

# WorkOut

The  
Training  
Workshop



## A big hello!

Welcome to this first issue of WorkOut, the new look newsletter from the team at The Training Workshop. Many of you will, I am sure, remember its predecessor The Face, and be wondering why the change...

Well, since the last issue of The Face earlier this year, The Training Workshop has undergone a make-over, and developed a fresh new look and feel which we really hope our clients will like. Whilst we still have the same excellent training team on board, we have also moved the main office to larger premises in Royston, Hertfordshire.

Over the last few months, despite the downturn in the economy, our business has grown – we have continued to work successfully with our established clients, as well as meeting and working with several new clients in this country, Europe and the United States. Organisations are naturally thinking very carefully about when and how to develop their individuals and teams, and a return on investment remains a vital requirement of any training spend. Whether it is maximising sales opportunities or delivering an even more individual level of emotionally intelligent customer service, it is even more important now to have key managers and players working as efficiently and effectively as possible.

To all of you we would like to say a huge thank you for choosing to work with The Training Workshop Team.

We would very much like you to have your say – any thoughts, comments or feedback would be welcomed together with any ideas or input you may have for future issues. Please email us at [info@thetrainingworkshop.com](mailto:info@thetrainingworkshop.com)

Until next time Stay Pumped!

**Steve Kitchener**  
The Training Workshop



## Has the king lost his crown?

**“The basic fact remains that those are customers on one end of the phone line – and that’s your brand on the other.”**

Call Centre Focus Magazine, 'Spotlight Review', April 2008

Following a major mystery shopping programme involving 30 leading UK organisations, Call Centre Focus magazine published some interesting findings in April. Take a look at the research yourself at [www.callcentre.co.uk](http://www.callcentre.co.uk)

Overall, the 30 organisations were found to be performing at least at a 'functional level of customer service, improvement recommended', and several companies delivered an 'excellent customer experience' in certain aspects of the call. Yet no helpline, even those at the top of the ratings, was found to be providing a service that was rated 'excellent' in every respect.

Much is said and written about the importance of the customer. 'The Customer is King' says one best-selling inspirational poster. Yet is it really possible to make every customer feel like that, every time they call? And if we are asking our agents to deliver such a demanding quality of service, how can we ensure they do so whilst themselves feeling supported, fulfilled and inspired by their role?

There is no quick fix, of course, but The Training Workshop has been working with organisations large and small for over 20 years, helping them to achieve just that.



## Sales Wizardry with Merlin Entertainments

In February 2008, The Training Workshop received an intriguing enquiry. It was from Merlin Entertainments, the global group behind a million great days out at attractions like Alton Towers, Legoland, The London Dungeon, Tussaud's and Chessington World of Adventures, and it was asking for something very particular...Rebecca Winn takes up the story.

Following a conversation with the Sales Manager at Merlin's Contact Centre in Chessington, I was emailed a brief explaining what the Sales Team was looking for. The teams at Chessington are largely disbanded over the winter months, when many of Merlin's main attractions are closed for the winter; they then recruit Sales Agents for the summer season. Because it is such a popular place to work – the funkiest Contact Centre you ever did see, even including a full size waxwork of Robbie Williams! – recruitment is rarely a problem, and the Centre sees many of the same Sales Agents returning season after season. So far so good...

However, the Team Leader group was aware that for some of these returning staff, the start-of-the-season sales training was becoming a bit tired. So they decided to tickle it up a bit!



## Prefer your copy of WorkOut by email?

Kindly send your details to [info@thetrainingworkshop.com](mailto:info@thetrainingworkshop.com) and we will be happy to ensure you receive the next issue as an A4 format PDF.

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That's when The Training Workshop received their brief, which had the following as its aim: 'At the end of a two day session, we will have written a training session that is ready to roll out, either in a group session or on a one to one basis. We will have the tools to up-sell effectively, and will be able to train this on to others.' In other words, Merlin wanted a 'Train the Trainer Workshop' AND a 'Sales Workshop' combined – to be delivered in two days flat. Which sounds simple, until you realise that most Train the Trainer courses last two – sometimes three – days, and sales training is another full day's worth of learning. So, some creative thinking needed...and 'Sales! The Big Attraction!' was born!

On Day One we focused on some of the key principles that underpin successful training session design, and explored the different ways that people learn. We thought about what we needed the sales session to achieve, and wrote some cast iron aims and objectives for our new course. Once we had those, we knew exactly what we wanted the learning outcomes to be, and could begin to think about the content.

Day Two was all about writing the course. We talked through some tried and trusted selling techniques, and explored alternative ways of training them out. We then allocated sections of the course to smaller task groups, and when we came back together, we even had time to start tying all the component parts into a running order, and think about some exercises and activities to get it all linked together seamlessly.

The upshot is that those hardworking Team Leaders – plus two colleagues from the Group in Germany – underwent a full 'Train the Trainer' programme, and wrote a brand new sales training course of their own, in two days flat. Along the way, they discovered a whole load of creativity, organisational skills and flair for presentation that some of them never knew they had – and a lot of fun was had as well! What an achievement.

