A 3D maze with green walls and silver balls on a dark grey floor. The maze is composed of various sized rectangular blocks. Three silver balls are visible, each with a bright reflection. The background is a dark grey floor.

Working with support? Here's how to get optimum results

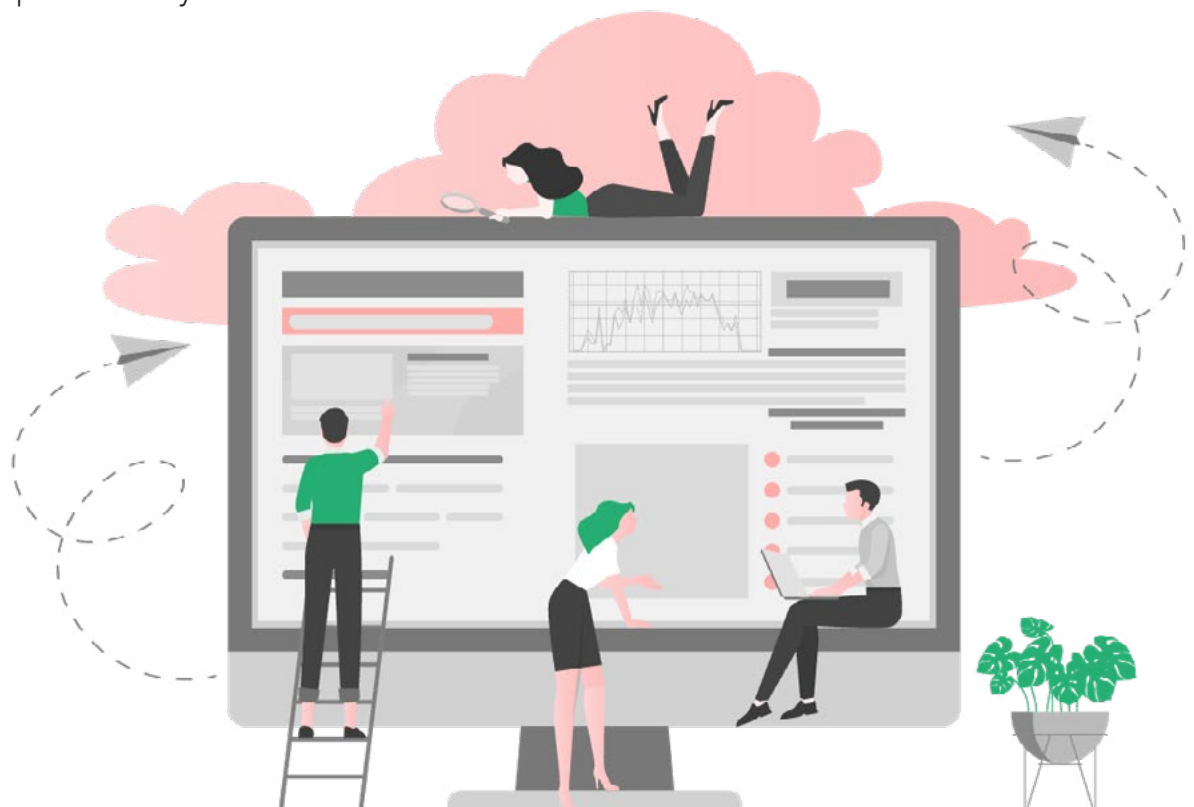
Working with support, whether internal or external, can be a challenge. Based on our experience, we've put together a set of recommendations that, if followed, will help your company to get the most out of your support resources, whether they are internal, external or combined.

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An Infosys company



Know what's important

When communicating with support personnel, it's important to distinguish what's truly important from what is less important. Every customer communicates differently and has their own set of processes and rules, which means that our support engineers will work with you to focus on what's important for the solution. In most cases, this will involve unifying the set of information about the problem - asking the right questions will usually lead to getting the right answers. Support engineers will also try to narrow down the potential causes of the problem, and will ask you to describe the nature of the problem in your own words.



Communicate in language you're comfortable in

2

It often happens, especially for end users, that the language they use to describe the nature of a problem is both imprecise for the support engineer and uncomfortable for the end user. This is why at the beginning of a support call, it's best to try to find out more about who you are - are you a user with technical knowledge, or an end user without an IT background? We recommend adapting communication to use the language of the person reporting the problem - never the other way around.

We use written communications as much as possible because they provide an easier record of the progress of the entire incident. Because all of our support work is conducted via the ServiceNow platform, this is handled by the nature of the platform itself.

