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The Power of Values at Work

Why is it important for organizations to care about employees' values and beliefs while being asked to generate profit?



Dr. Doris Dull Owner and founder of Convalori

Organizations that consider the interest of employees greatly outperform opposed to those that do not. Further, it is proven, value-based management increases work engagement, commitment, productivity, and reduce job related stress, the bottom-line effectiveness of an organization.

Good to know

Difference between corporate values, work related values, individual/personal values

Corporate Values

Corporate values represent a decisive factor for goal-orientated behavior among employees. Most often set by the leading management team including top-down communication aimed for knitting the organization together.

Bestselling authors Collins and Porras provided empirical proof in 2004 to refute that core values, which describe the main purpose of an organization, are one of the central factors in the success of Fortune 500 companies. It is because core values provide guidance for an effective behavior for the betterment of the organization, which generates a positive culture.

Typical corporate values are e.g. innovation, respect for people, team-orientation, openness, integrity, adaptability.

The question arises whether, in today's business reality corporate values is still an effective method to inspire the organization to march in one direction. Especially when misconduct of corporate values is not sanctioned or wiped under the carpet. Or, leaders present themselves as ***charismatic***, invoking values but in fact he is a hypocritic person who just manipulate people for their own self-interest. If this is the case, values backfire.

Overall, to ignore peoples' preferences when working in an organization will not work anymore. Nowadays employees have multiple choices to join or to remain in a company where their values are satisfied.

Work-related values

The concept of values related to work is easy to explain. It is the importance of different elements an individual attach to his work role including the work environment. Work values are viewed from a need perspective or from a motivational theory. Backed by research, work related values are the most

impacting factors for job satisfaction, motivation or organizational commitment.

Work related values are for example, **feedback, achievement, personal growth, pay, recognition, benefits, hours of work, freedom etc.**

Individual/personal values

Individual or personal values are desirables towards ones' personal life, an organization, or a society. They help people to distinguish between right from wrong when making decisions or taking actions. **You can't see them, but you leave them all over everything you do** -Elvis Presley-. Thus, every decision or action some made in business or his life is driven by his values and beliefs. You hardly can escape from it.

Have you known, individual values are always on top of a group, a society, or a corporation but social pressure can force individuals to compromise their values. When this happens, it will have direct implication on employees' behavior and attitude.

Some examples of

Individual values towards an organization: responsibility, freedom, independence, involvement, trust, respect.

Individual values towards ones' personal life: security, belonging, beauty, happiness, achievement, fun, comfortable life, freedom, recognition

Individual values toward a society: Human rights, Peace, national safety, stability, freedom to stand up, economic growth, low inflation, comfortable cities.

As the world of work is changing individual values rising importance opposed to corporate values. People have recognized, corporate values are most often just words on paper or nice decoration on the wall than a motivational factor.

Summary

Individual value preferences independent towards ones' life, an organization or a society depends on several influencing factors. Thus, the examples above can't be taken as given for all people. All depends on the rites and rituals of a specific culture a person belongs to, the socialization, or major event in a person's life connected with personal experiences, a deep emotional disorder, or a psychological wound that changed which was previously important.

Organizations need to be aware that values are changing over time. It is, the value priorities of their employees as well as the value priorities of a corporation. Value change is a process and happens in waves.

Value change respective value shift are subject of the next article I intend to publish in due course.

-Written by Dr. Doris Dull-