

warp+weft

Values Exercise

FOR ORGANIZATIONS

Define What You
Stand For and How
You Lead.



Why Defining Your Business Values Matters

As a business leader, you are constantly navigating competing priorities, making tough decisions, and managing people, operations, and growth. In the midst of all that, it is easy for a company's core values to get buried under the weight of what's urgent.

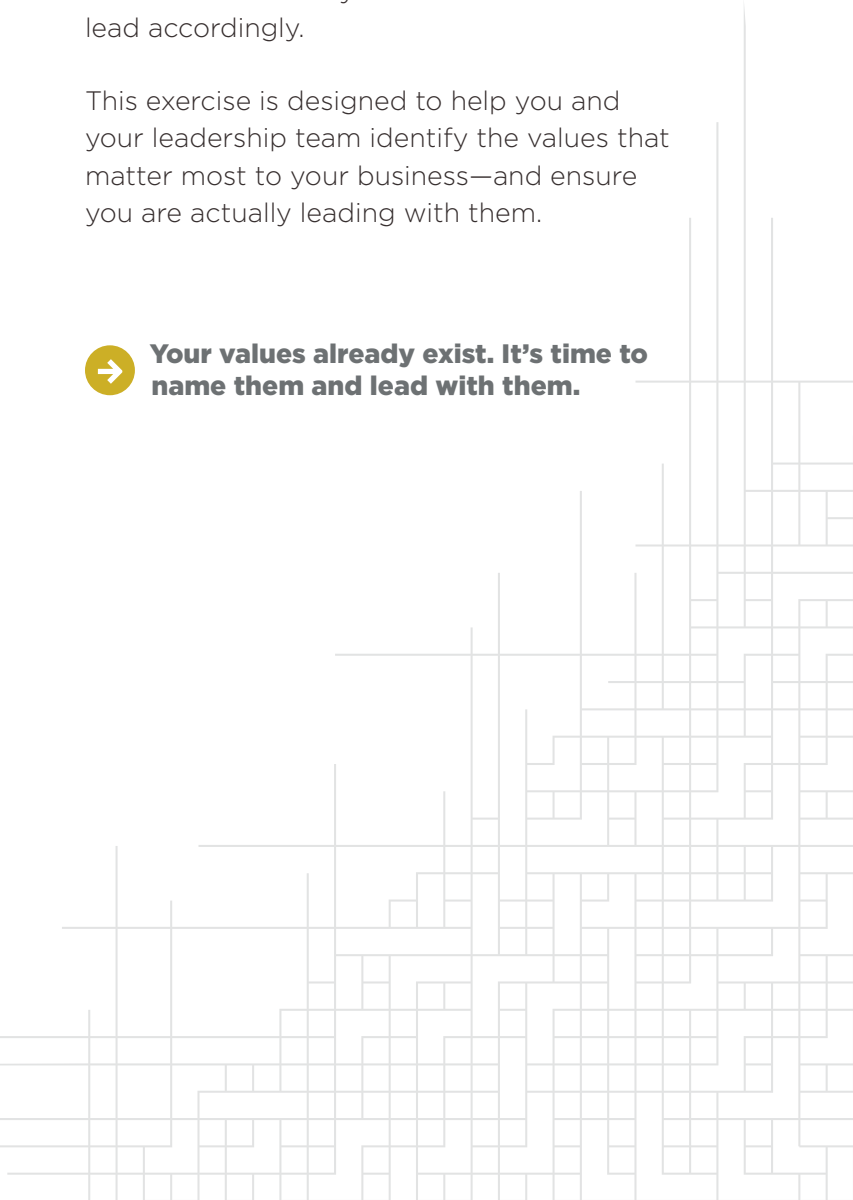
But the truth is, your business already has values. Whether they've been intentionally defined or not, they are embedded in your culture, your reputation, and how your team shows up every day. When those values are clear and actively used, they become a powerful tool for leadership, alignment, and growth.

We are not talking about corporate platitudes that live on a website but never get referenced again. We mean the real, lived principles that guide your culture, shape your brand, and influence every experience your team, customers, and partners have with your business.

Defining your values gives your company a compass. It helps you make consistent decisions, attract aligned talent, and build trust with your customers and community. It also strengthens your internal culture. People want to work for and with companies that know what they stand for and lead accordingly.

