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# The Employee Experience: How To Attract Talent, Retain Top Performers, And Drive Results



## Synopsis

Want a profit-enhancing Customer Experience? Start with the Employee Experience. The Employee Experience helps organizations attract and retain top talent, and reveals the secrets for building a deeply engaged workforce. With insights into the dynamics of trust and mutual expectations, this book proves that before you can deliver a transcendent customer experience (CX), you must first build a superlative employee experience (EX). It's not about perks. It's not about creating a worker's utopia, and it doesn't mean that work must be easy; employees are responsible for managing expectations and meeting the organization's requirements. But by establishing a clear set of expectations and promises--collectively known as "the Contract"--and upholding it consistently, employers can build the essential trust that leads to powerful employee engagement. The data are unambiguous: organizations with engaged workforces are more profitable, enjoy greater growth, and win the battle to keep the most talented personnel. Employees who have a fulfilling, rewarding work experience perform better, achieve more, and bring more value to the organization. The Employee Experience teaches you how to leverage the full potential of your people to transform your future: Make the Employee Experience a core part of your strategy Understand employee expectations and bridge the 'Expectation Gap' Establish a rock-solid Contract that breeds trust and confidence Build a culture of support and achievement Turn employee engagement into an exceptional customer experience, profit, and growth Creating a transformative employee experience is not about stock options or foosball in the break room. It's about respecting the role your people play in representing your brand and building your business. When you give talented people the space to achieve and thrive, they'll give your customers an experience your competitors can't duplicate. The Employee Experience shows you where extraordinary companies start. . . and how to build one.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Maylett and Wride have plowed through tens of thousands of cases, figured out what actually tips the scale of engagement, and are now sharing what you can do to attract and retain top performing employees by building the right employee experience for your organization." - From the Foreword by Kerry Patterson, Co-Author of the New York Times bestseller, *Crucial Conversations*.

Ever Notice How Companies with the Best Service Also Have the Happiest Employees?

That's No Accident. Do you want to build a strong, successful organization? Start by ignoring your customers. Really. Instead, focus first on creating a better employee experience, or EX. Your employees interact with customers, make them smile, and carry your brand message from the warehouse to the front lines. If your employees are having a great experience, so will your customers. In *The Employee Experience*, employee engagement pioneers Tracy Maylett and Matthew Wride reveal the secrets not only to attracting and retaining top talent, but to building a deeply engaged workforce; the foundation of organizational success. With deep insights into the dynamics of trust and mutual expectations, this book shows that before you can deliver a transcendent customer experience (CX), you must first build a superlative EX. With real-world examples and more than 24 million employee survey responses, Maylett and Wride reveal a clear, consistent pattern among the world's most successful organizations. By establishing a clear set of expectations and promises; collectively known as the Contract; and upholding it consistently, employers can build the trust that leads to powerful engagement. Whether in business, healthcare, education, sports, or nonprofit, these organizations are consistently more successful and more profitable, enjoy sustainable growth, and win the battle to keep today's rarest resource: talented people. Blending rigorous research, detailed case studies, in-depth interviews and expert insights, *The Employee Experience* will teach you to: Make the employee experience a core part of your strategy Understand employee expectations and bridge the "Expectation Gap" Establish rock-solid Brand, Transactional, and Psychological Contracts that breed trust and confidence Build an employee-employer partnership in creating something extraordinary Turn

employee engagement into fuel for customer satisfaction, profit, and growth. Attracting talent, retaining top performers, and creating an environment in which employees choose to engage drives results. The Employee Experience shows you where truly extraordinary organizations begin and how to build one.

I will recommend this book to other corporate trainers, HR directors and leaders I work with. Practical advice with clear and relevant examples. A worthy investment of your time and money. Other reviewers have provided excellent detailed summaries of the book. I am simply adding my 5 star vote to express my opinion and gratitude for the work that the authors have done here. This book will advance the discussion about the evolving relationship between companies and employees. The three chapters about the Brand Contract, the Transactional Contract and the Psychological contract are treasures worth savoring. I have not found another book that clarifies these concepts as well as the authors have here.

I highly recommend this book! I can apply the principles where I am now, in a role with very little to do with people management.

I like this book. It is the follow-up book to *MAGIC: Five Keys to Unlock the Power of Employee Engagement*. The book *Magic* introduced the notion that effective employee engagement is enhanced by focusing on: the Meaning of the employees work, the Autonomy that the employee enjoys in choosing work and tasks, the Growth potential the employee experiences, the Impact that the employee has, and the Connection that the employee feels with the organization and his colleagues, *MAGIC*. *MAGIC* is a similar construct to *Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us*, one of my favorite management books of all time. In *Drive*, Pink tells us that employees are motivated by autonomy, mastery, and purpose. You can see the relationship between these and the elements of *MAGIC*. The main contribution that *The Employee Experience* brings to the discussion is the notion of employee expectations and formal and informal "contracts" that exist between the employee and the organization. When the organization is meeting the employees' collective expectations then the employees will have an excellent employee experience that leads naturally to great customer experiences - the ultimate goal of the business. This book broke the theory of enabling good employee experiences into three broad areas: expectation alignment, formal and informal contracts, and mutual trust. Each section included some theory, some questions for considerations, and many, many real-world, illustrative examples. The premises

