

# Mike Robbins' Five Ingredients for a Great Company Culture

**Shay Hughes** | Lead From Within

A few weeks ago Hughes Marino was honored to host our fantastic business coach and one of our favorite people, Mike Robbins, to our office for a special client appreciation event.

Mike has been working with us for years in helping us nurture the amazing company culture we're fortunate to experience at Hughes Marino. On occasion we've opened our doors to introduce Mike to our loyal clients and close friends so that they can experience some of the magic he has brought to our team.

Mike opened with a personal story from his own experience about not fully appreciating what he had when he was a young man. Although he'd been pursued by one of the nation's most celebrated MLB teams in high school, he opted instead to attend Stanford before heading for a career as a professional baseball player. After experiencing great success in college and winning the College World Series, within just a few years of going pro Mike had thrown out his pitching arm, effectively

ending his chances of a lasting career as a professional baseball player.

Yet losing the opportunity to pursue a career in baseball was nothing compared to the regret he felt about not appreciating the experience while it was happening. "I was always looking for what was next, rather than appreciating what I had," he said candidly.

Fortunately, Mike used this experience to find a new passion—chiefly in helping others to understand how vital it is to appreciate what you have when you have it. (In Hughes Marino slang, that means "enjoying the journey.")

He next explained why he was drawn to work with Hughes Marino, even though we're a relatively small company in comparison to some of the Fortune 500 companies, professional sports teams, and tech giants he also coaches.

As he told our audience, the reason we first reached out to Mike wasn't because we wanted our team to be successful in business, but because we wanted our team to be successful in life. We wanted them to be successful Monday through Friday and we wanted them to live happy, fulfilling lives outside of the office as well. Apparently our vision resonated with Mike, and we've been honored to call him our business coach ever since.

We knew we had found the perfect



*Shay Hughes, Chief Operating Officer and Owner, Hughes Marino.*

person to help guide us when Mike began talking about how a strong company culture is unequivocally the key to success for individual members, and to the success of the company itself.

As Mike explained, a strong company culture requires:

## Chemistry

Teams aren't successful because all of the team members are strong. Teams are



successful because they have chemistry. Chemistry requires a concerted effort to build lasting relationships based on trust, not just with clients, but with our entire team at Hughes Marino.

## Recognition

Companies with a strong culture recognize their members for their efforts and achievements. This helps to build a culture wherein team members feel like they are being cheered on and celebrated for their victories. When we look for the good, we find it.

## High Expectations and High Nurturance

Mike shared that all companies with a strong culture are dedicated to excellence, meaning that they expect a lot from their team members. Settling for mediocrity will not help individuals to grow, nor will it help companies to thrive. Having a healthy dose of high expectations, while also supplying the high nurturance needed to achieve them is indispensable in creating a strong company culture.

## Plenty of Appreciation

Appreciation is not the same as recognition. Mike has compiled data from years of studies showing that companies where employees and teams feel recognized are 23% more productive than companies where they do not feel recognized. However, it is appreciation of clients and colleagues that really brings out the most in teams and in individuals. Teams that feel truly appreciated – not just recognized – are 40% more productive.

## Authenticity as Key to Appreciation

Concluding the event, Mike explained that none of the above (chemistry, recognition, high expectations, high nurturance, and appreciation) can even exist without authenticity at the very root of everything a company does.

So where does authenticity come from? It comes from being genuine, being real, being reliable, and being trustworthy, and that means it needs to come from the heart. In fact, one definition of ‘authentic’ is ‘not false,

or copied.’ Without authenticity, which at times means also being vulnerable, there’s little hope for a strong company culture, and virtually no hope for a strong, lasting company.

I know I speak for everyone at Hughes Marino when I say that we deeply appreciate our clients, and we hope that each and every one who joined us for Mike’s presentation enjoyed the inspiring message he shared.

We look forward to many years of continuing to show our appreciation to our clients, teammates, friends, families, and communities through adhering to our core values, including delivering excellence in all we do, building lasting relationships based on trust, and always being authentic, grateful and humble. □

*Shay Hughes is chief operating officer and owner of Hughes Marino, an award-winning California commercial real estate company specializing in tenant representation and building purchases with offices in Los Angeles, Orange County, Inland Empire, San Francisco, Silicon Valley and San Diego. Shay writes about business leadership and company culture on her blog, Lead from Within. Contact Shay at [shay@hughesmarino.com](mailto:shay@hughesmarino.com) or 1-844-NO-CONFLICT to learn more.*