

## How to Use NPS to Evaluate Your Learning Program

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For us learning and development professionals, being able to demonstrate the value that we add is kind of like the holy grail of learning. However, most of us only measure our learning programs based on the problem we're trying to solve. Did it deliver on the learning outcomes? Tick!

Less often we're thinking about the experience.

**Was that piece of learning engaging?**

**Did people actually enjoy it?**

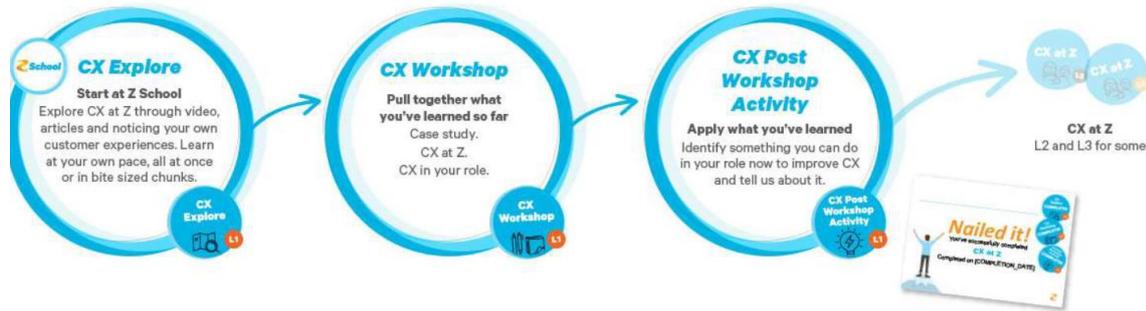
**Are people telling their friends about how great it was?**

One way to measure this aspect of your learning program is using the Net Promoter Score (NPS). Using NPS in learning design and evaluation is something we have been experimenting with at Z Energy. I recently presented our experience at [L&D Innovation & Tech Fest](#) and got such incredible feedback from the audience I thought I'd share it a bit further.

### Using NPS at Z Energy

Z Energy is a New Zealand based fuel distributor. One of the things that's really important to us, as well as to a lot of organisations, is developing our capability in customer experience. It's something that every single person who works for us needs to learn about. As part of this, our people need to understand the Net Promoter Score which is how we measure the experience of our customers.

Here's the basics of our learning program:



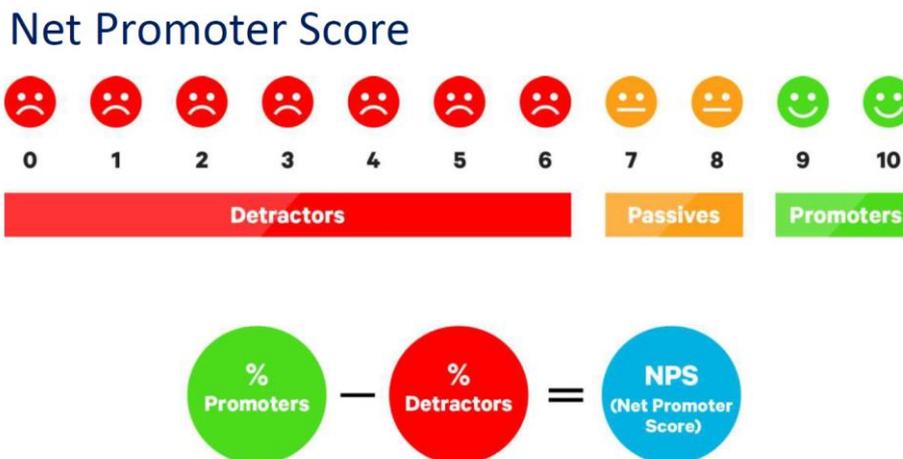
Our people start off by doing some self-paced learning on our intranet, followed by a workshop. And then they go away and do a little project to make a difference to customer experience in their role.

### It got me thinking, wouldn't it be interesting if we used the Net Promoter Score to evaluate our customer experience training programs?

That way they'd get a double hit: They get to evaluate the learning programme using the NPS measurement, and at the same time gain a greater understanding of what NPS is all about.

### What is the Net Promoter Score?

The Net Promoter Score a customer satisfaction benchmark that measures how likely your customers are to recommend your business. It asks a simple question of your customers: "On a scale of 0 to 10, how likely are you to recommend us to a friend?"



For a learner, I ask "How likely are you to recommend this learning programme to a colleague?"

If they mark it a nine or ten, they're classified as a promoter. If they say seven or eight, it's means "yeah maybe I would", but there might be something getting in the way for them. And then if they're a six or below, we call them detractors.

To calculate your Net Promoter Score simply take the promoters and subtract the detractors.

For example, if everybody rated your programme a nine or a ten, then your Net Promoter Score would be 100. Or if everybody rated it six or below, your Net Promoter Score would be -100. If everybody was passive, the Net Promoter Score would be zero (let's hope that never happens!).

