



## **CX Best Practice Success Story – CSR Career Development**



### **Company Description**

VSP Vision Care, a VSP Global company, is the largest and only not-for-profit vision benefits provider in the U.S. It provides access to high-quality, affordable eye care and eyewear for 88 million members around the world through a network of 39,000 eye doctors. VSP reinvests profits back into the members and communities they serve so that everyone can enjoy a lifetime of good vision.

It is this shared belief that everyone deserves to see their world clearly that helps inspire VSP's customer service representatives (CSRs) to provide a World Class experience for VSP customers. This is done through high-quality service experiences, first call resolution (FCR) performance, and employee satisfaction.

### **VSP Vision Care Contact Center Description**

#### **Locations**

Sacramento, California, United States

Columbus, Ohio, United States

#### **Call Types**

Inbound calls related to benefits, eligibility, doctor referrals, and claims

#### **Customer Types**

Members and doctors

#### **CSR Headcount**

Over 500 CSRs

#### **Contact Channels**

Inbound and outbound phone calls, email, IVR self-service, website, some social media

#### **Hours of Operation**

7 days per week, 5:00 am to 8:00 pm PT M-F, 7:00 am to 7:00 pm PT weekends

#### **Contact Volume**

Over one million calls per month

We shape the VSP Global leaders of the future!

### **Program Details**

VSP's Leadership Training Development (LTD) program is a career path into leadership in our call center. LTD is a formalized program that provides an opportunity for CSRs to grow and enhance their leadership skills through a blend of practical application and academics. Over the last 14 years, this program has supported the development of 51 participants with a 92% success rate promoting into roles such as supervisor, analyst and trainer.

The program length is typically 6-18 months full time, and the selection process is competitive. The most viable candidates have a proven and sustained track record of delivering World Class service with exemplary CSAT and FCR accomplishments. With FCR being a top priority for the Call Center, it is imperative that employees selected for this program show the ability to identify and coach to World Class competencies. In 2017, 92% of our eligible CSRs certified as World Class, which speaks to the skill, focus, and alignment of our leadership team, including LTD participants.

All our leadership team members have a vested interest in the LTD participants' individual development. Each supervisor provides support to the LTD program in their individual areas of expertise. They invite the participant to shadow during coaching sessions with CSRs and at project meetings. Participants are also paired with a manager mentor with whom they meet on a weekly basis. The manager mentor assists with the LTD's learning plan, individual development plan, and contributes to the LTD participant's annual performance review.

Program participants hone their leadership skills through a formal, personalized learning plan requiring certification of demonstrated skills. This includes short and long-term supervisory assignments directly supporting frontline teams in Customer Care. Practical application is gained by supporting the teams of leaders on vacation or development assignments and CSRs just out of training awaiting permanent supervisor placement. This program has allowed us to flex LTD staff to address temporary spikes in headcount in a cost-neutral manner.

### **Career Advancement**

Those who demonstrate the greatest proficiency in FCR and CSAT are routinely our top candidates for skill enhancement opportunities including the LTD Program. Voice of the customer (VOC) feedback is a key focus and measurement of performance for both CSRs and Supervisors. Leadership at all levels is responsible for developing employees and coaching them to the call

handling competencies that best support FCR and CSAT. In 2017, 100% of our Supervisors received World Class recognition.

CSRs who are successful in moving into management advance along the path by mastering the customer service position and demonstrating VSP's coaching model and core competencies. As these representatives continue to the next level, they understand how targeted coaching aligns with our VOC goals. They have advanced call handling skills and are selected to be Peer Coaches to their coworkers. The LTD program is the next step on the path and allows those individuals with leadership experience an opportunity to gain a certification that will be recognized when applying for supervisor positions.

### **Satisfaction**

The LTD program is one of the most popular and comprehensive opportunities for growth and advancement within the Call Center. Our 2017 engagement results show that 76% of our employees are very satisfied with VSP's development opportunities. They understand the significance of mastering Call Resolution and CSAT competencies, career advancement opportunities, and are regularly apprised of their progress by the prominent display of VOC metrics on their scorecard. They are motivated to improve their Call Resolution and CSAT results for many reasons, from the way we reward performance to observing the success of leaders who have been promoted because of the LTD program. The LTD job criteria are clearly defined and excelling in these areas translates to being among the most competitive candidates for a leadership training position.

### **Program Link to FCR/CSAT**

The targeted VOC coaching provided by our leadership team has resulted in our Call Center achieving World Class certification for 16 years in a row! Those in our LTD program are an extension of, and an integral part of, the leadership team. LTD participants regularly coach CSRs on all key performance indicators with a sharp focus on our VOC results. These sessions take place when the supervisor requests additional coaching or when an LTD team member is on an assignment in an acting supervisor role. LTD participants are trained to identify skill gaps and identify root causes, helping CSRs improve their VOC results.

The below quotes are from individuals who achieved their goals in the LTD program and currently lead teams of CSRs as a supervisor. As stated, in their review of the program they both gained the knowledge, experience, coaching, and feedback needed to having World Class team members and being recognized as first-year World Class Supervisors.

**Derrick Huwer**

“When I look back at my career advancement, there’s always going to be defining moments that stand out. That moment was my acceptance in the LTD program at VSP. Being green behind the ears, I knew that it was crucial for me to seek out and apply as much feedback as I could, and the consistent theme I heard, was having the ability to develop my team. The key was to coach for alignment and performance accountability assuring my CSRs understood our Wildly Important Goals (WIGs). Since First Call Resolution (FCR) has its roots in our other WIGs, Winning Culture and Financial Accountability, the LTD program highlighted that I could advance as a leader and focus on my professional development by supporting FCR.

The LTD program provided me with ample training like integrated coaching, Situational Leadership, job shadowing, and, most importantly, hands-on experience. With all this training, coaching, and feedback for my areas of opportunity around developing my team, I could confidently advance in my career. Without the LTD program, I would not have had the focused approach in how to succeed as a leader and would not be the supervisor I am today.”

**Teresa Williamson**

“The LTD program was the stepping stone to my leadership career with VSP. While I did bring prior call center and leadership experience to the table when I began my career with VSP as a CSR, the focus that VSP places on our Customer’s Experience and providing FCR is very different from anything that I have experienced elsewhere.

My journey in the LTD program provided me with consistent opportunities to help our employees understand the importance of providing FCR in every customer interaction and to help them understand how VSP’s strong focus on the Customer Experience is an essential part of our amazing culture. The LTD program was an opportunity for me to immerse myself in the Winning Culture that is VSP.

In this program, I could continue to grow my leadership skills while making strong contributions to FCR through coaching sessions across our organization!”

Our continued success in the program over the years can be attributed to those individuals with a passion for making every contact with customers, CSRs, or any of our publics, a top priority to achieving First Call Resolution. The LTD participants are committed to delivering a low-effort, high customer satisfaction experience. They demonstrate dedication and perseverance in this role, molding their career goals to being one of VSP’s leaders of the future.