

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CALL CENTERS

IN QUEUE

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Welcome to the January 2019 issue of the NACC In Queue newsletter!

Top Three Pitfalls Of Work At Home Programs And How To Avoid Them

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Our company does a couple of things. We hold workshops, conferences, and perform on site consulting to help companies get work at home and remote working programs right. We see hundreds of deployment strategies per year, a ton of innovative tactics and processes, and yes, some big pain points and important learn

So here are the top three trending pitfalls of work at home programs (for contact centers and support functions specifically) and how to avoid them:

Pitfall #1: Bad hiring - we're speaking specifically of transferring in house employees into work at home positions, or hiring people externally into work at home positions. Why do we get this wrong? Usually it's time pressure (setting unrealistic goals to fill positions), and/or lack of proper assessment of required knowledge abilities to successfully work remotely.

To get the wheels back on and deliver a stable, high talent, low turnover hiring program:

- Start with a new job description. Focus on what's required to be successful working from home or working remotely at your company.
- Use a comprehensive job simulation tool. Prospects need to take a test drive of what the job feels like, (by doing it), and companies need to get a glimpse of their prospects on test drive. Two excellent vendors are Furst Person and Chemistry.
- Past performance and behavior. Behavioral interviews, reference checks, background checks are the tools we need. SkillSurvey invites applicants to furnish references of friends/colleagues and gets good results, candid feedback (so say our clients).
- Skilled final decision maker. We've seen companies sometimes ramp up hiring (unrealistically) and put interviewers/hiring decision makers in positions that don't belong there. Inexperienced people in these roles will result in bad hiring, it's a sure thing!

Pitfall #2: Disconnected new hire training - the most crucial components of training are identifying what people need to know, and when they need to know it. Skills based training (starting with one or two skills, gaining proficiency, then adding more) has the highest success rate in a contact center environment, and works well for remote/virtual learning. Use mixed mediums and micro-learnings (5-7 minute segments).

Pitfall #3: High-effort/Fragmented Connection to Co-Workers - remote working is a mature staffing/business model, and there is great technology available to make sharing knowledge and experiences, in a remote environment as low effort and as effective as in-office. There are also great tools available that make socializing remotely as easy and as effective as in office (nearly). Enterprise Social Networks are the norm (Slack, Facebook for Business, Microsoft Teams). Collapsing several communication channels (i.e. chat, bulletin boards, IM) into one is what makes these tools so easy to use, no matter where people sit. Video (for most team meetings and one to one meetings) is a baseline requirement. If your company is not willing to invest in video and virtual meeting platforms, (i.e. Zoom, Adobe Connect, Teams, Go To Meeting) we recommend you keep your staff in an office building. Face to face interactions hold huge importance and without it, programs suffer, engagement weakens, performance slips, turnover rises.

Want to learn more and benchmark best practices on work at home programs?

Join us in Dallas March 6-7, 2019 for the Remote Working Summit: <https://www.customercontactstrategies.com/2019-remote-working-summit/>

NACC Survey Results Show Continued Growth In At-Home Agent Trend

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During the third quarter of each year the NACC, in conjunction with Saddletree Research, conducts its annual research survey of customer service professionals. For the past several years, we have endeavored to keep track of what we see as a growing industry trend in the number of contact center agents who are working from home.

This year, 54 percent of respondents reported that they have agents working from home. This is up from 50 percent at the beginning of 2018. Also interesting is the percent of agents that work from home in the contact centers that support home agents. Figure 1 below illustrates the overall percentage of the workforce that works from home in all contact center at-home agent workforce at the beginning of 2018.

Figure 1: Percent At-Home Contact Center Agents 2018

Figure 1 indicates that the majority of respondents, 44 percent, have ten percent or less of their agent workforce working from home in 2018. Figure 2 illustrates this same statistic year later, at the beginning of 2019.

Figure 2: Percent At-Home Contact Center Agents 2019

Figure 2 shows that the majority of respondents in 2019, 37 percent, now have 11 percent to 25 percent of their workforce working from home. We believe this a clear indication of success of at-home work programs in the contact center industry. As success is proven, more contact centers are investing in an at-home agent program.

Another factor that will likely play into the at-home agent movement is potential for the gig, or contract, contact center agent in the very near future. Similar to Uber drivers, gig agents will choose the hours they want to work and supply their own equipment. Surprisingly, seven percent of the industry is already experimenting with gig agents in their contact center. Another 19 percent indicated that they would seriously consider bringing in gig agents before the end of 2019.

For more information and data regarding gig agents in the contact center, please listen to a [webinar](#) I recorded with Aspect at the end of 2018. The [webinar](#), entitled, "Contact Center Staffing in the Gig Economy" can be downloaded [here](#).

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- Top 3 Pitfalls Of Work At Home Programs
- NACC Survey Results: At-Home Growth
- Call Center Comics

Pearls Of Wisdom

"If you want to turn your life around, try thankfulness. It will change your life mightily."

~ Gerald Good

Reports From NACC

NACC has been burning the midnight oil and typing until our fingers are sore to bring out reports to our members. Each is listed below. If you are interested to see what we are writing about, click on the links below and download the executive summary of each. If you like what you see, join the NACC so that you can view these reports and others that will be coming out soon on our website. These reports will ensure that you know the latest trends in the industry.

- [Research Note: NICE Introduces CXone - Fully Integrated Open Cloud Contact Center Platform: August 2017](#)
- [Research Note: Verint Introduces Knowledge Management Professional Knowledge Management for the Masses: July 2017](#)
- [NICE Introduces Nexidia Analytics: Omni-Channel Analytics For The Contact Center: January 2017](#)
- [Text Analytics Market Update: April 2016](#)
- [HireIQ Candidate Optimizer Disrupts The Status Quo, Powers Revolution In Customer Service Human Capital Management: May 2015](#)
- [Verint Jumps Into The Gamification Game: April 2015](#)
- [Research Update - Strong 4th Quarter Tops Year Of Growth! For The 2014 U.S. Contact Center Industry Employment: March 2015](#)
- [Geo-Fencing: Expanding The Contact Center Boundaries?: November 2014](#)
- [Neural Phonetic Speech Analytics: The Brains behind Nexidia Interactions Analytics 11.0: July 2014](#)
- [Nexidia Pushes Speech Analytics Envelope with Nexidia Interaction Analytics 11.0: July 2014](#)
- [The Time is Now: Workforce Optimization Becomes Reality for the Small-to-Medium-Sized Contact Center: July 2013](#)
- [Finding the Silver Lining in the Contact Center Cloud: May 2013](#)
- [The At-Home Agent Movement - A Benchmark Quantitative Analysis: January 2013](#)
- [State of the Call Center Industry Report: 2nd Quarter 2012 Data](#)
- [State of the Call Center Industry Report: 1st Quarter 2012 Data](#)
- [Contact Center Mobility Study: May 2012](#)
- [State of the Call Center Industry Report: 4th Quarter 2011 Data](#)
- [State of the Call Center Industry Report: 3rd Quarter 2011 Data](#)
- [State of the Call Center Industry Report: 2nd Quarter 2011 Data](#)
- [State of the Call Center Industry Report: 1st Quarter 2011 Data](#)
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- [State of the Call Center Industry Report: 3rd Quarter 2009 Data](#)
- [State of the Call Center Industry Report: 2nd Quarter 2009 Data](#)
- [State of the Call Center Industry Report: 1st Quarter 2009 Data](#)
- [North American Contact Center Industry, 2008-2009: The Year In Review and a Look Ahead](#)
- [State of the Call Center Industry Report: 4th Quarter 2008 Data](#)



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