

Your starting point:

Process improvements with a focus on customer alignment.

It looks like your team's processes might be out of step with the demands of your customers. We recommend starting your adaptive journey by taking a fresh look at your systems, tools and workflows.

Starting steps:

1. Seek inspiration in customer insights

- Start by spending time truly understanding your customers.
- If you already have personas and detailed quantitative and qualitative data about customer needs and behaviors, gather your team together for an immersive refresher on who your customers are, what they need, and how your business can best meet those needs.
- We like a simple exercise where you ask team members to fill out a lightweight customer profile for each of your main customer segments—without doing any research; purely from memory.
- You can then compare the results against the real data and insights to quickly unearth any foundational misalignments between your customers and your team.
- If you don't have valid customer data and insights, then start by collecting it and reworking your strategy to focus on customer needs.
- As part of this customer immersion, ask team members to flag the ways the current processes are (or are not) meeting specific needs.
- You may discover that the problem is more in the collection and maintenance of actionable data about your customers. In other words, your perceived process problem might be about operationalizing new ways to collect and share data and insights about your customers.

2. Audit your system

- Now that you've reconnected with your customers, your next task is to uncover what it is about your current processes that's getting in the way of true customer-centricity.
- Working with your team, conduct an audit to map your processes for operationalizing customer expertise:

Collecting data (quantitative and qualitative)

Processing it to make it meaningful

Using it to inform your strategies

Measuring the performance of your work

- To start with, you may discover that you don't have processes in place at all to support these activities. If you don't, try piloting small initiatives to spin-up the missing pieces.
- At the same time, continue to assess your current processes. Seek input from stakeholders within your organization who work with your marketing team to identify any process challenges they've experienced.
- Then do the same with your team. Ask them to self-identify process challenges that are disrupting their abilities to understand and use customer insights.
- With a solid understanding of your customers, a clear sense of your current processes and feedback from both your team and internal stakeholders, you'll have all of the ingredients you need to begin looking for process improvements.

3. Identify new processes to apply

Conduct a workshop with your team and collectively plot out the relationship between each of the inputs you've gathered so far. Use this to identify new processes, changes to processes and open questions that you'll need to revisit.

- For each process change, create a timeline for when it should be addressed.

- Then prioritize your team's time depending on the size of the issues they are solving. Ask them to research possible solutions and put together a proposal for how the issues should be addressed and which processes they recommend for implementation.
- Keep it light. Use the planning and proposal process to ensure each item has been given enough thought, but don't make it a heavy lift for projects to get going.

- Use this planning work as a moment to return to internal stakeholders who provided you with feedback. Let them know how you are responding to their concerns. They may spot ways that your proposed solution can be improved.
 - Once you're sure you have good options for improving processes, provide your team with the support they need to pilot the new processes. Be mindful of your prioritization exercise and refrain from introducing too much change at once.
 - Make one team member responsible to oversee the rollout and adoption of each new process. This team member should check in with colleagues and groups to collect further feedback and ideas on how it can be refined.
 - As your team rolls out and implements each process change, be sure to include time for reflection, socialization of results and revision.
 - Remember that when it comes to change initiatives, how the change is communicated and supported is just as important as the change itself.
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Book a free one-hour consultation

Get started with (even more) confidence by adding nuance and context to these recommendations.

To book your free one-hour consultation with our team of experts, drop us a line at start@themoderncraft.com.

“If you’re on a mission to make change happen, you want Modern Craft in your corner.”

-Jon Mamela, CMO, Tourism Toronto