Use the 6 Es framework to improve the employee experience

Key findings from the 2022 Employee Experience Survey
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Key takeaways

- Communicate information to employees promptly.
- Use surveys or employee councils to better understand employees' needs and what's getting in their way.
- Involve employees in designing and implementing solutions to improve the customer experience (CX).
- Make sure everyone has a shared understanding of expectations. Design policies that make it easier for employees to deliver the desired customer experience.
- Recognize employees for more than their results. Recognize the attitudes, mindsets, and behaviors that lead to better CX outcomes.

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E Source developed the framework The 6 Es of cultivating engaged employees using our research on how organizations most effectively cultivate employee engagement in CX improvements. We used the 6 Es framework to create the E Source Utility Employee Experience Survey, an online survey of utility contact center employees.

How E Source can help with employee engagement

Fill out this short form to start a conversation about your needs and how we can help.

In this report we summarize the key findings from the 2022 Utility Employee Experience Survey, where utility contact center employees rated their organization's ability to deliver on each of the 6 Es:

- *Empathize.* How might we develop a deeper understanding of employees' attitudes, beliefs, assumptions, and constraints related to becoming more customer-centric?
- *Encourage.* How might we encourage all employees to get involved in making us more customer-centric?
- *Educate.* How might we make sure that every employee has a shared understanding of what CX means, why it's important to us, and their role in improving our customers' experiences?
- *Enable.* How might we ensure that all employees have the knowledge, tools, skills, and resources they need to deliver the best-possible CX?
- *Empower.* How might we remove barriers and update policies to make it easier for all employees to deliver the best-possible customer experience?
- *Embrace.* How might we recognize and celebrate the customer-centric mindsets, attitudes, behaviors, and outcomes we want to see?

Access the full results from the 2022 Utility Employee Experience Survey

Utilities that participated in the 2022 survey can view the full results in our report How to improve the employee experience.

If you're interested in replicating this study at your utility, please fill out the interest form.

What are key drivers of the employee experience?

Engaging employees starts with connection. Connection influences satisfaction, which influences willingness to recommend (**figure 1**). And we should expect happier employees to lead to happier customers.

- *Connection.* Created by communicating promptly, involving employees in implementing solutions, and applying policies that make it easy for employees to deliver the desired customer experience.
- *Satisfaction.* Created by connection, recognition and reward for delivering the desired customer experience, and an understanding of what's most important.
- *Recommendation.* Created by connection and satisfaction.

Figure 1: The key drivers of the employee experience

Creating a good employee experience all starts with connection. Once employees feel connected, they're more likely to feel satisfied and more likely to recommend their company.

We found that two-thirds of contact center employees rated feeling somewhat or extremely connected to their work. And a similar number were somewhat or extremely satisfied employees. Almost half of contact center employees are promoters of their organization. This results in a good Net Promoter Score (NPS) rating of 15.

What is NPS?

NPS is the percentage of promoters (respondents rating a 9 or 10 on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means not at all likely and 10 means extremely likely) minus the percentage of detractors (respondents rating a 0–6). An NPS that falls between 0 and 50 is good, while a score above 50 is excellent.

Employees need to feel connected at work to feel motivated and fulfilled. Employees that reported feeling somewhat or extremely connected to their work were more likely to have positive comments about their experience. As the feeling of connection to work decreases, so do the positive ratings of all other workplace attributes.

How are utilities performing on the 6 Es?

We asked respondents to rate their organization's performance on delivering each of the 6 Es. In this section we summarize the results and explain how they relate to the key drivers of employee experience.

Empathize

Contact center employees feel they're being listened to and understood by their organization. At least half of respondents rated each empathize statement as very good or excellent:

- "Understanding what I experience daily in my job"
- "Routinely asking me what's getting in my way as I try to deliver our desired customer experience"
- "Routinely asking me what I need to successfully deliver our desired customer experience"

Use the E Source Employee-listening session: A facilitator's guide and agenda to build greater understanding of your employees.

Encourage

Listening to your employees is crucial. But involving them in implementing solutions solidifies the message that the company values their work and ideas. And our data shows that involving employees is a key driver of connection.

But there's some room for improvement when it comes to involving contact center employees in implementing the actual solutions to improve the customer experience. Less than 50% of respondents thought the organization involved them in implementing solutions. Consider how you can better involve your employees in improving the customer experience.

Educate

Education isn't only about training. It's about making sure everyone at the organization has a shared understanding of what's important, why it's important, and what each employee needs to contribute to the whole.

One important part of employee education is making sure job expectations are clear. Most contact center employees feel they have a clear sense of:

- The customer experience they should deliver
- How their role contributes to the organization's overall strategy
- Who their customers are and what they need
- What the company needs from them

Consider what's working well in your organization. Think about how you can develop a shared understanding around those successes. Is it a shared understanding or just a top-down communication?

Enable

Contact center employees strongly rate their organization in the empathize, encourage, and educate categories of employee engagement. But employees feel less confident in how their organization performs in the enable category.

Make sure you listen to employees to understand what they need to meet expectations and feel successful. Employees should have the knowledge, skills, and tools and resources they need to deliver the desired customer experience.

If agents don't feel enabled and equipped, they can't deliver the level of service that customers expect.

In the contact center, this is key to both the employee experience and the customer experience. If agents don't feel enabled and equipped, they can't deliver the level of service that customers expect. This will affect their level of satisfaction and feelings of connection and commitment. And it can have a negative effect on the customer experience.

Empower

Empower has some of the lowest overall scores of the 6 Es. The empower category relates to the actions employees feel they can take to deliver on the desired customer experience.

It's important to make sure employees understand their job expectations. But they also need to feel like they can act on them. If not, you'll see reduced returns on your CX efforts.

Consider whether you have any policies in your organization that are standing in the way of agents doing excellent work. Are there ways you can adjust existing policies or new policies to make it easier for employees to do what's expected?

Embrace

Embrace also has some of the lowest overall scores of the 6 Es. The percentage of respondents who felt that their organization was doing a fair or poor job of recognition was higher than it was for any other items in the survey.

Use metrics based on more than outcomes alone to recognize your employees.

Employees want to feel like they're doing meaningful work. If you aren't reinforcing and acknowledging

positive behaviors, your employees are likely to feel a lack of connection and empowerment to their work.

In fact, our analysis found that rewards and recognition were key drivers of NPS and employee satisfaction. And satisfaction will influence the sense of connection.

Use metrics based on more than outcomes alone to recognize your employees. Consider how you might recognize the attitudes, mindsets, and behaviors that are more likely to produce the right outcomes. These outcomes will also contribute to a more human-centric workplace.

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