

CASE STUDY

dermalogica



Candice Gardner, Education Manager- Digital and Content, UK & Republic of Ireland // Dermalogica

Dermalogica is a company rooted in education. Long before the products were launched and the company had grown to the size it is today, the seeds of company values were sown within the founders' ideology and beliefs. These organically infiltrated into the company as it grew.

We spoke to them about how these values have evolved over time and the challenges that they've faced in aligning the values of so many different people, across the world, in over 100 countries and cultures.

The Challenge

Dermalogica's core values of education, personalisation and human touch have always been part of the culture, from the inception of the brand. Intentionally and proactively reflecting on these company values as the brand grew globally was important so that they could be formalised. Failing to do so would risk the values being diluted, or lost altogether.

The Solution

Distilling the brand culture and ethos to the three guiding principles could help steer activities and decision-making across the organisation and within multiple cultures, languages and standards of practice.

Dermalogica product and service development, commercial activities and programmes and customer service would be led with these values at the centre – like a compass to keep the company on course.

Always looking to upskill and advance knowledge with education, providing personalised solutions, and delivering the brand offering with authenticity and positive intention, the element of 'human touch', sets the company and service standard. These principles seem appropriate especially considering that the group is largely concerned with skincare and partnering with educators and therapists.

To ensure that these values are present at all levels of the organisation, the induction and onboarding of all corporate and skin therapist staff includes exploration and familiarisation with the company values at an individual level. Understanding how within each role the values can be embodied helps staff to live the values.

Values are intentionally reinforced through consistent mentoring and at regular "tribe talk meetings", monthly check-ins where all strategies and activities are shared, and projects are aligned to the guiding principles.

For example, through an outlier customer experience programme launched in 2020, Dermalogica has made their values easy to remember and therefore fully accessible through the acronym CLEAR - fitting, for a skincare organisation.

Values change the way that people feel about working at a Dermalogica, for the better.

- C - Connect:** Authentic emotional connections develop positive working relationships and builds trust – speaking to the human connection principle.
- L - Learn:** Embrace and share knowledge - embodies the principle of education.
- E - Experience:** Elevate the experience through personalisation
- A - Advise:** Bring education and personalisation together with powerful solutions.
- R - Reconnect:** Return once again to the element of human touch, maintaining a connection between the corporation and its affiliate partners and ultimately, with the end user / customer.

Speaking of Dermalogica's values, Candice Gardner says,

“Beauty can be seen, at times, as a little bit superficial, so for us, it's really important that we don't exploit people's insecurities. It is the reason we focus on skin health and education, but also prioritise a personalised approach with empathy and humanity. Commerciality can sometimes override authenticity and values because business is trying to be successful at driving revenue. For Dermalogica, we strive to be authentic and value led in our interactions. Integrity is essential and that's part of the human touch connection which is so important to our brand identity. How we use our voice, our intention and our collective humanity shapes our brand and determines how we operate as whole.”

Gardner points out that some of the challenges faced when instilling values across all levels of a corporation the size of Dermalogica include helping individuals understand how to translate those values to their roles specifically. With a diversity of people from finance to therapists to marketers and strategists, the question of how to embody company values, while retaining individual talent and creativity and personal beliefs, remains the greatest challenge, with a very real corporate reward when achieved.

Gardner describes the importance of company values being embodied throughout the company, saying that any organisation would want to have engaged staff that drive the business forward through active and aligned participation. When you foster that kind of organisational engagement, you also foster staff unity and commitment.

“If everyone is working to the same purpose and same values, everyone is moving in the same direction and that is where success comes from,” says Gardner. The result is not just a few individuals upholding the company's well-being, but an entire corporation of individuals who feel that they are making a valuable contribution, and one that is greater than the 'bottom line.' It changes the way that people feel about working at a place, for the better.

In summary, our study of Dermalogica's use of values in leadership shows us:

1. Instilling company values is intentional
2. Company values do not infringe on personal beliefs
3. Positive company values enhance creativity and talent
4. Strong company values invite collaboration
5. Celebration of individual and collaborative success enforces values

