



Free Guide: How To Establish (And Reinforce) Your Church Staff's Core Values

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Naming and emphasizing staff values is gaining more and more popularity in the corporate arena. Especially with millennials flooding the workforce seeking jobs with a cause, more and more smart companies are establishing their team values, making them public, and seeing awesome results.

Why are staff values so important, and why should church staffs have them as well?

Your staff values directly impact your team culture, and thus shape your church culture at large. Your values attract high-capacity leaders to your team. They permeate everything your church staff does. Your team's core values put hands and feet to the mission and vision of your church. They align and motivate your staff. They provide standards to aid your church with staffing and reviews. I really can't emphasize this enough: having established and enforced staff values makes the difference between a good team and an exceptional team.

Here at Vanderbloemen, everything rides on our team values, and we talk about them all the time. We incorporate them into everything we do. The result? An aligned team with an infectious company culture where everyone loves coming to work every day (we even were named [Entrepreneur.com's Top Company Culture for 2016](#) and were ranked high among the Best Places To Work in Houston!). The biggest compliment to our team values and culture is the number of high-capacity people who apply to work with us or express how much they want to join our team.

So how can your church decide, name, and reinforce their staff values? Glad you asked. Since I've been dubbed the Vanderbloemen team's "Culture Whip," I'll walk you through our team values, how we formed them, and how we reinforce them on a regular basis.

1. Brainstorm.

Hold a special meeting for your entire church staff (not just your leadership) dedicated solely to [brainstorming](#) about what makes your team unique. Make the meeting fun and open to everyone's input. Write down everything that is said. Ask questions like:

“What makes our staff different?”

“What characteristics do we strive to embody as a team?”

“How do we want the outside world to perceive our team?”

“What’s unique about how we do things or interact together?”

“What adjectives do we wish described us?”

“What makes you want to work here?”

Don't only include how your staff is currently, but also write down what you want to be become. If you aren't already starting with a solid workplace culture, this is a great way to begin shaping it into what you want it to be. This is truly a time for blue-sky thinking for your entire team.

2. Cull.

Next, it's time for your leadership team to have their own meeting. Take the entire list you created while brainstorming, and begin to cull it down to 15-20 common ideas. Combine suggestions that are similar. Get rid of any ideas that came from left field that no one else echoed. Look for the common themes in everyone's input, and create a list of these 15-20 repeated ideas. Perhaps word each idea several different ways.

3. Survey.

Once you have your culled-down list of the common themes, distribute the list to your staff and have each of them anonymously vote on the 5 - 10 they think most accurately describe your staff's culture (and their desired culture). Less than 4 or 5 staff values leaves your team culture a little vague. More than 10 is too many to remember and reinforce.



If you need some examples, here are the Vanderbloemen team's 9 core staff values:

Broadband Love
Unusual Servanthood
Wow-Making Excellence
Ridiculous Responsiveness
Solution-Side Living
Ever-Increasing Agility
Stewardship of Life
Constant Improvement
Contagious Fun

Here are a few other companies' staff values that we think are rad:

- [Hubspot](#)
- [Southwest Airlines](#)
- [Apple](#)
- [Wistia](#)
- [Call Ruby](#)
- [Dave Ramsey's Ramsey Solutions](#)

4. Make it official.

Choose the top-voted 5-10 staff values and then make a big deal about publicly naming them. Throw a staff celebration when you unveil them. Thank your team publicly for what they add to your team culture and how they live out the values. Remember, this isn't an unimportant detail in leading your staff. This is a big deal that will hugely affect the future of your team, its culture, and the vision of your church. Do whatever you can to make sure your team knows, loves, and owns these values that they helped establish.

5. Reinforce constantly.

Now that you have named your values, it's time for your leadership to come up with a specific plan to regularly reinforce them. The intentional and consistent emphasis of your values is key. If you name your staff



values and then do nothing else, your values are entirely pointless and will be ineffective and forgotten.

Perhaps your church staff already has named values, but you've fallen short of this crucial step to consistently reinforce them. Here are a myriad of suggestions that can help you implement a plan for this - most of which our team here at Vanderbloemen does!

- Have your staff values artfully displayed in a central, public place that everyone on your staff sees regularly.
- Create individual plaques of your staff values that every team member can display on their desk.
- In every staff meeting, open the floor up for one team member to give a "Values Spotlight" and describe how they saw one team value lived out that week.
- Publicly thank your team for how they embody and live out the values
- Base your staff reviews on how each team members is living out your core values
- Have monthly team events based on one of your staff values
- Send out a weekly team email with an encouraging or challenging article or quotation that aligns with one of your core values

Our team and our staff culture have been dramatically shaped by the naming and consistent reinforcement of our core values. Don't ignore the importance of creating team values for your church staff. The future of your staff culture, team members, staff effectiveness, and church mission depend on it.

Vanderbloemen Search Group is a pastor search firm that helps churches and faith-based organizations find great staff. If you'd like to talk about how we could help you build your team, contact us at info@vanderbloemen.com.