

REMARKABLE HUMANS

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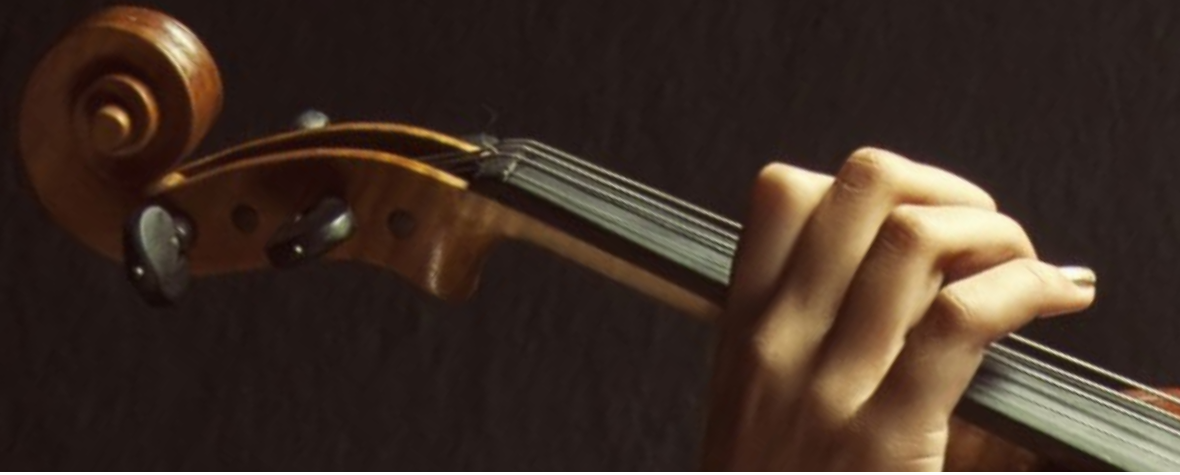
Chapter 3:
Customer experience
Creating the CX factor



THE KRONOS
'NOTES ON DISRUPTION' SERIES



Workforce Innovation
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What's the source of a great customer experience?

In a digital age, the customer holds all the cards. And when it comes to the modern customer experience (CX), they expect a lot.

They want a personalised service. One that's faster and more accessible than ever before. And they want the option to engage with brands through any channel.

Technology can help with a lot of these challenges. But we're living in highly disruptive times. Many companies are scrambling to stay on top of the latest innovations. And technology isn't perfect. You can't rely on it to carry your CX on its own.

Still, if you want to stay competitive, that standout CX needs to come from somewhere. Or someone. Specifically, the people who – directly or indirectly – play a huge role in defining the kind of experience your customers have when they touch your brand.

Your employees.

If you want to deliver great CX, you've got to engage your people. They need to be excited by what you're selling, or how you're selling it. And they need to believe in what you stand for. If your people don't buy into your brand, that will come across in the service your customers receive. When things are so disruptive, that could make the difference between succeeding and sinking.

In this eBook, we'll examine the modern experience that today's customers expect; why employee engagement is key to delivering it; how to tell if your employees are engaged or not; and what you can do to improve engagement in your business.

75% of companies said their top objective was to improve customer experience.¹

¹ http://go.spigit.com/rs/123-ABC-801/images/Spigit_Crowdsourced_Innovation_Report.pdf

CX is more important than ever

Why is CX a bigger deal today than ever before? It's not just that digital technology has raised consumer expectations. It's also because word travels faster. Social media can quickly spread what consumers think about your brand – both good and bad.



It can affect your profits as well. Loyalty is a big driver of revenue. And if you want customers to keep coming back, you've got to offer them a better CX than they can find elsewhere.

73% of consumers say they're extremely or somewhat likely to switch brands if a company provides inconsistent levels of service.²

CX for a younger generation

Younger generations are now the dominating demographic in the marketplace. They see CX differently. And they're changing how brands engage with customers.

Want to create a CX that will get the attention of younger and future generations? Then you need to know how they think.

Here are some of the key things they're looking for:

- **Authenticity**
When younger generations talk to someone who represents your brand, automated messages won't cut it. They want to have a real, informal conversation with someone genuine on the other end of the phone. Not an employee reading from a script.
- **Choice**
They might not want to phone at all. Social channels are becoming one of the main ways young people interact with brands. But remember that choice is just as important as keeping up with the latest channels. Delivering a great CX to a younger generation isn't just about having an active Instagram. They want to engage with you on their terms, when they want.
- **Instant gratification**
A generation of smartphone users are used to getting instant service at the tap of a button. To give them the CX they want, be ready to respond to their queries as quickly as possible, particularly on social media. Because if you can't get to them fast enough, a faster competitor may only be a few swipes away.

The importance of customer service is nothing new. But digital technology and changing expectations have raised the stakes. The voice of the customer is getting louder and louder. Which means getting CX wrong is no longer an option.

Great CX starts at home

When improving your brand experience, deciding where to focus can feel like a tough choice. You want to create a great internal culture and keep your people happy. But your revenue – and growth – is dependent on keeping customers loyal and attracting new prospects. Do you focus your energy and resources outwards, or inwards?

Actually, it doesn't have to be a choice. You just need to know which one to focus on first. Start by engaging your employees, and they'll help you deliver a great experience for customers.

Before we look at some of the best ways to engage your employees, let's take a step back. How can you tell if your employees are disengaged in your workplace? Some warning signs are easier to spot than others.

