



Before we move onto the second step of refining your quality monitoring program, which is selecting the monitoring method, we need to spend time examining the things that keep you up at night about your current situation.

Here's what you told me "keeps you up at night" about your current quality monitoring program:

- § *Are we being fair and consistent in scoring*
- § *Are we motivating to succeed*
- § *Are we providing positive and useful feedback*
- § *Are we showing them how and not just mandating conformance*
- § *How do we keep so much information organized*
- § *Are we calibrating enough*
- § *How can we do more coaching*
- § *How do we gain and maintain leadership buy-in and support*

Let me ask you some questions about your concerns.

Are we being fair and consistent in scoring? I'm concerned about this area because several points of your questionnaire pointed right back here. You also list as a concern "Are we calibrating enough?" and your agent feedback includes "How did the score get determined?", and "Lack of consistency".

It sounds like both your QA Supervisors and Agents have concerns about scoring consistency. Your form appears to use a simple Yes/No scoring system, which is ideal. Here are my questions for you:

1. Are all questions on your form weighted the same?
2. If, no, please provide me the weights for each question on your form.
3. Have you noticed a trend in components of the form that spark the most questions about consistency (i.e. Greeting, listening, techniques)?
4. How often do you calibrate?

I very much want your answers to the above questions and in the meantime here are some immediate suggestions for you to consider:

- § From time to time, give agents a monitoring form and have them score their own calls. This exercise will be fun for your agents and it will enlighten them to the fact that monitoring is not easy and that true measurement is not “nit-picky”. You’ll likely find that agents are harsher on themselves than any supervisor would ever be.
- § Use frequent calibration meetings to be sure that supervisors are truly being consistent and fair. By frequent, I mean at least once weekly. We’ll take an in-depth look at calibrating in this course.
- § Assure agents that everyone will be held to the same standards and objectives. I will talk more about this in the “Getting Agent Buy-in” section of this course during week 5.
- § Regarding the “Favoritism or anti-favoritism – we are looking for bad calls” comment: Remind agents that the aim of measuring performance is to improve quality, not to catch them doing something wrong. Additionally, be sure that your agents get lots of praise for the things they do well.
- § I strongly recommend honoring model calls with incentives or public recognition. Johnson & Johnson QA Supervisors vote on the best monitored call weekly and the winner is recognized with an abundant and often coveted gift basket. Recognizing the best calls on a regular basis demonstrates that you are not simply looking to catch agents doing something wrong AND it motivates agents to give their best to every call.
- § To the “The communication on our monitoring form does not have enough training and specifics behind it.” comment I suggest
 - Your agents need to have their own copy of your very thorough Explanation of Components document. This document is comprehensive and clear and it spells out exactly what your QA Supervisors are looking for. But don’t just hand the document to them. Give it to them in a training session, as described below.
 - A special training with the express purpose of explaining and clarifying your expectations in quality monitoring needs to be designed and delivered. I will talk more about this in the “Getting Agent Buy-in” section of this course during week 5.
 - Find out what parts of the monitoring form are not clear to your agents (go to them and ask them).
- § I think two areas of this course will provide value to you in this area: Calibration and Getting Agent Buy-in. I look forward to getting to these components with you.

We will examine each item on your "what keeps you up at night?" list at the appropriate times in this course.

Step 2: Selecting Your Monitoring Method

The second step in refining your quality monitoring program is to select the monitoring method and the technology. You are currently using call record as your method. Your monitoring method is what most contact centers use today. According to Call Center Quality Monitoring Study IV (2007), a recent report by the International Customer Management Institute (ICMI),

- § Most centers (80.4%) use a combination of monitoring methods, the most common method cited in the study is call recording " used in 81.9% of centers surveyed.
- § The percentage of respondents whose centers use automated monitoring technology is down from 58% in 2004 to 51.8% today.

Call Monitoring Technology Today

You are using the call record method, but you are not providing copies of recorded calls to agents. I urge you to immediately put a plan in place to provide copies of monitored calls to your agents.

Consider the fact that in litigation, prosecutors are required to turn all of their evidence over to the defense. In order to be fair to employees, QA Supervisors need to do the same thing. Your employees need solid, verifiable evidence so they can examine their own performance and also defend themselves, if necessary. You need to find a way to give employees the opportunity to listen to the calls you monitor.

Additionally, I'd like to offer for your consideration exploring full-time recording. In call center lingo, systems that record a sample of interactions are referred to as "quality monitoring" (selective recording) systems. Systems that record 100% of interactions are known as "loggers" (full-time recording).

For organizations that manage compliance, I always recommend recording all interactions that could be subject to regulation. The ability to

record all interactions protects you in the event one or a group of those interactions comes into question later.

The good news is call monitoring systems have reached such sophisticated heights that remote agent monitoring can literally be done from an iPhone, voice and screen captures can be done in real time, and a customer's voice can register certain decibel levels indicating anger, foul or harsh language, and even the use of a competitor's name. If you're willing and able to make the investment, you will find the technology to more than meet your needs.

Below, I have provided a list of vendors of call monitoring technology and also a sample RFP for call monitoring technology that includes more than 100 questions you need to ask any potential vendor.