



UNDERSTANDING WHAT YOUR AGENTS ARE THINKING

Alvaria Agent Experience Index Survey



ALVARIA™

Alvaria 2020 | Agent Experience Index

Survey Overview/Background

- Alvaria conducts an annual survey of over 500 agents to understand how their needs and preferences are changing
- We asked each agent 50 questions, often with many sub-questions, resulting in several hundred answers in all
- Survey data allows Alvaria to correlate values, needs and attributes with age, years as a CSR, propensity to churn, job satisfaction, etc.
- Alvaria has collected data over the span of several years, enabling us to see trends over time
- Most findings are statistically significant at the 90% confidence level or greater



The Changing Face of the Contact Centre Agent



WOMEN

2018	2020
69%	76%



MEN

2018	2020
31%	24%



TENURE (3+ yrs)

2018	2020
69%	76%



MILLENNIALS

2018	2020
46%	52%

GEN Z

2018	2020
22%	14%

GEN X/BOOMERS

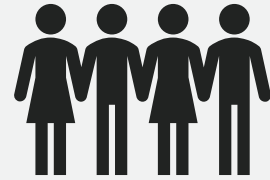
2018	2020
32%	33%

Agent mix continues to fluctuate amongst men and women in the contact centre environment

Agents are staying longer in their jobs

Agents are getting older on average

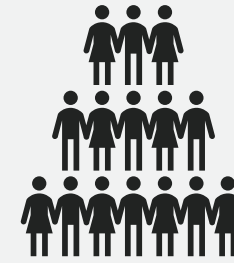
The Changing Face of the Contact Centre Agent



SMALL CENTRES
(<250 Agents)

2018	2020
44%	30%

—▼—
Fewer small centres



LARGE CENTRES
(>1,000 Agents)

2018	2020
22%	36%

—▲—
More large centres

CONTACT CENTRES ARE CONSOLIDATING!

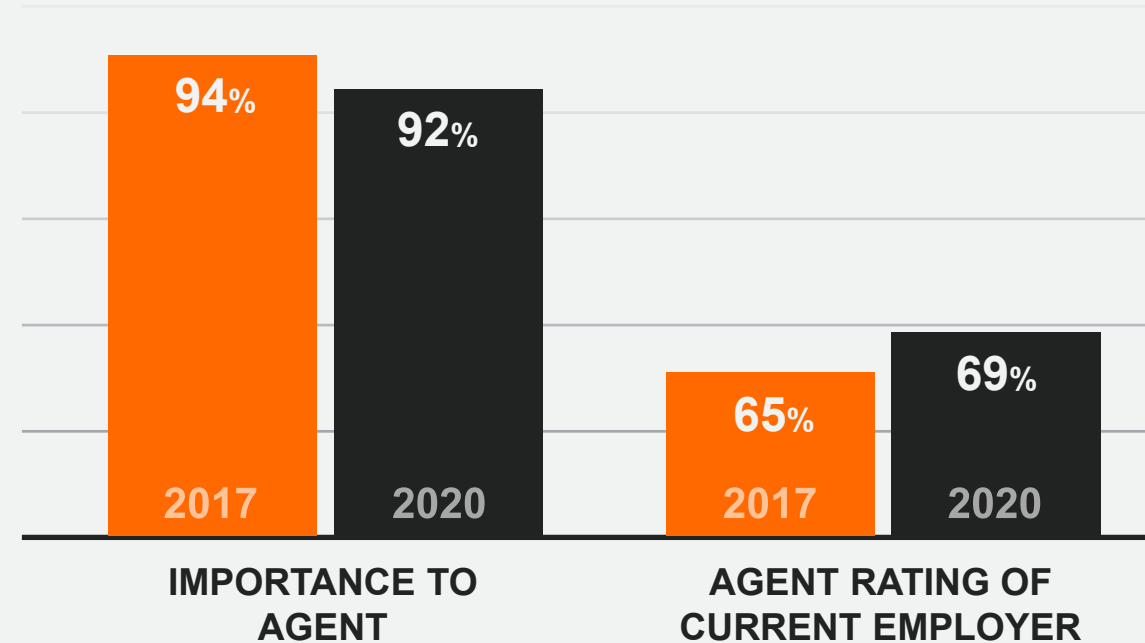
How are Contact Centres Delivering on What's Important to Agents?

Aspiration vs. Reality

“

Environment where
I am respected as
an individual

”



