

# How Quality Assurance is key to unlocking advisor engagement improvements



**Delivering exceptional customer service is a key priority for contact centres, and there's a growing realisation that improving advisor engagement is a critical driver for organisations to optimise contact centre performance.**

In this CCMA Good Practice Guide we look at the role that Quality Assurance (QA) can play in transforming contact centre performance and enhancing the customer experience. Key areas where an effective QA approach can make a difference include automating workflows, faster advisor evaluation, improved feedback, and stronger advisor engagement.

## Advisor engagement has never been more important

Today's contact centre advisors face constant pressure to meet exacting goals and targets - whether that's winning new business, improving customer satisfaction, retaining existing customers, or helping to improve brand value. It's hardly surprising that many organisations find it hard to recruit and retain people to fill these demanding roles. That's particularly been the case over the last two years, with major challenges including:

- **Advisor attrition** – while advisor attrition has been a long-standing issue across the sector, recent research confirms that the problem isn't going away – with almost half of the workforce indicating that they plan to leave their role within the next year according to latest research.
- **Heightened stress levels** – escalating call volumes, pressure to meet performance KPIs, and a greater

proportion of more complex interactions due to simpler queries being deflected to self-serve, are all contributing to an increase in work-related stress for advisors.

- **Cost of living increases** – both customers and advisors are faced with significant cost of living increases, with CCMA research suggesting that some 52% of advisors are concerned about their ability to pay their bills and make ends meet.
- **Post-pandemic adjustments** – while the lockdown transformed the way people worked and uncovered new pressure points for advisors and managers, many organisations are yet to arrive at a successful balance of remote/hybrid/office-based operation.

Against this background, and with advisor retention a priority, there's clearly a pressing requirement to engage advisors and support them more effectively. A recent EvaluAgent study found that only 55% of employees felt they were 'highly engaged' in their role, and the research also found significant misalignment between contact centre advisors and their managers. This needs resolving, particularly as advisors themselves recognise that customers benefit from better service when frontline staff are engaged.

## Held back by legacy QA processes?

Advisor engagement is a key measure of how motivated frontline staff are to put in extra effort for their organisation – and how committed they are to staying there. That's why it's essential that contact centre management, quality teams, team leaders, and advisors are able to listen, learn and act on conversations that take place. Unfortunately, this is becoming increasingly difficult for the many CX teams that continue to manage via legacy manual quality processes, sporadic coaching and infrequent communications.

A key concern here is that some four out of ten contact centres continue to use spreadsheets to support their QA processes, while a third are still managing quality assurance through manual audits. This, invariably, makes it harder for team leaders and quality managers to fully engage with advisors, making it more difficult to provide positive feedback, ongoing coaching or further training where needed. And while scheduled employee engagement surveys do offer a channel of communication, advisors often complain that there's no effective feedback closed circle.

## Enabling improved advisor engagement

With both advisors and their managers citing lack of support, motivation and incentives from management as a major CX roadblock, there's a broad recognition that improved advisor engagement is needed if contact centres are to address key concerns such as retention.

Team leaders know just how poor engagement can lead quickly from high to low performance. However, they also know that every conversation counts. It is essential that quality managers and team leaders learn from all the interactions that touch the contact centre.

Adopting the latest quality assurance platforms can play a key role here - not only helping CX teams to evaluate every conversation across all channels, and support coaching and training where needed, but also working directly to improve advisor engagement. Key QA benefits can include:

- **Automating workflows and keeping advisors informed** – too many team leaders and managers spend their time with their heads buried in a spreadsheet or compiling reports. Reducing this administration load by automating workflows instead allows them to focus on higher value activities such as conducting coaching sessions. At the same time, advisors get to participate actively in the QA process, with full visibility of their

quality scores, top and bottom-performing areas, coaching records as well as feedback. This enables them to track their performance against specific KPIs, monitor leaderboards within their team, and also ensures they always have access to the insights needed to help them exceed targets.

- **Sharing evaluations and feedback faster** – The latest QA systems enable a more real-time feedback approach, evaluating much faster, encouraging advisor engagement, celebrating positive interactions, and offering constructive, contextual feedback exactly when it's needed. This removes a major frustration with traditional quality systems feedback – effectively allowing the QA process to intervene with feedback in real-time rather than waiting until scheduled 1:1s take place. This addresses potential poor performance issues much more quickly, encouraging agents to improve performance right away.
- **Keeping advisors on track** – adopting the latest AI-enabled QA technology means that advisors can remain focused, following a clear and manageable performance path that supports them in making improvements to their own performance. Integrated eLearning empowers team leaders to easily address knowledge gaps discovered within 1:1s, while real-time performance reports help improve engagement with consistent monitoring and active handling of any advisor disputes.

## Raising the bar for QA with AI

Transitioning to next generation QA will not only enable a greater focus on advisor engagement, but also open up new opportunities in terms of automated workflows. Quality managers and team leaders will benefit from increased productivity, while better engagement contributes directly to improved agent retention – presenting a clear ROI through improved CX and reduced costs.

However, contact centre teams will need to be careful to ensure that their QA programme evolves alongside their business – simply jumping from spreadsheets straight to the latest automated AQ solutions is likely to be too big a leap. Instead work with a solution that can scale with your needs. This can start with automated workflows, integrations and real-time reporting, before transitioning to the latest machine learning and AI-enabled QA solutions with capabilities such as 100% automated scoring via analytics, and intelligent workflows.