

FROST & SULLIVAN
BEST PRACTICES



2026

GLOBAL PERFORMANCE
INTELLIGENCE PLATFORM

**TRANSFORMATIONAL
INNOVATION LEADERSHIP**



Best Practices Criteria for World-class Performance

Frost & Sullivan applies a rigorous analytical process to evaluate multiple nominees for each recognition category before determining the final recognition recipient. The process involves a detailed evaluation of best practices criteria across two dimensions for each nominated company. Central excels in many of the criteria in the performance intelligence platform space.

AWARD CRITERIA	
<i>Transformational Innovation</i>	<i>Customer Impact</i>
Market Disruption	Price/Performance Value
Competitive Differentiation	Customer Purchase Experience
Market Gaps	Customer Ownership Experience
Leadership Focus	Customer Service Experience
Passionate Persistence	Brand Equity

Central, founded in 2013, is a New York-based company that offers a Performance Intelligence Platform focused on frontline performance improvement, growth and engagement in the flow of work. The company serves businesses of all sizes across technology, financial services, healthcare, travel & hospitality, and retail sectors.

Central positions itself as a post-interaction enablement platform for frontline teams. The unified platform, with an employee-centric design, offers customizable solutions for individual goals in

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**- Ankita Singh,
Industry Principal**

performance management, microlearning, coaching, quality, voice of employee (VoE) analytics, and gamification. AI-powered role play closes the gap between learning and live performance, letting agents rehearse complex scenarios repeatedly until the behavior holds under pressure. Central is increasingly orchestrating these solutions through agentic workflows, where AI coordinates coaching, learning, quality, and recognition actions across the flow of work.

Central’s AI-powered Manager Experience provides real-time assistance to frontline managers by offering them next-best actions for coaching, recognition, and performance support. The platform’s AI Assistant draws from multiple data streams to suggest integrated actions, such as assigning a coaching plan,

triggering learning, or recognizing progress. It delivers them through a natural language interface embedded in the manager's workflow. Central also prepares managers for every coaching conversation, captures the session, and auto-documents takeaways and commitments, removing the post-session admin that has historically consumed coaching time. The Manager Experience also offers a gamified experience for managers that tracks and reinforces manager behaviors such as recognition, coaching, and evaluations, driving consistency and accountability. Frost & Sullivan notes that this gamification feature for managers is disruptive, unlike any other in the market, and therefore gives Central a clear, distinct position. This has also allowed Central to reframe frontline management's role from one focused on reporting and oversight to one focused on coaching and supporting agents through increasingly complex, high-emotion scenarios. Frost & Sullivan analysts conclude that this focus on personalized enablement - rather than just analytics - has helped the company expand across global BPOs and enterprise contact center environments where traditional tools fall short.

The company has also reimagined quality evaluations; not as an isolated compliance workflow, but as a facilitator for performance improvement. The enhanced quality solution links quality assessment outcomes directly to coaching plans, personalized learning, and recognition triggers. This closes the loop between feedback and action, a significant business challenge, and helps frontline employees build the skills and behaviors needed to improve over time.

Central has leveraged GenAI efficiently to bolster frontline performance and learning and deliver immediate value. The AI microlearning and knowledge checks convert existing training materials (such as PDFs, PowerPoints, and manuals) into dynamic, interactive learning content, speeding up launch time (to seconds and minutes) and improving knowledge retention.

The AI mission summaries and sentiment insights leverage LLMs to analyze survey responses and quiz data, giving managers a clear picture of team knowledge, confidence, and sentiment—fueling targeted support and coaching. The personalized performance summaries are automatically generated for employees and managers, connecting performance outcomes with suggested next steps for growth or recognition.

Brand Equity Due to Stellar Performance Value

Central also offers a change management program and an enablement toolkit for its customers, including strategic onboarding, structured change enablement, and access to the Change Hub—a guided self-service portal with downloadable planning templates, communication kits, end-user deliverables, best practices, customer-proven strategies, and sample timelines and activation plans. This scalable enablement support helps customers drive adoption, engagement, and business alignment across all user groups.

To deepen admin expertise and build community, the company has continued to invest in its PowerUp solution, an interactive in-platform experience designed for Central admins. It's a gamified, guided journey that helps customers learn the platform by using the platform, offers admin certification, and connects power users across companies to share ideas and best practices. Frost & Sullivan recognizes how these service innovations not only drive faster time-to-value—they also build internal champions and long-term self-sufficiency across customer teams.

The clear success of Central's strategy can be seen through the following case study:

A leading global bank launched a six-month pilot with Central for its 30,000 customer care agents, aiming

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to improve productivity by gamifying key metrics, such as average handle time (AHT). Just two months in, the bank reported it was on track to save \$2 million annually due to reduced AHT. Over the course of the pilot, Central helped reduce AHT by four seconds while increasing engagement and motivation through personalized goals and training. These trends have shaped and reinforced Central's position as a modern, behavioral-first alternative to legacy WEM stacks and bolt-on CCaaS modules.