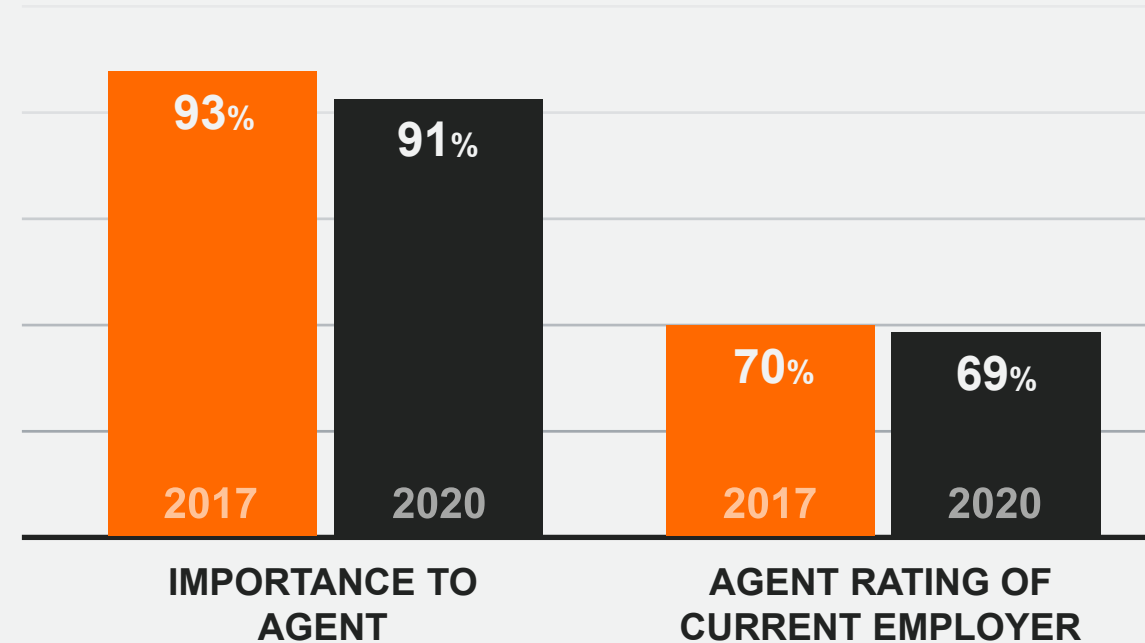
IMPLICATIONS

- “Respected as an individual” is very important in a communal environment
- Good supervision and culture can make the difference in keeping good agents
- Contact centres are not delivering well on agent expectations

Aspiration vs. Reality

“

Fair Working
Environment

”

IMPLICATIONS

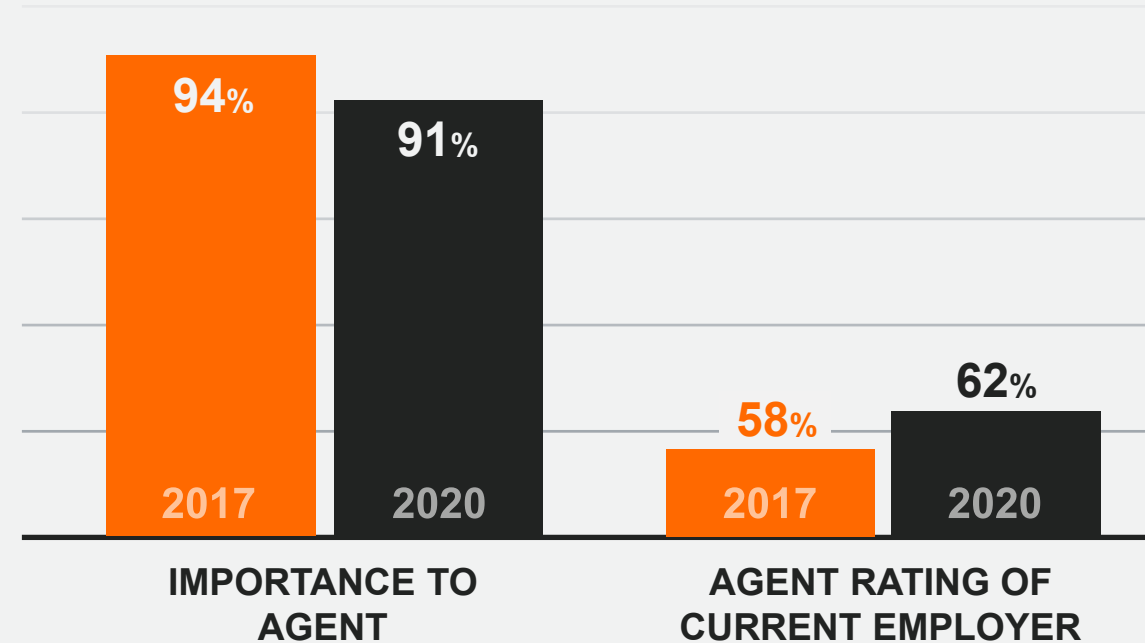
- “Fair working environment” is likely a proxy for many feelings about the contact centre
- Non-monetary factors can be as important as monetary factors
- Contact centres are not delivering well on agent expectations

Aspiration vs. Reality

“

Competitive Salary/
Hourly Rate

”



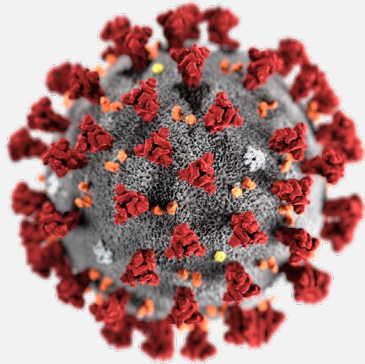
IMPLICATIONS

- Money is only one of many ways to make agents happier
- Agents perceive an improvement in employers' pay rates
- As with non-monetary factors, contact centres are not delivering well on pay rate

The COVID-19 Effect



The COVID-19 Effect



This agent survey was conducted in three separate efforts at different times.

As the severity of the COVID-19 impact became clear, agents became more conservative in their aspirations and willing to settle for less, since prospects appeared dimmer.

