



# Our Culture

# Our Starting Point

**You create a great company by getting the right people in the team, getting the wrong people off the team and getting the right people in the right positions.**

**Then you figure out how to win the league and cup double.**

# Our Most Important Asset

**The right people are our most important asset. We can only delight clients if we have exceptional people serving them**

# Our Mission

**To harness the power of our creativity, marketing and communications expertise and commercial insight to help clients build their brands, drive sales and be more successful**

# Our Vision

**To be the most admired creative  
communications agency in the UK**

# Striving For Excellence

**To achieve that goal we are creating a culture that fosters excellence**

# Seven Aspects Of Our Culture

1. Talent and values
2. High performance
3. Freedom and responsibility
4. Context not control
5. Highly aligned but loosely coupled
6. Rewards
7. Promotions and development





# Talent And Values



# Talent And Values

- To be the most admired creative communications consultancy in Britain, we hire exceptionally talented people who want to be the best they can be for our clients, for Beattie and for themselves
- Talent and attitude differentiate our people from others in our sector
- The values displayed by our people determine who is rewarded, promoted or respectfully let go

# Nine Qualities

**At Beattie we particularly value nine qualities and we reward and promote those who demonstrate them**

# 1. Judgement

- You make wise decisions on every aspect of our business from client care to people, technical, business development and creative
- You identify root causes and go beyond treating symptoms
- You think strategically and articulate what you are and what you are not trying to achieve
- You separate what must be done well now from what can be improved later

## 2. Two Way Communication

- **Instead of reacting fast, you listen first in order to better understand issues, problems and opportunities**
- **You are concise and articulate in speech and writing**
- **You treat people with respect, independent of their status, performance or disagreement with you**
- **You maintain calm poise in stressful situations**
- **You value the input and opinions of your colleagues**

# 3. Making An Impact

- You accomplish amazing amounts of important work
- You demonstrate consistently strong performance so colleagues can rely upon you
- You exhibit bias-to-action and avoid analysis-paralysis
- You use the Beattie Bible to help you to produce consistently great results



# 4. Continual Learning

- You learn rapidly, eagerly and constantly so that you are always at the top of your game
- You are knowledgeable about our business strategy, our market and our clients
- You contribute willingly, effectively and enthusiastically beyond your specialty

# 5. Innovation

- You re-conceptualise issues to discover practical solutions to difficult problems
- You challenge prevailing assumptions when warranted and suggest better approaches
- You come up with new creative ideas for our clients and our company
- You keep us nimble by minimising complexity and simplifying issues

# 6. Courage

- **You respectfully say what you think even if it is controversial or unpopular**
- **You take smart risks**
- **You question actions inconsistent with our values**
- **When problems arise, you never blame circumstances or colleagues. Instead you take responsibility and sort the issue**

# 7. Passion

- You inspire others with your thirst for excellence
- You treat everyone at Beattie as someone you can learn from
- You care intensely about our clients' success, Beattie's success and your own success
- You celebrate wins and are unbowed in defeat

# 8. Honesty

- You are known for your honesty, candour and directness
- You never over-promise and under-deliver, rather you under-promise and over-deliver
- You are non-political
- You only say things about colleagues you would say to their face
- You are quick to admit mistakes
- You do not lie, cheat, steal or tolerate those who do



# 9. Selflessness

- You seek what is best for our clients and Beattie, rather than best for yourself or your profit centre
- You are egoless when searching for the best ideas and you refuse to tolerate “not invented here” negativity
- You don’t steal the glory of others, rather you give praise where praise is due
- You make time to help colleagues
- You share information openly and proactively



# High Performance

# It's All About You

- **A great workplace is not about the building or smart technology**
- **You and your amazing colleagues are what make a great workplace**
- **At Beattie you should expect responsibility, learning, recognition and fulfilment**

# Recruiting

**When it comes to recruitment, we have one rule –  
always hire extraordinary people who are as good as  
or better than yourself**

# Hiring And Firing

- Like all of our rivals, we aim to hire well
- Unlike our rivals, our philosophy is simple – average performance results in us parting company
- We treat departing colleagues with understanding and respect and, where possible, assist them in finding alternative employment



