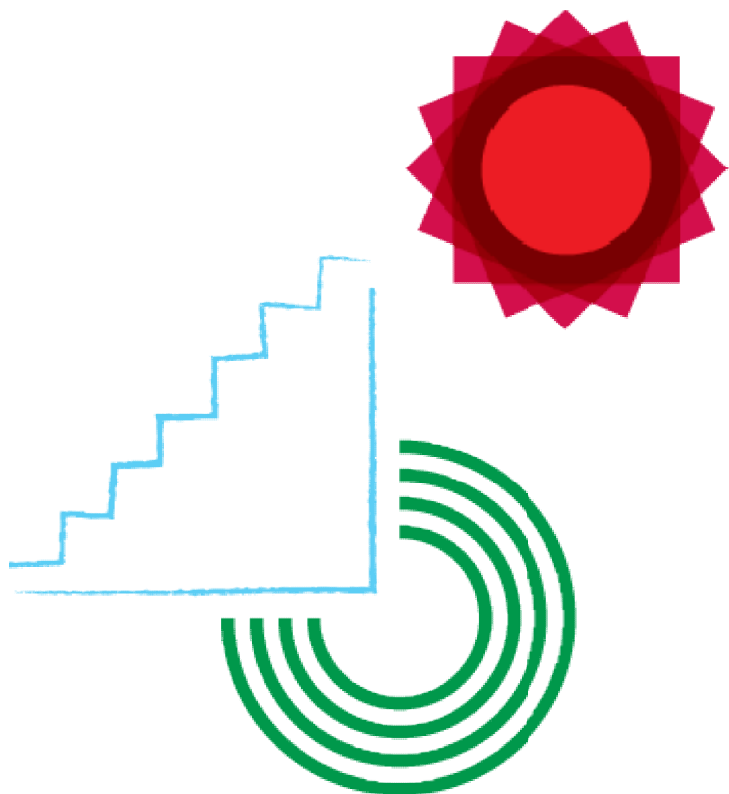




ENGAGE
FOR
SUCCESS

CREATE AND COMMUNICATE BUSINESS VALUES WITH INTEGRITY

20 Hints and Tips from Engage for Success



CREATE AND COMMUNICATE BUSINESS VALUES WITH INTEGRITY



20 Hints and Tips

1. What are business values?

Business values are the core principles or standards that guide the way you do business. They sum up what your business stands for and what makes it special. While business plans and strategies may change the core values of your business remain the same.

For example - some businesses say that innovation is one of their core values – they are constantly developing new products or services and this shapes their whole approach to business. Other businesses may say that they are agile - they are constantly responding to change and creating new opportunities for customers.

2. Vision – Purpose and Strategy

Nothing moves forward unless there is real conviction behind its ‘purpose’, which is also critical for engagement. It is part of the ‘story’ that your organisation tells its employees. Distilling this purpose is up to you and your top team, engaging as far as possible with what you and your colleagues personally care about.

The advantage of starting the ‘vision’ purpose, rather than leaping straight into strategy, is that it encourages co – ownership and buy-in. Once you have established your vision you need a strategy to achieve it - for which you want people to be aligned and engaged. This plan should be based on activity- based costing to ensure you know where you make your money. You should have an outstanding marketing department to ensure you understand and satisfy today’s customers and (this is the clever part, why you need outstanding marketing people) both latent and likely future customer needs.

3. Communicate business values

You can raise awareness and build understanding of your values among employees by publishing them in recruitment and induction materials and creating a specific statement or picture of the values - for example – on wall charts, posters or postcards.

4. Communicate business values verbally

Discuss them with senior managers to make sure they understand the importance of the values to your business and provide a face-to-face induction session regarding the values and what they mean for all new employees.

5. Communicate business values through employee involvement

Make a symbolic commitment – e.g. a pledge to values - that you sign up to and ask employees to follow suit, follow with question time sessions that invite employees to ask you and other senior managers how you are delivering values in practice. Ask employees or external experts to give lunchtime talks on what the values mean or how other businesses have embedded their values.



