

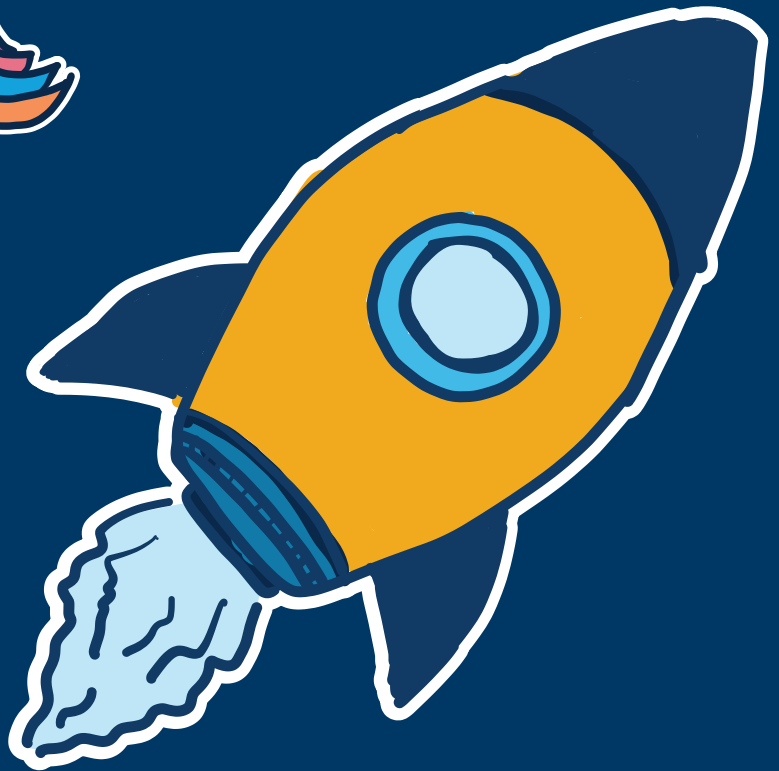
# Bringing your company values to life

Workshop Pack



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# Introduction

Company values - if authentic, embedded and shared properly - are the hallmarks of your business, **and**, can be one of the most strategic tools you have at your company. For this reason, we've developed this workshop pack, aimed at helping you not only find the 'right' tool to put in your employee engagement 'toolkit', but with instructions so you can use it in the best way possible to achieve your business and people objectives.

This workbook has been divided into these 3 sections:

**Section 1: The importance of company values**

**Section 2: Developing your company values**

**Section 3: Embedding your company values**

## How to use this workbook

This booklet is designed to help you work your way through the critical steps required to bring your company values to life. There is no right or wrong way to do this, you need to do what is right for your business and for your workforce. Here are a few things to keep in mind as you get started:

### 1 Find your allies

You can't make real business change all by yourself, so go out and find yourself some allies from different areas of the business to be a part of your team. They'll bring different ideas, expertise, and points of view. In addition, ideally you'll have a member(s) of the leadership team as a sponsor of this work, providing the leadership support and buy-in that's required to drive change.

### 2 Set yourself up for success

Ideally read the Rebel Playbook together, it's available from all bookstores or from [shop.rebelplaybook.com](http://shop.rebelplaybook.com). If you can't get the book or don't have time then read the first two chapters that you can download for free from [rebelplaybook.com/free-two-chapter-preview](http://rebelplaybook.com/free-two-chapter-preview). This will help you and the team understand how company values fit into the other elements of what we call in the book, The Engagement bridge.

### 3 Work through this workbook with your team

Work through each section of this workbook with your team, thinking about your organization and considering the questions asked. Give yourself time to really go in depth and think about each question and come up with a plan to help you achieve your objectives, whether they are specific to HR or for the overall business.

## SECTION 1:

# The importance of company values

Your company's values, along with your company's purpose and mission, give your employees something bigger to work towards, helping them understand what your organization's contribution is to your industry and society. They also help set and drive your company's culture. Well executed, they become a guiding force in your organization, helping with strategy, decision-making, and developing the right behaviours.

