Avaya Demystified
by Walt Medak

Q: One of our users wants to be able to pick up another line when it rings. I guess a couple other phones at our Distribution Center are set up like this. She says when the phone at one desk rings, she could press #7 to pick up that call from her own desk. I thought maybe this had to do with a coverage path, but it looks like that is already set up. Any ideas?

A: The feature this user is talking about is called a pickup group. The first thing would be to check the feature access code and make sure #7 is correct. Use the command "*display feature-access-codes*" and look for "*Call Pickup Access Code*". I've seen that code start with a "*" more often than a "#", so maybe it's that simple.
The next thing to do, assuming she is using the correct code, would be to make sure all of the stations in question here are in the same pickup group. You can use the command "*list pickup-group*" to see all of groups you currently have programmed. This command doesn't show you the extension numbers that are in each group, only the number of members. If you only have a few groups, you can see the members with the command "*display pickup-group x*". If you have a lot of groups, it might be easier to look at each extension in question with the command "*list usage extension xxx*" and look for an entry that says "*Pickup Group*".
Let's say you determined that all of the extensions this user wants to pick up are already in pickup group 4, but her station is not. Use the command "change pickup-group 4" and add her extension number to the group.
There is another feature called Directed Call Pickup that could also work. It requires a little more programming, but could be used to get around the problem with only being allowed to be in one pickup group. To use the feature, the user would enter the Directed Call Pickup feature access code followed by the extension number of the phone that was ringing.

Q: Can you tell me if there is the possibility of prioritization on our Avaya? I am used to an ability to say things like the agent in the call center who was least busy gets the call first. We seem to believe that there is, but not sure what it is.

A: On the first page of each hunt group form, there is a field called "*Group Type*". Without actually looking, I would bet your call center hunt groups are probably set to "*ucd-mia*", which is the default setting. That stands for uniform call distribution - most idle agent. Set this way, your system should try to decide which available agent has been idle the longest and direct the call to them. Another option is "*ucd-loa*", which means uniform call distribution - least occupied agent. With this setting, the system tries to determine which agent has had the least amount of time on ACD calls, and sends that agent the next call even if they just answered the last call.
Your system does have the necessary options enabled to use a completely different type of call center logic called "*Expert Agent Selection*", or EAS. This is a much more detailed and refined system of routing calls to the agents. The current design, often referred to as "*split-based*", requires you to enter the agent's extension number in each hunt group they answer, and requires them to log in to each group separately. With EAS, referred to as "*skill-based*", you create an agent-ID for each agent. In that agent-ID you program which groups they answer calls for, as well as their skill level within that group. The agent then logs in with their agent-ID, and with that single login, they can be available to answer calls from as many as 20 different hunt groups.
In an EAS call center, when a call comes in to a particular group, the system would first try to find the agent that has the highest skill level available, and if there are more than one with the same skill it can

use either the mia or loa logic to determine which agent will get the call.

Changing to EAS would require a considerable amount of programming. Each agent would have to be assigned an agent-ID, and all of the hunt groups would either have to be changed to EAS or new hunt groups could be created and all of the vectors re-written to queue to the new hunt group numbers.

And as always, if you have any questions please call 800-452-6477, or visit us at www.medak.com.