



How to Improve Employee Experience

5 Strategies for Success

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
1. Establishing and Maintaining Workplace Culture	6
2. Translating Data into Insight	8
3. Scaling the Employee Experience	9
4. Reaching a New Generation of Workers	11
5. Improving the Employer Brand	13
Conclusion: EX Pros Are Putting People First	16



Introduction

“For HR leaders, the whole topic of the employee experience has suddenly become a make or break issue.”

— Josh Bersin

The Employee Experience. We’ve written about it, [we’ve defined it](#), and we continue to [study it](#). In fact, we’ve been looking at statistics from LinkedIn and we’ve seen that from May 2017 to December 2019, the number of Employee Experience jobs has risen by an astounding 240 percent!

This new breed of Employee Experience manager plays a variety of corporate roles, and the rapid growth in their numbers is proof that EX — as an extension and a reappraisal of the traditional role of Human Resources — is becoming a key strategic business partner.

Equipped with [people data](#), EX professionals are meeting the challenge of human capital management by designing strategies to improve its practices: workforce acquisition, onboarding, management, and optimization. EX professionals are the architects and engineers of this movement.

EX pros are broadening the scope of HR to encompass all of the touchpoints that workers have with their companies throughout the employee journey. The goal is to make the entire experience as enriching as possible in order to engage talented workers, keep them around for longer than the national average

of just [4.2 years](#), and turn them into loyal employer brand ambassadors.

EX professionals are responsible for mapping their organizations' strategies for this journey, communicating with various departments, including IT, finance, and marketing, and applying [design thinking](#) in the development of compelling people programs.

As a result, recruitment strategies and onboarding processes are being tied to learning and development initiatives, which in turn can form part of a meaningful recognition and rewards culture.

Employee Experience is still a new field, so it should be no surprise that current EX professionals have held their positions for an average of only two years. What is perhaps more interesting is that their roles are being adopted at different management levels — from manager to director to chief. In some organizations, Employee Experience pros





are reporting to the Chief Human Resources or Chief People Officer. In others, these people are part of C-level leadership, where a Chief Employee Experience Officer might be charged with aligning talent acquisition and employee retention with overall business goals. But no matter their exact place on the org chart, they all face similar challenges.

The EX discipline requires an array of skills, including the use of modern business analytics and communications methods focused on creating dialogue and building engagement with a changing, multi-generational workforce that's more dispersed, mobile, and tech-savvy than ever before. But it also requires good old-fashioned empathy and emotional intelligence. It's about talking "with" people, as opposed to talking "to" them.

Clearly EX is impacting today's changing workplace. But just what is an Employee Experience manager, and what do these people actually do?

1. Establishing and Maintaining Workplace Culture

"I would advise leaders to go about defining their culture. Do so from the heart and think about it in the context of the promise to the customer. Think about how this translates to your employees, and what kind of work environment, ways of working, and behaviors will foster the success of the business through your employees."

- Mark Levy, Employee Experience Pioneer

We've written elsewhere about [the importance of finding and articulating a core purpose](#) for your company. Putting purpose into practice and establishing ways to bring it to life is what culture is all about, and it's a crucial responsibility of EX managers. [Research by Deloitte](#), shows that 94 percent of executives and 88 percent of employees believe that a distinct corporate culture is important to organizational success. And [there are even more numbers](#) to prove the power of company culture in regard to employee engagement.

For many EX leaders, the first priority they're being tasked with addressing is to define the culture of their organization. This process begins by identifying a company's mission, vision, and values.

Mission:

How do you explain to the world — your employees, customers, and partners — what your business does?

Vision:

What does your company aspire to become?
How will you get there?

Values:

What do you and your employees believe, and how do you put these beliefs into practice?

The next step is finding ways to forge emotional connections between a company's employees and their brand. In doing so, EX pros work on a range of projects, from examining how to use Glassdoor and other employer rating sites to strengthen the employer brand, to creating positive employee experiences across the employee life cycle, from new hires to long-tenured employees, and even exploring how alumni can advocate for a company's employer brand.

EX pros understand that without alignment at the leadership level, it's almost impossible to make long-lasting, meaningful change. It's their job to help leaders put their money where their mouths are, placing the core values they've defined into practice every day throughout the organization — and avoiding the risk that these values be dismissed as mere empty promises. These objectives are becoming the "new normal" for how HR and EX departments are creating cultures that help ensure that the employee journey is a positive end-to-end experience.

