

## Leadership Perspective: Ten Key Technical Issues

Of the primary skills and characteristics we've been discussing as desirable in leaders of a contact centre, these are the key "nuts and bolts" skills.

1. You need someone with a healthy interest in trends and strategic analysis - someone interested in keeping their finger on the pulse of activities.
2. Do they appreciate the differences between motivation and movement and the psychology behind incentives?
3. Ask them to describe their philosophies and experience with hiring, evaluating, even releasing staff. Listen to the type of words they use. Do they betray an innate lack of respect for an individual? Do they demonstrate an understanding of the difficulty and importance, or are they more into "churning out the numbers"? Do they balance the measures?
4. During the interview process a simple revealing tool is to draw a circle, give them a pen and ask them to carve it into sections like a pie according to the best way a leader can spend their time. Once completed, ask them to number the wedges by priority of importance and then indicate the single wedge that has proved to be the most challenging for them as a leader. Have them explain and listen to how they describe this. Does this resonate with what your organisation expects or needs?
5. What are their thoughts about time and on delivering quality service? Service level agreements met consistently with other areas of your organisation, with suppliers, service bureaus and most of all with customers and staff, go a long way to establish reliability internally and in the market.
6. An interesting and potentially revealing question to ask is, "How many calls should someone handle in a day?"
7. Do they have the basic skills to manage their own hardware and software programs themselves? If not, how much of an investment in training will it take to bring them up to speed?
8. They should understand the overall impact of the company's strategy, vision and competitors so they can keep staff well focused.
9. Are they aware of the importance of building solid internal relationships? The "corporate politics" side of business life.
10. Last but certainly not least (or first) along with basic profit and loss understanding, they should understand cost per call, the contribution margin of a sale, pricing of the products and when and how adjustments or discounts might be applied rather than just leaving this to someone else.

***Read about the author, Darlene D. Richard, at [www.CallCentreINTEGRITY.com/articles.htm](http://www.CallCentreINTEGRITY.com/articles.htm)***