

# Aligning values with employer can lead to promotion, suggests new study

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Employees looking to move up within their organization should get on board with the goals and values of their employer, according to new research from Washington University in St. Louis.

The study, "Status and the True Believer: The Impact of Psychological Contracts on Social Status Attributions of Friendship and Influence," shows that employees who are "true believers" in the mission of their organization gain more influence in the company, while those who are not as invested in the company's mission become pushed to the periphery.

"In mission-driven companies—companies like Whole Foods Market or REI—the people who emerge as leaders are more than just nice guys. They are the ones who embrace the mission and values of the organization," says Stuart Bunderson, PhD, the George and Carol Bauer Professor of Organizational Ethics & Governance at Olin Business School and co-author of the study.

"But the belief has to be real," Bunderson says "Faking a value system that aligns with your employer won't work."

The researchers tested their hypotheses in two organizations, a for-profit business and a not-for-profit service organization that explicitly embrace a social cause as part of their missions. They found that positions of [status](#) and influence more often went to the "[true](#) believers."

The study is scheduled to appear in the management journal

*Organization Science*

**More information:** [orgsci.journal.informs.org/con ...  
3.0827.full.pdf+html](https://orgsci.journal.informs.org/con ... 3.0827.full.pdf+html)

Provided by Washington University in St. Louis

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