



# BPO BULLHORN

**Straight talk. Smart insight. No bull.**

**Thursday, January 22, 2026**

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## **Hello there**

Budgets are tight, targets keep stretching, and delivery teams are often the ones asked to absorb the pressure.

Earlier this month, we asked what the herd won't compromise on in 2026. The responses struck a nerve. Now we're asking again: where are you drawing the line this year?

What's the one non-negotiable you're protecting for your teams or customers, even when the pressure is on to cut costs, move faster, or do more with less?

Add your view in the comments on our January 20 post [here](#). These are the signals leaders pay attention to.

Next week, we'll be back with a new **Heard** drop, pulling those perspectives together and looking at what they say about where the industry is headed.

### **This week:**

- Unilever weighs Hyderabad for a new global capability center
- Google enters the contact center platform race
- Breez AI raises \$1.3M to build no-code voice automation

Let's get moo-ving! 📣🐮

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## **Bullseye: The Essentials**

### **Industry News**

→ **Unilever evaluates Hyderabad for a global capability center**

[\*\*Unilever is eyeing Hyderabad for a new global capability center\*\*](#), adding to the city's momentum as L'Oréal just launched the world's largest beauty tech GCC there. State officials pitched infrastructure and talent at Davos. Hyderabad is pushing hard to compete with Bengaluru and Pune for GCC investment. For global BPO and shared services leaders, India's tier-two cities are no longer backup options.

→ **Wamda Capital backs Breez AI with \$1.3M pre-seed round**

[\*\*Breez AI raised \\$1.3M to fix what breaks voice automation\*\*](#), the infrastructure underneath it. The US-Jordanian startup built a no-code platform that unifies routing, carrier connectivity, and AI processing so contact centers can deploy Voice AI without stitching together fragmented telecom systems. With 55% of contact center interactions still happening by voice, the industry needs infrastructure that scales, not just better chatbots.

### **Technology**

→ **Google enters the contact center conversation**

[\*\*Google announced Customer Experience Agent Studio at NRF\*\*](#), bringing together customer service, commerce, and data tools in one platform. The play: connect customer interactions across channels. The reality: several features are still in beta and overlap with existing CCaaS platforms. Forrester analysts say it tackles the data silo problem but warn most 'agentic commerce' claims are overstated. Worth watching if you're in retail or food service BPO.

→ **AI's progress still runs on human input**

Forbes Councils argues that human [crowdsourcing remains central to how these systems actually work](#). Distributed workers handle data labeling, annotation, validation, and feedback: the unglamorous work that makes models accurate and usable. This isn't a temporary step or background task. It's the engine. For BPO operations exploring deployment, remember: someone still has to train the models.

## **Customer Experience**

### **→ Call center and technology help GPs cut waiting times**

A BBC visit to Riverside Surgery in North Lincolnshire shows how a centralized call-handling team, early clinical triage, and new dispensing technology are [helping reduce GP waiting times from weeks to days](#). Patients are assessed by care navigators and clinicians before appointments are booked, while tools like a dispensing robot and a 24-hour prescription machine help manage demand. It's the BPO playbook applied to healthcare: triage before escalation, empower the frontline, measure outcomes.

## **Employee Engagement**

### **→ New hires turn to AI instead of managers and HR**

Research from Northern Kentucky University finds that [68% of new hires used these tools in their first 90 days](#), often turning to them before managers or HR. They're using them to summarize documents (55%), draft emails (52%), and decode internal jargon (20%). The kicker: 59% say the tools filled gaps their manager or HR didn't cover. For BPO ops with constant recruiting cycles, this signals a shift. Onboarding automation isn't just about efficiency. It's becoming the default learning path.

## **Leadership**

### **→ What actually makes leadership development work**

Big Think+ argues that [leadership development](#) fails when treated as events instead of systems. Effective programs include six elements: stretch assignments, continuous coaching, peer learning, accountability structures, clear principles, and measurement tied to business outcomes. For BPO operations with high attrition and distributed teams across sites and shifts,

quarterly workshops don't build team leads. You need embedded systems that scale and travel with your people.

## Media Field Guide

### Video

#### **TEDTalk: Sitting All Day Is Killing You - [YouTube](#)**

Manoush Zomorodi explores how modern work and tech habits, especially sitting for long stretches, are affecting our physical health. Drawing on early findings from a large-scale experiment, she explains how constant inactivity contributes to fatigue and long-term health risks and shares practical ways to build more movement into everyday routines.

**Why watch:** a timely reminder of how small changes to how we work can improve energy, health, and productivity.

### Podcast

#### **David's Diaries - [Spotify](#)**

In this episode, Eloise Kamineth shares her personal journey, reflecting on the role of faith, friends, and family in shaping who she is today. She talks about becoming a storyteller, building meaningful relationships, and learning to advocate for others.

**Why listen:** a thoughtful conversation about identity, connection, and using personal stories to build understanding.

### Books

#### **Micro-Habits: Tiny Changes That Supercharge High Performance - [Amazon](#)**

Jake Humphrey and Damian Hughes challenge the idea that high performance comes from talent alone. Instead, they focus on small, repeatable behavior changes that top performers use to build momentum and consistency over time. The book breaks down how tiny habits, applied daily, can lead to meaningful improvements without major overhauls.

**Why read:** a practical, no-nonsense take on performance for people who want progress without burnout.

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What media would you like to see more of? **Hit reply** and let us know. We'll give you a shoutout if we include it.

[Continue the conversation](#)

## Resource Rodeo 🤠

### **Featuring NEW releases:**

#### **The Capability Mindset: Turning Business Transformation into a Repeatable Discipline**

Commissioned by SAP, the Forrester Consulting study reflects how transformation is being framed heading into 2026. Based on a survey of more than 1,000 executives, it focuses on maturity models, repeatability, and treating transformation as an ongoing capability rather than a one-off effort - [Download](#).

### **Also spotted:**

- State of Contact Centres 2026 (Puzzle) - [Download](#)
- 2025 State of the Shared Services & Outsourcing Industry (SSON / Celonis) - [Download](#)

## Toro's Timetable

### **February**

10 - [Medallia Experience '26](#) - Las Vegas, NV

23 - [Customer Contact Week Berlin](#) | Berlin

## March

4 - [CX Alliance Workshop](#) | London

18 - [CCW Digital](#) | Sydney, AU

## The Tail End

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Thanks for reading. See you next Thursday.

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### Maistro UK Limited

Rowan House North 1 The  
Professional Quarter, Shrewsbury  
Business Park, Shrewsbury

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