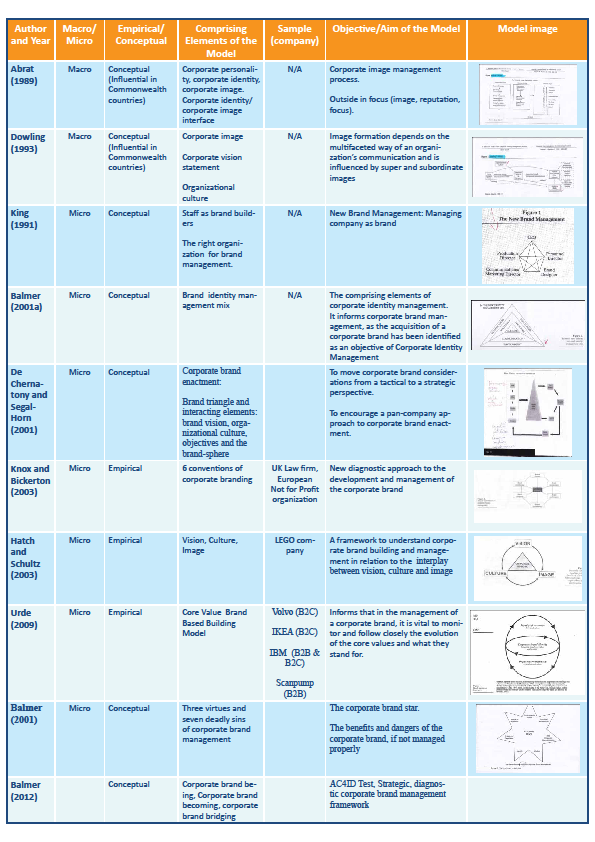
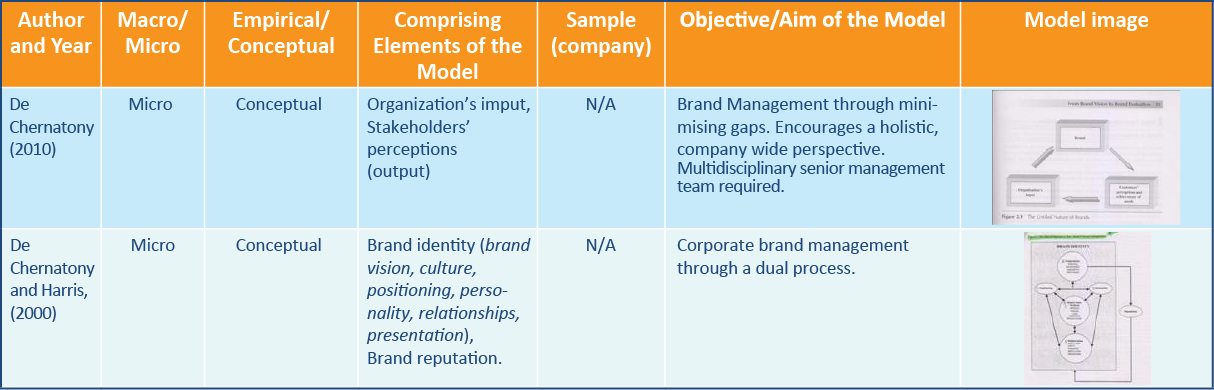
**Supplementary Material A: Corporate brand development/management models/frameworks**

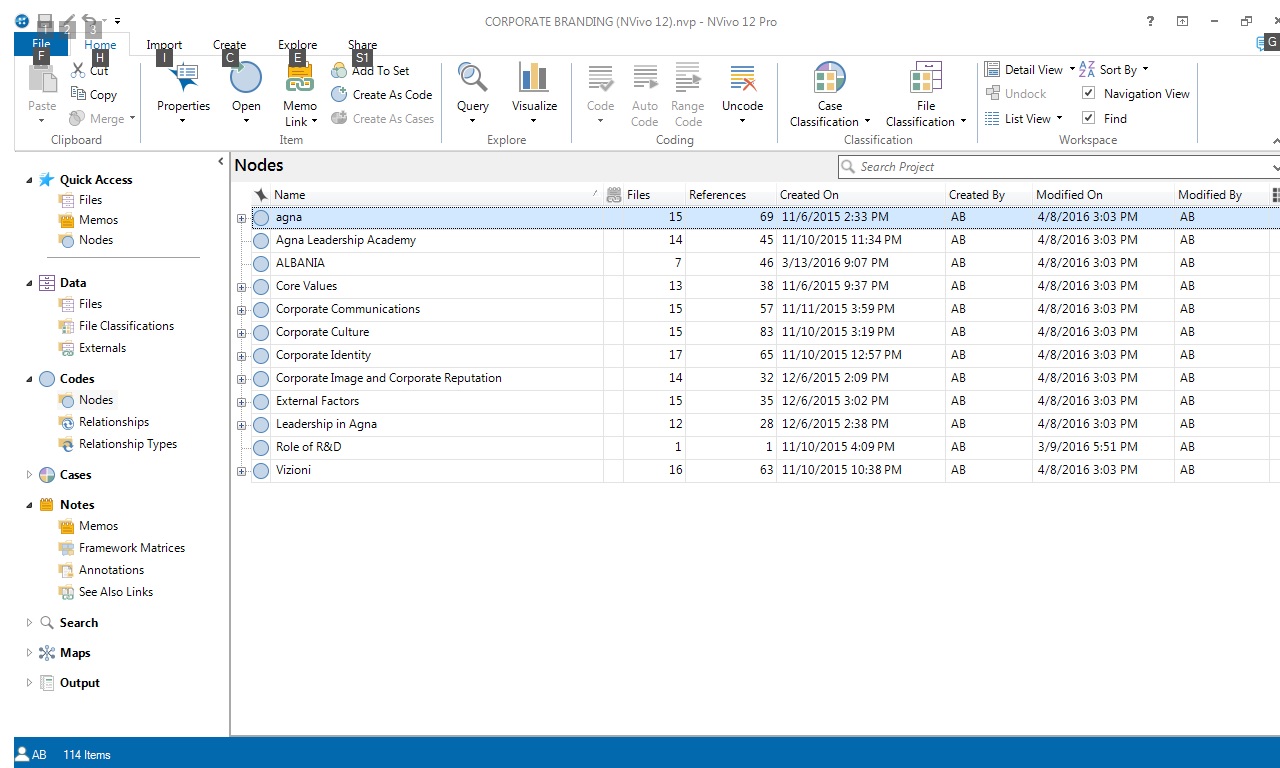




**Supplementary Material B:** **Illustration of themes generating process-Data Analysis: Interviews, Documentation, Observation; Matrixes.**

