# The Importance of a Well-Designed Learning Journey

HOW TO IMPROVE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE, EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE, AND BUSINESS RESULTS WITH LEARNING

schooX

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# INTRODUCTION

Customer experience (CX) and employee experience (EX). Each are independent in design, yet dependent upon the other for success. And both are important components of a competitive organization. Business leaders have long recognized the importance of CX in helping them achieve happier, satisfied customers. Now, companies are focusing on improving EX as a key initiative to help them attract and retain high-quality employees and achieve better business results.

But how will they do this, and where should they begin?

In this e-book, you will learn about the important relationship between CX and EX and the role a well-designed learning journey can play in improving that relationship. You'll understand what learning journeys are, why they matter, and how they can help businesses achieve meaningful and measurable results.

# The CX and EX Connection

To understand the impact of a well-designed learning journey, it helps to understand what CX and EX are and how they relate to one another.

First, think about customer experience. How are businesses keeping their customers happy? How are they engaging them? What are they doing to keep them? In all cases, you'll notice one common thread that influences CX throughout a customer's journey: your employees—which then leads to the question:

*If employees are the deciding factor of a positive or negative customer experience, what are employers doing to influence a positive or negative employee experience?*

Employers are under more and more pressure to focus on employee experience as a way to improve overall business outcomes. And while they realize that their workforce is their greatest asset and are investing in EX more than they have in the past, sometimes they struggle with the "how." Investing in EX is great, but if you don't know what to invest in and why, or if you're unable to measure the results of that investment, all of your good intentions, positive outcomes—and dollars—can go to waste.

And that is where the learning component comes in. An employee's learning journey is critical to their overall experience at work. And even though learning and development is just one element of EX, if it is well-designed, it can have far-reaching benefits throughout your organization.

**CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE (CX):** A customer's overall experience or their perception of their experience interacting with a business or brand.

**EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE (EX):** What people encounter, observe, or feel over the course of their employee journey at an organization.

**LEARNING JOURNEY:** The how, when, where, and why a learner interacts with content. A learning journey brings in factors like engagement, collaboration, application, and meeting learners where they are in the flow of work.

# The Case for Better Learning

## BETTER CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

All companies recognize the value of their customers. Because of this, they invest a great deal of resources in designing an experience in which customers remain happy throughout their journey with the company. Part of this design can include:

- Attracting and nurturing customers as prospects
- Supporting them through their purchase decision
- Onboarding them post-purchase
- Keeping customers informed about new features, products, events
- Keeping them engaged so they choose to stay when it's time to renew

Proactively managing and investing in CX can improve customer retention, customer satisfaction, and increase opportunities for cross-selling and upselling. By improving each of these areas, businesses can also positively impact their bottom line revenue.
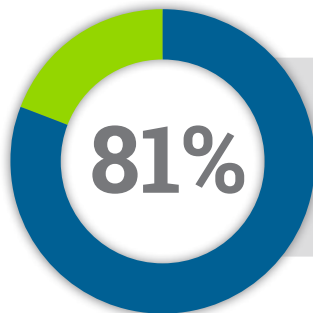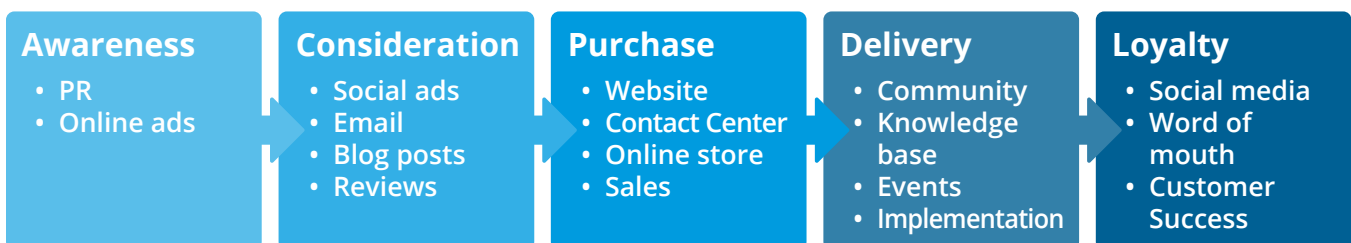
**81%** **of companies expect to compete mostly or completely on the basis of CX**
Source: Gartner

