



Three ways to place employees at the heart of your business transformation

by Diamond Kenney, Senior Strategist

More and more organizations are enriching the employee experience to improve business processes and maximize productivity.

How? By partnering with experts who can help them place employees at the center of their digital transformation strategy.

For instance, recently, Luxoft's Smashing Ideas team were brought in by a major airline to detect organizational issues which were causing delayed turn times (i.e., delayed flights), and adversely affecting profitability and customer satisfaction.

Insight is key

Our research included interviewing and observing the work patterns of employees to gain practical insights. We found our client's problems mirrored the kind of issues that impact businesses across most industries; problems that can be solved by taking a human-centered approach to business transformation.

Importantly, if the human-centered approach to establishing new business processes and making organizational changes is overlooked, you run the risk of implementing ineffective solutions that create even more problems for your employees.

So, here are three ways to start your human-centered journey:

1. Give employees a voice

When employees are excluded from the decision-making process — even when solutions may well improve bottom-line metrics — they may also neglect employee needs and make their jobs harder to carry out.

Several airlines have retrofitted planes with extra seats to increase profits in the wake of substantial Covid losses. However, regardless of the number of passengers on a flight, turn times have remained the same, complicating the whole logistics and traveler management process. This has piled extra stress onto employees, questioning the airline leadership's determination to make changes that, while boosting profitability, are also in the best interests of the workforce.

Clearly, one way to get employees involved is to appoint advocates who are capable of voicing concerns and recalling their experiences in the boardroom for company decision-makers. Also, adopting research methods like contextual inquiries, surveys and interviews can elicit honest employee feedback on how the company can be improved.

Finding the pain points

It's essential to develop a culture that values honesty to ensure employees feel safe enough to provide their unvarnished perspectives. Applied strategically and objectively, these methods can uncover real employee pain points and provide decision-makers with a better understanding of how deeply workforce feelings affect the company.

When making changes to things like company policy, IT infrastructure or software that supports communication within the organization, you need to establish a continuous feedback loop between management, product teams and staff impacted by those changes. This practice will help leaders avoid creating fresh problems for the company.

2. Dismantle barriers that block information sharing

Information sharing is crucial because it promotes collaborative problem solving and helps build trust and empathy. When employees communicate effectively, they share insights on which information is useful and the actions needed to solve problems. Information barriers can be caused by storing information in databases or systems that are beyond the reach of certain employee groups, or by not allowing department experts an outlet for learnings from past experiences.

Begin removing barriers by identifying where important information flows are blocked or impeded. Promote collaboration and open communication company values, then incentivize information sharing but, beware, it could ramp up the pressure on executives to face and fix issues with team dynamics, company culture and the like.

Safe spaces

To break down communication barriers, create safe, comfortable spaces where team members can express their barrier concerns — beyond someone filing a complaint with HR — and contribute ideas for improving the employee experience. This helps employees feel their views have been heard, increasing their level of collaboration and encouraging them to problem-solve daily challenges with their peers.

Also, find out how employees prefer to communicate and try to adhere to which communication style best supports each individual and their role. With our airline client, we found a significant number of employees with pivotal roles in turning the plane, opted for direct verbal communication rather than texting or using their messaging app. Knowing these preferences pointed us toward new tools more suited to the nature of their duties which, in turn, increased efficiency and productivity.

3. Perform a fit-gap analysis of the communication ecosystem

If you're thinking, *"we already did an audit and added features to (add your software or product)"* ask yourself, *"but did we take a human-centric approach by including employee perspectives and expertise?"*. There may be a lack of communication between the people who make these decisions and the employees who use the technology, which can result in efforts that are ineffective or misspent.

A human-centric approach starts out asking employees whether they have tools that are hard to use or underutilized. The next step is to evaluate the technical infrastructure to identify system gaps and overlaps.

All together now

Then it's about working with leaders and employee advocates to prioritize issues and actionable insights, as well as to decide if other factors like usability, latency or data quality should be tested.

Finally, consider updating software and hardware that no longer meets user needs and slows productivity. Employee feedback can help drive the overall technical strategy, prioritize infrastructural updates and justify the expense.

"Where do I start?"

Committing to a human-centered strategy can be a radical shift for some firms. We get that. Luxoft's Smashing Ideas team specializes in helping companies like yours take a human-centric approach to improving internal and external communication, implementing new technology, and using design thinking to identify problems and ideate practical solutions.

If you'd like to learn more about how we can help your firm take a human-centered approach, contact me at diamond.kenney@dxc.com or [click here](#) to take a look at one or two of our client success stories.



Diamond Kenney

Diamond Kenney is a Senior Strategist in Luxoft's Smashing Ideas team, specializing in experience strategy with a focus on emerging technologies. She uses her background in research, digital marketing and experience design to guide clients in the best uses of technology to address unmet customer needs. Her strategic insights help clients generate positive brand engagement and lasting value for customers and employees.

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