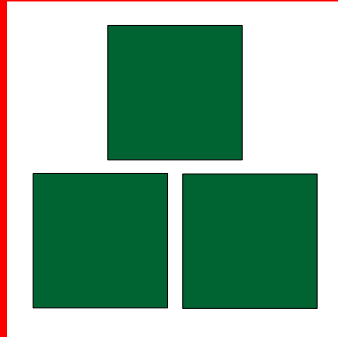


LIVING THE VALUES - WALKING THE TALK



NIGEL A.L. BROOKS

THE BUSINESS LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Article reprint

LIVING THE VALUES - WALKING THE TALK

Values form the basis for enterprise behavior because they describe a system of management's beliefs that set expectations for individual behavior, establish positions and priorities, and provide a framework for decision making. Values statements must be well crafted and unambiguous to be useful to employees.

The notion of management "walking the talk" boosts an enterprise's advantage if the words are perceived as genuine. If employees sense that management really is "living the values," they will have a positive attitude towards the enterprise.

"Walking the talk" means that management is "out on the floor" communicating with employees about expectations. "Living the values" means that stated and enacted values are perceived by employees as being the same. It's not just the words that matter, but how the words are said, and the integrity of the accompanying actions that are important.

The notion of management living the values and walking the talk establishes an environment for employee motivation, assuming that the employees agree with what is being espoused. If management doesn't live the values and doesn't walk the talk, then the employees will display superficial allegiance to the enterprise. If individual employees don't agree with the values, perhaps they should lobby for change, or seek employment elsewhere.

Breakdowns occur when management blames others for decisions that they are responsible for, when they don't provide support for decisions that they have made, or when they abstain from decision making altogether.

Once there is a fit between stated and enacted values among the members of management as a team, values-based behaviors should cascade throughout the enterprise. When everybody is living the values, an advantage occurs in the marketplace because employees, customers, and suppliers learn what is negotiable, and what isn't. The policies of the enterprise should not be ambiguous because decisions can be made in the context of the values.

If management can empower employees to make decisions in accordance with the values, the enterprise becomes more effective and efficient because issues can be addressed on the "front line," thus improving nimbleness in the marketplace.

Walking the talk is an example of "management by walking around." The concept of management by walking around was a principle espoused by Bill Hewlett and Dave Packard when they established The Hewlett-Packard Company in 1939.

By creating The Hewlett-Packard Company, they established an enterprise that initially was based upon the principles of staying together, without knowing what the exact nature of the products and/or services would be.

Other principles espoused by Hewlett-Packard include the "open door" policy, "positive expectations," and "management by objectives" - a concept developed by Peter Drucker.

An illustrative set of values includes statements for the enterprise itself, its constituencies, and the environmental ecosystem within which it operates:

Enterprise:

- Maintaining an environment of trust and integrity
- Being a good citizen in the community and industry
- Striving continually for innovation, quality, and continuous improvement
- Avoiding conflict of interest

Constituencies:

- Developing employees as teams
- Listening to customers
- Treating suppliers as partners
- Delivering superior returns to investors
- Complying rigorously with laws, regulations, and agreements
- Encouraging healthy competition

Ecosystem:

- Being environmentally responsible
- Being economically responsible
- Being socially responsible

If management does not live the values, lack of trust and cynicism set in among employees because of perceived (and hence real) double standards. Such double standards can cause breakdowns leading to poor performance, misconduct, including conflicts of interest, and even the risk of fraud and embezzlement.

Enacting stated values are "enterpriship" (entrepreneurship, leadership, and management) competencies.

For more information...

For information about audiobooks, books, earticles, ebooks, and eseminars offered by The Business Leadership Development Corporation visit www.etailia.com

For more information about the discipline of enterpriship visit www.enterpriship.com

To assess your individual competencies in thirty minutes or less, claim your opportunity for instant access when you go to www.individualcompetencies.com



About Nigel A.L Brooks...

Nigel A.L Brooks is a management consultant to entrepreneurs, business enterprise owners, executives, and managers, and the enterprises they serve. He specializes in developing the entrepreneurial, leadership, and managerial competencies that build sustainable advantage from vision to value. He is an author and a frequent speaker.

He obtained his professional experience as a partner at Andersen Consulting (now Accenture, Ltd.), as a vice president at Booz Allen Hamilton, Inc. (now Booz and Company), as a senior vice president at the American Express Company, as president of Javazona Cafes, Inc., and as president of The Business Leadership Development Corporation. He has been a contributing editor for the Bank Administration Institute magazine, and has served on boards of entrepreneurial networks. He was educated at the University of Exeter, Devon, United Kingdom.

His clients are in the financial services, food services, high-tech, manufacturing and distribution, pharmaceuticals, oil and gas, professional services, retail and wholesale, transportation, and government industries.

He has experience in North and Latin America, Europe and Asia-Pacific.

www.nigelalbrooks.com

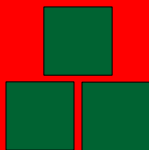
About The Business Leadership Development Corporation (BLD)...

The Business Leadership Development Corporation is a professional services firm that works with entrepreneurs, lifestyle business enterprise owners, executives, and managers, and the enterprises they serve.

BLD develops entrepreneurial, leadership, and managerial competencies that achieve performance excellence by *building sustainable advantage from vision to value*™ through:

- Strategic Management Consulting
- Executive Coaching and Mentoring
- Professional Training via The Center For Business Leadership Development (CBLD)
- Motivational Speaking

www.bldsolutions.com



THE BUSINESS LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

13835 NORTH TATUM BOULEVARD 9-102

PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85032 USA

www.bldsolutions.com

(602) 291-4595