BUILD HUMAN-CENTRIC EXPERIENCES AT A CONTINUALLY EVOLVING DIGITAL WORKPLACE

MEASURED BY XLAs AND DRIVEN BY XMO

Abstract

This White Paper explores the role of XLAs and XMO in reimagining the Digital Workplace to drive enhanced employee experience, improved productivity, and tangible business outcomes.

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A New Reality - Better Employee Experience leads to better Customer Experiences

> **"** Employee experience is the sum of all employee interactions with an organization – everything from pre-hire to retire. It is the intentional design of a compelling experience for employees in work while employee engagement is an outcome of this workplace experience. **"**
>
> **- Ben Whitter**
>
> Author, Founder & CEO at HEX Organization
>
> and World Employee Experience Institute (WEEI)

'Experience', today, has become a yardstick for organizations to measure the happiness index of their people – the workforce. The experiences organizations offer to their employees will directly reflect on the overall growth of the organization.

More specifically, the onus of creating and driving better workplace experiences is not merely confined to the purview of the HR department. On the contrary, it is a collective organizational responsibility that includes cross-functional collaboration between HR, IT, and business teams. So, something as critical as this which touches every employee requires singular ownership and accountability. More so, to steer everyone towards a shared vision, unify the ways of thinking, align priorities, and summon one experience language. Also to facilitate the organizations to move towards a smart and continuously evolving digital workplace ecosystem that offers employees elevated experiences in the moments that matter and helps them bring the best version of themselves to their work.

Status Quo - The Challenge Faced by Organizations

The expectations of the workforce from their workplace have significantly evolved over the past few years. They expect today's workplace to deliver consumer-grade experiences. This shift requires a fundamental reboot of how employee experience is perceived, and this begins with identifying the experiences that matter and devising the right means to measure them. If the problem statement is not known, then how does one find solutions for it?

The effectiveness of IT Services (including that of workplace services) has traditionally been measured by the promise of Service Level Agreements (SLAs) - A written down commitment on time, speed, quality, efficiency, reliability and more. However, this yardstick no longer holds good in the experience economy.

Judging a Book by its Cover - The Watermelon Effect

Sometimes, it's more than what meets the eye. Like the Watermelon Effect, when all the SLAs reported and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are seemingly green, but the employees are not delighted by the experience. While the green suggests everything is working as it should, it does not shed light on how the employees consumed the whole experience.

To address this, organizations world over are transitioning from service level agreements (SLAs) to experience level agreements (XLAs). Which leads us to - What are XLAs and how are they defined and measured?

The Inevitable Shift in Paradigm - SLAs to XLAs

An important fact to be understood is that SLAs cannot be like-to-like replaced by XLAs. On the contrary, SLAs and XLAs are two completely distinct units of measurement.

SLAs

- Measure the **output**
- **Process** driven
- A **singular unit** of measurement
- Focus on **user issues** and resolution
- Driven by **penalties**
- Measuring units **remain the same**

XLAs

- Measure the **outcome**
- **Experience** driven
- A **combination of experience metrics** driving an unit score
- Focus on **user needs** and expectations
- Driven by **rewards**
- A journey of **constant correction & evolution**

Figure 1: SLAs vs XLAs

Hence, XLA definition is critical. More so, because of the intangible nature of "experience" and the fact that it will differ from one organization to another.

