



# Hope Is Not a QA Strategy

Don't Leave Your Contact Center  
Quality to Chance

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In his bestselling book, *Hope is Not a Strategy*, Rick Page—one of the foremost experts in sales management and selling, and founder and CEO of *The Complex Sale*—outlines a simple yet strategic process for winning sales. He asserts that successful sales, which he calls “Consultative Sales,” focus upon pinpointing specific problems and challenges in order to determine the solutions. This is in direct contrast to the more common sales practice of pushing products on the basis that they’re better, or faster, with more bells and whistles than ever before.

**Essentially, Rick Page’s book tells us that, as savvy business leaders, we must first determine what our challenges are, where our pain lies, and then subsequently seek the appropriate solutions.** And, it’s a good salesperson’s job to help us through that process. While Page’s book is intended to help salespeople do their jobs better and speak the language of their prospects more effectively, the concept of not relying simply on hope as a strategy is one that applies across industries, geographies, and time.

While some organizations had already transitioned from part-time to full-time call recording, they’re not taking full advantage of their full-time recording systems. Many organizations continue to randomly select and monitor calls—something like six calls per agent per month; maybe 10 calls per month for new-hires—hoping to find at least one call per agent that’s worth listening to and coachable. Additionally, to improve their chances of getting a good call, they spend lots of time listening to longer calls in the hope that the length of the interaction is indicative of a problematic conversation. Sound familiar? Is this the most effective use of your limited time and resources and the best way to help agents or supervisors to improve? Since contact center Quality Assurance (QA) has been performed randomly for so many years, some managers are under the impression that random call selection is the only way to be objective. Is it really? If hope is not a strategy, why are so many organizations leaving their QA to chance?

Listening to a random selection of calls just isn’t an effective, efficient way to get an accurate picture of what’s really going on in customer calls and how they’re being handled by your agents. The selection of the longest or shortest calls is not random, and it doesn’t really help with finding calls for review that are worth your time. Many leading organizations have recognized the futility of this outdated QA practice and have started to do things differently. Instead of arbitrarily listening to calls and hoping to get one that’s actually worth listening to, they deploy advanced QA solutions, leveraging analytics technology, to identify the calls that matter most to them and their business according to the value of the call content. This means that the calls they really want and need to hear are automatically flagged, classified and sent directly to the appropriate manager or supervisor. These state-of-the-art solutions help you find the root causes of major issues and provide you with the tools to fix them.

So, how can these solutions deliver the calls you really want to listen to? The answer—all calls are recorded and analytics are applied to those calls. During the call and after-call work, agent application activity is monitored and valuable data is tagged to call recordings, such as customer ID, account ID, case ID, value of the sale or collection amount, reason codes, etc. Anything that shows up on the agents' desktop applications can be tagged and associated to the call. The data is gathered either directly from your database or by pulling it directly from your agents' application screens using a desktop analytics tool. All of this data then becomes searchable and can be used in business rules to automatically classify and bucket your calls, then prioritize them for review. For example, want to listen to calls in which an agent gave out the wrong information, forcing the customer to call in again? How about the calls that have required multiple points of contact—such as when customers call in several times and speak with different agents about the same issue in order to get it resolved? The new QA solutions use an advanced data tagging mechanism and automated analysis to flag and deliver these repeat calls to you. These are the kinds of calls that destroy first contact resolution rates and create unhappy, potentially irate customers who don't hesitate to spread the news of their negative experience and take their business elsewhere. You must be able to consistently access these calls quickly and easily.

With an analytics-driven QA solution, your calls can be tagged with the customer's ID and reason for calling—regardless of which agent or channel handles the call. The solution can then identify and send information to you regarding the types of issues that cause repeat calls along with links to those call recordings for review. Alternatively, you can implement rules to receive each of those customers' calls within the last week or month—you pick the time period—so that you can truly understand what your customers are experiencing and how you can improve.

So, you can uncover all kinds of issues and challenges that you never knew you had—but now what? In addition to delivering your problems to you on a platter, an advanced QA solution will also give you the tools you need to fix them. Instead of flying blind, every agent, supervisor and executive gets their own personalized desktop ticker, dashboard and scorecard that displays—in real time—all of the metrics or KPIs that they're each measured on. Managers also get a single, real-time view of how sites and teams are performing. Agents can flag calls that they would like help with, listen to their evaluated calls and review their QA scorecard prior to their coaching session. Plus, they don't have to wait until the end of the day, week or month to see how they're performing versus other team members and against their goals. The healthy competition that ensues from having real-time access to performance status data instantly boosts performance and agents' ability to self-manage—which helps enormously to improve agent morale and retention. This level of transparency often leads to improved agent satisfaction and supervisor efficiency.

To ensure training consistency across teams and agents, you can even attach coaching



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assignments and reminder messages to each question on the QA evaluation form. If an agent gets that QA question wrong or falls behind on a key metric, they'll automatically receive a reminder message or personalized training module at their desktop. Additionally, an advanced QA solution provides the ultimate in visibility with reports in which agents acknowledge the message received and how they are scoring and progressing on their coaching assignments.

A successful QA program doesn't have to be—and shouldn't be—left to chance. As Rick Page says, hope is certainly not a strategy. Are you getting the most value from your QA program? Chances are, you'll quickly reap the benefits of implementing a new, analytics-driven QA solution. In order to survive and thrive in this harsh economy, you need every advantage available to you. Fortunately, the new QA solutions are surprisingly affordable and easy to implement, promising rapid ROI and significant, quantifiable results. ●

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