

ORGANISATIONAL CORE VALUES

An organisational value is “a belief that a specific mode of conduct is preferable to an opposite or contrary mode of conduct” according to Rokeach (1973, The Nature Of Human Values). We can think of them as representing frameworks for the way we do things. Some organisations think of their values as their “guiding beacon” directing the process of organisational development and growth. Others describe them as the components of their philosophy. They do relate to how organisations deal with their beliefs about people and work. They define non-negotiable behaviours. More and more studies show that successful companies place a great deal of emphasis on their values. **Any organisation which espouses particular values will tell you that those values underpin their vision.**

Values at work assist us by;

- Providing a framework for how we treat one another at work.
- Providing a framework for how we treat our customers.
- Helping us make sense of our working life and how we fit in the big picture.
- Providing a framework for achieving the vision and increasing the effectiveness of the organisation.
- Creating an environment conducive to job satisfaction as well as finding work which is exciting and challenging.
- Differentiating one organisation from another.

Values at work are increasingly important because;

- We work in stressful times, and they give us guidelines for our behaviour.
- Because it is a highly competitive world and they help show our customers how we are different from other providers, and potential staff how we differ from other prospective employers because they say “This is what we value here”.
- People are increasingly aware of organisational values and look for them, frequently choosing one organisation over another because of their values.
- They provide the basis for achieving culture change.
- They help enable people and organisations to succeed.
- They impact on professional practice.
- They can provide a measurement of success for individuals. (Some organisations include them in people’s performance reviews)
- They can provide some stability through change; i.e. which values are remaining, how do we implement the change in line with our values?

Values are the essence of corporate culture because they set out the “do’s” and “don’ts” around here! Living them is what really counts. They are not made to be put up on the wall and forgotten about!

WHAT VALUES CAN LOOK LIKE

This varies from one organisation to another. However there should be a few core values only, I would suggest no more than 5 at the most. They should be symbolised by one word, then have a brief definition of what that means in reasonably global terms, followed by defined behaviours. They support your vision, shape your culture, and reflect what you value.

Here are some examples. The bullet points indicate defined behaviours.

Teamwork

Listening to and respecting each other whilst working together to achieve mutually beneficial results.

- When we are unsure we check with others as to what they meant.
- Everyone has strengths which we value and will use whenever possible.
- All team meetings will include a progress report from everyone and requests for help when needed.

Teamwork

Providing support to one another, working co-operatively, respecting one another's views, and making our work environment fun and enjoyable.

- We help others to achieve their deadlines without having to be asked.
- All projects have identified points which are celebrated by the whole team.
- We work with one another with enthusiasm and appreciation.
- We work with one another without manipulation.
- Conflict is resolved according to agreed guidelines for this team.
- Conflict is brought out into the open and dealt with constructively until all parties are satisfied with the result.

Honesty

Being open and honest in all our dealings and maintaining the highest integrity at all times

- All concerns are aired constructively with solutions offered.
- Each person is as skilled in some way as another and is entitled to express their views without interruption.

Excellence

Always doing what we say we will and striving for excellence and quality in everything we do.

- Quality will always delight the client whilst staying within budget limitations.
- If we give our word we keep it unless agreed otherwise by all parties.

Commitment

Working with urgency and commitment to be successful from individual and company perspectives.

- Timeframes are always met unless urgent circumstances mean we have to renegotiate new timeframes with all parties.
- Clients' needs agreed within budgets are met regardless of personal wants.

Ownership

Taking ownership of our customers' needs and being accountable for delivering friendly and professional service.

- We are each fully accountable for our work in gaining any possible repeat business with customers.
- We understand our customers' business, prepare for all meetings with them

Recognition

Recognising and rewarding each others contributions and efforts.

- All individual successes are celebrated within the team.
- Assistance is thanked every time.

Customer Service

We enjoy their custom and so they deserve our service -timely, responsive, proactive, meeting their needs and aiming to delight.

- At every meeting with our customers we ask them what we could have done better, then implement their suggestions before we meet them again.
- Before any accounts are rendered, we check with our customers that they are sufficiently satisfied to pay the agreed account.
- All agreements are met.

Professionalism

At all times we act with integrity, providing quality service, being reliable and responsible.

- We do not upset one another intentionally, always endeavouring to present negative feedback constructively.
- We take pride and ownership in all that we do and say.
- We never talk about people behind their backs.

Personal development

We value learning, feedback, coaching and mentoring.

- Coaching and mentoring are commonplace here; we all coach and mentor one another.
- All opportunities for our own learning are pursued.
- Whenever we undertake a project it is our responsibility to express our training needs and gather the required skills.
- We each take responsibility to gain the required development to meet our customers' needs.
- We each take responsibility to gain the required development to be learning consultants.