LOVING YOUR JOB IS THE BEST KIND OF OFFICE ROMANCE.

CULTURE BY DESIGN NOT DEFAULT

Jay Wilkinson
Firespring Founder & CEO
“I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

- Maya Angelou (American author and poet)
Creating a Vibrant Nonprofit Culture

• My personal experience building a company culture.
• 3 steps to creating a healthy nonprofit culture.
• 5 revealing stats about employee engagement.
• Organizational culture in action (4 case studies).
• Leader self-assessment quiz.
• Call to action.

If you’re tweeting about Today’s session, use #NPSummit @jaywilk
NEBRASKA'S FIRST
CERTIFIED B CORPORATION

OUR PURPOSE
WE LEVERAGE OUR
PEOPLE,
PRODUCTS & PROFIT
AS A
FORCE FOR
GOOD
3% of our **Products** (free products & services)
3% of our **Profit** (cash donations)
3% of our **People** (volunteer 1 day per month)
2011 TOP SMALL COMPANY WORKPLACES

Firespring
A marketing company that lets its employees' personalities shine.

By Eric Markowitz | @EricMarkowitz | May 23, 2011

Employees band together at Firespring's Lincoln, Neb. office.

The Data
Firespring
Location: Lincoln, Nebraska
Founded: 1992

At Firespring, employee personality is taken very seriously. "We focus on allowing and honoring personalities to emerge," says the company’s CEO, Jay Wilkinson. To that end, Wilkinson and
Firespring built a sustainable culture in 3 steps
1 Defined our values
TYPICAL ORGANIZATION VALUES

We are innovative
We are team players
We strive for excellence
We have integrity
We are passionate

These are Virtues, not Values
MISSION TO MARS
CORE VALUES

Must meet the following:

① Is it distinguished?
② Are you obsessed with it?
③ Will it outlive you?
④ Can you actually “live it” every day?
⑤ Would you sacrifice money to protect it?
We bring it. Every day.

The Post Office has nothing on us. Rain, snow, sleet or shine, we deliver the goods on time and strive to obliterate the expectations of our clients and coworkers. Math may not have been our best subject in school, but we always give 110%.
We have each other’s back.

Ain’t no lone wolves here, pardner. At Firespring, we believe teamwork is where it’s at. Whether it means helping a team member out of a pickle or going the extra mile for a client, consider your back had.
We give a shit.

What does it mean to give a shit? To us, it means genuinely caring about ourselves and the success and well-being of our coworkers, clients, partners and vendors.

Sometimes we even give multiple shits – it’s our version of hugging, without the discomfort.
2 Hired to our values
HIRE VALUES

1st for culture fit
2nd for skill fit
Live our values
# Firestarter

## Our Purpose

**We leverage our people, products, profit for good.**

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<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Impact</th>
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<td>Creative</td>
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## Quarterly Rocks

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<td>Scale</td>
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## Core Values

- **Bring it Every Day**
  - Don’t settle. Never give up. Always move forward.
  - Be authentic. Be real. Be honest.
  - Be kind. Be helpful. Be generous.
  - Be accountable. Be responsible. Be reliable.

## Living Our Values

- **Arise**
  - Rise to the occasion. Rise to the challenge.

## Last Week’s Goals

- **50% of 12 for 80%**

## Coming Up

- **Next Week’s Goals**
  - 10% of 12 for 60%

## Coming Up

- **Next Week’s Goals**
  - 10% of 12 for 60%

## Culture Club

- **Team Meetings**
  - Team meetings are critical for aligning the team and staying on track.
  - Team meetings should be open and inviting to all team members.

## In The News

- **Recent Wins**
  - Celebrate our recent wins.
  - Acknowledge the team for their hard work.

## Strengths

- **Developer**
  - Code is our language.
  - We build the future.

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**Firespring.org**
# Values Hall of Fame

- Deb is a total rock star and an invaluable asset to the VersaDoc team and Firespring family. She has amazing (and I mean AMAZING!) patience and accepts every challenge with a smile. Although she tends to be quieter than others, she is full of personality and an absolutely fantastic person to work with. I appreciate her help and dedication to the company and our clients. She once stayed until 11 PM to make sure one of our vital clients was prepared for their meeting, and she was out of the office at multiple evenings (even Holidays!) to complete jobs. Deb is an incredible person and I cannot say thank you enough for giving a lot and always doing so much more than her part. She always takes time out of what she’s doing to help out when needed particularly. I returned from about two weeks of vacation and was overwhelmed with emails. Deb sent emails and upcoming events. Due to the recent assignments in sales and marketing, I was unsure of how to address each item. Julie met with me and had a massive amount of information to explain who was in what role and what questions each person could answer. She then answered each of my questions thoroughly and took extra time to show Jordan and I some helpful tips in Salesforce that we were previously unaware of. Julie represents all of our values on a daily basis.

