

Creating a Companywide, “Customer-Obsessed” Culture

5 Steps to Get Started



Recently I was babysitting “Spanky”, my in-laws medium-sized, energetic canine, who was with me in the bank drive-through. The teller noticed Spanky in the backseat and we had a brief back and forth about dogs while she processed my deposit. To the surprise and delight of both man and dog, included in the canister with my deposit receipt was a crunchy, miniature dog bone. Needless to say, Spanky and I were grinning ear-to-ear as we drove off. My teller saw an opportunity and seized the moment. She recognized how to transform a mundane transaction into something much more magical.

OUTPERFORMING COMPETITORS

According to a Customer Experience Impact Report from Oracle, when consumers were asked what specific thing a company could do to motivate them to spend more, **the majority said “improve the overall customer experience.” 81% also said they are willing to pay more for a better customer experience.**

81% of customers are willing to pay for a better customer experience. | Oracle

Customers can easily be won over for the long-term by a company who not only resolves their presenting need or problem, but who obsesses over the customer while they’re doing it. What if your business arsenal included an expertise in providing exceptional, memorable customer experiences? That’s where you can really get the edge. And the trickle-down is gains in customer engagement, repeat and referral business, positive online reviews, employee performance, and overall profitability.

Ready to get customer-obsessed from top to bottom? 5 steps to get you started:

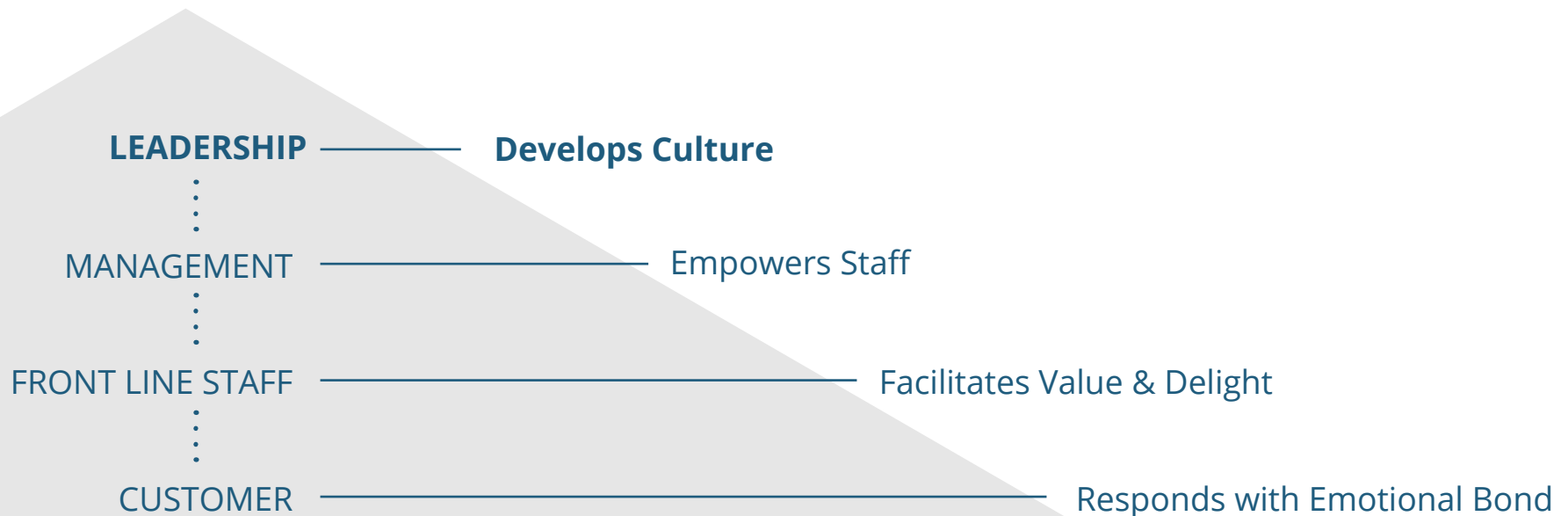
Read the Oracle report: <http://www.oracle.com/us/corporate/press/1883120>



1

Top-down mindset.

Company culture and team member attitude are the by-product of the culture and attitude at the top. Make a commitment at the executive level that you will be a customer-obsessed organization who delights customers at every turn. **Commit to evaluating the customer journey through the eyes of the customer.** From your web presence, to your phone presence, to your brick-and-mortar presence, consider the customer journey from the customer's vantage point.



