



ELEMENTS AKADEMIA

Imparting The Finer Elements of Career

WHITE PAPER - Career in KPOs/BPOs

What is the difference between a KPO/BPO & Call Centre?

Knowledge Process Outsourcing/KPO or Business Process Outsourcing/BPO are essentially providers of third party business process services. It can range from high end work like analytics to basic data entry operators job. However, Call Center is basically a voice based customer service job and can be part of BPO or can be stand alone business.

As the industry has evolved, so have the roles. The traditional concept of a person doing nothing but answering phones is certainly not valid for the kind of roles Elements train you in. Our target roles – even if in Voice (which itself is 50% or less of total roles available through us) – involve business processes like Accounting, Insurance Claims etc. Note, Elements does not train for Data Entry jobs.

What is the difference between a KPO and a BPO?

To put it in a nutshell, you will reach KPO if you go up the value chain in BPO work. KPO work involves domain knowledge rather than just process knowledge required for BPO work. With most of Indian companies moving up the value chain in outsourcing, these definitions are getting blurred.

Most of the roles Elements trains for belong to KPO category. The typical hiring pattern of our students is 40-50% Voice Operations, 30-40% Finance & Accounting, 10-20% Insurance, and the remaining some others. Even in Voice Operations, our target roles involve a lot of problem solving, analytical work, ownership etc - very similar to a front line salesperson, just that it happens over the phone. Our target roles typically will include Customer Issue resolution (requiring, for instance, a sharp presence of mind... and hence in KPO) vs. Making Cold Calls to sell products (which would be typical call center job or a low end BPO job).

Is there a long term career in a KPO/BPO?

IT & IT Enabled Services (ITES) is the fastest growing sector in India; it's the career of future. With several new positions being created, people who are part of these sectors will automatically grow as increasingly new opportunities are created and demand for experienced people rises within the organizations and outside. Salaries typically double every 2-3 years, and an average performer reaches a senior manager profile (AVP and above) in 6-8 years, where he/she works along with MBAs from top B-schools.

Experience in ITES sector will have a great weightage in coming years. According to Nasscom, 3 lac jobs will be created by 2007, with bulk of the job opportunities being created by the BPO Sector.

Note, our partners also have an elaborate "earn-while-you-learn scheme" where employees can complete a course like MBA or equivalent along with their jobs.

What is the career road map at a typical KPO/BPO firm?

The multinational KPO/BPO firms have a clear career road map for every employee who joins based on his/her education; skill sets, experience, merit and performance. Every employee after completing a certain period of time in the company is eligible for a promotion based on performance. Promotion essentially depends on the employee's performance delivery as the process is clearly defined and documented.

These firms have very objective, transparent system of appraisal which depends totally on accomplishments against targets "meritocracy is the key driver".

Many of these firms offer a basket of services, and have a very robust system of Internal Job Rotation. Employee after completing 2+ years in their current role can apply for a different process; movement is possible subject to the interview and availability of position. For example, you may be hired for a Collection process and after 2 years you may move to an HR role.

What kind of work are we expected to do?

KPO/BPO firms service clients across diverse sectors. Jobs here are like any other regular companies offer in India except that it's outsourced from their overseas based clients. Roles are typically in Voice Operations (Customer Service), Finance & Accounting (Payables, Bookkeeping etc.), and Insurance etc.

How can we build a long term career in a KPO/BPO?

Stability, loyalty and hard work will never become obsolete and this is true for any sector including KPO/BPO. Knowledge and equity in the company come if you are a stable employee and that's when promotions and growth with greater responsibilities comes. Job at a KPO/BPO is like any other main stream company only difference being it is created by outsourcing work from some other company.