

workplace

A photograph of two women in professional attire, both wearing hijabs, smiling and laughing. One woman on the left is wearing a light pink hijab with a colorful butterfly pattern and a matching top. The other woman on the right is wearing a plain beige hijab and a yellow blazer. They are in an office environment with modern, angular ceiling lights.

Workplace EX HR Handbook

from
FACEBOOK



Forget about 'normal'

In the aftermath of the disruption created by COVID-19, millions of people are anxiously awaiting a return to normal. Except at work. Who wants to return to 'normal' when 58% of employees are unsatisfied with their day-to-day job¹ and 63% don't have the level of autonomy they need²?

Forget about normal. There's now an urgent expectation for something new. Something that, in the words of HR analyst Josh Bersin, represents a shift towards "empathy, compassion and understanding³."

**“Just as nurses
are the front-
line healers in
the hospital,
[HR leaders] are
the front-line
healers in the
company.”**

Josh Bersin
HR Analyst

This emphasis on how people are feeling (not just what they do) gives HR leaders a unique opportunity to show care by transforming the Employee Experience (EX). This trend was already accelerating (even before COVID-19, 92% of CHROs expected the importance of EX to grow by 2021⁴). Now it's here to stay.

In practice, this means understanding where, and how, HR can change people's day-to-day experiences at work. It's about moving from a world of complexity (process-first) to a world of simplicity (people-first). The ultimate goal? To create a sense of belonging and unlock the innovation, creativity and productivity that only people can deliver.

Understanding the Moments that Matter

'Employee Experience' is a big tent. Mapping out the territory and visualizing key EX touchpoints are the first steps. But that's no mean feat when it's estimated that there are 285 touchpoints in total - 60% of which are owned by HR⁵.

These touchpoints occur at different points in the employee lifecycle and at different frequencies. They impact different numbers of people and have different implications. We've put together this framework to help you start thinking about the micro and macro touchpoints in your organization.

Lifecycle

Find

Find

Touchpoint

Recruitment → Onboarding

Experience

Outreach
Referral
D&I
Belonging
Candidate
management

Access to
information
Personalized
experiences
Mentoring

Frequency

Low

Low

KPIs

Funnel
% of referrals
Diverse slate
tracking
Cycle time
Candidate
feedback

Satisfaction
Retention
180-day
performance

Owner

HR

HR | IT

Lifecycle	Grow	Grow
Touchpoint	Purpose →	L&D
Experience	Leadership Strategy Vision Values Mission Transparency Voice	Learning for career growth Timely and inclusive recognition Wellbeing
Frequency	Medium	Medium
KPIs	Engagement Business and Employee Performance Brand equity	Engagement Sentiment Promotions Diversity
Owner	HR CxO Comms	HR CxO

Lifecycle

Innovate

Analyse

Touchpoint

Workflow

→ Offboarding

Experience

Autonomy
Technology
Environment
Communication
Remote work
Collaboration
Work-Life balance
Safety

Interview

Frequency

High

Low

KPIs

Engagement
Adoption
Productivity

Retention
Advocacy

Owner

HR | IT
Comms

HR

Recruiting

Forty percent of people say they'll pull out of an interview process if they have a bad experience with the recruitment manager⁶, while 58% say that clear and regular communication is the most important part of the experience⁷. Clearly, EX begins before potential employees even walk in the door. How they feel during the recruitment process establishes a make-or-break impression.

Onboarding

Twenty-seven percent of recruitment professionals say onboarding talent in a timely fashion is their biggest challenge⁸, while 88% of employees aren't satisfied with the experience either⁹. That's why building an integrated onboarding journey with access to resources, learning communities and mentorship opportunities is a key EX touchpoint.

Purpose

Seventy-two percent of executives agree that purpose gives employees a sense of fulfillment¹⁵. HR leaders can't create that purpose, but they can move the needle on EX by working with their C-suite and Comms team to articulate and share it across the business.



Learning & Development

Seventy-three percent of employers say fostering employee development matters to them¹². And yet only 49% of employees say they're actually seeing the benefit¹³. Why does this matter? Because 94% of employees would stay in their role longer if their company invested in their career¹⁴. HR has an opportunity to bridge the gap between words and action.

Workflow

The day-to-day experience of doing work is influenced by a complex set of factors, whether technological (the tools you use), physical (the environment you're in) or personal (the people you work with). Almost all of these can be influenced by HR in partnership with other stakeholders. But with 58% of employees saying they're unsatisfied with their day-to-day work¹⁰, and 62% feeling unsatisfied with their tools and technology¹¹, there's plenty of work to do.

Offboarding

Treating your employees with respect and listening to their experience provides insights into your culture. Staying connected with them after they've left helps to build your employer brand, makes them feel heard, and may even provide an opportunity to rehire them in the future.



