

AGENT CHURN:

go through it or around it?

Introduction

Surveys show the top two strategies for contact center leaders are improving customer experience and controlling costs.¹ But one thing stands in the way of your goals — **Agent churn.**

47%

The number of Contact Center managers who list agent churn/absenteeism as the biggest obstacle to success.²

63%

The number of Contact Centers with staffing shortages.³

12%

The growth in agent churn percentages over five years.⁴

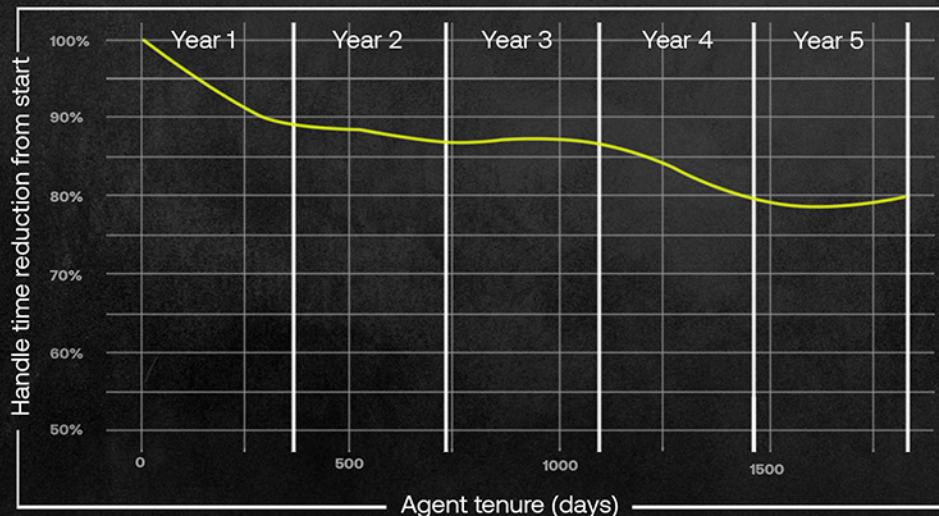
60%

The number of agents who are currently planning to quit in six months.⁵

\$20,800

The combined bill for training, productivity, hiring, and CX impact costs every time an agent quits.⁶

Just as two bodies of land are separated by an ocean, so a contact center is separated from its goals by **high agent churn.**

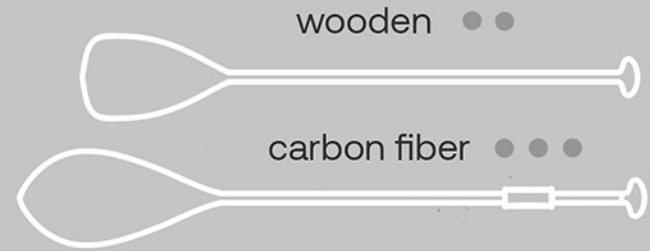


Our own research shows that handle time increases with low tenure. **High agent turnover creates a culture of untrained agents which moves company performance to the left of the chart.**

This is quite a blow, considering quick resolutions are the number one marker for customer satisfaction.^{7,8}

Incremental and Radical

You can attack the problem with incremental innovations or radical innovations. Incremental innovations increase benefits gradually over time. For instance, exchanging wooden rowing paddles for carbon fiber is advantageous. But the benefit is incremental. Powering boats by wind instead of arms is radical.



sails ●●●●●●●●●●



Radical innovations include a paradigm shift that opens new opportunities—like long-distance travel.

This 32 square-meter sail contained the annual wool production of 215 sheep before it was coated with fish oil, fish tar, and sheep fat to protect it from the elements. Such technology let Vikings travel great distances.⁹

