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Welcome to this week's issue of Call Centre 101

To navigate between the topic-streams, click on the coloured tabs above or on the management objectives below:

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Hoseasons is to increase the size of its call centre by 15 per cent to meet increasing demand for UK holidays. The operator is recruiting new staff to ensure that it can deal with increased call volumes. The company has reported more than 3000 calls being received on its busiest days. The past two weeks have each seen an increase in bookings through travel agents of more than 50 per cent...

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Wellbeing

Management objective: Cut absenteeism and boost morale with subtle changes to occupational healthcare

Author: Paul Hagger, on behalf of **Keep IT Clean**

When businesses are faced with navigating an economic downturn, it becomes all the more important for management to implement efficient strategies to maintain their organisation's targets, and keep employees motivated.

Many initiatives have been implemented across a range of businesses to bridge the gap between management and employees, to ensure that operational output is at its most efficient throughout these times. However, it seems that one factor remains seemingly beyond management control – absence.

If absenteeism is not properly managed, it can quickly develop into a significant and unwanted cost for employers. A recent study into absence management by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) has revealed that the average amount of days taken off per employee due to illness currently stands at 8.4 working days a year. This equates to 3.5% of lost productivity per employee with the average cost of absence per worker currently standing at £666. Organisations such as call centres, that often encounter a high turnover of staff, inevitably suffer a higher cost and have an understandably larger problem to deal with.

The CIPD findings cite minor illnesses such as colds, flu and stomach upsets as the main cause of short term absence in manual and non-manual workers. Interestingly, one study found that 60% of common illnesses actually stem from the workplace environment. This may sound alarmingly high but considering that poorly cleaned workstations can harbour up to 10 million microbes and the average office contains 20,961 microbes per square inch, it is easy to understand how businesses could be held accountable for their own lost productivity if office cleanliness is left at the bottom of the list.

The CIPD study also suggests that organisations need to re-evaluate their occupational healthcare policies in order to minimise the costs and overall impact of absence due to minor illnesses. However, with many industries currently suffering in the midst of an economic crisis, call centres in particular may not be in a position to facilitate the necessary resources required to develop lavish occupational healthcare programmes.

Occupational Healthcare

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is urging companies to adopt and implement positive proactive occupational health strategies to ensure that work does not pose a risk to employee's health, and that workers themselves do not pose a risk to the health of others. Another aim of the HSE is to bring about a cultural change whereby companies are proactively identifying the prevalence of poor occupational health as well as monitoring and managing the extent to which it affects an individual's working life.

In simple terms, companies that continue to neglect occupational healthcare need to sit up and take note of the real benefits they can reap from actively tackling the problem. A commitment from management to prioritise employee healthcare can not only result in a morale boost for employees and lead to better staff retention and involvement, but will also reinforce management's confidence that they are managing an efficient and motivated workforce.

A major survey of UK employers by EEF, who provide support and advice for business, has made a clear link between investment in occupational health provision and reduced rates of absence among workers. It found that where there was occupational healthcare support (whether internal or external), 39% of companies saw a reduction in short-term absence and 28% saw a reduction in long-term absence. Where there was no provision, these figures fell to 22% and 19% respectively.

In the UK, it is widely considered that the field of occupational healthcare is developing at a slow rate; this is often more attributable to a lack of awareness on the part of management as opposed to a reluctance to invest in the general welfare of employees.

The nature of call centre work denotes that management operating within this industry must be astute when assessing the needs of their employees. There are many cost efficient measures that can be implemented which can significantly cut absenteeism and improve staff morale.

Occupational healthcare does not always have to involve expensive gym memberships, physiotherapists and on site stress counselors. In truth, the most subtle of changes to an office environment can have a huge impact on employee's health and wellbeing.

It's the thought that counts:

Perhaps the most cost effective way of beginning to tackle the issue of staff absenteeism is by improving the environment in which the organisation operates.

