Contact Centre Agent Morale

Carolyn Blunt FCIPD

Nice to meet you

- Carolyn Blunt FCIPD (LinkedIn, Twitter)

- 15+ years contact centre operational and L&D experience with household names

- Leading award-winning performance improvement projects for clients focusing on people skills`

- Using the latest digital L&D approaches and thinking.

3 C's of Morale in a new world…

- Due to the global pandemic of 2020 we have seen contact centres as we know them close and move at speed and scale homeworking.

- This means that a lot of our tried and tested approaches to morale and motivation in physical world (team huddles, competitions and rewards) need to be moved to a virtual world.

- Morale and motivation will be impacted by factors such as personality, personal circumstances (family, health, loneliness, financial situation) and individual reserves of empathy and resilience.

- When morale and motivation are low you may notice poor performance (teamwork, deadlines, KPI's, customer feedback), absenteeism etc.

First C is for: Contact

Contact

Contact centres often attract extroverted personalities to work in them. People who get their energy from others, from talking, laughing and the fast-paced 'buzz' environment. With home working much of that energy source can be depleted if we don't stay in regular contact.

The following used as both 1:1 and Team help to keep your people focused and energised:

- ✓ Video calls/telephone calls/messaging
- ✓ Business updates, idea generation, problem solving and just pure fun (involve the team in creating these) and social contact
- ✓ Highlight of the week, prizes and surprises – the power of 'well done with xyz' and 'thank you for…' (genuine, timely, specific and public!)
- ✓ Showing an interest in the individual and their circumstances and concerns. Helping where possible to make things better or simply to reassure
- ✓ Personal development and training opportunities (learning, quizzes, competitions, feedback, progression).

Poll...

Second C is for: Coaching

Coaching

Thankfully, coaching in contact centres has evolved from a monthly, subjective tick box exercise to real-time, objective and practical information that the agent can really use to reinforce, remind and reveal best practice.

Coaching is not 'telling' or 'training'. It is asking positively framed questions and stimulating the other person to think for themselves:

"What do you think went well?"
"What could be even better if…?"
"Where could you find that information?"
"How would you approach that next time?"
"What can you do to help you remember?"

Using data and real examples avoids subjectivity. Review what 'good looks like' – how important are each of the measures now? Making time for coaching has always been important but now it is critical to keeping your isolated team members on track. Peer-to-peer coaching can be a great way to keep your team in contact and connected and lighten the load on your time. Just ensure they are trained to coach effectively.

Final C is for: Couragement

Couragement

The new way of working in 2020 requires bravery, patience, resilience – courage and encourgement.

There are going to be ups and downs, motivation and morale will not remain in a consistent upwards trajectory no matter how good your leadership and interpersonal skills are. You will also likely have tough days yourself.

Feelings and energy levels will come and go. The important point is to ensure your team feel supported and encouraged – something that can be a challenge with so much uncertainty surrounding us every day.

How has the performance of your agents changed in recent months?

There may have been some benefits to not commuting, having more time and letting go of some old expectations.

How can you demonstrate couragement?
Flexibility in shift patterns, being human, role-modelling empathy, providing opportunities to be future-ready with new skills etc.

Poll...

Thank You

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