

# Saying one thing, doing another



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## Beyond Philosophy Services Page:

Beyond Philosophy is recognized as the world's thought leaders in Customer Experience. We have written three international bestselling books on the subject. Formed in 2002, Beyond Philosophy works internationally with organizations such as IBM, FedEx and American Express to name a few. Our offices are in London, England and Atlanta Georgia, USA.

We provide a thought-provoking and practical approach to the Customer Experience, leaving our clients with sound knowledge, dependable expertise and a practical method to apply our Seven Philosophies for 'Building Great Customer Experiences' and the know how to "Revolutionize Your Customer Experience". Our services use tried and tested applications, researched techniques, and educational services to help you answer these questions.

Our three types of services are:

**Strategic Services** – Our consultants and subject matter experts work internationally with blue-chip companies beginning at the C-level through mid-management. We assist organizations in understanding the implications of the Customer Experience against the backdrop of changing market demands and commoditization. These and many other challenges drive the need for a strategic and detailed understanding of customer events in order to prepare for the future.

**Education** – We have well developed educational programs for organizations from senior leadership to front line staff. Our experts educate our clients on how building great Customer Experiences add value, link with the brand and become a key differentiator to improve customer loyalty and revenue while reducing costs. We use concepts backed up by real-life case studies to demonstrate our key points.

**Research** – We make a considerable investment each year to ensure our knowledge is the best in the industry. We have written two books and have just completed our third. The topic: – the specific emotions organizations should evoke and avoid in order to maintain customer value and increase customer loyalty. We also undertake customized research, given specific requirements for our clients.



## Saying one thing, doing another.....

This week I was asked to speak at an internal conference for a bank. The subject was how to build a great customer experience. However, the reality was somewhat different to the title. I sat listening to speaker after speaker - all coming along with the same message “How can we stuff more products into our clients and achieve our targets”.

As I sat there I started to think, why do people say one thing and do another? Do they really think people are that stupid that they cannot see the conflict between the words and the actions? So, as the speakers droned on and on about product X and revenue Y, I thought “what are the tell tale signs that show if your company is really customer focused?”. I took the opportunity to make some notes.....

When I visit companies, they take great pains to tell me how customer focused they are. They show me mission statements, pretty “charters” on their wall extolling the virtue of being customer focused and explain how the company is organized around their products! Yet the reality is that their words and their actions are different. Customer focused is the last thing they are. Let me be very clear right up front, your people are not stupid, and your customers are not stupid, they know you are not customer focused! One thing I have learnt over the years is...

“Customers will judge you on your actions not your intentions”

So what are some of the tell tale signs of people saying one thing and doing another?

### **What do you measure?**

This is the easy one. I have met companies who tell me they are customer focused and yet they have no form of Customer satisfaction measure at all! Do you measure Customer satisfaction? Ask yourself now if you know what last month’s results were? Now ask yourself if you know the company’s revenue performance last month? Normally People can tell me the latter but not the former. What does that tell me? Half the Customer Experience is about emotions. So, do you measure the emotions you’re evoking in your customers? When were your measures last reviewed to check they are still the right ones and changed if necessary?

### **What happens to the information?**

Too many companies have a “tick the box” mentality. They measure Customer satisfaction as the management books say they should. But they never do anything with the results. So ask yourself, how often is your customer satisfaction measure actively used to drive improvements?



## **How important are Customer measures to your company?**

Who gets paid on the results and how much? I remember when I was in corporate life; I had a stand up argument with one of my colleagues at a board meeting about this. I suggested that the bonus we paid account managers, which stood at 5% of their overall bonus, with the remaining 95% paid on revenue, should be increased to 50% of their bonus. I argued if we really believed that focusing on the customer was critical then we should “put our money where our mouth is”. Sadly I lost the argument. Revenue was the key measure throughout the company and would remain so. Talking about being customer focused just made everyone feel better. In fact with hindsight, in everything they did the customer came second or in some cases third!

## **Where is the customer on the agenda?**

Just look at your next team meeting agenda. Where is the customer satisfaction review? Is there one? I know of monthly and quarterly meetings where the customer and the customer satisfaction measure are not even spoken about? How can management then say they are focused on the customer?

## **You are your diary**

Look at your diary. How much time do you spend with Customers or working on customer issues? Look at your bosses and senior teams - this will tell you the difference between the actions and the intentions.

## **Customer complaints**

Are they a good thing or a bad thing? Customer complaints should be encouraged – they are free consultancy and feedback from your customers. Too many companies treat them as something they shouldn't have?

## **“Inside out or Outside in”**

A couple of weeks ago I was involved in a meeting where there was a heated debate about what the customer wanted. Retail put their view, Customer service put their view, sales put their view and it all got a bit strained. I sat there and, at an opportune moment, asked the simple question. “Can someone tell me what the customer thinks?”



....."Where is your customer data to back up what you are saying, because without that these are just opinions"? The most important thing is what the customer thinks. So in summary these are the main areas which show the difference between words and actions. Look at your colleagues and bosses and then ask yourself, are you truly customer focused?

Finally, I would be fascinated to learn of any other "tell tale signs" you have observed; we are considering using them in our next book. Perhaps email them to me at [colin.shaw@beyondphilosophy.com](mailto:colin.shaw@beyondphilosophy.com). If they are new and we use them in the book then we will acknowledge your contribution in print!

### **About the Author**

**Colin Shaw** is the Founder of Beyond Philosophy, a consultancy, training and Customer research organization. They are recognized as thought leaders in the Customer Experience and are located in London, England and Atlanta, Georgia USA. Colin is an International bestselling author and widely acclaimed public speaker. For further information on the Customer Experience, and to read Colin's blog and videos, please visit Beyond Philosophy at [www.beyondphilosophy.com](http://www.beyondphilosophy.com)