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HOW TO THINK ABOUT CUSTOMERS IN GOVERNMENT

A Guide for Government Employees
Getting Started With CX

Every Agency Has Customers

To improve the services your agency provides, you must begin with the customer. But what if you're not sure who your customers are? Your agency's customers are the people you're trying to serve, whether they're members of the public or fellow government employees.

Some agency customers are not hard to identify. IRS's customers are taxpayers, for example. TSA's customers are travelers. Identifying customers can be more challenging, however, in agencies that don't directly interact with the public.

The National Finance Center (NFC) and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), for example, work only with other government employees. That is, they have only *internal customers*.



FEMA



3 Steps for Identifying Internal Customers

These activities can help you identify and understand your customers, suppliers, and oversight:

1. Examine interdependencies — Consider how your work supports the coworkers you serve. Review your agency's mission statement and discuss interdependencies with coworkers.

2. Map interactions — Visualize where and how your services are consumed by others and document processes and interactions using a [SIPOC diagram](#), [service blueprint](#), or similar tool.

3. Define customer relationships — In your diagram, include details about service delivery roles, responsibilities, and your customers' service expectations.

5 Ways Leaders Can Help

Bringing customer awareness to a government agency requires management. Here are five ways agency leaders can help manage the change.



1. Align agency goals to customer outcomes. Your agency goals should directly address customer pain points. Great key performance indicators are built around things your customers know and care about.



2. Encourage employees to speak (and think) as your customers do. Encourage employees to incorporate plain language into their daily interactions and communications. Use the same words your customers use, and frame issues and pain points in terms of what customers see and hear.



3. Encourage a view of the big picture. Creating great customer experiences doesn't happen in silos. Encourage others to see how their work contributes to the overall mission and goals of the agency.



4. Provide training. Train staff on CX principles and how a customer-centric approach can help your external and internal customers, and your agency.



5. Recognize and celebrate. Socialize with your team how great customer experience measurably contributes to your agency's successes. This could involve publicizing how your agency or its employees contributed to customer success stories, highlighting customer feedback and testimonials, or an award program for customer listening and customer advocacy.

You're Taking the First CX Steps

By identifying your agency's customers and deepening your understanding of the people you serve, you're taking your first, foundational steps toward implementing a successful CX strategy. Executed well, [a customer-centric approach](#) will improve collaboration and efficiency across your agency, improve the experiences you provide for the people you serve, and enable your agency to better meet its mission.

Want to learn more about using CX strategies and practices in government?

[Contact Our CX Experts](#)

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