

CALABRIO™

FOR AGENTS | FOR BRANDS | FOR SUCCESS


State of the Contact Center 2023

ACTIVATING THE AGENT
OF THE FUTURE



Your Presenter

Ed Creasey

- Global Director of Engineers, Consultants & Architects
- 31 years in Contact Centres
- 24 years in CX software & consulting
- Definitely not a dinosaur 



Presentation Objectives

How do we activate the agent of the future?



Introduction



Our AI Blind Spot



Rethinking Training



Future Agent Proficiencies



Conclusions & Next Steps



Project Purpose

WHY WE DO THE REPORT EACH YEAR

We want to understand changing perceptions, misperceptions, and emerging strategies in the contact center.

What challenges and pressures do CCs face today?

How are CCs addressing these challenges/pressures via strategy and investment?

What skills to agents need today and in the future?

How do CC managers view the role of AI in the Contact Centre?

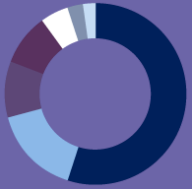
2020 – Evolving World of Work

2021 – Cloud is Here. What's Next?

2022 – Contact Center as a Brand Guardian

2023 – Activating the Agent of the Future

Survey Audience



JOB TITLE

- Head of call center: 54%
- Manager: 16%
- Operations manager: 10%
- Customer service director: 9%
- Team leader: 5%
- Quality manager: 2%
- Reporting and/or analytics manager: 54%

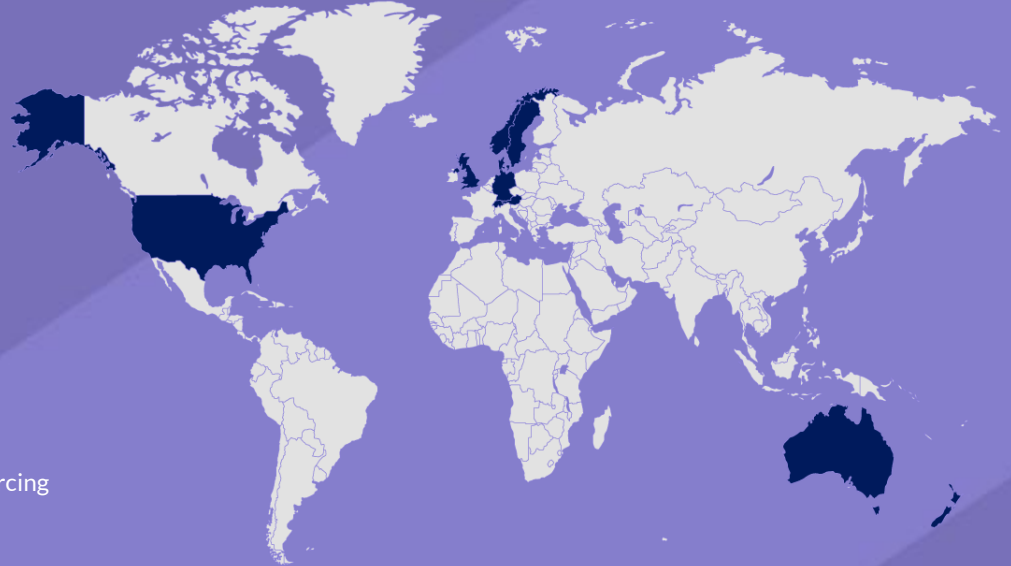


AGE

- Millennial: 69%
- Gen X: 23%
- Gen Z: 7%
- Boomer: 1%

INDUSTRY

- Telecommunications
- Business Process Outsourcing
- Retail/Apparel
- Financial Services
- Healthcare
- Government/Public Sector



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HOW IS AI CHANGING THE
LANDSCAPE?:

**Only 3% saw no
change
in the next 10
years.**

What do the experts think?

