



POINT OF VIEW:

EX Metrics: 5 Areas that Effectively Measure the Employee Experience

As far back as 2008, the service—or value—profit chain established the integral relationships between profitability, customer loyalty, and employee satisfaction, loyalty, and productivity. InMoment's own CX Trends research found that employees are the single largest factor in both making *and* breaking customer experience. So it isn't surprising that Forrester has confirmed that "Companies that are already investing in EX have seen significant increases in revenue and customer satisfaction."¹

Thanks to this inextricable tie, employee experience—or EX—is now ascending to take its rightful place alongside customer experience (CX) as both a critical factor in business success, and a deep source of intelligence in identifying and driving the most impactful change. With this elevation comes the need to find the right metrics to measure and analyze EX in order to understand where to focus resources and action.

Like CX, EX involves human beings; therefore, understanding it is a complex and nuanced endeavor. But despite (or perhaps

because of) these shared complexities, simply using traditional CX metrics to understand EX isn't sufficient.

Why? Because being an employee and being a customer is different. Most people spend about half of their waking hours at work, meaning that their job is rarely "just a job." In fact, finding meaning and purpose in one's work is a core universal human need. In best cases, where, how, and with whom we labor creates an emotional state that inspires passion and commitment toward our work, our employer, and our customers. In worst cases, the exact opposite can happen.

Identifying what makes work meaningful is as much of an art as it is a science. Fortunately there is established behavioral science behind what matters most that can help us ask the right questions and measure the right factors.



Five Things You Should Measure

Below are five elements you should measure to fully understand EX and the levels of engagement, as well as the relationship to CX.

Dr. Wilmar Schaufeli, professor of work and organizational psychology, and his colleagues define engagement as “persistent, positive affective-motivational state of fulfillment in employees that is characterized by *vigor*, *dedication*, and *absorption*,”—giving us the first three elements every organization should measure.

1. VIGOR (EMOTION)

According to Schaufeli, vigor refers to “high levels of energy and resilience, the willingness to invest effort in one’s job, the ability to not be easily fatigued, and persistence in the face of difficulties.” Measuring employee vigor is determining their emotional orientation, or feelings about work versus the actual doing. Examples of questions that capture level of vigor include:

- Do you look forward to coming to work most days?
- Do you feel energized and inspired by the work you do daily?
- Do you believe your work helps you achieve your personal career goals?

2. ABSORPTION (ACTION)

Absorption is an activity measure: doing vs. feeling. Scheufeli describes it as “a pleasant state of total immersion in one’s work, which is characterized by time passing quickly and being unable to detach oneself from the job.” The point here is to capture whether, to what extent, and where vigor—or emotional enthusiasm—manifests in employees’ day-to-day work. Questions that can help measure this include:

- When I’m performing my job responsibilities, time passes quickly.
- There are many parts of my job when I feel fully engrossed, invested, etc.

3. DEDICATION (COMMITMENT)

Dedication is defined by Scheufeli as “a strong involvement in one’s work, accompanied by feelings of enthusiasm and significance, and by a sense of pride and inspiration.”

This aspect measures how both the emotion and action manifest and endure over time.

Sample questions include:

- If you were offered a similar job with the same pay and benefits, how likely are you to change?
- Do you think you’ll be working here in 6 months?

The final two dimensions every EX initiative should track have been developed by InMoment’s subject matter experts and informed by our 15-years of experience in helping brands understand the intersections between CX and EX. They include:

4. ORIENTATION TO THE CUSTOMER (IMPACT)

Employees can be highly engaged in their jobs and not necessarily engaged with the customer. They can be inspired by their colleagues and managers, the products and services they are creating, even their own self esteem, but stop short of knowing or caring why or how their actions actually impact the customer. It’s important to ask a question about the following to understand whether employee emotions and efforts are directed toward the right things—helping self, team, etc:

How would you rank the direction of your energy (Rank 1-4)?

- Value for the company
- Value for your team members
- Value for yourself
- Value for the customer

All of the above factors are meant to understand the phenomenon that is the

employee experience. When combining these elements, an organization gains a holistic view. This view is best articulated in the form of an EX index.

5. CULTURE (SUPPORT SYSTEM)

Employees can only sustain high levels of vigor, absorption, and dedication if there is a strong culture that actively and consistently supports them. A strong culture isn’t about perks and benefits, it is a deliberate system of support that fuels increasing levels of positive action and emotion where each person knows exactly how they contribute to the larger whole. Good questions to measure culture include:

- Do you feel supported by leadership, your manager and your colleagues?
- Do you have the autonomy and control you need to do your job well and with confidence?
- Are your corporate identity and mission something with which you feel aligned?
- Does your organization have strong corporate values that you support?

Outcomes: EX INDEX

EX, unlike CX, is not a measurement of interchangeable transactions (i.e. is my workplace clean). An EX index is a collection of items from the survey that measure the cognitive and emotional outcome states of the respondents. These items are not directly controlled by management practices, environmental changes, or direct intervention; rather are the result of creating the right conditions, providing essential components of the employee experience, and treating people in the right way.

¹ Forrester, *Extend the Customer Experience to the Employee Experience*, October 2017

² <https://www.wilmarschaufeli.nl/publications/Schaufeli/154.pdf>

The Limits of eNPS

While eNPS, or Employee Net Promoter Score™, is often the go-to metric for understanding employee experience, there are significant limits in what it can tell a company. The first limit is that societally, individuals are less likely to recommend a workplace as compared to a specific brand or product. Second, eNPS is seen as a functional output of the employee experience, but does not target the critical emotional factors that impact the day-to-day experience of the employee.

For example, one may recommend a company as a great place to work because of the potential fit between a person and the job role or company culture, yet their own experience may not be contributing to them personally, the health of the company, and the customer experience.

