

It is a “No No” to have unclear values and principles for doing business!

Your culture is the values and principles that create *the way* you do business!

I did a series of lessons over a year ago based on the book, “The Starbucks Experience”. It was a book about the culture of Starbucks as a company.

Starbucks is not a franchised business as of yet. Starbucks is famous for more than coffee. They sell music, they sell an atmosphere that is the “third place” in a community, and they sell coffee. Every employee gets stock in the company, and every employee is trained to be a “barista”. That is the person who makes the coffee. There is a little book that they keep in their apron called the green apron book that instructs them on a number of things. For many of us the most French we have learned in the last couple years has to do with the size of our coffee cup from Starbucks. Starbucks has done a lot of work on creating a culture for the customer and the employee so that they will sell a lot of coffee.

It’s the Starbuck’s way! It is the Starbuck’s culture!

Starbucks coffee cups used to come with a spiritual life lesson on them. Starbucks coffee was the first to use recycled coffee cup holders. Starbucks is a hangout for generation x, y, and mosaics.

“Important principles may and must be inflexible.” Abraham Lincoln¹
“Live one day at a time emphasizing ethics rather than rules.” Wayne Dyer²

Let’s start with some very common values.

Ethics: “Right from Wrong”

What is expected and what is not accepted? Training others in right and wrong is essential. Do you provide training? Can I recognize an unethical situation as a businessman, businesswoman or employee of your company?

Excellence of Service: “Your way of providing your service”

Define and refine how you are going to provide your service, i.e. from phone call to sale, to install, to thank you for choosing... What do you expect your service providers to do, to look like, and what key manners are you looking for in them? Is the customer always right? Do you love people?

Spirituality & Faith in business

If you are in a Christ follower “Christian” based company either this is a way of attracting customers or it is a way of proclaiming your focus in business. In my experience it is rarely both. If you are not a faith based business what role does spirituality play in your company?
How will you deal with religious employees of differing faiths in your company?

The question is how do we create and implement our values and principles into our business culture?

Your principles are the tools for allowing your company to live out your values. If you are faith based business it will be more evident in how you do business than in what your marketing says.

Your first step as a leader is **to sit down and do some “visioneering”!** You are going to dream and engineer how your company is going to do business. Write this dream down. This document is your constitution for customer service! This document is your bill of rights for those you employ! Your goal is to come up with a document that lays out how you dream of doing business.

Your second step is to **articulate the dream along with the necessary values needed to accomplish your dream.** You should have between 6 and 8 key values for your company or business. These values will drive your hiring practices, performance in sales, and customer service!

Your third step is to **get rid of anything that is negatively impacting your vision and dream.** If there is anything in your own life or your organization that is counterproductive to the culture you are trying to create you need to get rid of it. You are the Visioneer! You are the creator and master planner, wave your wand Walt! In church planting we call this out counseling. If a person doesn’t fit your ministry you ask them to find a church that they do fit in.

Your fourth step is to **develop the principles** that create your culture. Here is a great website for learning how to develop your principles.³ I have used the article **Four Steps to Creating Principles and Building A High Performance Workplace by Shelley Holmes** in writing this article. In this article the author unknown suggests that you complete the following statement to develop the principles you wish to use to create your culture.

People will be (insert value) when they...

By “people” we mean either customers or employees. What values do you want your customers to experience? What behaviors do you want your employees to demonstrate?

Example: People (Guests of the View Church) will be greeted warmly when they attend the View Church!

Example: People (Members and partners of the View church) will put our guests first by warmly greeting them and making them feel welcome.

Vision: A warm friendly come as you are church!

As you develop your principles keep these guidelines in mind:

- *Involve team members in developing the principles*
- *The principles need to be consistent with the Vision*
- *What experience the organization wants to deliver to its customers*

¹ Ibid. 1.

² Ibid. 1.

³Shelley Holmes: <http://www.leadership-and-motivation-training.com/four-steps-to-creating-principles.html/> August 21, 2009; 9:06 AM:

- *Ensure the principle doesn't outline the exact "how to do", but does emphasize what is important to the business⁴*

Your last step is to **apply your principles to your business**. Once you have applied and implemented these new values and principles every decision you make as a leader must pass the test of the following three questions. *Is this decision aligned with our principles and values?" "How will this decision affect our business over the next 3,5,10 years?" "What is the possible impact it could have on how our people behave and feel?"⁵* I will add this thought. Will these values build the vision you engineered?

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Round table:

Visioneer your business: Describe in detail your vision for doing business including 6 to 8 key values.

Create one principle for doing business for your customer and employees based on one of your values using the "people will be (insert value) when they... tool. Review the guidelines for creating principles; did you include your team?

Determine how you are going to implement your principles in training employees and educating customers.

Maxim For Leaders



Pastor Robert E. Rutherford

Excellence, Ethics, Faith

⁴ Ibid 3.

⁵ Ibid 3.