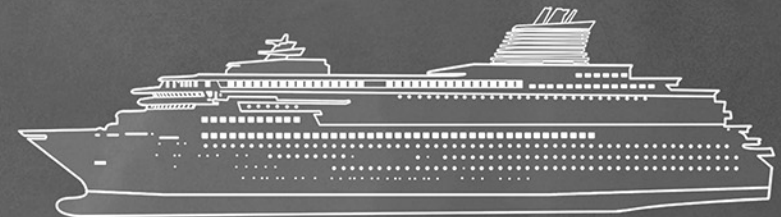
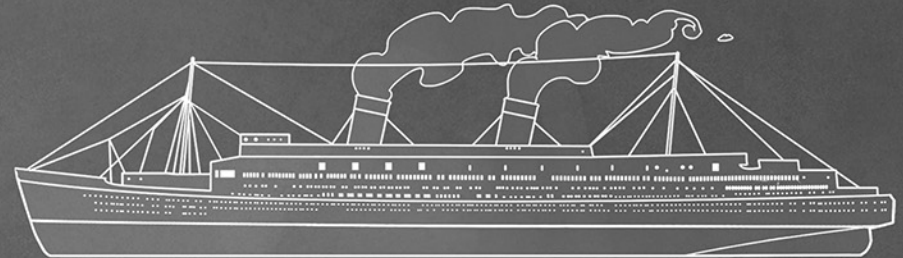
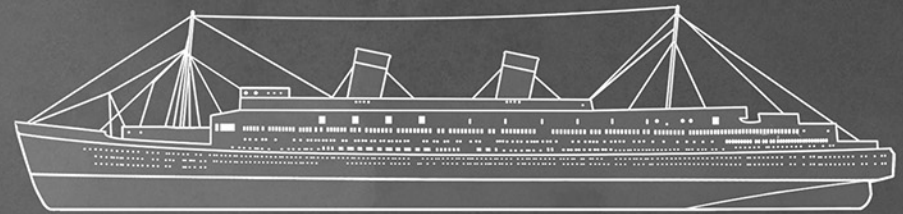
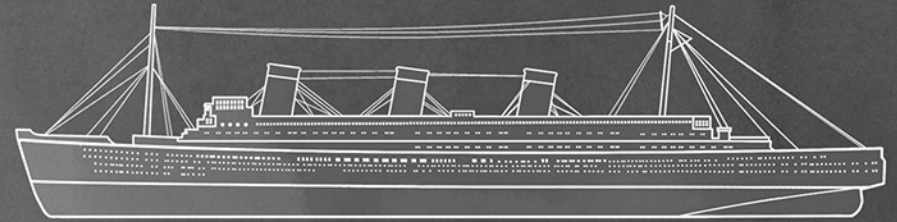
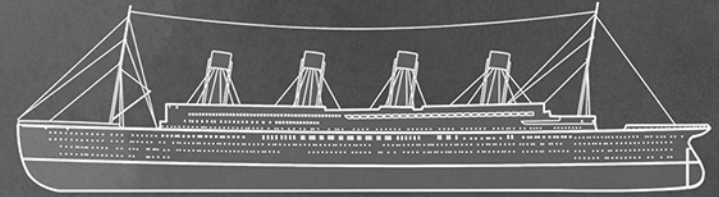
Incremental innovations for agent churn include Workforce Engagement Management (WEM). Many think detailed coaching creates more fulfilled workers. But as WEM adoption increases, so does agent churn. In fact, studies show coaching an agent more than once a week makes them more (not less) likely to quit.¹⁰

Work-from-home (WFH) programs are also thought to improve agent churn rates. Thirty-four percent of contact centers had a WFH program in place in 2018. By 2023, it was 69%; analysts expect it to be 73% by 2025. And yet, agent turnover continues unabated.¹¹

Chatbots promised to decrease customer request volumes and increase customer satisfaction. However, their brittle nature and poor implementation leave 80% of customers angry. Only 1 in 3 companies feel satisfied.¹² with their value.

