

2 Customer support

- ▶ call centres
- ▶ customer service technology

2.1 About business Call centres

Discussion

1 From the customer's point of view, does it matter where a call centre is? With a partner, think of reasons why it is, or is not important.

Scan reading

2 Read the article opposite about call centres in the Philippines. Decide if statements a–f are *T* (true) or *F* (false).

The Philippines have overtaken India as a business process outsourcing provider because ...

- a) millions of Filipinos emigrate every year.
- b) changes to financial regulations have made setting up call centres more attractive.
- c) call centre operators don't want to put all their eggs in one basket.
- d) American customers understand Filipinos better than Indians.
- e) most Filipinos' mother tongue is Tagalog.
- f) Indian call centres only provide high-level consultancy services.

Summarizing

3 Match the headings below with the correct paragraph in the text.

- 1 Margin for improvement
- 2 Culture change
- 3 India's reality check
- 4 Language of success
- 5 Learning from India


Reading for detail

4 With a partner, discuss the significance of these words and phrases from the article. Decide whether they represent strengths or weaknesses, threats or opportunities for the Philippines and complete the SWOT chart.

- bars, restaurants and shopping malls
- to bus employees to and from work
- replace up to half their staff
- four million college graduates
- consultancy projects
- national language
- unreliable infrastructure
- experienced managers
- cultural links
- tax breaks
- night shifts

	helpful	harmful
internal factors	Strengths cultural links	Weaknesses
external factors	Opportunities	Threats

Listening

5  1:14 Cloud computing now offers a third alternative to domestic or outsourced call centres. Listen to an interview with the head of customer relations at Groupon®, a 'deal of the day' website company, talking about new technology they use. Answer the questions.

- 1 How does Natterbox deal with calls from important clients?
- 2 How does Natterbox match callers to the best customer service agent?
- 3 What is special about Groupon's call centre staff?
- 4 How does Natterbox avoid customer frustration?
- 5 How could cloud-based computing change call centre staff's lives?

Roleplay

6 Work in groups of three. Your company provides an online music-streaming service to customers all over the world. Hold a meeting to decide where to set up your new call centre. Choose one of the three roles and prepare your arguments before you begin.

- Role A: low-cost country - turn to page 114.
- Role B: your own country - turn to page 118.
- Role C: cloud-based approach - turn to page 117.

Internet research

Search for the keywords *call centre racist abuse* to learn about racism experienced by call centre operators. What can be done to combat this type of abuse?

Glossary PAGE 152

- bus (verb)
- copycat
- tax break
- tax holiday
- twentysomething