

*In this edition of “The 330”, David Hicks, CEO of TribeCX, spoke with Donna Miller, HR Director, Europe, Enterprise Rent-A-Car, and Simon Brown, former HR Director at GSK, The Coca-Cola Company, and now Managing Director of his own HR Consultancy [www.simonbrownassociates.com](http://www.simonbrownassociates.com), about how human resources strategies can improve CX. Donna and Simon also shared details on how developing employee engagement can help improve the customer experience. Here are their key points.*

“The 330” is a series of podcasts where proven business leaders discuss how to improve performance through customer experience. Specifically, what works and what doesn’t.

In today’s uncertain business climate, it’s critical that customer experience (CX) becomes a shared accountability across multiple functional areas within an organization – those areas that own the responsibility for delivering and/or supporting the company’s brand value proposition. CX is no longer defined solely by a CX department – the entire brand owns the customer experience.

The path to mitigating the risk of market uncertainty lies in spreading that risk across the entire organization, challenging each functional area to step up and own their responsibility for supporting delivery of a brand value proposition.

## Joined at the Hip

First impressions are often the best and that’s the key link with CX. Customer and employee experience are joined at the hip, you can’t have one without the other. The employee experience influences CX by creating a culture of engaged and happy employees. Employees need to feel valued. People who feel good about themselves interact better with customers. It’s as simple as that.

### CX RAW TIP

*Take care of your people and your customers and your profits will take care of themselves.*

## Highly Motivated Recruits

Your employees own the customer experience, as they’re the ones responsible for delivering it. Hire eager customer-focused people while installing compensation models that reflect their interests (e.g., offer a reward-based incentive program). Create an environment where employees feel engaged, are customer-focused and have their effectiveness measured on customer satisfaction scores.

### CX RAW TIP

*Tie career advancement to employees’ success with customers.*

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## Values Being Customer Aligned

Your employees are your best bet to retain customers in an uncertain market. While the leadership team creates a vision for what customer experience looks like, it won't work if the company doesn't build a culture that employees can feel proud of and mirror after their own. Produce a road map that has defined milestones and answers the following questions: 'where we are now?', "where do we want to be?" 'how do we move forward?', 'how do we deliver core values?', 'what does it look like?', 'how do we share it with employees?', and 'how is it measured?'.

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### CX RAW TIP

*Do something that you love and are passionate about – find a company that matches your own values.*

## Behaviours

To get the right behaviours, you must empower your employees. Building the mindset that everything they do revolves around the customer experience is imperative. Employees need to have the tools to help with the problem; then let them solve any issue that comes their way.

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### CX RAW TIP

*Give employees the ability to take care of the customer.*

## Storytelling

Storytelling is a powerful way of communicating with your teams. Not only does it express your corporate values and reinforce your desired culture, but it energizes employees by giving them real, practical examples that they can relate to. Create an environment where hard work and passion for helping customers are visibly rewarded.

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### CX RAW TIP

*Share examples showing when employees have gone the extra mile for customers and colleagues.*

## First Impressions are the Best

Execution doesn't happen by accident. To improve customer experience, organizations need to ensure employee development is consistent and happens regularly. Employee development is paramount to a company's success, especially if you promote from within. Hire the right people, give them the right tools, and provide them with autonomy to solve problems themselves without always needing to go to management.

By providing a great onboarding experience and educating employees of the culture and CX position at the hiring stage, your company ensures a consistent employee experience that compliments the customer experience. From there, focus on practicing, coaching and mentorship. Learning the customer service philosophy should ensure a consistent experience on how employees engage with the customer.

### CX RAW TIP

*Onboarding is even more important with internal employees who don't have face-to-face dealings with customers. It reinforces the customer experience.*

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## The Customer Service Philosophy

Your company provides the resources to ensure colleagues and customers are speaking the same language. By instilling a philosophy, colleagues pick up what good looks like, versus being ordinary. Soft skills like intuition, engagement and empathy are so important when dealing with the customer and set an exceptional team apart from an average one. The right philosophy shows that the employee and customer experiences are entwined because, in the end, employees and customers want the same things – to be trusted and valued.

### CX RAW TIP

*Create a mentoring program within your organization.*

## Management vs. Leadership

Knowing the difference between leadership and management in creating an environment for positive customer experience is essential to your employee's success. Management is often focused on technical process, control, systems, and operations. In contrast, leadership is about having vision and empowering employees.

### CX RAW TIP

*True customer experience comes from great leadership and not management control.*

*In closing: A great human resources department works hand in hand with the customer experience team. By hiring into values, providing employees with a clear vision, measuring into delivery and encouraging that into leadership and management through storytelling ensures clear expectations. Remember that both customers and clients want the same thing – they want to be valued, they want to be respected and they want to be part of something big.*



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David is a practical “Customer Experience” practitioner and strategist combining blue chip strategic marketing and customer experience management in main board roles with a proven record of transforming large-scale customer management operations.

*TribeCX, for CX people by CX people*

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