



A creative application of Calabrio Speech Analytics and apology training nearly halves call escalations while boosting agent satisfaction.

GOAL

By offering the features and benefits of a national provider while maintaining the customer-first mentality of a local business, Bluegrass Cellular maintains the highest customer satisfaction ratings of any carrier in its Central Kentucky locale. It's this customer-first philosophy that prompts contact center leaders to constantly search for new ways to improve the service Bluegrass Cellular agents deliver to customers.

After attending an illuminating "Art of a Meaningful Apology" session at ICMI, leaders suspected they could foster more genuine customer interactions by improving the quality of apologies given by contact center agents to customers. They wanted to:

- Improve customer loyalty and retention, as measured by RSAT (representative satisfaction) survey scores;
- Strengthen the emotional intelligence of staff, as measured by quality assurance scores; and
- Reduce the number of escalated calls (which, in turn, would improve overall business efficiencies).



ANALYSIS & KEY FINDINGS

To measure the current effectiveness of agent apologies, leaders decided to run through Calabrio Speech Analytics the various “sorry” phrases used by agents in order to understand the perceived strength and sincerity of existing agent apologies. Included were phrases like:

- “I’m sorry about that”
- “I’m sorry”
- “Sorry about that”
- “Sorry”

The results were startling. Instead of delivering “I’m sorry” as a sincere apology, well-intended representatives repeatedly used the phrase simply as a way to pause the conversation.

SOLUTION

By applying the “Meaningful Apology” skills they learned at ICMI, contact center leaders quickly built and delivered to the entire contact center team a custom training program featuring tangible examples of appropriate apologies. The new program teaches contact center agents and employees to:

- Acknowledge the issue or concern experienced by the customer;
- Briefly explain what caused it; and
- Deliver a genuine expression of remorse.

Agents requiring additional guidance also receive individualized training sessions that address their specific needs.



RESULTS

The new program immediately shrank the number of insincere apologies delivered by agents by a whopping 40%. By reassuring customers their concerns have been heard and understood—and clearly communicating how Bluegrass Cellular will resolve them quickly and completely—call escalations decreased by 45%, formal customer complaints decreased by 43% and rep satisfaction grew by 26%.

In fact, the meaningful apology training program developed by contact center leaders proved itself so beneficial, it became required curriculum for all new hires at Bluegrass Cellular.

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↓ 45% FEWER ESCALATED CALLS

↓ 43% FEWER CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS

↑ 26% IMPROVEMENT IN REP SATISFACTION SCORES

↑ 5% IMPROVEMENT IN QUALITY MONITORING SCORES

**“It’s a lost opportunity
if you have half a
million recorded calls
within your grasp
and don’t have a tool
enabling you to
use it to achieve
actionable improvements.”**

– ROBIN FENTRESS,
DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMER SUPPORT