

Leadership Perspective: Criteria for Recruitment & Selection of Effective Contact Centre Leaders

Finding the most appropriate leaders for your organisation and culture is not easy. Potential contact centre leaders need to be able to apply their experience in face-to-face environments to the non face-to-face operation. Their leadership style, qualities and values also need to be augmented by additional qualities for the invisible environment of the contact centre.

Whether your organisation is looking for someone to embrace a leadership role in your centre or you are someone aspiring to a leadership role, the state of the contact centre is an important element in the leadership qualities that will be most effective. (See earlier installments)

Another important quality a developing a leader needs is sensitivity to people. Whether these people are the customers, the staff or management, without this quality, leadership efforts will be ineffective. One of the best books on leadership I've read is Naked Truth by Fabian Dattner. In it Dattner presents many provocative concepts, one of which I will quote:

"A large part of the leadership problem has to do with the acute shortage of women in senior management positions. - It is very possible that many of the problems we are experiencing in the mismanagement of people reflect the paucity of relationship skills among leaders and they may have more to do with gender than education. I am suggesting that when one group of people make a decision for all of us without adequate representation of the opinions of the people they will affect, then the probability of their decision making being inadequate is fairly high.

"I would further suggest that women generally (though not in all cases) are very good at managing relationships and broadly-based communication. That is not to say that men can't manage these as well; it is simply that women may find it easier."

Obviously gender is not the answer to leadership, rather (especially in contact centres), the ability to build authentic relationships with staff, etc, is the significant issue. There is a list of additional categories below that can help you identify professional leadership potential for your contact centre. First and foremost, contact centre leaders must come equipped with a practical grasp and appreciation for the complexities of this industry. Those aspiring to be leaders, need to be in the industry learning how it works.

Other valuable qualities include:

Renaissance Person	Hands-on Experience
Overall Strategic View	Track Record
Attitude	Technical Issues
Team Building Skills	Health & Fitness in the Centre
Approach to Time & Money	People Perspective

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