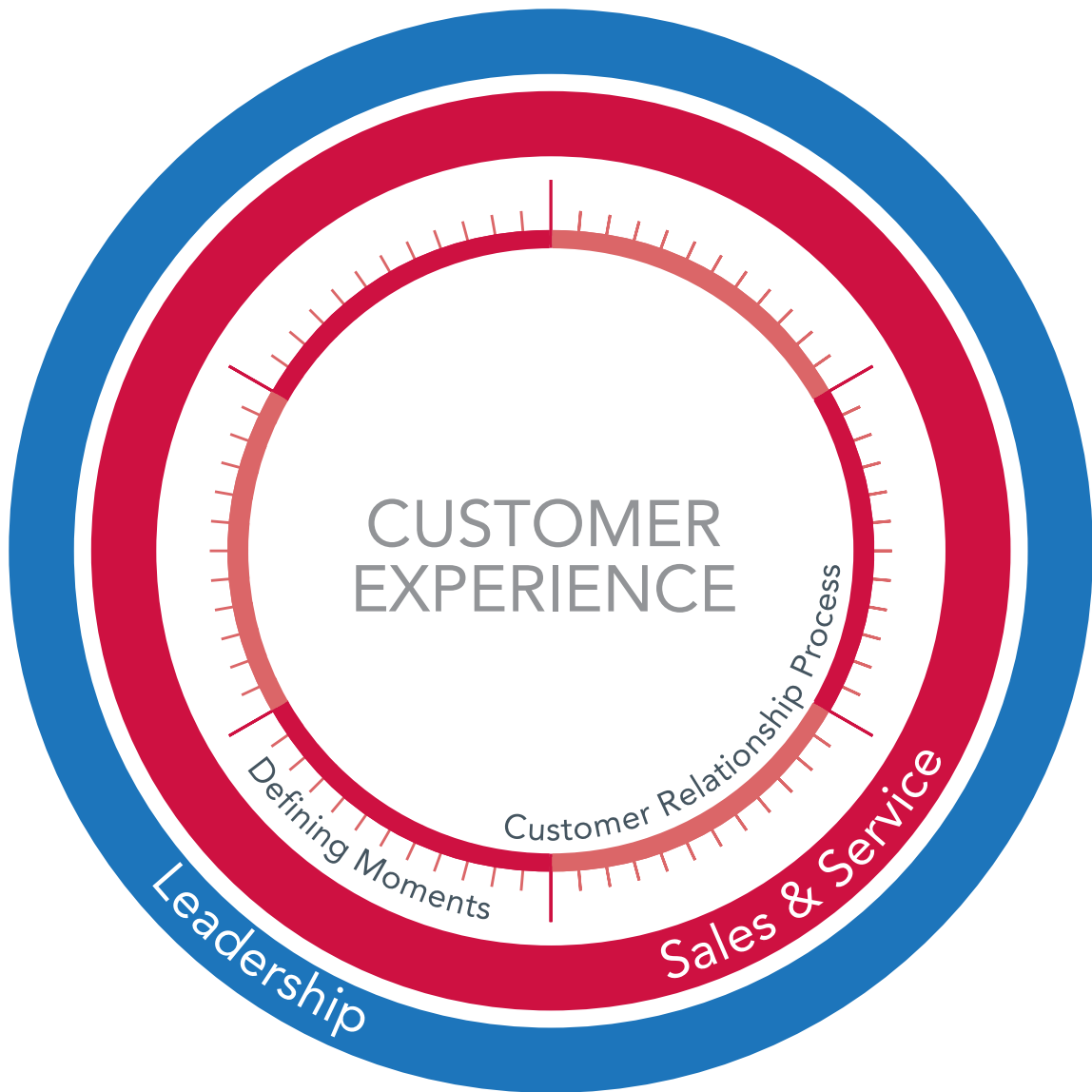




Owning the Customer Experience:

A new view of sales
effectiveness today

Owning the Customer Experience



ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

In today's tough environment, what the customer feels — the unique, positive emotions engendered by a skilled and dedicated associate — spells the difference between loyalty and indifference.



Customers today...

- **...are not easy to impress:** they want value above and beyond the features of a product or service.
- **...want a business partner:** they want a salesperson who is a business advisor too, who understands their industry, their business model, and their customers.
- **...do not give you much time:** they won't give you very much face time (or ear time, or web time for that matter).
- **...want faster response time:** they might want a proposal in 24 hours, then won't act on it for 3 months. Then, want immediate follow up in 24 hours.
- **...are global:** they are moving from being multi-national to being truly worldwide.

As our customers have evolved over the years, sales has evolved too:

- In the old days, it used to be selling on personality – salespeople often acted as “professional visitors.”
- Then we moved to consultative sales. The industry moved from product selling to selling solutions, selling value and selling to business issues.
- And lately...it's been about CRM, web 2.0, clouds and technology tools.

But here is the hard truth: despite all this wonderful progress over the years, these environmental changes still lack one incredibly important element.

For years (perhaps decades) we have talked about customer-focus and being customer-centric. However, AchieveGlobal believes there's more to just taking into account the customer perspective.

