

Effective and efficient onboarding program



CASE STUDY ZILVEREN KRUIS



**FACULTY
OF SKILLS**

Introduction

Onboarding new employees completely and quickly

Paying attention to empathic communication with clients

In the Netherlands, the final months of the year are a time of tradition –and the insurance industry is no exception. As the new premiums for the coming year are announced, clients begin a deep-dive into policy conditions, deliberate at length, and then – at the last possible second –make the switch to a new health insurance company.

Or not.

To be able to give the right answers to all clients with questions, Zilveren Kruis has to upscale its client service staffing significantly between summer and the end of the year. These new employees all take part in a brand-new onboarding programme aimed at a full immersion into the theory and practice of Zilveren Kruis.

The onboarding programme also pays extensive attention to communication skills, such as empathic communication. By letting employees practice with realistic examples as early as this onboarding phase, they can reach the required standard more quickly. And it shows in our client satisfaction ratings.



Large groups of new employees, reaching required standards swiftly

The increase in the number of client questions demands that the call-capacity of Zilveren Kruis has to be doubled by the end of the year. Around 600 people have to be trained in a short period of time. This group includes people of a highly varied backgrounds: between 18 and 55 years old, with various levels of education, with or without experience in the business, from students to stay-at-home mums re-joining the workforce after many years. All of them have to reach the same level of conversational ability, software skill, and product knowledge. For that reason, Zilveren Kruis requires an onboarding programme that is both intensive and highly flexible. Flexibility in terms of:

- New employee starting dates: nobody should be required to await the recruitment of another contingent of starting employees, and newcomers should not become tempted to switch jobs before their training is fully completed.
- Participant number: it should be possible to onboard large groups of people at simultaneously.
- Individual entry-levels and learning preference: aligned to employee experience and existing knowledge.

Online as a principle

To facilitate the onboarding of all of these new employees, a new and varied programme has been developed in collaborating with other parties, like Tinqwise. Faculty of Skills provides the communicative skills training as part of the programme. The principle force behind this training is an online course which every employee completes according to their own learning process. The online environment offers participants a full overview of the entire programme. Employees take part in introductions to the organisation, Zilveren Kruis brand values, systems, and product knowledge. The programme has been designed to be both educational and appealing, and is based on a process that uses a combination of e-learning, online training modules, quizzes, videos, and assignments. Training using TrainTool by Faculty of Skills is also part of the process.



tinqwise

Recurring topics

All components of the onboarding programme are divided into categories that are recognisable for the participants:

- Understanding where I work: about the company and its values
- Understanding how to communicate: talking to clients
- Understanding what I work with: tools and software
- Understanding how I work: our working methods
- Understanding what I communicate about: product knowledge
- Understanding my quality of performance: continuing to improve.

This case mainly focusses on the communication skills belonging to the second topic: 'Understanding how to communicate'.

Practice using TrainTool

In order to practice conversational skills, participants use TrainTool. New employees are tasked with completing three components: the intake scan, the training, and an end assessment.

Intake

The intake begins with four video role playing sessions in TrainTool. Participants are given the opportunity to get used to the tool. Next is a series of exercises in which they listen to a recording of a client with a question. They participants have to answer the question as best they can. They have one opportunity to re-record their answer, after which it is sent to their coach.

Niveau

Based on their answers, participants are given a report card by their coach, with a recommendation based on their skill level, their current capabilities, and which of their skills still need developing. Next, a minimum of two appropriate training modules is offered. All participants are free to



Aandacht voor de emotie

Vorbereiding



Om te laten blijken dat je goed luistert is het belangrijk om bij een duidelijke klantvraag deze vraag of het verhaal van de klant samen te vatten. Vraag vervolgens door op ontbrekende informatie.

complete additional modules, and most do so. Out of each module, one recording is shared with the coach, who offers feedback on the recording using TrainTool.

