Beyond W.O.W®

HOW TO TURN COMPANY VALUES INTO BOTTOM-LINE RESULTS

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Well, hello there!

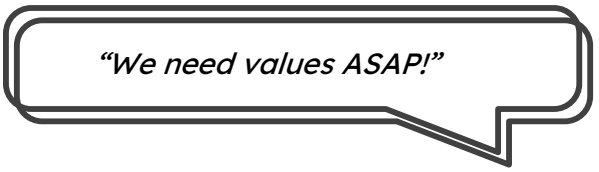
What took you so long?!

Really – a whole book about company values?

Abso-flipping-lutely.

If you've bought this book, you're likely sitting in one of the following camps:

- You're a **founder or leader** who senses that something's off in your organisation. It's growing and the team's expanding, but alignment feels fragile. Decisions take longer than they should and priorities are quickly replaced by the next 'bright, shiny object'. You're hoping that defining values will bring clarity – a way to anchor behaviour, guide decisions, and preserve what made the organisation special in the first place as it continues to grow.
- Or perhaps you're part of a leadership or People team **tasked with figuring out values**. Maybe doing this has come from the top down:



And you're keen to impress / not get this wrong.

- Maybe you're the **Lone Ranger** in your organisation. The one who gets that, when used in the right way – taken Beyond W.O.W (Words On a Wall) and used as a cultural operating framework – values drive commercial success.
- You might even be a **values sceptic**, having worked at places where they were little more than wall art.
- Or you're just plain **curious**. About the best way to build a strong culture. About whether values really can be a business gamechanger.

First bit of straight-talking incoming (you'll see **No honey** – one of my organisation's values, meaning straight-talking – sections throughout the book):



No honey

Those leaders who overlook the fact that, when properly defined and intentionally taken Beyond W.O.W, discovering and defining their organisation's values will be one of the best things they've ever 'done' for it, do so at their peril.

This book is the permission slip, playbook and, if needed, kick up the backside of every forward-thinking CEO / leader / People professional / whatever other reason has led you to the edge of the values discovery precipice.

It's time to define values that go Beyond W.O.W, shaping your organisation's culture and in turn impacting its bottom-line results.

As you read on, you'll see that there's a cheeky, little double entendre going on here!

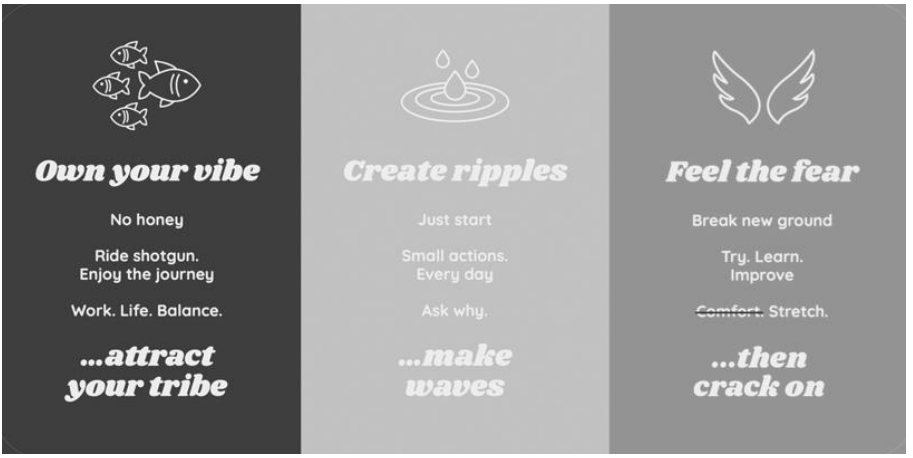
1. This book will support you to define values that **more than wow**, i.e.:
    - Stand out from the 'meh' values we've all come to know – and scoff at.
    - Are not only on the tip of every team member's tongue and at the front of their mind, but are something they're proud to shout about and stand behind.
    - Are so resonant, you'll wonder how your organisation ever operated without them.
    - Provide a clear compass for how things get done, facilitating the right business decisions.
    - Drive the right customers and prospective team members to say, "Yes" to working with you and the wrong ones to say, "No, thanks".
    - And finally, but **most importantly**, provide a strategic operating framework through which to influence culture and drive high business performance.
2. Then, it'll guide you through taking your organisation's newly defined values **Beyond W.O.W (Words On a Wall / Website)**, so they play out in EVERYONE and EVERYTHING, EVERY TIME.

