

***'TRANSFORM CUSTOMER
EXPERIENCE'***
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CASCADING FROM THE BOARD AND C-SUITE

Ultimately, the board of your company and the CEO need to back your CX strategy if it's to have a true impact. The strategy will empower staff on the frontline, but it has to be led from the top to make sure that everyone understands it and knows the part they have to play in its delivery. The senior executives of the C-suite need to act as true leaders and lead by example.

THE CX LEADER

It is crucial that a senior executive is accountable for CX within the organisation. With the support of the CEO or equivalent, this one person is responsible for driving and delivering on the strategy to make it happen. Some larger organisations are fortunate enough to have sufficient resources to create a dedicated role for this purpose and a team of people to support it. Other organisations have incorporated this responsibility into an existing leadership role.

Whether the job title is Chief Customer Officer or something else, the person in this role will become a leader of great CX in the business, bringing it to life. Anointed by the CEO, they can act within the organisation as an advocate, persuading sceptics to venture outside their silos and their comfort zones. As author Jeanne Bliss has put it, this person's role is to 'work with the leadership team in building the consistent behaviours, decision-making, and company engagement that will prove to the organisation that leaders are united in their commitment to earn the right to customer-driven growth'.

THE CX CHAMPIONS

With a leader appointed to own and drive CX among their management peers, CX then cascades down through the organisation. I strongly believe that the most successful organisations are those that appoint strong CX advocates at all levels of the business to act as CX champions. These champions don't have to be in leadership jobs, but they will be natural leaders (even in an informal capacity), the kind of enthusiastic, committed people who will drive change at ground level and motivate everyone else.

Chosen by the CX leader in consultation with their managers, these champions can be trained to detect problems and rectify them on the ground. For example, my firm does a lot of work training teams of champions in customer journey mapping, a key CX approach that I'll explore further in chapter 5. The training program includes information on the uses and benefits of customer journey mapping, and on ways of measuring success. The champions are then peppered across all parts of the organisation and empowered to develop customer journey maps for their own projects or business areas so they can make great CX happen in the course of their everyday work.

The presence of CX champions can do many things to promote change. They can:

- establish a pipeline of information between the CX leader and staff on the ground
- act as subject-matter experts
- shape CX implementation
- deliver on CX initiatives
- advise the CX team of the best approaches to use
- be involved in launching changes to ensure they are implemented most appropriately in their areas.

In this context, support from top leadership helps create an environment where CX awareness becomes embedded in all parts of the organisation.