

WorkOut

The
Training
Workshop



Hello again!

Welcome to the second issue of WorkOut, the newsletter from the team at The Training Workshop. Many thanks for your feedback and thoughts on the first issue – all comments were gratefully received. It seems that like us, you really like the refreshing new size and format.

Let me start this issue with big congratulations to one of our Training Account Managers, Jules Pollendine. He has just had another addition to his family, a lovely daughter, Alyssa Ruby. Never one to be left out of the action, Jules assisted in the birth by catching Alyssa as she was born slightly earlier than expected in the front passenger seat of his car on the way to hospital!

As some of you are aware, as well as bespoke training and development activities, The Training Workshop also offers Open Courses to cater for individual learning requirements. These have proved very popular in the past, and we have now launched our Open Course Programme for 2009, with new course titles and new venues being added. This year we have 15 lively, practical and participative Workshops, covering subjects such as Developing Assertiveness, Creative Thinking, Business Writing, and Debt Collection. Full details can be found on the website.

Should you have any ideas, input or comments to make regarding WorkOut, please email us at info@thetrainingworkshop.com. Also feel free to check out our new website at www.thetrainingworkshop.com which has now completed its own facelift, and where you can find full details of all our activities.

Until next time, be healthy and stay pumped!

Steve Kitchener
The Training Workshop



Survival of the fittest

“The challenge to organisations today is to ensure they deliver consistent levels of customer service, not only to retain customers, but to ensure growth in the current economic climate.”

Anne Marie Forsyth, Chief Executive of the Call Centre Association, February 2009.

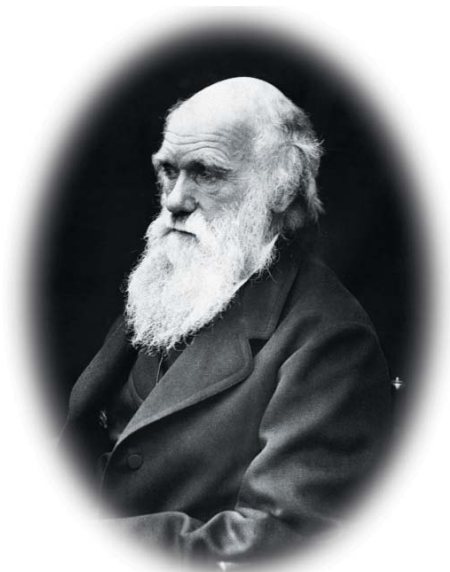
The Training Workshop agrees. It has long been known that most dissatisfied customers won't even make a complaint; they just quietly slip away, taking their business with them. So when the going gets tough, the smart money knows it is more important than ever to keep investing in front line staff.

In a recent poll by the CCA, 94% of respondents said that the call centre industry as a whole needed to raise customer service standards.* The right development can do many things. As well as helping your customer service evolve and respond to whatever the economic climate throws at it, you will get a front line service that knocks the spots off the competition. Your customers will notice that, and recommend you for it.

And here's one more thing: your staff will respond positively to the very fact that you are investing in their skills. It gives them a sense of value, involvement and purpose, something organisations need to nurture even more in these uncertain times.

So, investing in your staff is not simply a 'nice to have'. These days, it is the factor that will ensure the survival of the fittest.

*CCA Membership Poll, *'The Paradoxes of Contact Centre Management Today'*, September 2008.



People love their pets...

...but they can be expensive, particularly when Tiddles, Dobbin or Rover needs attention from the vet. That's why more and more pet owners are choosing to buy a pet insurance policy.

Jardine Lloyd Thompson is one of the UK's largest brokers, and handles pet insurance for a major UK provider, Sainsbury's. In 2007, JLT identified that although their handlers had a high level of technical expertise, there was a desire to further enhance their customer service skills. So, they met with Steve Kitchener to talk about how The Training Workshop could help. Judith Pokora, Operations Divisional Director at JLT, explains what happened next...

“Steve spent numerous hours with the business, listened to calls, talked to team leaders and agents,” Judith explains. “He concluded that staff did not understand how to use the customer service training they had previously received in-house, and were not confident enough to change how they approached their calls.”

Rather than deliver yet more group training, Steve worked with the business to implement a mentoring programme. “Once started, the impacts were immediate,” says Judith. “Steve has the knowledge and skills to understand each person's needs and was able to coach and mentor them individually, as well as delivering some across group work...the number of errors reduced, the amount of rework reduced, attrition stopped and staff morale dramatically improved. We have been able to consistently meet stretching service levels with no additional headcount!”



Prefer your copy of WorkOut by email?

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

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Team leaders and managers were also supported with a coaching and mentoring programme of their own. "The programme supported their needs, allowing them to manage performance. It brought about a complete change to the way this group had been working, but left them feeling empowered and unthreatened," says Judith.

