Cultural Norms – Analyzing the Corporate/Office Culture; Developing a New Corporate Culture; Developing Your Organization’s Mission; Connecting Everyone to the Mission

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Cultural norms

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Cultural Norms

- The power of Cultural norms.
- Uncovering cultural norms.
- Creating and formalizing cultural norms.
- The process of instilling the cultural norms into the every day routine.
- Why go through the process?
What are cultural norms

Culture is the business personality that guides and constrains behavior.

*Cultural norms are distinctly different from rules.*

You can not drop culture. Culture will survive new management, products, and potentially mergers with other firms.

*Culture evolves over periods of time.*

Cultural norms are unique to your firm and should be a reflection of how your firm conducts business.

*Do not confuse cultural norms with a mission statement.*

Cultural norms tie together “why” you are in business with “how” you do business.
Uncovering cultural norms

- Your organization already has cultural norms. It is up to you to strengthen the positive norms and change the negative norms.

- Ask others to talk honestly about what they perceive as accepted behaviors.
  
  *Start with asking what is really working well?*

- Write down what you see happening around your organization.
  - Who seems to be accepted and why?
  - What kinds of behaviors are rewarded?
  - What kinds of behaviors are tolerated?
  - What does management pay close attention to?
  - What types of catalysts bring the organization together?
  - How are decisions made?
Instilling cultural norms

- Find ways to keep the cultural norms front and center.
  - Cards with the cultural norms
  - Plaques with the cultural norms

- Put the norms on hiring documents.

- Put the norms on marketing materials.

- Create continuing education options that help reinforce the cultural norms.

- Align incentives to the cultural norms.
  - Performance reviews
  - Leadership pipeline
  - Bonuses
  - Get team members involved in giving compliments based on cultural norms.
Instilling cultural norms
The hard part

- The cultural norms have to be authentic
- All leaders (by title or influence) must live by the norms. Employees will pay close attention to how leaders behave and adapt behaviors accordingly.
- The creation of culture requires time and repetition
Why go through the process

- Hire and retain employees who are passionate about what you do, and how you work.
- Create energy opposed to time at the office.
- Execute on firm priorities by having employees work together and self manage behaviors.
- Provide a uniform experience for customers and allied professionals.
- Create and maintain a work environment that propels the organization forward with less bureaucracy.
The Abacus process

- Define why we do what we do, and what activities do we want to be world class in.

- Create a list of values and behaviors that are inspiring.

- Combine and narrow down the individual list of values.

- Talk about the norms that currently exist in the firm.

- Talk about the cultural norms that tie together “why” Abacus Planning Group is in business with “how” members of the Abacus Planning Group team should conduct business. *Remember that you conduct business internally and externally.*

- Build the norms into the fabric of the firm.
Resources


McNamara, Carter “Organizational Culture” Free management library
http://managementhelp.org/organizations/culture.htm

http://blogs.hbr.org/cs/2011/03/culture_trumps_strategy_every.html

Simon Sinek TED talk http://www.ted.com/talks/simon_sinek_how_great_leaders_inspire_action.html


