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The Current Place of Corporate Identity Due to Changing Demographics and Corporate Communication Structures

A Thesis

Presented To

The Faculty and the Honors Program

Of the University of San Diego

By

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International Business Department

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ABSTRACT

Our business environment is in a period of significant change. We have a new generation beginning to enter the workforce that requires different levels of communication and the phase-out and incorporation of remote/hybrid work resulting from the pandemic. Corporate identity could be at stake as a result, and how will that affect employees at a company? This study analyzes how corporate identity applies to the business of the future, what makes an impact on its connectivity, and the links between identity and work environment and communication. The goal is to understand what can be adjusted to increase the relevance of corporate identity within a company and if it matters to current employees. Insight should be created on current gaps in company processes and what works best for the general employee.

Keywords:

Corporate Identity, Corporate Communications, Hybrid Work, Business Impact, and Employee Engagement

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Chapter 1: Understanding the Current Business Environment

There are two main factors impacting internal operations: hybrid work and the new generation entering the workforce. In this report, internal operations will refer to inner management practices to control how employees perform and the chain of command. In order to understand the impacts of corporate identity and why it is a significant factor in employee retention, it is vital to understand environmental factors contributing to change.

Navigating the Hybrid Environment

Hybrid work can be defined as an employee that works part-time in-office and part-time remotely (i.e., from home). There have been variations between remote and hybrid employees, especially among contract workers and entrepreneurs. However, the Covid-19 Pandemic has wholly changed what an office can be and how employees can stay connected while working remotely. It ushered in an era of navigating independent work with minimal supervision and connection to other co-workers. Due to this possibly isolating environment, many workers decided to resign, alluding to the Great Resignation. Because of the virus and the upending of in-person work, the labor force participation rate dropped from 63.2 percent (2019) to 60.8 (2020), the largest drop ever. According to Dow Jones, nearly 3 percent of American workers quit jobs in November 2021 alone. Because of the pandemic, a new trait of the U.S. economy was the drops in the employment rate, changing how our population works in the process. “By summer 2021, Americans were comparatively flush, which meant that workers, especially those in lower-wage jobs, could be choosier about where (and whether) to work” (Suderman, 2022). The Great Resignation shows that many Americans and workers worldwide want to work differently and with less bureaucratic measures set within an organization. The last few years have taught companies how to be more flexible and willing to work with employees, and it has

taught employees to prioritize leisure time a bit more and that it is negotiable. Overall, as companies rebuild their workforces after the pandemic, there must be a further push into the digital age and embracing the aspects of remote work that performed well.

Welcoming Gen Z to the Scene

As of the last few years, there could be up to five generations working in the same company. Generation Z refers to anyone born between the years 1997 and 2012, according to many researchers. They follow behind the Millennial generation, which caused a stir in the workplace as they carried many different values than those prior. The older generations tend to look unfavorably on the younger generations. They have many different priorities and experiences than their superiors, giving them new ways of communicating and interacting with others. The most common characteristic of Gen Z is their tie to technology, as almost every one of them has grown up with the Internet.

Recent studies have started to poll Gen Z to learn more about the demographic and how they think. According to EY, 67% are worried about their physical and mental health, and 60% also say that people cannot be trusted generally. This study also divided the group into five generalized segments: authentic activists, carefree constituents, secluded perfectionists, big dreamers, and stress strivers. As a whole, this generation appreciates values instead of money when it comes to jobs. Therefore, they will have an attachment to the company's mission, identity, and more. This generation prioritizes liking what they do versus making large sums of money, more than previous generations. Companies will need to learn to adapt to this generation's speed as they will be the future of business at this present moment. There will be a push to present trust, transparency, authenticity, health matters, and purpose.¹ While Millennials

¹ McWilliams, L. (2021, November 4). *EY Releases Gen Z Survey Revealing Businesses Must Rethink Their 'Plan Z'*. EY.

and Gen Z are often grouped due to their young age, Gen Z varies significantly due to its unique outlook on careers and definitions of success.

