How to Create a Connected Workforce Through Quality Core Values

Opinions expressed by *Entrepreneur* contributors are their own.

Whether you run a start-up that focuses on a single market or own a large business that operates worldwide, defining the company's mission and values is the fundamental thing needed to communicate its reason for existence, connect to customers and organize the group of people who will work toward a common business goal.

This is what the "First Who, Then What" concept presented by Jim Collins in his book *Good to Great* refers to. It also encourages entrepreneurs at the helm of building successful organizations to "get right people on the bus" – in the key seats – and only then decide where to steer the bus. My company quickly became convinced of this idea's veracity, and I am willing to share how we ensure no "random passengers" on board.

Related: **How Establishing Core Values Drives Success**

People come first

When we saw our company growing 10x in the first three months after launch, we understood that this increase was most likely to continue along the same lines. And now, after ten months of operation, the monthly revenue exceeds $3 million from zero, which is an even greater performance, meaning that our assumptions were right. So we needed a more advanced approach to business to keep pace with it.

After consulting with a few highly skilled entrepreneurs from various niches, we summarized our research and concluded that any great organization's first and foremost criterion was quality recruitment.

Company values that let the workforce know the essential parts of doing any given business are what underlies the hiring processes. They serve as a reliable guideline for an employer who seeks long-term and productive cooperation.

While hard skills can be corrected or enhanced over time, a potential employee's values are usually immutable. In case a candidate's inner culture runs counter to your company's principles, making a job offer:

- poses a threat of wasting time and energy on training;
- can cost you thousands of dollars – our HR department calculated that the losses are six monthly salaries of a bad hire plus indirect costs of the organization's inefficiency;
- will eventually require more efforts to revitalize the search for a better employee.

Setting your company's core values helps avoid these outcomes, systematize the qualities that you need your staff to have and better understand what workforce should be fired. If employees easily get discouraged by what they do after a month of operation, do not learn from their failures or do not want to grow, they are not with us for long. The passengers of our bus never give up and always strive for more.

Related: Stand for Something: How to Establish Authentic Core Values

Only true values have power

When working on your company's culture, consider the values that matter to you. Do not motivate your employees to lead a

moderate and thrifty lifestyle if you purchase a luxury purse every time you walk past an expensive boutique. Otherwise, your employees will soon sense the difference, and communicating with the team will be much more challenging.

If several entrepreneurs manage a business, all co-founders must agree on the company's values to avoid future misunderstandings and conflicts. As three co-founders, we came to common opinions about our company. Among them, we believe that we need to be first in everything. Thus we are waiting for a job candidate who is not just a good employee, but a top performer. Also, we do not tolerate gossip and rumors, so we cannot go any further with those who demonstrate that they are prone to backstabbing.

Related: 7 Traits You Must Find In A Co-Founder

Implementing your values into business

Based on our experience, the best solution is to integrate your values into all employee development activities, which requires excellent internal communication. We started by presenting the company's mission and values to our C-level executives to assess whether they could settle down in the team. As soon as some positive progress was made, we designed our own culture fit scoring system, which implies:

1. Holding an extra interview with a competent expert to determine whether the candidate's values correlate with the company's fundamental beliefs. In cases with C-level managers and team leads, often the co-founders themselves perform this role. Ideally, you should involve an impartial specialist who did not previously participate in the hiring process and will never even cross paths with a candidate at this job. Thus, you manage to avoid the bias as people unconsciously

sympathize with those they already put time and energy into. This tactic is a good hedge against the risks – third-party opinions have already saved us from multiple bad hires.

2. Including acquaintance of new employees with the core values into the list of the onboarding activities so that every specialist knows what qualities you appreciate along with hard skills;
3. Launching individual training plans and performance reviews for employees who are generally good performers but lack a few essential qualities. For example, suppose people are afraid of making decisions. In that case, managers are gradually delegating relevant tasks to them. Then the discussion of the results takes place.

As an ending note, I would like to share one good method my company uses as part of culture fit when selecting suitable candidates during interviews: *appeal to your senses.* This means that the first part of the conversation you spend being diligent and attentive to details, but then you distance yourself from what you hear, focus on your inner thoughts and try to feel the candidate in front of you. Sometimes employers become too keen on the process and ignore their doubts when having doubts should be a key signal for refusal.

Creating the company's culture is more important than coming up with strategies because strategies are executed by people who get genuinely inspired by your mission and values. Setting the right culture fit scoring system may significantly increase your recruitment's effectiveness and ensure your business's long-term success.

Related: Having A Work-Life Balance is Nonsense. To Reach Your Goals, Follow Another Approach

https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/438591