This exercise is designed to help you and your leadership team identify the values that matter most to your business—and ensure you are actually leading with them.

 **Your values already exist. It's time to name them and lead with them.**



1 Step One

Rate each value below using the key to the right. Focus on what reflects how your organization truly operates at its best—or aspires to operate.

V = Very important
Q = Quite important
N = Not so important

— **Accountability:** We own our actions and results

— **Agility:** We adapt quickly and thoughtfully

— **Ambition:** We pursue bold goals and high standards

— **Authenticity:** We are transparent and true to who we are

— **Balance:** We value sustainability over burnout

— **Belonging:** We create space for all voices

— **Collaboration:** We believe in the power of teamwork

— **Communication:** We speak clearly and listen deeply

— **Community:** We invest in the people and places around us

— **Compassion:** We lead with care and consideration

— **Courage:** We are willing to take smart risks

— **Creativity:** We think differently and challenge convention

— **Curiosity:** We ask questions and stay open

— **Customer-Centricity:** We put our customers at the center of what we do

— **Diversity:** We value and reflect a range of perspectives

— **Efficiency:** We aim to do more with less

— **Empathy:** We strive to understand others' experiences

— **Excellence:** We hold ourselves to high standards

— **Fairness:** We act with equity and integrity

— **Focus:** We do fewer things, better

— **Generosity:** We give time, resources, and credit freely

— **Growth:** We believe in continuous learning

— **Honesty:** We communicate with clarity and truth

— **Humility:** We don't pretend to have all the answers

— **Inclusion:** We actively create space for all identities

— **Innovation:** We seek better ways forward

— **Integrity:** We do what's right, even when it's hard

— **Joy:** We bring positivity into the work

— **Learning:** We value progress over perfection

— **Leadership:** We lead by example

— **Legacy:** We aim to create lasting impact

— **Openness:** We are receptive to feedback and change

— **Purpose:** We align our work with what matters

— **Quality:** We are committed to doing things well

V = Very important
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2 Step Two

Review the values marked with “V” and select your top 5-8 values.

— **Respect:** We treat people with care and professionalism

— **Responsibility:** We hold ourselves accountable for our impact

— **Safety:** We protect the wellbeing of our people and stakeholders

— **Service:** We go beyond expectations for those we serve

— **Simplicity:** We make the complex more clear and manageable

— **Stewardship:** We use resources wisely and responsibly

— **Strategy:** We make intentional, well-informed choices

— **Sustainability:** We plan and build for the long term

— **Teamwork:** We are stronger together

— **Transparency:** We share information openly

— **Trust:** We build and earn trust in every interaction

— **Vision:** We think long-term and act with purpose

— **Insert your own unlisted value here:**

— **Insert your own unlisted value here:**

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

Follow-Up Steps After Identifying Your Business Values

Now that you've identified the values that matter most to your organization, use these steps to keep your values aligned with your day-to-day decision making.

→ Refer to your values when making decisions

Use your business values as a decision filter. Whether you're making a hire, taking on a project, or entering a partnership—ask if it aligns with your values. If it doesn't, it's probably a no.

→ Define what each value looks like in action

Don't let your values stay abstract. For each one, describe how it should show up in your business. What does that value look like in hiring, onboarding, customer service, or leadership?

→ Share your values with your team. Talk about them. Integrate them.

The more your team understands and uses your values, the more powerful and cohesive your culture becomes.

→ Use your values to shape culture and set boundaries

Values aren't just about what you encourage. They also define what you won't tolerate. Use them to guide your standards for behavior, performance, and accountability.

→ Evaluate past decisions through the lens of your values

Look back at decisions you've made as a leadership team. Where did your values guide you well? Where were they missing? What would you do differently now?

→ Check for alignment between stated and lived values

Are your stated values just words on the wall—or are they evident in how you work, lead, and serve? If there's a gap, this is your chance to close it.

→ Ensure your brand clearly reflects your values

From your messaging to your marketing to your customer experience, your brand should be a living reflection of your values. If it's not, it may be time for a refresh.

→ Revisit your values during growth and transition

New leadership, strategic pivots, rapid growth, or culture shifts are good times to pause and ask if your values still fit. Revisit regularly to stay aligned.

→ Remember that business values are directional, not dogmatic

There's no single right answer. Values are not about perfection—they are about intention. They give your organization a center of gravity. And when they are well defined and actively used, they become one of your most strategic tools.