They are also the most diverse generation and greatly value steps in diversity and inclusion practices and regulations. Overall, they require personalization when it comes to career experiences, and these changes can also help workers already in the labor force.² According to Deloitte, the worldview of Gen Z has been shaped by four key factors: The Great Recession, the growing wealth gap, rising non-discretionary expenses, rise in higher education but also student debt. This survey argues that Gen Z will prioritize financial security as they have to deal with rising inflation and a competitive job market. The biggest takeaway about Gen Z should be that they find ethics and social impact from corporations crucial to businesses they support.

² Gomez, K., Mawhinney, T., & Betts, K. (2022). *Welcome to Generation Z*. Deloitte.

Chapter 2: Defining Corporate Identity

Introduction

As the business has developed over the last thirty years, a need for examining employee interest has emerged. Within a business, the various functions of human resources, communication, marketing, strategy, etc., need to support one another.³ Corporate identity is concerned with connecting central values and a unique idea of the organization to how they are represented internally and externally. For the purpose of this analysis, there is a focus on internal identity and how employees connect to company image and presentation. It also shows how an organization expresses and differentiates itself from competition or within the market. “Thus, increasingly, organizations compete based on their ability to express who they are and what they stand for. Emotional and symbolic expressiveness is becoming part of the experience of doing business.”⁴ Right now, the study of corporate identity and how it impacts internal management can be extremely important. A good identity connects the who, what you do, how you do it, and where you want to go as a corporation.

There are many reasons that corporate identity is critical to business success. Having a connection to an organization and its values and culture can help to influence performance and behavior. A good identity can help in the recruitment of good employees to a company as they look to connect. If used to attract, potential recruits have to hear good things from trusted sources and feel brand recognition. If companies can promote a positive image to their employees and the general public, they are generally well-run companies.⁵ Employees and people, in general, come to recognize a company by everything it does; therefore, everything relates to identity.

³ Hatch, M. J., Schultz, M., & Holten Larsen, M. (2000). *The Expressive Organization*. Oxford.

⁴ Hatch, M. J., Schultz, M., & Holten Larsen, M. (2000). *The Expressive Organization*. Oxford.

⁵ Goodman, M. (Ed.). (2010). *Corporate Communication*. SUNY.

Identity is, therefore, a huge factor in employee retention. Identity carries significant empowerment themes and group membership, allowing employees to connect to both each other and their work.

Identity Formation

The basic concept of identity is formed through alignment with a particular culture. Culture is a learned system of meanings concerning traditions, beliefs, values, etc., that are passed down from one generation to the next. Members within a community participate in these shared beliefs and worldviews, and this system helps them “make sense” of their interactions and environment. The alignment of a member to a cultural group is considered the “in-group identity.” Therefore, a solid shared identity is a result of a strong culture. Identity answers questions of “who am I?” and helps a person relate to others based on their value alignment.

Thinking about how identity is formed is crucial to business as people have multiple identities that form an intersection of who they are. Also, understanding the root of strong culture can help assess issues that may have happened due to a lack of identity relations. So, to have a strong relation to corporate communication starts with the workplace culture and how it is implemented and encouraged among employees. Hopefully, members of a company can align their values with the company to have that stronger intersectional relationship.

Chapter 3: Defining Corporate Communication

The field of corporate communication started to emerge in the late nineties as people started to recognize how important it is to business processes. The foundation of communication is based on rhetoric. The foundation of the study of corporate communication is interdisciplinary and combines findings from anthropology, communications, language and linguistics, sociology, psychology, management, and marketing.⁶ The term combines various management functions related to how a corporation sends a message to an internal and external audience. For this analysis, there will be a sole focus on the internal structures, as they are pertinent to operations and employees.

