

icmi[™] EMPOWERING CONTACT CENTER EXCELLENCE



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Session 403:

The #FreeToHelp Movement: ***What it is and Why You Should Join***

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Pleased to meet you!



I'm Jenny Dempsey



I'm Leslie O'Flahavan



We are #FreeToHelp



Introduce yourself

- Who you are
 - Where you work
 - How long you've been there
-
- On a scale of 1 – 10, how #FreeToHelp are customer service agents at your company?
 - Pick one specific example that explains the reason for your rating

About the #FreeToHelp Movement

What is #FreeToHelp?

- A movement
- An approach to empowering frontline customer service agents
- A way of explaining why customer service goes wrong and how to make it go right
- An exercise in right-sizing the “risk” of making agents #FreeToHelp
- A website, blog, survey, Twitter handle, Facebook page



Why we started #FreeToHelp

We believe most frontline agents are *willing* to help, but they're often prevented from giving great service by rigid policies, stern managers, bad software, and ridiculous expectations.

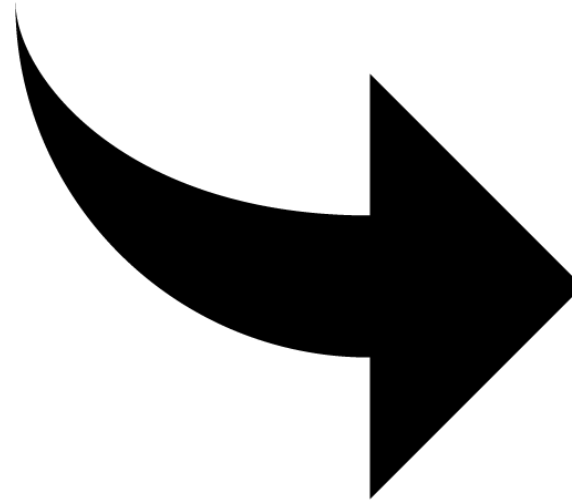
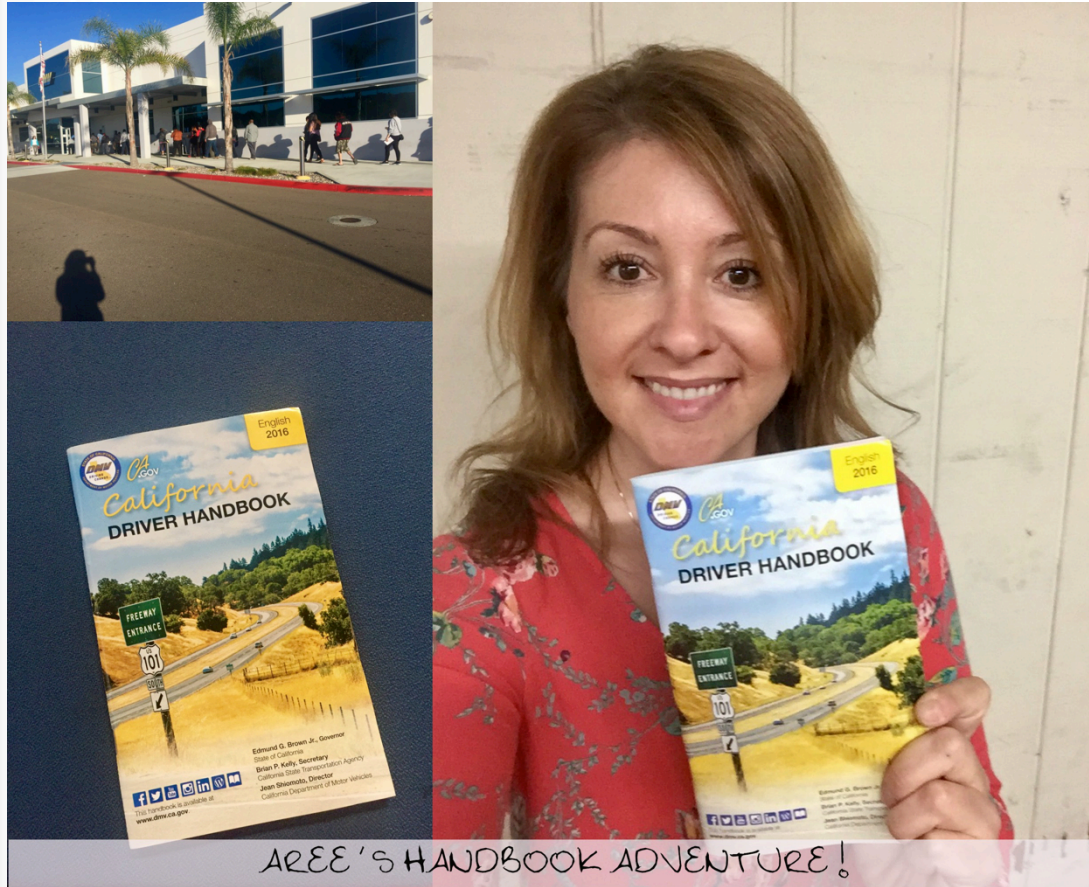
We are on a mission to find out



