

# Internal Communications Plan

**Client: Customer Experience**

**Enhancing Customer Experience by Improving Employee Experience**

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## Summary

At Premera Blue Cross, we define customer experience as the total engagement a customer has with us. Beginning with their initial brand awareness and perception, it continues through their decision to purchase a plan and extends throughout their use of our care services. Far more than customer service, customer experience builds relationships that foster loyalty that can set us apart in a competitive market.

Premera is widely recognized for excellent customer service and has a solid reputation as a health plan provider — it's a competitive advantage. However, health insurance overall is a low-trust industry, and recent reputation research showed that consumers often don't distinguish between different "Blue" plans. The Affordable Care Act added to customer confusion with significant changes while diversifying and leveling the playing field.

CEO Jeff Roe underscored the importance of customer experience during our September all-hands meeting, outlining a new strategy in a *Formula for Success*. Customer experience is one of three key focus areas. To support this, we're introducing new baselines for customer advocacy to differentiate and establish Premera for its customer-centric care.

The customer experience team is already mapping the customer journey, gathering 'voice of the customer' feedback, and by year-end, our strategy team will introduce new customer-focused purpose and value statements. To ensure every customer interaction reflects our commitment to their satisfaction, we must support our employees. Listening to employees who directly touch the customer, creating a resource-based employee-facing portal to support them, and empowering them at all levels to champion the customer experience will help us achieve our customer advocacy goals. One of many new initiatives includes the 'Who's New in the Room' campaign to help employees keep the customer in mind during every meeting.

We know that overall, our employees are empathetic individuals who care deeply about improving healthcare for everyone. We must provide them with the tools and autonomy to empathize, make decisions, collaborate, innovate, and experiment with new approaches. To foster this culture effectively, we must clearly define expectations, actively model and reward desired behaviors, provide practical examples, establish measurable goals, and eliminate barriers to enhance our services and better meet the needs of our customers.

***"If you take care of your employees, they'll take care of your customers." – Richard Branson***

# Internal Communications Plan

## Business Objectives

***Improve customers' lives by being the most customer-obsessed health plan on the planet – simple, affordable, hassle-free, trusted.***

- Embed the customers' voice in everything we do.
- Create a customer-obsessed culture.
- Continuously improve the customer experience.
- Measure effectiveness through advocacy scores (Net Promoter Score - NPS).

## Communications Objectives / Goals

Employees:

- Understand the difference between customer service and customer experience.
- Demonstrate customer advocacy in daily work, regardless of role.
- Embody customer experience at every level, to understand, support, and drive improvements.
- Use plain language with our customers and with each other.
- Are engaged and empowered and adopt key behaviors.

## Communications Strategy

- Implement an employee listening initiative; use insights to drive continuous improvement.
- Illustrate customer passion and desired behaviors through storytelling; highlight examples to bridge gaps in employee awareness.
- Ensure employees have readily available information for customer-focused decisions.
- Launch key initiatives:
  - Let's Be Clear — use clear language in every communication
  - "Customer" New Year's Resolution — customer-focused New Year's resolution campaign
  - White Glove Service/First Call Resolution — resolving customer issues in their initial call
- Share changes and expectations, rationale, and supports; report updates and adjustments.
- Reward progress.

## Target Audiences/Key Stakeholders

- Senior Leadership Team
- Managers and above
- Department Subject Matter Experts:
  - IT UX/Customer Experience team
  - Strategic Development (new vision, purpose, and values)
  - Human Resources (New Hire Onboarding, Talent Development, Learning & Development/Adoption)
  - Lean Team/Continuous Improvement
- Marketing & Sales Teams
- Customer Service Representatives (CSRs)

## Challenges

- Cultural shift: Currently, we're a risk-averse and CYA culture.

# Internal Communications Plan

- Recognize current success: don't minimize the great work our teams already do while helping them improve.
- Fix what's broken: While we do good work, some long-standing issues haven't been addressed despite awareness.
- Balance Lean principles: As a Lean shop, we often rely too much on following a process and not on fixing a problem.

## Communications Success Factors

- Measure against established objectives.
- Consistently monitor advocacy scores.
- Employee engagement with collaboration tools.
- Gauge sentiment from customer and employee surveys and engagement channels.

## Key Message Themes

Customer Experience messaging will be an embedded theme in communications wherever possible. Our goal is to show, not tell, with examples of where we're doing great work and how we're doing it.

- **Listen:** We listen to our customers, use data to better serve them, and leverage customer feedback to influence decisions. We continually improve our products, processes, and systems.
- **Experiment and Innovate:** We work differently, embrace fast failures, and learn quickly. You are empowered to innovate. Collaborate and share what works.
- **Customer Obsession:** We are dedicated advocates for our customers, making a difference in their lives. Everything we do impacts our customers.
- **Simplify:** We make it easier for our customers to interact with us (show how).
- **Cost Efficiency:** We ensure customers receive the care they need when they need it, with transparency around costs. We help customers avoid unnecessary expenses.
- **Employees as Customers:** We heard you. We are fixing things (with examples to demonstrate progress). You, too, are Premera customers.

## Tactics

- **iHub Stories & Snapshots:** Ongoing cadence of stories (monthly) and "quick hits" (bi-weekly) focused on work-in-progress and case studies from other companies to demonstrate experience. Highlight employees doing good work. Share "voice of the customer" feedback.
- **Surveys:** Use iHub survey tool to gather information and reiterate key messages.
- **Blog Posts:** Support key executives and subject matter experts to regularly post blog content.
- **Email Communication:** Send ongoing cadence of messages from CX SVP emphasizing key focus areas and CX goals, how we're doing, and why it matters.
- **Customer Experience Portal:** Create awareness for new customer experience portal — a toolkit for employees to find the information they need when they need it, a collaboration site to share best practices, and CSR tipsheets.
- **Digital and print signage:** Share key messages, customer quotes, and tips on digital and print signage (including hallway and restroom signs).
- **Road Show:** Shop customer experience overarching strategy and upcoming initiatives at department meetings.

# Internal Communications Plan

## Timing

- See editorial calendar for content timeline.
- Q4 (in progress): Define and finalize key metrics for measuring success (e.g., advocacy scores, engagement levels).
- Q4 (in progress): Begin consistent monitoring of advocacy scores.
- Q4: Launch new vision, purpose and values; weave in messaging.

Next year:

- Q1 next year: Implement customer and employee survey mechanisms.
- Q1: Launch employee engagement initiatives with collaboration tools.
- Ongoing: Analyze survey results quarterly to identify trends and areas for improvement.
- Monthly: Report on progress and adjustments to stakeholders.
- Annually: Review and refine measurement strategies based on outcomes and organizational goals.
- TBD: Integrate customer-centric behaviors in performance reviews.

## Resources:

As customer experience grows as a discipline, research is ongoing and reports are numerous. A few key resources:

[What is Customer Experience](#) (Beyond Philosophy)

[The Truth About Customer Experience](#) (Harvard Business Review)