At the very beginning, communications may be curt, along the lines of "It doesn't work. Fix it," but as the incident evolves, we start to build a more detailed and accurate picture of what's actually going on, and how we can fix it. Even the language you use to describe what's going on is important. An "incident" is something that needs to be fixed, while a "request" describes an enhancement. When there is an incident, it's crucial to define the incident by providing as much detail as

possible about what exactly does not work, the context in which the incident happens, the functions that are affected and so on.

They say a picture is worth a thousand words, and a good screenshot can be worth more than gold in understanding the nature of a problem. A support engineer may ask the end user what they last input when the screenshot occurred, for example. Screenshots are always helpful because they don't require end users to provide an expert verbal description of the technical nature of the problem. A good support engineer will adapt to your language as much as possible, and with a minimum of jargon and abbreviations.



3

Prioritise

Not all requests are in the same rush. If at all possible on your side, try to help your support personnel by setting out the priorities of the issues you're reporting. The impacts of situations that led to requests may be very different, which is why it's important to watch out for subjective feelings. When support engineers are faced with a limited time to solve a problem or set of problems, it's crucial to set a realistic and balanced prioritisation of the tasks in a given situation.

This is especially important in service level agreement (SLA) situations, where every minute counts; many SLAs have resolution time written into them, where the engineer has to work on problems that have less time to be resolved, which makes prioritisation that much more important. The GuideVision support team works with priorities as a measurement unit, but other organisations have a matrix that takes into account both urgency and impact.



Measure twice; cut once. Always involve the end user.

4

Especially in situations where the support team needs to deploy significant resources to resolve a request, we need to be more than 100% sure that we understand what the customer is actually requesting. Often, because the customer doesn't know how to specify what they require, it becomes that much more important to clear up any possible ambiguity in the request beforehand. In other words, if the support engineer doesn't have a clear understanding of the problem, they need to ask so that everything becomes clear.

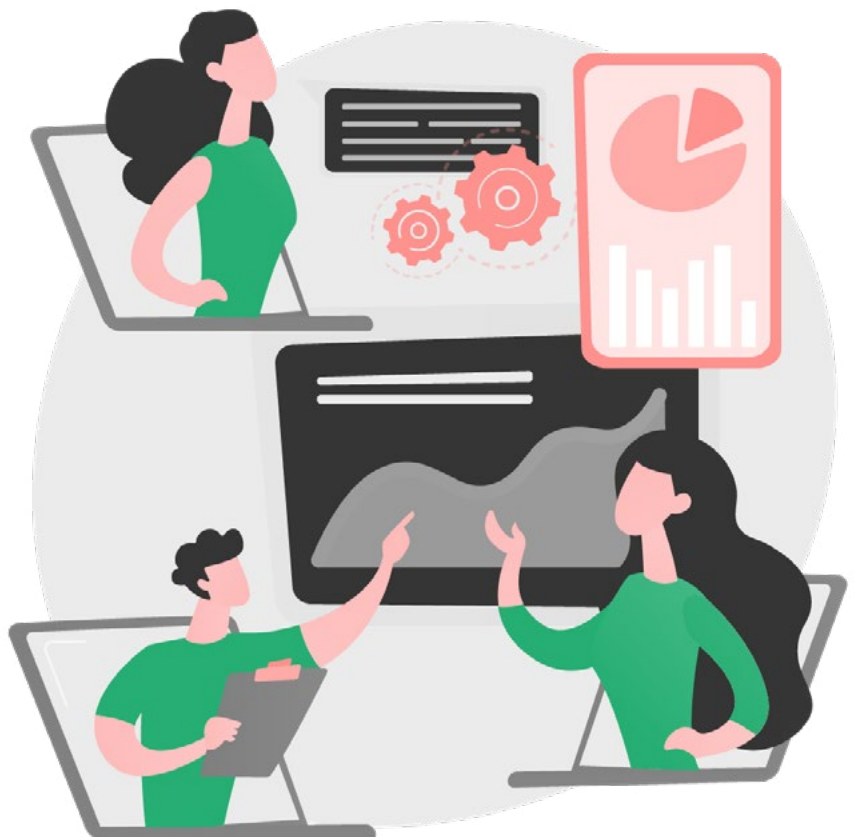
We consider consultation to be an important part of the process – it's part of solidifying the requirement, and it provides tremendous added value when done right. Finally, before the solution is handed over to the user, we strongly recommend that engineers check the solution themselves to make sure it works, and then involve the user in the process of checking it. Regular check-in communications with the user also make sure that the support team understands the nature of the request, and that the user approves of the proposed solution.