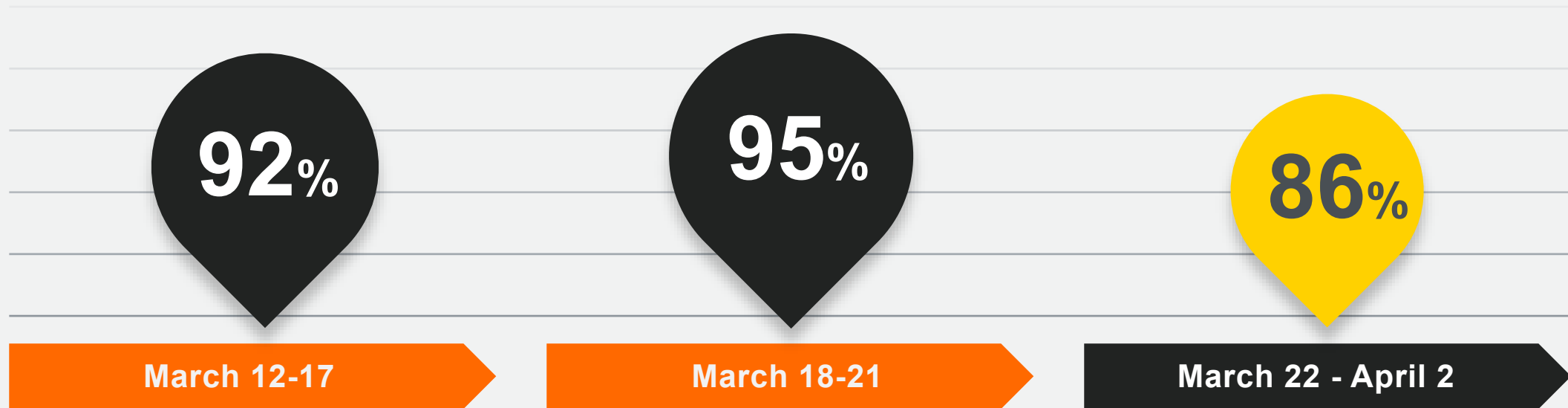
March 12-17

March 18-21

March 22 - April 2

- Governors order lockdowns
- CARES Act passed
- 6.5 million file jobless claims
- Social distancing extended until April
- Face masks recommended for public

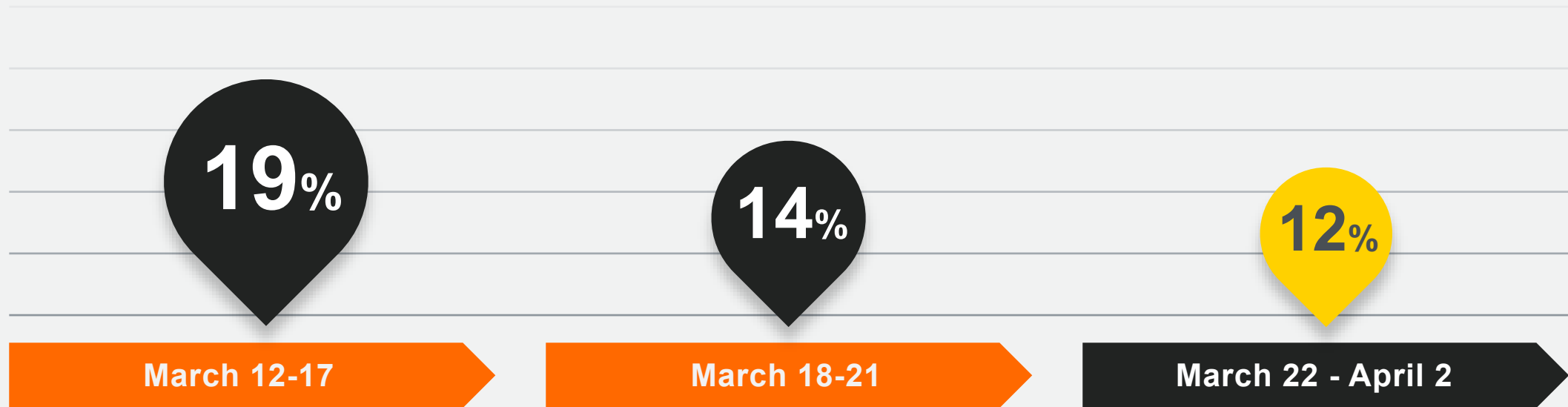
Competitive Salary “Very Important”



IMPLICATIONS

- Uncertainty reduces upward pressure on salary and expectations of advancement
- As long as the industry is in turmoil, the hopes for a brighter future will take a back seat

Agents Plan to Stay Longer | 6 Months or Less



IMPLICATIONS

- Fewer agents think they will be leaving in 6 months or less as the job market looks like it's tightening