Different kinds of incentives will of course work better in different environments and are wholly dependent on how well management can gauge their employees' perceptions of their jobs. If the HSE is to succeed in bringing about a cultural change, management needs to be more proactive in their approach to ground level strategies.

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Below are two examples of simple initiatives that organisations could implement and their benefits:

(1) Offer all staff free fruit and fruit juice:

A relatively inexpensive gesture which could have a huge impact on staff morale.

Benefits:

- Reduced number of sick days – By actively promoting a healthy lifestyle this gesture shows that the health of staff is a top priority.
- Higher staff involvement, commitment and retention – Staff can be proud that their company goes the extra mile for them through providing free fruit and juice, which would be considered a luxury by employees at another company.
- Improves productivity – Another positive effect of this initiative is an increase in employee motivation to work for the organisation.
- Enhances corporate image – Show competitors and potential clients that management are confident and versatile enough to prioritise their employee's day to day healthcare.

(2) Invest in regular cleaning of employee workstations:

Subtle changes can have a significant impact on the way that employees perceive their position within a company. Desktop or workstation cleanliness is often overlooked by management who may consider this to be a minor part of occupational health strategies; however regular cleaning can greatly enhance the positive attitude and general health of employees.

Benefits:

- Reduced number of sick days – Remember, 60% of minor illnesses spread within the workplace. In one London office tested for bacteria, a microbiologist recommended that one of the keyboards be removed from the office as it had over 150 times the amount of recommended levels of bacteria.
- Higher staff involvement, commitment and retention – Employees can be safe in the knowledge that their employer can provide them with a clean and healthy working environment.
- Improve productivity – Nurtured workers are proven to look upon their job more favourably. If generating motivation within the workplace is challenging, this approach is simple but will not go unnoticed.
- Longer equipment lifespan - Properly maintaining equipment such as computers can double their lifetime and reduce the need to replace expensive equipment with already over-stretched budgets.
- Enhanced corporate image – Management displaying a responsibility towards its employees is a massive coup for any organisation. The difference between winning or losing a new contract could hinge on something as little as a potential client noticing a lacklustre group of employees working on scruffy keyboards, monitors and desks or a motivated group of employees working in a tidy environment.

These are just two examples of incentives that can be incorporated into an organisation's occupational health strategy which can result in bottom-line benefits for an organisation. It is imperative for decision makers to remember that whatever incentives are implemented need to be appropriate for the culture of the organisation and the workplace at hand. Management must also ensure that they have successfully gauged their employees perception of their current environment and the position they hold within the company.

Next Step

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Visit Website: <http://www.keep-it-clean.co.uk>

Profile

Keep IT Clean are a specialist IT cleaning company with over 250 clients spread nationwide.

Recent research into the cleanliness of offices shows that each square inch of a keyboard can contain up to 3,295 different kinds of germs, and that bugs such as listeria or salmonella can linger for up to 24 hours on the keys, the computer mouse and phone. When the IT equipment is shared with colleagues such as in call centre environments the problem intensifies.

Despite this warning, management rarely see workstation cleanliness as a top priority. However, a clean workplace environment has many distinct advantages. Whilst limiting the spread of infection which is a chief cause of sickness and absence, regular cleaning also extends equipment lifetime, helps to project a professional image and improves staff morale by proving that their wellbeing is a priority to their employers.

If you would like to find out more about keeping your IT clean, contact Claire on 01603 731058 or visit www.keep-it-clean.co.uk.

Management

Buyer's Guide to...

Management objective: Manage redundancies successfully as part of a change programme

Author: Katherine Wiid, **Recrion**

In the current economic climate a lot is being written about redundancies: and according to the latest statistics the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, as many as 50% of companies in the UK will be making cuts and going through some form of restructure as a direct result of the downturn. Whilst we are all trying to focus on the positive, it is worth considering the management of the redundancy process as a necessary step to a successful change programme.

