

Four vertical bars in pink, light blue, yellow, and dark blue extend from the top of the page. Three light blue stars are positioned to the left of the bars.

BRITTANY★HODAK

SLOW ELEVATOR **CHECKLIST**

A quick guide to
***elevating* ordinary**
interactions into
memorable
experiences

Four vertical bars in dark blue, yellow, light blue, and pink extend from the bottom of the page. Three light blue stars are positioned to the right of the bars.

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GROUND FLOOR

On a recent visit to the LEGOLAND Florida Resort, I was as mesmerized as my kids were each time we stepped into the elevator. It was adorned with floor-to-ceiling decals of dancing, human-sized LEGO characters and a disco ball hanging from the ceiling.

When the doors closed, flashing lights blanketed the elevator and music from ABBA and the Bee Gees piped through a speaker. It was so fun that we didn't notice how slow the ride was until about our fifth time in the elevator. Even then, we didn't mind because every ride was a blast.



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LEGOLAND took a potential annoyance (a slow elevator) and shaped it into an experience we'll remember for years. That's the magic of intentional experience design. Although they couldn't make the elevator move faster, they made it *feel* faster.

Your customer journey might also contain some unpleasant touch points that are out of your control; however, with a little bit of creativity, you can turn those interactions into neutral or even positive moments. This guide will help you examine your customer journey — whether in person, online, in your app, via a retail or logistics partner, or over-the-phone — and identify the slow elevators that you can transform into a magical moments.



ONLINE

ORDINARY

Multiple, immediate pop-ups

Immediate, obnoxious AI chatbot pop-up

Hit-or-miss accessibility

Contact info is missing or difficult to find

Boring or default messages for your 404 page, email subscription confirmations, order confirmations, etc.

Web pages are not optimized for mobile or tablet screens

Complex payment systems that leave a negative lasting impression or cause buyer's remorse

Hours of operation online don't match the actual schedule, especially during holidays

ELEVATED

Minimize use of pop-ups or delay their appearance

Unintrusive, optional chatbot available

Optimized with options for visitors with all abilities

Contact options are clearly listed on all websites and social platforms

Memorable messaging that's infused with your story across every digital touch point

Web pages are designed to function everywhere your customers are accessing them

Seamless payment options with invoices or confirmations that continue to tell your story

Hours of operation are regularly updated, and last-minute changes are posted on social media





ON-SITE

ORDINARY

Your office is hard to find in a large or unmarked building

Customers go through an entire transaction before hearing the price

Customers have to wait in your office for their turn to be served

A packet of paperwork that slows everything down

Customers arrive at your business and find out it's not fully accessible

Customers are ignored upon entering your business

Boring or default language for your wifi network & password, menu, and signage

Disorganized, unsanitary, or unseasonably cold/hot office that deters customers

ELEVATED

Customers receive detailed instructions with parking information

Clearly communicate the price and applicable variables upfront

Customers can sign up for a phone call or text to alert them when it's their turn

The ability to complete paperwork online in advance

If it's not in your control to make it fully accessible, clearly communicate the limitations on your website

Staff is trained to properly greet each customer

Messaging that's infused with your story across every relevant touchpoint

Clean, put-together, and inviting space that's at a comfortable temperature





ON THE PHONE

ORDINARY

Customers are greeted by a robot or pre-recorded operator

Boring or default hold music and voicemail message

Customers have to explain their situation over and over again

Customers feel disconnected from the call center employees

Customers are rushed off the phone because average call time is weighted metric

Customers have to start over if their call gets disconnected

Customers have to waste time providing their account number and other information

ELEVATED

Real humans greet customers whenever possible

Hold music and voicemail message that further tell your brand story

Staff fills their teammate in before transferring the customer's call

Call center employees share where they're calling from and ask customers to do the same

Employees use active listening to make sure all of their customers' needs are fully met

Associates ask for a callback number upfront in case they get disconnected

Staff can access the customer's account when it's linked to the phone number they're calling from





NEGATIVE TO NEUTRAL

Eliminating minor inconveniences is the easiest way to transform negative interactions into neutral ones. As you look for the slow elevators in your business, focus on the interactions that involve responsiveness, unclear expectations, or knowledge gaps.

WAIT TIME

You can avoid frustrated customers by providing estimates and updates on current wait times. If customers are waiting on hold, offer a call-back with an estimated time. If customers submit a form on your website and are waiting to hear back, set an expectation in an automated reply. When customers are waiting in line to speak with an associate, let them know that you realize they've been waiting, thank them for their patience, and provide an estimate of when it'll be their turn. Finally, offering distracting activities for children, such as cards, books, or coloring pages, can turn negative situations into positive ones.

UNCLEAR EXPECTATIONS

Over-communicate expectations with customers whenever possible. How long is each appointment? What is your average turnaround time? Do you require 30 days' notice to cancel a subscription? Always remember to reset expectations when necessary and, as my friend Jay Baer says, respond without answers. If you're waiting on someone else to provide information, let your customer know that you've received their question and will get back to them with an answer when you have it. Don't let customers think you forgot about them. Having no update *is* an update.

KNOWLEDGE GAPS

Customers are often annoyed when they can't easily find the information they're looking for. What are the most common questions you get asked before, during, and after a transaction? Can you record videos or create step-by-step guides? Regularly audit all of your communications with customers (your website, onboarding materials, contracts, etc.) and make sure all of the necessary information is available. If your customers still have questions, make sure there's a way to reach a human for swift resolution. As the expert in your area, there may be something that seems obvious to you but isn't widely known by your customers. Go through your customers' journey from their perspective and ask yourself what could be confusing to an average new customer.



NEUTRAL TO POSITIVE

One memorable “wow” moment can help erase the sting of minor annoyances along the customer journey. Below are three low-cost areas where you can effortlessly turn neutral interactions into positive moments.

WELCOMES AND FAREWELLS

What’s the first thing that happens when someone begins an interaction with your company, and the last thing that happens before they go? How can you inject magic — or at least charm — into these interactions? Welcome moments set the tone for the experience that follows, while special farewells leave your customers with a positive, lasting impression. This might be a small treat, a refreshing beverage, a handwritten note, or a personalized closing gift. In industries like dentistry, aesthetics, or acupuncture, reach out to customers before their visit and ask them if they have questions to ease their anxiety about their appointments. A phone check-in 24-hours *after* the appointment reminds them you care.

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Whether it’s a sign outside of your storefront, a 404 page, or even a voicemail message, there are endless opportunities for turn neutral interactions into positive ones. For example, connect with prospects before they even step into your business with fun sandwich board signs. Messages that cheer on the hometown sports team or congratulate members of the community on special milestones humanize your brand and demonstrate that you care. Infusing your story in every piece of communication will help you overcome apathy and boost brand affinity.

KINDNESS

Being kind is a simple way to transform mundane transactions into memorable moments. Take Trader Joe’s, where employees are renowned for their friendly and helpful demeanor. Simple acts of kindness, like offering assistance or a genuine smile, can turn a routine shopping trip into a delightful encounter. Similarly, Chick-fil-A has built a reputation for exceptional customer service. The company places a strong emphasis on politeness and care, creating an atmosphere where customers feel valued.