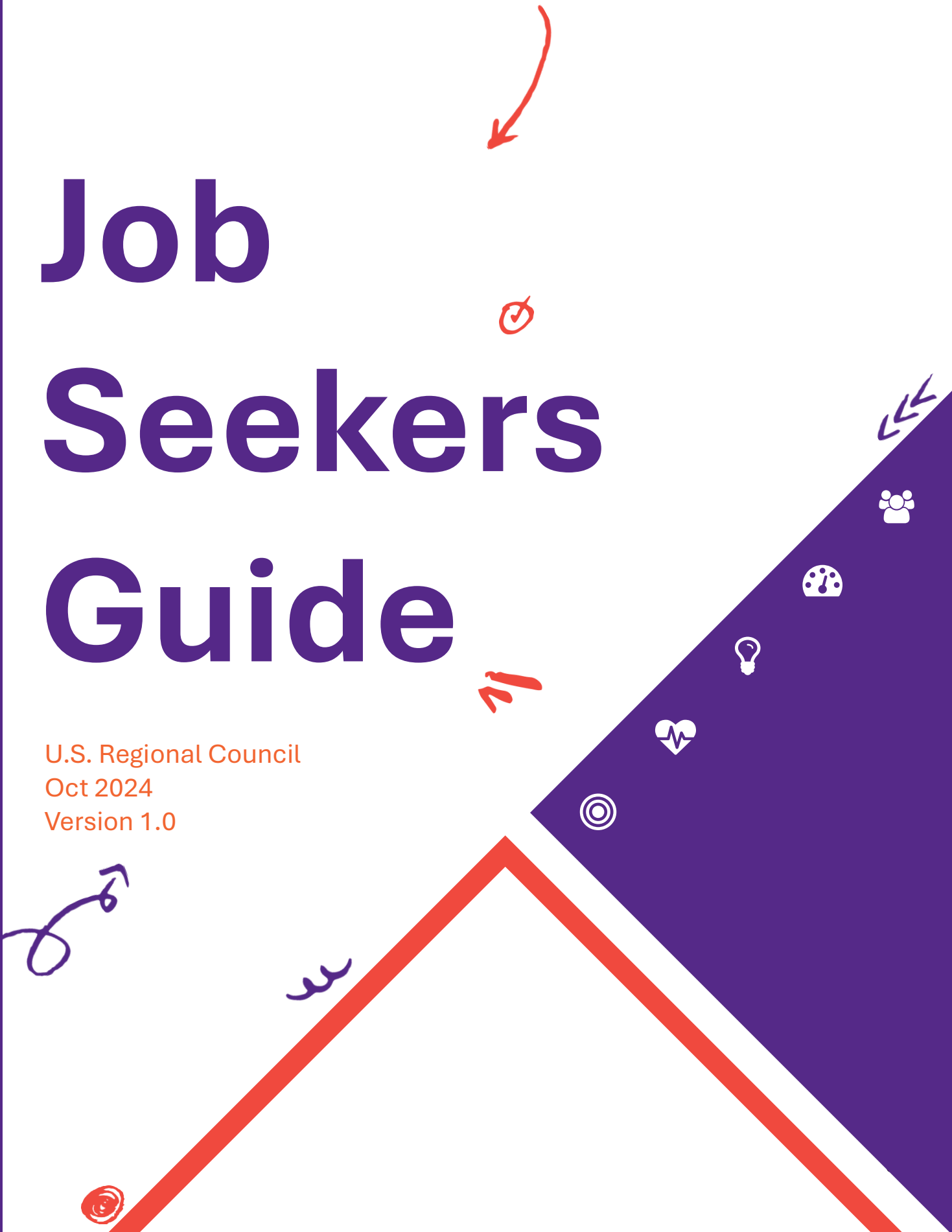


# Job Seekers Guide

U.S. Regional Council  
Oct 2024  
Version 1.0



# Contents

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Introduction .....</b>                 | <b>1</b>  |
| <b>Your Reading Roadmap .....</b>         | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>1) A Career in CX .....</b>            | <b>4</b>  |
| CX is a Business Driver .....             | 4         |
| Core CX Competencies.....                 | 5         |
| Typical CX Roles.....                     | 7         |
| Devil in the Descriptions.....            | 8         |
| Cross-Functional Similarities.....        | 10        |
| Reality Check - CX is a Cost Center.....  | 12        |
| <b>2) Career Reflection .....</b>         | <b>13</b> |
| Right Time for a Job Search?.....         | 13        |
| Know Your Strengths .....                 | 14        |
| Assess the CX Market Landscape .....      | 15        |
| Pinpoint your CX Career Goals .....       | 16        |
| <b>3) Reskill and Upskill .....</b>       | <b>17</b> |
| Self-Assessment of CX Skills .....        | 17        |
| Craft your Career Story .....             | 19        |
| Self-Development Plan.....                | 20        |
| <b>4) Nurture your CX Network .....</b>   | <b>22</b> |
| <b>5) Apply &amp; Interview .....</b>     | <b>23</b> |
| Boost your Social Presence.....           | 23        |
| Search for Opportunities .....            | 24        |
| Qualify and Prioritize Opportunities..... | 24        |
| Build a Compelling Job Application.....   | 25        |
| Interview Effectively.....                | 26        |
| Post-Interview Reflection.....            | 30        |
| <b>6) Be Pragmatic! .....</b>             | <b>32</b> |
| <b>7) Additional Resources .....</b>      | <b>33</b> |
| <b>8) Acknowledgments .....</b>           | <b>34</b> |

# Introduction

Congratulations! By reading the CXPA CX Job Seekers Guide you are equipping yourself with knowledge, tools, and a supportive community to help you achieve your career goals – whether an immediate need or longer-term aspiration. This guide distills insight and advice from peers who have tackled the tricky job of finding, applying for, and evaluating CX job opportunities. We are your people, and we created this guide with you in mind.

There are a few things we'd like you to know about seeking jobs in CX.

First, it is typical that a CX professional will experience career transitions. As a young discipline only three decades old, the CX field experiences greater volatility than more established disciplines like accounting or human resources. This can lead to exciting growth opportunities – but can also contribute to instability and change. This Guide offers insight into ways to prepare for success whatever the circumstances. CX does not have clear career ladder or prescribed pathways, so it is especially important that you take an active role in managing your career.

Second, it is important to understand the dynamics of positive CX management. Customer experience management is a holistic venture, seeking to drive intentional collaboration across the entire organization to ensure that every interaction is good for the customer, employee, and business outcomes. This is difficult – if not impossible – to achieve if the right structure, culture, and executive support is not in place. The authors have provided excellent guidance on how to identify characteristics of holistic approaches to CX, and for your long-time career success and happiness, I encourage you to seek these factors in finding your next career step. This will help you navigate the dizzying array of job postings that include customer experience to find the opportunities positioned for success.

- **Karan Thaker, CCXP** served as lead editor, deftly building consensus and maintaining accountability.
- **Tom Shimko, Aubrey Macklin, CCXP**, and **Tanya Thomas, CCXP** were ever-present contributors, making significant contributions at every stage of the project.
- **Brad Smith, CCXP**, **Maria Elisa Acero, CCXP**, and **Nick Lygo-Baker, CCXP** stepped in with excellent reflections, additions and guidance.
- **Jenn Stephens, CCXP** provided leadership throughout, making the project a cornerstone of the CXPA US Leadership Council.

Finally, please think of this Guide as just one way that CXPA is here to support you. From advocacy for the profession to research-based guidance to helping you unlock success in your new role, CXPA is dedicated to your growth. When you are a CXPA member, we are your partner for success – including waiving membership renewal and CCXP recertification fees while you are in transition. Be a CXPA member and take full advantage of all we have to offer. We're glad you are here.

Greg Melia, CAE  
CEO, CXPA

# Your Reading Roadmap

Welcome to the Job Seeker’s Guide presented by CXPA! We’re so excited that you’ve chosen this guide as a resource and hope you find the information valuable as you navigate your CX career journey.

This guide is designed to empower you with reflective thoughts, specific How-To, and prompt questions that will help you establish a clear path toward or within a Customer Experience career. It will help you determine how your skills measure up to industry standards, offer encouragement and direction through best practices, and provide practical actions you can implement at every stage. Whether you are new to CX or have years of experience to offer in your next role, the Job Seeker’s Guide is built with you in mind.

Please refer to the Reading Roadmap below to learn about each section and apply this guide to your specific needs:

| Section                         | Purpose   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <b>1) A Career in CX</b>        | Summary of a holistic CX career, core competencies and information about how this work shows up in different organizations and within different business disciplines<br><br><i>“CX is not just one more business function – it’s a business partner function that maximizes the effectiveness of effort applied by other functions toward a common goal.”</i> |
| <b>2) Reflect on your Goals</b> | Prepare yourself with groundwork of relevant skills and competencies for your next job and continuing career in CX<br><br><i>“Be intentional with your efforts.”</i>  |
| <b>3) Re-Skill and Up-Skill</b> | Prepare yourself for a successful job search, customization of your application, and interview process.<br><br><i>“Go broad to go narrow. Be iterative!”</i>  |
| <b>4) Nurture your Network</b>  |   |
| <b>5) Apply and Interview</b>   |   |
| <b>6) Be pragmatic!</b>         | Recognize the volatility of the economy/job market and prepare for navigating the ups and downs of career changes.<br><br><i>“Take care of your mental health and be realistic”</i>   |

# 1) A Career in CX

As the world becomes more digitally connected, authentic human connections and memorable experiences (digital and physical) are becoming more meaningful than ever. Consumer choice has exploded in nearly every industry, and services and brands can be easily switched or replaced as a result of a bad experience. To stand out in this ocean of choice and change, businesses worldwide are in a perpetual race to become better, faster, cheaper, easier. There are so many variables to compete over (like new customers, new value propositions, new business models, new intellectual property) in this race. Without compelling offerings for the customer and commercial viability of those offerings, these businesses won't be operating for long. This raises constant questions at all vantage points of any organization, starting from the executive leadership down to the tactical teams. How can we increase our agility and get ahead of the change? How can we meet our customers where they are, with exactly what it is that they need and want? The objective is to understand customer needs to deliver value.

## Enter **Customer Experience (CX)**.

This field has evolved toward becoming a trusted business partner and connector across business functions to create and clarify strategic opportunities that help the organization advance in the marketplace. CX as a business discipline helps the organization identify opportunities and problems that impact customers, create compelling experiences, and guide action toward specific measures of success. CX initiatives make a meaningful and measurable impact on the business and in the minds and lives of the customers they serve. In some businesses, customer obsession is an inherent part of culture and decision-making, and customer analytics, continuous measurement and proactive identification of unmet needs is part of the day-to-day operating models of every function. While in others, customer obsession is slowly being recognized and nurtured by introducing a business function called Customer Experience Office (CXO), or small CX teams within other business functions such as the Chief Marketing Office (CMO), Chief Revenue Office (CRO), Chief Operations Office (COO), etc. The key goals of a CX practitioner in any business are:

- a. to drive a focus on the customer across the organization,
- b. provide evidence that we are committed to improving customers' lives, and
- c. measurably drive united prioritization and action to improve the customer's experience and generate better business outcomes.

