

SHAPING YOUR TEAM CULTURE

DEFINING FOUNDATIONAL ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIORS
THAT STRENGTHEN YOUR TEAM AND MINISTRY



by Gregg Hunter

“Raise your hand if your organization has a set of core values,” I ask attendees at a seminar I lead at CCCA sectionals. “Now, keep your hand up if you know what they are.” About three-quarters of the hands drop as people snicker. “If you have your hand raised, would you be willing to stand and recite them for us?” Nearly every time, the remaining hands go down. ▶

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I have been inspired by Andy Stanley from North Point Ministries in a podcast called “Defining Your Organizational Culture.” As I listened to his list of organizational behaviors I saw how Andy and his team moved far beyond a list of core values that remained in a file drawer and became active guiding principles that truly affect the way team members work together and

In the following paragraphs, I’ll share CCCA’s organizational behaviors as an example. I encourage you to consider this as you read: Would our team benefit from establishing this kind of covenant — to help clearly define our culture and what’s expected in our daily behavior? The CCCA team composition reflects that of many small to medium camps:

breakfast, as Peter Drucker says.

Imagine a weekly team gathering in which one sharp-edged staff member says to another in front of everyone, “That’s not what you were supposed to bring to the meeting, Sarah.” (In other words, “C’mon, you’re not very bright. You did this wrong and everyone knows it.”)

We would say that’s not operating

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treat each other. They actually define the culture in a powerful way.

As a team, we at CCCA started working through the North Point list and edited, added and subtracted until we landed on a short list that has become our covenant to each other. We’ve all agreed. It’s a commitment, and if you break the commitment, you are subject to having a team member — with kindness, grace and respect — approach you and let you know what they observed.

Adopting organizational behaviors as a covenant to each other is changing the culture at CCCA. It’s changing who we are and how we do what we do. It plays out in the way we act, the way we treat each other and how we interact with each other.

about 17 team members who are either full-time, part-time or key contractors. Following are the seven organizational behaviors the CCCA team has committed to:

1. Operate with Kindness, Grace and Respect

You’d think in Christian camping ministry, or maybe ministry in general, that this goes without saying. I have worked with wonderful people who have incredible skills — people who do their job functions extremely well, but have a sharp edge. With that edge, they may cut people down, sometimes their own teammates. If that type of behavior was accepted, or not redirected, the culture of the team could eat our strategy for

with kindness, grace and respect. And Sarah would be empowered (as would other team members who observed this interaction) to say to the complainant, “I was thinking about what you said at staff meeting today, and it didn’t feel kind, gracious or respectful. I just wanted you to know.”

John 13:35 says, “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” When we treat each other with kindness, grace and respect, it actually communicates to others that we belong to Jesus.

Each behavior on our list is followed with a promise that starts with the words, “We will.” This first organizational behavior promises, “We will treat others the way we want to be treated. ... We will honor people as sent to us by

God.” As we live this out, we might be a little less likely to criticize someone for tracking mud, scraping the wall or planning a devotion that seemed too long.

At CCCA’s 2015 national conference in Phoenix, Horst Schulze, founding president of Ritz-Carlton Hotels, taught us about how to take excellent care of our guests. This man has been recognized as the world’s top hotelier. He

process were empowered. Every person on the assembly line could stop the line at any time. For example, if someone’s job in the process is to put lug nuts on the wheels and they find a bent lug bolt on a car, that person pushes a button to stop the entire assembly line. People gather around to figure out how that lug bolt got bent, and to ensure that never happens again. This continuous quality

When we say we’ll adopt the mission and vision as our own, I don’t expect people to give 24/7 to CCCA, nor do I think you expect people to give 24/7 to the ministry of your camp. What I am saying is whenever and wherever we are working, we will take the mission and vision of CCCA personally. We say, “I own this.”

Taking it personally means we don’t



says, “My whole management philosophy is summed up in this: Be nice!”

2. Make it Better

The concept of “make it better” is a global business philosophy that is often given acronyms such as CQI (Continuous Quality Improvement) or TQM (Total Quality Management.)

I worked at The Boeing Company for the first six years of my career. We were building a brand new airplane — the 777. Boeing began a massive culture change on that airplane program. They went to Japan on a study mission in the mid-80s and asked why Japanese manufacturers have so few defects on their products.

What they learned there was that all team members in the manufacturing

improvement impacted everything they did, which impacted the products they put out.

Here’s the way CCCA has described it in our commitment: We will strive to improve continuously in all areas of our work. If we see an opportunity to make our service or products better, we will approach the person responsible and bring our suggestion.

3. Take Personal Ownership

Our covenant says: We will take the mission and vision of CCCA personally and adopt them as our own. We’ll see our work as a reflection of who we are as people and invest ourselves in living them out.

say, “It’s not my job.” We take it personally because even one unreturned email or a candy wrapper on the ground can influence the way someone feels about our ministry. We own everything together.

4. Remain Open-Handed

The CCCA covenant statement says: We will keep our hands and minds open to new ideas, innovation and change, and will hold loosely the way we’ve always done it as well as our ownership of the process.

We are committed not to be close-fisted about “our stuff” or “our way.” We also want to be quick to share information with others. We will not adopt the philosophy that knowledge is power and power is to be held closely. We ▶

limit innovation when we say, “This is the way we’ve always done it.”

5. Pursue Personal Growth

Who you are outside of work comes to work with you. Whatever you’re dealing with — whether it’s spiritual,

better. It’s harder to say “Sorry, I can’t help you” or “It’s not my job” when we have agreed to work together. We have said we’ll allow our skills to be used and look for ways to collaborate.

A key element of collaboration is to communicate so the whole team knows

requests” for others behind their back. Unless you’ve spoken with the person about your concern, these conversations need to stop.

To prevent these organizational behaviors from becoming a forgotten list in a file, we have committed to

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emotional, or physical — those issues accompany you on the job, either consciously or subconsciously. It’s imperative that we remain connected to God and take care of our own needs so that we are healthy enough to serve the ministry and the people that have been entrusted to us, and live out the lives that God has called us to.

Our covenant statement reads: We will strive to grow in our relationship with God and others, and work to be the best we can be spiritually, emotionally and physically. We will actively seek out areas of our lives where God may want us to grow.

6. Collaborate

Collaboration can save time and money, while also making things

what’s going on. When we collaborate we bring in everyone who needs to be involved.

7. Maintain Conversational Integrity

The commitment for this behavior is: We will go directly to another team member to express concerns or offenses rather than expressing those to others. We will decline to listen to others’ complaints or criticisms about another team member, but will encourage conversation directly with the party involved. I think that speaks for itself. But if this one is broken, the damage done can exceed all others combined. You’ve probably seen it happen, or you may be the one who shares “prayer

addressing one at each staff meeting. As we discuss each behavior, we’ll ask for examples of how it can be lived out, and about what could happen if we don’t.

This organizational covenant — which each staff member has signed and will be evaluated upon annually — goes beyond our mission statement. It’s not about *what* we do; it’s about *how* we do it. And this can make all the difference in building a positive culture in which people like to work, and where they thrive. ●



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