Real stories: How #FreeToHelp are these agents?



Real stories: How #FreeToHelp are these agents?



The #NOTFreeToHelp movement?

Managers can cause it:

- Agents must handle too many contacts
- QA scoring is rigid and consequences for low scores are severe
- CRM or knowledge base are difficult to use
- Agents get punished for stepping out of their lane
- Agents don't get enough training
- Management doesn't create feedback channels

The #NOTFreeToHelp movement?

Customer service agents can cause it:

- They are the wrong people in the wrong job
- They are afraid to speak up in support of customers
- They just don't care
- They are a bad fit in the company's culture

The #FreeToHelp Survey



#FreeToHelp Survey about Giving Great Customer Service

#FreeToHelp

Thanks for taking our #FreeToHelp Survey! It's only 11 questions, so it shouldn't take longer than about 5 minutes or so. We're trying to learn whether customer service pros are truly #FreeToHelp customers ... or not. We really appreciate your input.

* 1. What is your job title?

- ☐ Customer service agent
- ☐ Customer service representative
- ☐ Customer service supervisor or manager

Other title (please specify)

Frontline agents' perspective: Our 2017 #FreeToHelp Survey

Who's completed the #FreeToHelp Survey?

- 144 responses
- Job title:
 - Customer service agent - 24%
 - Customer service rep – 55%
 - Customer service manager - 20%
- 11 years or more experience – 49%

With one of your agents in mind, take the #FreeToHelp survey



#FreeToHelp Survey about Giving Great Customer Service - CC Demo 2017

#FreeToHelp

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Take the #FreeToHelp survey

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FreeToHelp-CCDemo>



#FreeToHelp Survey about Giving Great Customer Service - CC Demo 2017

#FreeToHelp

Thanks for taking our #FreeToHelp Survey! It's only 11 questions, so it shouldn't take longer than about 5 minutes or so. We're trying to learn whether customer service pros are truly #FreeToHelp customers ... or not. We really appreciate your input.

Want a custom #FreeToHelp survey for your team?



