

Values alignment in the workplace



The Problem

A number of teams within a state government department had difficulties embracing a company-wide initiative to introduce a Values Programme. The teams were comprised primarily of managers from a fairly technical background. They felt the

Values Programme represented little benefit and they could not see the point of all this 'airy-fairy soft stuff'.

The Organisational Development unit responsible for designing the Values Program needed to find an approach that would demonstrate the 'realities' of Values in the workplace.

Action Taken

In consultation with TMS and their clients, the Organisational Development team facilitated a 1-day workshop which featured the Window on Work Values Profile. The objectives were to:

- Illustrate the practical benefit of recognising values in the workplace
- Identify how the values of the organisation were currently perceived
- Discuss the implications of personal values on leadership style
- Address issues of values alignment within the team and the branch

- Begin exploring the implications of values across the whole department

The *Window on Work Values Model* was introduced through a card sort activity.

Each group was asked to illustrate how they currently perceived the values of the organisation. The next component involved debriefing their individual Window on Work Values Profiles. Participants then plenarised their results and discussed the issues of alignment within the groups. This exercise highlighted some very interesting results.

The composition of the group in terms of the *Window on Work Values Model*, started to reveal the origin of disagreements or barriers with many of the teams.

There were a number of cases where historically poor relationships could be explained and understood because one manager had values in the northern (Organisational Constraint) part of the Window, while their colleagues had values in the southern (Organisational Freedom) section.

This clash of values revealed why they had such different attitudes to management, leadership and change and why problems had occurred. The realisation about how their values were misaligned enabled the managers to understand how their values impacted on the way they all worked together.

Industry: Public Service/Government
TMS Product: Window on Work Values Profile
Total Staff: 3,200
Challenge: Values & Culture



The final component of the workshop was for the team to review all of the issues that had arisen and identify the implications these had for the way they operated as a branch. They could then start to develop action plans for addressing any issues.

The biggest benefit for the Organisational Development unit, was the opportunity for each team to realise the impact misalignment of values can have on their team's effectiveness.

Outcomes

The Window on Work Values framework offered a simple and practical starting point for discussions around values at work.

The Management Teams were quickly and easily able to translate the theory into their operational realities. Additionally, the Profiles the participants received were very accurate and insightful, leading to good robust discussion about individual differences and team and branch alignment.

Due to the success of the initial program, the Window on Work Values workshop was used more broadly than just at the management level. The Organisational Development unit also used the program when they encountered reluctance at any level in the organisation.

Additionally, they also found it was successful when they worked with groups that went through the department's Corporate Values program and wanted to do more work on values.

Window on Work Values Profile

Values are the principle determinants of our behaviour and this Profile helps respondents and organisations make sense of these important drivers in the workplace.

- Promote & Align Values
- Culture Change
- Build Teamwork
- Map Organisational Values

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