Take a step back and consider all the angles

Finding out that your future employment is at risk can come as a real blow. Finding out that you need to announce redundancies to your employees or team members, and manage the fall-out, can be even harder. The fear of recrimination, "survivor's guilt", and the sheer emotional impact of such a difficult task can be daunting to the point of seeming impossibility.

Handling redundancies the right way, and giving those who are affected the very best support, can make a huge difference not only to them, but to you too.

Also critical, however, is to maintain focus on the wider business objectives behind the decision, and ensure that the impact on KPI's and service levels as a result of the announcement of impending redundancy is minimised.

The tips below will help you minimise the impact of redundancies on those at risk, on your business, and on you.

Information is key

"Why me?" will be the natural and most common reaction you'll face when breaking the news. Making sure that you have a firm grasp of the business reasons behind the decision will allow you to give a clear and persuasive answer to the question – and in uncertain times that's exactly what those at risk need.

The "rumour mill" will probably already be in full swing by the time you come to make your announcement, so nipping any potentially damaging myths in the bud as early as possible will serve to lessen people's anxiety. Remember – however bad your news is, it's probably not as bad as the gossip has built it up to be, so put people's minds at rest as quickly as possible.

Of course, it's not good news you're delivering, and you will face a variety of reactions. Be clear about what information you can give out, and which details do need to stay behind closed doors, so that you don't accidentally reveal sensitive information to the wrong people or at the wrong time.

Selection

To ensure that everyone at risk is treated fairly, your criteria for selecting those who will stay and those to "let go" should be well established. There are of course guidelines on what are deemed acceptable criteria, but as a rule of thumb you should keep in mind that it is the "position" which is made redundant, not the individual. Determine which roles are critical for the continued survival of the business (liaising with other managers, and HR where necessary), and then set out how you will decide which employees are best suited to fulfil those roles.

Again, these criteria should be communicated as quickly and clearly as possible to prevent your people losing focus on their day-to-day activities.

How to go about it

It's almost impossible to carry out a redundancy process without significant upheaval and disruption to your day-to-day business. However, by working alongside HR and the wider management team, you can help to implement a "strategic redundancy plan" that will help you to minimise this disruption. By having a strategic plan you will ensure that you do things in the right order, and thereby also help to minimise your risk. It will also ensure that you do it in as fair a manner as possible to employees, while at the same time helping to protect the image and brand of your business.

Ensure managers are aware of the risks

The maximum 'unfair dismissal' penalty for individuals is **£66,200** with effect from 1 February 2009. In addition, there can be a 10% to 50% uplift for failure to follow statutory dismissal procedures.

Where discrimination is proved on grounds of age, sex, marital status, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, there is no limit to potential financial penalty. Particular care should be taken to ensure that selection criteria are not indirectly discriminatory.

For example, selecting part-timers for redundancy may amount to indirect discrimination against women. Selection of women for redundancy on the grounds of pregnancy will also be considered unfair. Again, this shows just how important it is for you to keep clear and accurate records detailing your selection process and the reasons behind each redundancy.

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Take a moment for yourself

Of course it does happen that the very managers who must break the bad news and inform their teams about impending redundancy also find their position at risk. Whether this applies to you or not, you should take time to consider the impact of bearing such news to your colleagues, and take steps to ensure that you are not negatively impacted.

On an emotional level, it is as important for you as it is for everyone else, to remember the business decisions behind the move, and to remind yourself that by dealing with the matter efficiently and fairly, you are in fact giving each of your colleagues a part of the help and support they will need to get through this difficult time.

It's hard, of course, but you should try to remain detached from the personal and emotional impact on each of your colleagues.

The meetings

The first part of the consultation process is to invite all affected employees to a meeting. Prepare for that meeting by setting up a checklist of things that they need to go through, and in particular by establishing what information can and cannot be shared with employees.

