VALUES CULTURE

Field Guide 2025

MISSION

THE TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY SYSTEM PROVIDES LEADERSHIP AND SUPPORT SERVICES FOR TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY, TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER, ANGELO STATE UNIVERSITY, TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER EL PASO, AND MIDWESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY IN THE FULFILLMENT OF EACH COMPONENT INSTITUTION'S INDIVIDUAL MISSION.

Scan the QR Code on the left to access more resources about our Values Culture or visit texastech.edu/values-culture/resources.php
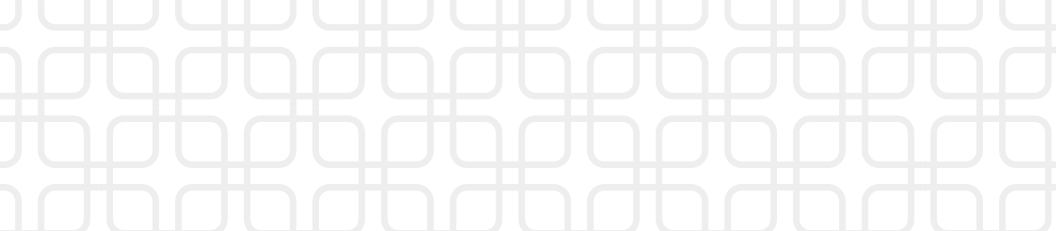
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A MESSAGE FROM CHANCELLOR TEDD L. MITCHELL, M.D.

Our journey to create a sustainable values-based culture at the Texas Tech University System Administration (TTU System Administration) began in November 2019. Our team gathered then to establish the values and behaviors we would strive to integrate into our daily lives and activities.

A lot has changed since 2019. We've welcomed new team members to the TTU System family, including those at Midwestern State University, which became our fifth institution in 2021. We've celebrated successes and navigated challenges, both of which have allowed us to improve and expand the important work we do every day. Through it all, our Shared Values have served as our compass.

Two things have not changed. The first is our focus on servant leadership, which connects us to our universities by integrating our values into the processes and programs we use to help them accomplish their missions. The second is our commitment to systemness, which gives us the opportunity to find synergies that make our efforts more efficient and impactful.

In January 2025, we gathered for Values 2.0 to discuss what was working and where we could improve our Values Culture. These discussions led to the addition of the value of Resilience, something that is much needed during periods of great change and amidst the constantly evolving landscape of higher education.

By committing to live our values-based culture, we have the ability to build a strong and sustainable TTU System Administration team that will continue to support our universities and each other at a remarkable level. This updated field guide serves as a tool to strengthen and grow our culture for years to come.

I want to thank our Values Ambassadors for their leadership and thank our entire TTU System Administration family for all you do for our system and for living our Shared Values.

Tedd L. Mitchell, M.D.
CHANCELLOR
TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

A MESSAGE FROM VALUES CULTURE EXECUTIVE SPONSOR JASON WEBER

"Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants?"

– Robert Greenleaf, "The Servant As A Leader"

Greenleaf's challenge invites us to think deeply about the impact we make each day. At its heart, it asks us to consider how our actions affect those around us — the people we serve, support, and work alongside.

At the Texas Tech University System, our Shared Values call us to do the same. When these values were first established, we asked ourselves what mattered most — what we stood for — and committed to those ideals together. We knew we would face challenges, but we also knew that shared values would give us the clarity to meet them.

Our values are not just statements; they are invitations. Invitations to be curious. To explore their meaning. To ask how each of us, in our unique roles, can bring them to life. There's no single way to do that — and that's the beauty of Greenleaf's test: it gives us space to grow, to ask questions, and to pursue alignment through reflection and learning.

In this second edition of our Shared Values Field Guide, you'll see that spirit of curiosity and collaboration in action. The updates reflect the input and insights of our Values Ambassadors — and many of you. The toolkit is designed to offer practical guidance for navigating real-world situations. And the digital companion site provides even more perspectives to help us grow and live out our shared commitment.

