Z-Commerce

Data for PwC: Emails
Submissions from managers across Z-Commerce

Z-Comm
mail

From: Riley Knight
To: All Managers
Subject: [Transformation Kick-off] Requesting your input

Sent (1)

Drafts

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Sent

Dear Managers,

Thanks for your time this morning. We were missing a number of you due to conflicting schedules and I wanted to follow up here to recap.

We're proud of the success we've had since we started this journey in 2015, and for the resilience and agility of all our staff during the pandemic. Z-Commerce is growing at a rapid pace, and our customer base along with it. As the market settles in this post-pandemic period, our leadership team (LT) has reflected that there are some important gaps that must be addressed. My new role at Z-commerce is to work in with you to address and affect the changes that can improve our internal operations.

In our meeting today I met with you to kick-off a drive to learn from you and your staff. We want you to share your ideas for a better working experience here at Z-Commerce, including our culture and processes. Our LT wants staff to have a positive working experience where they feel valued, and where technology supports their workloads and the processes that bring us all together. We especially want to understand how we can better serve our early career professionals, particularly in Sales and Customer Support - we've got to understand why the retention levels are so low for this population, and how we can improve them.

While some of these things will take time, please consider with your teams:

- What initiatives would add the most value quickly?
- What are the meatier burdens that you hope we address?

Please email your feedback and ideas to me by end of day Friday, and I will keep you informed of progress.

Best wishes,

Riley Knight

Transformation Director

Z-Comm

mail

From: Keisha Bleswick
To: Riley Knight
Subject: thoughts for Riley

Riley,

So great to e-meet you- I didn't even know that we had a transformation director, but it's really awesome to hear!

Loved what you said in our kick-off meeting about doing more with less. Yes! That's 100% what we need to unpack and fix here. I love my job, but I can't tell you how frustrating it is to deal with so many conflicting, incomplete processes that get in the way of the fun that the job should be.

I'm pretty new here, directing our marketing division. I'm used to being able to pull groups of people together quickly, sharing ideas in an instant, coordinating teams of people and rolling out campaigns pretty quickly. But here- there are 5 meetings for every 1 decision, every other team I need to work with each has their own process for communicating, so there's so much duplication - it's just a mess. There are some great ideas, but no uniformity, so inevitably I'm coming up against unnecessary conflict. Two of the teams we run campaigns for use the XYZ App to keep themselves organized- I'm a fan- but the other 7 teams I support all have different ways of working that I'm supposed to be able to help lead- it's a struggle.

Even last week, all I wanted to do was grab 10 mins with a few colleagues- the hoops my assistant had to jump through to understand everyone's schedules and availability… he literally spent half a day to arrange it. Surely there's a tool to help with this that we could get everyone to buy into! And this is exacerbated when we try to find time with an interview candidate!

My point is- there are way too many manual processes for managers (and indeed, even staff who are at the assistant level) to be able to navigate with ease. When our time and energy is taken up with admin, it's unmotivating and frustrating. Kind of like the example you shared in our meeting too.

I've asked Jon (my assistant) to pull together a list of the processes that he struggles with too, just so you have examples to work with here…

Keisha
Director of Marketing

Z-Comm

mail

From: Matthew Appiah
To: Riley Knight
Subject: development for staff

Inbox (7)

Drafts

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Hi Riley,

Great to hear about the initiative you're opening up to staff. I'm working my notice period and will be starting a new role at another organization next month, but I thought I'd send you a quick email as my reason for leaving this company is relevant to your project. I know this initiative is directed at Managers, but I hope you don't mind me sharing some thoughts.

I've been in the same role here for nearly three years. I've been a pretty strong performer, always met my targets. However, there have never been opportunities for me to progress at this company, and the demand on services here has always been too great to leave space for employee development. My contemporaries at similar organizations count learning options, extra training, and development opportunities as one of the given perks of their jobs, and not having the same here was a big motivator for me to leave Z-Commerce. I feel bittersweet about it, but hopefully the changes you want to make will make this company an appealing choice in my future employment.

