

Call Centre Operator interview questions

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What to expect

Call centre operator interviews usually combine a phone screen with a face-to-face or video interview, sometimes including a short role play or typing and system test. Employers want to hear how you handle real customer interactions, not just that you are friendly on the phone.

- **Process and system questions:** How you handle calls, use CRM and telephony systems, and meet call quality and handling targets.
- **Behavioural questions:** Past examples of dealing with difficult customers, working under pressure or managing a busy queue.
- **Scenario and judgement questions:** What you would do in the moment when a customer is upset, a system is down or a complaint needs escalation.
- **Motivational and fit questions:** Why you want to work in a contact centre and how you handle the measured, target-driven side of the role.

Typically a recruiter or team leader screens you by phone, then a face-to-face or video interview with a team leader or operations manager. Some employers also run a short assessment with a role play, a typing test or a live call simulation. You may be asked to explain how you would handle a common call and to talk through your experience with specific systems.

1. Walk me through how you handle an inbound call from a customer with a billing enquiry.

Why they ask

This shows whether you can follow a process, use systems and keep the customer informed without overcomplicating a routine call.

How to structure your answer

Walk-through: outline the steps in order, from greeting and verification through to resolution and record keeping.

Example answer

"First, I greet the customer, confirm who I am and ask how I can help. Then I verify their identity using the security questions required by the business. Once I know what they need, I pull up their account in Salesforce or Zendesk, check the billing details and explain what I can see in plain language. If the charge is correct, I explain it clearly. If it is an error, I follow the process to raise a correction or escalate it. Before ending the call, I summarise what will happen next and update the account notes. I also check whether there is anything else I can help with. The whole call usually takes around four minutes unless it needs escalation."

2. Tell me about a time you dealt with an angry or upset customer.

Why they ask

Behavioural questions show how you manage your own reactions and whether you can de-escalate without taking it personally.

How to structure your answer

STAR: describe the situation, the task you had, the action you took and the result.

Example answer

"A customer called because a delivery had not arrived and they had already called twice. They were frustrated and started the call by raising their voice. My task was to resolve the issue without escalating the call. I listened without interrupting, apologised for the inconvenience and confirmed

what they wanted: a new delivery time. I checked the tracking, called the courier while they waited and arranged a redelivery for the next day. I also sent a confirmation text and updated the notes so the next person could see what happened. The customer calmed down by the end of the call and said thank you. I did not take the anger personally; it was about the delay, not about me."

3. Scenario: You have a customer on the line who is upset about a delayed order, and your supervisor is unavailable. What do you do?

Why they ask

This tests judgement under pressure and whether you know when to escalate and when to solve within your authority.

How to structure your answer

Judgement under pressure: acknowledge, assess what you can solve, take action, and if needed, set expectations for escalation.

Example answer

"I would stay calm and let the customer finish. Then I would apologise and confirm the specific problem: which order, how long it has been delayed and what they want. I would check the system for tracking and see if I can give a clear answer or arrange a new delivery. If it needs a refund or an exception that I cannot approve, I would explain that my supervisor is unavailable, give a realistic time frame for a call back and take their best contact number. I would log the case as a priority and leave a detailed note for the supervisor. I would not promise something I cannot deliver, and I would follow up before the end of my shift to make sure it has been picked up."

4. How do you manage your time when you have back-to-back calls and admin tasks?

Why they ask

Contact centres run to targets and queues, so employers want to know you can stay organised without cutting corners on customer service.

How to structure your answer

Process: describe your system for prioritising, note taking and using quiet moments.

Example answer

"I use the time between calls to update notes immediately, because leaving them until later creates a backlog and mistakes. If I have a queue of calls, I focus on the customer in front of me and trust the process for the rest. For admin tasks like email follow-ups, I flag them and use any scheduled break in calls or the last part of my shift, depending on what the team leader prefers. I also keep my desktop tidy so I can find information quickly. If I am falling behind, I tell my team leader early rather than letting it build up. That way I stay within handling time targets without rushing the customer."

5. What experience do you have with CRM systems like Salesforce or Zendesk?

Why they ask

This is a technical question about tools. Employers want to know you can learn their system quickly and record accurate notes.

How to structure your answer

Technical: name the systems, describe what you did in them and how you kept records accurate.

Example answer

"I have used Salesforce Service Cloud daily for two years to look up customer accounts, log calls and update case status. I have also used Zendesk for email and chat enquiries, so I am comfortable switching between systems. In Salesforce I create new cases, attach relevant notes and tag the correct category so reporting is accurate. I learned the system on the job and I am used to picking up

new software quickly. For example, when my last employer moved to a new telephony system, I was one of the first in my team to be confident with it and I helped two colleagues learn the basics."

6. Why do you want to work in a contact centre?

Why they ask

Motivational questions check whether you understand the measured, target-driven nature of the role and whether you are likely to stay.

How to structure your answer

Motivational: connect your skills to the role, show you understand the environment and give a genuine reason.

Example answer

"I enjoy helping people solve problems on the phone. I like the structure of a contact centre: there is a clear process, you know what good looks like and you can see your own progress. I am comfortable with targets because they give me something to aim for. I also like learning systems and keeping records accurate, which is a big part of the job. In the longer term, I want to build my skills in customer service and maybe move into a team leader or quality assurance role, so starting in a contact centre is a good fit for me."