Media Contacts | Media Resources | Insights | Archive

Press Release

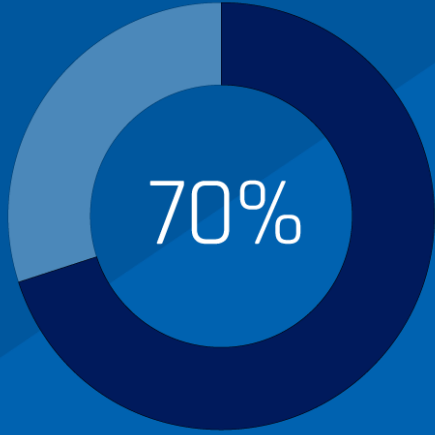
Newsroom

STAMFORD, Conn., August 31, 2022

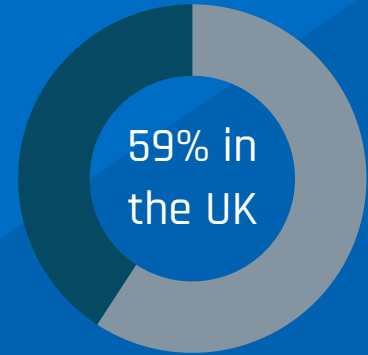
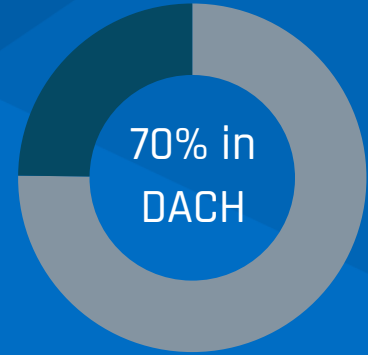
Gartner Predicts Conversational AI Will Reduce Contact Center Agent Labor Costs by \$80 Billion in 2026

Gartner Forecasts Conversational AI End-User Spending to Reach Nearly \$2 Billion in 2022

By 2026, conversational artificial intelligence (AI) deployments within contact centers will reduce agent labor costs by \$80 billion, according to Gartner, Inc. Worldwide end-user spending on conversational AI solutions within contact centers is forecast to reach \$1.99 billion in 2022.



70% of contact center managers believe AI will ultimately **INCREASE** the number of agents over the next 10 years





HOW IS AI CHANGING THE
LANDSCAPE?:

Do Contact Centre Managers have a Blind Spot?



Lack of trust in technology e.g., the
Honda Point disaster in 1923

Cognitive
bias e.g., the
Churchill
losing the
1945 election



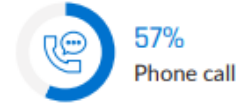
Inattentional
blindness as
with the
Gorilla study
from 1999 -
limited
Cognitive
Bandwidth.



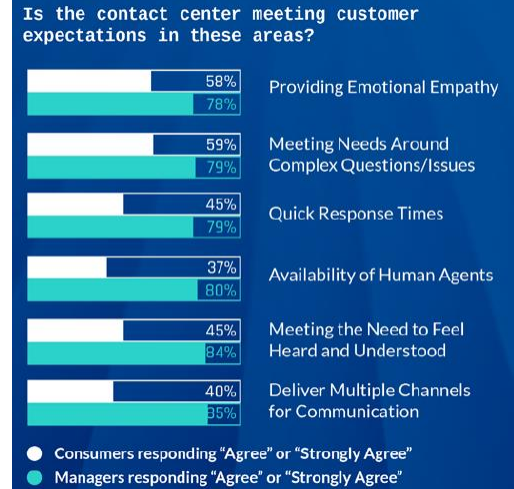
HOW IS AI CHANGING THE
LANDSCAPE?:

Do Contact Centre Managers have a Blind Spot?

CONSUMERS



MANAGERS





Managers see upsides & risks with AI

- Contact centre managers don't agree on what to do with AI.
- Some concerns are misplaced e.g. Training, addressing mental health and predicting actions

WHERE WILL AI HELP THE WORKFORCE THE MOST, AND WHERE ARE MANAGERS CONCERNED?



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Nearly 2/3rds of managers (64%) say they oversee a hybrid workplace

49%

of managers believe that remote workers are meeting productivity expectations.

24%

lower than in 2020.

MANAGERS WHO OVERSEE A REMOTE WORKPLACE WERE LEAST SATISFIED WITH:

PRODUCTIVITY



HIRING THE MOST QUALIFIED



AGENT SATISFACTION





45% of agents don't have the skills they need—but managers can't agree on how to prioritize training.

DO OR WILL YOUR AGENTS HAVE ALL THE SKILLS NEEDED TO BE PRODUCTIVE IN THE FUTURE?



AREAS MANAGERS SAY NEED IMPROVEMENT:





VOICE OF THE CUSTOMER

TravelPerk

As AI and automation increase, the role of the agent will become more integrated with technology—and in many ways more demanding and valuable, said Tom Davis, Director of Tools and Planning at TravelPerk, a corporate travel management company.

How do you see contact centers changing in the next several years?

I think the future of the contact center is that the agents will be a value-add instead of just plugging gaps in the platform. **We're going to come through a curve of "automate everything," and then look at the customer journey and say, "Where would a human add value now?"** For us, it's obvious where a customer will want to speak to a human.