Organizations use various methods to send a message to employees, and any channel in which a message is sent can be a method of corporate communication. The most commonly used are email and business group messaging software. Communication is most effective when sent with a prominent and clear voice to not get too much feedback in translation. Corporate communications are essential on a more global scale as “the need to translate a corporate message into another language, and another culture brings communication into the strategy for any transnational activity no matter how small” (Goodman, 2010). This aspect brings in the issue of localization. However, there are so many ways in which good corporate communication practices affect internal operations, and translating is just one aspect. This field is crucial to performance as it guides strong corporate identity, philosophy, and citizenship.

In recent trends, corporate communication has been integrated into many new aspects of corporate social responsibility, diversity and inclusion, onboarding, and retention. One recent

⁶ Goodman, M. (Ed.). (2010). *Corporate Communication*. SUNY.

finding found that one of the forces having an impact on this field is integrity.⁷ Relating back to the changing demographics, “the influence of expectations among new employees entering the workplace” (Goodman, 2019) affects the environment in which messages are being sent. There is also an increased calling to see the strategic role of communication in maintaining employee engagement, which is precisely the argument made in the following pages.

Communication itself is how a message is sent and received between transactors. People have to encode and decode based on their socialized perceptions and understandings. The biggest problem for professional communicators is to reduce the amount of noise that could impact how a message gets received. The goal would be that what the message meant to the sender is the same for the receiver. Communication competence and adaptability are also important traits for someone managing this business function which helps to reduce miscommunication. The answer to “Why Study?” is simply that communication creates touchpoints and has a direct impact on every person receiving a message.

⁷ Goodman, M. B. (2019). Introduction to the special issue: corporate communication -- transformation of strategy. *Journal of Business Strategy*, 40(6), 3-8.

Chapter 4: Analysis by Current Employees

Survey Overview

A research study was conducted to provide a comprehensive analysis of how these two factors affect the current employee's connection to corporate identity. A survey of twenty-nine questions, plus a consent agreement, was sent out to my network. It was completely anonymous and void of company identifiers. The study was open for fifteen days and attracted a total of twenty-two respondents. The survey itself was divided into three sections: demographics, corporate identity, and corporate communication. Each question provided information that could be cross-analyzed to find common gaps in current business practices across industries and structures. Respondents were not required to answer every question in case they felt uncomfortable with having that data point recorded. The effect of this could be fewer respondents to specific questions.

The twenty-two respondents to the survey ranged in ages from eighteen to sixty plus. While many worked for more local reach companies, data was gathered from employees in national and global companies. While they range in position level, a majority are at a senior level at this workplace. This result could swing the data a bit as they may be more loyal and have had more say in their role and choice of the company during the job search. Finally, during the COVID-19 Pandemic, many experienced remote work to some degree and were subsequently affected by it. A majority of respondents have combined twenty-plus years of experience in the workforce. The number of responses goes down to 18 in the third section, probably due to time constraints. However, there is still sufficient evidence to analyze and develop a fair analysis.

Demographics Analysis

As referenced in chapter one, there are new elements affecting the workplace. It is important that this survey was able to measure these a bit to reflect how the environment is changing. Four respondents could be in the Gen Z age range or on the millennial cusp. Two of them had entry-level positions, so with deduction, it can be concluded that 11% of respondents in the survey were of Gen Z perspective. To reflect the importance of remote work and the hybrid impact, only three respondents had only ever worked in person or in this setting pre-pandemic. Seven people were still holding positions remotely, and five said they continued to work in a hybrid environment.

