



How employee experience
and customer experience
go hand in hand

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

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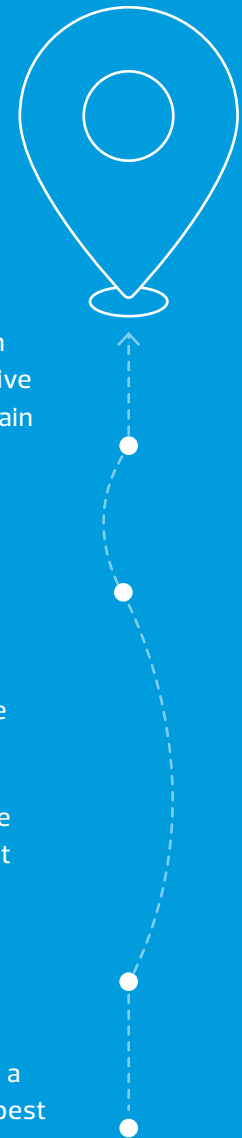
➤ In the customer journey, there are many moments that matter.

From receiving an email to speaking with customer service, each moment is an opportunity to engage with your customers and give them a positive **customer experience (CX)**. Each is a chance to gain a new customer, retain a loyal customer or, potentially, lose that customer for life. In other words, every moment counts. With all this attention on customers, however, there's one essential CX factor that often gets overlooked: your employees.

Organizations that focus on improving CX often zero in on technology and digital transformation—the tools that will help employees improve their interactions with customers. And those tools are critically important.

Yet companies frequently fail to prioritize who will be responsible for using that new technology and how they're using it to interact with customers. Mature organizations are recognizing that **employee experience (EX)** is vital to improving CX and that a satisfied team of workers is behind every positive customer moment that matters.

This guide dives into the relationship between EX and CX, taking a look at the symbiotic bond between the two and offering some best practices for improving EX, and thus improving CX at the same time.





➤ A productive worker is a happy worker.

It's rare today for employees to stay with one company for an entire career, especially as recruiters are constantly looking for top talent and presenting attractive opportunities. Organizations would be wise to consider how a good EX can help them retain their best workers. Today's employees are looking for a sense of purpose and value. Younger workers are evaluating who to work for—and who to stay with—based on a different set of variables than that of past generations. Organizations must accept this or risk missing out on the next wave of top talent.

It was once said that a happy worker was a productive worker. Now that aphorism has been turned on its head: A productive worker is a happy worker. When looking for a sense of purpose and value, today's employees want to make sure they're also going to be productive. Doing so makes them feel valuable to the company and validates their 40 (or more) hours a week at work to themselves. Being productive makes them happy, and that makes for a positive EX that, in turn, makes them more engaged with your customers. Simply put, better engagement, ultimately, means better CX.

BEST PRACTICE: Prioritize EX to attract and retain today's top talent.



➤ Say goodbye to Betty's spreadsheet from 1987



Millennials and Gen Z employees have grown up with limitless data at their fingertips. They know what technology does for them at home, and they expect it to do the same at work. Asking your employees to perform a repetitive task like data entry when it's unnecessary just hurts your EX.

Today's employees want the tools to be productive, and that includes any technology that acknowledges the value of their time and frees them up to work on higher-value enterprise tasks.

Going from paper and spreadsheets to purely digital processes is challenging for many companies. Some organizations are eager to evolve; others are resistant. But it's important to understand how slow-walking technological changes doesn't just affect your customers and their experience; it affects your employees and their experience, too. And that positive or negative EX, in turn, greatly affects CX. Today's workers demand the best tools to do their job effectively. Failure to provide them with these tools will have a negative domino effect on CX.

BEST PRACTICE: Improve EX by giving employees the best tools to do their jobs.



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> “Why does someone want to work with us?”

Attraction and retention are the two primary drivers for organizations that are focused on EX. Many companies think the solution is to throw money at the problem, whether through the initial salary or pay increases. But in today's climate, employees want—and expect—more.

They also want training, career development, access to the right tools and the ability to learn leading-edge skills and—more and more frequently—they want to work for a company with shared values and culture. Whether it's diversity, equity and inclusion or a particular ideology or belief, the new generation of workers wants to align itself with employers that represent their personal values.

