

7 Challenges, 14 Solutions: Elevating Call Center Effectiveness with Coaching



Introduction

Sports coaches help their players to bring their best to the game. Similarly, coaching can elevate the performance of call center teams, ensuring consistency of messaging and raising skill levels.

But few call center managers are trained as coaches, and even if they were, most don't have the time needed to provide ongoing training to their entire team of agents.

Fortunately, there are steps that call centers can take to deliver the coaching that agents need.

In this ebook, we'll review the 7 main challenges that managers face, and share 14 tactics that can be used to implement a culture of coaching at call centers.



The Challenges of Coaching Call Center Reps

When we spoke to call center managers, we found that some issues came up again and again. Staff turnover is high on the list, reaching 30%-45%, so increasing employee engagement through coaching is a priority.

Happy, engaged employees boost profitability and CSAT scores, and reduce agent churn. One survey found that an engaged workforce can increase profits by as much as 23% and lower turnover by 43%.

Main challenges that can hold managers back from delivering excellent coaching.

01

Understand which reps need help the most

Most managers are unaware of which agents are sinking and which are swimming. They need insights into how each agent is performing and which areas they struggle with, so that they can prioritize their efforts towards those agents who most need help, and know which skills are weakest across the board and need extra focus for the entire team.

02

Keep up with changing processes, certifications, new products, etc.

Agent performance can change quickly, and managers need to keep up with those changes. For example, an agent might suddenly lose their confidence, or encounter a situation that they weren't prepared for. Managers need real-time insights that reflect changes instantly, not quarterly status reports delivered after the fact.

03

Personalize learning interactions

Every agent is an individual, with their own strengths and challenges. They have different learning styles, backgrounds, initial proficiency levels, and individual weaknesses. Managers have to understand individual needs so that they can deliver customized interactions that each agent needs.

04

Combine consistency with individuality

When agents are required to learn a scripted call by heart, they often end up delivering their pitch in a flat, robotic manner and conducting unengaging customer interactions that don't inspire trust or build a connection. Soft skills coaching can empower them to add personalized touches to their pitch, making it more authentic-sounding and effective.

05

Celebrate the small wins

Sports coaches mark even minor wins and incremental achievements with celebrations, to encourage their athletes to keep up their efforts. Managers need to do the same, and reward every achievement in some way so that agents feel encouraged and confident.

06

Deliver learning that doesn't interrupt work

Effective coaching should complement the flow of work, not interrupt it and require agents to take time out of their day. Managers should find ways to integrate coaching smoothly as part of work experiences. This way, agents immediately apply what they learned to their real world situations, reinforcing their mastery of new skills.

07

Ensure real world experiences

It's not enough to teach the theory behind how to be an effective call center agent, agents need to practice the relevant skills. Just like a batting cage, agents need to repeat the vital action until they build up their muscles and can translate the same skills to the pitch.



The Tactics Call Centers Need to Overcome These Challenges

Now for the good news: when call centers use the right tools and strategies, they can empower managers to deliver effective coaching that builds up agents skills, confidence, and motivation. Call centers that use Second Nature are able to apply these tactics to ensure impactful training that results in improved performance, up time to proficiency and shorten onboarding.

01

Personalize coaching to each agent

In an ideal world, you'd offer personalized coaching for every agent. Second Nature's AI engine makes this possible by analyzing elements like user proficiency, learning style, and pace to deliver the coaching that helps each agent learn most effectively. The solution also provides customized feedback, and adjusts suggestions and learning sessions according to the changes it identifies in user interactions.

zoom

Zoom used Second Nature to gain visibility into agent strengths and weaknesses while rolling out a large-scale certification program. The sales enablement team gained insight into which areas to emphasize and which had already been mastered.

02

Integrate training into the workflow

With Second Nature, agents can easily switch between practice conversations and real calls. Its native CRM integration suggests a relevant simulation immediately before an agent takes a difficult call, so they "warm up" their muscles and enter the call feeling confident.

UH

The Bauer College of Business at the University of Houston saw a non-native English speaker repeat a role play conversation 19 times. The user succeeded in elevating their failing grade to an A.

03

Encourage micro-learning

Coaching needs to be short and easy to consume, which is why all Second Nature's AI role play sessions are kept bite-size. Agents can complete one anytime, anywhere - even between real calls if they feel that they need a refresher.

04

Use the tools agents are familiar with

Agents are more likely to complete coaching sessions if they can use the tools that are already open on their devices. Second Nature integrates with the CRM and LMS that your agents use every day, so there's no need to train them on a new tech stack just for coaching.



Twilio embedded Second Nature's coaching solution as part of their own sales enablement platform, to offer a seamless experience for every agent.

05

Make coaching the norm at every level

Agents just starting out aren't the only ones who need coaching. Everyone can benefit from it, including managers. With Second Nature, it's quick and simple to create practice role plays for any role across the organization: BDRs, account managers, CSM, AE, managers, and more.

