

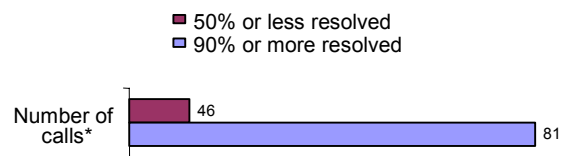
Customer Satisfaction, One-Call Resolution, and Changing What You Can Control

LIMRA International study finds way to help centers that struggle with one-call resolution and customer satisfaction.

Industry experts agree that of the various factors that impact customer satisfaction, one-call resolution is number one. Not surprisingly, field research by LIMRA International confirmed this fact. The question then becomes: How can your center better accomplish one-call resolution? LIMRA's study uncovers some issues that show where the greatest difficulty lies, what factors can be changed, and what factors may be difficult to change.

The study found that *call volume* has the greatest influence on one-call resolution rates (Figure 1). Centers with high call volume tend to handle short queries that are easily resolved without follow-up. A service call question such as "What is the area code of Topeka, Kansas?" is quickly, accurately, and completely answered for the customer. On the other hand, low-call-volume centers typically deal with long, difficult calls where immediate closure is more difficult. Clearly, when it comes to customer satisfaction, low-call-volume centers with complicated calls face a greater challenge.

Figure 1
Call Volume Makes a Difference in One-Call Resolution



* Average number of calls per rep in an eight-hour shift

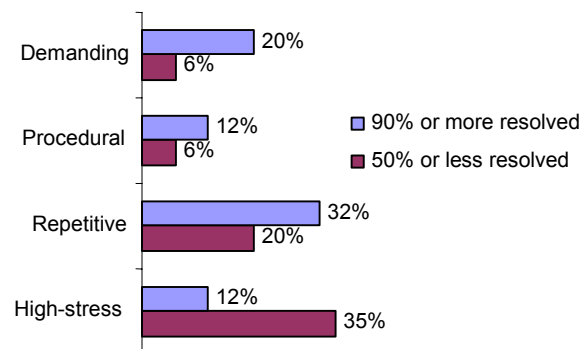
Increasing One-Call Resolution

Unfortunately, large call volume and difficult calls may be beyond a center's control. For example, a technical help desk cannot change its business mission. In this case, other issues should be addressed to prompt conditions for "one and done" success. Recently, LIMRA has been studying the potent influence of work culture to improve various success metrics in call centers, and asked "Does work culture have an impact on one-call resolution and customer satisfaction?"

Optimal Work Culture for One-Call Resolution

LIMRA approached this question by comparing high-success centers (90 percent or more one-call resolution) with low-success centers (50 percent or less one-call resolution). LIMRA gathered quantitative information on work culture from eye-level supervisors using a measurement exercise called CultureFit. Of 54 possible culture descriptors, four showed a significant difference between the high-success and low-success centers. Figure 2 shows the percentage in each success group where each descriptor was rated “very characteristic.”

Figure 2
Culture Descriptors That Differentiate High- and Low-Call-Resolution Centers



Centers showing consistent success with “one and done” activity had cultures described as low-stress, demanding (with reps accountable for their performance), highly procedural in handling calls, and repetitive in general rep activities. Such a culture engineers a work environment that values a methodical, structured, and thorough approach to handling calls with the benefit of reduced stress to optimize agent performance.

Improving Your One-Call Resolution and Customer Satisfaction

The findings provide direction on boosting your link to customer satisfaction. While some aspects of the work operations cannot be changed, others *can* be changed. LIMRA’s research suggests that values and preferences shared by management and reps can be modified to a work environment that promotes “one and done” success. The approach requires cultural change through organizational interventions as well as finding and hiring individuals who share these core values.

For more information on this project, contact Malcolm C. McCulloch, Ph.D., at 860-298-3905 or mmcculloch@limra.com. McCulloch, a senior research consultant at LIMRA International, is an industrial/organizational psychologist who specializes in staffing issues within the contact center industry.

LIMRA International is an applied research organization focusing on human resource issues within contact centers. LIMRA has developed the ExSel selection system for job applicant assessment to recruit and retain the best people for sales and service positions. For more information, visit www.contactcenter.limra.com.