



## Insider Thoughts: 10 Years of Customer Care Excellence

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Just last month, our Customer Care Centers received a tenth "Center of Excellence" [certification from BenchmarkPortal](#). We're honored to be the first financial institution to accomplish this. Or, we should say, we're honored to have such remarkable associates, who have earned and achieved this recognition for ten years straight. They bring positivity and compassion to their work each and every day, impacting the lives of our customers and driving our business forward.

How did we get so lucky? Why have such amazing people chosen to invest their time and talents in Alliance Data? Well – we'll let them tell you!

[wpvideo WD95bZcw]

### What makes you excited to come to work?

**Robert Lasley (Lenexa, 2 years with Alliance Data Card Services):** It excites me to know that I will help someone every day – whether it's a fellow associate or a cardholder.

**Adam Stanford (Milford, 7.5 years with Alliance Data Card Services):** I love the work that I do and the company I represent. I look forward to working with my team each day by coaching, challenging, and motivating them to be the best. Having the top team for five straight months would make anyone excited to come to work!

### How do you strive to give the best customer experience possible?

**Todd Dunning (Westerville, 6 months with Alliance Data Card Services):** I ensure that not a single customer hangs up angry or frustrated. I want each customer to be completely satisfied and proud to be a customer of the brands we support.

**Desiree' Ahnquist (Coeur D'Alene, 8 months with Alliance Data Card Services) :** The simple act of actually listening to what the customer has to say can make a world of difference to them. In Payment Solutions, our customers are expecting to be treated harshly, and that's not what we're about. Being kind and taking the time to really explore all the options can open new doors to resolution – or at least ease the stress of the customer.

### How does Alliance Data's training prepare you to successfully handle all calls?

**Kristin Bartley (Westerville, 2 years with Alliance Data Card Services):** Alliance Data does a great job at providing us with customer experience workshops and motivating us to provide outstanding customer service. Also, supervisors are always willing to sit down with us and provide feedback and advice.

**Lasley:** Having awesome trainers in Lenexa definitely allowed me to have confidence and the knowledge to navigate our systems, enabling me to have an immediate, positive impact in our retail collections department.

### Name a situation when you felt empowered to use your best judgment to handle a call?

**Bartley:** An older gentleman's card was blocked for suspicious activity, and I had to ask him security questions from Experian. He had trouble answering the questions and failed. Normally, we would close the account. However, I didn't believe he was suspicious, and I thought it was simply because he could not hear very well. Instead of closing his account, I looked his address up on Google maps and asked questions that only he would know. He was very happy and thankful that I was able to reopen his account and verify his identity another way.

**Corina Sweeney (Westminster, 2.5 years with Alliance Data Card Services):** I spoke with a customer who was frustrated because she only had her card for a month, she was unable to make it to the store, and she was being kicked off the website (during our recent update). I was excited, because I had the power to help her with her payment over the phone and waive the pay-by-phone fee. This really relieved her stress and helped start her relationship with our brand partner on the right foot.

### Share a time when you connected with a customer or turned a complaint into a positive experience:

**Ahnquist:** A customer's life had been turned upside down. She called to say she was giving up, because there was no way to get caught up. It was very difficult to work with at her first, but I gave her insight on how we could change the situation. I able to help her with the several accounts she had, and we discovered that we had a lot in common. At the end of the call, she said she found a new friend – and who would have thought it was someone in collections.

**Dunning:** I was able to connect with a customer who had horrible experiences with prior collectors. She was extremely frustrated and asked to speak with a supervisor before I could even open the call. Rather than place her with a supervisor right away, I chose to calm her down and explain why I was calling. In the end, I was able to collect three payments and received recognition from the customer, when she asked to speak with my supervisor about my performance and customer service skills.

### Anything else?

**Sweeney:** I feel so fortunate to have found a company like Alliance Data. We spend most of our daily hours at work, and we get to make it an adventure, instead of a job. It's been an amazing journey so far, and I can't wait to see what's next!

**Ahnquist:** I have to say that working for Alliance Data is one of the best decisions I have ever made. It has changed my perspective and shown me

that when a company cares, it positively affects how effective the business is.

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