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Call Center Quality Monitoring: Implementation and Training Tips

Includes:

- **Top Ten Ways Quality Monitoring Creates Better Trained Agents**
- **Top 10 Tips For Implementing A Quality Monitoring Solution In Your Call Center**

Top Ten Ways Virtual Observer Creates Better Trained Agents

This is an overview of how the Virtual Observer call center quality monitoring suite to improve the performance of your call center team.

1) Virtual Observer provides the ability for agents to hear themselves speak

Even the best agents make mistakes. Most don't even realize when they're making them. Playing back recorded interactions will enlighten them. When an agent first hears themselves going "Uhhmmm...", you can see the funny look on their face as they think, "that's what I sound like?". Chances are after they realize that there IS room for improvement, they will embrace the opportunity to do just that.

2) Virtual Observer's screen capture functionality allows for greater understanding of how agents use their applications

Screen Capture technology isn't only for nabbing solitaire players or web surfers during business hours – it can also be used to watch an agent navigate through a crm while helping a customer on the phone. Often time-saving process improvements can be made after observing CRM usage. Screen capture, and especially video-mode screen capture (where every on screen movement is captured, not just stills), can have a huge impact on ROI.

3) Evaluation functionalities speed up the learning curve

This one seems rather obvious – before the evaluation process was automated, supervisors had to sit side-by-side with employees, take notes, fill out spreadsheets, develop training material and provide feedback to employees and compile reports for management. If this process took three hours, the automated process takes three minutes. That's not an exact calculation, of course, but you get the picture. Even worse, recording calls without an evaluation element keeps you from improving at the rapid pace that is available to you.

4) Virtual Observer reports make it easy to identify employee strengths and weaknesses, and to identify where agents need training

Virtual Observer comes pre-loaded with agent performance reports that can identify where employees are struggling, even where entire groups falter across the board. This is key in developing relevant training materials that focus on specific problems.

5) E-learning features allow supervisors to send targeted training materials to agents

Once you've completed some evaluations and identified where employees need training, you then will have to set out to work on the areas they need help on. Once you've created your training materials, deployment of the appropriate content to the specific employee can be automated via "E-Learning" functionality. Confirmation of completion is then sent back to the supervisor after the employee has viewed his training material.

6) Virtual Observer's "packaging" features enable you to create a "greatest hits" list of the best and worst call examples

With Virtual Observer's "packaging" feature, you have the ability to grab your recorded events and organize them together for training purposes. You can then publish your package to the web, a shared network drive, or burned to cd. You can create a group of events related to a similar training theme, or even a "greatest hits" collection of stellar service calls sure to impress the executives.

7) Virtual Observer can reduce turnover and stagnation by providing a measurable means of improvement

A good quality monitoring system such as Virtual Observer can provide managers with the ability to focus in on skill areas where employees need help. Implemented properly, a Virtual Observer can provide a continuous improvement of agent performance. Agents will grow less frustrated and stagnant. As their skills improve, so will their ability to get to the next level.

8) A successful quality monitoring implementation enables teams to work to common goals and expectations

No QA program should be implemented without first having everyone on board with both the concept and the goals. Both management and employees should have common goals, expectations and metrics – the momentum of a cohesive team effort will often empower the ability to exceed those goals.

9) Virtual Observer can affect your entire organization. Customized reports can allow you to determine if training needs are for individuals, teams, or the entire organization

Having the ability to focus in on training requirements for individual agents is one benefit of a solid reporting mechanism, but quality monitoring reports should also allow you to examine your teams' deficiencies, and organizational problems across the board. This will allow you to deploy individual, team and company-wide training programs and improve overall call center performance.

10) Virtual Observer can rapidly deliver a return on investment

Once a quality monitoring program has been implemented, the return on investment can be realized very quickly. This translates to the bottom line via more upsells, saves and new sales, less turnover, faster training cycle time for new hires, and much more.

