

# CX Best Practice Award Winner

Award for Continuous Improvement Process:  
**Millennium1 Solutions**

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## CX Awards-Winning Best Practice Success Story – Continuous Improvement Process



### Company Description

Millennium1 Solutions (“M1S”) is one of Canada’s fastest growing Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) providers, growing at three times the industry rate. M1S prides itself on handling their client’s brands with care and ensuring delivery of tailored programs that meet their needs. Their mission is to deliver a superior customer experience to our clients and their customers through executional excellence and industry-leading insights.

M1S has a solid track record of providing end-to-end solutions for many of the largest North American brands across a variety of industries. These organizations trust M1S to provide high-quality, scalable, and secure solutions in three main service towers: Contact Center, Credit Cards, and Back Office/Administrative services. They have assembled a team that brings a disciplined and rigorous approach to managing their clients’ businesses – many of whom choose M1S to provide an integrated solution across all three service towers.

Whether performing as an extension of a company’s existing capabilities or as a stand-alone service delivery channel, Millennium1 Solutions brings industry-leading expertise, best practice processes, technology, and a disciplined approach to execution. They’re passionate about the delivery of great customer experiences; their performance and processes have earned them a series of industry awards annually.

## Millennium1 Solutions Contact Center Description

### Locations

Toronto, Ontario, Canada  
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada  
Orangeville, Ontario, Canada  
Sudbury, Ontario, Canada  
Bridgewater, Nova Scotia, Canada  
Pasig City (Manila), Philippines

### Contact Types

Varies by client program

### CSR Headcount

2,000 CSRs

### Contact Channels

Inbound and outbound phone calls, email, website, IVR, chat, social media, SMS

### Operating Hours

24/7

### Contact Volume

Approximately 7.8 million calls per year

## Background

At M1S our clients place a premium on effective delivery of their brand experience. As their solution provider, it is incumbent upon us to demonstrate impeccable care and support in delivering that brand promise. Our clients come to us for thought-leadership and value-add that will help them improve delivery of their customer experience. Many members of our senior leadership team have sat on the client side of a BPO engagement, and they observed a common opportunity area - the ability to extend beyond KPI measurement and instigate insightful continuous improvement based on trends. We knew there had to be a better way, so we initiated an improvement journey to build a structure that supports our mission.

## Our Common Goal – Delivering Improved Business Outcomes for our Clients

To create our own recipe for continuous improvement success, we cultivated a holistic culture of accountability where trends are gathered from multiple data sources and departments. These inputs are then synthesized to convert that information into action. This approach is founded in

departmental connectivity/collaboration and enabled by multiple best practices that work together to achieve continuously improving results:

- Quality Assurance Program (SQM Best Practice award recipient in 2014 and 2015)
- Performance Management System (SQM Best Practice award recipient in 2014)
- CSR Recognition
- CSR Coaching Program
- Career Development Program

Another important ingredient in our recipe for success is the investment in our Business Insights & Optimization team. This team's function is focused solely on measuring the "cause and effect" and outcomes of what we do. Designed to identify and continuously improve on customer effort, data from all functional areas feed into our analytical tools for analysis and opportunity modeling.

In the words of our CEO, Tom Band, "If you want to reach a higher level of customer experience service delivery, you need to be looking under the covers at what's going on with each employee, each interaction, every day, not managing to averages. You're never done. The CSAT program, best practices, and tools we provide our coaches with allows the focus necessary to drive improvement on the metrics that matter most to our client's customers."

### **Quality Assurance Program – Focused on Continuous Improvement**

We have developed a comprehensive Quality methodology supporting delivery of positive, memorable caller experiences on behalf of our clients. Our approach includes the measurement system as well as team processes and reporting tools that enable us, to factually assess FCR and CSAT improvements across multiple channels. The foundational elements of the system marry the best components of a variety of QA methodologies and best practices, arriving at a balanced and blended model that supports not one call centre but dozens of dedicated call centre teams that we manage on behalf of our clients.

