

The Powerful Persuasion of Principles

Over the years numerous authors have stated and reinforced the notion that leadership is the foundation of organizational excellence. Examples abound in the world of business, in sports arenas, in warfare and battle that sound leadership is the first and foremost requirement of success. Even in hospitality and service, leadership plays that essential role. As Tony Hyde, Senior Executive Vice President of East West Partners Club Management, said, “The longer I’m in this business, the more I realize it’s all about leadership.”

Yet most successful club managers will tell you that no matter the individual skills and talents they possess, there is much more in the way of organization, structure, and management disciplines that must be brought to bear to create and sustain a high-performing operation. First and foremost of these are **well-defined organizational values and a continually reinforced culture of service**. Why is this so?

- A leader’s values are those bedrock principles that govern the actions by which she gains the trust and loyalty of her followers. A recent ad for Notre Dame University said it best, “The value of a leader is directly proportional to a leader’s values.” Dr. Bob Nelson, founder of a company specializing in management practices improvement, has said, “You get the best efforts from others not by lighting a fire beneath them, but by building a fire within.” Leadership is not so much what you do. It’s what you inspire others to do; and nothing inspires like principled action.
- As we have often stressed, a leader must spell out his or her expectations for followers. While these expectations must cover the standards, policies, and procedures of performance and execution, there is nothing so basic, yet so important, as ensuring that all employees, especially managers and supervisors, have a firm grounding in the values of the organization.

This indoctrination is best accomplished by continuing exposure, ongoing example, and constant reminder of the underlying principles by which the club conducts itself in relation to the board, the members, employees, vendors, and the community at large. Without the effort to spell these out in detail, an organization has little hope of modeling and teaching employees what is expected of them in their dealings with others. Yet how many clubs have made the effort to define their organizational values? Some have, others have not.

To assist clubs who may want help in this area, Hospitality Resources International has prepared a wide variety of organizational values covering mission, vision, guiding principles, operating standards, managers’ code of ethics, principles of employee relations, and standards of management professionalism. To further assist organizations in teaching these essential principles, HRI has created [Values on the Go](#), a program designed to present organizational values in brief formats for ongoing training and reminder.

The material in Values on the Go is intended for the management staff, including all employees who supervise the work of others and may be used in any appropriate group setting, but most particularly in the general manager’s weekly staff meeting. By spending a few minutes at each meeting discussing these topics, a general manager can be assured that subordinate managers understand and continually reinforce values and culture. It can also be used to train new management hires in the details of the club’s organizational values.

As Mac Anderson, founder of Simple Truths, author of more than 22 books, and inspirational corporate speaker, has said, “The three keys to inspiring . . . service – Reinforce, Reinforce, Reinforce.”

Without an effort to reinforce to employees the basic values of the club, the general manager is failing to value one of the most invaluable of all leadership qualities – the powerful persuasion of principles.

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