



Call Center Jobs

CallCenter
Classifieds
com

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October 03, 2007

Call Center Jobs Update

By Mae Kowalke, TMCnet Associate Editor

(Norwalk, CT – October 03, 2007) Earlier this year, CallCenterClassifieds.com was launched with the goal of becoming the place for call center job seekers and employees looking for agents to find each other. TMCnet caught up with the company's CEO, Michael Maffei, to find out what's happened since the site was launched and what lies ahead.

TMCnet: When was CallCenterClassifieds.com founded and what is its mission?

MM: We launched the first phase of the Web site on May 1, 2007. We're now in the process of adding content, employment resources and proprietary functions to the site. The mission of CallCenterClassifieds.com is to become the call center industry's premier employment resource website.

TMCnet: What are some of the current trends in the call center employment market?

MM: We are seeing a continued need for all levels of employees, especially those with experience working in call centers. About three percent of the US workforce is employed in call center-related positions, so with turnover and growth, jobs will always be available. Even with offshore outsourcing, call centers continue to grow in the US, though at a slower pace than 5-10 years ago. Some companies have actually brought back their call centers to the US because of issues with providing customer service from abroad. This is especially true for business-to-business related customer service firms.

TMCnet: Why does there tend to be high employee turnover in call centers, and how can employers reduce turnover rates?

MM: Call centers jobs have the stigma of being entry level positions—a stepping stone to “better” opportunities with the company. The real problem is how call centers manage turnover. Some prioritize it as a challenge to overcome, while others do nothing or limit their focus on reducing turnover. Labor accounts for 70 percent of the cost of running a center, but management tends to spend less than 25 percent of their time focusing efforts to reduce turnover.

Call centers can combat turnover by paying a competitive market wage, creating a positive work environment for employees, keeping management engaged, supporting the needs of employees, and providing opportunities within the call center to advance employee careers. Also, treating the call center as a vital asset rather than a cost of doing business tends to reduce turnover.

The bottom line is that reducing turnover should be a daily focus and a proactive effort rather than reactive.

TMCnet: How have new technologies used in the call center changed how agents are hired and trained?

MM: Technology has certainly helped with call center employee assessments. Simulations that can “skill-set” a candidate based on the requirements for the position are very useful. This type of technology, if utilized properly, improves prescreening of candidates to determine which ones will be most successful. Also, IVR and Web-based screening processes reduce the manpower necessary to screen applicants that would not be a “right” fit for the particular position or organization. This has a positive impact on reducing time-to-hire and creating a better pool of candidates.

TMCnet: What are some of the ways today’s agents can best prepare themselves for the hiring process?

MM: The most important is to learn as much as you can about the company and position before you apply for a job. The biggest mistake prospective employees make is not having enough information from the get-go. Talking to others who work in the call center to get their viewpoint is also valuable. With so many call centers, especially in markets like Phoenix, Tampa, Dallas, and Oklahoma City, the competition for employees is intense. That being the case, a qualified and experienced call center agent or manager should always have the “pick” of the best job opportunities.

TMCnet: When hiring and training new agents, what are some techniques used by the most successful call centers?

MM: As mentioned earlier, making hiring and training the number one priority is vital. With the constantly changing employment environment, companies can’t rest on their laurels. Staying focused on market employment trends and what your competitors are doing is key. What may have worked for a particular call center previously may not work today.

The highest level of turnover in a call center happens within the first 90 days of employment. Turnover during training is extremely high if the right candidate skill sets weren’t evaluated correctly. The successful call centers hire candidates not to just fill sets or meet training class goals, but hire based on the right fit for their call center environment and company culture.

TMCnet: What else should people know about CallCenterClassifieds.com and call center jobs?

MM: CallCenterClassifieds.com is not just another job board for the call center industry. Instead, we’re working hard to become a single-source employment solution Web site for both employees and employers. We have a lot of exciting things on the horizon in the next 12-18 months. Stay tuned!

More information about call center employment opportunities is available on the TMCnet.com channel Call Center Jobs, brought to you by CallCenterClassifieds.com.

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