Delivering a More Customer-Centric Experience

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Becoming a customer-centric organization doesn't mean your employees have to take a backseat. When you involve the entire organization in your business and digital transformation goals, everyone can benefit. <mark>Delivering customer-centric experiences should be a culture-wide initiative, says Denise Lee Yohn of the Harvard Business Review.</mark>

Research from the Temkin Group reveals that employee engagement and customer experience go hand in hand. Companies with above-average customer experiences boast 1.5 times more engaged employees than companies that don't focus on achieving a customer-centric mindset.

Greater Customer-Centricity Starts from Within

Here are five ways to get your employees excited and involved in creating a customer-centric experience:

Host brainstorm sessions

Bring departments together to discuss possible ways to achieve a more customer-centric approach to your overall business strategy. Ideally, you want them to come up with ideas for putting the customer first that will tie into their own work.

Explain how employees' contributions directly support the organization's goals of becoming more customer-centric. For employees to buy into this culture adjustment, your leaders and middle managers will need to completely commit to regular reinforcement of the initiative.

Encourage direct interactions with customers

Sure, your front-line employees interact with customers on a daily basis and can understand their pain points. But what about your accounting department and administrative staff?

To ensure everyone understands the crucial role they can play, arrange for all employees to have a chance to sit in on sales calls, attend customer visits and participate in ride-alongs or industry conferences alongside customers. Make sure your employees who directly interact with customers know they have the space and tools to resolve customer issues on the spot. Encourage employees to think beyond the typical company protocol to deliver above-and-beyond solutions.

Celebrate success

Consider building a customer-centric aspect into the bonus structure or other business processes. For instance, reward an employee for proposing an idea that the company ended up implementing to improve the customer experience. The idea is to show employees that everyone can impact the user experience, and that the company's customer centric culture rewards those who make a difference in the company's goals.

Refining management processes to better achieve your business goals will not only help with employee morale, but also reinforce the value of being a customer centric company.

Set the stage with hiring

Hiring managers should be prepared to ask potential hires about their experiences with customers (for example, a time when they provided above-and-beyond customer service). This will drive home the point that the company is looking for customer-focused employees, even those who don't directly interact with customers on a daily basis.

Enlighten your back-office staffers

Customer service and sales professionals can deliver training sessions to departments like HR, accounting and administration. These professionals can share what it means to create a customer-centric organization, and offer inspiration to their co-workers on how they can

contribute to organizational change. Offer those staffers who don't normally engage with customers the chance to impact the customer experience in some way.

Bottom Line

Your employees are your most effective resource for achieving a more customer-centric experience. When you implement the practices above, you can create a more engaged workforce while also enhancing the customer experience.