

Driving Customer Satisfaction The Role of Support Engineers in the Era of Automation

An interview with Girly Mbonani - Junior Support Engineer at Adapt IT Telecoms
by Katucia Moussongo

In the Technology and Telecommunication sectors, customer complaints and concerns abound constantly. To proactively address customer expectations and prevent potential frustration, companies employ Support Engineers. These skilled individuals stand boldly behind technology to ensure unwavering customer satisfaction and loyalty. In this interview, meet Girly Mbonani - Junior Support Engineer at Adapt IT Telecoms.



Tell us a bit about your background and how you got into your area of specialisation.

After earning my diploma in Information Technology, I landed an internship at a company that was later acquired by Adapt IT. Coming freshly from school to a male-dominated industry was not easy initially, but I made it through.

I am grateful to my mentor, Gavin Abebrese, who kindly taught me everything I know about application support engineering. I don't want to forget my former colleagues Schalk Snyman, who trained me on the system I'm currently working on, and Sophie Khoza, who provided support when needed. She used to say, "Don't worry! Over time, you will understand it and be able to execute it."

I consider myself lucky to have been supported by remarkable people, and I truly believe that having a great support system is important in any work environment.

Why Adapt IT?

Because of the culture. I believe in the values upheld by the company, particularly - Honesty. Personally, I'm an honest person who takes on responsibilities and is always accountable for my actions. Also, regarding professional development, we have access to Udemy to upskill ourselves and we have groups where we can go when we need help.

Can you discuss any trends or innovations in Telecommunications impacting your role as a Support Engineer?

Task automation has a big impact on us. In fact, many tasks previously performed by support engineers are now being automated by technologies such as **AI-powered chatbots and the like.**

An AI-powered chatbot can answer basic customer questions and troubleshoot common

problems. This helps our support engineers focus on tackling more complex issues, which benefits our team overall.

Moreover, monitoring and reporting are being automated, too. We can check the system's performance and identify any issues in real-time. We will receive a notification when the system is not performing well, letting us know when to log in and investigate.

In your opinion, why do Support Engineers hold such an important role in the Technology & Telecommunication sectors?

We switch off fires. I like to think of myself as a fire extinguisher. Every day, we have the privilege of engaging directly with users on behalf of a company or brand. Do you see how central that position is? When users encounter problems, we provide effective resolutions that foster trust and loyalty with the customer.

Likewise, as knowledgeable, patient, and professional support engineers, we leave a positive, lasting impression on the customer. Indeed, **our role impacts and contributes significantly to a company's brand image and reputation.**

How do you see Automation shaping the future of technical support roles, particularly for Junior Engineers?

Junior engineers who embrace automation and learn to use AI-powered tools effectively will be well-equipped for the future. Why? Because they have the ability to use automation to deliver great results.

This might involve understanding how to interpret data from automated diagnosis and collaborating with AI to resolve any intricate issues that may arise. Lastly, automation is the

future. We are heading there, and it is essential to understand and harness its distinct advantages and limitations.

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What advice would you give aspiring Support Engineer students looking to build a successful career?

Our role as support engineers involves encountering unique and complex problems that necessitate individuals with solid analytical and problem-solving abilities. If someone wants to become a software support engineer, they must practice troubleshooting by working on different scenarios and learning to diagnose and resolve issues efficiently.

There are issues that require immediate resolution and cannot be delayed for an hour. Thus, practice makes perfect.

In addition, they must learn how to communicate because communication is a vital aspect of our field of expertise. Finally, strong writing skills are necessary to translate technical language or code into words everyone can read and understand.