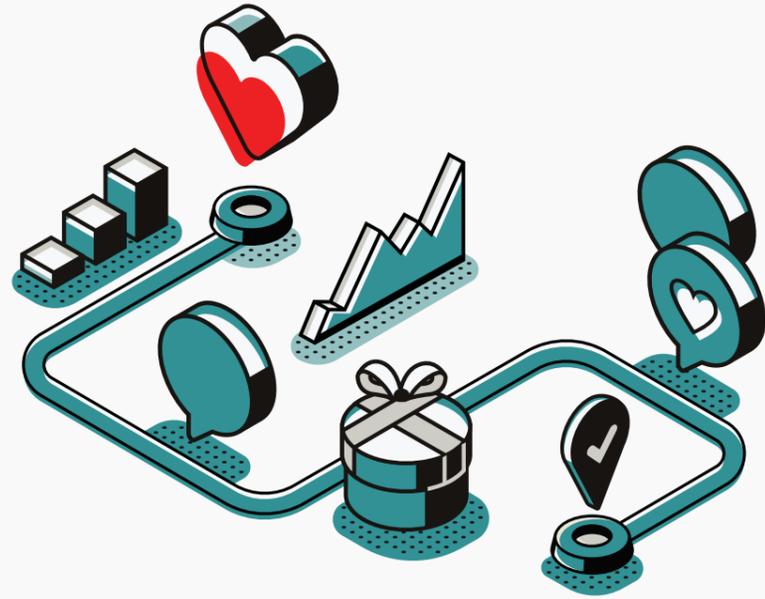


Employee Experience 2020

Global Report & Case Studies





“EX is about discovering and designing around human emotion.”

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About the EX Network

The Employee Experience (EX) Leaders Network is a group of founding EX-Pioneers and EX Leaders from across industries and geographies. Together they promote and shape EX. The EX Leaders Network is a KennedyFitch initiative.

For more information, visit:
www.exleadersnetwork.com
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About KennedyFitch

KennedyFitch is an international executive search and management consulting boutique, specializing in EX-Centric Transformations & Design Thinking. The EX Leaders Network is a KennedyFitch initiative.

For more information, visit:
www.kennedyfitch.com

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Elliott Nelson leads the EX practice at KennedyFitch. He researches, writes and coaches leaders and organizations in EX-Centric Transformations and building new Agile ways of working.

Maria Neicu is the program lead of KennedyFitch's EX practice. Maria is passionate about learning how to create contexts where people can truly be at their best - for their organizations as well as for themselves.

Case Studies



EX - for a Future-proof Bank

EX is a pillar of the business strategy and the Netherlands team has written their own 'EX Playbook' as a blueprint for how they use Design Thinking, Agile teams and Analytics everywhere.

[Read the full case study on page 24](#)



Agile and EX

ING builds journeys and agile teams around employee needs. Their PACE program uses Design Thinking, Lean Start-up and Agile methods to create MVP's which can be rapidly implemented.

[Read the full case study on page 34](#)



EX Driving Innovation

KBC Group built an Employee App that serves as a 'Digital Butler', to solve problems in 20 seconds, developed by an Employee Journey team using Scrum methodology.

[Read the full case study on page 44](#)



Walmart: Scaling EX at the 'Fortune One'

Walmart moved (from other functions) or hired Experience and Workspace Designers, Product Owners, Storytellers and others, with the ultimate goal to win the future of retail.

[Read more the full case study on page 52](#)



Building Organizational Empathy

Facebook created EX Pillars of Health, Family, Community, Convenience, Time Away & Finances to show their people they care about them outside of the workplace.

[Read the full case study on page 30](#)



Seamless People Vision

Marie Kretlow mapped out the entire experience of a mostly remote workforce & created new journeys for Onboarding & all other areas that touch EX, along with digital tools.

[Read the full case study on page 40](#)



Analytics & Culture Champions

LinkedIn combined data sets to discover key ways to improve EX, and created 500 'Culture Champions' who helped them build a winning positive culture and great experiences at a local level.

[Read the full case study on page 48](#)

Executive Summary

Human-centered Design and Employee Experience (EX) are at the heart of significant organizational transformations around the world. EX is about discovering and designing around human emotion and 'What works here' in each organization, as a way to build competitive advantage. EX has exploded from its first appearance in 50 or so companies in 2017 to finding a place today in most Global Fortune 500 organizations, and a significant number of smaller companies as well.

This report contains the results of our 3rd annual Global EX Survey, where some 200 companies participated. We've included 7 in-depth case studies of leading EX companies – LinkedIn, Walmart, ABN AMRO, Facebook, KBC Bank, InVision, and ING, each illustrating different ways of doing EX.

This is the longest running survey of EX trends in the market. Half of our respondents come from companies with more than 10K employees, and one quarter from big organizations of 50K+ people. Another quarter comes from smaller companies, below 500 employees, which brings a balance of perspective, and a different level of challenges coming with the size of their organization. In terms of geographic location, 90% of the respondents came from Europe and North America, followed by APAC with 5% of respondents.

Most of what we do in HR today is built for the world of yesterday. EX is about moving us towards the future of work and a more consumerized workplace, where employees have more choice about where they work and their preferences frequently change, they seek out companies aligned with their values, are more likely to work as gig workers, do shorter lifecycles as full-time employees, and own their data. A workplace becomes a "platform" where workers learn, socialize, share ideas and move on.

Think of how many of our current systems, policies, processes, workforce strategies, physical facilities, digital tools are misaligned with these megatrends.

EX is here to for the long term and is growing in all industries, geographies and in companies of all sizes. EX has matured and evolved beyond what early EX Pioneers envisioned. What has changed the past 2 years and what's new for 2020? Key trends include:

Top 3 Trends in EX for 2020

- 1. Creating Organizational Empathy** – Led by the drive to make human connection, and supported by insights from People Analytics, organizations want to discover the Moments that Matter and turn them into "Wow Moments". This is the most powerful place where Culture intersects with EX and creates value.
- 2. Building & Scaling New EX Capabilities** – The good news is no matter how big or small you are, you can adopt Agile ways of working and get broad, diverse skills and capabilities onto your EX team. EX teams are starting to resemble Marketing and Digital teams with roles and skills that are completely new to HR.
- 3. Agile Becomes the New Normal** – Advanced EX companies use Agile frameworks and ways of working to rapidly prototype, test and implement new EX "products", with completely new ways of working that are more cross-functional, flatter and more business-driven.



EX should help us drive “Connection” and Wow Moments that Matter, which will in turn drive business results.

Other significant things that are happening at the same time – either contributing to or resulting from the above trends:

- **EX is bringing in radical new kinds of roles and capabilities** – many borrowed from UX, CX, Design Thinking, Marketing, DevOps, Service Design, etc. These are shaking up HR as many in traditional roles have to learn new ways of working and how to collaborate in new kinds of Agile teams. The HR Business Partner role can help “distribute and democratize whatever Analysts (and others) are discovering”, in the words of Richard Rosenow (Workforce Analytics) at LinkedIn.
- **Benchmarking is dead** – EX and Design Thinking are bottom-up processes vs. the top down approach we’ve been used to. Every company is finding its own EX definition and strategy, based on insights they are gathering about their people. As Michael Arena of Amazon Web Services puts it, “We need to shed this idea of ‘Best Practices’ and base what we do on evidence” within our own organizations. The idea of EX indices, models, industry comparisons or benchmarks just isn’t relevant anymore. Instead of using 17 or 36 ‘standard touchpoints’ from 50 or 100 companies, get your own insights on how your employees experience work and the company-specific needs and drivers of your own people, showing where you can make an impact.
- **HR is (finally) learning how to speak the language of business** – in the past, many people coming from business roles into HR said they didn’t understand the way HR talked and their terminology. As organizations move CX and EX closer together, they use language that is more about products, Product Owners and backlog, segmentation, customer satisfaction, end-user, NPS, etc.
- **The CoE model is being replaced** – according to EX leaders like Sjoerd Kueter, Director HR Digital & Service Delivery at ABN AMRO, “Agile teams with people of diverse expertise, who get things done faster and with all of the people needed to introduce ‘products’, are replacing CoE silos.” CoE’s are slow, isolated relics of top-down organizations.
- **Measurement of everything** – Analytics is one of the first new skills created and utilized to create “good EX”, as organizations want first to discover “what works” and do modeling around different activities. Shujaat Ahmad of LinkedIn says, “My role was to make sure any decision-making around Talent is based on evidence as much as possible and to minimize bias... starting with who we recruit, how we recruit, how we onboard and how we develop talent. It includes how we look at Diversity and Inclusion, at Belonging. How do we look at retention strategies? Is it backed up by data? Is there strategic thinking leveraging data?”
- **EX and Engagement** – As we first wrote 2 years ago, Engagement surveys come from 1920’s industrial design and are basically asking how well you like something that has already been done for (or to) you. EX is enlisting you in the co-creation of new experiences and then measuring how well those are delivered, with open text questions. Companies buy Engagement surveys for benchmarking (see above) which has less relevance as we realize the futility of comparing things that are incomparable. For some, like ABN AMRO’s Head of People Analytics, Patrick Coolen, Engagement, for now at least, sits side by side their NPS scores to measure things like clarity of the company’s strategy.

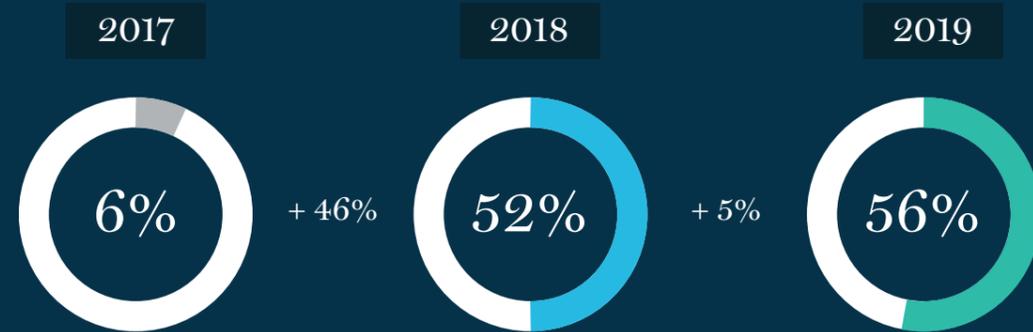
Here are the most important success factors for EX that we’ve noted in our research and consulting:

- **Executive buy-in and support is essential** - Business leaders must see EX as an imperative, at the same level of urgency as CX. EX insights help you understand ‘what works here’ with key touchpoints, and where to invest or stop investing, unlike traditional HR metrics which focus on cost and compliance.
- **Building Organizational Empathy is a top goal of EX** – we want to understand what it feels like to work here. Identifying and understanding emotions is the window into behavioral drivers and Moments that Matter. Organizations that have Organizational Empathy live and breathe Diversity and Inclusion that translates into how well they understand their diverse customers as well as employees.
- **Best way to approach Journeys** – those that start with the goal to openly discover how people actually experience work and build EX analytics data the way work naturally occurs, rather going through than an HR life cycle lens, find better insights about what drives performance and effectiveness, and build far better EX. Examples include Deutsche Telekom, BP and Enel.
- **Don’t forget to first empathize and understand** - Great Design and People Analytics teams that work well together and feed Design Thinking insights are absolutely critical. It is tempting (and this is our habit) to jump into Ideation and Prototyping without fully understanding the current way people experience work. Without solid data on the front end, what comes out of Ideation and Prototyping in Agile teams is no better than what you have now.
- **Everyone who touches EX vs. just HR** - Get everyone involved who touches the Employee Experience and build Agile teams, right from the start. Turn all your processes and programs into products and follow Agile methodology. Break up and put your CoE people in squads with Designers, Facilities, Communications, etc. and have them “pitch” products to the business. Examples include ABN AMRO, ANZ Bank, Vistaprint, and IBM.
- **Borrow or buy EX capability** – Move over or borrow any existing Product, Marketing, Agile and Analytics people from other areas of the business to help you until you know what you’re doing. This way of working is not like anything we’ve done before in HR and too many HR organizations try to do things themselves. There are probably UX or CX people, Designers, or Agile Coaches somewhere in your organization. If there aren’t, hire someone to teach you.
- **Where to learn** - Don’t expect to gain the best theoretical or practical knowledge about what EX is or how it actually works in practice, by reading HR or Employee Experience books. The best books are from authors outside of HR who write about Human-Centered Design, Design Thinking, Empathy, Organizational Psychology, Service Design, Agile, Scrum, Analytics, etc.

Listening, building Organizational Empathy and co-creating around “what works” for employees is hard work and takes sustained effort. As great as the shift has been to Employee Experience, Design Thinking and Agile, there will be far greater changes in how organizations work in the next 5-10 years and greater separation in terms of business success and happy employees, between those that adopt these principles and those that do not.

Organizations
that have
Organizational
Empathy
live and breathe
Diversity and
Inclusion.

Infographic



% that feel their organization has made significant progress on EX

Full Report



reported that EX will increase in importance within their organization in the next 1-2 years



already experience a new way of working and move towards merging CX - EX



of companies are at the building capability stage, while 12% have already implemented new ways of working or have merged CX with EX



of respondents say they have an agreed internal definition



of companies say they have set aside budget to execute their EX strategy in 2020.



Larger companies (over 50K employees) all have begun doing EX



Companies with 10,000-50,000 employees are most advanced in terms of merging CX and EX.

2. Full Report



In early 2014, when Mark Levy brought together all the groups at Airbnb touching Culture (Recruiting, Events, Facilities, Real Estate, Design, etc.) to create an end-to-end journey for employees, he coined the term "Employee Experience", adapting the term from Customer Experience.

In the years since then, EX has grown along with CX to become a way of doing business for many organizations. Early "EX Pioneers" like GE, IBM, ABN AMRO and others started using People Analytics to study behavioral drivers, segment users into personas and create journey maps and storyboards that informed HR services and processes.

GE's Head of EX, Paul Davies, said in 2017, that "We don't go an hour without using one of these (journey maps). We ask our employees, our people leaders and our candidates what matters most to them, we listen to their stories, listening especially for emotions."

Mark Levy said that Airbnb "borrowed the idea from Disney that 'every frame matters' in telling employee stories." Cisco began using hackathons, originally designed for UX ideation to give employees a voice on crowdsourcing new People processes.

Early on in our research, we noted that what separated the "leaders" was that they had developed and deployed Design Thinking capabilities as a way to discover and define EX and were very disciplined in how they gained insights – they observed, interviewed, surveyed, combined data sets in their Analytics, they experimented with different ways of working, using a variety of workspace arrangements and tools.

One of these, mentioned in our last report was Olivier Dubuisson, former head of EX at BP, who created a Voice of the Customer group, comprised of 300 people across BP, volunteering to share their insights. "We 'shadowed' people as they worked, conducted interviews and one-on-one meetings to extract information. Out of that information, we created personas and 16 employee journeys."



Deutsche Telekom took a similar approach, interviewing and observing over 200 people and then using their insights to create over 20 Moments that Matter.

In this way, EX marks a clear departure from the old top-down way of working. In the "old way of working" (e.g. Cascade or Waterfall), an HR organization typically operates this way: Someone at the leadership level receives a business mandate to create a new program and process e.g. Performance Management, a Management Development program or an Onboarding Program.

For our example, let's say it's a Performance Management program. In the traditional way things are done, we set strategy and specifications for what we want in the end, at the top of the organization, often with little input from end users. We often know what we want it to look like because we've borrowed the approach (think of forced rankings or 5-point ratings scales) from outside, without any idea of whether it 'works here'.

We give our strategy mandate for Performance Management to a Talent CoE, someone with expertise in performance management, who designs the way it will work from A to Z, likely based on a benchmark – a 'plug and play' process from external sources. We give it to our regions and business units and tell them how to use it, often with little variance for culture or business situation (at least, that's the way I did it in my 25 years of HR).

How do we measure success? Mostly by how well people 'comply' with our instructions. We measure how many people are on the system, how many have set or completed goals, etc.

And what we get in the end, is the implementation of a Performance Management system that is probably 100% complete – full of details and specifications and maybe even an operating manual (also something I did in the past – a 100 page 'Performance Management Master Document').

But it has never been tested in this environment. We have no idea whatsoever whether it will work or of the unintended consequences (sometimes disastrous as in the aforementioned Forced Rankings).

With Employee Experience, we use Design Thinking. We start with the people who will use Performance Management. But we don't just focus narrowly on the Performance Management process or timeline alone. We study the situations and context for how and when people need guidance, support and feedback, and ALL the places where they get it, including from their manager.

We measure 'what matters' to people and drives their performance. We do everything we can to 'Empathize' with how things work now – first – and define the problems they're trying to solve, before we think about a solution.

Once we define their problems (and validate them), we ideate and prototype and test new ideas with them, and experiment on a few possible solutions. And we do those quickly and develop and manage them like "products", in Agile teams. Those teams produce "Minimum Viable Products" (MVP's) that are continually test and validate our assumptions of 'what works' e.g. with control groups and several parallel streams, if we want to be sure of a successful outcome. We experiment with our new

Performance Management prototype in one part of the business before we "go big" everywhere with implementation.

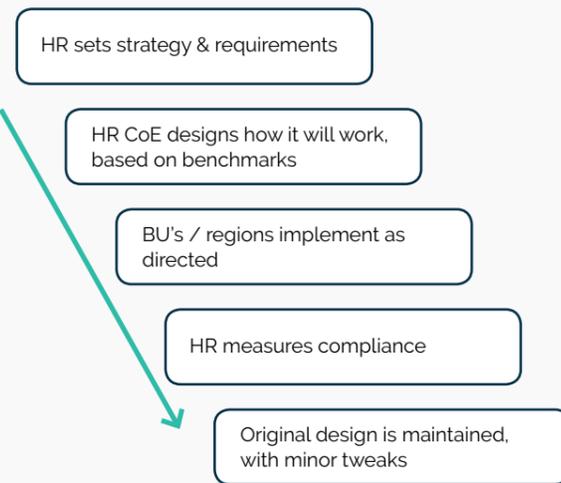
Then and only then do we decide on a Strategy for how Performance Management will be done in our organization, along with the MVP's for supporting processes, digital tools, communications, coaching and so on. Our metrics are based on what our people have told us are their drivers. Not an industry or market standard of touchpoints and drivers. And our solution is continually in beta, being tested and improved also after that point. Here is an illustration of how that looks.

