



Infusing customer value into daily operations

Retail banking has its fair share of problems. What is clear is that when things go wrong, it is not because banks fail to comply with regulatory rules – the business model, company culture or business practices are usually to blame.

Banks wanting to operate at the highest level will need to navigate cultural obstacles, in addition to control and process challenges. Behavioral change, as it relates to employee engagement, is the key to strong customer relationships and an employee culture that emphasizes continuous improvement.

Customers seek a trusted financial partner, not a financial retail outlet

Retail banks strive to offer a wide portfolio of high-value, high-margin products and services to customers. However, customers want more than just a retail outlet for financial products and services – they want a trusted financial partner. Improving efficiencies, automating business processes and directing customers to online resources are all important elements of the retail model, but they must enhance the customer experience. Customers that are confident in their bank's ability to seamlessly conduct basic transactions are more likely to diversify their portfolios when the time comes.

Going the extra mile

"Engaged" employees, those with a greater sense of pride and feeling of appreciation in the workplace, are much more likely to go the extra mile. This type of behavior embodies the spirit of empowerment and will, in turn, leave a lasting impression on the customer. It will also influence their decision to choose the same banking company when additional products and services needed. Given the amount of competition in today's market, banks that do not emphasize the relationship between employee engagement and community relations run the risk of long-term operational deficiencies that could lead to a mass exodus of customers.

How are you measuring employee engagement?

Our experience tells us that low levels of employee engagement and wasteful practices go hand in hand. It also tells us that companies typically underestimate how difficult it is to engage every level of the workforce. Once executives begin such an initiative, they often realize they do not have the bandwidth necessary to engage every employee.

For more information call Alexander Proudfoot at 404 260 0600 or visit www.alexanderproudfoot.com