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Value-based corporate culture

- Format** 3-part process: 2-hour workshop with the management team, on-line survey and 1.5-hour workshop with the entire team.
- Location** Zurich
- Output**
- Foundation work for an Algrano Charter regarding form, content and implementation
 - Evaluation and interpretation of survey results
 - Focus discussions in groups along the three sections of the Algrano Charter, clusterin, prioritization and next steps
- Follow-up**
- Binding document with concrete implementation steps and assignments of roles
 - Elaboration of the final Algrano Charter

“Working with ethix has given us the perspective and expertise that is essential to the creation of such a charter. They were able to guide the process towards a concrete and applicable result.”

Christian Burri, co-founder Algrano.

Algrano operates a platform that connects coffee roasters directly with producers of green coffee beans. With its proprietary technology, Algrano is revolutionizing the coffee trade and setting new standards in terms of the efficiency of logistical and financial management in the traditional coffee trade. Through Algrano, coffee producers can establish their own brand and, as entrepreneurs, increase their earnings. At the same time, roasters receive complete transparency with regard to the supply chain and price.

It all began with an observation by co-founder Gilles Brunner in Brazil. What is needed is a suitable online tool for coffee producers to access global markets and make direct contact with roasters. Together with Christian Burri and Raphael Studer, a beta version was developed and presented to cooperatives in Brazil. In just a few years, Algrano successfully evolved from orders of a few jute bags to orders of full shipping containers. With over 800 registered business partners in 80 countries - most of them from Nicaragua, Brazil, Costa Rica and Peru - Algrano operates a platform that enables logistics and financial services for the global transport of coffee beans.

The Algrano team has grown rapidly and brings together diverse nationalities, languages and skills from different locations. As an innovative start-up company, Algrano is particularly dependent on good relationships and a strong corporate culture. A key factor in this context is the working atmosphere, which is characterized by shared values.

The strong ethical value base is the common denominator of the intrinsically motivated and goal-oriented team. Innovation is promoted when each member can develop through shared values. In order to clearly and bindingly record the values for new and existing employees, an Algrano Charter was developed in an interactive and participatory process. It briefly and concisely contains all values in narrative form, which were thematically divided into three sections: collective values (working climate, responsibility within the team), individual values (being a role model for others) and the creation of a normative self-image towards the world (vision).

Foundation work for a charter

In a first workshop, Algrano's management team sat down with ethix to define core values to guide the Algrano team. The first workshop therefore focused primarily on the values that employees want to follow internally, rather than on the ethical principles to be applied in their dealings with external stakeholders. Together we drew up a blueprint for a first draft charter. It made sense to divide the charter into three thematic sections: Which ethical values should guide the working climate? How should each individual behave in relation to the others? And what self-image do we want?

Online survey

Following the first workshop, an online survey was sent to each employee to record their agreement with the values defined beforehand. On a Likert scale it was possible to state anonymously how important they thought each respective value should be within the team (on a normative level), how much it is already acted out both within the team (collective level) and by themselves (individual level). In addition, suggestions for ethical values not yet mentioned could be recorded. These were included in the discussion in the second workshop. The results speak for a generally high approval of the values proposed by the management.

Focus discussions in the team

In a third step, ethix organized a second workshop with the entire Algrano team. The aim was on the one hand to present the charter (draft version) supported by the survey to the employees and on the other hand to develop concrete ideas for its implementation. A thematic section of the Charter was worked on in small groups, i.e. the ideas previously collected in the plenum were clustered, expanded, concretized and prioritized. This ensured broad support and as high a level of participation as possible. Finally, the ideas were presented and discussed in the plenum. The group agreed on one or two concrete implementation measures for each defined value.

Output

After the three-part design process of a values charter, the Algrano team has a broadly supported and effective core document in its hands, which forms the foundation of a value-based corporate culture. Furthermore, it also contains important methodological knowledge for future team meetings on questions of values and an internal handling of ethical questions. The implementation measures are each prepared as concrete instructions for action and then published internally, so that the division of roles is ultimately left to each employee according to his or her personal preference.

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About Engagement Migros

Engagement Migros supports pioneering projects in the midst of social change that break new ground and test future-oriented solutions. The impact-oriented funding approach combines financial support with coaching-like services in the pioneer lab. The development fund was founded in 2012 as a voluntary commitment by the companies of the Migros Group. With its independent approach, Engagement Migros supplements the funding activities of the Migros Culture Percentage.

More information: www.engagement-migros.ch