

Employee Alignment

Getting people to deliver the customer experience

A Gallup customer survey confirmed that the 'people' factor is by far the most important determinant of customer loyalty. The question is, how do you electrify and energize people in your organisation? How do you align them with your customer-focused strategy? The answer lies in the following four key factors that are critical to successful employee alignment:

1) Recruit the right people

If you wonder what getting and keeping the right employees has to do with getting and keeping the right customers, the answer is everything” says Frederick Reicheld in his book ‘The Loyalty Effect’. What’s critical is that you first identify the fundamental behaviors and values your brand requires and then recruit people on the basis of those behaviors and values.

2) Train them right

Develop training that teaches people not just what the core behaviors are but how to live them for customers. Focus on training that really enables people to turn company and brand values into competitive advantage. But make sure that you differentiate your training. You can’t achieve breakthrough results with uninspiring training. Branded experiences require branded training. You can’t tell employees what to do to be the best – you have to use more innovative and engaging approaches.

3) Reward the right brand behaviors

The soft stuff needs a hard side. ‘People power’ requires that you also develop metrics for evaluating the use and impact of core and specific brand behaviors. Reward and recognition systems need to be aligned with these metrics.

4) Demonstrate the right brand behaviors from the top

Senior managers need to set the example. The way they treat employees is reflective of how employees will treat customers. Leaders must communicate a sense of purpose and constantly reinforce the values of the organisation. They must also remember the connection between what colleagues want and what customers want. Above all, they must encourage colleagues to observe and challenge the organisation through customers’ eyes.

Extracted from ‘Managing the Customer Experience’, Shaun Smith and Joe Wheeler. Chapter 6: ‘People First’. (Published by FT Prentice Hall)