An Organization's Values

Values

Values are the standards that guide our conduct in a variety of settings. An organization's values might be thought of as a moral compass for its business practices. While circumstances may change, ideally values do not.

Vision and mission statements provide direction, focus, and energy to accomplish shared goals. Values express the integrity that individuals and organizations believe in. They serve as a decision-making tool in daily interactions that guide behavior.

A Case in Applying Values to Corporate Decision-Making

In 1982, someone laced Tylenol capsules with cyanide poison, causing several deaths and alarm around the country. Johnson & Johnson, the manufacturer of the product, acted quickly and removed all Tylenol capsules from retailers' shelves. Prior to this decision, suggestions were made for strategies to solve the problem, such as removing the product only in regions where the product had been contaminated. Profit and loss considerations were debated.

The company found its answer in its values in the first two sentences of a document called "Our Credo."

> "We believe our first responsibility is to the doctors, nurses, and patients, to mothers and all others who use our products and services. In meeting their needs, everything we do must be of high quality."

The organization believed that adhering to its principles was more important than short-term profits. Looking back to the founding of their company in the mid-1800s, they realized that the trust of the American consumer was at stake. Today, the Tylenol line continues to enjoy a prominent place in households everywhere, because the company put purpose and ethics above profit.

Values of the XYZ Group

The following values represent how the XYZ group chooses to operate. They guide how we do business internally and externally. They are the keys to our success and need to be maintained. The XYZ Group may be any team, department, or organization that you wish it to be.

- ❖ Integrity
- ❖ Orientation to the customer
- ❖ Teamwork
- ❖ Innovation
- ❖ Performance priority

Questions and Assignments

1. Determine which one of the listed values "speaks loudest" to you as an individual. Give your answer and explain. Consider how the value will serve the individual and the collective whole.

2. Define each value.

   ❖ Integrity

   ❖ Orientation to the customer

   ❖ Teamwork

   ❖ Innovation

   ❖ Performance priority

3. Rank the five values in order of importance, and give the reasons for your ranking.
   A.

   B.

   C.

   D.

   E.

4. Consider each of the values. List behaviors associated with each value.
   A.

   B.

   C.

   D.

   E.

5.   Suppose a conflict of values developed. How might you resolve it?

6.   List the major questions you have about values in terms of problem solving and
      decision making.

The Values of My Student Organization

Think about the goals of your student organization. Examine the list of values/principles listed below. Select the five values that would enable you to maintain your goals, and explain why you chose them.

1. Teamwork

2. Quality

3. Accountability/Responsibility

4. Trustworthiness

5. Integrity

6. Self-motivation

7. Safety awareness

8. Continuous improvement

9. Open communication

10. Service to others

11. Diversity

12. Respect for the individual

13. Community involvement