



# SkillSharpener Web Extra

## What tool prescreens CSR performance the best?

**A new survey says customer service managers put their money on the personal telephone interview.**

According to an online survey conducted by CallCenterCareers.com, an overwhelming 52 percent of 598 respondents voted that a personal telephone interview is the most accurate tool for assessing CSR success.

The second most popular new agent prescreening and assessment tool was call center simulation software (27 percent) followed by a written test (9 percent), an interactive voice response (IVR) interview (7 percent) and website testing (3 percent).

The most surprising result of this survey is that agent certification is the least popular prescreening and assessment tool, yielding only 2 percent of the response.

Jeff Furst, president and CEO of FurstPerson, Inc., a Chicago-based call center personnel hiring firm, says, "We're not surprised that certifications are poorly viewed by the industry. Organizations may feel good about having 'certified' agents, but those certifications will not predict job performance."

The results of this survey demonstrate how important it is for an interviewer to personally assess a potential agent's industry knowledge and skillsets while physically hearing how that agent communicates and presents him- or herself over the telephone.

Says Furst: "Any screening tool will have pros and cons to it. Assuming a personal telephone interview is based on the success factors that drive job performance, it can be an effective tool to examine what an applicant has done and how well he or she communicates.

"However, call center organizations should not rely on one tool or test to make a hiring decision. The whole-person approach, or using a variety of tests and procedures to fully assess people, is the most powerful approach to hiring and also the one suggested by the Department of Labor's Testing and Assessment Guidelines. ■



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