Figure 1: Ratings on Remote/Hybrid

**On a scale of 0-5, with 5 being great and 0 being horrible

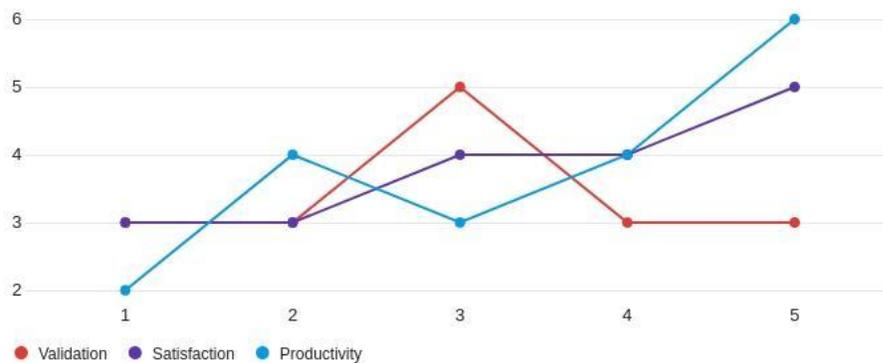


Figure 1 shows the number of responses on the y-axis contrasted with the individual scoring ranking on the x-axis to contrast thoughts on three elements in regards to remote/hybrid work. As seen, the rate of validation had a mean of 3 and plateaued at that average. Satisfaction had the greatest variance in regards to remote work with a mean of 3.36 and an overall higher rating. Productivity also increased in a remote or hybrid environment, which is predictable as

more time and less time-consuming distractions occur. However, many still struggled with a home office and how to complete work independently. Therefore, hybrid work often is best suited to those that value and need some flexibility and are ranked higher in their career. Compared to productivity and validation of in-person work, these are generally rated much higher. There can still be many frustrations with the disconnect associated with not having a presence in-office. The most important and challenging part of being in a hybrid or remote environment is that some people have been onboarded this way. One respondent said they were hired remotely, and four started their current positions in a hybrid format.

These trends are important to understand more on a company-by-company basis as each will cater to its specific demographics. The accessibility that hybrid and remote practices provide has enormous benefits and many cons, especially if not integrated properly. Demographic research will need to be continued as the workforce continues to change. Departments dedicated to people operations should also understand how these trends affect their employees and what structures need to change to incorporate them better. The entrance of hybrid work will play into relationships formed through communication, and, therefore, the corporate identity which will be crucial to monitor going forward.

Importance of Corporate Identity

The survey reflected the importance of corporate identity and employees' association with it to performance at work. However, there was a discrepancy between what corporate identity relates to and its multitude of functions. Many respondents gave answers to what corporate identity means to them. However, the meaning of the term was often confused with branding or corporate culture. There was also notice of the outer reach of identity but not the internal components that would directly relate to motivation. Many, however, were able to

recognize that it is about value alignment and image. This idea will be an important distinction going forward as the research wants to connect to that internal approach which should then translate to a favorable external approach.

Figure 2: Ratings on alignment with company identity

**On a scale from 0-5; 5 =great and 0=horrible

Field	Min	Max	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance	Responses	Sum
Value Alignment	3.00	5.00	4.50	0.60	0.36	18	81.00

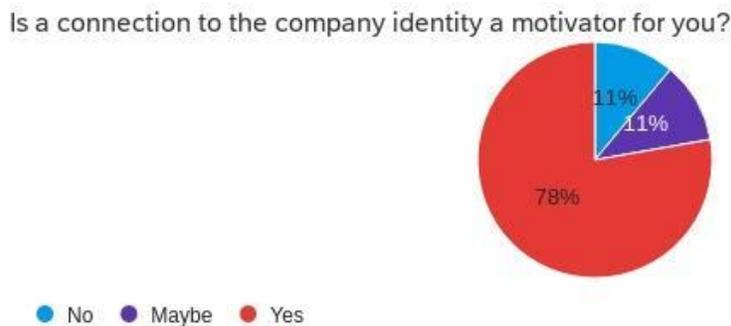
Figure 2 displays employees’ felt alignment with their personal company’s identity or what they perceive to be it. Many felt a high level of connection, and this could be important as it shows both a good measurement of recruitment within the company and that this alignment could be why a said employee chooses to work here. When asked a similar question of if employees identify with their current position, many also gave high ratings, meaning that their job and work directly affect how a person chooses to align themselves. Identities define who we are as people, and if someone chooses to connect with their job, it becomes part of their intersection of identities. These choices show how important a career is to a person and how they are as individuals.