- August
  - Julie Plyler
  - Give a Shh!

- In her previous role in the sales department, Heather needed only a basic understanding of the Salesforce board and just enough to know what it does and that its cools. When I took her on board, she was confused about what she thought she needed to know for her role. She said, “I want to know everything!” Learning everything about the Salesforce is pretty much like trying to drink from a fire hose... but with just a few hours of demo and instruction from me, she has taken it on and now has a good understanding of being able to use and update Portal in a non-traditional way, to help facilitate closing sales.

- August
  - Heather Logan
  - Bring It Everyday

- Jordan Faulder
  - August 8/6/2013 16:19:14
  - Bring It Everyday

- Molly Keen and Teka-Maria
  - July
  - Make Lemonade

- Molly Cane: Two days before the Privilege Hub conference, I made the decision that I would not be able to attend due to my mom's failing health. As the presenter or co-presenter of five different sessions, I needed to get all of my material covered and didn't even have it all created yet. After hearing some screeched noises and one particular presentation, Teka responded and said, “Thank you!” I’m super excited to present. I can whip out presentations with absolutely no prep or formulations, some bullet points, I take care of the rest and make you understand. I made this thing that is all the rage. I’ll be on my 10 dog and get ranked with high marks, and both Molly and Teka expressed interest in doing it again!
what isn’t office culture?
what is organizational culture?
it’s about the people
Taco Soup
1 lb Velveeta
1 lb Sour Cream
1 can chili w/ beans
1 can black beans
1 can tomatoes
2 lb hamburger
1 onion
1 can Rotel
Heat and Season to Taste
we’re all in this together
3 Steps to a Healthy Organizational Culture
3 STEPS TO A HEALTHY ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE
What's the big picture mission of our organization?

WHAT IS YOUR MISSION?
Clear Mission and Vision

Our mission is like the soil we plant our garden in. It’s our foundation, the matter we root ourselves in. If it’s rocky and inconsistent, our best efforts will be tenuous, and its focus will be shaky.

If we don’t unite our organizational culture around a consistent, inspiring mission, it will be hard to achieve unity of action.
Shared values are what’s important to organizations. They are expressed in everyday actions and attitudes.
Fill in the blank:
A good person acts like
______________
and knows the importance of
______________.

#2 Cultivate Shared Values

KEEP CALM
AND
BE NICE TO PEOPLE
Fill in the blank:

Work-life balance means _______________

(How long will we stay in the office?)
#2 Cultivate Shared Values

Fill in the blank:

____________________ is appropriate work behavior.

____________________ is not.
Fill in the blank:

Money should be used for ________________ not ________________.

(What’s our view of overhead vs. program expenses?)
If our colleagues share similar answers to these questions, our values are well aligned. If we don’t, there will be conflict, blame and disunity.

Shared values are like the sunlight and water of a garden. Without consistent expression of shared values, our culture wilts.
3 STEPS TO A HEALTHY ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE
How we treat people determines the kind of people we have on board and how they work.
Answer these questions:
How do we hire and fire?
Answer these questions:
What behaviors do we reward?
Answer these questions:
How do we communicate?
Answer these questions:

What’s our view on personal sacrifice?
Answer these questions:
How is failure treated?
Is it encouraged, discouraged, awarded?
Answer these questions:
Do we operate in silos or encourage open collaboration?
Answer these questions:
Do we nurture personal growth?
How we answer these questions determines how people in the organization act.

#3 Keep People First
People are like seeds in our garden. Problems will arise if we water our budding plants inconsistently, plant them too densely or plant for the wrong season.

If we reward only consistent success, there will be no incentive to innovate or take risks to succeed as a nonprofit.
5 Revealing Stats About Employee Engagement
Most people are not engaged at work.

70% of U.S. workers are not engaged at work.
Most employees do not leave for more money.

89% of employers think their people leave for more money, while only 12% of employees actually do leave for more money.
THE BIG QUESTION:
“If I can work for a corporation, make a good living and still do socially meaningful work, why would I choose to work for a nonprofit?”

Most employees do not leave for more money.
People don’t leave jobs. They leave bosses.

75% of people voluntarily leaving jobs don’t quit their jobs; they quit their bosses.
Fun + Interesting + Purpose > Money

70% of Forbes Global 2000 companies will use gamification to boost engagement, retention and revenues.
#5 More feedback = more engagement.

43% of highly engaged employees receive feedback at least once a week compared to only 18% of employees with low engagement.
Case Studies
Organizations with a Vibrant Culture
BEST NONPROFITS TO WORK FOR 2013

Flexibility and ties to mission keep employees loving their jobs

NPT's Best Nonprofits To Work For 2014

Compensation, collaboration and development fuel employee satisfaction

The NonProfit Times

The NonProfit Times is a publication that focuses on the non-profit sector, providing news, insights, and resources for non-profit organizations. This particular issue highlights the best places to work within the non-profit sector for the years 2013 and 2014.
PENCIL is the leader in creating innovative and impactful models of ongoing collaboration between business and public schools.

