The Philadelphia Chapter of
The French American Chamber of Commerce

Proudly Presents a Transatlantic Webinar

OUT C.A.R.E. THE COMPETITION
Fine Tuning Culture for Sustainable Success

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OUT CARE THE COMPETITION
FINE TUNING CULTURE FOR SUSTAINABLE SUCCESS
EMMANUEL RICHARD | DIANE SERBIN HOPKINS

Judith :
Good morning, everybody.
For those of you who don't know me, I'm Judith. I've been the Executive Director of the French-American Chamber of Commerce for the past 30 years, and I'm really happy that all of you could join us today. We're excited to have this transatlantic webinar with Emmanuel and his team in Paris, and many of us here in Philadelphia. We also have Diane Hopkins joining from Lancaster, PA, so we've got all our bases covered!

And we're also joined by some folks from the French-American Chamber of Commerce in Washington, D.C., so a big thank you to them as well.

Now, I'll introduce our speakers. We have Emmanuel joining us from Paris, and Diane from Lancaster, PA. Diane also comes to Philadelphia quite often and has been a part of some of our events. They're the co-authors of Out Care the Competition, which is about how to increase profitability, efficiency, and loyalty by truly caring for your colleagues, customers, and clients. Their book is available on Amazon, and we'll share all that information on our website after the event.

With that, let's dive in. Emmanuel, over to you.

Emmanuel:
Thank you, Judith, for the introduction. Diane and I would like to thank all of you for joining us today.
Our journey began in 2019, specifically in Philadelphia, when Diane and I started discussing the healthcare sector. I was especially intrigued by the advancements being made, particularly in patient experience.

As many of you may know, most of our healthcare in France is public, so we don't have the same level of competition that exists in the U.S. Diane and I quickly realized that this was a key issue. For example, in the U.S., we've seen a decrease in life expectancy, and I've noticed that one of the first things people ask about here is health insurance.

This led us to start sharing our research in this field. Then in 2020—completely unplanned—during the COVID-19 pandemic, we discovered that healthcare was the perfect area to study how we can be inspired by customer service approaches.

During that time, we all remember receiving messages saying things like "we care about you and your family." And it got us thinking more about the power of care. Care is a very complex concept—it has many different meanings depending on who you ask.

Diane and I decided to explore this concept in depth and break it down into its components. That's what we'll be discussing with you today.

Diane :
Now, to add to that, I was very curious from the start about the healthcare customer experience. No matter what industry you work in, whether it's healthcare or another sector, the customer and employee experience is crucial to success. But in healthcare, it's even more critical because we're dealing with life-and-death situations. When the customer experience is thoughtfully and deliberately designed, it not only helps the business succeed but also engages patients and improves their compliance with their care.

Emmanuel :
That's how Diane and I got started. We felt there was no better industry to see how care could really make a difference. From there, we began exploring different sectors. I'm sure you remember 2021 when everyone had to return to the office. For many, it wasn't easy to come-back and rebuild that sense of shared community in the workplace.
At that point, we realized that care wasn't just about customers—it was also about employees. This became a key part of making everything work. Around the same time, we saw the "Great Resignation," and companies had to start rethinking and reinventing how they operate.

For us, it was the perfect moment to develop a methodology focused on what's most important: caring for employees first. After all, if your employees don't trust the company, how can they extend care to your customers?

That's where our framework of C.A.R.E.™ comes into play. You may have noticed that "CARE" can also be arranged to spell "RACE." Diane and I strongly believe that companies that understand and harness the power of care can win the race. That's why we wrote the book—to explain the key factors for improving employee engagement, and, in turn, customer engagement.

Our goal is to address this in practical terms, so let's dive into a quick video.

This video gives a quick overview of the C.A.R.E.™ model, and we'll dig deeper into it afterward.

Video Plays :

Camaraderie is like a fire—it provides warmth and light, just like how team members support each other.
Authenticity is like a tree with deep roots, representing employee behaviors that align with the company's core values.
Reliability is like a steady breeze, bringing predictability, much like well-designed workflows that ensure consistent customer satisfaction.
Ease is like a smooth-flowing river, representing interactions that are simple and free of unnecessary friction.

Now that you've seen the video, we'll go deeper into the components of the model.