As we look ahead, we know new challenges and perspectives will emerge. Let this guide be a foundation — something you can return to for clarity, direction, and encouragement. But above all, remember: this is a journey. There will be missteps, and there will be growth. And that's what makes it meaningful.

Jason R. Weber, Ed.D.
**ASSOCIATE VICE CHANCELLOR
LEADER & CULTURE DEVELOPMENT**

VALUES CULTURE EXECUTIVE SPONSOR

TTU SYSTEM ADMINISTRATION SHARED VALUES

PEOPLE FIRST

Value and support those around us

- Acknowledge and respond to the needs of others
- Treat people with empathy and dignity
- Be considerate and respectful
- Cultivate growth and continuous learning


INTEGRITY

Commit to our Shared Values

- Be transparent in your purpose, expectations, and actions
- Honor commitments and responsibilities
- Lead with honesty, accountability, and fairness
- Have the courage to do what is right

COMMUNITY

Work together to achieve mutual success

- Foster meaningful connections
- Build relationships based on mutual trust and teamwork
- Engage purposefully with others
- Celebrate and enjoy each other's successes
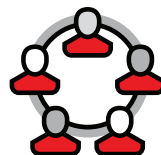
EXEMPLARY SERVICE
Exceed expectations

- Strive to do your best
- Lead and serve with humility
- Anticipate needs and provide visionary solutions
- Build a reputation of excellence

RESILIENCE
Persevere through obstacles, setbacks, and difficulties

- Show up every day ready to contribute to the team's success
- Adapt to change and focus on finding solutions
- Accept challenges as opportunities for growth
- Learn from mistakes and use them to improve

If you would like to learn more about our values, please reach out here: ttus.valuesculture@ttu.edu

SYSTEM OF VALUES

A system can be defined as, "a set of principles or procedures by which something is done." These principles steer the endeavor and provide a clear path forward.

For the TTU System Administration, the "something" that must be done is the fulfillment of our mission to support our universities' focus on the advancement of higher education, health care, research, and outreach. Having team members who are committed to allowing our Shared Values to be the principles by which they work, realize individual achievements, and reach institutional objectives is how we fulfill that mission.

This toolkit was developed to aid in that pursuit. It contains information from multiple resources to help team members grow and learn during their values journey. The toolkit is also designed to provide practical materials to support you in bringing our Shared Values to life.

Here is what we know — organizations don't create sustainable cultures. People do!

Sustainability occurs when the majority of the team members commit to living a life of shared values and influencing others around them to do the same.

Ultimately, it is up to us!

TOOLKIT CONTENTS

Scan the QR Code on the left to access more resources about our Values Culture or visit texastech.edu/values-culture/resources.php

1. CRUCIBLE MOMENTS

A crucible moment is a singular transformative experience that tests a person's commitment to their core values and can change the course of a person's life.

While we may try to avoid them, many of us will be faced with situations that require us to decide whether we will **CONFRONT** the situation, **MINIMIZE** the situation, or **IGNORE** the situation.

Let's look at an example that brings crucible moments to life:

Emily, a project manager, notices that Jake, a key team member, keeps missing deadlines, causing delays for the entire team.

CONFRONT — Emily meets with Jake to address the issue directly, asks about challenges he's facing, and works with him to find a solution.

MINIMIZE — Emily makes a casual comment in a meeting, hoping Jake will self-correct, but the issue persists.

IGNORE — Emily says nothing, assuming Jake will fix it on his own, but the team's frustration grows.

LET'S CONNECT CRUCIBLE MOMENTS TO OUR VALUES:

V1. PEOPLE FIRST – We learn and grow by confronting crucible moments.

V2. INTEGRITY – Doing so requires transparent and authentic communication.

V3. COMMUNITY – We cultivate collaboration and ultimately build trust.

V4. EXEMPLARY SERVICE – This builds our capability to handle even tougher challenges.

V5. RESILIENCE – Ultimately, we transform adversity into growth.

