The Essential Contact Centre Sales Blueprint

Five ways to avoid contact centre mediocrity and convert more sales

Simon Blair

The Essential Contact Centre Sales Blueprint

Five ways to avoid contact centre mediocrity and convert more sales

Welcome

Welcome, and thanks for downloading this **Blueprint!** Your first step towards avoiding mediocrity and converting more sales is complete. You will find plenty more actions to get stuck into within this Blueprint which will challenge but ultimately reward you if you continue to take the practical steps needed to make a difference.

If you manage or support a dedicated inbound contact centre team or a blended operation that takes both sales and customer service enquiries, your key business objectives are to drive first contact resolution, maximise sales and to create strong customer advocates through delivering exceptional customer experience.

So read on and discover what **over 20+ years of building sales & service capability** within contact centre operations has revealed to me as the key ingredients to make these happen and achieve the success you seek.

These are the 5 essential ways to help you stand out from the pack and make a significant impact on your people and your culture. By boldly implementing the key actions contained within each of them, you will be able to achieve exceptional results for both the business and for yourself.

Method 1
Create & Implement A Definitive Sales Process

Here is an insight that I can share from over a decade of **objectively measuring** the sales effectiveness of **Australian Contact Centres:**

Most inbound contact centres *don't use a clearly defined, structured sales process that makes it easy for customers to* ***make a buying decision.***

The obvious question to ask yourself is does this apply to your centre? If I were to walk into your contact centre today and randomly approach half a dozen individuals and ask them **"Can you please tell me the sales process that you use on your calls?"**, what response would I get?

Would I quickly gain an understanding of the key steps and competencies of a needs-based, consultative sales process or would I hear about the products and features that they like to reveal to customers? In my experience, the latter is the far more likely scenario within most contact centre operations.

Your starting point for being better than merely average at sales is to ask yourself the key question, **"Do we have a definitive sales process that everyone understands and can easily articulate?".**

If you don't have a clearly defined sales process, then get busy and create and implement one as your first critical step to growing your performance. If you do have a defined sales process that is commonly used by all staff, then the next obvious question is do they truly understand it and apply it effectively on calls?

The single biggest mistake that most staff make within their sales conversations is that they make assumptions about customer needs, jumping too quickly to asking specific, closed questions that relate solely to preferences for **product/service features.** In addition, they do most of the talking and focus on pitching product features and benefits that aren't tailored to the individual they are talking to. This is a traditional sales method that isn't the best way to maximise the conversion of enquiries to sales for those customers who have yet to make up their mind.

A different approach is required to fundamentally shift your conversations from being a sales process to more of a buying process. A type of sales process that the most successful sales professionals the world over inherently understand and apply to great effect.

The sales process you use has to be about the customer's needs and not your own need to get the sale. **When you stop trying to 'sell' and instead make it easier for customers to 'buy', you get more sales.** We buy from people we like and we buy from people we trust, so using a customer oriented approach that avoids 'pushing' product is key.

The greatest skill to be effective in sales is to facilitate an open conversation with customers early in the process. You can do this through managing their expectations around the process you will take them through and then asking good open questions to get them talking.

The aim is to get the customer revealing in their own words what stage they are in the buying process and what will make them feel comfortable to make a buying decision **TODAY.** If your staff are not engaging in such conversations to reveal key needs and buying triggers **BEFORE** talking about their products and services, then a **proper, consultative, needs-based sales process is not being used.**

ACTION 1.1

Research and define a best practice, consultative, needs-based sales process to implement within your operation.

The following is a set of core sales competencies that I've created for my contact centre clients which I've branded '**The 5 Degrees of Customer Experience'.** *The key competencies within the sales process you use should relate extremely closely to each of these, even if they are called different things:*

1. **Engage:** A clear desire to help that triggers the right emotional response in your customer, which in turn builds their trust and confidence in you.
2. **Discover:** Engage in genuine, open conversation to discover what your customer wants to achieve and what is MOST important to them... not you.
3. **Deliver:** Personalised solutions through painting pictures in the mind of your customer of them deriving the core benefits of your products and services within the context of their own lives.
4. **Close:** Ask for their opinion to check and confirm the suitability of your solution and to show true appreciation for their enquiry and their business, to leave your customers wanting more.
5. **Energy & Style:** Communicate with energy and empathy to show your personality and create real customer connection within a structured yet natural conversation.

The key consideration when executing these core sales competencies is to use a vibrant tone and energy, and demonstrate an ability to relate to individual customers and what is important to each of them... without making assumptions. Each of these five competencies working in sync together are essential for the execution of an effective sales process which ultimately makes it easy for your customers to make buying decisions and to feel great about doing so.