6. Briefing managers on values and behaviours

You could consider running a workshop for managers, giving all managers a briefing pack that explains the values, emphasises their importance and explains how employees are expected to deliver them. Make sure managers understand that they will be assessed on their own behaviour and the behaviour of their team through the performance management process and provide guidance to managers on how to handle any employees who are failing to demonstrate the values in practice through their everyday behaviour.

7. Embed business values

In order to make your expectations clear- include information on and examples of your expectations of employees in induction materials, ensure that role profiles, job descriptions and personal objectives align with values and required behaviours.

8. Assess whether employees are living the business values

Conduct separate value reviews for employees and include 360 degree feedback - recognise and reward employees who demonstrate supportive behaviour.

9. Ask external audiences about your values and behaviours

Involving trusted customers, suppliers and/or partners as you define your core values and behaviours can give you a valuable, independent perspective on what it is like to work with your business. In turn, this can help you assess whether there is a gap between what by identifying your process your business says and does on an everyday basis. Those you approach need to be people who know your business well and have been working with or alongside you for some time. You need to know that they will give you open and honest feedback. If you are the person with primary responsibility for the relationship you should ask another senior manager to do this for you.

10. Questions to ask external audiences about your values and behaviours

Every business will have different issues or areas that it wants to explore but here are some sample questions:

- How would you describe the organisation and the way it does business in three words or phrases?
- What do you see as the core values that underpin the way this organisation does business?
- How do you experience those values in action - can you give examples?
- Are there any gaps between what the business says and what it does – are there any specific examples?
- Does your experience of working with the business vary depending on the people you deal with?



11. Business values and integrity - Employee survey

There is no set format for an employee survey. This guidance sets out best practice examples for creating an employee survey that you can tailor to suit your business needs.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I have confidence in the business				
The business lives its values				
I recognise the values in day-to-day life here				
I trust what leaders tell me				
I trust what my manager tells me				
I am treated with respect by colleagues				
Leaders' actions match their words				
This business lives up to its promises				
This is an ethical business				
Managers' actions match their words				

12. Creating co-ownership of values

An individual is far more likely to feel an emotional attachment to a course of action if they feel they played a part in its creation and are therefore more likely to give their discretionary energy to it. A sense of co-creation fosters a sense of co-ownership. Listening to the workforce provides valuable insights; more importantly for the engagement agenda, it gives the workforce a sense of control and choice.

13. Make it personal

The way that you make values personal to your workforce is to start by showing that it is personal to you. This is done by revealing yourself and also by behavioural leadership: you need to live your commitments. By revealing something of yourself your persuasion becomes more powerful.



14. Draw on the values of your organisation

Tap into the 'purpose beyond profit' that you have identified. It is about meaning, about the difference to be made beyond the mere production of goods and services.

15. Plan from the audiences perspective

Adopt some simple disciplines when planning your conversations with people. What is the desired result? What will be on the audience's minds? What messages are critical? What style do you need to adopt to convey these messages?

16. Creating value

Keep articulating your purpose beyond profit or if you are in the public sector the public value you are creating. People must feel that a consequence of their efforts is manifested in something worthwhile.

17. Establish a strong internal communications infrastructure

You need to ensure upward / downward feedback, including regular sensing mechanisms. These can include surveys, sensing groups – regular meetings with a panel of colleagues - or a website / suggestion box where employees can post queries or ideas and be sure of getting a response. The aim is to open up routes for direct employee questions, feedback and opinions. You need to bear in mind however, that introducing such mechanisms for communication is in itself, sending a strong message. The message will be a positive one as long as the channels for communication are consistently attended to. If they become neglected, the message will quickly become negative.

18. Make use of technology to establish a strong internal communications infrastructure

Websites on the corporate intranet can offer accurate information on a hot or sensitive topic; use of blogs on which management participates, video diary boxes where individuals can drop in to record their views on a particular issue can be effective as long as a response mechanism is in place.

19. From rational to emotional

Find ways to expand the space in your conversations so that there is more emotional content; ensure there is more than just a rational sequence of required actions. Plan to use a mix of emotional chords such as personal disclosure, demonstrate values, sense of personal esteem, growth, development, excitement and passion in peoples' roles, winning and then combine them all in a story.

20. Clarity of direction

Ensure that positive and negative consequences are directed towards encouraging the development of the skills and behaviours that will allow the organisation to go on being successful in the marketplace.

