

# How does HR get the digital employee experience right?

On behalf of the whole LACE Partners Team we want to thank you for registering/attending the webinar on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2020. We

For those of you that were unable to attend, you can watch an 'on demand' version at [www.lacepartners.co.uk/webinars](http://www.lacepartners.co.uk/webinars).

We've outlined below some of the questions that were asked at the webinar as part of Q&A, but if you'd like to have a chat with any of the team you can drop us an email at [info@lacepartners.co.uk](mailto:info@lacepartners.co.uk) or call Chris Howard on 07759 375 097. You can also contact Chris via email – [chris@lacepartners.co.uk](mailto:chris@lacepartners.co.uk).

## Questions

### What are the principles for employee experience?

- Ensure that employee experience is driven by employees – not just the organisation or the HR Team. At Centrica they use a '4D' methodology – Discover, Define, Develop, and Deploy, with all stages done with employee interaction – one-to-one sessions, surveys, etc.
- The five principles that Centrica have developed are:
  1. **People Focused** – employees are central to decision making in the business
  2. **Strive to be adaptive and agile** – enable services to be upgradable where possible
  3. **Power to self-serve** – very relevant in current climate but employees need help to serve themselves with human interaction where necessary – balance is key
  4. **Enable by data** – the foundation of employee experience is colleague insight
  5. **Simplicity** – continuous goal to make complex processes simple
- People want contact their way and so the balance of blended experience between automated and human interaction is key.

### What insights came out because of Centrica's approach to employee experience and the work undertaken in recent years?

- Cultures of distrust and disengagement start when employees do not feel they are being listened to. Organisations that deliver pulse surveys or engagement surveys that generate little action as a result of their feedback will create dissatisfaction. So listening, then involving in the feedback afterwards is key. If you ask for opinions, you must act on them.
- Design processes and journeys with the employee in mind. Designing processes with simplistic language, tone of voice, in a way that all employees can understand is key. Don't make the assumption that because you are using the HRIS system all of the time, every line manager is, for example.

### What parts of your journeys have been digitised in the approach to self-service?

- All people processes in Centrica have been migrated in to the Workday platform they use from 2019, which was key, but the next big challenge has been focused on colleague education, line manager support and upskilling – this is on a continuous basis.
- There are unique journey's for line managers and colleagues that have had to be mapped out.
- Helping employees navigate vast intranets to get to the appropriate HR processes has also been a key part of the challenges.

### Every organisation has different types of workforces. How does that impact the approach to self-service and how HR delivers to the whole business?

- Centrica has a very diverse workforce and so whether its office or employee functions, through to engineers working in towns, or on platforms in the North Sea. The first step has been to develop employee personas which enabled the business to understand what works well for the different personas.
- All employee personas were developed from feedback from employees and the interaction across the workforce.

Line managers have two experiences. One as an employee and one as a line manager. How can you help these people who have these two 'hats' and how can you help these people adapt to new ways of working?

- Most organisations don't have a line manager capability issue; the challenges they face are because they haven't put the mechanisms for learning and upskilling in place, to help line managers succeed.
- At Centrica the focus has been on supporting line managers through additional learning such as eLearning, workshops, guides, etc – helping line managers work remotely and support employees.
- For many organisations one of the big challenges also exists with onboarding new staff during this time. A year ago a lot of the natural onboarding elements of meeting people in the office, building relationships face-to-face, are now needing to be digitised and delivered remotely. However, communication has vast improved during lockdown because so many leaders have been forced to do it in ways that they will not have done before.

How can you measure success with employee experience?

- Covid-19 has shifted the way that Centrica have used data because the business has started to increase a regular 'pulse' system in place, changing questions to understand what employee sentiment is like, specifically related to the global pandemic. Insights have included how line managers are supported people, how physical and mental wellbeing has changed, etc. Those pulses go out to all group functions and departments. However, this is also matched with speaking to people via calls, etc.
- Some organisations have also used rating systems – for example via information housed on their intranet – as to how good employees value the information they are looking at.
- What is key is how businesses develop ongoing feedback loops. But these need to be two way. HR talks a lot about what it can give to the business, but employees also have to have the desire to provide the information and feedback, back to the HR team to act on. Essentially an 'employee deal' – the 'give and the get'. It is about transparency, i.e. 'we will give you this communication and information, in return, this is what we expect from you'

How much of the employee experience is a collaboration between HR and other functions?

- This is crucial – typically HR can work in a silo'd environment, which has been stopped as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. It has forced HR to work with Finance and Procurement, for example. For Centrica the return to the office situation is a perfect example, making the offices as safe as possible for the workforce. For Centrica the three workstreams that have been vital in the return has been Procurement and Facilities Management, the second is resilience for government, the third is employee experience.
- The EX workstream is now recognised as a key part of the return, because it includes health and safety, wellbeing, learning and development, communications, diversity, resourcing, etc. EX is becoming the 'glue' that is pulling together HR to effectively work with other functions and become the 'glue' for a business.

What are the different channels/tech that you've put in place outside of Workday?

- Centrica use Qualtrics for their sentiment analysis surveys, but Workday has been the focus in terms of technology.
- Often businesses have too many systems in place and the result of that is a lack of engagement from employees. The trick is to get the balance.

How do simplify your processes to make life easier for line managers?

- Try to simplify the process for line managers – if they only need to focus on two or three elements of a hiring process, for example, there is no need to involve them in every stage as it.
- For example, if you have 500 expense codes and a line manager requests details, perhaps providing them with the 'Top Ten' codes that are used, so it makes life easier for the employee.

Do the panel think there is a risk of EX becoming the new jargon and therefore over-used and abused similar to how "digital", "agile" and "pivot" have become recently?

- It is at risk of becoming a buzz word if you are not clear on what it means in each organisation, you are not transparent in the journey and if it is not measured in organisations. Understanding 'what are our outcomes?'
- EX is evolving and the COVID-19 global pandemic has accelerated the way in which organisations view EX.
- Feedback loops and listening to your colleagues are critical to the success of the evolution of EX.

