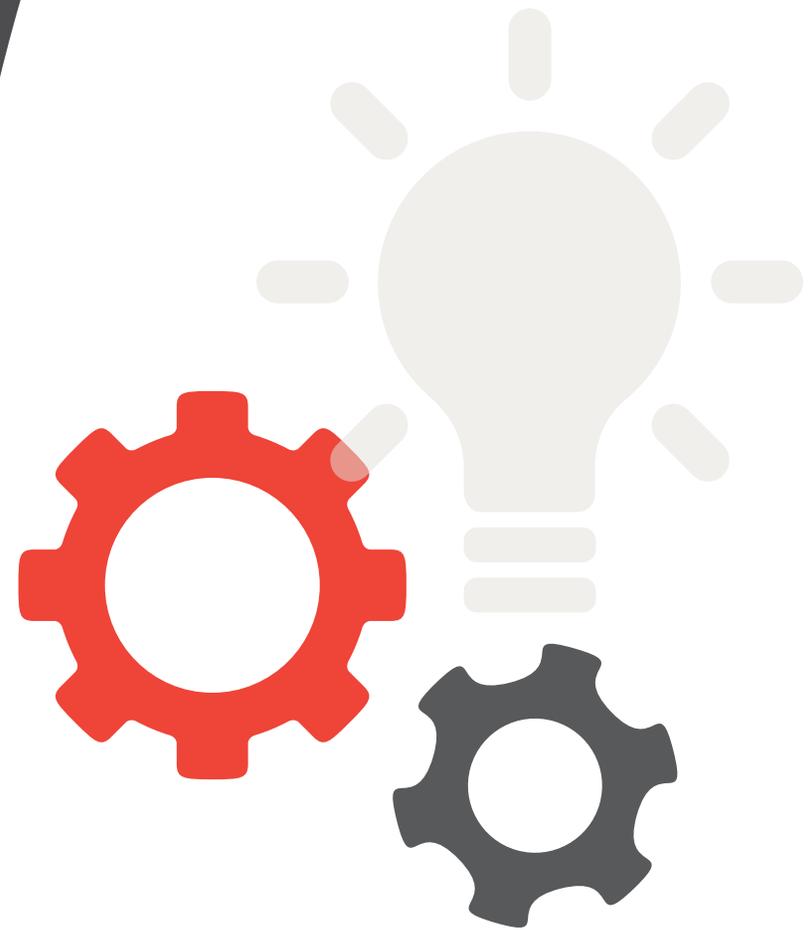


Empowered People
+ Advanced Technology

**= the Formula for Contact
Center Excellence**




HomeServe
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Call centers are generally viewed as revolving doors, with [turnover rates](#) of between 30 and 45% versus 15% for all other industries. The work can be difficult, high volume, high stress, and lower paying, so high turnover is understandable but also problematic. In addition to the expense of continually hiring and training new employees, a greater price is the degraded customer service that can result from an inexperienced, uninspired and disempowered workforce.

HomeServe is dedicated to delivering an exceptional customer experience, and we put the customer at the heart of everything we do. Contact center excellence is crucial to our mission, and we achieve this day after day through the application of innovative technologies and an unwavering focus on developing our most important resource, our people. The principles and activities we employ can be applied to any customer service organization to create a team that is qualified and passionate about delivering an excellent customer experience.

Power to the People

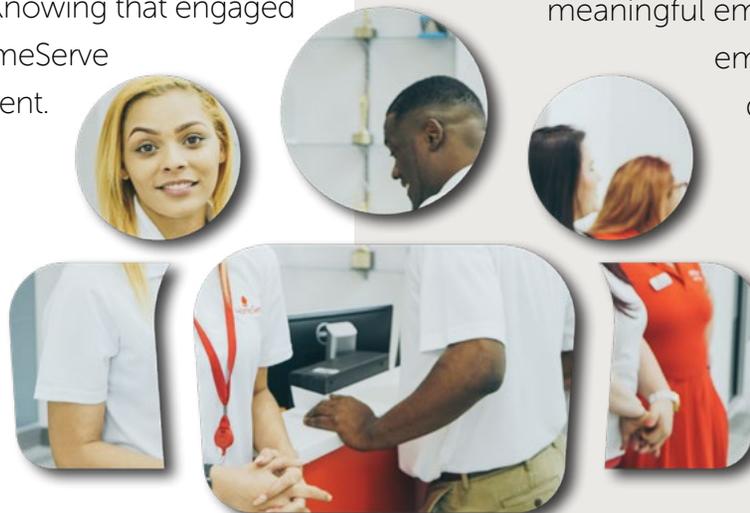
In 2018 HomeServe experienced its largest growth on record with call volumes up 25% to 3.1 million calls for the year. Maintaining our exceptional service levels was a challenge we were prepared for. Knowing that engaged employees deliver the best customer experience, HomeServe is passionate about delivering on employee engagement.

