

Good morning, everybody. Dennis Engelbrecht with the legacy series Digging Deeper.

I was reading an article recently about being powered by customer purpose, and I thought, "Oh, that's kind of interesting." Most of our companies have a purpose, but does that purpose really connect to our people and maybe ultimately to our customer? Workers have changed from back when I was a kid. In the so-called Protestant work ethic back then, you worked because that's what was expected and you worked to earn a salary, make a living, and all of that. And I don't think back then our basic needs were assured as well as they are today. So, our focus was just on getting the work, the work done, and it was kind of an expected thing. But today, people want more. Your workers want more, they want to have a purpose, they want to be connected to that purpose, they want more than working for a paycheck, and certainly you want them to be doing more than working for a paycheck. And I think customer expectations have changed as well.

Very much today, your customers are looking for much more than just getting their building built. They're looking for a better experience, they're looking for relationships, they're looking to be impressed, and that this is different. It's not just a matter of getting the work done. So how do we do that and how do we connect folks? Your purpose is usually encompassed in your mission, vision, and values, those three statements that most companies establish. So, think about it, what are yours? What are your mission, vision, and value statements that you live by at your company? And are they meaningful? Are they well understood by your entire team? Are they well communicated? Are they lived day to day by senior leadership and ownership in particular? Does it grab people's attention? Does it drive effort, performance? Does it enable them to make better decisions? Does it allow your people to bring their best selves to the job? Does it put the company's best face in front of clients and project partners? So, think about that.

Again, what is your mission and vision? Does it encompass a strong enough purpose or a deep enough purpose that it really motivates people and moves people within your organization? And then if not, how could you adjust that so that you could accomplish that? And then taking it a step further, which this article I read was doing, how does it connect to your customer's purpose? Do you even know what your customer's purpose is? Do you take the time to find out when you're building a project? Do you ask, "What are the important aspects of this project? Why is this project important to you? Why is getting it on time or having a certain level of quality or having this certain aspect of your project, why is this important to you?" And certainly, if you understand what's important to your customer about that project, what their fears are even, but what their hopes are, probably more importantly, that gives you a better chance of attending to them and delivering a better experience, and even making better decisions.

Let's say you're in the value engineering process and let's say there's this fancy auditorium involved. Well, if you don't know how important that auditorium is to the overall project to the sellers, how do you know whether you should be cutting back there? Or maybe you should be cutting on square footage or classrooms, or the entryway, or what aspect of the building, you want to make sure gets enhanced or maybe even cut back. So, knowing your customer's purpose helps you and allows you to connect further with the customer. And that can be translated to your employee team to where, again, they can make better decisions, they can be more connected to the end work of the company and all of that.

I hate to brag a little, but at FBI, our purpose is encompassed in our mission, which is *We Build Better Contractors*. All right? Now, think about the way that's stated. That really encompasses our customer goal getting better. It's built right into the purpose of our company. Now, getting better is a little different with each of our clients, what aspect they want to change or move toward or improve in their company. But basically, they're all with us because they want to get better. So, for us, building better contractors connects directly to our customers and their customers' purpose. But more so I think it inspires our team to keep adding value. When we have our quarterly planning get-togethers, it's all about how can we do what we do better to build better contractors. All this goes back to our mission and purpose, and I really see that. I know it motivates me, it allows me to make better decisions, it inspires me to get up and get out and do the things I do. And I see that it infects, if you will, our entire team of how we go about doing that.

So then, coming back again to you, if you can make that connection for your people between the end product, what you do, what your purpose is for your company, it can make a huge difference in motivation, in performance, and in really the enjoyment and happiness of your team as well.

So, think about what that is and how you can maybe improve and make that connection better. Again, make your company powered by purpose, and if possible, powered by customer purpose. Dennis Engelbrecht, Digging Deeper.