Characteristics of engaged contact center employees

Characteristics of engaged call center employees

A key and enduring challenge for call center team leaders revolves around addressing agent disengagement. Mitigating this all too common outcome is tied directly to several key accountability metrics, such as:

- 🟠 Improving customer service delivery
- 🟠 Boosting employee and organizational productivity
- 🟠 Reducing costs

A disengaged agent will damage all these key metrics, and ultimately contribute to costly turnover. Call centers are notorious for having high turnover, and even the layperson can probably venture some guesses as to why.

we explored six factors that contribute to call center employee disengagement. Here in Part 2, we'll look at how engaged employees behave, along with some tips on how to ensure they stay that way. Part 3 will dive into affordable and practical employee engagement solutions.

In no particular order, the following characteristics are indicative of an individual who is engaged in their work.

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01 | Strong communication

Engaged agents will want to have their voices heard, and will also want to encourage others to speak up. This isn't just for things that bother them: engaged employees will be outspoken on a myriad of topics.

They will often be the most active on any instant messaging platforms an organization might use
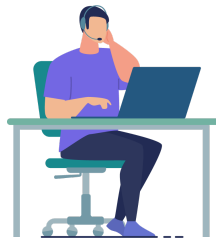
You'll find that they respond promptly and comprehensively to important messages

They will usually not be afraid to give positive or constructive feedback to peers, direct reports, or managers

Strong communicators will be tuned into the communication practices of others. To keep them around, it is important that they receive equally high-quality communication in return. In a culture with a large amount of disengaged agents, this becomes a challenge.

Creating systems that facilitate communication, a culture that rewards it, management that appreciates it, and processes that require it all work together to improve the odds that strong communicators stick around.

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02 | Adaptability

Being able to respond well to change is a hallmark of an engaged employee.

Those that are tuned into their work will be able to better see and understand the nuances behind change. If they don't like the change, they'll know what channels or processes to leverage in order to provide feedback.

If they do like the change, you'll find that engaged employees will often become champions of at least advocates of the change.

A good way to promote adaptability among agents is to ensure that they're as involved in incoming changes as possible. The more ownership someone has over their situation, the greater the chance that they'll be able to navigate it.

03 | Collaboration

Many organizations have siloed departments and teams. It's not always a bad thing, but it can create friction and slow down processes.

Engaged agents will naturally seek to collaborate with their teams and more notably, be comfortable with attempting to 'move outside the silo' in order to help solve problems. Where disengaged employees see a silo as a barrier, an engaged employee will more likely view it as an interesting challenge.

Lowering the barrier for collaboration is certainly a good general tactic for encouraging and fostering this characteristic. But recognizing and rewarding smart and thoughtful collaboration is an even better way to get started (and often much, much easier than attempting to dismantle silos).

04 | Innovation

If folks are submitting ideas or suggestions for improvement, it is critical to take these as seriously as possible. Disengaged agents just want to get through the day and collect their paycheck, spending as little energy as possible.

When people speak up with thoughts on change or ideas for improvement, it is a signal that they're engaging with the tasks and want to be better, go further, move faster.

The truly engaged employees won't wait for a suggestion to evolve into action. They will find ways to solve their novel problems ASAP. Be sure to have a method for detecting unorthodox behavior, and do not immediately assume it should be stopped in the name of consistency or efficiency.

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05 | Seeking development and training

Your engaged employees will be more likely to appreciate, seek out, and partake in development opportunities. These may be internal, or provided by a third party with some or all of the costs covered by the organization.

Folks who actively want to learn are invested in their careers, and more likely to be (and stay) engaged.

Providing access to these opportunities is a good way to gauge the level of employee engagement in an organization. Empower managers with a training budget that can be allocated to employees, and encourage people to suggest avenues of development that fall outside the standard list.

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Technology as a driver of employee engagement

In addition to the tips above, taking steps to reduce disengagement can truly pave the way for engagement to flourish. Recalling the factors explored in Part 1 of this series:

🟠 A good onboarding experience can explicitly address all of the topics above. It might include examples of how communication, adaptability, collaboration, innovation and development are rewarded and encouraged.

🟠 Aligning people with the right tasks frees up their mental time and energy to pursue engaged behavior.

🟠 Strong feedback mechanisms deeply empower strong communicators—it's like giving them superpowers! In addition, strong feedback systems make finding and rewarding engaged behavior much easier.

🟠 Good information fluidity makes collaboration happen more easily and can also boost innovation. Information flow is a big part of strong communication as well.

🟠 Properly forecasted scheduling can give more time for folks to anticipate, appreciate, and adapt to change.

🟠 Fun, joy, and purpose tend to flourish in a culture where most employees exhibit engaged characteristics.

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Technology as a driver of employee engagement

Most of us use highly advanced technology every day of our lives—whether we notice it or not. The modern employee is inundated with websites, apps, and smart tech.

If their workplace has adopted up to date tech, and has considered the overall employee experience in relation to technology, the likelihood of developing engaged employees is much higher.

Are you looking for a call center solution for your organization? Learn how a Cloud CX platform can improve employee engagement across the board. Get in touch with GTS today

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