

# Organisational Values

Having a clearly articulated set of values offers a number of organisation benefits. For example, organisations that have a strong sense of their own 'personality' (values) find it easier to attract high quality people. Talented employees in today's global market will dedicate their intelligence and skills to progressive companies - but not at any cost. They look for organisations which embody a noble cause which can provide a real sense of achievement. Where successful organisations can find a way to articulate their cultural values *and* align these with the emerging needs of the 'Generation Y' employee, they become a magnet for the best available talent.



**Discretionary Effort:** Once these employees are on board, a strong and authentic statement of values that is *walked* (not *talked*) underpins the strategy, helps to engage discretionary effort and enhances brand reputation. Whatever stage your company is at, **Tandem Consulting** can provide a range of expert Values-related interventions.

Client organisations face Values challenges for a variety of reasons – establishing a modus operandi during start-ups, radically overhauling businesses, bedding-in acquisitions or coping with leadership changes. Given these diverse starting points, our approach is highly tailored; there is no one-size-fits-all solution in this distinctive space. We start by understanding the unique requirements and challenges faced by each client – before building a customised solution. Here are some examples of Values challenges we've faced in the past:

**Development of Values and behaviours to drive strategy and performance :** The Leadership Team of a large Irish company wanted to define values and behaviours to drive the company's strategy. They chose time (as a competitive weapon), teamwork, customer focus and innovation. But, the real genius was in how these values were articulated and embedded.

**Integration of a global mindset with local values and culture:** An Irish based executive team

(manufacturing) struggled to translate the Values of the parent company into everyday life. They moved staff from an initial position of cynicism to actively embracing the values concept and made this part of the way they worked at the plant.

**From unhealthy practices to positive behaviours:** A Company Board were perplexed that espoused, clearly articulated company values did not translate into the values-in-action they (or the customers) witnessed on the job. We helped the Leadership Team team to challenge the current work practices in a series of open workshops – that were robust – but ultimately transformative.

**Personality driven to shared values:** One company embodied the outdated values and behaviours of its founders, long after they had left the company. As the company matured, its strategies needed to evolve. Some of the senior team initially were in opposition to this, wanting to hold onto the heritage. We engaged the team in developing and instilling a new set of values which every member of the team felt they owned and which was 'future proofed'.

**Aligning organisation Values during a Merger:** It is worthwhile to review how the Values concept can improve organisation performance in more depth. The following case illustrates this.

## Tandem Consulting In Practice



**The Assignment:** Two telecommunication companies came together in a 'merger of equals'. Both companies had proud traditions of success, with some complimentary values and behaviours, but these were articulated very differently. We worked with them to fully align their Values level – with the same level of energy which was invested in aligning product and key business processes.

### The Approach:

A comprehensive review of the values, cultural traditions, signs and symbols and values-in-action behaviours was undertaken. Senior leaders were invited to discuss a set of values, from both traditions, which would drive the newly merged company forward. We also reviewed values statements from a range of external organisations. Despite the 'busyness' agenda they really engaged with this using the following approach:

**Engage With:** Involve leaders and managers in 'new values' engagement' sessions from both legacy companies, discussing the strengths and downsides of their 'old' value systems.

**Appreciate Both:** In diverse settings we worked with employees (all level, in small focus groups), to agree a shared set of values and associated behaviours which were aligned with the new strategy.

**Change Agents:** Involve Leaders and key employees as co-facilitators in 'new values engagement' sessions with all staff. The new values became 'ours' – not something imposed.

**Sustain It:** Built the new values and behaviours into competency frameworks, performance management and reward systems. They were copperfastened in a number of ways.

### Key Results:

1. A strategically-aligned and clear set of values emerged, fully articulated and communicated.
2. Both traditions felt heard and appreciated. There was respect for the past, but a focus on the future.
3. Employees of the two merged companies felt the best of their own tradition became part of their future – a 2+2=5 solution.
4. Less helpful behaviours or practices were identified and discouraged.
5. Feedback from employee engagement surveys demonstrated improved commitment to new values as the project went 'live'.

**Tandem Consulting:** Whatever your business, Tandem Consulting specialize in strengthening client effectiveness. Our goal is simple: To help you improve performance. We operate a partnership approach to consulting. Our relationship is collaborative - from the first meeting onwards. Whether we are designing a research project or working hands-on in strategy execution, we work with you rather than working independently for you

We also provide a powerful structure for analysis, robust discussion, decision-making and execution. This maximizes the expertise of the client and consulting teams, producing superior results. You contribute in-depth knowledge of your business and underlying culture. We bring objectivity and proven processes which generate a range of options.

For a confidential discussion about your future plans  
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