**1. Interview Analysis**

* **Example of first-level codes generated from the interview transcripts, through NVivo**



* **Example of second-level manual/computer coding of interview transcripts-core values construct**

Res.4: The process **(PROCESS**) of identifying the values was a need for the business, in order to define which would be the road, the way, the process or the way of taking decisions; on the basis of what to take the decisions (**DECISION MAKING CRITERIA**). When we would discuss about the values at that time, we could understand what one should have in order to be part of this organization (**MEMBERSHIP CARD**), what was the thought of the board of shareholders, or the philosophy of this business (**PHILOSOPHY OF DOING BUSINESS).** One could ask himself, do I have these values? Am I part of these values? And you could always do a kind of analysis: do I have these values that are discussed, or not? Do I fit to them? Is my place here or not? (**MEMBERSHIP CARD**). All these values that came up, which are values that the business needs nowadays, were defined and came up from the voting, but also from what Agna truly believed, because the values can come up through the voting process, but the main thing is what the people that lead the business believe, and which is the way to do business **(CORPORATE CHOICE).** This is very important. Once you see that these values fit to you, you certainly feel good, relaxed, and have more clarity from that moment and on. If we had some doubts before in doing things, or taking decisions, now we have more clarity, because everything has to be adapted to these values (**DECISION MAKING**) that we have agreed upon. Once it is clear to you that you should act with integrity, hard work, professionalism and dedication, thus, you know what you are asked to do, and you know what values you should have in order to be suitable for the business. If you do not have them, you will be out (**VALUES LIKE MEMBERSHIP CARD**).

Res.4: No, I do not think so, because the values are some assets, or some values that the company decides to have for its proper functioning within the company, for how the decisions are taken within the company, are the pillars as to which the company progresses **(CORPORATE CHOICE/DECISION MAKING CRITERIA).**

* **Example of sub-themes generated as per each respondent-core values construct**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| CORE VALUES CONSTRUCT | |
| RES. 5 | |
| SUB-THEMES | |
|  | EFFORTS TO LIVE THE VALUES |
|  | CORE VALUES RELATED TO THE RESULTS |
|  | VALUES AS A FILTER FOR HIRING PEOPLE |
|  | COMMUNICATION OF VALUES |
|  | THE ANNOUNCMENT OF VALUES BROUGHT ABOUT CHANGE |
|  | THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE IMPLEMENTATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE VALUES IS TOP-DOWN |
|  | THE MAIN RESPONSIBILITY-THE CEO |
|  | KEY ROLE OF THE HR DEPARTMENT |
|  | CORE VALUES AT THE FOUNDATION OF THE AGNA IDENTITY, AND THE AGNA BRAND |
| ISSUES |  |
|  | CLASHES BETEEN THE NUMERICAL OBJECTIVES AND VALUES |
|  | VALUES NOT REFLECTED ENOUGH IN THE MARKET (PER. EVAL. PPROCESS) |
|  | NOT ENOUGH CHANGE |
|  | THE MODELS OF SUCCESS ARE NOT IN EVERY CASE MODELS OF VALUES |
|  | RES.1 |
| SUB-THEMES |  |
|  | CORE VALUES ARE RELATED TO BUSINESS SUCCESS |
|  | CORE VALUES ARE IMPORTANT FOR BUILDING A CULTURE |
|  | CORE VALUES AS A FILTER FOR HIRING THE RIGHT PEOPLE |
|  | CORE VALUES IMPORTANT FOR BUILDING A STRONG (CORPORATE) BRAND |
|  | CORE VALUES ARE DECIDED BY THE FOUNDER OF THE ORGANIZATION |
|  | THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING PEOPLE WITH THE VALUES OF THE FOUNDER & CEO |
|  | COMMUNICATION OF CORE VALUES-THE MAIN THINGTHE PARTICULAR BEHAVIOR |
|  | THE RESPONSIBILITY OF VALUES IMPLEMENTAION AND MANAGEMENT IS TOP-DOWN |
|  | THE MAIN RESPONSIBILITY-THE CEO  VALUES HELP US TO MAKE DECISIONS. THEY SET THE WAY, THE GUIDELINES |
|  | KEY ROLE OF THE HR DEPARTMENT |
| ISSUES | THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE CORE VALUES AND THE AGNA BRAND IS ESSENTIAL  NOT EVERYONE IMPLEMENTS THE VALUES.  PERFORMANCE EVALUATION IS NOT BEING GIVEN THE REQUIRED ATTENTION. |