Diane :
Thank you, Emmanuel. So now that we've introduced the model, we'd love to hear from all of you. Think about where you work now, or maybe a company you've worked for in the past, or even a company you've been a customer of. Which of the four elements—camaraderie, authenticity, reliability, or ease—do you think they were particularly strong in?

Judith:
In terms of the strongest, I'd say camaraderie. When I worked in international banking, I was part of a wonderful team. We even had a female president, which was a big deal at the time—this was in the late '80s, early '90s. We were the only national bank with a female president.
The weakest area, though, was probably ease. It was a large corporate environment, so navigating through all the departments was a challenge.

Diane :
Coming from a healthcare background, I can tell you that healthcare is one industry where ease is almost never present. It's not easy to get an appointment, especially since the pandemic, and it's often even harder to figure out bills or understand your medical costs. We spent a lot of time trying to make healthcare easier—simplifying processes and reducing friction.

Diane :
Let's dig deeper into the model now. The idea behind this is simple: companies already have many strategies in place to stay in business, but we encourage them to take a pause and refresh. Imagine applying the C.A.R.E.™ framework—Camaraderie, Authenticity, Reliability, and Ease—to reimagine and enhance performance in these areas.

Camaraderie is about that feeling of belonging and respect, where everyone feels valued—whether it's among peers or higher-ups. When that sense of warmth and connection is present, employee satisfaction and loyalty increase. In our research, companies like Patagonia and Virgin Atlantic stood out as great examples of fostering camaraderie.

Authenticity is really about trust and stability. Do the leaders at your company practice what they preach? If we set goals, visions, and expectations within the company—whether through policies or procedures—are they actually being followed? If we aren't authentic, whether in our personal lives or in business, relationships fall apart, and so does trust.
That's why we spent so much time digging deeper into what authenticity really means for patient experience, customer experience, and employee experience. As we explored this more, two companies—Armor Lux and Decathlon—stood out as prime examples of truly authentic organizations.
Every company has a brand—it's how you tell the world who you are and what you stand for. It's what people expect from your products or services. But if your branding doesn't match the experience people have—whether they're employees or customers—you're risking long-term underperformance.

Reliability applies to any industry, though we tend to think about it more in high-risk sectors like manufacturing or aerospace. But really, everyone—whether customers or employees—needs a predictable, consistent experience. People need to know they can count on a company to deliver a certain level of quality, access, and accuracy. Reliability is crucial. It supports trust. If a company provides an unreliable customer or employee experience, would you really want to stay connected with them? In many industries, reliability is tied to safety, but even if it's not about physical safety—like in an online business—it's about the safety of your data. Whether it's an e-commerce site or

a physical store, people need to know they can interact with your company without risk.

When we did our research, two companies that stood out for their reliability were Toyota and Pfizer. We're all familiar with Toyota's lean systems, which they've shared with the world, and Pfizer's reputation speaks for itself.

The last element we explored deeply is **Ease**, and I've actually written another book on the subject. It's all about making things simple and comfortable for people. How do we create an online customer or employee experience that's intuitive? It's strange that many companies make it hard for customers to engage or stay loyal, but it happens all the time.

So, we have to look for ways to reduce friction and effort—not just for customers but for employees, too. Why make it harder for your team to do their jobs than it needs to be? Driving simplicity has to be part of your strategy and a core value in your company.

Of course, two companies that excel in making things easy for their customers are Apple and Amazon.