Defining Experience Level Agreements (XLAs) – The Infosys Way

Infosys takes a structured approach for envisaging XLAs and weaving them into the fabric of an employee's journey such that organizations can measure, understand, and act, there by driving exponentially better workplace experiences. This approach takes a multi-dimensional view, or an employee centered 360-degree model to define an experience to be measured.
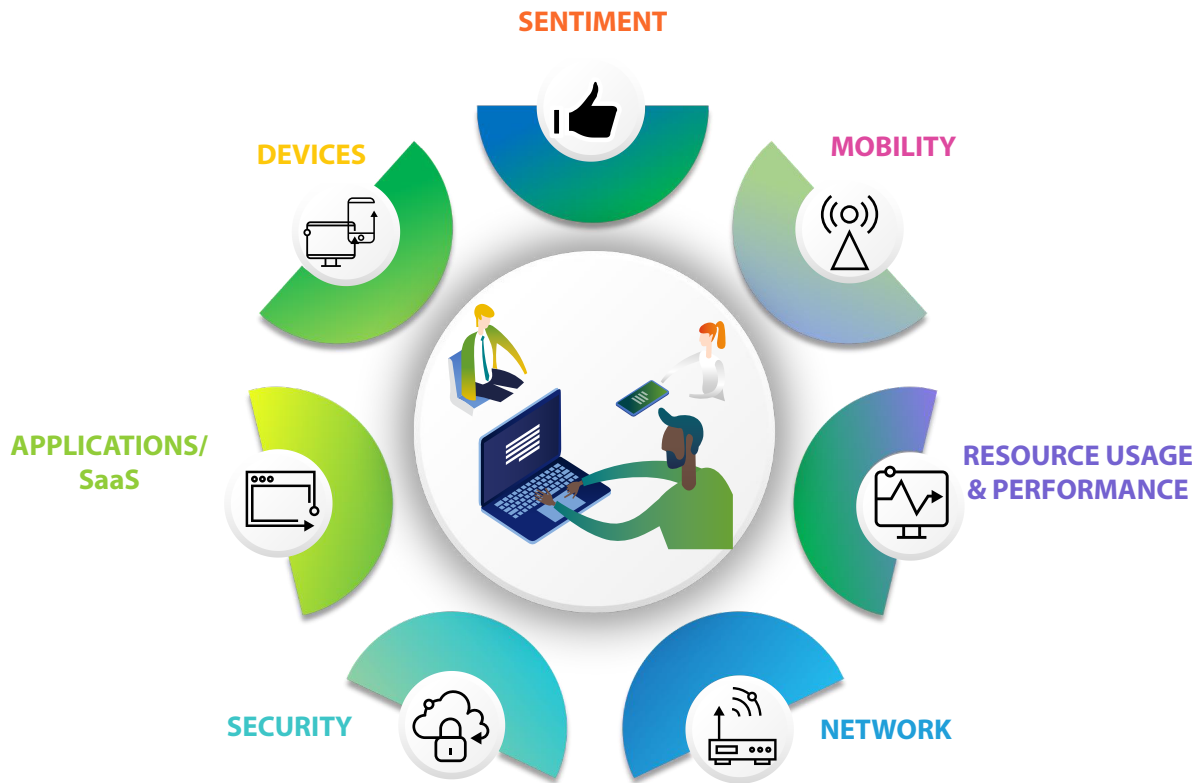
Understanding the **Moments that Matter** to employees

Identifying the **Metrics that Impact Experience**

Mapping the **experience touchpoints** with employees at the heart of it

Figure 2: Experience measurement dimensions

For instance: If an employee is frustated with a poor application performance, the reasons could be:

a) Poor network connection

b) Backend jobs lowering system performance

c) Lower configuration device

d) Issues related to the application itself, among others.

So, it is important to consider a 360-degree view of the different workplace channels of interactions, systems, processes, and tools that can influence the eventual employee experience.

The first step is identifying the moments that matter and then measure these moments with what we like to call as "Key Experience Indicators (KEIs)".