* **Example of sub themes & big themes (patterns)generated through interviews -core values role**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| SUB-THEMES | BIG THEMES |
| CV AS foundation STONES for the corporate brand | CV AS CORPORATE STRATEGY |
| CV AS FUNDAMENTAL CRITERIA IN AGNA |
| CV AT THE FOUNDATION OF THE AGNA BRAND |
| CV ARE ESSENTIAL PART OF THE AGNA BRAND |
| CV ARE ESSENTIAL FOR THE CORPORATE BRAND EXISTENCE |
| CV REPRESENT THE PHILOSOPHY OF DOING BUSINESS IN AGNA |
| CV- AS RULES OF BUSINESS FUNCTIONING |
| CV ARE COMPANY PRINCIPLES |
| CV ARE COMPANY RULES |
| CV PART OF THE BUSINESS PHILOSOPHY |
| CV ARE A CORPORATE CHOICE |
| CV AS CATALYST OF CHANGE | CV INFLUNCE CULTURE |
| CV BRING CHANGE |
| CV AFFECT BEHAVIOR |
| CV IMPACT EMPLOYEES’ BEHAVIOR |
| CV IMPACT CORPORATE CULTURE |
| CORE VALUES ARE PART OF THE CULTURE |
| CV AS A GLUE THAT KEEP PEOPLE TOGETHER/AS COMMON DENOMINATOR |
| VALUES AS MEMBERSHIP CARD |
| CV AS A DECISION-MAKING CRITERIA | CV AS DECISION MAKING CRITERIA |
| CV AS CRITERIA IN PEOPLE SELECTION PROCESS |
| CV LIKE THE FILTER FOR THE PEOPLE TO BE WITH THE COMPANY |
| CV AS FUNDAMENTAL CRITERIA TO BE WITH AGNA |
| CV AS CRITERIA TO CONTINUE WITH THE COMPANY |

* **Sub themes & big themes (patterns) generated through interviews- drivers influencing core values’ role**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| SUB-THEMES | BIG THEMES |
| MNCs & PARTNERS EXPECT TO HAVE A PARTNER THAT THEY CAN TRUST | EXPECTATIONS OF MNCs & LOCAL PARTNERS  (influence with respect to CVs as Corporate Strategy trait) |
| INTEGRITY BUILDS TRUST, AND SO GOODWILL FROM CUSTOMERS AND PARTNERS TO COLLABORATE WITH AGNA |
| INTEGRITY HELPS TO BUILD HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS AND LONG-TERM PARTNERSHIPS WITH CUSTOMERS AND PARTNERS |
| WORK WITH VALUES SUCH AS INTEGRITY-HELPS AGNA TO BE SEEN AS TRUSTWORTHY/TO BUILD REPUTATION AMONG MNCs/PARTNERS/CUSTOMERS |
| INTEGRITY IS NOT OFTEN FOUND IN ALBANIA, AS SUCH IN WELL APPRECIATED FROM MNCs/CUSTOMERS/PARTNERS | LOCAL CULTURE & MARKET CONTEXT  (influence with respect to CVs as Corporate Strategy trait) |
| LACK OF INTEGRITY IN THE ALBANIAN MARKET, WHICH MAKES INTEGRITY HIGHLY APPRECIATED BY STAKEHOLDERS |
| WORK WITH VALUES NOT BEING A COMMON PRACTICE, BUILDS A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE FOR AGNA |
| CEO INFLUENCES WORK WITH VALUES BY ACTING WITH VALUES-GIVING HIS EXAMPLE | INFLUENCE OF THE CEO  (influence with respect to CVs as Decision Making Criteria trait) |
| CEO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR WORK WITH VALUES AS HE IS THE KEY DECISION MAKER |
| CEO IS THE PRESIDENT AND CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD, THUS INFLUENCING WITH WHICH VALUES TO LEAD THE BUSINESS |
| CEO INFLUENCES VALUES AS A KEY DECISION MAKER AND ROLE MODEL |

**2. Example of Documents’ and Observations’ Analysis Documentation: Performance Evaluation Template**

Thematic analysis of the document was used; codes were applied on the document and themes were generated. An example of applying codes and generating themes, in relation to the core value of integrity is provided in the table below. In the performance evaluation document, values are disaggregated into specific behaviours, which are self- evaluated and formally evaluated periodically. Thus, the statements representing behaviours related to the core value of Integrity as they appear in the performance evaluation document are presented on the left side of the table below:

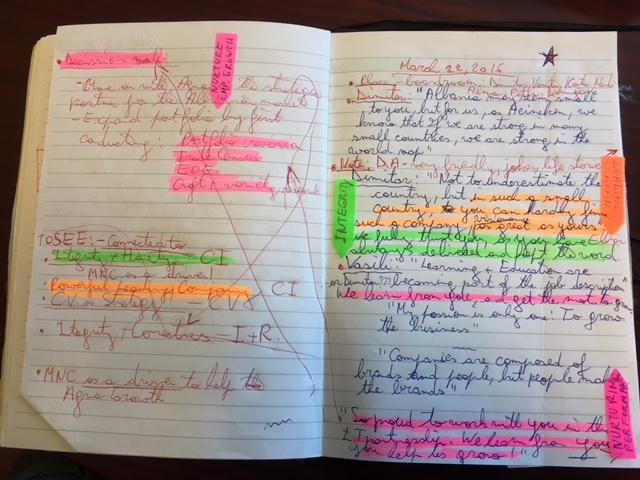
|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Core values | | |  |
| Integrity | Codes | Themes | Themes generated through Interviews |
| I keep my word by fulfilling my promises | TRUE TO MY WORD/TURSTWORTHY | EXPECTATIONS & EVALUATION OF WAY OF WORKING | GUIDANCE AND CONTROL MECHANISM |
| I am honest and responsible in the relationships with myself and others | HONEST AND ACCOUNTABLE |
| I never try to hide or transform the truth | TELL THE TRUTH |
| I do not try to benefit unfairly from my job position | DO NOT CHEAT |
| I always do the right thing, regardless of being checked by others or not | DO NOT CHEAT |
| I do not compromise (with) my integrity | DO NOT CHEAT |
| I try to always deliver more than I have promised | KEEP MY WORD/DELIVER ON RESULTS |
| I have the trust of my colleagues, subordinates, supervisors, clients | TRUSTWORTHY |
| I always hold myself accountable for my actions/inactions and the results of my work | ACCOUNTABLE FOR RESULTS |
| I am loyal to the company’s products and services | I AM LOYAL |

As seen in the table, a theme generated from the analysis of the document is “Expectations & Evaluation of Way of Working’’. Thus, values serve to set the expectations about the way of working, as well as to evaluate the way of working in Agna. This resonated with the theme ‘Guidance and Control Mechanism’ in relation to the role of core values, generated through the interviews.

