

3 Myths Standing in the Way of Call Center Productivity

Five weeks of vacation time sounds like a dream to most people, but what if that vacation had to be taken one or two minutes at a time? At your desk. That's the equivalent of what your agents experience during idle time - the small increments between customer interactions that occur naturally throughout the day.

While no one would seriously characterize this as a vacation, it does demonstrate the magnitude of wasted time that could be productive for your contact center operations if it could be properly utilized.

Three myths stand in the way of recognizing the true potential of this time:

Myth #1: Five weeks of idle time? Not in my contact center.

Every day, in even the most tightly managed centers, agents spend 11 percent of their time sitting idle, waiting for the next call. And while they mostly occur in very small increments, (we're talking 90 seconds, even as small as 30 seconds) they can all add up to a staggering amount of lost time.

Workforce management tools are essential for forecasting call volume based on historical data but aren't prepared to handle this lost time due to two factors: the data is not evaluated in real time, and it's not granular enough as these tools only look at call volume in 15 minute intervals (much longer than the typical instance of wait time).

Technology that has the power to find and aggregate these small increments of time across all agents into usable segments creates *active* wait time.

Myth #2: High shrinkage is just a fact of life in the call center.

Coincidentally, another 12 percent (curiously close to the percentage of time spent idle) of call center agents' daily activities are attributed to controllable shrinkage. These activities – i.e. “must-

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read” communications, after-call work, or training – fall within management’s control, because they need to be scheduled.

Rather than scheduling agents off the phone to complete these shrinkage activities, you can shift these tasks to be completed during active wait time. Not only will you reduce shrinkage, you’ll also make better use of idle time, and thereby increase productivity.

Myth #3: Taking away downtime will negatively impact job satisfaction and customer satisfaction.

Is a 45-second breather really enough time for agents to sufficiently decompress between calls?

Rather than letting agents “decompress,” (or stare at a cubicle wall for 30 seconds frequently throughout the day), give agents an assignment that takes 10 to 15 minutes to complete. While it’s not a break (nor is a 30 second interval between calls), it’s an opportunity to do different work, learn something or complete a task that will make them better at their jobs.

Really worried about your agents’ job satisfaction? Take the hours saved and reinvest it in career advancement training. Try an incentive program tied to productivity. Or reward them with a *real* vacation day for performance.

If you can see your way through these myths, you have the power to improve operational efficiencies and increase profits. Tap into this vastly underused resource in your contact center to pull off the ultimate more-with-less success story.

About Knowlagent

Knowlagent provides the only call center software that increases agent utilization by delivering shrinkage activities during idle time. Knowlagent creates active wait time through dynamically delivered sessions for common shrinkage activities between customer interactions. Knowlagent’s solutions are on-demand, easy to use and require no capital expenditures. Over 200,000 agents and managers around the world use Knowlagent’s solutions every day. For more information, call 888-566-9457 or visit us online at www.knowlagent.com.

