

The following discussion on Business Values is excerpted from Manage!'s Advisor system. We are bringing this to your attention because we believe that understanding and implementing values is so critical to getting the full benefits of Manage!.

## VALUES

### WHAT ARE VALUES?

A value is a belief, a mission, or a philosophy that is really meaningful to you. An example of a value is: "Customer Satisfaction." Another example of a value is "Being Ethical and Truthful." Every company has one or more business values. A manager is usually asked to share in those values. If the value is something that you also have always believed in, then that value has the greatest chance of implementation in work under your authority.

In many recent business management books and business journals, developing, adopting, and implementing values has been identified as perhaps the single key in the success of many high growth, high profit companies. A passion for a value and its implementation into the daily activities of work was identified by many as the single key to their business success.

For example, Merck, the pharmaceutical company became so successful in its field because the company was so dedicated to the value of "high quality and purity of its drug products". Because of this perceived value, distributors felt secure carrying Merck products, and felt confident recommending the products to their customers.

Apple Computer had a different set of core values. In its early years, Apple management was dedicated to the values of individual freedom and creativity. Because employees were given the freedom to be creative, they took the initiative to develop innovative, breakthrough products. Because Apple's management was also dedicated to a larger social value, "Making Computers Easy to Use," Apple attracted tremendous loyalty amongst its users who felt that Apple was really dedicated to making their work easier.

Finally, Sears became a colossus by serving the needs of the rural community. In the 19th century, when many people couldn't get into town to buy things, you could order through the Sears catalogue. The social value of serving the rural community opened up new markets for Sears and great engendered trust and loyalty from its customers.

In all of these cases, a value was the key driving force behind their success. What are the key values at your company?

Here is a partial list of some values to consider:

- Concern and Respect for Others
- Safety and Health
- Customer Satisfaction
- Service to the Community
- Developing the Potential in Others
- Organization and Efficiency
- Cleanliness
- Quality Products And Services
- Freedom in Self and Others
- Creativity in Self and Others
- Being Ethical, Honest, and Truthful

•Confidentiality & Privacy •High Productivity & Results in your clients •Concern and Respect for the Individual •Social Justice •Happiness and Joy •New Lifestyles and Business Techniques

#### TRY IT!

Once your company (and you, the manager) is interested in a particular value, then you can implement that value in a number of your own or your staff's activities. Think about a number of activities you or your perform, and come up with a way to incorporate the value into each activity. Set standards for how the value will be implemented in the activity. For example, if you believed in the value of "Customer Satisfaction," you could come up with a number standards for how your staff will carry out the activity of "talking with customers on the phone." Beginning the conversation by asking how the customer is doing, thoughtfulness, and utilizing listening skills are examples of standards for carrying out the phone answering activity. Try to come up with values and their standards for a number of activities.

Once you know the value(s) that are meaningful, and have set standards for carrying out the value in a number of activities, really commit to doing it. If your staffers are involved, make sure your staffers are informed and coached on these new standards and procedures. Then make sure it is carried out!

Over time, monitor yourself and your staff to see if you are really keeping up with it. Think about the results of the effort. Keep track of your successes, and note new breakthroughs that came about as a result of implementing the values.

#### USING MANAGE!

You can enter business values into Manage!'s Values system. Once your and/or your company's values are entered into the Values database, the values can be applied to such activities as the manager's Agendas, To Dos, Meeting topics, Project Tasks, among others. You can also develop standards for carrying out that value in the activity.

A number of reports are available to help you evaluate our success. One report shows all values applied to a particular activity type (such as projects or to dos). Another shows how any one activity has been applied throughout all activity systems.

#### GOOD LUCK!

Developing and implementing values may be the most important thing you ever do as a manager.