

Leadership Development: A Comprehensive Guide

A Guide on How to Improve your Leadership Style to Achieve High Call Center Csat and Agent Engagement

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[1. What is the Leadership Definition?](#)

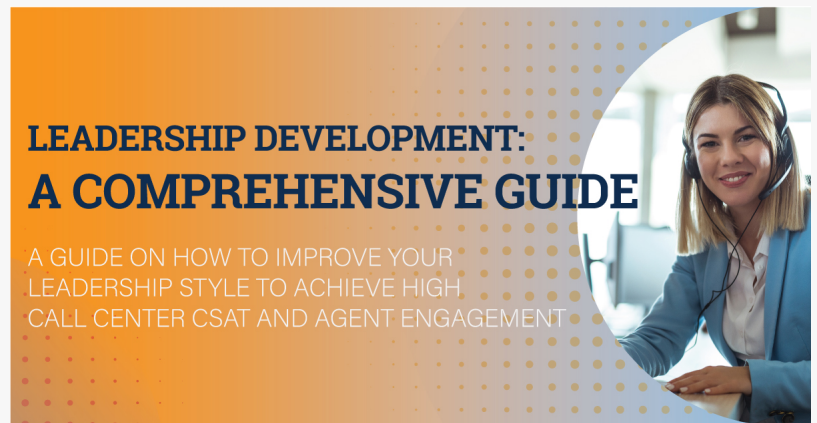
Leadership is a complex topic that has been discussed and debated by practitioners, researchers, and academics for a long time. However, there is a general acceptance that leadership styles can be defined as a behavioral approach that a leader uses to influence the behavior of their followers.

[2. Why is it Important to Know Your Leadership Style?](#)

Most call center practitioners believe a supervisor's leadership style is essential for helping agents achieve high performance. Therefore, knowing your leadership style is important for a call center leader to help deliver great customer satisfaction and agent engagement. A recent poll we conducted showed that leadership style is the second most important call center supervisor skill, just behind their coaching ability. Additionally, it is widely believed that the supervisor's leadership and coaching ability are the keys to helping agents improve First Call Resolution (FCR) and Customer Satisfaction (Csat).

[3. What is a Good Leadership Style?](#)

While there are many leadership styles used in call centers, it has been SQM's experience that servant, participative and transformational have been the most effective for achieving high



Leadership Style Guide Thumbnail

customer satisfaction and agent engagement.

Many managers' leadership style is rooted in their personalities, experience, and preference. However, strictly adhering to only one leadership style can hinder a call center leader's or company's success in achieving high call center Csats and agent engagement.

A widely recognized approach to leadership is to use a situational leadership style. This leadership approach is based on the demands of a particular situation.

Good leaders can improve those around them (e.g., managers, supervisors, agents) and achieve high performance. There are many ways to evaluate a good leader, such as their direct reports have high Csats and engagement, but I also look for the employees who report to a good manager to be motivated, get better at their jobs, and become better leaders themselves.

Many essential qualities contribute to a good leader for a call center. In our recent poll question, we asked, "What is the most important leadership quality for a good call center leader?" Our research showed that leadership qualities of communication & coaching were viewed as the most important in a call center environment, perhaps because of the need for standardized operating procedures to deliver a consistent CX.

[4. How to Know Your Leadership Style?](#)

Please complete the online leadership style questionnaire to determine and compare your dominant style to other styles. In addition, it might be helpful to ask others what they think your dominant leadership is; it could be different than what you consider it to be.

5. How to Develop Leadership Skills and be a Good Leader?

To be a good leader, you need to understand your leadership style and your leadership quality, strengths, and weaknesses. Good leaders can connect emotionally with their agents by having strong communication skills, encouraging personal growth and development, and using a two-way feedback approach. Some good leaders are introverts, and others are extroverted. Many leadership experts believe that a specific personality is not required to be a good leader. However, many leadership qualities have been identified as strong indicators of good leadership in a call center environment.

The top call center leadership qualities that successful Csats leaders have in common include:

- Communicating & Coaching
- Inspiration & Motivation
- Problem-Solving & Decision Making
- Think Strategically & the Big-Picture

A. Communicating & Coaching

The foundation of good leadership is strong communication and coaching skills. It is highly unlikely that you will be skilled in the other essential leadership qualities identified in this blog if you don't have effective communication skills. To improve your communication skills, you will want to explain everything from call center goals to call handling standards in concise language.

To be an effective communicator, you need to be a good listener. To improve your listening skills, you'll want to practice your active listening skills (e.g., carefully paying attention to what the agent is saying).

B. Inspiration & Motivation

Agent engagement remains low in the call center industry. SQM research shows that only 27% of agents say they are highly engaged. Perhaps this is one of the main reasons annual agent turnover in 2022 is over 35% and is the highest turnover percentage we have ever measured in over 25 years of benchmarking this metric. High agent turnover is one of the main reasons why call centers have low Csats. Inspiring and motivating agents are great techniques for increasing agent engagement and achieving high Csats.

Good leaders have a Csats goal and the ability to inspire how agents can help achieve it and get them excited about it. This means that the leader maintains a positive yet realistic presence within the call center, assisting agents in staying motivated and engaged and remembering what they are working to achieve.

C. Problem Solving & Decision Making

Problem solving for customer issues at the call center supervisor and agent levels has been an Achilles heel for the industry for a long time. Furthermore, SQM has found that most call centers struggle with improving Csats. Unfortunately, only 2% of call centers can sustain 3 years of continuous improvement for increasing the Csats and FCR rate annually. A significant reason for the Csats and FCR continuous improvement issue is that most call center leaders and agents are not skilled in problem-solving techniques for improving Csats.

D. Think Strategically & the Big-Picture

What is Thinking Strategically?

Customer service strategically thinking involves seeing the big-picture, planning for the future, and allocating resources to implement their plan to gain a competitive advantage in your call center's Csats.

Why is Strategic Thinking Important?

SQM believes that call center leaders need to focus more on enhancing their strategic thinking skills. The competitive environment can change quickly for any company or call center. New trends in people, processes, and technology may emerge quickly and require your call center to take advantage of them or fall behind in your Csat performance.

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