At each touchpoint throughout a customer's experience you'll notice there is direct or indirect employee involvement, or, the "common thread" mentioned earlier. Employees are involved with customers every step of the way and therefore are pivotal to customers' satisfaction, engagement, and overall happiness (or unhappiness).

## CUSTOMER TOUCH POINTS

| Awareness | Consideration | Purchase | Delivery | Loyalty |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • PR<br>• Online ads | • Social ads<br>• Email<br>• Blog posts<br>• Reviews | • Website<br>• Contact Center<br>• Online store<br>• Sales | • Community<br>• Knowledge base<br>• Events<br>• Implementation | • Social media<br>• Word of mouth<br>• Customer Success |

# The Case for Better Learning (Cont.)

## BETTER EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

Understanding the level of interaction and dependency between employees and customers, it makes sense that employers would benefit by investing in EX just as much as they do their CX. After all, without happy, engaged employees, it's difficult to maintain happy and engaged customers.

Designing a better employee experience can include resources or processes to:

- Attract high quality talent and keep applicants informed
- Follow fair interviewing and hiring practices
- Set new hires up for success during onboarding
- Invest in opportunities for continuous learning and development
- Engage employees and equip them with the support they need to thrive

Improving the ways your employees experience work makes good business sense, too. In addition to increasing customer satisfaction, companies that invest in EX can see an increase in employee productivity, performance, retention, and even more profits.

**Companies that invest in employee experience are**

# 4X

**more profitable than those that don't.**
Source: Wellable



If employees are the common thread in CX, then employers are the common thread in EX. At any given point throughout an employee's journey at a company, they will encounter experiences designed by departments throughout the organization, including HR, executive leadership, management, and L&D.

## EMPLOYEE TOUCH POINTS

| Attraction | Recruitment/ Hiring | Onboarding | Development | Retention |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| • Website<br>• Job ads | • Applications<br>• Communication | • 30-60-90<br>• Compliance training | • Learning<br>• Mentorship<br>• Career pathing | • Benefits<br>• Recognition<br>• Promotion |

# Learning Journeys and
# Why They Matter

Simply put, learning journeys are important because of their potential to positively impact business results. But if meaningful and measurable business results are what you're after, you'll have to start thinking outside the traditional "training" box.

Just as technology, engineering, and product development teams place a large emphasis on the user experience (UX) for the products and services they create, L&D teams should treat the learner experience (LX) with the same level of importance.

