Contest

OK, here it goes. I have convinced Ozzie, the artist behind Call Center Comics, to draw some original pieces for our In Queue newsletter. Though I have gazillions of ideas for comics myself, I thought I would open it up to readers of In Queue to contribute some original ideas since you are just such neat people. Just think of the daily bizarre happenings in your call center world each day and how ripe those are for a comic. So here is how the competition works:

1. You submit your idea for a comic to me via email at David.Butler@nationalcallcenters.org.
2. Give me as much detail as possible, imagine it in your mind, write it out.
3. I will select the top comics from the entries.
4. Ozzie will draw them.
5. The comic will appear in a future edition of the In Queue newsletter.
6. Ozzie and Call Center Comics will retain the copyright to all comics.
7. You will be mentioned as the grand idea person behind the comic in the issue and I might even send you a few goodies for winning.

60 Ideas in 60 Minutes

Paul Stockford (NACC Advisory Board Member, Saddletree Research, and essayist for In Queue) asked me to serve on a panel at the ICCM Toronto call center conference in October this year. Each panelist was given 1 minute to give their idea for improving call centers before the next panelist’s turn. Stockford moderated and kept time for 60 minutes. I recorded and have transcribed the session with the first round of ideas is listed below. I will be sharing other rounds in future issues of In Queue and may even convince some of the panelist to write an essay for us expanding on one of their one minute ideas.

The panelist, besides me, included:
- Bill Durr, Verint Witness
- Garry Schultz, Sonic Roxio
- Kevin Hegebarth, GMT
- Penny Reynolds, The Call Center School
- Chris Crosby, Cisco

Round 1

Butler: Fire worst performer, most complaining, and most irritating in your call center to improve overall morale in your call center.

Durr: Start budgeting process by setting every budget to zero. A common mistake is to start with last year’s budget and applying some sort of growth factor.

Reynolds: Let your agents have fun and get together in small groups and play doctor. Let them come together to cure some verbal viruses like common uses of the phrases “Um, Ah, and Like.”

Schultz: (in response to Butler) Bottom performers. Good innovation in bottom performers. Go and talk to them and you may find a diamond in the rough. Coach, don’t catch.

Crosby: Don’t ask vendors to recreate what you already have. See what you can do with the new stuff instead of retrofitting it.

Hegebarth: Throw away the scripts. Let the agents take the conversation. Let the customer lead the conversation. And let the agent guide the result. Then ask if the customer is satisfied and if they can help them with anything else.

What the Call Center Industry Can Learn from Manufacturing: Part II
It is worth noting that the NACC Investment Portfolio was down for the week while the NACC Composite Index was up for the same period and why we have the two different measurements for the industry's financial health since any one measure may not give someone a complete or full picture.

**Real Estate**

If you are looking for a new call center location you should check out the NACC Real Estate page by clicking on this link to see some of the available existing sites.

**Quotes**

"The Americans have need of the telephone, but we do not. We have plenty of messenger boys."
-Sir William Preece
chief engineer of the British Post Office, 1876

**Picture of the Week**

This is a view of one stained glass window in the cathedral Sainte-Chapelle, Paris. Though lesser known than the nearby Notre Dame cathedral (they are on the same island in the river), this place has the best stained glass windows I have ever seen. The whole chapell is illuminated by these multistory windows sitting close side by side. Many architects are amazed that these windows are still in tact since most of the walls and buttresses hold the heavy weight of the ceiling. When you carve out places in the walls for windows, these usually become weak spots that are not supporting the ceiling and thus have the potential to break, crack, or weaken the overall structure of the building. This cathedral is lined wall to wall with these enormous windows yet it still stands and supports it weight.

The other interesting story about this cathedral was its survival during World War II. There was a story told that the government used this building for file storage. The file cabinets filled the cathedral from floor to almost ceiling. It is this fact that somehow preserved the windows during World War II. I know the story does not make sense and I have missed some key part, but that is all I can remember about it. Maybe one of you can fill me in to the missing punch line of the story.

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E-mail: David.Butler@nationalcallcenters.org

should go? Who owns the results...C-Sat, Quality, and Productivity...for each call type? Who owns running tests and experiments to try to improve those results? In manufacturing it would be a process engineer. The process engineer(s) are responsible for defining, measuring, and improving the process they are responsible for.

Call center leaders typically do not have this role and that is a key reason the call center industry does not enjoy the track record of results that manufacturing does. You can argue that Quality Monitoring is responsible for all that. Well, are all your call output measures systematically improving? If they are, congratulations. If not, your Quality Monitoring organization needs a new game and I suggest it is spending less time listening to individual agents and more time experimenting with more effective ways to execute the call process.

In the next issue of In Queue (Vol 2, Number 23) Part III of "What the Call Center Industry Can Learn from Manufacturing" will cover the final key leverage point: give more to and expect more from your outsourcers.

Call Center Comics (NEW...ish)

If you like this comic and would like to see more write Ozzie at callcentercomics@yahoo.com and visit his website at http://callcentercomics.com/cartoon_categories.htm or just click on the comic to take you to his page. The NACC appreciates Ozzie letting us use some of his comics in our newsletter.

To view past issues of In Queue, please click here.

If you would like to contribute to In Queue, please reply to this email with "Contribute" in the subject line.

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