2

Middle management buy-in.

Executive vision needs support from the middle. In your management meetings, discuss how to center your organization around the customer experience. Incorporate a new corporate language that includes the concepts of “delighting,” “wowing,” “exceeding expectations,” “customer-centricity,” and “customer-obsessed.” Help management empower front-line staff with practical ways to delight customers. The immediate response and expectation of every situation should habitually be “customers first.”



3

Front-line partnerships.



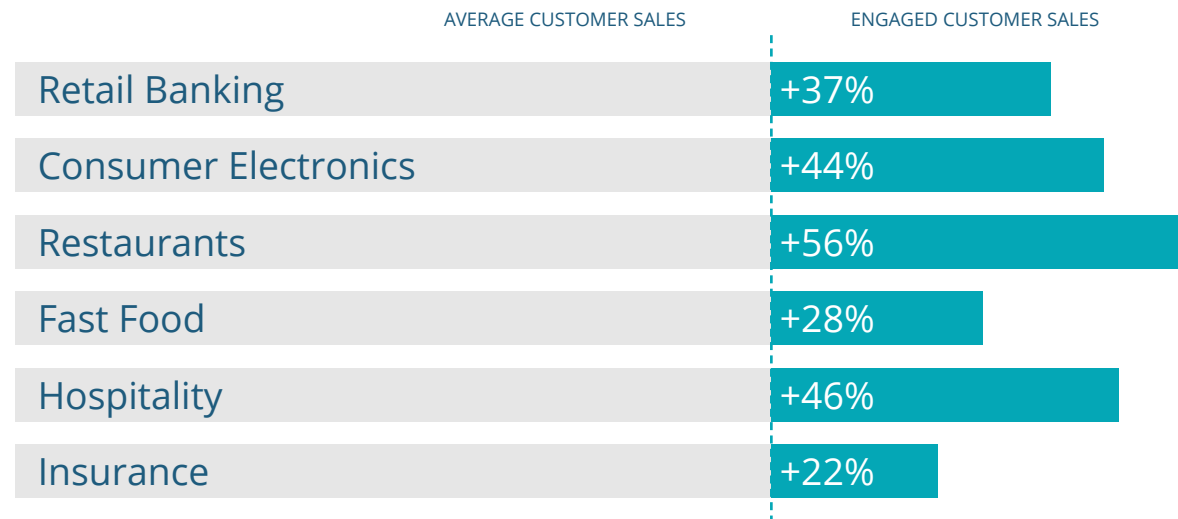
C-Level vision is ultimately executed at the team member level. That's why it's critical to partner with your front line if you're going to deliver a truly differentiated customer experience. Here are 4 ways to do that:

- Make **customer experience training** a required part of your curriculum. This will help communicate vision and expectations, while helping standardize the customer experience.
- **Empower and equip your team with the resources and freedom** to delight customers on the fly—just like my teller with the dog bone. Customer perks, spiffs and surprises are essential.
- **Get regular front-line updates** on what customers are saying that could improve customer relationships. This is your best link to customer wants, needs and emotions.
- The reward system is powerful, so **implement regular employee rewards** tied to customer satisfaction performance, raving customer reviews, or for providing management with valuable front-line data on customer sentiment.

4

Reward customers.

Appreciation is highly underrated. **When customers feel valued, they respond with loyalty.** An unexpected Thank You gift of food such as freshly baked cookies is a powerful way to create a strong emotional bond with your customers. And according to Gallup, highly engaged customers are off the charts when it comes to brand loyalty and advocacy, lower price sensitivity, and their likelihood to recommend and use your services again.



Read the Gallup report:

<http://www.gallup.com/businessjournal/172637/why-customer-engagement-matters.aspx>

5

Listen and respond.

Response time is critical for the customer to feel valued. Implement an effective customer feedback mechanism that solicits feedback immediately after every transaction. It should include several user-friendly channels for completion, including a responsive one for mobile. It should also include an analytics platform that tracks CSI and team member performance, and that allows the feedback to be organized and actionable.

Set up & route negative alerts to the appropriate managers. Use the feedback to quickly resolve customer dissatisfaction and to privately coach or publicly praise team members. Route positive feedback to front line staff (CSR's, technicians, salespeople) to encourage the team and complete the cycle of customer-centricity.



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