

# Automation Without Alienation: A People-First Workforce Strategy in the Age of AI

## RAPID-FIRE CASE STUDY



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# The Challenge & Opportunity



Cost pressure and growing operational complexity required efficiency gains without increasing burnout or eroding workforce trust.

## Why This Matters Now

- AI adoption in CX is accelerating faster than organizations can operationalize or earn frontline buy-in
- Workforce experience and trust have become critical enablers of customer experience outcomes

## The Opportunity

- Reframe automation as a people-first strategy that removes low-value work and creates capacity
- Prioritize change management as the foundation that allows automation and AI to succeed and generate consistent scalable actions.

## THE STAKEHOLDERS

- **Senior leaders** — accountable for cost, scale, and long-term sustainability
- **Operations & WFM leaders** — responsible for daily execution and adoption
- **Frontline agents** — most impacted by change and trust

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# The Goal

- Our organization needed to find long-term, consistent cost savings while avoiding burnout and simplifying day-to-day work for leaders and agents in a high-volume contact center environment.
- We needed a solution that could automate time-consuming, manual tasks in real time—reducing friction, increasing capacity, and helping our workforce focus on higher-value work without fear of replacement.

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# Key Considerations

## Cost Considerations

- Focused on long-term, consistent savings — not short-term cost cutting
- Avoided adding hidden costs through burnout, attrition, or rework

## Effort

- Required significant change management, not just technical deployment
- Time invested in listening, education, and relationship-building across leadership levels

## Timeline

- Early expectations of rapid impact were adjusted to allow for adoption and trust
- Change management strategies were modified to establish better preparation.

## Risk

- Risk of resistance if automation were perceived as job replacement
- Risk of moving too fast without the frontline and middle-management buy-in

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# The Solution

## The Approach

- Shifted from selling automation to listening and understanding daily pain
- Reframed automation as a tool to remove low-value work, not replace people

## The Steps Taken

- Conducted one-on-one conversations with Operations and WFM leaders to uncover root concerns
- Asked leaders to imagine a day without time-consuming, manual tasks
- Introduced automation only after leaders connected it to their own challenges

## The Solution Implemented

- Deployed real-time automation to handle schedule changes and manual workload adjustments
- Automated decisions that previously required constant human intervention

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# The Business Outcome

## Before

- Schedule changes, handle time management, and VTO required constant manual effort
- Leaders and supervisors spent time chasing tasks instead of leading
- Efficiency gains were limited by human capacity and reaction time

## After

- 1.7M automated schedule improvements executed in real time (2025)
- 6.4M automated handle time notifications delivered without manual intervention (2025)
- 924K hours automatically unlocked for development, training, and communications — no scheduling effort required (2025)
- \$2.5M in VTO savings realized automatically through extended lunches, unpaid breaks, and early releases (2025)

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# Lessons Learned & Next Steps

## What Worked — and What Didn't

- Worked: Listening first and letting leaders connect automation to their own pain
- Didn't: Assuming executive buy-in would translate to frontline adoption

## What We Didn't Expect

- Resistance wasn't about technology — it was fear of becoming unnecessary

## The Hurdle That Almost Changed the Strategy

- Rolling out too fast created pushback that forced a pause, reset, and re-launch

## Next Steps

- Continue expanding real-time automation as a foundation for AI initiatives
- Deepen focus on employee experience while scaling operational impact

## What You Can Steal

- Reassure and build trust before you educate or scale
- Treat change management as the strategy — not a supporting task

# Questions?



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