

them with someone from their home country). Before long they are speaking English and getting along well. Many of the New Americans speak several languages, including their home country language and English.”

The countries represented at Cardinal IG during the past few years include Albania, Algeria, Bosnia, Burundi, Central African Republic, Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Haiti, Iraq, Iran, Kenya, Liberia, Macedonia, Nigeria, Romania, Russia, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Vietnam, and the United States. Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota is the primary organization for bringing refugees into the area. It contracts with the U.S. government in relocating and supporting new refugees. Most of these New Americans came to the United States through a long journey consisting of war, violence, poverty, and persecution.

In a recent article for the Lutheran Social Services publication, *The Messenger*, Meg Luther Lindholm describes the New Americans at Cardinal IG. “The stories that people were telling me were so interesting and so strong. A lot of the people that I have met and interviewed for this project could have films made about their lives. They are dramatic. They have been through that kind of experience where they have just had to use their wits to survive from day-to-day. And they have lost so much.” Some examples include the following:

A young Cardinal IG worker from Somalia is a full-time student with a wife and children. He was orphaned at the age of 14 when thugs broke into his family’s home. His father didn’t have anything for them to steal because they had been robbed earlier in the week. This enraged the thugs, and they killed both of his parents. He fled and eventually made it to the United States and Fargo. Despite all the possible reasons for feeling down and sorry for himself, he has a very positive outlook.

A husband and wife from Sudan fled their homes with only the clothes on their backs when northern Sudanese army troops came into their town and started killing villagers and looting homes. They were separated from their son who had to stay with his grandmother until being reunited with his parents several years later. The husband is now employed at Cardinal IG, and the son is a student at North Dakota State University.

One of Cardinal IG’s team leaders is from northwest Bosnia. In 1991, when he was 20 years old, civil war broke out. Serbs put him into slave labor for several years. He was caught in the fighting, was shot in the back, and spent 2½ months in a hospital. He was able to escape by crossing over to Croatia and lived in a refugee camp for several years. He later came to the United States and found his way to Fargo through the refugee program.

Pinder’s leadership style breaks through communication and cultural barriers through the universal language of love, respect, and authenticity. By knowing his employees, their families, and their stories, he honors their dignity and makes it a powerful force in the culture and success of “the Big Story.”

CONCLUSION

How effective is the Cardinal IG plant in Fargo? It excels at being a great company, not just a good company. From the research collected, success is evident in several areas. It accomplishes its mission well. The financial performance of the company as the top performer within the organization of 29 different plants is evidence of this along with the overall

success of the corporation—Cardinal Glass Industries Inc., It is an exceptional plant in taking care of its employees. This is evident in their high retention rate, profit-sharing plan, recognition of excellence, exceptional team members, immaculately clean plant, and the shared values of a diverse workforce.

As we examine the company from a holistic and systems perspective, it is evident many of the elements of the organization are interrelated. They fit together to achieve a shared goal—a great example of an organization “designed” to accomplish its purpose. The elements that make this happen are the strength of its leadership, specific goals and objectives, a team-based structure, strong values and culture, and intentional and disciplined procedures throughout the organization. Cardinal’s success cannot be attributed to any one factor but rather the alignment of all its parts in support of its mission.

The Cardinal IG plant also exemplifies ethical leadership. Under Pinder’s direction, Cardinal employees are encouraged to pursue the company vision and participate in the firm’s ethical corporate culture. The firm developed solid principles that are non-negotiable, such as respect for employees. The firm lives and breathes its values. For instance, 50 percent of the plant’s employees are New Americans, demonstrating the firm’s strong commitment toward its value of diversity. Additionally, all employees are treated with respect and dignity, reiterating the fact the company values their contributions. Cardinal’s strong ethical leadership enables the company to thrive while providing it with the opportunity to become a positive force in its community.

QUESTIONS

1. How has David Pinder embraced ethical leadership to create an ethical culture at Cardinal IG?
2. How has Cardinal’s principles and values shaped the ethical behavior of employees?
3. How has Cardinal empowered its employees to practice responsible and accountable leadership?

SOURCES

The above case study was based on information from the Cardinal IG website, www.cardinalcorp.com, retrieved on April 16, 2011; interviews with Dave Pinder, plant manager of Cardinal IG Fargo, on March 10, 2011, and April 7, 2011; interview with Mike Arntson, Cardinal IG Fargo, on April 11, 2012; a presentation by Dave Pinder at the Center for Ethical Leadership, Concordia College, Moorhead, Minnesota, on November 1, 2002; an article from *Open Magazine*, Issue 3, Winter 2007, by Jodee Bock, titled “From Westpoint to Fargo: A Leaders Journey,” Fargo, ND; an article in the Lutheran Social Services publication *The Messenger*, Winter 2005, titled “Finding common ground”; interviews with Yasmeen Frost and Darci Asche, Lutheran Social Services, New American employment, on May 2, 2011; the book mentioned in the above case was by Jim Collins, “*Good To Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap ... and Others Don’t*” (2001), New York: Harper Collins; the management model used as the framework for the article was by Cavalari and Obloj, “*Management Systems*” (1993), Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.