We have an open-door policy in our contact center. According to [Forbes Magazine](#), an open-door policy promotes a culture of friendly openness and builds a belief in others that the manager truly wants to be actively engaged with daily activities, thus fostering closer relationships with employees.

Our quarterly “happiness survey” offers employees an opportunity to tell leadership what they love about their job and what can be improved to continuously build upon our already strong culture. Survey responses are reviewed by a committee of front-line agents and senior leaders who meet regularly to collaborate on processes, policies, employee feedback and philanthropic initiatives, driving continuous improvement in center engagement and customer experience. We hold bi-annual All Hands meetings where every employee can hear from our CEO, ask questions and provide suggestions.

Employee desires are taken very seriously and have resulted in many engagement programs such as Customer Service/Customer Promise week celebrations, tuition reimbursement, Free Food Friday and many more. Feedback from employees has revealed that many wish to be involved in supporting their local communities. So HomeServe’s corporate social responsibility activities also serve as a platform for meaningful employee engagement. Every

employee is granted one free PTO day per year to support a charity of their choice, and many local organizations have benefitted, including animal shelters, Junior Achievement, Toys for Tots and children’s hospitals.



If You Build it...

Since the average person spends a third of their life at work, a workspace can be an effective engagement tool. A sign of true employee empowerment, HomeServe looked to our agents to help design our new 500-seat Customer Center of Excellence after outgrowing our previous site. By popular vote our agents selected the site amenities, color schemes, finish materials and even the exterior design of the building. Moving the entire operation to the new site was quite an undertaking and was accomplished without a single minute of downtime. The new center features a state-of-the-art Network Operation Center, an open production floor plan, fitness center, advanced multi-purpose training facility, open wireless for all employees and large break and gaming areas.

The new center is often showcased to existing and prospective HomeServe partners. Tours were previously conducted by senior leadership, but a recently launched program, "HomeServe Ambassadors," enables up-and-coming Agents and Supervisors to showcase the center that they helped to create.



Low Attrition, High Advancement – Not Your Typical “Revolving Door”

HomeServe is committed to employee development and promoting from within. During the last 12 months, we have internally promoted 97 employees, including 9 Team Leads, 8 Supervisors and 6 Managers. We have also implemented a monthly leadership development program to provide training on leadership, coaching and self-assessment. Our strong “people-first” culture is further evidenced by a stellar monthly attrition rate of only 3%, a significant percentage of employees with tenure of over five years (27%), and a fully staffed center without any paid recruitment advertising.

Technology – Foundation for Process, Performance and Operational Excellence

The implementation of advanced technologies has driven our contact center to the next level in many areas. Voice analytics is employed for agent training, to determine trends in customer need, and to collect customer feedback across a number of platforms. Our comprehensive workforce modelling ensures sufficient staffing based on a number of internal and external factors, thereby enabling peak efficiency of our operation. We also employ technologies to enhance our ability to assist each customer in a timely manner with the utmost expertise and professionalism.

Voice Analytics – A Flood of Data at a Fraction of the Time and Price

[Voice analytics](#) is becoming more widely utilized to make data actionable in real time, to help companies improve services, reduce costs and grow revenue in their contact center and other business areas.

HomeServe has implemented CallMiner voice analytics software, which analyzes speech and creates transcripts of calls, behaviors and customer responses. In addition, CallMiner measures silence, tone and volume, and categorizes findings based on verbiage in calls. Screening criteria is programmed to search for key words, phrases, and parameters to determine “category hits,” revolutionizing the quality assurance process. Significant and measurable improvements in contact center operations have resulted from implementing this tool.

