SESSION 1:  
THE ESSENCE OF  
A COMPELLING CULTURE  

ReView

When they first met, Truett Cathy’s warmth and intentionality communicated care to Dee Ann, and she hadn’t even been offered a job yet. In your work experience, whose intentional care impacted you in a positive way? What did they do that stood out?

As she described her experience with Chick-fil-A, Dee Ann argued that Truett Cathy’s dedication to people—not products—created the environment for his company’s success. Why do you think a focus on the people of a company would promote growth and success?

Truett’s son, Dan, talked about the values on which Truett built Chick-fil-A—most prominent of which was loyalty to both customers and employees. What kind of impact have you experienced from loyal leaders within a company? How has loyalty affected your own leadership?

Explore the Principles

Purpose:

The first important principle of culture-building that Dee Ann offered is purpose. She said that, if culture is the soul of a company, purpose is the heart. What value does having a clear purpose offer to a company? What would a company look like without a purpose?

Can you describe the purpose of your company or organization? If so, what is it?

If your company or organization doesn’t have a clearly defined purpose, what would you say the implicit purpose of the company is? Why?

In what ways, if any, could you refine or improve the stated purpose of your company or organization? Why would you change what you changed?

Mission:

The second principle is mission. A mission statement answers the question, “What are we in business to do?” How would your company or organization answer the mission question?

Dee Ann pointed out that mission motivates workers. How does your organization or company’s mission motivate employees?

How do you or the leaders of your company express the mission of the organization to the team members? How could that communication be improved?

Core Values:

The third component of healthy culture is core values. Core values are character qualities that constrain the company as it works to accomplish the mission. Does your company or organization have core values? If so, list them out, and describe how each value helps your company or organization accomplish its mission.
SESSION 1: 
THE ESSENCE OF 
A COMPELLING CULTURE

If your company or organization doesn’t have explicit core values, what would you say are the implicit, or unstated, values that govern the company? What character traits does your organization embrace or exhibit?

What impact have those particular core values had on the way your organization operates?

**Guiding Principles:**

The final component of culture in a company that Dee Ann described is guiding principles. These principles govern the “how” of the company as it sets out on its mission. What would you list as the governing or guiding principles of your company or organization?

How did your company arrive at those particular principles? How have they shaped your company?

Dee Ann pointed out that an organization that has strong guiding principles can remain strong through changes in strategy, work structure, and even leadership. In your perspective, how do guiding principles create that strong foundation? Have you seen it play out in your business experience? If so, how?

In your company or organization, are there any guiding principles (whether implicit or explicit) that need to be reevaluated? If so, what are they? If not, what makes them strong?

*Nose to the Grindstone*

Select an activity from the list below to begin applying the lessons of this session to your business or organization.

**Memorize:**
Rehearse the value of purpose, mission, core values, and guiding principles to a company or organization, or, if your organization doesn’t have written purpose, mission, and values, then review your notes above. Then, commit to memory the purpose, mission, and principles of your organization.

**Interact:**
Identify someone you can engage with (superior, subordinate, peer) on the topic of purpose, mission, and principles in your organization. Set aside time for conversation.

**Write it Down:**
Spend a few minutes this week writing out the company’s purpose, mission, and principles, and then jot a few notes on how they influence your particular area of responsibility.

**Read:**
Read chapter one of Dee Ann’s book *It’s My Pleasure*, and look for further information that would help you in your leadership.

**Act Differently:**
Identify one area in your own leadership that stands at odds with your company’s mission, purpose, and principles, and plan out a course of action to realign your leadership. Or, plan out a process to better express your company’s mission, purpose, and principles to your team members.
SESSION 2: BUILDING A TEAM THAT CREATES A COMPELLING CULTURE: PART 1

ReView

You can fill up your gas tank with orange juice, but your car won't go very far. In the same way, an organization’s culture will only grow if it’s filled with the right kind of people. Describe a time in your experience where the wrong kind of workers impacted the culture of a company or organization.

People matter more than products, and a culture that invests in people will succeed. How would your perspective toward your subordinates, coworkers, or superiors change if you dedicated your day-to-day work to impacting people, rather than improving products?

Explore the Principles

Select and Steward the Right Talent:

Good talent in an organization begins with the selection process. Dee Ann highlights six ways to ensure that the right kind of people gets hired: Clear job description, diverse recruitment, behavior-focused interviews, reference consultation, candidate evaluation of the position, and commitment to employee development.

Which of the six elements have you experienced in your own career?

