The Napkin Guys: How to Build an Organization That Operates With a Purpose

Tim Hanson: Hey Bryan, how are you?

Bryan Bechtoldt: I'm good, buddy. Good morning.

Tim: Good to see you again.

Bryan: Cheers, same here.

Tim: You know what? One of the things I just really enjoy about working with you and together on is when we think about - how do we build a purposeful-based organization?

Bryan: Mm-hmm, yeah. And it's something that you and I shared pretty intensely is, you know, how do we build an organization that really, you know, is engaged and likes what they do, and wants to get out of bed and run to work in the morning? And, you know, we know working with a purpose is pretty key to that. And you say working with the purpose, but what does that actually mean? I mean we can put a little definition to it and kind of some meat on those bones, and talk through a little bit. I know, Tim, we talked about purpose-built. One of the things that really helps is a social responsibility initiative, right? And something, you know, you lead for us.

Tim: Right and, you know, I think we have that fundamental obligation as an organization to think about our social responsibility. So there's a couple of tenants that we use to kind of underscore those approaches within the organization. So obviously one is just thinking about how we're charitable.

Bryan: Yeah.

Tim: And charity can be in a variety of forms, right? Obviously the one that comes to mind for most people is just from a financial perspective, but I know you work quite a bit thinking about how do we engage our people from a time perspective as well and an energy perspective.

Bryan: Yeah, so, you know, making sure that the people feel and understand that they have the encouragement of the leadership team to actually give of themselves and to give up time and to actually work in the community, in addition to if they want to donate stuff financially. It's pretty key to their engagement, you know. What we want to do is we want them to be very proud of the organization they work for and you have to build that pride through actions.

Tim: Yeah, and I think the important aspect of doing that well is look, it's not an HR initiative. Right? It's just a kind of a fundamental core of who we are and what we do. And we want people to feel an opportunity to participate in that should they choose to.

Bryan: And even beyond social responsibility, but the general work, you know, through the day at large. The body of clients that we service, you know, we're fairly intentful about making sure that we're doing work for organizations we feel are kind of, have the same values and are aligned. We look and kind of look nationally, in some instances now internationally, for organizations that have just fantastic missions they're on. And we can adopt those missions and feel really good about engaging deeply with clients that are doing great things.

Tim: Yeah, completely agree. So understanding those missions of our clients is important and engaging with organizations that share similar values. And then we talk a lot about, within our organization, what we call ethical business practices. So just, how do we, when we engage with clients, engage in an ethical manner and in a consistent manner with a shared value system with our clients.

Bryan: Yeah, and it comes, the basis of that comes with transparency.

Tim: Agreed.

Bryan: So there's going to be issues and problems that happen in large projects. We just got to be very, you know, forthright about it, you know. It comes in our billing practices where we do full detail billing of, you know, the time from our team members explaining what they did for whatever hours are being positioned on an invoice. That transparency and the willingness to be wrong and the willingness to always do the right thing, or at least attempt to, is really, I think, the key to, you know, creating that ethical work place.

Tim: Yeah, completely agree. And then so, I say the third and last tenant would be a term we use would be sustainability. So one of the cool parts about sustainability is, frankly, many of the clients we're engaging with are undertaking technology initiatives to help our environment be more sustainable. So they think about ways within their organizations to lower their carbon footprint and to lower their impact on the environment and they're using technology to help them do that.

Bryan: Yeah exactly. And some of the movements that happen now, you don't necessarily have to do it at a local company level because you can take advantage of it in the aggregate. And like cloud systems that are built on sustainable footprints. Whether the data centers they run are sitting out with hydropower in Idaho so that they're being very sensitive to their energy consumption. Whether there's different techniques around how they actually, you know, turn things on and off to make sure they, you know, utilize it as wisely as they can from a power perspective. You can get the advantage of that just by making smart selections of who you work with.

Tim: Yeah, completely agree. So again, enjoy working with you and thinking about that and consistently thinking, how do we build that organization that operates with a purpose? So thanks for the opportunity to do so.

Bryan: Cheers buddy, thank you.