This means deeply understanding customers' needs, wants, and motivations, and the role we play in their lives. We map our journeys with them, identify issues that require focus, and pursue emerging opportunities that can potentially attract new customers (or convince existing customers to stay, buy more, or recommend us). Understanding all of this and then springing into action so that we 'walk the talk' is hard work. It requires growing a wide range of capabilities and an even wider range of cross-functional partnerships outside of the CX role, with individual business functions like Sales, Service, Product, Marketing, Finance, Legal, Compliance, and HR. These capabilities are introduced and cultivated by a wide range of talent in the CX space that spans **leadership, player-coach, and tactical, hands-on roles**. These expansive careers cover many industry verticals, from Hospitality to Healthcare, from Education to Entertainment, and from Manufacturing to Media. A job search in the Customer Experience space is likely to cover all 3 types of CX roles.

## CX is a Business Driver

No matter what type of CX role we may look at, the common thread of CX as a business driver persists in all those roles. Fundamentally, CX drives:

- a. **Differentiation.** The collective 'One Company' experience delivered by an organization can leave lasting impact on the minds and lives of consumers. In an age where many products and services are commoditized, businesses with stronger CX maturity levels have competitive differentiation and in turn, an advantage in the market. They can better meet customer expectations and win their loyalty.

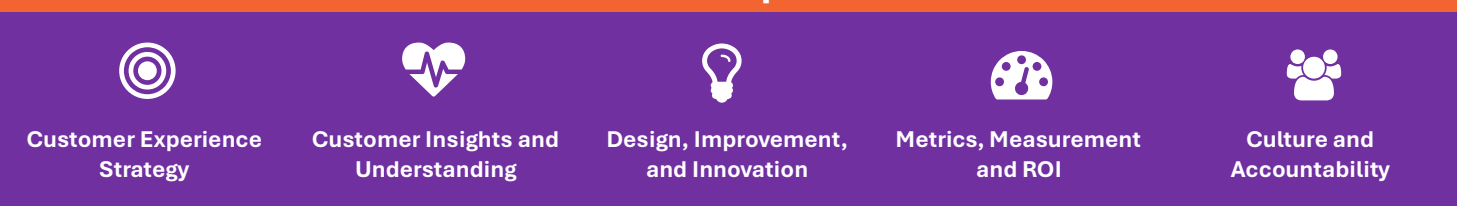
- b. Retention.** Greater relevance and engagement directly correlate with improved retention. Customers who are satisfied and happy with their post-purchase relationship with any company are more likely to stay longer with the brand.
- c. Growth.** Strong customer experiences also have a direct correlation with revenue growth. This could be in the form of value of new business (VNB) or in the form of cross-sell and up-sell revenue from existing customers. Businesses with mature measurement practices for their customer experiences--from pre-sales to post-sales--can boost sales, reduce churn, and deliver increased customer lifetime value.
- d. Agility.** In an age where change is constant, sensing and responding to it effectively is a competitive advantage in and of itself. Innovation and rapid iteration in what is rolled out in the market is underpinned by a clear understanding of customer needs--and an even clearer understanding of how we are (or are not) meeting those needs.
- e. Efficiency.** Businesses scale when they have a compelling value proposition in the form of products and services, and when they are operationally efficient to deliver that value proposition. This efficiency comes by reducing customer support inquiries, returns, and complaints. Optimized customer experiences also streamline operations and improve operating efficiency in measurable ways.

Now that we have a foundational understanding of what Customer Experience as a business discipline is, let's unpack the **type of work** it entails.

## Core CX Competencies

Uniting the organization toward customer-centric decision making is difficult. So, the CX community, and CX jobs in the industry focus on a variety of competencies and expert skills that help build consensus and drive the customer focus--from ideas to the market--in measurable and compelling ways. Often, businesses operate reactively once they launch their products and the inevitable organizational inertia sets in. Surveys come out and business functions (i.e. individual silos) react to them. Research is done and they react. Products, services, and experiences are developed with varying degrees of customer insight. Everything is a distinct project or initiative without an overarching connecting framework that makes work cross-channel, cross-functional and cross-product. Work begins and ends without line of sight to other very relevant and often duplicating work. As CX professionals, our work ultimately introduces and sustains the common threads among the work happening across the board, so that decisions can be made in a cross-channel, cross-product, and cross-functional way. CX roles can **span the whole range of Core CX Competencies** as identified by the CXPA. When beginning to explore CX roles, you should evaluate which core competencies you possess and/or are interested in developing. You may be new to a CX career, already be in a CX role and are looking for the next step, or you may be actively in the market now and figuring out how to cast a targeted net to identify the right opportunity.

## Core CX Competencies



Below is a brief overview of each competency. These CX competencies serve as a foundation for this guide.



## Customer Experience Strategy

This is all about development and execution of a strategy that articulates a clear vision of the experience that a company seeks to create in support of the company's brand values, including its direct linkage to CX activities, resources, and investments. To effectively manage the experiences of customers, employees, and partners, an organization needs to articulate a clear strategy for CX efforts, and then coordinate the execution of that strategy across a number of business functions, stakeholders, groups, executive sponsors, and initiatives over multiple years. This competency is about architecting, aligning, and sustaining successful CX efforts. To grow in this competency, you should seek out opportunities to build expertise around:

- Strategy and program management for cross-business unit CX Improvement efforts
- Customer segmentation / differentiation strategy implementation
- Business strategy frameworks and planning
- Identifying and branding new value propositions
- Engage the executive suite in CX strategy design and execution
- Generate and share knowledge of CX best practices across industries



## Customer Insight and Understanding

This is about building a comprehensive and continuous pipeline of customer needs, wants, perceptions, and preferences through the capture and analysis of the voice of the customer. CX programs must identify and capture the appropriate signals from the appropriate customer segment at the appropriate time on all customer journeys. This is often done via customer research, or listening posts introduced throughout different experiences to capture feedback asynchronously. To grow in this competency, you should seek out opportunities to build skill and experience around:

- Qualitative and quantitative research methods
- Innovative approaches to measuring customer experience
- VOC analytical tools and methodologies
- Touchpoint mapping
- Root cause analysis for corrective action
- Predictive analysis
- Process analysis and redesign



## Design, Improvement, and Innovation

This is all about crafting differentiated experiences for customers by using human-centered methodologies such as Design Thinking and Service Design. Such methods help us introduce meaningful experiences that emotionally engage consumers across all relevant channels in ways that set the organization apart from the competition.

To grow in this competency, you should seek out opportunities to build expertise around:

- Human-centered design thinking, service design, and agile co-creation
- Process/policy improvement methodologies and discipline
- Journey management and journey design
- Identifying key moments of truth affecting customer perceptions
- Customer experience gap analysis
- Mapping and depicting customer touch points



## Metrics, Measurement, & ROI

This is all about creation and reporting of the measures of CX success including their use in business cases to illustrate the ROI and business value of customer experience. Measurements may include business operations metrics (such as project cycle times, case handle times, operating margin etc.), customer behavior metrics (such as lifetime value, share of wallet, retention, purchase, etc.), and perception metrics (NPS®, CSAT, etc.) To grow in this competency, you should seek out opportunities to build skill and experience around:

- Net Promoter Score<sup>1</sup> (NPS®) and methodology
- Customer relationship and financial metrics (cross-sell, product penetration, etc.) reporting
- Impact analysis of experience changes on loyalty and business performance (cost avoidance, revenue preservation, revenue acceleration)
- Standard Operating Process analysis and improvement
- Innovative CX measurement and research methodologies
- Strategies to communicate metrics and ROI with employee and stakeholder groups



## Culture & Accountability

This is all about nurturing a customer-oriented culture via demonstrated behaviors, practices and standards that encourages all cross-functional partners to focus on delivering outstanding customer experiences. CX professionals focusing on this competency drive change and develop cross-company experience accountability from the C-suite to the front line. To grow in this competency, you should seek out opportunities to build expertise around:

- Internal and external marketing, promotion and communications
- Employee hiring, training, coaching and engagement
- Reward and recognition strategies
- Aligning employee behavior with customer-focused culture
- Cross department relationship building skills
- Ability to coordinate diverse resources
- Strategic program project management
- Leadership and change management
- Budget prioritization process
- Process management and optimization
- Ability to plan, implement, and manage change
- Ability to lead cross-functional efforts
- Collaboration, influencing and relationship skills

## Typical CX Roles

Types of job titles that can potential cover one or more of CX competencies:

- CX Consultant
- CX Advisor

1 - "Net Promoter", NPS®, NPS Prism®, and the NPS-related emoticons are registered trademarks of Bain & Company, Inc., NICE Systems, Inc., and Fred Reichheld. Net Promoter Score<sup>SM</sup> and Net Promoter System<sup>SM</sup> are service marks of Bain & Company, Inc., NICE Systems, Inc., and Fred Reichheld."



- CX Specialist
- CX Strategist
- CX Designer
- Service Designer
- Head of Service Design
- Journey Owner/Manager
- Chief Customer Officer
- Chief CX Officer
- Director, Customer Experience
- Director, Service Design
- Director, Voice of the Customer
- Director, Innovation
- Director, CX Operations
- Manager, Customer Experience
- Vice President, Customer Experience
- Vice President, CX Journeys
- and so on...

The CX role / discipline / team might live within Marketing, in Strategy, in Operations, or stand alone with a Chief Customer Experience Officer (often called CCXO or CXO) reporting directly to the CEO. There are various governance structures ranging from centralized to decentralized. When looking at roles, CX can be embedded into a channel leader for a decentralized model, where a combination of operations or product plus CX can be valuable. For some organizations, the CX leader’s role might be to decipher, scrutinize, and put external feedback into context so it can be aptly applied. For example, it’s easy for people to say things like, “hey, customers are saying it’s too hard to work with technical support; you should fix that.” A capable CX practitioner and leader will want to apply their own contextual knowledge to help break that observation down into a usable insight and cross-functional partnership – one that motivates those stakeholders to take action. It may be that the customers working with the simplest products are the ones reporting difficulty with technical support, while large, complex customers are satisfied. This would suggest development of a simplified support process for small, simple fixes. By understanding the decisions business leaders are focused on—and the full context of customer interactions—effective CX teams can provide insights the business can use to make improvements. The role of the CX professional within any business, no matter the consumer segment or the market vertical, always comes with a degree of ambiguity that is not always apparent from the title. Let’s unpack that further.

