

The Earley Examiner

A Letter from Chris Earley

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“Culture eats strategy for breakfast.”

- Peter Drucker

Culture to me is the most important part of a law firm. It is more important than strategy because culture should inform firm strategy and execution. I believe culture is the glue that holds it all together. It is the unique DNA a law firm possesses that differentiates it from any and all other law firms. It is also the rudder that guides the ship and simplifies the tough decisions and tough actions that must be made. Culture though can be very hard to articulate and express. For that reason, culture can and should be reduced down into core values because a law firm, like any entity, must have core values.

Core values are those principles that don't change and that guide each and every decision a law firm makes. Core values are important because they allow firms to stay true and authentic to their unique reason for existing. They give shape and purpose to all key areas of concern that any firm, regardless of size, must deal with such as marketing, hiring, delivery of client services, firing, etc.

Core Values though need to be seen in order to have weight. When visible and made public they will inform job applicants, team members, potential clients, existing clients, opposing counsel, and everyone else not just about what you do, but *why* you do what you do. They must therefore be written down. Place them in all job ads you run so that you attract the right candidates that share your values, and repel those that don't. This is a great way to find A-players that want not just a job, but a role in an organization that they view as carrying out an important mission. Discuss them at interviews with all job applicants.

Hang them on a picture on the wall in your reception area for all visitors to see. Place them prominently on your website where prospective clients and opposing counsel will see them and understand what you stand for. Put them on the wall in your break room as well as in your office manuals so team members will see them and be reminded of them. Besides being written down, they should be discussed at firm meetings. Whether

it be at a firm-wide meeting, or an individual team member performance review, core values can and should be referenced regularly so that they are affirmed and adhered to.

Core values are needed by sole practitioners as much as they are by large firms. Regardless of your firm's size, if you don't already have your core values established, then I encourage you to really think hard and to find them. But keep in mind they are not created, but rather they are discovered. They should embody and articulate what you do each day. Ideally, they should be roughly 5-10 in number. You will find that running and growing your firm is made easier and more simplified by writing down and living according to the Core Values that have been established.

Did You Know?

The states with the most lawyers are Massachusetts, New York, and Maryland.

Thank You For Your Referrals!

Referrals are the lifeblood of my law firm. Your trust in us to handle your referral is incredibly appreciated not only by myself, but by my entire team. I want to say thank you so very much for your referrals.

Check Out My Most Recent ABA Article Attached

Check out the attached article I wrote for my monthly ABA column. I hope you find it informative!

Quote of the Month

“The opposite of love is not hate, it's indifference. The opposite of art is not ugliness, it's indifference. The opposite of faith is not heresy, it's indifference. And the opposite of life is not death, it's indifference.”

– Elie Wiesel