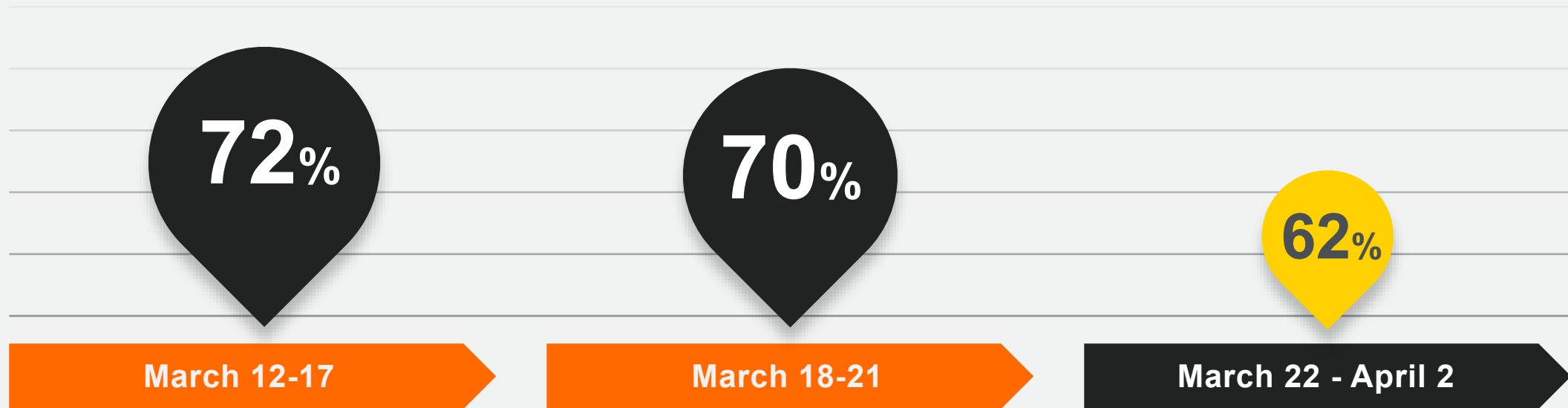
Agents Plan to Stay Longer | 6-12 Months



IMPLICATIONS

- More agents plan to stay longer than 6 months as the prospects for jobs elsewhere look dimmer

Work/Life Balance “Very Important”



IMPLICATIONS

- The luxury of work/life balance becomes less important as the risk of job loss increases

How are Work-from-Home Agents Different?



What Do We Know About Remote Agents?



28.3% working remotely
(consistent with 2018 survey)