Infosys has developed a comprehensive KEI Framework* that is the foundation to our XLA definition model. Here is an approach through which we have assisted many clients to transition from SLAs to XLAs, in a positive way.
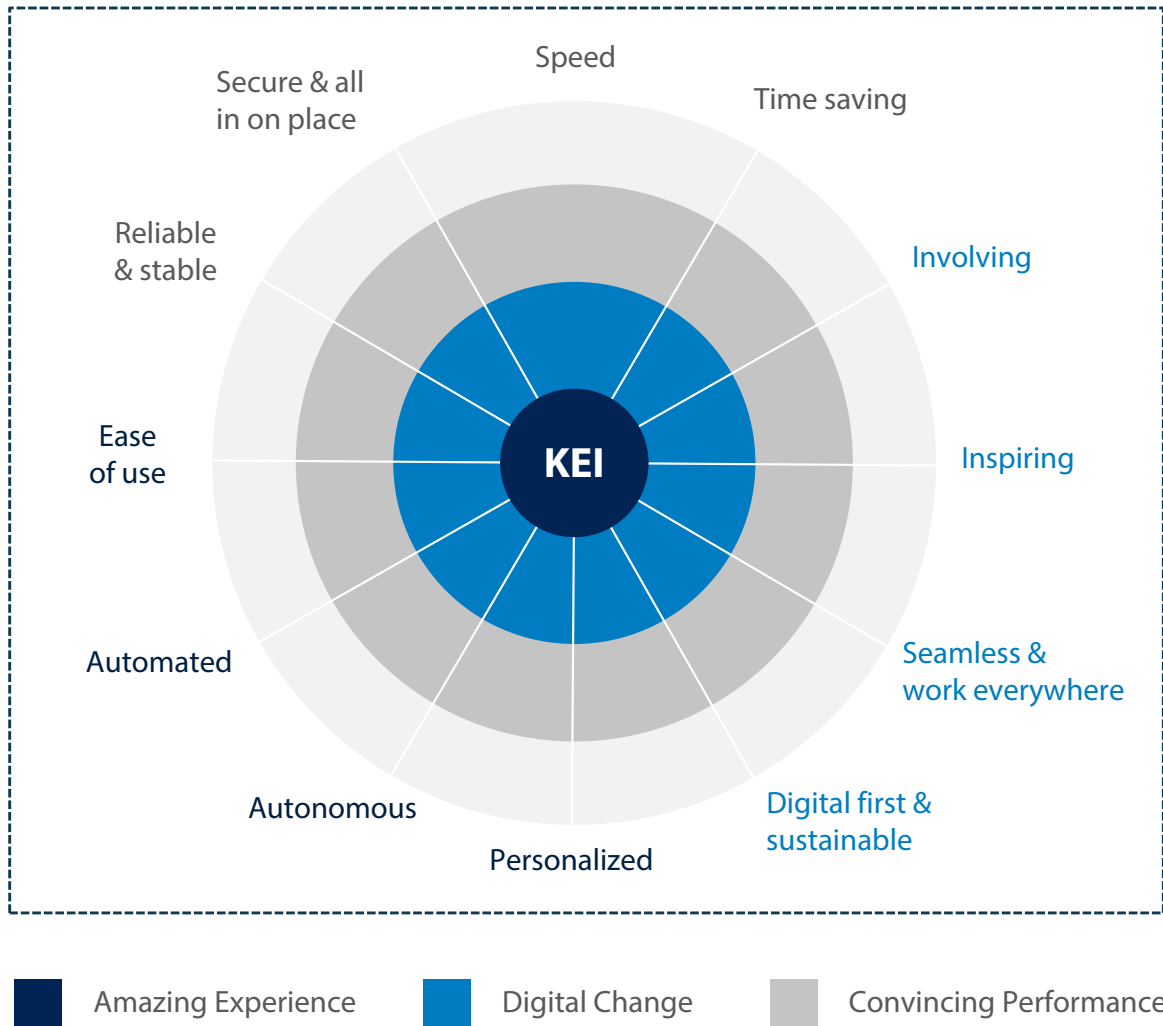

Figure 3: The KEI Framework*

The Key Experience Indicators (KEI) framework focuses on the employee journey across the workplace and mapping the key moments that shape the experience delivered to the employee. This **KEI framework** is mapped against three user experience dimensions – **Amazing Experience, Digital Enabled and Convincing Performance.**

A detailed breakup of the KEIs need equal inputs from both the Business and IT Teams, assessment of friction points, focus group discussions, and asking leading questions that influence the workplace experiences. This can form the basis for definition of the XLA.

