

A Special *Character-Wise* Report

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Values Alone is Weak



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As organizations start to realize that it takes more than profits to grow their reputation, there is this movement to emphasize on the need for strong corporate governance and the promotion of good values. All of a sudden, you see the resurgence of mission statements, catchy clichés and re-branding campaigns! Yet, most of what you see happening in the marketplace is only “skin-deep” and hardly addresses the real issues.

It takes more than just creative slogans to transform an organization – in fact, *slogans without substance* will only create the backlash of doubt and skepticism! Although values are important, it is not sufficient on its own because it is the *outcome* of something deeper, something which is rooted in a greater principle. To have values alone can be likened to just having the body of a great-looking car but the engine is missing!

Values are the outward expression of an inner conviction.

Without the “engine” of convictions, values will not possess the “directional strength” needed to guide us through the tough and turbulent times. We can say all that we want about values when times are good but when crisis erupts, do we see people being determined to stick to their guns or start shifting their commitment elsewhere?

Before you start crafting out the values for your team or organization, ask yourself the following three questions to first examine your level of conviction :

Question 1 : What am I willing to do for free and without recognition?

The sincerity of a kind act is easily doubted if there is promise of monetary reward attached with it. Do you have certain convictions that you will follow through even if it means that nobody recognizes you for it? Will you continue to service the client even though they are ungrateful and rude to you? Will you stay back late despite the fact that your boss hardly ever notices your sacrifice? Your convictions are never more real when nobody pays attention to you! What you do consistently in private will reveal the depth of your values and character.

Question 2 : Who am I helping to be successful?

Do you notice that rich people start to set up foundations to distribute their wealth towards the sunset years of their lives? It dawns on them that all they accumulated in their younger years cannot be transported beyond their physical life on earth. So, they begin to think in terms of significance rather than success – what they can leave behind rather than what they can take with them. A more practical way is to ask yourself on a consistent basis – “Am I helping someone else be successful?”, “Am I meeting the needs of others?” What good are values if they are not founded upon the conviction of putting the interests of others ahead of your own? The paradox in life is such that when you refresh others, you yourself will be refreshed. Isn’t this marvelous wisdom?

Question 3 : Do I speak hurtful and damaging words?

It is quite easy to spot the condition of one’s heart – listen to the words that proceed out from the mouth! In as much as a sweet spring cannot produce bitter waters, the consistent foul words from a person’s mouth only reveals an equally foul condition of the heart. When confronted with tough times, a trying relationship, how is the tone and intention of your speech? When under stress, do you “blow your top” or exercise self-control? Without a careful control of your tongue, you might as well throw all the cleverly designed slogans out of the window! That’s why the number one enemy of good values is not bad values – rather it is hypocrisy.

Values alone is inherently weak. It requires personal conviction so that we walk the talk and talk the walk. Think about it.

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