Good luck with it all!

Matthew
Customer Service Associate

Z-Comm

mail

From: Kathryn Kelly
To: Riley Knight
Subject: automation needs to be top priority

Inbox (6)

Drafts

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Sent

Hi Riley,

Thanks for the kick-off meeting. I'd love to get some time with you to talk about automation in the customer service space.

I've been supervising one of our four customer service teams for a year. Previously, I project-managed the automation of the customer service function of one of our competitors.

At this company, customer service is a huge, manual operation and we have some great staff. One of the things I see often is burn-out. Our staff answer the same questions day in and out- and as with most customer service functions, they each endure a good number of grievances/escalated interactions that can be emotionally difficult.

I agree with the urgency you conveyed in the meeting yesterday- we need to do more with less, and automating customer service is one of the biggest things we can do that would vastly improve the customer experience and no doubt positively impact our retention rate and customer loyalty rate.

At the heart of our services should be the customer experience… in the market today that looks like self-serve help centers with thorough FAQs, bot-run chat portals for customers, customer dashboards, etc. Our customers need 24-hour access to instant, tailored service.

Having experience, I would be keen to be involved in future plans, and happy to share more.

Kathie
Customer Service Supervisor

Z-Comm

mail

From: Sara Robles
To: Riley Knight
Subject: No consistency- garbage data!

- Inbox (5)
- Drafts
- Junk
- Sent

Hey Riley,

I've had a quick think about your ask - can't really suggest anything else until we sort the data issues out... We must have at least 50 different systems for who knows what. For example:

- Any time I need data it's all in ten different places and it's not always accurate!
- Data processed/analyzed in different ways by different teams and saved in different places
- No consistency- none of the data matches up!
- No source of truth- undermining all of our work, making audits impossible
- Hard for me to articulate true impact and understand our growth
- Compromises us when we share with stakeholders and makes my job hard

Hope this helps!

Sara R.
Finance Manager

Z-Comm

mail

From: Adnan Nasser
To: Riley Knight
Subject: Making our systems work for us

Inbox (4)

Drafts

Junk

Sent

Hello Riley,

Thanks for the meeting. I'm Adnan from the CRM & Database team. It's exciting to hear that LT will be dedicating resources to improving internal systems. Our team is small and we all started working here within the last 2 years. It's been cool to see how happy our customers are and how fast the company is growing. From the perspective of our team, we know that there's much more our systems are capable of that we are not yet utilizing because we're under-resourced.

In my volunteer work I help to operate a healthcare helpline. A lot of it is automated- which our company does not seem to do. It strikes me that we have too many people doing low skill, repetitive work that could all be done by our system if we were to invest in it more than we have before. From my perspective, our sellers are essentially bottlenecks. If we were to implement a self-serve system for our customers and partners rather than relying on sellers, especially for lower value sales, we'd surely make more sales, save more money, and be able to re-route resources to improving technology that can work for us with far less effort, at less expense.

I would be very happy to consult with LT on the possibilities of our CRM if we were to put more resources into it.

Adnan Nasser (on behalf of the CRM and Databases team)

CRM & Databases Manager

Z-Comm
mail

From: Ahmed Sequira
To: Riley Knight
Subject: Exit interview feedback - lack of career progression

Inbox (3)

Drafts

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Sent

Hi Riley,

Thanks again for inviting our insight like this. It's really encouraging to be a part of our internal roadmap to change.

As you know, for its first 2 years Z-Commerce did not have a HR team. I've worked in our HR team since 2017- first as a recruitment officer and then as a manager overseeing the recruitment and exit processes. I wanted to email and highlight some of the feedback I am constantly hearing from people leaving the company at junior roles (e.g., entry-level sales, customer service).

