Knowledge gaps and empowered customers are the biggest challenge facing support teams – and the biggest change driver

55% of agents say the hardest part of their job is supporting increasingly knowledgeable customers with high expectations of support outcomes (high/medium pain point). **44%** of agents say this is also a key factor changing their roles - **61%** of managers think the same

Other significant pain points for customer facing employees relate to customer/product knowledge gaps and lack of access to information (**53%** high/medium pain point)

What are your pain points in fulfilling your customer service tasks?
(Knowledge / information related issues)

35% Customers are more knowledgeable than before, and their expectations are high

6% I do not have enough product/issue knowledge to solve customer's problem

8% I do not have enough knowledge about customers to personalize interactions
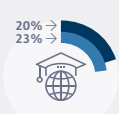
9% I do not have easy access to the information needed to solve customer problems
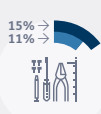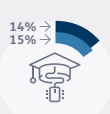
● High pain point   Employee survey, N=484

Agent view: how do you think your role as a customer service employee is changing? (Top 5 results shown)

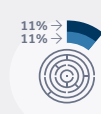| 20% → 23%	15% → 11%	14% → 15%	12% → 10%	11% → 11%
Customers expect increasingly detailed knowledge of products/services	I use more technology/ software tools	Maintaining my technical education is more difficult	Channels I handle have expanded beyond voice	I deal with increasingly complex issues alongside routine tasks

● High-level change   ● Medium change
Employee survey, N=484; Manager survey, N=341

Agents are not being equipped to succeed

Training is mediocre in general: only **44%** of customer facing agents in total say that initial job training is just right and this falls to **35%** for on-going training

Only **35%** of agents say they can **solve issues on first contact**

29% of employees are **reliant on colleagues for help** and report that one in five interactions require a call-back while **13%** of calls get transferred

Only **47%** of customer-facing employees in the survey use a **knowledge data base solution**

The inability to meet customer expectations is spiking agent frustration levels

Customer facing employees express a **very high degree of frustration** because they can't meet customer expectations

85% →
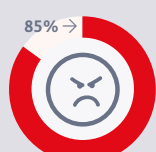
Managers and agents are aware of the benefits of AI but impacts are still early stage

Managers place high value on the ability of AI solutions to improve overall customer satisfaction (**54%**).

But most managers in the survey are still formulating their AI strategy (**38%**)

or have early phase plans in place (**28%**).

Almost a **quarter** admit to having no AI strategy at all

Actions

Improve agent training or risk negative impacts. Training has a significant impact on the ability of agents to do their job well, which in turn affects both agent and customer satisfaction.

Don't be AI laggard. Only 37% of customer facing employees in the survey have AI tools, which means they are missing out on the benefits that AI can bring. For example, AI tools that can assist agents in real time, can drive more personalized customer engagement, and can enhance knowledge management

Focus on knowledge database tools. Less than half of agents in the survey have such tools but 56% of those that do are either extremely or very satisfied with them (56%).

To see the full report, click here