NEW RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

Why Strong Leaders Should Dispel 3 Myths of Communications

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There is a burgeoning school of thought that enterprises should behave more like consumers—become fully open and transparent with all data and information; consumerize technology, devices, and apps; and collaborate in an unstructured fashion where common goals, leadership, and structure are irrelevant. These are myths! Business leaders who believe this will happen are naïve, and they’re putting their companies at risk. The differences between consumer and enterprise behavior are extreme, and rightly so. Their communications goals—and consequences for their actions—are wildly different.

That said, smart business leaders cannot ignore the consumer influence on technology, company operations, and customer expectations. Therefore, they must develop and follow sound customer engagement principles that don’t follow these myths, but leverage their relevance to better serve customers, improve employee productivity, open lines of communication and permeate silos—with appropriate context and structure. What will naturally follow is increased competitive advantage and stronger financial statements.
INTRODUCTION

Lightning-fast advances in consumer technology have added life-changing conveniences practically overnight. Waze shortens our commutes, Evernote keeps us organized and Facetime gives us instant video calls. As a result, employees, customers and even some in academia suggest business leaders embrace workplace transparency and consumerization to transform the enterprise: Open all enterprise communications, leverage (often unsecured) consumer apps and devices at work, and adopt the consumer Internet culture.

But let’s face it: The consumer Internet resembles a virtual Wild West where anything goes. People share astoundingly intimate details of their lives with hundreds—even millions—of “friends” and followers, and trolls feel free to attack perfect strangers with venom-fueled posts for which they face no consequences. Meanwhile, the sharing of information can lead to identity theft, cyberbullying, and relationship problems.

Is this the model we want for our businesses? It can’t be. The highly regulated domain of the enterprise is at odds with the consumer Internet and many consumer practices. The enterprise goal is to promote a positive image, control the conversation, and encourage consumers to become its advocates. It is also a world in which a slip of the tongue, the release of even one proprietary detail, or a consumer attack can lead to disaster for employees, customers, and shareholders.

Despite the risks, the latest conventional wisdom insists the following myths are actually recipes for enterprise success:

1. **The Myth of Openness** – Enterprises should be as transparent as consumers with information and data. Armed with unlimited information, all employees—and by extension, customers and investors—will be more successful.

2. **The Myth of Collaboration** – By collaborating with others, enterprises will be more successful because employees will help each other achieve goals, regardless of the fact that each person possesses inherently different goals.

3. **The Myth of Consumerization** – Enterprises should adopt consumer applications, technologies, and culture to attract the best and brightest, serve their customers and maintain competitiveness.
It’s naïve, unrealistic and even subversive for your organization to adopt these myths as doctrine in the 21st century. There are far-reaching consequences that simply don’t occur on the consumer side. Take security breaches, which are becoming routine for many leaders. In the past year alone, 43% of U.S. companies have experienced a data breach. Although that figure underscores the seriousness of security breaches, it understates the number of hacks went unreported or the total cost to the economy. In addition, although the size of each data hack has grown exponentially, more than a quarter of companies have not put a breach plan or team in place.

Despite escalating calls for openness, businesses will never share information or practice unfiltered communication the way consumers do. Workplace dynamics, the need to protect valuable information, the damage a negative report can wreak and the holy grail of competitive advantage dictate otherwise. This is true for professionals at all levels and across all industries, government agencies and nonprofit organizations.

These three myths should actually provoke an awakening among business leaders. Components of these myths actually can empower the enterprise, so revising the myths into reality is a step in the right direction.

Enterprises can power effective customer and team engagement by appropriately leveraging and responding to what’s happening in the consumer space. Controlled, but flexible, flows of internal information will better serve customers and increase competitive advantage. Understanding how changing consumer behavior affects the business is crucial. Both enterprises and consumers can benefit from the creation of delighted customer advocates on one side, and increased corporate revenue, profits and visibility on the other.

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1 2014 report, sponsored by Experian, by the Ponemon Institute, which conducts independent research on privacy, data protection and information security policy

2 2014 report by the Ponemon Institute
Myth #1: The Myth of Openness

It may be an oxymoron, but “controlled openness” is how a successful business should operate. Yet, a grand theory gaining credence in the technology space suggests companies are going to open like an unfiltered Twitter feed and share everything. “What we know about organizations in general is that the more knowledge workers have, the more likely it is they make better decisions, and the more likely it is you’ll feel invested in the work,” says James O’Toole, a professor at the University of Southern California Marshall School of Business and workplace transparency proponent, recently quoted in a New York Times article written by Farhad Manjoo. “It’s possible to envision a future in which email—remarkably—is supplanted by new tools that allow people to collaborate in big groups and force upon companies the sort of radical information transparency that many in the tech industry, at least, believe is essential,” Manjoo says.

