

# Intentionally Developing Culture Leads to Workplace Satisfaction at Centre Street Church

by Jeff Wimmer



Centre Street Church (CSC) has a rich and exciting fifty year history that exemplifies an unwavering commitment to “introducing people to Jesus and helping them become fully -devoted followers of Jesus.” In 1958, CSC began with 62 people attending the first worship service. Since then, thousands of people have come to know the Lord and experience the encouragement of true Biblical community. Through God’s rich blessings, today CSC ministers to our city, nation and world, including weekend services involving over 6,000 people in multiple campus locations.

As a workplace, we believe that it is an incredible privilege to serve Christ in His kingdom-building work – this message is articulated clearly before a person ever joins the staff family at Centre Street Church. Current and potential future staff are reminded that every ministry position at CSC is part of God’s incredible redemption plan, and that serving on staff at CSC is a “ministry position” not just a “job” for which they have been hired.

Every workplace has a culture – it is either ‘good’ or ‘bad’ or somewhere in between. Several years ago, we recognized that as our staff family increased we needed to intentionally develop a common understanding of

expectations for both the organization and staff in order to have the best workplace environment possible. Through a collaborative process, we began with foundational framework statements used to guide the next steps of our People Development (Human Resources) strategy at CSC. These framework statements are:

- ✦ The church operates from an eternal ‘Kingdom’ perspective
- ✦ Biblical values set the standard for organizational health
- ✦ People are created to experience community
- ✦ People are the church’s most important resource
- ✦ How people are treated matters, because people matter to God
- ✦ A person’s unique design determines their most effective role
- ✦ Lifelong learning maximizes personal growth and organizational productivity
- ✦ The work/life relationship challenge must be managed with integrity
- ✦ Our main motivation is always about the harvest

Followers of Christ are duty bound to do their work as unto the Lord

Using the framework statements as a ‘filter’ of sorts, we then created a mission statement, staff values (provided on a laminated card to every staff person) and guiding principles that continue to define our workplace culture to this day:

## **People Development Mission**

– In our endless pursuit of becoming a great and enduring life-giving church, we pay attention to God’s people because we believe maximum effort and effectiveness is achieved when people are cared for. By successfully caring for, equipping and empowering our staff, we contribute toward the Spiritual, Professional, and Organizational strength and health of Centre Street Church.

## **People Development Values**

– The following values clearly communicated, deeply understood and consistently applied shape the staff culture of CSC:



COHESIVENESS  
ACCOUNTABILITY  
SELFLESS SERVICE  
TRUST  
EMPOWERMENT  
MISSION

Centre Street Church TEAM VALUES

COHESIVENESS is the utter determination of every individual to strive for unity in heart, mind, soul and action.

ACCOUNTABILITY involves clarity of expectations and feedback on how one is doing.

SELFLESS SERVICE is about reflecting the spirit of Christ in one's attitudes and actions

TRUST involves both choosing to trust one another as well as choosing to exhibit behaviours that demonstrate one is trustworthy.

EMPOWERMENT is about a working environment where Staff feels released to act using their competencies in a manner that advances the mission of the Church.

MISSION involves both the declaration and understanding of why the Church exists while taking personal ownership for its accomplishment.

**People Development Guiding Principles** - By the grace of God and to the best of our human abilities, we make every effort to operate by the following guiding principles:

✦ **Organizational Needs** – we are proactive and intentional in assessing our future needs in order to discern both the kinds of people and positions required to achieve our God-given vision.

✦ **Recruitment** – we are deliberate, purposeful and

prayerful in the pursuit of people who will contribute to accomplishing the mission of CSC.

✦ **Hiring** – we commit to a growth experience for all by diligently applying the best practices for selecting the best people to be on our team.

✦ **Orientation** - we give new people every opportunity to understand and adopt the cultural expectations and values of CSC in order for them to excel from the start.

✦ **Performance Effectiveness** – we honor the

rights of individuals to know what is expected of them, to know how well they are doing, and to be given the opportunity to improve personally, professionally and spiritually.

✦ **Corrective Discipline** – correction, if necessary, is to be done with consistency and in a spirit of truth, openness and respect with the goal of keeping relationships intact.

✦ **Transitioning** – job transitions are normal and are to be managed with the best interests of the individual and the church in mind.

**Staff Culture** – we make every effort to intentionally cause a staff culture of fun, caring and delight in each other and our workplace.

One of the distinguishing characteristics of CSC is a leadership team who believes in ongoing collaborating with staff and lay leaders. This collaborative working style is one of the key factors in creating and sustaining a satisfying and meaningful workplace environment. Many opportunities are made available to staff to provide input and keep informed of our ever-changing ministry realities, including weekly all-staff meetings, monthly leadership team visioning days and annual all-staff retreats. We are convinced that these activities must be not only be intentional, but are critical to create a workplace environment where staff feel heard, respected and informed – the most important factor in determining work satisfaction.

May God richly bless you and your organization as you strive for excellence as a partner in His kingdom ministry!

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