Did those particular hiring steps help you feel confident about the job? Why or why not?

Once people begin working either at the company or as part of a team, it’s important to continue investing in them. Dee Ann calls this “stewarding the talent.” She recommends stewarding young talent by giving them responsibility and soliciting their input on projects.

Practically, how could you steward young talent either in your company or on your particular team?

What about older, seasoned talent? How could you draw on their expertise and experience?

Becky’s story of launching Kelsey’s photography career illustrates the dedication Becky had to stewarding her talent. What impacted you most about her story?

The Three “C’s”:

Character

Talent and skill can’t compensate for bad character. It’s important that the character of a prospective (or current) team member aligns with the purpose, mission, and values of the organization. Have you seen conflict in character affect a company or organization? If so, how, and in what way?

Why do you think it’s so crucial that a team member's character match the values of the organization? Is there ever an exception to this rule?
Competency
Second, competency is crucial for a team member who will contribute to a culture and company. A competent team member will not just do the job, but help the entire organization grow. Describe someone whose competency you’ve seen grow the company. What set that individual apart?

What differentiates between someone who is capable (able to do the job) and competent (someone who can improve the quality of work)? Why is true competency important?

Chemistry
The last component that Dee Ann highlighted is chemistry. People work best when they like each other.

What experiences have you had with good chemistry in a team? What about bad?

Practically, how could you determine a potential candidate’s or team member’s chemistry with the organization or team?

Describe a work relationship that you experienced where the chemistry clicked. What about that relationship worked so well?

Nose to the Grindstone
Select an activity from the list below to begin applying the lessons of this session to your business or organization.

Memorize:
Commit the three C’s to memory, along with the importance they contribute to team member selection and dynamic.

Interact:
Find a team member who you can invest in this week, and set a time to interact with them and figure out their career goals. How can you help them achieve those goals?

Write it Down:
Look at your own character, competency, and chemistry. Write out how each of those areas affects your own work.

Read:
Read chapters two, three, and four of Dee Ann’s book It’s My Pleasure, and look for further information that would help you in your leadership.

Act Differently:
Instead of looking at team members as simply there to do a job, start looking at them as people you can help grow and succeed. Focus your attitude on people, not products.
ReView

People matter more than products. Throughout this study, we’ve said that a lot. In this session, Dee Ann shows how a people-centered value system impacts not only performance evaluations, but company benefits and services as well.

As you reflect on the session video, what impact does people-centered thinking have on performance evaluations? Who benefits from having a high value of people?

When a company commits to serving its employees above and beyond expectations, the entire culture benefits. In what ways have you experienced exceptional commitment from your company?

Sometimes, you don’t have to be the CEO to extend extraordinary service to team members. You don’t have to buy them a car, but in what way have you (or could you) offer outstanding service to your fellow workers?

Explore the Principles

Operate with Integrity:

We often think of integrity as doing the right thing when no one’s watching. But in the office, it also means doing what you say when and how you say you’ll do it.

Dee Ann talked about “leading on” potential team members despite knowing they don’t fit the job well. Where have you seen reluctance to say or do what’s necessary in a job setting? What kind of impact did it have on those involved?

Dee Ann gave several points on helping people do their best work. Sometimes that involves equipping them to work in a different role or a different company altogether. In the past, how have you approached the process of working with a team member or employee who isn’t succeeding in their work? What went well? What would you change in light of Dee Ann’s comments?

Commit to Your People:

At Chick-fil-A, team members commit to give to the company their hard work and dedication. In return, Dee Ann described, the corporate office provides three above-and-beyond benefits to the team members: A commitment to care for each other, serve each other, and impact each other for good.

Describe a way in which you have seen either your company or a team member express one of these values to you. How did that action affect you?
In your current work, does the value promise of the company extend beyond the basic benefits offered to workers? If so, how? If not, what would you like to see?

In the story illustration, the Operator of a Chick-fil-A franchise saw the need of one of his workers. By giving her a van, he—and all of his employees—proved that he cared for her.

In what ways can you go above and beyond to show care for your fellow workers?

What kind of effect would a culture of care, service, and positive impact have in your company or organization? What would it look like?

**Nose to the Grindstone**

Select an activity from the list below to begin applying the lessons of this session to your business or organization.

**Memorize:**
Memorize the three commitments: personal care, service to each other, and positive impact. Look for those three things in your work this week.

**Interact:**
Identify one team member or employee whom you can impact positively this week, and then do it.

**Write it Down:**
Write out a story of an instance where someone in your organization or company impacted you positively, and share it with your team members as an encouragement to pay it forward.