Within each of these **5 critical competencies,** there are multiple specific call handling behaviours that are required to deliver an effective sales experience over the telephone and to maximise the conversion of the enquiry to a positive sales outcome. A typical sales effectiveness checklist that I use for sales evaluations for my clients contains **15-17 specific behaviours spread across 'The 5 Degrees of Customer Experience'.**

A few examples of the specific behaviours evaluated for all clients include 'Use of name to engage', 'Managed expectations' and 'Enabled customer to tell their story'.

ACTION 1.2

Train your staff (and your frontline leaders) in both understanding and applying the fundamentals of each of the core sales competencies and the specific behaviours within each of them. Your frontline staff need to understand the core purpose of each competency and how they work together to both **maximise sales conversion AND deliver a better than average customer experience that drives customer advocacy.** Failure to get this common understanding means your staff are not 'customer ready' and will fail to maximise the opportunities that will come their way on calls. This means dollars slipping through your fingers each and every day!

Your training has achieved a key outcome if by the end of their learning they can respond quickly and confidently when asked the question posed previously **"What is the sales process you use on your calls?".** Their answer should be something like:

"I personalise my interaction with each customer at the start of every call, then manage an open conversation to discover their needs and what they need to make a buying decision. From there I can work with them to provide a personalised solution matched to the needs I confirmed earlier, and then check they're comfortable with what we've determined and the information I provide. I'll also make sure I communicate with both energy and empathy and let them know that I would love to have their business and for them to have a long-term, valuable relationship with us."

If you don't get everyone on the same page revealing the essence of this example above, then there is still work to be done!

Method 2
Measure Your Sales Effectiveness

How do you measure your sales effectiveness? If you cannot measure what you are doing, then you cannot improve. It is essential if you want to drive change to find out objectively how effective your sales consultants are and what their specific, priority areas for improvement might be.

How effective is each individual at managing and controlling an open conversation to establish needs and buying triggers? Do they make it easy for the customer to evaluate the benefits of your products and services for their individual situation? Do they maximise the chance of getting the deal done and closing the sale? At its core, how good are they at making it easy for the customer to make a buying decision in **THE MOMENT.**

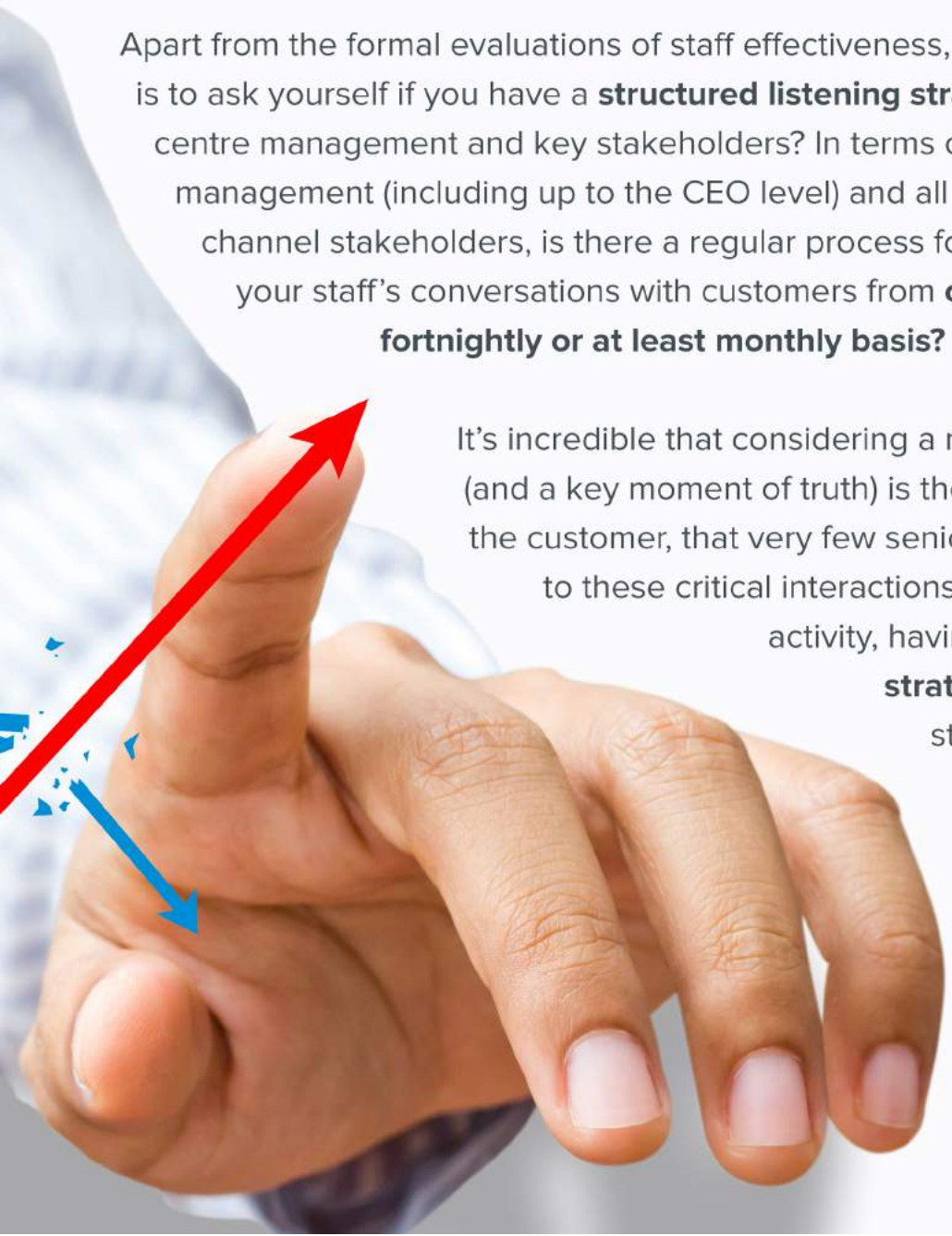
In conducting your measurement of sales effectiveness you are in essence evaluating the effective use and delivery of the core sales process competencies you've previously defined as your sales process. **It needs to be independent,** and it needs to be objective which is a hard thing to achieve from within your own business or operation where most managers tend to **over estimate the abilities and effectiveness** of their team members.