The importance of measuring in a way that lends itself to actionable reporting cannot be understated. Our QA scorecards present not only a result, but detailed point of failure information that equips our Operational Coaches and other support groups (such as Training) with inputs they can convert into action plans.

- **Quality Program Design:** Our Quality Assurance program has been designed with the customer in mind. The scorecard includes two components with attained points blended from both sections to provide a balanced measurement system:
  - Internal Quality – measuring with a strong bias towards knowledge, accuracy, and compliance to ensure procedural needs are met and repeat call avoidance. Client-specific brand delivery requirements are also measured in this section.
  - Voice of the Customer – measuring FCR, resolution, and CSAT directly from feedback gathered via customer surveying.
  - In addition, we also offer an alternate version of the internal portion of our QA scorecard which generates an outcome-based score rather than a percentage result.
- **Quality Assurance Call Selection & Process:** Our Quality process leverages many industry best practices and ensures that the customer’s assessment of the call comes first where agent-level survey data is available. Daily survey quota tracking and monitoring for survey attributability are embedded in our standard practice.

Our Quality department also plays a leadership role in driving KPI improvement initiatives and has formed a Voice of the Customer (VoC) Task Force. We believe that a critical lever to driving an improved customer experience is creating a cadence of accountability at all levels of our organization while honoring our customer’s desired brand promise. This Task Force brings together the cross-functional teams required to drive Quality and VoC improvement. Client and employee improvement ideas are pro-actively reviewed and examined to target actions that would drive changes to call handling/approach, processes and procedures as well as areas of focus for Coaches. Prioritized actions are measured according to the critical success criteria integrated into the Cost Benefit prioritization process. We work with our client to proactively drive improvements for their customers regardless of whether the implemented changes have an impact to our operational revenue capture. We know the right long- and short-term focus starts and stops with an improved customer experience. We assist our customers with long-term differentiation by remaining focused and driving improved customer experience.

### **Performance Management System – Accountability from CSR to CEO**

We have created a performance-focused culture where employees at all levels are accountable for their own performance and the performance of their direct reports. In order to attract, develop

and retain top talent, we rely on our performance management system, employee recognition programs, and engagement building initiatives as a part of our recipe for success.

At the beginning of each year, every employee gets the opportunity to review their Goals and Objectives with their direct manager. These goals vary somewhat across our various lines of business and client programs, but one thing that remains constant is that every measurable KPI has a direct or indirect impact on our customers and/or clients, or in the case of people managers, on our employees. Each performance metric is discussed on a regular basis as a part of our CSR Coaching Program, as well as formal mid-year and year-end review meetings.

CSR performance against key metrics is used as an eligibility qualifier for other role-based elements. This includes customer survey feedback, which is included as a part of each employee's personal goals and objectives.

- **Annual Wage Increases:** Performance is used to determine eligibility for annual wage increases with increase amounts determined by performance ratings.
- **Pay for Performance Bonus Program:** Blended Quality scores (which includes SQM CSAT/FCR survey results) and achievement of operational metrics determines qualification and ranking for monthly/quarterly "Pay for Performance" bonuses.
- **Shift Bidding:** Performance results are used to determine agent stack ranking for our "shift bidding" process. Those with the best results are rewarded with their desired shift times.

Every frontline agent has daily visibility into their performance through our Performance Dashboard tool. They can see how they performed across a variety of timeframes and see where they rank among their peer group. The scorecard is of a cascading nature, with Team Leaders, Managers, and Site Directors also held accountable to their team results through the performance dashboard tool and scorecards.

### **CSR Recognition Program – Motivating Through Consistent Positive Reinforcement**

Employee recognition programs and engagement building initiatives are a part of our recipe for success. Our employees at all levels are accountable for their own performance and the performance of their direct reports, and we enjoy recognizing both individual and team achievements. We believe in the power of frequent, consistent, and timely recognition in order to motivate and incent CSR behaviours.