**Read:**
Read chapters five and six in Dee Ann’s book *It’s My Pleasure*, and identify ways you can apply the content to your work and leadership.

**Act Differently:**
Commit to respond to fellow team members or employees with integrity: do what you say you’ll do when and how you say you’ll do it.
SESSION 4: GROWING A COMPELLING CULTURE AMONG YOUR TEAM: PART 1

ReView

A compelling culture impacts more than just current employees. Rudy encountered the culture of Chick-fil-A and found not just a career, but also a calling. What specific aspects of Chick-fil-A enabled Rudy to succeed as a person and a businessman?

How did the people-not-products culture of Chick-fil-A influence Rudy as he took over and ran his own franchises?

Rudy described his role as providing and caring for the families of his 150 employees. Has your family been impacted by the investment your company or organization has made in you? Why or why not?

Explore the Principles

Calling:

A calling is greater than a career. A career gets you to work, but a calling gets you out of bed in the morning. What would you say your calling is?

Does your current work contribute to your calling? If so, how? If not, why not?

There is nothing quite like doing what you believe you were made to do. What about your current work would you change to better fit your sense of calling?

Servant Leadership:

A person who’s found his or her calling can invest in others. Dee Ann highlighted the important value of servant leadership and gave several examples of how that form of leadership could play out.

Are you willing to do any job you ask someone else to do? Will you work shoulder-to-shoulder with your employees or team members?

Do you value the input of your fellow team members or employees? What can you do to create an environment where your team members feel that they’re a valuable part of the business or organization?

When there’s a line, where do you stand? Why? What do your actions communicate about your view of the people that work with you? Is there anything you could change to serve your team members or employees?
SESSION 4:
GROWING A COMPELLING CULTURE AMONG YOUR TEAM: PART 1

Dee Ann shared the story of flying first class when the executives of Chick-fil-A opted for coach. In what ways could you share the opportunities and privileges of your position of leadership with employees or team members?

What effect would sharing opportunity and privilege have on the culture of your company or organization?

Finally, servant leadership is about people not products. How can you include team members or employees in your work in a way that reinforces their value?

Abundancy Mentality:

In the final part of this session, Dee Ann introduced the concept of abundancy. An abundancy mentality sees others’ successes as beneficial to everyone.

In your experience, where have you seen abundancy or scarcity play out at work? How did it impact the work environment?

An abundancy mentality means celebrating the successes of others and working in the interests of others. What would this look like specifically for you? Which is easier for you: an abundancy or scarcity mentality?

Would the culture of your company or organization change if you, specifically, embraced an attitude of abundance? If so, how? If not, why not?

Nose to the Grindstone

Select an activity from the list below to begin applying the lessons of this session to your business or organization.

Memorize:
Memorize the character qualities of an abundancy mentality: fostering others’ dreams, confidence in your own dreams, mentoring others for success, optimistic, and generous. Look for ways to implement them this week.

Interact:
Identify someone in your company or organization who succeeded this week or this month. Congratulate them and find a way to celebrate their success.

Write it Down:
Write out what you believe to be your calling. Craft the words carefully, and then use the description of your calling to guide you as you develop in your work.

Read:
Read chapters seven through ten in Dee Ann’s book It’s My Pleasure, and identify ways you can apply the content to your work and leadership.

Act Differently:
Give up your seat or place in line once this week. Show deference to someone else in the company or organization.
SESSION 5:
GROWING A COMPELLING CULTURE
AMONG YOUR TEAM: PART 2

ReView

Loyalty is a two-way street. In this fifth session, Dee Ann discussed the value of loyalty in an organization and the role it plays in building a compelling culture. In your words, how does loyalty impact the culture of a company or organization?

It’s easy to think that loyalty is an employee’s responsibility alone. After all, shouldn’t workers be loyal to their company? Dee Ann, however, pointed out that a leader’s loyalty to his or her people is even more important.

Have you seen loyalty displayed by organization or company leaders? If so, how?

Explore the Principles

Almost all of us have worked a job we didn’t enjoy. We did it because we had to. Dee Ann argued that there’s a difference between someone who is compliant with their job (they do what they’re told), and someone who’s committed (they do above and beyond).

Describe a job experience you’ve had where you were simply compliant with the expectations of the position. How did you feel about your work? How loyal did you feel toward the company? Your boss?

Describe one person you’ve worked around who demonstrated commitment to the company or organization. How did they affect you?