2. Translating Data into Insight

The role played by workplace analytics technology is drastically transforming HR, with new tools designed to mine the key metrics necessary for building the foundation of the entire talent experience — from candidate to new hire and onward, affecting every consequential touchpoint throughout the employee life cycle.

People data, which can be defined as datasets describing people in organizations, is being used to personalize employee journeys and create exceptional experiences that align with individual learning objectives and career paths, attempting to match employee interests with organizational goals.

According to [an article published by Deloitte](#), “69 percent of organizations are building integrated systems to analyze worker-related data, and 17 percent already have real-time dashboards to crunch

the avalanche of numbers in new and useful ways.”

All of this information — including data about job progression, career mobility, and performance - is allowing companies to calculate the lifetime value of talent in addition to providing useful insights that can help to optimize an array of touchpoints throughout the employee experience.

Solid data is also helping financial decision-makers understand the business benefits of investing in these types of programs and tools, and [figuring out which ones are right for you](#).

By analyzing key metrics and identifying the trends that can be used to inform organizations of the current condition and ongoing progress of their engagement programs, such data can drive continuous improvement.

3. Scaling the Employee Experience

For smaller companies it's generally easy to feel connected — to the mission, to the founders, and to each other. But as purpose-driven companies grow, it becomes more difficult to find ways to ensure that everyone has a voice, feels like they're making a contribution and getting recognition for their efforts, and, most importantly, believes that they are growing both personally and professionally.

Without the proper feedback channels and tools, however, the challenge of enhancing the day-to-day workplace experience of an expanding number of employees can seem daunting. That goes double if you initiate programs that either fail to reach all employees or aren't fully carried out.

The employee experience thrives on feedback, but feedback is only truly valid when it includes voices from throughout your organization — including



often forgotten non-desk employees — and only when what you hear is subsequently met with a continuous response. These two requirements alone will make or break the success of any EX initiative.

This notion of EX as an ongoing, cyclical process is backed up by Steve Bennetts, an employee experience management expert at the software company Qualtrics:

“Businesses need to recognize that employee engagement doesn’t happen via set-and-forget programs. Instead, they need to keep checking in with employees to make sure that initiatives are working, and they need to be responsive to changing sentiment in the organization to stay ahead of the curve.”

Experience management software, including employee apps, has become the best way to turn anecdotal evidence into hard data, which can guide even inexperienced people managers toward ideal

engagement strategies for their teams.

“Once they have a clear picture of what motivates and demotivates employees, they can begin to enact meaningful change that gets to the heart of why employees want to work at certain companies,” says Bennetts. “It usually goes beyond gimmicks like free breakfast or casual Fridays.”



4. Reaching a New Generation of Workers

A major contributor to the rise and relevance of the employee experience is the increasing number of millennials and Generation Z-ers in the workplace. The presence and expectations of these younger workers have made it imperative that forward-thinking organizations fundamentally redefine their structure and purpose.

Finding the right people to meet these new challenges is yet another explanation for the rapid rise in the number of EX professionals.

For EX managers, millennials in particular present the biggest quandary when it comes to fostering engagement in the multigenerational workplace. And the need to address lackluster engagement numbers



will only accelerate with millennials predicted to account for >50 percent of the global workforce in 2020.

Generational concerns don't end with engagement. [According to Gallup](#), millennials are also the most likely generation to switch jobs, with six out of 10 open to new job opportunities.

As for Generation Z, which will comprise 20 percent of the workforce in 2020, they expect communication to be rapid, constant, and available at their fingertips.

Of course the trick of engaging one workplace generation is to do so without alienating up to as many as four others. One can assume that every generation wants access to relevant company news, information, and services, but they want it available in ways that are easy and familiar to them.

The problem is that with so many options for satisfying different generational preferences, targeting your workforce with employee-specific

communication that's also being broadcast in the preferred channel of each generation is a complex undertaking. Customizable tools such as employee apps can make this job more manageable for EX and comms professionals.

Ultimately, EX professionals with the ability to effectively navigate the generational waters will be the ones who make the biggest impact on the workers who still have a majority of their careers in front of them.

Do Boomers only respond to email? 🙌✉️💙

Does Generation Z really love emojis?

This guide will share secret tips on how to effectively communicate with all your employees, no matter their generation.