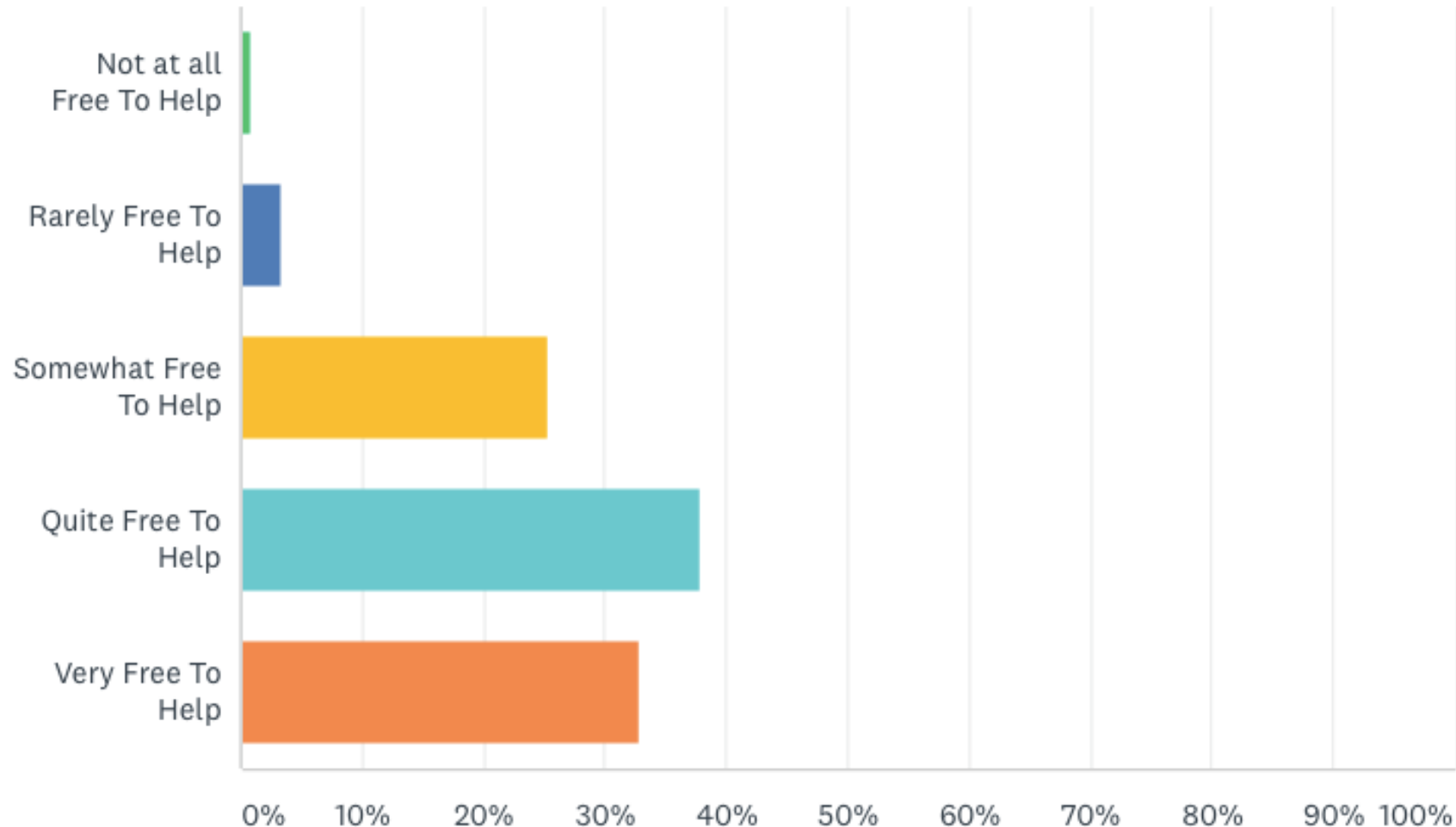
We can do that for you!

- We'll create a custom survey URL you can share with your frontline agents.
- We'll export all the survey responses and share them with you.