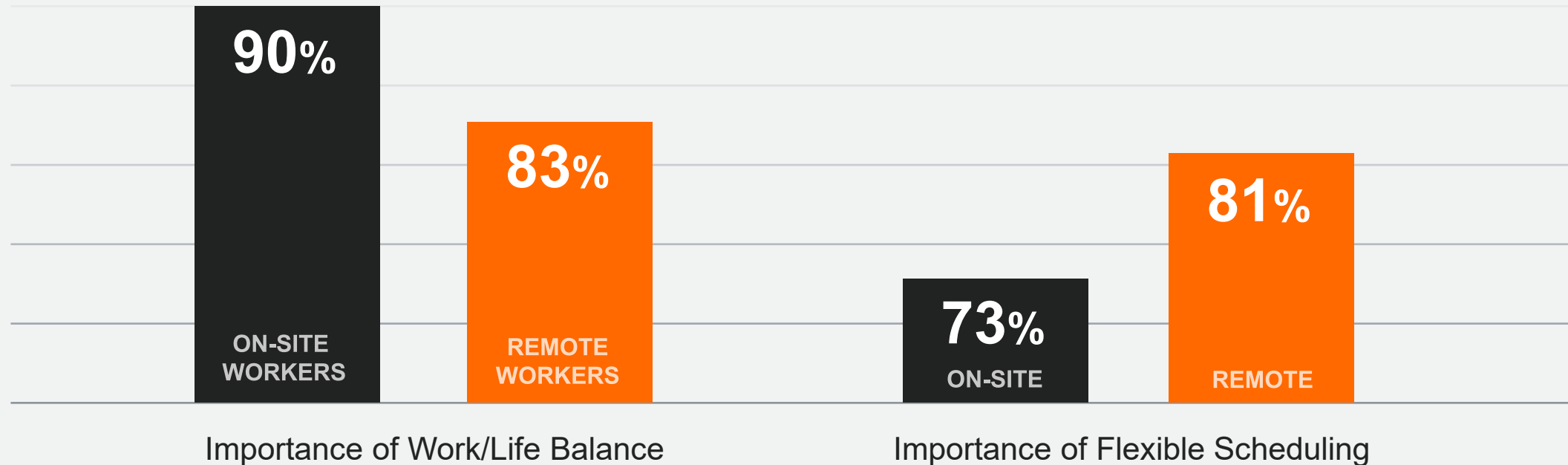


More likely to work in
medium to large
sized contact centres



Many tech workers are
remote; few government
workers are remote

Remote Worker Preferences | W/L Balance and Scheduling



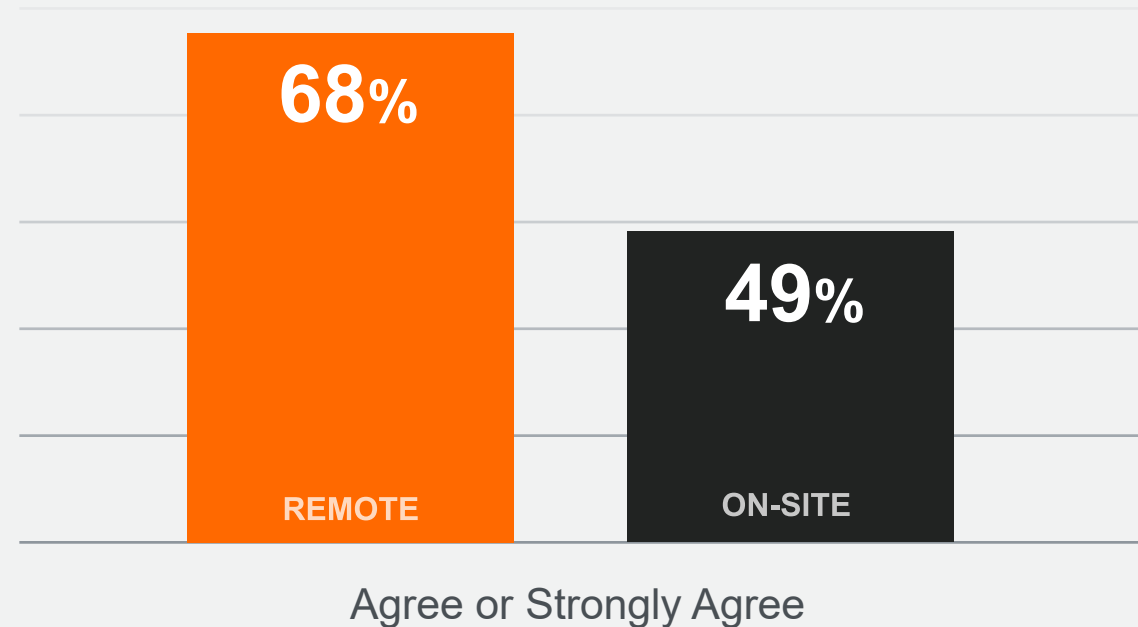
IMPLICATIONS

- W/L balance is more important to on-site workers; Flex scheduling is more important to remote agents
- **W/L Balance = Work-from-Home + Flexible Scheduling** (agents need proximity to home to get most value from flex scheduling)
- WFH is a big benefit for on-site agents, especially when they have flexible schedules

Remote Worker | Communication with Management

Q

Do you agree that being able to get in touch with management whenever you want is just as important as competitive salary?



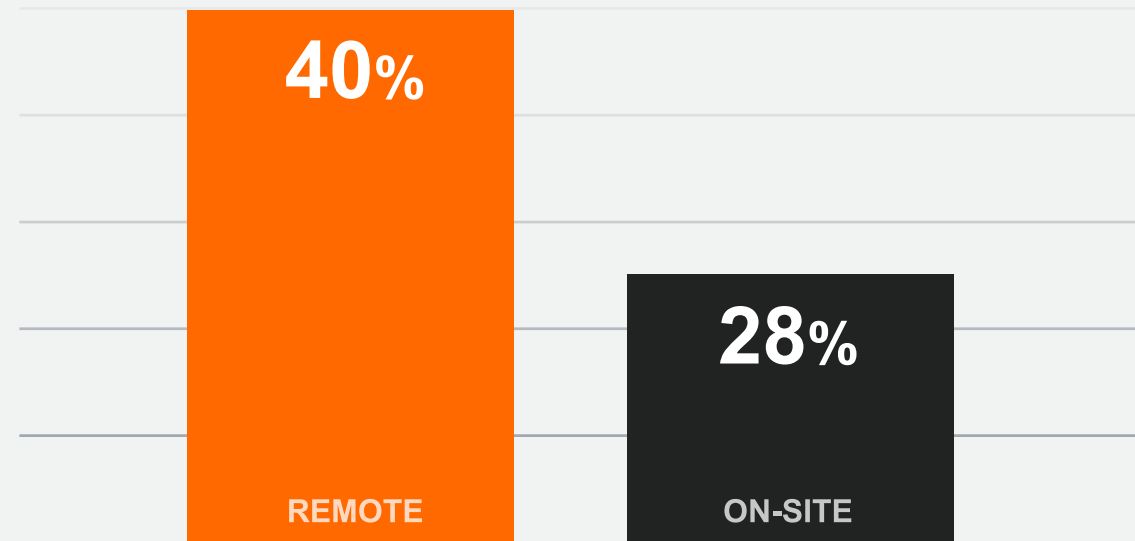
IMPLICATIONS

- Remote workers highly value the ability to reach their management whenever needed
- Without peers or managers nearby, WFH agents are sometimes blocked in their daily work
- Communication is less of a challenge for on-site workers

Remote Worker | The Threat of Chatbots

Q

Would you be worried about losing your job if your customer service centre started to use chatbot technology to help handle the most frequently asked and easy-to-handle questions?