Unbridled workplace transparency, however, is simply not going to happen. The notion that all information should be democratized in the enterprise—i.e., available for everyone within the organization to see and use—is a terrible idea for nearly all companies.

Sure, communication and camaraderie among employees and between departments is a plus for any enterprise, but across-the-board access to potentially sensitive information is dangerous. Taken to the extreme, transparency means every employee could view any electronic communication, including salaries, discussions about employee performance, early views of financial performance and problems with customers—which could then be shared in social media for all to see. Not only could this harm a company, reduce employee morale, and affect stock prices, it would break regulations and privacy laws.

Contextual Priority

What’s missing from the argument in favor of widespread workplace transparency is context—the who, what, where, when, why and how behind that information—and judgment of that context. When we have context, we can make a judgment about the information. For example, if you hear that John shot Sally, your first response may be that his action was wrong. But then you learn John shot Sally because she pointed a gun at him, so your opinion changes because you think it was self-defense. Next, you discover John is a U.S. soldier and Sally a terrorist. Now you think: That’s war! It’s totally justified...until you find out Sally was six years old. Puts yet another spin on it, doesn’t it?
Information between people and silos should indeed be shared, but only as necessary—after business leaders make informed decisions based on context—and on a controlled basis. The last thing a company needs is a deliberate or inadvertent leak of customer data or other proprietary information from one department to the next, or worse, to the public.

**Personal vs. Enterprise Brand**

In the early days of social media, consumer transparency entailed little threat beyond occasional embarrassment. But it didn’t take long for that to change. Quickly, stories emerged of ruined relationships and marriages, damaged credibility at work, or being outed as a troll. More seriously, law enforcement found otherwise undisclosed breaches of law, kids were suspended or expelled from school, individuals experienced identity theft or cyberstalking, and people were taken to court for cyberbullying.

I actually expect the consumer world will gradually move closer to the enterprise model of protected and controlled information for these reasons. Few rules apply in the consumer world, but individuals do have control over what they share, the image they portray of themselves, and what context they put around it. Transparency advocates want no one to control enterprise information flow, likening it to the consumer world. Yet, individuals already control their message and their “personal brand.”

Because companies succeed or fail based largely on differentiation (e.g., function, quality, service, price), uncontrolled information flow poses an unacceptable risk in the form of confidentiality breaches, brand damage, lost competitive advantage and, potentially, layoffs. Leaders should not selectively, arbitrarily, or automatically share information in the name of openness, but rather preserve competitive advantage, mitigate risk, serve customers and increase revenue.

**The Yelp Effect**

Treating information the same way for the enterprise and consumer worlds doesn’t make sense.

An organization that has inadvertently exposed sensitive content is unlikely to find itself in a position of power. It’s hard to aggressively go after markets when you’re crouched in a defensive posture (think Target, Sony, Anthem/Blue Shield). The consumer world operates under a different risk profile; a disgruntled consumer actually can cause great peril to an enterprise. Yelp, anyone?

“It’s possible to envision a future in which email—remarkably—is supplanted by new tools that allow people to collaborate in big groups and force upon companies the sort of radical information transparency that many in the tech industry, at least, believe is essential.”

Or consider an example that hit close to home: In 2012, a former Nortel employee told the Wall Street Journal that hackers had infiltrated the company’s systems for nearly a decade, a story that quickly went viral. Since Avaya had purchased pieces of Nortel and the whistleblower was erroneously identified as an Avaya employee, the story landed on our doorstep pretty quickly. But none of what the guy said was true. The breach never took place. We spent the next three weeks in damage-control mode, assuring customers their data was safe, but it took a while to contain the rumor and our business took a big hit—all over an article that contained not one iota of truth.

Some events, like the false Nortel rumor, are beyond our control. Still, it’s clear that certain aspects of an enterprise, such as strategy, intellectual property and client records, should never become more widely available than is necessary to run the business. Sensitive
information shared without a purpose creates risk for the client and for the company, which loses credibility, public trust and, ultimately, market share.