A sampling of our R&R initiatives includes:

- Monthly/Quarterly National Reward and Recognition Ceremonies
- Employee of the Month Program
- Conference Participation and External/Client Awards Program Nominations
- Recognition as a “Customer Hero”



### CSR Coaching Program – Transparency, Accountability, and Effectiveness Tracking

Coaching effectiveness and compliance to committed activities are critical measures that we take into account given their linkage to improvement in individual results. We have made a significant investment to augment and improve the quality and effectiveness of agent coaching with investment in an in-house designed Leadership Excellence Program (LEP) as well as our performance dashboard and coaching tool.

We believe a clear line of sight to daily results is a key enabler of performance improvement. To that end, we invested in a comprehensive performance management and coaching dashboard tool that enables visibility to individual, team, site, and organizational results by performance dimension. Highlights of this tool’s functionality are outlined below:

- **Visibility to Metrics:** Each CSR has daily visibility to how they are performing along with peer and team comparisons.
- **Analytics and Alerts:** Reporting and analytical tools are also an important feature of the tool with a myriad of reports and analytical tools available.
- **Coaching Accountability and Documentation:** In addition to providing visibility to results, the dashboard tool also facilitates documentation of all coaching conversations and performance planning – one-stop shopping for results, coaching notes, and action plans.
- **Coaching Effectiveness:** The dashboard also rates the effectiveness of our coaches by measuring coaching effort and corresponding agent performance improvement versus their established goals.

## Career Development Program – Our People Make the Difference

We want our employees to learn and grow, and we believe that supporting their development is critical to engagement. Our performance management system helps us identify those who are ready for new opportunities and support them in achieving their personal development goals. As VoC data is a key input to our Quality Assurance and performance management programs, customer feedback naturally assists us in identifying top performers for advancement as well as those who require support to improve. By helping our employees continuously improve, we're not only delivering improved aggregate results, but also a better employee experience. A few elements of our development program include:

- Use of training best practices to pave the way for continual learning
- Continual coaching, development support, and career counselling
- Continuous learning with cross-training, upskilling, and opportunities to advance through progressive levels on some programs (heightened earning potential with each progressive level)
- Commitment to promoting from within where possible for both lateral learning opportunities and advanced roles

## FCR/Csat Outcome

The tight connection between our various best practices has returned positive performance gains for multiple clients we have the pleasure of supporting. The holistic approach, which avoids common VoC pitfalls and departmental silos, is a contributor to our success. Below are a few examples:

### Credit card industry:

- Double-digit gains achieved for multiple KPIs in the first 5 years of surveying:
  - 28% increase in Calls Resolved
  - 15% improvement rate for in Average # of Calls to Resolve
  - 10% increase in CSR CSAT
  - 10% increase in World Class Calls
  - World Class Certification achieved by one segment in both 2015 and 2016
  - Consistent year-over-year KPI improvements for multiple segments

### Retail/Loyalty industry:

- Recipient of SQM's Highest Customer Service award for the retail/loyalty category
- Consistent year-over-year CSR CSAT KPI improvements, including a 6% year-over-year improvement in FCR comparing 2016 to 2015 after just 8 months of utilizing the M1S blended Quality Assurance methodology
- Quarterly improvement observed throughout 2016, with one program achieving the following improvements in Q3 compared to Q2:
  - 5% improvement in CSR CSAT
  - 4% improvement in World Class Calls
  - 3% improvement in FCR
  - 3% improvement in Calls Resolved
  - 2% reduction in Action Alerts
  - Site-specific improvements for multiple KPIs
- 50% NPS improvement for a new client post adoption of several M1S voice of the customer best practices

### Energy industry:

- Leveraging existing best practices enabled a newly launched survey program to achieve 1<sup>st</sup> quartile FCR and Call Resolution KPI results in its first quarter of surveying

### General:

- Finalist for the SQM 2014 and 2015 CSR of the Year awards
- Finalist for the 2015 SQM Supervisor of the Year award
- 2015 SQM FCR Leadership Award – Tom Band, Chief Executive Officer
- 2016 SQM FCR Champion Award – Holly Abbott, Director, Customer Experience & Corporate Communication