Top 10 tips to implementing the Virtual Observer quality monitoring solution suite in a customer service call center

Call centers traditionally utilize some degree of agent monitoring to identify weaknesses and improve customer service strengths. Preparing for agent reaction to the implementation of automated call recording systems is an important part of the entire process. By no means is this a finalized list - it's more of a dynamic starting point to a really good white paper. The tips in this list are generated by actual client success stories.

1. **Write a clear outline of the reasons behind bringing a call recording system into your call center's work flow:**

- Benefits to agents
- Benefits to customers
- Benefits to company

It's always good to start with an outline before rolling out something new. It's like using a recipe before you cook. Not sure if that's the best comparison, but you get the picture. Your outline is your blueprint for success.

2. **Introduce the concept of Virtual Observer / quality monitoring well in advance and initiate tasks to empower agents to participate in the process**

- The purpose of call quality monitoring is NOT to catch employees slacking off, but to help improve customer service and meet overall performance metrics
- Employees can help define the quality assurance metrics and play a significant role in continuous performance improvement

Always use the word "we" when addressing your employees. Make sure they know that you're on the same side and that this implementation will benefit everyone in the company - you aren't trying to catch someone playing solitaire or visiting illicit web sites.

3. **Reiterate company customer service goals**

- Customers are the ones who actually pay salaries and wages
- It is often much easier to retain customers than get new ones
- Treat all co-workers as customers and good habits will form

This should hardly be done only for purposes of the call monitoring implementation, but should be reiterated often. The most successful companies in the world are the ones with the strongest customer service beliefs, unless of course, you count organized crime.

4. **Create a "team" atmosphere for your agents**

- Set up a team recognition and rewards program
- Highlight stellar service examples via internal emails and newsletter articles/photos
- Sub-teams should be formed to make task management easier

Is it any wonder why basketball teams full of confident role players (2003-2004 Detroit Pistons) always overachieve while collections of individuals seem to fail (2005-2006 New York Knicks)?

5. **Make sure the Telephony and IT sub-teams know their roles and responsibilities in carrying out their end of the plan**

- All part of the same larger team along with the agents, managers and supervisors - Create detailed project plans for each sub-team If your IT and Telecom teams are uninformed about a new implementation, and they find out about it just as the call recording servers are rolled in to the data center, there may be unforeseen

complexities that could have been prevented unnecessary problems.

6. **Educate your call center agents on their sub-team's specific quality improvement goals**

- Increase upsells
- Increase saves
- Increase new sales
- Call time to resolution
- Caller time on hold
- Ask them for other ideas

"Our common goals are to increase upsells by 40% over the next two quarters. We believe we can accomplish this by focusing on improving our customer service techniques in the call center."

7. **Include agents in coming up with evaluation criteria and forms**

- once the metrics are defined, your agents can help you define evaluation criteria, in essence, creating the forms
- Self-evaluation is often one of the most effective building blocks to improvement. More and more companies are asking their employees to perform self-evaluations - and it's not because managers are lazy

8. **Appoint a few agents to a "system review sub-team" to represent agent feedback on what could be improved with the quality monitoring program.**

- System improvements wish list
- Team goal review
- Evaluation criteria review

This would be akin to asking Derek Jeter, Jorge Posada and Mariano Rivera to provide input to Yankees GM Brian Cashman relative to personnel additions, potential team chemistry issues, etc. Their input is invaluable because they are out there everyday in the trenches, just like their call center agent counterparts.

9. **Throw a great kick off party**

- Announce weekly performance goals and prizes
 - At the party, allow your agents to evaluate supervisors' calls
- Every great party needs a contest with fun prizes. Give the best evaluations a cool gift, such as a Starbucks card or Ebay gift certificate.

10. **Schedule a benchmarking session with another call center that has been quality monitoring for over a year and seen improvements**

- Exchange discoveries, stats, tips
- Not only would this be a fun exercise, but watch people relate as they realize common issues in their everyday jobs - and watch them bond as they solve these problems....then watch your company's customer service goals be accomplished.