We propose a better way to sell... *owning the customer experience.*

Let's examine this concept of Owning the Customer Experience. First, owning the experience means having a holistic Customer Relationship Process – one that outlines the expectations that key customer segments have and the activities you will undertake to meet or exceed them. Taking a closer look at the Customer Relationship Process, there are dozens of key activities driving success, and literally hundreds of defining moments shaping the customer's

impression of your organization. What's a defining moment? Defining moments are the impressions a customer forms of you - from their first marketing contact, through the buying process, and then in their ongoing relationship with you and your organization.

The bottom-line point is this: An experience that produces the desired customer behaviors requires both strategy and skills that add value at every "defining moment" – that is, at every opportunity for a buyer to judge your organization.

Depending on sales, service and leadership behaviors, that judgment could be positive, neutral, or negative.

An unbroken sequence of positive defining moments is the hallmark of extraordinary customer experience ownership.

So, the key is understanding where and when these defining moments occur and figuring out how to manage them proactively. Your people need to *own the experience* rather than leave it to chance. The balance of how all these defining moments add up is what leads to customers perceiving you as trusted advisors - or

product sellers - or friendly visitors. The aggregation of these defining moments is a critical input to how the customer makes decisions.

Now let's get to the crux of the situation, **your people**. Do you have the *right people* with the *right skills*, who can own all of your defining moments and ensure they are positive ones? The first thing to consider is all the people who have a role in this

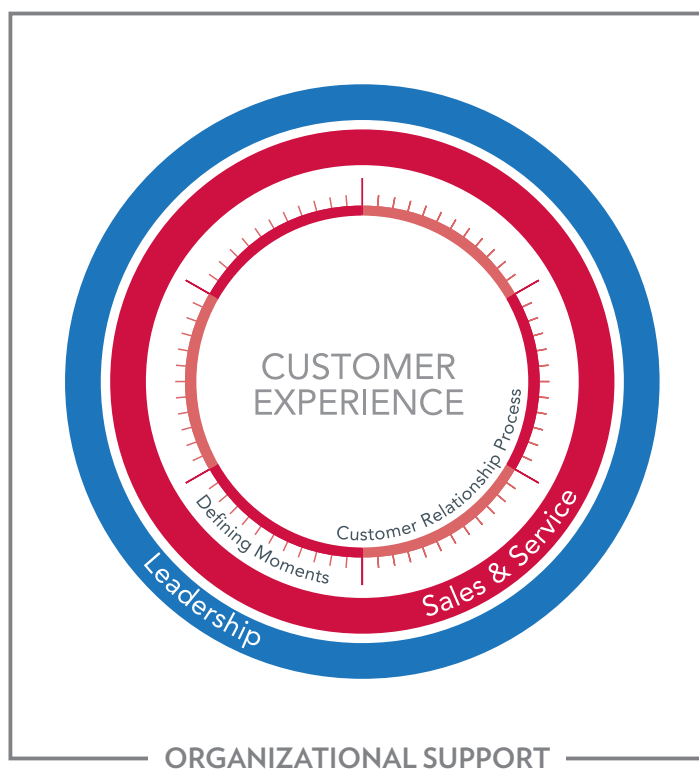
process, in owning the customer experience. It is probably more than you think: consider your salespeople, service personnel, marketing, installation, delivery, product engineers, even the front desk receptionist. Behind your customer-facing teams are your leaders. Leaders are probably the most critical part to this whole equation. They are the link between the salesperson (and service person) and the overall strategies of the organization.

Finally, let's look at the overall organizational support you provide to your leaders and salespeople. Are you set up in a way which helps

or hinders your people when they try to execute? The level of support organizations provide to their sales people is directly related to their level of success.

The two support activities that AchieveGlobal research reports having the most influence on sales performance are sales training and coaching. Other support activities that are important for driving sales include the effective use of metrics and dashboards to manage sales, a Sales Force Automation tool that streamlines the selling process and providing resources to help sales people research customers and their markets.

Owning the Customer Experience



Own the Customer Experience

Owning the customer experience is a sales strategy whose purpose is to acquire new accounts, grow current accounts, and retain profitable accounts. To begin, you define the customer behaviors you want. Then you design a replicable sequence of positive defining moments that bring about those behaviors.

What powers customer behaviors is productive sales behaviors, which leaders encourage by selecting the right salespeople, assessing current salespeople, and providing coaching, training, and other forms of support. Equally central to this strategy are the positive defining moments created by service staff. This strategy works only if all involved have core service skills, appropriate sales skills, a firm grasp of their role, and a direct line of sight to customer expectations. None of this is possible without strong leaders, who set expectations and align all systems to the overall strategy.

This nitty-gritty mapping of strategy helps you truly reframe your focus by aligning all systems – and everyone’s understanding and day-to-day use of those systems – to build and animate your unique version of “owning the customer experience.” By focusing maniacally on a positive customer experience, you insulate buyers from competitors and promote the long-term health of your brand.



About AchieveGlobal

In the 21st century, the level of human skills will determine organization success. AchieveGlobal provides exceptional development in interpersonal business skills, giving companies the workforce they need for business results. Located in over 40 countries, we offer multi-language, learning-based solutions—globally, regionally, and locally.

We understand the competition you face. Your success depends on people who have the skills to handle the challenges beyond the reach of technology. We're experts in developing these skills, and it's these skills that turn your strategies into business success in the 21st century.

These are things technology can't do. Think. Learn. Solve problems. Listen. Motivate. Explain. People with these skills have a bright future in the 21st century. AchieveGlobal prepares you for that world.



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