Figure 3: Is an alignment to mission and values important

**On a scale from 0-5; 5 =great and 0=horrible

Field	Min	Max	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance	Responses	Sum
Level of Connection	3.00	5.00	4.33	0.67	0.44	18	78.00

Figure 4: Is connection to corporate identity a motivator?



Connection to the company’s values and mission improves everyone’s work experience, as seen in Figure 3. If you choose to work somewhere, you will hope that you value the work as you are helping to turn out a product or service. The biggest takeaway should be that identity is, in fact, a motivator, as reflected in figure 4, which proves its importance to this study. The biggest concern is how the company continues this connection to its values, mission, and identity. Many employees are only exposed during their onboarding and training sessions. Sometimes there are initiatives to create that employee engagement and buy-in, but it is usually put out in a more marketing approach. These gaps in continued motivators could be why many feel disconnected from their place of employment.

Figure 5: Ratings on Level of Connection

** On a scale from 0-5; 5 =great and 0=horrible

Field	Min	Max	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance	Responses	Sum
Level of Connection	3.00	5.00	4.33	0.67	0.44	18	78.00

Continuing with the theme of connectedness, many respondents replied that they felt connected to their place of employment. As many rated their validation and value alignment as a motivator, this is not surprising. Most respondents have had many years of experience and have probably had time to find a job and company where they feel that sense of connection. If there is not a sense of connection, then what is the motivator to stay in that current position? It would be interesting to see how these motivators compare to those of more tangible things such as financials in future studies.

Importance of Corporate Communication

Communication is at the heart of how people relate to others and come to understand things. The survey was a good reflection of how critical, good communication practices can be to internal operations. Only twenty-two percent of respondents said they had never been frustrated due to a lack of communication. This statistic means that on some level, seventy-eight percent of respondents have been frustrated to some degree, which goes to show that it is a common occurrence. These messages are sent out in a variety of ways. The most common forms of communication were email, text messages, and meetings. Only four respondents received company newsletters that presented necessary information for employees to know. The phone, in general, is also a key point of contact, but presuming that others are more preferred as they are easier to manage and respond to on a timely basis. Company reports can also be a good way to showcase corporate performance, and only seven respondents noted this as a form of communication from their managers.

Figure 6: Effectiveness of Communication

Do you feel that communication is used effectively?

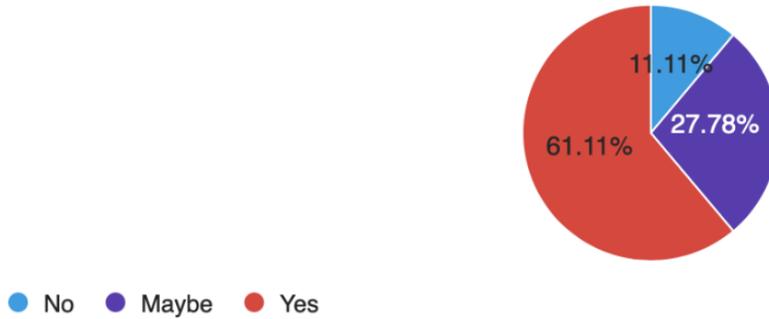
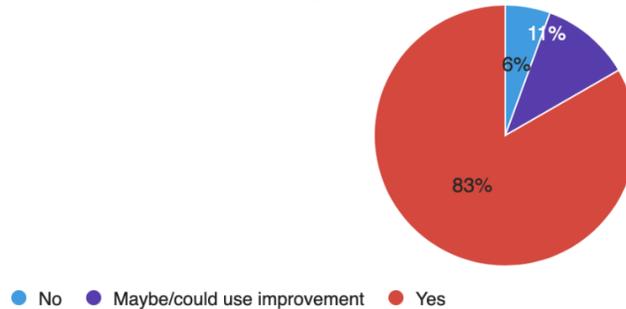


Figure 7: Value and Internal Communication

Does the current internal communication make you feel like a valuable member of the company?