Within your Contact Centre you may have **Team Leaders** doing assessment of your calls. That can be OK, providing you have a rigorous assessment and calibration process that proves that they can **objectively evaluate their own staff**. In my experience, most Team Leaders struggle to remove the **inherent, natural bias** that exists when evaluating their staff. It is therefore, **NOT** the ideal model if you are seeking accurate and objective insight from a **customer perspective**.

Having a dedicated internal quality team is much more effective if you wish to **maximise objectivity** and keep this function in-house. This still poses some challenges as there is still an internal, operational bias at play but can be easier to overcome with the proper mechanisms and process in place when compared to a team leader model of assessment. Outsourcing this function to a third party who are experts in quality monitoring is an even better model if you truly want to ensure objective insight from the **customer's (rather than your own) perspective** and is why this is a core function provided by **my own business, Five Degrees.**

The main consideration though, regardless of which model you choose, is that the measurement program needs to **drive the coaching process** and the **continuous improvement** in capability and performance. So if you are not continuously improving, then take a good look at the quality of your measurement model as this could be the main culprit!

Apart from the formal evaluations of staff effectiveness, the other key consideration is to ask yourself if you have a **structured listening strategy** for your contact centre management and key stakeholders? In terms of yourself, your up-line management (including up to the CEO level) and all other senior contact centre channel stakeholders, is there a regular process for listening to a selection of your staff's conversations with customers from **call recordings on a weekly, fortnightly or at least monthly basis?**



It's incredible that considering a main output of your business (and a key moment of truth) is the actual conversation with the customer, that very few senior managers regularly listen to these critical interactions. More than any other activity, having a structured **'listening strategy'** will give you and other stakeholders a level of insight, context and a reality check of what your business is actually producing, than any single piece of data ever could.

ACTION 2.1

Review and update your existing sales quality monitoring measurement model. If you don't have one, make sure you get one in place. *If you do have one, review its effectiveness at objectively measuring the capability of your staff at executing the core sales competencies.*

Do not make the mistake of having a monitoring form that **measures both compliance and competency within the same evaluation.** These should be separated out and assessed independently. Compliance monitoring requires an internal assessment mindset when evaluating, while evaluating sales effectiveness requires an external customer mindset. **Switching between the two at the same time** is a recipe for disaster in getting **accurate and objective evaluations.**

Make sure that the outputs of your monitoring program (i.e. the reporting) drives the next stage of the coaching process as fundamentally that is Its purpose. You shouldn't be measuring just for the sake of measurement. **More on this in method number 4 of this blueprint.**

ACTION 2.2

Ensure you have a structured listening strategy for yourself and other senior managers in the business to regularly listen to random customer conversations from your call recordings. **If possible, look to influence this listening process to become a core KPI for all stakeholders** *(i.e. x number of recordings listened to per week/month).*

Without a regular listening strategy in place, there is a massive blind-spot in your business that data alone will not reveal. **Done well, this process will bring your data to life and enable more accurate and insightful analysis to be made.**