**Observation: Meeting with senior representatives of Heineken Company and the management of Agna Group, March 22nd**

The researcher decided to observe the event as the data analysis had indicated the key role of partner MNCs, especially Heineken, in corporate brand building and management in Agna.

The observation was written down during the course of the event. Detailed information was noted, including who participated, discussion mood, quotes from participants, actions decided etc. Codes were applied on the observation notes, and links to the themes generated through the interviews were made. This process was annotated in red color and colored sticky notes. As a further step, the researcher looked back to the insights related to the respective themes generated from the interviews, to which the current observation appeared to be related. This helped to confirm the relation between the observation at hand to the themes generated through the interviews. By way of example, it was seen that this observation related to themes such as: Integrity & Honesty in the Corporate Identity construct; Integrity & Correctness, and Powerful Leading Company in the Image and Reputation construct. In this case, the themes were at the “manifest level” (directly observable in the information). The picture below illustrates the way the observation was documented and analyzed.



The current observation served in two main ways:

1. To confirm themes generated through the interviews
2. To connect to further observations, which, in combination, supported the themes generated through the interviews.

**Matrixes built to further analyse the data and draw conclusions, building on interviews, observations and documentation.**

**Table 1. Core values role.**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Res | CV as COPORATE STRATEGY | CV as a GUIDE and CONTROL MECHANISM FOR EMPLOYEES’ BEHAVIOR | CV as DECISION MAKING CRITERIA |
| 1 | CV are ‘*the Alfa for a good, solid business, for building a strong brand, for having success, for bringing the right people’* (Res.1, p: 2)  Although there are 6 core values, integrity is considered as ‘*the value of the values’*, because integrity “*is like the light that guides your way*” (Res. 1, p: 2) | Everyone becomes a ‘*watchdog*’ of values when a system is built, including ‘the *code of ethics, the code of behaviour in the company*’, and ‘*the clear way to go ahead’* (Res. 1, p: 2). |  |
| 2 |  |  | CV serve as criteria for the people who work in Agna (Res. 2, p: 1) |
| 3 | CV are ‘*foundational stones’* for which the company does not compromise (Res. 3, p: 3).  Integrity is the most important value, which along with the other values compose ‘*a very important part of the relationships that Agna builds’* with its staff, partners and all the other parties (Res. 3, p: 5). | CVs “*are not subject to discussion*” (Res.3, p: 3) | CV help as criteria, so one ‘*cannot compromise in the decision making’* (Res. 3, p: 2)  CV have ‘*served as a* ‘*filter*’. Those who could not behave with these values, ‘*have left the company*’ (Res. 3, p: 3). |
| 4 | CV are part of the business philosophy (Res. 4, p: 4), are ‘*the pillars as to which the company progresses*’ (Res. 4, p: 4)  A business *“cannot exist without integrity”.* Integrity is required in every part of the business chain, from production to logistics (Res. 4, p: 3). | Once a new comer “*finds it [*the organization*] solid, with core values in place, he will also adapt to this environment”.* Otherwise, everyone will do what will think appropriate (Res. 4, p: 6). Thus, values serve as rules on the way of doing things.  ‘*the client is our priority’* implies that the client should be treated and should feel as such. “*The actions measure the values*” (Res. 4, p: 6) | CV are criteria for new people selection and for those who are inside the company. CVs represent “*what one should have*” in order to be part of this organization (Res. 4, p: 4). |
| 5 | CV are part of the philosophy of doing business in Agna. Its first pillar is “*values at the foundation*” (Res. 5, p: 5)  Values are company standards (Res. 5, p: 12) | The Values & Behaviours are all disaggregated into elements, which represent the behaviours that employees should reflect in the daily job, in order to prove that they “*live with these values*” (Res. 5, p: 4) | CV are criteria for people selection (Res. 5, p: 3). |
| 6 | CV represent the philosophy of doing business in Agna, *“the thinking of Agna”* (Res. 6, p: 4) | CVs are the same for all departments. As such, “*all go in the same line, uniform*” (Res. 6, p: 14)  CVs come to reality through actions. “*The totality of actions that we take by caring for them (*clients) *and building relationships*” is what makes reality the value ‘*the client is our priority*’ (Res. 6, p: 3) |  |
| 7 |  | CV put “*some limits on the positive side. There are clients who drive you crazy, and you feel ready to burst out, but you tell to yourself ‘calm down, wait, you have to respect him’*” (Res. 7, p: 3). | CV are decision making criteria. Example was given of a case when the collaboration stopped because the employee showed lack of integrity (Res. 7, p: 4). |
| 8 | Values “*are for life in the business journey*”. Values are shown when are implemented (Res. 8, p: 11) | CVs are “*like a bell ringing in your ear: watch out, we have these values, do not make mistakes*” (Res. 8, p: 11) | CV are criteria that should be kept in mind during the people selection process (Res. 8, p: 8). |
| 9 | Integrity is ’*the value of the values’*. The respondent defines integrity so, referring to the way integrity is communicated in the company (Res. 9, p: 5) | CVs are rules of business so that “*people understand how the business functions, how Agna functions..*.” (Res. 9, p: 5). Thus, CV can be considered as standards to work with, as well as a mechanism that controls the way of doing things. | CV are decision-making criteria. Example was given of a case when the collaboration stopped because the employee’s behaviour was against the code of ethics. This was in addition to other misbehaviours that the employee had conducted, so the decision was made (Res. 9, p: 5). |
| 10 |  | CVs are as a *‘compass’* for employees to get orientated, and helpthem to represent Agna properly (Res. 10, p: 3–4) |  |
| 11 | CVs ‘*are listed, are engraved in every place or action…”* (Res. 11, p: 1)  Integrity is ‘*the value of the values*’ (Res. 11, p: 1). The respondent emphasizes that integrity is considered as such in Agna. | CVs have been accepted by everyone, thus, *“there are not anymore compromises and negotiations”* (Res. 11, p: 1) |  |
