

Hello there,

A short one from me before the summer break, but an important message if you've been thinking about client listening but not quite got round to it yet.

My challenge to you is to take the next month or so to think about how to put client listening on the top of your agenda when the 'new term,' so to speak, starts in September ('The Happy Client' will be taking a break in August).

To help you on your way, here are my tips for getting a client listening programme off on the right foot:

### **Start small**

A pilot is a great way to get going with client listening - start with a sample of between 10 and 20 clients. If you're doing interviews, then 10 is enough to give you some great insight; if you're doing a survey, try for at least 20. I recommend you identify clients who have been with you for at least six months as they will have experienced various interactions with your business.

### **Start with the end in mind**

Think about what you want to find out from the exercise and make that the basis of your survey. Quantitative questions are great for statistical purposes, but open, qualitative questions will give you real insight into what your clients think and enable you to identify themes arising from the feedback. These themes give you the basis for the next stage in the exercise which is to amplify the positives and address any areas of concern so you can close the feedback loop.

### **View all feedback as a positive**

The greatest opportunities often arise from the least favourable comments. Although it may feel uncomfortable at the time, embracing all feedback demonstrates integrity and a willingness to learn and improve.

Bill Gates famously said, "You learn what you should be doing when you get negative feedback from unhappy customers." But in my experience, not all negative comments (or challenging ones as I

prefer to call them!) come from unhappy customers – advocates can have great ideas for improving your service too. And conversely, I've interviewed clients who've given lots of challenging feedback but wouldn't switch providers and would still make recommendations to others! So it's always worth asking, as you never know what you'll get back.

### **Manage expectations**

You need to establish a baseline. If you don't currently survey your clients, you have no basis from which to measure improvement. Your pilot results will give you an early indication of sentiment towards your business but to gain a fuller picture you need to expand your programme to more clients.

Regular client listening will enable you to track how you're doing in terms of your chosen satisfaction metric (Net Promoter Score or Customer Satisfaction) and consolidate the themes you began to see in the pilot phase. This will give you a compelling story to tell about how you make your clients feel – helping with both retention and attracting new clients.

As always, please do get in touch if you'd like a chat about how client listening can help you grow your business. Drop me an email or book a call.

I hope you have a wonderful summer. I am taking a bit of time off with my boys and, to try and break the cycle of constant bickering (anyone else?!) I'm taking them camping – on my own and as a complete camping novice – wish me luck...and see you in September!



Best wishes,

*Anna*

Anna Lake Consulting, Tavistock, Devon, UK, United Kingdom

[Unsubscribe](#) [Manage preferences](#)