

1 Be timely

Communicate as soon as you can, and then follow a set rule for follow-up communications. If you need to adjust the memo, such as the situation will last for days or longer, then communicate what the new cadence will be. Meeting a directive means that sometimes you will not have new information to relay, but “radio silence” will needlessly increase your customers’ stress.



2 Be relevant

Communicate the scope of the issue (who is affected, or likely to be), as well as the impact (how it will affect them). Include workarounds.



3 Be accurate

Incorrect information can set unrealistic expectations, so don't speculate. Having to correct yourself publicly damages trust in your competence. Therefore, you should ensure a situation meets your crisis criteria before communicating publicly — build in a window of time at the start of your process for this verification step.



Tips for communicating calmly and effectively when tensions are high

4 Be compassionate

Take ownership and acknowledge the impact the crisis is having on your customers. Apologize for that impact, avoid being defensive, and don't shift blame — your customers depend on you.



5 Be honest

This should go without saying — don't lie to your customers. It will come back to haunt you. It's okay to say you don't know the answer to something, but try to follow up as soon as you have more information.



6 Be transparent

Share as much as you can, to the extent that it can be helpful in setting expectations for your customers. They don't need to know what third-party tool you use to build your software but it could be helpful for them to know, for example, that you're having issues with a server that may impact connectivity with a particular segment of customers.



7 Use one voice

There are two parts to this. First, the right hand should know what the left hand is doing. Marketing should know what customer service is communicating, how often, and vice versa. Before you talk to customers, convene internally around a single source of truth. By no means should individual employees attempt to dive in and respond ad-hoc, as mixed messages will damage your company's perceived competence. Second, the voice should be consistent in tone and terminology from one situation to the next. Including sample message templates in your process documentation is a great way to ensure this.



Provide an agent optimization platform

An Agent Optimization Suite is the best way to ensure you are fulfilling the above items. With Playvox, you can have a good motivation plan in place to ensure your agents won't quit when dealing with tough customers and questions. Train your agents properly, they will be knowledgeable and ready to face challenges. Address their mistakes, give assertive feedback and coach them out of bad behaviors. Conducting evaluations for customer service interactions leads to agents delivering exceptional experiences.

How Playvox helps during times of crisis

We have proved to our customers how our Agent Optimization Suite is perfect during a crisis and they have to transition into a different way of working. Our Learning App can train them seamlessly into working from home. Real-time feedback from evaluations, coaching sessions, and general issues remain the same as they would in the office. Our rewards program lifts morale and keeps agents happy and engaged.