As an agent training and measurement tool, we created a customer experience scorecard to automatically determine the quality of service delivered based on call length, silence, QA standards and attributes including empathy, tone, professionalism and attention to customer needs. This enables the pinpointing of agents who need additional support or training to enhance the service they deliver. For example, at an individual agent level, silence in calls was reduced from 17% to 9%, and the 9% represents silence required during payment processing. Supervisor productivity and effectiveness has improved by using calls for coaching based on pre-determined, agreed-upon criteria. The recorded calls provide valuable information that enables supervisors to quickly address opportunities with specific examples of behaviors. Coaching

preparation time has been reduced, allowing for more one-on-one time and coaching with agents, which supports exceptional customer interactions.

Categories were built to identify areas of compliance, such as billing verbatim, to ensure the proper language is read during the course of a sales call. If an opportunity is identified, we can quickly address it to ensure the utmost service and experience for our customers. In the first year, 90,000 hours of calls were mined, and the number of calls analyzed by Quality Assurance increased from 12,000 manual reviews to 655,000 CallMiner reviews. The cost of reviewing so many calls was a fraction of what it would be with manual review.



Efficient Collection of Customer Feedback

To complement the insight provided by our call analytics, HomeServe utilizes an automated Customer Survey application called Rant and Rave. This technology replaced our previous outsourced telemarketing survey solution, reducing the cost per survey by 96%, while increasing the number of actionable customer insights across the entire customer lifecycle by 648% from 4,000 to over 30,000.

The feedback identified from the sales, service and claims journeys is compiled in an interactive web-based solution enabling users to drill down to agent, technician, team and departmental level, providing true root cause and actionable insight into all areas of the business. The output of this is available in real time and reviewed by stakeholders across the business to keep a finger on the pulse of our customer needs.



People Drive Progress

As a best practice, HomeServe found that a dedicated internal resource/champion was critical to the success of our speech analytics activities. An existing Quality Assurance representative with a background in computer science was recruited for the role. Once assigned as the speech analytics lead, she learned and mastered the coding and implementation requirements of the software. She remained self-managed and driven in integrating the technology into the contact center, while remaining responsible for configuration, modification, user training, problem solving, analyzing and outputting everything related to the project. In addition to implementing the tool, this employee has worked closely with operational stakeholders around the business to refine search criteria ensuring every area of the operation benefits from this technology. Contact Center supervisors have been able to enhance the quality of their coaching interactions using outputs from customer search criteria, which instantly identifies trends and opportunities at an agent, team and departmental level to improve the customer experience in every interaction.



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Riding the Wave – Ensuring Optimal Staffing

HomeServe has developed comprehensive workforce forecast models to project needs for agents and technicians based on factors such as day of week, seasonality, customer concentrations and product types, among others. The model calculates required headcount based upon key data inputs including projected response rates/claims frequency, call volume, average handle time, occupancy levels and shrinkage, including forecast meeting time, absenteeism, project time, coaching sessions, one-to-one meetings, breaks, etc.