In Confronting A Crucible Moment, Each Of Us Has Three Choices:

1

CONFRONT — involves directly addressing the challenge with honesty and clarity. It requires courage to engage in difficult conversations, acknowledge the issue, and seek resolution rather than avoidance. Effective confrontation is not about aggression but about fostering understanding, accountability, and progress. Leaders who confront challenges head-on set a standard for transparency, build trust, and create opportunities for growth — both for themselves and their teams.

MINIMIZE — involves downplaying the issue to reduce tension or avoid discomfort. This can take the form of making light of the situation, offering vague reassurances, or addressing it superficially without fully engaging in the root cause. While minimizing may maintain short-term harmony, it often leaves underlying problems unresolved, allowing them to resurface later — potentially in a more damaging way. Leaders who minimize challenges risk eroding trust and missing opportunities for meaningful change.

2

IGNORE — involves completely avoiding or dismissing the issue, either out of fear, discomfort, or hope that it will resolve itself. While this may seem like the easiest path in the short term, it often allows problems to grow unchecked, leading to decreased morale, eroded trust, and larger consequences down the line. Leaders who ignore challenges risk fostering a culture of avoidance, where accountability and progress are hindered.

Adapted from "Crucibles of Leadership" by Robert J. Thomas

3

2. CRITICAL CONVERSATIONS

One of the most critical skills we can develop is the capability to conduct difficult conversations. According to author Kerry Patterson in his book, "Crucial Conversations," the nature of a conversation is crucial when it meets the following criteria:

OPINIONS VARY

EMOTIONS RUN STRONG

STAKES ARE HIGH

Examples of critical conversations include delivering bad news, giving constructive feedback, and confronting a behavioral issue and loss of trust.

We Each Have Three Options When Faced With Negative Behaviors From Another Person:

ACCEPT THE NEGATIVE BEHAVIOR — do nothing.

CHANGE OUR ENVIRONMENT — leave the team or help the other person leave.

CHALLENGE THE BEHAVIOR — work together toward the change we want to see.

There Are Seven Steps To Critical Conversations:

1 Identify the purpose

2 Compose the message

3 Deliver the message

4 Listen to understand

5 Create the pathway to a win-win resolution

6 Determine timeframe and deadlines

7 Provide on-going feedback and support

Typical Conversation:
"Steve, your results have not been satisfactory, and you need to get your work done on time. Nobody on the team trusts you."

Preferred Conversation:
"Steve, you know we are creating a values-based culture. I am concerned that you are losing trust with our team. When you make commitments and then fail to deliver results in the timeline we agreed upon, you cause other team members to pick up your slack and work outside of their strengths and priorities. We need you to carry your weight and deliver results on time in the areas where you are strong."

LET'S CONNECT CRITICAL CONVERSATIONS TO OUR VALUES:

V1. PEOPLE FIRST – Be compassionate and inspire growth.

V2. INTEGRITY – Be authentic and transparent.

V3. COMMUNITY – Foster trusted partnerships and teamwork.

V4. EXEMPLARY SERVICE – Encourage excellence.

V5. RESILIENCE – Cultivate a growth mindset and challenge respectfully.

3. ACCOUNTABILITY

ACCOUNTABILITY — the obligation of an individual or organization to account for its activities, accept responsibility for them, and to disclose the results in a transparent manner.

ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK — when we set the expectations, or expected performance, accountability becomes an opportunity to support others in closing the gap between what is expected and how they are performing.

EXPECTED PERFORMANCE

ACTUAL PERFORMANCE

GAP

LET'S CONNECT ACCOUNTABILITY TO OUR VALUES:

V1. PEOPLE FIRST – Build trust.

V2. INTEGRITY – Encourage honesty.

V3. COMMUNITY – Share plans, results, and resources.

V4. EXEMPLARY SERVICE – Motivate individuals to exceed expectations.

V5. RESILIENCE – Strengthen relationships.