Some other customer outcomes reported by Central include:

- A global hospitality brand reduced early attrition during onboarding by 50%.
- A global bank using Central for back-office fraud teams increased accounts worked per hour by 4% while reducing errors from 6% to 2%.
- A global BPO achieved a 50% improvement in speed to proficiency.
- A leading UK insurer is saving 10 hours per week on content production using AI microlearning.

Frost & Sullivan believes that Central's commercial success stems from its strong focus on serving not just as a technology provider, but also as a cultural and digital transformation partner through its products and change management offerings.

Leadership Focus and Passionate Persistence

Central's leadership strategy focuses on anticipating market needs by designing adaptive solutions that align with the ever-changing workforce environment. One of the key aspects of the leadership strategy is the operationalization of behavior change through gamified performance challenges, targeted learning nudges, and personalized recognition workflows to performance through habits—all grounded in behavioral science and increasingly agentic workflows.

Another key aspect is addressing challenges faced by frontline organizations, especially underinvestment in frontline managers, the rising need for behavioral enablement, and the urgency to scale impact across complex, global operations. The company has made significant investments across product, go-to-market, and customer engagement to deliver against this vision.

The third significant aspect of Central's leadership philosophy is curating deep vertical strategies and use-case relevance and backing it with a strong go-to-market approach with tailored messaging, positioning, and sales strategies across industries, including banking, insurance & financial services (BFSI), travel & hospitality, telecom, utilities, healthcare, and BPO. Central nicely benefits from this vertical focus, which boosts sales velocity, enhances relevance in competitive cycles, and facilitates expansion into related teams, such as moving from contact centers to retail operations in telecom, or from customer service to fraud operations in BFSI.

Frost & Sullivan believes that Central will continue to grow, fueled by its vertical strategy and careful investments in product innovation to meet customer demands.

Conclusion

Central provides an AI-powered Performance Intelligence Platform that addresses several business challenges, including properly enabling frontline managers and employees through orchestrated performance, development, and engagement strategies. The company has a strong vertical strategy and a focus on product innovation that shows its clear commitment to its customers.

Due to its forward-thinking approach and valuable customer ownership experience, along with its strong overall performance, Central earns the 2026 Frost & Sullivan Global Transformational Innovation Leadership Recognition in the performance intelligence platform industry.

What You Need to Know about the Transformational Innovation Leadership Recognition

Frost & Sullivan's Transformational Innovation Leadership Recognition is its top honor and recognizes the market participant that exemplifies visionary innovation, market-leading performance, and unmatched customer care.

Best Practices Recognition Analysis

For the Transformational Innovation Leadership Recognition, Frost & Sullivan analysts independently evaluated the criteria listed below.

Transformational Innovation

Market Disruption: Innovative new solutions have genuine potential to disrupt the market, render current solutions obsolete, and shake up competition

Competitive Differentiation: Solutions or products articulate and display unique competitive advantages

Market Gaps: Solution satisfies the needs and opportunities that exist between customers' desired outcomes and their current market solutions

Leadership Focus: Companies' focuses are on building a leadership position in core markets and on creating stiff barriers to entry for new competitors

Passionate Persistence: Tenacity enables the pursuit and achievement of seemingly insurmountable industry obstacles

Customer Impact

Price/Performance Value: Products or services offer the best ROI and superior value compared to similar market offerings

Customer Purchase Experience: Purchase experience with minimal friction and high transparency assures customers that they are buying the optimal solution to address both their needs and constraints

Customer Ownership Excellence: Products and solutions evolve continuously in sync with the customers' own growth journeys, engendering pride of ownership and enhanced customer experience

Customer Service Experience: Customer service is readily accessible and stress-free, and delivered with high quality, high availability, and fast response time

Brand Equity: Customers perceive the brand positively and exhibit high brand loyalty, which is regularly measured and confirmed through a high Net Promoter Score®

Best Practices Recognition Analytics Methodology

Inspire the World to Support True Leaders

This long-term process spans 12 months, beginning with the prioritization of the sector. It involves a rigorous approach that includes comprehensive scanning and analytics to identify key best practice trends. A dedicated team of analysts, advisors, coaches, and experts collaborate closely, ensuring thorough review and input. The goal is to maximize the company’s long-term value by leveraging unique perspectives to support each Best Practice Recognition and identify meaningful transformation and impact.

STEP		VALUE IMPACT	
		WHAT	WHY
1	Opportunity Universe	Identify Sectors with the Greatest Impact on the Global Economy	Value to Economic Development
2	Transformational Model	Analyze Strategic Imperatives That Drive Transformation	Understand and Create a Winning Strategy
3	Ecosystem	Map Critical Value Chains	Comprehensive Community that Shapes the Sector
4	Growth Generator	Data Foundation That Provides Decision Support System	Spark Opportunities and Accelerate Decision-making
5	Growth Opportunities	Identify Opportunities Generated by Companies	Drive the Transformation of the Industry
6	Frost Radar	Benchmark Companies on Future Growth Potential	Identify Most Powerful Companies to Action
7	Best Practices	Identify Companies Achieving Best Practices in All Critical Perspectives	Inspire the World
8	Companies to Action	Tell Your Story to the World (BICEP*)	Ecosystem Community Supporting Future Success

*Board of Directors, Investors, Customers, Employees, Partners

