

Culture Story Worksheet

WILLOW

Create Your Culture Story

Actionable ways you can define, cultivate, and live your company's values.

Organizations use core values to help define their culture and give weight to their brand. But for too many associations, core values are nothing more than a collection of empty, hollow words. No more! We're here to help you bolster your organization with values that add meaning to your brand. Work through this activity sheet to identify what your association stands for, what gives it significance, and what you can do to support and spread its values – creating your culture story.

Get Started: Reflection

Think back on the following scenarios, and jot down any thoughts or memories that stand out.

- Looking back on the moments you were most proud of the work done by your team or yourself, consider why you felt that way.

- Think of a time you've overcome a professional difficulty. What got you through that time? How did that moment help you grow?

Get Motivated: Inspiration

Who or what moves you? Think about what sparks your creativity and gets you excited about what you do.

- List some of the organizations or leaders you admire. What characteristic(s) about them stands out to you?

- Write down something you look forward to doing in your spare time. What is it about the activity that gets you jazzed? What does that say about the things you value?

Get the Feels: Emotion

It's more than a 90's pop ballad. Emotion is the hook that gets us invested in a brand, and leaves us wanting more. Consider the following:

- Write down the way you feel when you leave the office at the end of a long day. What is it about your work that makes you feel accomplished?

- Think about testimonials you've received from your customers. How has your business made them feel? What kind of words do they use to describe those feelings? What is it about their words that made you feel good?

Get This, Not That

To really understand what you are, you have to understand what you aren't. Instead of making a list of words you think defines your organization, think about the words that define what your association isn't.

- Create word pairings to show what you value and what you don't. (e.g. SMART not NERDY)

THIS

NOT

THAT

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Take Action

Now that you have a good foundation to begin building your values, what's next? Here are some steps you can take right now to start living your brand values today.

Identify Key Themes

- Write out the themes that have jumped out at you in the first half of the exercise. Jot down common words and phrases.

- Highlight or circle 2 or 3 core themes that emerge.
- Which of these align best with your brand's personality? With your brand's mission and vision?

- Can you tell a story with an example of those potential values, relating it back to your brand in a concrete way?

Activate Your Values

- Take what you learned here today back to your team. Share with them the stories and experiences that led to you choosing the values you selected.
- Train your team on how to talk about the values, and how they can create their own brand stories to share.
- Update your website to include your values, so anyone interacting with your brand knows exactly what you believe and what you stand for.
- Make your values a part of your interview process to ensure job candidates align with your culture and beliefs.
- Make values training a part of your onboarding process.
- Reinforce the brand values everywhere. Put them on the walls. Include them in presentations. Talk about them in meetings.
- Recognize and reward employees who actively live out the values.

My Company Values

Once this worksheet is complete, write down your values here in big, bold letters so you can easily reference them.



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