



## Age Old Sayings Still Ring True...Metrics Matter

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Recently I visited two contact centers encountering the same challenge. Both centers grew quickly over the past three years and now seek to formalize and improve. One has virtually no metrics or reports; the other is drowning in reports. Both are struggling.

Metrics matter. They keep you focused on the success factors for your environment and help you stay the course. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are the *specific* metrics and targets selected for your contact center based on your strategy and goals. They are influenced by the specific industry and products or services provided and should align and support company goals. When determining your KPIs, keep in mind:

- **Typical KPIs:** Most contact centers at least track Service Level (SL) for calls, Response Time (RT) for other media, Abandon Rate, Quality scores, and Customer Satisfaction (cSat). An increasing number now include First Contact Resolution (FCR).
- **Center-specific KPIs:** Some metrics conform to specific center and staff roles and include things such as sales revenue (or conversion or retention) per agent, returns per agent, average sales order, cost per transaction, etc.
- **KPI Balance:** Most centers look at agent efficiency through adherence to schedule, occupancy, and average handle time (AHT) while emphasizing effectiveness through Quality Monitoring (QM) or error rates.
- **KPI Weight:** Some KPIs are more important than others. The ones that tie most directly to business goals and/or individual control tend to be linked to performance evaluations (referred to as measures). Others merit attention to the extent that they reveal important trends or outliers (referred to as monitors). For example, a sales-oriented center might measure revenue per agent but monitor AHT.
- **Keep It Simple:** “The more the merrier” does not hold true with metrics. Focusing on a few measures keeps the message clear within your center and yields better results. Focusing on dozens of metrics may confuse your team or send conflicting messages, thereby inhibiting success.
- **Be Role Specific:** Each role may have two to six or so KPIs for their focus. The KPIs for an agent are a subset of those for a manager or support center staff based on their responsibilities. Agent focus may be on adherence to schedule, cSat, QM, and FCR. Managers focus on those plus SL, RT, and employee satisfaction. Support center staff focus on KPIs for their specific areas such as Forecast Accuracy for the Workforce Management team.

### ***Once you've got them, do something with them!***

Metrics won't do you much good unless you organize your operation to drive activities and behaviors toward your stated goals. This means aligning:

**Training:** Convey KPIs with new hire training and tie center training back to specific KPI attainment whenever possible.



**Quality:** Align QM and Voice of Customer (VoC) metrics to ensure that you and your customers agree on what constitutes a good job. Provide timely agent-specific feedback for continuous improvement in contact efficiency and effectiveness.

**Coaching:** It does no good to train and audit center staff if center management does not investing in consistent coaching for performance management. Recognize and promote successes as well as target opportunities for continuous improvement.

**Reporting:** Share the numbers. Visibility drives performance. Present the big picture to executives and a more granular view to agents and managers.

### ***Technology is your Friend***

Whether technology is abundant or you're running your center on a shoe-string budget, there are tools available to help you keep your targets in mind and drive desired outcomes. Low technology options include posting information and status towards goals on bulletin boards within your center, in break/lunch areas, in hallways or elevators. Keep it fresh, informative, and even fun when you have good news to share.

Electronic displays show calls in queue, team metrics, or specific messages based on current events. Centers are increasingly moving to desktop displays which provide information on KPI targets and results at an agent's, manager's, or executive's fingertips. The greater the visibility and timeliness with metrics, the greater the results in individual performance management and goal achievement.