

Employee Feedback:  
Are you missing the vital link in  
the customer experience chain?



# Employee Feedback: Are you missing the vital link in the customer experience chain?

The big buzz phrase is “Customer Experience”. Organisations are jumping on the bandwagon, merrily collecting vast quantities of “voice of customer” feedback, analysing it and then taking action to improve customer experience.

That’s all well and good. But there is often one vital link in the chain that they are missing – employee feedback.

Many of your employees are the public face of your organisation, dealing directly with your customers. They are the ones in the call centres dealing with customer queries and complaints. They are the ones picking up emails and investigating issues as and when they arise. They are the ones serving customers face-to-face in retail environments. Your employees are very often the critical part of your brand that can make or break a loyal customer.

Many of your employees are also the ones who work on the shop floor. They are making products and following your business processes. They are up close and personal to the nuts and bolts of your organisation. They see and understand how it operates and – most importantly – they see what works and what doesn’t work.

Surely your employees merit a say in the “Customer Experience”? ▶

“A wider interaction and contact with the product range would be great, to re-affirm the connection with the brand and where we work.”

Sample of employee feedback from an automotive client



It stands to reason that “employee engagement” positively impacts levels of productivity, absenteeism, retention and innovation, as well as accident rates and conflicts at work. However, there is also a growing amount of evidence which links “employee engagement” to “customer experience”.

### Facts\*:

- For every 10% increase in employee engagement levels, a company's customer service levels go up by 5% and profits by 2%;
- 70% of engaged employees say they have a good understanding of how to meet customer needs, versus only 17% of disengaged employees;
- 67% of engaged employees advocate their company, versus 3% of the disengaged employees.

In light of these facts, it is very evident that any attempts to manage customer experience without tackling employee engagement are missing a critical link in the chain.

# 67%

of engaged employees advocate their company, versus 3% of the disengaged employees

*“Service is all about energy, enthusiasm and emotional engagement and it is so evident when you’re being served by someone who is disengaged. Think about your own personal experiences – when you’re actually having an interaction with somebody in service, their levels of engagement need to be high. It’s pretty obvious and intuitive, but now there is evidence to show it’s highly correlated.”*

**Paul Beesley, business performance coach at Beyond Theory**



It stands to reason that businesses who want to be successful need to keep their employees engaged. People work best in roles that make use of their strengths, offer responsibility and have a clear purpose they can identify with. ▶

\*source: Engaging for Success – a report to UK Government by David MacLeod and Nita Clarke

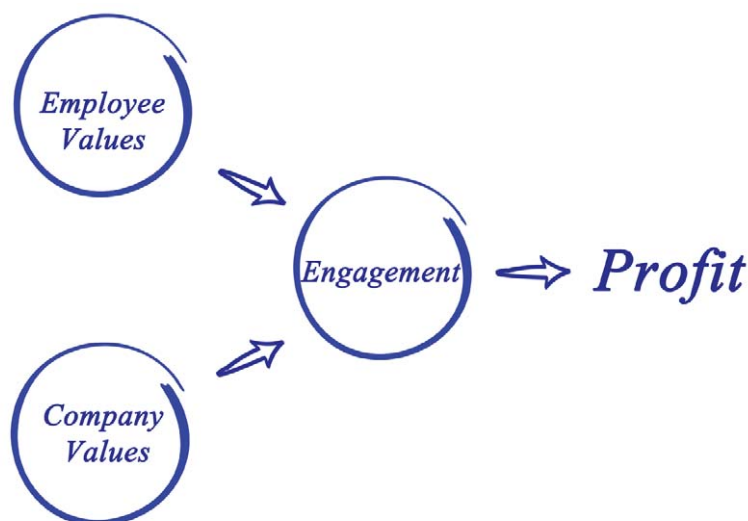
## So what exactly is “employee engagement”?

There is no one agreed definition of employee engagement but here are three alternatives, all of which we like:

1. A set of positive attitudes and behaviours enabling high job performance of a kind which are in tune with the organisation’s mission (Professor John Storey)
2. Employee engagement is the emotional commitment the employee has to the organisation and its goals. (Forbes)
3. “If you want people to do a good job, give them a good job to do.” (Frederick Herzberg)

“In recent years, excessive budget, financial controls and processes have started to strangle initiative and are preventing the business from functioning in a responsive manor to customer demands.”

