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IST 335

10/5/19

Chick-Fil-A's Organizational Change

As the world around us rapidly expands and changes, so do the organizations we rely on. Different societal pressures hold a strong influence on whether change must be implemented within an organization. America's third largest fast food chain, Chick-fil-A, has in recent years, been facing this type of external pressure. The company's strong religious affiliation and stance on the LGBTQ community is one of the past and is calling for a shift in the organizations priorities.

Chick-fil-A is a family run fast food chain started by a Baptist named S. Truett Cathy. The company's purpose is as stated: "To glorify God by being a faithful steward of all that is entrusted to us and to have a positive influence on all who come into contact with Chick-fil-A.". Now, being that the company started back in 1946 Georgia, their religious and social views are massively outdated. More specifically, their views on the LGBTQ community. The current CEO has publicly stated his stance against same-sex marriage and the company even has history of donating to charities known for discrimination of those apart of the LGBTQ community. With society's values becoming more and more rooted in acceptance and equality, Chick-fil-La must implement change otherwise the company will take a hit. The LGBTQ community is expanding, meaning that both the company's consumer and employee demographic will shift. Their sales have the potential to drop as the community expands and progressive employees will refuse to work for such an exclusive company.

Since the rise of this backlash, Chick-fil-A has made minimal efforts to respond. They claimed to have stopped donations to religious and political charities. Yet, tax return data shows they still donate to the Salvation Army and Fellowship of Christian Athletes. Both who have anti-gay ideals. When further ridiculed, they stated that their priorities fall with in what the charity does for the children, not their affiliations.

In order to adjust with society's change in values, I would like to shift Chick-Fil-A's image. In order to do this, I would change a few different aspects of their company. First, the company's purpose statement must be edited. This statement is what encourages future employees to join the company and keeps costumers coming back. With all the controversy revolving the company's beliefs, the religious aspect of the statement should be revised. The new statement must be less religion oriented and more morally oriented. Instead of speaking on "being faithful stewards of God" , we will word it more in a way that speaks to the morals behind that. For example, their new statement will read as followed: " As a company we value the importance of serving the world around us and all who come in contact with Chick-Fil- A ." This allows the company to keep the religious morals within their purpose without bringing attention the controversy. Furthermore, I will implement a shift in the leadership structure. Currently, the company's leaders are all relatives of S. Truett Cathy. In order to bring in a fresh perspective and new look to the company, non-family member will be implemented at high status within the company. This will not only show employees and customers that our company is changing with the times but bring a new type of thinking to the table.

Considering my ideas for the company are so radical, comparatively, I will implement these changes in a specific, structured manor. First, I would like to acknowledge the speed and style in which I will be implemented change. The change will take place over the course of a few

years. Considering I have intentions of changing two very important aspects of the company, its purpose and structure, it will take a longer amount of time to implement. The style will be semi participatory. This meaning that both changes are non-negotiable but once implemented, the employees have up to one year to file a complaint. Depending on how many complaints are received, change will be adjusted. During the freezing stage, each level of the organization's structure will be educated on the current state of the company and the need for change. I will show a presentation tailored to each level and expose them to the proper information they should know. For example, employees that are at the bottom of the structure do not need to be informed on how to work with a new leader by your side. Furthermore, I explain that without this change Chick-Fil- A's reputation will remain tainted and that they will lose their franchise. During the transforming stage I will first implement the purpose statement. I will then closely analyze the effectiveness of this specific change. After, proper analysis of the first change is complete, I will begin the interviewing process for the new leaders. Hiring will come from both inside and outside the company. During the refreezing stage, I will implement evaluations that allows the employees to express their opinions on how well the company is working with these changes. I will also explain to the employers that they can be promoted to a high position within the company, now that the top is not only family run.

Chick- Fil- A has been a family run business since 1946, so a change in leadership is where I see the most resistance to come from. Family members may not want to implement this change and screw up tradition. In order to combat this resistance, I will create a task force to help both parties, the family members and new leaders, adjust. This task force will provide a space for employees to be counseled, informed, and assisted.

Being adaptable and ready for change is an important part for a companies prosperity.

The recent shift in societal values on the LGBTQ community beg for a change in Chick-fil-A's culture and beliefs. A change in purpose and fresh faces to the company are both necessary. With an open-minded staff and by following my outline for change, Chick-fil-A will continue to thrive.

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