## Benefits of Using NPS in Learning

The NPS really gives you an idea of how engaging your program is. If you're learning program is drier than a piece of toast, they're not going to give it a nine or ten, no matter how relevant it is to their role.

And there are a few other reasons I like NPS as a way to measure learning programs:

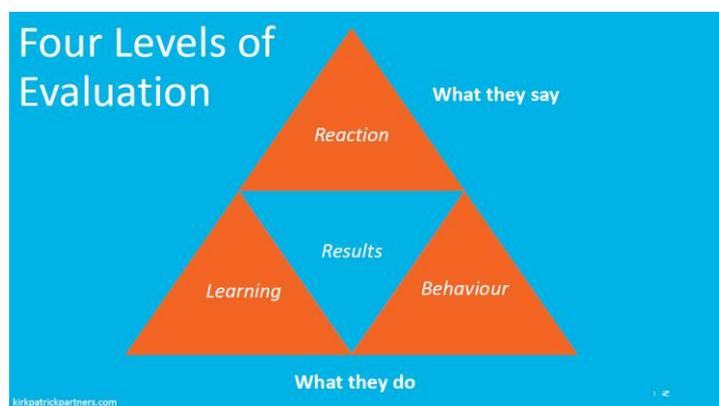
- **It's a tough measure:** Often as learning designers, we look at the problem we're trying to solve and create a solution to tick that box. But if you know you're going to be asking people how likely they are to recommend, it really raises the bar in terms of what you will have to deliver. Having someone recommend your learning program to another human is actually quite a high aspiration, which I think is a great thing.
- **It forces you to think about the experience up front:** NPS really forces you to go beyond the norm in your design. You now need to consider how much fun it's going to be, how time efficient it is, and how user-friendly the program is.
- **It's a measure your people already understand** (especially if your company is using NPS in their customer engagement strategy). There's often a tendency to create something shiny and new, but if we can put things in frameworks that our people already understand it makes it so much easier to get buy-in.

## A Holistic Measurement of Learning at Z Energy

What Net Promoter Score really is measuring is reactions. What are people saying about your learning program? While that's really useful, especially in your design, there are some things it doesn't measure:

- Application to job
- Effectiveness of learning outcomes
- Behaviour change

NPS is not a complete score and using it in isolation won't be a true evaluation of your learning program. At Z Energy we use the following model to evaluate our learning programs:



**Reaction:** NPS will give you a good idea of the “reaction” triangle. It’s pretty straightforward to measure, we send out a simple survey using a Microsoft form (but you could use any survey tool).

But as you can see from this diagram, this is only one part of the equation - it doesn’t give a complete picture of your learning effectiveness.

So at Z Energy we combine NPS with a few other measurements to give a holistic evaluation of our programs:

**Learning:** measuring learning is a little bit trickier, but it doesn’t have to be complicated. I simply consider the capabilities that I’m trying to build and use simple quizzes in our LMS to test their understanding.

**Behaviour:** This is where things get hard. It’s much more complicated and time consuming to really understand whether you’ve made a difference. So in thinking about this programme I had to think about what it would look like if people are behaving in the way that we intended.

### **Three ways we measure behaviour change at Z Energy:**

1. **Intranet visits:** We know that if people are applying customer experience in their jobs everyday, then they would be going to our intranet for resources to help them do this.
2. **Team rituals:** For us, having a “customer moment” in every team meeting is a good indicator that people have our customers front of mind. So we get regular feedback from our managers about who’s introducing these things into the team meetings.
3. **Impact on daily tasks:** Ultimately, what I’m interested in is what people do in their job every single day. And that’s quite hard to measure. We’ve worked with a partner to develop a three pronged survey approach which takes the learning outcomes and the behaviours we want to see and asks the following:
  - To managers: Are you seeing behaviours with your team after they’ve finished the program?
  - To learners: Are you doing it?
  - To facilitators: What was the feedback from the workshops?

So by looking at those three pieces of feedback, I’m able to see if there are particular teams that are applying the learning better than others.

### **Measurement is Not the End Game**

Measuring the effectiveness of your learning program, whether you use NPS or another measure, is not about ticking a box and moving on to the next thing. For me, it’s really a kicking off point to ask “what’s next?” What’s missing in our program? Who isn’t applying it? And where might I need to do some tailored stuff?

This can be a little bit of a mind shift for us learning folk. We often look at NPS or other measures as a reflection of how good we are as learning designers. But if we look at it as a way of staying curious about what we need to focus on, I think we can start to nurture a continuous learning approach.

*This story from Z Energy was one of the top-rated presentations at [L&D Innovation & Tech Fest](#), a 2 day event for learning and development leaders to learn, network and connect. Join us at L&D Innovation & Tech Fest in New Zealand in 2020. Sign up to stay in the loop.*