*Sample of employee feedback from an automotive client*



### What employee engagement is NOT:

- It's not 'employee happiness'; employees can be happy for all sorts of reasons which are not linked to an organisation's performance
- It's not 'employee satisfaction'; a satisfied employee might show up for their daily 9-to-5 without complaint. But that same 'satisfied' employee might not go the extra mile. Satisfied isn't enough.
- It's not 'an annual employee engagement survey'; how can doing something once a year be engaging?
- It's not 'a warm and fuzzy initiative that can be turned on and off'; engagement in business is critical, not fluff. Like all other critical business activities, it must be continuous. ▶

Before you embark on a new employee engagement programme, ask yourself this all-important question:

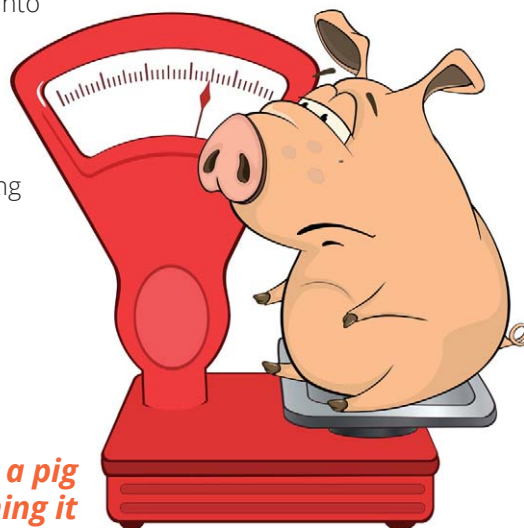
Does the organisation's leadership believe that engaged employees are good for the organisation? *This is the crucial factor that separates successful programmes with failed ones.*

**Assuming the answer is yes, here are our 7 steps to actively engaging your staff:**

1. Create the right culture – one where openness is valued and employees feel confident that their views will be welcomed and supported. Recruit people who chime with your company values;
2. Ensure all line managers have buy-in to the programme – a programme can fail when messages get confused;
3. Communicate your purpose of the business – staff will want to know and will value knowing and understanding it;
4. Ask the employee – put in place mechanisms to engage employees in regular feedback. If you understand what is important to them, what motivates them, what they enjoy doing (and are consequently good at), and you sculpt their job around these, you are much more likely to have a highly engaged, loyal and productive employee who will help drive profitability. Thinking you know best is a recipe for disaster;
5. Recognise that engaging employees is an ongoing commitment, as is giving your employees a say in that commitment;
6. Listen to their feedback and be authentic in your response to it. 'Close the loop' by thanking them for their feedback and letting them know they have been listened to. Don't fall into the trap of spending too long looking at and analysing the figures;
7. Prove that you value their feedback by acting on it – involve them in making improvements to the business. ▶

“ *The reward policy for persons who have had an internal promotion (no increased benefits, bonus or pay increase for 12-18 months, despite the expectations of higher staff output), does not encourage goodwill towards the business and seem almost unscrupulous in nature.* ”

*Sample of employee feedback from an automotive client*



***No one ever got a pig fat by weighing it***

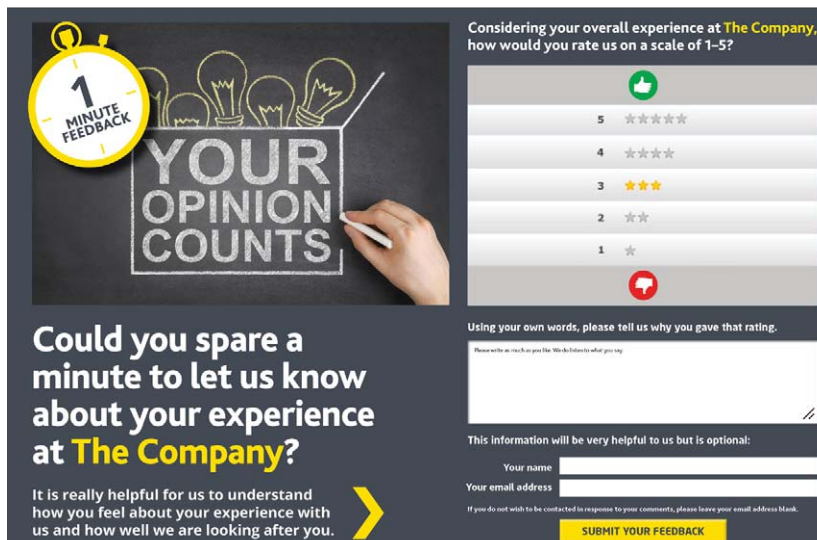


Seeking out, listening to and acting on employees views does not necessarily mean an organisation has to do what its employees want. But it does need to demonstrate that its leadership is listening to its people by inviting feedback and responding to it.

Although there are various methods that can be used for encouraging feedback, online feedback forms, which ask employees to rate their working life and then say – in their own words – why they gave that rating, are hugely successful in generating quality insights into employee engagement.

## 4 golden rules for employee feedback:

1. Make it quick and easy for staff to give feedback;
2. Ask for a simple single rating and open-ended commentary for the best quality insight into your employees views;



Considering your overall experience at **The Company**, how would you rate us on a scale of 1-5?

5 ★★★★★

4 ★★★★☆

3 ★★★☆☆

2 ★★☆☆☆

1 ★☆☆☆☆

Using your own words, please tell us why you gave that rating.

Please write as much as you like. We'd like to hear what you say.

This information will be very helpful to us but is optional:

Your name

Your email address

If you do not wish to be contacted in response to your comments, please leave your email address blank.