Work out with the wider management team and HR what decisions can be shared with employees at this stage, such as enhancements to the statutory redundancy pay calculations, or information on support and advice services which are to be made available. Some of the information can be used in written communication to employees – on notice boards for example.

Employees will have questions; and it's important to anticipate that individuals may react differently to the news. Some will talk a lot; some very little. Some will be angry, some will be sad and will want to talk about "the good old days" or when they joined the company and how they started out. The best thing to do in these circumstances is to allow people the time to talk, and then when they have said everything they want to, return to your plan of what you want to say. Investing a few minutes in hearing them out can save a lot of hard feelings and resentment in an already testing environment.

Support

People don't fear redundancy: they fear what redundancy means for them. Loss of income, and its impact on their ability to pay bills, meet the mortgage, and feed themselves and their families. Consider this "bigger picture" when you're offering support - both to those at risk, and the managers and colleagues who remain in the business.

For those who are leaving your support may range from: offering help on writing CVs; providing access to employment resources during company time; liaising with local recruitment agencies and other employers; and, helping those affected find alternative employment. Whatever you do will pay dividends by motivating staff to continue to perform to the best of their abilities right to the end of their time with your company.

But don't forget about those who stay. Simply because they are safe from redundancy right now does not mean they won't be concerned about their future security and the continued health of the business. Remember also that they will be parting with friends and colleagues who are being made redundant, therefore take steps to ensure that they are not impacted by the changes going on around them.

So what sort of practical steps can you take to make your redundancy process as positive as possible?

- Work with other managers and HR to create a central resource of information that can be shared with employees to keep them as well informed as possible. This is key to keeping motivation as high as possible during a difficult time.
- Invest in outplacement services to help you provide a broad cross section of support, both to those at risk and those who will be staying behind.
- Keep a lookout for alternative job opportunities for those at risk, both within the company and in other businesses.

Handling redundancies badly can lead to not only a great deal of stress for all those involved, but potentially costly legal proceedings when claims of unfair dismissal arise. Ensuring that your management team and HR division are suitably prepared to deal with the process in a professional, considered and appropriate way can help to protect not only the individuals, but also the company as a whole.

Next Step

Making redundancies in Recrion's experience starts out as a business decision; but managing redundancies requires a human touch and an understanding of the wider implications of the decision. Recrion's team of HR professionals helps you to communicate openly and honestly with everyone affected by the changes and provides support so that you can make your business stronger, healthier, and create a reputation as a responsible and compassionate employer.

For further information on how to reduce the impact of redundancies on your business and on your employees, please contact Katherine Wiid at katherine@recrion.co.uk or call 01780 484910.

To find out more about Recrion please visit us at www.recrion.co.uk

To read a Recrion case study looking into how we can help organisations respond to changing business requirements, please visit: <http://www.recrion.co.uk/redundancy-case-study>

Homeworking

Management objective: Utilising homeworkers to augment a staffing strategy during a recession

Author: Dave Pauling, regional sales director UK, Middle East and Africa, **Interactive Intelligence**

During the recession many contact centres are struggling in terms of forecasting headcount on an ongoing basis to meet varying call volumes. As such achieving adequate levels of staffing has become a complex task.

However, this task can be eased by augmenting the traditional office-based workforce with agents who work from home. There are a range of physical costs which amount to a fixed price for each agent based in the contact centre. These include desk, PC, chair, phone, heating, lighting and power. In times of recession, justifying the cost of additional agents can be difficult; this is where leveraging the power of homeworkers can help contact centres to effectively meet staffing demands while controlling operational costs.

By implementing agents that work from home the contact centre can eliminate the physical costs of having an agent on the premises as these costs will be incurred by the worker themselves. In addition to the economic benefits, homeworking solution can also provide a flexible staffing solution.

Typically homeworkers will prefer to work the shifts that are less popular with traditional office-based agents. Those agents based in the office will often prefer to work a traditional nine to five day. Evening shifts are notoriously difficult to fill as agents would rather spend time at home with their families, and depending on the location of the contact centre, female agents may feel less safe travelling to and from the office.