ACCOUNTABILITY CONVERSATION PLANNER

CPR: As you think about the various facets of your problem, do you want to discuss Content, Pattern, or Relationship? To help you decide, ask yourself what you really want from the conversation.

My Discussion Topic: _____

_____

DESCRIBE THE CONCERN: Start by discussing the expectations versus what was observed.

EXPECTATION: "The expectations we agreed on included

_____ "

OBSERVED: "What I observed was _____

_____ "

GIVE THEM SPACE TO RESPOND: "Can you help me understand? What are your thoughts?"

Content: What was the violated expectation? Generally the here and now. / *Pattern:* What has been happening over time? / *Relationship:* What is their behavior doing to your relationship?

Key Values Behaviors: Communicate transparently. Be authentic in your purpose, expectations, and actions. Be compassionate, kind, and willing to serve.

HELPFUL TIP: Remember not to treat your feelings as good or bad. It is okay if you do not agree with someone. The focus should be to come to an understanding so you can identify a solution.

CREATE A PATHWAY TO SUCCESS:

Are there any barriers that I can help with? In what ways can we support each other?

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

"Are there any barriers standing in the way?"

"What changes can we make so we can move forward?"

"Is there anything we could have done differently?"

_____

_____

_____

Key Values Behaviors: Acknowledge and respond to the needs of others. Foster trusted partnerships and teamwork. Seek to understand.

HELPFUL TIP: Don't forget that you both bring different perspectives to the situation. Be willing to hear them and don't be afraid to ask clarifying questions such as: *"Tell me more about that…", "Why do you think that…?"*

Adapted from "Crucial Accountability" by Patterson, K., Grenny, J., Maxfield, D., McMillian, R., & Switzler, A.

MOVE TO ACTION:

Don't forget to end by determining who does what, by when, and how you will follow up.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

"How is the plan we created going? Is there anything I can do to support you?"

"What have you learned through this? Is there anything we could do differently?"

"Are there any obstacles you have identified that we can overcome?"

_____

_____

_____

Key Values Behaviors: Inspire people to grow and learn. Cultivate collaboration. Provide visionary services and solutions.

HELPFUL TIP: Remember, you cannot control others. But, you can influence them. Regardless of their response or reaction, your interaction with them is an opportunity to influence them to live our values.

4. BUILDING TRUST

Blanchard's **ABCD TRUST MODEL** provides a structured approach to building and maintaining trust in leadership and relationships. The model identifies four key elements:

ABLE, BELIEVABLE, CONNECTED, AND DEPENDABLE.

ABLE – refers to demonstrating competence and delivering results.

BELIEVABLE – emphasizes acting with integrity, honesty, and fairness.

CONNECTED – highlights the importance of showing care, empathy, and genuine concern for others.

DEPENDABLE – focuses on reliability, consistency, and following through on commitments.

By consistently practicing these four behaviors, leaders can establish, strengthen, and restore trust within their teams and organizations.

LET'S CONNECT TRUST TO OUR VALUES:

V1. PEOPLE FIRST – Admit when you're wrong, apologize quickly, and show humility.

V2. INTEGRITY – Say what you'll do, then do it.

V3. COMMUNITY – Care for others and show it.

V4. EXEMPLARY SERVICE – Establish a track record of getting the right things done, then improve.

V5. RESILIENCE – Create safe space for open dialogue.

How Do We Repair Trust When It Has Been Broken?

When a breach of trust occurs, there are three steps you can follow to help repair the relationship: ACKNOWLEDGE, APOLOGIZE, and ACT.

ACKNOWLEDGE
+ Assess which elements of trust were broken.
+ Admit your mistakes.
+ Invite reactions; listen with empathy.

APOLOGIZE
+ Express remorse.
+ Ask for a new start.
+ Share your hopes for restoring trust.

ACT
+ Identify actions to take.
+ Agree about how to move forward.
+ Set a check-in time.

Tips For An Effective Apology:

+ Ask your colleague if it's the right time.
+ Don't make excuses or shift blame.
+ Don't use conditional language (if, but, etc.) in your apology because it shifts responsibility to the other party.
+ Listen without judgment or rebuttal.

