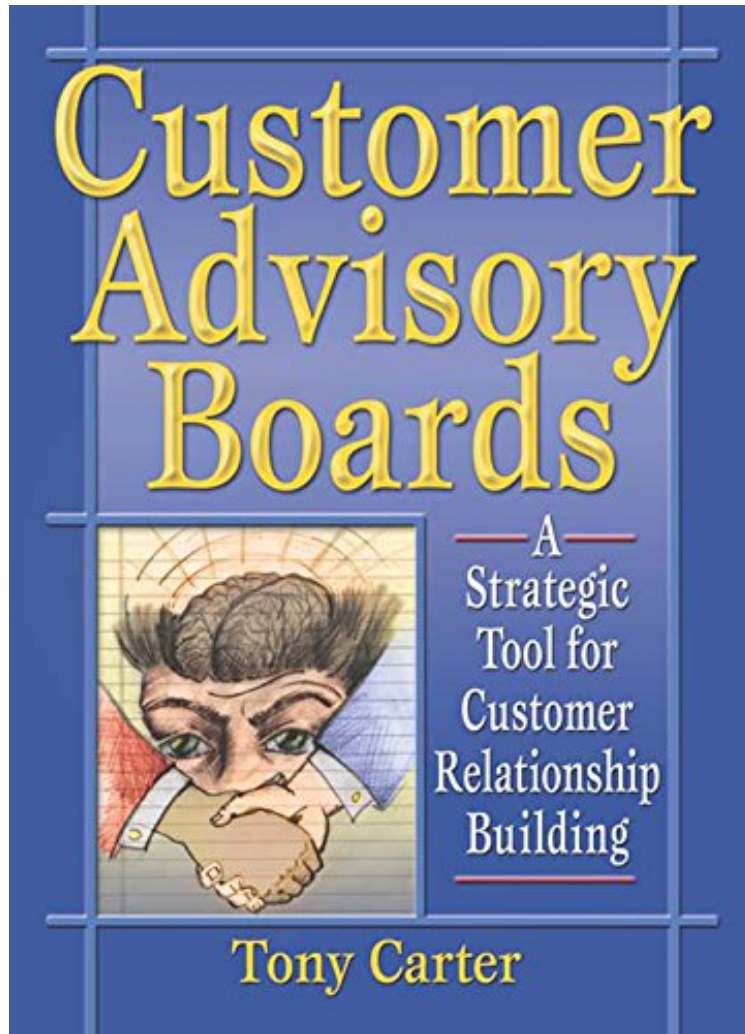


Customer Advisory Boards: A Strategic Tool for Customer Relationship Building

David L Loudon, Tony Carter

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This may variously prejudice or inform here. Customer Advisory Boards are powerful tools for engaging with customers in a variety of dimensions. Companies are using them to interactively work with their customers on developing new products and services, to keep them abreast of changes in their customers' perceptions of the changing landscape of their business world, and more. CABs provide a platform to share and develop in an environment where the customer is present and participating. CABs are used by big and small firms, They are relatively inexpensive and potentially very high in rewards. Given this, it is of immediate interest to read a book on this topic. Customer Advisory Boards: a strategic tool for customer relationship building by Tony Carter (Binghamton, NY: Best Business Books Haworth Press, Inc. 2003) The tagline for this book, "a strategic tool for customer relationship building" only hints at the confusion of ideas within its covers. 45% of the book, "Section I: Customer Relationship Building", is taken up with a discursive sampling of theory and practice in relationship selling, customer-centered value, and the 'nature of relationships' (this includes a side venture into leadership and emotional intelligence theories). Many of these discussions are interesting, even provocative in themselves. Unfortunately, Carter makes no organized effort to map these onto the actual topic at hand, CABs. Further, Carter mixes in discussion of Advisory Boards for start-up firms with applications more typical for mature firms. The balance of the book, "Section II: Building Customer Advisory Boards" and "Section III: Strategic Uses and Effective Management" will not reward senior managers or consultants with much of practical value. The view of strategic value is limited to customer acquisition and customer retention. There is no useful discussion of how meetings are actually conducted, how participants interact, what values they might gain, or how the meeting facilitation role is accomplished. In the end much of these sections of the book are taken up with cases studies that seem only peripherally to shed light on CABs. For a book that pops up very high on a Google search for "customer advisory boards", this is a disappointment. This review originally published on my blog at: [...]

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Learn why customer advisory boards are so successful and how to create one for any business! From a leading authority in business management comes a book to give your company the winning edge. Customer Advisory Boards: A Strategic Tool for Customer Relationship Building examines the customer advisory board (CAB) one of the most effective competitive tools for building and maintaining customer satisfaction. This business guide shows how to create and make use of an effective CAB, and how doing so can give your company a marketing advantage and improve vital aspects of business, including customer responsiveness, trust-building, and customer satisfaction. Customer Advisory Boards focuses on bringing companies and customers closer together utilizing input and advice from a CAB. This book shows how to use three types of customer bases: existing customers, potential customers, or former buyers to form three different types of advisory boards: corporate strategy boards to plan future investments, product planning boards to create new product, and launch success boards to improve existing product. Using the information in this book, your company can transform from being customer focused to customer driven. Customary advisory boards benefit your company by: improving sales contact and dialogue dynamics of the company enabling the company to see itself through the customers' eyes; sharing ideas and suggestions to improve a company's programs and services to its customers showing that the company values its customers' opinions

and wants to improve for them providing access to expertise and experience from a wide range of necessary disciplines without legal liability Customer advisory boards also benefit the board members by: giving them opportunities to offer practical advice that can affect a company allowing them to establish personal and professional contacts from each other rewarding them with company perks and products giving them a sense of belonging and empowerment With case studies, appendices, notes, references, and surveys, Dr. Tony Carter has created an illuminating, educational research tool for company owners and managers. Whether applied to a corporation, a medical or religious institution, or a not-for-profit organization, Customer Advisory Boards will help increase customer loyalty and satisfaction.