**Myth #2: The Myth of Collaboration**

Tools to help dispersed employees collaborate are extremely useful, but business leaders must recognize that “collaboration” as an organizational structure is not successful; “teamwork” is. Enterprise employees will never collaborate the way consumers do: Competition exists for promotions, pay raises, and recognition in the workplace; it doesn’t in the personal world. When people collaborate, they typically don’t have a shared goal or outcome. They’re working together, but they still have individual goals. Although philosophically, the idea of individuals collaborating openly and fairly to help one another fix a problem or leverage an opportunity is great, it’s against human nature. Each individual wants to be the top dog, the one who gets the raise and promotion.

Most enterprises and their employees are rewarded for achieving competitive advantage, and competitive advantage comes from knowing more or planning better than the company across town or the guy across the aisle. Employees earn jobs and promotions by knowing more and being smarter than someone else. Like most CEOs, I try to operate my company as a meritocracy. Any healthy business requires a meritocracy, and leaders must work hard to find the best people to do the best job possible.

**Collaboration is Not Teamwork**

Collaboration is valuable in brainstorming sessions or within research labs. But in general, any attempt to push collaboration at the expense of personal or business gain will be met with a resounding shrug, some well-practiced passive resistance and a return to business as usual. In addition, human nature doesn’t change as a result of inserting technology into the enterprise equation. Habits might well be affected once an organization introduces, say, a tablet. An iPad might alter the tool someone uses to look things up or to communicate, but it won’t affect how much is shared—or not.

One caveat to keep in mind: As outlined in a noted Harvard Business Review article, collaboration is not the same as teamwork. Whereas collaborative projects often belly flop because individuals have conflicting goals, a team with a real leader at the helm will encourage a common goal, thus upping its chance of success and, ultimately, competitive advantage.

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**COLLABORATION ≠ TEAMWORK**

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<tr>
<th>TEAMWORK</th>
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<td>Identified leader</td>
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<td>Common Goal</td>
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So the key to overcoming this myth is to train leaders to organize group projects as teamwork vs. collaboration initiatives. (See callout.) Suppose a CEO sets increased customer engagement as a goal. The contact center director leads a team from marketing, contact center, sales, and product development with a shared goal of increasing interactions. Through structured meetings...
and assignments, sales finds revenue is increasing most with 18- to 25-year-olds, despite no explicit marketing to that demographic. Product development suggests it’s because of new features and look of the product. The marketing and contact center members uncover this group likes to engage with text—a feature not available in the contact center. By adding it, they increase interactions by 25%: Goal achieved. As an added benefit, the marketing team develops ads to further target the demographic, increasing sales.

**Myth #3: The Myth of Consumerization**

What’s good for the consumer is good for the enterprise, right? Wrong. The consumer and enterprise worlds are separate and distinct, each with varying proclivities based upon policy, motivation and risk. The company requires a collective effort to generate economic values (revenue, profit, market cap). The consumer seeks to satisfy singular, personal values (fulfillment, joy, recognition, adventure). Simply put, the enterprise is focused on decision-making and meritocracy, the consumer on fun, connection and ego. Consider also that businesses put a high premium on efficient communication, and are willing to pay more for greater functionality in integrating with other enterprises and with consumers. Those consumers, on the other hand, are generally happy with the app of the moment, and whether it integrates with anything else is less important. Other striking differences concern issues of security, privacy and legality. Each is of paramount concern to the enterprise; consumers, on the whole, give them little thought.

“...the enterprise is focused on decision-making and meritocracy, the consumer on fun, connection and ego.”

Though the two realms can be disparate, they also are complementary and dynamically dependent. And while specific user interfaces, devices, and search methods can and should cross the line, separating consumer from the enterprise, there is a limit to how far they should go. For the past 40 years, communications have been limited by the inertia and constraints of limited bandwidth. Recently, consumer expectations have changed, driven by three groundbreaking technologies:

- The adoption of mesh architectures to enable and manage the exponential scale and latency of the mobile world, which has had a fundamental effect on the growth and performance of wireless devices.
- The adoption of publish-and-subscribe architecture utilized by Facebook and Twitter, versus email’s forward-and-distribute architecture. The transition allows for greater scalability and a more dynamic network topology.
- The rise of mobile technologies and the democratizing applications that have followed in their wake.

It is the rise of mobile technologies and the applications that have followed that are most relevant to this paper. The result: For the first time, consumers are driving crucial aspects (particularly communications technology) of the enterprise world, rather than the other way around.

