

HOW *Clare White*



Clare White
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Q: What is the number one lesson you have learned during your CX career journey that you use on a regular basis, that you believe all CX professionals should know?

As someone who is passionate about the customer, it's very easy to assume everyone in your organisation (or at least the leadership team) feel the same way. That is not always the case. Whilst we have experienced and understand the true value providing a consistent customer experience has on critical business metrics and ultimately growth, it is still a fairly new concept and field for businesses that are usually focused on the needs of shareholders. Boards still must deliver on profit and revenue metrics. Enabling leadership to view customers as critical assets, that have significant influence on revenue and profit, is super important. The biggest learning for me that I continually apply is, speak in a language that leadership understands and contributes positively to their priorities and needs. Once you have leadership on your side, bringing the rest of the organisation on the journey becomes much easier.

Q: What is your best piece of advice for CX leaders to be successful?

Unite everyone in a customer experience vision and show them how to get there. Businesses that work in silos with no common customer goal, will make delivering a CX strategy difficult and complex. Most businesses already have a brand promise, providing the customer with an expectation of the experience they will receive from your brand. The brand promise should be underpinned by a customer strategy that unites departments clearly, outlining the responsibility of each area with their own functional goal to deliver it.

Q: What has been your biggest pain point in driving CX?

Without doubt, it is influencing cross-functional teams to get on the 'CX bus.' Frontline teams understand customer experience as it is directly influenced by their roles and behaviour. However, for back office teams e.g., IT, Data and Insights etc., who don't directly connect with the customer and are dealing with operational metrics, it is difficult for them to understand their impact on the customer's journey or how they can influence the experience customers receive. Once they are on board, it's then an on-going priority to maintain that focus.

Q: If you could have one CX superpower, what would it be?

'Superlearning': This power enables you to absorb vast amounts of information and at times, being in CX requires that! No only must you really understand the needs of different areas of your business, from leadership to cross-functional teams but also have the latest CX thinking and understanding of tech at your fingertips. The CX landscape is continually evolving and keeping on top of everything that is happening can be tricky. If I had 'superlearning' ability it would be much easier!

Q: While all customers should be treated well, do you think all customers should be treated exactly the same?

This is an interesting question as what does 'exactly the same' mean? The principles that govern frontline staff and how they interact and engage with customers should be consistent. No customer should be treated any more favourably than another. This is just good ethics and brand management.

When it comes to CX, every customer deserves to receive a consistently good experience. However, the experience each customer expects may be slightly different. Every shopper has a different need, want, emotion they experience at different touchpoints with a business. Of course it is impossible to truly understand an individual and provide the truly personalised experience they require. But, communicating with them through the channel they require, dealing with their queries as an individual, understanding their individual requirements, showing empathy and compassion, is key.

Q: What is your most favorite customer experience memory?

Bizarrely it was following a poor customer experience. My business had experienced a systems outage during a critical trading moment for my client. As leader of the business unit, it was my job to coordinate and lead crisis management and resolution. It was a complex situation, coordinating cross-functional teams both internal and client side to find a resolution quickly and sharing regular agreed updates up to CEO level. It was a high pressure and intense situation. However, there was a positive outcome. Cross-functional teams pulled together to resolve a complex problem, resulting in praise from the customer on a situation managed well with learnings to take forward to improve future crisis management. It was a win-win.

Q: What is the number one lesson you have learned during your professional career that you use on a regular basis, that you believe all professionals should know?

Believe in yourself. Believe in your gut. Don't let anyone tell you 'it's not possible', 'you/we can't do it', 'now isn't the right time'. These words have been spoken to me many times, and I have learned that actually, anything is possible. Be brave, keep learning and growing and realise your potential.

Q: What is your most favorite professional memory?

Without doubt, it was my 10th anniversary with my previous company. It was our Christmas party, we were all having lunch. I was expecting an award as that's what you got when you achieved the 10 year mark. However, I was not expecting peers and colleagues to stand up without being prompted, and talk about how I had benefited and inspired them in some way throughout their career. When I started in that business, my main purpose was to add value to those around me. It was very humbling to hear all the fantastic ways I had helped people realise their potential and that anything is possible. This is 100% my standout career moment.

Q: What is the best job you've ever had?

This will make you laugh, I'm sure. It was actually working in UK Horse Racing with a trainer in Birmingham. It involved caring for and exercising the horses every day. It was tough, particularly for a young woman in a very male-dominated environment, but I learned so much. I learned that you could do anything you put your mind to and worked hard at (I was often told I wouldn't make it – but I did), not to take yourself too seriously, and enjoy what you do every day.

Q: What are the most overused business words or phrases?

Think outside the box. It is what it is. Grab the low-hanging fruit. Let's circle back. Shift the dial. These are a few, there are so many more!

Q: What profession other than your own would you like to attempt?

Psychology. I am fascinated by how the mind works and how people's experiences, emotions and learned beliefs make up who they are. I have always had a passion to help people and at one time did consider going back to university, taking my Masters in Psychology but ended up working in customer experience!

Q: Which talent would you most like to have?

Singing. I'd love to have been on stage, in musicals. It just wasn't to be!

Q: What book changed your life?

"Start with Why" by Simon Sinek. It made me think really carefully about my own purpose, my own 'why'. The result has been I'm happier and more open to saying 'no' when something doesn't fit my 'why' and my values.

Q: What is your motto?

"People will forget what you said. People will forget what you did. But people will never forget how you made them feel." – Maya Angelou



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Believe in
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