Infosys has developed a catalogue with 100+ KEIs that combined to form XLAs. But there is no one-size-fits-all definition. The catalogue can jumpstart the process and the KEI framework can act as a starting point from which imagining and defining the XLAs becomes more structured and accurately customized to that specific organization.

Shared below are some XLA samples we have constructed from this model for some of the clients-

- New Joiner Productivity
- Ease of Use Index for Workplace Services
- Level of Autonomy at the Workplace and more

Measuring Experiences and Acting Upon Them

To measure the experience metrics across the enterprise, real-time data relating to many areas of end-user's tools, systems and processes need to be captured, correlated, and made sense of. The respective metrics of each KEI combines to form the eventual XLAs scorecard and are visualized via XLA dashboards. These dashboards provide insights into real time, daily and weekly experience scores and highlight the end user friction points and narrow down the problem areas that require attention.
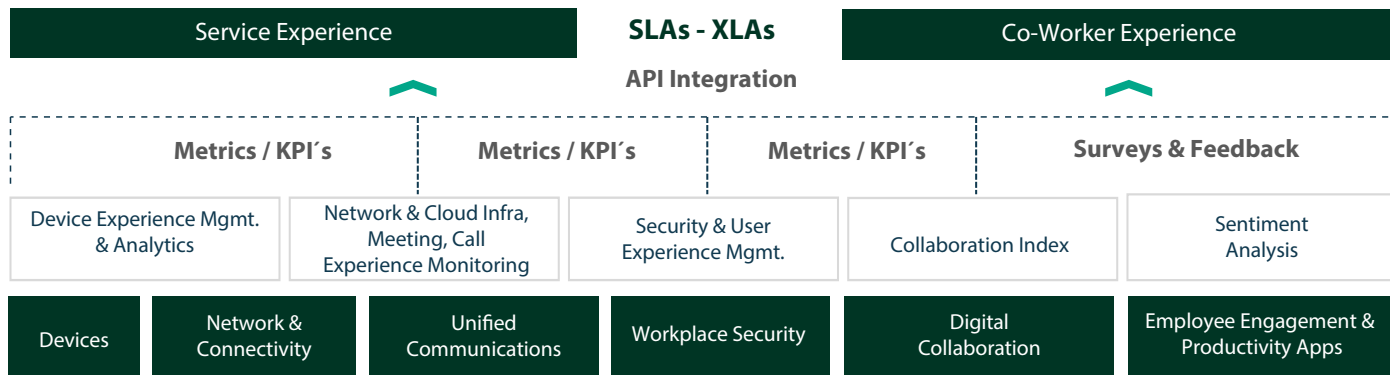
Service Experience		SLAs - XLAs	Co-Worker Experience	
		API Integration		
Metrics / KPI´s		Metrics / KPI´s	Metrics / KPI´s	Surveys & Feedback
Device Experience Mgmt. & Analytics	Network & Cloud Infra, Meeting, Call Experience Monitoring	Security & User Experience Mgmt.	Collaboration Index	Sentiment Analysis
Devices	Network & Connectivity	Unified Communications	Workplace Security	Digital Collaboration	Employee Engagement & Productivity Apps

Figure 4: Cross channel Data Sources

To get a holistic view of employee needs and perception, correlation of data from different channels of employee interactions and experience is essential.

There is a need for an observability layer across the digital workplace to capture the data signals and telemetry. Besides, an aggregation layer where, using API integrations, data lake and analytic engine – one can correlate the data points to enable proactive management and measurement of employee experiences.