**Running To Stay Even**

Consumers are fully mobile now, which has driven the demand for immediate attention, 24/7, with mobile options for connecting to business. They also want a variety of channels for connecting, whether it’s instant messaging from a laptop, or video from the next wave of Google Glass. As a result, the business world is in a mad race to keep up with the consumer’s access to new platforms and applications, which are increasing exponentially.
Many enterprises have moved quickly to embrace mobility; others are experiencing a painful transition. Even the most traditional and innovation-resistant institutions are climbing aboard the consumer-as-driver train, albeit reluctantly. Several years ago, I met with 35 executives at a well-known and established European bank and told them about our upcoming products that utilized mobile technologies. They politely but firmly showed me to the door, with the message of: “Thanks, but no thanks. We have no intention of adopting a mobile platform. Ever.” Six months later the iPad was released, and shortly thereafter, guess who called back for a follow-up meeting?

No longer do consumers have to make do with one-size-fits-all products, iterations of which are dependent on a manufacturer’s schedule for upgrades that may or may not address customers’ needs. One firm lesson enterprises have absorbed from consumers over the past decade: People want what they want when they want it—and they’ll find it with or without you, even if they have to design and individualize it themselves. We’ve come a long way from Henry Ford’s dictum: “Any color, as long as it’s black.”

**Silos for Survival**

Although consumers—and subsequently businesses—have embraced technological changes, it would be a grave mistake to assume the enterprise is on its way to being fully consumerized as well, with employees using their mobile devices for work the same way that they use them at home. Consumer devices alone cannot meet enterprise needs. They need enterprise-ready applications to enable information partitioning, and/or enterprise networks with layered protections.

Silos exist for various reasons, and companies erase them at their peril. Despite consumer and employee expectations about how they want to conduct business, full consumerization is at odds with the enterprise’s
“And what a race it is: While it took more than 70 years for telephones to find a place in 50 percent of American households, the Internet achieved that same percentage in just 10 years. And while Twitter required a little over two years to reach 10 million users, Google+ pulled off that milestone in just 10 days.”
Customer engagement offers a means of providing excellent service and mitigating risk by controlling the flow of information from the enterprise to the consumer. Essentially, engagement is the formation of meaningful, communications-empowered connections between individuals, teams, and customers that increase participation across time and space and on any device and lead to better business outcomes – productivity, loyalty, enthusiasm and customer satisfaction.

Serving customers and employees effectively requires culling some positive elements from the three myths. For example, some level of openness is good. Take opening a technology platform with APIs that enable developers to create innovative customer apps. And some level of collaboration is positive, as long as it happens within a structured framework. In addition, some level of consumerization is effective. Enabling a supervisor’s consumer mobile device to work with contact-center software can result in a solved problem even though the supervisor is at lunch or across town in a meeting.

Silos are only a problem when they get in the way of a positive customer experience. And getting in the way of customer service is very much an enterprise problem, given Gartner’s prediction that 90% of all companies will compete almost entirely on the basis of customer experience by 2016.

Bridging Silos

Prior to their demolition, it’s important to understand why silos exist. Essential silos are there to protect valuable information and mitigate risk. The more potent or perilous the content (e.g., product design details, medical or bank records, military strategy), the more silos are needed for security and protection. factions exist as well in any company—those who share some common values not shared by others in their functional groups, such as growth at all costs, or proprietary vs. open systems. Silos also exist around activities—the finance team works together and has little to do with the product design team, for example. Information sharing policies must account for these unofficial tribes.

The good news is that new technologies invented on both sides of the consumer/enterprise equation provide ways to bridge silos and connect the enterprise to the consumer. These technologies offer an opportunity for smart organizations to increase the permeability of the wall separating consumer and company and thus allow for controlled mechanisms of exchange—with the enterprise doing the controlling.
If a customer wants to communicate via chat because she is at work and can’t speak from her cubicle, the enterprise must oblige and break down the barrier of voice-only communications to the contact center. Likewise, a customer requiring hands-on help with a product that did not contain assembly instructions must be able to video chat with a customer service agent, who can walk him through the process. Of course, the degree of permeability is driven by context—what should be shared, with whom and when. The challenge, however, is to make silos porous only when necessary (and only enough to mitigate the risk), so that the right people have access to information that enables them to either avert or solve a problem or jump on an opportunity.

