



Jon Picoult

Jon Picoult helps businesses impress their customers and inspire their employees, turning everyday people into loyal brand advocates.

Jon is a sought-after speaker whose thought-provoking presentations have consistently earned rave reviews. His insights have been featured in leading publications ranging from *The Wall Street Journal* and the *New York Times* to *Brandweek* and *Workforce Management*. He has worked with some of the world's foremost brands, helping organizations capitalize on the power of loyalty—both in the marketplace and in the workplace.

Jon's philosophy is simple: With each and every customer interaction, businesses win or lose share. Every touch point—be it with consumers, employees, or even job candidates—presents an opportunity to either build brand loyalty or to erode it. Using both marketing and operational tactics, Jon helps companies capitalize on this concept by shaping distinctive interactions with these key stakeholders to create positive, memorable impressions that cultivate loyalty and deliver all of the associated financial benefits.

Prior to founding Watermark Consulting, a customer experience advisory firm, Jon held senior executive roles at Fortune 100 companies—leading service, technology, sales and marketing. With this unique, cross-functional professional experience, he developed award-winning marketing strategies; delivered on sales plans exceeding half a billion dollars; shaped competitively differentiated service solutions for millions of consumers; and engineered industry-leading technology platforms.

Early in his career, Jon earned the distinction of becoming the youngest senior vice president in the over 150-year history of a leading global financial services company. He received his A.B. in Cognitive Science from Princeton University and his M.B.A. in General Management from Duke University.

Jon's expertise is far from academic or theoretical; the guidance he offers is grounded in years of hands-on business experience. Jon infuses his presentations with a unique combination of passion, pragmatism and humor, which leaves his audience not only energized but also armed with specific, actionable ideas that they can immediately employ in their own organizations.



Speech Topics

Seek To ImpressSM – The Power of Great Customer Experiences

How do you get your business to stand out from the crowd? Many sources of competitive differentiation can be fleeting – product innovations can be mimicked, technology advances can be copied, and cost leadership is difficult to achieve let alone sustain.

But as Jon Picoult describes in this presentation, a great customer experience can deliver tremendous strategic and economic value to a business, in a way that's difficult for competitors to replicate.

Filled with compelling statistics and fascinating case studies, this program will give your audience very specific, actionable ideas for enhancing their own organization's customer experience. Topics covered include:

- What the "customer experience" is and what's so special about great ones.
- How great experiences boost financial results and accelerate business growth.
- The current state of the customer experience in your industry.
- The link between a company's employee experience and its customer experience.
- A behavioral and operational prescription for customer experience excellence.

The Forgotten Customer: A New Perspective on Winning the War for Talent

Many businesses are routinely ignoring one of their most important customers. As a result, they're not only tarnishing their brand, but they're also losing the war for talent.

Based on Jon Picoult's popular *New York Times* feature, this presentation offers a compelling case for viewing employment candidates as customers. It illustrates how companies can turn administrative recruiting touchpoints into persuasive marketing opportunities that help draw talented people into an organization.

The program also highlights the often overlooked connection between job applicants and actual customers, demonstrating how recruiting interactions can influence your company's brand and shape consumer perceptions. Topics covered include:

- Why the "applicant experience" is broader and more influential than you think.
- Why talent acquisition is a business like any other – product, provider and customer.
- What job applicants think of companies' current recruiting experiences.
- What companies have to gain from a great applicant experience.
- How customer experience management principles can be applied to the recruiting arena.

It's All In Your Head: Cognitive Science and the Customer Experience

The mind works in mysterious ways. When people interact with a business, their satisfaction and loyalty is shaped by how they perceive, process and remember those experiences.

In this fascinating presentation, Jon Picoult describes how companies can capitalize on cognitive

science to create a stronger, more memorable customer experience. From improving sales close rates to building positive word-of-mouth to enhancing employee engagement – you'll find the principles outlined in this program to be invaluable. Topics covered include:

- How memories are formed and then shape customer perceptions about your business.
- Why some business brands inspire intense consumer appeal, while others fall flat.
- How customers can be satisfied – even if your customer experience is far from perfect.
- How service failure can turn everyday customers into loyal brand advocates.
- How common cognitive biases can be turned into competitive business advantages.

Five Surprising Truths About Great Customer Experiences

Many businesses think they know what it takes – and costs – to create a great customer experience. It's all about delivering great service, satisfying customers and improving retention – right?

Not exactly. These are just some of the common misconceptions that often derail companies' efforts to enhance their customer experience.

In this eye-opening presentation, Jon Picoult dispels these myths by revealing five surprising truths about what's really involved in differentiating your business' customer experience.

Topics covered include:

- Why customer experience is not the same as customer service.
- Why aiming for customer satisfaction is like aspiring to mediocrity.
- Why customer retention is nearly meaningless.
- What it really takes to delight a customer.
- How great customer experiences can actually reduce expenses.

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly: Eyewitness Accounts Of Unforgettable Customer Experiences – And What Your Business Can Learn From Them

As consumers, we all have examples of unforgettable customer experiences – memorable either for how great they were or how awful.

But look beyond the delight or frustration associated with these experiences, and there are valuable business lessons to be learned from them. Every unforgettable customer experience offers a tutorial on how to strengthen customer loyalty, or erode it.

In this entertaining presentation, Jon Picoult mines his own unforgettable customer experiences and uses those stories to illustrate key principles for cultivating customer satisfaction and loyalty. Topics covered include:

- The best service recovery ever – turning failure into fortune.
- Maggots on a plane – communicating during times of customer distress.
- The best painter in the world – the surprising truth about delighting customers.
- The call center that doesn't take calls – the perils of internal focus.
- The worst 800-line greeting ever – creating a frictionless customer experience.

The Top Five Reasons Why Customers Are Tuning You Out

Is your business having trouble getting its message across to customers? Do you find that your attempts to communicate are falling on deaf ears?

In today's smartphone-enabled, Twitter-obsessed, e-mail barraged, 500-TV channel world, it can be tough for any business to capture consumers' attention. But the sad fact is, many companies fail to capitalize on some basic approaches that would help them to better understand and communicate with their customers.

In this presentation, Jon Picoult describes the most common reasons why consumers often tune businesses out – and shows how companies can change this dynamic so that when they talk, their customers listen. Topics covered include:

- The current state of customer engagement in your industry.
- How to create a brand that resonates with consumers and employees.
- Why many businesses' customer communication strategies are doomed to fail.
- The power of simplicity in fostering customer understanding and engagement.
- The most valuable source of customer insight that companies routinely ignore.

The Top Ten Ways to Spook Your Customers

What keeps you up at night? Are you afraid that your customers might disappear like ghosts? Worried that competitors might pick them off like vultures? Stressed about customer complaints that are driving you batty?

In an amusing and entertaining format, Jon will take you on a tour of ten common ways that organizations inadvertently drive their customers away. You'll not only learn how to avoid these pitfalls, but you'll discover how to cast a spell that'll keep your customers coming back time and time again. Topics covered include:

- Why companies routinely underestimate the business impact of spooking customers.
- How front-line staff behaviors can make or break your business' customer experience.
- Why operating with a skeleton staff costs more in the long run.
- Why customers need to know what's lurking around the corner.
- The power of treats over tricks.