Companies or organizations with compliant team members suffer because they spend too much time firing and hiring—time that could have been used to grow the company. But a leader that is committed to his or her team members or employees will cultivate commitment in return.

What does your commitment look like in your current position? Would you describe yourself as a loyal member of the company or organization? Why or why not?

How has your leadership demonstrated commitment to your growth and success as an employee or team member? How has that affected your commitment to the organization or company?
How does your perspective of your work (whether compliant or committed) impact those with whom you work? Do you inspire loyalty?

Commitment breeds commitment. What would the impact be on your employees or team members if you committed to their own success and growth as workers? Would that commitment create loyalty? Why or why not?

Kevin invested in the life of one of his team member above and beyond the basic expectations of the employer/employee relationship. Kevin and his wife showed commitment to Diana and invested in orthodontics to improve her smile and self-esteem.

Describe how you saw Kevin’s commitment breed commitment in Diana.

What would that kind of commitment look like in your current business or organization? What would it take to create that commitment?

**Nose to the Grindstone**

Select an activity from the list below to begin applying the lessons of this session to your business or organization.

**Memorize:**
Memorize the phrase, “Commitment breeds commitment.” When faced with an opportunity to go above and beyond, remember the importance of commitment.

**Interact:**
Identify someone this week that you can intentionally impact above and beyond the requirements of your job description. Take steps to commit to them.

**Write it Down:**
Write down the ways in which you want commit to your organization or business and your team members. Put the list in a prominent place to remind you to be loyal.

**Read:**
Read chapters eleven through thirteen in Dee Ann’s book *It’s My Pleasure*, and identify ways you can apply the content to your work and leadership.

**Act Differently:**
This week, pay attention to those things in your work that you see as something that just has to “get done.” Rather than act in compliance, look for a way to go above and beyond in your responsibilities, and then do it.
SESSION 6: ENGAGING GUESTS IN A COMPELLING CULTURE

ReView

Dan Cathy, the son of Chick-fil-A founder, Truett Cathy, shared the biblical principles that underlie the mission of Chick-fil-A. The company is about people, not products.

What does the concept of extravagant service look like at Chick-fil-A?

In your personal experience, where have you seen extravagant service to customers or clients?

Dan also highlighted servant-leadership as foundational to the success of Chick-fil-A. Rather than focusing on the leader’s successes, a servant-leader focuses on the success of the people.

What does servant leadership look like in your company or organization?

Mr. John’s story plays out the impact that extravagant service toward customers or clients can have. In what ways did the Chick-fil-A operator who interacted with Mr. John go above and beyond to serve his customer?

What would extravagant service to customers or clients look like in your own work?

Explore the Principles

The fundamental, biblical principle of Chick-fil-A’s service model is “second-mile service.” The phrase alludes to Jesus’ teaching about going above and beyond required service.

As you look at the way your organization or company services its clients or customers, how do you go above and beyond the basic obligations of your work?

Has your company or organization made it a point to provide extravagant service to clients or customers? If so, how? If not, why not?

The concept of people—not-products has filled these sessions. What could be improved in your company or organization to emphasize serving people—both employees and clients?
SESSION 6: 
ENGAGING GUESTS IN 
A COMPELLING CULTURE

In what way has your business sought to build loyalty among customers or clients? Where have you seen it succeed? Where could it improve?

The Chick-fil-A model views serving guests as a privilege. They highlight this attitude by using the phrase, “It’s my pleasure.” Does your business or organization express appreciation to your customers or clients? If so, how? If not, why not?

Dee Ann’s final admonition was to recognize the impact a compelling culture has through time. Even the greatest companies will come to an end, but investing in people—employees and guests—creates a lasting legacy that surpasses sales records.

Is your company or organization building a lasting legacy in the lives of its people? If so, how?

What stories do your team members or employees have that would illustrate this commitment to service?

Nose to the Grindstone

Select an activity from the list below to begin applying the lessons of this session to your business or organization.

Memorize:
Commit to memory the wise words of Jesus in Matthew 5:40–41: “And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles.” Use them as a reminder to serve extravagantly.

Interact:
Identify one client or customer you can intentionally serve in an over-the-top fashion this week, and plan to do so.

Write it Down:
Write out the story that you or one of your team members or employees may have that illustrates the power of people-not-products servanthood.

Read:
Read chapters fourteen through seventeen in Dee Ann’s book It’s My Pleasure, and identify ways you can apply the content to your work and leadership.

Act Differently:
When you interact with clients, customers, team members, employees, or superiors this week, decide to go out of your way in showing committed service to them.