Silo bridging also applies within the organization. Any customer service agent communicating with a client unhappy about a missing package or delayed service must be able to work across internal silos to retrieve information about the transaction instantly (from ERP and CRM systems), while using integrated unified communications to reach experts for specific questions. The customer should never have to lift a finger to dig up a receipt, much less punch in or repeat a 13-digit identification number.

The Myth of Collaboration also comes into play. Suppose an agent asks a scheduler to get a technician to a disgruntled customer’s site immediately. Though the agent and scheduler may be “collaborating” to fix the problem, their goals are likely different: The scheduler’s goal is to leave at 5:00 p.m., and getting a technician scheduled requires phone calls and paperwork that will keep him at the office until 5:30. The agent’s goal is to meet her customer satisfaction numbers for the month. If that agent is trained in an organization’s rules of engagement—including one, for example, that calls for always putting the customer first—she would be equipped to work around the naysaying scheduler and reach out directly to the technician for dispatch.

Be Proactive, Not Reactive

Rules of engagement also cover how to leverage social media with proactive, immediate responses—lessons learned from consumerization and openness.

Consider the reactive nature of Delta Airlines’ response when television personality Piers Morgan vented his frustration to nearly half a million Twitter followers about being late to America’s Got Talent auditions in Minneapolis because his Delta Airlines flight was delayed due to weather and, later, maintenance issues. His tirade quickly went viral and caused a PR nightmare for the airline. While weather is never an airline’s fault, and maintenance issues only sometimes are, Delta mustered a decent response under the circumstances, quickly offering an apology, and the next day thanking Morgan for his understanding—a serviceable response, but hardly a proactive one.

In contrast, Southwest Airlines showed its social media and engagement chops a couple of years later when
one of its planes landed nose down at New York’s LaGuardia Airport. Just minutes after the accident, the company was quick to get out in front of the story—and any potential broadsides against the airline that could quickly go viral—jumping on Twitter and Facebook to release a statement and posting updates on the plane’s status as they came in. Comments on social media reflected appreciation of Southwest’s swift reaction, with most writers expressing sympathy for the airline. Its response stands in stark contrast to Malaysia Airlines’ five-hour delay in issuing a statement after one of its planes disappeared into the Indian Ocean a year ago, resulting in a public relations crisis of epic proportions that continues to this day.

From Anger to Advocacy

Because there is no question that any crisis—a product failure, an accident or an information leak—can devastate a company (something I nearly experienced with the Nortel debacle), every organization must have rules in place for how to respond. A well-managed engagement plan—i.e., one that is handled proactively—will at the very least staunch the bleeding, and can even result in a positive outcome.

Case in point: Writer Ayelet Waldman recently posted to her Twitter and Facebook pages after being snubbed as a solo diner at a local restaurant. According to her reports, the surly host was gracious to other, larger, parties; made her wait while he seated those who arrived after her, though there was no wait and they didn’t have reservations; and then stuck her at a corner seat of the bar and refused her request to move elsewhere. A few days later, Waldman posted on the subject again, writing that the owners reached out to her, apologized and invited her and her family to the restaurant for a complimentary dinner. Afterward, she wrote a generous review of the food and service.
Prior to the era of Twitter and Facebook, Waldman likely would not have gotten such a response from a letter or phone call. But her influence to 13,800 Twitter followers was nothing to ignore. The openness of consumers is not something enterprises should replicate, as stated, but they must have a strategy to respond to it. By preparing for any conceivable crisis, customer engagement provides an opportunity to turn a negative into a positive, resulting in a win for everyone.

**Context is Critical**

No matter how engagement principles are used, however, context is crucial. As outlined earlier in the John vs. Sally gun scenario, shared information must be viewed in terms of context—through the lens of relevance, judgment, the impact of the passage of time, etc. Just having people show up or compile reams of data isn’t enough.

For example, a new employee of a transportation company nearly quit when she learned of some “Big Brother” technology in the trucks. The company had previously added video cameras, temperature sensors and GPS to all of its vehicles. She questioned whether the company trusted its employees.

What she didn’t have was context. Executives decided to invest in GPS tracking after they caught employees taking long lunch breaks, stopping at home, or running errands on work hours. Temperature sensors were installed after customers complained that produce was arriving warm and spoiled. And they determined video cameras would improve employee safety if they had mechanical problems. Though the company terminated dishonest employees, they found the technology—and the information it delivered—was incredibly valuable. The GPS improved routing in high traffic situations, reducing driver frustration and improving productivity. And remotely controlled temperatures kept perishables at the right temperature, increasing customer satisfaction.