5. Improving the Employer Brand

A major responsibility of EX pros is ensuring that their employer brand is being clearly communicated. It's their job to think strategically about how the employee experience is being promoted internally and externally by their people, and to understand how these attitudes can be influenced.

Culture and experience are subjective perceptions of how an organization functions and interacts on the whole; as such, these perceptions are communicated most effectively through your employees. When they're excited about a new career opportunity, it's likely they'll share the news with family and friends, both in person and on social media. That's no different when they have an upsetting interaction with their colleagues or company. It's this type of authentic information that job seekers rely upon

Evan Turner



❤️ 28 💬 12

Evan Turner
We run together! 💙

Kate Webber



❤️ 15 💬 3

Kate Webber
Group of 40 people from different departments helped building a temporary school for refugees.

when deciding if their personalities and working styles will fit a potential employer. Employee Experience professionals understand that today's talent is drawn to real stories that reflect their expectations of an ideal employer.

By inspiring their own employees with positive experiences that make for compelling stories, EX pros can create genuine advocates in the workplace, helping to enlist them in the job of attracting talent for the future, a responsibility critical to long-term business success.

At the same time, employers need to know how staff perceive the organization. Such knowledge allows them to determine which workplace conditions make employees happy or unhappy, in addition to enabling them to proactively address sources of negativity before they become contagious and spread.

Ultimately, the most powerful voice in building a strong and compelling employer brand is that of your

colleagues. They are the clearest and most believable voices you have for sharing positive employee experiences that reinforce your culture and brand.

EX pros know that your employer brand is the most powerful tool available for attracting and retaining the people who make your organization a success. They understand that your brand isn't something that can be dictated to the market, but rather a conclusion that the market will reach based on the interactions it has with your organization and its employees.

The challenge for many companies is that they often see the strength of their employer brand in ways that don't completely align with market perception. EX professionals must be adept at getting an accurate picture of how an organization is perceived by its people, and understand how that perception shapes the opinion of the world beyond its doors.

Here are some of the ways they can do that:

- ☐ Use social media listening tools to monitor online mentions of your organization.
- ☐ Read employee reviews from past and current employees on Glassdoor, etc.
- ☐ Monitor the content on which employees are commenting, liking, or sharing on sites like Facebook, LinkedIn, or in their employee app.
- ☐ Survey staff for feedback regarding the perception of your current employee experience.



Conclusion:

EX Pros Are Putting People First

Creating a compelling employee experience requires a deep understanding of the needs and expectations of people at work. This new business priority has led to the creation of a new role, the Employee Experience professional, who is being charged with thinking beyond individual organizational silos and assuming a cross-functional role working with multiple departments, including but not limited to Human Resources, Operations, Marketing, IT, software engineering, data science, and Internal Comms.

