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INDUSTRY: Call Centre Recruitment



# Q & A

“ One of ways we help our clients minimize costly turnover is via helping them develop an attractive Employee Value Proposition (EVP) based on our knowledge of why people leave call centre jobs. We also customize the recruitment process to each individual client and focus on not only the skills to do the job but the personality attributes that support longevity in the role. ”

DT: FuturePeople has been shortlisted for the Telstra Business Awards, how did that come about? And what does it mean for FuturePeople?

LS: We were nominated by a job seeker who had had a good experience with the business. It's quite a rigorous process of completing a detailed entry submission about business strategy, processes and HR practices followed by an interview and site visit by the Judges. We involved the team in that process and were delighted to be announced as a Finalist out of more than four and half thousand entries. It's great recognition of the team's dedication and talent.

Over the six years we have been in operation as a specialist in call and contact centre recruitment, the outstanding team that is FuturePeople have been recognized in a range of awards programs including:

- Seek Annual Recruitment Award Winner in 2004
- Finalist in Seek Annual Recruitment Award in 2006
- Finalist on SmartCompany List 2007
- Finalist in Telstra Business Awards 2008
- BRW Fast 100 List – ranked 21<sup>st</sup> of Australia's fastest growing companies in 2006

**DT: What does FuturePeople mainly do - area of expertise, market focus and the nature of your client base; why should companies work with you?**

LS: FuturePeople is a specialist in the design and delivery of recruitment solutions for the Call & Contact Centre industry. We provide temporary and permanent recruitment solutions, as well as executive and volume to a range of blue chip clients nationally. We have offices in Sydney and Melbourne, service clients in most capital cities

compete on the basis of service rather than price or product, attracting and retaining the right talent becomes a competitive advantage.

At FuturePeople we spend all of our time connecting talented people with great employers in the contact centre space. Our people started their careers in contact centres and are experienced and accomplished recruitment professionals within this space. We have a customized process called FutureFusion™ which has been

**process, can you shed more light on what it exactly entails?**

LS: futurefusion™ is the bespoke process we use to identify, attract and select the ideal employee. It focuses as much on culture fit as it does on skills. futurefusion™ sets us apart from our competitors by selecting better quality staff who are retained longer; thereby saving our clients time and money spent on recruitment and training.

In addition to complete customization of the recruitment process based on time spent immersed in our clients' culture and work environment, observing the job role being carried out first hand, a key characteristic of futurefusion™ is the Fusion Workshops which unite a range of assessment tools in a dynamic interactive assessment centre format. These are ideal for volume recruitment requirements and/or selecting teams that will effectively work together.

futurefusion™ Workshops include creative team problem solving activities and call centre simulations, enabling our clients to observe candidates doing the actual job role. These are proven to better predict 'on-the-job' performance and deliver stronger retention of contact centre employees for our

clients. This unique methodology sets us apart and creates real value for our clients.

**DT: Historically, Contact Centres are notorious for high staff turnover, can you update us on the current situation in Australia?**

LS: Staff turnover in contact centres in Australia is sitting at around 49% per annum, according to recent research by callcentres.net. This is obviously one of the highest staff turnover rates for industry in Australia and continues to be an ongoing challenge for the industry.

The main drivers of turnover are a combination of the nature of the job and that is often viewed as a stepping stone for entrants. Where in the past call centres have not always been associated with excellent working conditions, the industry has worked hard to create best practice conditions relating to remuneration, training and career paths. One of ways we help our clients minimize costly turnover is via helping them develop an attractive Employee Value Proposition (EVP) based on our knowledge of why people leave call centre jobs.

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and are about to expand into the Brisbane market place.

Our value lies in our specialisation. A company's customer service personnel are incredibly important. As more and more companies

designed specifically for selecting candidates for contact centre employment and is proven to deliver meaningful value for our clients.

**DT: We understand that futurefusion™ is a trademarked**

focus on not only the skills to do the job but the personality attributes that support longevity in the role. Most importantly, we carry out job role simulations with candidates to provide them with a realistic preview of the job role.

**DT: Offshoring is a sensitive issue but a growing trend. How has it affected the Australian call centre industry and what do you think will happen in the future?**

**LS :** The percentage of seats off shored in Australia is minimal being around 1%. We are also seeing some offshored contact centres returning to Australia. There is no doubt about the cost gains associated with offshoring with wage costs in India and the Philippines being up to a tenth of what they are locally.

However Australian customers are patriotic and generally don't respond well to offshore centres. I see a continued trend in offshoring for repetitive low skill level customer contact but expect to see more complex customer interactions occurring via local centres.

**DT: What do you think are the big issues for clients in dealing with Generation Y?**

**LS :** Lack of commitment to the role

Desire for significant work flexibility around hours. Unrealistic earning and progression ambitions. Workplace behaviours deriving from lack of maturity.

**DT Is there a shortage of talent in the call centre areas? What are the challenges faced by companies in acquiring call centre talent?**

**LS:** In the twelve years I've been involved with recruiting for the contact centre industry a shortage of talent has been an ongoing challenge. This has become acute in the past couple of years as unemployment rates generally have dropped to a 30 year low.

The main challenge for companies in acquiring call centre talent is that the nature of the job requires a complex skill set yet the cost sensitivities of the industry don't always enable salaries to reflect the level of competence required. Training costs are high due to the often broad and complex range of products/services an operator is required to know. High turnover in the industry is the key challenge in acquiring talent – with such demand for talent, employees are in demand and there is a high level of job mobility.

**DT: You talked about developing 'employee value proposition' with**

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**clients, how important is this in sourcing the right talent?**

**LS :** With such competition for talent occurring in the contact centre industry, it is critical that employers have a value proposition for employees which address what they want. Gen Y want work life balance, part time employment opportunities, fast career progression and up-skilling opportunities. If employers are not constantly reviewing what the top talent they are seeking to attract and retain want, they will not be competitive in attracting great people.

**DT: What are the priorities for FuturePeople moving forward?**

**LS** FuturePeople has aggressive growth plans for this year and beyond. We

have experienced year on year growth since inception and this year is about expanding further via offices in Brisbane and possibly Adelaide, whilst continuing to retain our loyal customer base in NSW.

**DT: Define Talent**

**LS:** People who deliver value to an organization via their capabilities and intrinsic qualities. Our strapline is 'humanresourcefulness' which to me sums up talent.

*Destination Talent connects Australian employers and talent solution providers.. Visit us at [www.destinationtalent.com.au](http://www.destinationtalent.com.au)*