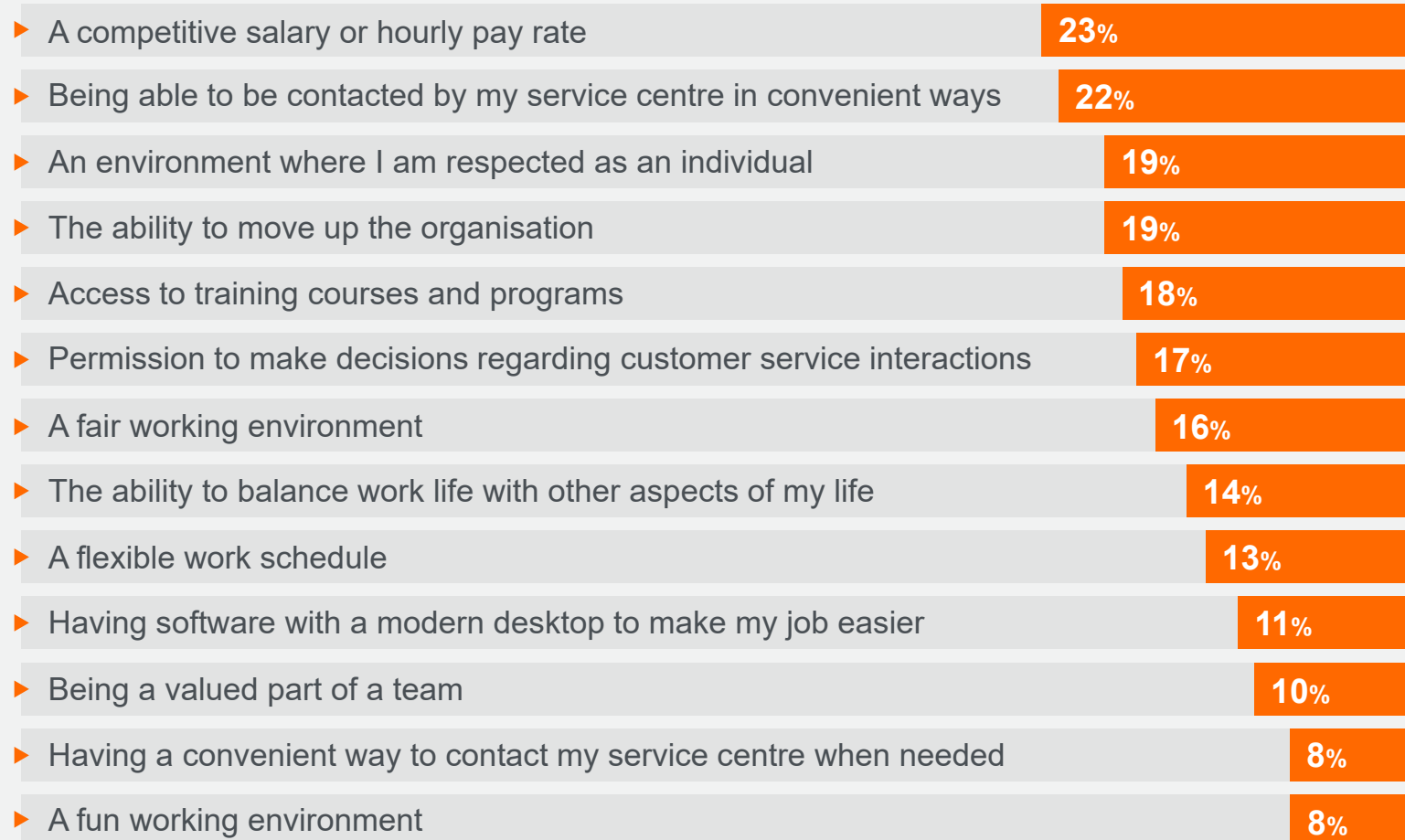
Likely to Worry About Losing Job

IMPLICATIONS

- Remote agents much more threatened by chatbots (automated agents)
- Communication between remote agents and managers is essential to maintain “team” spirit
- Remote workers feel disconnected from the group, where there is safety in numbers

Remote vs. On-Site Agent Ratings of Employer

How much higher do WFH agents rate their employers than on-site agents for these attributes?



IMPLICATIONS

- Remote agents rate their contact centres more favourably than on-site agents across all attributes surveyed!
- Many more WFH agents think they are getting a competitive wage than on-site workers
- Many more WFH agents think they are being respected as individuals than on-site workers
- Perhaps WFH agents have better attitudes because they are happier

How to Predict Great Agent Attitudes



The Golden Agents



GOLDEN AGENTS

are agents who check their performance metrics at least once per day...

...an objectively measurable indicator of your best agents!

The Golden Agents | Typical Profile



52% - Aged 24-39



31% - Owns a smart watch



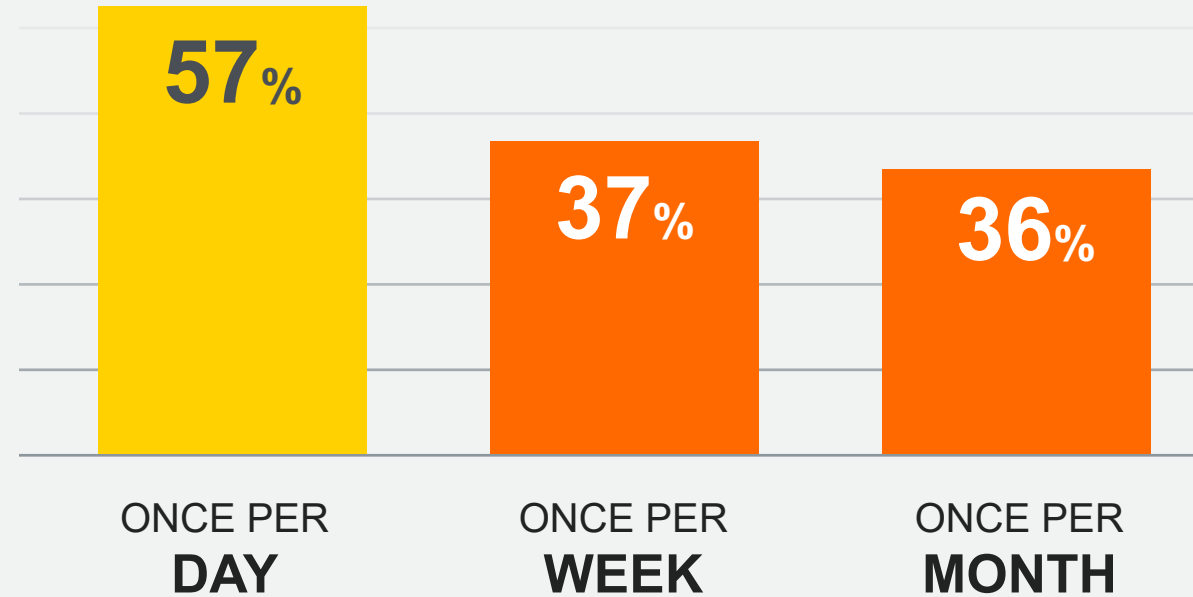
25% - 1 – 3 years of
CSR experience

IMPLICATIONS

- Who would have thought that owning a smartwatch would be an indicator of great agent attitudes?
- There are probably other unexpected indicators that we have not found yet

