Measuring Call Center Performance

Global Best Practices

Key Metrics

❖ Chose metrics that reveal key insights into the customer experience, emphasizing quality and quantity equally

❖ Concentrate on four key areas to maximize customer satisfaction and to maintain an efficient, high-performance call center

- Telephone benchmarks
- Efficiency benchmarks
- Human resource benchmarks
- Service benchmarks

Telephone Benchmarks

Service Level

Service level is a percentage of calls received by the centre that are answered by a human agent within a certain time frame. **The global metric is 80% of calls answered in 20 seconds.**

This is the most common benchmark to measure the level of service a call centre provides its customers.

Average speed to answer

Although related to the service level, this benchmark also takes into account all of the calls that are not answered within 20 seconds. This results in an average overall. **The global metric is 28 seconds.**

If this metric is high, it may be wise to employ additional staff to maintain customer satisfaction.

Abandoned rate

Abandoned rate is the number of calls that are abandoned while the customer is waiting for a human agent. This value is expressed as a percentage of all calls received. **The global metric is 5% to 8%.**

The propensity for customers to abandon will vary considerably depending on the expectations that they have of the service being provided.

Efficiency Benchmarks

Accuracy of call forecasting

If actual calls are higher than predicted, there will not be enough staff to respond, which will put pressure on the entire team. This will impact the service level. If there are fewer calls than forecast, then agents will be under-utilized. Call forecasts need to be constantly reassessed and measured. **The global metric is a 5% variance.**

Adherence to schedule

The benchmark measures whether agents are on time for their shifts, whether they go to lunch and take breaks according to the schedule. This is particularly important in smaller call centers because there is not as much room for error. Some small centers may only have 2 agents on call at any time. **The global metric is 95%.**

Occupancy

Occupancy measures the average percent of time an individual agent or all agents are actively occupied on a call. This includes talk time and wrap up time. Occupancy does not include ready time. **The global metric is between 60-80%.**

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Efficiency Benchmarks, continued

Call duration

Call duration is the amount of time spent speaking to customers on the telephone. The cost of the call will help to curb long conversations. Calls may be longer initially as agents are still new to the product and systems. Encourage slightly longer first calls to reach resolution as this is more efficient than repeat calls. **The global metric is 4 minutes per call.**

Call wrap up time

The call wrap up time is the time that an agent takes after the call has finished to complete the case. This time may include updating the system, completing forms, and any other activities associated with the call. **The global metric is 6 minutes.** However, this metric is very industry specific.

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Human Resource Benchmarks

Absenteeism

Absenteeism tracks the average number of agent days lost per year through illness and unauthorized absences as a percentage of contracted days. This measure should include all forms of unauthorized absence including long term illness. This is a key indicator of underlying motivation and stress issues, and affects productivity and potential revenue. It is important to measure agent absenteeism separately from that of the managers and team leaders as there is usually quite a difference. **The global metric is 5%.**

Attrition

Attrition is a measure of staff turnover annually, expressed as a percentage. It is calculated by taking the number of people that have left the call center in a given year, for whatever reason, as a percentage of the total number of staff. It is important to use actual head count, rather than full time equivalents as the impact of attrition is the cost of re-recruitment and re-training of replacements, which is a per head basis. **The global metric is 15%.**

Service Benchmarks

Customer satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is a critical benchmark. A three pronged approach is recommended that combines quarterly customer surveys conducted by team leaders with independent third party analysis, and quality assurance measurements. **The global metric for customer satisfaction is 90%.**

First call resolution rate

First call resolution rate measures the percentage of all calls that are resolved on the first attempt, without the agent needing to refer the customer to a colleague, their manager, or calling the customer back. This measure should improve as agents become more confident with the product and systems. **The global metric is 70-75%.**

Quality assurance

Quality assurance measures quality of calls and is based on a set of criteria which the agent must cover during the call. Including, but not limited to:
- How the agent answers the call
- How they navigate the caller to a resolution
- How they end the call

Quality Assurance Process

❖ A quality assurance specialist or team leader listens to the recorded or live call and rates it using a comprehensive evaluation form

❖ Keep QA simple by focusing on 3 to 4 criteria

❖ Each criterion should be assigned a numeric value, and is weighted based on its impact on customer satisfaction as well as the call center's goals and requirements

❖ The scores are then added to create an final quality score for the call

❖ QA is not limited to calls. Call centers should also score email as well as any other form of customer interaction

❖ The QA specialist can also review the call with the agent as a coaching session to make improvements. At least 2 calls per agent should be assessed each week. QA results should form part of the agent's key job performance metrics.

❖ Calibration sessions should be held once a week to make sure QA assessors are scoring consistently.

Quality Assurance Criteria

❖ The following activities could be part of the QA process, but each assessment should focus on only 3 to 4 of the most important factors

- Appropriate greetings and other call scripts
- Following correct procedures regarding holds and transfers
- Upholding the culture and values of the call center
- Accurately capturing key customer data
- Understanding customer needs
- Providing customers with correct and relevant information
- First-contact resolution
- Compliance with privacy acts, customer verification and other measures
- Correct call coding
- Grammar and spelling in text communication, such as email and chat

Call Center Reporting

❖ It is vital for the staff to understand the metrics and their implications

❖ Create a metrics board with targets and actuals - keep them realistic and achievable. Celebrate successes

❖ Track a range of weekly and monthly reports

- ▪ Weekly Reports
  - ✓ Dashboard
  - ✓ Attendance/Absenteeism Reports
  - ✓ Attrition Reports
  - ✓ Weekly Metrics Board
  - ✓ Schedule Adherence Reports
- ▪ Monthly Reports
  - ✓ Schedule Adherence Report
  - ✓ Monthly Agent Ranking Report
  - ✓ Monthly & Quarterly Dashboard

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Reporting Dashboard

❖ Allows management to see at a glance how the call centre has performed the previous week, month, quarter or year

- Contains call center metrics and includes averages, actuals, and targets
- Shows graphic representation of trends
- States highs and lows, as well as steps taken to correct the lows

❖ Team leaders and operational manager must understand these reports and their implications