Choosing the Moments that Matter to You

As we've seen, HR's EX remit basically covers everything that happens to an employee from the moment they first show an interest in your company to the day they walk out the door. How do you decide which of these moments matter to you? In other words, where do you start?

Here are five factors to help you decide how to prioritize EX initiatives.

Business Goals

Always begin with the business context. For instance, if your business is going through a period of hyper growth, it makes sense to prioritize the EX impact of recruitment and onboarding. In larger, more complex organizations, driving incremental productivity gains through technology investments or defining the company mission might be more fruitful.

People Priorities

One way to balance the question of frequency versus scale is to look at your overall people and talent goals. If your current people goal is to grow the pipeline of senior executives, it makes sense to focus on touchpoints around development. If you're looking to connect a large frontline workforce, you'll probably want to prioritize workflows.

Frequency

How often do these touchpoints occur? Are they a daily opportunity to address the way people feel at work, or do they only occur a handful of times a year? Some, like recruiting, will only happen once in an employee's lifecycle. Does that make them less important?

Scale

Every single employee in your company will go through recruitment and onboarding at least once. EX initiatives focused on these areas may be low frequency but the impact will be highly scaled. Whereas other EX touchpoints may happen more frequently but impact fewer people - an example would be remote collaboration.

Implementation

Some areas of EX take longer to influence than others. If you want to make an immediate impact, focus on the low-hanging fruit. Start with some simple things that are low cost but high visibility, like a diversity and inclusion audit or employee recognition program.



Giving Employees a Voice

There's one crucial factor missing from this framework. If the goal of EX is to create a more people-centric organization, you need to give people a voice in the process. Right now, this isn't happening: 72% of employees say they're not involved by HR when identifying business needs¹⁶.

The tried and tested way is by using surveys. The best surveys are lightweight and mobile-friendly, which means you get to hear from your entire organization, including frontline or emailless employees, not just people who sit behind a desk. They're an easy way to take the pulse of your organization, discover pain points, and deep-dive into specific areas.

Use the guide below to tailor your survey based on the EX touchpoints we discussed earlier.

Lifecycle

Find

Find

Touchpoint

Recruiting

→ Onboarding

Experience

Talent outreach
Employee referrals
Diversity, inclusion and belonging
Candidate management

Access to information
Personalized experiences
Mentoring

Sample Survey Questions

How clear and regular was communication with your recruiter?
How easy was the job application process?
How did you find the interview process?

Did you have access to the information you needed to understand your role?
How important is it to you to have a mentor?
Did your onboarding experience feel tailored to your needs?

Lifecycle

Grow

Grow

Touchpoint

Purpose



L&D

Experience	Purpose	L&D
	Leadership Strategy Vision Values Mission Transparency Voice	Building learning experiences for career growth Making recognition personal, timely and inclusive Health, mental and financial wellbeing

Sample Survey Questions

How important is the company mission?	Does your manager show care for you?
To what extent do you feel you contribute to the mission?	Are you satisfied with the recognition you receive?
How often is action taken based on your feedback?	How long do you intend to stay with the company?

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→ Offboarding

Experience

Autonomy
Technology
Environment
Communication
Remote work
Collaboration
Work-Life
management
Safety

Interview

Sample Survey Questions

Do you have
the tools
you need
to perform
effectively?

How much time
do you spend
doing the work
you love?

How important
is the option
of remote work
to you?

What are the
main reasons
for leaving?

Would you
recommend
this company
to others?

Go beyond the survey

Surveys can offer valuable insights but they also come with three major drawbacks.

Bias

They reflect what HR thinks is important rather than capturing the employee perspective.

Frequency

They represent a snapshot of time rather than a continuous evaluation.

Action

It's not always clear that filling out a survey leads to tangible change.

Perhaps it's no great surprise that people treat surveys with a degree of scepticism, or that only 29% of employees think HR understands what they need and want¹⁷.

To overcome this, you need to capture and continuously evaluate unfiltered employee perspectives. That isn't easy but one solution is to use analytics tools to track employee sentiment and engagement data so you can see what kind of messages are resonating.



‘Normal’ is broken. Now let’s fix it

HR has a once-in-a-generation opportunity to rewire the Employee Experience, changing not just the way people work but the way they feel about work. That's why we can't think of return to work as a return to 'normal'. Because right now, only 13% of employees say EX is fully meeting their expectations¹⁸.

Getting it right has never been more urgent or necessary than it is today. Josh Bersin sums up the stakes: "HR really 'is the business.' We no longer 'serve the business' or 'sit at the table.' We are central and critical to the company's survival, response, and long-term success¹⁹."

Because ultimately HR is about people. And only people can lead your business into the future.



Sources

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Discover more tips and advice for creating great employee experiences at our new content hub.

workplace.com/employee-experience-resource-hub