Read this bit... FIRST

To get the best bang for your buck from this book

This is no ordinary business book

This is a book about values, written in a way that plays out my (organisation's) values. As you read on, you'll quickly get to grips with the fact that, if you're going to go to the trouble of defining your organisation's values, they're only worth the wall (or website) they're written on if they then show up in EVERYONE across the organisation and in EVERYTHING it does, EVERY TIME. Even when that includes writing a book.



Own your vibe... attract your tribe: I see you – you're busy with your day job and have neither the time nor the inclination to wade through page after page of theory to get to the good stuff. So, you'll find this book's deliberately written in a 'create-your-own-learning', dip-in-dip-out format. I get that this format, or even the book's content, won't be for everyone. That's fine by

me. The point is, your values (and resulting culture) won't be for everyone either, so let's start as we mean to go on.

Create ripples… make waves: Each section gets straight to the point, cross-references relevant additional reading and emphasises provoking your own thoughts, ideas and approach over providing a fixed, step-by-step checklist. These are *your* organisation's values and resulting culture, after all.

Feel the fear… then crack on: This book draws on over 20 years of lived experience working with organisations across a variety of industries to discover and define their values, then enjoying the highs and overcoming the lows of making sure they play out in everything they do.

PART ONE

Getting your head in the game and your ducks in a row...

Read this bit… if you're thinking, "Culture Code. What the…?"

Culture code explained

Culture code explained

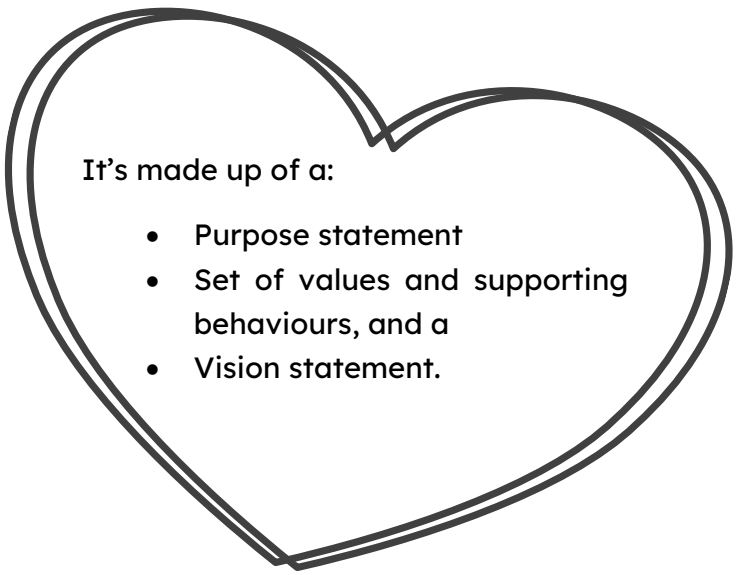
Pinning culture down

My favourite definition of workplace culture is:

> ***Culture is how employees' hearts and stomachs feel about Monday morning on a Sunday night.***

~ Bill Marklein

Your organisation's culture code captures in black and white the framework around how its culture *should** play out every day.



It tells the world:

- Why the people in your organisation get out of bed in the morning, beyond making money (purpose)
- How you and your team members aim to show up every day (values), and
- What the future that you're trying to create through your work looks like (vision)

You may hear talk of a mission statement too. Mission is often used interchangeably with purpose. This is incorrect in my opinion. A purpose statement outlines your organisation's 'why', whereas a mission outlines 'what' it does.



