# Strategies for Advancing Your Customer Engagement Program with AI-Enabled, Analytics-Driven Quality Management

**NICE**

# It's a lot like learning to swim – you don't just dive into the deep end of the pool

Customer experience is a top priority for businesses across industries.[1] Research shows that organizations that lead their industry in terms of customer satisfaction grow revenues roughly 2.5 times as fast as their industry peers and deliver two to five times the shareholder returns over the next 10 years.[2] Customers reward companies that deliver exceptional experiences by buying more products and services and are more likely to recommend the company to others on social media.

And connections matter. Customers today are engaging with companies through a wider variety of channels, yet agent-assisted channels remain one of the most impactful communication methods when it comes to customer satisfaction. That makes agent engagement critically important; companies with agents who are involved in, enthusiastic about and committed to their work and workplace have higher customer satisfaction levels and deliver a better customer experience.[3] In fact, 86 percent of executives rank employee experience as the No. 1 factor in delivering consistent, positive CX.[4]

One of the most effective ways to uncover opportunities to improve customer satisfaction and ensure that agents' interactions with customers consistently help meet customers' needs is by leveraging a contact center AI enabled analytics driven quality management solution. Contact centers using AI capabilities achieve 3.5x greater annual increase in customer satisfaction rates.[5] Modern quality management programs that use these advanced tools empower businesses to understand the behaviors, coaching and process improvements agents need in order to deliver a great customer experience. They also automate many of the traditional manual processes and can also help companies adapt more quickly to customer needs – and that's more critical now than ever, with customer expectations upended by the pandemic.

## How Mature is Your Organization's Quality Management Program?

So how can you get started or expand CX initiatives with quality management? The key is to first understand where your organization stands in terms of a quality maturity model, then take steps to advance. This involves ensuring that the people, processes and strategy are in place to support the adoption of new technology – and this, in turn, requires careful planning, proper allocation of resources, a change management process and buy-in at all levels of the organization. Only when these things are in place and you have an end in mind is it possible to have a meaningful maturity model plan that makes sense to execute over time.

It's a lot like learning to swim – you don't just dive into the deep end of the pool. Instead, progress requires taking small steps and building on what you've learned. In much the same way, advancing your quality program also requires taking incremental steps through the stages of quality management maturity. It's not an all-or-nothing endeavor, contrary to what many contact center leaders think.

## Basic Traditional Quality Program

A traditional quality program is challenged in making an impact due to manual processes and decisions based on evaluations of small, random samples of interactions – an average of seven per agent per month. Organizations use a mix of tools to run their quality programs, from spreadsheets to SharePoint and home-grown solutions. As a result, it is difficult to get a holistic view of quality in the organization. Feedback based on such a limited sample is incomplete, and in the end, agents don't trust the process because they're being measured based on just a handful of calls.

To take a more strategic approach and advance your program, begin by focusing on specific transactions – the first stage of maturity of a quality program – before moving on to focusing on trends and on the organization overall.

**STAGE ONE: MOVING TO TRANSACTIONAL QUALITY MONITORING**

Moving from a basic quality program to transactional quality monitoring is like the first step in learning how to swim – dipping your toe in the water to get used to what you are about to experience. The goal of moving to a transactional quality monitoring focus is to begin to link quality processes to coaching plans and CX outcomes.

Contact centers can supplement the traditional random sample approach by identifying meaningful interactions to evaluate based on a specific metric – for example, instead of seven interactions per month, they're selecting three to five and supplementing the rest. To achieve this, you can:

- Leverage metadata such as CSAT survey results or speech and text analytics to drive your quality evaluation and coaching processes, which should have some automation capabilities.

- Use this targeted monitoring strategy to increase your ability to identify some extreme interactions on both sides – both very high performers and very low ones – that you would have missed using random sampling.

Organizations at this stage typically will have a supervisor scorecard, which is a dashboard to track agents' and the quality program's progress. With these tools, it is now possible to connect your quality program scoring to coaching program needs and then track the outcome of your efforts.

The first step is to dip your toe in the water and get used to what you're about to experience

## STAGE TWO: MOVING TO A METRIC-DRIVEN QUALITY PROGRAM

Moving into the second stage of the quality maturity model is similar to learning to swim by treading water. At this stage, the goal is to link your quality program to the contact center's strategic objectives.

