

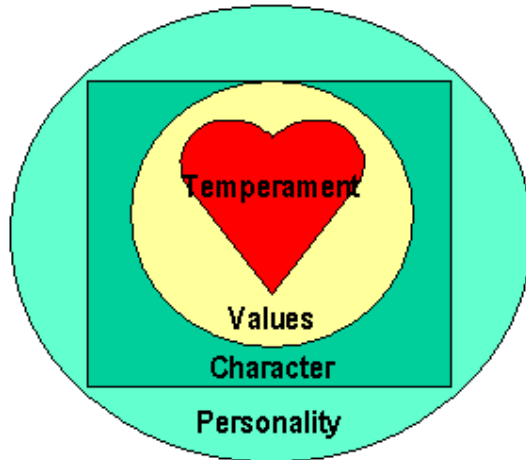
Leadership Perspective: "Stressed Values in Leadership"

A recent study in the US suggests that companies applying McKinsey's leadership principles, which align the personal values of staff with those of the business, grow up to 22% faster than comparable companies that do not apply the principles."

- BRW, 17-23 January 2002, *Love in a Hot Climate*.

Values describe what we believe is important. They are our wants, preferences, desires, likes and dislikes for particular things, conditions or situations. Values describe what matter most to us. We make sacrifices for our values. Values define what we know to be right, fair, just or desirable. They drive our behaviour, because our actions are strongly influenced by our beliefs, and our beliefs significantly influence our values.

We use our values to compare processes, establish standards with those around us, judge issues, debate/share our opinions, plan activities, reach decisions, resolve differences, change our own behavioural patterns or exert influence not to change.



Temperament - innate, genetic, subconscious & the foundation of our **values**, character & personality.

Character – the REAL person – result of: temperament modified by nurture & values

Personality – what people see, or what we want them to see, of who we are.

In many contact centres our values are sometimes compromised or in conflict with the climate and culture of the organization we are working within or with the values of the manager we work for. Because our values are so critical to us, as long as we remain in the situation without balancing the conflict, the more likely a variety of unhealthy coping behaviours will result.

The issue of "stressed values" is becoming a more prominent concern for contact centre leaders having difficulty balancing cost-cutting with customer service - in some organizations these are at such opposite poles it is a major struggle. Or trying to find ways to encourage staff to take repetitive abuse from callers fed up with ill-fitting technology and constant pressure to meet unrealistic performance benchmarks.

One of the reasons we hire someone to fill a contact centre leadership role is because they regard/value staff and customers. It's growing as challenging to find good leaders as it is to keep those presently in place and to develop the next generation.

Stressed values are forcing leaders to opt out of the "contact centre rat race" and take up gardening or pottery or take a role in another organisation with more aligned values to theirs. Values in the workplace are a significant key and we must take a closer look at them.

[Read about the author, Darlene D. Richard, at www.CallCentreINTEGRITY.com/articles.htm](http://www.CallCentreINTEGRITY.com/articles.htm)