# We're Like A Football Team

- We're like a professional football team. We play together as a team and we sign stars for every position so that we can win for our clients, our company and ourselves
- We hire the best people we can find and we coach them so that they quickly achieve their true potential
- We also speedily identify under-performers and under-achievers and we part company quickly

# Candour

- **Leaders have a duty to tell underperformers, they are not good enough to be with us. They either have to up their game or we recruit a star for that role**
- **No one is surprised when we decide to part company**
- **Candour, however, is not just a leader's responsibility. Team members should periodically ask their manager: "If I told you I was leaving, how hard would you try to change my mind?"**

# Loyalty Works Two Ways

- Loyalty is important
- People who have been stars and hit a bad patch, are given support to become stars again
- We expect the same in return – if Beattie hits a temporary bad patch, we expect our people to stick with us

# Hard Work

- We applaud hard work but sustained under-performance, despite lots of effort, will lead to us parting company
- Sustained extraordinary performance, despite the appearance of minimal effort, results in more responsibility and greater rewards

# Brilliant Jerks

- **Some of our rivals tolerate brilliant jerks**
- **For us, the cost to effective teamwork is too high**
- **Diverse styles are fine – as long as the person embraces our nine values – judgement, communication, impact, learning, innovation, courage, passion, honesty and selflessness**



# Popular Buffoons

- **Some of our rivals see popular buffoons as the glue that holds their agency together**
- **We see them in the same light as any underperformer – they have no place at Beattie, no matter their popularity**

# Creative Geniuses

- **Creativity and innovation go hand in hand**
- **But an idea on its own is worthless without innovative implementation**
- **That's why we prize colleagues who marry creative genius with brilliant delivery**

# Passionate Unicorns

**We make space for unicorns – passionate, driven people with the vision and energy to make improvements and bring about change**

# Leadership Team

- 1. The primary function of our leaders is to vigorously pursue the company's clear and shared vision**
- 2. The more talent we have, the more we can accomplish**
- 3. Leaders assist each other all the time**
- 4. Sink or swim behaviour is not tolerated**
- 5. We help each other to be great!**

# High Performance

- In procedural work, the best only need to be two times better than the average
- In creative work, the best need to be ten times better than the average
- That's why we place a huge premium on creativity and innovative brilliance

# We're Not Right For Everyone

- Many people love our culture. They thrive on the creative challenge, striving for excellence and continual evolution
- Some people value the mundane over challenging themselves to be the best they can be. They dislike our culture as a result
- We are getting better at attracting people who love us while helping others realise we are not right for them



# Freedom And Responsibility

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Responsible people thrive on freedom



# Qualities Of A Responsible Person

1. Self-motivating
2. Self-aware
3. Self-disciplined
4. Self-improving
5. Act like a leader
6. Don't wait to be told what to do
7. Pick up litter lying on the floor

# More Freedom

**To attract the best people, we increase employee freedom rather than limit it**

# Avoiding Chaos

- Most companies curtail freedom the bigger they get
- Growth increases complexity and can reduce talent density
- Process stops chaos but rigidity drives talent away
- We avoid chaos by:
  1. Putting in place innovative systems that evolve over time – The Beattie Bible
  2. Recruiting extraordinary rather than ordinary people

# Our Culture

- **We increase talent density faster than the increase in complexity so we continue to be a high performance culture**
- **We have a culture that rewards creativity, self-discipline, freedom and responsibility**

# Failure Is Acceptable

- We fix problems quickly – high performers make fewer errors and when they do, they learn from them
- Creativity is what gives us the edge over our rivals
- In industries such as manufacturing or medicine, preventing errors is cheaper than fixing them but not for us
- This is our model – Trial > Fail > Learn > Scale

# Expenses

- **Most companies have complex policies around what can be claimed for travel, accommodation, hospitality etc**
- **Our policy is simple – act in Beattie’s best interest**
- **Claim only what is necessary for work and what you would not spend unless you were working**
- **Travel as you would if you were using your own money**
- **Stay where you would if you were using your own money**