The survey's key finding was that internal communication makes individuals feel like valuable company members. Only one respondent answered the question with "no." Finding what provides value will ultimately help the workplace experience and proves that communication is key to business success. A surprising sixty-one percent of respondents said communication was used effectively. The original hypothesis was that many people would feel that communication was used ineffectively. To cross-analysis why this is the case, Figure 8 presents it referenced with company size to see how communication has to be managed. However, it should be noted that one-third of respondents still see that communication is not

used effectively to some degree. Some respondents noted that what would make it more effective would be fewer silos and a broader base of communication.

Figure 8: Cross-Functional Communication Needs

Do you feel like communication from other departments should be more frequent, less frequent, or that it's just right?



More people wished for cross-functional communication. Zero respondents listed that there should be less. Cross-functional communication is important to facilitate synergy and cohesion in operations. Out of the respondents, six listed cross-departmental or cross-functional. This gap is not very well encouraged or facilitated within companies.

Key Trends

There are many minute gaps within current processes, yet a few general trends stood out in the research. The first main component alluded to in the communication section, is a deep need for cross-functional communication. Teams work together to create a standard product or service and increase a company's profitability. There are so many new ways a company can create more synergy with team integration. Cross-functional was repeatedly mentioned as a reason communication can be better. It also helps keep people in a hybrid format from being stuck only in their immediate department within the company. Allowing bigger proxemics in which people can meet also makes employee understanding and community building easier.

Regarding key trends in corporate identity, there were two big discrepancies. The first is that the definition of identity often does not articulate what an internal corporate identity would be. Many often developed definitions that matched more to branding and image rather than the alignment and relational aspect. If there were correct definitions, it often was related to the perception by external systems. There should be a way for employees to understand and relate to their identity as a worker of said company. What does that mean to them? Do they want to carry this identity? Does it shape their perspectives? There is a need to separate external and internal corporate identities because there are different ways of nurturing each.

The second corporate identity trend is the need for more motivators and connections throughout a worker's life cycle. Many felt they got exposed to these identity processes during onboarding and in some initiatives, yet there are no continuous touchpoints. A company would want employees to plug into the identity. It helps build a better workplace culture and translates to a better public perception of the company because employees are happy to be there. So, there will be a lack of alignment with a lack of motivators to keep someone as a member of the in-group. Other identities that make up that person will shine through instead of their connection to their work. It could also make group participation harder to buy into as employees are onboarded.

Chapter 5: Proposal of Solutions

Amending the Gaps

Based on the analysis of the survey results, there can be many routes to alleviate the gaps found in current systems. The mixture of a tangible survey and a literature review has informed six major solutions based on the research conducted.

- Integrate cross-functional communication and connection and find innovative solutions
- Find connections to internal motivators – identity builders and understand true corporate identity and its applicability
- Be proactive to stay on top of changing demographics
- Continue research into the effects of Gen Z and Hybrid

Integration

Connecting back to the ideas of corporate communication and facts presented in the survey results, internal communication practices directly impact how employees function and find meaning in a workplace. There were gaps in how management was able to facilitate those links between departments. Having a team isolated within themselves is not productive as it decreases synergy and productivity. With the effects of hybrid work, it is easy for close teams to only keep communication between themselves and for lower-level workers to be pigeon-holed into their specific departments. There is no facilitation of “water-cooler” conversations; with fewer informal meetings, there is less reason to meet and work with others in a larger corporation’s context. Smaller companies may have an easier time facilitating this as their departments are small and report directly to high-level management.