5. SERVANT LEADERSHIP

Robert Greenleaf's **SERVANT LEADERSHIP** philosophy emphasizes that the most effective leaders prioritize serving others — employees, teams, and communities — before themselves. Unlike traditional leadership, which focuses on power and authority, **SERVANT LEADERS** seek to uplift, develop, and empower those they lead.

Servant Leadership Best Test Reflection Questions:

+ How do I prioritize the needs of others in my leadership approach?
+ In what ways do I empower those I lead to reach their full potential?
+ How do I model humility and a willingness to serve in my daily leadership?
+ What feedback have I received that reflects my effectiveness as a servant leader?
+ How do I balance serving others while maintaining accountability and results?

LET'S CONNECT SERVANT LEADERSHIP TO OUR VALUES:

V1. PEOPLE FIRST – Focus on serving others rather than your own interests.

V2. INTEGRITY – Promote ethical conduct throughout.

V3. COMMUNITY – Create an environment where everyone feels valued and respected.

V4. EXEMPLARY SERVICE – Encourage active listening and empathy.

V5. RESILIENCE – Cultivate an atmosphere where team members are more engaged and better equipped.

Servant Leadership And Team Effectiveness Themes:

These six themes can be used by all to better understand what behaviors they should consider when working with others. These guiding themes focus on the main elements leaders should be considering when leading others. Reflection questions emerge to support how each theme can be applied personally and professionally.

PROVIDING ACCOUNTABILITY	Do I hold others accountable to ensure completion of work goals?
SUPPORTING AND RESOURCING	Do others have the support and resources needed to be successful in their roles?
ENGAGING IN HONEST SELF-EVALUATION	Have I examined my role before being critical of others?
FOSTERING COLLABORATION	Do I encourage and support collaboration?
COMMUNICATING WITH CLARITY	Do others understand what I am saying?
VALUING AND APPRECIATING	Do others know how much they are valued and appreciated?

Adapted from "Team Effectiveness" by Irving, J. A., & Longbotham, G. J.

6. ONE QUESTION EVERY LEADER SHOULD ASK

Great leaders are willing servants of people, organizations, and causes. Maintaining clarity is a challenge for any tested leader.

The next time you run into a challenge or conflict, consider the following question:

AM I WILLING

AT THIS TIME

TO MAKE THE INVESTMENT REQUIRED

TO MAKE A POSITIVE DIFFERENCE

ON THIS TOPIC?

AM I WILLING — implies we are exercising volition — taking responsibility — rather than surfing along the waves of inertia that otherwise rule our day.

AT THIS TIME — reminds us that we are operating in the present. Circumstances will differ later on, demanding a different response.

TO MAKE THE INVESTMENT REQUIRED — reminds us that responding to others is work — an expenditure of time, energy, and opportunity. And like any investment, our resources are finite.

TO MAKE A POSITIVE DIFFERENCE — places emphasis on the kinder, gentler side of our nature. It's a reminder that we can create a better us or a better world.

ON THIS TOPIC — focuses on the matter at hand. We can't solve every problem. The time we spend on topics where we can't make a positive difference is stolen from the topics where we can.

Adapted from "Servant Leadership" by Blanchard, K., & Broadwell, R.

OUR VALUES PLEDGE

We are on a journey to foster a values-based culture within the TTU System Administration. The compass rose lapel pin symbolizes our journey and reminds us and others which direction to head when the way is in doubt. The pin is available for all team members who choose to take a pledge and commit to our values-based culture.

To submit your pledge and receive a pin, please contact your department's Values Ambassador.

+ I pledge to hold myself accountable to live our values every day.

+ I pledge to allow others to hold me accountable to live our values.

+ I pledge to hold others accountable to live our values.

+ I pledge to intentionally work hard to recognize and celebrate others who live our values.

