



interests. risk-taking. job security. loyalty. family time. high income. career. appreciation.

“OFF THE WALL” VALUES

BY DR. BEVERLY KAYE,
FOUNDER & CEO, CAREER SYSTEMS INTERNATIONAL

They were front and center as we walked into the lobby. In foot-high shiny brass letters on a beautiful cherry wood mounting, the company's corporate values could not be missed. The reflected image shimmered on the polished marble floor. We were impressed by it. This company wanted visitors and employees, alike, to be hit between the eyes with their credo, with their business philosophy and there could be no escaping the message. That enormous plaque on the wall must have cost thousands to create...both the construction of the plaque itself and the creation of the philosophy it presented to the world. It was big and it said, "I am important!" Here's what else it said:

•• “THE COMPANY” Corporate Values ••

WE WILL BE A WORLD CLASS LEADER IN ALL ASPECTS OF OUR BUSINESS. • WE WILL PRACTICE INTEGRITY IN ALL OUR DEALINGS WITH COLLEAGUES AND CUSTOMERS. • WE WILL STRIVE FOR EXCELLENCE IN CUSTOMER SERVICE TO DESERVE 100% CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND LOYALTY. • WE WILL PRODUCE THE HIGHEST QUALITY PRODUCTS AND TAKE PRIDE IN OUR WORK. • WE RESPECT DIVERSITY AND SUPPORT GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT FOR EVERY EMPLOYEE.

 **CAREER SYSTEMS INTERNATIONAL**
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"The connection between what's on the wall and what's in one's soul is generally only found in a workplace where unique skills and interests are encouraged. You don't get out-of-the-box ideas from putting people into boxes."

How nice for them. How lovely for the stockholders. And, we thought, these words are absolutely interchangeable with about 100 other companies we know fairly well. Not that it's a bad thing. We actually believe that every company that wants to be successful had better subscribe to those words...or other words like them.

And, we wondered, what would happen to the company if the plaque fell off the wall. We wondered how those words were embedded into the hearts and minds of the people who worked there. Did they make anyone work harder? Work differently? Be more loyal? Trusting? Enthusiastic? Engaged? Even...happy? We wondered how those laudable words linked to one's personal values. Isn't it our personal values and how well we can live them every day that makes us successful, productive, engaged employees?

PERSONAL VALUES DRIVE PERFORMANCE

It's the alignment of personal values to the organizational culture that makes for a good match. In a place where skills and interests are encouraged to produce innovation, not stick people in boxes - is where the connection between what's on the wall and what's in one's soul works best. That's what got us the instant replay or the iPod or overnight delivery or even the internet! No game changing device or technology was ever sprouted from the brain of a bored, disengaged, overworked or underutilized worker.

WHOSE VALUES? YOURS OR MINE?

But very few of us sit around thinking about how our values may or may not align with the corporate values of our companies. We just know when it's not working right. And, even if we tried, determining our own values is not that easy. If you ask someone outright, "What are your values?" they may answer quickly....honesty, integrity, the golden rule and maybe putting in an honest days' work. All are impressive and worthy values, to be sure...and shared by many. But, although they contribute to how we treat others, including our employers, that short list doesn't help us define the way, the where, the how and the when we do that work.

HEADS DOWN, CHINS UP

In the current economic slowdown, organizations are doing more with less but managers, nonetheless, have to **GET IT DONE!** People are laying low, trying to be invisible and to avoid ending up on "the list". Heads down, chins up, bite the bullet and wait for better days. Who cares about my values, I just want to stay employed. We get it and we've seen it before. We also believe that if you have to work for a living, you might as well feel a sense of fulfillment and contentment. Same salary, either way. And that sense of commitment could make the difference between getting results and getting nowhere.

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But if you value having time freedom, but can't flex your schedule or you value having influence, but never get asked your opinion...if you value being a team member, but work alone...if you value being autonomous, but are closely managed...if you value spending time with family and friends, but work 80 hours a week...then contentment and fulfillment are far away and the dollars you get paid won't help you buy any satisfaction.

If values are the emotional salary of work, we need to recognize that they change, over time. People can suddenly find their workplace at odds with their evolving values. When this happens, interests wane, skills atrophy and work becomes more difficult, takes longer, and becomes less accurate -- maybe even boring.