In the end, with an EX approach, you get something (in our example, a new way of doing Performance Management), that you have a high degree of confidence will actually WORK in your environment, because it was co-created with the end user and tested rigorously.

"Employee Experience requires a new way of Working"

The old way of working

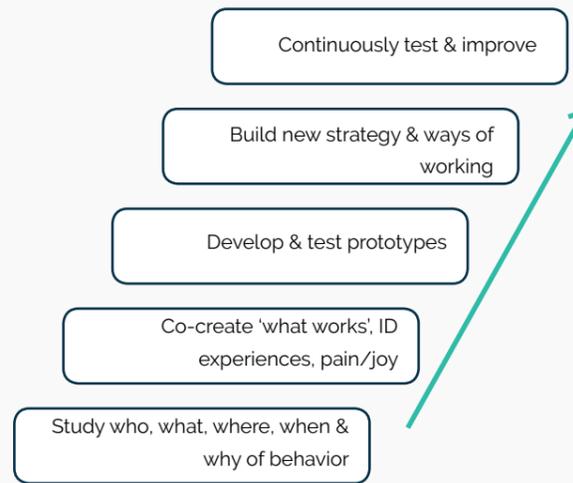
Problem: Defined at top



Solution: complete, untested

Co-creating with end users, like CX

Solution: prototype, tested



Problem: defined by those closest to the source

2.1. Organizational Personas: Stages of EX Implementation



EX Persona 1- "Talking EX" - These organizations have started using the term "Experience" to describe most of what they are doing in HR and may say things like "Our goal is to create great experiences" or "We acknowledge what is important to our people". These companies may have held HR-offsites where they worked on improving some HR processes and called it a "Design Thinking" session. These are often the companies who say they are "Researching" EX, who have not yet made any plan or investment to create new capabilities of their own.

They may borrow resources from elsewhere in the company e.g. Design Thinking or Agile Coaches. Frequently the person or role leading EX is also responsible for Engagement or EX is one of the responsibilities of the CHRO or head of Talent.

What are the challenges these companies need to overcome to move up? In many cases, their business and/or HR leaders have not been exposed to or experienced firsthand more transformative EX practices and have not seen the real business value of EX. Often an Analytics-based insight that challenges their conventional thinking about what is really driving behavior can break the ice. We find that when organizations first build a strong CX function, they are able to extrapolate the value to EX.

EX Persona 2- "HR-Centric" - This is where the vast majority of organizations are today who have made some progress implementing EX. They have built personas and journeys and critical EX capabilities including Agile teams. They are often well-organized and resourced, and their focus is almost exclusively on Employee Lifecycle, HR systems and processes e.g. Recruiting, Onboarding, Performance Management, Learning & Development, and Off-boarding (Leaving the company).

They have invested in new roles and capabilities, including some Agile teams and a People Analytics function, whose main purpose is to discover employee drivers and test and validate the effectiveness of their HR-related programs. In these companies, you often find a Head of EX, with an expanded team with non-traditional HR expertise e.g. CX, UX, Design, Product Marketing, Branding, Storytelling, etc. What are the challenges these companies need to overcome to move up? The main limitation of these companies is that they may see EX as the "CX of HR", primarily a form of HR Service Design with Design Thinking, but the emphasis is still on HR rather than the majority of Moments that Matter which usually have little to do with HR. As they develop continuous listening tools and listen more openly to their employees, they discover that key touchpoints and drivers of EX NPS, rarely have anything to do with HR.

EX Persona 3- "EX-Transformed" - These companies start with a more open approach to EX, preferring to first listen to, empathize with and understand the different journeys and Moments that Matter that people naturally have, including but not exclusive to HR processes. They look and operate more like CX and Marketing than HR and work almost entirely in Agile teams - squads or clusters. Their Analytics function integrates customer and employee insights. They've moved beyond HR processes and programs with roles that focus on Organization Design, Physical & Digital workspace and changing the business model. They have started to integrate customer and employee journeys and the EX leader is frequently head of both CX and EX.

2.2. Key Trends for 2020

In our research and consulting this last year, we've noted the 3 following areas of critical activity, where companies are investing and growing new capabilities, leading to some exciting new results in EX:

- Creating Organizational Empathy
- Building & Scaling New EX Capabilities
- Agile Becomes the New Normal

Creating Organizational Empathy

"Employee Experience is often defined as "How it feels to work here" and connects to the role "Culture" really plays in organizations, creating a "feeling", climate and environment for success.

This is why EX is at the forefront of Culture Change in companies around the world.

In our Global EX Survey, we see companies giving the following, actual culture-related reasons for "Why we do EX":

- "To create a working environment that allows people to realize their potential"
- "To attract, engage and inspire employees to be their best in a safe, transparent and engaging environment"

- "Engagement: Culture as a competitive advantage"
- "Defining and developing the optimal EX is crucial to our business success and, in particular, our High-Performance Culture"
- "To build a better place to work"
- "We are not calling it EX - instead we call it a Culture Journey"

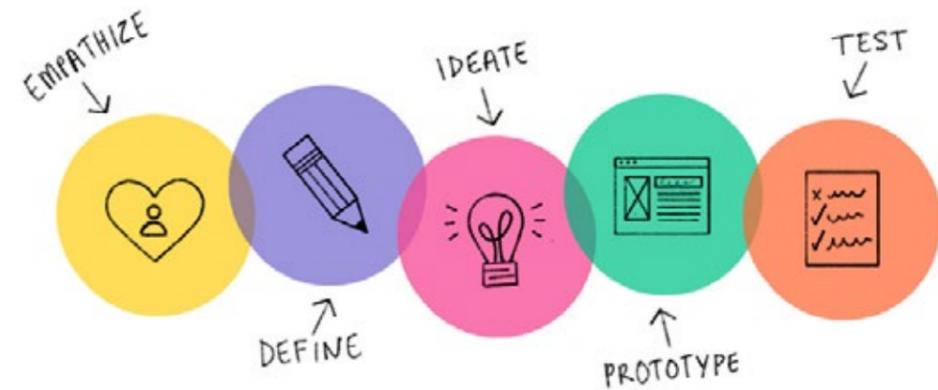
77% of respondents also say that "Transforming the Culture" is "very" or "extremely difficult", and ranked rank it at the top of challenges to building EX.

If creating a positive Culture is one of the most critical characteristics relative to creating positive Employee Experience, how have successful EX companies have done it?

One of the most consistent findings in our research the past 3 years is that successful EX Pioneers have developed both muscle and capability around "Organizational Empathy". This is seen in a variety of activities. A few examples include:

- Creating Personas
- Journey Mapping
- Analytics Insights
- Interviews – both structured and unstructured
- Understanding Moments that Matter
- Building "personal connection"

Empathy is the portal into Design Thinking and EX



Ideally, the first five activities above should lead to the last one of creating personal connection, or they are of little or no value. Personal connection is core to Empathy. Brené Brown talks about this connection in her masterful YouTube video on how Empathy drives Connection. Brown also cites research done by Theresa Wiseman, who did a "Concept Analysis of Empathy", and came up with these 4 "Defining Attributes" of Empathy:

1. Perspective Talking - The ability to see the world as others see it
2. Being Non-judgmental – allowing that what others experience is their truth
3. Understanding another's feelings
4. Communicating that understanding

Brown says that, "In order to connect with you, I have to connect with something vulnerable within myself that knows that feeling. And rarely can a response make something better. What makes it better is 'Connection'."

We believe therefore, that creating Organizational Empathy is far and away the most important thing to do to successfully transform the Culture to one that is EX-Centric. If you want to be a bottom-up, Agile organization, you need to know 'What it feels like to work here.'

We find it hard to believe that so many companies still talk about how they are creating 'Great EX', when they fail to do the hard work of Empathizing. If you read an EX Story that talks about how "Our management team got together and

2came up with ways to improve the Employee Experience", you should be extremely skeptical. This is just re-branding what has always been done e.g. leaders assuming they know what their people need.

Almost as ineffective is having HR people in a room talking about and creating Employee Journeys when what they are doing is focusing on and sometimes promoting their own views for HR processes e.g. Employee Lifecycle.

What is happening in many organizations is they are getting ahead of themselves into Solution Mode, forgetting the first steps in Design Thinking, the "First Diamond" of the Double Diamond model. Organizational Empathy is the portal into Design Thinking and EX.

I had one HR leader insist to me that he could stand in for his customers in a Journey Mapping session because, it was "his business" to know everything his customers needed. Damon Deaner, Head of EX Design at IBM puts it this way in a recent podcast: "Even as HR professionals, we're not our users. We're not representative of how employees will use or consume our offerings. I think what's exciting about these practices and mental models and frameworks, like Design Thinking is that they require us to look through the lens of the user, and the experiences that they have."

77%
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Culture' as the top
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In our current Global EX Survey, people shared the following insights about "The most important things they have learned" from doing EX:

- "It's very difficult to constantly look at things through an Employee perspective"
- "The categories of human feelings and emotions and how important this is"
- "Understanding what employees desire to experience directly from employees is more important than management strategies to improve EX"
- "The shift in mindset in HR to think about the employee as a true customer"
- "Focus on the problem, not the solution"
- "How little we know"

Focusing on Moments that Matter helps build Organizational Empathy because they almost always deal with the personal connections we have at work. Moments that Matter (MTM's): are typically identified in journeys as particular moments of emotional impact and importance – both positive and negative.

A definition from Customer Experience for an MTM is: "A transformative point in time where someone does something that makes a lasting emotional impression that changes how you feel about them and your relationship with them." Alternatively described as a Moment of Truth (MOT). By extension, we associate how we feel about a person with how we feel about the organization.

Gaining a deeper understanding of MTM's can tell us someone's perspective of: "How well did someone help me in a moment of critical need?" Focusing on MTM's or MOT's allows you to concentrate your energy on experiences that matter. The value of our EX offerings should ideally be assessed by how well we address MTM's. And our goal is to make MTM's into positive or 'Wow' MTM's.

Sander de Bruijn, Head of Global Employee Experience at ING, says people "Tend to focus on the things that really matter which is the personal connection." Sander and his team say that Moments of Truth or Moments that Matter are what really sticks: "People forget the rest, but they will remember the personal connections".

ING also found out that "if a pain point is repetitive enough

and persistent enough, then it will become an emotional moment and it will generate a Moment of Truth. People will remember it." Sander says, "You always need to fix the pain points, because they may become moments of truth in the end." (see the full case – 'Agile & EX at ING', later in Case Studies).

In our work with companies, we have learned the following lessons about Moments that Matter:

- Most had nothing to do with HR processes
- They focused on human interaction & emotional well-being
- Any digital tools enabled better human interaction
- Wow MTM's had the goal to support better, more effective work
- They are practical, low cost, simple, easy to implement

Real Examples of Moments that Matter



Tudor Havriliuc is VP HR at Facebook and over the past 5 years has been working on building and scaling the People Strategy and People Proposition. He talks about how Facebook "customizes our programs by first listening to the communities that need these services. For example, Transgender Benefits or our nursing rooms and mothers' rooms." (see the full case – Building Organizational Empathy at Facebook' later in Case Studies).

Tudor says, "We co-create and build these programs

working very closely together with the constituencies that are ultimately going to be the end users and beneficiaries of these programs. Because none of us in the team is an expert in every experience, we actually asked people who had gone through a transition whether they could be part of a steering to build the top Transgender Benefits Facebook could offer"

Tudor continues, "When we started doing our project for mothers, I knew nothing about pregnancy or lactation. And we asked mothers to tell us about their experience, and what they thought the best experience would be. We sat down and mapped out what they really wanted."

Tudor says: "Don't be afraid to ask people what they need, fearing you cannot deliver. "95% of people we spoke with were very reasonable in their requests. They're not going to ask for something outrageous. But it was very meaningful to them and in rolling out these programs afterwards, that the people who would be impacted and would benefit from these programs actually participated in building them. Giving ownership is empowering."

Lucien De Boeck, HR Digital Transformation Lead and Head of EX at KBC Group, talks about enlisting people who looking for re-assignment during a major restructuring. Lucien says: "We had people coming to our internal job center where they look for new opportunities or temporary jobs, and we got them involved in our EX work. We said: 'Okay, go talk with employees. If you want to create a journey for employees, for example to support a leave or a sickness journey, pretend you are sick. Stay at home and reflect on the experience of being sick try to gather lots of information: What do you want to do? What's most important to you?" (see the full case 'EX Driving Innovation at KBC Group', later in Case Studies).

Marie Kretlow, Senior Experience Designer at InVision, says: "EX is about creating empathy for your people. Defining the problem that they're having and then moving into ways to solve it—that framework is critical. Listening with empathy and letting go of your own assumptions about people's needs is crucial for anyone who wants to embark on the EX journey."

Marie's work of building EX is all the more complicated because most of their 800 employees across the US are remote workers. It was especially critical, therefore, that

they 'nail' how it feels coming into a new organization when you're working remotely.

They spent a lot of time collecting insights on the current Onboarding Experience, using NPS and a mix of quantitative questions as well as open text fields. Marie says: "The pilot solutions were tweaked with each iteration after that, until we nailed down our program." (see the full case 'A Seamless People Experience at InVision', later in Case Studies).

LinkedIn is another company that works hard to create Organizational Empathy. Nawal Fakhoury is an EX Leader and founder of the Culture Champions initiative, with 500 Culture Champions worldwide. Shujaat Ahmad is Senior Manager of People Analytics at LinkedIn and driver of People Analytics, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging, among other key roles. (see the full case – Analytics & Culture Champions at LinkedIn, later in Case Studies).

Shujaat and Nawal and their colleagues, have teamed up to uncover and promote what drives great Culture at LinkedIn by empathizing and listening to employees using Analytics and their Culture Champions. Shujaat says that "What we do at LinkedIn is pretty unique because LinkedIn's business is also People Analytics. We are 'Customer Zero".

Shujaat works hard using Analytics to develop Organizational Empathy - "What it feels like to work here" in the first weeks and months of joining the company. His team works first to analyze disparate multiple data sets e.g. compensation data, market data, engagement, open text, and attrition data in the first months on the job and define inflection points and key moments and predictors for when people where people are most engaged, and where they are likely to leave.

They ask, "Are we losing people at a specific time, a time that, if we zoomed in, we could highlight an onboarding issue?" They use that data to define the problems people are trying to solve. In the end they identify specific hotspots and then address these.

LinkedIn's Culture initiatives, came from a need that was identified from empathizing, listening to and understanding employees. And Nawal with her team and her network of Culture Champions have operationalized these and

developed strong, professional delivery capabilities for how they test and implement these programs.

Shujaat describes the LinkedIn Culture in this way: "I would say it's a very humane culture. You will see with anyone going through a problem in their life, people actually jumping in without anyone asking! And leaders jumping in, going there to make the most out of helping the person and their family. Whether there's something professional or personal. I worked at a lot of places where I haven't seen that! And I think that's something that you can't quantify."

And the result? LinkedIn is consistently ranked in the Top 5 Places where tech people want to work, in two recent polls.

- What have you found effective in creating Organizational Empathy in your workplace?
- What are the most important insights you've discovered about Moments that Matter?
- For which EX programs do you want to develop more empathic insights?

Building & Scaling New EX Capabilities

Walmart (over 2 million employees) is the largest company in the world – by far. How does a company of that size even think about creating Employee Experience? Kristin Reilly – Head of People Experience, a global COE at Walmart (see the full case - 'Scaling EX at the Fortune One' later in Case Studies).

Kristin says "Our main challenge is typically scale: How can we meet associates where they are in a global, matrixed organization with so much variety in roles and experiences? Personalization is important, but it requires us to think about how we create frameworks and guiding principles for experiences that enable the business leaders to have the flexibility to adapt to their needs." She calls it "flexibility within a framework."

The Walmart PX team focused on building three initiatives to scale:

1. The Associate Value Proposition
2. Measurement of EX and
3. Journey Mapping

To achieve success in these initiatives in a company the size of Walmart, Kristin has built and scaled her team of nearly 100 people—the number and makeup evolves and changes to best support the business and capitalize on economies of scale.

Kristin has come to highly value skills relating to Product Management, Marketing and Agile, as well as UX. She says, "We need tech partners and UX designers to be immersed in our work. I believe there will always be the day-to-day strategic components of HR, but the ability to build these new capabilities and talent will be even more critical in the future. The ability to invent, innovate, and solve big problems in real-time requires an agile product mindset. Bringing in some of these new skill sets, gathering new insights, building solutions, and operationalizing what you discover is the new wave of HR."

Kristin says, "The roles we hire for are not purely HR focused—we have marketers, product owners, storytellers, and workplace designers. We have shifted parts of our HR organization and general thinking to a more product-focused approach, using Agile methodology to create problem statements and build solutions through the development of MVPs and constant iteration based on insights and learnings."

"All of these capabilities were a mix of build and buy—many of these people were inside Walmart already," Kristin says. She also says that getting those people to work in HR and build great experiences for Walmart People was an easy sell.

Lucien De Boeck, HR Digital Transformation Lead and Head of EX at KBC Group, a 42,000 employee Bank insurer, headquartered in Brussels, only has himself and Sandra Mertens, Innovation and EX Manager, working full-time on EX. So they found and organized others across the organization to work in an Agile team to build their Employee App, which acts like a 'Butler' for employee needs that solves any problem in 20 seconds.



For this EX project, they brought in a Product Owner of the app, and organized a team with a Scrum Master, two analysts and another person in charge of communication, as well as developers. They also organized bottom-up an extended 'virtual' team involved in EX.

Lucien says: "We do not have a big budget behind this effort. We are a team of two people, but we have a real community of people in our business." Borrowing people from inside the company in Marketing, UX Design, Product Management and Agile is a great way to make anyone's EX team scalable – for both boom and bust. You're not building in FTE's dedicated to HR. That's the best thing about the model that Kristin has built at Walmart – anyone can do it and it works for literally any size of company.

- What are the roles in your company that you could make use of to scale your EX?
- How would you convince them to work on EX?
- How would you help them integrate with your HR Business Partners and other HR roles?