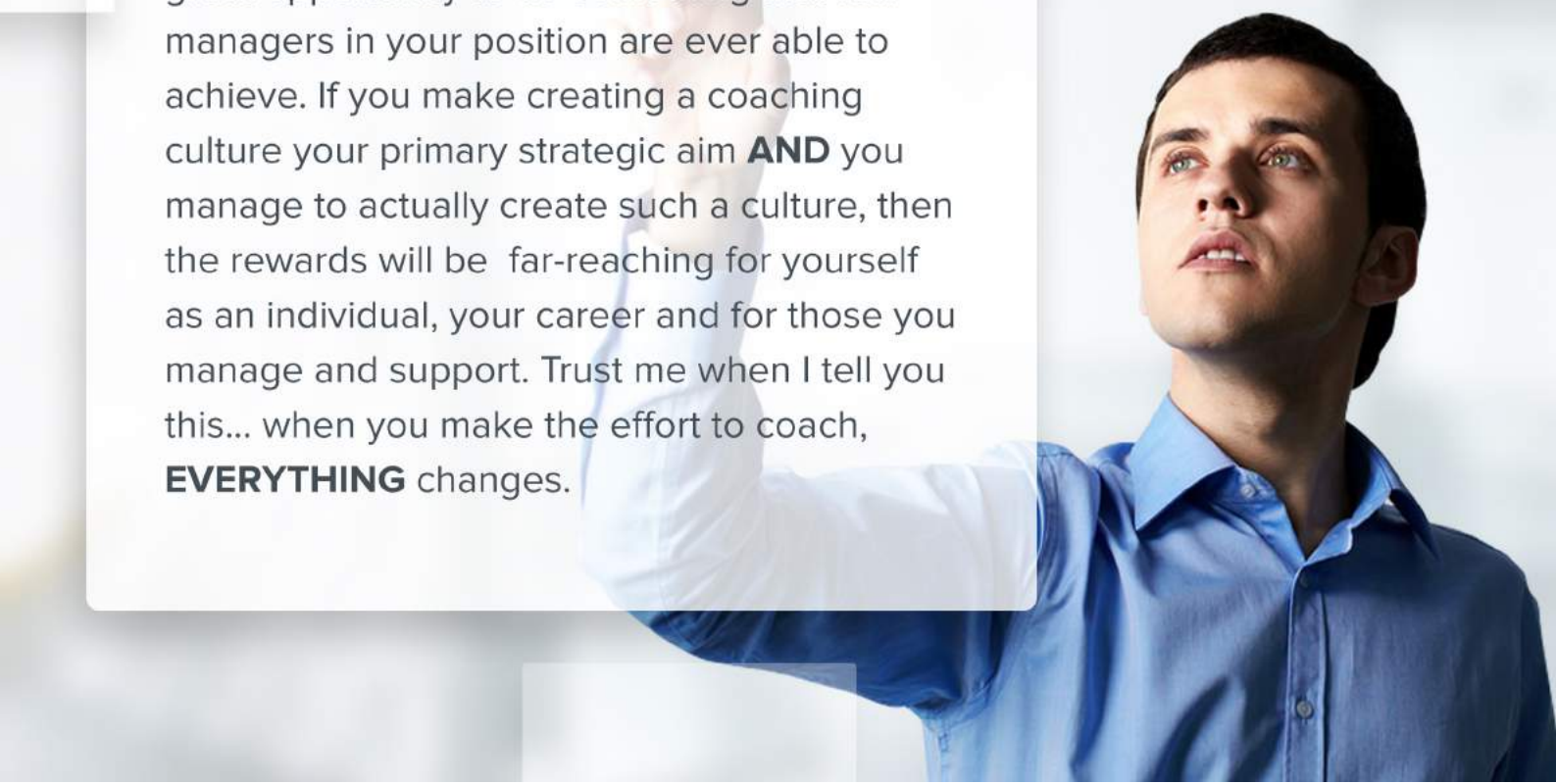
Method 3
Get Your Team Leaders Coaching

If you truly want to transform your **culture and performance to avoid mediocrity and convert more sales,** then if you do nothing else, at the very least get your Team Leaders coaching.

Live and breathe the concept of the manager as coach, starting with yourself and then with your frontline leaders. **Ultimately, you need to create a strong, vibrant coaching culture** within your operation to step out of your comfort zone and avoid being like all the rest... and let's face it, that's why your reading this isn't it, to be better than most!

I can tell you from my own 20+ years in helping contact centres improve performance, that establishing a strong coaching culture is the most challenging and difficult thing you can do, but the pay-off is huge. If it was easy, every centre would have this culture and the quality of sales and customer service would be of a consistently high standard. Of course it's not, and your own experiences as a customer reveals the truth of this.

Building a strong coaching culture provides a great opportunity to do something that few managers in your position are ever able to achieve. If you make creating a coaching culture your primary strategic aim **AND** you manage to actually create such a culture, then the rewards will be far-reaching for yourself as an individual, your career and for those you manage and support. Trust me when I tell you this... when you make the effort to coach, **EVERYTHING** changes.



The first step to get started on this journey is to ask yourself and your Team Leaders this one key question:

Here is the best description of the role of a Team Leader I've ever heard, which I came across about 15 years ago, and I think it encapsulates perfectly and simply the essence of what they need to be doing and where they need to be focusing their time and energy:

The role of a **Team Leader** is to coach and **develop their staff** to continuously **improve** and **achieve** the desired **business objectives**.

That's it. Nothing more. I love it. Everything else that they do in their role is secondary to that core purpose of coaching and development to drive improvement. In essence, to execute the components of this very Blueprint!