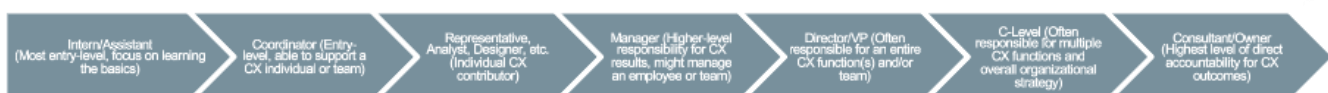
## Devil in the Descriptions

Below are some examples of mid-career CX jobs which have the same official title but very different job descriptions, leading to a very different career trajectory and perception in the marketplace and within the organization. They all fit within the wide scope of a Customer Experience career, but they can have a holistic focus, service focus, sales focus, product design focus, etc. It is up to us to figure out where the role fits and how it fits our own interests and goals.

| Holistic CX Roles  | Not Holistic CX (targeted scope)   |
|--|--|
| <p><b>Director, Customer Experience</b></p> <p>Responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and execute a comprehensive customer experience and strategy roadmap aligned with company vision and objectives</li> <li>• Drive a customer-centric culture across the organization, fostering collaboration and engagement at all levels</li> <li>• Architect and demonstrate impactful CX practices to drive growth (i.e. journey management and experience design)</li> <li>• Collaborate with executives and company leaders to craft and execute winning go-to-market strategies, including Customer</li> </ul> | <p><b>Director, Customer Experience</b></p> <p>Responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead team members in providing exceptional service to customers (in-person, phone, email)</li> <li>• Oversee, track, analyze and report on customer satisfaction in various areas of the shopping experience</li> <li>• Develop new company-wide initiatives and strategies to increase overall customer satisfaction and loyalty</li> <li>• Improve processes to help team work more efficiently and effectively</li> </ul> |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>Success, Customer Support, and Product in order to champion improvements in the customer experience and build stronger alignment across all stakeholder groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead organizational change initiatives to ensure alignment of service delivery and post-sales strategy with customer experience targets</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify trends and opportunities to enhance the customer experience and make recommendations for execution</li> <li>Work closely with the CX platform provider to utilize data to create insightful reports that can be used to improve the customer experience</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Experience Designer (CX/Service Design)</b></p> <p>Responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create detailed CX design assets (end-to-end journeys, surface-to-core service blueprints, storyboards, concepts, etc.)</li> <li>Orchestrate the delivery of service experience improvements that cross channels and products.</li> <li>Work through organizational silos to coordinate efforts and help others achieve better results</li> <li>Closely collaborate with both Product and Business functions</li> <li>Set up and manage analytics/metrics related to holistic journeys</li> <li>Guide teams to think about the journey/service/experience as a part of a bigger, human-centered picture: from digital user experience to holistic CX and company business model</li> <li>Lead service design workshops (end to end CX) for problem exploration and rapid brainstorming of solutions for a cross-channel, cross-functional and cross-product focus</li> </ul> | <p><b>Experience Designer (UX/Product Design)</b></p> <p>Responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create detailed UX wireframes, mockups, screen flows and prototypes to communicate ideas and tradeoffs</li> <li>Closely collaborate with Product and Research functions</li> <li>Informs the business and product strategy by connecting user needs with business goals</li> <li>Conduct usability testing where applicable</li> <li>Translate user needs to compelling digital experiences intended to be functional and usable products.</li> <li>Lead UX design workshops for problem exploration and rapid brainstorming of solutions for all digital user personas</li> <li>Evaluate the usability of new and existing products and make constructive suggestions for changes</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Manager, Voice of the Customer (Holistic Research &amp; Measurement)</b></p> <p>Responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create and execute VoC strategy and program roadmap</li> <li>Obtain stakeholder alignment for VoC data and adoption</li> <li>Drive CX improvements via customer insights across key customer touchpoints and channels and translate to actions</li> <li>Collaborate with Product and Design to instrument products with relevant listening posts for async customer feedback</li> <li>Design and manage NPS®/CSAT/CES feedback and distribute insights across the business</li> </ul>   | <p><b>Manager, Voice of the Customer (Digital UX Research-Only)</b></p> <p>Responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve the organizational understanding of customer needs</li> <li>Lead efforts to plan, execute and govern voice of the customer efforts (design surveys, conduct interviews, do field studies)</li> <li>Summarize findings from interviews, surveys, focus groups into reports and other deliverables (personas, segments, etc.)</li> <li>Support product and design roadmap</li> <li>Conduct competitive analysis to identify industry trends and best practices</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Director, Customer Communications/Engagement (CX):</b></p> <p>Responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop digital and in-person communication and/or engagement specifically for customers</li> <li>Collaborate with stakeholders and internal teams to deliver relevant, timely customer engagements that contribute to their overall experience</li> <li>Monitor and leverage customer feedback to drive engagement through VOC and channel-specific data</li> <li>Understand customer personas/segments to personalize communication/engagement experiences</li> <li>Design communication touchpoints that support overall journeys and experiences to meet business &amp; customer needs</li> </ul>   | <p><b>Director, Communications (Marketing):</b></p> <p>Responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build awareness and demand among potential customers (usually the “first impressions” of a company)</li> <li>Cross-sell/cross-promote to existing customers to increase revenue &amp; lifetime value</li> <li>Develop communication, materials, events etc. within brand standards to use with current or potential customers</li> <li>Support individuals or teams responsible for engaging directly with and providing service to customers</li> <li>Focus is on overall design and messaging to grow a company</li> </ul>  |

These job titles are some common examples of roles in CX, but the overall progression of roles can vary a lot. Upward movement in CX is not always linear but often follows a path of increasing responsibility that naturally shifts your role from one of "doing", to one of thinking, planning, strategizing, and leading teams.



[CXPA's Guide to Developing CX Job Descriptions](#) offers more information about the skills and key competencies of many of these positions – it can help you understand how your existing skills align with career advancement and opportunities for you to grow into a next-level CX role.

## Cross-Functional Similarities


CX jobs within **any** business, no matter the consumer segment or the market vertical, are bound to have parallels with other disciplines, which can often cause confusion or questions, or in some cases, lack of collaboration, from our peers in those functions. This is why it is very important that you not treat CX job searches as a brute-force numbers game and blindly apply to a large number of roles hoping something will stick. It is crucial to qualify the roles you apply/interview for with questions to understand the level of awareness or buy-in from the business. If a leader in Marketing is hiring for a CX role, they are very likely expecting a high degree of familiarity of Marketing and their endgame may be for CX to drive growth, support campaigns, improve the digital footprint, and measurably increase leads. Meanwhile, if a leader in Operations is hiring for a CX role, their expectations may be all about process optimization post-sales, or planning and running regular NPS® surveys. This nuance--that different functions have fundamentally different perceptions and goals related to CX--is helpful for us understand.

The next page shows a level breakdown of the similarities CX roles may have with other business functions.

|                 | Corporate Strategy   | Marketing   | Customer Service   | Sales and Customer Success  | Business Operations & Enablement  | Digital UX Design  | Product Management   |
|-----------------|--|---|--|---|---|--|--|
| Responsibility: | Exploration of organizational strengths and weaknesses and carving out a path forward that will drive improved margins | Growth agenda, which can include market research (all channels, not just digital), campaign planning and execution, market positioning and pricing for products | Post-purchase experiences to ensure customers are happy, promote us, and stay longer | Purchase and post-purchase experiences to ensure customers are happy, promote us, and stay longer | Keep everyday functions on track and improve productivity of teams via change management, org readiness, process improvement etc. | Customer research, exploration and creation of experiences (this is often for only digital channels and users, thus the name 'UX')<br><br>Note: companies with a Service Design focus treat Design with a holistic CX focus and not just UX, covering all channels, not just digital | Product vision and execution roadmap for whatever is being sold to consumers<br><br>Note: companies that don't sell software typically have multiple Product Management functions (one for digital roadmap, and one for pricing and positioning) |
| Accountability: | To recommend organizational direction pivots, and inform the planned work for all business functions                   | To improve brand awareness, demand-gen, lead generation, and conversion   | To post-purchase retention and cost optimization                                     | To ensure post-purchase satisfaction is high, and customer lifetime value is generated            | To improve internal processes and org readiness for new ways of working that different business functions are executing           | To activate digital product management goals in more mature organizations, and also activate the business function goals (i.e. improve CSAT / NPS®, retention, demand-gen, revenue, etc.)  | To define product strategy and roadmap (often this is digital product management) which can easily be conflated with CX strategy and roadmap   |
| Fiscal Unit:    | Typically, a cost center   | Typically, a cost center  | Typically, a cost center   | Typically, a profit center  | Typically, a cost center  | Typically, a cost center   | Can be a cost center or profit center  |



| Customer Experience |   |   |  |  |   |   |   |
|---------------------|---|---|--|--|---|---|---|
| Where CX comes in:  | Be a peer of Corp Strategy and add customer-centric considerations to the mix of things being considered in strategic planning, leading to better decisions and improved understanding of value/risks.  | Be a peer of Marketing teams to support their growth agenda via outside-in journey efforts, VoC programs and actionable insights  | Be a peer of Service teams by helping them propagate insights across the organization to relevant parties, and deepen customer relationships   | Be a peer of Sales and CS teams by helping them propagate insights across the organization to relevant parties and deepen customer relationships   | Be a peer of Operations teams to complement their inside-out business process efforts with our outside-in customer journey efforts. | Be a peer of User Experience Design to create a common thread across multiple products, channels, and business functions                | Be a peer of Product Management partners to create a common thread across multiple products, channels, and business functions   |
| How we co-exist:    | They generally focus on executive alignment and annual strategic/ OKR planning with a top-down focus, and we focus on both executive and operational alignment not just annually but quarterly – and with a core focus on co-creation and rapid iteration | They focus on growing the prospect pipeline and in some cases, digital properties, and we serve as a tailwind for their efforts by offering insight into what works and doesn't, as well as driving metric tracking and measurement efforts | They focus on building and nurturing relationships with customers, and we serve as a tailwind for their efforts by offering insight into what works and doesn't and driving metric measurement efforts | They focus on building and nurturing relationships with customers, and we serve as a tailwind for their efforts by offering insight into what works and doesn't and driving metric measurement efforts | We join forces to have both a surface-to-core and end-to-end coverage on operational improvement, covering gaps and opportunities.  | They focus on UX Design for digital channels and their product area, and we focus on end-to-end CX Design for all channels and products | They focus on Product Strategy for their product area (which typically doesn't cover customer support, pricing, marketing, VoC measurement) , and we focus on end-to-end CX strategy (being the connective tissue across all channels, functions and, products) |

 CX unites prioritization and action across all the above business functions and more (such as Legal, Finance and Compliance)

The [CXPA Online community](#) of members have lots of examples wherein someone stepped into a CX role (titled CX Manager, CX Director, CX Consultant, etc.) only to realize it was entirely a Sales, Service, or digital UX role instead of holistic CX. This can potentially cause frustration and wasted time for both the employer and employee if expectations are not aligned. So, it is important to understand where on the spectrum of CX competencies do we operate or would like to operate, and tailor our job search accordingly. It should also be noted that working in a CX role that is tightly scoped within a specific business function (e.g. Sales) gives us the perspective on how to work with Sales teams on CX improvements later in our holistic CX career. As they say, there is something to be learned from every job we ever get.