Agile Becomes the New Normal

Going along with the idea of bringing in a wide variety of new skills e.g. marketing, UX, product owners, storytellers, and workplace designers, etc. to help create

EX, is organizing these people into Agile teams. Agile is also something that can be implemented in any size of organization, reducing layers of management and erasing boundaries between silos. These teams respond in an EX context to "problems to solve" and "Moments that Matter" in EX Journey Maps, co-creating with internal customers new product portfolios. In the scheme of Design Thinking frameworks, Agile teams come into play ideally in the "Ideating", "Prototyping" and "Testing" phases, after we have "Empathized" and "Defined" employee needs.

In companies we work with who are using Agile frameworks, they are organizing their people in "squads" or "clusters" – teams of ideally 7 people, headed by a Product Owner. These teams decide which processes or programs they want to define as "Products" and create a "Product Backlog". They consist of a Product Owner and a rich mix of experts from different functions e.g. designers, storytellers, facilities, communications, digital, learning, etc. and an Agile Coach (or Scrum Master) who acts as both coach and the gatekeeper, helping them follow the Agile framework, and removing roadblocks.

These teams will use Agile frameworks such as Scrum and Sprint, which each focus on rapid prototyping of minimum viable products (MVP's) in a product portfolio (Sprint referring to time box iterations within Scrum). Design Sprints are a five or ten-day process for responding to critical business questions through design, prototyping, and testing ideas with customers.

For example, Olivier Dubuisson at BP set up squads to design prototypes and turn problems into "Products" and decide priority, etc. They used the inputs they gathered on "Moments that Matter" and drivers in the problem definition stage to zero in on success drivers to be measured. An Agile "Onboarding Team" at BP consisted of 7 people - from Facilities,



Communications, IT, Recruiting, and an Agile Coach.

Sander de Bruijn, Head of Global Employee Experience at ING, which is known for being an Agile organization, talks about starting out from the beginning with that mindset, as they analyzed and built journeys.

Sander says: "If you are just getting started with employee experience management, then approach it Journey by Journey, like onboarding or getting paid or leaving the company, anything along the employee lifecycle. Then, start designing the team from the journey, deductively." Sander says they organized Agile teams, in squads, around each journey, where an EX expert lead works with an Agile Coach to make sure everyone follows the same methodology."

Sander talks about integrating Agile with EX: "With Agile-based methodology it is actually simple: you start with exploration, identify a potential problem and then you start digging out everything that is connected to the problem. That really helps to validate the problem, creating certainty. Then you go into a solution phase, and afterwards go into a market phase and scale up."

As part of their goal to build a "Future-proof Bank", ABN AMRO incorporated EX into one of the pillars of their banking strategy with monthly and quarterly portfolio reviews. As part of their own Agile HR transformation, they asked "What does Agile mean in our setting?" They did extensive training across their HR organization on how to run Design Sprints and built new roles and skills around Agile, Digital and Service Design. (see the full case – EX Roadmap for a FutureProof Bank, later in Case Studies).

Roughly 6,000 people at ABN AMRO now work in an Agile work environment. Beginning with all their IT-related HR activities, ABN AMRO started back in 2017 working in an Agile set up - called the "HR grid". Frank van den Brink, Chief EX Officer at ABN AMRO says, "Then we started to look at leveraging Agile towards non-traditional, non-IT departments, within HR."

"Our goal was to have a multidisciplinary grid of end-to-end teams, with backlog and definition of epics and user stories like talent acquisition or learning programs. And that's when we transitioned people from CoE specialist roles, into Product Owners, with new ways of working



around Agile in 2-week Sprints, and collectively driving the new strategy in those new Agile infrastructures."

Frank says, "We are now actually busy creating an HR Business Partner pool to make HR business and HR consultancy more Agile, unlike the dedicated "trusted advisor" role which we used to have in the Ulrich model." Read more about ABN AMRO's Agile Transformation in our cases."

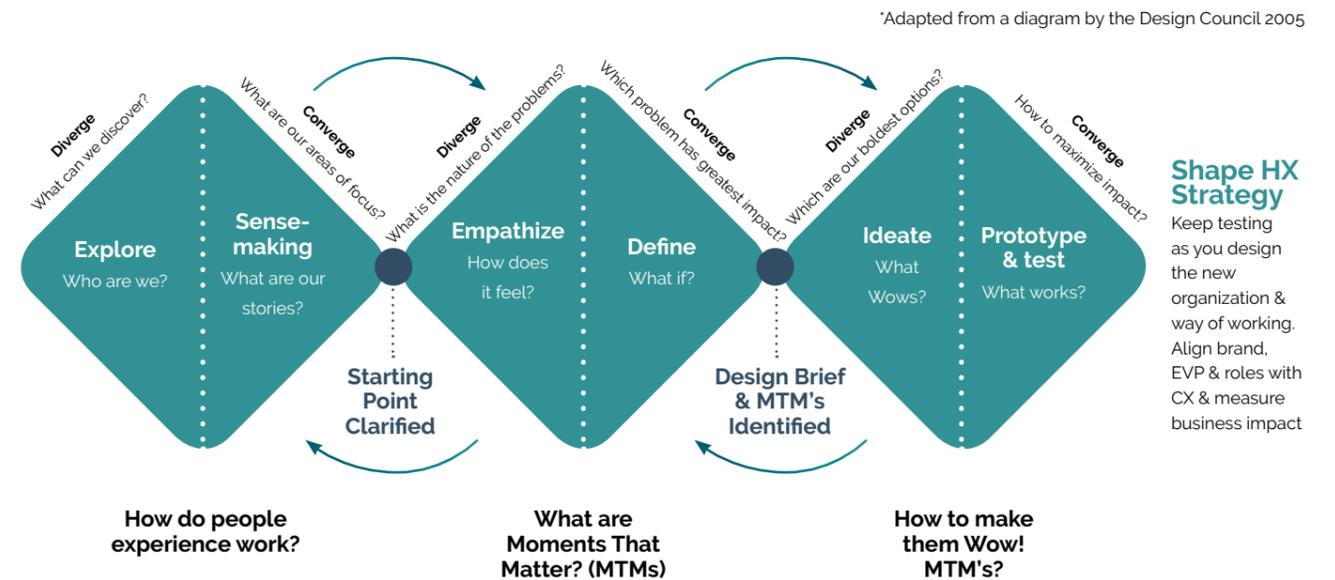
What impresses me most in seeing how ABN AMRO does Agile, is that it is through the interaction they have with employees and business stakeholders that they set priorities and define value.

Agile helps HR talk and act like the rest of the business, with the same kinds of success criteria and measurements for success.

- What journeys have you identified where Agile teams could best help you prototype new products?
- Who could serve as your Product Owners Agile, Coaches and your other team members?
- Which new Agile skills would you want to teach and scale in your HR organization?

EX Playbook

From our 3 years of research and consulting, we have developed this 'EX Playbook' that takes you through 3 main stages of EX development. We start exploring very broadly to discover the natural ways people experience work and journeys and gradually refine these into touchpoints, Moments that Matter (MTM's), and then design new, improved journeys and turn MTM's into Wow! Moments that deliver highest impact.



Explore

Discover how people experience work/life. Examine all areas that impact people & business results.

Sense-Making

Analyze multiple data points. See what patterns emerge, identify journeys we want to dive into.

Empathize

Create Empathy Maps & Personas, listen for & understand emotions & drivers.

Define

Map as-is journey with touchpoints, MTM's, ID the user's problems to be solved & metrics.

Ideate

Crowdsource bold ideas for Ideal journeys, organize Agile teams around journeys & MTM's.

Prototype & Test

Rapidly prototype & test new Wow MTM's & new ways of working in multi-functional Agile/ Sprint teams, pitch to business.

2.3. Conclusion

Where EX is going from here

It's exciting to watch the kinds of insights and results that companies are getting by creating Organizational Empathy (How does it feel to work here?), and pulling in new kinds of diverse capabilities from across their organization (and from the outside), and adopting Agile methodologies to rapidly co-create and prototype new customer-focused solutions. We must keep in mind that the purpose of all this is to drive "Connection" and Wow Moments that Matter between people, which will in turn drive business results.

We've focused a lot still on HR-related solutions. Companies who are most evolved with EX frameworks are turning their attention, as we said earlier, to transforming their business model, the design of their organization (teams, workflow, structures, processes, etc.) as well as their physical and digital workspace. The end goal is sustainability and competitive advantage via happy people who feel more connected with their work, and the other people they interact with.

Many of the more advanced HR organizations we spoke with are using the learning from building these new skills to think about which capabilities and ways of working will be needed to execute the Future of Work. If EX roles are designed for now and the near future, what kinds of new capabilities will we need as we build more consumerized organizations for the changing brand and personal values and demographics of tomorrow's workforce, many of whom will not be full-time employees, and who will increasingly work with AI and robots.

Employee Experience Leaders Share Their Stories

EX Roadmap to a Future-proof Bank at ABN AMRO

Frank van den Brink, Patrick Coolen, Luuk Sombezki and Sjoerd Kueter

Building Organizational Empathy at Facebook

Tudor Havriliuc

Agile and EX at ING

Sander de Bruijn

A Seamless People Experience at InVision

Marie Kretlow

EX Driving Innovation at KBC Group

Lucien De Boeck and Sandra Mertens

Analytics & Culture Champions at LinkedIn

Nawal Fakhoury and Shujaat Ahmad

Walmart: Scaling EX at the 'Fortune One'

Kristin Reilly



EX Roadmap to a Future-proof Bank at ABN AMRO

We first profiled Frank van den Brink and his team at ABN AMRO as 'EX Pioneers' in our 2017 Report. Frank is now Chief Employee Experience Officer at ABN AMRO and has helped lead the transformation to a more Agile and integrated organization, working with all functions touching People.

We interviewed Frank, plus Patrick Coolen, Head of People Analytics, Sjoerd Kueter, Director HR Digital & Service Delivery and Luuk Sombezki, Head of Employee Experience.



Frank van der Brink
Chief EX Officer



Patrick Coolen
Head of People Analytics



Sjoerd Kueter
Director HR Digital & Service Delivery



Luuk Sombezki
Head of Employee Experience.

Tell us about the roadmap you have followed these past 2 years and what you consider as your proudest milestones?

Frank: "The smartest thing that we did 2 years ago was to place EX in the center of the broader transformation of our HR services and operating model. We did that the same time that CX was being positioned on the Marketing and business side as part of our company-wide restructuring that was going on. So CX and EX both played a central role in reshaping the business back then. That decision was an important first milestone."

"There were several important things going on at the same time. We said, if we believe in the principle of "Happy People = Happy Clients", then we should create a platform to allow our people to be the best version of themselves while they are with us. Making things more urgent was the fact that Financial Services was changing fast, unpredictability was still high and people were wondering what sense of belonging or purpose do I get from working for a bank?"

"We followed that up with several key moves:

- Changing our way of working – running employee listening sessions, introducing personas and service design and journey mapping in small groups, with 10 to 20 people initially, gathering a lot of data in order to tell us how people are feeling, behaving and experiencing ABN AMRO as an employer. That's how it all started.
- Modifying the way we manage and lead HR - we asked HR services to merge everything into what we now call the portfolio of HR Digital. We carved out the traditional CoE's and put these roles in our portfolio and had them create projects that were part of our backlog and pitched these to the business.
- Building new capability - we did extensive training on how to run Design Sprints and built new roles and skills around Agile, Digital and Service Design. We changed what we expect from our future HR colleagues, including management team members. We restructured 50 percent of the management layers and launched a new organization in April 2017.

- We made EX one of the 3 main pillars of our business strategy – in 2018 we reinvented EX at ABN AMRO and focused on the People side on how to build a 'Future-proof Bank'. And part of that approach was to incorporate EX into our banking strategy with monthly and quarterly portfolio reviews".

Frank: "Our last milestone is more recent: we just launched our HR story and narrative for the future, laid out in three chapters. The first chapter covers what is happening in the future of banking, the second chapter is "What is our HR response?" This includes How do we build the future workforce? How do we build on critical skills for now and in the future?" "How do we define the new ecosystem of learning and do more skill-based learning? How do we do things smarter, faster and more fun? How do we attract talent? How do we make leadership more contemporary



and inspiring? And how can we reinvent our EX platform?"

"The final chapter in our story is our own agile HR transformation. What does Agile mean in our setting? What kind of skills do we need? How do we share and develop our services model? How do we invest in different opportunities for HR colleagues for now and in the future? How do we collaborate and partner with all EX-related departments in the organization e.g. IT, Communications, Facility Management - to cover the full scope on EX and define the future of work."

"This puts in writing our roadmap towards building a Future-proof bank. We've launched it with the Executive Committee and Executive Boards and within the HR teams and we're now translating that into an employee story for the bank, launching beginning of next year."

What did your roadmap look like for Analytics and Digital?

Patrick: "We have been doing People Analytics now for six years. And over the years we developed some more products like Strategic Workforce Management and Survey Management. Our main goal has always been to support decision-making in and outside HR on workforce topics and to create a more fact-based mind set. Because Employee Experience is at the heart of our corporate and HR strategy, we started within our Survey Management team to define and measure Employee Experience in 2019."

"Currently our HR Analytics team exists of ten people, pretty much equally divided over People Analytics, Strategic Workforce Planning and Survey Management. Within People Analytics we look at questions like: 'Are our learning interventions effective and if not what should we change?' or 'Does team size and composition impact customer satisfaction or sales?' or 'What is driving absenteeism and how can we minimize it as an organization?' or 'What is blocking employees from using their full potential? All examples of relevant questions that are driven by our curiosity to improve the careers of our employees and the performance of our organization."

"As mentioned we are focusing on Employee Experience in the last year. What are our employees telling us and what can we learn from that and do about it? Another term we use for this is continuous employee listening. Our People Analytics and survey management practices work closely together to understand what our employees are telling us. In our survey, the main question is 'Would you recommend ABN AMRO as an employer to your friends and family?'"

Patrick continues: "Then we have some open questions. 'What are you happy about and what should we improve?'. Based on these simple questions we are doing sophisticated text / topic analyses on our survey data. We also are using this topics for modeling. Are specific topics impacting customer satisfaction, performance or any other business goal? And where suitable and useful we combine the survey data with data that is already available in, for example, our recruitment or learning systems." right actions. And of course we track if topics disappear over time."

"To understand your employees there is not one single data source that provides you with all the insights. You have to combine different data sources in a smart way like survey data, HR contact data, business data and HR transactional data. By doing that you will be able to identify groups of persona's, regions, business lines or processes that allows you to focus on specific problems or opportunities. Because in the end it is all about using data to drive the right actions!"



Luuk: "As Patrick mentions, there is not a single data source which provides you with all the insights. If you look at onboarding for instance, we collect data in several ways:

1. People joining ABN AMRO are asked to activate our onboarding app from Talmundo for the first three months. Within the app we ask questions about specific moments that matter, like "To what extent is it clear what is expected of you?" or "How was your first week?". Throughout their onboarding experience at ABN AMRO we continually ask feedback about specific touch points when they happen. It gives us valuable insights in how people experience our onboarding process.
2. We use our EX methodology (based on Service Design) to find the right problem and solve the problem right by co-creating with our employees. We do this with onboarding, but also with different services we offer as HR.
3. We do our monthly EX survey that Patrick mentioned – typically we have four open text questions and we put it through text mining to detect what topics were mentioned most and correlate with other data."

Luuk continues: "If we want to deep dive about one single topic or touchpoint, we also use our employee community. It is an online community where, every other week, we can post a specific topic and where employees have a dialogue and provide valuable insights to us which helps us better understanding their needs."

"All the data insights are shared with our product owners so they can use that data to see if it's useful to change

implementations that they're doing or start doing new things."

Sjoerd: "We've just mapped all of our methodologies (e.g. how we use Service Design, Lean Start-Up and Design Thinking) and the required capabilities into an 'EX Playbook' which formalizes how we approach EX. This allows us to further spread this way of working more deeply into the organization."

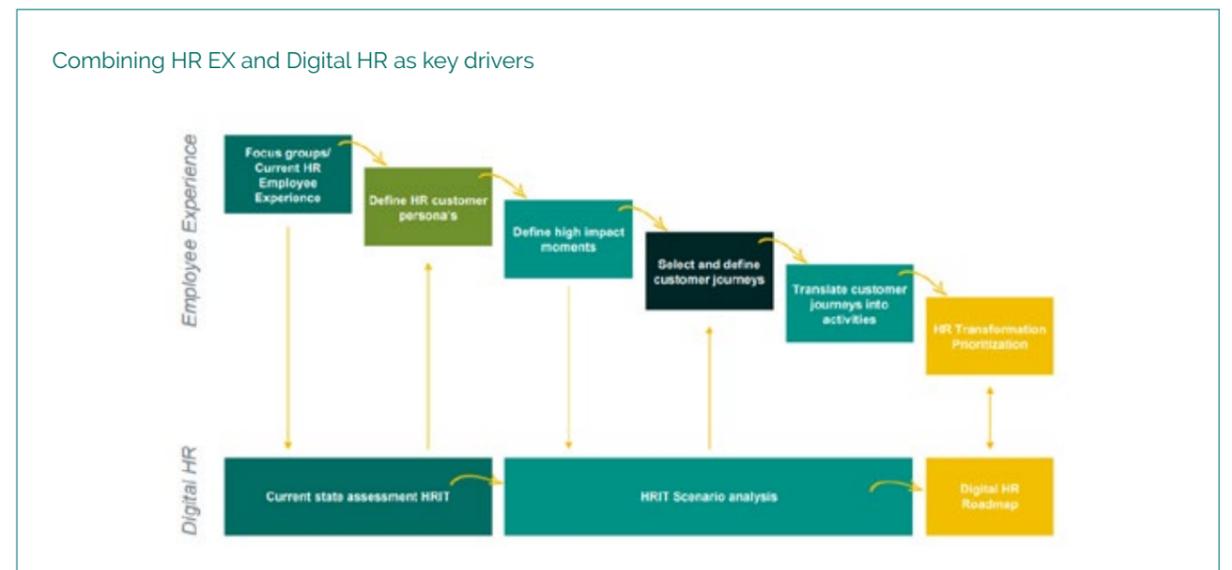
"We've created an 'EX Circle' consisting of people from HR, Digital Workplace, Communications and Facilities Management, the four areas that most regularly touch EX. In the Circle we look at the backlog for these four areas and see what work we need to be doing to improve EX, for example how can we set up an EX service desk? Where can someone go for help with a facilities issue, etc."