For a Large Consumer Goods company based in UK, Infosys has built an end user experience dashboard which aggregates and correlates data captured via DEX, Microsoft 365 Analytics, ServiceNow, Happy Signals, HR IT and Enterprise Systems powered by an analytics engine, data lake and APIs. This forms the basis for not only experience measurement but also the basis for deriving insights and taking remedial actions to elevate the employee experiences.
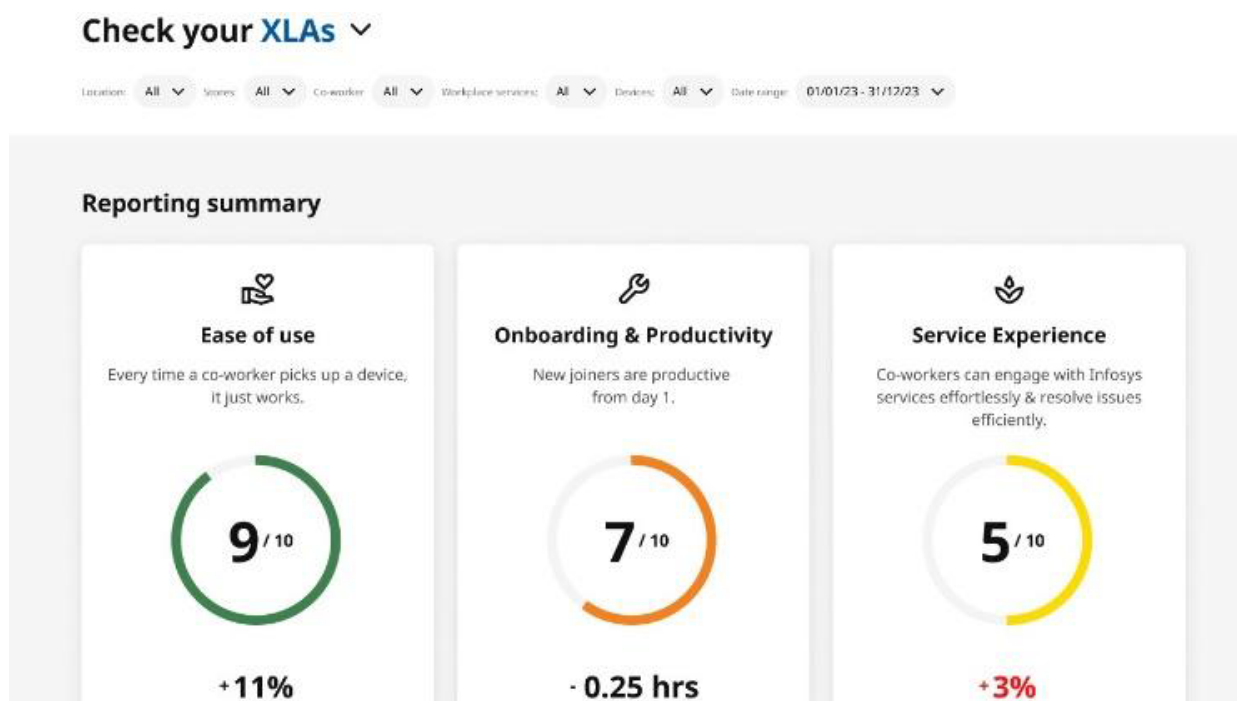
Check your XLAs ∨

Location: All ∨ Stores: All ∨ Co-worker: All ∨ Workplace services: All ∨ Devices: All ∨ Date range: 01/01/23 - 31/12/23 ∨

Reporting summary

Ease of use
Every time a co-worker picks up a device, it just works.
9 / 10
+11%

Onboarding & Productivity
New joiners are productive from day 1.
7 / 10
- 0.25 hrs

Service Experience
Co-workers can engage with Infosys services effortlessly & resolve issues efficiently.
5 / 10
+3%

Figure 5: Illustration of dashboard built for a Large Consumer Goods company based in UK.