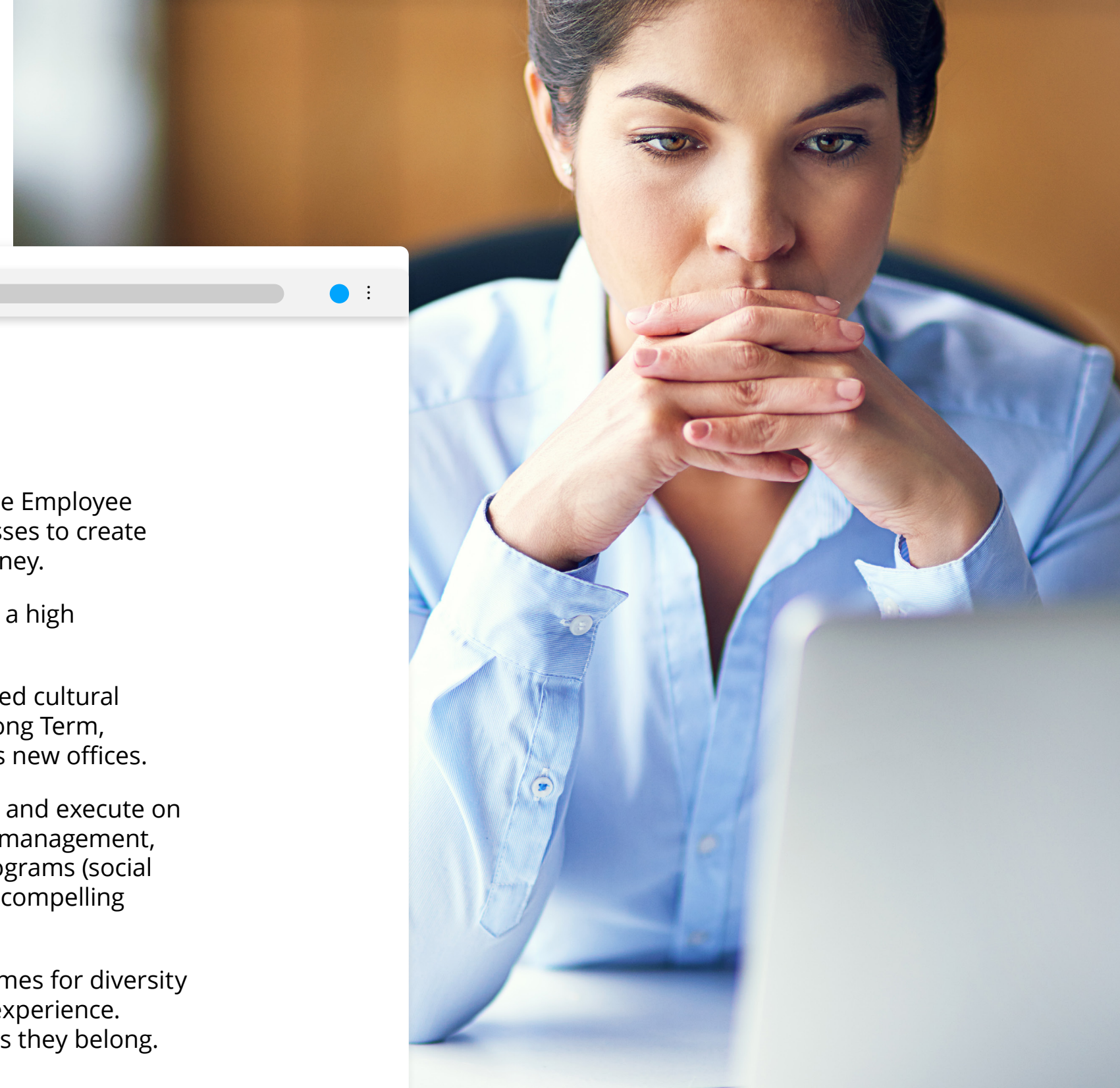
The all-encompassing vision of this new role presents an opportunity for HR to reach out to employees in other disciplines in its search for suitable champions and ambassadors. Meeting this challenge is more than a matter of re-skilling current HR professionals,

but of HR recruiting new skills into the function. Talented Employee Experience professionals aren't strictly coming from the world of HR.

EX professionals understand that first impressions are lasting ones. They are focused on creating compelling employee experiences and seamless processes that can offer aid and guidance, initially so that new hires are more likely to stay, and onwards so that they remain engaged throughout every stage of the employee journey. EX pros know that [research has shown that new employees with tenure of less than two years often leave because of frustration](#) with unproductive, poorly optimized work processes.

These objectives are what the role of the EX professional has been created to address, broadening

the function of HR to deliver an employee experience that's human-centered, features the latest consumer-grade digital technologies, and is personalized, compelling, and positive.



Sample EX Job Description

Your responsibilities will include:

Employee Experience Design: Create a vision to shape the Employee Experience Team. Design and iterate programs and processes to create amazing “moments that matter” across the employee journey.

Team Growth and Development: Hire, develop, and lead a high performing Employee Experience Team.

Scale Company Culture: Champion, role model, and embed cultural principles (e.g., Obsess Over the Customer, Build for the Long Term, Challenge Yourself) as companies scale globally and across new offices.

Build Programs to Attract and Develop Talent: Evaluate and execute on current people programs (employee survey, performance management, etc.) to maintain a high-performance culture. Pilot new programs (social impact, wellness, employee development, etc.) to create a compelling employee value proposition.

Diversity and Inclusion Efforts: Drive training and outcomes for diversity and inclusion efforts across the candidate and employee experience. Support initiatives that create a place where everyone feels they belong.

The Staffbase Employee Experience Platform

Build culture, drive engagement, and connect the dots to a single employee-facing touchpoint that your people will love.

- Turn employees into fans
- Build Connections and create belonging
- Connect the dots for your employees so they don't have to
- Empower people with the right information at the right time

