



## **South West Contact Centre Forum Awards 2016**

### **Contact Centre of The Year (Inhouse)**

***How you are an employer of choice?*** The entry should outline your recruitment strategies, what makes you an employer of choice, your commitment to training and development and how you provide a great physical environment to work in.

#### **Values**

The LV= difference is to be sharp with a heart – which means it demonstrates the behaviours of a mutual with the performance of a PLC. The following diagram shows LV='s overall strategy with its goal at the centre followed by its vision, mission, the LV= difference and its brand promises.



#### **Looking after its people**

At LV=, we put our people at the heart of our business as we believe a happy and engaged workforce will deliver great customer service. This is why we continuously look for ways to enhance our peoples' working lives. Here's just some ways we do this:

- ♥ Funding of professional qualifications such as CII
- ♥ Career breaks
- ♥ In-house occupational health therapist
- ♥ Dedicated wellbeing programme for all staff and wellbeing reps
- ♥ Restaurants on main sites

This award focuses on our Bristol Sales and Service contact centre.

#### **Nurturing a flexible working culture**

Our people were telling us that they wanted to work from home to compliment their lifestyles. So in Bristol we created a flexible working committee who review lifestyle shift requests in a fair and consistent way. After a year working at LV= our people can apply for flexible working (including homeworking) and request shifts which best suits their lifestyles. Once the committee has considered all requests, they are taken to a panel of managers and HR to review and approve. Currently we have over 40 people working across four different lifestyle shifts. We also offer split lunches to help keep our people motivated and energised.

## **Recruitment**

We recruit people who are enthusiastic, ambitious and who deliver the basics brilliantly. We look for people who have the right attitude and who aren't afraid to challenge the norm in order to provide great customer service. To keep up with the industry we regularly update our recruitment strategies; including open days at local shopping centres, local brand awareness on roundabouts and bus stops, as well as leaflets. We also offer a 'refer a friend' scheme in which we encourage our people to recommend candidates of a high calibre they think would be the right kind of people for us.

## **Training and staff development**

Once we've recruited our people we provide them with the skills for the job through induction training programmes, on-going coaching and by ensuring skills are refreshed and courses arranged to develop individuals.

To provide increased job variety and a more streamlined customer journey, we've transformed the way our call centre operates. Historically, people in our Sales department could only help customers if they wanted a quote. So if a customer wanted to ask a customer service related question, our Sales team would have to transfer them to our Customer Service department. In 2015 training was re-designed to clearly demonstrate the whole customer journey, by focusing the training on each step of the process. It began with 'new customer' training, 'existing customer' training and 'retaining a customer' training. Our people are now able to do everything on one call so our customers don't have to be transferred to other departments.

Additionally, we've created a talent and succession model that helps us identify emerging frontline talent. This gives our people the opportunity to develop and help them prepare for leadership roles.

LV= also offers a development initiative called the 'Role Model Behaviours' programme to equip each leader – from team leader through to senior managers with the right tools to inspire, support and develop their teams.

We've introduced a new system called Coaching Development Reviews (CDR) which has created a new culture of coaching for our frontline people. The system allows frontline staff to track their own performance and take ownership of their development. Each person has access to all previous feedback and coaching sessions. The aim of this is to alleviate the stigma and worry attached to call quality feedback, and it's been a fantastic success. Our people love it, the business love it and detriment to our customers has been minimized.

We've also transformed our people's targets and objectives to focus more on the customer outcome. We've moved from measuring people on over 15 key performance indicators to just four. Our people can now concentrate on the customer journey, rather than meeting productivity targets.

## **Office environment/culture**

Our office is vibrant, modern, in line with our branding, spacious and filled with lots of natural light. Furthermore, our furniture is ergonomically designed for comfort. We have

'break out' areas on each floor where our people can relax and catch up with colleagues. We have an 'engage' area with comfy seating where employees can hold meetings, feedback sessions or general catch ups. Furthermore, our site is equipped with a modern subsidised restaurant. The office has an atrium where staff can enjoy a break outside in our seating area, hold meetings, activities, or coaching sessions etc. We also offer staff a range of benefits, such as discounts on gym memberships and a cycle-to-work scheme.

LV= understands how important it is that the different views of all its people are recognised and respected and that employees feel comfortable being themselves when at work. LV='s commitment to diversity and inclusion is supported by its CEO, his Executive team and the LV= Board. Through a continual programme of communications activity and events LV= seeks to remind people around the organisation why diversity and inclusion are important to LV= and what it means within the organisation.

### **Providing our people with a voice**

We invest heavily in internal communications. We have an onsite comms team who keep our people up to date with business information and upcoming events etc.

To provide our people with a voice and to help our people leaders listen we provide a number of feedback tools. We've introduced a new collaborative intranet, similar to facebook, where our people can create stories and discussions. Additionally we've introduced a knowledge management platform called Resolve and we carry out back to floor days. Innovate, is an internally built ideas generation platform that allows our people to submit ideas on how to improve processes and help us deliver even better customer service. So far 16 ideas have been implemented from Bristol with another 28 in progress and 41 under consideration.