But Who will Step Up to Take the Accountability - Experience Management Office (XMO)

The responsibility of creating and driving better workplace experiences does not fall under the purview of the Human Resources department alone. It is a collective organizational responsibility. Something as critical as this which touches every employee in an organization needs a singular ownership and accountability; to steer everyone towards a shared vision, unified ways of thinking, collective priorities and one experience language. Hence the need for an Experience Management Office (XMO) – a team which of dedicated individuals who act as the custodians and driving force behind an organization's digital workplace experience. The XMO is an organization's Experience Lighthouse helping navigate towards the experience objectives laid out.

The XMO typically constitutes of three main functions:

1. **Experience Strategy and Governance** – owns, manages, aligns, and reports on holistic experience at the workplace and drives the experience initiatives and programs.

2. **Experience Measurement** – focuses on ongoing collection, monitoring, and management of data to measure performance against the XLAs — both to understand the efficacy of the solution and to identify pain points.

3. **Experience Insights & Actions** – interprets and investigates the findings to identify and frame the challenges and remedial actions to be taken by the project/ service teams.
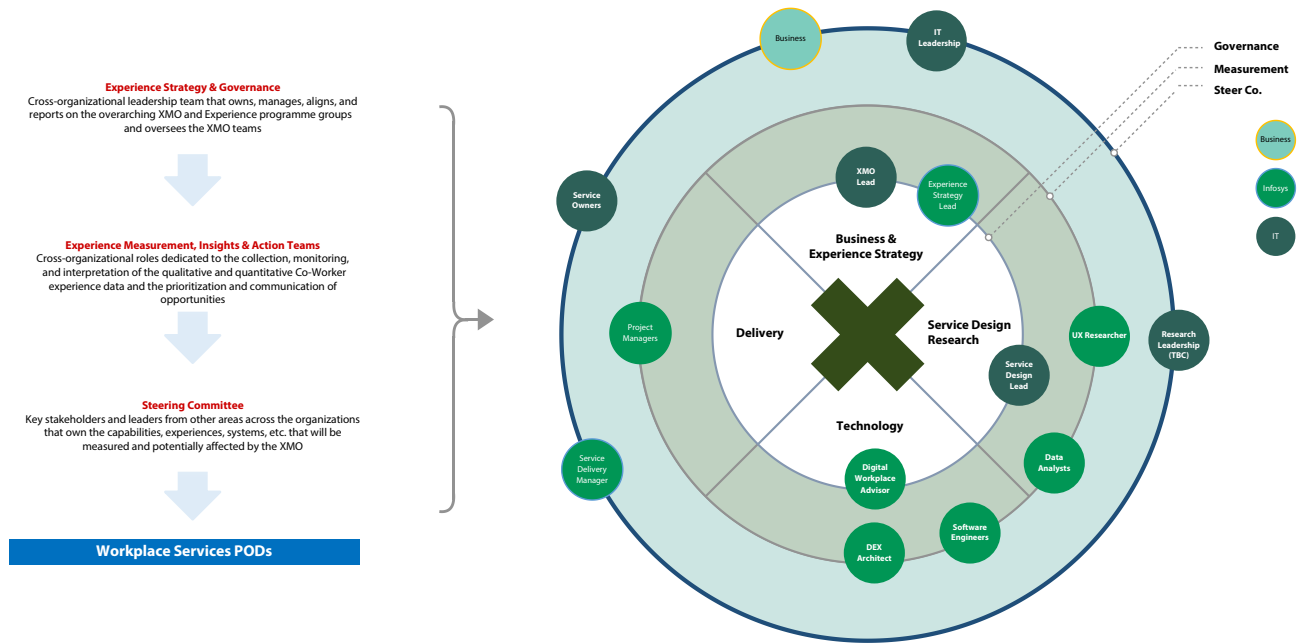

Figure 6: XMP Team structure framework

We, at Infosys Limited, propagate setting up a XMO as an essential success factor towards successfully transitioning from a process and SLA led workplace to an experience and XLA led workplace.

