



*CORE VALUES - REPORT*

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APRIL 22, 2008

## *Values Review and Update*

On January 9, 2008, SEARCH Canada held a Faculty Team Strategic Planning Day. During this meeting participants were introduced to the new Core Value statements of SEARCH Canada. This introduction took the participants through the work completed by SEARCH's staff at their retreat in October 2007. The staff had been charged with reviewing the Core Values and producing a new, shorter list of the 4-5 values that they believe reflect and drive SEARCH Canada; the values that are lived every day and that the organization would hold to even if doing so meant ceasing business.

The Faculty Team was taken through an exercise where they were asked to provide their reaction and input on the new Core Values. As a result, a Values Committee of both faculty and staff was established to review the discussions, refine the values and their descriptors, and propose a final version. The Committee met three times, the values were reviewed again at a Staff Meeting, and were provided on line for feedback from all staff and faculty.

The consensus of these extensive discussions is reflected on the following pages. The *core value* is described through a *value statement*, and *descriptors* are provided for information which emerged from the discussions and provided the basis for identifying and describing the value.

### *Core Value: GROUNDBREAKING*

At SEARCH Canada, we regularly break new ground, undertaking new projects, building a solid foundation and improving upon what we have built. We are entrepreneurial and forward-looking, but also strategic in choosing new paths. As calculated and reflective risk takers, we set the bar high for ourselves, our clients and our partners. In the process of changing behavior and culture with our clients and internally, we continuously adapt to shifting circumstances.

#### **DESCRIPTORS:**

- Future-looking
- Calculated and reflective risk taking
- Setting the bar high
- Changing behaviour / culture
- Adaptive
- Strategic
- Building a foundation
- Improving what we have already built

### *Core Value: FOSTERING LEADERSHIP*

At SEARCH Canada we foster leadership in ourselves and in others. In our interactions with clients, partners, and team members, we strive to be catalysts for effective leadership. Sometimes, this means being a good follower. We may not have all of the knowledge at hand, but we know where to find it. Through our work, we provide a safe space to practice new leadership skills and increase confidence. We celebrate strength and unleash potential. Through the credibility we establish in our interactions, we are known as leaders in our field.

#### **DESCRIPTORS:**

- Reputation as the go-to people
- Quality in our efforts and our product delivery
- Known as leaders
- Credibility
- Catalyst for excellence
- Catalyst for effective leadership
- Being a good follower
- Increased confidence
- Unleashing potential
- Safe space to apply new leadership skills
- Cultivating confidence, champions and change
- Celebrating Strength
- Entrepreneurial

### ***Core Value: WORKING THROUGH COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS***

SEARCH Canada exists by the very nature of our collaborative relationships. In working with others, we acknowledge shared goals, respect the local context, and ensure that we are “doing with, rather than doing for.” We create synergies by taking a flexible, inclusive and equitable approach and by jointly developing roles to deliver quality results.

#### **DESCRIPTORS:**

- Partnerships, alliances, networks - “Doing with, rather than doing for”
- Mutually beneficial
- Acknowledgement of shared goals
- Synergy – “The whole is greater than the sum of its parts”
- Inclusive
- Respecting the local context
- Quality results
- Clear lines of authority, accountability and responsibility
- Common understanding of roles and responsibilities
- Equitable
- Flexibility in our approach

## *Core Value: LEARNING*

Learning is at the core of what we are as an organization. We provide supportive, nurturing, non-competitive environments that foster transformative learning experiences for developing enduring capacity. We take a creative, open-minded approach that values all ways of knowing, including experience and research, for the purpose of knowledge exchange and use. We focus on progressive development and support people and organizations move from where they are to where they can be.

### **DESCRIPTORS:**

- Transformative
- Enlightenment
- Non-competitive
- Developmental
- Knowledge exchange
- Nurturing
- Enduring capacity
- Supportive environment
- Respecting all sources of knowledge
- Egalitarian
- Inclusive
- Moving from where you are to where you can be
- Open mindedness
- Value experience as well as research

### *Core Value: RESOLVE / AFFECTING CHANGE*

At SEARCH Canada we resolve to do the right things right. We display a firm commitment to enabling positive, real change at an individual, organization and system level by creating opportunities for growth. We are excited by what we do. Our positive outlook and passion focus our energy, enable us to build on ideas and enjoy the results of our work.

#### **DESCRIPTORS:**

- Positive outlook
- Opportunities for personal and professional growth
- Exciting
- Passion
- Effervescent
- Building on ideas
- "It's about doing the right stuff right"
- "Firm determination"
- Committed to making change real
- Focused energy