*"Values are the emotional salary of work and some folks are drawing no wages at all."
- Howard Figlar*

MANAGERS CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The first step to helping employees determine how their actual work aligns with their values is for managers to ASK direct reports what matters most to them and explore - through conversation - individual values and how well they are in sync with the values of the company, the department and their boss. Armed with that information, managers can partner with employees to help unleash that discretionary effort.

Values give meaning to our life and work. They are the source of personal and professional fulfillment. Working in sync with one's values greatly increases job satisfaction - a key component to keeping people engaged and productive.

OUR EVOLVING VALUES - A FREE TOOL FROM CSI TO PAY IT FORWARD

Career Systems International has been a leader in career development, employee engagement and mentoring for over 25 years. We've seen economies bearish and bullish. One thing that doesn't seem to change, whatever the economic backdrop, is how our values impact our lives at work and at home. And figuring them out - putting words around feelings is always a challenge - doesn't get any easier when one is under pressure.

To help managers and employees facilitate this discovery, especially in this economic slump, we're offering three free *Invest in Your Values* assessments, online (one for you and two direct reports). There are more "ahaa" moments in this 10-minute exercise than we can count. And for years, companies like Marriott, ADM, Microsoft, Constellation Energy, The Hartford and thousands of others, have used this tool to improve performance levels through discretionary effort - HR speak for "employees who are satisfied and engaged work harder than those who aren't."

HOW TO USE THE VALUES ASSESSMENT TOOL

Go to <http://csitoolsonline.com/oev/> to register; use OEV as the password; you're ready to follow the simple instructions. We can't do this forever, but it will be available through the end of July. Go ahead, try it - have at least one values conversation with one of your stars - perhaps it will give you just a little more of that discretionary effort.

And if those bright, shiny brass values in the lobby don't mean anything to you, at least you'll know what does.

And that, my friends, can be the key to unlocking your own bright, shiny future - organizationally and personally.

ABOUT US

Dr. Beverly Kaye is an internationally recognized authority on career issues, employee engagement and retention in the workplace. As Founder and CEO of Career Systems International (CSI) and a best-selling author on workplace performance, she has worked with a host of organizations to develop and deliver cutting-edge, award-winning talent management solutions.

CSI has been a game changer in the learning and development industry since its inception when Dr. Kaye wrote the ground-breaking book *Up is Not The Only Way*, which

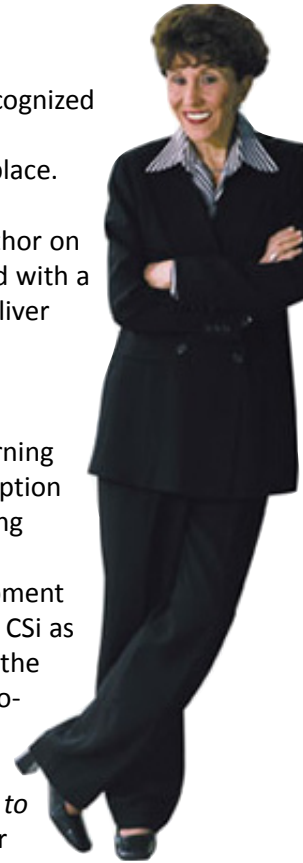
established career development as an area of practice and CSI as the foremost authority in the industry. Later, Dr. Kaye co-wrote the best-selling book, *Love 'Em or Lose 'Em: Getting Good People to Stay*, which is the basis for CSI's highly successful practice in employee retention and engagement.

CSI's powerful suite of talent solutions have helped organizations reduce costs associated with talent loss and/or underperformance,

while fostering a culture of support for the individuals, managers, and leaders. Organizational cultures are transformed -- employees are energized and managers are supportive ... mentoring becomes a natural, everyday occurrence ... growth and learning are on-going.

CSI's resilient talent management processes link directly to business strategies and increase productivity and profitability to deliver the best returns on investment.

CSI's clients are primarily Fortune 1000 companies whose names are familiar brands in the market place. Projects range from the delivery of individual training programs in a single division or department of an organization to enterprise-wide interventions around the world.



*Complimentary
Invest in Your Values
... One for yourself and
two for your employees,
to help facilitate great
conversations
(<http://csitoolsonline.com/oev/>)*

You have a massive reservoir of potential game changers throughout your company. They produce results, they have needs, they innovate, they discover, they create revenue and profits. And they CAN choose to give you their discretionary effort. Have a Values Conversation with one of your game changers - today.