

## **Zappos: A Culture of Service**

Zappos expects their core values to be reflected in everything they do; how they interact with each other, how they interact with customers, vendors or business partners. Their core values form the framework from which Zappos makes all decisions. Subsequently, their core values form a natural part of an employee's everyday language and way of thinking.

Zappos Core Values are:

1. Deliver WOW through Service
2. Embrace and Drive Change
3. Create Fun and a Little Weirdness
4. Be Adventurous, Creative and Open-minded
5. Pursue Growth and Learning
6. Build Open and Honest relationships with communication
7. Build a positive team and family spirit
8. Do more with less
9. Be passionate and determined
10. Be humble

Take a closer look at *how* Zappos delivers on their values.

## **1. Deliver WOW through Service**

- Anything worth doing is worth doing with WOW.
- To WOW, we must differentiate from others – which means we do some things a little unconventional and innovative.
- You must WOW in every interaction with co-workers, vendors, customers, the community, investors – with everyone.
- Whatever you do must have an emotional impact on the receiver.

Ask yourself: What are the things you can improve upon in your work or attitude to WOW more people? Have you WOWed at least one person today?

Sample behaviors:

- Help even when it “isn’t your job.”
- Makes me say “WOW.”
- Frames interactions to elicit the most positive outcome for the customer while keeping in mind Zappos’ best interests.

## **2. Embrace and Drive Change**

- In a growing company like Zappos, change is constant. If you can't handle it, this might not be the right place for you.
- Don't just accept change; embrace and drive it. Encourage change, especially from those on the front lines who are closer to customers and issues.
- Avoid getting too comfortable with the status quo. Companies that struggle often fail to adapt and respond quickly to change.

Ask yourself: How do you plan and prepare for change? Do you view new challenges optimistically? Do you encourage and drive change? How do you encourage more change to be driven from the bottom up? Are you empowering your direct reports to drive change?

Sample behaviors:

- Drives original thinking
- Challenges the status quo or common wisdom
- Is comfortable with chaos

### **3. Create Fun and a Little Weirdness**

- We value being fun and being a little weird.
- We aren't one of those big companies that feels corporate and boring. We want to be able to laugh at ourselves.
- Not crazy or extreme, but a touch of weirdness makes it more interesting and fun for everyone.
- Express personality in your work, we function best when we can be ourselves.

Ask yourself: What can we do to be a little weird and differentiate from everyone else? What can we do that's both fun and a little weird? How much fun do you have in your job – and what can you do to make it more fun? What can you do to make your co-worker's job fun as well?

Sample behaviors:

- Turns ordinary into extraordinary
- Has an authentic sense of self
- Let's their inner quirkiness come out

#### **4. Be Adventurous, Creative and Open-minded**

- We are bold and daring, but not reckless.
- Do not be afraid of risks and not to be afraid of mistakes. If you are not making mistakes, you are not taking enough risks.
- You are encouraged to make mistakes as long as you learn from them.
- Never be complacent and accept the status quo just because that is the way things have always been done.
- The sense of adventure and creativity might result in unconventional solutions – but that allows one to rise above and stay ahead of the competition.

Ask yourself: Are you taking enough risks? Are you afraid of making mistakes? Do you push yourself outside of your comfort zone? Is there a sense of adventure and creativity in the work that you do? What are some creative things that you can contribute to Zappos? Do you approach situations and challenges with an open mind?

Sample behaviors:

- Unafraid of taking risks
- Willing to fail
- Acts as an entrepreneur

#### **5. Pursue Growth and Learning**

- It is important to grow both personally and professionally – by constantly challenging and stretching yourself and not be stuck in a job where you don't feel you are learning or growing.
- Every employee has more potential than he/she realizes, and it is our goal to unlock that potential.

- You must want to challenge yourself and stretch yourself in order for growth to happen.

Ask yourself: How do you grow personally/professionally? Are you a better person today than you were yesterday? How do you get your co-workers and direct reports to grow personally/professionally? How do you challenge and stretch yourself? Are you learning something every day?