Recommended Best Practices towards setting up an XMO are:

- Find the right Leader. The XMO Lead should be an internal role (not sourced from a partner)
- Identify the right individuals to form a team
- Arrive at the experience vision and align on outcomes targeted
- Agree on the roles and responsibilities
- Set up a meeting cadence across the different XMO functions
- Keep evolving, since experiences are ever changing

It is important to revisit the XLA definition and the metrics periodically since experience is an ever-changing element.

Applying Risks and Reward Controls with XLAs

Previously, many organizations have treated XLAs as complex SLAs and attempted to combine both XLAs and SLAs under a single framework. However, the two need to be kept separate, with penalties associated with missing SLAs and bonuses associated with exceeding XLAs, to incentivize the workplace services to go above and beyond in elevating the overall end user experience.

We, at Infosys Limited, recommend a sample risk/reward model that's mentioned below to illustrate this second approach:
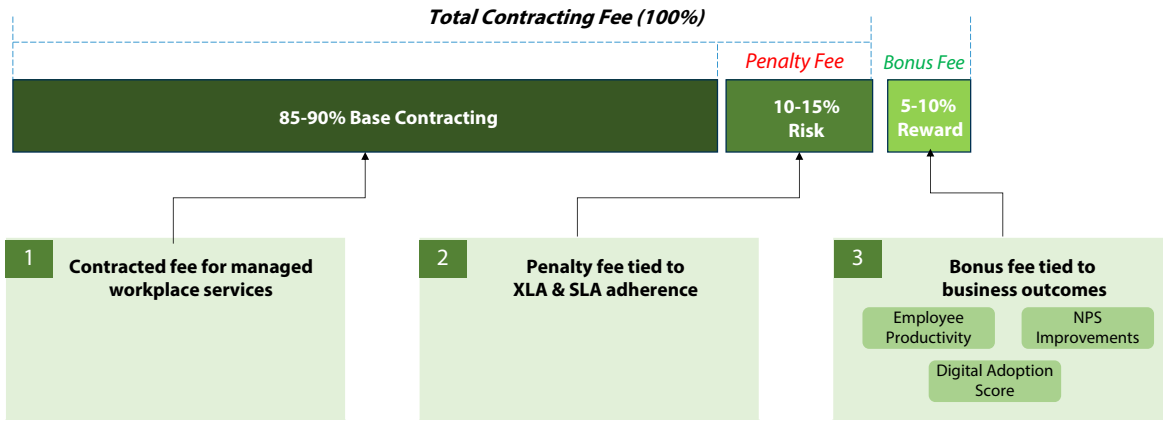

Figure 7: Risk / Reward Framework

Summary: To cultivate a robust workplace culture, effective experience management is a fundamental necessity. However, this cannot be achieved instantly. This requires a dedicated approach that fosters collaboration between IT and Business Teams. This collaboration would be helpful in identifying experiences that truly matter and realizing actual results on the business front.

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A Business Leader with close to 20 years of experience in crafting employee experiences and driving digital workplace services, and helping clients re-imagine work, workforce, and workspace along the way.
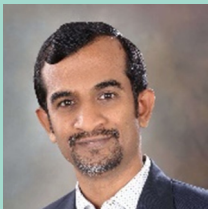
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Chidambaram Ganapathi (Chidu) has over 25 years of experience in IT consulting, practice building and pre-sales, solution architecture and delivery for global Fortune 500 clients across multiple verticals including financial services, telecom, education, pharmaceutical and other industries. He has extensive experience in IT Strategy & Consulting and has provided technology advisory services in the execution of large transformation programs for global clients to successfully deliver on their strategies.

Chidu is an active speaker in industry forums and conferences providing thought-leadership on Cloud, Workplace Transformation, Digital API economy and SOA.

*Special Acknowledgement

Sunil Agarwal,

Creator of *KEI (Key Experience Indicators) Framework,

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