

## Take the High Road: Customer Journey Mapping Best Practices

*"Up to 80% of Future Revenue Comes from Current Customers"*

In a nutshell, here's why customer journey mapping is so important: Buyers typically expect an ideal experience when purchasing a product or service they think will finally meet their needs. They anticipate feelings of satisfaction and success in finding something they want, going through the purchase process, and enjoying what they bought. Customers also notice and remember this experience—the ease or annoyance of it—even if they're not consciously thinking about it. Below are the steps I take to ensure customers' anticipation is met with total satisfaction.

- 1. Keep It Simple.** Design and document logical, easy journey processes—this benefits customers and employees alike.
- 2. Be Systemic.** Find the “one best way” for your end-to-end process that enables the highest quality and delivers consistent, repeatable experiences.
- 3. Be Smart.** Ensure that those highest-quality processes also deliver faster journey cycles for customers and entail the least cost for the company.
- 4. Focus.** Find your “moments of truth”: those key points at which, if you don't get it right with the customer, you lose trust, credibility, and possibly their business. And if you get it right, customers stay much longer.
- 5. Relate.** Move from being transaction-minded to relationship-centered. Focus on opportunities to build lasting customer relationships versus processing individual transactions.
- 6. Validate.** Map the actual current-state journey and complete a cross-department validation. Aspects of the journey are sometimes assumed, misinterpreted, or not actually happening, so verification is crucial.
- 7. Don't Fumble.** Pay particular attention to department handoffs, transitions, and especially dependencies throughout the journey, as this is where customer-impacting challenges occur. Bust down the silos while defining clear responsibility.
- 8. Involve Employees.** Post your journey map and let the entire company weigh in. This sounds like a lot of work, but it's an invaluable way for employees to learn and to offer feedback on the current map as well as ideas for the future, ideal-state customer journey.
- 9. Invite Customers.** Involve a few customers to get their perspective, or at the very least, consider their input as gathered from your VoC program. They are the ones on the journey, after all.
- 10. Think Ahead.** Create the ideal, future-state customer journey map, and a plan to achieve it, along with your employees. Watch employee engagement rise as they make company decisions that positively impact customers.
- 11. Get Results.** Measure progress against high impact customer success metrics and adjust when needed.