As the core function, **80% of a frontline Team Leader's time should be invested in driving continuous improvement** through a focus on the coaching and development of their staff. This fundamentally means supporting them in the process of changing their habits so they can keep improving their customer conversations with the specific behaviours proven to influence high levels of sales conversion and high levels of customer engagement.

At this point, many managers totally appreciate the need to get their **Team Leaders coaching but then they quickly start** to realise that the capability of their group to do this effectively is quite limited. So a coach-the-coach strategy should also become a key part of your operational plan when this is the case to ensure your frontline leaders have both the capability and the confidence to do what needs doing.

In working with a lot of **different Team Leader groups and management teams over the years** through my work as a management trainer and coach, I can tell you that the number one reason your **Team Leaders don't coach is fear.** Fear of the unknown, fear of difficult conversations and fear of knowing how to pull the levers that challenge, motivate and teach the skills required to keep driving improvement with their staff. *The good news is that this is normal and can be overcome with a proper strategy and plan... and through being bold.*

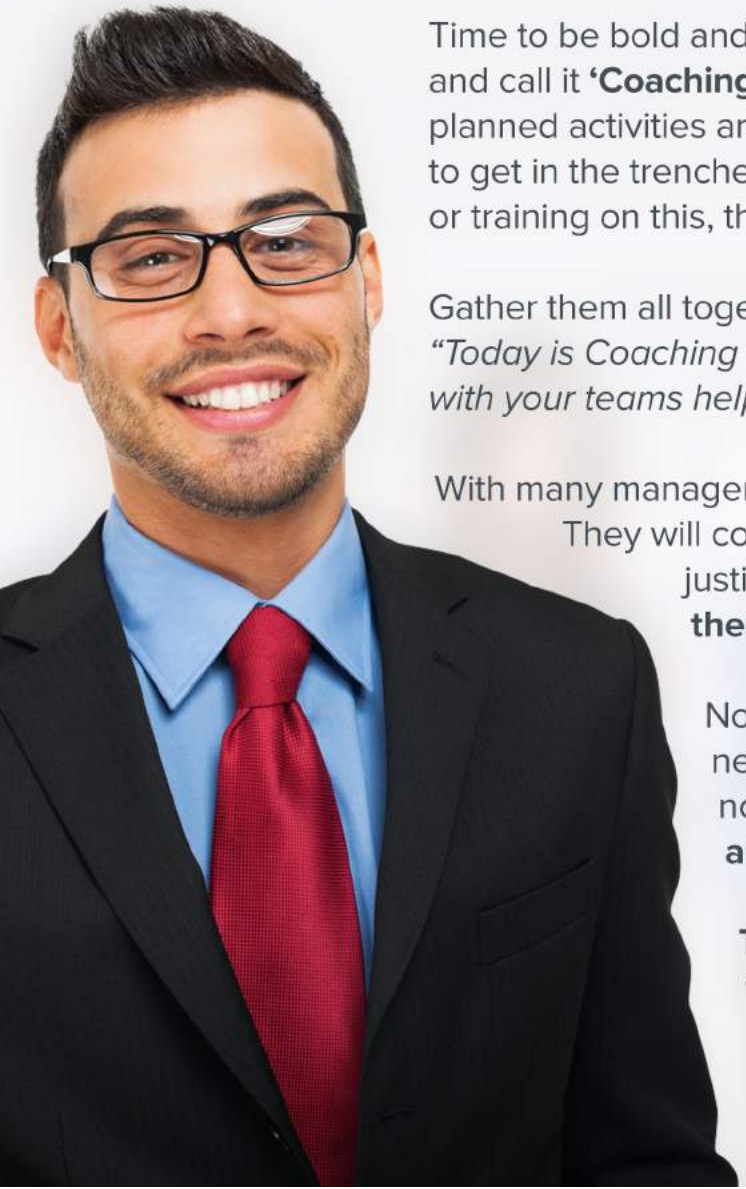
A word of caution. If you buy-in to the 'we're too busy' mantra from your managers *(and it will come!)* then you're also part of the problem and not the solution. **EVERYONE is busy.** Those managers and operations that do manage to coach staff as a regular activity don't have any more time than than yours do. **Do NOT buy into this excuse.**

At some point you have to break the cycle of **endless meetings, reporting, managers sitting** at their desk for hours on end and reading/responding to emails. Get them out of their seats and up and about amongst their teams developing capability and engaging their staff. **Don't tie them up in low-value activity.** *Cut your meetings in half, reduce email volumes, delegate transactional reporting activity to others as a tool for their development and free up your leaders for what really matters.*

You must take away the excuses for them not to coach because they will grab onto them like a drowning man reaching for a piece of driftwood at sea. *Failure to do this will mean that your **Team Leaders** will continue to function more as traditional* **'supervisors'** rather than agents of change. It will mean that despite your best efforts, your operation will fail to perform at its best and elevate itself beyond being merely adequate. **What a horrible place to be!**

