

Bringing life to the employee experience

We're in a unique moment where unemployment is low, but volatility and disruption are high. Emerging technologies such as generative AI will fundamentally transform our experiences at work. While this disruption can cause uncertainty, it also presents a tremendous opportunity.

Right now, we have a chance to make work more meaningful – to place people at the center of tech-driven transformation and move towards a more life-centric approach to the employee experience (EX). Companies doing this are gaining a competitive edge. They're able to reinvent with their people, instead of letting reinvention happen to them.

Yet 3 out of every 4 organizations lack comprehensive strategies and initiatives to ensure positive employee experiences and outcomes with gen AI¹.

What is the Employee Experience (EX)?

Employee Experience (EX) is the perception people have of the sum of their interactions with and within an organization that affects their feelings and thinking, leading to their behaviors and performance.

There's a major disconnect between employee expectations and their actual experience in the workplace. Accenture research reveals an alarming reality that only 29% of employees trust their company's leaders have their best interests at heart². This is brought to life when we consider that 60% of employees are concerned that gen AI may increase stress and burnout³ but only 37% of leaders see this as an issue¹.

So what needs to change? When organizations put EX at the heart of everything they do, they can attract and retain talent and unlock the potential of their people.



¹ Accenture Pulse of Change Wave 10 Survey, Sept 2023 (n=2,425 CxOs)

² Accenture Future of Work Study, Nov 2022 (n=10,750 workers)

³ Accenture Change Workforce Survey, Oct-Nov 2023 (n=5,000 workers)

The recipe for EX success

People are expecting more and more from their employers. They want leaders to prioritize their fundamental needs so they can feel Net Better Off⁴ at work. Crucially, leaving people Net Better Off unlocks people's potential, strengthens trust and gets people ready for, and comfortable with, new technologies like gen AI⁵. So what does this all mean? It means leaving your people feeling healthy (physically, emotionally and financially), connected with a strong sense of trust and belonging, purposeful in the work they do and confident in their job opportunities with highly marketable, future-ready skills.

Now more than ever, organizations need to create exceptional experiences across all types of employee interactions — whether that's career-related, organizational interactions (e.g., as part of learning and development) or work interactions (e.g., as part of serving customers). Just like delivering exceptional customer experiences, these employee experiences must manifest through all channels or touchpoints — human to human, human to machine and human to physical space.



At Accenture, we developed a unique formula to measure EX success that factors in the interplay between employee experiences and expectations. To succeed, organizations need to ensure the sum of all employee experiences exceeds people's expectations. The more they can exceed those expectations, the greater the benefits such as increased retention, greater engagement and improved customer experience. This can be further amplified by a clear and aligned enterprise EX vision and strategy.

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \text{EX} & & \text{My Experience} \\ \text{Vision \& Strategy} & \times & \text{My Expectations} \\ & & \text{=} \\ & & \text{Increased Retention} \\ & & \text{Greater Engagement} \\ & & \text{Improved Customer Experience} \end{array}$$

So how do you ensure every experience goes above and beyond what people want? It's all about taking a life-centric approach to EX.

This means looking at employees in the context of their whole lives, not just their work life. It requires appreciating and caring for people's unique needs and having an always-on suite of insights to deliver impactful, relevant and hyper-personalized experiences.

⁴ Accenture, "Care to Do Better," Sept 2020

⁵ Accenture Change Workforce Survey, Oct-Nov 2023 (n=5,000 workers)

Better for people, better for business

Companies moving toward a life-centric approach to EX are the ones gaining a competitive edge against their peers. Accenture’s research⁶ found that not only are they better at attracting and retaining talent, but they’re also seeing exponential business growth.

Here’s what leading companies are doing differently and the proven ways it’s paying off:

From	To	In practice
Using relatively static sentiment capture (e.g., annual or periodic surveys)	Using dynamic, always-on data capture to generate insights in real time (e.g., Voice of the Employee)	Organizations need a continuous, integrated view of their people to better understand their needs. This means listening to what people want on an ongoing basis and generating timely insights and actions. The good news is that in many cases, that data already exists. Companies leading in attracting and retaining talent are 20% more likely to conduct regular feedback sessions for people to share their suggestions and concerns ⁶ . They’re also tapping into insights beyond the four walls of their business, like online data from Glassdoor or LinkedIn ⁶ .
Focusing on the employee at work	Focusing on the entire person, including the context and life forces that exist around them	When employers look at the bigger picture of what motivates people, they can gain context-sensitive insights that enable them to deliver personalized experiences. For instance, companies that gather holistic feedback from people which includes the context of their personal lives (e.g. how they perceive their ability to meet demands of both work and their personal lives) are 30% more likely to realize exponential business growth ⁶ .
Seeing all employees as workers having the same needs	Recognizing the uniqueness of each person and every role they play in their lives (e.g., employee, citizen, parent, caregiver)	70% of workers around the globe have some level of caregiving responsibility — whether caring for children, elderly parents or both ⁷ . Organizations must recognize the needs of each individual and tailor the employee experience to better serve them and their preferred way of working. Accenture found that companies that give people control over how, when and/or where they work are 30% better at attracting and retaining talent ⁶ .
Reacting to employee needs	Anticipating and proactively responding to needs that employees didn’t even know they had	With generative AI becoming more ubiquitous at work, companies are now more equipped than ever to predict people’s needs. Companies using generative AI conversational agents and interfaces to better understand their employees are 30% more likely to see exponential revenue growth ⁶ . They’re also 20% more likely to retain employees if they use generative AI to design and personalize solutions that address people’s unique needs ⁶ .
Positively impacting only employees	Empowering people to feel a sense of purpose so they can provide value to customers, the community and the planet	People that feel a strong sense of purpose – beyond just an individual job – are the ones driving meaningful change in the world. For example, those that feel they “make a difference” at work are 64% more likely to be engaged in high levels of innovation ⁸ and those that feel energized and excited about their work are 31% more likely to go above and beyond ⁹ . A Harvard Business School study also found that when employees felt a sense of purpose at work, their companies outperformed the stock market by 6.9% ¹⁰ .

⁶ Accenture Song Intelligence Survey 2023 (n=1,000)

⁷ Accenture Future of Work Study, Nov 2022 (n=10,750 workers)

⁸ <https://www.greatplacetowork.com/resources/blog/soaring-over-purpose-gaps-with-incredible-company-culture>

⁹ <https://www.gartner.com/en/newsroom/press-releases/2023-10-24-rhr-gartner-hr-research-finds-only-31-percent-of-employees-report-they-are-engaged>

¹⁰ <https://www.greatplacetowork.com/resources/blog/purpose-at-work-is-only-profitable-if-you-do-this-one-thing-study>

Ready to get started?

Here are four things to keep in mind when delivering life-centric employee experiences:

- 1 See people before employees**
Gain a profound and dynamic understanding of employees as people with complex, multi-dimensional lives.
- 2 Solve for relevance**
Broaden the canvas for value creation by shifting from the needs of individual functions to the individuals needs of people.
- 3 Simplify for clarity**
Design with transparency and simplicity for a delightful employee experience.
- 4 Scale for growth**
Build an organization and operating model that enables great experiences delivered through a modern tech stack and mature enterprise EX capabilities.

Get in touch to learn how Accenture can help.

Accenture delivers end-to-end EX transformation for clients to bridge the gap between leaders and employees and create a shared path toward growth.

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