## Reality Check - CX is a Cost Center

Hopefully the previous section emphasized this point for you: a big part of a Customer Experience career is to be a tailwind for the organization. It is to raise the tide for all boats to rise, rather than be 'one more boat' and wait for the tide to rise. Rather than make products easier, better and more intuitive, our focus inherently is on making the organization easier to do business with – by way of strategy, research, design, measurement, process improvement and cultural improvement. We are an enabler for the organization to help maximize the effectiveness of effort applied by cross-functional partners – in that regard, CX is not 'one more silo', and if we try to operate like one, we inevitably run into trouble. Fundamentally, this type of work is a cost-center. You should keep in mind that the very nature of cost-centers in any organization is that they are more exposed than profit centers to the volatility of economies and inherently face a greater risk of being questioned in the face of uncertainty. After all, unless we are generating economic value that offsets the economic footprint of ourselves and our teams, we are bound to be considered an expense that is questioned from time to time.

Simply put, this means all CX careers are more prone to be impacted by economic downturns and company downsizing efforts worldwide, leading to emotional ups and downs for anyone working in this space. Departments may be built and be decommissioned with layoffs, and mandates may shift with limited notice. Anyone working in CX will benefit from being flexible and opportunistic. While atypical from most other careers, a CX career journey is highly rewarding journey because:

1. We can improve the lives of consumers by uniting action at scale
2. We can maximize the effectiveness of effort and competency from our peers across the business

So now that we have establish a foundational understanding of what a career in Customer Experience is all about and how CX jobs fit into an organization, let's dive deeper into the journey of a job seeker in this space.

## 2) Career Reflection

Whether you are currently a free agent looking for your next opportunity, or already in a CX role, it is always a good idea to keep a pulse on your career growth, the depth and pace at which you are learning, and to build greater awareness of possibilities you could explore.

### Right Time for a Job Search?

- a. **Culture:** Scan your personal ‘key stakeholder network’ of colleagues at your current workplace who can assist/promote you and your work, those who can block and slow you down or are neutral to you and your CX agenda. Look above you, beside you and below you for a full environment scan of how well your organization understands and supports the importance of the CX work you are currently doing. Also consider the same environment for your reporting leader and map how well they are supported in being your CX sponsor. Through this exercise, you can answer the question of *“Is this a me friendly place to work?”*. We all have different definitions for what a “good” company culture looks like. Whatever yours might be, if you find yourself in an organization where the environment poses legitimate challenges in any aspect to your mental or physical well-being, or maybe you've just had enough, seeking a different environment might make sense. Of course, if you have a closer camaraderie with those around you, that's great too. Most of us spend a lot of time with our colleagues either in-office or in virtual meetings (given the nuances of hybrid working models in recent years), so how they impact us is important. Depending on where you are in your career, you'll have a varying degree of exposure to executive leadership and how they operate. Generally, do you believe your company's leadership displays values that align with yours and works to provide a suitable environment for employees in functions like CX? If the organization is misaligned with your needs, it's tough to achieve long-term satisfaction, no matter how good the job looks on paper.
- b. **Compensation:** Do you know what fair compensation looks like for your current or most recent role (based on your area, industry, experience, etc.)? If so, are you or were receiving that level of compensation? Are there benefits of non-monetary value, such as a great work environment, flexibility with your schedule, or others, that make up for gaps in financial compensation? If your circumstances allow it, choosing whether to stay or seek a new role based on fair compensation is worth consideration.
- c. **Growth:** Do you believe you'll have opportunities to grow your CX career at the current company? Are opportunities for continued learning available to you, and are they applicable to a CX career path and interests? Or are you frustrated with a lack of challenge or advancement? As mentioned in the Introduction of this guide, CX careers generally have an atypical ladder, unlike most other careers. Sometimes people outgrow roles or organizations, and decide to seek opportunities elsewhere because none - or none they want - are obtainable in their current environment. This could even mean switching to a people leadership role from a craft leadership role, or vice versa, depending on your interest and experience.
- d. **Leadership:** We all know the saying, *“People don't leave jobs, they leave leaders.”* And it's very often true. While we're certainly not suggesting you should be pals with your reporting leader, or even know them on a deep personal level, a pleasant working relationship and sense of mutual respect are key in job satisfaction. If you're concerned about your reporting leader's impact on your work life or general well-being, change might be needed. If you are yourself a people leader, not only should you consider whether your direct reports are contributing to any dissatisfaction in your role, but also take a pulse check on your capabilities and satisfaction in a leadership capacity. There's nothing wrong with determining that leadership isn't for you, even if it's just for right now.
- e. **Organizational/Industry Outlook:** Are there signs that your role, department, company, or industry might be in jeopardy? It could be due to factors out of your control both within the company such as finances, structure, ownership changes, or directional changes, or industry-wide factors like regulatory or economic constraints.
- f. **Individual Performance:** In cases when the organization is concerned about patterns in your individual performance or attitude, there should also be signs (ideally in the form of direct feedback and coaching from your leadership) that could indicate the reporting leader or the role itself or the organization isn't the best fit.

These factors can be all the more difficult to reflect on during an economic downturn, but they are important underpinnings to the pace and trajectory of your career, within CX or even beyond. So, when we think about nuances related to CX job searches, let's zoom in further.

# Know Your Strengths

We invite you to challenge yourself and think back to projects and examples for every single bullet point below. Review the list by CX competency below, and see how many of them you truly feel comfortable with and how many of them you feel passionately about growing:

| CX Competency                                | Type of Work  |
|--|---|
| <b>Customer Experience Strategy</b>          | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Aligning the customer experience strategy to organizational strategy, goals, and brand values and attributes</li> <li>2. Determining the strategic focus areas for the organization and find tradeoffs between customer goals and business goals</li> <li>3. Develop base KPIs/Metrics and align feedback to ensure data actionability</li> <li>4. Develop a plan for communicating the CX strategy to stakeholders</li> <li>5. Align the executive team and functional leadership around journey management</li> <li>6. Introduce agile and human-centered thinking as fundamental skillsets necessary for customer-centric transformation across the organization</li> </ol>  |
| <b>Customer Insights &amp; Understanding</b> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Assess infrastructure mechanisms and methods to capture internal and external CX data</li> <li>8. Design Voice-of-the-Customer programs to learn more about the current experience</li> <li>9. Identify customer and employee touchpoints throughout the high priority journeys for customers across key products, functions and channels</li> <li>10. Determine gaps and research strategies to address deficiencies</li> <li>11. Collect experience feedback from customers</li> <li>12. Collect customer experience and improvement feedback from employees</li> </ol>   |
| <b>Design, Improvement &amp; Innovation</b>  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>13. Establish a Service Design practice for end-to-end and surface-to-core focus on journeys</li> <li>14. Utilize customer and employee insights to define and prioritize gaps and opportunities</li> <li>15. Establish a defined CX design process that combines Product Design (UX) and Service Design (CX) into one cohesive pipeline, from initial customer journey exploration all the way to execution and measurement of experience rollouts</li> <li>16. Facilitate service design workshops with cross-functional players to demonstrate journey management</li> <li>17. Create CX design / service design assets like storyboards, service blueprints, journey maps, segmentation analyses, to highlight gaps and opportunities for cross-functional, cross-channel and cross-product journeys.</li> <li>18. Implement the CX design by working with Product and Business functions simultaneously</li> <li>19. Baseline and benchmark all CX design work against enterprise CX strategy</li> <li>20. Integrate processes and tools for continuous customer experience improvements</li> </ol> |
| <b>Metrics, Measurement and ROI</b>          | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>21. Build inner loop for customer insight to distribute it across the organization at scale</li> <li>22. Design and deploy quantitative surveys for NPS®, CSAT, CES tracking</li> <li>23. Analyze VOC feedback drawn across sources to identify customer pain points and opportunities to improve and differentiate</li> <li>24. Analyze large-volume quantitative data from customers via advanced research techniques (like maxdiff analysis, factor analysis, driver analysis) to show prioritization and themes</li> <li>25. Gather input from employees about customer experiences and opportunities for improvement</li> <li>26. Personify insights from VoC via continuous pipeline of customer and employee journeys</li> <li>27. Demonstrate and communicate correlation and causation between CX improvements and operating performance metrics such as revenue and costs</li> <li>28. Organize and facilitate customer advisory boards to create a pipeline of CX champions</li> </ol>  |
| <b>Culture &amp; Accountability</b>          | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>29. Assess and determine ongoing strategies for sustaining a customer-centered culture</li> <li>30. Partner with HR and Operations to define and execute ongoing change management strategies for customer-driven transformation</li> <li>31. Introduce employee training for agile and design thinking and demonstrate how human-centered problem solving is a critical skillset across the organization</li> <li>32. Build partnerships with peer functions at executive and operating vantage points</li> <li>33. Introduce the idea of shared accountability for CX programs and journey work across all functions, channels and products</li> <li>34. Manage and maintain executive accountability for CX strategy</li> </ol>   |

You're an expert in \_\_\_\_ out of the above 34 areas of CX work. Now, let's zoom in further to understand how this work shows up across different roles in the market.

## Assess the CX Market Landscape

Over the past decade, Customer Experience (CX) has become a more prevalent theme in business as well as a more widely-expected practice by customers. Businesses can be anywhere on the maturity spectrum, from just getting started in measuring and managing CX, to practiced leaders.

Most of these businesses also have at least some elements of CX in their approach, however the maturity of both the practice and practitioners, and in turn, the number of available CX jobs varies widely. The maturity level directly shows up in the kind of CX jobs that are posted for hiring and the degree of investment (talent and technology) that the organization is willing to make. These mature organizations are typically seen with dedicated roles for CX, commonly as functional leadership (VP, SVP) level or operational/craft leadership (Director, Principal, Consultant, etc.) level. We have also seen those industries with a larger dependence on customer experience as a key product (i.e. hospitality, healthcare) have a higher degree of CX acumen and maturity than those who don't.

Companies that have reached a higher level of maturity in CX may be larger, and have strong leadership at the C-suite or significant pockets of leaders who understand CX as a proven business practice. The maturity level directly shows up in the kind of CX jobs that are posted for hiring and the degree of investment (talent and technology) that the organization is willing to make. These mature organizations are typically seen with dedicated roles for CX, commonly as functional leadership (VP, SVP) level or operational/craft leadership (Director, Principal, Consultant, etc.) level. We have also seen those industries with a larger dependence on customer experience as a key product (i.e. hospitality, healthcare) have a higher degree of CX acumen and maturity than those who don't.

Companies that are less mature or who have not begun incorporating CX into a business approach may be smaller, newer, or have a leadership that either does not see the value of CX to the business outcomes.

In short, the CX market landscape can vary a lot, from leadership roles to hands-on craft and advisory roles, from CX teams that are more mature and looking to grow to non-CX teams who are dipping their toes into CX and looking to hire their first formal CX business partner. Given this wide range of CX roles, it is vital to think about where on the CX competency spectrum do we want to operate, and what other factors play a significant role in our career trajectory.