The company has evolved quickly and while we have a huge workforce, we struggle to retain junior staff beyond 12 months. My team is talented and professional- they are empathetic and spend the majority of their time in one-to-one conversations, interviews and training with staff.

The most common reason for a staff member, particularly (but not exclusively) at junior levels, moving on is lack of career progression. I probably hear of one or two conversations a week where we get this exit feedback - we hire a bright college graduate, attracted to Z-Commerce because of the name, and they are anxious to start a promising career. After a couple of months, they can do the job in their sleep, and they get bored. There is nothing to stimulate them, and no clear next step at the company. They stop learning and start looking outside the company for new roles that excite and challenge them. I've seen this a hundred times.

We need to figure out a way to keep these employees motivated, learning, and progressing within the company. I know we have trouble filling mid-level roles. My colleague Ramona said she will message you on this topic so look out for that one.

When we chatted briefly after the meeting, I said I'd attach a sample of exit interview transcripts. On reflection, I've chosen not to include them- they are each at least a 40 minute read and are written in a shorthand/ abbreviated language that is only meaningful to our team… which perhaps also demonstrates how inaccessible these reports are to others across our leadership team (maybe technology can help us solve this problem?). I'd recommend us setting time aside to meet if you'd like to see a sample of transcripts.

Happy to discuss further,

Ahmed Sequira
Senior HR Manager

Z-Comm
mail

From: Mike Choudhury
To: Riley Knight
Subject: before I forget: covid hires/connection/mentorship

Hey Riley,

Great meeting yesterday- really caught the vision for the work you're planning. I have a lot of ideas/ will share with my dept in our next huddle and forward their ideas as they come in.

Thing that came to my mind as you were talking about using programs/tech that work for us to bridge the gap btwn function and investment of our people:

- thousands of new employees hired during the pandemic
- massive turnover in the last 2 yrs
- new hybrid way of working = lack of connection (us and them)
- we need help onboarding /embedding new staff authentically so they feel part of the team
- missing water-cooler moments where healthy working relationships / team bonding happen
- how can I be an effective mentor in a hybrid space/ in the increased pace of post-pandemic pace business?
- how can I encourage staff to bring their whole selves to work when we don't have the tools to authentically engage/ build relationships with them?

Maybe more Qs than ideas for you- like I said, I'll share more from my team this week as we discuss it.

Mike Choudhury
Sales Manager

Z-Comm

mail

From: Ramona Salazar-Price
To: Riley Knight
Subject: building a 360 degree view of our staff

Inbox (1)

Drafts

Junk

Sent

Riley,

I'm Ramona Salazar-Price. I'm an HR Program Manager and I've worked here for 8 months after 3 years at one of our competitors. In a recent team meeting my manager shared your vision for engaging technology to improve our internal experience. He asked me to share my feedback with you in this email.

One of the things that surprised me about joining this company was the lack of tech infrastructure. There are a lot of things we are doing that could be streamlined with the help of technology, whether it's administrative processes, analyzing data, producing reports and more.

The example I gave my team was that we have a limited view of the skillsets of our staff. At my previous company, staff had the ability to formally qualify their skills that may or may not have supported their current job description. They did this at their own pace, and a database was essentially being fed by our staff in the background of the day-to-day responsibilities they had.

For us as a team, we were building a 360 degree view of our staff that made backfilling roles an agile experience, and it empowered staff to consider their progression and see opportunities for growth. It was a great way to cultivate a feeling of all of our staff investing in the company.

Right now at Z-Commerce, we have a very difficult time backfilling roles. Our first port of call is to look outside the organization, when we certainly have people here with the skills we need to fill in more advanced roles. I have heard that we are losing many junior level employees who do not feel that they can move on in the company. I think a 360 view of our workforce will be a win-win for the company and our individual employees.

If there are opportunities to get further involved, I would really love to share more about some of the lessons I've learned in my previous company.

Thanks for your time,

Ramona Salazar-Price
Sr. HR Program Manager