"The last initiative we're working on is our work as an Agile HR organization. We started working Agile in our HR Grid (HR Digital teams) and now we are around 60% fully Agile all over HR. This was and still is quite a journey. But we see great opportunities in further developing our HR organization in a more Agile way."

How do you see the roles of EX and Engagement surveys – will EX replace Engagement or will they co-exist?

Patrick: "There are definitely similarities but also differences. In our case the annual engagement survey is directly asking feedback from our employees on topics like their direct manager, leadership, sustainability, work-life balance, efficiency etc. These are all very important topics from the perspective of the organization. Our Employee Experience survey does not dictate any topics upfront. We simply ask our employees what they like and don't like about working for our organization. The results show that topics overlap but the EX survey also reveals new topics and more detailed context because of the open questions."

"Another difference besides closed versus open questions is the full survey versus sample surveys. We conduct our engagement survey once a year in a full survey whereas the EX survey is done per month on a 10% sample of the organization. Sampling is important to avoid survey fatigue and is robust enough to draw conclusions on global and business line level. So yes, there is overlap in content but the differences are organization drive versus employee driven, full survey versus samples, closed questions versus open questions. We will evaluate in time if there are opportunities or a necessity to choose one of the two."





What are you most proud of with all this work?

Frank: "I am proud that I can actually say something more fact-based, on how people experience working here and the experiences we would like them to have. That's always the most difficult part. How do you know how people experience your organization? How do you know if we are capable of creating a sense of belonging and recognition? How do you know what the root causes are for not having good engagement? How do you know the things that you don't know, when you start working on EX?"

"To measure this, we developed the employee promoter score - EPS. It's our approach to continuous listening, where we ask our people about the different moments that matter. I'm quite proud of the results we're seeing that reflect our transformation of HR. This week, we got the results from our yearly Employee Engagement survey and our overall engagement in HR went up to 87. Given the fact that we're shaking up everything, people are still really engaged in our journey and that's a good result as well."

"Another thing I'm proud of is that we are pioneering new roles in HR and changing the profession, thinking about different service models or HR business model concepts for the organization. This is something where we shape the future and that's good fun."

"We also have a lot of fun - that is also important. It's nice to work on those topics, where HR can be difficult, with very sensitive topics, and we are an organization which is

in constant flux of change. We set the scene for the future direction of where we think the organization should be going, and at the same time HR is trying to step up and show the good example to embrace that future. That's where we take a leading role in the discussion in the organization."

Frank says, "Roughly 6,000 people at ABNAMRO now work in a what we call an Agile work environment. Beginning with all our IT-related HR activities, we started back in 2017 working in an Agile set up - we called it the 'HR grid'. Then we started to look at leveraging Agile towards non-traditional, non-IT departments, within HR. Our goal was to have a multidisciplinary grid of end-to-end teams, with backlog and definition of epics and user stories. For example, with talent acquisition or learning programs. And that's when we transitioned people from CoE specialist roles, into Product Owners, with new ways of working around Agile in 2 week Sprints, and collectively driving the new strategy in those new Agile infrastructures."

"We run a portfolio review every quarter. We invite business and multiple stakeholders during the day. We discuss priorities, talk about where we are with our strategy, and we ask product owners to pitch what needs to change in their user stories. And we set priorities based on required effort, added value and resources. And by the end of the day we connect and make decisions. And after that we bring in other HR colleagues and we share the outcome. And that's how we set priorities for not only the upcoming quarter but also take a bit of a structural approach from how we follow up on strategy execution, in an Agile way."

"Currently, we have 140- 150 people in HR working in an Agile-supported environment, with capabilities like Agile Coaching and Product Owners formalized in new roles. That is out of 250-260 people. We're 60 percent Agile now."

"We are now actually busy creating an HR Business Partner pool to make HR business and HR consultancy more Agile, unlike the dedicated 'trusted advisor' role which we used to have in the Ulrich model."

"That's a big change now, because it also changed our operating model. The traditional model of HR becomes more of a flexible, Agile service model. You need to have a backlog on business priorities and have all the HR managers be in sync with that. We're now discussing letting go the dedication of HR Business Partners below of what we call the "ExCo areas".

What are some of your key learnings?

Frank says, "First, Stakeholder management is key, but it can be like a swamp sometimes. You dive in and you can't get out because everybody wants to say something. So, you need to stay practical. A very important lesson

learned for us is 'Keep it simple.' If you want to do a super intelligent framework - save it for later, and just start small."

What are the biggest challenges that you've faced in all of this?

Frank continues: "Our biggest challenge is the mindset in our Culture. To get all the people on the bus, we must create a growth mindset around the next steps we would like to take in our HR transformation. We have to involve the business, as well, because it should be a business story. I believe that the best HR stories are people and business stories, and we're not there yet."

"If we can say: This is our business story and this is how we would like to treat people, how we help them feel like they belong in our organization and this is how we differentiate in labor market and this is how we create great ambassadors and this is how we add value to their meaningful growth during a career with ABN AMRO, and this is how we unleash all talents and make sure that everybody will be that best version of themselves. Working on HR as a career platform. That's something I would be extremely proud of. But I would like to see that as a rallying cry coming out of business and not from HR."



What is one of the more surprising places you've been able to use EX to change things?

Frank: "One of the chapters I just mentioned in our book, elaborates on the future work. And part of that is how we redefined our competency and skill language. We created a standardized approach of what we even mean by "strategic workforce management" because it's either very broad or has no relevance. So we said: 'We need a playbook for how do we do Strategic Workforce Management.' That's now being finished. The important thing we added was forecasting three to five years, and we're starting to do this work for three big business lines. This is based on Service Design and Analytics insights."

What are the most important things you've learned?

Frank: "The most important thing I've learned is Agile mindset and Agile capabilities. The second one is really practical skills. What is UX design, what is service design in practice? How do you apply design thinking to HR services? What does it actually mean? The second thing is how do you manage to get from a narrative and a strategy towards execution in a proper way? And how can you diminish the time in between. How to manage transformations is my biggest learning"

Where do you see EX going from here?

Sjoerd: "For me the biggest question is creating new capabilities for the Future of Work. All of the roles and capabilities we've created so far are for now or maybe in the near term. We want to use our journey maps to identify future capabilities and do strategic workforce planning around this. For example we have a lot of people

in DevOps roles dispersed around the world. How do we understand what they need and help those people to work together and connect their purpose to ABN AMRO's purpose?"

Frank: "I think EX Analytics will get a more prominent place on the HR agenda going forward. Also what we call now Employee Marketing - the whole marketing, product management and branding around employees. For example, we have benefit statements that you can call a benefit snapshot or benefit product. But if you commercialize that statement, then it becomes employee marketing and then you can say: All the policies behind that statement - you could consider those as products. But who is owning those products and how do we commercialize to fully utilize the value of all those items in that statement?"

"And do we actually track for utility and for impact and for value, going forward? That's not even happening. So I think the whole area of Employee Marketing will change. I think also technical or IT capabilities in HR are key, going forward. Data capabilities as well, and we are not yet there, to be quite honest."

"I think we still can learn a lot from the CX side. One of the biggest things which we are proud of is that CX adopted some methodologies from our EX playbook. That is where EX and CX really come together. That is a big compliment, because two years before it was completely the other way around and we were only copy-pasting from them and not vice versa."

"I believe the next step in blending CX and EX is how you combine client journeys with employee journeys, because of course in a client journey you have touchpoints on the employee side, and vice versa. So taking a blended approach could be the next big thing."



Creating Organizational Empathy at Facebook

Tudor Havriliuc is Vice President, Human Resources, and uses Employee Experience to help build and scale Facebook's people strategy and people proposition to support 10x headcount growth.

Facebook was rated as the Number 1 Place to Work by Glassdoor in 2018.



Tudor Havriliuc
VP of Human Resources



Why is Facebook doing EX? (What was the reason or business case?)

Six years ago, Tudor Havriliuc came up with the concept of "Life@Facebook", aimed at creating more opportunities for action supporting the values that are important at Facebook: collaboration, caring for one another and friendship with the aim of building internal community. As he says: "the idea was to bring together all programs and resources and tools and the language and marketing and brand associated with 'care' and with that, bring an extraordinary amount of focus on caring for employees and the people they care about."

As Tudor explains: "We did a lot of research trying to figure out ultimately: how do you help people? How do people thrive in their lives? What does happiness really mean? What are the high moments for people? We did a lot of research into different theories of happiness and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and the correlation between various behaviors, contexts, external factors and people's lives. That amounted to understanding what would ultimately be described as 'the highest level of possible well-being' that someone could have in their lives in general."

"At Facebook, it is important for our people to know that we care about them outside of the workplace. Obviously, we care them for them deeply when they're at work, too which is why our facilities and our physical setup is designed towards creating opportunities for interaction and a community-feel."

"Our company has a very transparent approach to internal communications and feedback. We run Workplace internally, which is the Facebook platform for companies. We get to know what people think, feel and experience directly from there, because we encourage people to speak up. They are empowered to tell us when something's not right or when they want something, or they need something."

What steps did Facebook take, with its new People program?

Tudor describes that, "with Life@Facebook, we really wanted to expand far beyond the physical environment. We focused our work on six pillars: (1) health, both physical and mental health; (2) family; (3) community; (4) convenience; (5) time away and (6) finances.

What are some concrete examples of enhancing Employee Experience at Facebook?

"EX can mean small things like taking the load off the shoulders of your employees whenever we can." As Tudor explains further on pillar 4 mentioned above: "Convenience simply means taking care of the little things in your life that just accumulate on your To Do list and give you stress. At Facebook, we want to give you resources to make the load easier for you. That has a physical representation and also a virtual representation. So, we actually have on campus a place where you can physically go to, it's called the Life@Center, where you can go in with any question. It can be anything, from getting help on finding a doctor or understanding a medical claim to asking for help making a reservation at a restaurant or putting together an itinerary for an upcoming vacation. It's sort of a comprehensive support/concierge type of service that allows you to speak to someone in person or there is also an e-mail system that allows you to send these questions or request for someone to help you out with what you need. Actually, I organized my birthday party with their support, booking caterers and a location. That is the Concierge pillar for us."



How to get everyone on board and scale solutions?

You cannot pretend to be an expert about what your audience is going through or feels. We have to listen to them and engage them in everything we are trying to build. "We do a lot in the area of physical and mental health. We customize our programs by first listening to the communities that need these services. For example, Transgender Benefits or our nursing rooms and mother' rooms. We co-create and build these programs working very closely together with the constituencies that are ultimately going to be the end users and beneficiaries of these programs. Because none of us in the team is an expert in every experience, we actually asked people who had gone through a transition whether they could be part of a steering to build the top Transgender Benefits Facebook could offer. We learned a lot!"

But... isn't it expensive?

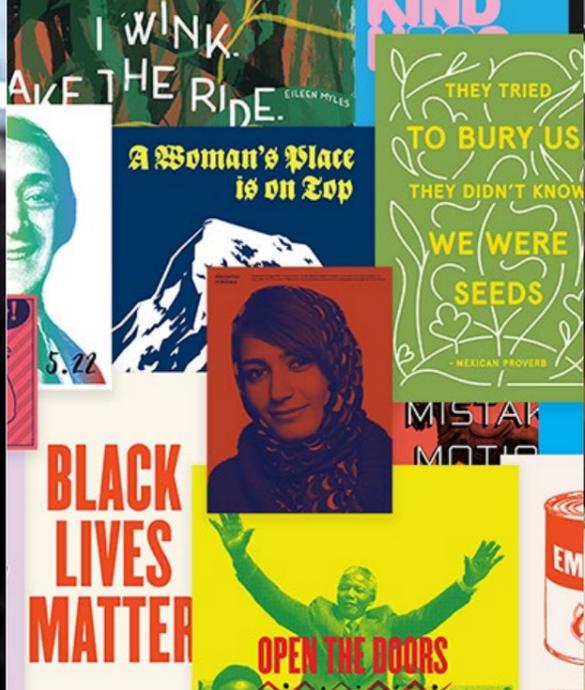
No. Tudor confirms that EX doesn't have to be a threat to budget: "We ended up creating many solutions that were really meaningful but not extraordinarily expensive because the population is small, but really meaningful to the people impacted. It was important to everybody else who felt like we were doing the right thing, to give the people who are going through these transitions and afterwards the best medical benefits."

Don't be afraid of asking people what they need, fearing you cannot deliver. Tudor agrees: "95% of people we spoke with were very reasonable in their requests. They're not going to ask for something outrageous. But it was very meaningful to them and in rolling out these programs afterwards, that the people who would be impacted and would benefit from these programs actually participated in building them. Giving ownership is empowering."

What kinds of steps did you follow?

As Tudor explains: "At first, we took the approach of a survey, which is a pretty traditional approach to see what is wanted and needed. We also benchmarked a lot with our peers, ran a lot of focus groups and then we reached out again to the various constituencies that would be impacted. For example, we were very small when we started doing our project for mothers and I knew nothing about pregnancy or lactation. And we asked mothers to tell us about their experience, and what they thought the best experience would be. We sat down and mapped out what they really wanted."





As time goes by, every bit of data gives a perspective of how things evolved: "Now we've gone to a much more sophisticated point with our programs, because we have a lot of historical data and volume, because we are a much larger company than when we started."

What have you learned about how to do things more in a sophisticated way?

Tudor says: "we've invested a lot in data and analytics. We built a warehouse of data that allows us to incorporate a lot of metrics and data points from both a demographic perspective and outcomes perspective, historical data and qualitative data for example including satisfaction and utilization of specific programs, and today we are also measuring quality of care outcomes for some of our more unique programs such as our Fertility offering with Progyny. All of this to yield a strong indicator of the success of a program or the need for its improvement or removal. We have also taken programs out e.g. when people were not really utilizing them or weren't satisfied with them. And that is completely fine."

Facebook did not over-engineer the process of evaluating experiences and redesigning them. "Our culture is very skeptical of too much process. Our approach is to have very real and focused conversations about what we need to do and why."

What lessons did you learn? What would you tell others?

"The first thing is that all the ping-pong tables and free sushi in the world cannot substitute that feeling of genuinely being cared for and supported."

In many companies, Tudor describes, "thinking about benefits means imagining a cost center focused on personal spending. The start-up culture in tech also overemphasizes perks at work, but, as Tudor highlights, "a lot of them were just for show or quite eccentric because people felt like that would be a great differentiator in the market, that would drive people to choose that company. But the truth is, at the end of the day, if you don't address the core parts of someone's life, in moments that matter the most, in a way that they feel incredibly well supported and cared for, none of the other perks matter."

Tudor also observes thoughtfully that "what I learned is that there is a high deep emotional connection by touching these specific areas of someone's life. Especially the validation that happens when you come back home and your family says: 'We were well taken care of at the doctor's office.' Or if they couldn't believe that this procedure was covered by the insurance we provided for them and their families."

Tudor emphasizes: "it is really critical to be intentional about showing care for people. That plays in very close-ly with motivating people to stay and work hard and be part of the team what made them feel like they have support system when they come to work which is very strong and humane."

"Our employees appreciate the fact that we are really trying hard to minimize the stress and the distractions - big or small, that just come with...living! If we can take part of that burden, people can really focus on the things that still go on, on recovering and on delivering and having impact and, hopefully, doing the best work of their careers."

ING 

Agile and Employee Experience at ING

ING is known for implementing Agile frameworks in many parts of the organization. Now Sander de Bruijn brings his Marketing and Customer Experience expertise to HR, and has established Agile teams around their employee journeys, focusing on improving Moments of Truth.



Sander de Bruijn
Head of Global Employee Experience

Why is ING doing EX?

Sander explains: "Through our digital transformation that started a couple of years ago, ING has set the ambition to build the digital bank of tomorrow, offering a differentiating customer experience that empowers customers to stay a step ahead. Becoming a bank that has its customers as a starting point, rather than anything else, really turned things around, also in small things: the amount of ING employees wearing sneakers to work has grown immensely!"

"Within our strategy, we also re-focused on our HR purpose, aiming to maximize the engagement and capabilities of people so they can deliver on ING's strategy. We do this by focusing on creating greater leaders and better managers and offering people services that create a differentiating employee experience"

Sander de Bruijn joined a department called People Services in late 2018, to add an EX approach to the rollout of a global standardized People Services process, including technology. At the time of the interview, Sander has been in his role for only 9 months. He was hired for his excellent marketing background, and has already brought fresh perspectives to HR. As Sander explains, "the mindshift takes place when you stop limiting your thinking in terms of policies and processes, and you begin to understand interactions between employees and their



organization in terms of needs and how to respond to those needs. Just like you would do with your customers." Sander's personal goal is to integrate ING's customer experience approach to the field of People Service Delivery within the broader field of Employee Experience."

How to build an EX team?

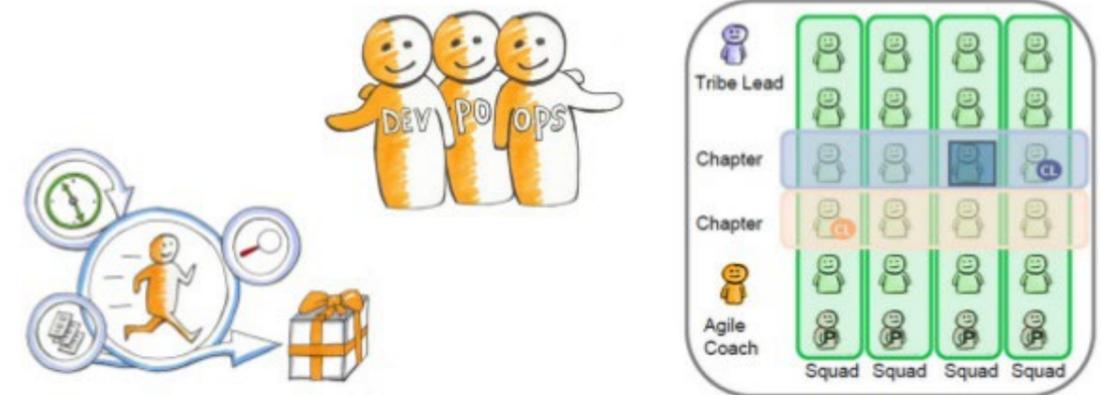
"Employee Experience in ING is not new. However, each country has had its own approach until now. In our effort to build an employee experience management practice on a global scale, we approach it journey by journey, starting with the journeys that are owned for the majority by HR, like Onboarding or getting paid or leaving the company, anything along the employee lifecycle. We started with looking at Onboarding in The Netherlands and designed the team from the journey, deductively, consisting of representatives from different departments, such as Facilities management, IT, People Services and People Analytics."