06

Make coaching realistic

The coaching you deliver should prepare agents to deal with real world situations. Second Nature delivers authentic role play scenarios that require agents to flex their conversational muscles in realistic situations. You can input content from your CRM or any other content source, to ensure that the sessions are relevant to the specific personas, products, and messaging your agents encounter and use.

Xavier University, Louisiana (XULA) implemented Second Nature for students on its selling skills course to practice sales conversations. 75% of students said the role plays were more realistic than other practice methods.



07

Keep coaching varied with frequent new sessions

Good coaching should mix things up a little, and cover all the material and prevent boredom. Second Nature's intuitive editor interface allows call center leadership to build and roll out new sessions for any situation at the drop of a hat. You can input content from a text document, URL link, or audio file to form the basis of a new session.

08

Keep coaching relevant

It's important to match the training you offer to the products and services you sell, the personas your agents interact with, the messaging you need them to convey, and more. Second Nature produces automated, real-time reports and always-updated dashboards, so you can adjust your coaching strategy at any time.



A global EdTech enterprise used Second Nature to evaluate and grade agents and issue clear, insightful reports that kept sales enablement informed about team progress. After Second Nature was introduced, the number of agents attaining a passing grade rose by one-third.

09

Train agents in their own language

In today's global village, you're likely to have remote teams in various parts of the world, delivering sales and support in their own language. It stands to reason that you need to provide coaching in their language too. Second Nature's multilingual training system makes it easy to offer coaching in each team's native tongue.

10

Review and adapt coaching frequently

Effective coaching needs to change in response to the fluctuating abilities, circumstances, and gaps in agent performance. Second Nature analyzes agent performance to issue rich insights, real time scores, and objective evaluations that keep you abreast of agent needs and inform better coaching decisions.

A call center adopted Second Nature to track the progress of its agents. After introducing Second Nature, it saw 80% of users report an improvement in their real life selling capabilities.



11

Plan coaching as part of a long-term strategy

Coaching has to be appropriate not just to your agents' needs today, but also to their needs tomorrow, next quarter, and next year. Second Nature is an end-to-end application that grows with your coaching requirements, giving you the insights and tools you need to plan strategically for the long haul.

Various universities in the US used Second Nature's insights to design a coaching program that accompanies students in sales programs through various challenges, including practice for classes, final exams, interviews for internships, national competitions. Student teams that used Second Nature consistently reached the final rounds of national sales competitions, outstripping their previous records.

12

Integrate coaching program with your other training tactics

Coaching should never stand alone. Second Nature is designed for L&D, Instructional Design and Sales Enablement teams to generate coaching experiences that reinforce the skills and capabilities imparted in different settings and platforms. With Second Nature, call center teams can design coaching that complements existing training methods.

GoHealth

GoHealth integrated short coaching sessions within its current training program, driving a 20% increase in sales.

13

Deliver frequent, staggered rewards

Celebrating the small wins is a great way to encourage agents and keep motivation going. Second Nature offers dynamic, engaging leaderboards, and delivers scores immediately to provide positive reinforcement for user gains. Managers can set rewards for incremental achievements, and the platform will automatically notify agents when they succeed.

zoom

Zoom built customized, dynamic leaderboards which encouraged every agent to participate in its certification, without the need to nag anyone. It saw an unprecedented 100% completion rate, thanks to Second Nature.

14

Select an Enterprise-Oriented Coaching Platform

Choosing the right coaching platform means ensuring seamless integration with your enterprise systems. Second Nature connects effortlessly with Active Directory, SSO, LMSs and CRMs, providing a holistic and secure experience. With SOC2 Type II compliance, you can trust that your data is protected. The cloud-based platform is highly scalable, designed to handle large organizations with high availability. As a pioneer in GenAI-based solutions, Second Nature offers a cutting-edge, reliable platform that grows as your coaching needs and call center grows.

Second Nature's AI-Powered Coaching Solution

Second Nature uses conversational AI to power authentic role play partners who are knowledgeable, patient, and always available for coaching sessions. The AI engine analyzes user style, pace, and progress to personalize learning experiences for each agent, and the dynamic leaderboards and instant feedback provide immediate and incremental reinforcement. Second Nature also produces actionable insights and real time data, so managers know where to direct their resources and when to augment virtual practice with face-to-face encouragement and training.

The Second Nature coaching difference:

- Authentic, engaging AI role play partners
- Easy-to-use editor to produce new sessions in minutes
- Suitable for training any agent in any role
- Integrates with any LMS and CRM
- Rich reports and at-a-glance dashboards
- Multi-language support
- Convenient, bitesize coaching sessions that complement the flow of work
- Dynamic leaderboards and timely feedback
- Personalized learning experiences that adapt to user growth
- Instantly scalable to any size team
- Mature security processes, certifications and AI ethics processes
- Input content from text, audio, or URL to build knowledgeable role play personas
- An end-to-end application for long term relevance

AI Coaching Copilots Deliver Call Center Excellence

The right coaching strategy can be the inflection point that brings engaged and motivated agents, high-performing teams, improved customer satisfaction and increased revenue. With the help of Second Nature's AI-powered copilot, managers can deliver the coaching that their teams need, without stress or headaches.