In practical terms, **the best way for making coaching happen** *(as opposed to talking or thinking about it)* is to plan for it and then to schedule it well in advance. With this approach, *everything else from a resourcing and workforce management perspective can fit around this now high priority activity.*

ACTION 3.1



Time to be bold and get your Team Leaders coaching tomorrow and call it **'Coaching Day'.** Whatever scheduled meetings or other planned activities are in place, scrap them and free up your leaders to get in the trenches with their teams. They don't need coaching or training on this, they just need to **DO IT!**

Gather them all together at the start of the day and declare that *"Today is Coaching Day, and I want you to spend the whole day with your teams helping them to have better sales conversations".*

With many managers *(if not all)* you will see the fear in their eyes. They will come up with all manner of reasons and justifications for why this can't happen. **Reject them.**

None of them are as important as this. This is a new world order centred around coaching and now is the day it all changes. **Stand your ground and enforce it.**

This is D-Day. This is leadership. Do this and you have taken the biggest single step to transformation of yourself, your centre and your managers that you can ever imagine.

ACTION 3.2

Repeat Action #1...the very next day!! Everything else now fits in around this core job function. Good luck! Be brave. Pay attention to the shift in frontline staff based on this new-found attention and change in focus by their managers.

Get out amongst it, encouraging and supporting everyone, gathering feedback, observing and demonstrating what is required yourself. On Day 3, bring all the managers together and review as a group the key learnings, challenges and successes. **Celebrate their action and their bravery.** Reveal to them that this is what is expected of them every day from here to eternity. *This is what the best contact centres the world over do as a business-as-usual activity not just as an exception.*

Method 4
Drive Continuous Improvement

Your whole operation and the model for the running of your centre should be geared to continually improve performance. **You cannot sit still,** and I'm sure you're not, but if capability and performance doesn't consistently improve, **then the reality is you are actually falling behind.**

The critical requirement is to make sure you have a systematic and structured approach to change and improvement. You need to have a strategy and a plan to execute it. **It will not happen by random chance or force of will alone.**

Here is a classic continuous improvement model which is a repeatable thing you can execute time and time again on a monthly cycle within your operation. It can be applied at a centre, team and individual level:

As per **Method number 2 within this Blueprint,** you first need to objectively measure what is actually happening in terms of effectiveness and performance outcomes and what the sales opportunities are that you are missing out on.

Secondly, analyse these measurement insights and identify what the priority improvement areas are. From these you can really hone in and target the critical areas that will give you the biggest bang for buck in terms of building capability and driving improved sales outcomes.

Having determined the **priority improvement areas** you are now in a position to provide constructive feedback to your **Team Leaders** and they in turn to each individual staff member around strengths and improvement areas, **looking to gain acceptance and agreement on these.**

Once each participant in the process is on the same page, **step 4 is to formulate and document** an agreed action plan with specific coaching and development activities that will address those critical areas to drive performance improvement.

To actually improve *(as opposed to just giving feedback and putting a plan together)* a structured approach to the coaching and training of teams and individuals is needed. This is where the plan gets executed and is how you ultimately drive the changing of habits and behaviours that will determine the success of your business. **The core activity is coaching** (as per Method Number 3 in this Blueprint) but often the measurement and analysis will reveal the need to address common development areas, which is where training of multiple individuals is needed.

Once coaching and training *(where needed)* is underway, you then keep repeating the model as a cyclical process where you measure **capability and performance** again to track changes and see what's working and what new activity or focus needs to occur.

In essence, driving continuous improvement with this model is a process in how to change habits. We all know from our personal experiences that the process of changing habits is hard and that there are **no short-cuts.** You need a plan and you need a method for change and for tracking/measuring improvement. This is what a continuous improvement model provides when executed effectively.

To change habits you need practice and repetition and ongoing feedback and support from peers and a coach *(i.e. the frontline manager).* The execution of the agreed plans with the support of a coach as manager is the critical final step that will determine if the continuous improvement model becomes a measurement and planning tool only *(i.e. ideas and intentions)* or a process of real change *(i.e. execution).*

Failure to execute on plans and agreed actions is the greatest failure of those that undertake using a continuous improvement model and makes sense if a coaching culture is yet to be established. So the combination of creating both a coaching culture as per Method number 3 in this Blueprint AND executing a structured approach to continuous improvement with this model is needed to truly change.

ACTION 4.1

Create a 6-month sales improvement strategy which details your priority areas for improvement and the methods you will use within a continuous improvement process to deliver the improvement you seek. *Facilitate the development of the strategy, and the specific tactics you will employ to execute it, with your management team and team leader group.*

ACTION 4.2

Once you have documented a 6-month strategy you then need to **create a monthly action plan for the overall operation with clear and specific tasks/actions,** identifying who is responsible and the dates for completion.