**SUBMIT YOUR FEEDBACK**

**Could you spare a minute to let us know about your experience at **The Company**?**

It is really helpful for us to understand how you feel about your experience with us and how well we are looking after you. ➤

3. Use a variety of feedback channels so your employees can choose the method they prefer – online forms, focus groups, tablets / kiosks, social media;
4. Consolidate your employee feedback with your customer feedback to gain a 360 degree view of company issues. ▶



“ We instil high and demanding standards on our dealer network with regards to facilities and presence. However, looking around the office, to me there is a material difference in the standards we accept at Head Office (eg; a taped up front reception carpet, employee chairs where seats are torn, broken blinds, poor air-conditioning).

*Sample of employee feedback from an automotive client*

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In today's changing landscape for organisations worldwide, engaging customers and employees in the right ways is critical to business success. The two are intrinsically linked – happy, fulfilled and valued customers are easier to deal with and therefore make the lives of service employees that much easier. Happy, fulfilled and valued employees service their customers with more enthusiasm and energy, thus turning them into happier customers.

Open your eyes afresh to your customer experience programme. Consider how much additional value employee feedback could bring to it.

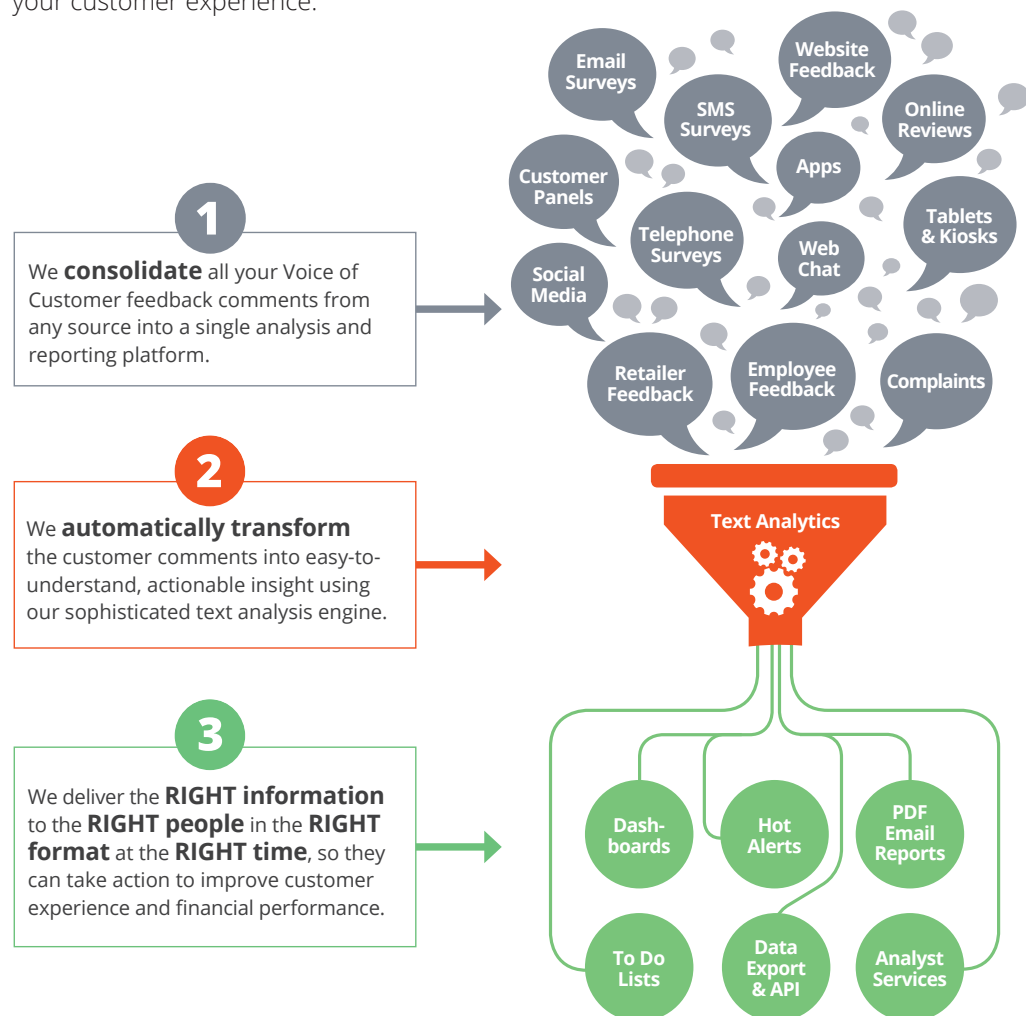
Your organisation may have already consolidated “voice of customer” feedback from multiple channels but isn't it time to come full circle and include the “voice of employee” in the mix? ■



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Feedback Ferret**

# Feedback Ferret – Experts in Customer Feedback

Using text analytics, Feedback Ferret transforms customer feedback comments into actionable insight. We make it easy for you to improve your customer experience.



All our technology and services have been developed by, and are operated by, Feedback Ferret Ltd. The technology is our own intellectual property, designed specifically to address the needs of extracting insight from customer feedback.

Feedback Ferret is based in Bourne End in the UK, with offices in USA, South Africa and Poland.

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