

## COMPANY CULTURE EXCELLENCE

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If a picture is worth a thousand words, what would a stay at the Ritz Carlton say about their Company Culture Excellence? One of the finest occurrences of Culture Excellence I've experienced in a hotel happened at the Ritz-Carlton in Dallas. From our arrival to our departure and everything in between, we experienced a Culture of Excellence. The staff went out of their way to make our visit perfect—from welcoming us by name (the family dog, too) to surprising my wife with a gourmet chocolate torte and hand written birthday card. They also delivered a gift package containing a toy and dog biscuits for our pup's enjoyment. Whenever we called the desk, gift shop, restaurant or room service, they answered by addressing us by name before asking how they could serve us. There was a consistency of excellence throughout the hotel from décor to amenities and from staff attitudes to behaviors. The Ritz-Carlton in Dallas, a former Baldrige Award recipient, deliberately nurtures their Culture of Excellence.

Your company's culture reflects your people-shared values, attitudes, and behaviors that either support and enable the attainment of your company purpose, vision, mission, and goals or detract from them. If you desire excellence, start with the proactive development of a culture that reflects, supports, and enables excellence.

### To create a Culture of Excellence

- Define the values, attitudes, behaviors, and environment critical to achieving excellent results in your company.
- Guarantee your current leadership team and employees are trained in culture excellence.
- Guarantee your current leadership team and employees understand your culture expectations.
- Set in motion processes to attract, recruit and retain people who thrive in a culture of excellence.
- Develop an effective environment to assist your people to grow in excellence.
- Develop processes and systems to sustain and reinforce culture excellence.
- Develop a process to measure the critical parts of your culture.
- Celebrate your culture successes.

To recruit new people or retain current staff members who thrive in a Culture of Excellence, look for people who

- Know what excellence looks like for the service or product they deliver to their Raving Fans.
- Know what excellence looks like within their organization as they serve one another and become internal Raving Fans.
- Know the measurable standards that correspond to excellence within their organization.
- Commit personally to exceeding company standards of excellence.
- Commit to proactive, self-managed performance as they attain company standards of excellence.
- Commit to continuous improvement.

### To nurture a Culture of Excellence

- Communicate your Company Culture Vision frequently.
- Clarify how your Company's Culture Vision relates to your Strategic Vision and the direction of your company.
- Model the relationship between organizational and individual excellence within your company culture.



- Encourage proactive self assessment of all persons in the company. Expect all company staff to
  - Self examine personal values and behaviors. Are they consistent with excellence?  
Examples of fundamental values/behaviors are: love, truthfulness, humility, servant hood, joyfulness, stewardship, influence, boldness, faith and pro-activity.
  - Solicit feedback from others regarding personal behaviors.
  - Self evaluate personal behavior relative to professed values, attitudes and behaviors.
  - Develop a mindset to improve personally by setting improvement goals and action plans.

The Ritz-Carlton in Dallas and our USL clients who are also Baldrige Award winners develop and nurture their Company Culture, and their people consistently create picture perfect excellence within their companies. Although these companies may be quite dissimilar in product or service, they remain similar in their Culture of Excellence and their ability to cultivate Raving Fans.

If it's true that a picture is worth a thousand words, what would an occurrence in your company say about your Company Culture Excellence?