That's a quick overview of our C.A.R.E.™ model. You can think of it like this: camaraderie, authenticity, reliability, and ease are four strands of a rope. If one strand—like reliability—isn't as strong, the whole rope is weaker. But if all four strands are equally strong, they reinforce each other and help strengthen your culture, your strategies, and the actions that follow.
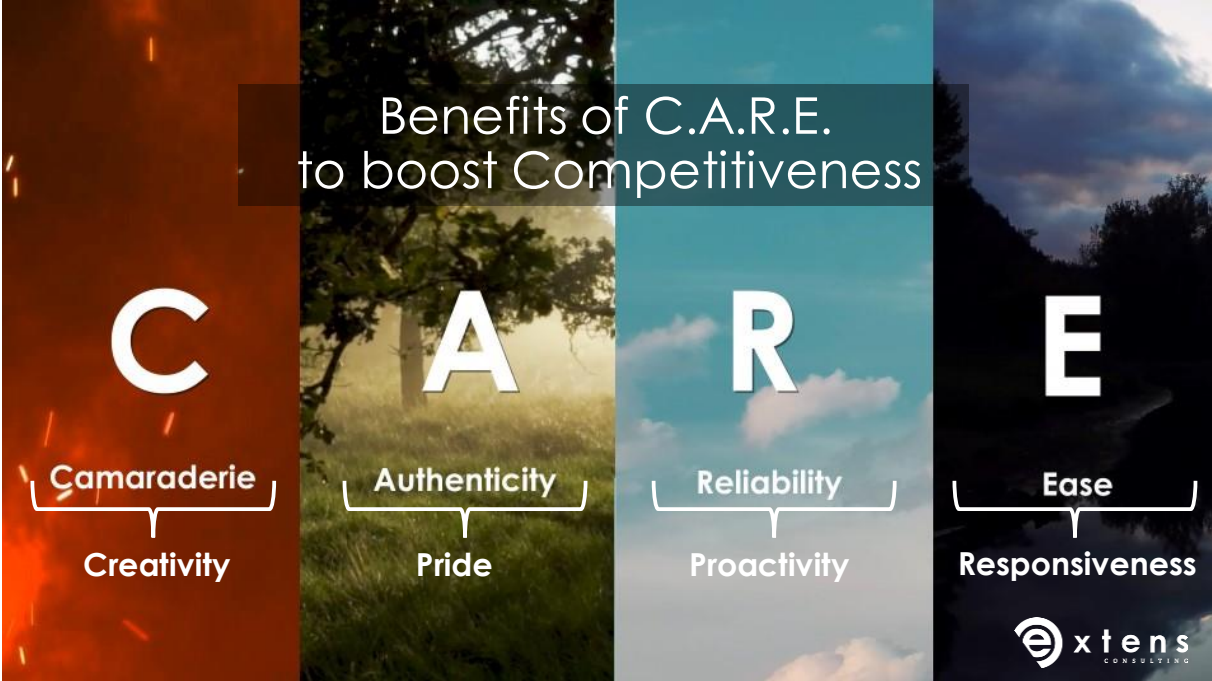
Looking at the four elements again, here's what the benefits could be for your company:

Camaraderie: People feel safe, creative, and willing to contribute in new ways, which is key for keeping a company dynamic and forward-thinking.

Authenticity: This builds a sense of connection and pride. When employees feel proud of their company, they're more committed to delivering their best for customers.

Reliability: When people can rely on things being consistent, they can be more proactive and focus on what comes next.

Ease: When ease is embedded in your company's values, not only will you be responsive, but you'll also be proactive in ensuring that customers can engage with you with as little friction as possible.

Benefits of C.A.R.E. to boost Competitiveness

C	A	R	E
Camaraderie	Authenticity	Reliability	Ease
Creativity	Pride	Proactivity	Responsiveness