## Pinpoint your CX Career Goals

### Core CX Competencies



Customer Experience  
Strategy



Customer Insights and  
Understanding



Design, Improvement,  
and Innovation



Metrics, Measurement  
and ROI



Culture and  
Accountability

#### CX Questions:

1. Where in the CX competency scale would you like to operate?
2. Are you looking for people leadership, tactical/execution leadership, or a mixed player-coach role?
3. Are you looking to work in-house within a business, or are you looking for an advisory role wherein you work with a third-party entity and work with multiple companies in specific industries?
4. What do you:
  - a. Enjoy about CX work?
  - b. Not enjoy about CX work?
  - c. Think you won't enjoy about CX work?
5. What frustrates you about CX work and what is the root cause?
6. Can you recall projects and examples where you applied each of the above CX competencies? Which ones do you get most excited to talk about? Which ones do you feel most comfortable with when questioned about why you are passionate about focusing on the customer experience? (think "5-whys")
7. Often, people find themselves in a career because they really enjoy the work. Meanwhile, they have strong talent they could apply professional but haven't pursued a career in that. Does that apply to you?

#### Broader Career Questions:

8. Do you have any professional deal-breakers? (i.e. not open to remote work, not open to smaller company, etc.)
9. If you're already within a CX role but don't see upward or lateral mobility, which competencies have you been focusing on and which ones may be gaps and potential opportunity areas?
10. What do trusted mentors, friends, and/or loved ones have to say about your strengths and opportunities? Test your thinking with them. Are you thinking reasonably, or could you have a blind spot? They may share observations about your skills, communication and competencies that you may have noticed or paid much attention to.

# 3) Reskill and Upskill

## Self-Assessment of CX Skills

Below is a skill breakdown of the skills that demonstrate each of the 5 CX competencies effectively. Please refer back to page 6 and page 15 to review what each competency means and the type of work it entails. As you go through the below, consider which ones fit your background, skills, expertise and interest the most.



### Customer Experience Strategy

This is all about development and execution of a strategy that articulates a clear vision of the experience that a company seeks to create in support of the company's brand values, and business objectives, including their direct linkage to CX activities, resources, and investments. This means we need to be skilled at:

- *Program strategy and governance*
- *Business strategy frameworks and planning*
- *Cross-function, cross-channel and cross-product planning*
- *Interdependencies across people, process, and technology*
- *Ability to translate corporate strategy into well-defined customer experience strategies and programmatic efforts*
- *Ability to engage executive suite in CX strategy design and execution*
- *Ability to engage functional business areas (product, marketing, operations, etc.) in creation of action plans*
- *Ability to introduce cross-functional CX teams to work on key priorities (funding, accountability, skillsets, org readiness)*
- *Ability to clearly communicate the importance of the customer experience strategy to deliver the organization's business goals*



### Customer Insight and Understanding

We need to be able to identify key customers that drive business results and to be able to deliver insights into their experiences, roadblocks, and opportunities to increase customer value, retention, and loyalty. We need to deliver updated information to unite cross-functional leaders and teams on the most impactful customer priorities, and influence mindsets from parsing survey scores to improving customer lifetime value opportunities, which begins with how we earn their business, by creating awareness of how we can solve their need(s), and providing value across the customer lifecycle. This means we need to be skilled at:

- *Voice-of-the-customer program design and management*
- *Research methods (surveys, interviews, focus groups, advisory boards)*
- *Advanced statistical modeling techniques for synthesis and prioritization of themes*
- *Capital expenditure analysis and operational expenditure analysis*
- *KPI baselining and ROI forecasting*
- *Balanced scorecards*
- *Journey mapping and process mapping*
- *Market segmentation by customer value and needs, and persona mapping*
- *Identification of KPI's and measures of success*
- *Identification of most valuable and most vulnerable customers, and attrition and key attrition drivers*
- *Identify customer value and lifetime value opportunities*
- *Operational data and customer data (experience data, behavior data)*
- *Qualitative and quantitative research methods*
- *Behavioral science techniques*
- *Root cause analysis, predictive analysis*
- *Analyze and redesign business processes collaboratively*



## Design, Improvement, and Innovation

This is all about making adjustments and essentially designing experiences the same way we would design products – by grounding ourselves in consumer insight, identifying key customer segments, prioritizing their needs, empathizing with their point-of-view, and crafting compelling experiences that influence prospects to become customers and influence customers to stay, buy more, and promote us. This crafting of experiences in a cross-channel, cross-function and cross-product way instills a sense of ‘One Company, One Vision’ model in how teams operate internally and how consumers perceive us. This means we need to be skilled at:

- *Design thinking and agile mindset (both for exploration and execution work)*
- *Human-Centered design (Service Design and Product Design)*
- *Competitive analysis*
- *Co-creation with customers, employees and cross-functional partners*
- *Experience friction, and gap analysis, with the ability to plan and prioritize.*
- *Future state experience visioning*
- *Piloting, control, and response plannings*
- *Operating plan and capabilities*
- *Change, project, and process management*
- *Iterative ideation and prototyping*
- *Ability to identify key moments of truth affecting customer perceptions*
- *Ability to provide metrics around moments of truth, such as volume, criticality of success, one-call resolutions, loyalty correlation, etc.*
- *Ability to conduct experience gap analysis and prioritize recommended improvements*
- *Ability to drive customer centered design and innovation*
- *Ability to accurately map and depict customer touch points*
- *Ability to drive action and execution of key CX improvements*



## Metrics, Measurement, & ROI

We need to explicitly link CX work to financial and business goals. Without that, our work is at risk of being perceived as a leap of faith, expensive and a roadblock to attaining objectives that are tied to quantifiable business strategies and results. This is all about creation and reporting of the measures of CX success, including their use in business cases to illustrate the ROI and business value of customer experience. Measurements may include revenue and profit goals, reduced operating time, cost or errors, customer behavior metrics (such as lifetime value, revenue, share of wallet, retention, repurchase, etc.), and perception metrics (NPS®, CSAT, etc.) This means we need to be skilled at:

- *Perception metrics (like CSAT and NPS)*
- *Outcome metrics (via operational data and customer behavior, like effort, purchase, retention, engagement, etc.)*
- *Data mining and analysis (from all customer data platforms like CRM, CMS, ERP, etc.)*
- *Key customer segments, including high value and at-risk customers*
- *Experience measurement and research methodologies*
- *Key drivers and impact on business performance*
- *Communication, reporting, and presentation of information*
- *Self-service access to data, vies, and analytics*
- *Documentation and tracking of changes in CX metrics*
- *Business value and ROI of investing in customer experience*
- *Tools and methodologies*
- *Ability to create measurement strategy KPIs in support of broader CX strategy*
- *Ability to quantify and illustrate the business value and ROI of investing in customer experience*
- *Ability to illustrate ROI of CX investments*
- *Ability to assess effectiveness of metrics platform design*
- *Ability to translate data into clear communication of results, progress and actions*
- *Ability to drive executive support and engagement in CX metrics and results*



We need to explicitly link CX work to margins. Without that, our value cannot be tied to business objectives and results. This also encourages a customer-oriented culture for cross-functional partners to focus on delivering outstanding customer experiences that will tie to their personal objectives. Driving change and developing cross-functional accountability and commitment from the C-suite to the front line. To grow in this competency, you should seek out opportunities to build expertise around:

- *Established best practices and results for cultivating a customer-focused culture*
- *Employee hiring, training, and coaching alignment*
- *Reward, recognition, and other team and individual engagement incentives*
- *CX communication strategies*
- *Stakeholder and change management approaches*
- *Assess and guide an organization's CX maturity*
- *Customer experience impact as criteria for driving decisions and results*
- *KPI and team goal ownership*
- *Executive sponsorship and engagement*
- *Business goal alignment with customer-centric culture*
- *Problem solving skills*
- *Relationship building skills*
- *Coordinate diverse resources to create value*
- *Engaging “hearts and minds” across the organization via compelling storytelling*
- *Aligning employee behavior with customer-focused culture*
- *Communicating the importance of CX and corresponding strategy*
- *Reinforced commitment to creating and managing customer experience data*
- *Reporting CX data and results to different audiences in an understandable manner*
- *Plan, implement, and manage change*
- *Cross-functional agile collaboration*

## Craft your Career Story

- Complete self-assessment.** Identify which CX skills are required to achieve your short/long term careers goals. Identify where you have strengths and where you may need to fill gaps.
- Obtain peer feedback** from trusted colleagues, mentors, or industry peers about your skills and accomplishments. This can provide valuable insights into how others perceive your strengths, and highlight opportunities for growth.
- Review performance notes.** Document your major accomplishments using the popular STAR framework (Situation, Task, Action, and Result). Focus on those achievements that demonstrate your ability to enhance customer experience, particularly where you had measurable financial impact. Be clear on your past successes and how these would benefit a future employer.
- Draft a professional pitch.** It applies to your career too (not just customer experiences). What motivates you about CX, about working in a team, about working in ambiguous environments? Do you enjoy working on opportunity clarification or also opportunity execution? Are there particular industries you have deep expertise in? Take some time to focus your career story. This will serve as the foundation of your job application and interviews.
- Project Exposure.** Seek out community volunteering (e.g. with CXPA) work to build/showcase your expertise.
- Seek out mentors.** You may also consider finding a mentor who can guide you in your professional development and help you navigate your career path. Reaching out to former peers and managers can be a great way to reestablish and strengthen peer and mentor connections.
- Build a ‘Board of Directors’ for your career.** These are trusted mentors whom you will be able to discuss your goals, your plan, your success and failures, and freely ask for their feedback. If you have the resources, you may also consider reaching out to a career counselor.
- Build a growth plan (next section).** This is where we put together an action plan that realistically identifies where you fit and would like to grow within the CX business discipline.

# Self-Development Plan

Below worksheet is an example of how you can approach your learning plan for CX. The grey text in the grid shows an example.