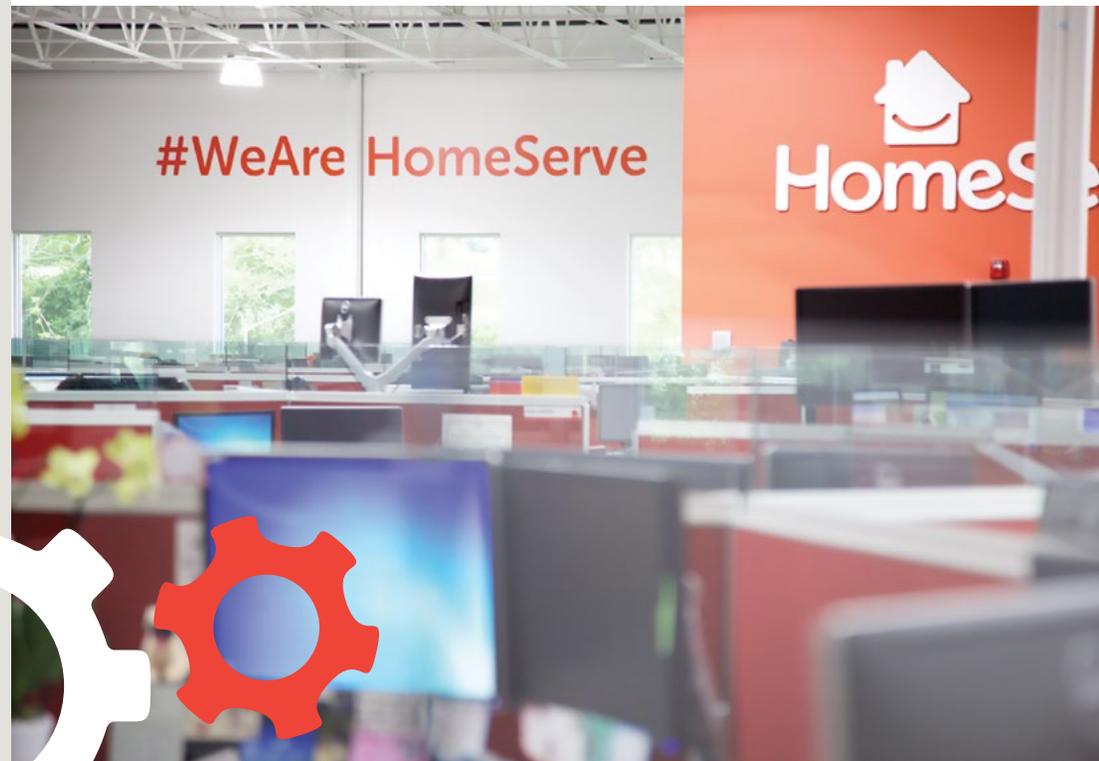
In addition, the model accounts for and forecasts new-hire and recurrent training, applies logic based on seasonal historical trends and oversees call allocation by department to ensure effective business continuity. The output of this detailed analysis allows for timely recruitment and oversight of productivity measures to ensure we are overstaffed against the expected call forecast and can deliver on agreed service level metrics.

Examples of the model in action:

- Seven million pieces of direct mail were received by our customers in one particular month. The HomeServe call center achieved an average speed of answer of 16 seconds.
- On the repair side, during peak season (October through February), we handled 74,000 claims with an average speed of answer of 23 seconds.

Delivering A Seamless Journey

HomeServe employs a number of advanced contact center applications that optimize our agents' ability to service customers. For example, Precision Routing technology dynamically maps queues to direct a call to the agent who best matches the caller's precise needs, improving efficiency and enabling us to deliver the best possible service on every call. Agent Whisper prepares the agent for the appropriate conversation and supports a seamless customer journey by "whispering" through the IVR to the agent regarding the exact call type of the customer calling. And our agents are able to provide a personalized greeting to callers through Customer Screen Pop, an application that searches the customer database and instantly delivers the customer details to the agent's desktop, enabling the agent to focus on the caller's need without the distraction of looking up customer information.



Creating Customer Service “Superheroes”

Our high levels of engagement, empowerment and ownership result in HomeServe agents that are singularly focused on delivering the best customer experience with every interaction. Our Customer Promise conveys our pledge to every customer in five specific areas. In order to instill our Customer Promise throughout the contact center, we initiated an internal communications campaign using a theme built around superheroes. Characters were created to correspond with each of our five customer promises.

- **Customer Promise #1:** Before a customer joins, we’ll make it clear what they’re buying and what it will do for them. **(THE CLARIFIER)**
- **Customer Promise #2:** When a customer joins, we’ll tell them how much they’re paying, what that buys them and how to make a claim. **(THE INFORMER)**
- **Customer Promise #3:** When a customer becomes a member, we’ll make life easy for them. **(THE SIMPLIFIER)**
- **Customer Promise #4:** When a customer makes a claim, we’ll solve their problem quickly and easily – their emergency is our emergency. **(THE SOLVER)**
- **Customer Promise #5:** If a customer’s not happy, we’ll listen, apologize and make things right wherever we can, as soon as we can. **(THE LEVELER)**