Learning journeys require a "design thinking" approach, and L&D teams should continuously rethink this approach in order to offer the best LX possible.
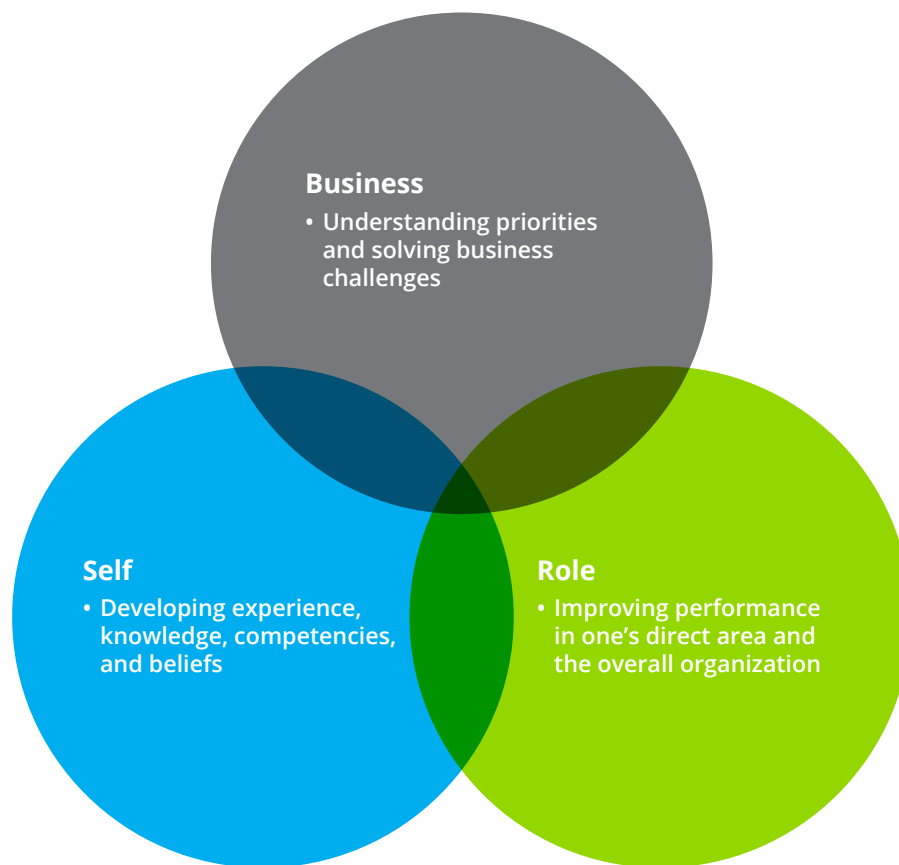
## About Design Thinking

One of the first approaches of design thinking was taught by the Stanford d.school. Because the work of L&D requires innovative thinking and creativity, traditional instructional design models based on systems thinking are often insufficient. Traditional models move at a slower pace when compared with current design trends, and when they're unable to catch up, they fail to meet learners' expectations, resulting in disengaged employees and a poor learning experience.

Design thinking lies at the center of business objectives, learner needs, and technical limitations. It is a more human-centric, collaborative, iterative process of deeply understanding learners and their challenges in order to create better, more effective learning solutions.

# Essentials of a Well-Designed Learning Journey

There are three key perspectives in a well-designed learning journey: the business—strategic alignment and problem solving, the role—improving individual and organization performance, and self—growing knowledge, skills, and abilities.

**Business**
- Understanding priorities and solving business challenges

**Self**
- Developing experience, knowledge, competencies, and beliefs

**Role**
- Improving performance in one's direct area and the overall organization

If these perspectives are taken into account, the learning journey can drive both individual and organizational change.

# How to Get Started

Employees learn, change, and grow depending on the experiences and challenges they face. Because of this, no two learning journeys are alike.

A good starting point for designing a learning journey is to consider the following questions to get a better idea of how you currently develop employees.

- Is there a clear connection between your company's business goals and your employees' development plans?
- Do you have a one-size-fits-all approach to learning and development, or do you personalize learning for employees?
- What do you do before and after learning to ensure employees can demonstrate the application of new skills?
- Are executive leaders involved in your L&D initiatives?

After you answer these questions, you can dive deeper into designing a learning journey:

- Tap into what your C-Suite and HR executives are prioritizing regarding employee experience
- Consider the ways design thinking can help you create compelling conversations around the employee learning journey
- Try leveraging the concept of personas in building your learning journeys

# Conclusion

Remember that a journey is more than just going from one place to another. It should evoke a sense of meaningful change and make people feel as though they've returned a bit different than from when they left.

If L&D leaders can replicate this spirit of taking a journey, and if they dedicate the necessary planning, effort, and execution to be successful, employees and organizations alike can return transformed.



Would you like to improve your overall business results with learning? Schoox provides a future-based, end-to-end learning and talent development solution that makes it easy for L&D teams to draw a clear line between their learning programs and the meaningful and measurable impact they have on helping organizations achieve their business goals.

**Schedule a demonstration** with one of our representatives to learn more.