### Competency Reflection:

1. List the competencies you would like to focus on
2. List your relevant skills within each competency
3. List your project examples within each competency to demonstrate and communicate your existing skills
4. List the skills you would like to learn and re-skill for

### Career Reflection

1. List the different avenues you plan to pursue to grow your CX skills
2. Answer key reflective questions about your career path and experiences so far
3. Set 2 goals and list down smaller tasks to help you make progress toward those goals

### Competency Reflection:

|   | <br>Customer Experience Strategy | <br>Customer Insights and Understanding | <br>Design, Improvement, and Innovation | <br>Metrics, Measurement and ROI | <br>Culture and Accountability |
|---|---|--|--|---|---|
| <b>My Skills:</b><br><br>CX visioning<br>Program management<br>Governance<br>Brand values alignment<br>Value proposition  |   |  |  |   |   |
| <b>My Project Examples:</b><br><br>(with quantifiable impact on margins)<br><br>Project A: co-created a CX strategy and roadmap at XYZ company<br><br>Project B: linked CX strategy to action at ABC company<br><br>... |   |  |  |   |   |
| <b>My Learning Goals:</b><br><br>Journey Management   |   |  |  |   |   |

## Career Reflection:

|   |                 |  |
|---|-----------------|--|
| How/Where will I complete my Learning Goals?                            |                 |  |
| When my colleagues speak about me, what do they say?                    |                 |  |
| What might be holding me back from taking the next step in my career?   |                 |  |
| What do I want out of my career?  |                 |  |
| What energizes me? What drains me?                                      |                 |  |
| What would I most like to change about my current career stage or role? |                 |  |
| What does professional success look like to me?                         |                 |  |
| Aspirational Goal #1  | List Goal Here: | Goal Milestones (break it down to smaller achievable tasks): |
| Aspirational Goal #2  | List Goal Here: | Goal Milestones (break it down to smaller achievable tasks): |

**Below some key resources to help you broaden your CX skillset and competencies.**

- CXPA offers many great educational tools & resources (just like this!) to members on the website ([online courses](#), [resource library](#), and [CXPA's Navigating Career Transitions Topic Guide](#), a curated collection of resources)
- Follow/subscribe to accomplished CX professionals' channels/social media
- Find a CX mentor
- Attend [CX meet-ups](#) to network and learn from those already in the field
- [Learn About Certified Customer Experience Professional \(CCXP\)](#)

Once we have a clear grasp on our value proposition and skillset of the CX practice, we can begin to have targeted conversations with the wider community and nurture a network of CX peers.

## 4) Nurture your CX Network

Whether you are seeking a job or not, it is always a great idea to be a friendly and open-minded professional in the business community and make new connections, contribute to their success, offer valuable insight and assistance and connect people who you know might benefit from meeting. Simply put, networking is industry-agnostic and all about sincere and authentic relationship-building. Below are some helpful practices to help you build/grow your CX network:

- **Remember that people will be more motivated to invest in you if you also think about how to invest back in them.** It's a 2-way street. Reciprocity is about mutual benefit, so be conscious of not putting 100% of the focus on yourself and what you may need. Be curious about what you might be able to do for others. If you schedule a call, pull up some notes on what you discussed last time and be prepared with good questions. Be on time, and end on time. Remember the little details, such as the names of their children or partner. These things go a long way to showing that you actually do listen and value them and will help you leave a lasting impression.
- **Follow up and follow through.** Did someone ask you for an introduction to a hiring manager or colleague? Follow through. Did you suggest a quarterly touch base with your mentor? Schedule it. Did you sign up to speak at a conference? Be responsive and accountable and bring your best self to ensure mutually beneficial outcomes.
- **Try the snowball method** - Grow your network via direct referrals. For every authentic connection you make, ask them to introduce you to 1-2 other people within their network. Most new roles come from 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> degree contacts.
- **Block 15-20 minutes weekly as Networking Time.** During this time, you can send emails, texts, LinkedIn messages to build and stay connected with peers, new and old.
- **Connect with 1-3 people per week.** Try to schedule 15-20 minute catch up calls with your peers, and always state the purpose of the conversation up front. If you'd like to obtain their advice on something, say it. If you happen to see a role at their company and would like to know more or get assistance in getting noticed, say it. If you happen to be a free agent looking for a job at this time, say it. They may not have immediate leads in their circle, but they may know others in a hiring position who would benefit from your skillset.
- **Find industry events and conferences.** If you are targeting specific industries, follow [CXPA on LinkedIn](#) to identify relevant events (webinars, conferences, executive roundtables) often hosted by the CXPA or CX industry suppliers.
- **Attend CXPA career networking sessions.** The CXPA holds [events](#) that will provide you with an opportunity to expand your reach and knowledge. Meet new peers, learn latest trends, opportunities and obstacles for CX work.
- **Earn credibility by demonstrating thought leadership.** The biggest benefit of authentic networking is that you spark new ideas in the mind of whoever you are connecting with, whether through 1:1 networking conversations or meeting them at events. If there is no existing job CX posting but someone feels you may be a great fit for challenges that come ahead of them, they may think of you then. A good practice is following up after the networking meeting or 1:1 chat with related content (e.g., a link to a related article by you or others). This can cement your reputation with that individual as a knowledgeable thought partner.

Use the below grid to build a networking plan help meet your goals:

|                           |  |  |   |
|---------------------------|--|--|---|
| Networking Opportunity #1 | Which of your goals above does this networking opportunity apply to? | Who specifically would I like to connect with (individual or group)? | How can they assist me? How can I assist them? Timeline to connect? |
| Networking Opportunity #2 | Which of your goals above does this networking opportunity apply to? | Who specifically would I like to connect with (individual or group)? | How can they assist me? How can I assist them? Timeline to connect? |

## 5) Apply & Interview

Now that you've got a clear idea about your expertise and goals, move on to the stage of shortlisting desired employers and roles, so you can begin the targeted search, application, and interviewing process.

### Boost your Social Presence

As a CX professional, you already know that using the communications channels that the customer prefers and uses are necessary for success. In this spirit, it is helpful to have a digital footprint of our career profile, and the best place to do this is LinkedIn, or your own personal website. Most recruiters and hiring leaders will do a quick search for you online.

- **Build profile and brand.** Establish a LinkedIn profile. Do a Google search to point to your public profile. Emphasize key competencies in your profile details so that your profile becomes accessible to LinkedIn Recruiter algorithms. This also means that you should ensure there's sufficient content in descriptions of prior roles to showcase CX skills and experience related to the type of role you're searching for.
- **Go through your connections** list to identify peers that are within the CX space or adjacent spaces and identify contacts working at any target employers who can help you get noticed for roles there. Once you've identified them, you can start engaging with their content on LinkedIn, or plan to reach out to them for a brief hello or a brief reconnect.
- **Join LinkedIn Groups** and post/comment within them. Research professional industry associations to gain insights into thought leadership and industry specific issues. These are also opportunities to know more about your potential employers. These organizations can provide valuable information on trends, leaders, laggards, and opportunities. Additionally, attend industry webinars to expand your network. The Q&A section of those webinars is a great time to get yourself noticed with meaningful questions and comments. Engaging with peers in those ways will not only help you stay informed but also increase your visibility within the industry.
- **Participate in community dialogue** via thoughtful commentary and direct messages with people whose background and content resonate with you. Share a compliment, add to the conversation, or prompt a question. Read articles about companies and post your expert opinion about how they could be using CX to drive improved results. Repost articles and add your thoughts.
- **Create your own content** (posts, articles, best practices, etc.) to share your expertise and opinions with the wider community. Write articles that may be relevant to the types of jobs you're looking for. This will further establish your presence as a knowledgeable professional in the CX field. CXPA members have posting privileges on [CXPA's blog](#), and posts are sent to CXPA members weekly via the CXPA Engine newsletter.
- **Use LinkedIn analytics** to see how much engagement you're getting for your content and adjust accordingly – experiment, test and double down on what works.
- And finally, you can use LinkedIn to **look for CX roles** as well – your social presence and the level of completeness and keywords on your profile will directly result in the jobs that fit your background the best. Sometimes, members on LinkedIn will post a direct link to the job posting on their company site, they'll link to a job posting on LinkedIn itself, or they'll post a Call to Action on the news feed to the public network with an ask like *"I'm growing my team with XYZ skills, please let me know if you know anyone"*. In any of those scenarios, it is helpful for us to be present and active on LinkedIn in order to kickstart a conversation about the role.



## Search for Opportunities

Job postings are often posted in multiple online communities, or you may learn about them via work of mouth through a solid CX network. Below are some suggestions on where you can search for roles.

- **Network Connections:** being in touch or reconnecting with new and old peers in your network can offer up additional dialog about job postings. Often, connecting like with peers starts a conversation for not existing roles but down the line when a relevant does come up
- **CXPA Online Community:** the CXPA community is very helpful when it comes to offering leads, guidance about existing companies and growth opportunity with teams. Often, members post about jobs and freelance assignments directly on the Open Forum, so it is a good idea to stay active in the dialogue there.
- **Job Boards:** there are many job board sites out there, and all of them have postings for Customer Experience in varying degrees. They tend to be aggregators, so most of the time, roles posted on the official websites of companies and CX solution vendors are posted on the job board. The most popular ones among our CXPA member community are LinkedIn, Glassdoor, Career Builder, Zip Recruiter, ExecuNet, Ladders, and Service Design jobs.
- **Search and Staffing Firms:** career staffing firms can be a very helpful resource in building momentum on your job search. The popular ones among our CXPA community are Blue Rock Search, Randstad, Robert Half, and Aquent. Often, there are smaller executive search firms who may be trying to fill out a senior leader role.

## Qualify and Prioritize Opportunities

We need to assess whether each opportunity you see is a potential fit for you based on your priorities and experience. This means your goal now is to evaluate and prioritize. As a CX professional, you have a unique set of skills that will help you in your job search. This begins with your ability to analyze a situation and establish a starting point, including identifying and assessing opportunities and obstacles. You also have the skill to create a prioritized action plan and measure results. Use that skillset to establish an objective view of your current situation. Focus your attention and time on opportunities that will most likely lead to success.

Consider following a practice that CX industry suppliers often follow: Identify your target industry, becoming a known quantity within it, having a point of view on the latest trends, and being able to position yourself as a unique solution. This can help you differentiate, prioritize and target the highest potential value companies for your employment search. Potential value is a function of where specifically that you want to work, where you can add the most value, and where you see your greatest opportunity for success.

- **By Verticals:** Prioritize and finalize the top three sectors/industries that you believe will have the greatest opportunity for you to make an impact and enjoy success. You will next be analyzing and learning more about the individual organizations within those industries. Start with your single highest priority sector/industry.
- **By Supply Chain (B2B, B2C, B2B2C):** Consider where in the industry's supply chain you will focus your search. Are you targeting companies with a direct-to-consumer business model, or those that sell products through channel members like other businesses and partner networks? If the latter, who are those channel members? Who supplies the products to your target company? By mapping the ecosystem of all the players involved, you will be able to use this information to both broaden options and sharpen your outreach. For example, you may want to work for ABC company, but you may also want to present yourself as a knowledgeable expert to their suppliers or channel partners. In addition, you may discover a set of adjacent organizations where you may well be able to add value and land your next position.