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***“Companies need an inspirational and authentic mission and livable values that support and drive the business and employees.”***

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In a recent LinkedIn survey of over 3,000 U.S. professionals, 71% said they would be willing to take a pay cut to work for a company that shares their values and has a mission they believe in.

Here are four reasons why values are important to your company and to your employees. **For each, write your responses to the questions in the box:**

### 1. They define who you are.

What makes you different to any other company?  
What is your differentiator that makes you stand out from your competitors?

Values should let your employees and the world know who you are, what behaviors you value, and what defines exactly who you are.

**List out what you believe defines who you are as a company.**

## **2. They communicate what is important.**

Your employees are waiting for you to tell them what the company expects from them, communicating what is 'good' and what is 'bad'. Values can and should do this, defining what is important, and, of course, what is valued.

**List out what you believe should be the key expectations of the business to your workforce.**

## **3. They shape company culture.**

Culture, as we all know, is something that cannot be designed, but is an output of everything we do at our companies.

It is, however, shaped by our values, because as previously mentioned, they define who you are to your employees.

**List out the company culture that you are trying to create at your company.**

## **4. They drive company success.**

Values are not just there to be fun and fluffy. They should drive the bottom line, so the company success.

**List out the behaviors that will truly make a difference at your company.**

**List out the behaviors that will cause your company to stumble or fail.**

## SECTION 2:

# Developing your company values

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*“Company values can have a dramatic effect on your organization, so make sure they are the right ones. It takes time, but it is hugely valuable.”*

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## Five principles to get you started

As we say in the quote above, the absolute key to values is getting the ‘right’ ones. Easier said than done, right? But to help you with this, here are five principles to get you started:

**1. Be authentic.** To be authentic, something is genuine and worthy of belief, which is exactly what you want and need your values to be. They need to be from the heart of your business and of your people. If not, your employees, and others, will see right through them.

**2. Be observable.** Values needed to be from the heart, as just mentioned, but they also need to be from the mind and body. This means that they can and should be able to be easily observed in employees throughout the organization, and not just isolated to one job level or function.

**3. Be connected.** If we want our values to truly make a difference to our business, they need to be connected in some way so that your employees not only remember them, but connect them to each other and to the business.



At Reward Gateway we use a [rocketship metaphor](#) to tie our values together, explaining how they work together to ensure the rocketship gets to its destination, which is the company’s mission statement. This helps employees understand and relate to the mission, and be clear as to how the values support this journey. You can watch this 3-minute video on: [rg.co/rocketship](https://rg.co/rocketship)

**4. Deliver meaning.** Designing values is more than just coming up with a set of words. It’s taking the time and effort to explain exactly what you mean by these words, delivering meaning to your employees. Even better? Work with your allies to list out words or phrases that are already in use to inspire the workforce. Do this, and your employees will be crystal clear on how these words should be translated into behaviors.

**5. Do what they say.** Last, and certainly not least, you need to do something with with your values, or quite frankly, why bother having them? There are countless stories of companies doing this, saying one thing through their values and doing something entirely different. For example, they have a value of ‘trust’ and then create an expense or benefit policy that is based on the assumption that everyone is out to cheat the company. So before developing your values, make certain that you can say and do the same thing, or quite frankly ditch them!

## Five steps for creating values

If you don’t have values, or if you want to refresh them, here are five steps to help you do so.

### 1. Start with your purpose and mission

If your purpose and mission are signposts of why your company is here, where you are going, and what your trying to do, then your values should codify the behaviors you want to use to get there. For this reason, you want to start with your purpose and mission in mind.

Conduct an exercise with members of your leadership team and possibly with key employees you’ve identified to provide a different perspective, where you put your purpose and mission statements up on the wall, and discuss and map out what behaviors you believe are required to achieve each of them.