| 12 | The respondent emphasizes that ‘integrity’ is a value that is highlighted a lot in Agna, and is very important for people to have it (Res. 12, p: 7) |  | CV are like the filter, so those people that *‘cannot stand with these values, cannot continue to work in Agna’* (Res. 12, p: 5) |
| 13 | CVs are company principles. With other values “*it would be a different Agna*” (Res. 13, p: 3–4) | CV are *“like the religion that preaches the good behavior”,* and are about avoiding many problems or dissatisfaction (Res. 13, p: 4). Thus, CV are like a control mechanism to make sure that employees manifest the proper behavior. | CV are a ‘*filter*’ for people selection ‘*over the time’* (Res. 13, p: 3). |
| 14 | Integrity is ‘*the value of the values, is irreplaceable’.* A person without integrity cannot be trusted, cannot bring results, cannot be long-term with the company (Res. 14, p: 2*)*. The respondent emphasizes that integrity is considered as the most important value in Agna. |  | “*You can not take anyone from the street and make him a salesman. The person should have some values, which are indispensable*” (Res. 14, p: 2) |
| 15 |  |  | Those who do not have a common vision and common values with Agna, “*are temporary*” (Res. 15, p: 5) |
| 16 | Values are ‘*foundationstones’* (Res. 16, p: 2)  The key value is integrity (Res. 16, p: 2) |  |  |
| 17 |  | The employees who join Agna, “*either they like it or not, they will get used to these values*” (Res. 17, p: 6). |  |
| 18 |  | These values are “*like preconditions*” for those who like to work in Agna (Res. 18, p:4) | Unless you have these values, you can not work in Agna (Res. 18, p: 4) |
| 19 | CVs will always be “*foundational stones*” (Res. 19, p: 4) |  |  |
| 20 |  |  | Someone who does not have these values, cannot make the job properly, and will not be long term with Agna (Res. 20, p: 11) |
| 21 | An organization “*can go ahead and have success, only by having its model, values, and aims”* (Res. 21, p: 3) |  |  |
| 22 | CVs are “*very important, are foundations*” (Res.22, p: 2) | There are temptations*,* but *“it is important to resist temptations”,* and to work with values (Res. 22, p: 3) |  |
| 23 |  |  |  |
| 24 |  |  |  |
| Docs | ‘Core values at the foundation’ is a key strategic pillar, around which are positioned all the other pillars (Agna Way, p: 21). ‘Core values & Beliefs for success’ is a key module in the ALA.  **Belief**: “Our core values are our Bible and Koran. Poor performance can be forgiven, but absence of values cannot” (Core values & beliefs for success, p: 77)  ‘Our core values are the core, the heart, the axis around which are built and implemented our strategies, plans and projects’ (Agna Way, p: 25)  Agna Business Magazine, 2009, p: 8  “Integrity is the foundation stone of the way we do business in Agna. Integrity is at the foundation of every business project and relationship with our clients and partners. Integrity is non-negotiable” (CEO, ABM, 2009, p: 8). | ‘If a manager fails to achieve ‘numbers’, but lives with ‘values’, we give him/her another chance. There will be no second chance for someone who cannot live by the values and code of conduct of Agna Group’ (Agna Way, p: 20).  “Stating core values is not enough. Practicing and internalizing them as habits, is what makes the difference” (Agna Way, p: 31)  Code of ethics doc;  Core values &behaviours are part of employees’ performance evaluation (Performance evaluation doc, p: 2)  10 respondents (Res. 1, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 18, 20, 21) expressed their concern about consistent implementation of core values.  Performance evaluation is the main process that helps to monitor and measure values’ implementation. However, there are issues surrounding this process, thus, the company should review the way it is done and the results that it brings, such as reflection of values internally and externally, and proper decision making with values as criteria (Res. 3, 4, 5, 8, 9; researcher’s observation, experience and notes) | During people selection process is required “*to have these values all the time in mind during the decision making*.” (HR manager, meeting with the researcher, Sept. 2015)  “The core values of an organization serve as a guide for all decisions and actions within the organization while setting goals, making strategies and implementing them” (Agna Way, p: 21).  “Integrity is the most important virtue and is the basic requirement for anyone who wants to be part of Agna Group. Integrity is non- negotiable” (Agna Way, p: 23) |
| Obs | “*The real value of our business is the growth on the basis of these values. This is the common denominator that bonds all the Agna Group members, and will continue to bond them when we become 8000, or 80,000*” (CEO speech, 2016, corporate meeting for the celebrations of the 25th anniversary)  ‘Core values at the foundation’ as a key strategic pillar is highlighted by the CEO in all his annual speeches 2007–2017  Agna core values are placed on the wall in each floor of the building, and in the conference room (Researcher’s notes)  “Integrity is the number one value, because without it, no other value has meaning” (CEO, speech in the open seminar, April 2016).  “*To build a company, or a family without integrity, is like building a building without foundations, it is fake*” (CEO, in ALA session, Feb. 2017)  ‘Only by working with values, and above all, with integrity, Agna will achieve long term results’ (CEO, Sales & Success seminar, May 20th, 2017) |  | Often in the board meetings, reference to core values is made in case of dilemma about decision making (e.g., procedures *vs.* values with regards to umbrellas and other POS materials not registered properly in the system; exclusivity contracts with issues (researcher’s observation, Dec. 2015), but also in discussions among colleagues about making the right decision (email communication between the brand manager and the sales supervisor, researcher’s observation, Aug. 10, 2016).  Tough decisions have been made by the company, such as ending the relationship with a business partner after 17 years of cooperation, as he showed lack of integrity which negatively influenced the business, by putting in danger the collaboration with a partner company (CEO discussion of this case with the researcher, July 2016). |
|  | 15/24 | 11/24 | 13/24 |