- **By Organization/Potential Employer:** Focus on companies within the vertical and supply chain you've identified that you will be targeting. You are not taking a "shotgun" approach, you are defining specific organizations that pique your interest because of their CX supply chain, their vertical, their business model, etc. Essentially, they all become a valued 'prospect' for you.
- **By Employer Reviews:** Use online resources (e.g., Glassdoor, LinkedIn, company websites) to research potential employers. Look for information on company culture, recent news, changes, and their approach and level of commitment to CX. What are their customers and employees saying about them? What type of people and backgrounds do they hire? Look for LinkedIn connections at these organizations. Reach out to them to gain an understanding of what it is like to work there.
- **By Job Description:** Review the focus and goals of the role to determine the true scope of the role, and whether it aligns with your goals. For example, many postings titled as 'Customer Experience' are actually sales-focused or service-focused.
  - Customer Experience: focuses on the customer's journey from awareness through to the end of the customer relationship, with goals related to creating a positive experience across customer touchpoints. CX is generally proactive and aims to identify new opportunities, or to solve problems, and it prioritizes specific segments or groups of customers.
  - Sales: focuses on converting prospectives into customers or selling additional products or services, and the goal is to meet sales targets and drive revenue.
  - Customer Success: can mean many things, but primarily the goal is to ensure the customer successfully uses the product yielding higher customer retention and loyalty. Customer Success is generally proactive and aims to prevent issues.
  - Customer Support/Service: focuses on addressing and resolving individual customer issues and inquiries, typically post purchase while the goal is to provide timely and effective solutions to customer problems, ensuring satisfaction and retention. Customer Support is generally reactive.
  - User Experience Design: focuses on experience design and creating a holistic design strategy across multiple products and channels, ensuring satisfaction and growth. CX roles that heavily tilt on UX Design work can be reactive or proactive depending on how Design is perceived within the organization
- **By Role Agenda:** consider the priority or endgame of the posted role. Is it to galvanize staff toward the "art of the possible", or is it to impact measurable bottom line of the business, or both? This can often be inferred from reading the job description or by learning about the company and its CX roles via networking. LinkedIn allows you to identify CX professionals at specific companies. By reviewing their names, titles, and work histories you can determine where they are focusing their energies, and whether or not you would like to be part of that team. It will also give you additional insights on who to target and follow going forward. As you build your network further, it will be important to reach out and communicate with these individuals, perhaps beginning with commenting on their posts.

## Build a Compelling Job Application

Typically, job postings require a Resume / CV. In many cases, the role description will explicitly ask for a portfolio of projects or examples of past experience doing this work. Below are some suggestions for creating a compelling application.

- Tailor your Resume** to the role. CX roles are no different than any other job. Typical best practices such as keyword matching, clear ROI of work, targeted skill demonstration, etc. are applicable here.
- Build a Portfolio.** This is a practice that stems from the Design field and is effective at getting noticed and sparking good dialogue during interviews. Just like your Resume, create an additional document that shows key projects and demonstrate what you as a CX practitioner or leader can do. This is your opportunity to demonstrate your capabilities across the different CX competencies, and to showcase your results in the form of impact to team culture, measurable business outcomes, improved decision-making via CX design assets, workshop facilitation and cross-functional engagement, etc. It is important to be careful about not sharing any restricted IP from past companies and clearly demonstrate only your work as opposed to work created by others on your team.

- c. **Write a Cover Letter** if appropriate. Make your cover letter as customized to the position as possible. Focus on the key job objectives and if possible, make it clear that you have done this job successfully in the past. Recruiters' first objective is to lower the hiring risk, and that means finding someone with a successful record. Many job application systems limit the type of documentation you can submit, or even the size of documents (i.e. 5 MB max). If you plan to upload a cover letter resume, and portfolio as a single PDF file, you very well may hit the 5 MB limit fast.
- d. **Get creative** for your own reflection purposes while you put together your application. Whip up a journey map (on paper or whatever tool you're comfortable with such as Miro, Mural, Figma, PowerPoint etc.) where 'you' are the business and the potential employer is a 'lead' you are nurturing through the funnel, from initial awareness to consideration and so on. If you've been in the CX space for some time, chances are that you can quickly sketch out a journey map on the back of a paper napkin because you can fully understand it is nothing more than a tool to personify insights so you can see the bigger picture end-to-end. Just like a consumer begins their journey with a need, which ends with a sale and is followed by a creating a relationship, the steps of your *Job Search Journey Map* begin with how your future employer will become aware of your search and the skills that you can bring. Think about the below.
- Do you know individuals within the organization that could assist you in getting noticed?*
  - Do you have general references that would eliminate a future employer's risk?*
  - Do you have work products and case studies in your portfolio to demonstrate a fit?*

Remember, every job application goes through many factors of reality: high competition, AI bots, ease and clarity on your resume documentation, ATS keyword analysis, and the timeline of submission. If the role receives 100s of applications, chances are that the recruiter may only review 15-20 resumes, and the hiring leader may only see 3-5 resumes.

## Interview Effectively

To stand out in a competitive CX interview, preparation is key. You want to present yourself as a knowledgeable, skilled professional with a clear track record of success. Below are some essential tips for excelling at any CX interview:



### Highlight Past Achievements with Measurable Outcomes

This is done by quantifying your success and recognizing right off the bat that CX is about being an enabler of the business and not just about doing the right thing for customers. Whenever possible, use numbers and measurable outcomes to showcase the impact you've made in previous roles. For example:

- "I improved our overall NPS® by 15% over 12 months by revamping the customer feedback process, and led to improved retention of 10%"*
- "I reduced customer cancellations within the first 90 days by 20% through a redesigned selling and onboarding experience, improving annual revenue from new customer sales by 31%."*
- "I led a team that identified key loyalty needs of high value customer segments. By improving our outreach to this group, we increased NPS® by 25%, and increasing cross selling to this group by 30%, leading to an increase in sales of 18%, and a 40% decrease in attrition."*

These examples will separate you from others and focus on results instead of process improvement.



### Showcase Creative Solutions

This is done by demonstrating problem-solving skills. Be prepared to talk about specific instances where you identified a challenge and brought creative solutions to the table. For example:

- *"When our customer support wait times were high, I worked with the product team to create a self-service knowledge base, reducing ticket volume by 30%."*
- *"To improve second year customer retention, I used Journey Mapping with a cross functional team to identify the top three drivers of attrition. We prioritized opportunities to take action, and piloted concepts, resulting in a 15% decrease in customer cancellations."*

Highlight your ability to think outside the box and create solutions that benefit both the company and the customer.



### Emphasize Data-Driven Decision Making

This is all about unpacking the nuances of how data informed your decisions, both wins and learnings. In CX, decisions are often driven by customer data. Be ready to discuss how you've used data to identify pain points, improve processes, and measure the success of initiatives:

- *"Using customer satisfaction surveys and analysis of churn rates, I pinpointed the top 3 issues affecting customer loyalty, which allowed us to address them systematically and increase retention by 10%."*

Companies value candidates who can balance customer empathy with data-backed strategies.



### Deeply Understand the Company and CX Competencies

Research the company thoroughly. In the interview, bring a comprehensive understanding of their value proposition, their business model, the market vertical(s) they operate in, and fundamental CX challenges in that vertical as well as this specific company. Use AI tools or databases like LinkedIn, Glassdoor, and company websites to understand the company's goals, values, and customer experience challenges. Here's what you can look for:

- *Recent product launches or business shifts*
- *Customer complaints or recurring themes in customer feedback (check reviews)*
- *How their leaders talk about their mission and how they communicate with and about customers (podcasts, interviews, etc.)*
- *Explore the website and think of how customers or prospects would react to the experience. Identify areas of potential improvement.*
- *Look for online industry updates on the impact of CX*

Doing this homework shows that you're serious about the role and the company.



### Identify the Currency of Influence

In every organization, there is a dominant business unit that heavily influences decisions that move the entire company forward. For instance, a company can be Sales-driven, Operations-driven, or Technology-driven. It is helpful to try and understand what area(s) of the business have political power so you can envision how that impacts CX decisions and day-to-day work. You might ask:

- *"What predominant priority in the organization drives action? Can you help me understand the currency of influence at your organization?"*
- *"What drives priorities, work and investments at the company, at a macro corporate strategy level?" (For instance, you'll be able to tell from the response whether or not the hiring team/leader does in fact link the CX work with broad organizational strategy, whether or not they recognize/acknowledge that there usually is in fact a driving force, like being product-driven, being sales-driven, etc.)*

- *"Which stakeholders are enabling and inhibiting the work so far?" (This question is only relevant if the CX practice has already been kicked off. If it is a new role, you are unlikely to obtain a clear answer for this in the interview)*

AI can also help you come up with potential solutions to challenges you discover during your research, which you can present during the interview to showcase your proactive approach.



### Ask Targeted Questions

Ask insightful questions. Based on your research, come prepared with questions that show you've done your homework and are already thinking about solutions. Use AI tools (like ChatGPT or other research platforms) to gather information on the company, the industry, and any potential challenges they may be facing in customer experience. For example:

- *"Where does CX report within the organization?"*
- *"How has CX evolved there over time?"*
- *"Which stakeholders are most involved? How has the organization worked together to enable the work so far?"*

These questions not only reflect your knowledge of the company, but also demonstrate that you're thinking ahead about how to make an impact.



### Explain the Skill Fit

This is about connecting your expertise to CX needs: When explaining your career path or skill set, make sure to connect your background directly to the needs of the role:

- *If you have a background in data analytics, explain how you can use customer data to drive improvement in CX.*
- *If you have experience working cross-functionally, show how that collaboration led to better customer outcomes.*

Tailor your skills to the role you're interviewing for to clearly demonstrate your value.



### Practice Storytelling

Tell stories of CX wins. Use the popular STAR (Situation, Task, Action, Result) model to structure your answers. Practice telling stories of how you handled specific customer experience challenges, the actions you took, the cross-functional partners you engaged, and the results you achieved:

- *"When I started, the customer feedback process was unstructured. I worked with Customer Service, Digital Product, and Data Science to implement a structured survey system and mapped the feedback to specific KPIs. As a result, we improved response times by 20% and increased customer satisfaction by 12%."*
- *"I designed and deployed a quantitative brand health study with Marketing to learn how prospects are moving through our funnel toward lead conversion. We got over 5,000 prospect responses, and I used the Factor Analysis technique to distill insights. We learned that 75% of prospects found it difficult to differentiate our offerings from other players during the Awareness phase."*

Storytelling not only makes your responses more engaging, but it also helps interviewers visualize your impact.



### Walk through your Portfolio

This is not common practice within our CX community, but it is highly effective to have a CX portfolio ready to share and/or review together in interviews. If you have examples of previous work, such as customer journey maps, feedback loops, or case studies of past CX improvements, be prepared to walk through them in the interview.

- *Make sure to explain the context, the challenge you faced, your approach, and the outcome.*
- *Visuals can be very effective, but be sure to clearly communicate your role in each project.*



## Considerations for New vs. Established Roles

When interviewing for CX roles, it's crucial to recognize the difference between positions that are already well-established within a company versus those that are originating or being built from scratch. These two scenarios require different approaches, as the expectations, challenges, and opportunities vary. Below is a breakdown of each, including tips on how to navigate both types of roles.