Homeworkers can be used to address these peaks and troughs in demand throughout the course of the day and prevent scheduling difficulties. For example, a mother working from home may only work a few hours per day that fit in around her schedule, such as when her children are at school or in bed. By scheduling homeworkers during times of high demand, or low level of staff resources in the contact centre, an optimum level of service can be maintained at all times without increasing operational hard costs. Homeworkers can also act as a differentiator for businesses, protecting against the highs and lows of the labour market and allowing contact centres to overcome seasonal variations and geographic challenges.

Adopting a homeworking strategy can also help to reduce staff turnover, a major concern in an industry with annual turnover of 20%. Studies have revealed that staff turnover and absenteeism for homeworkers is 50% lower than for those based in the office helping to avoid costly on-boarding of new staff.

In addition to saving on the costs of having agents physically based in the contact centre, homeworking solutions can also help contact centres to reduce carbon emissions and operate more environmentally conscious way as fewer agents are making the journey to and from the office each day.

Typically there has been much nervousness in the contact centre around implementing a homeworking solution, as agents inherently lack the visibility of their contact centre-based counterparts. As such, when considering a solution to facilitate homeworking, contact centres should look for products that offer functionality such as real time monitoring of activity, on hook/off hook and presence management.

This will allow supervisors to monitor when an agent is logged in and ready to take calls. This aspect is particularly pertinent if you are paying agents by the hour, when the ability to accurately calculate the hours that have actually been worked becomes critical.

Another important factor to consider is the security of data. If an agent is not physically based in the building it should not mean that the calls and data they handle are any less secure. A solution that encrypts calls and allows for quality monitoring, coaching and voice recording will ensure there is no material impact to functionality for agents based at home.

In order to ensure this is the case, remote agents also need to have access to all of the same functionality when based at home as they would do in the office. This includes the ability to handle calls, emails, chats and generic object routing as well as other key business applications such as CRM, customer databases or online order processing systems with no reduction in service

In effect a homeworking solution should act as a seamless extension of the physical contact centre to offer customers a consistent level of service, regardless of where the agent they are interacting with is located.

Next Step

From its inception 13 years ago, Interactive Intelligence has offered users the functionality to log into the contact centre communications system via a remote PC or laptop from home so that users outside of the office environment can achieve the same level of functionality as if they were sat at a desk in the physical contact centre.

Interactive Intelligence's Customer Interaction Center (CIC) solution offers remote agents access to the same softphone application on their screen, as those based in the contact centre. This allows users to control, transfer or record calls. Therefore workforce performance and customer service levels can be maintained thanks to a range of features for every aspect of unified communication and interaction management.

CIC includes features such as ACD with multi channel queuing, speech enabled interactive voice response, recording, scoring and quality monitoring and supervision and system monitoring.

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The only difference to the solutions for those based at home is the way they connect and log in to the system. By offering pervasive connectivity irrelevant of location, the solution allows contact centres to benefit fully from a homeworking strategy.

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www.inin.com

Attrition

Management objective: Understand, manage and mitigate against the damaging, spiralling effects of attrition

Author: Keith Gait, Founder and Principal Consultant, **Orchid Consulting**

Attrition continues to be a key concern for all contact centres. The effects of unforecasted or unsustainable levels of attrition are felt right through the operation and across all support functions, and with its equally destructive cousin, Absenteeism, will lead to a decline in service performance and ultimately a deterioration in the customer experience.

Attrition is not just a management headache. It sets off a chain reaction, causing additional workload and adding contagion across the business.

It will impact on your workforce planning, as gaps in the schedule will need to be identified and managed. This will often mean either changes to existing rosters, or operating rosters short of the required headcount. Both will cause heightened levels of pressure, stress, anxiety, and resentment amongst those agents left to cover the gaps. This disruption to employee engagement can then in turn affect the wider culture around the site.

