



## Gold standard service: part-time or all the time



It's noon on Tuesday and Perkiomen School's receptionist is pulling double duty for admissions and the school's main phone line.

While this double act had become the norm, for Diana Gleeson, Perkiomen School's Assistant Head of School for External Affairs, it wasn't a sustainable solution.

Over the past seven years, the number of staff who covered the phones shifted, leaving a single receptionist to juggle answering the phone and other administrative tasks throughout the day.

*"Our receptionist was skipping appointments, which wasn't a healthy situation for anyone," Diana said.*

As an independent boarding and day school for students, Perkiomen School generates most of its revenue through admissions. This makes it crucial to not only connect with current students and their families, but also prospective students in a timely manner—no matter the time of year.

### Focus on flexibility

"Flexibility was an important piece to us," said Diana. "We might need help for an hour and a half one day, then another day, it might only be a half hour. And during admission season, which is a busy time for us, we needed to be able to make adjustments and allow our receptionist to work on higher priority projects."

But with activity fluctuations throughout the year, it didn't make sense to hire another full-time set of hands. After researching possible solutions to their staffing dilemma, Diana found Ruby.

### Integrating Ruby as back-up support

Whether it's a call about a construction project, admissions, or even a food delivery, Perkiomen School isn't letting anything slip through the cracks with Ruby taking over answering part-time.

"The biggest change is our receptionist can finally have her lunch consistently," Diana said. "She's not worried about being pulled away from the desk now because she knows it's covered. It's been a win-win for everyone."

She added: **"Our receptionist doesn't feel threatened by Ruby, or that she's being replaced.** It's an easy backup and she doesn't need to rely on anyone else's schedule as priorities shift."

In addition to answering calls, Ruby helps Perkiomen School conveniently relay messages to teachers and administrators in a way that accommodates their busy schedules.

"We've loved being able to customize how messages are sent. Most teachers are busy when someone calls, so it's easy for them to check their email and return calls at their convenience," said Diana.

### A new approach

When she first pitched Ruby to her CFO, Diana was met with uncertainty about introducing such a major shift in operations. But over time that uncertainty dissipated, and beyond a much-deserved break for their receptionist, Perkiomen School found a new perspective on customer service thanks to Ruby.

*"Ruby is the gold standard. In terms of companies whose model of customer service should be emulated, you think of places like Disney and Nordstrom, but Ruby has that same feeling."*

In fact, as Diana and her team focus on their own blueprint for customer service now and in the future, she's taking inspiration from Ruby: "I always hope our customers get that same feeling from Perkiomen School that I get from Ruby. It really feels like the way business should be done."