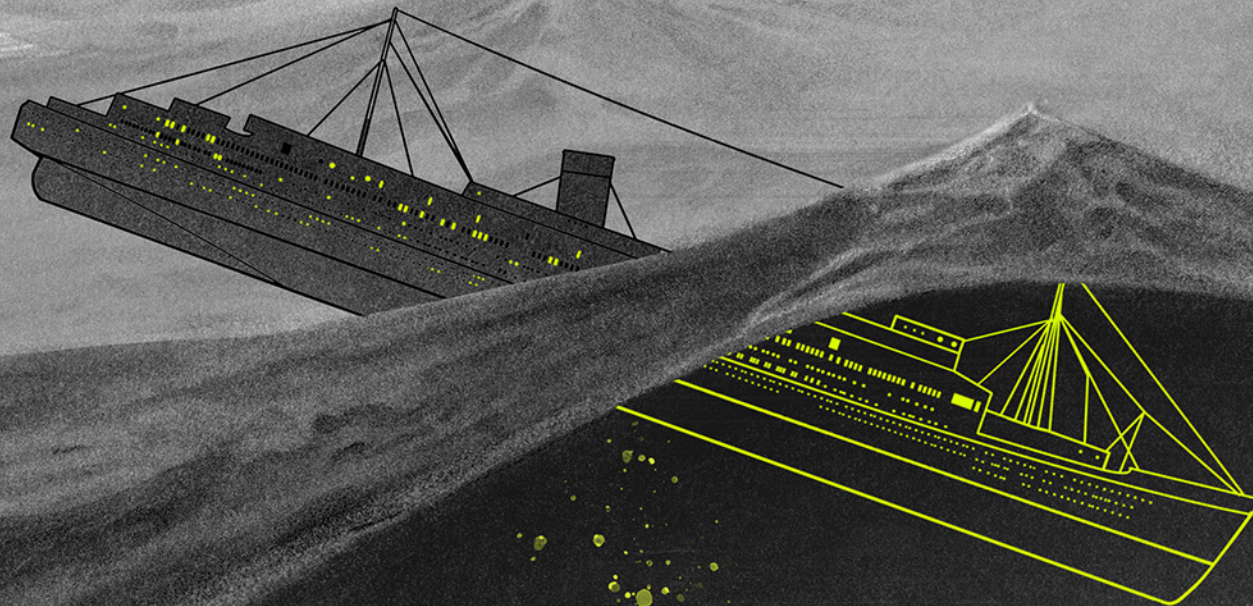
Eighty-six percent of companies plan to increase agent salaries by 2025. This isn't exactly an innovation, merely more coal in the furnace. However, some centers, desperate for lower costs, are reluctant to increase their spending.¹³

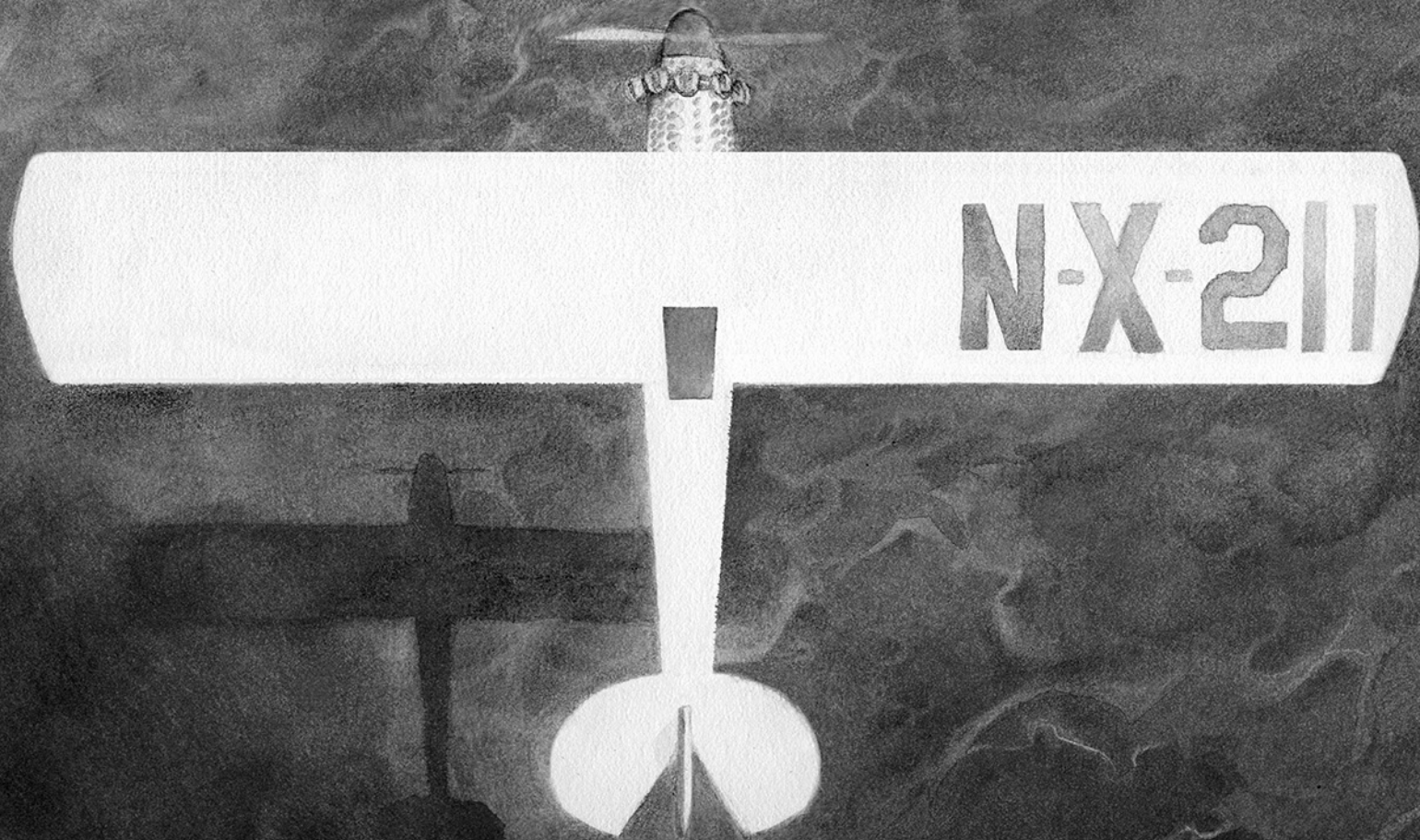
Lastly, Business Process Outsourcing (BPOs) is on the rise. But BPOs have even higher churn rates than an internal contact center. While you might outsource the management of the problems, you're still importing their effects: high handle time and low first-contact resolution.¹⁴



