

Business Manager

Vol. 16 No. 12 June, 2014 Single Copy ₹ 85/-

Making HR People Complete

Workplace Productivity




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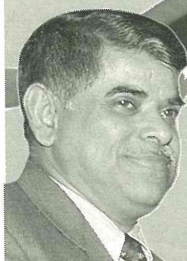

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Idea in brief

1. Start with an inside-out look at your core purpose
2. Map your culture to understand the values
3. Determine who your customers are
4. Map the employee journey to understand what experience you're currently delivering to employees
5. Treat Communication as a strategic activity

The entire employee experience plays a very crucial role in ensuring that employee productivity is at its best.

Employee experience - Backbone of employee productivity

Aparna Sharma

Country Head, HP



On a regular week, life is full of activities which expect you to strategize, conceptualize, co-create, collaborate, and execute. So much so that weekends usually come in as a breath of fresh air. Not that the work responsibilities (24x7) are lesser, but most importantly, it gives me some "Me Time". It's that time which helps me to unwind and recharge my batteries.

One of the activities of my "Me Time" is catching up with Bollywood movies. Movies which make me experience a different world. While I can write pages on various learning that I have gained through Cinema, that's not what I want to focus here. Post one such

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outing, I went to KFC to enjoy the new spicy Paneer Ginger Burger. I asked my husband to grab a seat, while I went to the counter to place the order.

At the counter was this sweet little girl, barely out of her high school, welcoming me with her pleasant smile. Post taking the order, she recommended some combo meal explaining how it would increase my overall experience and also will not drill a hole in my pocket. She asked me to take a seat since my order would take a few minutes. I came back to my seat and started chatting to my

nce my order would take a few minutes. I ck to my seat and started chatting to my about the movie. In some time, the girl ed with my burger and French fries. I was d to find a small bottle of packed water. surprised look, holding the bottle of water I o the girl. And before I could say anything, ed, "Madam, it's complimentary. Since you ordered for any drink I felt you might need k you for visiting KFC and have a nice er smile was infectious. My husband also ing. While I am not promoting KFC here, ainly would like to bring to light the entire r experience that I went through. That ce of three minutes was more powerful three hour movie that I had watched. True r delight!

e customer experience is one of the most at levers in the entire business value chain, ps us in generating goodwill and certainly s bottom-line. Similarly, the entire e experience plays a very crucial role in g that employee productivity is at its best.

oyee experience is what I call the promise nization makes to its people, whether new or experienced employees. It's a statement it's like to work in the organization. You ple to get excited and be proud about the le experience they can have working in anization. You want everyone that works organization to understand the quality and f the learning and development. And you celebrate your organization's commitment numerous benefits available for its es.

of us have to put up with airline travel imes a year. Few of us look forward to it. us actively dread it. And yet, does the perience have to be something we dread? e contrast between the experiences of a airline company; we call it A and a private company, we call it J, both of which have utes across cities in India.

oyees, in airline A, have little awareness of all work process, and instead have a y to understand their own piece of the to the exclusion of the rest. When asked y were doing and why, employees typically

The experience an organization delivers to customers is a reflection of the organization and its employees.

its employees.

in-flight service. They have the gold standard in in-flight service. Right from the process of recruiting in-flight personnel, flight attendants, all the way through the specific touch points with passengers during the flight, before the flight, after the flight, they've honed this as an art.... It's really how well their flight staff are trained. First of all, J Airlines focuses largely on what they call the front part of the cabin, that is, the first class and the business class passengers. And they have a superb database on their frequent fliers, on their loyal passengers, loyal customers. As soon as a passenger is seated, even before he or she asks for, let's say, a drink, the flight attendant knows exactly what kind of drink, hot or cold, if hot then is it with or without sugar and if cold then how many cubes of ice, go into it. So they're scripted in knowing exactly who the passengers are and what they want.

- ◆ A smile is a user experience
- ◆ An honest and candid reply is a user experience.
- ◆ Delivering happiness across as many touch points and as often as possible is the ultimate user experience.

What do all of these have in common?

Employees can create the link

Employees are the best link to great customer experiences. Employees are an organization's most important touch point. The experience an organization delivers to customers is a reflection of the organization and its employees. Employees, who are motivated, empowered and enabled with the information, tools and technology will deliver on the brand promise and can create delightful customer experience. This goes far beyond employee engagement. This means taking the design and measurement of employee experience just as seriously as the design and measurement of the customer experience. If you cannot turn your employees into your fans, there's no way you will turn your customers into fans. How do we shift our focus from measuring employee engagement to designing great employee experiences that turn employees into fans who excel at delivering happiness, making you smile or solving problems of the customer?