Corporate communication itself is a multi-disciplinary practice. It takes into account areas such as marketing, communication theory, intrapersonal communication, psychology,

public relations, and human resources marketing. So, it makes sense on a broader scale that different departments within a business should have cohesive streams of dialogue and similar interests. They need one another's support, and the only way to obtain that is through strong communication practices. Increasing company connectivity through cross-function communication impacts identity because "the integrated communication approach builds on a monolithic identity structure."⁸ Communication is also more effective when it is consistent; therefore, if a suitable system gets established, there should be fewer misunderstandings between departments and more cohesion in products developed.

At this point, it may be valid to think about how this type of integration begins. It could start with more informal processes, such as socials or mentor programs. Some companies have started to assign mentors to entry-level and new hires from other areas' teams to help promote this type of integration and camaraderie. Then management could start to create channels through which departments must funnel information. Sometimes, other employees do not know where to start and whom to contact for a specific task. So in onboarding, get employees to know other teams they will be interacting and working with. When dedicating more time to fostering these connections, be transparent with the why so an employee does not feel their time is being wasted. Overall, a few of these steps could make a huge difference and increase efficiency within operations.

Identity Building and Differentiation

⁸ Hatch, M. J., Schultz, M., & Holten Larsen, M. (2000). *The Expressive Organization*. Oxford.

Many respondents to the survey struggled to fully grasp what corporate identity entailed and how it applied to them as employees. There is a vast difference between the external component and the internal. External will be directly affected and a product of how the organization feels internally. Internal corporate identity is formed through an employee's alignment and perceptions of the workplace culture and company image. So, theoretically, if the company culture is strong, employees will desire to be a part of the in-group and positively align with their identity as a said employee. This idea will then be reflected in the external identity of a corporation because employees are accepted and proud to work there. When an alignment is opposing, this often leads to a worker's exodus from a company and brings that perception to another place of employment. How they relate their experience to others will be how the public perceives and values their identity as consumers. There are also other forces that would affect the external identity of the company, like the media and advertising. However, any internal relations are generated directly through management and communication. The company's perceived image versus the identity should not be too far apart from each other.

The survey also alluded to gaps in how a company attaches its identity to programs and continues to promote its inclusion into the daily lives of employees. Programs should be motivational and developmental and begin with orientation. Through direct connection and communication, "the members of the company understand clearly what it means to be a member of that organization"⁹ The positive identity connection and image will be created with thoughtful programs directed at the internal forces rather than the public. However, links to identity should not just come from onboarding. There should be many ways in an employee's daily work that gives them a reason to apply alignment and find value. A good corporate identity should answer

⁹ Goodman, M. (Ed.). (2010). *Corporate Communication*. SUNY.

the employee's questions of "Who am I as an employee of ___?" It would be up to a people operations or workplace experience manager to be a mediator of creating collectivity under a corporate identity and realizing how a variety of people can fit into this image. Corporate identity is explicitly able to be cultivated and covers how the idea is represented to an audience. It is also vital for employees to find the emotional and symbolic connection to their corporate identity. Managers have difficulty figuring out how this should be represented internally and what type of identity to promote. These promotions could occur in informal events to how meetings are run and the office is generally set up. It is also about how employees interact with each other as communication directly informs identity. Any possible ways of reminding employees subtly of their relationship to being a member of the company culture is an excellent method to promote corporate identity.

Becoming Proactive

The thought process behind this solution is that with the known upcoming impacts of hybrid work and Gen Z, managers should be working to integrate new practices now rather than before impacts have been made. Gen Z can already be anticipated to affect the workplace significantly as they will by 2030 be the majority of the workforce. How can practices set in place today affect successful future internal operations? There are many ways they can be reached and connect with others that previous generations are struggling to understand and keep on top of. The two big changes in the workplace are already transforming how work is performed. How a company handles the onboarding of Gen Z to their workforce can be a make or break situation.¹⁰ Within this decade, most of the workforce will shift to those under 40 years of age and whose generations are more connected to technology and the world around them.

¹⁰ Gomez, K., Mawhinney, T., & Betts, K. (2022). *Welcome to Generation Z*. Deloitte.