Sample behaviors:

- Is curious about how things work
- Insatiable appetite for improvement
- Is their own teacher (self-evaluative)

## **6. Build Open and Honest Relationships with Communication**

- Openness and honesty make for the best relationships because that leads to trust and faith. Strong positive relationships are a big part of what differentiates Zappos from other companies.
- We develop emotional connections – for that it is important for one to be a good listener and a good communicator.
- Always act with integrity in your relationships, be compassionate, friendly, loyal and make sure that you do the right things and treat your relationship well.
- We embrace diversity in thoughts, actions, opinions and backgrounds. The more widespread and diverse your relationships, the bigger and more positive impact you can have on the company.

Ask yourself: How much do people enjoy working with you? How can you improve those relationships? What new relationships can you build throughout the company beyond just the co-workers that you work with daily? How do you WOW the people

you have relationships with? How can you make your relationship more open and honest?

Sample behaviors

- Wants to hear ideas/input from others
- Transparent about both positive and negative information
- Connects people to sort out differences

## **7. Build a Positive Team and Family Space**

- We emphasize culture because we are a team and family.
- We want an environment that is friendly, warm and exciting.
- In general, the best ideas and decisions are made from the bottom up – those on the front lines that are closest to the issue and or the customers.
- The role of the manager is to remove obstacles and enables her/his direct reports to succeed – act as Servant Leaders.
- The best team members have a positive influence on one another and strive to eliminate any kind of cynicism and negative interactions.
- The best teams are those that not only work with each other but also interact with each other outside the office environment.
- The bond among employees goes far beyond the typical “co-worker” relationships found at most other companies.

Ask yourself: How do you encourage more teamwork? How do you encourage most people to take initiative/ownership? What can you do with the team members so that you feel both like family and a team? Do you exemplify a positive team spirit?

Sample behaviors:

- Is more than just a co-worker
- Leads by example, walk the talk
- Connects people for meaningful relationships

## **8. Do More with Less**

- We do more with less. We believe in hard work and putting in the extra effort to get things done.
- We believe in operational excellence and realize that there is always room for improvement in everything they do.
- To stay ahead of the competition, there is a need to continuously innovate as well as make incremental improvements in the operations.
- Never lose a sense of urgency in making improvements – and never settle for “good enough” as good is the enemy of great.
- Zappos sets and exceeds its own high standards constantly raising the bar for competitors and for themselves.

Ask yourself: How can you do what you are doing more efficiently? How can your department become more efficient? How can the company become more efficient? How can you personally help the company become more efficient?

Sample behaviors:

- Be a MacGyver – just pass the duct tape
- Gets sh\*t done with less
- “Just do it” attitude (values hard work)

## **9. Be Passionate and Determined**

- Passion is the fuel that drives us forward. We value passion, determination, perseverance and a sense of urgency.
- We don't take "No" or "that will never work" for an answer.
- Have a positive and optimistic (but realistic) attitude about everything we do because that inspires others to have the same attitude

Ask yourself: Are you passionate about the company? Are you passionate about your work? Do you love what you do and who do you work with? Are you happy here? Are you inspired? Do you believe in what we are doing and where we are going?

Sample behaviors:

- Asks for forgiveness, not for permission
- Never believes the statement, "it can't be done"
- Fights the fight if it's the right thing for our vision
- Protects the Zappos culture

## **10. Be Humble**

- No matter what happens, always be respectful of everyone.
- While celebrating team and individual success, don't be arrogant; treat others as you would like to be treated
- Carry yourself with quiet confidence and in the long run, your character will speak for itself

Ask yourself: Are you humble when talking about your accomplishments? Are you humble when talking about your company's accomplishment? Do you treat large and small vendors with the same amount of respect that they treat you?

Sample behaviors:

- Displays a quiet confidence for their achievements
- Takes responsibility and admits mistakes
- Listens before being heard