### Scenario 1: Established CX Positions

#### Characteristics:

- *CX has an established presence within the company.*
- *There are clear processes, tools, and metrics already in place.*
- *The CX team collaborates closely with other departments (Product, Marketing, Sales, etc.).*
- *Metrics such as NPS®, CSAT, and CES are likely being tracked.*
- *Structured onboarding and defined career paths within CX.*

#### Approach to Interviews:

- **Focus on Contribution:** *Highlight how your experience can further refine and optimize existing systems. Frame your answers around adding value to what's already in place.*
- **Ask Specific Questions:** *Dive deeper into specific CX metrics and how the company is currently performing. Example: "What is the current NPS®, and what are your goals for the next 12 months?"*
- **Discuss Optimization:** *Show how you can bring innovation to their existing practices. Mention examples from past jobs where you improved a well-established system.*
- **Portfolio Focus:** *Present projects that showcase refinement of existing processes, optimizations, and scaling efforts.*
- **Tailor Your Success Stories:** *Emphasize how you've taken existing processes and elevated them. Metrics like improvements in NPS®, reduction in churn, and increased customer engagement are crucial here.*
- **Cultural Fit:** *Demonstrate that you can integrate into an established team while still bringing fresh insights. Ask about team dynamics and existing CX workflows.*

### Scenario 2: Brand New CX Positions

#### Characteristics:

- *CX is a new area of interest for the company or for specific executive function leaders.*
- *There may be limited or no existing CX processes, metrics, or systems.*
- *The role will involve building CX strategy, implementing tools, and possibly advocating for CX's importance within the company.*
- *Cross-functional collaboration may need to be initiated or strengthened.*
- *No clear precedent or career path for CX within the organization.*

#### Approach to Interviews:

- **Focus on Building:** *Emphasize your ability to build systems and processes from scratch. Highlight your strategic thinking and entrepreneurial mindset.*

- **Ask High-Level Questions:** Clarify the company’s vision for CX. Example: “What are the primary customer pain points you’re trying to address with a CX function?”
- **Show Leadership:** Discuss how you can educate other departments about the value of CX and work cross-functionally to establish CX as a key function.
- **Portfolio Focus:** Present projects where you initiated and built CX strategies, implemented tools, and drove measurable impact from scratch.
- **Show Strategic Vision:** Articulate your long-term vision for the CX department. Paint a picture of how you would begin setting up systems and processes, who you would involve, and how you would demonstrate CX value to the business.
- **Discuss Past Leadership:** Highlight examples of when you’ve built initiatives from the ground up, and make it clear that you’re comfortable in an ambiguous environment where you will set the agenda.

Below is a comparison chart to for both scenarios.

| Aspect                          | Established CX Position   | Brand New CX Position  |
|---------------------------------|---|--|
| <b>Role Focus</b>               | Optimize existing processes, improve KPIs   | Build CX strategy, processes, and systems from scratch   |
| <b>Level of Structure</b>       | Clear systems, tools, and metrics already in place                                | Minimal structure; you’ll be setting up systems  |
| <b>Company’s CX Maturity</b>    | Mature CX function, often part of a larger strategy                               | New CX initiative, likely in early stages of development   |
| <b>Expectations</b>             | Improve efficiency, scale successful strategies                                   | Define strategy, advocate for CX, and establish processes  |
| <b>Interview Questions</b>      | Deep dive into specific KPIs, processes, and tools                                | Broad questions about CX vision, goals, and challenges   |
| <b>Example Questions to Ask</b> | “How do you measure CX success currently?”  | “How do you envision that I can contribute to promoting and ensuring a customer-centric approach across the company, particularly in fostering collaboration between departments to consistently prioritize customer needs?” |
| <b>Challenges</b>               | Integrating into established systems, making incremental improvements             | Lack of clear direction, convincing stakeholders of CX’s value   |
| <b>Opportunities</b>            | Optimize systems for greater efficiency and results                               | Establish a foundational CX strategy, high autonomy  |
| <b>Skills to Highlight</b>      | Process optimization, cross-functional collaboration, data-driven decision-making | Strategic thinking, leadership, ability to create and implement new processes  |
| <b>Portfolio Emphasis</b>       | Projects that demonstrate improvement of existing systems                         | Projects that showcase building and implementing CX from scratch   |
| <b>Key Interview Point</b>      | “I can help optimize your current processes to achieve better outcomes.”          | “I am excited about creating a CX strategy that will set a strong foundation for the company.”   |

Whether you’re applying for an established or brand new CX role, understanding the context and adapting your interview approach accordingly will set you apart. Established roles will need your expertise in optimization and scaling, while originating positions will require a strategic mindset to build and grow CX within a company. Navigating both with the right insights and preparation will make you a standout candidate ready to excel in either scenario.

## Post-Interview Reflection

Often, we let the excitement of the role overshadow whether it truly fits our needs and supports our growth. In the worst case, this can lead to joining a company or role and within weeks, realizing it’s not a fit, wasting time and energy on both fronts. In the best case, you’ll be off to a tumultuous start in a new job. To mitigate this risk, take a pragmatic lens after every interview round and ask yourself whether you can clearly answer (or follow up about) some key questions.

1. What is the primary driver behind customer commitment at this company? Is this a net new role or a backfill? Who is the executive sponsor for this work at the company? Is the organization already in a place to take on this type of work?
2. Will I be able to question the status quo, business processes and metrics that worked with individual business functions (silos) but might not work collectively for a one-company experience?
3. Are they open to building cross-functional working teams to tackle challenges? Or am I going to have to stretch myself and justify this work?
4. Is the hiring leader aware of the expansive role of CX from their background and current role, or are they focused on only a set of targeted goals? Is that aligned with what I would like to do in my career?



5. If this is a senior leader role rolling up to the CEO or is CX rolling up to a specific function?
6. Who pays for my role? Is it part of a shared service funded by each individual business function (like an in-house consulting group that gets funded based on OKRs) or is the role operationally funded within a specific business function and not dependent on whether other business functions would pay for it?
7. Is there clarity among the peer teams of this role that the role is to enable and establish a one-company approach to the customer experience, not take over their work?
8. Am I going to have to expend energy and cycles lobbying to get a place on the organizational agenda, or am I sensing strong top-down support from the hiring leader for this type of work?
9. Are there roles/teams actively held accountable for customer performance? Is there clarity for what is expected?
10. What is primary objective for the CX role? Is it to demonstrate the art of the possible based on customer insights and influence decisions, or is it to deliver measurable outcomes and also be held accountable for those outcomes? *(If I'm going to be held accountable to improve the experience via NPS® or CSAT, will I also actually have the responsibility or close proximity to the teams delivering the experience?)*

The answers to questions like above help us assess a mutual fit. Use the below grid to document and evaluate your potential roles and their interview processes to help you make the best decision for yourself and the employer.

|                  |                                 |   |  |  |
|------------------|---------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Role 1:<br>_____ | What are the PROs of this role? | What are the potential CONs of this role? | What follow-up questions or concerns need to be addressed for this or future interviews? | What did I learn/where can I improve from this interviewing process? |
| Role 2:<br>_____ | What are the PROs of this role? | What are the potential CONs of this role? | What follow-up questions or concerns need to be addressed for this or future interviews? | What did I learn/where can I improve from this interviewing process? |
| Role 3:<br>_____ | What are the PROs of this role? | What are the potential CONs of this role? | What follow-up questions or concerns need to be addressed for this or future interviews? | What did I learn/where can I improve from this interviewing process? |
| Role 4:<br>_____ | What are the PROs of this role? | What are the potential CONs of this role? | What follow-up questions or concerns need to be addressed for this or future interviews? | What did I learn/where can I improve from this interviewing process? |



## 6) Be Pragmatic!

Though the ultimate goal is finding a fulfilling job in Customer Experience, it may take longer than we'd like (all of us have varied expectations for how long a job search will take, but everyone wants it to be quick!). According to the US Bureau of Labor, in 2024, it can take an average of 5 months for someone unemployed to find a new job. With such a long window, it is easy to feel discouraged and the frustration can take a toll on your mental health.



### Recognize and take care of your mental health

Recognize that the mixed emotions you are feeling are very normal. Set some boundaries for 'job search time' during your day and give yourself permission to take breaks. Though it is commonly said that 'job searching is your full-time job when you're unemployed', this can lead to burnout and frustration, neither of which is good for your mental health. If left unchecked, the frustration can lead to overwhelming dread and ultimately exhaustion. Similarly, when you're jobhunting alongside a full-time job, you should take care not to overextend. Recognize that it can feel like two jobs at once, so you'll need to balance your efforts accordingly.



### Set smaller, bite-sized goals

Instead of solely focusing on finding a job, set a few smaller, manageable goals to help keep you on pace and be sure to celebrate your progress. Some examples can be attending a webinar, reconnecting with an old peer, making and meeting a new connection, completing a course, reading a book, learning a new skill (related or unrelated to CX).



### Don't underestimate the power of community

Reach out to your friends and family for support and encouragement. It's also helpful to connect with other peers in and beyond the CX domain who are on a job hunt as well. Exchanging perspectives on your experiences will help create space for new ideas and also help form a good, authentic connection in your network, alleviating the feeling of being isolated.

The CXPA is here with many excellent resources to help you throughout the process. Our community of over 3000 members is willing to help with resume improvements, skill training, networking workshops, and interview coaching. Try connecting with an experienced career coach or pay for services to help keep yourself accountable and check your work. Not only will these resources help alleviate some of the stress, but they'll also help maximize your success in the job market.

# 7) Additional Resources

Below are some more resources for your reference.

a. [CXPA Member Resource Library](#)

b. Helpful books to grow your CX competencies and support your job search:

- CXPA's *CX Book of Knowledge*, 1<sup>st</sup> Ed., Revised: [Free Online Reading \(CXPA Members\)](#) | [PDF](#) | [Print](#)
- [Chief Customer Officer 2.0](#)
- [Service Design Thinking](#)
- [Service Design Doing](#)
- [Experience Economy](#)
- [Playing to Win](#)
- [Good Strategy, Bad Strategy](#)
- [Outside In](#)
- [Crossing the Chasm](#)
- [Multipliers](#)
- [Impact Players](#)
- [Effortless Experience](#)
- [Next Generation Customer Experience](#)
- [10-Second Customer Journey](#)
- [The Principles Behind Great Customer Experiences](#)

## 8) Acknowledgments

This guide has been co-created by many members of our CX community across several countries. It brings together best practices for job searching in the CX industry. CXPA volunteers Jenn Stephens, CCXP and Karan Thaker, CCXP led a team of dedicated volunteer writers and reviewers to co-create this resource and captured insights into best practices helpful for anyone seeking to position themselves for CX career success.

| Workstream Leads                                      | Co-Authors   | Reviewers   |
|---|--|---|
| Jenn Stephens (Washington)<br>Karan Thaker (New York) | Maria Elisa Acero (Argentina)<br>Louise Jones (Ohio)<br>Nick Lygo-Baker (United Kingdom)<br>Aubrey Macklin (Texas)<br>Tom Shimko (Connecticut)<br>Brad Smith (California)<br>Jenn Stephens (Washington)<br>Karan Thaker (New York) - Lead Co-Author<br>Tanya Thomas (California)<br>Jennifer Wright (Missouri) | Lauren Deeney (Massachusetts)<br>Nick Griffin (Tennessee)<br>Rick Malsch (Wisconsin)<br>Eldon Phukuile (Canada)<br>Mark Ratekin (Indiana)<br>Christen Spirocostas (Florida) |