5

Remain in contact

Communication is crucial in the support process, both with the user and internally among the support team. Every team member needs to know what their priorities are and what they're supposed to be working on. Users need to know what's going on with their request, which is why regular pro-active communications with the user are crucial. In this way, the nature of the communication involves both internal team members and the customer.

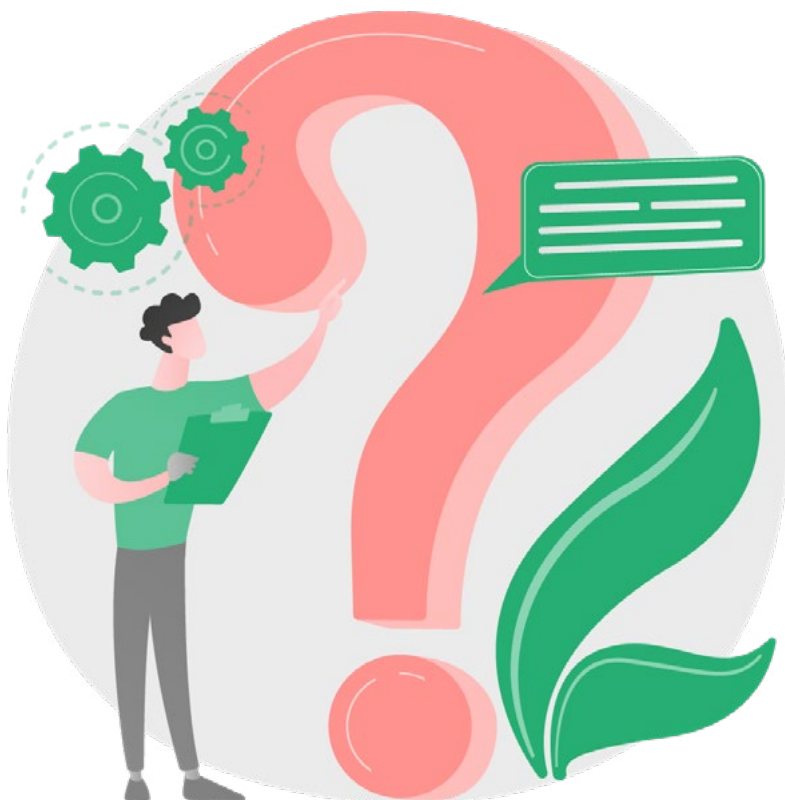


Monitor customer satisfaction



It's clear that customer satisfaction is important, but in many cases it's also included in the SLA that has been signed with the customer. Customer satisfaction as a KPI is gaining in importance, and we need to not only deliver the technical side of the equation, but we also have to communicate with our customers about what is happening. The support team is the primary supplier of this satisfaction, which is why we recommend tracking both "soft" and "hard" results, and sharing these results both with your users and with your team.

In some cases, the time to resolve an issue is the most important thing, but in others it's about the quality of the solution. For some the most important thing is our approach and the way we communicate. In all of these cases, we recommend talking to the user to find out what they appreciate the most so that you can satisfy that best.



How you can make your team more effective

7

It almost sounds clichéd, but a strong mix of people and skills is one of the most important keys to success. We recommend spending the time and resources to assemble a great team. At the same time it's important to recognise that not all team members are the same, which is why the team needs to learn to rely on each other to achieve your goals.

Based on our own experience, we've created a number of different techniques to keep our team motivated and working at optimum

effectiveness. These include rotating support team members among customers, pairing junior and senior team members, and always communicating the goals of the team and the organisation.

In the end, placing emphasis on a balance between work and personal life results in you retaining them longer - which then benefits you as our customers because there's more institutional memory and know-how retained.