An example of an idea that originated from Bristol came from a CSR who suggested we arrange temporary cover for a deceased customer's property under 'hire not due to loss' risk assessment. They felt providing cover during this difficult time was the right thing to do. Also they felt it could help increase business due to the flexibility and excellent customer care. This idea has now been implemented as standard working practice.

The benefits of the suggestion:

- To be seen as more compassionate, fairer and flexible to relatives of our customers after they've died
- Grow the Home product by promoting great customer service to other family members

***How does your centre underpin the running of the overall business?*** Please include evidence of how the centre contributes to the wider business, how the centre delivers world class service to its customers and what makes the centre an extraordinary place to work in.

### **Driving an engaged workforce**

Our annual employee engagement survey by Towers Watson (TW) showed that in 2015 Bristol received 83% for overall employee engagement. Additionally, Bristol received their highest scores in 2015, 20% above TW's UK high performing companies norm on the top five

survey questions. 98% of Bristol employees also believe in the goals and objectives of LV= and 91% are proud to be part of LV=.

Based upon these results an action plan is created for the department to highlight the areas of focus for the next year and to ensure there is continuous improvement for our people.

### **Charity**

We actively support the charities or causes that are close to our peoples' hearts.

Our Bristol office in particular devotes a large amount of time to community and charity work. The Bristol Charity Committee created a local community team made up of volunteers who were really keen to help local causes. Each volunteer wrote a short brief as to why they wanted to support the local community and what difference they could individually bring. Once this was completed we appointed a team of 12 colleagues to be on the committee.

The team meet monthly to discuss upcoming events or local initiatives, volunteer work, or fundraising opportunities where we can really make a difference. They have developed an annual calendar of community activity, so all 500 Bristol employees can see the community activity taking place in their site. This gives everyone an opportunity to get involved during the year and allows different people to get involved in each event.

In 2015, LV='s local charity committees raised £33,992, with Bristol contributing to this by raising £17,701 alone, so over 50%!

### **Attrition**

In Bristol we've worked tirelessly to reduce attrition. We set up a project called Star, where we completed a review of our recruitment process to ensure we're recruiting the right people. We now have a Bristol page on Jobs.LV where we have a description of our office, videos on what it's like to work at LV=, as well as training and career progression information.

Bristol is proud to be performing at 17% for attrition, 2.5% above target. Internal attrition is classed as a positive figure as it shows staff moving forwards with their career. By being open and honest with our people, as well as being more receptive to their feedback we can combat any issues and tackle them head on. This makes them feel listened to and appreciated which helps towards retaining our people. We've seen 40 people progress and develop from their original role into a new area or position.

### **Wellbeing - initiatives/rewards**

We arrange regular 'back to the floor' days where managers spend time on the floor with staff listening to calls. These are designed through our employee engagement champions who have been given the extra responsibility alongside their role to organise 'engage' activities.

We run a monthly incentive called The Karen Star award which recognises colleagues who go above and beyond. The award is nominated by peers to their colleagues. Winners are presented with the award where they receive an engraved trophy, a cake and a bottle of wine. CSR reward days are also held twice a year, similarly employees pitch the person they

feel deserves to attend a treat day to the management team in the form of a 'Dragons Den' style pitch.

During surge call volumes, we tend to keep our morale high throughout the office by arranging games in energiser sessions, as well as throughout the day to keep staff motivated. We regularly provide drinks, cakes or chocolate as a treat and thank you to our people.

### **21<sup>st</sup> century call guides**

The new 21<sup>st</sup> century call guides enables our frontline people to view scripts online instead of through a hard copy. In Bristol we ensured all team leaders received coaching to help them familiarise themselves with the call guides before the rollout. We developed a process for team leaders to coach their teams, review for errors/inconsistencies and suggest improvements.

Once the call guides moved online, we continued to develop new and amend existing call flows based on CSR feedback. We ensured regular communications were sent to raise awareness around the office. Team leaders ensured there were 'floor walks' on launch days and allocated time spent with all CSRs in energiser sessions to increase excitement. There was a specific focus on helping non-technical CSRs set up their screens and practice navigations. The scripts were easy to run through during training – it was only when we started taking calls that we saw barriers in the process which we were able to fix. We then shared the learnings with other sites. By empowering our people and providing coaching to CSRs, they had the time and confidence to learn the system.

### **Customer satisfaction**

We monitor customer satisfaction using a variety of tools and methods. The contact centre has recently introduced a 'hot alerts' process. This is where notifications are sent directly to managers when CSRs receive dissatisfied feedback. Management can then contact the dissatisfied customer directly to resolve the problem before it gets escalated. Workshops are held to allow CSRs the chance to listen back through their calls, so they can identify areas of improvement and next steps to take to help rectify the issues.

Bristol is currently performing at 91.36% for customer satisfaction, which is considered as world class. Additionally, Bristol received a score of 89% in January 2015 for ease of doing business, which increased by 1% by the end of 2015. The attribute 'attitude of our people' also increased in 2015 from 90% in January 2015 to 92% in December 2015.

### **What makes our office unique?**

A supportive and nurturing culture – focus is on motivational team building sessions.

Our people see us as a great place to work - if we give people the tools to do their jobs well, engage and reward them for delivering excellent customer journeys, they invest in customers, which in turns generates greater business benefits.