Despite these adjustments, agent churn rises, swallowing up all these proposed solutions. ^{15, 16}

Costs rise while customer satisfaction sinks. Incremental changes can't keep pace with the shrinking pool of agents. Therefore, you need a paradigm shift—a radical innovation.





When Charles Lindbergh crossed the Atlantic alone in just 33 hours, he stunned the world. Today's world record for a nautical crossing still hasn't caught up to his time. (A luxury yacht made the trip with marine versions of F18 engines in 58 hours, 34 minutes, and 50 seconds). A superior paradigm can defeat even the best technologies. **But you get breath-taking results if you pair good technology and a good paradigm.** (The Concorde Jet, for example, traveled from JFK to Heathrow in 2 hours, 52 minutes, and 59 seconds).

Old paradigm:

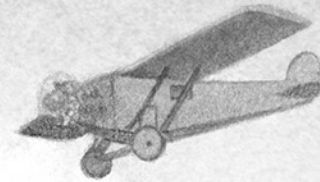
Scale labor, manage with AI.

New paradigm:

Scale AI, manage with labor.*

*GenerativeAgent includes a human in the loop for approvals, to input offline information, or to fill a gap in one's knowledge base or FAQs. This isn't a hard escalation, but a request for the human agent to assist the AI.

If the seas are too rough, bypass them.



Ingredients for radical innovation

Customer care has four parts: 1) Hear what the customer says, 2) understand what they mean, 3) propose solutions, and 4) take action. For the past 10 years, ASAPP has used AI to automate care piece by piece. We first built AutoTranscription—the best in the market at **hearing** the customer's words and making them digital. Next, we developed AutoSummary to **understand** the meaning and intents behind the customer's speech. ASAPPMessaging is a messaging platform equipped with AutoCompose that **proposes** possible next actions. Finally, GenerativeAgent is the culmination of all our previous experience. It **hears, understands, proposes, and acts** to fill the role of a frontline agent.

It also gives quicker results over voice or chat, with interaction costs that are pennies on the dollar. GenerativeAgent doesn't take vacations, doesn't require 6-8 months to learn the job, nor does it quit after 12 months.