Think of the most engaged people at your company, and consider how they behave to drive your purpose and mission. Another way is to think of your best days, and consider the behaviors exhibited on these days.

Purpose/Mission	Values/Behaviors



There’s a helpful exercise in Gregg Lederman’s book ‘Engaged!’ which talks about the Five Dimensions of Brand Integrity, which cover all of the necessary and highly important behavioral areas that you want your workforce to know about and do.

## 2. Turn behaviors into values

There is no magic number of how many values a company should have, but in general we'd recommend between three and six so that there aren't too much for your employees to remember, and thus live on a day-to-day basis.

So the next task is to look at the behaviors from the previous step and turn them into values. To do this, go back to the five principles, and tick how many of these each value will be able to meet.

Value	Authentic	Observable	Connected	Explained	Say/Do

## 3. Test them

Once you've narrowed down your list of values, the next thing to do is to give them a 'test ride' to see how well they work. You can do this by going out to a group of managers or employees to test how well they believe they'll work. Try to get a diverse group so that you get a diverse set of views and opinions. Once you've done this, you will have your finalists, and be ready to go to the next step.

**List out your proposed values:**

## 4. Define them

The next step in the process goes back to one of our principles, which is that values need to be explained. For this step, go back to your notes and pull all of the rich descriptions that were used to define each of the behaviors and values that you selected. When doing this, try to make sure you use words that will be understood by your diverse workforce. Also, try to find words that will evoke emotion, and thus acceptance.

Value	Definition

## 5. Get management buy-in

The final and often overlooked step in the process is obtaining the all important manager buy-in. This is essential because it's going to take years of work, discipline and commitment to embed your values, so getting managers to highlight any concerns upfront is a worthwhile exercise. Just as important, having managers buy-in and support of your values will radically improve your chances of them sticking and ultimately making a difference.



## SECTION 3:

# Embedding your company values

You can have ‘the’ best company values in the world, but if you don’t truly embed them into each and every part of the employee lifecycle they’ll be no more than words that appear on websites, posters and mouse pads throughout the office.

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*“If you fail to get your company to live the values through everyday actions, you’ll join the ranks of thousands of corporations that write one thing on the wall and then go do the opposite.”*

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Let’s look at each part of the employee lifecycle, assessing how you’re using your values to drive each critical part.

## 1. Hiring

If you want employees who are going to live your values, you need to start from the beginning, and hire them based on these values. This sets each employee up for success as they’re aware of, and embrace values from the start.

## 2. Onboarding

As the expression goes, you only have one chance to make a first impression. So, make sure your values are front and center with the onboarding of your new employees so they’re clear of what they are and the expectations of how they should be lived each and every day.

## 3. Retaining

Now that you’ve done the work to hire and onboard the right people, it’s important to make sure that you do all you can to retain them. Here are 4 ways you can do this in respect to your values:

### a) Leading

If we expect our employees to live our company values, they need to first be role-modelled by our leaders. But to think this happens automatically, sets our companies up for failure. We need to start by letting our leaders know that we expect this of them, train them to be prepared to deliver on this, and then hold them accountable for doing this. Set the expectation that leaders should use the words from the company values in casual and formal communications.

### **b) Developing**

Our development programs are our ways to develop and fine tune our employees skills and behaviors, so don't miss out on the opportunity to build your values into your development programs. Consider having people do self-assessments for how they live the values in their day-to-day work.

### **c) Recognizing**

It's been proven that recognizing against your company values can drive business performance. In fact, one study showed that you have a 32% better chance of delivering an ROI (return-on-investment) with a values-based recognition program. Sharing stories of great work and how this work supports your values will help the workforce see how the values apply to their everyday actions.

### **d) Performing**

Another way to drive performance, both individual and company, is to reward against your company values. Look at how they are built into your performance management process, so how are you rewarding people who are truly living your values?

## **4. Separating**

Last, but often forgotten from a values perspective, is the separation phase of the employee lifecycle. But if we really want to send a clear message to our employees that our values are important, then we need to use our values as a reason for having people leave our companies.

