

Contact Info

David Butler,
Executive Director
National Association of Call Centers
100 South 22nd Avenue
Hattiesburg MS 39401
Tel: 601.447.8300
Fax: 601.266.5087
E-mail:
David.Butler@nationalcallcenters.org
<http://www.nationalcallcenters.org>

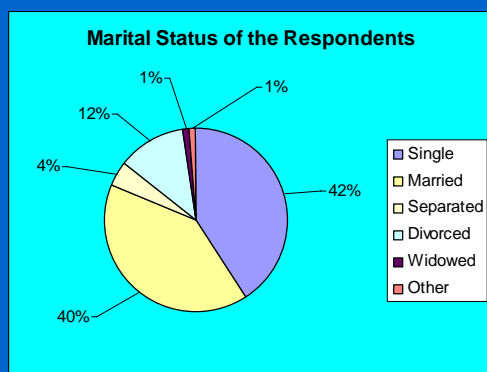
Quotes

“An investment in knowledge always pays the best interest.”
- Benjamin Franklin



Right up there ↑, in that banner, is one of the best publications for the industry. If you have not read it yet, check it out. It is filled with some great information.

Fun Facts



Lessons Re-Learned

A week or so ago on the local National Public Radio station, there was a local piece from the oral history project. The person being interviewed was a man from the south who helped form the state-wide Farm Bureau network. In interviewing this gentleman on the history and origins of the farm bureau, he stated that in the early 1920s he took a trip to upstate New York to talk to the group of people creating the farm bureau as an advocate organization for the farming community. One of the most memorable tasks was when one of the committee asked the following question, “What happened to the other groups that were formed to perform this very task in the past five years?” Before the committee could move forward, it was agreed that they had to understand why other such organizations failed so that they did not make a similar mistake with the farm bureau they were creating. After multiple days of examination, they came to the conclusion that the other similar organizations that tried and failed to represent the farming community did so because of one simple reason- “selfishness.” The committee decided then and there to adopt “selflessness” as part of the constitution of the organization to be sure that their organization did not succumb like the other organizations.

This brief radio piece hit home with me because it was the very same story for the National Association of Call Centers-just 90+ years later and in a different industry. It explains why we chose to be a not-for-profit organization, versus for profit, and why we chose in our charter the phrase “to help professionalize the industry.” Maybe we should have added the phrase “selflessly” as well.

Schools, Testing, Teaching and Call Centers

This is a conversation that transpired in my home a few days while my in-laws were visiting. My mother-in-law is a retired K-12 school teacher. The topic of testing came up, in particular the idea of state-wide testing examinations. It was agreed with all involved that this type of state-level testing is to ensure that everyone meets a minimum level. However, by creating such a test, teachers are then forced to teach the test, removing some of their creative talents in the classroom. Additionally, those students who can excel beyond the level of the test are not able to do so because all focus is on the test, not on the students as individual learners and not on a teacher’s reach to

This graphic is from a national survey of CSRs. The question asks about marital status. The majority of the respondents were divided between married and single people. Those labeled as separated, divorced, or widowed were in a minority.

Source: *NACC State of the Industry Report #3 2005: A Labor Survey of the Industry*

Picture of the Week



A British guerilla artist's, "Telephone Booth." It made me think of what some customers feel about call centers and what some reps feel about customers after a long and trying day. See the following link for more information

www.neatorama.com/.../banksys-telephone-booth/



the student. In essence, it was suggested, that this type of testing creates a single, but lower, standard overall, since it teaches teachers to teach a test, and teaches students how to take a specific test, not necessarily to acquire or retain knowledge or the ability to think-little associated with actual learning and understanding.

The conversation struck a cord with me and the more I thought of it, the more I realized that the story was akin to that of many call centers with problems. Like students, we are asking our reps to learn specific things, say keywords or scripts, but not actually tapping into their innate talents. As managers, we are like teachers. Using all of the metrics that we have "bought into" (both literally and figuratively) as a substitute for real service level professionalism and customer service and satisfaction. Like the teachers, we are measuring all sorts of stuff, but we are measuring the wrong things, and not truly understanding what we are doing in the larger picture. I think it is time to stop and ask some big and hard questions about what we are doing and how we are doing it when it comes to training and management in the call center industry. Leaders point to the failure rate or drop out rate of schools to indicate the need for change. Similarly, I would point to the high turnover rate and the fact that the top 5 problems in call centers today are the same as they were 10 years ago to indicate that a new model and way of doing business is needed.

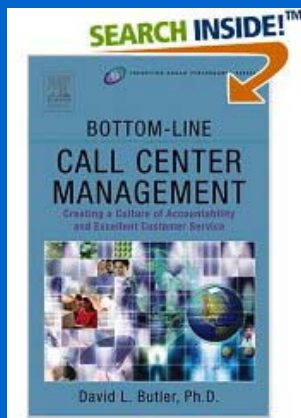
Certification Launched

I am proud to announce that our first class for the Information Technology Services Community Certification program has launched. This certification process is lengthy and detailed, but in the end, a community knows much more about call centers, shared services, and back office operations than before. This makes these communities much more attractive to companies and organizations seeking a friendly and productive home for their operations.

Congratulations to all of the communities who are taking part in this certification process and good luck to each of you.

Resource List

Due to the increasing number of inquires about how to find a good resource on a particular call center subject, we are creating one for all to access. At present we are compiling relevant academic articles, books, white papers, websites, and other such items onto a spreadsheet. These items are arranged based on subject matter, "technology," "workforce," etc. This is a work in progress as I am combing my files and emails for relevant information. The real value will come when we begin to evaluate each report, article and white paper based on its content value. As we begin to rank each, we will provide that to you. It is hoped that we will create a valuable resource site for you to use and for our rankings to help you sort through the list and find the best resource for you to use.



You can visit the current list at
<http://www.nationalcallcenters.org/pubs/additional.html>

To advertise in *In Queue* or with the NACC, please contact the NACC at:
Tel: 601.447.8300
Fax: 601.266.5087
E-mail:
David.Butler@nationalcallcenters.org

To unsubscribe from the *In Queue* newsletter, [click here](#) and submit your contact information in the body of e-mail before clicking the send button.