




# Creating a CX focused contact centre team to drive engagement

*Insights from the Fair  
Work Ombudsman  
(FWO)*




18th Annual  
Government Contact  
Centre Summit 2018






For any contact centre, employees are the most valuable asset in achieving higher customer satisfaction. Customers will only have the experience you want them to have if your team are creating and providing that experience throughout all touch-points and channels.




For the Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO), creating a motivated contact centre team that is customer-oriented and based a decision-making rather than processes has been a key driver in improving customer engagement and satisfaction.

Over the past two years, the FWO has evolved as a contact centre in moving away from the traditional contact centre specific directive processes and KPIs like calls per hour and after call work, and moved towards a new Principles-based environment.




Introduced from mid-2015 these four principles – Authority, Tailored, Energy, and Expertise – guide all of FWO’s customer interactions and are applied by staff to ensure the best possible service for the individual situation.



And this approach seems to be working. Since taking a bigger focus on employee engagement at FWO, 85% of staff believe their team has a culture of finding new and better ways to do things and 90% of staff agree they feel personally accountable for their contribution to achieving branch and agency priorities.

Ahead of the [18th Annual Government Contact Centre Summit 2018](#), Zoe Mansfield, Assistant Director Frontline Voice at FWO explores the steps their contact centre has taken to move away from a traditional contact centre team approach to create a customer centric team culture, and the impact this is having on employee and customer engagement.





## Based on your experience, why is a good culture critical to today's contact centre?

"I think it's important to recognise how the contact centre of today is different to contact centres in the past – more complex work, more complex challenges due to new technologies and contact platforms, and ever increasing customer expectations.

By focusing on culture we've been able to increase staff retention rates and the sense of pride and energy our staff have for their role and the work they do within the agency. This has contributed to a real willingness in staff to go above and beyond, whether it's actively contributing to initiatives that will improve the operation of the centre or being willing to take another call when they were going to go on lunch or at the end of their shift if we're experiencing long wait times. When you get this alignment right, you can really start to have an impact on achieving business priorities and tackling the complexities mentioned above."

## What steps are you taking at FWO to move away from the traditional contact centre team approach to drive motivation?

"We have undertaken a number of steps to move away from a traditional contact centre mindset. The biggest shift was to implement a principles based service approach to our work; empowering our people to use their discretion on the best way to assist customers.



Our principles are; providing tailored customer service, showing energy in our work, providing expert advice, and using our authority to make decisions. These principles underpin everything we do, and provide staff the freedom to be innovative in their role and how they interact with our customers.


We've also made an investment in up-skilling our people by providing significant development opportunities through secondments and job shadowing, so they are able to provide an exceptional customer experience. We aim to provide a seamless, integrated approach where staff are not constrained by traditional notions of structure and process.

Operating in a principles based service environment also saw us remove some scheduling restraints within the contact centre, allowing our staff to use their judgement when they take their breaks. This decision created a commitment from the leadership team that we were serious about moving away from the traditional contact centre and trusted the decision making abilities of our staff."

## **What are some of the biggest challenges you're facing when it comes to empowering and motivating staff? How have you addressed or overcome these challenges?**

"We've operated in a stats / rule based environment for a significant period, so it's been a challenge to form new habits and ways of thinking. This is especially relevant to staff and empowering them to make decisions using their expertise and authority.





We've addressed this challenge by involving staff in developing our principles, provided training and opportunities to discuss examples of how to use them and recognised staff through our reward and recognition program. We've started an internal blog where staff can share their experiences, information and encourage innovation. We're also really supportive of trying new ideas and approaches- with this comes the challenge of not being afraid to fail.

We're all on this journey together, which means each of us has helped to shape our new culture along the way."

## **As digital gains more momentum, what strategies are you using to up-skill and motivate staff to use these channels?**

"We involve our frontline staff in the co-design and testing of new online service offerings. We also encourage them to do user testing of products so they are involved and motivated to not only use these products, but know how and why they are built as they are and can explain the benefits to our customers.

We use customer journey mapping and create customer personas to increase staff understanding so they can connect what they do with the Fair Work Ombudsman's goals.

We've also offered our phone based staff opportunities to do secondments or rotations into our digital teams so they develop their skills, understand what goes on in the back end of these systems and are able to provide a seamless service to customers utilising digital channels.

Our staff frequently use and encourage customers to use the range of tools available on our website, [www.fairwork.gov.au](http://www.fairwork.gov.au) because they are practical, easy to use and available 24/7. Such tools include;

- Pay and Conditions Tool (PACT), where you can calculate your own pay rates, leave, notice and redundancy entitlements
- 'My account' where you can save results from PACT, favourite pages and award summaries.

Furthermore, we have regular team meetings where guest speakers attend to talk about their team and share information to provide integrated customer service.


These strategies motivate staff to use digital channels, provide for job variety and multi-skilling, and provide staff with the opportunity to be involved in something a bit different.”

## **What role does the customer play in creating a good contact centre culture?**

“One of our branch priorities is “Customer1st@FWO” which means providing exceptional customer service by putting the customer first. An example of this is that we have a “Voice of the Customer” team who are committed to better understanding our customers and test whether our current tools and services meet customer needs.

From the research we've done we know approximately three quarters of customers initially contact us seeking advice on entitlements and conditions of employment and subsequently contact us for assistance approaching their employer to resolve their workplace issue.





We also know 80% of our customers visit our website before they contact us. Having this information means we are continually working on ways to tailor our resources and services to best meet their needs.”

## Since taking a bigger focus on employee engagement at FWO, what results have been realised in your contact centre in terms of employee and customer satisfaction?

From our own internal ‘Pulse’ survey in December 2016:

- **86%** of staff agree they feel empowered to assist customers and solve problems using their own initiative
- **87%** of staff agree they have the skills needed for the future work of our branch
- **90%** of staff agree they feel personally accountable for their contribution to achieving branch and agency priorities
- **85%** of staff agree their team has a culture of finding new and better ways to do things





# Interested in learning more?

Join us at the LARGEST and ORIGINAL Contact Centre Summit for Government Professionals at the 18th Annual Government Contact Centre Summit 2018. This year, the Gov CC Summit will focus on:

1. Undergoing Digital Innovation with Restricted Funding
2. Transforming Staff Culture and Performance to Reflect the Values of the Public and Non-Profit Sector
3. Delivering Government Services through Omnichannel Transformation
4. Delivering Human-Centered Service Design and Workplaces

For more information visit <http://govcc.iqpc.com.au> or call +61 2 9229 1000 or email [enquire@iqpc.com.au](mailto:enquire@iqpc.com.au)



*“The value of attending the Annual Government Contact Centre Summit is finding out what other Government agencies are doing in areas of your interest, listening to lots of different speakers and developing networks with people outside your agency and sharing mutually beneficial information.”*



**Zoe Mansfield**