Similarly, your Team Leaders need to create action plans for themselves... with you. What actions will they undertake with their teams and with each other to drive the improvement needed within their teams?

The next step is for them to go out and create monthly action plans with every individual on their team. **The actions should contain three to four tasks/initiatives at most.** Start simple, and make sure they are done...**no excuses.**

The temptation is to load monthly action plans with tasks that the **Team Leaders do with or for their staff.** Remember, that each individual is ultimately responsible for their own development, so make sure some of the tasks include the individual having to proactively try new things themselves while the **team leader's tasks should be to support and guide** *(i.e. coach)* where appropriate.

Method 5
Create a Vibrant Sales Culture

If you want to create a **dynamic and vibrant sales** culture then it is essential that you follow one piece of advice. **Don't be boring!**

Be bold, be creative, be energetic, be passionate.

Here's a quick set of questions you should answer to check the behaviour of your frontline staff and to reveal the real focus and culture of your contact **centre**

1. **Do they stare into their PC monitors during the first 30 seconds of taking a call?**
2. **Are they too eager to push the customer through a boring, transactional process?**
3. **Are they simply providing quotes and/or pitching too much product/service detail?**
4. **Are your staff avoiding having proper, in-depth conversations with your customers early in a call?**

If there is not a **clear, vibrant energy within your centre and in your staff's conversations with your customers,** then you're going to struggle to maximise sales conversions and create clear customer advocates from their interactions with you.

In terms of your **Team Leaders,** you want them to be **coaches who can challenge and motivate their staff**. You want them to be rolling up their sleeves and getting in the trenches coaching and spending time with their staff figuring out together how they can get better. **This all needs passion, energy and proactivity.**

You need to create within your contact centre an **environment that celebrates success, overcomes adversity, challenges each individual**, gets people trying new **things and ultimately changes everyone's work** habits and behaviours to achieve **high performance and drive customer advocacy.**

If you can't create a dynamic, coaching culture that supports and achieves continuous improvement, then your business will become stagnant and stale. A coaching culture is all about driving progress. Progress and improvement is the key to employee engagement, NOT pyjama days or motivational posters stuck on a wall! It's also the key to human happiness so it might be worth some consideration.

Set the bar high for all the staff in your operation to do great things, then jump in and support them in doing so. Don't settle for mediocrity and poor effort or attitude. Call it out when you see it. One of the great business insights I've seen over the last year or two is this:

You get the **culture** *that you allow*

So if you allow **sub-par effort and performance**, then that is very much what you will get. Not addressing poor performance and poor attitude is the greatest failure of managers the world over, **because it does require effort, hard-work and sometimes stepping out of your own comfort zone.** Welcome to management. You accepted the position, so accept the responsibilities that come with it and stop procrastinating or whinging about the things that are actually within your control to fix.

Energy and vibrancy are the drivers of a powerful sales culture. Do things differently and don't be afraid to create a bit of chaos to change the status quo. Out of chaos can come fundamental change providing you have a plan and a method in how to lead a team out of the chaos towards something better.

Lead by example and change things up to not get stuck in the repetitive and the mundane where one day to the next feels the same. **Try things and if they don't work, then tweak them or chuck them out and try other things**. Fail in order to succeed! Doing things the same way and somehow expecting a different result is insane.

Here's a scenario to consider. What would happen if your centre suddenly lost power and all the computers went dead but the phones kept magically working? Could you still function and deliver amazing experiences and close sales for customers? This is the the ultimate test. When you can answer this question in the affirmative then you are maximizing your potential and know you have transformed your operation into a professional sales environment. **Until then, get to work!**

The best salespeople **NEVER** have to use their system until the sale has been confirmed and its time to process the order or fulfilment for the customer. Yet the big mistake that most contact centre sales people make is they are sucked into the vortex of their screen and the information at their disposal.

What happens is it tends to **create a transactional experience/focus for the staff member instead of a focus on conversation to discover customer needs and buying triggers**. They overload customers with too much detail which has no bearing on getting the actual sale.

This is boring and this sucks the life and energy out of your customers and your business. **It is also stopping you from converting more sales because ultimately we buy from people we like**. If staff sound like they're just going through the motions, then customers on the phone will defer their buying decision. **This is dollars slipping through your fingers!**

Creating a vibrant sales culture is the key ingredient that makes all the other methods revealed within this Blueprint have their maximum impact. **So be brave, be imaginative and be different**. If you want to avoid mediocrity and leave a legacy (and I know you do, otherwise you wouldn't be reading this!), then there is NO other way. Be anything other than **BORING!**

ACTION 5.1

One of the great actions you can implement to not be boring is to have a 'sales huddle' every morning. There are lots of different names you can call it, so firstly get your Team Leaders to come up with a name of their choosing. So what does it involve?

Firstly get your Team Leaders together at the start of every day for a quick five minute pow-wow. *What's the focus of today? Revisit your action plans. Who is doing the coaching? What is the focus of the coaching? What is a performance stretch target you will all aim to achieve? How will you reward those that get there?*

Secondly, get them immediately to do the same with each of their teams.