POWER OF THE PIN

This pin is a reminder of the Shared Values we are striving to carry out as a member of the TTU System Administration team.

Sometimes we feel like we are the only ones doing our part and wonder if anyone else is living our values. Every day, fellow TTU System Administration team members face challenges that make it tough to live our values. Seeing the pin may be just the thing they need to understand they are not alone and have someone willing to help them.

When we choose to wear this pin, we are showing our commitment to live our Shared Values: People First, Integrity, Community, Exemplary Service, and Resilience.

VALUES TEAMS

To help us uphold our Shared Values and implement them into our daily routines, the TTU System Administration has created Values Teams. The teams, consisting of representatives across the TTU System Administration offices, carry out initiatives to help move our culture forward and facilitate living our values.

Communications

Develop and implement effective internal policies and procedures that communicate the TTU System Administration's Values Culture to current, new, and prospective employees, partners, and constituents.

Engagement

Provide tools and opportunities for individuals to engage with and implement the TTU System Administration's Shared Values into their everyday lives. Periodically evaluate engagement as well as what it means for individuals to live our Shared Values.

Love Our Work

Develop initiatives to enhance and bolster our work community through building a Values Culture whereby TTU System Administration employees enjoy their work environment and feel known and appreciated by the TTU System Administration family.

Rewards and Recognition

Strengthen our culture of recognition and appreciation, as well as integrate Shared Values into our everyday behaviors. Develop and implement an organizational rewards and recognition program that reinforces the Shared Values and celebrates individuals who live those values.

If you would like to learn more about our values, please reach out here: ttus.valuesculture@ttu.edu

VALUES NOMINATIONS & CHALLENGE COIN PROCEDURE

A Values Hero is an individual that has been recognized by another individual for exhibiting the Texas Tech University System values.

Values Hero Nomination Process:

+ Navigate to the Nomination Form on the Values Culture website.

+ Enter the employees' name you want to nominate, select the value you want to nominate them for, and enter an explanation for how they have exhibited this value.

Criteria For Receiving A Challenge Coin:

+ An employee is nominated 2 times for the same value.

+ An employee is nominated for all 5 values.

+ An employee is nominated by someone outside of their department.

+ The Chancellor awards coins at his discretion.

When Will Challenge Coins Be Awarded:

+ The Rewards and Recognition team delivers Challenge Coins at the end of every month to those who have met the criteria during the month.

Scan the QR Code on the left to submit nominations.

SOURCES

This field guide contains information from thought leaders of a wide variety of topics. As part of our commitment to our Shared Values and personal development, we encourage you to read the source documents for topics of interest to you.

Quote (pg. 6):

Greenleaf, R. K. (1970). *The servant as leader.* Robert K. Greenleaf Publishing Center.

Crucible Moments:

Thomas, R. J. (2008). *Crucibles of leadership: How to learn from experience to become a great leader.* Harvard Business School Publishing Corporation.

Critical Conversations:

Patterson, K., Grenny, J., McMillan, R., & Switzler, A. (2002). *Crucial conversations: Tools for talking when stakes are high.* McGraw-Hill.

Accountability:

Patterson, K., Grenny, J., Maxfield, D., McMillan, R., & Switzler, A. (2013). *Crucial accountability: Tools for resolving violated expectations, broken commitments, and bad behavior.* McGraw-Hill.

Building Trust:

Blanchard, K., & McBride, R. (2003). *The one minute apology: A powerful way to make things better.* HarperCollins.

Servant Leadership:

Irving, J. A., & Longbotham, G. J. (2007). Team effectiveness and six essential servant leadership themes: A regression model based on items in the organizational leadership assessment. *International Journal of Leadership Studies, 2*(2), 98-113. https://www.regent.edu/journal/international-journal-of-leadership-studies/team-effectiveness/

One Question Every Leader Should Ask:

Blanchard, K., & Broadwell, R. (2018). *Servant leadership in action: How you can achieve great relationships and results.* Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.

NOTES

TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY SYSTEM™

VALUES CULTURE