

How to Create the **Best** **Employee** **Experience**

By Greg Selke
& Jamie Aitken



Our personal and professional lives continue to move toward a world of enhanced technology and digital assistants for much of what we do. Let us pause and think about how we can get the most out of this progressive and exciting new technology.

Who doesn't like doing banking online vs. a teller window, Uber vs. long taxi stands, online directions vs. folding paper maps (remember those)? It's all good, but there is still a very important people element to all this that cannot be ignored. Let's explore how we as human beings can work alongside these technology advancements to realize the value it brings to us.

EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE MEASURES

There has been robust and varied research over the years about what makes us happy and motivated at work. Engagement surveys were the measure for years. The new measure is the "employee experience." We are going to explore how to impact the employee experience in the workplace though much of this applies to our personal life experiences as well. Below are six of the many elements that comprise the employee experience. This is a little

bit employee engagement with a dash of Maslow's Hierarchy and a splash of motivational theory, rolled into one.

Here are six factors that contribute to one's employee experience:

- **Relevance** – how relevant and important we are to others
- **Predictability** – how accurately we can plan ahead
- **Control** – how we take charge of decisions in our lives
- **Threshold** – how we stay above a certain level of security and safety
- **Respect** – how we are treated by others and treat others
- **Balance** – how different facets of our lives interact with each other

Let's define these in more detail.

Relevance is about how what we do impacts others. We all want to be wanted and need to be needed, so it's not surprising that a great employee experience would mean most of the time that what we do matters to others. If we are working in a vacuum, where nobody notices what we do or cares what we do, we have a problem.

Predictability is about how accurately we can plan and prepare for the future. We all like to be ready for what's coming at us, albeit a little spontaneity doesn't hurt us. The occasional surprise is expected and normal in business, but when everything is a last-minute request, it rattles our brains and over time, is not sustainable. We all desire and need time to think, process, plan and prepare for what's coming and the best employee experiences provide this wiggle room. If you are feeling there is never time to prepare and you're having those dreams at night where someone is always chasing you, it is time for a change.

Control is having input and a voice. People like to know their opinions are heard. Sometimes it's a challenge when decisions are not ours or we have to live with bad decisions, but we must go along. It's called consensus. Still we like to know decisions are good for us or that our input has been factored in. Our lives are laid out in front of us with a million decisions a day and many of those that we make deserve and need to be heard. That leads to a good employee experience. If nobody is listening to your input or if others are making all your decisions for you, it's time to move on.



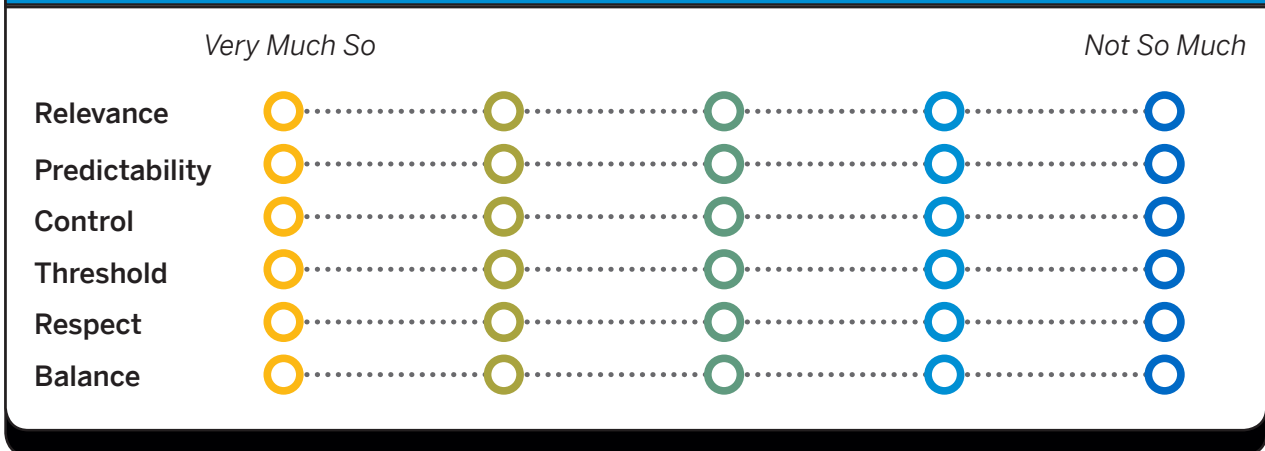
Threshold is staying above the line of criticality. It's a little bit Maslow Hierarchy and making sure we feel safe and secure in what we are doing. Research over and over proves that bringing our total selves to work, uninhibited and comfortable, yields more productivity on the job, better results and a great employee experience. If you have ever been, which most of us have, in a situation where you are fearful of job loss or retribution from coworkers or have an ineffective or unappreciative boss, we tend to go safe, which is not only unsatisfying, but not when we do our best work.

