

Call center agent training is the best way to help your agents perform well at their jobs. But many call center training programs fall short, leaving new agents ill-equipped to handle real-life scenarios.

The solution? Scenario-based training. This interactive type of training is an excellent addition to any agent onboarding process. It teaches agents to think on their feet and feel confident handling calls.

Here's how to script contact center virtual scenarios that will set your agents up for success once they're on the job.

What is scenario-based training?

Scenario-based training uses interactive examples, or scenarios, to help employees learn. Often used in online training sessions, this strategy is a form of active learning. It walks participants through a learning experience using a real-life situation that's relatable and highly relevant — increasing engagement and retention for the learners. Think of scenario-based learning as on-the-job training instead of just passive studying.

Benefits of scenario-based training

Scenario-based training has a variety of benefits to help call center agents succeed. By working through real-life call center virtual scenarios, call center agents will learn to think on their feet. They'll develop the ability to draw from a variety of learned skills and use the knowledge base tools available to them.

Scenario-based training makes it okay for agents to fail. Call center agent training becomes a safe space where agents can practice skills and learn from their mistakes *before* they're talking to an actual customer. By participating in scenario-based training, agents will understand the importance of continual learning and improvement.

Agents will also increase their knowledge retention, remembering what they learn so they can provide a positive experience for customers by staying compliant to company practices. Finally, scenario-based training helps the training process happen more efficiently, allowing agents to become confident and competent more quickly. And by reusing scenarios, your managers won't have to spend time training new employees over and over again — making scenario-based training a win for everyone.

Best practices for using scenario-based training

Why and how scenario-based training should be used in call center onboarding

Scenario-based training should be used to benefit agents and managers alike. Managers can create scenarios that will become part of your agent onboarding process, being used again and again by new hires. During the onboarding process, agents will run through these scenarios as part of their training, receiving feedback along the way.

Implement scenario-based training by giving your new employees common scenarios they will encounter. Outline the scenarios in a basic Microsoft Word document. Then agents will use a guide to walk through the scenario. You'll want to document everything they say and do so you can provide feedback where needed.

How to design effective scenarios for training call center agents

Scenarios for new agents need to reflect the real-life scenarios that often happen at your call center. At first, learners might need extra support to help them successfully navigate these scenarios. Over time, you can decrease the amount of support necessary while creating scenarios that are more and more complex.

Identify what you want new agents to learn during call center training and then build your scenarios around those learning objectives. Do you want agents to introduce themselves? To stay calm and polite under pressure? To take notes during calls? If so, agents need to walk through scenarios that require these responses.

You may want to choose different types of scenarios to best support various learning objectives. [Types of scenarios](#) used in scenario-based training include:

- Skill-based scenario (learner demonstrates skills they've already acquired)
- Problem-based scenario (learners use theoretical and practical knowledge)
- Issue-based scenario (learners pull back to the bigger picture)
- Speculative scenario (learners predict a future outcome)
- Gaming scenario (uses games as learning tools)

Keep in mind that scenario-based training might not be a good fit for call flows that are more complex. It can be hard to figure out all of the different paths where a call could go. And if the scenarios are too complicated, sorting through the resulting documents will be a major headache.

Finally, it's also important to provide feedback to agents after a call center virtual scenario is complete. Go through their response to the scenario and note what they did correctly as well as

the areas that could use improvement. Moving forward, it may be helpful to specifically create or assign scenarios that target those problem areas.

How to make scenario-based training part of your agent onboarding process

Add scenario-based training to your agent onboarding process so new agents can start learning right away. Prep scenarios based on common situations that happen in your call center. When you make a new hire, briefly walk them through basic information, your company culture, and the learning objectives for their training. Then provide them with a guide to refer to as they start working through scenarios. Give feedback as agents go.

It's up to you to decide how much traditional instruction to incorporate alongside scenario-based training, as well as when new agents are ready for the big time.

Set your agents up for success

It's clear that scenario-based training is a critical piece of any onboarding program. By incorporating real-life situations into your call center agent training, new agents will quickly feel confident and competent, able to start work more quickly and handle calls with ease.