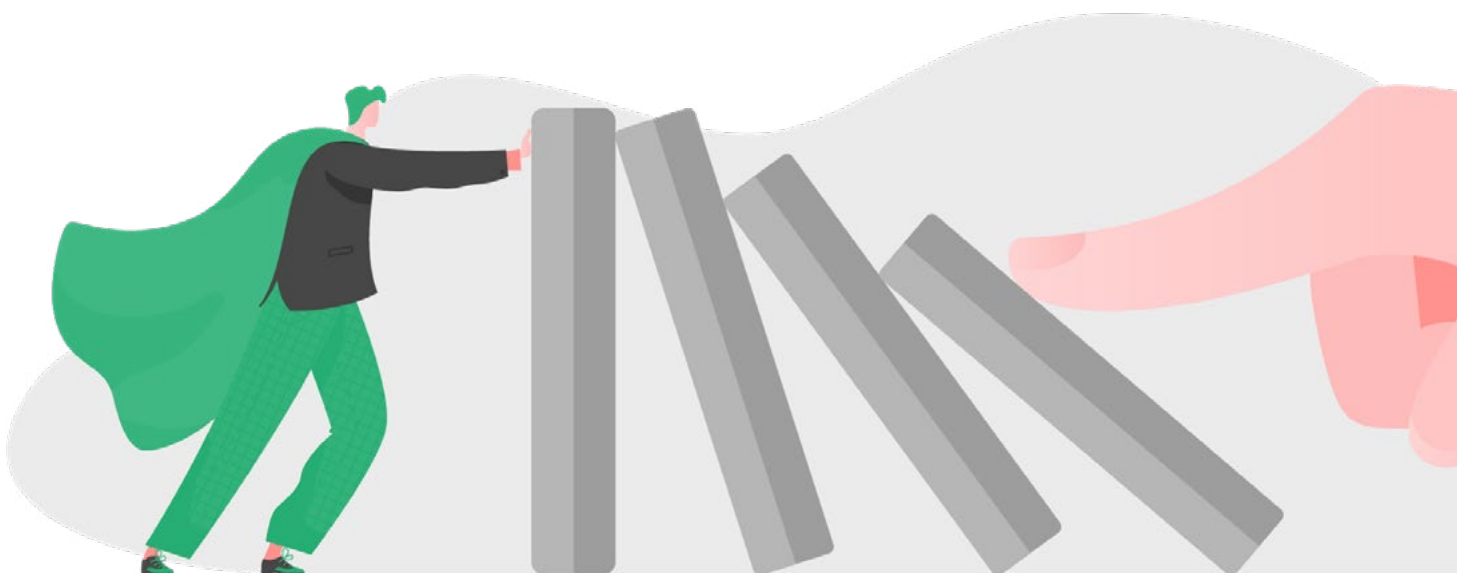
8

There's only one Superman in the world!

Resolving support requests requires a strong mix of skills, and not every problem can be solved by every team member. This is why support personnel need to have a clear idea of what they're able to resolve on their own and what requires assistance from others. It may also happen that the problems aren't resolved, and even more specialists need to be called in.

Support engineers need to constantly assess their progress in resolving the issue and to keep an eye on the time allotted to resolve it - when more than half of the allotted time is remaining, they need to assess their progress, and to reach out to colleagues for help if necessary.

Most support requests don't have a specific recipe for how to solve them, and not every request needs to be resolved by the same team. It's quite common to "hand off" a request (to another specialist, to another level of support, or to a third party). A large part of the support process is investigation, finding out why things aren't working and where things aren't right.



About GuideVision and GuideVision Support

GuideVision – ServiceNow Elite Partner

is a dynamic and progressive consultancy committed to enabling clients to reimagine and transform their enterprise service management with ServiceNow. GuideVision empowers its international clientele through strategic advice, deep expertise and innovative technological knowledge.

GuideVision offers support services after ServiceNow implementation in a highly flexible way to ensure your solution becomes an integral part of everyday operations, ranging from simple administration tasks through comprehensive configuration to extensive development.

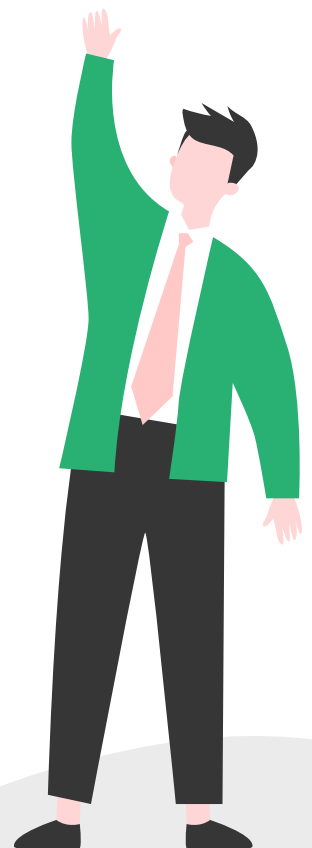
We can take care of maintenance, resolve incidents and make sure the changes you make don't affect your performance, that you scale optimally, and that you have the structure in place to help you grow. All this in a highly competitive business model utilising a dedicated pool of experts in our support centre based in Central Europe.

GuideVision Support means an instant access to certified ServiceNow resources in a flexible service that adds value to your business.

Get in touch with us today:

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