

Are Your Values Adding Value?

A wise leader of any organization will spend significant time thinking through and carefully crafting organizational values. He understands as the team lives out these prescribed behaviors the organization is more likely to accomplish its mission. While listing Core Values is a common practice, unfortunately living out core values is not. In many cases organizational values are posted on a wall and forgotten or ignored. In other cases the values are defined but no one is sure how they integrate into the daily life of the organization. As a result the values lack the power and influence they're intended to have. So how do you know if your values are adding value?

Here are four indicators that may help you find out.

Everyday language: You know your values are adding value when they become the **common language** that team members are using on a day-to-day basis. Keywords or phrases from your defined values are showing up in everyday conversations, meetings and in the way that others describe your organization. These words or phrases become insider language that your people understand and use to help move your organization towards the mission. If your values are not showing up in everyday language it's likely they're not adding value.

Decision Making: Values can add a great clarity to your decision-making. Every decision you face has multiple options and the option you choose will either keep you on or get you off mission. Your values (I actually prefer to call them Core Behaviors) are **a set of a pre-decided ways** that you and your organization will behave. Therefore if a decision doesn't align with one or all of your values then you need to find an option that will. These pre-decided behaviors are intended to keep you on mission. If you're not referring to your values in the midst of decision making then they're not adding value.

Changed Behavior- Not everyone you bring into your organization automatically reflects your values. That's okay at the beginning but a clearly established set of values that are communicated regularly will overtime shape the behaviors of the individuals on your team. This will bring **greater alignment** to the way people behave, think and make decisions in your organization. If your values are not shaping the behaviors and decisions of individual team members they are not having their intended impact.

Clear Reputation - It doesn't take too many touches for people outside your organization to quickly discern what you value. Whether we like it or not what we value is highly visible. This is why one of the leader's greatest responsibilities is to manage and shape the corporate culture of his or her organization. We do this by modeling and teaching the values/behaviors we expect. When team members live out the values in daily activity others quickly pick up on "how we behave around here". And it's those day-to-day expressions of our values that **establish the reputation** of our organization. What is your church or company known for? If you're unhappy with the answer to that question then your values are not adding value.

What next steps do you need to take to ensure that your values are adding value?

Would you like to learn more about developing Values for your organization? [Connect with an Auxano Navigator and start a conversation with our team.](#)

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