In the dozens of conversations I have with companies charting their paths to a better customer

explain their own tasks without reference to the overall process of flight departures. Employees involved in the flight departure process displayed a great deal of blaming towards each other for late departures and other negative outcomes.

On the other hand, employees in the airline J focus on subjective issues, what they call human software. Their first way of differentiating themselves from their competition was to focus on in-flight service. They have the gold standard in in-flight service. Right from the process of recruiting

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While important as it help improve employee ensuring

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customers experience what our employees make them experience. If you give your employees an experience of a lifetime, then they will influence your bottom line always - either through higher productivity or through better brand promotion.

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experience, the role of employees often comes up. We talk about the importance of employee empowerment and how critical it is that employees feel free to make decisions that are right for customers. We discuss tactics like hiring, socialization, and rewards that can help organizations build corporate cultures that reinforce customer-centric attitudes and behaviours.

Rarely - if ever - does anyone ask me about actually *designing* the employee experience.

As I've said before: Great customer experiences don't happen by accident - they have to be actively designed. In other words, you need to follow a structured process to ensure that you're meeting customers' needs and enabling interactions that are easy and enjoyable for them. While the discipline of design hasn't yet become main stream in the business world, companies around the globe - have started to embrace the value of design in customer experience. They're conducting ethnographic research to uncover customers' hidden needs. They are bringing customers in for co-creation sessions to develop new experience ideas. They are iteratively prototyping and testing the proposed solutions.

So why aren't these two concepts - employee engagement and experience design - more frequently combined? In most companies that I know of, even in those where customer experience is a priority, the employee experience just kind of happens. The IT department implements a new CRM or accounting system, finance and human resources introduce new policies and procedures, the facilities group moves employees to a new and unfamiliar location - and employees must learn (mostly on their own) how to adapt to these changes and integrate them into new ways of working. But just like great customer experiences, great *employee* experiences - those that enable employees to support customers as they are supposed to - don't happen by accident. They have to be actively designed.

Employees are on a journey....Help them create great stories!

How do we inspire employees to deliver great customer experiences? Is it as simple (and as hard) as designing great employee experiences? Experiences that motivate and support employees to work, allowing them to learn, slay dragons, be happy, transform and develop mastery along their own life's journey.

If you're ready to cross the threshold along your own journey to transform your enterprise, here's a possible roadmap for tackling the challenge:

Companies striving to improve employee engagement rarely develop an inclusive view on end-to-end employee experience, across processes, across every employee touch point.

- ◆ Design the desired customer experience.
- ◆ Map the employee journey to understand what experience you're currently delivering to employees.
- ◆ Design the desired employee experience.
- ◆ Architect a platform that allows you to deliver on the experience.
- ◆ Treat Communication as a strategic activity (think content marketing for employees)

The key lies in the details. There's no one right method to deliver great employee experiences that align with the customer experience. Every enterprise is unique. But there are organizations out there that are doing some really interesting work in this area.

Few organizations through their innovative approach have leveraged their employee experience as a brand differentiator:

- ◆ **FAB: The Fab Way.** It is making people smile. Everyone's got a customer, be it external or internal. Ask yourself, "Will it make my customer smile?" If yes, do it. If not, don't do it.
- ◆ **Netflix: Freedom and responsibility.** Shaping the employee experience through culture.
- ◆ **Hubspot: Creating a lovable company.** Solution for the customer. Not just their happiness, but their success.
- ◆ **Zappos: Delivering Happiness.** Zappos is committed to WOWing every customer.
- ◆ **Lululemon: Lululemon Athletica** has carefully cultivated culture. Every employee is encouraged to create a vision for their ideal life with goal setting.
- ◆ **O2 Fans and fandom.** If our people are not fans of the business, they're not likely to inspire customers to become fans, so it all starts with our people.
- ◆ **Google: Not a happy accident:** how Google deliberately designs workplace satisfaction

Companies striving to improve employee engagement rarely develop an inclusive view on end-to-end employee experience, across processes, across every employee touch point. And all too often the employee experience conversation is simply an add-on to employer branding. It's time to take the employee experience seriously and think about ways to optimize the hundreds of touch points between employees and the organization. Why? Because it is a critical component for managing cost, fostering collaboration, and ultimately driving better business results. Our