ACTION 5.2

Here is a focus that your entire centre can have for a whole day. Confirm this with your Team Leaders in a morning 'sales huddle'. Are you ready for it?:

Get pieces of cardboard cut out to fit the dimensions of their monitors and tape them to the screen to block their view. **Watch the panic set-in**. Great, you are creating a bit of chaos. **Now what are they going to do?**

Here's an idea. *Maybe they could spend that time truly engaging in proper conversations with their customers to understand who they are and what they need to make a buying decision*. You do not need a computer to achieve these things. Hand them a paper and pen and get them to tell the customer that they will write down key points that will arise from the discussion with them.

This all seems radical, but when the habit of *staring at a screen* is so deeply ingrained for more than **98%** of contact centre staff every time they answer the phone, the **ONLY** way to change the behaviour is to get a little crazy! If you want to take this even further, get them all to stand-up as well. **Go for it.**

The vast majority of staff who work in inbound contact centres pitch too much product information and talk way too much. They make assumptions around customer needs and make it more about their own need to get the sale and not what is in the **best interests of customers.**

They are typically good at serving customers who have already made up their minds to **buy before they call** *(i.e. order taking)* but are often terrible at making it easy for customers to make a buying decision when they have yet to make up their minds.

This is the certainly the case for most inbound sales teams who convert enquiries at **the industry average of 30%**. You can do **30%** in your sleep by just being **mediocre**. But what would **35% or 45% conversion do to your bottom line?** This is what can be achieved in a high performance operation that has all the **elements revealed in this Blueprint operating as BAU (Business as Usual) activity.**

These insights are not opinion, but based on objectively measuring the sales experience of Australian contact centres *(on and offshore)* over the **last 10 years** or so by myself and those I manage. We've mystery shopped and assessed over **10,000 inbound sales** interactions with the **Contact Centres of Australia's largest service companies** across multiple industries and products and tracked if a sale would have been made or not based on the quality of the interaction.

I can reveal that the greatest impact on converting an enquiry to a *confirmed sale is in the quality of engagement and open conversation within the first* **1 minute of the call.** Get this right, the rest often follows. **Of course, this is where the majority of contact centre staff get it wrong.**

But this is great news! When the vast majority of businesses are so bad at telephone sales, then this *provides you with a great opportunity to smash your competition and be one of the very few who are great.*

If you can apply the methods and inspiration contained in this Blueprint then you have the opportunity to stand out from the pack and improve your **engagement with your employees and with your customers**. Your operation will be able to critically convert significantly more sales and enable you to make your mark on your business and your people.

The final take-home message from this Blueprint is that your Team Leaders are the most important asset you have. **They have the greatest influence on the success or failure of your operation and the culture of your business than any other factor.** People leave managers, they don't leave companies, so despite your best efforts, if you don't create the capability and the motivation in your frontline managers to apply these methods, you won't be able to get the success you are seeking.

Set the bar high for your frontline leaders and don't accept mediocrity or excuses for not trying and continuously improving. A great thing to remember from the last method revealed, is that you get the culture that you allow. So if you don't accept excuses and sub-par performances as a manager, then this won't define your culture. *Ensure your people take responsibility for their development and give them a reason to do so.* **WHY** should they bother otherwise? **Do they share your vision for success?**

Ensure there are consequences for those who are not open to learning and growth. They will tell you want you want to hear but will do the bare minimum to get by. Starve them of your attention. Conversely, handsomely reward with your time, attention and recognition, your best people who are defined by their proactivity and bravery to try new things.

Contact me via email, phone or social media and tell me about your experiences with trying to apply the methods within this Blueprint. I am not saying this flippantly. Do it.

Such transformational and bold activity is what I strive to influence in **my career more than anything else** and is the fuel for what I do **so I would love to hear about your challenges and successes**.

For yourself, the act of talking about your experience with someone who can relate to your journey is a critical step to help with motivation and focus on what is needed to be done to drive the change needed.

So I look forward to hearing from you.

For more than **23 years, Simon has been a leader in developing and implementing continuous improvement programs** *for those at the frontline of Australian sales and customer service.*

His pragmatic approach with customer contact personnel and management groups has led to the transformation of culture and performance across a myriad of industries and operations.

As the **co-founder and a director of 5 Degrees since 2009**, for the *last 7 years, Simon has been helping his long-term clients develop and execute tailored programs of work to effectively measure, coach and train the competencies and behaviours needed to* **deliver exceptional customer experience and business.**

CONTACT SIMON

simon.blair@fivedegrees.com.au
phone: 0407002113
www.fivedegrees.com.au
http://www.linkedin.com/in/simonlblair
https://twitter.com/SimonLBlair
https://www.facebook.com/5DegreesCX

© Five Degrees 2016