



Businesses *Think* They're Listening.
But They're Missing What Matters Most.





Sentiment Isn't Enough

Most companies believe they have a pulse on their customers and employees. After all, they're swimming in data—from surveys and feedback forms to chat logs and social posts.

They track sentiment. They know when people are happy or unhappy.

But here's the problem: **Sentiment is just the signal. Emotion is the message.**

To truly understand people—and meet their needs—we must go deeper. We must understand emotion.

Negativity Is Not Just a Signal—It's a Spectrum

Too often, negativity gets flattened into a generic red flag: "They're unhappy."

But unhappiness is a **broad umbrella**—and each emotion under it reveals a different truth about what someone is experiencing. In our work, we consistently see six core negative emotions driving behavior:

Disappointment – Expectations weren't met.

Frustration – Effort isn't paying off.

Anxiety – Uncertainty or fear of what's ahead.

Anger – A sense of injustice or betrayal.

Aversion – An instinct to pull away or avoid.

Loathing – Deep, visceral rejection.

Each of these emotions carries a **different cause and consequence**. And each one demands a different response from the business.

When organizations only measure sentiment, they miss these nuances—and miss their chance to act meaningfully.

Here's the Catch: Emotion Hides in Plain Sight

Let's say your feedback dashboard flags a comment as negative. So, you issue a generic apology or offer a discount.

But what if the customer wasn't upset about the product—they were **angry** about being dismissed? Or **anxious** about whether their issue would ever be resolved?



Without that clarity, well-intentioned responses can backfire—reinforcing the very emotion you're trying to soothe.

The Emotion Advantage

Emotion is the hidden driver behind every complaint, every compliment, every act of loyalty – and every decision not to come back.

When you move beyond sentiment and tap into real emotion intelligence, everything changes:

You stop reacting and start **empathizing**
You stop guessing and start **connecting**
You stop firefighting and start **building loyalty**

You're not just listening.
You're **hearing what matters most.**

Let's Talk Emotion

If your team is still relying on sentiment alone, it may be missing the full story.

Want to talk about how emotion can give your business the advantage? Let's connect.

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