

Traits of a Good Contact Centre Manager

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In my area of profession, I have the opportunity to work with Contact Centre Managers who manage contact centre of different sizes (small, medium and big scale) in different industries. Based on my observations from the frequent interaction with these Contact Centre Managers, I have gathered that (and I believe you will agree with me) in the contact centre industry, there are so-called “Good” and “Not Good” Contact Centre Managers. In this article, I would like to share with you some of the traits of a Good Contact Centre Manager.

People Oriented

Very often we hear this sentence being spoken by the players in the contact centre industry: “The contact centre industry is all about P-E-O-P-L-E”. A quality Contact Centre Manager needs to be people oriented. This means that he or she must focus on developing the team of Supervisors and Agents. Spending sufficient time to build relationships and bonding; as well as consistently and continuously motivating and coaching the contact centre team are of utmost important. The common challenge that most Contact Centre Managers has is that they are too tied up with their daily tasks of attending regular meetings and putting together management reports resulting in lack of quality time to be spent with the team. One effective way to be “closer” to the operation team is for the Contact Centre Manager to sit in the open area of the calling floor, rather than in an enclosed so called “private” room. Such an approach provides the avenue to real-time assistance and guidance for those who need it and also able to foster open communication.

Performance Driven

The contact centre is a highly performance driven environment. A contact centre will not be considered as a “real” contact centre without having Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) or Scorecards in place. In some contact centres which I have worked with, I was surprised to find that the Contact Centre Manager does not truly understand the “whys” of having KPIs. In other words, KPIs were put in place simply because it is a must-have in a contact centre. A competent Contact Centre Manager, apart from knowing the “What” – i.e. the types of KPIs that are required, he or she must also be able to articulate “Why” – i.e. the rationale of having such KPIs. Thereafter, it is the “How” of implementing the KPIs to the team. Relating to the “People Oriented” element stated earlier, a good Contact Centre Manager will drive the contact centre team towards achieving the set KPI targets by providing assistance and support, even if he or she has to go the extra mile.

Thinking Out of the Box

This quality may sound very common, which can be applicable to everyone. Nevertheless it is especially essential as a trait of a good Contact Centre Manager. Inevitably contact centre is an extremely challenging working environment. Contact Centre Managers face different challenges almost everyday, both internally and externally. A competent and experienced Contact Centre Manager must have the capability to think out of the box to overcome these challenges. Recently I had an experienced Contact Centre Manager who shared with me that she felt disappointed that the current generations of managerial positions in the contact centre industry rarely think out of the box. Majority of them are very task oriented, i.e. they will carry out only the tasks that are being assigned to them. They will not think of alternative approaches to improve the operational processes. She also felt that there is a serious lacking of sense of belongingness and accountability in this group of people.

Lack managerial talent is a major challenge in all contact centres. This is a recognised challenge faced globally. In order to address this gap, and to build the next generation of competent Contact Centre Managers, the traits mentioned above should be inculcated upon at even the Supervisor or Team Leader level. As such, contact centre management should start identifying potential team leaders to be developed to accommodate the succession plan.

P/S: This article is dedicated to all the fantastic Contact Centre / Call Centre / Operations Managers out there. Well done for a marvelous job! My personal salute to you!

About FUSION CONSULTING and the Author:

Jeannie serves as Consultant, SEA for FUSION Consulting Sdn Bhd – the leading specialist in Workforce Optimisation (WFO) Solution, Human Capital Development and Business Consulting services in the South East Asia region. Her areas of expertise include Contact Centre Operations Review and Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation of Call Quality & Face-to-Face Service Interactions, Operations Management, Workforce Management, Performance Management, and Customer Feedback Management.

To find out how FUSION CONSULTING can assist your organisation to implement a successful contact centre human capital management strategy, please give us a call at +603 7494 0399, or email us at jeannie@fusioncomms.com