To accomplish this, there is less of a focus on quality evaluations being driven by an agent quota and more of a focus on them being driven by a metric such as customer satisfaction results. The quality program relies more heavily on analytics to score all interactions automatically, thereby creating unbiased processes for evaluating agents.

The use of analytics and quality management automation capabilities streamline processes, such as:

- Autoscoring of metrics based on analytics events and aggregating the score on a dashboard – for example, whether an agent reads a mini Miranda disclosure or confirms an account. This allows you to remove these types of checklist questions from your quality evaluation forms.

- Automatic suggestions for answers on evaluation forms to save an evaluator time. The interactions can be reviewed at the exact point that an analytics event occurred; the evaluator can override suggested answers as needed.

Additional ways to advance your quality management program include automating data-driven quality processes such as:

- Agent self-assessments prior to a coaching session.
- Coaching assignments and tracking their impact on KPIs.
- Calibration assignments and deviation reporting on the results.
- Auditing evaluators to ensure consistency.

The second stage of the quality maturity model is like learning how to tread water
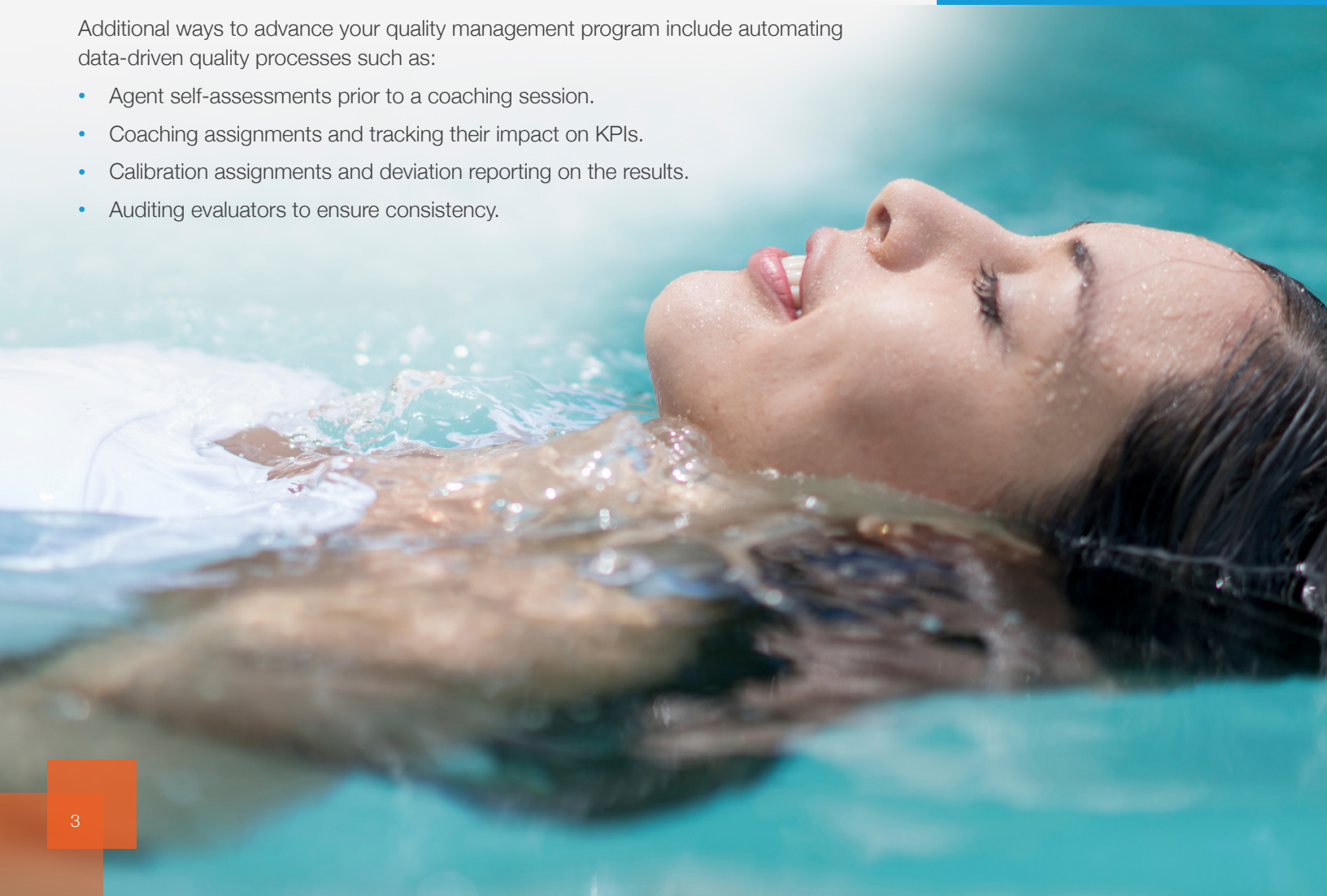
## STAGE THREE: MOVING TO AN ORGANIZATIONAL FOCUS