**Assess for Success**

No matter the scenario, engagement relies on real-time assessment of each situation, guided by well-thought-out principles. Deciding which rules to employ requires real-time assessment on a case-by-case basis—everything from funneling tech-savvy customers toward automated features to getting in front of a crisis on social media to having two nurses sign off on a diabetic’s insulin dose.

The goal of engagement is to reduce peril and maximize consumer advocacy on behalf of the organization. It offers a means to organize context, skills, judgment, timing, automation and other tools within an organization’s arsenal, thus enabling potential action in response to anything and everything, from John Q. Public’s grousing tweets to a full-blown crisis. Unlike the inert and passive methods of the unified communications-only era, engagement enables proactive, immediate maneuvering (timing is imperative in an emergency and where advocacy is concerned) across multiple platforms.

Engagement also requires that employees operating within silos aren’t working at cross-purposes—i.e., that they’re functioning as a team rather than as mere collaborators. As noted earlier, collaborators too often get bogged down in competitive, hoarding behaviors, more concerned with advancing their own agendas and careers than in contributing to group success. Herding a group of people into a room and telling them to work together isn’t enough. Turning collaboration into teamwork requires structure—in the form of leadership, policies, processes for planning and risk management, and some means of accountability, both within the team and out to the broader organization. As with customer engagement, team engagement necessitates a firmly outlined set of principles and parameters.
Engage To Win

Done correctly, with appropriate filters in place, engagement results in:

- Improved customer experience, which is paramount and the reason that any of us do business. Although specific principles of engagement vary by situation, customer experience must be the top priority for any company that aspires to grow and thrive. Everything else is plumbing.
- Mitigating or avoiding damage that technology-equipped consumers can wreak upon an enterprise. A permeable membrane allowing an enterprise-controlled exchange of information with consumers leads to delighted and repeat customers who act as advocates, placing the enterprise in a position of power rather than weakness.
- Improved business results, including increased productivity, revenue, profitability, and visibility.

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TEAMWORK CHECKLIST

- Executives identify high-level goal of team
- Based on that goal, they select appropriate team leader
- Team leader refines goal
- Team leader selects team members based on qualifications, personalities, and goal
- Team leader explains project, goal, time frame, and consequences for success and failure
- Team meets to identify processes and technologies they’ll use to achieve the goal. They also define metrics for and definition of success.
- Team leader selects project manager to schedule meetings, take notes, and keep project on track for meeting goal
- Team meets regularly, conducts work to achieve goal, and reports back to executive sponsors on a pre-determined “checkpoint” schedule
- Team achieves goal, validates success metrics, presents to executives
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Although the world is a risky place, selective sharing of information and porosity between the consumer and enterprise is mandatory. Companies must make a sustained effort to understand what employees need to know and share with the customer. Similarly, information sharing between an organization’s silos must also be thoughtfully managed, taking into account risk, security, company goals, and human nature.

I recommend business and technology leaders consider the following:

- Establish a named team of IT and business leaders to identify your rules for customer engagement, particularly as they relate to openness, consumerization, and collaboration.
- The rules should include the types of tools to be used (contact-center channels, social media outlets, etc.), who has the authority to use them, and how much review is needed.
- Identify the process for the team to work with internal corporate communications and marketing to educate employees about the newly created rules of engagement.
- Determine the structure for formal training programs and whether all or certain employees are required to attend for consistency across the company.
- Define success, and then create before-and-after metrics to measure success or failure, as well as a timeframe for measuring.
- Don’t fall into the trap of consumerization.
- Don’t manage your organization like a cluster of consumers trying to cultivate the autonomy and free information flow of the consumer world.
- Do understand consumer experiences have raised the bar for what it takes to satisfy and delight them.
- Develop a strategy for controlled engagement.
- Leverage openness to the company’s advantage. Control the conversation. If a customer uses social media to criticize you, have a plan in place that your engagement team can quickly activate.
- Make sure you understand the difference between collaboration and teamwork—and set up teams with leaders, structure, and common goals.
- Evaluate the silos that exist in your organization, both internally between departments and between you and your customer.
- Determine the policies for permeating those silos.
- Develop a plan to break down silos when, where, and with whom it makes sense.
About Avaya

Avaya is a leading, global provider of customer and team engagement solutions and services available in a variety of flexible on-premise and cloud deployment options. Avaya’s fabric-based networking solutions help simplify and accelerate the deployment of business critical applications and services.

For more information, please visit www.avaya.com.