

Re:Focus

simple ideas to help you thrive

by Simon Sinek

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Our priorities reveal our values

It has been said that values are the standards by which we set our priorities. This means we can understand the values of a person or an organization by examining their priorities.

I listened to a presentation given by top executives of a large firm recently. In their presentation, they listed the company's priorities:

1. Top line growth
2. Enhance shareholder value
3. Focus on global expansion
4. Enhance customer satisfaction
5. Our people

I think it's safe to say, they don't really value their people. Or at least they don't put their people before growth. Ironically, the best organizations I've ever seen, the ones that are actually more profitable for the long-term, all put people before growth on their list of priorities.

As Lou Gerstner, the man who reinvented IBM, said, "culture is not an aspect of the game. Culture is the game."

So what of other priorities?

If a company says shareholder value is their main priority how do they value customers?

If an executive has their Blackberry at their kid's ballgame because work it still a priority, then how much does he value the fleeting time he has to watch his kids grow up?

If the urgent always takes priority over the important, then how much do we value the important over the urgent?

If indeed we value things that we are not prioritizing or prioritizing things we do not value as much, then perhaps it is time to realign our priorities. If we value those kinds of things...