Recruitment and HR become stretched. Additional pressure is placed on the recruitment process and the people within it to find an increasing number of staff, in a shorter time frame. Apart from the increased workload, it is all too easy at this point to lower the threshold and hire people who would previously not have met the required standards. This is usually subconscious, but is often a conscious decision to meet the operational need to meet service. Often the gap is plugged by an increased reliance on temps or agency staff, a short term fix which is usually paid for further down the line.

HR become stretched as the volume of exit interviews increases. This is often one of the first areas to be dropped, but this is a fatal error, which among other failings can lead the floor to feel that management have stopped caring.

The next area impacted is Training. Not only is additional training resource required, but pressure is then on to condense the training period in order to get staff onto the floor. This in turn affects the on-boarding of new staff into the live environment, as either additional time and effort will be required by the operation to bring their knowledge and understanding up to standard, or due to operational constraints this will often be neglected, which again leads to upset amongst the new staff who feel unsupported, and resentment among existing staff or frontline managers who have to allocate additional time to rework, often referred to as Failure Demand.

This can then in turn affect your forecasting again, as call volumes increase due to a drop in first time resolution, and an increase in repeat calls or complaints.

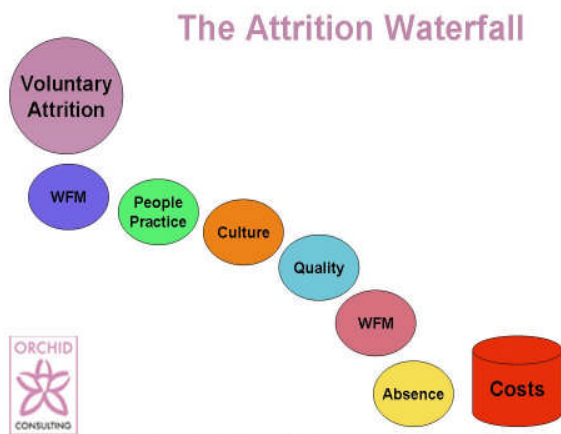
All these impacts of course affect Quality. Quality of Staff, Quality of Performance, Quality of Culture, and Quality of the Customer Experience.

All these tensions will often first manifest themselves in increased absenteeism. This increases the pressure still further and compounds all the factors, creating a vicious circle of decline.

All of which of course adds significant costs to the running of the entire operation, either in additional support resources, additional facilities, additional FTE, and increased compensation, refunds and goodwill payments.

This increase in the cost to service or decline in customer experience has often been the death knell of many organisations in recent times, and has left many others with serious dents to their reputation.

The ultimate end point of this Attrition Waterfall is that everybody drowns. We have seen it happen, but the situation can be recovered.



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Involuntary attrition

So your attrition is nearly 0%. Fantastic? Well not quite.

In any service organisation there needs to be an element of involuntary attrition to clear dead wood and disruptors.

What we outlined above is primarily the affect of Voluntary Attrition, sometimes referred to as Negative Attrition, where the agents or managers have chosen to leave of their own accord.

In these increasingly fragile and uncertain economic times, literally millions of people are fearful for their jobs, and hundreds of thousands have already lost theirs. The call centre industry is no exception and is not immune, with a news story almost every day of another call centre closing or shedding jobs.

So people are thinking twice now about leaving a job they are not happy in. But do you want them to stay?

Retaining people in the operation who should no longer be involved in it, whether due to performance, attitude, conduct or competency, is just as dangerous. It is however, in the current climate, becoming increasingly difficult to rely on poor performers, disruptors or dead wood to take themselves out of the organisation.

The effects of retaining this group are similar to those described in The Attrition Waterfall, except that the damage to culture and employee engagement will be much more severe.

Committed, passionate, and competent staff become increasingly frustrated when they see continual non performers not being managed, and undermining the operation. They very easily, and quite rightly, blame managers for failing to act, or blame the company for not having the controls which enables poor performance to flourish, leading to resentment and a lack of respect.