Here are four key things to look out for.

87% of employees worldwide are not engaged at work.³



The main causes of employee disengagement are boredom and frustration (35%), followed by a poor work-life balance (31%) and stagnant career prospects (30%).⁴

Four signs of a disengaged employee



Stony faced, even on the good days

Don't mistake this as quiet = disengaged. Most work spaces will have a mix of introverts and extroverts. But if you see employees looking visibly disinterested when things go well – like when the business secures a new deal, or when they get the chance to work on an exciting new project – that could mean they're disengaged.



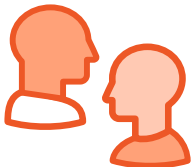
Not interested in performance

If an employee is performing badly and isn't fussed about getting better, they're probably disengaged. But watch out for the just-good-enough-ers. Employees doing the bare minimum and hitting their targets might not be engaged either. Do they want to learn and grow in their role, even if they're performing well? If not, that can be an equally concerning sign.



Would rather be getting a coffee

Disengaged employees will have a harder time concentrating on their job. If you spot people taking coffee breaks all the time or idly browsing social media at their desks, it means they're distracted – and not engaged by what they're supposed to be doing.



Plays the blame game

The way an employee approaches mistakes can tell you a lot about how engaged they are. If they're disengaged, they won't want to take responsibility for anything that goes wrong. They'll look for someone to blame. An engaged employee, meanwhile, will see mistakes as a natural part of the learning process in any role. They'll use them as an opportunity to see what they can do better next time.

"Highly engaged employees make the customer experience. Disengaged employees break it."

Timothy R. Clarke⁵

Four ways to engage your workforce

Now you have a better idea of what disengaged employees might look like. But how do you turn that disengagement around? How can you get them invested in delivering a great service?

This isn't something you can do easily – or quickly. But with the right time and investment, it is possible.

It starts with the small things. Here are four steps you can take to get the ball rolling:

Tell employees how they're doing – and keep telling them

Schedule regular feedback sessions. It will help employees feel good about what they're doing right and understand where they can improve. Not only will this enable them to provide better CX, it will help them feel like their good work is noticed, which is key for driving engagement.

Let personalities flourish

Like we mentioned earlier, young people crave the authentic. They want the real deal. So, giving your employees the breathing room to be themselves is essential. Let them put their personality into the CX they provide, and they'll feel more invested and engaged.

Be flexible

A little trust goes a long way. Giving people the chance to be flexible about how they work can help reduce absence rates and improve engagement. You could offer duvet days, for example, or the option to swap shifts with co-workers.

Create a safe, productive team environment

People are more engaged when they're enjoying themselves and feel like they're part of a team. Create a work environment where people feel comfortable being open and honest with each other. And set time aside for regular, fun team building exercises.

Once you've laid the groundwork to improve workforce engagement, a better CX will follow, driven by your people.

Disengagement costs companies \$550 billion dollars annually in the US alone.⁶

Why happy employees result in happy customers

As you begin your journey to engage your employees, you'll probably wonder – what's the link between an engaged workforce and happy customers? Has anyone proven it? And what will my business get out of it in the end?

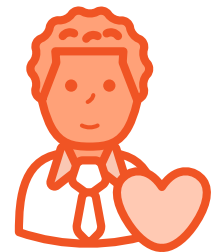
Let's get scientific about this for a moment. What is engagement? What's going on in our brain when we're engaged?

Engagement happens when we feel positive about what we do. It's when we're passionate about the company we work for. It's when we feel like our work has meaning – that what we do really matters.

The biological reason? Neurotransmitters and hormones. When we're into our work, our brains generate chemicals, like dopamine and serotonin, which make us feel good.

Set out a strong mission, vision and set of values, and you'll create the sense of purpose that drives engagement. And by acknowledging employees for following those values, you're giving them the social validation needed to help them generate those feel-good chemicals in their brain.

Engagement isn't just chemical. It's emotional too. If your employees are engaged on an emotional level, they'll take the organisation's successes and setbacks to heart. So, they'll have an instinctual commitment to giving the best CX they possibly can.



The link is real

The relationship between employee engagement and CX is backed up by a growing body of research.

For instance, Temkin Group found a clear link between the two in a recent employee engagement benchmark study. The study showed that 79% of employees working at companies with “significantly above average” CX in their industry are “highly” or “moderately” engaged. This is compared to just 49% at companies with “average” or “below average” CX.⁷

Another recent study revealed that companies with great CX have “1.5 times as many engaged employees as do customer experience laggards.”⁸

CX and internal engagement: two sides of the same coin

There’s a clear, proven link between employee engagement and better CX. Which means if you want your CX to stand out, you can’t treat CX and employee engagement as two separate issues.

Behind most great customer experiences, there’s an engaged employee. Get your internal experience right, and you’ll have the foundations for a CX that will keep your customers happy – and benefit your business.

When companies do engage their workforce, they outperform their peers by 147% in earnings per share.⁹

⁷ http://www.temkingroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/1703_EEBenchmarkStudy17_FINAL.pdf

⁸ <https://experiencematters.blog/2016/02/16/report-employee-engagement-benchmark-study-2016/>

⁹ <http://www.gallup.com/services/190118/engagedworkplace.aspx>



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That's why our solutions are purpose-built for your industry
and all your employees.**

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