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Creating The Right Work Culture Brings In All-Star Hiking Compadres

Greetings *|FNAME|*,

There is a reason I am not an accountant, and it's not because I dislike numbers. It is because I love creating balanced learning, rather than balancing the books for a living. But as the leader of a growing small business, you have to sometimes strap on your boots and go into the weeds a little bit. For example, I've recently done a good deal of deeper learning on Quickbooks, because each dollar that our business earns goes somewhere. It goes to paying competitive wages to outstanding staff, to purchasing supplies, to paying vendor bills, and even to holding some retained earnings for a rainy day. Yes, business is good right now. But more money coming in means more money going out, and I have to get it right, because my name's on the side of the building and I must account for all banking-related activity.



In previous issues of **OOMP!** I've discussed the choices that professionals have today, being able to work from anywhere in the world to picking their ideal employer to sometimes getting massive hiring and retention bonuses for remaining at the company for a year. Yes, filling open seats does require an investment, whether I'm hiring candidate A or B, because employing the wrong person at the start of an engagement is a HUGE waste of money. That actually introduces NEW COSTS... like work having to be redone - or even worse - having a negative impact on our brand.

Yet, the "Great Resignation" is still a very real thing. Most organizational heads believe they are doing a good job on behalf of their people, but unfortunately, everyone has their blind spots and can miss key trail markers in delivering value to their employees and contractors.



My personal compass is dialed into culture, culture, culture because it underlies my long-term **hiking hiring** strategy. In our industry (and most others) word travels along the trails. Right now at Change by Design, I hear:

- We're happy, treated with respect, and this is fun work
- We're paid for the quality expected, but we work hard
- We're appreciated and have the chance to grow
- Sue has my back, and she will jump in to help me if I face a challenge

Avoiding the blind spots that many leaders experience while taking the long, strategic view at 15,000 feet is important to me. But leaving behind the people factor of our organization is a dead end for me.

So back to Quickbooks. Businesses, like trails, change over time and things do not function the same way they did 10 years ago. Just look at how remote work has grown in the past 2 years! Before I started dabbling in Quickbooks, I personally worked in Quicken for most of the past 30 years. For both, a new version is released every single year, if not more frequently. Each changes based on needs. Change by Design has also grown immensely, so it's come time for a better solution to the accounting function. Hence my temporary tromp into accounting software details... I've got to master the software now... before handing off the hiking stick to the CPA pros.



All to say: don't be afraid to retread previously walked paths, in life or in business, provided you have:

1. good footwear (i.e. - a willingness to dig in and grow),
2. a route map with trailheads marked (know when to hand off to the professionals and get back to what you do best)
3. incredible hiking companions (people who are good at what they do and have your back when a crisis hits)

This month's featured blog article below covers some of that same ground, discussing how to not leave behind key cultural elements (or team members) on the trail, during a journey through expansive organizational growth.

Enjoy!



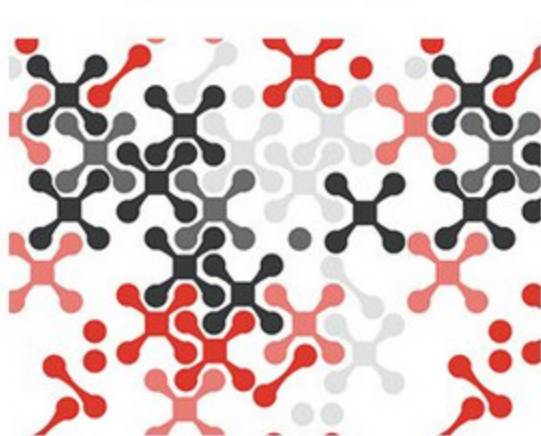
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Building Blocks & Connecting Dots: Reinforcing A Cohesive Message That Aligns Employees To A Healthy Culture



By: Jeffrey Johnston
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Large and small companies alike are witnessing incredibly challenging operating conditions. The new normal of today requires us all to navigate complex digitalized economies, evolving social patterns, and changing workplace environments. And as employers face shifting employee knowledge patterns within multifaceted, intersecting industries, our employees collaborate and interact together with a diversity of colleagues who have greatly differing attitudes, goals and competencies...even within the same job description! It can certainly be a challenge to keep everything and everyone together.

Therefore, it is essential that companies increase team member cooperation and collaboration to achieve ongoing, profitable outcomes. You can achieve this by fostering a work environment that is aligned to its organizational purpose and amenable to employees to becoming more flexible, agile and sensitive to both business and social change. Here is how a learning and development (L&D) training program can help make that happen.

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Change By Design has incorporated the practice of continuous improvement throughout our operations, which carries over into this publication. So we'd love to hear where we stumbled, where we hit the mark, and any other feedback you have. Please rate the newsletter on a scale of 1-4 stars, with 1 (*---) being terrible, and 4 (****) being terrific.

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