This can very quickly cause a serious management headache, and is often a hidden contributory factor to high performers choosing to leave.

An unchallenged environment stifles creativity, development and progression of the service organisation, and the people who care about delivering it.

What is the right number?

I am often asked the question, "What is the right number for Attrition" . Our answer often is "It Depends"

Achievable and sustainable levels of Attrition will vary whether you are Public or Private Sector, by your call type, and by your relationship to the parent organisation.

Many large outsourcers for example, will plan and budget for Attrition of up to 50%. This is often necessary due to the work they undertake, and the basis on which they have to run their operation. At an In-house Call Centre, this would typically be planned to be under 30%. In many public sector call centres, Attrition will often be under 10%

In a sales environment, it is natural that there will be a much higher throughput of staff, and similarly in some locations there is a transient workforce.

The key is that it should be in balance with the organisation that you are and the business model within which you operate.

Clearly, Attrition upwards of 50% would set alarm bells ringing whatever the environment, but equally, Attrition in single figures can be a good thing, but as we have shown with Involuntary Attrition it can cause its own problems.

It is equally important that you establish the trends, and also identify in the life of an Agent where the Attrition is occurring.

Clearly, if your Attrition is on the increase, you need to identify the factors that are causing it. Are they internal or external factors? Are they environmental issues, stress issues, management issues, or are external forces at play, such as a competitor recruiting nearby, or a popular manager leaving, or a transport route being altered?

Typically, it will not be one single factor, so you must identify all the factors at play and manage or mitigate each one independently.

Where in the agent lifecycle the bulk of the attrition is occurring is also critical to identify. We worked with a client recently where we identified that 35% of the Attrition was happening within the first 13 weeks of service.

This would indicate that there was a problem with either Recruitment, Training, or how they were being on boarded into the live environment. We also discovered that a large percentage of both Attrition and Absenteeism was happening on one particular shift pattern.

Establishing these trends and indicators will help you identify where you need to dedicate your management and support resources.

In summary

Attrition is the biggest single problem for many call centres. It causes a problem with morale, culture, service and performance, but ultimately is the biggest cause of increased costs to the business.

As we have shown, excessively high attrition is dangerous, but the definition of excessive will vary according to your business, and that zero percent attrition is equally unappealing.

In the call centre industry, Attrition is a major contributor to business failure. You need to understand the balancing factors involved.

Attrition is estimated to cost UK Call Centres in excess of £1.1b every year.

What is it costing you?

Next Step

The challenges that managers and company leaders encounter are the same issues that Orchid confront every day. Challenges such as Attrition, People Practice, Service Performance, and preserving the highest level of service in an exceptionally competitive and financially unstable market.

Visit <http://www.orchidconsulting.co.uk/case-studies.php> to read our case studies, including how we reduced attrition at one call centre from over 130% to under 50%

Orchid is a people based business, run by highly experienced, front line people. All our Principal Consultants have over 18 years experience of running contact centres both large and small, across a range of sectors.

Our Vision is to be recognised by our clients, their customers, and our peers, for outstanding delivery. We achieve this through living our values, developing our expertise, and differentiating through our people.

We make a real and measurable difference to the call centre by providing effective, sustainable solutions to improve the performance and function of the organisation.

Click here to see what our clients say about us <http://www.orchidconsulting.co.uk/testimonials.php>

About the Author

Keith founded Orchid in January 2007, and is a judge at the European Call Centre Awards. Keith began his career as an advisor, and is passionate about operations that recognise their people as well as their customers.

Clients have included AXA, Ventura, Hammonds, and Marsh. Prior to founding Orchid, Keith was Customer Service Director at Sainsburys Mobile, and had a successful career with organisations such as Sitel, Barclaycard and NHS Direct, and has completed performance improvement and transformation programmes for a wide range of clients.

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