Final assessment

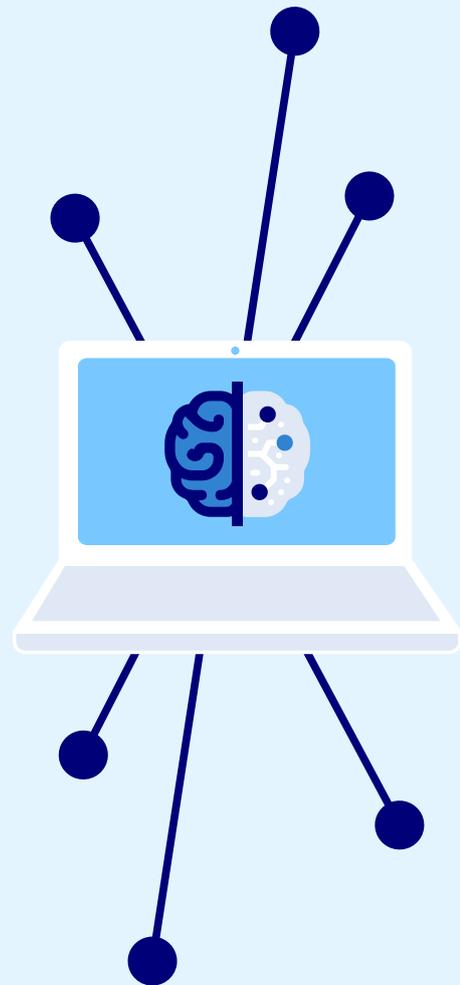
This part of the onboarding programme is concluded using an aptitude test: a similar online test to the intake, which is also assessed by the coach. The participants receive a new report card, showing them which skills they have mastered, and what should be their points of attention for the remainder of the onboarding programme and their first days on the job.

Nieuw: smartcoach feedback

Zilveren Kruis has been one of the first organisations to be able to implement the new Faculty of Skills Smartcoach Alix. Alix offers participants real-time, substantive feedback based on artificial intelligence. The system listens to a recording, scores the answers according to a pre-determined model, and then offers rapid written feedback to the participant.

The implementation of Alix has a number of advantages, most prominent of which is the speed at which participants are provided with feedback. This ensures a substantially improved learning effect, as the exercise is still fresh in the participant's mind and they are able to apply the tips directly. Additionally, using Alix is also more financially beneficial than using a human coach.

Following extensive trials and recalibrations, Alix has become a very accurate tool. This is evident from the appreciation participants have for the feedback: it is valued virtually as highly as feedback offered by human coaches.



Programma contents

Empathic communication as the basis

The phone calls that client service representatives are tasked with handling can be very complex. They require that employees ascertain exactly the reason behind the client’s call (even if the client themselves is not entirely sure), that they have adequate product knowledge readily available, that they can search the system to find how the question matches the client profile – all while being a kind and empathic conversationalist. Mastering these skills requires practice. The focus of this practice is on truly engaging in a conversation with the caller: ascertaining the question, listening, summarising, in-depth questioning. Health care insurance companies are often faced with emotional client responses or questions. Therefore, it is important that client service representatives offer sufficient personal attention and show adequate empathy to clients before addressing their issues substantively. The training covers the following four topics in these exercises:

- Being attentive to client situations
- Being attentive to client emotions
- Analysing clear client questions
- Analysing unclear client questions