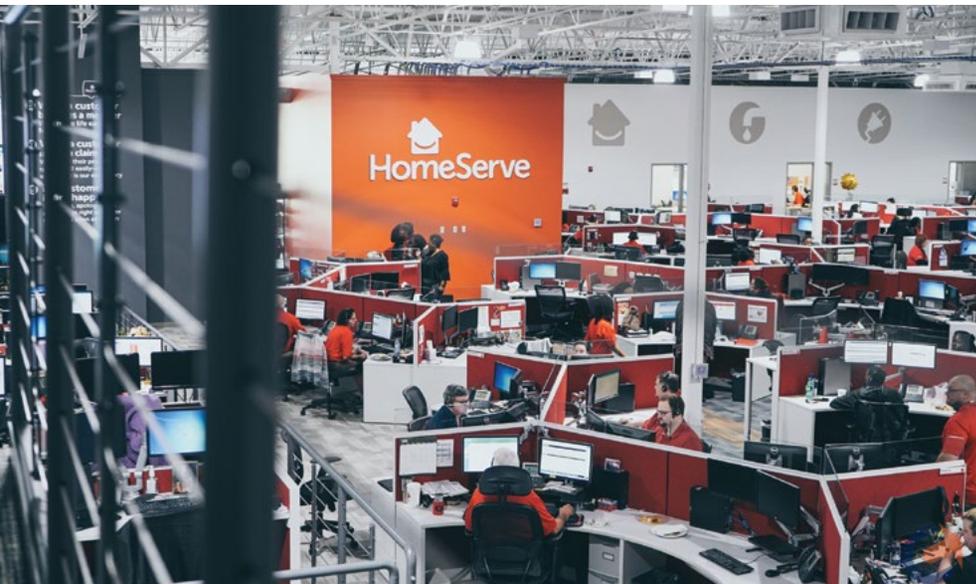
Posters are prominently displayed throughout the facility and “Hero Awards” are given to employees who exemplify the behaviors. For example, “The Solver” award was given to two repair management agents for working through the night to dispatch contractors during the bomb cyclone in the winter of 2017/18. “The Leveler” award was given to an agent who saved Thanksgiving for a customer whose oven could not be repaired before the holiday by arranging for a complete meal to be delivered to their home.



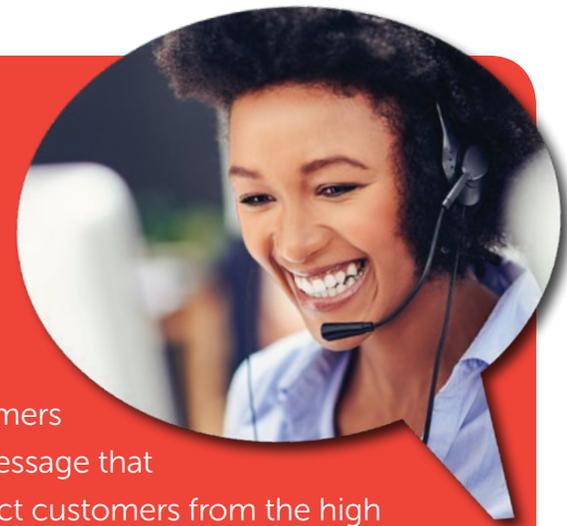
It All Comes Back to People

There are no technologies, applications, programs or gadgets that will deliver customer service excellence without a well-trained, motivated and engaged workforce. The people must utilize and champion the technologies to create ways of delivering value to customers. This is why one of HomeServe's core values is to develop and engage great people who are passionate about taking responsibility and making things happen. HomeServe's techniques for peak efficiency and outstanding service can be applied anywhere, but it's our culture of employee and customer engagement that should be emulated to truly deliver an exceptional customer experience.

*We welcome tours! **Contact us** to arrange a time to visit our customer service center and see our operation in action!*



Our Partners Are Saying:



"Offering HomeServe products to our customers sends an important message that we want to help protect customers from the high cost of emergency repair, which translates into heightened customer satisfaction. HomeServe's commitment to the highest quality standards and their ability to deliver exceptional customer satisfaction has been at every step."

— **Timothy Lubbers**, Director,
Business Development, SEMCO Energy

"Everyone involved on the HomeServe side, from the call center reps on the phone to the contractors in the field, is representing the First Energy brand to our customers. It was important for us to partner with a company with the same standards and culture to deliver what the customer was promised and what the customer expects."

— **Cheryl Brubaker Schaub**, former Manager,
Consumer Products, FirstEnergy