So successful was the programme within the pet insurance area that the results got noticed elsewhere, and as a result the mentoring scheme has now been extended more widely across the group. "Whilst their requirements are different to the pet insurance business, the impact that they are having has been similar to ours," Judith is delighted to report.

The Training Workshop is proud to be helping such a hardworking group gain so much more out of their roles, and the company is delighted with the measurable impact it continues to have on the business. The mentoring programme is very much still ongoing, helping staff to better serve their customers, find satisfaction within their challenging roles, and contribute to the success of the business.

Interested by what you have read? Then give us a ring and we will be delighted to discuss the impact a mentoring programme could have within your organisation.

You might also like to look up our Enabling Leadership programme on our website, for some more ideas.



True Lies

Q1 You are trapped in a room with two doors. One leads to certain death and the other leads to freedom. You don't know which is which. There are two robots guarding the doors. They will let you choose one door, but upon doing so you must go through it. You can, however, ask one robot one question. The problem is one robot always tells the truth, the other always lies, and you don't know which is which.

What is the question you need to ask?

Q2 Can you answer any of the following as 'yes'?

- Does your role require you to solve complex problems?
- Are you regularly presented with such huge quantities of data that you cannot see the wood for the trees?
- Feeling stale and running out of ideas?

Solutions:

Question 1:

Call or email The Training Workshop and we will share the solution with you.

Question 2:

Go to www.thetrainingworkshop.com and find out more about our Creative Thinking and Problem Solving Open Course! You'll find some truly practical tools and techniques to help you analyse, test and evaluate your ideas. So, whichever solution you are looking for, get in touch!



Quotes of the month

"Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek."

Barack Obama

"It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change."

Charles Darwin

"There is more to life than increasing its speed."

Mahatma Gandhi

"This 'telephone' has too many shortcomings to be seriously considered as a means of communication. The device is inherently of no value to us."

Western Union internal memorandum, dated 1876.

"Very little is needed to make a happy life; it is all within yourself, in your way of thinking."

Marcus Aurelius, Roman Emperor 161-180AD

"We have a plan, therefore nothing can go wrong..."

Spike Milligan

"Speak when you are angry, and you'll make the best speech you'll ever regret."

Lawrence J Peter, author

"Just because nobody complains doesn't mean all parachutes are perfect."
Benny Hill

10 Steps to building Positive Mental Attitude

We may not have total control over our own destiny, but here at The Training Workshop we firmly believe that it is your Self Talk – the inner conversations you have with yourself – that can help you sink or swim when times get tough.

So, here are some ideas for you to mull over, as you engage in your own internal dialogue...

1 Desire – not ability – determines success

If you really want to do something, you will do it. You may have been born with the potential to be the Next Big Thing, but unless you believe in your ability, it will never happen.

2 Set your own goals

When setting your own goals, make sure they are achievable – but don't underestimate what you are capable of. There's an old saying; "if you want something done, ask a busy person..."

3 Believe in YOU

Not, "I can't" – instead, "I can..."

4 See the oak tree – not the acorn

Visualise the end result. Keep your eyes on the prize. You get the idea...



5 Doing it better

Learn from every experience life throws at you, even those that are really tough to take. Spend time to review each activity, asking yourself; "OK, what did I learn from that, and what would I do differently next time?"

6 Recognise other people

Behave positively towards other people and give them praise when they deserve it. You will find that in life, you often get back what you give out.

7 Handling the difficult times

Turn adversity into advantage. If the old way of doing something doesn't work any more, because circumstances have changed, think again. What does the current situation call for? What work do I need to do to achieve that?

8 Build your confidence

Never make excuses. Never fear failure. Nobody fails until they give up.

9 Be enthusiastic

It's infectious!

10 Have a 'negative repellent'

Mix with positive people whenever you can. They will help 'top up' your reserves of positivity, which you can then use to support those who need you to do the same.



Competition Time

Congratulations to Michael Oliver of C H Sippe & Sons, who won a £25 cinema voucher as winner of the Limerick Competition in the last issue!

We had some wonderful entries, all on the subject of learning, but this one was in a class of it's own...

**When Mastermind's on the TV
I'm grateful to answer just three
Though constantly curious
My knowledge is spurious
I think school was wasted on me!**

Well done, Michael! Your vouchers are on their way to you. And thank you to everyone who sent us a poetic masterpiece.

For this Creative Thinking issue, we thought we could only really set you some Lateral Thinking tasks. So, if you reckon you can answer the following, email your entry to rebecca@thetrainingworkshop.com by 30 May 2009. The winner will receive a £30 theatre voucher.

1. What five-letter word does every Oxford graduate pronounce wrong?
2. What is at the beginning of eternity, the end of time, the beginning of every end, and the end of every place?
3. Mr & Mrs Smith have five children. Half of them are boys. How is this possible?
4. Before Mount Everest was discovered, what was the highest mountain on earth?