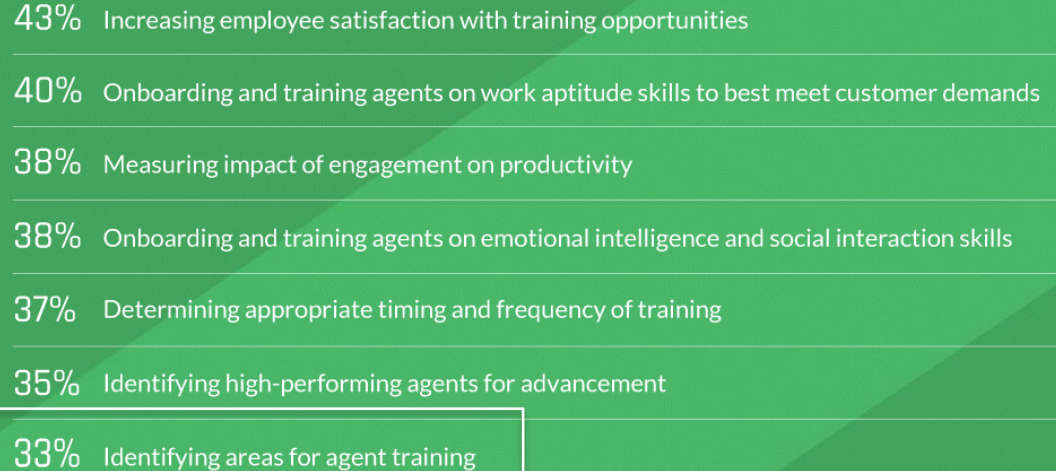


Wide range of engagement strategies for training

- Almost all managers felt their environment provided enough (71%) or somewhat enough (26%) opportunities for agent training.
- Only 33% of managers chose **identifying areas for agent training....why?**

WHAT ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES ARE YOU USING TODAY FOR YOUR AGENTS?

Respondents could name all that apply



Top Agent Training Opportunities

When agents feel like they are equipped with the right skills, they are more engaged. They need to be able to handle more complex issues., which requires structured and personalised coaching powered by AI.

Generative AI and Machine learning can automate mundane and repetitive quality process to increase sample size, personalise coaching and reduce wrap time.



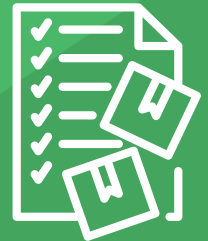
Automate
Quality



Personalise
Training



Measure
coaching
effectiveness &
commitments



Generate
Summaries

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**Critical thinking
and continuous
learning
are top agent skills
of the future—and the
most lacking today.**

WHAT SKILLS OR TRAITS DO YOU CONSIDER MOST IMPORTANT FOR AGENT PRODUCTIVITY?

When ranked 1-3

63% Critical thinking skills like problem-solving and troubleshooting

62% Adaptability and continuous learning

61% Strong interpersonal communication

47% Empathy and emotional intelligence

WHAT SKILLS OR TRAITS DO YOU CONSIDER LACKING IN AGENTS TODAY?

Respondents could pick all that apply

50% Adaptability and continuous learning

47% Critical thinking skills like problem-solving and troubleshooting

47% Empathy and emotional intelligence

45% Strong interpersonal communication

WHAT IS THE TOP SKILL TO SUFFER WHEN AGENTS ARE STRESSED OR STRUGGLING WITH DISENGAGEMENT?



- Critical thinking (24%)
- Adaptability and continuous learning (23%)
- Strong interpersonal communication (21%)
- Self-management and time management (17%)
- Empathy and emotional intelligence (15%)



Keeping agents happy and engaged is about more than just retention.

Top-valued skills are the first to suffer when agents are stressed or disengaged.



VOICE OF THE CUSTOMER

AMN Healthcare

Alison Rodney is Director of Workforce Management for AMN Healthcare. She manages forecasting, staffing and scheduling for 3,000 interpreters all over the world who work remotely to provide on-demand support to doctors and hospitals nationwide.

How important do you think critical-thinking skills, adaptability and continuous learning are for your agents to evolve and do their jobs effectively?

Very important. Our interpreters have to be able to think on their feet, to react, to do whatever they need to. **And when you're talking about a remote learning environment, they need to take it upon themselves to do the training material.** Our supervisors rely on the agents to make sure they are focused and taking opportunities to learn and grow.

Top Agent Self-Service Opportunities

There are self-service tools that can help improve engagement, performance, and satisfaction. Managers say the top three ways these tools can help agents are to:



Request
training



Select breaks
and lunches



Request time off
or overtime

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To build the agent of the future, we need AI & Automation

IDENTIFY HOW AI
AND YOUR AGENTS
WILL WORK
TOGETHER



USE ANALYTICS TO
AUTOMATE &
PERSONALISE
QUALITY



USE TARGETED,
COACHING TO BUILD
CRITICAL THINKING
& ADAPATABILITY



USE SELF-SERVICE
TOOLS TO IMPROVE
ENGAGEMENT,
PERFORMANCE, AND
SATISFACTION



Will AI mean the end of the Contact Centre Agent?





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Thank You