5 Lessons learned from the #FreeToHelp survey

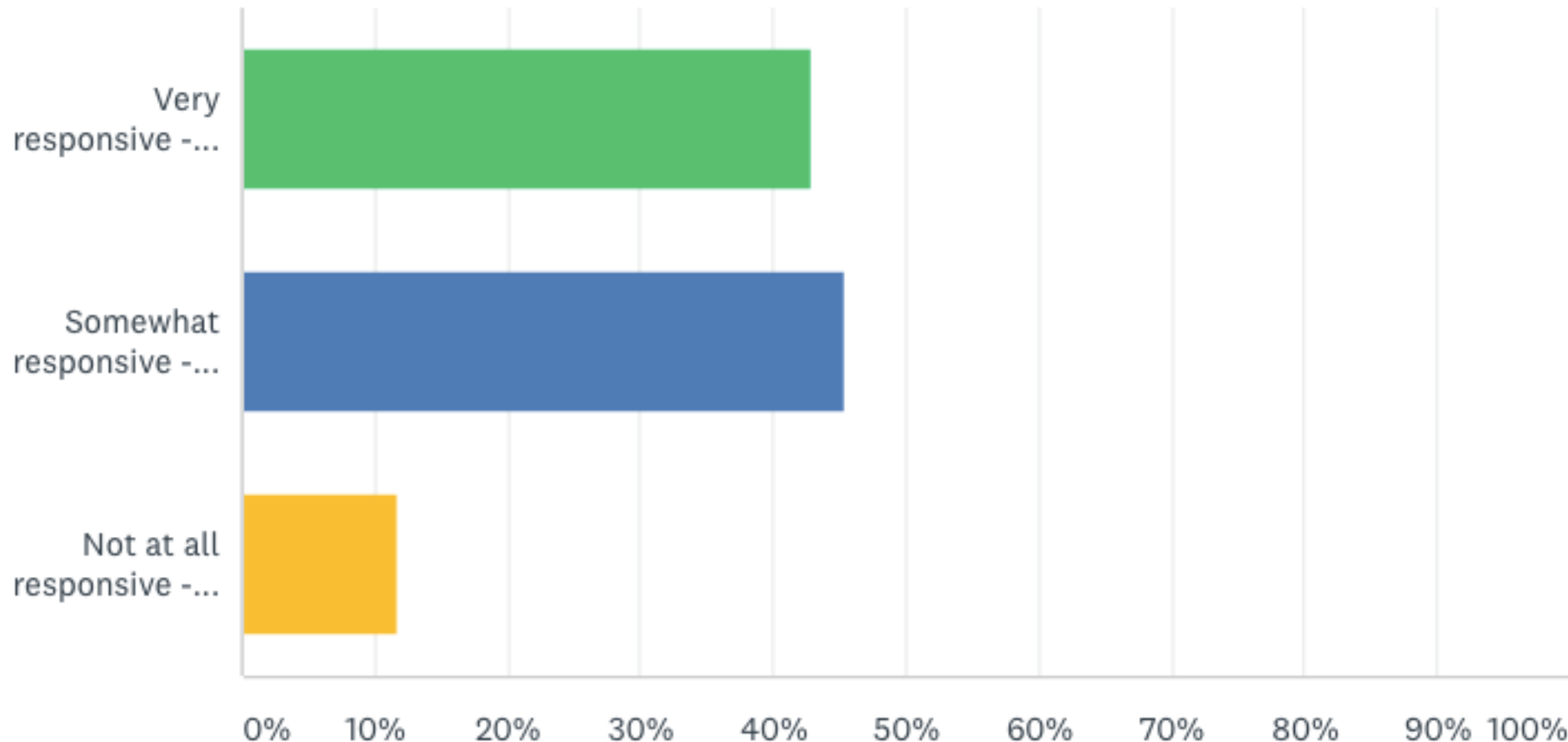
1. Agents feel they *are* #FreeToHelp

To what extent do you feel that you are Free To Help your customers?



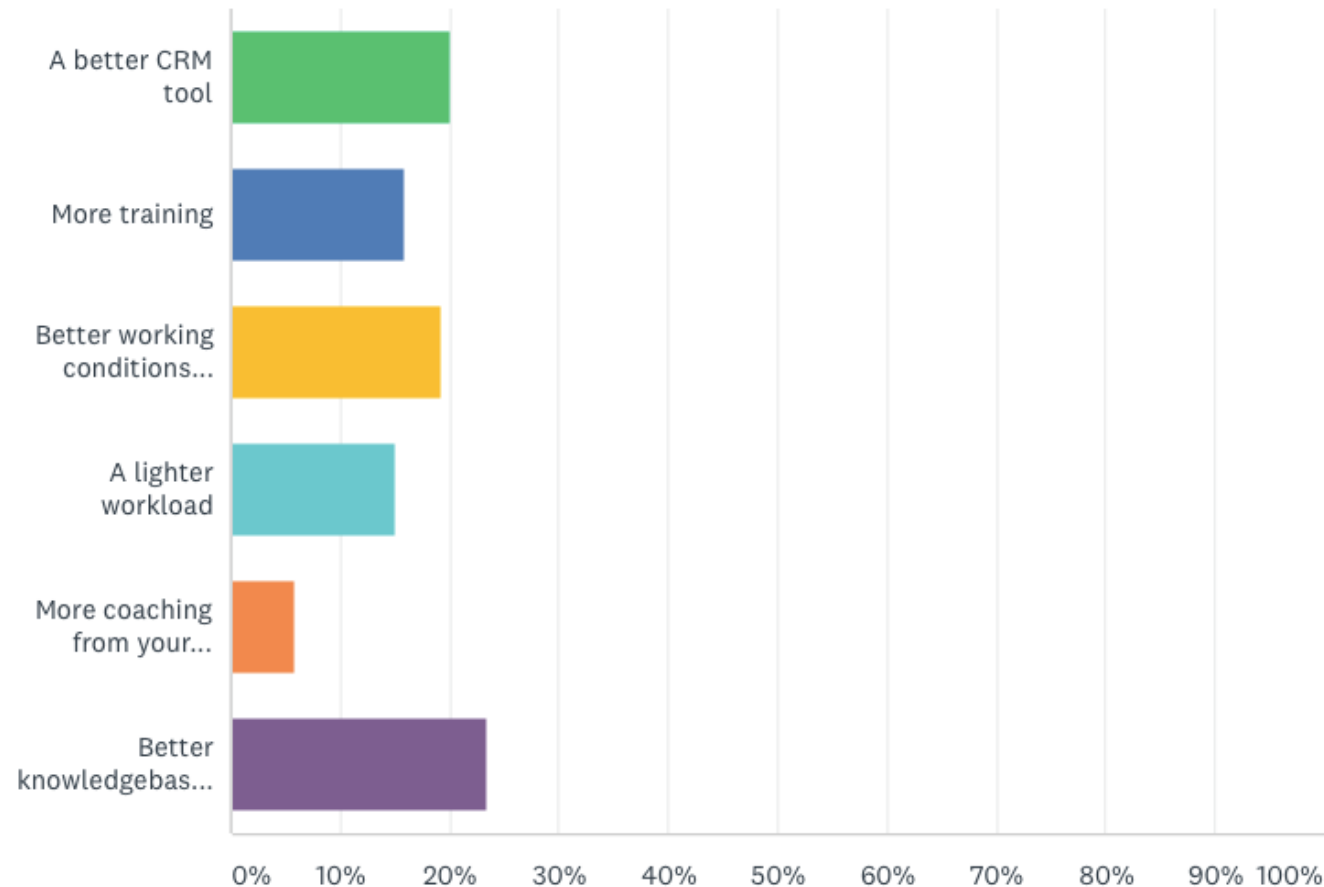
2. Agents feel their managers *do* listen