No honey

Without a lived and breathed culture code, your organisation is lost. You can have the best strategy, the smartest people, stand-out sales consultants and the slickest marketing, but bypass purpose, values and vision and you're building on sand.

***Why the italics and asterisk?** Well, as you read on, you'll see that in many organisations there's a gaping void between their culture code and the reality of their day-to-day culture.

The foundations of my organisation's culture code



Reality check

THE Baywatch story

In my first job, I was lucky enough (or so I thought at the time) to be 1 of 15 people selected from 1500 applicants to join the graduate trainee scheme of a well-known recruitment consultancy.

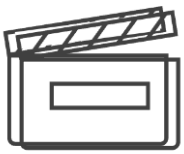
One day, the powers that be decided that all the consultants in the particular office I worked in were going to have a competition to see who could make the most cold calls in a set timeframe. Whoever came last would have to walk about a mile into town to buy lunch for the rest of the team – wearing a pair of Baywatch-style, red Bermuda shorts with the rest of their suit (suits were a big thing in 2001!) and their formal shoes (typically heels for women).

Guess who came last? Yes, it was me. So, off I trotted into town, the sound of my colleagues laughing *at* me growing increasingly distant. Not only looking ridiculous, but also feeling a huge sense of shame. This wasn't about me coming last. My family will tell you that I'm the least competitive person in the world. But what is important to me is a) giving everything I do my all and b) being recognised as someone who does this. As far as the cold calling was concerned, I'd done a), and not only had this and the quality of the calls I'd made been overlooked, but I'd then been humiliated.

Needless to say, I left there shortly afterwards. Back to Bill's culture definition, the feeling in my heart and stomach every evening (not just on a Sunday) about the following day was too strong to ignore.

How it works in real life

If purpose is *why* the business exists, beyond profit generation and vision is *where* the business is heading – its ultimate goal, then (when they're discovered, not picked) values form the heart of the code, capturing how the organisation shows up when it's operating at its best.



In action

Fast forward 20+ years and 'The Baywatch experience' has massively influenced my organisation's Culture Code.

Purpose:

Make work *great.* Make *great* work.

I (we) get out of bed in the morning to improve the world of work and the lives of the people in it. To help each organisation be the best version of itself, by putting its people first and showing up, every day, as it says it will. Because when you make work great, great work follows, and so, in turn, does commercial success.

Our purpose drives me and my team every day. It motivates us to take on the hard things. It helps us say, “Yes” to the right opportunities and, “No” to the wrong ones.

Values: (see p.i)

Vision:

Every life enriched by work.

“*Every* life? That’s massive. How will you ever achieve this?” I hear you cry. Well, here’s the thing:

- For your vision statement to be truly inspiring, it should be so BIG that it remains just out of reach.
- Your vision may be too BIG to achieve alone, but every step that you take towards it is a step closer to nailing it once and for all.
- Your vision can inspire collaboration with other organisations, bringing their own angle on striving towards the world you’re looking to create through your work.

>> Fast forward

Don’t pick, discover: p.115



Read this bit… if you've got some convincing to do…

Values as a business gamechanger

Values as a business gamechanger: ~~Fluff~~. Figures

Values, superpowers, DNA.

This woo-woo language doesn't do values any favours, right? But, when correctly discovered and defined and intentionally taken Beyond W.O.W, values become the operating system for culture, ultimately driving business performance.



No honey

Let's ditch the fluff and get down and dirty with the numbers. If you're 'umming' and 'ahhing' about whether values are all they're cracked up to be, or you're all in but need some armoury to convince, e.g., a reluctant bunch of board members, use the information below to help you.

Here goes:

Organisations that invest in culture (remember, values that are deliberately taken Beyond W.O.W shape culture and, in turn