Welcome to lesson three of our module on AI Business Strategy. Today we'll be discussing organizational core values. So what do we mean by core values? **Core values** are the guiding light in every decision that every member of your organization makes from the CEO to the most junior employee.

Anytime anyone in your organization is not sure on what is the right next step to take, what is the plan to make, how to appropriately respond to a situation, they can bring themselves back around to the core values and use that as a guide for making those decisions.

How do we use core values?

We use them in **hiring and firing**. In the recruitment process, ideally you will have sort of a sideways way of finding out if someone shares your core values, for example, you wouldn't say, "here's our core values. Do you agree? Do you share these core values?" You would say it more in a way that will help you identify whether they share your core values.

So for example, if you have a core value of lifelong learning. And in your interview process, you ask your interviewee "what book are you reading right now? Or what's the last course you took?" And depending on their response, you'll learn whether or not they share that core value.

Of course, you can continue to dig as deep as you want to, to make sure that you are clear. But that's one way that you can use core values as sort of a filter in your hiring process. Likewise core values are often used as a guide for firing as well. Or for potentially moving an employee to a different position.

For example, During your quarterly conversations or your reviews with your direct reports, you should always be coming back around to the core values and discussing how they exemplify those core values or how they show that they do or do not share those core values with the work that they're doing within the organization.
And if it's something that is not something that they can sort of bring themselves around to, and find a way to demonstrate authentically within the organization, then it's important to really seriously consider whether they're a good fit.

Vendor relationships, likewise, you can ask them questions to kind of see whether you're on the same page with your core values, whether they share the same perspective that you do. You can look at their customer reviews or speak with other organizations that have worked with them to see what their perspective is on those particular vendors. You can use your core values to determine whether or not to bring on **Investors.**

And if you do, who to be working with there, any **Strategic Decisions** that you make, the core values should be at the center of your ignition process, all your quarterly planning sessions, your annual sessions, any major decision that is made needs to be run through the filter of your core values to confirm that it really is true to who you are at the center of your organization.

And it should **guide team member decisions**. So being really clear about your core values and providing that clarity to your team members gives them a tool to use when they're not really sure what the next best step should take or how to respond to a customer request. Once everyone is really on the same page of what the core values are and what that means, it provides your team members with much more autonomy because they can be sure that the decision that they're making is the decision that Essentially anyone within your organization would make.

Examples of Weak Core Values

So core values have kind of become a buzzword in the corporate world. And there are quite a few that you will see repeated pretty often. They're basically the low hanging fruit that in my opinion any organization and any individual should have anyway. Watch for those sorts of words that might mean something to you, like integrity might be very important to you or excellence, all of these things are certainly relevant, but find a way to make it deeper, make it more core and less of a just a given.

Keep Core Values Front and Center

Shout outs are a great tool. This is something that you can do if you have a shared communication channel like Slack, or if you have all hands meetings or departmental meetings. It just provides as many opportunities as you can, wherever you see them, where a person within your organization can give a shout out to someone else in your organization and this is how they really demonstrate that they're living that particular core value.

Imagery. So later on in this module, I will be interviewing Will Scott, who has done a lot of work around imagery and core values. And we'll dig into that a little bit more. But essentially as much as you can keep it helps to keep images or posters or signs just around your office or in your shared environment to help people remember what your core values are and what they mean to you in the organization.

If you have an internal **newsletter,** you can have a corner where people have a quote, perhaps that shares what a particular core value means to them. You can have your staff take turns sharing that information within **company meetings.**

For example, on your weeklies, you could have five minutes where people just give a core value shout out to other people on the call or in the room, or an all hands meeting have a larger portion for shout outs or digging a little deeper into one particular core value and what it means.

To you as a leader or providing opportunities to other staff people to share what it means, what a particular core value means for them.

Verbal reminders essentially that opportunity to grab someone in the hall and say, "Hey, what are our core values?" Or if a direct report comes to you and with a problem as much as you can, you can bring it back around to the core value.

Well, if you consider this core value that we have, how do you think you can answer that or solve that problem? Keeping that in mind.

So that's it for our core values. Up next, Chris Daigle will be teaching about marketing strategy. Thank you so much.