At the third stage, businesses are expert swimmers who can truly transform CX through modern quality management. In addition to a metric-driven quality approach, organizations in this stage use AI-enabled behavior models to:

- Automate the scoring of agent soft-skill behaviors to identify their impacts on customer satisfaction. Before, this could only be done by manually listening or reviewing interactions. Now you can automate the entire evaluation process, which saves the evaluator significant time that was previously spent filling out forms and turns the evaluation form into a coaching tool.

- Deliver personalized coaching to the individual, because the AI behavior models can identify the precise skills that need to be improved. The quality team thus plays a more strategic role in the organization.

At this stage, there is a greater impact on the organization because you are redefining how to measure CX. The organization needs to make an investment in people, process and technology to support the initiative, which means you will need to communicate a plan to all stakeholders, demonstrate an ROI and get buy-in from everyone involved – leaders included. You also need to put in place infrastructure (such as a steering committee) to support change management.

Pinpointing where your organization stands on the quality maturity scale helps determine the steps needed to get to the next level and have a bigger impact on CX. Consider how your business compares to each of the different levels identified above and whether the right tools and processes are in place to help it advance to the next level.

Businesses
are expert
swimmers
by the third
stage of
the model
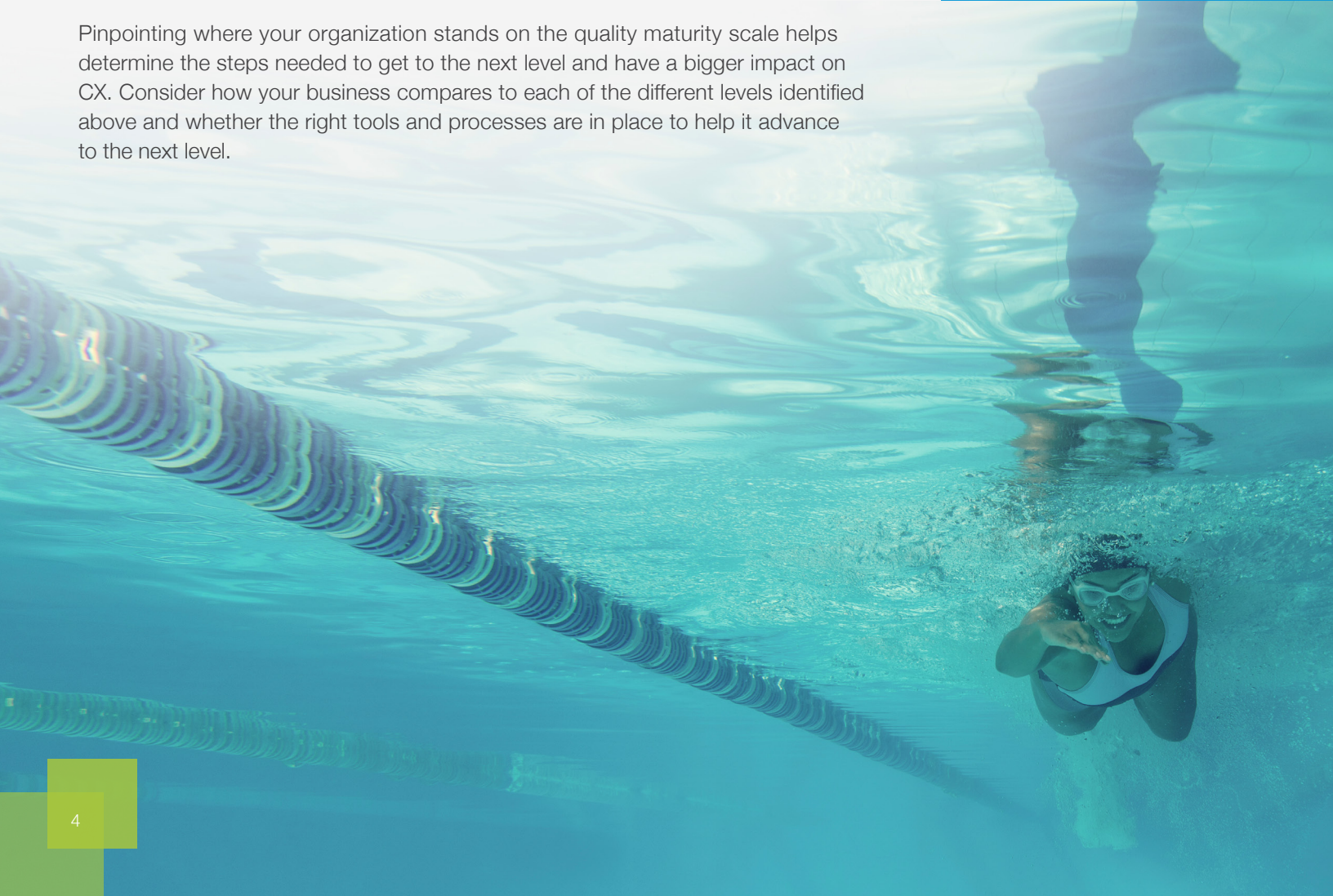
## The Technology You Need to Transform Your Quality Program

