**C3 EMCS2400: Effective Leadership**

Pre-Work: Assignment - Culture Diagnosis

Brian Russel Davis, [brian\_davis@brown.edu](mailto:brian_davis@brown.edu)

Currently, I work for PAX, a cannabis device company. Very similar to another start-up I worked for in 2009, Pandora, PAX is characterized by typical Silicon Valley “Start-Up Culture.” What makes PAX different is the mandate that we follow the law perfectly ( so no moving too fast and “breaking things” ie Facebook ) and the fact that we are a hardware company. Making hardware is not typically a “move fast” pursuit.

Referencing the “The Big 9 Cultural Values”, this is how PAX scores from my perspective ( on a scale of 1-10 ) :

**Agility**: 5 … It’s hard to be agile in a highly regulated space while you are making hardware as I mentioned above.

**Collaboration**: 5 … Teams tend to work in the silos and fight for airtime because we don’t have strong leadership that pulls them together in an organized way.

**Customer**: 9 … Everyone cares very deeply about our consumers. This is one thing we do right.

**Diversity**: 6 … We are mostly white and male especially in positions that

**Execution**: 3 … The lack of agility, collaboration and performance drag down execution. We tend to let small things hinder delivery.

**Innovation**: 10 … We a unique unicorn when it comes to innovation, and we hire the smartest innovators. We just can’t get them to work together and execute.

**Integrity**: 10 … We operate with 100% integrity, sometimes in ways that also slow down execution, mainly in areas where we are unsure of regulation.

**Performance**: 5 … Our overall performance is low because we don’t prioritize results.

**Respect**: 10 … People in the company have respect for everyone regardless of position, except under times of extreme stress which is usually because of poor execution.

Overall I think there are few problematic feedback loops. Making hardware is hard and complex. Because very few of us have experience in running a cannabis tech company that makes hardware and software on a global scale, there is a lack of leadership experience for the complex problems we face. Instead, leaders are trying to solve problems with paradigms from outside our industry space which doesn’t work very well.