Do you have some tired old training that needs a new take? We'd love to talk to you about it, so why not give us a ring?

## You could be a Time Lord!

### Do you find yourself...

- 🕒 Continually battling with an overloaded work schedule?
- 🕒 Frequently unable to meet deadlines, at least without a last minute panic?
- 🕒 Delivering quick fix solutions to problems because you don't have time to think about them in any greater depth?
- 🕒 Saying 'by the time I've shown someone else how to do it I could have done it myself'?
- 🕒 Constantly sorting out lots of niggly little tasks but never making a start on the more major projects?
- 🕒 Unable to settle to any one task because of constant interruptions?
- 🕒 Working late, taking work home, thinking about work over the weekend?
- 🕒 Staring at an over-full inbox, and deleting ancient messages from an over-full voicemail?

If so, you probably need help with your time management and personal organisation.

How timely! The Training Workshop has, this year, added a 'Time Management and Personal Organisation' Workshop to our Open Course programme – and it is already helping people up and down the country to look at their workload with fresh eyes, and get on top of their busy life. Give us a ring for more information. It could be the most useful ten-minute call of your life.



## Quotes of the month

**"There's no such thing as bad weather. Just the wrong clothes. Buy yourself a sexy raincoat and live a little!"**

*Billy Connolly*

**"Out of intense complexities, intense simplicities emerge."**

*Sir Winston Churchill*

**"Snowflakes are one of nature's most fragile things, but just look at what they can do when they stick together!"**

*Vista M. Kelly*

**"You see things and say 'Why?' But I dream things that never were and I say 'Why not?'"**

*George Bernard Shaw*

**"A chip on the shoulder can only come from a wooden head."**

*Comment made by an Australian cricketer interviewed on Radio 4*

**"The Chinese use two brush strokes to write the word 'crisis'. One brush stroke stands for danger, the other one for opportunity. In a crisis, be aware of the danger – but recognise the opportunity!"**

*John F Kennedy*

**"There is real magic in enthusiasm. It spells the difference between mediocrity and accomplishment."**

*Norman Vincent Peale, religious broadcaster and writer*

**"Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it."**

*Dwight D Eisenhower*

**"One can discover more about a person in an hour of play than in a year of conversation"**  
*Plato*

## “Just whistle a happy tune”

Governess Anna in ‘The King and I’ had some very good advice for when you feel scared and lacking confidence. But what if whistling a happy tune isn’t entirely practical? Well, here are some other ways you might just fool yourself, as well as other people, into believing that you feel more confident than you thought you did:

1 Stand up straight! Confident people stand tall with shoulders back, whatever their natural height. So un-hunch and stretch up!

2 Look at people! Confident people always make good eye contact, and the more you do it, the easier it is. So practice!

3 Smarten up! You always feel better when you make the effort to look good.

4 Be prepared! All those Boy Scouts can’t be wrong. If you know you have a stressful situation looming, find out everything you can in advance. Do the homework. Knowledge is power – and an important key to greater confidence.

5 Be strong enough to recognise your weaknesses and learn from your mistakes! Think of them as opportunities, not failures. Work out a strategy to deal with that problem area next time.

6 Think positive thoughts, and believe in yourself! You are the equal of absolutely anyone else, even if they know more than you do or earn more money. Don’t sell yourself short. Be proud of who you are.

As the wonderful Eleanor Roosevelt once said: “No one can make you feel inferior without your consent.”



## Enabling Leadership Programme

Middle management performs one of the most important roles in the business – managing and motivating the front line customer-facing agents.

Their role is achieving through people – the task/team balancing act. They need to be experts in the field of business practice, people management, communications, technology, etc. More often than not they have to attend training courses on leadership and management which involves time away from the work environment – and on their return they will get thrown straight back into the firing line of work – with little time to practice or embed their new skills, and little support from their Managers.

Typically what we see in a Call Centre environment is therefore:

- Teams under-performing
- Higher levels of absenteeism
- Higher attrition rates
- Lack of collective responsibility for team performance
- Lower motivation and morale levels
- Mainly reactive leadership style
- Middle management ‘doing’ rather than leading

The Training Workshop offer a unique solution built around enabling leaders to lead more effectively – it consists of investing time in the key people in the workplace. We will work with middle management and their team as a mentor, friend, counsellor, guide, and lifestyle coach over a period of time – observing, assessing and advising on everyday real team issues. We are looking to change habits and behaviours through consistent and practical examples.

This focused one to one workplace mentoring produces real results:

- More consistently successful team
- Increased levels of commitment, ownership, and motivation
- Commitment from team – less absenteeism and attrition
- Emotionally and behaviourally intelligent middle management
- Lasting results

## Competition Time

For this issue’s competition, we want you to get creative!

The challenge is to write a limerick based on the subject of LEARNING. The best limerick (in our opinion) wins a £25 cinema voucher....

GOOD LUCK!

Send your limerick to:  
[rebecca@thetrainingworkshop.com](mailto:rebecca@thetrainingworkshop.com)  
by 31 December 2008. Winners will be announced in the Winter issue. Here’s our best effort below – can you do any better?