Once you understand the current state of your organization's quality management progress, you can begin making strides to improve it. Three key technologies can help you advance your quality program: analytics, artificial intelligence behavior models and quality management. NICE Enlighten for Customer Satisfaction delivers all of these essential elements for a transformational quality program in a single, unified solution that enables you to advance your quality program at your own pace, whether that be dipping your toe in the water, treading water for a bit or diving in head-first.

### AI-ENABLED INTERACTION ANALYTICS

Automatically detect discrete events with speech and text analytics capabilities. Certain elements of customer-agent interactions, like opening with the right greeting, using the right sales pitch or following the correct compliance protocol, can have an outsized impact on customer satisfaction – especially because AI-enabled analytics covers all interactions and not just a random sample. Automated analytics metrics that monitor common indicators of customer dissatisfaction such as long average handle time (AHT), repeat contacts or first call resolution (FCR), non-talk/non-response time, and cross-talk also helps the quality program surface coachable interactions.

Detect discrete analytics events with pre-configured categories and create your own categories to help ensure that specific contact center requirements are covered efficiently. In addition, AI-enabled analytics helps to surface trending topics you didn't know about and score interactions for customer sentiment, and these insights can then drive a quality evaluation.

Organizations can benefit by using analytics in several key ways:

- Using automated speech and text analytics to detect whether specific requirements are followed by agents.

- Analyzing customers' experiences based on what words or phrases are said or written during an interaction and/or customer sentiment scoring.

- Leveraging insights gathered by analytics to inform supervisors on the coaching their agents need with automated quality workflows.

Your quality management program can determine whether you sink or swim in improving customer satisfaction

## MACHINE LEARNING/AI BEHAVIOR MODELS

Having a better understanding of customer sentiment is the first step to improving customer satisfaction. Sentiment scoring has proven to be an accurate predictor of customer satisfaction, such as CSAT or NPS metrics, but it's often left to the quality team or supervisors to identify the exact behaviors that lead to poor customer sentiment. That is where AI and machine learning come in. Solutions like NICE Enlighten include AI-enabled behavior data models derived from massive volumes of data that accurately and objectively score agent behaviors. Nine behaviors have been proven to directly impact the factors that are driving a sentiment score up or down such as demonstrate ownership, showing empathy and acknowledging loyalty.