How responsive are your managers when you suggest new and better ways to help customers?



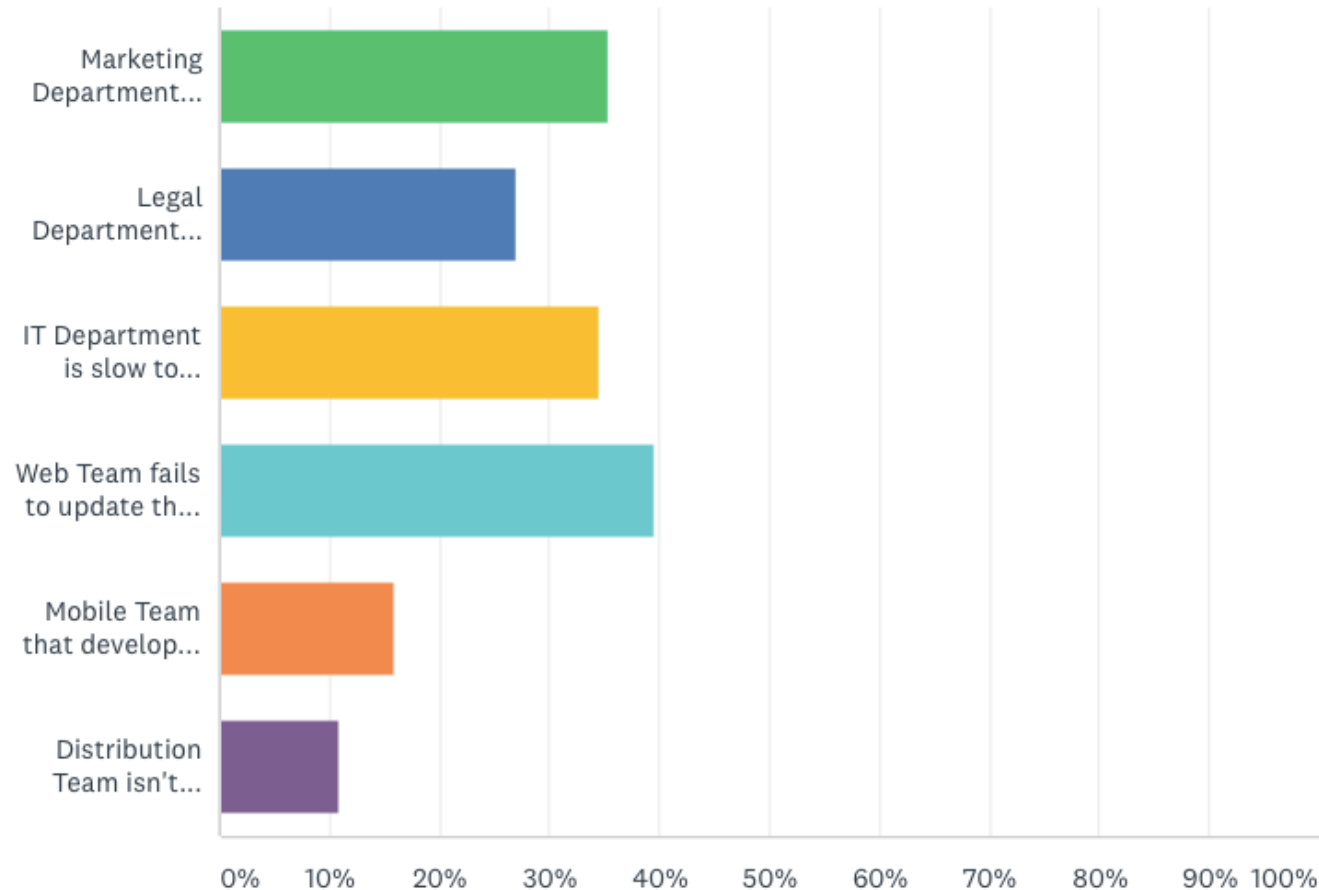
3. Agents *know* what would make them more #FreeToHelp and it's within your power