Sander describes ING's Way of Working, which he intends to roll out globally, where continuous improvement teams are organized in multi-disciplinary squads. In these squads are Customer/Employee Journey Experts, working with Agile coaches to make sure everyone follows the same methodology.

Sander continues saying: "It is important that relevant

Three phases of Agile

Chronicles of way of working



disciplines are represented, like a facility management expert, someone in IT, and an HR business partner representing the management teams. It is important to have a representation of employees who can really take ownership for different touchpoints in the journey, but you also need people who can talk about feasibility and make improvements in systems, processes or communications. And the sooner you tackle that, with everyone involved the sooner you can validate whether a possible solution is also feasible, at a very early stage."

The journey from CX to EX

Sander says: "There is still a lot EX can incorporate from CX, in terms of strategy, approach and process management, such as journey mapping and dashboards that can give you a real-time overview of what is happening in certain customer journey experiences. That gives us a 3D look at things. If you start from the process, it will be difficult to really start designing from the employee's perspective. If you start with the employee, you will much sooner find where a process is inefficient or where you need to challenge certain policies or risk controls."

By starting to use the same journey mapping tool as their CX department, the EX team at ING will be able to connect to HR, IT and Facility Management processes: "We have started feeding in the data that we get out of the surveys on touchpoint level, so you can really see what happens and who should take action to fix a touchpoint that is broken. We will be able to open the ratings from the

customer satisfaction survey and the open text fields that were attached to specific touchpoints such as 'Getting my contract' or 'Accepting my offer.' This is still in an early stage, but when we work according to this standard for journey mapping and data collection, you can imagine how much valuable and actionable insights we will collect and how much better we will understand which improvements in Employee Experience will impact employee engagement and ultimately bring value to the company."

It is crucial to create touch point accountability, whether it's in an HR department or it's a manager or it's an IT department. "You want to make accountability as specific as possible and only if you work towards that goal with an Agile, multidisciplinary team end-to-end can you achieve that", says Sander.

How do you integrate Agile methodologies with EX?

"To facilitate our digital transformation and respond faster to changing customer needs we are introducing one Agile Way of Working (WoW) across ING. This unites us in multidisciplinary, cross-functional teams and empowers us to collaborate more easily across the organization. An important part of this Way of Working and essential to creating a differentiating customer/ employee experience is our PACE methodology."

"PACE is ING's structured innovation process. PACE encourages rapid launch of new products and services developed by small, autonomous, cross disciplinary teams. It combines Design Thinking, Lean Start-up and Agile methods into a process tailored to ING's needs. PACE ensures that we follow a common process and terminology throughout ING globally. If you have a great idea for improvement, PACE will quickly take you through the process of assessing its potential and deciding if and how best to move forward."

"PACE projects are split into 5 Phases: Explore, Problem Fit, Solution Fit, Market Fit, and Scale. Completing a phase is a prerequisite for progressing to the next phase: you start with exploration, then identify the problem you are solving and dig out everything that is connected to the problem, validating with relevant user groups to create certainty. Then you go into a solution phase where you experiment with prototypes of a solution before you go into Market phase where you build and test a Minimum Viable Product of your innovation / improvement and when all lights are green you are ready to implement at scale."

"No matter how many experts are in the room, the assumptions they make do not always fit employee perception." From his experience, Sander witnessed that "people will go through their journeys in their own way and can take different routes. Dependent on their needs, they will find certain experiences cumbersome, while other do not have any problems. And some improvements are much less impactful than the design team assumed, while others will have a huge impact. The more reason to always validate."

As an example, Sander recently organized an Onboarding redesign workshop with some of the fresh joiners: "Together with journey experts, we divided them in four groups and every group had a part of the process, like 'Accepting the offer' or 'Day One readiness' or 'Induction Day'. They worked out the problems and their prioritization. What is nice to have? What is a must have? Only afterwards did they start designing and prototyping possible solutions."

But the process did not stop there. After a month, with a new batch of recently onboarded people, they collected survey responses and conducted in-depth interviews, to

ask again for what they perceived as problematic, using the knowledge generated in the first phase to complete their understanding.

Repeating this exercise, after interviewing 30 people, Sander came to the conclusion that "expectation management and clarity are the most important things in Onboarding in ING. People want to know where they are in the process and what they need to do. Secondly, how can you make sure that new joiners create personal connections that help them to engage faster with their new job and organization, so powerfully that they might forget everything else that is negative? As a result of these "Problem fit" validations we decided to re-design the Onboarding journey in The Netherlands with a lot more focus on a warm welcome and on clear instructions, than we deemed necessary at first."

EX focus: Creating better managers and great leaders

Sander says: "Choosing to develop our management capabilities within ING comes from the belief that regardless of what you do in EX, if a manager relationship with an employee is not good, if an employee doesn't have the feeling that he or she is adding value or they don't have the clarity all about their job or if they do not get the appreciation from their manager then...they will leave. They will leave for that, not because their laptop was not ready on day one." The development of management capability is not the primary role of EX, but enabling peer-to-peer and manager relationships and measuring if management capability development programs are working out, are areas where EX needs to play a role in partnership with HR."

EX focus: How to create a differentiating employee experience: make it personal, smart and easy

Talking about their findings, Sander states: "What we learned in this Onboarding process in The Netherlands is that candidates or new hires often experienced a cumbersome pre-Onboarding experience in ING."

Things did not always go smoothly and this could impact engagement on Day 1. From Day 1 on, helpful colleagues and the personal connection makes up for a lot of that.

And if you interviewed them three months after they onboarded, they tend to forget all the inefficiencies in the process and they tend to focus on the things that really matter which is the personal connection."

Sander and his team knew that they needed to focus on Moments of Truth because that's what really sticks: "People forget the rest, but they will remember that". They also found out that "if a pain point is repetitive enough and persistent enough, then it will become an emotional moment and it will generate a new Moment of Truth. People will remember it. You always need to fix the pain points, because they may become Moments of Truth in the end."

At ING, good employee experience starts with a good manager experience. Sander emphasizes "that managers might be playing the most important role. Managers do not have the time to read through a long copy. They just need to know what they need to do next and that you will guide them through the process."

How is the impact of EX actions measured at ING?

"In The Netherlands we are now testing a system of touchpoint measurements where Moments of Truth and effortless moments measured with an open question: "How was your experience?" People can rate the experience from 1 to 5 which generates a Satisfaction or an Effort score and they have an open text field for making comments. At the end of each journey we will also ask a Journey NPS question."

For engagement, Sander describes "a continuous listening model where we, once every two years, do a pulse survey every quarter and an all employee survey every year. We are really trying to build the connection between individual experiences and the drivers of engagement."

Sander continues: "We are looking into technology and vendors to automate much more, such as having automated surveys being triggered on the basis of certain events. "Ultimately, it would be great to really go into an automated digital listening mode where we can also include external sources like employer review platforms or or system data from our HRIS or from our ticketing system or from any other tools that we use. But that's the future and that's what I dream of."

Lessons learned for getting started with EX

For anyone who is just getting started with EX, Sander recommends to first start measuring by listening and analyzing data as you go, to create a baseline. "Consider that the basics of everything you do is to start getting your insights, whether it's measuring with surveys, whether it's interviewing, simply start talking to people and let them share with you their problems".

"It's a tempting trap to assume what people struggle with and what they would like to have instead, but Sander warns: "don't think 'this is a no brainer, let's go do it', because it's always different than you thought. What you design for one country does not necessarily have to be relevant for another country. So make sure you listen and you validate every time. Wherever you go, the situation changes so it is crucial to have the target audience covered."

Secondly, Sander continues: "make sure you gather together enthusiasts around you because they will get you started". That includes tapping into other, existing global networks in Employer Branding, Corporate Communications and HR. Sander is now building his global EX community from different teams who are really enthusiastic and passionate about the topic and engages them with every occasion. When people are passionate and believe EX can actually make things better around them, they are more than willing to spend extra time to help."

"Lastly, there is no need to try to reinvent the wheel, just learn from what customer experience specialists have been doing for 15 years. It's almost the same. When you start thinking and designing from employee needs, you will be more successful and have more engaged, higher performing teams and ultimately create business value with EX management."



A Seamless People Experience at InVision

InVision is a software as a service company, building tools for connecting the entire digital product design workflow, and they have greatly increased in size over the last couple of years. We find this case compelling for how design thinking can be applied when kick-starting EX to support a mostly remote workforce of designers and their teams.



Marie Kretlow
Senior People Experience Designer

Why is InVision doing EX? (What was the reason or business case?)

Marie Kretlow is a User Experience (UX) designer by trade, so her thinking about EX has been inspired and influenced by UX. With her background in digital experience and product, she wondered what it would be like to bring that same design methodology and process to employees, making it part of the foundation of their people strategy. When she talks about the business “why” behind this initiative, she reflects that: “Empathy and authenticity are core to InVision’s culture. We invest in our employees as ‘whole people’ and support their work-life experiences in the best ways we can. It is just the right thing to do. By focusing on this, we help to create an environment where each employee feels motivated and empowered to do what they need to do for their role, which positively impacts what we can achieve together as a business.”

Marie says that at InVision, “when we think about employee experience, we consider every touchpoint. From the tiny moments to the biggest milestones—from a person’s first interaction with our employer brand as a candidate, all the way through the entire employee lifecycle, and up until their last day—hopefully we’ve made a positive impression during that time and even beyond that.”

How did InVision build Employee Experience?

Part of a team of two designers, Marie sits within InVision’s People Development group. She says that “What is really wonderful is that our entire People Team embraces designing for our users and starting from a place of empathy. That is baked into our DNA as a design company. Our People Team has the right mindset—now we are building those practices and instilling them across our work.”

When she joined the company two years ago, the primary focus was to build out a company-wide employee onboarding program, where there was none. Marie explains: “Every team was doing their own thing. But when you’re doubling in size, and with every employee working remotely, it is critical to have a unified program. Once we designed the experience for onboarding, we took on learning and development. Now we’re working across the employee lifecycle, looking at candidate experience, referrals, interviewing and more.”

What steps did they take?

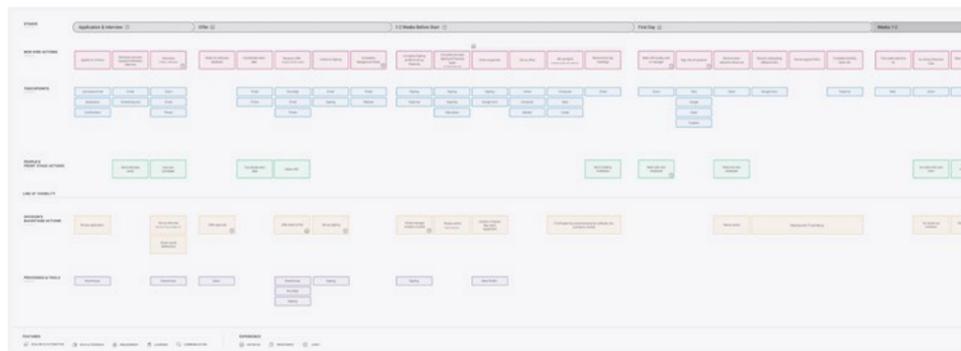
Marie explains that “the first thing we did was... talk to people. We went and figured out what was actually happening with onboarding as it was, auditing the current state. We mapped everything out, not only from a customer experience perspective, or from an employee experience perspective, but the full stack of what made that experience possible—what our team was doing, what the IT team was doing, what managers were doing, what systems and processes were in place.”

“We made a blueprint of current-state Candidate to New Hire experience. We gathered quantitative data—such as: what is actually happening, how many people are going through these steps, what does that look like across the organization—and paired that with qualitative data from talking to people one-to-one to bring in more context and nuance. The exploration gave us clear insight into the opportunities and challenges that we were going to face as we built the program.”

She continues: “Once we had all of that input mapped and established, we went far and wide to re-imagine what it could be. So, no holds barred, if we could do anything we wanted, what would we do for employee Onboarding? We uncovered a lot through that creative process. We defined design principles to guide the experience of the program, created a lightweight persona to define our target audience, and ultimately zeroed in on our minimum viable product. Rather than focusing on everything that happens in someone’s first week, we wanted to focus on the experience of belonging and engagement.”

As Marie describes: “To roll this program out, we started small. My colleague came from the Sales Department and used this connection to work with the Sales team on our first pilot of the program. We were transparent that it was a beta and asked them for candid feedback by challenging them to share: ‘You’re not going to hurt our feelings, we truly want to make this better for every InVisioner. What did you think? How did the week go for you?’ We didn’t just ask our immediate customers, but we asked their managers as well. To collect feedback, we used NPS and a mix of quantitative questions as well as open text fields. The pilots were tweaked with each iteration after that, until we nailed down our program.”

Snapshot of co-created onboarding.



"For our go-to-market strategy, we leveraged word of mouth and advocates across the company. We engaged evangelists of the program to share their experiences with others. We launched the program last February and by June, every department in the company was having its new hires go through Onboarding."

What are some of your key findings and how did you measure impact?

Marie acknowledges that: "The initial release of our program was working well for new employees. The content, open conversation, and hosted format really resonated with our audience. Over time, we recognized an opportunity to do even more. Our InVision culture is very much focused on being proactive and taking ownership, and we wanted to create a space for new hires to practice that—giving them an even more 'real-to-life' expectation of going out there and doing your own discovery, building connections on your own. With this in mind, we redesigned the structure of the program to feel more true to day-to-day InVision life. Since this major release, we have seen a boost in our engagement and satisfaction scores and continue to receive positive feedback from our participants."

"We are still looking at ongoing engagement survey results. We have been running this program a little over a year, and are just beginning to see if there is any correlation between what we're doing and long-term impacts."

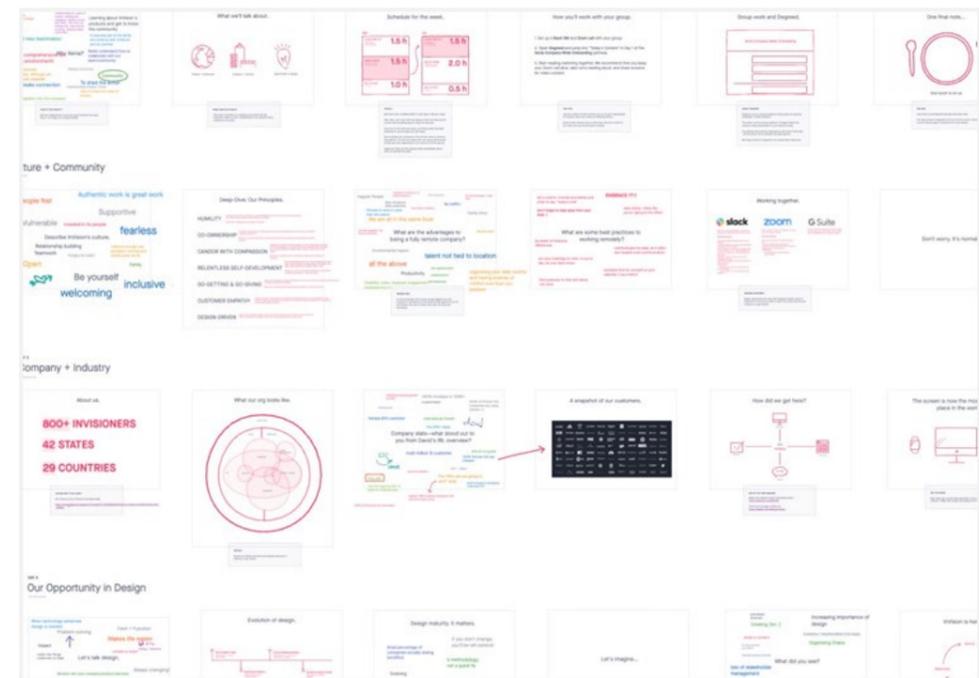
How is EX connected with Employee Branding?

Marie shares that: "One of the projects I've worked on recently is around internal training for interviewing and hiring. The goal of this program is to make sure our internal teams know what they need to do to create a great candidate experience which bleeds into employer brand, particularly with the rise of candidates sharing social and digital reviews. We started internally on employer brand first, to make sure our people have the tools and knowledge they need to support that in processes they're doing every day. Now one of our focuses for this quarter is external-facing employer brand."

What lessons does Marie have to share with others?

"First, says Marie, it is important to capture and work on the in-between moments to create a seamlessly connected Employee Experience. She shares that "We realize that in addition to major moments in the employee lifecycle, there are also smaller moments that we need to think about as a People Team—the 'in-between moments'. How do we make sure those major milestones feel connected and are designed with intention so there's continuity between them? Both from the employee experience as well as our systems and tools and processes. There is so much opportunity for us to do that and really move into a space of refinement to elevate the great things that we already have into an even better end-to-end employee experience."

Snapshot of Building the InVision Team: Interviewer training.

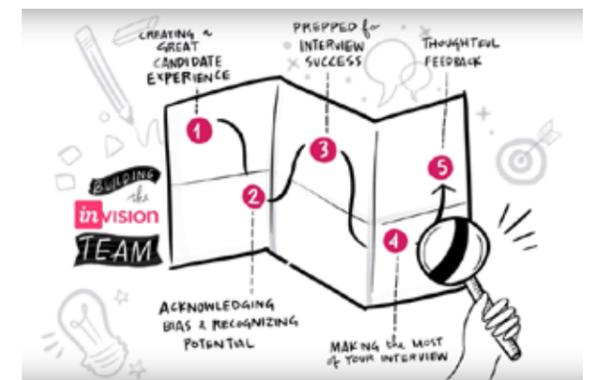


Second, make sure your tools support the work and human connection. InVision has a unique set-up, being a fully remote company. Marie explains: "What I find so interesting about what we do as a remote company is the fact that our tools are always there. They are the means through which we build relationships. We can't do it without a digital tool. And in that context, the question becomes: how can we make sure the interaction through the tools is not purely transactional?"

