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Key Knowledge Points Developed

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Self-Awareness and Culture Match

- When evaluating a potential employment opportunity, it's important for the individual to do due diligence on the company's fit with their personal values. Pay attention to the company's culture and other intangibles and understand how they compare to your previous and current employment and your work satisfaction level.
- If there is a company/employee culture-mismatch, it is evident rather quickly. It is important for the company to know exactly what it values, so that it is easier in the hiring process to identify those qualities in prospective employees. If the culture is one that is not defined, then finding the right fit when it comes to staffing is a shot in the dark. A company must not only hire talented people, but the people must be put in situations and environments that help bring out that talent in an efficient way.
- Individuals must know who they are, what they stand for and what the company stands for. If these elements exist in harmony, there is a good cultural fit and the individual should thrive within the company.
- Successful leaders ground their individual value set and incorporate this into their daily leadership style. It is important to know your leadership style and to stay true and authentic, despite any challenges you encounter.

Metrics and Accountability

- Shared accountability should be the end goal of any organization. In athletics, most coaches believe their best teams are ones that have players holding each other accountable rather than having the accountability always coming from the top. If there is a player or group of players reinforcing the coach's vision, it ensures that there is buy-in from all levels and everyone is on the same page.
- Incorporating values and competencies into performance measurement systems will ensure that individuals understand the importance of values in their day-to-day work. Many companies are driven by numerical success metrics. While this is vitally important to the success of the company, it is just as important to understand what tactics an individual used to accomplish those goals, rather than just the goals themselves. Devoting a portion of employee performance to competencies and values, and how well the individual portrays the value system of the company, will make this a seamless part of employee motivation.
- How the individual accomplishes work goals is just as important as what they accomplish. This falls in line with that age-old saying: people will not always remember what you say or what you do, but they will always remember how you made them feel.

Leadership

- Values-based leaders lead with courage and serve with integrity.
- Oftentimes, work groups take their cultural cue from their direct supervisors because that is who they interact with on a regular basis. With many levels of management, there are bound to be some managers that don't exhibit the company's stated values and don't expect those values of their direct reports.
- To establish culture within an organization, it is important for the head of the company to be visible and display their commitment to expected cultural practices. That helps eliminate the possibility of hierarchical layers of management influencing a group of employees in a negative manner.
- Leaders need to be seen to be believed and that helps ensure the company and employees are singing off of the same music sheet.
- The five practices of exemplary leadership discussed (*Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, Encourage the Heart*) are not new concepts and seem like common sense. However, most of us have experienced good management as well as poor management, so it is evident that some leaders, when faced with certain challenges, find that these concepts are easier said than done. They do, however, provide an effective blueprint for establishing a culture that fosters growth within an organization.
- Trust is gained by personal interaction. The more leaders can interact with their employees, the better chance there is for a foundation of trust to form. In a larger company setting (one in which many layers exist between lower-level employees and top management), other means of interaction/communication are necessary – i.e. weekly email updates or video conferences.
- In regards to a company's values, unfortunately, sometimes revenue hides all ills. The resurgence of values-based leadership and operations can be attributed, in part, to the recent corporate scandals and economic recession. It will be interesting to see if firms stick to these principles when/if the economy bounces back into steady growth.
- In a down economy, companies and people may be less willing to stand by their values. When a company sees their competitors going that route, it takes a strong leader not to follow suit.
- For a company's values-based culture to stick through economic cycles, company leadership and employees must have a plan and commit to it for the desired culture and values to be sustained long-term.

Loyalty

- Loyalty is an unstated result of a values-based corporate culture.
- Both companies and employees must earn loyalty and trust.
- Corporate conversations around values-based leadership are more prevalent in a down economy. Companies may send the message that they can't pay you, but they will treat you well.
- Many people are loyal to a set of values or a mission; they are not necessarily loyal to a company. Company loyalty comes when an employee tries out some company values and appreciates them. Then they try out more of the company's values and appreciates those, as well. Eventually an employee will recognize that the company adheres to the values they've posted on the wall. If the employee personally aligns with those values, they align with the company and share loyalty.
- Recent economic times have shown us that few companies reciprocate their employees' loyalty, so people need to take more control over their personal career plans.
- Young people today feel empowered to have choices. They are loyal to their personal beliefs, values and mission. They want to work for a company that will create a dynamic synergy between their personal beliefs, values and mission and the company's beliefs, values and mission.