

Questions from the CCMA virtual Seminar ‘Transitioning out of the Crisis’, 19th May 2020

1. Have you introduced any new systems or reporting to support oversight and managing the performance of people working from home?

From Adrian Japp of CDL: In the main, no. We already have systems, SLAs and line management to ensure that we achieve our goals, we have however increased our engagement time with our colleagues, on a daily basis, and as we all view the same data at different levels (in ServiceNow), we are all aiming in the same direction. In fact, we saw slight increases in productivity as time spent commuting, etc., was more gainfully utilised. Target based tasks and monitoring have therefore been at the core of our organisation, and will continue to be whether we are in the office or at home. The key changes are those on 'how' we report on the data, and for this, we create dashboards and reports in ServiceNow to meet operational needs. This gives everybody the right tools to measure against, review and keep improving.

From Glenn Hanton, Senior Director Technical Support, manager of the EMEA Contact Centres at ServiceNow: Please see below example of daily reports published to leadership, showing results last quarter, then tracking the post work from home period. NB US date format !

Archived: Daily Updates Date: 3/20

COVID-19 Event: Key Support Performance Measures

Key Measures	Q4 '19	(3/10)	3/11	3/12	3/13	W/end	3/16	3/17	3/18	3/19	3/20
CSAT											
TTRf (days)											
TTRf w PRB (days)											
Eng task time (days)											
SLA attainment											
P1 attainment											
% P1											
% Escalated cases											
Avg. daily vol											
Absent TSEs											

After we tracked this for a number of weeks, on a daily basis, we then switched to a weekly snapshot, to check that our performance was not being materially impacted by remote working, i.e.:

COVID-19 Event: Key Support Performance Measures

Key Measures	Quarter End								
	Q4 '19	Q1 '20	4/8	4/15	4/22	4/29	5/05	5/12	5/19
CSAT									
TTRf (days)									
TTRf w PRB (days)									
Eng task time (days)									
SLA attainment									
P1 attainment									
% P1									
% Escalated cases									
Avg. daily vol									
Absent TSEs									

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In response to the crisis, ServiceNow launched a number of targeted applications on the Now Platform that we made available free-of-charge. We are using those applications ourselves to allow any of our contact centre team members who have contracted Covid-19 to self-report their illness, confidentially, to our Global Talent (HR) team. We announced some new apps just a couple of days ago that are focused on the 'return to work' and we will be using those as well as part of our detailed planning for some resources to start working from an office-based contact centre again.

2. How are your staff managing with childcare and resourcing?

From Adrian Japp of CDL: They are all managing really well. In most cases, 2 parents are at home, and in cases where there are single parents, we openly engage with those colleagues, to understand their situation, and develop ways of working with them, and around their commitments. We are no longer constrained by the office and core hours as such, so there is a great deal more flexibility in the homeworking approach.

We use the ServiceNow app to give a view on this, and a key question that we added to the app was a question that gets the information from each employee in respect to their commitments, and their ability to work 'all of the time' or 'some of the time'. There is a dynamic view of this for HR and the BCRT.

From Glenn Hanton, Senior Director Technical Support, manager of the EMEA Contact Centres at ServiceNow: We have empowered managers to run their teams, using the resources that they have available to them, using differing shift patterns, as much as possible. This has allowed those with childcare challenges, home schooling, looking after elderly relatives, to take time out when

they need it, to balance everything. We have a good demographic of staff, at different “life stages” which has given us the flexibility, to cover each other, day to day. We also have good time overlaps built in with the “Follow The Sun” centres, to our east and west. This means that we always have two and sometimes, three, geographically separated teams, all working customer cases in the same window. For some it will be their evening, others, first thing in the morning, while one team has core working hours. This means that we can flex and bend our staff shifts to complement each other and build in time for other non-work activities to be taken care of.

3. Spoke about managers “gearing up” for remote management. Examples ?

From Adrian Japp of CDL: There is inevitably an overhead in respect of how we interact with our people. Line managers have to spend more time, more closely engaged with the staff, and look out for signs of stress, change in approach, external influences. We as managers have to be more attentive. If anything, because of this, our line managers have developed closer relationships with our people than ever before! How often does your boss walk into your living room? Different conversations are spawned, and barriers are broken down. It is a shift in the way we work, and it is far from a negative shift.

