Going beyond issue resolution

Supply chain disruptions stemming from COVID-19, geopolitical conflicts and climate change have permanently increased the end customer’s expectations around environmental, social and governance (ESG) concerns, delivery speed and the ability to make real-time order changes. This shift signals an imperative for what customers want and how quality teams can add value.

What do customers want?

Increased customer expectations apply not only to product specifications and standards, but also to the broader experience from purchase to receipt.

Success today requires that you understand the customer experience

Improved customer satisfaction, increases in the repeat purchase rate and decreases in customer complaints are far more likely for quality organizations that display a high understanding of expectations around the customer experience (CX) than those with a low understanding.

Keys to understanding CX

Customer access
Equipped and empowered quality staff to directly interact with clients.

Customer focus
Focus on the experiences of all customer segments.

Qualitative skill
Develop competencies related to interpersonal relationships, interviewing and focus group moderation.

Feeling focus
Talk about customer sentiments, feelings and frustrations.

How (not) to understand CX

Do
Become a “customer ethnographer” who studies the customer and learns about their environment and overall experience with the product and company. More than 80% of customer ethnographers say they understand experiences.

Don’t
Be an “issue engineer” who interprets customers through the lens of complaint data and analysis focused on the product. Only 48% of issue engineers say they understand customer experience expectations — basically a coin toss.

Understanding Experience Drives Results

Impact of Understanding Experience on Quality Key Metrics Over Past 24 Months

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High Experience Understanding</th>
<th>Low Experience Understanding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Customer Satisfaction Increased</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Promoter Score Increased</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Complaints Decreased</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

68% of customer ethnographers are more likely to understand customer experience expectations.

Learn more about our support for supply chain quality management leaders at gartner.com/en/supply-chain/role/supply-chain-quality-management-leaders.