

Making the member experience more efficient and effective through better training and coaching

Premera Blue Cross is a member of a family of companies in the Pacific Northwest that provide healthcare coverage and other benefits to over 1.6 million people, from individuals to Fortune 100 companies.

The Challenge

Premera Blue Cross was looking to improve its FCR (first call resolution) because it ranked in the 3rd quartile among all Blue Cross affiliates. In order to stay in compliance with the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association, as well as with federal regulations stemming from the recent healthcare reform, Premera needed to improve this metric by making

its overall member experience more efficient and effective. Plus, it wanted to be able to transform leaders into coaches, because the organization realized that an enhanced coaching program was key to elevating and sustaining the performance of the frontline agents.

“Our program with Ulysses Learning wasn’t just about servicing calls, but how team leaders can effectively coach their associates. Anyone can roll out a program but if there isn’t a strategy that reinforces the training – such as through the team leaders coaching – then it’s just another program. Coaching is the key to sustaining our success.”

– Director of Customer Service Operations at Premera Blue Cross

The Solution

To drive a better experience for its members, Premera’s management partnered with Ulysses Learning. They chose Ulysses because of its extensive experience working with other Blue Cross companies and proven track record helping other organizations improve their service through on-target training and coaching.

The Ulysses team worked with the entire organization, from the frontline agents up to the senior management, to ensure the program was a success. This included:

1. **Clear communication.** The team began by ensuring the program had buy-in from the top leadership, as well as a clear strategic vision. Ulysses helped Premera define every employee’s role in the process and established clear accountabilities.
2. **Training.** The new training process gave both the frontline agents and leadership the skill development and tools necessary to have better conversations. This included providing reps with clear strategies for taking

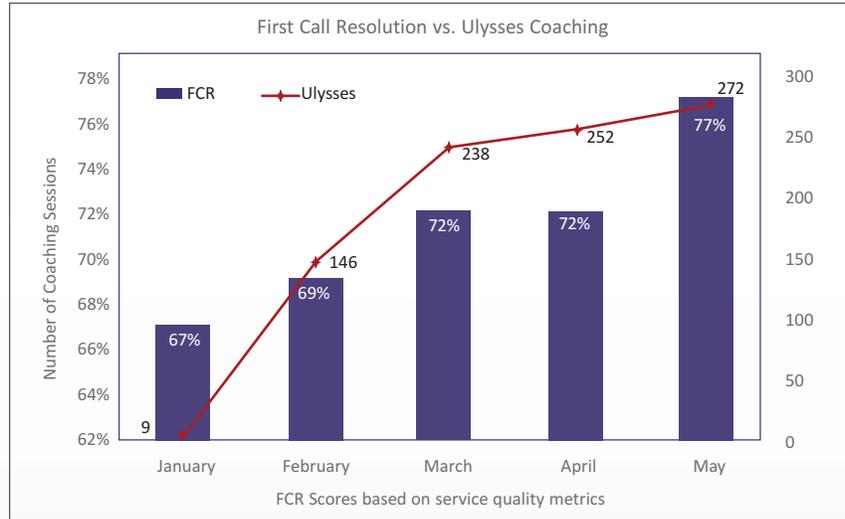
control of the call, probing to identify the core need, demonstrating control and defusing emotion. With a consistent learning process, Premera was able to create a “one face, one voice” for members – a crucial step to improving member satisfaction.

3. **Coaching.** Because a breakdown in coaching occurs when coaches don’t have the time or experience, Ulysses gave the frontline leadership the skills to become more efficient, effective coaches. This prescriptive process provided coaches with clear direction so they will know how to coach and be able to drive performance change among the agents.
4. **Sustainment.** For any organization to sustain its progress, it needs an internal champion, such as Master Coaches. The team developed a Master Coach program, which helped Premera achieve significantly higher levels of knowledge transfer and skill mastery, as well as sustain the coaching practice.

Results

Six months after the training, Premera’s service quality metrics dramatically improved in all areas. Its ranking among all Blue Cross Blue Shield companies jumped from 3rd quartile to 1st quartile in:

- First call resolution (FCR)
- Member’s overall satisfaction (Call Center Csat)
- Member’s satisfaction with the rep (CSR Csat)



Since 1995, Ulysses Learning has helped organizations of all sizes improve their customer service, sales and coaching performance. Using online, role playing simulations, Ulysses helps build decision making and advanced interaction skills in contact centers and at all points of customer interaction through the organization. We spent four years in research and development to create the validated content and proven methods to help companies effectively train their front line, engage their leaders and ultimately boost their customer base.

Our simulations deal directly with the different type of emotions and challenges that customer service agents face today.

For more information how Ulysses Learning can help your contact center and leadership thrive, call 800.662.4066, e-mail info@ulysseslearning.com or visit www.ulysseslearning.com