

## Building Culture is No Accident: the Human Spirit at Work Pt.9

*"Welcome everyone, and thanks for making the time available for this meeting. George and I felt that it was really important to meet outside of our normal managers' meeting and we appreciate the impact on your already busy days. Today, we want to spend a couple of hours on what we see as critical to us as a company." George nods in agreement with Allan.*

*"You all know that our company is not just about putting up buildings; we are here to ..."*

*"Build to inspire!" (This accompanied by good natured laughter from the whole team).*

*Taken aback slightly, Allan says "OK! But seriously, I'm really encouraged that you've all got behind this motto and made it your own." After a moment of silence Allan reflects "In fact, each of you have encouraged me by your affirmation that the building trade is a powerful way to cultivate people's spirits. Thank you."*

*"At this point I'd like to express special thanks to Joyce (Purchasing and Procurement Manager), who has built powerful relationships with our suppliers. Her efforts to talk to each of you about the quality of products and efficiency of supply have been a great example of being part of our team. At the same time, through her supplier breakfasts she's made them feel that they part of the company... so thanks Joyce." There is quiet applause in support. "Anyway, enough from me. George, would you kick us off to the main reason for being here this afternoon?"*

*"Absolutely Allan. You know, it's interesting to see that we all know Allan's motto. I agree with him that it has become our own. It is OUR reason or cause that each of us will live or die on."*

*"I don't know if I would go that far," grins Andrew (Carpentry and Construction Manager). "but you're right, it's better than slapping up something and moving on to the next job, knowing you could have done better."*

Smiling, George continues "Now, what Allan and I would like to do this afternoon is open up a conversation about what will drive our motto 'Building to inspire'? We are all great at what we do - that isn't in question. What's important is that we all have the right attitudes to pull this off."

Continuing, George says "Jill, I noticed that Phil has really changed how he has been doing his work over the last couple of weeks. He smiles more, asks questions about things he doesn't understand and there has been even less waste. My guess is that you had a quiet word with him. Either that or he's swallowed a 'I love work' pill."

Jill explains briefly that she did indeed chat with Phil and he has responded positively.

"Thanks Jill. Now, what Allan and I don't want to do is leave this type of leadership up to chance. There are certain attitudes or mindsets that we need to identify, develop and hold firm to. We want to ensure that our motto is more than just words."

Pausing for a moment George continues "I think you'll all remember that we had no other choice but to replace Francis recently, because he didn't see the connection between his attitudes, how he related to others and 'building to inspire'."

"He was a bully!" interjects Andrew.

"Yes," responds Allan "but he also wanted to build beautiful buildings and he had brilliant skills to boot. The outcome was the same but sadly the means of getting there were different."

George continues "That's our point, we don't want hit and miss leadership. After the meeting with Francis, Allan and I thought long and hard about what we needed to learn about the means to our end. And I think we've learnt something from this experience..."

"The employment of Jill has been more deliberate and thought through. We developed a job description with a special focus on what attitudes and mindsets we were looking for in our people. This is not to say we have it perfect, we know we haven't, but it was a start."

"What we want to do this afternoon is to include you in the discovery of critical attitudes and mindsets that will enable everyone to contribute to our spirit and our culture."

### *Living Spirit: a Question of Performance and Spiritual Development*

There is little doubt that our fictional company is looking beyond people's performance and focusing on attitudes and mindset to drive their purpose 'Building to Inspire'.

Clearly, Allan and George see each person in the company as having an intimate connection to (and being informed by) their thinking - the 'inner world' that influences performance.

Similarly, they see how actions are fuelled by feelings - feelings which have their genesis in thinking and attitudes - which influence our personal minds at work and indeed; life.

To develop a team, a healthily functioning workforce (and to build the inner capacities of everyone in the company), it is absolutely critical to have an intentional focus on people's attitudes.

This work is 'building from the inside out'. If we are to harness self-awareness and leadership (at every level), this purposeful focus cannot be left to chance. ■ ■

© PIB. PERMISSION TO COPY FOR PERSONAL USE IS GRANTED.  
FOR OTHER PUBLICATION RIGHTS EMAIL DAVID AT:  
[director@principlesinbusiness.com](mailto:director@principlesinbusiness.com)