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We also played around with the idea of "CARE" becoming "RACE," which is about propelling forward like a propeller. If all four blades of a propeller are well-balanced, you can move faster. Emmanuel's the engineer, not me, but he always says if one blade is missing, you're in trouble—you won't move forward as fast as you want.
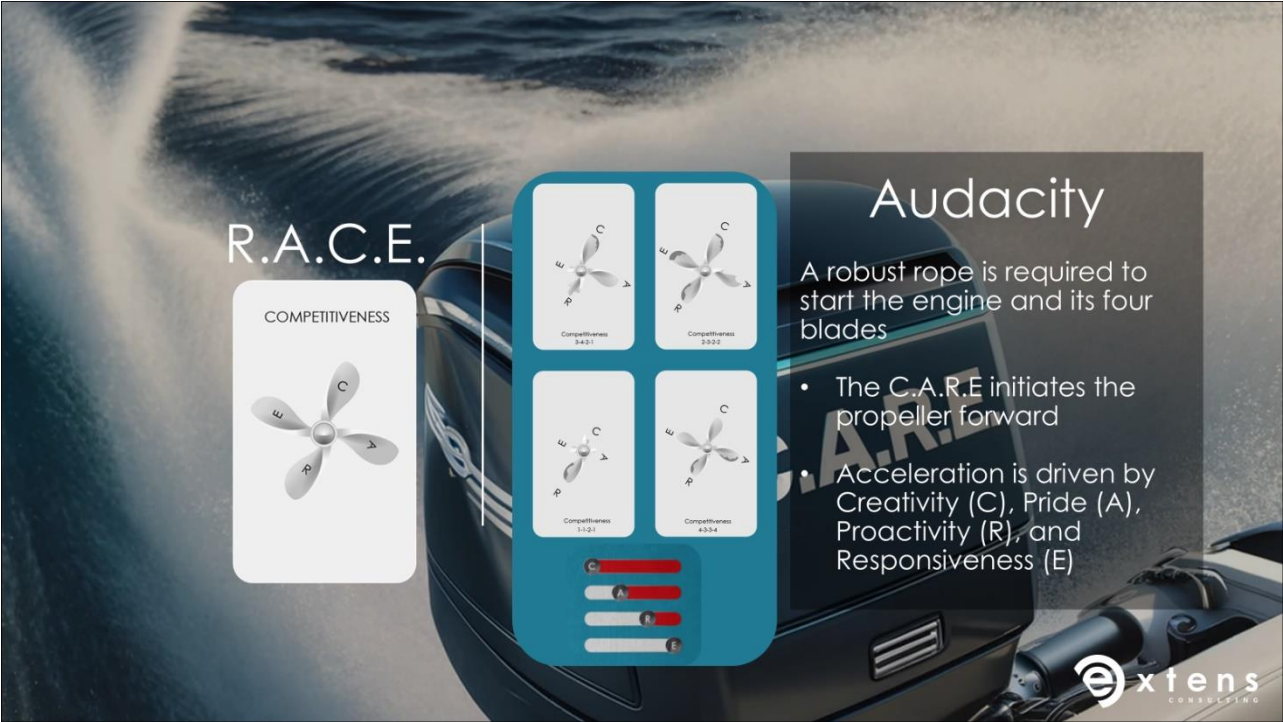
This concept of moving forward with audacity and care gives companies the strength to outperform competitors.

So to wrap up, we believe in the importance of taking a step back and reassessing your current strategies to see how strong you are in these four areas—camaraderie, authenticity, reliability, and ease. This process will help build and sustain trust. When you trust a company, or your employer, you feel safe. And when you feel safe, you have the confidence and audacity to do things you might not have done otherwise, which helps you stand out in the market.

We've been working on these concepts for over ten years, and through both our research and real-world projects, we've seen the impact they can have. What's important to note is that everything in a company starts with trust. Most of the time, when we talk about safety, we're focused on physical safety, but we don't always consider psychological safety. People need to feel they can trust the company they work for. That's why we focus so much on authenticity.

With all the challenges we face today, building trust within your company is crucial for staying competitive. That's why we talk about audacity and competitiveness. It might

seem surprising at first to combine care with the idea of a race, but when you dig into the four components—camaraderie, authenticity, reliability, and ease—it makes perfect sense. You can absolutely be competitive while leading with care, and this approach is not limited to healthcare.

Judith :
So, this is the point where we invite you to join the conversation and ask questions during the Q&A.

But before we move on, I just want to say that we love discussing this topic. If anyone wants to follow up after the webinar to talk about applying these ideas or exploring them further, we'd be more than happy to.
I'm originally from Philly, so I'm especially excited to be here today, and I'm always in close contact with Emmanuel and the team at Extens Consulting.
We've been very excited to share this model with you all.

Judith :
Okay, so I just want to say, if anyone has any questions, feel free to drop them in the chat. I actually have a question myself. Have you noticed any cultural differences between French and American companies when applying the CARE model? Do you find that certain aspects of CARE are generally more prominent in American companies compared to French ones?

Emmanuel :

One aspect that stands out to me is camaraderie. It's interesting because "camaraderie" is a French word, but in practice, it feels more real and concrete in the U.S. In France, camaraderie often implies a kind of opposition—people uniting for or against something. It's not really about business friendships or collegiality. That's something Diane and I noticed during our research. For example, in healthcare settings in the U.S., many workgroups, especially in nursing homes or hospital units, refer to themselves as a "family." That kind of dynamic is less common in France.

