

Flexible Scheduling Improves Contact Center Retention

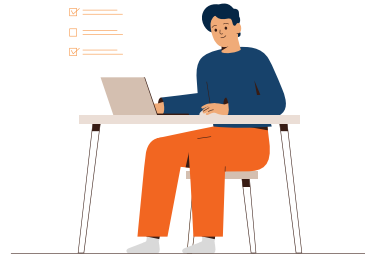
Highlights from a Roundtable Discussion

Frost & Sullivan recently moderated a discussion among several industry leaders to better understand the challenges and opportunities around scheduling in the contact center in a changing world. Here are some key takeaways.



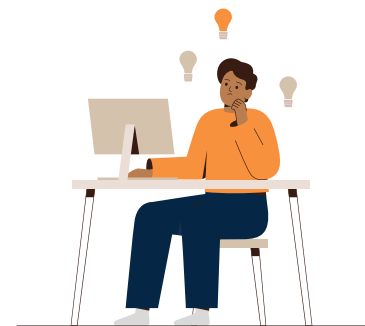
On agent autonomy: “One thing that we’ve battled with is around break autonomy. Agents can take their breaks whenever they want during their shift. The only thing that is scheduled for them is their lunch time. And they don’t have to take their break in a full 15-minute segment. If they have a difficult call, and they need to get off the phone just to take a breather or recenter, they can take two minutes, and then they still have 13 minutes of break time.”

–Fayth Bushman, Scheduler, AAA



On managing self-service: “We mitigate the risk of agents abusing the opportunities that we give them. For instance, we allow self-swaps. So, you can swap your day off, you can slide your schedule. And we’ve got business rules in place that prohibit them from abusing that, and not impacting service levels or business needs.”

–Andrew Gilmer, Senior Manager, Comcast



On the value of automation: “Some tools automatically adjust based on the headcount requirement, either by soliciting voluntary time off or extra hours. Obviously, you have times where you need more people, and you can target people to come in and work extra hours, or even do self-swaps with themselves. Or, you can have automated VTO solicitation to targeted agents, so you’re not opening the floodgates and letting too many people go. You have that flexibility, and instead of having to email your manager to get approval, you can just use the WFM tool to adjust as needed.”

–Andrea Matsuda, Senior Product Marketing Manager, NICE

“We haven’t given the teammates full control over their schedules. But when we have new hires coming in, we’ll evaluate what our scheduling needs are. And in that chunk of schedules being created, we’ll try to offer them first to current employees. Especially if there are desirable schedules in there, like Monday through Friday, or a morning shift. We’ll definitely make sure that the tenured teammates get first crack at those.”

– Workforce Management Analyst, Online Bank