

Case study brochure

From dropouts to commitment

How we helped a contact centre
reduce staff turnover by 70%

Introduction

What this case study covers and why it matters

This case study outlines how 1st Choice Staff Recruitment helped a helpdesk business reduce staff turnover by 70% through a people-first recruitment process.

Inside, you'll find a summary of the challenge, the tailored approach we used, and the results achieved. It's designed to offer practical insights for businesses facing similar retention issues – especially in high-turnover environments like contact centres.

What made the difference

“I felt supported during the interview process and appreciated being paid for my time.”

– Candidate feedback

This sentiment was echoed by many we placed. Respect, clarity and care throughout the process made candidates more likely to commit.

1

The challenge

Why the client needed help, what made recruitment so difficult, and why quick fixes weren't enough.

2

Understanding the role

How 1st Choice took time to fully grasp the working environment and job expectations before recruiting.

3

Redesigning the process

The tailored recruitment strategy: from phone screening to paid interviews and one-to-one shadowing.

4

The results

The measurable impact – 70% fewer dropouts, improved retention, and broader shift coverage.

5

What we learned

Key takeaways about what made this approach successful and how it can be applied elsewhere.

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The challenge

When a growing helpdesk business needed to build a reliable and committed contact centre team, they turned to 1st Choice Staff Recruitment. They didn't just want quick hires, they wanted people who would stay, grow into the role and become part of the business long term. With a high turnover rate and challenging working conditions, they knew they needed a recruitment partner who would go the extra mile. That is exactly what we did.

The client needed to recruit a large number of staff for phone-based support roles. The jobs were initially temporary with the chance of a permanent contract after twelve weeks. The shift pattern was tough, involving early mornings, late evenings and weekends, all on rotation. The roles paid minimum wage during the temporary period which made them harder to fill in a competitive market. There were no predictable busy periods so the workload could change from day to day. On top of that, some candidates were hesitant about applying due to the reputation contact centres often have as stressful or short-term environments. Unsurprisingly, dropouts were frequent and many new starters didn't make it past the first few weeks.



Project team

Driven by people who
know what works.



Operations Manager - Wyboston Branch
Lizzie Maclaine-Donaghy

"With nearly 30 years in recruitment - 28 at 1st Choice Recruitment - I've grown from Recruitment Consultant to Operations Manager. I'm passionate about partnering with clients to secure top talent and leading with honesty, respect, and trust. I feel fortunate to work in an industry I love, with a company that values integrity and ethics."



[linkedin.com/in/lizzie-maclaine-donaghy-015767289](https://www.linkedin.com/in/lizzie-maclaine-donaghy-015767289)

Understanding the role

Taking the time to understand

At 1st Choice, we don't believe in ticking boxes or rushing people through a process. We believe in getting it right. So before putting forward any candidates, we visited the client's site to understand exactly what the job involved. We sat with experienced call handlers, got to know the team and experienced the pace and pressure of the work first-hand. That allowed us to be open and realistic with the people we spoke to, giving them a clear picture of what to expect.



Visited the contact centre

Sat with experienced staff to see the pressure, pace and workflow first-hand.



Learned from the team

Observed real calls, spoke with team leaders, and gained insight into what success looks like in the role.

Redesigning the process



We began the recruitment process with phone interviews. Since the job involved phone-based support, this gave us a chance to assess how well candidates could communicate and build rapport. From there, suitable candidates were invited to paid, on-site interviews. These sessions were flexible, offered during the day or evening and paid at the hourly rate as a way to respect the candidates' time and help reduce last-minute dropouts.

The on-site interview process included a welcome with a 1st Choice consultant, a one-to-one chat with a department leader and a walk around the office floor. If successful, candidates were then invited to shadow a call handler for two hours to really understand the role before deciding to go ahead. We deliberately avoided group interviews which often feel impersonal and tend to have a high no-show rate. Instead, we focused on creating a genuine, one-to-one experience that helped people feel confident and respected.

The results

Results that made a difference

By changing the way people were introduced to the role, we helped the client reduce early dropouts by 70%. Not only were candidates more likely to stay, but they were better prepared and more engaged from day one. The improvement in quality gave the client room to trial new shift options, including a permanent evening and weekend team and a new schedule with no weekend work at all. These changes opened the door to a wider group of applicants and further strengthened their team.

Feedback from the staff we placed was just as positive. People told us they felt supported during the interview process and appreciated being paid for their time. They liked having the chance to see the role up close before committing and said the regular site visits from our consultants helped them feel looked after. Whether it was questions about holiday, payroll or recommending friends for roles, our team was on hand to help.

**70% REDUCTION
IN EARLY-STAGE
ATTRITION**

What we learned

A better way to recruit

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Let's talk

www.1stchoicerec.com

