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Got Growth?

Your focus has three parts: vision, mission and values

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Focus in a movie theater is about a clear image. On a golf course it's about a clean, straight shot, and in a classroom it's about understanding the lecture.

Focus in your business is all about making sure everything you and your team do moves the organization closer to its reason for being.

Without that reason, all you have is a job. You're not connected to some bigger ideal or goal; there is no fulfillment at the end of the road, just a paycheck. Having purpose allows you to recruit others who share your desire to help and become part of your team. It gives everyone a reason to come to work and something to work for.

Understanding and staying connected to that purpose is why every organization needs focus.

There are three steps to creating focus. The first is to write down what you are working to achieve, your long-term goals, your vision. When you come home after a long day and are asked what you've been doing, the answer is the vision.

The second step is to document the value you bring to your customers -- your mission. Until you can do this, how can anyone know what you are selling or why he or she should buy it from you? You must also make sure that fulfilling your mission will help you achieve your vision.

Step three is to define your values, those things that aren't negotiable under any circumstance, and hold everyone in your organization to the same standard of behavior. Teamwork, customer service, honesty, dependability are some examples.

Values help you teach your staff how to act when they are working, they help you create the culture you want in your organization, and they tell others how they can expect to be treated when they do business with you. They help make the unknown more comfortable and set some expectations for your organization to live up to.

There seems to be a lot of talk these days about focus, and how important it is. The first question that pops into my head is, focus on what? And if I'm not sure what I'm supposed to be focused on, how important can it be?

Every action has an equal and opposite reaction. If you invest your time and efforts into doing only those things that move you closer to your vision and goals, you are moving away from distraction and failure. When every member of your organization can feel the connection between his or her job and achieving the vision, you will be a part of the powerful force a highly focused organization can become.

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