AI-powered quality solutions enable organizations to:

- Utilize customer experience models that consider a range of soft skill behaviors, such as active listening, building rapport and demonstrating ownership.
- Accurately pinpoint the agent interactions that are affecting customer satisfaction and automatically queue them with a supervisor for additional evaluation and agent coaching – a process that used to take hours.
- Create a fair, unbiased interaction evaluation process that agents can trust.
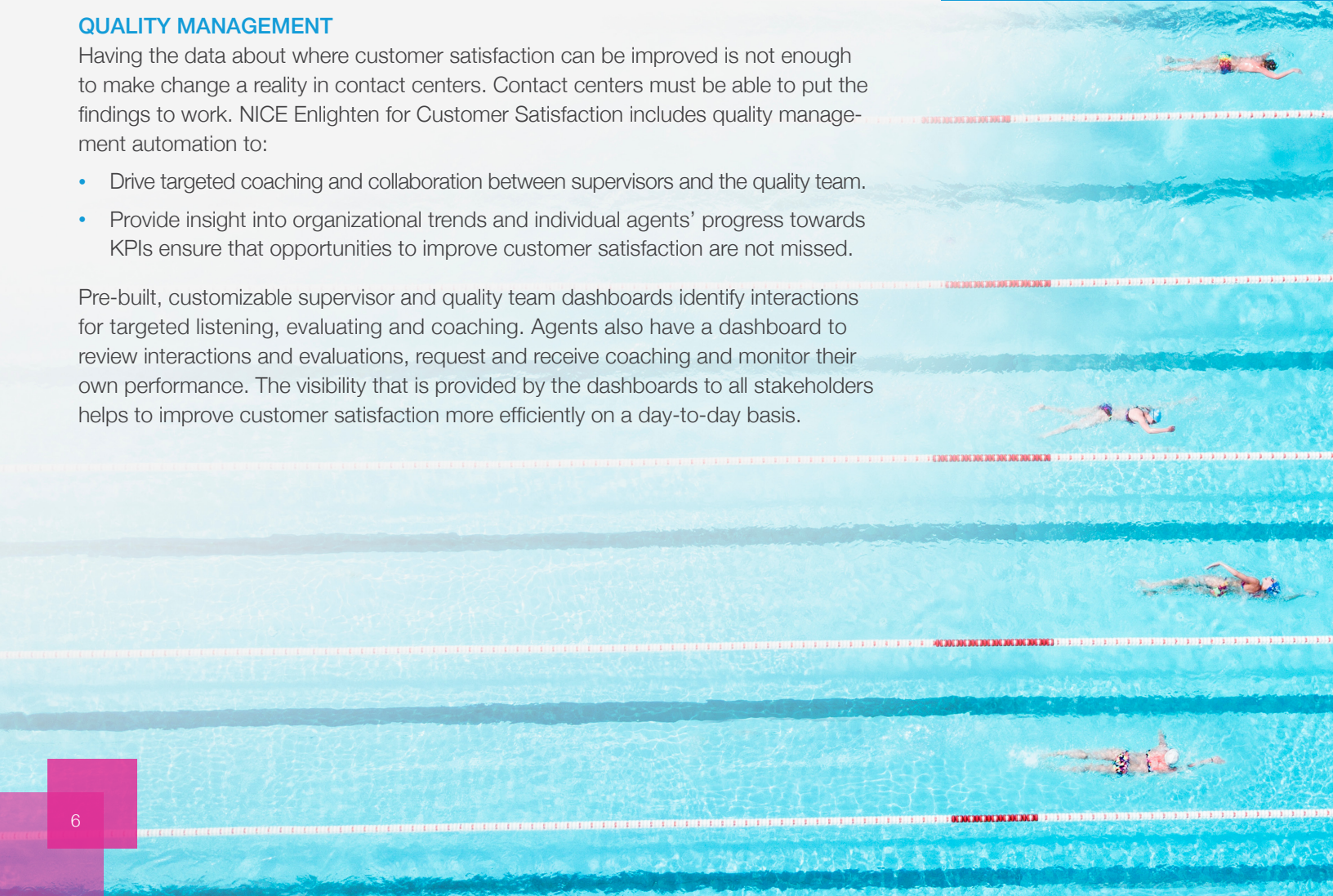
## QUALITY MANAGEMENT

Having the data about where customer satisfaction can be improved is not enough to make change a reality in contact centers. Contact centers must be able to put the findings to work. NICE Enlighten for Customer Satisfaction includes quality management automation to:

- Drive targeted coaching and collaboration between supervisors and the quality team.
- Provide insight into organizational trends and individual agents' progress towards KPIs ensure that opportunities to improve customer satisfaction are not missed.