## Assessing where you are

Now that we've listed out each of these parts of the employee lifecycle, let's assess where you are against each of them currently, what you need to do, and develop a plan to make improvements where necessary. Complete the table below to help you with this.

For each part, give yourself a rating between 1 and 5 (1 being the highest and 5 being the lowest) indicating how you assess your opportunities, how much control you and your allies have and noting any roadblocks you foresee. At the end you can use this to work out what you feel your order of priorities is - prioritising where you can move quickly.

Lifecycle Part	What have you, or do you need to do?	Priority (1 to 5)
Hiring		
Onboarding		
Retaining: Leading		
Retaining: Developing		
Retaining: Recognizing		
Retaining: Performing		
Separating		

# Your Plan

The last part of this workshop is to come up with a plan. So go back over your notes, and come up with your priorities. Think through what can and will make the most impact and can be done the quickest.

## What are your first 3 priorities for the next 3 months?

Priority	Timeline
1.	
2.	
3.	

## What are your next 3 priorities for the remainder of the year?

Priority	Timeline
1.	
2.	
3.	

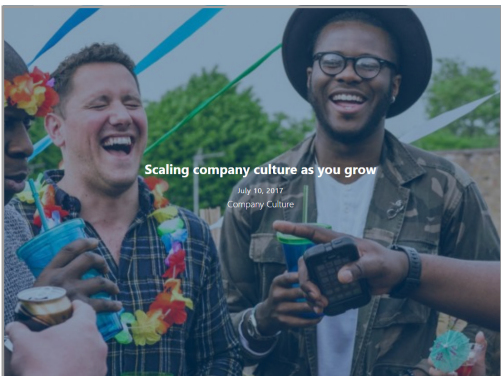
# Further Resources

There are many organizations out there that are doing amazing things with their values, some of which we've featured in Build it as case studies, or [plays](#). We've also been able to interview some of our wonderful rebels to get further insight into what they did with their values and why this was rebellious. Here are some of our favourites:



- [How to Build a Culture of Fun with Simple Values: an interview with Bonnie Endicott, Director of People at Southwest Airlines](#)
- [How No-Nonsense Values Foster a Culture of Awesome: an interview with Denise Hanlon, former Head of HR at Vocus Communications](#)

You can visit the [Rebel Playbook YouTube channel](#) for even more inspirational videos and TED Talks about company values, or read some of the articles written by Glenn and Debra:

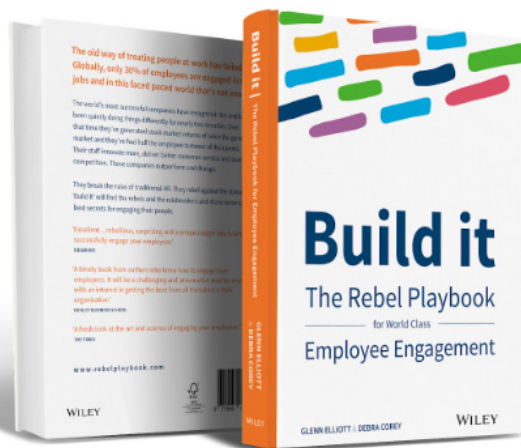


- [Glenn Elliott: Scaling Company Culture As You Grow](#)
- [Debra Corey for Forbes: Company Values And DNA: The Differences That Make Us Special](#)
- [Debra Corey for TLNT: Recognition Can Help Connect People to Your Values and Mission](#)

Finally, Reward Gateway also have some great articles and resources on how to embed your values into your culture on their blog:



- [Do you value your core values enough?](#)
- [Five new ideas to communicate company values in a crowded employer landscape](#)
- [Are your company values a big enough part of your recruiting process?](#)
- [How one company found 76,000 ways to live out their core values](#)



**Get the book that explains the whole Bridge in practical, inspirational detail.**





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