

Hi Minnesota Zoo,

I am writing because Core Values and Culture are incredibly important to my organization. I trust that they are with you as well. I wanted to share what *Stewardship, Excellence with Integrity, Smart Fun, Engage to Inspire, and Diversity and Inclusion* mean to me.

**Stewardship.** As a young father, I have never been so in love with anything before. My son is everything to me. I love Minnesota. It's brutal Winters. It's amazing Falls. It's myriad of lakes, great and small. It's incredible wildlife. Honestly, the Minnesota Trail is one of my favorite exhibits in any zoo, and I have been to a lot! It's constantly on my mind how we can preserve the beauty of nature, not just for me, but for the son that I love. I am also a defender at heart. Pity rules my heart, and I want to protect the little guy. Especially those that cannot defend themselves. That is why I gravitate to protecting nature. To protect that which can't protect itself from Man's ever reaching industry.

**Excellence with Integrity.** Everything I do is ruled by what is right. I believe in this principle so much that it's a core value of my business: Utmost Integrity. Excellence is a by product of that. Who we are when no one is watching is what defines us. I choose to be one driven towards excellence. It's hard not to want to do our best for what we believe in.

**Smart Fun.** I love this one! I have that goofy dad side that sometimes slips out. Finding fun and smart ways to motivate my employees is what I live for. When we had an office, we would take a walk across the street every day at 3 PM to the local Holiday Station for snacks. The whole company soon rallied around "Holiday Time". Now as we pivoted to working from home, I use Amazon Groceries to send my employees a monthly care package in remembrance of a once great tradition.

**Engage to Inspire.** This is the secret to my leadership success. We must meet people where they are at. To engage with someone is to take a genuine interest in their lives and who they are as a person, even if it means getting down in the mud. Through that connection, we can truly inspire them to great things. I love this as a Core Value for a Zoo.

**Diversity and Inclusion.** My faith is a big proponent of who I am. I strongly believe in everyone's inherent worth. I also believe there is a difference between Equality and Equity. Equality is treating everyone equally. Equity is giving everyone what they need to succeed, even if it's different. I strongly believe in that. The world is neither fair nor equal. I have a servant's heart for the poor, the cast aside, the downtrodden, and the broken. Unfortunately, as a white male American, it's easy to be aloof of a lot of that. I work hard to remedy that and give back to those that are less fortunate than me. One big example is the Sudanese refugee family that my wife and I are currently partnering with, through Arrive Ministries. I hate saying *partner with*, as they are true friends of ours now.