**Table 2. Core values-drivers.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Res | ESSENTIAL TO BUILDING A STRONG CORPORATE BRAND | CV INFLUENCE CORPORATE CULTURE | CV INFLUENCE RESULTS | CEO INFLUENCE | INFLUENCE OF LOCAL CULTURE | EXPECTATIONS OF MNCs AND PARTNERS |
| 1 | CVs are essential for the corporate brand existence. Without values ‘*you do not have a brand’* (Res. 1, p: 3). The brand is like the face. The values express *“how correct you are, express your character*” (Res. 1, p: 2). STRATEGY  It is only by having people with values *“that you can have an organization with values, thus, with strong foundation*” (Res. 1, I.2, p: 2). STRATEGY | CV are *‘the A of the business, if you want to build a culture’* (Res. 1, p: 2). STRATEGY | The CVs play a key role in achieving results. “*If the role of values would be clear in my mind since I started the business, I would now have a much better business. This is because when you are clear about the values, it is easier to add to your organization people with your values*” (Res. 1, p: 2). STRATEGY  Integrity builds reputation that helps the organization to succeed, because consumers, clients and partners will have trust in the organization, and will happily collaborate with it (p: 3). Thus, Integrity becomes an important advantage for the company (Res.1, I.2, p: 2). STRATEGY | The responsibility for values implementation is Top-Down. The CEO has the key role, and then the top managers, and the supervisors who give the example (Res. 1, p: 2). DM  The CEO wants Agna to be perceived as “*a good company, with values, correct”* that brings products and helps (Res. 1, p: 1). STRATEGY | Integrity is a value not often found in the Albanian market. As a result, is a lot appreciated by the market, thus becoming a competitive advantage (Res.1, I.2, p: 2). STRATEGY  In Agna culture is talked a lot about values. *“This is not usual in Albania, but we will continue in this direction, because only by having values part of the culture, we can all, as a company, behave in the right way”* with clients, partners, and the community (Res. 1, p: 2). STRATEGY | There is a need to act with integrity in order to build trust and to create successful relationships with clients and partners (Res. 1, p: 2).  Integrity becomes an important advantage for the company (Res. 1, I.2, p: 2). STRATEGY |
| 2 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | Once people agree on something with Agna*,* either they have a contract or not, *“that is it, and there is not something else hidden*” (Res.3, p: 5). STRATEGY | CV have brought change since they were established. E.g., ‘*people communicate better with each other, behave better*’ (Res. 3, p: 3/I.2). STRATEGY |  | The CEO is the main person responsible for values’ management (Res. 3, p: 3) because “*he is the founder of the business, the person that manifests and supports these values, and the main decision maker*” in Agna (Res. 3, p: 2/I.2). DM | Integrity builds trust, “*especially in Albania, that very often you get disappointed in the collaboration with third parties”,* because they often do not keep the word (Res. 3, p: 5). STRATEGY | Although values are not so popular in Albania, the partners and clients like to collaborate ‘*with a company with values*’, because they would like to have ‘*a loyal partner*’ (Res. 3, p: 3/I.2), thus, a partner that they can trust. STRATEGY |
| 4 | CV are the foundation for the brand, because the Agna brand *‘is built upon these values, represents and is represented by these values’* (Res. 4, p: 7) STRATEGY  The process of identifying the values ‘*was a need’* for the business ‘*to define which would be the road, the way”* (Res. 4, p: 4). STRATEGY | CV have brought change, such as ‘*more clarity’* in how to do things and to make decisions, because ‘*everything has to be adapted to these values’* that people have agreed upon. The working environment *‘has improved a lot* (Res. 4, p: 4–6). STRATEGY | The business cannot progress without integrity, because *“integrity means that what we say, we do; what we promise is delivered, what we agree is implemented” (*Res. 4, p: 3). STRATEGY |  | Values make a difference in a country like Albania. ‘*You cannot build such a business in a small country like Albania, without hard work and dedication”* (Res. 4, p: 3). STRATEGY  The partners, the clients, the consumers appreciate integrity, *‘despite of not having it much in the Albanian environment’* (Res. 4, p: 5). STRATEGY | Integrity helps to build healthy relationships with customers and partners. *“They (*clients and partners*) consider us as trustworthy, and see us as their favourite partner”* (Res. 4, p: 3). STRATEGY |
| 5 | CV are at the foundation of the Agna Brand/Agna Identity (Res. 5, p: 5). STRATEGY | Those who join the business, should have values “*that are similar to the rest of the team, and fit with the values of the company”* (Res. 5, p: 8). STRATEGY |  | Everyone is responsible for values’ implementation &management;however, President & CEO has the key role as ‘*he is the model’* (Res. 5, p: 5). DM |  |  |
| 6 | CV are drawn from Agna (Res. 6, p: 4). STRATEGY | CV keep people together, so “*they have 5 common values, or 5 common ideas, or 5 common aims”* (Res. 6, p: 3). STRATEGY | Adopting CVs supports the final goal of serving properly the customers and consumers*, “who help the company to achieve results*” (Res. 6, p: 3). STRATEGY |  |  |  |
| 7 | The corporate brand name and the CV were created at the same time (Res. 7, p: 5). STRATEGY |  |  |  | There is a need to control whether the employees have CVs part of themselves and to what extent manifest them (Res. 7, p: 4). MECHANISM | Integrity is important for the clients and partners. The clients constantly complain about their expereinces with suppliers in the market, but they value the way of working with Agna (Res. 7, p: 3). STRATEGY |
