

Listen to someone working for EDF, a French electricity company, talking about the values held by his company.

Optional exercise (The answers are at the bottom of the page).

Listen and identify which of the following values he talks about.

- | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. integrity | 6. innovation | 10. excellence |
| 2. tolerance | 7. fun | 11. quality |
| 3. solidarity | 8. respect for the environment | 12. performance |
| 4. respect for people | | |
| 5. diversity | 9. teamwork | |

Interviewer: Can you tell me about the five values that EDF has? For a start do you know what they are?

Worker: Yes, I do. I first found about them when I came for my interview twelve years ago. They've been slightly updated since then but the main ideas have stayed the same. Today they are; respect for people, respect for the environment, performance, solidarity and integrity.

Interviewer: And how do these values affect the way people work?

Worker: Well because EDF is a huge company they affect some people more than others but some of them are common to everyone. Respect for people for example can be applied to all EDF workers. In meetings say, everybody listens to each other, everyone can speak and say what he thinks. It's very common for people to shake hands in the morning to say hello and we tend to use the informal form of address with most people. At the moment lots of the offices in France are being adapted for wheelchair access because of equal opportunities which is a really good thing.

Interviewer: What about the other values?

Worker: I work in the nuclear sector so the respect of the environment is obviously very important. We are regularly audited and safety is the basis of our approach to the environment and the actual conception of nuclear power plants. So on a large scale we do everything to prevent radioactive products being dispersed. On a smaller scale, in our offices we separate our waste and recycle paper, metal and plastic.

Interviewer: It all sound too good to be true!

Worker: Well it's really important to make sure everything we do is safe which is why we have to follow some very strict rules.

Interviewer: What about performance?

Worker: It's getting much better. Up until recently we monopolised the electricity industry in France which meant we were sure to have the same clients. But now it's an open market and so we have to really perform well to keep our clients. On an individual level, there is a new system of performance related pay that is going to be put into place next year. This should really motivate all employees to perform well.

Interviewer: How do solidarity and integrity affect you personally?

Worker: They don't really. Although as a company we have a lot of responsibilities when there are extreme weather conditions. Our technicians fix the electricity grid at any time of the day or night. This happened when there were the bad storms in 1999 in France, everyone pulled together and EDF employees worked twenty-four hours a day to restore electricity. As for integrity, we work a lot with subcontractors and it's very important for us not to be influenced by bribes. Now when contracts are negotiated there are always at least two people; one technician and one sales consultant who actually negotiates the contract. EDF is a company with high standards and I guess this motivates me to do well.

Answers: 1. integrity, 3. solidarity, 4. respect for people, 8. respect for the environment, 12. performance