The two questions that your organization must ask and answer are: “Why does someone want to work with us?” (attraction) and “Why does someone want to stay with us?” (retention). It's these questions that new candidates and current employees will be asking themselves. Your company needs to consider these questions, then establish a brand—an “employee brand”—that will attract and retain the best talent. Competitive salaries will always be a factor, but in this market and going forward, a brand that appeals to employees matters just as much.

BEST PRACTICE: Increase EX by fostering a brand that appeals to today's employees.



➤ Getting the pulse of employee experience

In addition to answering the attraction and retention questions and creating a desirable employee brand, businesses can improve their EX by simply talking—and listening—to their employees. Most companies have conducted employee surveys and issued reports for years, but they often took too long to make relevant changes.

Today's employees expect their complaints to be addressed much sooner. In the age of social media and digital word of mouth, employees expect their issues to be addressed as quickly as in a week or two. That may sound unrealistic by traditional timeframes, but there are numerous examples of companies that didn't address employee discontent rapidly enough and suffered the consequences.

One of the best ways to gauge the tenor of your employees' experience is to ask them—and often. Conduct frequent surveys of your employees, especially the ones who interact the most often with your customers. This allows you to track employee contentment with more data points and closer to real time rather than relying on months- or years-long studies that have no relevance by the time they're released. Many companies say they're interested in EX, but their actions don't match their words. Others are conducting surveys but don't do anything with the data. In situations like this, an advisor like RSM can help analyze the data and turn it into actionable insights.

BEST PRACTICE: Evaluate EX with frequent, real-time employee surveys.

A photograph of three men in a factory or industrial setting. They are standing on a metal walkway, looking down at a document held by one of the men. The background shows industrial machinery and a green-tinted environment.

➤ The imperative of organizational change management

Change is hard. For most enterprises, organizational resistance to change is the single greatest obstacle to CX, EX and almost any other initiative. And while most companies say they want to improve CX and EX, when it comes down to brass tacks, on a day-to-day basis, they don't really want to change. Excuses range from "That's how it's always been done" to "That's what we learned when we started here five (or 10 or 25) years ago." They even like Betty's spreadsheet from 1987 because it's familiar. But change is necessary, and that culture of change typically must start at the top.

The real threat to change—and therefore, the resistance—is a loss of control. The technological aspect of digital transformation is actually the easy part. It's getting the buy-in across the enterprise that limits the efficacy of any new solution. For more established middle market organizations—particularly family-run businesses—it's hard to foster a culture of change and relinquish control. As data gathering has gone from monthly to weekly to daily to real time, the traditional gatekeepers have lost exclusive control. It can be a fundamental change that's difficult to accept.

To improve EX and CX and to maximize value from all digital transformation initiatives, today's organizations must embrace a culture of change. Systems that are implemented must be used. Data that is collected must become actionable. Executives must lead by example to show how to transform the way things have always been done. For younger workers, it's a big part of their EX. They want to be part of an organization that's more innovative, more efficient and more responsive to employees' requests.

BEST PRACTICE: Elevate EX by embracing organizational change and transformation.



> RSM advises organizational change to improve EX

When you're looking to improve your EX, RSM can help bring it all together, from assessment through execution. RSM has helped companies of all kinds in numerous industries navigate the natural challenges of organizational change. Our consulting teams' experienced professionals are adept at the processes and technology needed through the entire employee life cycle—from recruiting, onboarding and orientation through training, work and promotions to retirement.

RSM's hire-to-retain experience enables organizations to look at EX through a new lens. We can conduct surveys, gather data and create an action plan to improve the employee experience. Listening to your employees and acting on the insights can help neutralize attrition and radically improve EX. What are the

things that matter most to them? Is it job security? Is it job opportunity? Is it flexible hours? Is it the people they work with? What makes them feel more productive, and what makes them happier to be part of the team? Discovering the answers to these questions allows you to truly connect with your employees and make the changes your organization needs.

In the drive to improve CX, employee experience is often overlooked as organizations prioritize process and technology over people. But if your employees are having a negative experience, your customers won't be far behind—the happiness of the two goes hand-in-hand as positive EX leads to positive CX. It also leads your employees to make the most of every customer moment that matters.

➤ Learn more about what RSM can do for your enterprise

RSM knows how to lead your organizational change, take your EX and CX to new heights and bring it all together to take your company into the future.

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