

Corporate Values (12/5/17)

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3 Proven Methods For Bringing Company Values To Life



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3 PROVEN METHODS FOR BRINGING COMPANY VALUES TO LIFE



by [Dora Wang](#) on Oct 20, 2016 5:00:00 AM



Your company values are such an essential piece of your organizational culture and brand. But while the executive leadership may understand the list of these values deeply — even maybe had a hand in creating them — you have to ensure that this understanding trickles down the organization to people at every level. Why bother having core company values if nobody even knows what they are?

According to a global study by [Right Management](#) and [Globoforce](#)'s Workforce Mood Tracker study:

- Among a group of 91 possible factors, personal commitment to an employer's core values is the top driver of employee engagement
- 54% of respondents who didn't know their company's core values reported being engaged, while 88% of those that *did* know the core values reported engagement
- 65% of workers who could name their values say they had a strong grasp on company objectives versus only 23% of respondents who say they didn't know any of their company values

Clearly there seems to be a direct line between understanding company values and engagement and working toward company goals. This is good news for organizations — you just are in charge of ensuring your employees know your company values backward and forward. However, that's not as easy as it seems. Companies who do have a solid core of values have to reinforce them within their organization. It's more than just handing over a manual during new-hire orientation; employees should be engaging with their company values on a daily basis.

Here at TINYpulse, for example, we have one strategy that helps to drive engagement with organizational values. In cross-departmental groups, we role-play scenarios and discuss how we would respond to the situation based on our core company values. Many other companies have many other ways to achieve this same goal, and you can delve into three more ideas for increasing employee engagement with your values.



Implement a Real-Time Peer-to-Peer Recognition System

Values-based rewards should be a key component to your employee recognition program. Just look at the statistics from [SRHM/Globoforce](#), measuring employees who responded “yes” to these three statements:

- To the statement “Employees are satisfied with the level of recognition they receive for doing a good job,” 34% of employees in companies with recognition programs and 43% of employees in companies with values-based employee recognition programs responded yes
- “Managers/supervisors effectively acknowledge and appreciate employees”: 55% in companies with retention programs and 65% in companies with values-based recognition programs responded yes
- “Employees are rewarded according to their job performance”: 64% in companies with recognition programs and 76% in companies with values-based recognition programs responded yes

Employees who take part in a values-based recognition program feel more appreciated for their work, every step of the way.

But to boost the emphasis on organizational values, [DecisionWise](#) implemented a real-time, peer-to-peer reward program. Every two weeks, each employee at DecisionWise is given five tokens, each one representing one of the core company values — vitality, authenticity, drive, expertise, care, and family. When they see one of their peer employees exemplifying a value, they hand them one of the tokens of that value. Tokens can then be redeemed for cash and non-cash prizes.

This program reinforces behavior that lives those values, consistently reinforcing the values and ensuring that these behaviors are rewarded.

Decide Who You Would Send to Mars

No, this isn’t a way of getting rid of underperforming employees. It’s a strategy of identifying and understanding your company’s core values. The idea of the [Mars group](#) is to imagine you are leading a new branch of your organization on the planet Mars but that you only have room on the spaceship for five to seven people. The catch is that you must send the best people for the job. By identifying these five to seven people, what you’re really identifying is the people who embody the values you find most important to your company.

Have everyone on the team do this exercise and see which people consistently overlap across employees’ decisions. See who leaders and managers in the organization choose. Then have a discussion over what this means to the core values of your company.

According to Jim Collins, who discussed the idea of the Mars group, this values exercise should bring about a dialogue about several key questions:

- What core values do you bring to your work — values you hold to be so fundamental that you would hold them regardless of whether or not they are rewarded?
- How would you describe to your loved ones the core values you stand for in your work and that you hope they stand for in their working lives?
- If you awoke tomorrow morning with enough money to retire for the rest of your life, would you continue to hold on to these core values?
- Can you envision these values being as valid 100 years from now as they are today?
- Would you want the organization to continue to hold these values, even if at some point one or more of them became a competitive disadvantage?
- If you were to start a new organization tomorrow in a different line of work, what core values would you build into the new organization regardless of its activities?

By thinking about core values as people, not just a list of words, it helps your employees self-identify with and more deeply understand what the values entail.



Have Your Company Values Go Visual

Company “culture decks” are buzzing through the human resources world right now. They are a visual representation of your values, the things your company holds as most important.

The most visible example of a successful culture deck was a slideshow created by Netflix, titled “Netflix Culture: Freedom & Responsibility.” The 124-slide, easy-to-read slideshow walked employees — and outsiders — through Netflix’s core company values and why they are important. Facebook chief operating officer [Sheryl Sandberg](#) called Netflix’s culture deck “the most important document ever to come out of the Valley” — and considering her own company, that’s massive praise.

The culture deck has been viewed more than 3 million times, and it sparked a revolution in many big business HR departments. HubSpot and Zappos jumped on board the new model of showcasing organizational goals.

The keys here are that not only is it a breeze to read and understand, written in conversational language with examples, but it is shareable. It puts your organizational values front and center as representative of your company as a whole, unshakably intertwined.

Company values are well and good, but they are absolutely moot unless your employees understand and live them. Ensure that communicating these values daily is a strong part of your employee engagement strategy.

Editor’s Note: This post was originally published in July 2015 and has been updated for freshness, accuracy, and comprehensiveness.