# Holidays

- We all work nights and weekends, responding to emails, taking phone calls and speaking to clients
- We don't track hours worked per day or per week, so why track days of holiday per year?
- We focus on what people get done, rather than how many days they work
- Just as we don't work 9am-5pm, we don't need a holiday policy for our senior people – account directors and above

# Workwear

The fewer policies the better, that's why our clothing policy is simply – wear what's appropriate



# Offices

- We have eight offices in the UK and each of our people work out of one office or a series of offices
- In addition, we have a work from anywhere policy for our senior people, giving them the flexibility to work from any location, including home

# Summary Of Freedom & Responsibility

- **As we grow, we minimise the rules**
- **We overcome chaos by recruiting more high performance people**
- **Flexibility is increasingly important to us**



# Context Not Control

# Inspire

To build a ship, don't drum up the people to gather wood, divide the work and give orders. Instead, teach them to yearn for the vast and endless sea.

*Antoine De Saint-Exupery,  
Author of The Little Prince*

# Why Context Is Important

**High performance people do better work if they understand the context**

# Star Managers

**Star managers figure out how to achieve great outcomes by setting the appropriate context, rather than by trying to control their people**

# Embrace Context Avoid Control

Provide the insight and understanding to enable sound decisions

## Embrace Context

- Strategy
- Metrics
- Assumptions
- Objectives
- Clearly defined roles
- Knowledge of the stakes
- Transparency around decision-making

## Avoid Control

- Top-down decision-making
- Management approval
- Committees
- Planning and process valued more than results

# First Look Inwards

- **When one of our talented people does something dumb, we don't blame them**
- **Instead, we ask ourselves what context we failed to set**
- **When we run up against a problem, we look in the mirror at ourselves rather than out of the window at others**
- **When we achieve success, we look out of the window to celebrate the triumph of our talented team rather than in the mirror to congratulate ourselves**



# Be Inspirational

- When we are tempted to “control” our people, we ask ourselves what context we could set instead
- Are we articulate enough in inspiring our goals and strategies?
- Do we encourage questions to help inspire our team to achieve our goals and strategies?

# The Importance Of Control

- Control is important when faced with client emergencies
- Control is important when someone is still learning their job
- Control is important when you have the wrong person in a role



**Highly Aligned But  
Loosely Coupled**

# Objective

**Our goal is to move fast and be flexible**

# Our Model

## Highly Aligned

- Strategy and goals are clear, specific and understood
- The Beattie Bible enables effective and consistent outputs
- A big investment in coaching and time to be transparent, communicative and perceptive

## Loosely Coupled

- Trust between groups and offices on tactics without approving each one – so we can move fast
- Leaders talk regularly to foster ad-hoc coordination
- Occasional post-mortems to increase alignment and identify opportunities to improve





# Rewards

# Our Thinking

- One extraordinary person gets more done and costs less than two ordinary people
- We endeavour to only have extraordinary employees

# Traditional Compensation Model

- In the traditional compensation model – a good year earns a pay rise
- The problem is employees can become materially under- or over-paid relative to the market, over time
- It results in under-paid employees switching agencies to take advantage of market-based pay while over-paid employees are trapped with their current employer
- Consistent market-based pay is a better model



# Beattie Compensation Model

- We pay each of our high performers more than anyone else is likely to
- We also pay them as much as a replacement would cost and as much as we would pay to keep them if they had a better offer from one of our rivals

# Four Package Tests

1. What is a person worth to Beattie?
2. What package could a person get elsewhere?
3. What would we pay for a replacement?
4. What would we pay to keep that person if they had a bigger offer from one of our rivals?

# Not Everyone Is Equal

- Lots of people have the title Account Director but not all Account Directors are equally effective
- The art of compensation is answering the Four Tests for each member of our team

# Top Dollar

- **At rival agencies when employees are hired, market compensation rates apply but at pay review time, they no longer do**
- **At Beattie, it always applies so that top of market compensation is re-established each year for high-performing employees**
- **When reviewing compensation, each of our directors apply the Four Tests for each member of their team**
- **We understand the market rate will be different for different jobs, different locations and different performances**

# Rewards Over Time

- For some people rewards will move up quickly because their value in the marketplace is moving up quickly
- Some people will stay flat because the value of their job in the marketplace has remained flat

