

What's Different About Leading Today? Time.

On average, corporations now lose half their customers in five years, half their employees in four and half their investors in less than one. Average turnover with customers, employees, senior and middle management ranges to 30%. Contact centre staff turnover rates can be much higher. Disloyalty of this magnitude is stunting corporate performance by as much as 20-50% annually!

Yet, we've never been so busy! We have roles to fill, strategies to manage and campaigns to run. We're buried under "information overload" that doubles in volume every five years. We spend an average of up to 600 hours in our cars annually and (depending on the level of responsibilities) as much as two to three times that amount of time wading through and managing the mountains of e-mail choking our cyber in-box every day!

We have to prepare for new product, pricing, service or marketing campaigns while juggling previous campaigns, measure everything, pay attention to changing legislation and internal standards and guidelines while we watch staff leave and new people come to fill their ranks and be quickly trained. It's no wonder we're feeling mentally and physically stretched and stressed.

Recently I read of a sociological study concerning interviews with a large number of men and women over the age of 95. They were asked only one question: "If you could live your life over again, what would you do differently?" The most frequent answer was they would take more time for REFLECTION.

Time marches on and change occurs at "warp" speed, especially for leaders in contact centres who are charged with getting more from their people and technology in less time than every before. But we must TAKE time to reflect if we are to be excellent leaders.

For every change initiated, there must be sufficient calendar time to think about, evaluate and fine tune changes. Furthermore, the people involved in the change must have adequate time to understand, plan, communicate and reflect on those changes if the organisation is to reap maximum benefits from any change. But how?

Start small and start right now. Take out your diary. Select one hour each week and block it out for thinking and reflecting about what is going on in your centre. Do this for the next three months and evaluate the results from your clearer and wiser thinking. This could become a lifetime habit.

Read about the author, Darlene D. Richard, at www.CallCentreINTEGRITY.com/articles.htm