Which of the following would do the MOST to improve your ability to help customers?



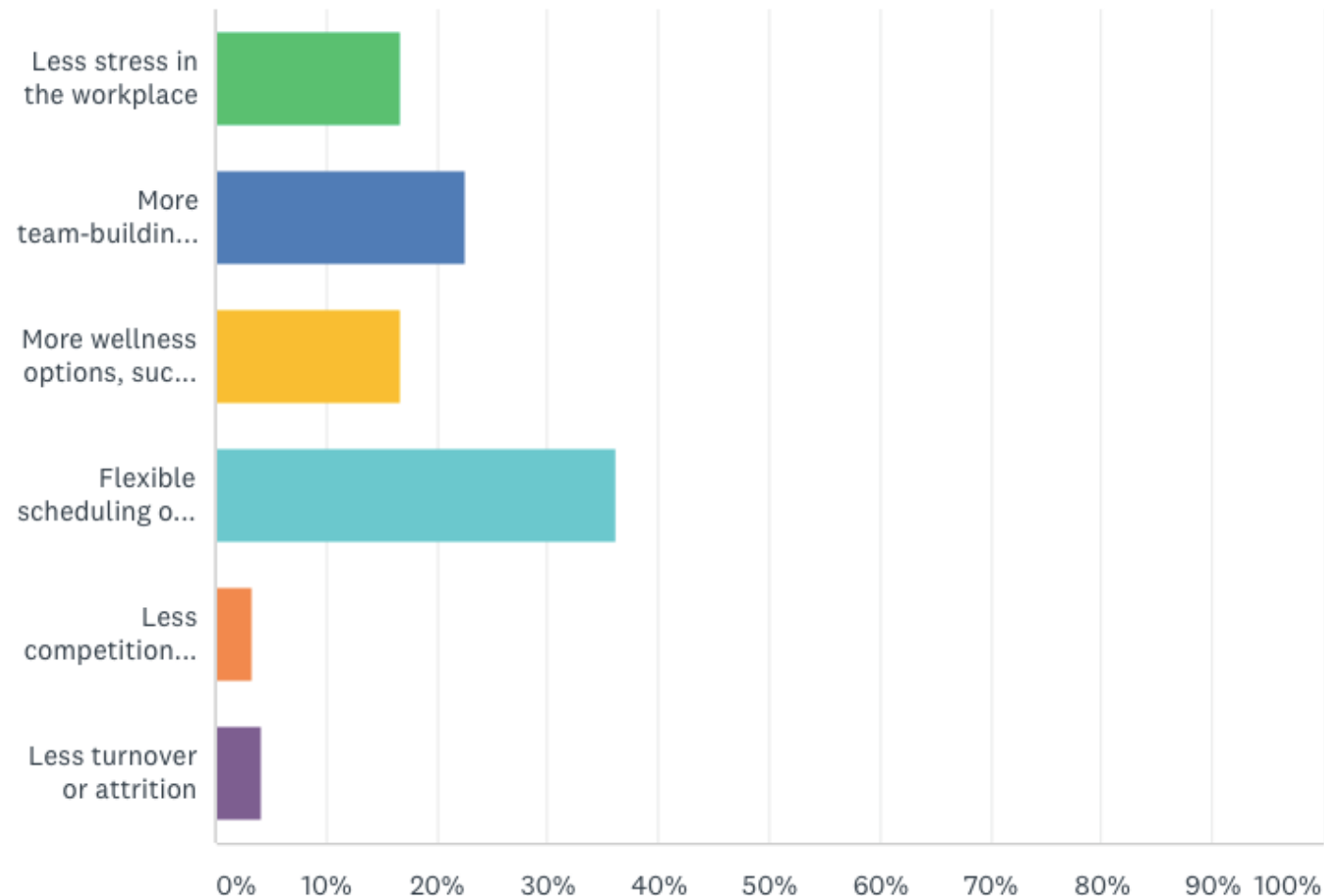
4. Agents *know* which departments are preventing them from being #FreeToHelp ... and it's not Legal