| 8 | CVs are part of the brand, and represent the Agna brand (Res. 8, p: 10). STRATEGY |  | A healthy business, with perspective, should have values. *“Only this way the business can have long term success”* (Res. 8, p: 7). STRATEGY |  |  | The clients want stable service and attitude. “*If you traumatize these values even once, you damage the relationship with them*” (Res. 8, p: 12). STRATEGY |
| 9 | CVs &Agna are ‘*inseparable*’, ‘*are one thing’* (Res. 9, p: 6). STRATEGY |  | Values help to drive results, because if people “*work with dedication, the results will come*” (Res. 9, p: 7–8). STRATEGY |  | The country’s culture influences the perception for CV. Family is important in the Albanian culture, and CV are compared to family rules (Res. 9, p: 5). MECHANISM  There is a need for control on how the CVs are implemented. “*I may think I am doing well, but should be always someone to ring the bell and to say ‘watch out’*” (Res. 9, p: 8). MECHANISM | CV are important for the relationship with partners. The example of a mother company was given, which stopped the partnership with the distributors in two countries, because of lack of respect and integrity shown by them (Res. 9, p: 6). STRATEGY  Many companies offer products, but working with values is something that not all the companies do, thus, becoming a competitive advantage (Res. 9, p: 6). STRATEGY |
| 10 | Values set the behavior framework, so that the employees “*can represent Agna*” (Res. 10, p: 4). STRATEGY |  | The results are better when people work with values (Res. 10, p: 4). STRATEGY |  | Control is required for values implementation. Because of *‘our nature as Balkan people, we need a push’* (Res. 10, p: 5). Thus, it cannot be simply left up to the employees to implement the values, because the culture requires such controlling. MECHANISM |  |
| 11 | Agna brand and CVs *“have an organic relationship; they are incorporated with each other*” (Res. 11, p: 2). STRATEGY |  |  |  |  |  |
| 12 | The brand and the values are related*. “The big integrity of Agna, is the mother of my integrity”* as an individual (Res. 12, p: 7). STRATEGY | “*The spirit of integrity prevails. …My people have the same spirit, and the others will certainly adapt, because ‘the stream’, does not allow you to act differently*” (Res. 12, p: 5–6). STRATEGY |  |  |  |  |
| 13 | The CB is the ‘*embodiment*’ of these CVs (Res. 13, p: 4)  To be Agna, you should have “*5 fundamental criteria*” (Res. 13, p: 3). STRATEGY |  |  |  | The country’s culture influences the perception for CV. Family is important in the Albanian culture and CV are compared to family principles (Res. 13, p: 3). MECHANISM |  |
| 14 | CV are part of the Agna Brand; are the ones that ‘*have made the brand*’ (Res. 14, p: 4). STRATEGY | These values are at the core of the company’s culture (Res. 14, p: 6). STRATEGY |  |  |  | Working with values creates good perception among the clients and helps to build trust in the relationship with them (Res. 14, p: 2–3). STRATEGY |
| 15 |  |  | Working with someone without integrity, “*you lose time, and at the end the results will be worthless”* (Res. 15, p: 1). STRATEGY |  |  |  |
| 16 |  |  |  |  |  | People become more serious when they talk to Agna. They say that with Agna “*you cannot play with the promise given, with integrity and respect*” (Res. 16, p: 1). STRATEGY |
| 17 | Working with values has helped “*to build the very good name of Agna.We have a lot to improve, but we are correct, we keep the word*” (Res. 17, p: 3). STRATEGY |  |  |  |  |  |
| 18 |  |  |  |  |  | Working with integrity is key to building trust in the relationships with clients Example was given of how the proper behavior helped the respondent to keep the realtionship with the client, despite the dispute (Res. 18, p: 4). STRATEGY |
| 19 | “*When I think of Agna, the first thing that comes to my mind are the values*” (Res. 19, p: 1). STRATEGY |  |  | “*Everything starts from the head (CEO), from his vision, the way he wants to take the business ahead”,* thus with X values or Y values. *Values differ from one corporate to the other*” (Res. 19, p: 12). STRATEGY/DM | It is not usual for companies in Albania to talk about values. “*who speaks about values in Albania*?!” (Res,19, p: 4). STRATEGY |  |
| 20 |  |  |  |  |  | The customers evaluate the salespeople based on the way they are served: “*the hard work, the dedication, the correctness*” (Res. 20, p: 2). STRATEGY  Everyday more, the companies are differentiated among customers by the service provided, rather than the products. “*The service can not be copied*” (Res. 20, p: 4). STRATEGY |
| 21 | “*It feels like Agna has invented them* (these values)*, and are only for Agna”* (Res. 21, p: 6). STRATEGY |  |  |  |  |  |
| 22 | Values are “*a characteristic of Agna. It is important to carry on ahead with these core values, becuase everyday more Agna name is growing*” (Res. 22, p: 5). STRATEGY  Work with integrity builds trust, respect and good name for Agna (Res. 22, p: 3). VALUES |  |  |  | *“in Albania you are told that you are not smart if you do not steal*. However, w*e should not stop demonstrating these values, because we can become an example for the others. We are almost 1000 employees in Agna”* (Res. 22, p: 3–4). STRATEGY |  |
| 23 |  |  |  |  |  | Values build respect, as such, “*our relationships with clients are empowered*” (Res. 23, p: 2). STRATEGY |
| 24 | Agna’s good name “*has been created by being correct, working with values, having quality products and very good service*” (Res. 24, p: 8). STRATEGY |  |  |  | Many businesses make several tricks to avoid paying taxes. However, this can bring only short terms benefits, becuase the government is pushing hard toward market formalization (Res. 24, p: 14). STRATEGY |  |