What advice does Marie have for someone starting EX?

Marie confidently says: "Never forget the people you are serving. As great as the process or the tool or the new program can be...if it doesn't serve your people at the end of the day, then it's not a great solution. Always talk to your customers. Look outside of HR and employee experience teams for inspiration. There's so much to be learned from complementary or contrasting disciplines!"

The advantage Marie brings to the People Team table is a deep understanding of how design works, and then



re-applying it in a new context, not for clients, but for employees. "I am most proud to see how our team is embracing design and constantly thinking of the end user. It's exciting to see traditional design frameworks that are typically used in the digital space or to build products, being used to support people at our organization."

"EX is about building empathy for your people. Defining the problem that they're having and then moving into ways to solve it—that framework is critical. Listening with empathy and letting go of your own assumptions about people's needs is crucial for anyone who wants to embark on the EX journey."



Employee Experience driving Innovation at KBC

Lucien De Boeck and Sandra Mertens founded the core EX team for KBC Group, a 42,000 employee Bank-insurer headquartered in Brussels. Their EX idea started with Service Design for HR, and ended up with an Employee App that acts like a Butler, helping their colleagues find solutions and support in 20 seconds.



Lucien De Boeck

HR Digital Transformation Lead and Head of EX



Sandra Mertens

HR Innovation & EX Manager



How did KBC start building Employee Experience?

As Lucien and Sandra describe it: "We reached a point where nearly everything was self-service within HR. But after some time, we felt that something was missing. Some processes could still be automated and we could shorten the times and we could make it easier and a bit more comfortable for employees, but what we missed was what we now call 'Service Design'.

"In the beginning, everything we were doing in EX was very HR-centric and we did not consider involving employees. But then, two years ago, Joris, an IT colleague of ours had an idea for building an employee app. We found him at a KBC innovation fair, and he already had a prototype." Lucien and Sandra loved the idea of an employee app where there is no silo anymore between HR, IT and facilities. Lucien remembers: "We talked to him and we began dreaming. Joris also had experience in using the whole service design cycle and so together we started building from scratch an employee app which is now in use." For Lucien and Sandra, that experience helped them realize how important it was to involve employees.

The app is called AppYourService and is meant to be a "Butler" for anything employees might need. "The app is simply a connector, a support system that facilitates action. If you look beyond the siloes, everything is a bundle of systems that can be connected", says Lucien.

"Nobody can imagine life now without WhatsApp, and we wanted to build a similar feeling for our employees." And so Joris got HR, IT and the facilities department to co-sponsor the idea, after pitching it to our management.

How did you engage employees?

Lucien explains: "In the first year we asked questions to lots of employees: 'What are your needs' and 'What would you like to see in this kind of app?' Whether it's job-related or facilities, it doesn't matter. To facilitate further development, we created an employee journey team."

For this EX project, Joris became Product Owner of the app, and organized a team with a Scrum Master, two analysts and another person in charge of communication, and developers. But not only that, Lucien says: "We also organized bottom-up an extended 'virtual' team involved in EX. "We don't have a big budget behind this effort. We are a team of two people, but we have a real community of people in our business."

Where did Lucien find the people to work on this project? He recalls a transformation going on "where certain people might lose their job, but we have a policy that we don't fire anyone. So, we had people coming to our internal job center where they look for new opportunities or temporary jobs. And we enlisted them in this EX work. We took some of these people and we said: 'Okay, just go talk with employees. If you want to create a journey for employees, for example to support a leave or a sickness journey, pretend you are sick. Stay at home and reflect on the experience of being sick try to gather lots of information: What do you want to do? What's most important to you?'"

"We simply decided that if somebody has some spare time, let's give them an assignment. Think about a specific situation and go and listen and capture all this information. We had to be like... Detectives!"

What were the first things to discover?

Lucien recognises that the first learning came through really quickly: "We realized that people do not care, when using an app, where support comes from, whether they need support from IT or Facilities or HR. They just want one single solution, to support the whole journey. For example, if you are sick, the policy of HR is, get a doctor's note and report it to your manager. But if you are sick and you wake up the first morning, that is not your first concern: you have meetings with customers and colleagues and you want a solution for that."

"Therefore, we built what we call '20 Seconds' Actions, so you can report your sickness in 20 seconds. You can take a picture of the doctor's note and everything is processed directly to payroll. And now we are building 20Second Actions which will connect with this particular problem." Why '20-Second Actions'? Sandra explains: "We learned this from our KBC mobile app for clients (which recently won the prize for the best technology innovation at the Digital Media Awards). We asked the CX team to teach us everything, and we 'stole' not only interfacing standards, but also this core idea that, to answer effectively to a user needs, you need to enable them to solve things in 20 seconds."

Do they all have to connect with a particular journey? Not necessarily, as Lucien describes: "Some 20-Second actions can enrich experience even without being a journey. Like the idea of being able to report broken things in a room you booked or being given alternatives if the room you want for a meeting is booked. By enriching systems with each other, you can provide a better experience."

Turning things around: how EX is now inspiring better CX at KBC

Sandra highlights that: "With this app, not only do we have the chance to improve our employee experience, but we also have an opportunity to learn new things from our employees that eventually can impact our customer app. This is what we see happening now, our customer app is re-using insights from our EX app. Therefore, things are turning around, not only for the CX team, who benefits from our project. We are now collaborating and exchanging ideas with the team handling customer incidents." Not

only does the CX team have a stake in EX, IT does too, as Sandra says: "IT is now willing to invest in us, and now part of the budget is coming from HR, the other part from IT. For them it's really about building IT capabilities, for us it's building a better Employee Experience, and we get to connect the two." In this way, EX gets to be a playground to experiment and build in-house digital capabilities. True to the principles of openness and co-creation, "the app itself has an employee feedback feature, so anybody can just give feedback or make a proposal and they get response within two days."

What is a particular example of EX reshaping an HR practice at KBC?

'Giving feedback to a colleague' is a good example. How did this start? Lucien says: "People told us: when I want to give feedback, I am not interested in logging in on a platform like SuccessFactors, I simply want to take my phone and do it on the spot, immediately after I left a meeting I had with someone. In 20 seconds. And so, through this app, giving feedback connects now with everyday workflow, it is not an isolated HR component anymore."

Lucien continues: "For our next sprint, we want to create triggers for people to give feedback. But where do we get these triggers from? We use Microsoft 365 which can detect which people you collaborate with. So, if you are working now for 3 months with someone, you can simply receive a message that says: 'You've been collaborating with this person, consider giving feedback'. And we can extend these triggers to other HR processes." What might be considered quite revolutionary by many, is that the feedback lands with the employee, but not necessarily the manager. The employee decides what to share."

KBC gives full autonomy for their people to 'own' their development. And that starts with the app, where the employee can decide what they want to do with the feedback they receive. It can be something like sharing with the manager or others, or connecting with her/his own targets, etc. The app gives an overview of all the things to discuss with the manager, in order to grow. Our strategy is to focus on forward looking experiences. We do not look at the past anymore. It is the employee owning this, and it is forward looking. Which is a significant

change from business as usual." Could there be pitfalls in the process? Lucien says: "If anyone has the tendency to share only positive feedback, the manager can realize this is not realistic and can prepare for an honest dialogue. We try to promote openness as much as possible, and we can only promote openness if we look forward, and if people know we will use this to support them forward."

How EX is answering to business needs at KBC

To succeed, the EX team connects to strategic projects in the company. "Everything we do is connected to the broader company roadmap", confirms Lucien. For example, one such project focuses on reskilling people, because digital transformation is a huge game changer in banking. Lucien relates: "We are doing a pilot now called 'The Matching Place'. Some of our people have done the same kind of job for lots of years and are not used to making career jumps. So how could you ask from these people to jump to a new position, not knowing where they are heading?"

"The Matching Place' asks managers to post temporary assignments, across all domains. And we match these with employees, using machine learning. You don't even need a CV. You can upload any descriptive document, so this is done in a low-entry manner, very accessible to anyone. 'The Matching Place' uses an engine that matches the skills needed for a project with skills extracted automatically". Lucien continues: "These temporary assignments are about getting a taste of another part of KBC. Which can translate eventually into people changing jobs, and we see this happening. Now we are looking into expanding it, to be more proactive: How can we detect people needs and triggers? Or suggest new assignments, to try something else?" That's where the app will support."

What are the most important things Lucien and Sandra have learned?

"First, our philosophy is Zero Manual", says Sandra. The app is aimed to give such a seamless experience that the users do not need to read any directions or instructions on how to use it. That also means that we don't introduce things too fast."

"Second, keep the front-end experience consistent

everywhere. Whether it's a request for parking to facilities or taking time off, the screen looks identical, even if in the back, the system is different. The employee doesn't care and doesn't have to care what the backend system is, they can just do what they need to do in the same look and feel, have the same flow whether it's for making a parking reservation, or booking a meeting room, or some time off."

"Third, developing an integrated digital service for employees means no vendor lock-in: "We've learned that instead of buying and using an integrated system like SuccessFactors, we can make something of our own, much more people-centric. It does not matter if there are multiple components at the backend, the most important thing for the employee is to have a seamless experience. We want to disconnect the experience from the back-end system, and then plug-in what we want", says Sandra. "And, finally, borrow as much as you can. Search for partners inside or outside the company with who you can co-create and share ideas. This can give a real boost to your EX dreams"

What is next for EX at KBC?

"Our focus is changing with time", says Lucien: "Until now, we were focused on supporting the employee, now we want to be able to support the team, like knowing where everyone is sitting or finding the best space to meet or work together. There is a lot of potential for working with augmented reality in solving this. People are working in teams very dynamically now". It is an entire new definition of collaborating in teams, and KBC wants to support its people in improving the experience of working together." Other plans for the future include connecting customer journeys with employee journeys. Lucien describes: "Right now, we connect CX and EX, but not in a way that is digitally supported." The EX team is considering how they can tap into everyone's expertise to answer client's needs. For example, how would KBC advise me in starting a new activity at my company? You can ask this question, as a client, and the question is distributed to someone who can support them or has the knowledge."

"Ideally, in the future, the app will be able to personalize the experience even more, say Lucien and Sandra. Which fully resonates with KBC's motto: 'Every day we start from scratch'. Never lose the sense of wonder when it comes to discovering what can enhance people's experience at work."



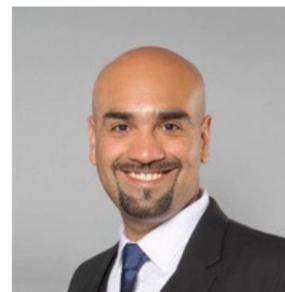
People Analytics & Culture Champions at LinkedIn

Nawal is the Senior Manager, Employee Experience at LinkedIn. Her story began in 2014, when the New York office was about to double in size. They recognized they needed someone to own the Onboarding program because, as they told Nawal at the time, "Right now it's not this phenomenal, stellar experience" and it didn't live up to the promise that was set during the recruitment process.

Shujaat (Senior Manager, People Analytics) joined LinkedIn two years ago with a background in Strategy and Operations Consulting. Like many in consulting, he has a background in running high performing teams, jumping in to ambiguous and complex problems, leveraging data and converting into actionable insights to influence business decision making. What sets Shujaat apart is he is deeply passionate about the People domain.



Nawal Fakhoury
Senior Manager EX



Shujaat Ahmad
Senior Manager Analytics

Why is LinkedIn focusing on Employee Experience?

Shujaat says: "What we do at LinkedIn is pretty unique because we are 'Customer Zero'. Our product is also in the talent domain, so we are in a unique space to not only advise on talent strategy but also product strategy as well. Our team reports directly to the Chief People Officer and works with the talent leadership to consult with our executive staff. Our starting point with People Analytics was different: A lot of People Analytics teams get stuck being a reporting team. One of our guiding principles is "insights without action = overhead". Reporting is one of the things we do as part of a strategic value proposition to influence insights-driven culture for all talent decisions."

How did LinkedIn build EX?

Shujaat says: "My role was to make sure any decision-making around Talent is based on evidence as much as possible and to minimize bias. That meant starting with who we recruit, how we recruit, how we onboard and how do we develop talent? It includes how we look at Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging. How do we look at attraction and retention strategies? Is it informed by data? Is there strategic thinking leveraging insights?"

Nawal started with a split role – responsible for LinkedIn's Onboarding and Employee Experience programming in the New York office. She tells how she met every single one of LinkedIn's new hires in New York and Chicago, and then had the "unique opportunity to continue to pop up

again and again in these employees' lives and help us live up to the First Day Promise and bring our culture to life beyond orientation."

Shujaat also worked on the early stages of EX. He says, "We go through this very comprehensive recruiting process and we've built all these programs to attract people. We want to know 'What is the efficacy of these programs, what's working and what's not?'"

"We look at different points in time of the employee lifecycle. Everything we look at is anonymized and kept confidential as per our very strict guidelines. We look at the group of people who got in. What does it look like in the first three months, six months? What does attrition look like in that time frame? Are we losing people at a specific time, a time that, if zoomed in, could highlight an onboarding issue?"

Shujaat continues: "And then we look at our engagement survey as well, to take a holistic look and get a better understanding. Is there something that we can pick up from a sentiment perspective as a hotspot? And then that blends into what type of development program we need, maybe to develop a program for managers. Or it could be a specific program if we discover the issue is that people are not feeling belonging, for example. Can we create a program around that? So that's where employee experience would come in."

Nawal and her colleagues have many inputs for how they understand and build EX. She says: "EX means different things everywhere, so we have to spend time thinking





about 'what is our differentiator' and what are people going to talk about at the end of the day that became a 'wow experience' for them personally."

"We spend our time thinking about if people walk into this experience, how are they going to engage their 5 senses? How do we do something that's mind-blowing? Even if it's as simple as creating a way to interact with someone outside of their team, this small moment builds a new connection, shares another point of view and inspires collaboration in a different way."

Nawal talks about how the Employee Experience team continually seeks input for the experiences they create: "We're lucky to have people who serve as 'Culture Champions' in every office, so we're able to ask employees to validate our questions and direction like 'does this connect with the rhythm of the business, does this feel like it would work for a diverse audience? Is this inclusive to multiple types of personalities?'"

Nawal explains that "Culture Champions are everyday employees that raise their hands and say 'I care deeply about our culture. Put me in charge of helping create great experiences at a local level.' They serve as volunteers that create monthly culture experiences on top of their day job. They come from Sales, Marketing, Engineering, Finance, and these rock stars are constantly designing and delivering experiences so we can ensure our culture traditions exist in every office. They even provide us with input on what people are saying they want in our culture programs."

In offices like in Madrid where we have 20+ colleagues, we have 3 Culture Champions and in offices like San Francisco, where we have 2,000+ employees, we have 20 Culture Champions. We get them a small budget, monthly resources and virtual training to bring our EX-related programs to life every single month in our 30+ global offices. That's the body of work that I oversee with a team of 5."

Shujaat says there are several main things that result from their effort to build employee experience: "We serve as strategic thought partners within HR. Typically, in the HR field, HR can tend to jump to a band-aid solution of "Let's create a program.", without thinking about the Why. We help teams to step back and help them think: "Alright, what is our objective?" "What is the problem?" Getting them to think, in that sense being their thought partner, leveraging different disparate sources of data to help validate their hypothesis. We have our engagement survey. We have headcount, organizational composition, attrition and compensation data. We have market data. By putting it all together we can best identify the hotspots and problems to solve."

Shujaat shares an example: "We saw that one of the teams had several managers with span of controls greater than what we would recommend. We have set some benchmarks around span of control based on our prior research. We saw that the spans of controls were at different ends of the spectrum – some had it too wide and some too narrow – that didn't necessarily align with the scope and

scale of their roles. Based on 1:1 interviews with some of the managers, and analyzing the organizational data, we were able to point out that as we had grown, we had a new group of people managers who had grown up in LinkedIn and had gone through management training, but were still new to people management. These two insights translated in a strategy for the group on addressing managerial capacity and capability.

What is the role of Culture and Employee Experience?

Both Shujaat and Nawal zero in on Culture as the core of what makes the employee experience at LinkedIn so powerful.

Shujaat says: "Attrition has not been that much of a concern for companies that have had good employee experience programs, good culture. Whenever we look at our alumni, we have a lot of 'boomerangs' - people who come back. One of the common reasons they give us for returning is that they can't find the same culture or people elsewhere. And those who remain Alums, express similar sentiments"

"All of us know that anywhere else we would go, we won't get the same great people culture that we've had here at LinkedIn. It's pretty unique!"

Shujaat says regarding the culture: "The biggest thing for me is that it is very authentically human. You will see that when anyone is going through a problem in their life, people actually jump in without anyone asking! And leaders jump in, helping the person and their family. Regardless of whether it's something professional or personal. I worked at a lot of places where I haven't seen that genuine compassion, and it's something that you can't quantify. It is that sort of alchemy that is binding everyone together."

"We do an All-hands every second Wednesday at 10:00AM Pacific Time. Jeff Weiner and team start with Talent before discussing anything else as it's our #1 operating priority. We introduce new hires around the world. When we do any employee voice surveys, the results are kept transparent and shared with the company during the All-hands and then have an open dialogue, like every one of these meetings, to address any questions from the employees."

Nawal says that with LinkedIn, "When I started we were in hypergrowth mode and we were wondering how to

scale our Culture and make our experiences repeatable. As a company we have been a startup, we have gone through hypergrowth, we were acquired by a massive company, and we are well on our way to becoming our own established company. And regardless of what stage we have been in as a company our focus has always been, 'How do we continue to do things by 'treating people beautifully' and offer every employee an exceptional employee experience."

"We're very lucky to have Jeff Weiner as our CEO and Christina Hall as our Chief People Officer. There's no conversation about 'How can we get you bought into this?' Our leaders get why prioritizing culture is a strategic play."

What are Nawal and Shujaat most proud of?