 **GenerativeAgent**



 **ASAPPMessaging**

 **AutoSummary**

 **AutoTranscribe**

GenerativeAgent bypasses high agent churn, lowers operational costs, and increases customer satisfaction.

In the first month of deployment, one customer used **34%** fewer agents to resolve the same volume of requests.

Voice isn't the only place for savings. One GenerativeAgent customer experienced a **23%** reduction in cost per chat interaction!

Before GenerativeAgent, a top airline had a first call resolution rate of **79%**. After GenerativeAgent, their first call resolution rate increased to **90%**.

One VP of customer care had this to say:

"I really love love love GenerativeAgent... And it's so quick... I'm looking at the time stamps. It took 4 seconds to give the answer... It's so quick, and it's so human-like."

Conclusion

In summary, incremental innovations can't keep pace with increasing agent turnover rates. You need a radical innovation—**a new paradigm**. GenerativeAgent does the work of a tier-one agent quicker for pennies on the dollar. Instead of scaling up your workforce for the holidays or outsourcing your customer's care to a BPO, use GenerativeAgent to bypass the tumult of churning agents.



Notes

¹ Deloitte Digital. (n.d.). Contact Center Survey Insights. Retrieved from <https://www.deloittedigital.com/us/en/insights/research/contact-center-survey.html>

² SQM Group. (n.d.). Call Center Agent Turnover Problem & Improvement Tips. Retrieved from <https://www.sqmgroup.com/resources/library/blog/call-center-agent-turnover-problem-improvement-tips>

³ Deloitte Digital. (n.d.). Contact Center Survey Insights. Retrieved from <https://www.deloittedigital.com/us/en/insights/research/contact-center-survey.html>

⁴ SQM Group. (n.d.). Call Center Attrition Rate. Retrieved from <https://www.sqmgroup.com/resources/library/blog/call-center-attrition-rate>

⁵ Invoca. (n.d.). The State of the Contact Center Report. Retrieved from <https://experience.invoca.com/the-state-of-the-contact-center-report/p/2>

⁶ SQM Group. (n.d.). Call Center Attrition Rate. Retrieved from <https://www.sqmgroup.com/resources/library/blog/call-center-attrition-rate>

⁷ SQM Group. (n.d.). FCR Metric & Operating Philosophy: The Number One Marker for Customer Satisfaction. Retrieved from <https://www.sqmgroup.com/resources/library/blog/fcr-metric-operating-philosophy>

⁸ Dixon, M., Freeman, K., & Toman, N. (2010). Stop Trying to Delight Your Customers. Harvard Business Review. Retrieved from https://hbr.org/2010/07/stop-trying-to-delight-your-customers?_ga=2.36581792.109615126.1724021070-1624525453.1724021070

⁹ Hakai Magazine. (n.d.). No Wool, No Vikings. Retrieved from <https://hakaimagazine.com/features/no-wool-no-vikings/>

¹⁰ Invoca. (n.d.). Survey Finds Contact Center Agents Plan to Leave Jobs. Retrieved from <https://www.invoca.com/blog/contact-center-agents-plan-to-leave-jobs>

¹¹ Deloitte Digital. (n.d.). Contact Center Survey Insights. Retrieved from <https://www.deloittedigital.com/us/en/insights/research/contact-center-survey.html>

¹² Business Wire. (2022). UJET Research Reveals Chatbots Increase Frustration for 80% of Consumers. Retrieved from <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20221206005186/en/UJET-Research-Reveals-Chatbots-Increase-Frustration-for-80-of-Consumers>

¹³ Deloitte Digital. (n.d.). Contact Center Survey Insights. Retrieved from <https://www.deloittedigital.com/us/en/insights/research/contact-center-survey.html>

¹⁴ Central. (n.d.). Understanding Attrition in BPO: Causes & Solutions. Retrieved from <https://central.com/resources/understanding-attrition-in-bpo-causes-solutions/>

¹⁵ Forrester. (2023). Forrester U.S. 2023 Customer Experience Index. Retrieved from <https://www.forrester.com/press-newsroom/forrester-us-2023-customer-experience-index/>

¹⁶ Forrester. (n.d.). What It Means: CX Index at a Low Point. Retrieved from <https://www.forrester.com/what-it-means/ep377-cx-index-low-point/>