From Glenn Hanton, Senior Director Technical Support, manager of the EMEA Contact Centres at ServiceNow: Team managers are running daily “stand up” meetings, first thing in the morning, with their teams, via videoconferencing. This is the opportunity for staff to share any challenges they may have with the day ahead (including family related challenges) and also, to request specific help from seniors, buddies, etc., e.g. hardest open case.

Leaders are encouraged to check in with direct reports on a one to one basis too, to ensure staff are able to discuss any concerns, outside of the group setting.

We have had managers build and run quizzes at the end of the day, to keep staff connected and communicating.

Senior leadership and our executive team have held All Hands meetings, All Manager meetings, etc., in order to keep staff abreast of the current situation, to give estimations around re-opening of facilities (with the caveat that no-one will be forced to return against their will) and to reassure them that our staff welfare is our topmost priority. Staff are thanked for keeping our business running during these difficult times, in order to keep staff motivated and engaged. Customer focus remains our key driver during this time and we have seen customer satisfaction rates move higher, despite all the challenges in the world.

We have set expectations that the future of work may well be very different and that we might see more remote working into the future, especially if the business measures are hit, irrespective of where people are. This is a very motivating factor for those staff we have that would like to take advantage of more flexibility to work remotely, once things get back to normal. The main drivers here are long commute times and balancing work and family life.

4. Can you please elaborate on the formal risk assessment mandatory

From Ian Ashby of ServiceNow: There is quite a lot of detail about this in the HM Govt. Document that I mentioned during the seminar: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/offices-and-contact-centres>.

Some key content from this document:

You must make sure that the risk assessment for your business addresses the risks of COVID-19, using this guidance to inform your decisions and control measures. A risk assessment is not about creating huge amounts of paperwork, but rather about identifying sensible measures to control the risks in your workplace. If you have fewer than five workers, or are self-employed, you don't have to write anything down as part of your risk assessment. Your risk assessment will help you decide whether you have done everything you need to. There are interactive tools available to support you from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) at <https://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/assessment.htm>

If you have not already done so, you should carry out an assessment of the risks posed by COVID-19 in your workplace as soon as possible. If you are currently operating, you are likely to have gone through a lot of this thinking already.

You should share the results of your risk assessment with your workforce. If possible, you should consider publishing the results on your website (and we would expect all employers with over 50 workers to do so).

5. Hi, the Government guidance stipulated that there was no requirement for PPE for contact centre teams in an office. Do you think there is any value in teams using PPE within the office?

From Ian Ashby of ServiceNow: PPE is covered in Section 6 of the the HM Govt. Document that I mentioned during the seminar: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/offices-and-contact-centres>.

In summary, the current government position on PPE for offices and contact centres (and in fact generally) is:

- Additional PPE beyond what you usually wear is not beneficial
- The exception is clinical settings, like a hospital, or a small handful of other roles for which Public Health England advises use of PPE
- Workplaces should not encourage the precautionary use of extra PPE to protect against COVID-19 outside clinical settings or when responding to a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19.

6. How do you envision this impacting attrition rates within contact centres and ultimately changing the way we recruit?

From Ian Ashby of ServiceNow: I recall writing a White Paper on the benefits of what I called 'homeshoring' for contact centre agents back in 2006 ! Some of the benefits that were identified at that time from homeshoring of contact centres were:

- Greater flexibility to accommodate part-time workers (to fit with childcare, medical conditions restricting hours of work per day, etc.)
- Improved safety for those working shifts (no late night travel, etc.)
- Benefits for those with limited mobility, disabled, etc.
- Reduced commuting times
- Reduced CO2 emissions (no commute)
- Ability to recruit from a much broader geography (literally anywhere in the world !)

I think these issues will all come into play going forward both for existing employees and also for new recruits. The flip side of course is that many contact centre agents will WANT to go back into an office environment (for at least a few days a week) for the social interaction, others may wish to work from an office because their home working environment doesn't suit (space, noise, childcare, etc.). And of course there's the issue of what the employer wants – are they comfortable with agents working remotely ? I do think there will be distinct segments of contact centre workers going forward, split between predominantly home-workers and predominantly office-workers, with likely quite different demographics and profiles.