



Customer Experience Director is the Wrong Place to Start

by Curtis N. Bingham

**CHIEF CUSTOMER OFFICER
COUNCIL**



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Curtis Bingham is the recognized authority on chief customer officers and the first to promote this role as a catalyst for competitive advantage. He is the creator of the CCO Roadmap, a groundbreaking work containing 100+ critical strategies essential for customer centricity. As an international speaker, author, and consultant, Curtis is passionate about creating customer strategy to sustainably grow revenue, profit, and loyalty.

Someone recently asked, "Is it time to hire a director of customer experience, or a chief customer officer?" This question clearly indicates a certain naïveté as it implies that there might be a progression from the need for a customer experience director to the need for chief customer officer. In my 10-plus years working with chief customer officers, it is very clear to me that your company cannot have a successful customer experience director without first having a chief customer officer.

A customer experience director has neither the line authority nor the process authority required to change customer strategy at the highest levels of the company and therefore cannot make changes across departments, divisions, or the enterprise. Consequently a customer experience director, without the vocal and visible support of a critical member of executive leadership, can only be someone who puts a Band-Aid on something that is broken and typically only within whatever department he or she may be part of. Changes wrought by a customer experience director typically end up being localized rather than sweeping, and executed at great personal cost if extended beyond the local organization.

If instead a chief customer officer were driving the systemic customer experience changes, a customer experience director could be of great value to a company. A chief customer officer, whether or not explicitly titled as such, is uniquely accountable for customers across all departments and is driving customer strategy at the highest levels of the company. As a result of explicit line and process authority, executives can far more effectively transcend organizational boundaries, minimize turf wars, and execute comprehensive customer strategy from which logically follows a consistent customer experience orchestrated across all touch points.

Many CCOs are beginning to hire customer experience directors to more effectively manage the customer experience, which although important, is just one of many of the CCO's responsibilities. Without such explicit executive support, a customer experience director is doomed to failure. However, with such strong executive support a customer experience director can thrive in his or her singular focus to improve the customer experience, but without having to fight the battles inherent in conflicting customer insights, turf wars, and competing budget or strategic priorities.

So before you jump on the bandwagon and hire a customer experience director, make sure you first have a member of the executive leadership team uniquely accountable for the customer and for driving customer strategy at the highest levels, who will pave the way for this person's success.*

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About CURTIS N. BINGHAM



The first to promote the role of chief customer officer (CCO) as catalyst for competitive advantage, Curtis is recognized as the world's foremost authority on CCOs. He is founder and Executive Director of the Chief Customer Officer Council™ and creator of the CCO Roadmap and the Customer Centricity Maturity Model: groundbreaking, proprietary works that assist companies achieve customer centric culture and revenue growth. Curtis is a champion of customer engagement as a critical growth engine and first to identify engagement as the next evolutionary step beyond loyalty. An international speaker, author, and consultant, Curtis is passionate about creating powerful customer strategies and trusted for his business acumen, actionable insights, and commitment to measurable business results.

About THE CHIEF CUSTOMER OFFICER COUNCIL

The CCO Council is a powerful and intimate gathering of the world's leading customer executives from widely diverse industries. The Council helps executives achieve objectives faster and more easily by leveraging best practices. It helps validate and refine strategies and initiatives to avoid experimenting at customer expense. Membership is by invitation only, and purposefully cross-pollinated with the most forward-thinking companies, large and small, so as to help customer executives deliver solid, customer-centric business results. For more information, email info@ccocouncil.org or call 978-226-8675.



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In addition, you'll also learn how real world companies such as MetLife, Oracle, and Riot Games are engaging their customers and enjoying bottom line improvements to revenue and shareholder value as a result.

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