NO EXCUSES!
HOW ANY LEADER CAN TURN ANY WORKPLACE INTO A GREAT ONE

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“Talent flows to where it is most valued.”
The Best Workplaces are Growing

Over the past 2 years, Best Companies grew at nearly 5x the rate of the U.S. Overall
A High-Trust Culture Impacts Your Bottom Line

Comparative Cumulative Stock Market Returns

Great Workplaces provide more than 2x the return

Source: Russell Investment Group
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Definition of a Great Place to Work®

TRUST the people you work for...

- CREDIBILITY
- RESPECT
- FAIRNESS

MANAGEMENT

EMLOYEE

JOB

...have PRIDE in what you do...

OTHER EMPLOYEES

...and ENJOY the people you work with.
The Great Workplace (2011)

• Great Place to Work® Model with stories and anecdotes of the best companies.
• Offer best practices of the best companies – in the US and around the world.
• Examines the business value of creating and sustaining a great workplace.
• Provides consulting guidance on how to develop your great workplace.
No Excuses! (2013)

• Any organization can be a great place to work.
  – Variety of industries, sizes, countries represented on the lists.
  – All have challenges...and they overcome them.

• Insights from leaders in companies with illustrative operating environments and challenges
The “No Excuses” Approach

• Organizational Identity

• Attitude

• Creativity and persistence in overcoming material challenges
Organizational Identity

• A firm sense of the organization’s mission, vision, and values and the ways in which they inspire and motivate employees.

• Smart decision-making about where energy, time, and money flow.

“Be crystal clear about the culture that you have, that you want to perpetuate. To me, there is no magic mix or profile of culture that is good for everybody. Google has been very successful; they are very different from Goldman Sachs. Procter and Gamble is different still. So don't try to create someone else’s culture. Just be real clear about what you want to be and who you are not.”

-- Balfour Beatty HR Manager
Attitude

• “People and their work experiences are important.”

• “I influence the experiences of those who work with me.”

• “Trust (the foundation of those great workplace experiences) happens over the long term, not overnight.”
Excuses are Expected

• When we are faced with information that shows we are not working toward something we value, or reaching our potential, or successfully navigating adversity, there MUST be a reason...

EXCUSES!
Excuses as Periods

• Excuses often serve to shortchange uncomfortable conversations concerning the difference between what was done and what could have been.

“Excuses and apologies are comments or stories we share with others that relate to a specific event or action, though an excuse usually comes before any action has been taken and an apology comes after actions have been taken when perhaps things haven’t gone so well.”

-- Amy Lyman
Cofounder of Great Place to Work® Institute
Excuses as Question Marks

- Start from the assumption that excuses arise from discomfort, and then ask questions:
  - Specifically, what about [insert excuse here] is difficult?
  - How might we use the problem (and perhaps its resolution) to build trust?
  - How might we lessen the impact of obstacles?
  - How might we embed capability to change in the process?
Use It

Sometimes, the problem itself provides an opportunity to build trust and create a better workplace.

“Our bottlers actually make us better because they’ll say no to an idea. [When they do,] the idea is probably not that good.”

-- Coca Cola Manager

“I think we probably all have [a 'no excuses'] approach to our work. If we need something, we’ll find a way to figure it out.”

-- Teach for America Manager
Lessen the Blow

Other times, the challenge isn’t going anywhere. But, we can minimize its impact upon people, building trust and innovating in the process.

“I think the ‘churn and burn’ reputation is a fallacy. If that sentiment is out there, it's because people know that we are very intense. We work hard, but we play hard too. We go to great lengths to support our people throughout their careers.”

-- Jill Smart, Accenture

“[As part of a RIF,] we put together packages for people that were above and beyond. It’s almost letting some family members go and you want to make sure that they do better than just land on their feet. We tracked them all. It was about 84% of people landed in an equal or better paying job without relocation.”

-- Frank Rudolph, Devon Energy
Become More Capable

Overcoming any obstacle is an opportunity to build the capability and efficacy to overcome the next one.

“I knew I had to change the culture, but I had been around long enough to realize I couldn’t change the culture. It was the front-line manager and the front-line supervisor that would change the culture. So I created the Scripps Leadership Academy. And at the end of the program I said, ‘I want you to be my agents of culture change.’”

-- Chris Van Gorder, Scripps Healthcare

“As a business now 127 years strong, we continually are going through change and transformation. Our role as leaders is to help people think about the possibilities—asking people to think ‘why not?’ and asking them to envision their world differently. It’s not always easy for people to have to consider ‘why change’ when things have worked in the past.”

-- Ceree Eberly, Coca Cola Companies
No Excuses!

• Have a clear sense of organizational identity, and make decisions that move things forward.

• Adopt the attitude that “We are all extraordinary.”

• Use excuses as fuel:
  – Specifically, what about [insert excuse here] is difficult?
  – How might we remove obstacles, create efficiencies, or change something (rather than add something)?
  – How might we use the problem (and perhaps its resolution) to build trust?
Thank you!

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