Results

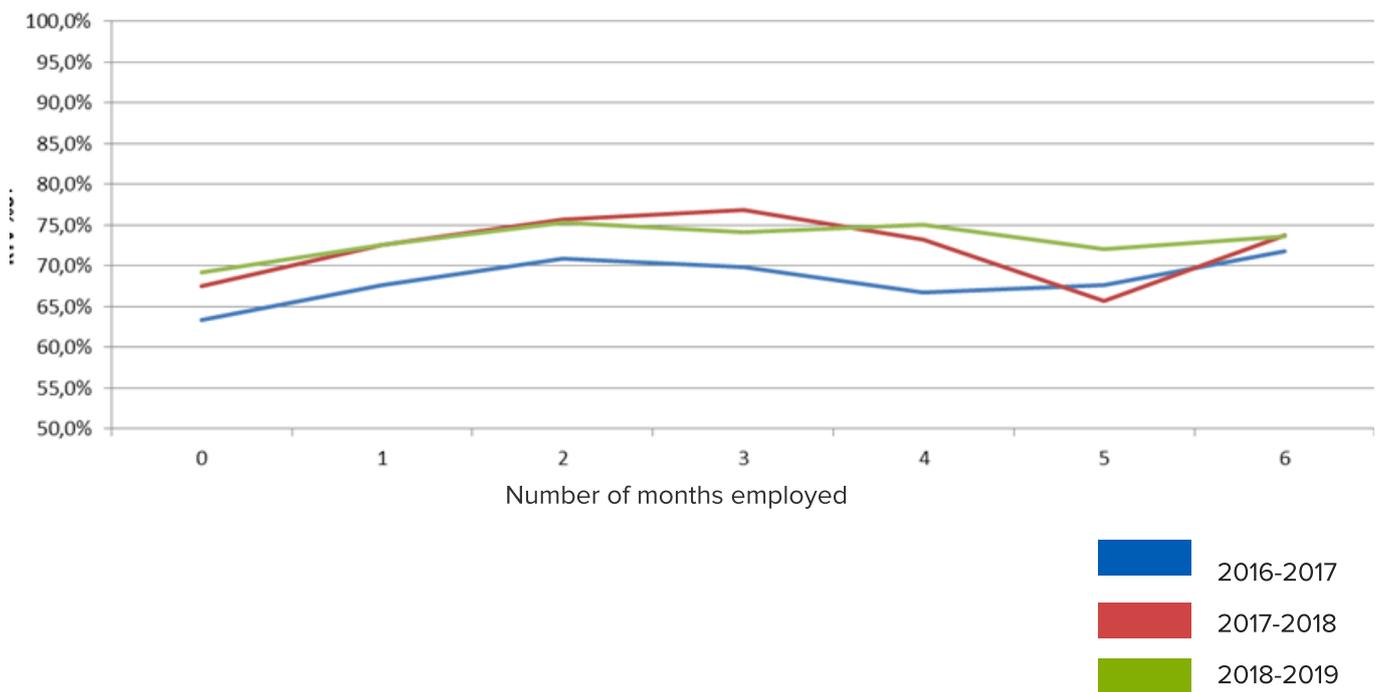
Participants who use TrainTool make major advancements in their skills. This becomes even more evident when comparing the intake to the end assessment.

Skill	Intake	Final assessment	Improvement
Being attentive to the client’s situation	47%	78%	31%
Being attention to the client’s emotions	64%	93%	29%
Analysing a clear client question	45%	83%	38%
Analysing an unclear client question	52%	76%	24%
Average score	51%	82%	31%

A faster path to achieving client satisfaction

Zilveren Kruis has seen that new employees are faster to reach the same level of client satisfaction as that enjoyed by their experienced colleagues. Nearly 70% of clients award 8 out of 10 points to their contact with new employees, even as early as their first working day. Two years ago, this figure was closer to 65%

Client satisfaction: % awarding 8 out of 10 or higher



Reduced onboarding times

The new onboarding programme has managed to reduce total onboarding time from 48 to 40 hours. Employees are also better prepared for their new jobs – which shows in the fact that fewer people drop out, and that more people achieve the desired level of skill.



48
formerly



40 hours
new onboarding
programme

Satisfied employees

Zilveren Kruis has found that employees are very enthusiastic about the new programme. Among its most highly valued aspects are the possibility to review one's own videos and the feedback provided. This is also evident from participant satisfaction ratings.

Participants review

How educational do you consider the programme to be?

98%

6 or higher

Average programme score

7,8



"You can take part in conversations independently, and you get feedback that matters."

"You learn a great deal from practicing with potentially real-life situations. It is always a little different if you have to do it yourself, which is why it is good to be able to review your own performance."

"The large variety in practice questions teaches you to answer more easily and more accurately. And plenty of repetitions help to make it easier all the time."

"You can practice using trainer feedback, and you learn a lot from that."



Want to learn more?

Have a look at the different case studies about other clients, like the Dutch railways, Rabobank, KLM, Aon en various universities. Find out more about our methods and the possibilities at www.faculty.nl/en/home/



**FACULTY
OF SKILLS**

Vondellaan 34 Utrecht, The Netherlands | +31 (0)30 8906 555 | www.faculty.nl