# Our People Seldom Leave

- Our leaders are responsible for creating a great place to work and paying at the top end of the market
- Employees are free to leave us anytime but nearly everyone stays
- Employees stay because they are passionate about their work, they love working at Beattie and they are well rewarded

# No Ranking

- Unlike some agencies we do not rank our people “top 10%” and “bottom 10%”
- Healthy competition is encouraged
- We want all of our employees to be top 10% relative to the pool of global candidates
- Our people develop, encourage and help each other

# Our Promise

- **We always pay at the top of the market and your salary is dependent on your performance while bonuses reflect your contribution and the performance of the company**
- **We do not take internal parity into account. Personal contribution and external market value are what count**
- **That means we rarely counter with higher compensation when someone is approached by a rival agency because we have already moved financial rewards to a maximum for that individual**





# Promotions And Personal Development

# Personal Development

**We grow our people by giving them the opportunity to develop themselves, by surrounding them with extraordinary colleagues, by providing residential and on-the-job training, supporting them with the Beattie Bible and giving them big challenges to thrive on**

# Self-Improvement

- High performance people are self-improving through experience, observation, introspection, reading and discussion
- We help each other grow
- We are also very honest with each other and ourselves
- That's why we stress the importance of you taking responsibility for your own self-improvement

# That's Not My Job

- That's not my job is a sentiment that's alien to Beattie people
- No job is too menial for any member of our team
- We step in and do whatever is necessary to delight a client, meet a deadline or to support our colleagues

# People Development

- We place much emphasis on people development. We do all that we can to encourage our people to attain personal greatness
- We expect everyone who joins us to be a highly capable individual and quickly become a contributing team member
- Effective manager is the next rung on the ladder before the individual can become an effective leader
- Some people go on to become what we call exceptional leaders. It is these people who drive our culture of excellence

# Qualities Of An Exceptional Leader

- You have the courage to take the right decisions even if they make you unpopular
- You accept the blame and shoulder the responsibility of fixing it when things go wrong
- You put your people centre stage when things go right

# Conditions For Promotion

1. You have to be a superstar in your current role
2. You have to be an extraordinary role model of our culture and values

# Wishing Talent Well

- **Great companies keep their best talent**
- **But there may not be enough growth opportunities at a particular time for everyone**
- **In which case, we celebrate someone leaving us for a bigger job than we had available**
- **The Beattie door is always open for superstar returners**



# Towards Excellence

**We keep improving our culture as we grow and we continually strive to get better by seeking excellence**



# Keeping Score

# Keeping Score

- **Talented employees need great managers but how long they stay and how productive they are is determined by their relationship with their immediate supervisor**
- **Great managers create a culture in which each of our people emphatically answer yes to the following questions...**

# Yes Questions

1. Do I know what's expected of me at work?
2. Do I have the equipment I need to do my job?
3. Do I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day?
4. In the last week have I received recognition and praise for doing good work?
5. Does my manager/director care about me as a person?
6. Is there someone who encourages my development?

# More Yes Questions

7. Do my opinions count?
8. Does the Beattie mission make me feel my job is important?
9. Are my co-workers committed to producing high quality work?
10. In the last six months has someone talked to me about my progress?
11. In the last year have I had ample opportunity to learn and grow?

# People Stay When They Are:



Appreciated



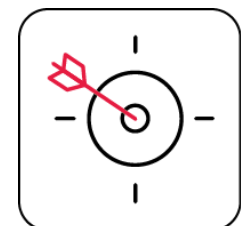
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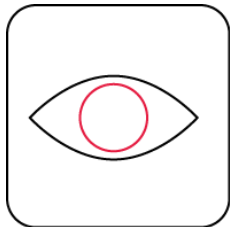
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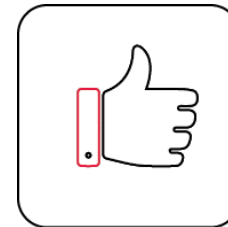
Sharing a  
Vision



Trusted



Involved



Praised



Empowered

# Leadership Aspirations

The worst leader is he who people despise. A good leader is he who people worship. A great leader is he who makes people say “We did it ourselves!”

*Lao Tzu, Tao Te Ching*

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