SESSION 7: BUILD A "JESUS CULTURE"

•Welcome & Discuss the Business Devos You Reviewed: 15 minutes
•Session #7 Teaching: Build a Jesus Culture: 10 minutes

Look at your work culture and decide if the vision of your organization is clear. Why do you exist? Why do you get up in the morning and go to work? If there is NOT a compelling vision, the organization will be led by other metrics that usually lead to burnout. This week, Jason Coleman talked about Jenkins' "Servant's Heart Award" and how that award ties into the corporate vision and core values. When you have clearly defined vision, mission and core values, you will have all you need to build a winning culture and hire the right people for your team!

Defining your 'Why' isn't a new notion, but one worthy of revisiting as a regular practice. Many assume, wrongly, that a company exists simply to make money. While this is an important result of a company's existence, we have to go deeper and find the real reasons for our being. An effective core purpose reflects people's idealistic motivations for doing the company's work. It doesn't just describe the organization's output or target customers; it captures the soul of the organization.

A powerful method for articulating your "why" is to begin by describing what you do, what you make, or what you offer, and then ask yourself why that matters to you. As you drill down through the repetition of whys, a gradual uncovering of the most authentic and succinct "why" or purpose will emerge.
There's really no doubt as to how important this is. It's equal to Vision and Mission and possibly even more critical because of its energizing contribution to motivation, drive and sustainability. It's your guiding North Star, a reminder of your dedication and the tie-in to core values and the inner essence and soul of your entity. It organically communicates beyond your own walls.

Many times, companies use their Mission Statement as a rallying point to motivate their team and move their organization forward. On the other hand, I believe that a simple set of 3-5 clearly defined core values (derived from the Mission Statement) can be the central point of a healthy culture that will evoke a positive mindset. These core values can then set the expectations from strategic planning and project management style, to client relations.

As your business grows, your strategy needs to evolve to suit your changing circumstances and at the same time be refocused on your core values. Following the same business model, but bigger, is not always a good strategy to maintain a growth trajectory. It's important not to assume past successes automatically leads to future success. Using your core values as a guiding light will allow you to plan your growth tactics, strategically, with the proper compass for future guidance.

Most organizations that don't focus on their WHY end up becoming very reactive, finding themselves chasing after opportunities that don't always line up with their values. As the organization grows, this approach can't be sustained. Instead of treating each problem as a one-off issue, systems and structures should be constantly developed and refined to make operations easier to handle and less reactive. A unified approach to management focuses on leading employees toward a unified growth path, developing team leadership skills and building the business strategy around the core values. When you use your core values as a management filter, the perpetual crisis mode will fade, team ownership with ensue and daily management will be easier to control.

Small Group Discussion: 20 minutes

- Why does your business exist?
- Why do YOU get up in the morning and go to work? Do you see your work as a "calling?"
- Does your company have a vision and mission statement?
- Does it have 3-5 core values? Are decisions made on these core values?

Small Group Wrap-Up: 10 minutes

- What were the biggest take-aways and personal commitment from your small group time?
- What is ONE thing that you will do different this week in order to make needed changes that came up in today's study?

Discuss This Week's Homework: 5 minutes

- If you DON'T have company values, go through the exercise on the next few pages.
- If you DO have stated values, check with your team and see if they are being lived out and used as decision making tools.

CORE VALUES EXERCISE

Phase 1. Interviews and Data Collection:

■ Step 1. Understand Corporate Values:
What are company values and why do I need them?
Company values (also called corporate values or core values) are the set of guiding principles and fundamental beliefs that help a group of people function together as a team and work toward a common business goal. These values are often related to business relationships, customer relationships, and company growth.

From a business perspective, having a core set of company values makes it easier for a company to make decisions, quickly communicate principles to clients and customers, and hire employees with the right attitude. Creating a business is a bit like creating a community: if you want the community to act as a group, you need a shared code/vision/identity/ethos that drives whom you choose to invite in and how the community functions as a whole. If you don't own, define, and care about the values of your community, they will evolve on their own, potentially in ways that hurt your business.

■ Step 2. Personal Core Values Exercise:
Have the leader(s) do the personal core values exercise on their own. This group should be the founders, owners or top executives—the ones who set the tone for the rest of the company. The goal of this step is to identify shared values within their responses. We will compile all the responses and look for common themes or repeated values. This list will be narrowed to 10 or fewer values that are shared by the greatest number of people and discussed in the next phase.

