

Entrepreneurship Curricula

Imagine your business

Introduction

Every company has values. At a basic level, values are the core beliefs and commitments that matter most to a company and the foundation of the way it conducts business. Sometimes these values are baked into the company from the start by the founders. Other times they evolve over time as the company grows and differentiates itself from competitors.

But, while every company has values, many haven't formally defined and articulated them—and they're missing out on a great opportunity.

A set of core values is the bedrock of a company's culture. They establish standards for ethical decision making that contribute to a company's code of ethics. Grounding policies and training programs in core values helps employees understand why certain rules are in place, so they can internalize those expectations. And as the company grows, core values can help it manage change without compromising the factors that have made it successful.

EXAMPLES;

If exceptional customer service is a key concern for management and customers, your core values might include a mandate **like Disney's**:

"Never a customer, always a guest."

Google is famous for its "Don't be Evil" mandate, but the company's core values also include statements that describe how it wants to do business, such as "Focus on the user and all else will follow."

Clif Bar, the maker of natural snacks and nutrition bars, lists "sustaining our business" as one of its core values (which it calls its "5 aspirations"). But it also provides a concrete declaration of how to achieve that goal: "Never compromise quality."

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Development

Imagine your own business plan and identify its mission, vision and values. With your team develop two or three examples. Be prepared to discuss your examples and rationale with the large group.

Methodology

- For each MISSION, VISION AND VALUES, come up with one or two examples.
- Write examples on the flipchart provided
- Select a spokesperson
- Present your examples and rationale to the large group.

Debriefing

- Why do you exist?
- What are the end results, the outcomes your organization strives to create for the community? What's your purpose?
- What business are you in? What do you do to fulfill your purpose? What is the broadest way in which you could state your work?
- For whom do you do this work? What is your target population, your audience, your market?
- Could someone reading your mission statement recognize that it is your organization/agency's mission statement and not another's?
- How might your mission statement help your organization/agency make decisions about its priorities, actions, and responsibilities?
- Discuss your findings, issues and concerns