Nawal says, "There are 350+ culture champions and 500 employee volunteers across our 30+ offices. Every year, we invite these volunteers to 'Culture Camp' where they can apply for one of 65 open spots. This is a leadership development program where our volunteers learn how they can continue to fuel culture at a local level. We're moving into our 4th year so we've had about 180+ people who have gone through Culture Camp and have the tools and training needed to scale LinkedIn's culture programs with a local flare."

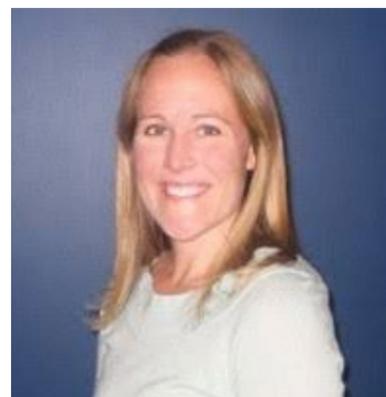
"We bring them together at HQ, and our campers get to hear what their volunteer peers and celebrating and what their challenges are. They learn how to create exceptional Employee Experiences, and we do a "collaboration challenge" Hackathon-style event that allows them to pitch ideas to our culture program leaders. It's one of the many ways we provide our employees to put their fingerprints on our future experiences."

Shujaat says: "I have seen a lot of large and small companies that try to enforce alignment top down. Whereas the mantra here is are: if you find something that you're passionate about, and it's aligned with our vision and mission, then go create it. It's not a top down culture, which I really admire. I have seen managers not only be just managers (who know how to do things the right way) but also be leaders (who know what's the right thing to do). The focus on the individual's transformation within the scope of the company is heartening"



Walmart: Scaling EX at the 'Fortune One'

How do you create and scale an EX Team to support the world's largest public company with 2.5 million associates? Kristin Reilly explains how she found and organized a team of people with new kinds of capabilities to build a new EX-based Associate Value Proposition to help Walmart 'win the future of retail.'



Kristin Reilly
Head of People Experience

Why is Walmart focusing on People Experience?

Kristin Reilly, Head of People Experience at Walmart, says "Our ultimate goal is to attract and retain the right talent to win the future of retail. We want to create an exceptional place for our associates (what we call our employees) to work so they can serve our customers in the best capacity. And I think that's the most important objective of PX."

Walmart refers to "Employee Experience" as "People Experience" (PX), since they aim to impact experience before, during, and after employment. "We define People Experience as true associate/candidate centricity: a frictionless experience throughout the journey that enables and inspires our people to belong, be well, and be their best every day," says Kristin.

"Focusing on associates has always been a part of Walmart culture, starting with Sam Walton who once said, 'the emphasis on our people must be genuine and sometimes very bold and daring.' Our People Experience team uses three principles to guide how we work and partner:

- 1) Lead with the associate perspective
- 2) Curate the right mix of resources
- 3) Measure the right thing and act on insights"

According to Kristin, "Our main challenge is typically scale: how can we meet associates where they are in a global, matrixed organization with so much variety in roles and experiences? Personalization is important, but it requires us to think about how we create frameworks and guiding principles for experiences that enable the business leaders to have the flexibility to adapt to their needs." She calls it "flexibility within a framework."

How is Walmart scaling PX?

Kristin joined Walmart through the acquisition of Jet.com in 2016, where she'd led the Talent Experience team and built it from the ground up. She explains, "After the acquisition, I had the opportunity to think about what People Experience would look like more broadly and was asked to bring our thinking into a Center of Excellence within the Walmart enterprise. This situation was so different because of the breadth of the remit. How could we create ways of working that are flexible enough to meet the unique needs of the business units, but also not so high-level that associates can't see themselves in it?"

The Walmart PX team focused on building three initiatives to scale:

1. The Associate Value Proposition.

Kristin says, "For our Associate Value Proposition (AVP), we started with years of associate research across business units and markets to understand why associates choose to join and stay with Walmart. We looked to uncover consistencies in sentiment around what truly makes Walmart unique in its totality, irrespective of the type of role or where folks sit in the company. We joined forces with Corporate Communications and Marketing to sort through and distill this information into themes, and then further partnered with key stakeholders across the organization to align around five pillars of our AVP which are representative of the enterprise and indicative of the potential of our people: innovation, well-being, purpose, inclusion, and opportunity."

"Soon after that, we created our associate brand and launch campaign known as 'This Is That Place.' It's our rally cry that ties to our aspiration of being the employer of choice, and our associates have taken it and made it their own. It's been translated internationally in eight markets, and the use of the hashtag has been growing organically on internal and external social channels which is validation for the fact that associates are looking for a way to channel their pride. The most important part is that our associates are telling their stories and sharing their experiences. That's what drives positive sentiment and reinforces the value proposition."

Walmart's associate brand was woven through the experience at the annual Shareholder's meeting in 2019. "We built our associate brand center, a website that houses brand assets, voice and tone guidelines, empathy worksheets, UX guides, marketing messages for ambassadors, and more. Our team regularly hosts workshops with HR communicators, agency partners, and other groups where they learn about why we created the brand and how to use it effectively. With the right tools in hand, communicators have been able to simplify and connect materials across the associate journey, from job ads and offer letters to policies, executive communications, and more."



Walmart's Associate Brand Center

"Between our pillar messaging and associate branding, we're helping to ensure communications and experiences have a consistent thread throughout our associates' journeys, and that new people-focused initiatives and decisions support the five pillars. A great example is our Live Better U program, launched in our US business recently, which provides college education to associates for only a dollar a day. Providing this kind of affordable education and growth opportunity to our associates solves an employee need and supports our opportunity pillar."

"Other examples are our ZP and Even programs, which offer our associates easier access to living better. ZP allows people to set their own goals and socialize their efforts, which is behaviorally proven to heed better results, and Even gives our people early access to their earned wages and offers financial planning advice to associates. These things help us expand our offerings to associates in pursuit of improving well-being."

"We're now working with different business units to evolve and adapt the AVP for their specific needs and populations. Providing a framework for different groups at Walmart to work within, but flex to meet their needs and make their own, is critical to being able to continue to immerse this at our scale."

2. Measurement.

Kristin explains how Walmart is moving away from once-a-year associate engagement surveys to a model of continuous feedback. In the meantime, they've rethought their engagement survey so that it better meets the needs of the business units.

"In addition to a standard set of questions which are scientifically proven to be actionable and indicative of engagement, each business unit can choose additional questions so that they obtain the insights they need to drive their business. They can also choose the timing and frequency around the survey."

"We've also created a Program & Product Measurement Playbook for our partners, so that we're all measuring the impact of our efforts in a consistent manner. These types of playbooks and toolkits are crucial given the consultative nature of what we do."

A page from a Program Measurement Playbook, which the PX team at Walmart uses to evangelize consistent measurement approaches.

With any initiative, Kristin says "It's crucial to pull in the right players early on and co-create with them so everyone feels ownership in the outcome."

3. Journey mapping.

According to Kristin, "All of our work starts with journey mapping. We've created a high-level journey that the associate takes from the very beginning, even before they know they're a potential candidate, and even after they've exited."

Walmart's journey phases

"For our potential candidates, we want to understand what they're thinking, feeling, doing, and saying at every step of the process, then map out compelling messaging and experiences around that. For instance, once they've accepted an offer, the recruiter might reach out with additional job opportunities in case they want to make a referral. And the hiring manager will follow up with a note that says "We're super excited that you're joining us," and it will include some of our branded content. Then after they've joined, we'll ask them for feedback on their Onboarding experience. We design it in a way so that everyone is invested in building the associate experience and that they can see it's a team effort."



"Another example is how we've built out our intern program. We went to colleges and asked students, "What do you need in an intern experience? If you've interned previously, what went well and what didn't?"

"We try to think about how to remove the friction and solve for the pain points—and design experiences that are connected every single step of the way through branding, messaging, and holistic support. So, it's no longer that the Learning and Development team does this and the Recruiting team does something else completely independent. Our job is to bring folks together to focus on delivering great experiences across the whole journey."

Kristin talked about what she had to do at the beginning to help the business understand the value of the work they were doing: "I think along the way it was important to show data, insights, and metrics and demonstrate that this is something that our people want. If you're not starting with a leadership team or a mentality across the company from the beginning that this is important then I think you are going to have a more difficult time."

What capabilities are helping Walmart scale PX?

The PX function has become part of the People Leadership Team at Walmart. Kristin says, "The roles we hire for are not purely HR focused—we have marketers, product owners, storytellers, and workplace designers. We have shifted parts of our HR organization and general thinking to a more product-focused approach, using Agile methodology to create problem statements

and build solutions through the development of MVPs and constant iteration based on insights and learnings."

Kristin has come to highly value skills relating to Product Management, Marketing and Agile, as well as UX. She says, "We need tech partners and UX designers to be immersed in our work. I believe there will always be the day-to-day strategic components of HR, but the ability to build these new capabilities and talent will be even more critical in the future. The ability to invent, innovate, and solve big problems in real-time requires an agile product mindset. Bringing in some of these new skill sets, gathering new insights, building solutions, and operationalizing what you discover is the new wave of HR."

"All of these capabilities were a mix of build and buy—many of these people were inside Walmart already," Kristin says. Today, she has a total of nearly 100 people on her team—the number and makeup evolves and changes to best support the business and capitalize on economies of scale.

What comes next for Kristin and her organization?

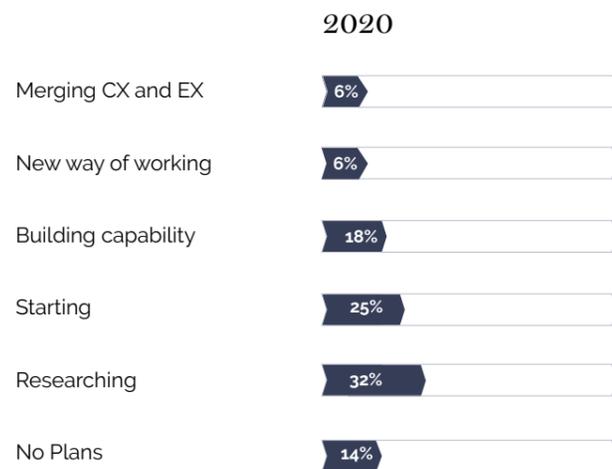
She says: "You may have heard about the plans for our new Home Office in Bentonville. Our teams are using a design thinking approach, testing workspace designs, and building on our learnings to create a work environment that's frictionless and inspiring. We're using these tests as the foundation to how we build out future locations as we grow and make sure associate-centricity is integrated from the get-go."

Appendix

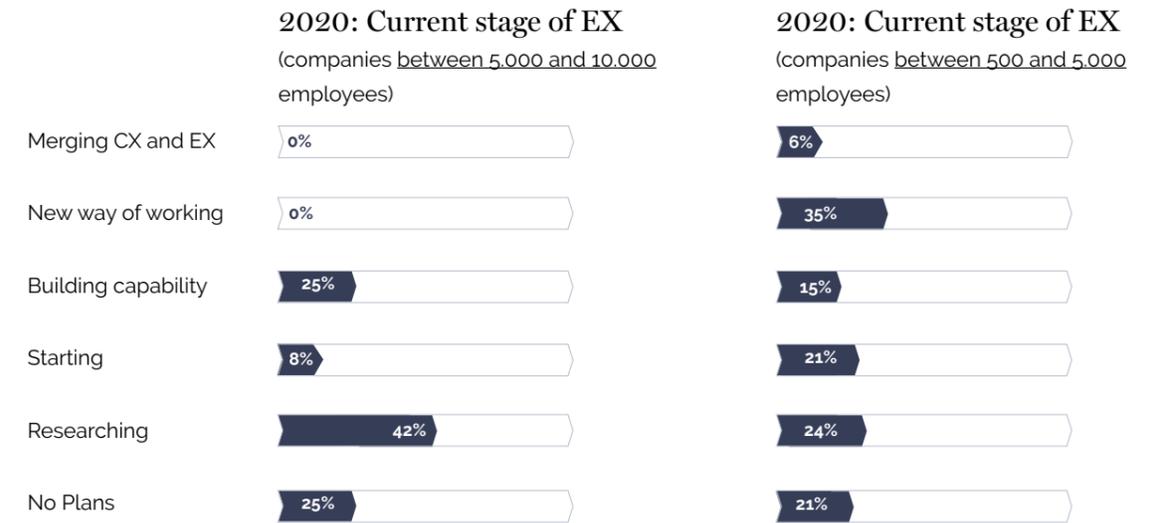
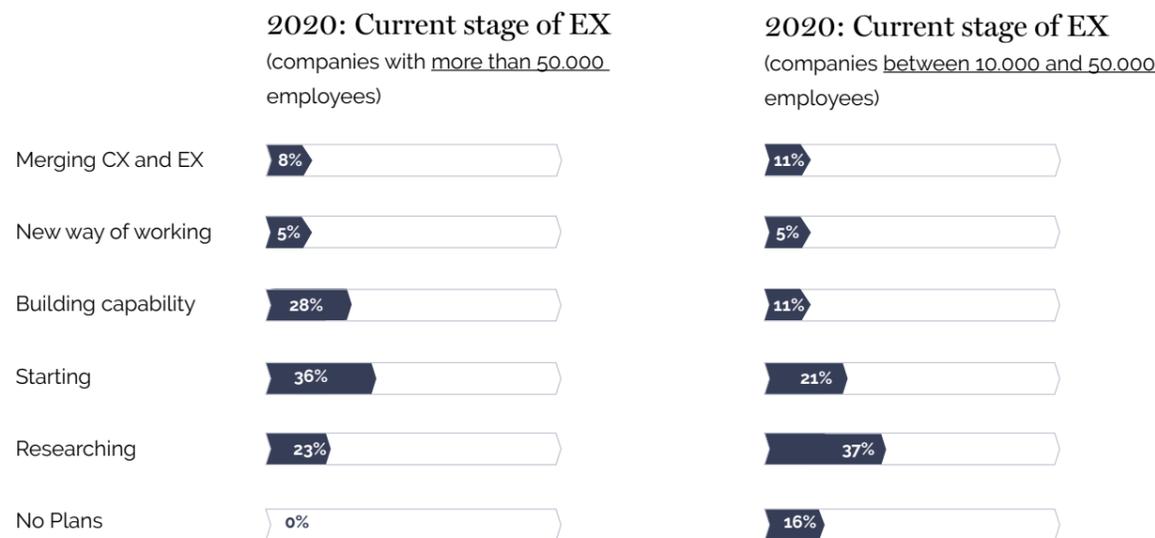
Appendix

Different maturity stages for EX

Not much has changed regarding where respondent companies are in their progress compared to 2018 – we see more companies in the starting phase and fewer in the categories of "New way of working" and "Merging CX and EX". Only 13% of our respondents said they have no plans whatsoever for EX.



We see a few differences in progress between different company sizes. Regardless of size, the largest percentage of organizations are in Researching and Starting. It's not too late to start if you haven't begun:



Key take-aways:

Small companies with fewer than 500 employees are not less advanced in pursuing EX for their people:

- only 16% of them have no plans yet, compared to 21% of medium companies (500-5000);
- 100% of big companies (more than 50K employees) are on track with EX; none said they had no plans whatsoever; more than a third have already started with EX and 28% are committed to building capabilities
- Companies with 10,000-50,000 employees are most advanced in terms of merging CX and EX, with 11% currently busy with that right now;

extending past traditional benefits

- People need to feel they belong
- Because it syncs with our business strategy of putting the customer at the heart of everything we do by creating an enjoyable experience for them
- We see the need to improve the employee experience. As part of our digital Strategy we are using employee journeys to map out the experience.
- EX is linked with our Agile way of working. We are looking to organize ourselves differently around employee and new working relations.
- We need to differentiate the experience our employees have...EX has been hugely inconsistent because each aspect was thought of separately - engagement, culture, leadership, empowerment, etc. So now we are starting to look at this in a joined-up way
- The job market in the tech arena is extremely competitive and we need to differentiate ourselves from our competitors
- To enhance a customer centric strategy and create a sustainable workplace
- EX is crucial to our business success, in particular our High- Performance Culture.

Mapping out the business reasons behind doing EX

We asked people **"Why is your organization building EX?"** and their answers give us insight into the purpose behind their EX strategy and how they see EX impacting their business.

Here are some of the more interesting answers:

- EX drives and determines how well we perform as an organization.
- We believe it is a new way to do business
- We understand the correlation between CX and EX and are more in tune than ever to the needs of employees

More specifically, for companies which have just started researching EX, the main reason behind looking into EX methodologies is:

- To attract talent and build pipelines, cherishing talent
- To retain the right people and makes them more productive
- To motivate our talent
- To treat talents as our most important customers and change the way we operate within HRM
- To enhance employee performance. We want to create a workplace where people can strive, bring their best and full self to work.
- To increase employee engagement
- To transform the HR function
- To retain competitive advantage in the disruptive world
- To support a new strategy, culture and associated talent profiles
- To transform our business

At the same time, for organisations which are more advanced in EX and are already merging EX with CX, the main reason behind implementing EX is:

- To reinvent the "Workplace Experience"
- To become a better place to work for our employees
- To fulfill our mission to create a working environment that allows people to realize their potential
- To empower energized employees to create incredible experiences for our clients
- To enhance speed, efficiency, innovation
- To increase productivity and build an engaging workforce where people want to work

In what concerns our shared understanding of what EX is, for the question "How do you define EX?", only 25% of respondents say they have an agreed internal definition. Here are some examples:

- End to end journey around employee moments that matter
- Happy employees = happy clients. This means their development, their physical work environment or the tools they need. In terms of leadership, communication and culture, our job is to help our colleagues do their jobs more easily, smartly and swiftly.

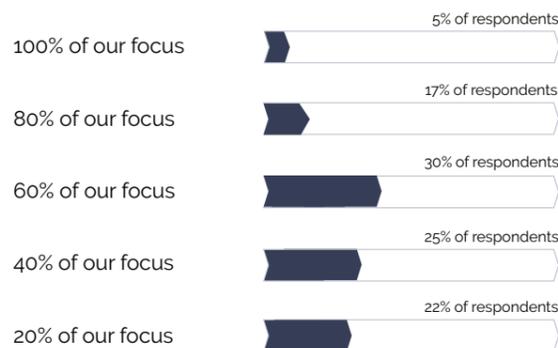
- To create an environment where employees get inspired and have more energy at the end of the day than when they started
- All the connections an employee has with the company
- The moment that matter for our different personas
- Understanding the E2E employee journey and enabling them to do their best work
- We consider every touchpoint between the employee and the company throughout the whole journey and design to make them better
- Improving the sum of all experiences (HR, job, culture & leadership, digital & workplace) of our people to help increase sustainable engagement and productivity.