Thrive by writing our own paths.

Ben Lebeaux
Communications Manager

Sara Clough
Senior Director of Marketing & Communications

pencil.org
New York City, NY
"We are people with a commitment to education and belief that we’re there because we enjoy and believe in what we’re doing. One thing that drives both people who work here and our volunteers is the notion that you are part of a relationship."

A mission is only possible through collaboration of like-minded people with a common passion.
“We take advantage of opportunities as they come to us, so we have a really good way of coming together whether it’s a summer retreat or a happy hour—we find ways to come together and bond.”

Your culture keeps your staff engaged and excited to come to work every day. You don’t need a big budget to make time for fun.
“I think one of the things that drives people, both people who work here and people who want to volunteer in our schools that we manage, is the notion that you are part of a relationship.”

People feel energized to do good work when they feel like they’re getting the recognition they deserve for doing a great job.
Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Midlands provides children facing adversity with strong and professionally supported one-to-one relationships with adult mentors.

Nichole Turgeon
Chief Executive Officer

bbbsomaha.org
Omaha, NE
“We use Gallup tools to measure employee engagement. And it’s really important to us. We want our paid staff to be the best professionals in the field, and we also want them highly motivated and engaged in what they do.”

Your organization is only as good as the people working behind the scenes to make it happen. Measurement tools can help you find the right fit.
“There’s a tendency to introduce yourself to the new employee, give him a pile of stuff, spend a bit of time with him and, be like ‘Okay, now hit the ground running.’ It’s just not a good way to start off a career with an organization.”

Forgetting to show new staff the small things (like using the copier) will lead to a stressful workplace culture and bigger problems in the future.
“One of the cheap and easy things nonprofits can do that our staff loves is to have a potluck, which costs the agency very little. It’s a very small thing, but we found our staff really enjoys it.”

Don’t avoid fun team-building opportunities just because you don’t have a budget. Culture thrives when people want to do things as a team.
NeedyMeds provides programs for people who can’t afford medications and healthcare costs. They’ve helped patients save over $60 million with discount cards.

Richard Sagall
President

needymeds.org
Boston, Mass
When your staff feels like they can trust and rely on each other, it makes the workplace a more positive and encouraging environment.

“What I want staff to know is I’m going to trust them 100%. I’m going to trust them to be honest. I’m going to trust them to be truthful. It’s up to them to blow it.”
“We don’t have any scripts [to help callers]. I want everyone to come up with their own approach. I find that everybody gives back the way they should, and those who aren’t don’t stay.”

When you open up your workplace culture to new ideas, you might find a new (even BETTER) way of doing things. Embrace creativity.
“Usually I find it’s pretty easy to filter out people who just aren’t going to fit in. We want people who don’t say ‘Oh, sh*t. I got to go to work today.’”

It might as well be one of Newton’s Laws. When you put like-minded people in the same room with the same passion, magic happens.
The Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia is DC’s oldest general civil legal services program.

Eric Angel
Executive Director

legalaiddc.org
Washington DC
Sure, mistakes happen. But you’ll get the best work from team members who feel like they have the freedom to make mistakes and learn from it.

“We say that people are always going to make mistakes. The big issue is just talking about it, learning from it, and virtually every mistake is correctable.”
"We really endeavor to give people autonomy within their caseloads. But also, people have a really good time in the hallways. People are constantly talking with each other and debriefing cases."

When you put people together who have a contagious love for your mission, it’s impossible to not catch the ‘bug.’
“Even the atmosphere in the interview process is really focusing on what motivated the person to go to law school, what motivates them to do this sort of work and would they push themselves to come up with the creative solutions for our client.”

Ask the right questions and ye shall receive the right candidates.
Self Assessment

7 Common Traits of Culture Leaders
Self Assessment Quiz

#1 Does our leadership team walk the talk?

SHOW ME, DON'T TELL ME
Does every employee participate in fundraising efforts?
Self Assessment Quiz

#3 Does our organization value learning and growth?

If learning stops, you are dead.
~Osho
Self Assessment Quiz

#4 Is our leadership team transparent about all aspects of the organization's business?
#5 Do our leaders embrace change?

“If you don’t like change, you’re going to like irrelevance even less.”
#6 Does our leadership listen more than they talk?
Self Assessment Quiz

#7 Are our employees the biggest believers in our mission?
culture is a journey not a destination
“Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven’t found it yet, keep looking. Don’t settle. As with all matters of the heart, you’ll know when you find it. And, like any great relationship, it just gets better and better as the years roll on. So keep looking until you find it. Don’t settle.”
this is culture by design and anyone of us can be the architect
For copies and links of this presentation or to learn about upcoming webinars, contact:

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