

Enterprise Feedback Management

Customer and Patient Experience Management:

AEFM, TX, CFM, CXM, CRM, VOC, CD, CIA...WTH?

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Do you ever feel confused or overwhelmed by the onslaught of acronyms, articles, and ads insisting that theirs is the “right way” to measure customer or patient experience? Do you struggle with the very nomenclature of what to call your process? Or maybe you’ve even started to question whether a formalized customer feedback management system is necessary? If you find yourself nodding to any of these questions, then I’d invite you to read on as we identify the key considerations that drive a truly successful experience measurement evaluation program, regardless of what you call it.

Looking at the alphabet soup of monikers below, we see that there are many ways to refer to customer feedback. With the words “customer” (6), “experience” (3), and “management” (4) showing up in multiple entries (heck, one is even called “customer experience management”), does any one choice really have more significance or appropriateness than the others?

EFM	Enterprise Feedback Management
TX	Total Experience
CRM	Customer Relationship Management
VOC	Voice of the Customer
CXM	Customer Experience Management
CX	Customer Experience
CIA	Customer Insight and Action
CFM	Customer Feedback Management

Looking beyond the name, how do you choose - or design - the best enterprise feedback management process, the one that’s the right fit for your organization?

To answer this question, you must start by clearly defining the **WHY, WHAT,** and **HOW** of your customer/patient feedback management needs, as they specifically pertain to your company. Unless you begin with these fundamental questions, you may find yourself with a very slick, very expensive bit of software that tells you everything but what you need to know. Fine-tuned enterprise feedback management is a result of the following strategic process.

WHY?

The first question – **Why** – seems so basic that many people skip right over it, assuming that the answer is obvious. But is it? There are any number of reasons why a business might want to measure customer feedback, including:

- Improve the overall customer experience.
- Enhance the voice of the customer.
- Determine customer loyalty and lifetime value.
- Obtain customer insight.
- Bring the total customer experience to a new level.
- Identify business strengths and weaknesses.
- Fix problems so they do not recur.
- Retain and expand customer base.
- Understand the opinions and needs of customers.

- Improve the financial performance of the company.
- Identify training and reward opportunities for employees, customers, and business partners through specific enterprise feedback management.

But, while anyone (or combination) of these would provide justification for your customer experience management program, determining the specific outcomes sought – for **your** organization – must be the focus of internal discussion before any thought is given to **What** or **How** the system might work.

Also, working through this critical step provides an opportunity to earn the buy-in, input, and commitment of the top executive team. This is vital as, without top leadership support, the customer feedback management process is less likely to receive the importance and value it deserves in your company.



WHAT?

Once you have this loadstar in place to give you direction, you next want to focus on refining some of the details by asking **What** you want to measure. Obviously, some of this will be determined by the type of company involved; for example, service-based businesses would have different specific data to collect than product-based businesses. But most

of your metrics will be informed by the answers you discovered during the **Why** phase. So, whether you determined that your goals were driven by expansion, prevention, training, etc., the enterprise feedback management data you collect should be a direct reflection of those goals. Below are general measures with specific examples.

What do I want to measure, and what feedback do I want to collect?

Measure	Data to Collect
Net Promoter Score (NPS)	A simple question to determine the likelihood of your customer referring others to your business and indicator of customer loyalty.
Customer ratings of employee interactions	Does the customer feel the employee is treating them with respect? Does the employee meet or exceed your customers' expectations
Verbatim comments	Offering opportunity for comments. Asking why a response was rated at a below acceptable rating. Asking if there is any additional information the guest would like to share.
Perceptions and ratings of specific touchpoints	Did the restaurant experience provide great service, value for the price, timely service? Did the facilities meet the cleanliness expectations?
Problems encountered and efficiency of resolution	If there was a problem, was it handled promptly and to the customers satisfaction?
Effectiveness and perception of initial contact	Did the call center or first touchpoint meet expectations?

Also, just as the **Why** gave you an opportunity to secure executive buy-in, the **What** allows you to involve all stakeholders – particularly employees - in defining the key metrics for their area. This will create a sense of ownership, commitment, and enterprise-wide involvement.

HOW?

