

Case Study.

Enterprise Ireland.

Co-creating values & purpose with your people

Enterprise Ireland (EI) is the government organisation responsible for the development and growth of Irish enterprises in world markets. With nine offices across Ireland and a presence in over 40 countries globally, their 800 employees support Irish enterprise to start, innovate and succeed globally, driving prosperity throughout Ireland.

The challenge.

Every organisation has a purpose and, inherently a set of values. Often, the challenge is identifying what they are and then writing them down so that there's a common understanding and everyone is pulling in the same direction.

And that was exactly the case with EI. They knew they had them but, like many other organisations, also knew that if you asked 20 employees what they were, you'd get 20 slightly different versions. So, this exercise wasn't about

creating a purpose and set of values, it was much more about finding out what already existed.

Because their people had all the answers. The challenge was how we could get at those answers and then co-create their purpose and values in a very open and transparent way. That was a tall order with only 60% of their employees based in Dublin and the rest spread around Ireland and the world.

What we did.

Over the course of eight weeks we ran 10 ideation sessions with EI people in Dublin, around Ireland and overseas, with the Leadership Team and with EI's Board. In total, those 150 employees provided over 4,000 opinions and ideas on what they believed were EI's purpose and values.

A thorough analysis of that data provided us with the insight we needed to create a draft purpose statement and a set of values with descriptors. And with the wealth of reference data we had, we were able to specifically link each element of the purpose and values to insights gained from in the ideation sessions.

To drive eventual ownership of the purpose and values later, we wanted to ensure that all 800 EI employees had the opportunity to have their say. So, we made the purpose and values available for two weeks in a secure online forum through which resulted in a further 130 pieces of feedback.

That input allowed us to further tweak what became – following CEO and Leadership Team signoff – Enterprise Ireland's purpose statement and values.



The results.

Having spoken to over a third of EI's people in this process, when Julie Sinnamon, Enterprise Ireland's CEO launched them, she could honestly say that they were 'Our Purpose and Values'. And that's a powerful thing when you're asking for your people's buy-in and support.

Since that launch, EI's internal communications team has provided values and purpose updates in the employee magazine and brought them to life through intranet video stories. And through their employee engagement platform, they've encouraged their people to recognise great work their colleagues are doing and link it to their values.

In addition, the OD Team is currently in the process of rolling the values into their performance development process to highlight the importance not just of WHAT their people achieve but HOW they achieve it.

“Inspiring Change made a real difference to our purpose and values project, bringing clarity and expertise; developing a collaborative, inclusive and timely process, and helping deliver an output of which we are really proud.”

Stephen Creaner, Executive Director

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