

# Why a good employee experience is the backbone of good customer experience



Businesses are hyper-focused on customer service and the customer experience right now. This is to be expected as customers and businesses alike transition to 100% digital collaboration, communication, and support. Customer requests are up across the board as the Covid-19 crisis unfolds across the globe, and customers are relying heavily on digital channels for help, according to [Zendesk Benchmark data](#).



Good customer experience is a prime competitive differentiator, which is why businesses were already investing heavily in this area. Companies that make it easy for customers to do business with them, provide personalized service using communication channels that customers prefer, and make transactions seamless stand the best chance of maintaining and even growing their customer base in the challenging months ahead. However, in the rush to invest in tools that provide more insights about the customer journey, businesses may have overlooked another powerful tool for improving the customer experience—the employee experience, also referred to as EX.

Just as the customer experience comprises all the physical and digital touchpoints between customers and a company, EX is the sum total of all touchpoints between a business and its workforce. The impact of a positive EX is clear: “engaged employees who feel a personal investment in their jobs are more willing and empowered to positively impact the customer experience,” according to a Gartner report.<sup>1</sup>

Companies are leaning even more heavily on technologies that keep their employees connected and informed as they go into survival mode. As employees all over the world transitioned quickly into work-from-home setups, the “new normal” underscores the need for agility in anticipation of the unexpected.

Communication tools like Zoom and Slack have since become a way of life, but companies need to go further and get more creative in building the infrastructure that keeps a distributed workforce connected. Doing so improves the employee experience, which, in turn, positively impacts the customer experience, and helps businesses more quickly adapt to the unforeseen.

This guide will define what goes into the employee experience and illustrate the role technology plays in executing excellent employee experiences.

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1. Gartner, Improve Employee Experience to Drive Improvements in Customer Experience, Gene Phifer, 26 November 2019

# What goes into employee experience?

The employee experience is the sum total of all the physical and digital touchpoints between a company and its workforce, which can generally be categorized as:

## What we work on

Do employees have the opportunity to do meaningful work that has an impact on the company?

## Who we work with

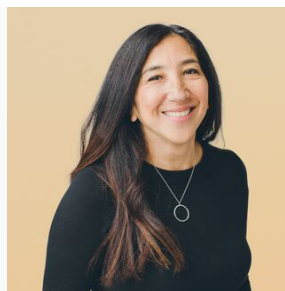
Are employees working around leaders and teams that are inclusive and dedicated to helping them grow?

## How we work

Walk yourself through an employee's experience, from the minute they open their laptop to the minute they close it for the day. Good employee experience, much like good customer experience, is seamless—from how well different technologies work together to how easily employees can find the knowledge they need to do their jobs.

## How we're rewarded

Are employees incentivized to do great work?



# How to use technology to improve your employee experience

Improving the employee experience can have a real impact on your business' bottom line. Since 2009, a portfolio of Fortune's "Best Companies to Work For" companies [outperformed the S&P 500 by 84.2 percent](#), according to research from Glassdoor. And, the same Gartner report that found that engaged employees who felt personally invested in their jobs were more willing and empowered to impact customer experience found that the inverse is also true; that employee experience can negatively influence operational performance and customer experience when employees are not personally invested in their jobs and organization.<sup>2</sup>

Though the "right" employee experience is unique to each company, there are some universal best practices around "how we work" that can help any company improve the employee experience, which can, in turn, help improve the customer experience.



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2. Gartner, Improve Employee Experience to Drive Improvements in Customer Experience, Gene Phifer, 26 November 2019



## Omnichannel platforms

A hallmark of a good customer experience is enabling customers to connect with companies in whatever way they want. It should be the same for employees. Employees should be able to connect over email, Slack, other social media channels, chat, and more if they have a question. This is especially true when the majority of the workforce is remote and has to rely on digital channels. Making it easier for employees to get their questions answered allows them to work more efficiently in the long run.



## Personalize communications

Employees, just like customers, appreciate communications that are personalized to their unique situation. But doing this at scale can be difficult. One way companies have accomplished personalization at scale is by implementing internal knowledge bases and help centers. By capturing all company info—policies, news, processes, institutional knowledge—in one place, knowledge bases allow employees to self-serve on a wide variety of unique situations and questions. A knowledge base also allows a company to disseminate information to a lot of people quickly, and update company policies in real time. This “one to many” approach has been useful for companies who have found themselves needing to rapidly shift large portions of their workforce to new assignments or ways of working.



## Democratize institutional knowledge

A big problem employees face when asking questions is knowing who to ask. “Who is the expert on \_\_\_\_?” seems to be institutional knowledge that is never written down and ever-changing. Help employees navigate your company by setting up an internal help desk or directory-based workflows so questions are automatically directed to the right department. Then, employees don’t have to rely on who they know to get their jobs done or questions answered.



## Automate for greater efficiency

Making internal processes as efficient and productive as possible helps people get their jobs done. Technologies such as workflow automation, self-service, and AI can help make the employee experience more efficient, which, in turn, frees up more time for employees to focus on other aspects of their jobs, including customer experience. Workflow automation can expedite routine tasks, such as new-hire provisioning or routing questions to the right department, while self-service allows employees to help themselves on certain topics at their own pace. AI, when working hand in hand with a knowledge base or internal help desk, can automate answers to routine questions and even complete routine tasks without human intervention.



## Zendesk's internal help desk for a better employee experience

The Covid-19 pandemic has turned the need for great employee experience from a nice-to-have to a need-to-have as businesses quickly shift how they do business. Employees, especially those on the front lines, are tasked with quickly adapting to 100% remote collaboration, while also providing efficient, empathetic service for customers who may be anxious or upset. Many have turned to Zendesk's internal help desk solution, which can quickly be tailored to streamline internal requests and workflows to make collaboration easier.



[Tesco](#), the British grocery giant, initially implemented Zendesk because it was looking for software that was “nimble, flexible, and simple.” Now, it relies on Zendesk's internal help desk solution to support requests from a workforce of 460,000 employees across nine countries.



The [State of Tennessee](#) implemented Zendesk's internal help desk solution to capture priceless institutional knowledge, which shortened the average employee onboarding time from six months to six weeks.



## Organizations have turned to Zendesk's internal help desk solution because:

### It's easy to set up

Especially now, companies may need to set up an internal solution quickly. Zendesk has recently helped companies stand up solutions in as little as two days, shortening the time to value.

### It's intuitive and easy to use

An intuitive interface means that teams start to see benefits immediately once it's rolled out. Companies also benefit from high adoption, leading to more efficiency over time and more data about the employee experience that companies can use to identify further areas of improvement.

### It has a low total cost of ownership

By focusing on user experience and making solutions as intuitive and easy-to-use as possible, the Zendesk solution eliminates the need to hire an army of admins just to manage an internal help desk. Meanwhile, a robust app marketplace ensures that you can continue working with existing systems instead of migrating to proprietary platforms.



**Employees have already been through a lot, and they will continue to go through a lot as everyone adjusts to new ways of doing business.**

Employees are customers, too. The Zendesk internal help desk makes it easier to take good care of employees who are, in practice, your business' first customers. Building the foundation for a great employee experience helps ensure your company provides a great customer experience, too.

Learn more about the Zendesk [internal help desk solution](#).

