve FCR, call resolution, and customer service. Given the excellent opportunity to improve Agent call resolution and Csat coaching, all supervisors should be trained on a VoC Agent Coaching model.

11. QA Evaluations Include Surveys and Call Compliance Data

CQA combines call compliance metrics, judged by a QA evaluator, and service quality metrics,

judged by a customer via a post-call or email customer survey. CQA is based on the premise of letting the customer be the judge of their own experience and is one of the best practices for driving improvements in the FCR rate and customer service.

12. Call Handling Standards that Help Agents Deliver FCR and Csats

To help agents gain effective call handling practices, SQM has developed a Call Resolution Delivery Model that defines the customer service standards an agent should follow to successfully resolve customer calls at the world-class level of 95%.

13. Have a Comprehensive Agent Training Program

Call handling represents a much bigger opportunity to improve than soft skills to provide great customer service. SQM's view is that improving agent soft skills has a much more positive impact on customer care versus customer service.

14. Top 5 Call Center Agent Performance Metrics

SQM's experience is that most call centers that improve customer service do so by creating agent accountability for customer service metrics and reducing the agent source of errors for repeat calls to resolve an inquiry or problem. Moreover, improving customer service based on motivating and creating more agent accountability tends to be quicker than fixing the organizational source of error issues.

15. Using Service Recovery for Improving Csats and Retention

A call center's escalation support queue's primary purpose is to have those agents working in that queue either assist customer service agents in resolving a call or resolve a complex or a complaint call by talking to the customer directly. The agent support queue is the last line of defense in many cases for resolving a complex call or a customer complaint and retaining a customer.

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