After you have thoroughly worked through the **Why** and **What** of your enterprise feedback management measurement process, then - and only then - are you ready to address the **How**. Unfortunately, too many times, businesses treat this step as if it were the first, last, and only step, trying to find a one-size-fits-all, turnkey solution. And, while there are vendors who will be happy to sell you such a bill of goods, the only way to ensure a customer or patient experience management system that is beneficial, efficient, and enduring is to start by fully understanding your needs before looking for a way to fulfill them. Luckily, if you are not comfortable with working through the **Why** and **What** internally, there are also companies out there who recognize how crucial these first steps are and can help you through the process.

When you are ready to tackle the **How of enterprise feedback management**, here are some preliminary thoughts to consider:

- Are you looking to develop a customer feedback management system within your organization?
 - Do you have the expertise to do that?
 - Does your company have the capital to invest in building a system from scratch?
 - Will you need to hire additional staff to manage the process?
 - What is the timeline for building an enterprise feedback management system?

So, let's say you think through these questions and decide that you need some help. As you are probably aware, there is no shortage of customer feedback management systems on the market. In fact, as of this printing, 1,640,000,000 (I promise that's the correct number of zeros) search results

appeared for Customer Feedback Systems! Now, you could weed through all 1.6 billion sources, but I wouldn't recommend it. So, if you are in the market or just want to explore feedback options, here are some critical thoughts to consider:

- Is the customer feedback management system flexible enough for the company's specific needs?
- Is the reporting robust enough to manage all stakeholders needs?
- Are there a wide variety of reports and can these reports be customized?
- Can the system push specific data to designated stakeholders?
- Can alerts be set to identify low and/or high scores?
- Can the system produce data that can generate action?
- Does the system include verbatim analytics for enterprise-wide feedback management?
- Is the system cost within budget?
- Is the system flexible enough to support the company's evolution?
- Will the customer feedback management system allow composite reporting from multiple business locations?
- Will additional staff be needed to manage the system?
- Is support staff available during the company's business hours?
- Is there assistance in designing and updating surveys?

What's in a Name?

Now, it's time to circle back to where we began. We first looked at a plethora of acronyms, ultimately deciding that what you call your system or process of customer feedback management is not as important as clarifying the **Why, What, and How** for your company.

We looked at each of these steps, in turn, examining why it's critical to start with the **Why**, which informs the **What**, which helps you choose the appropriate **How**. With this as your baseline, you could call your process "The Whizz-Bang Listening Cavalcade," and it wouldn't matter, so long as it provides the tools, process, and system that generates the feedback necessary to deliver the maximum experience for your customer. Additionally, the system you use must provide the human support, flexibility, and customization you need.

So, while labeling your customer feedback management system is a personal choice (or may be determined by the system you use), you need to call it something. And, as a way to incorporate the ideas we've discussed, this writer believes there is merit to the moniker, "Enterprise Feedback Management," and here's why:

Enterprise – Everyone in the organization, from the top executive to the back-of-house employees,

should have ownership for some portion of what creates the customer experience. This speaks to the **Why**.

Feedback – The specific data that is collected from customers and disseminated throughout the organization for follow-up and action. This speaks to the **What**.

Management – Requires not just a system of getting data from one point to another, but also requires that action be taken. The most perfect technology generating extensive amounts of useful data is useless unless the data is actionable, and that action is being managed and implemented. This speaks to the **How**.

In any business, the ultimate goal of your enterprise feedback management system should be to know what customers want, and to know that you are delivering on their expectations at all touch points. Listening to the customer is the only way you can be sure you are providing that experience. And, by employing an enterprise feedback management system that starts with the fundamental questions of **Why, What, and How**, you give yourself a seat at the competitive market table, regardless of what it says on the label.

About the Author



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Ann Donahue has 40+ years of work experience, primarily in service industries. Thirty years have been spent in the hospitality industry where customer feedback management is critical for sustaining a viable business. During her tenure in hospitality, Ann has served as a consultant serving both domestic and international clients, created a Consumer Insight function which included customer experience, quality assurance, business intelligence, and research. She also co-founded and served as President of a consulting firm that specialized in operational assessment, customer feedback management, and continuous improvement. Most recently, Ann serves as senior executive of resort operations for a resort company with properties in the US, Canada, and Mexico. She is passionate about monitoring the pulse of the customer and assuring that that feedback is managed through an enterprise feedback management system, designed and managed for action.

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