

# Case Study: Improving Costs and Quality in a Contact Center



A contact center receives over 750,000 after-sales support calls per month for a major client. The company elected to try Lean Six Sigma tools and methods for improving their service-level targets and reducing costs within this contact center. The service delivery for this company had a target abandonment rate of less than 5%. The company was struggling to make this target consistently. Working with Guidon, the company developed a multi-phased approach for this contact center to achieve the required gains.

## Phase I – Assessment

A review of all aspects of the business was conducted to determine how best to achieve the results needed for this location. Areas reviewed in the assessment included volume forecasting, scheduling approach, call procedures, quality monitoring, training, and knowledge management. After the assessment, a schedule was created for implementation of the various components needed to address the full range of issues.

## Phase II – Kaizen Breakthrough Events

Guidon led improvement projects (Kaizens), each of which brought together a cross-functional group to address one of three critical issues: reducing the “handle time” of calls, improving the quality monitoring process, and preparing for a new cellular processing structure.

## Phase III – Guidon Workforce Management

The company chose to adopt the Guidon Workforce Management (WFM) system to improve the forecasting and scheduling of resources within the contact center. In their original WFM process, the difference between forecasted volumes and actual calls could vary as much as 20%. The company had previously implemented a variety of customized schedules that did not adequately match the staffing to the incoming-call arrival patterns.

Gap Analysis: A comprehensive analysis was completed on the following:

- Review of the call patterns in order to more accurately predict call volumes.
- Review of the average handling time to determine the total call load for each time period.
- Shrinkage, service level performance, and agent utilization.

Future State: With the analysis complete, the company was able to develop a clearer picture of its current resource requirements. This formed the basis of new agent schedules that better matched capacity and call volumes, even in this high-variation environment. The new schedules were put up for agent shift-bid and assigned.

With the implementation of the new staffing schedules, the following annual savings were identified:

- A drop of \$1.8 million dollars in overtime expense.
- A reduction of \$1.3 million in excess staffing expense. This resulted in the use of additional part-time employees and a reduction in overtime.
- An 82% reduction in the number of schedules used, which simplified the management and monitoring of the staff.

**Client:** A leading global technology services company that specializes in IT outsourcing

**Industry:** Retail

**Service:** Kaizen Events, Workforce Management

**Challenge:** A call center consistently missed its cost and service-level targets.

**Solutions:** A multi-phased approach allowed the contact center to match solutions to specific challenges/problems:

- Phase I – Complete assessment of the overall operations, generating information that helped to determine the best approaches for each key issue
- Phase II – Use Kaizen Breakthrough events in key areas to gain immediate improvements
- Phase III – Implement Lean Six Sigma Workforce Management for improving forecasting and scheduling

**Results:**

- Agent lead-time for quality feedback was reduced from 8 days to 24 hours
- Offline work was consolidated to a dedicated team
- Identified an annual savings of \$1.8 million in overtime and an additional \$1.3 million in excess staffing expense