

## CORE VALUES

A company's core values are the foundation of what the brand and brand culture is built upon. Without core values, the company doesn't have a rudder to steer the ship. They guide the company's attitudes, choices, and actions when things are going smoothly and help to make decisions in rough times. They create unity, strength, and trust.

Values are more than just words, they are your commandments and commitment. They are the company's code of conduct and standards to build the business and messaging on. A word(s), phrase, or sentence that conveys the core values of your company to your customers, employees, and/or the world.

The values are not just picked out of thin air or what sounds cool but must be real, legitimate, genuine, and true to the company. They must be deeply held, unwavering, and passionately protected for they act as a benchmark in all facets of the business so they need to be crafted carefully.

Once you have finalized your company values, hold each other accountable to them all the time, talk about them all the time, remind yourself about them all the time. Most importantly, stand up for them when you are asked to compromise, all the time!

### Let's Get Started

Rule #1: Ensure your core values are true and authentic!

**STEP 1:** Write a list of the principles, standards, or qualities that are most important to you and what you believe is relevant to the character and success of the business.

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**STEP 2:** If you have more than 10, look to see if you have words that are similar; Honesty, Truth, and Transparency and select the words that best capture your values.

**STEP 3:** Narrow down your list of values to your top 5 core values and list them in Step 4 on the next page.

When determining the core values that drive your business, remember these values have to resonate with your audience, something they believe in and you can authentically share with them.

**These are the most overused company values, think deeper, why does your company have integrity, what is so special about your service...**

- Integrity
- Respect
- Innovation
- Teamwork
- Excellence
- Customer focus
- Trust
- Diversity
- Accountability
- Openness
- Quality
- Honesty
- Passion
- Safety
- Community
- Service
- Collaboration
- Responsibility
- People
- Commitment

**Identify your unique values that separate you from your competition.**

### Sample Core Values:

#### Southwest Airlines Values:

Live the Southwest Way

- Warrior Spirit
- Servant's Heart
- Fun-LUVing Attitude

Work the Southwest Way:

- Safety and Reliability
- Friendly Customer Service
- Low Cost

#### Virgin Airlines Values

- We Think Customer
- We Lead The Way
- We Do The Right Thing
- We Are Determined To Deliver
- Together We Make The Difference

## CORE VALUES (CONTINUED)

**STEP 4:** Next, define what each of the 5 values stands for and mean for the company—connect it with emotion. For example, if “Innovation” is one of your core values, write a rationale about what “Innovation” means and why it is important. The reason for this is for clarity because others can/will have different ideas of what those specific words and/or statements mean.

Core Value 1: .....

Meaning: .....

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Core Value 2: .....

Meaning: .....

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Core Value 3: .....

Meaning: .....

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Core Value 4: .....

Meaning: .....

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Core Value 5: .....

Meaning: .....

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### Sample Core Values:

#### Coca-Cola Values

- Leadership: The courage to shape a better future
- Collaboration: Leverage collective genius
- Integrity: Be real
- Accountability: If it is to be, it's up to me
- Passion: Committed in heart and mind
- Diversity: As inclusive as our brands
- Quality: What we do, we do well

#### Adidas Values

- Performance: Sport is the foundation for all we do and executional excellence is a core value of our Group.
- Passion: Passion is at the heart of our company. We are continuously moving forward, innovating, and improving.
- Integrity: We are honest, open, ethical, and fair. People trust us to adhere to our word.
- Diversity: We know it takes people with different ideas, strengths, interests, and cultural backgrounds to make our company succeed. We encourage healthy debate and differences of opinion.

#### H&M Values

- We Believe In People
- We Are One Team
- Straightforward And Open-Minded
- Keep It Simple
- Entrepreneurial Spirit
- Constant Improvement
- Cost-Consciousness

#### Google Values

- Focus on the user and all else will follow.
- It's best to do one thing really, really well.
- Fast is better than slow.
- Democracy on the web works.
- You don't need to be at your desk to need an answer.
- You can make money without doing evil.
- There's always more information out there.
- The need for information crosses all borders.
- You can be serious without a suit.
- Great just isn't good enough.