The Golden Agents

Percent of agents who are “very engaged” in their contact centre work measured by frequency of checking their personal performance

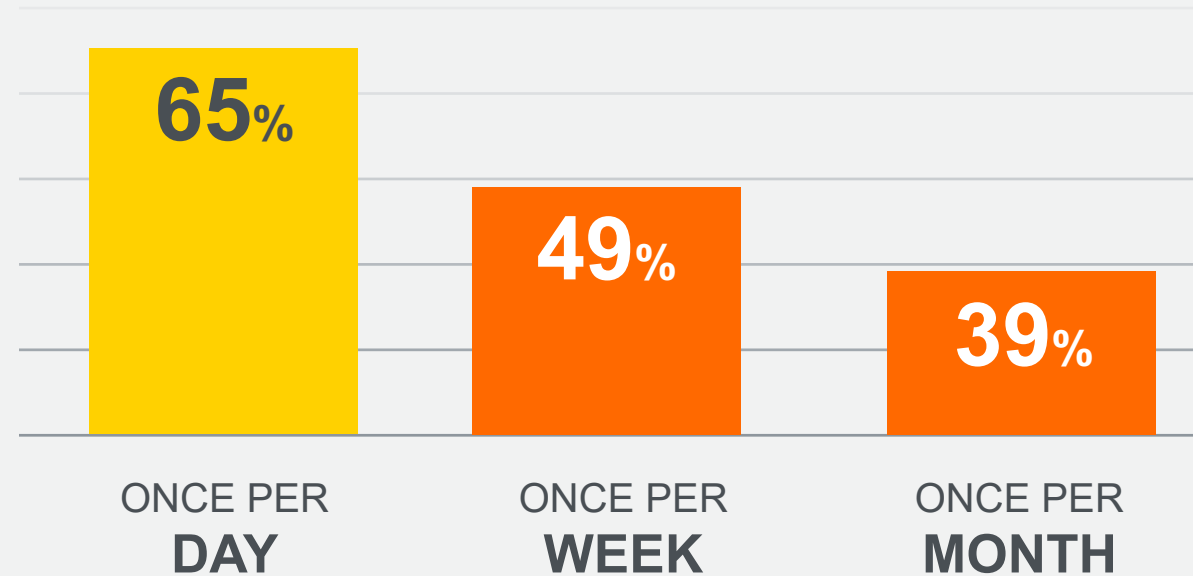


IMPLICATIONS

- Golden Agents are more engaged in their work
- But what's the cause and what's the effect?

The Golden Agents

Percent of agents who think gamification is “important” or “very important” by frequency of checking their personal performance

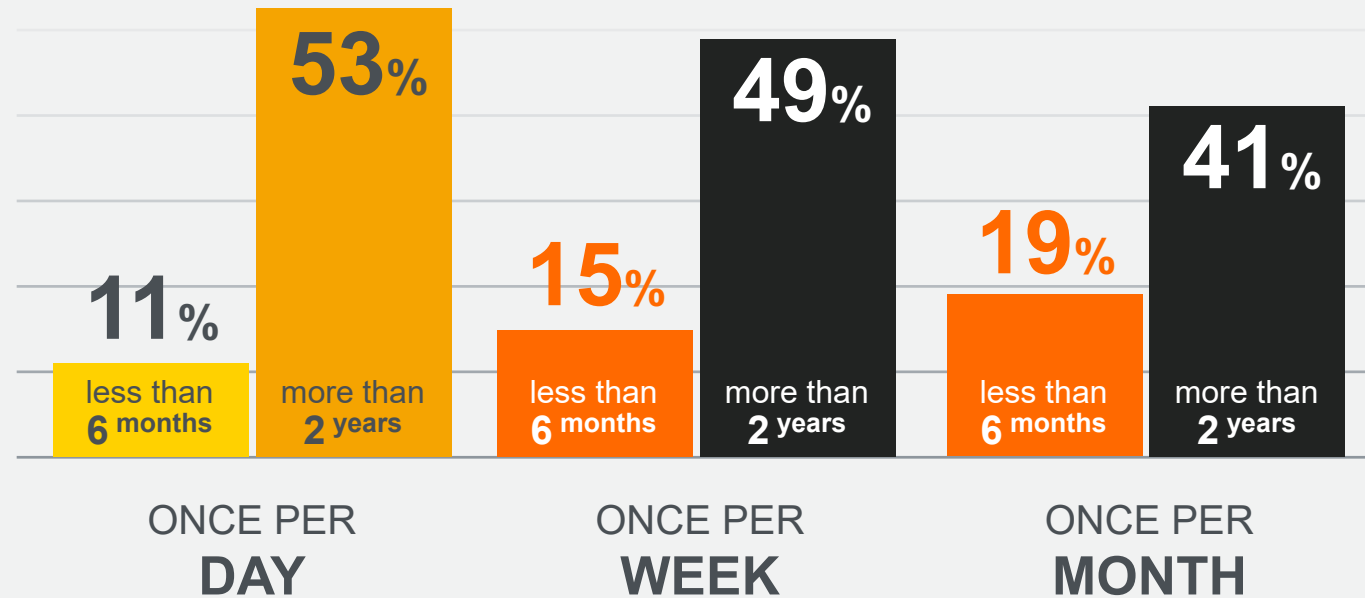


IMPLICATIONS

- Perhaps they check their performance scores because they are competitive (with themselves and with others)
- Gamification is a feature that can attract and keep good agents

