Leading Your Team to Work Together Part Two: Culture

How do you help your staff work together as a true team, not just a collection of individuals?

Mention the word "team" and most people think in context of a sports activity. That may be the primary association with a team – a group of people we observe or cheer for, but in some way, everyone works together with others to achieve a goal: families, schools, businesses, non-profits – these are all teams.

Your church staff is a team as well. Are your leaders functioning in unison as a team or operating individually as a collection of individuals?

When you are part of a team, you're not giving up your individual goals or sacrificing your personal success. Instead, team members set their sights on an even higher goal in order to magnify greater success.

THE QUICK SUMMARY - **WORK RULES!** by Laszlo Bock

From the visionary head of Google's innovative People Operations comes a groundbreaking inquiry into the philosophy of work-and a blueprint for attracting the most spectacular talent to your business and ensuring that they succeed.

Drawing on the latest research in behavioral economics and a profound grasp of human psychology, WORK RULES! also provides teaching examples from a range of industries-including lauded companies that happen to be hideous places to work and little-known companies that achieve spectacular results by valuing and listening to their employees. Bock takes us inside one of history's most explosively successful businesses to reveal why Google is consistently rated one of the best places to work in the world, distilling 15 years of intensive worker R&D into principles that are easy to put into action, whether you're a team of one or a team of thousands.

WORK RULES! shows how to strike a balance between creativity and structure, leading to success you can measure in quality of life as well as market share. Read it to build a better company from within rather than from above; read it to reawaken your joy in what you do.

A SIMPLE SOLUTION

Culture can be described as the operationalizing of an organization's values. Culture guides employee decisions about both technical decisions and how they interact with others. Good culture creates an internal coherence in actions taken by a very diverse group of employees.

A strong, vibrant culture stimulates people to both be and do their very best and reach the highest goals. Leaders point the way forward, but they invite meaningful participation from every person at all levels of the organization

Culture is the DNA of the organization and is in large part created by the founders – not by their words so much as their actions.

> *Once you've chosen to think and act like a founder, your next decision is about what kind of culture you want to create. What are the beliefs you have about your people, and do you have the courage to treat people the way your beliefs suggest?*

Google has three defining aspects of their culture: mission, transparency, and voice.

A mission that matters

Google's mission - to organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful – is the first cornerstone of their culture.

This kind of mission gives individuals' work meaning, because it is a moral rather than a business goal. The most powerful movements in history have had moral motivations, whether they were quests for independence or equal rights.

If you believe people are good, you must be unafraid to share information with them.

Transparency is the second cornerstone of Google's culture.

Assume that all information can be shared with the team, instead of assuming that no information can be shared. Restricting information should be conscious effort, and you'd better have a good reason for do so. The benefit of such openness is that everyone in the organization knows what's going on.

All of us want control over our own destinies.

Voice is the third cornerstone of Google's culture.

Voice means giving employees a real say in how the organization is run. Either you believe people are good and you welcome their input, or you don't. For many organizations this is terrifying, but it is the only way to live in adherence to your values.

The case for finding a compelling mission, being transparent, and giving your people voice is in part a pragmatic one. The growing global cadre of talented, mobile, motivated professionals and entrepreneurs demand these kinds of environments. Over the coming decades the most gifted, hardest working, people on the planet will gravitate to places where they can do meaningful work and help shape the destiny of their organizations. But the case is also a moral one, rooted in the simplest maxim of all: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

Laszlo Bock, *Work Rules!*

A NEXT STEP

For your next team meeting, create three chart tablets, titling them Mission, Transparency, and Voice.

For the first, write down your church's mission, a clear and concise statement that defines what your church is ultimately supposed to be doing. Ask each team member to reflect on how they are contributing to the mission. Ask them to list areas where they are struggling, and have the team provide ideas and support in these areas.

For the second, discuss the level of transparency in your organization. On a scale of 1 (nobody knows anything) to 10 (our default is to be a totally open and transparent organization), where does your organization fall? Come to a group consensus about what level of transparency is important and how to improve your transparency over the next three months. Schedule a date three months from now to review this exercise.

For the third, discuss the level of voice in your organization. On a scale of 1 (team input is not welcome) to 10 (team input is welcome and expected), where does your organization fall? Come to a group consensus about improving the voice of team members over the next three months. Schedule a date three months from now to review this exercise.

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*This is part of a weekly series posting content from one of the most innovative content sources in the church world: **SUMS Remix** Book Summaries for church leaders.*

SUMS Remix takes a practical problem in the church and looks at it with three solutions; each solution is taken from a different book. As a church leader you get to scan relevant books based on practical tools and solutions to real ministry problems, not just by the cover of the book. Each post will have the edition number which shows the year and what number it is in the overall sequence. (SUMS provides 26 issues per year, delivered every other week to your inbox).

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