Judith :

So, what would you say is the strength of French companies when it comes to the the C.A.R.E.™ model?

Emmanuel :

I'd say authenticity is a major focus for them. In France, companies are highly concerned with showing employees that what they say is real and can be backed up. This really became a priority during the Great Resignation—just like in the U.S., employees in France don't want to work for companies they don't trust anymore. The ability to move between jobs gives people more freedom, and it has forced companies to rethink how they manage their workforce and communicate their values.

Companies like Decathlon and Armor Lux, which are French, really stood out to us for their commitment to authenticity. They've faced tough times, but their genuine approach helped them stay close to their employees and overcome challenges. Authenticity is also a big issue in the U.S. When companies lack it, it often leads to labor conflicts and unionization efforts. It's one of the main reasons behind labor strikes and dissatisfaction.

It all starts with a problem of authenticity. Even after a union relationship is established, the lack of authenticity can still lead to strikes and labor conflicts. I believe this issue is rooted in trust. Companies, especially schools, tend to focus on reliability, but we wanted to explore the idea of proactivity—how empowered employees feel.

To feel empowered and choose to be proactive, employees need to trust their company. This brings us back to camaraderie and authenticity. Over the past decade, we've been investigating the concept of "ease," and as a result, we launched the "Customer and Employee Ease School." It was based on customer effort, but we shifted the conversation to focus on ease, considering both employees and customers. Diane, who's been a key part of this journey, even wrote a book on frictionless organizations.

I know this is a brief introduction, but Diane and I have developed specific content and methods together. If you're interested, I recommend checking out the book, as it goes into much more detail. We're here to discuss and share our beliefs. Joe Wilson had a question about our target market, specifically revenue and employee numbers.

Regarding consulting fees—yes, there is a fee, but what we've decided for the U.S. market is to create something that resonates with both American and international companies. That's why Diane and I work together to ensure the content isn't just focused on France or the U.S., but is truly multicultural.

Our clients include international companies like B Software, DHL, and others. We're also focused on some specific American companies. Diane can elaborate on her work with these organizations. Our goal, through the book and the methodology we've developed, is to support companies interested in implementing these strategies.

At this stage, we're hoping to gather feedback and reviews of the book as we continue to engage with companies. We're well aware that this approach is disruptive—it combines care with return on investment (ROI). The aim is to model and balance both effectively.

Diane :
Personally, I primarily work with healthcare and medical-related companies, ranging from 2,000 to 16,000 employees. I assess their current state and help them develop action plans using the CARE model and other tools to improve both employee and customer satisfaction. It's a simple model that helps bridge the gap between the current state and the desired future state, focusing on what works and what wows. This approach can be adapted for companies with multiple locations around the world, bringing alignment and competency to the process.

Emmanuel :
I see Judith is muted, but there's another question from Joe about consulting fees. Yes, there are consulting fees. However, our focus is first on having an initial discussion to review your KPIs. From there, we work together to define how you can improve your KPIs, making them more predictive rather than just looking at them in the rearview mirror. The CARE model is designed to deliver measurable results.

Judith :
I'll let Emily ask her question now—it's a good one. She asked for an example of how the C.A.R.E.™ model has been implemented in healthcare, and whether there's a company that's successfully balanced this model already.

Diane :
As of now, there hasn't been a dedicated implementation of the full C.A.R.E.™ model in healthcare. However, I've worked in the industry for 20 years, and I've seen how these four elements (of the model) have been key in either the success or failure of organizations. I've spent a lot of time focusing on the "ease" part of the model, especially as digital experiences have impacted healthcare. Things like personal

patient portals have enhanced the ease of access for patients, but introducing technology alone isn't enough—it requires thoughtful experience design to truly be effective.

Emmanuel :

Diane and I have also realized, through writing the book, that parts of this methodology have already been implemented by companies we've worked with. For example, we're currently collaborating with a major life insurance company, reviewing how people interact with both customers and internally with employees. Technology plays a significant role here, empowering people to focus on care and improving processes overall.

Ultimately, our dream is to implement the full C.A.R.E.™ model in the next round of companies we work with.

Judith :

So there's Emmanuel's email and also Diane s preferred email :
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Thanks everybody. I hope you everybody has a great day. Thanks for having us. It's so nice to see all of your smiling faces !