

# Contact Center FCR Best Practice Award Winner

## Award for CSR Training: VSP Vision Care

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## **CSR Training Program Best Practice Award**

### **VSP Vision Care**

#### **How VSP's CSR Training Program Works**

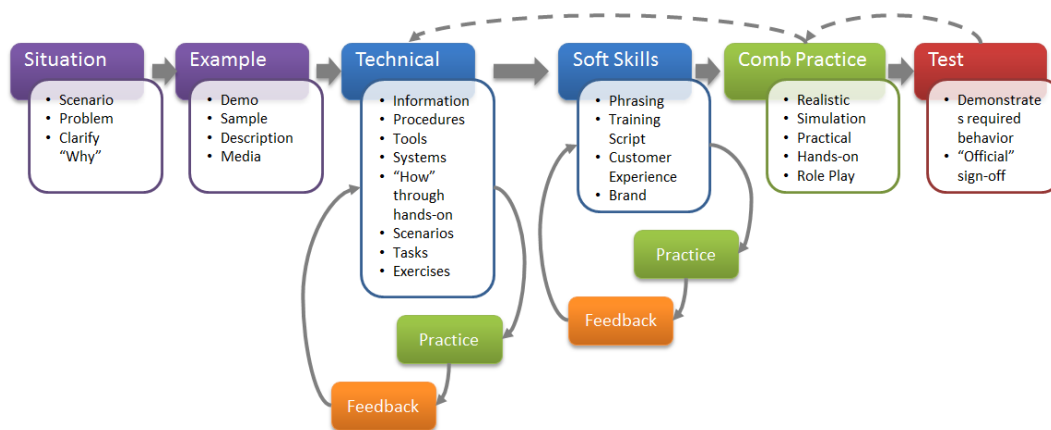
VSP's CSR training program has a history of providing robust and comprehensive training to its call center staff. New representatives used to enjoy a 17 week journey that would cover every technical step and a wide-range of call handling procedures. This was a source of pride and historically served us well as a differentiator when bidding against competitors. Like many organizations, the business climate has significantly changed over the last five years. The training team was faced with the challenge of making training more efficient while increasing its effectiveness.

In 2012 we began evaluating the length of training. Key processes were identified and infrequent call scenarios were minimized by focusing on the use of tools and resources to equip the trainee to learn "just in time" as those rare situations arose. This reduced training time by 20%. In 2014, we undertook a deeper analysis of our training design to evaluate not only what we were training, but how we were training it. The result was an immersive approach to learning by blending the best practices from the past with an increase in key skills practice in low risk, scenario-based contexts. In addition, it required alignment of a core set of competencies across the different life-cycle stages of the CSRs' development from hiring to full mastery of the position along with a strong infrastructure of support at every level.

The current training program is aligned to 9 core competencies as well as key technical skills and is staged into four different levels based on the skill complexity and customer type. Each level includes trainer guided classroom instruction followed by time taking live calls under the close supervision of the trainer in partnership with supervisors, coaches, and the quality assurance team.

At the micro-level, the immersive design of each learning module follows a consistent architecture. It begins with the adult learner in mind by presenting the situation or problem being addressed. Then there is an example to immerse the learner in the context of that situation. This is done through call samples, robust descriptions, live demonstrations, or even the use of a comic-book type illustration. Next, the technical components of that scenario are covered using the actual tools and resources that will be available to them on the phones. These skills are practiced using feedback loops and are then combined with the relevant soft skills. Once all relevant knowledge and skills have been practiced in the low-risk classroom environment, then they are tested to ensure mastery. This redesign began in 2015 and is 75% completed.

#### **VSP Learning Module**



Following the classroom instruction, trainees are placed in a “Call Center Academy” where they take live customer calls relevant to their recently acquired skills. They receive daily audits based on the 9 core competencies, coaching from their trainer, meet once a week for a group huddle, and spend time with a peer to observe their customer interactions. During this time, they also meet with their supervisor to begin the transition to their assigned team. At the second level of training, they begin to receive customer feedback through SQM.

Altogether, CSRs complete training immersed in reality of the position through an iterative approach that builds on their exposure to the issues they will be handling, the tools and resources they’ll be using, and the technical and soft-skills needed to deliver a world class customer experience.

### **Incorporating Customer Feedback**

Customer feedback is incorporated into training in two ways, (1) directly to the trainee through the use of SQM surveys and (2) through organizational collaboration and feedback loops amongst support teams.

During the second level of CSR training, while they are taking live customer calls in VSP’s Call Center Academy, we begin having SQM survey the customers they’ve spoken with. Trainees are then provided with the customer feedback along with coaching on what went well and what can be improved. Combined with internal audit feedback, this provides the CSR with a holistic view to the customer experience they create.

At the organization level, there are regular meetings amongst the leadership of the training team, the support queue (or call support) team, and the quality audit team to share customer information. This feedback loop increases transparency and identifies: patterns around customer issues that they are being addressed by the support queue, and what is being observed by the quality team when auditing call recordings. This feedback is then used to focus or increase the emphasis on a specific issue or to update training material

**CSR Satisfaction with Training Experience**

At the end of each level of training, including Call Center Academy, trainees are invited to provide feedback on their experience with training. In 2015, 93.7% of trainees indicated that they felt prepared to take customer calls at the level they were trained.

**Performance Linked to Training Program**

VSP's CSR training program teaches and aligns to 9 core competencies that directly relate to creating a positive customer experience. These competencies include issue diagnosis and issue resolution along with customer rapport, active listening, and effective communication which all directly have an impact on FCR and customer satisfaction. The behaviors associated with these competencies outlined are practiced during classroom training and are evaluated during trainee call audits and coaching sessions during our Call Center Academy.