Respect is being nice to others and being treated fairly by others. We work hard, and we believe people are innately born to contribute and want to do good things. We also expect to be treated fairly with respect and paid accordingly in a great environment by our employers. This is obviously a two-way street as demanding respect equals giving respect, which together creates a great employee experience. If you are in a hostile or toxic business organizational culture, try to find a better place as there are many great places to work these days.

Balance is how the different elements of our lives interact – things like work, family, friends, finances, spirituality, and health - with the goal being that we achieve a level of balance. As we all know and have experienced, there are times when work is great, but our social life is lacking, or family and friends are abundant, but money isn't. Finding an employee experience that helps all aspects of your life is so important and needed by the human psyche and soul. If these parts of your life start to tilt out of balance like a washing machine, it's time to stop the machine and re-position the clothes inside or get a new machine.



Your Yardstick | Where are You Personally on Each Spectrum? Where is Your Organization's Culture?



MOVING THE DOTS

Here are a few suggestions, especially for HR Practitioners, but also for employees, for how to stay on or move to the good side of each of the six above mentioned scales using new HR focused technology.

- **Relevance** – use continuous performance management to stay in real time on performance and feedback; use just in time learning to increase agility making everyone more relevant for more and different situations; and use new technology such as idea generation and crowdsourcing tools to stay business relevant and be “in the know”
- **Predictability** – use internal social media sites (e.g. SAP Jam) to increase transparency in organizational culture; communicate more openly on business results and changes in the business strategy (e.g. M&A); and help reinforce stability in the workplace through ongoing employee based and HR communications
- **Control** – train managers to be more iterative and less controlling; use social media to solicit new ideas from employees 24/7/365 globally; and use succession to demystify organizational structure, hierarchies and decision-making trees
- **Threshold** – pay fairly with calibration and adjustment discussions often and help managers talk honestly with employees about careers and pay; promote those who deserve it and who add the most value to the business; and provide interesting work for all employees when possible

- **Respect** – treat external workers with respect as they are people too; break down silos between groups and managers and employees; and create a culture that attracts millennials versus pushing them to your competitors
- **Balance** - provide well-being resources to all employees; expand benefit offerings; instill inclusive and diverse values and guiding principles with customers and employees, every day by every employee

BOTTOM LINE

To create a best employee experience for employees, potential employees and yourself, use the latest advances in technology to bring new ideas to life in your organization. Don't be afraid and don't wait too long. The future is here, so embrace the changes sooner versus later, and leverage new technology applications. Work with technology, not against it. Humans will always prevail, as we have feelings, emotional intelligence and will always relate to others and the greater context and good. Drive positive change and your employee experience forward with an equal dose of innovative technology ... and ... innovative common-sense.

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 Greg and Jamie are Executive Human Resource Value Advisors at SAP SuccessFactors, each with over 25 years HR practitioner and leadership experience. Jamie resides in Toronto and Greg in Chicago.