of each section are both academically sound and resonate with experience. For example, under expectation alignment, the authors describe six "pillars": Fairness, Clarity, Empathy, Predictability, Transparency, and Accountability. The authors provide warning signs for when things have gone awry. Missed goals, lower engagement scores, and quality issues are some of the indicators of poor expectation alignment. The approach for the whole book can be summarized in one quote, "the answer lies in a lot of hard work and by building an intentional plan..." This is not a book about abstract theory or a series of case studies. The book is a regimen that will require a manager to work hard in areas that he or she might not be very comfortable, but in the end the work will pay off. The contract section identifies three contracts at work in every business whether the managers are aware of them or not: the Brand contract, the Transactional contract, and the Psychological contract. The book defines the Brand contract as "all the implied promises that your brand makes to the people who are exposed to it." The idea being that employees are attracted first to a business based on their perceptions of its brand. A key part of each of the contracts is that there is both a deliberate, clearly articulated piece and a perceived piece. The voice over in an advertisement is the articulated piece, but the smiling grandmother and warm tones of the happy house also imply something about a brand - something that might attract employees to be part of the company. The transactional contract is the sum of the physical contract that the employee signs along with the explicit policies and procedures that a company runs from. This is the smallest section in the book, because it is relatively cut and dried compared to other concepts. If you find yourself being sued for breach of contract by employees then you likely have an issue with the transactional contract. Finally, the psychological contract "is the unwritten, implicit, set of expectations and obligations that define the terms of exchange in a relationship." This is an area that can get managers into trouble. The forms of the psychological contract are: implicit, unilateral, interpretative, belief based, nonreciprocal, about fairness, open-ended, flexible, illogical, and inclusive. Most of those concepts involve personal interpretation of the world. Managers can hope to influence, but without a very tight feedback loop and frequent communication no manager can hope to master it. The last section of the book on trust includes a primer on MAGIC and describes "moments of truth." The idea is that there are seminal moments when employees will form lasting views and beliefs of the trustworthiness of the company. By exercising the principles of MAGIC, the company creates an environment where it has the best chance of having the moments turn out positively. All in all, this is a very good book. I recommend reading either "Drive" or "MAGIC" before tackling this one.

Over 15 years ago, it was Coffman & Buckingham's "First Break All The Rules" that brought employee engagement into sharp focus. They planted an appreciation for a condition that, until then, I saw as just another metric—the next generation beyond satisfaction. The authors spoke with an authority grounded in robust research and abundant data. My copy of that book looks like it sprouted post-its, I've referred to it so much. It wasn't until Tracy Maylett's book "MAGIC" that I experienced a similar response. It too was grounded in abundant data but it went further to describe the conditions that must be present to produce and sustain high engagement:

Meaning • Autonomy • Growth • Impact • Connection. MAGIC builds on what we know from the Gallup Q12 about the basic employee needs that must be met: know what's expected of me, have the resources needed, quality conversations with the boss and so forth. Fail to meet those needs and you get low or no engagement. But, attend to MAGIC and build cultures that transcend meeting needs to achieving and sustaining the highest potential benefits that highly engaged employees and managers produce and experience. "The Employee Experience" takes a fresh view of the "Service-Profit Chain" (satisfied employees beget satisfied customers) and brings fresh insight to the elements of an integrated employee experience strategy. Again the authors ground their insights and recommendations in their interpretation of millions of survey responses and application of organizational theory. In fact, the authors compliment the intelligence of the reader with mini side-bars that, in a few paragraphs, explain those theories. This is another book worthy of multiple reads to get at the extensive list of actions to meet the expectations for each of the three "contracts": brand, transactional and psychological. Refer to this book as a practical guide for the organization seeking to attract and retain the best talent. For the consultant, it's a framework with which to approach an organization, appreciate what's working there and identify opportunities to strengthen the employee experience. The content in each chapter can then be used as checklists, specific recommended actions and instructions. Toward the end of the book, the authors show Employee Experience as both a cause and result of MAGIC. Organizations need to have expectations aligned and the three contracts fulfilled ALONG WITH a culture where meaning, autonomy, growth, impact and connection flourish. Taken together, the two volumes make significant, practical, accessible contributions to the engagement-related literature.

I read a lot of business books. Some that go way over my head; some that seem to be regurgitating 100 other books; and some that hit that spot where ideas may not be new but they are presented in a way that makes the reader look at it a little differently. The last example is where Tracy Maylett and Matthew Wride's "The Employee Experience" fell. They present familiar issues but in such a way, that it prompts a fresh review and impression. There is a lot about contracts and that gets a little overwhelming but after a pause or two, it starts to make sense. The information is presented in an engaging way that is meant to be understood. In other words, it doesn't go so high into its ideas that it leaves the reader behind. That's what I liked best.

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