

HOW TO...

WEAVE YOUR COMPANY VALUES INTO TRAINING

Company Values are important. They provide guidance about 'how we do things around here' and what matters to a company: what defines its personality. However, in many organisations, although the values may be known by most people, very few can articulate clearly what they mean in practice.

To make an L&D programme truly bespoke, it needs to be set in that organisation. That means that the examples, case studies and tips need to relate directly to the organisation, but also that the Values provide the context and are a 'red thread' throughout the training.

Values don't need to be covered separately – in fact (for the main part) they shouldn't. However, people will need the training to 'join the dots' for them between the topic, the values and what that means in practice. Here are some tips to help you to do that.

1. **Be up-front** - Despite saying the Values shouldn't be treated as a separate thing, it is a good idea to highlight which Values a piece of training has strong links to at the start. Whilst this can be an information piece, in live training, there's a great opportunity to turn this into a short discussion or simple activity to start people thinking about how topic X links to Value Y.
2. **Specific Exercises** - It may be necessary to run specific exercises (such as card sorts or quizzes) to help people to understand what the Values look like – especially if they are new.
3. **Use visual cues or metaphors** - Using picture cards or asking people to select objects/people/places to describe culture and values can be a very interesting way to open up discussion and discuss any gaps between where we are now and where we want to be.
4. **Weave them into case studies** - I'm a massive fan of case studies as a vehicle for learning and the more character we can give the subjects, the better. Make sure that positive (or negative) examples of behaviours relating to Values are written into the personalities of case study subjects. It needn't be the focus but it adds another layer of discussion and helps people to recognise what desirable/undesirable behaviours look like.
5. **Discuss them** - A very simple way of bringing the Values to life is encourage delegates to discuss what they mean to them. What do the values look like in their part of the organisation? Sharing specific examples can be very powerful.
6. **Build on Post-it Note exercises (and similar)** - Whatever the topic, if you include a post-it note exercise, you can quickly re-purpose it to review Values. So, if you use post-it notes to identify the qualities of good performance management, you can then ask delegates to sort the ideas into categories based on the Values to help them to see the links.
7. **Summarise** - Whenever an activity is debriefed, highlight the key learning points that relate to specific Values – help people to see that Values underpin everything they are learning.