Hybrid work is already taking over the job landscape, and remote work options are increasing each day. People desire the flexibility and convenience that comes with being able to work from home. Proactivity is the best way to protect the business of the future, as it will be hard to fix mistakes after they happen.

Continue Research

Due to how much is changing, as hinted previously, there are many unknowns about how much impact and to what extent practices are helping the problem. This study has a relatively small sample size and mainly reflects an older crowd. As this was a broad study, how practices and operational management need to change will be specific to each industry and corporation. There should be more research conducted on this topic. There is so much to study, and corporate identity is just a tiny portion of the overall employee experience. These last few years are only the beginning, and there is so much more to discover. It would be important to consider psychological elements and how the brains work with these two elements involved in the work performed. New research should also focus on a more global scale than local businesses as, in theory, those should be easier to manage and implement change. The research conducted in this thesis is not entirely reflective of the current workplace. However, it shows the importance of working on identity and communication are overall helpful to the employee experience and engagement. Retention will always be a problem when it comes to jobs. Therefore, it should be a source of much research. Having more research also makes the conclusions more credible. The more prevalent awareness of these issues is, the more likely they will also be solved, and correct adjustments will be made.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

So why, after all this, should companies see the importance of fostering a corporate identity? Why factor in the element of corporate communication and study it alongside corporate identity? Creating purpose within a company ultimately drives job satisfaction and therefore employee engagement. This term is quite the buzzword when it comes to internal operations, but factors greatly into job performance, cost of operations, and the creation of that company culture. There are more components to retention than purpose, but it ultimately anchors a worker to their role. Purpose can almost be synonymous with corporate identity, as identity provides purpose itself as well as helps to instill the values shared among employees. Each new generation to the market also finds importance in having purpose and establishing meaning within their jobs. Gen Z is going to demand these requirements to remain at a company. With the Great Resignation and the effects of the pandemic, job seekers hold more power. To attract top talent, it will be crucial to have this strong sense of connection to pull in those who are the most qualified. It should also be argued that job seekers themselves should care if there is a corporate identity at a company, and a positive one at that. An employee stationed at a company to whom they have a strong affinity will find their job more motivating and satisfying to perform.

There is such a strong correlation between corporate communication and the creation and maintenance of corporate identity. Communication forms the basis of our perception and interpretation of the corporate culture and image that an employee is choosing to buy into. The stronger the corporate internal communication is, the more important and cared for an employee feels in their position. As a byproduct of good internal employee relations, the jobs performed and the products sent out will be more effective and developed. The consensus provided in the survey backs this message up as many respondents felt more valued as members of a corporation

that communicated with them. Purpose is created through the messages sent out to employees; the messages create understanding. Therefore, corporate communication has a direct impact on corporate identity and should be studied alongside.

Each coming generation will continue to change how businesses perform and operate, consequently, it is necessary to study and understand how they work. Operations will never continue to work forever and will constantly need to change. Gen Z has a more profound impact as they have different values than previous generations and greater connectivity to technology. They communicate differently and as they will soon be the majority in the workforce, it will be important to cater to their styles versus those of older generations.

Finally, hybrid work is a game-changer and needs to be thought about when creating a sense of connection for employees. The practice is not going anywhere and many workers tend to prefer the option. However, it can create a discrepancy between those in the office and in other teams as there is less opportunity to create those relationships. Figuring out how to properly manage and empower those employees that are working in this capacity will be a common occurrence going forward.

The big takeaway from this research should be the need for corporate identity and the touchpoints they create. Companies are made up of people that have emotional needs besides the physical. Society is moving towards the embrace of ethical business practices and taking care of employees is one of these advances. A cared-for employee also turns into a huge asset for a company as they start to up their performance and have excitement and respect for the job they perform. Corporate identity and other internal operational factors create buy-in and should be a massive reason why a person stays loyal to an organization. It should be a consideration for both employers and job seekers as we move into the future.

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