ttec®

CRISIS TASK FORCE

Meet the Surge in Citizen Demand

4 key answers for government contact centers

The COVID-19 pandemic is placing an incredible burden on government agencies. The lack of resources and surging demand for information has agencies struggling to keep up while also trying to maintain normalcy.

To manage this crisis, agencies need to adapt to the new work-from-home-environment that blends human and technological capabilities to manage unanticipated interactions such as health updates, financial resources, and unemployment benefits. Here are 4 key questions government agencies should be asking to manage now and over the long term.

1. How do I deploy work-from-home right now?

Citizens need answers as soon as possible. Handling surge volumes requires moving employees home and finding new talent. Though they may be working from home, the recruiting and training process must meet the standards of a traditional brick-in-mortar center.

Recruiting: After understanding who can make the transition home, consider finding talent from all corners of the new work-from-home environment. The pool of potential candidates isn't limited to geography or local travel restrictions, and recently displaced workers can leverage their expertise toward assisting fellow citizens.

Training: The typical classroom environment is gone. Curriculums need to be digital and digestible so employees can complete quickly at home whenever they can. For experienced employees moving home, deploy a shortened from-home curriculum to brush up on basics so they can resume work as soon as possible.

Activating: Follow security protocols to confirm agent's devices are safe and use a secure VPN connection. Deploy performance management and QA tools to ensure agent productivity and effectiveness.

2. What are obstacles to enabling my workforce to work-from-home?

Survey employees to get a sense of their work-from-home capabilities. Find out who has the best WIFI, available technology, and dedicated area for office space. Deploy these agents to the priority contacts to ensure the fastest and most effective interactions for the most critical citizen contacts.

Work-from-home hiring is a disciplined, repeatable approach that includes:

- Measuring the candidate's work-from-home mindset and technology skills, not only customer service aptitude.

- Refining the technical assessment to include from-home-specific devices and applications.

- Conducting interviews via videoconferencing, when possible.

- The use of automation technology to help applicants quickly go through the process.

Source: TTEC

Don't forget the human side. This is an emotional time for people, including both the public and government agents. It is essential that extra steps are taken to help employees feel connected to their virtual coworkers and that they're an integral part of a bigger mission. Day-to-day interactions and making them feel valued are key.

3. How can technology help manage my call volume while providing a great citizen experience?

Automated capabilities, such as bots and IVR, can quickly and significantly improve resolution and satisfaction for repeatable tasks while streamlining processes so human employees can focus on the tasks that need a human touch.

The increasing usage of digital channels will also play a bigger role (e.g., in-app chat, SMS, web-based chat, social) by allowing customer service associates increase the number of customers they can handle concurrently by 4X. Messaging on mobile and social platforms is growing as an essential tool in communicating on the platforms that citizens use most. Messaging is asynchronous and very conducive to the work-from-home environment since it takes up less bandwidth than voice and background noise isn't an issue.

4. How do I ensure operational excellence when all my contact center agents are remote?

Team leaders need to be incredibly focused on performance management while maintaining a human connection to their employees..

For the unforeseeable future employees will not have in-person, face-to-face interaction with co-workers and supervisors. This can be replicated virtually by:

Providing access to chat coaches and mentors

Utilizing regular video coaching sessions

Performance management that matches physical centers

Engaging throughout the day via chat

Offering employee community forums

Generating virtual culture-building activities

Want to learn more?

Learn about TTEC's Business Continuity Planning and Resiliency Solutions for government and others at **www.ttec.com/business-continuity-planning**.