The Golden Agents

Percent of agents planning to stay by frequency of checking personal performance metrics

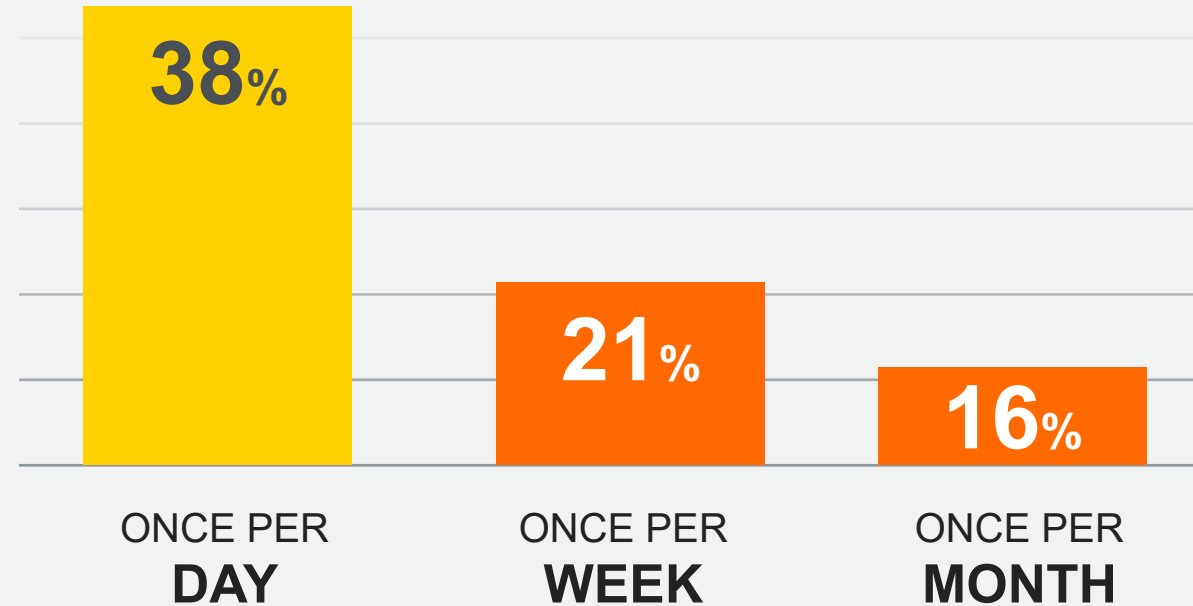


IMPLICATIONS

- There is a direct relationship between frequency of checking performance and likely longevity as an agent
- Frequency of checking performance can be a factor in promotion decisions

The Golden Agents

Percent of agents who are “very likely” to be more satisfied with job if customer service centre started to offer chatbot service to handle simple questions (since agents would be handling less mundane questions)



IMPLICATIONS

- Golden Agents less likely to perceive chatbots as an employment threat
- Golden Agents are more self-confident about their skills
- Give the Golden Agents more challenging types of customer service calls

The Golden Agents

Golden Agents rate their employers higher across all attributes surveyed

A competitive salary or hourly pay rate	An environment where I am respected as an individual	The ability to balance work life with other aspects of my life	The ability to move up the organisation
Permission to make decisions regarding customer service interactions	Having software with a modern desktop to make my job easier	Having a convenient way to contact my customer service centre whenever and wherever I need to	Access to training courses and programs
A flexible work schedule	Being a valued part of a team	A fair working environment	Being able to be contacted by my customer service centre in ways that are convenient for me
			A fun working environment

GOLDEN AGENTS

score their contact centres

23% HIGHER ON AVERAGE

than agents that check their performance **EVERY MONTH**

IMPLICATIONS

- Golden Agents seem to be happier in their jobs than agents who check performance less often

How to Make Golden Agents Happy (“Very Important” or “Important”)

CHECKS PERFORMANCE:		DAILY	WEEKLY	MONTHLY
★	Environment where I am respected as an individual	97%	92%	85%
★	Fair working environment	95%	90%	84%
★	Competitive salary or hourly pay rate	93%	89%	90%
★	Being a valued part of a team	91%	90%	76%
★	Ability to balance work/life	91%	88%	85%
★	Ability to move up the organisation	87%	77%	76%
★	Having software with a modern desktop to make job easier	88%	83%	79%

IMPLICATIONS

- Golden Agents expect more. You need to treat them accordingly if you want to keep them
- Agents who check performance only monthly are focused on compensation

Key Takeaways | Alvaria 2020 Agent Experience Index

- The contact centre is changing quickly—major structural changes have occurred in past 2 years
- Work-from-home (aka “remote”) agents have different needs and wants than on-site agents
- Contact centres need to understand these new dynamics and adapt their WFO tools and culture
- Top performers can be identified before hiring and early in careers
- More research will surface other relationships between objective measures and likely success

Watch for future results from Alvaria!

