3505 The Values Conflict

People Book · https://kb.jeffreysummers.com/docs/3505-the-values-conflict/

Operator's Playbook | People arc — Conflict Audit cluster

Status: DRAFT

When stated values and actual behavior diverge, you have the most corrosive conflict in the building — and it is the one most operators never see coming.

Values conflicts are invisible until they are not. They build slowly, in the gap between what the operator says they stand for and what the operator actually does when the standard costs something. The cast watches. Every day they watch. They are not watching the poster on the wall. They are watching what happens when a difficult Guest is wrong and the operator apologizes to them anyway. They are watching what happens when a cast member raises a concern and the operator is too busy to address it. They are watching what happens when the budget is tight and the first thing cut is the thing the operator said was most important.

What you do is your values. What you say is aspiration. The cast learns the difference very quickly.

The values conflict surfaces as cynicism — the cast member who has heard the speech enough times to be able to deliver it back to you while believing none of it. Cynicism is not a personality type. It is a response to a pattern of misalignment. You created it.

The only resolution to a values conflict is alignment between stated values and actual behavior. Not a new set of stated values — more words will make it worse. Alignment. The operator who says Guest experience is the priority and then makes every decision through the lens of cost reduction does not need a better mission statement. They need to make different decisions.

When the cast sees alignment — when what the operator says matches what the operator does, consistently, at cost to themselves — the cynicism recedes. It does not disappear overnight. Trust that was eroded by misalignment is rebuilt slowly, through repeated evidence. But it is rebuilt. The cast that has watched an operator say one thing and do another will watch, carefully, when that operator begins doing what they said. Give them enough evidence. The culture will follow.