Then, we wanted to get an idea of how much energy and focus is on HR processes and programs vs. the holistic experience people have with a company. Note: when asked in our workshops "How much of your day-to-day is spent interacting with HR processes?", most people (even HR) will say less than 5%. But this graphic tells us how aligned we are with that level of interaction.

We have a ways to go to detach EX from regular HR processes:

- At one end, 15% of respondents with 50.000 or more employees said that only 20% of their EX is concerned with HR processes.
- The most advanced companies seem to be medium sized 500-1000 employees, with 38% saying that only

What % of your EX focus is on HR Services, systems or processes vs. non-HE experiences e.g. manager, team, workspace, personal/family, remote working



20% of time is spent on HR business as usual.

- At the other end of the spectrum, 5% of all companies do EX 100% linked to HR processes, not daring yet to move out of the prescribed territory.
- In the middle ground: 41% of big companies (+50K employees) say more than 60% of their EX activities is entirely following HR processes while 68% of small companies (0-500 employees) say HR connects directly to less than 40% of their activities, the rest is spent on non HR experiences.

The graphic above tells us that we still tend to emphasize HR processes & systems, etc. over the actual ways people experience work. Moments that matter have more to do with person-to-person interactions and how "connected" someone feels with the people and values, and how well they feel recognized as a person.

Journeys already mapped & planned for the next phases

Our Survey attracted a considerable audience still at the beginning of its EX chapter. One indication is that 37.5 % of respondents have mapped any journeys so far.

The overall employee journey is defined as the total experiences and touchpoints someone has with a company, from the moment they research working there to their moments as an alumnus. A journey has a well-defined starting and ending point, and sometimes the full end-to-end employee journey can be limiting in its perspective: it looks at an employee only from an HR point of view.

Within a long journey, many other shorter ones unfold, from the first day as an expat in a new country, to a mentoring program or becoming a parent. We asked people "What kinds of journeys have people mapped so far?" and these are their answers compiled by specific topics:

Journeys already mapped

- Onboarding - 33% of companies
- Hiring / Candidate journey - 17%
- Development & Learning - 13%
- Performance review - 7%
- Leaving / exits / offboarding - 7%
- Career moves - 5%
- Rewards - 4%
- Personal moments - 3%
- Help me - 2%
- Leave of Absence - 2%
- Flexworking - 2%
- Scrum / Agile journeys - 2%

Journeys planned for the future

- Candidate journey
- Career development
- Offboarding
- Learning & Development
- Performance management
- Onboarding
- Career move
- New manager journey
- Hiring manager journey
- Promotion
- Journey of a new hire
- Agile working
- Rewards/ benefits
- HR systems
- Leaders journeys
- International mobility
- Mentoring
- Diversity and Inclusion journeys
- High potentials career development
- Personal moments that matter
- Leave of absence
- Retiring journey
- Wellbeing at work
- Maternity/paternity leave
- Critical illness

Key Moments that Matter

We asked our respondents to give examples of key Moments that Matter that they have identified. Adapting a definition from CX, a Moment That Matters (MTM) is a transformative point in time within a journey, where someone does something that changes and makes a lasting impression on how you feel about them and by extension, the organization. They are alternatively described as a Moment of Truth (MOT). Focusing on MTM's or MOT's allows you to concentrate your energy on experiences that matter. You want to ensure that all touchpoints (service delivery, tools, processes, etc.) are working well. But the highest value and ROI comes from Moments that Matter. Below is a summary of what our respondents identified already as MTMs, depending on their different stage of EX development:

Companies that have just reached the "START" phase describe as Moments that Matter:

- When I walk into a hiring interview
- When I have an exit interview
- When I receive my first "Welcome to the Company!", with a wellbeing goodie bag
- When I hit my year mark
- When I have lunch for the first time with my team on Day 1
- When I've learned from a mistake and decide to move on
- When I return from parental leave (my first day back)

Organizations still at the "RESEARCHING" phase have identified as Moments that Matter:

- That moment when we can give to new joiners, one day before they start, information and a small gift through an app, to help them experience our brand and to make them feel connected and welcomed
- When the communication coordination between HQ and other parts of the organization fails
- When I find out about a vacancy after it has been filled, and discover it never was published / made available to a wider group of employees, so I was not aware of it
- When I need to take extra care of their sick parents or children

- When I return to work 4 months after having a baby
- When one of our key team members was picked up by his colleagues during a very rough personal time and helped to achieve his goal
- When I get frustrated because I cannot find the right information to do my job
- When I need information and no one knows the answer/ or I receive contradictory advice on where to look for it.

For companies at the stage of "BUILDING CAPABILITY":

- When I come to work for the first time in a new team
- When a significant change is announced
- When I become a parent / come back from parental leave
- When I give or receive feedback
- When I get a moment of recognition
- When I finally get promoted
- When I get nominated by other colleagues for a role or I nominate them
- When I leave the company
- When I get ill
- When, as a candidate, I look at our homepage and decides whether or not to apply for a job
- When, as a candidate, I receive timely and relevant feedback on the status of the process
- When we set priorities or goals
- When you look for the right tools that make your job easier

For organizations that are at more advanced stages of "NEW WAY OF WORKING" and "MERGING CX AND EX", Moments that Matter are:

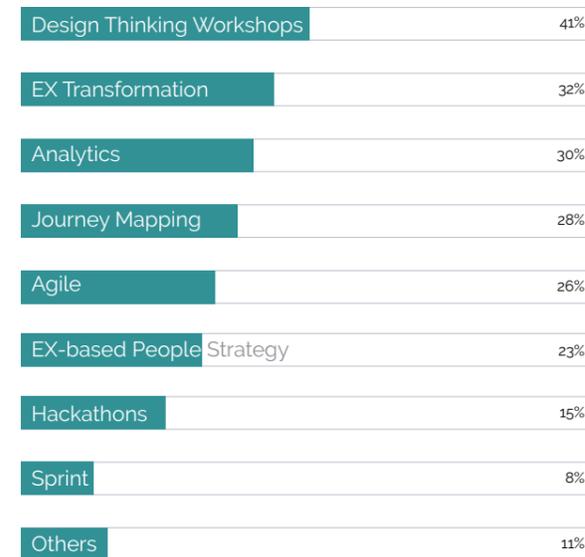
- My first contact with mentor when onboarding
- My first contact with the company
- When I have a 1-1 progression talk with my manager
- When I realize I have a need for reskilling
- When my promotion is announced
- When clients come back to give us feedback
- When I go on parental leave
- When I return from a long leave of absence
- When we are celebrating (or not) a work anniversary
- When I notice someone feels overloaded and stressed
- When I go through a personal milestone (a birth in my family, the death of someone I love, moving to a new country etc.).

Turning to outside expertise

What helps your EX projects? We wanted to know what companies look for when exploring external capabilities and what they're missing in their organization that needs a boost to get started or move forward with EX?

Here are their answers:

For which of the following do you seek external support?



External support is perceived as needed by ¼ of the companies which are just starting, 32% of companies at the researching phase and 18% of companies busy with building the right capability.

Only 12% of organizations more advanced ("NEW WAY OF WORKING" and "MERGING CX AND EX") consider relying on external expertise.

- 70% of those who said Design thinking workshops are needed come from the "START" and "RESEARCHING" phases.
- Only 11% of those who need Analytics come from "NEW WAY OF WORKING" and "MERGING CX AND EX".
- 81% of respondents who need an upgrade in Agile ways of working come from the first 3 stages

of "START", "RESEARCHING" and "BUILDING CAPABILITIES". 92% of those who want to learn more about Sprints come from "RESEARCHING", "BUILDING CAPABILITIES" and "NEW WAYS OF WORKING".

- Almost half of the respondents who are willing to rely on external support for Journey mapping are at the "BUILDING CAPABILITIES" stage (46% of respondents); 41% of those who want to up their game in organizing Hackathons also come from the "BUILDING CAPABILITIES" stage.

For EX-based People Strategy, the ones who need it the most come from:

- RESEARCHING- 36%
- START- 30%
- We don't have plans to do EX - 15%
- BUILDING CAPABILITY- 12%
- NEW WAY OF WORKING- 3%
- MERGING CX AND EX- 3%

No wonder, 56% of those who said they need support for an entire EX Transformation come from the START and RESEARCHING phases.

New roles and capabilities needed

In terms of new roles and capabilities, organisations at different stages said they need the following:

"START" stage:

- Agile teams, Agile coaches, scrum masters, design thinkers
- EX leads
- Data Analytics specialists
- Designers
- Cultural ambassadors
- A project team

"RESEARCHING" stage:

- Agile Transformation Coach
- An appointed Global Director of Employee Experience, with a core task team globally
- A CX division attached to HR, to enhance internal and external experiences.
- CX specialists

- High performance culture facilitators
- Community influencers
- Product owners / Process owners for EX
- A restructured HR service team, to include also facilities etc.

"BUILDING CAPABILITY" stage:

- Project Centric Leads, Sprint Teams, Scrum masters, Agile Facilitators/Coaches
- Agile, Analytics and Design capabilities (including a special global task force)
- Enhanced tech/digital literacy among HR colleagues
- Enhanced skills of HR Business Partners in EX

"NEW WAY OF WORKING" stage:

- D&I Leads, EX Managers, Digital EX Managers
- Change management specialists
- High touch roles in HR like Community manager
- Emotional analysts
- Insights capabilities, Design capabilities, Delivery capabilities
- Competency architect

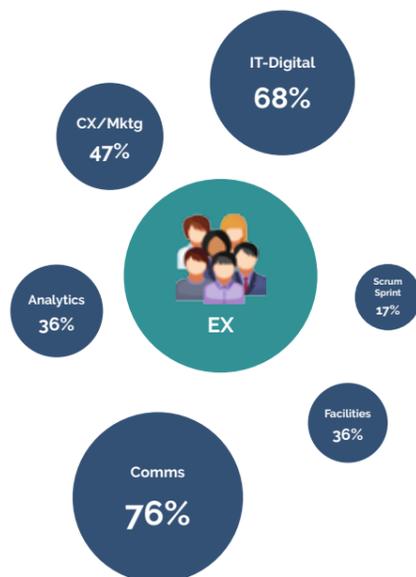
Which other functions do you actively collaborate with?



"MERGING CX AND EX" stage:

- Agile, Analytics and Design capabilities
- Innovation capabilities
- Workplace Experience Manager

Who we work with most now



New EX Roles & Skills

Human-centered Design & Design Thinking

- UX Designer
- CX Specialist
- Workplace Designer
- Emotional Analyst
- Experience & Journey Designer
- Design Thinking for Organization Design

Marketing

- Product Owners
- Brand Managers
- Recruitment & internal campaigns

People Analytics

- Machine Learning
- Cognitive & Predictive Analytics
- Social Media, AI, etc.

Agile Coaches & Scrum Masters

- Agile Coach
- Scrum Master
- Sprint Facilitator
- Agile Organization Design
- Agile Transformation Manager

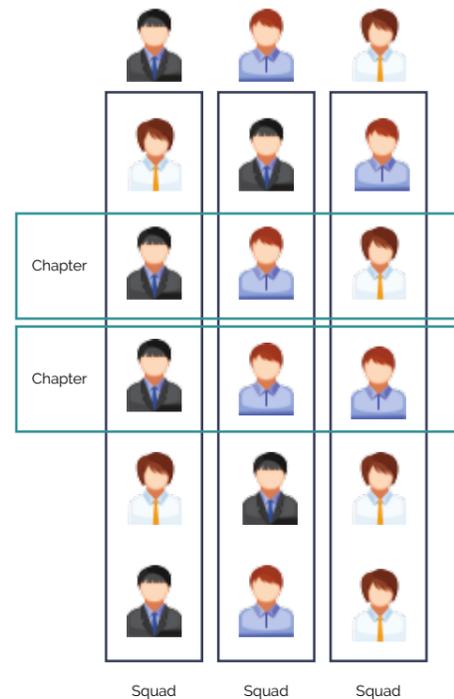
Digital

- Digital EX Manager
- App Designer (Consumer-grade)

Others

- Storyteller
- Community Builder
- EX skills for HR Business Partners

How we are working - Agile Teams



Understanding challenges

In terms of specific challenges identified, 67% of respondents said "Leadership Mindset" is 'difficult' or 'very difficult' to deal with in starting EX. Buy-in from the C-suite is often cited as the most critical element to start.

64% of our Survey respondents are struggling with "Organizational Complexity".

55% of our respondents, cite changing the "Capability, and mindset of our HR" as 'difficult' or 'very difficult'.

Lastly, "Transforming the Culture" is perceived by almost half of all respondents as 'very difficult' (46%).

Measuring EX impact on business

Many companies are taking a dual approach, doing both an annual engagement survey and measuring EX. The impact of EX is being measured at major touchpoints e.g. Moments that Matter, as well as service delivery points. Many respondents are also using Net Promoter Scores, Customer Satisfaction Scores, and other measures, and exploring how they correlate with improved EX.

Survey types respondents are using include:

- Annual employee listening moments
- Employee engagement surveys
- Employee net promoter score (NPS)
- Customer net promoter score (NPS)
- Turnover
- Profitability of the organization (KPI)
- Culture survey
- Team barometer
- Inclusion index
- New hire turnover
- Recruiting spend vs. turnover
- System data (e.g. Workday), number of escalations and tickets in service centers

Celebrating success: reasons to be proud of

Besides understanding struggles and how to overcome them, we wanted to give our respondents a moment of

reflection regarding what makes them proud in their EX work, regardless of the stage they are at. Here are some selected responses, clustered by topics, with the hope that you will find them inspiring for your own efforts:

Getting leadership buy-in, involvement and recognition:

- "I am proud that we finally managed to get a dedicated team for EX."
- "We managed to raise EX Awareness at SVP level."
- "We became recognized as an official Innovation Initiative for our company, being among start-up initiatives with an Innovation Fund support to validate, design and scale-up EX strategy."
- "Engaging leaders and staff in the EX discussion - asking them to co-create. One key example was redesign of office space."
- "With a leadership push, we achieved true commitment shared across HR leadership team."
- "We are 2 years into our journey and have begun to shift the executive mindset. There is much more support than in years past."
- "We achieved the lowest turnover ever and that is recognized to be due to our efforts".
- "I am proud of the movie-at-home kit for new parents: with a personal note from the board."
- Strengthening collaboration inside the company:
- "It brings everyone together around a shared purpose."
- "We managed to create a culture of continuous, meaningful dialogue."
- "We succeeded in creating an open work climate, where people also can get direct support from senior leadership."
- "I am most proud of the way we've embraced a cross-functional approach to designing employee-centered experiences as a team. By working this way, we are able to elevate and amplify our work and truly deliver world-class experiences for our employees."

Taking our thinking to the next level:

- "We set our strategy for an employer brand, based on our new insights from EX."
- "We are finally putting the employee first in our design and thinking."
- "We are truly starting to put employees at the heart of what we do in HR as opposed to simply rolling out corporate program after corporate program."

- "Raising the bar of HR"
- "We amended processes and challenged behaviors based on what we learnt from employees."
- "We've been able to use it to infuse our cultural values in our various programs."
- "We changed the mindset of the recruiting team."
- "We get a chance now to learn by doing."

Making a difference in how employees feel:

- "We simply create a better world for our employees."
- "We are making changes that impacts people lives."
- "People arrive at work happier" and "they take a genuine interest in each other."
- It's impressive "how many employees want to be a part of paying it forward."
- "People react to our efforts in a positive manner."
- "The pride people feel when they leave our company. They are our ambassadors!"
- "EX is central to how people feel about themselves and their workplace. Nothing touches employees more and nothing else can accelerate engagement and productivity."
- "Happy employees - is what matters, gives the organization energy."
- "Employees feel much more engaged - I feel the difference."
- "I am proud when we see the loyalty of our employees towards the organization."
- "I feel proud when people talk about a program or process the EX team created as something remarkable about their experience here. "

Looking ahead: what can be changed or improved?

EX is still largely perceived as a domain within HR, when it is HR that needs to transform itself to become the People Experience function. To truly move the needle and democratize EX innovation, our efforts need to include expertise and perspectives outside of HR. We are seeing the rapid buildup of many new capabilities coming from Human-Centered Design and Design Thinking, Marketing, Agile, Digital and others. What is still missing in most cases? Better ways of scaling insights on the whole spectrum of experiences, including new tech tools to map and design experiences, and an analytics approach to integrate data points and identify drivers of satisfaction and what helps us perform at our best. And connecting all these touch points to what drives business success.

To succeed on this point, EX needs strong coordination between Analytics and Digital/IT. As one of our respondents said: "We need resources if we're going to get traction on these issues. We can't expect new results by doing the same old thing with no additional help."

Finally, one of the lessons learned in the Walmart and KBC Group cases is that you don't have to 'own' a huge new team of new roles and capabilities. Borrow from existing Marketing, Analytics, Agile and IT people within your organization and build new skills in Design, Journey Mapping, Storytelling, etc. and start organizing these in Agile teams around personas and journeys, as well as Organization Design and your elements of your business Transformation.

Thank you for reading our report

We hope you find this report both inspiring and practical for your work to discover and create strong EX in your workplace. We would like to help you connect with others who have solved similar problems and together we promote and shape new ways of doing EX.

EX is one of the most significant new movements in organizations in the past 50 years. Most EX leaders are in their role less than 2 years, and we have listened as they have told us about their challenges as well as their development and learning needs.

As a response, we've created the EX Leaders Network as a global platform for sharing knowledge, resources, tools and templates, as well as new capabilities and ways of working. Our goal is not to benchmark and drive sameness but rather inspire diversity of thought and shape Human-centered experiences on a global scale.

We invite you learn more and to join our EX Leaders Network. For more info, please visit our website at: www.exleadersnetwork.com or write us at info@exleadersnetwork.com.

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