

The Creative Team Culture Cheat Sheet

CULTURE BEGINS WITH LANGUAGE

WHY DEPARTMENTAL VALUES MATTER

THE FIVE CORE CREATIVE & COMMS TEAM VALUES

HOW TO USE VALUES TO SHAPE CULTURE

SIGNS OF HEALTHY CREATIVE TEAM CULTURE



Culture Begins with **Language**

- The language you use becomes the culture you build.
- Undefined language leads to subjective expectations, frustration, and confusion.
- Values create shared meaning, shared behavior, and a shared “personality” for the team.

WORKING DEFINITION:

Culture = The shared personality of the team, made up of its values, beliefs, and behaviors, which shapes how its members interact and work together.

Why Departmental Values Matter

- Church-wide values guide the whole organization, but creative & comms teams need specific values tailored to their daily work.
- Values define how the team behaves, makes decisions, resolves conflict, and collaborates.
- Each recurring issue becomes a cue to create or refine a value.



The Five Core Creative & Comms Team Values

Value 1 – Bring Heaven to Earth

We want to do work with purpose. The kind of purpose that affects positive life change around the world. We also believe that we have the agency to bring a little more light or a little more darkness into the world with every choice we make. So it doesn't matter how big or small - our aspiration for every interaction and every creative expression is simple: on Earth as it is in Heaven.

WHY IT MATTERS:

- Elevates routine work into mission-driven ministry.
- Reinforces purpose and meaning for every role.

Value 2 – Say the Quiet Part Out Loud

We value speaking plainly. This could mean talking openly in difficult situations, not shortcutting conflict resolution, or simply refusing to let bitterness simmer by letting things go unsaid. Fundamentally, we don't believe in trying to hide the real thing we're trying to say.

WHY IT MATTERS:

- Sets communication expectations.
- Builds a self-governing culture where issues surface early and relationships stay healthy.



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Module 9: Building Your Team

Value 3 – Yes Be Yes, No Be No

People trust us. We hold that in high esteem. Keeping that trust demands that our words are pure and our actions live up to our words. And yet, opportunity will always exist to stretch intent in service of our own interests. In light of this, our commitment is to not manipulate, sensationalize, over-promise, misdirect, or in any way purposefully mislead people with our words. We uphold and affirm this value through our actions.

WHY IT MATTERS:

- Reinforces reliability - one of the most essential staff/volunteer traits.
- Protects trust within the team and with the congregation.

Value 4 – Disagreement Is Not Disrespect

Unity is not uniformity. Alignment doesn't require full agreement. We challenge ideas, not people. And we anchor our disagreements to mission.

WHY IT MATTERS:

- Creative work is subjective; this value protects collaboration.
- Shifts critiques from taste-based to mission-based.
- Enables healthy debate without relational friction.

EXAMPLE:

- Instead of "This design is too trendy," ask: "How would Far Away Fiona interpret this design through our missional lens?"



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Value 5 – Solutions First

Identifying problems is easy. Proposing solutions less so.
We bring solutions first to the table.

WHY IT MATTERS:

- Uproots unhelpful negativity.
- Fosters problem-solvers, not problem-spotters.
- Encourages ownership and innovation.

HOW TO USE VALUES TO SHAPE CULTURE

- Revisit values whenever conflict or confusion emerges.
- Hold each other accountable to them - staff and volunteers alike.
- Integrate them into onboarding, team meetings, and creative reviews.
- Expect values to strengthen only after being tested in real scenarios.

SIGNS OF HEALTHY CREATIVE TEAM CULTURE

- Shared language
- Aligned expectations
- Constructive feedback
- Trust and reliability
- Mission-focused decision-making
- Collaboration that multiplies results, not just adds effort





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