Are other departments in your company preventing you from being Free To Help? (Choose as many answers as apply.)



5. Agents want flexibility and fun, though it's less clear how that would make them more #FreeToHelp

Which improvement in "work climate" would enable you to do more to help customers?



10 Things You Can Do to Make Your Agents #FreeToHelp

10 Things You Can Do to Make Your Agents #FreerToHelp

1. Gather customer feedback on what they want agents to do to help. Share the feedback with the agents.
2. Stop measuring handle time.
3. Broaden agent's' authority to correct billing errors; allow them to correct higher-dollar-amount errors.
4. Allow agents to phone customers who've emailed in with unclear requests. Allow agents to switch channels to provide better service.
5. Allow agents to tell customers plainly what the service level agreement is instead of having to lie about the timeline and then wrestle with their frustrations and arguments.

10 Things You Can Do to Make Your Agents #FreerToHelp

6. Schedule at least six ongoing training days per year for your agents.
7. Listen and act on your agent's feedback, and they will increase productivity.
8. Survey your team at least twice per year about their knowledgebase and resource use to learn what could be improved.
9. Offer flexible scheduling.
10. Inspire a culture of “think and act like the owner,” where the agents are equipped to make decisions for customers.

Download #FreeToHelp Discussion Guide

<http://bit.ly/2xEch5u>



Discussion Guide for Customer Service Teams

We've surveyed hundreds of frontline customer service reps to learn what makes them #FreeToHelp customers ... or not. In this Discussion Guide, we've shared their feedback. We hope you'll use this Guide to have an open discussion with your team.

#FreeToHelp	True for us?	How can we adopt this?
1. I was given the power to make a decision that would benefit both the customer and the company. I submitted the suggestion for review by my supervisor, who agreed that providing the service would be mutually beneficial, and I was able to give the customer the result they were looking for, as well as preventing the need for giving a credit.		
2. I worked with a customer for 20 minutes to find her address in our map system. I had to end up verifying her address with Google Maps because our system would not load the right area.		
3. A passenger on one of our flights missed a hockey game with his disabled son because our flight was delayed. I requested and was granted hockey tickets for a replacement game to send them to. Yeah!		
4. I think we have great latitude to help customers even within the company policies because our managers trust our judgment and abilities.		
5. Whenever a new situation occurs, the whole team is asked to submit feedback and update the team with a resolution if we get it. There is lots of communication.		
6. This year, we've had a strong focus on cross training. Now we can step in and help each other—and our customers—more quickly.		
7. The ability to work from home and have a flexible schedule allows for more resolution and less PTO being used.		
8. I can call a customer who emailed us or vice versa. Whichever works best!		
9. I had a customer who preferred to use one of the online forms we provide. But the form had been changed and no longer had the functionality they needed. It took some time, but I was able to get that form reverted while working with other departments to help the customer.		
10. I had to get over my personal insecurity about going above and beyond. I was afraid of making a mistake.		

Contact us



Jenny Dempsey
Leslie O'Flahavan

www.FreeToHelp.com
[@FreeToHelp](https://twitter.com/FreeToHelp)

Our CC Demo #FreeToHelp survey results