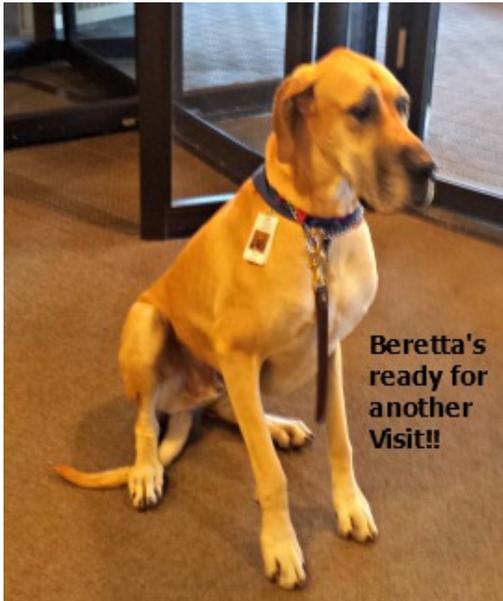


Building a Workplace Culture Where Success is a Way of Life

Advice from Beretta



In today's business world, the workplace culture can make or break the organization. People working together develop a shared set of beliefs and values. This perspective becomes the lens through which they view their workplace world.

After years of working as a business consultant and coach; after tutoring many leaders and integrating many business systems; we have found that the lessons to be best taught for building a successful workplace culture come from another very unique source. Our dog, Beretta, a Great Dane, certified Therapy Dog.

Walking the halls of hospitals, one can sense a growing crunch between handling more patients in less time and covering the rising costs in health care. Goals are developed based on P&L statements, and the expanded use of technology isn't cheap. The workplace culture risks losing sight of

the patient, as being a human element. Often, the patient is reduced to a number, a chart, and a set of statistics. A physician recently made the statement to us that completing the electronic chart requirements for each patient take so much time, that there is little time left for actual patient care.

We also witness this type of work crunch when Beretta joins us for business training workshops. It seems that businesses focus on each quarter's earnings and bottom-line dollars. The workplace culture is stretched thin and asked to buy into strategies it may not fully embrace. Here is what we are hearing from employees when we ask, "How are things going?" They respond with one of the following complaints.

- Work-related exhaustion. Too much work, too little time.
- Feelings of dissatisfaction. The work is unrewarding; the business focus is unrealistic; the work they are completing doesn't make a difference.
- De-personalized I-It attitude. All decisions are guided by revenue; workers are simply cogs in a wheel; there is no value placed on building relationships with staff members or clients.

What happens when a workplace culture does not buy into an organizational strategy that leadership wants to institute? Culture eats strategy for lunch. Yes, culture always wins. How can an organization create a positive workplace culture that successfully meets corporate goals? We suggest you follow Beretta's advice.

1. **Respect the whole person by taking time to know them.** This includes staff members, customers and colleagues. Beretta is a gentle Great Dane. He meets patients and spends time nudging them with his velvety muzzle, watching them with his dewy eyes, listening to them talk as he stands quietly by their side. Unhurried, he uses his

intuitive sense to understand when they need extra care and comfort. During each visit, he stops by the staffing areas as if to check in and give some bolster of support. The staff members have grown fond of Beretta and look forward to his visits, which offer them emotional support, especially if they have had a trying day.

2. **Build your teams wisely to take advantage of combining unique talents.** Beretta is a Great Dane who is strong, tall and watchful. However, he doesn't catch a ball in his mouth, and doesn't hunt with his nose. When chasing rabbits, he relies on help from his house mate, Bella, a Bassett Hound. She is low to the ground, has a terrific nose for smells and was bred to hunt rabbits. They make a great team. Each breed of dog is bred for specific capabilities and when working together, they accomplish a great deal more than they could working alone. People should follow the same advice.
3. **Make sure that everyone knows the purpose of your business.** Beretta has a job to do. When he visits hospitals, he is there with the sole purpose of offering emotional support. He knows that. He never has to be reminded. When organizations clearly define what they are doing and why they are doing it, the people involved have a clear sense of mission. If the workplace culture does not embrace the mission, the organization will not meet its goals. The workplace culture has to be aligned with the organization's overall purpose to be successful.
4. **Be gentle.** Beretta is a gentle giant. Although, quite large at 145 pounds, he doesn't push his weight around. He does not intrude where he is not wanted. He is not boisterous. He is gentle and sensitive to other people's needs. At times it is better to be quiet, listen, and take in your surroundings before making any rash decisions which could be detrimental to others. A gentle tone always reduces anger.
5. **Ask for help.** Beretta knows his way around the hospitals he visits. Yet, he still needs help. He has not mastered the large button that one can push and automatically open hallway doors. Although the button is located on the wall right at nose height for him, he patiently waits, glancing over at us to signify that he is ready for us to open the door for him. He doesn't mind asking for help. It makes him more of a team player, knowing that we all have certain roles to contribute to the welfare of the business of which we are a part.
6. **Stay curious.** There is always something new going on. Change is a constant. Dogs by their nature are curious creatures. Life is exciting for them, and every day is a new adventure. What happened yesterday is left behind. The new day offers new opportunities to shine and have fun. If the workplace culture embraced such an attitude, the office would be a great place to have a great time. And people would be happy, just like Beretta. Wouldn't it be wonderful if the world went to the dogs? They offer a lot of great ideas.

If you have questions about how Drs. Gene and Ann Gatty can help your organization improve the workplace culture, [contact us](#). Beretta also can accompany us to any training workshop!! Our dog models first-hand, how to humanely treat others. At our workshops we partner with organizations to simplify business systems and champion leadership strategies. Together we close the performance gap between formulating goals and achieving the desired results.