■ Step 3. Leadership Interview(s):
EXAMINE WHAT MATTERS MOST TO YOU AND YOUR STAKEHOLDERS:
Think about all interactions between your company and each of its major stakeholders. Then ask what those stakeholders want or need out of the experience.

What is your company's purpose?
Think about why your company is in business, and consider the impact that the owners, managers and employees want it to have. Ask a series of questions focused on the company's interests, goals and defining characteristics, such as:
•What is our company's broader purpose or reason for existence (beyond making money)
•What contributions does our company make to the world?
•What do we want be known for?
•How do we want to treat people, whether they're employees, customers, partners, or the public at large?
•Why do we act the way we act and do the things we do?

Based on those answers, (re)consider the values and ethics that are needed to help you achieve your broader purpose. For example, Google is famous for its "Don't be Evil" mandate, but the company's core values also include statements that describe how it wants to do business, such as "Focus on the user and all else will follow."

What is most important to our team?
Feeling trusted? Being treated fairly? Having a significant say in the company's direction? Depending on your company culture, employees may value having fun, or feeling like their work has a positive impact on the world. What is most important to our owners and managers? Exceeding customer expectations? Being transparent about financial and management decisions? Helping employees achieve their potential?

What is most important to our clients?
Responsiveness and customer service? Value for their money? Working with companies that have a positive social or environmental impact?

Step 4. Turn personal values into shared values:

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Step 5. Survey the team:

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Phase 2. Execution:

Step 7. Embed the values and shift the culture:

The company leaders now need to own any culture shits personally, by understanding what is important, and what was not important, and how to describe it and execute needed changes. The process may take months, but will be a wonderful exercise that leads to a (re)prioritized set of values and vision that will be articulated in a very intentional way.

The work doesn't end when you articulate the values: you need to embed them in the company to make sure they succeed. For example, like many companies, Whole Foods includes quality in its core values. But the organic retailer defines quality in the context of its business, which means "Selling the highest quality natural and organic products available." The company then goes further by describing the actions it takes to uphold that value: "We define quality by evaluating the ingredients, freshness, safety, taste, nutritive value and appearance of all of the products we carry. We are buying agents for our customers, not the selling agents for the manufacturers."

If your company is more oriented toward actions than conceptual values, you can take this exercise even further and follow the lead of Netflix: When defining its culture, Netflix decided that, "Actual company values are behaviors and skills that are valued in other employees." Therefore, the company didn't cite its list of values. It assembled a list of nine core behaviors and skills:

1. Judgment
2. Communication
3. Impact
4. Curiosity
5. Innovation
6. Courage
7. Passion
8. Honesty
9. Selflessness

After you've linked core values to specific actions, you can build those examples into your code of ethics and employee training programs. Employees often benefit from having these kinds of illustrations, which show them what values-driven behavior looks like in the context of your business.

"If you start with a good mission statement, you can conquer the world!" Donald Miller
The **mission statement** should be connected with the **core values**.

The mission statement should...
      1. Introduce the conflict: What obstacle are we trying to overcome.
      2. Define the destination: Where do we want to take our clients?
      3. Foreshadow the stakes: What is at stake if they DON'T use us?

Every mission demands certain characteristics from the team that will accomplish that mission and these are DIFFERENT from the core values.

The KEY CHARACTERISTICS should...
      1. Be necessary to accomplish the mission and live out the values.
      2. Be aspirational and achievable.
      3. Must be in priority order.

With the core values established and applied to the mission statement, with key characteristics, the team will truly be in UNITY and primed for authentic success both internally and client facing!

Step 8. Test your commitment:

The way to test your commitment to core values is to ask tough questions, such as:

•How is this value showing up in our company today?
•Would we continue to hold these values if they put us at a competitive disadvantage?
•Are we willing to hire or fire employees based on whether they fit with our company's values?
•Will these values still be valid in 100 years?

Based on this honest assessment, you might have to take a step back and do more work defining your core values. If your list of core values doesn't seem solid, you can try a different exercise to see if it generates different results. If you're falling short on a value that's truly important to the company, you can try to modify your employees' behavior, rather than cutting it from the list.