Pre-built, customizable supervisor and quality team dashboards identify interactions for targeted listening, evaluating and coaching. Agents also have a dashboard to review interactions and evaluations, request and receive coaching and monitor their own performance. The visibility that is provided by the dashboards to all stakeholders helps to improve customer satisfaction more efficiently on a day-to-day basis.

Improve
and advance
your quality
program
at your
own pace
with NICE
Enlighten

## NICE Enlighten for Customer Satisfaction: everything you need for a winning quality program
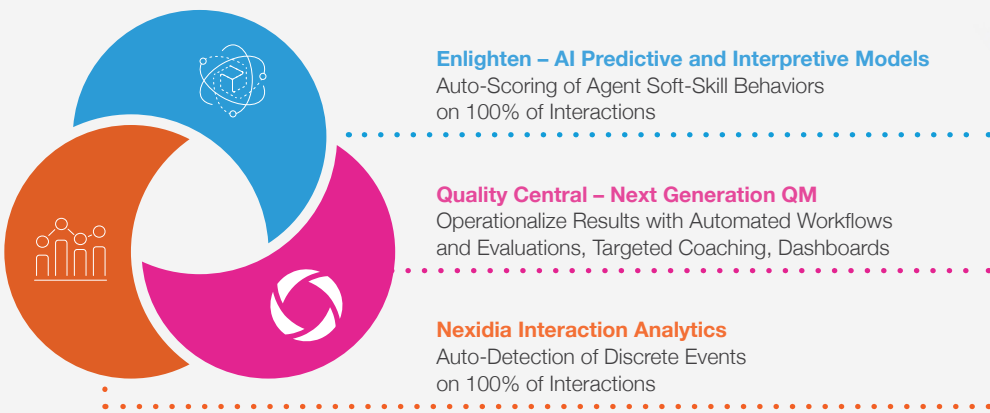
## Summary

Having a great experience when interacting with your contact center is the currency modern customers demand from the brands they choose to support, and your quality management program can determine whether you sink or swim in your efforts to improve customer satisfaction. By understanding your organization's quality maturity and implementing the latest in technology to improve your quality program, you can have an outsized impact on customer experience, ultimately delivering greater workforce efficiency, higher revenue and increased growth.

## About NICE Enlighten for Customer Satisfaction

NICE Enlighten for Customer Satisfaction includes everything you need to transform your quality program. Its AI behavior models identify and score agent behaviors that have been proven to impact customer sentiment. Speech and text analytics provide added insights, which are then visualized with pre-built dashboards and reports. Automated quality workflows provide supervisors with visibility into which agent interactions require an evaluation or coaching. It's a complete modern analytics-driven quality solution suite that includes Nexidia Analytics, Quality Central and NICE Enlighten behavior models, all from a single pre-configured platform in a secure cloud. It enables contact centers to quickly achieve their customer satisfaction targets and adapt to a constantly changing environment, now and into the future.

**Enlighten – AI Predictive and Interpretive Models**
Auto-Scoring of Agent Soft-Skill Behaviors
on 100% of Interactions

**Quality Central – Next Generation QM**
Operationalize Results with Automated Workflows
and Evaluations, Targeted Coaching, Dashboards

**Nexidia Interaction Analytics**
Auto-Detection of Discrete Events
on 100% of Interactions

**For more information on NICE Enlighten for Customer Satisfaction or business consulting that can help you with your quality transformation, visit nice.com.**

[1]"CX a Priority for Business, but Technology Adoption Lags." Adobe. 16 Apr. 2019. [2]Markey, Rob, Daniel McCarthy and Peter Fader. "The Loyalty Economy." Harvard Business Review. 15 Sept. 2020. [3]"What Is Employee Engagement and How Do You Improve It?" Gallup. [4]"Gartner Survey Finds Employee Engagement a Top Concern Affecting Customer Experience." Gallup. 14 June 2018. [5]"The ROI of Real-Time Agent Guidance: How AI Helps Align Agent Performance with Customer Expectations." Aberdeen. September 2020.