



# Managing Employees to Success

Making your mission, vision and values a reality

By Mark A. Griffin

I HAVE BEEN HONORED TO WORK for many impactful companies and widely known brands in corporate America. God has given me those experiences, coupled with education at some of the best higher education institutions in the U.S.

What works well in high-performing organizations — such brands as Quaker Oats, Gatorade and Snapple — also works well in smaller Christian-owned for-profit companies, nonprofits, ministries and churches. Why is this relevant? Because the methods that have made those brands individually expand and experience prosperity can help prosper your organization as well.

What is most important — enabling organizations to lead employees to success — is to install key human resources (HR) components. The first, which is foundational, is to establish your organization's mission, vision and values (MVV) statement. Much has been written regarding how critical a MVV statement is to success, including here in *Outcomes* magazine. (One of my articles, "Kingdom-Minded: Defining your mission, vision and values," appeared in the Spring 2014 issue.) The importance of having this integral to your HR strategy will never change. Without mapping your organization's destination by defining its core beliefs and purpose, it is impossible to move it in the direction to which God calls it.

*"Then the LORD replied: 'Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets so that a herald may run with it'"* (Hab. 2:2).

Assuming you have an appropriate MVV designed and created with employee input, the next step is to integrate it into all you do, from an HR perspective. This is where most organizations falter.

Most leaders, after they create their organization's MVV statement, do what comes naturally: They share it with everyone. It is displayed on the company website, and printed poster-sized and proudly hung on the walls of its conference rooms and lobby. It is mentioned consistently — for about three months. And then it gets forgotten and dies. It dies because it

has not been made an intrinsic part of the way it guides business. It is not ingrained in the heart of the organization.

How do you make your mission, vision and values a part of how you work? You integrate it into the practices of the people who are in the best position to make it happen: those who apply your HR practices. HR practices touch all employees.

What are some examples of HR practices?

- Employee relations
- Recruitment
- Workforce planning
- On-boarding
- Training
- Performance management
- Compensation and benefits
- Attendance and leave
- Employee skills development
- Health and safety
- Employee activities
- Employment policies

While one could almost certainly laundry-list at least 40 or more solid practices, let's focus on six that you can integrate with your MVV quite easily:

1. Handbook
2. Recruitment process
3. Performance review process
4. Job descriptions
5. Communication process
6. Training and development

## HANDBOOK

Employees complain when you don't have a handbook, but when you have one, they don't want it! An employee handbook is very easy to create, yet probably the most overlooked aspect of employment documentation. One thing is for sure: if an

organization has multiple work shifts or locations or simply a multitude of employees, an employee handbook helps to keep all employees on the same page.

Handbooks are always a delicate subject. When done right, however, and with employee input, this tool has significant positive impact. Here are some tips:

- Make it mirror your MVV
- Make it relevant
- Keep it simple
- Keep it legal and legit

*“The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it” (Gen. 2:15).*

Allow me to expand on two of those points.

### 1. Make it mirror your MVV.

Your handbook should reflect your MVV, which essentially amplifies your culture. Someone who is unfamiliar with your organization should be able to pick up your handbook and see your heart reflected in the tone and guiding principles you lay out for your employees. The front of the handbook should contain your MVV, followed by the president’s message as to why the MVV is important to the organization and how it was created.

### 2. Make it relevant.

Having reviewed hundreds of handbooks over the years, one thing is certain: most are horrible. They are irrelevant, often don’t convey the culture of the organization and are more about preaching, or dictating, than guiding. It is possible to make it legal and legitimate without making it overly wordy and boring.

## RECRUITMENT

One of the most difficult aspects of managing organizations is recruitment. It is not necessarily just difficult on the candidates; it’s also difficult on the organizations. While we live in tumultuous business times, with real unemployment exceeding 10 percent in almost every city in our nation, recruitment is still a challenge for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to:

- Lack of skilled candidates
- Emotionally wounded and hurt applicants who lack trust in any organization
- A too-large pool of candidates, which makes it difficult to know where to begin
- Lack of alignment with salary expectations; candidates are accustomed to more

These are all hurdles to climb over, but organizations with a well thought out process and strategy inevitably prevail in hiring the best candidates to accelerate the organization’s performance. The process of building a “high-performance” organization revolves around incorporating your mission,

vision and values into every HR practice as practicable, including recruitment.

When developing your strategy, weave in several concepts to help recruit the best candidates: those who will help you manage within your mission, reach your vision and operate within your values. Your process should include:

1. Networking vacancies to trusted sources
2. Using employee referral systems to increase your candidate pool
3. Using consistent hiring methodology when recruiting candidates
4. Including your MVV in any recruitment process

Be careful when developing your recruitment process. Many want to optimize the process to speed the days to hire-up. They want candidates fast. They want a paperless process and a filtering system to eliminate candidates who don’t match their requirements. Unfortunately, not being sure of what you’re doing, and working with unwise counsel, is a minefield you want to avoid; the results could be downright explosive.

I recently did some preliminary research on Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) cases that have headlined in the past several years, painting a damaging picture of some very prominent organizations, including churches, ministries and nonprofits. The cases revolved around such factors as:

- Pre-employment testing
- Unlawful employment application questions
- Disability discrimination


Many organizations, even those with the best intentions, ask questions that can inadvertently result in disparate treatment across a broad spectrum of minority candidates. Organizations also rely on invalid forms of pre-employment testing as a screening tool, ones they might not be aware that might disqualify minority candidates at a higher rate than non-minorities. So, always make sure you know precisely what you are doing to protect your organization from legal action. When in doubt, seek advice from a qualified HR specialist.

Want to learn more about the other our aspects of integration: performance review process, job descriptions, communication process and training and development? Join us at CLA’s Outcomes Conference in Dallas. We look forward to sharing with you our successful format on how to develop a high-performance HR system for your organization. ●

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 Register to attend the workshop being led by Mark A. Griffin “MANAGING EMPLOYEES TO SUCCESS” at CLA’s Outcomes Conference 2017, April 4–6, in Dallas (outcomesconference.org).