| Doc | “Core values are the backbone of our corporation” (Agna Way, p: 21)  ‘Our business philosophy is built around these values’ (Agna Way, p: 25)  PPT on CVs, 2007  CEO speeches in annual celebrations (2007–2017)  CVs are “*the magic glue*” that holds the company united in times of crises and successes (Core values and Beliefs for success, p: 18)  *“Trust and reputation are built day by day. The way Agna brand is perceived today is related to the way we have done things during these 25 years in business”* (CEO discussion with the researcher, July 2016).  “Integrity brings trust, energy, happiness and reputation” (Agna Way ppt, Feb. 2017) | ‘Core values are the main building blocks of the organizational identity and culture” (Agna Way, p: 21)  ‘It is not enough to talk about values. Implementing, reflecting and making them habits, is what makes the difference’ (Agna Way, p: 38)  ‘Core values require the commitment of everyone in the organization to make them a way of living’ (Core Values and Beliefs for success, p: 31)  Performance Evaluation Doc. | “Numbers are the consequence, whereas values are the cause” (Agna Way, p: 19)  “The right values inspire the right behaviours, thus, affecting the performance, and hence, the results” (Agna Way, p: 20)  Core values “are chosen from the wisdom of our past, to lead our way through to the fulfilment of the vision” (Agna Way, p: 32).  *“*Shared values … have an enormous potential to increase company energy, which brings increased revenues and profits*”* (Core values and beliefs for success, 2014, p: 19).  Unless the values are applied at all levels of the company, they will not bring the desired results (Core values and beliefs for success, 2014, p: 19).  Values &behaviours are part of employees’ performance evaluation (Performance evaluation doc, p: 2). | ‘The employees need a leader who walks the talk. Only this way they can be motivated to understand, appreciate and reflect the values’ (Core Values and Beliefs for success, p: 30)  “Every team leader should be a role model by living the values” (Agna Way, p: 31)  The CEO is the Author of ‘Agna Way’ and ‘Core Values and Beliefs for success’. | The perception of corruption “*is high in Albania*” (EU annual report on Albania, 2015, p: 6).  The Word Bank report 2015 indicated that the issue of informality is considered as “*being integral to Albania’s development*” (CIPE blog, 2015).  “*Procurement is an area particularly vulnerable to corruption…*”in Albania (EU annual report on Albania, 2015, p: 34).  “85.9 % of medium size enterprises and 100% of big enterprises, pay bribes to secure government contracts” (World Bank, 2013, in ALTAX, 2015)  “The country’s severe isolation from the outside world was effectuated through a combination of terror, propaganda (from cradle to grave), militarisation and panopticon surveillance” (Prof. King and Dr. Vullnetari 2014) | “Integrity builds reputation” (Agna Way, p: 23)  “Our integrity is what ensures that we provide quality products and services, build fruitful, long term relationships with customers, suppliers, and partners. It is our major competitive advantage in the market” (Agna Way, p: 23)  *“In several moments of our business life, we had to choose the way to go, and I am happy we took the right path, the path of integrity and values. This has been much appreciated by our customers and partners*” (CEO discussion with the respondent, July 2016).  Informality and widespread corruption still remain the main obstacles for the Albanian economy, emphasized in each EU and international economic report (Agro Web, July 14, 2016). |
| Obs | “*We prefer to safeguard our integrity, which will help Agna in the long run, rather than to win some more money through such tenders, which will not add value to the Agna name*” (CEO, board meeting, Dec. 15th, 2015)  Agna core values are placed on the wall in each floor of the building, and in the conference room (Researcher’s notes)  “*The real value of our business is the growth on the basis of these values. This is the common denominator that bonds all the Agna Group members, and will continue to bond them when we become 8000, or 80,000*” (CEO speech, 2016, corporate meeting for the celebrations of the 25th anniversary)  “Working with values is not a matter of desire; it is our strategic driver to long term success. Success and reputation can be achieved, only by being built on strong foundations-values” (CEO, annual speech, 2017) |  | “*only by working with values we can expect long term results*” (CEO, board meeting, October, 2016)  “*If we want results, we should work not only harder, but smarter. However, the main secret is our key pillar: ‘values at the foundation*’” (CEO, Agna Way seminar, Feb. 2017)  Performance evaluation is the main process that helps to monitor and measure values’ implementation, but there are issues surrounding this process. Thus, the company should review the way it is done and the results that it brings, such as the reflection of values internally and externally, and proper decision making with values as criteria (Res. 3, 4, 5, 8, 9; researcher’s observation, experience and notes) | The CEO initiated the process of defining CVs in 2007.  Being the founder, the President and Chairman of the board, the CEO is an influential decision maker. The CEO led the process of defining the core values, and making them an essential part of doing business in Agna, e.g.: incorporating them as a key strategic pillar in Agna Way, in the performance evaluation process, in the recruiting process, in the orientation programme for new employees etc. | “*Control is needed, because people perform better when there is control on what they do and how they do things. On the other side, people like to be controlled; they get more motivated when someone checks on what they have done. It is part of the Albanian culture*” (CEO, June, 16th, discussion with the researcher) | Working with values is addressed as a key point that has kept the partnerships with MNCs continuing successfully for more than two decades (CEO speeches, 2008–2017, V/President’s remarks in board meetings, e.g., Apr., 2016, meeting with Heineken team Mar. 22nd, 2016; P.Kita, GM, Colonat fast food chain, Sept. 2016; Researcher’s observation).  For MNCs and local clients, it is very important to have a good, correct partner. This is emphasized by the top management, as they deal with the partners and feel in the relationships with them the power of being correct, with integrity, and doing business with values (V/President, Nov. 2015, Researcher’s notes)  “*Integrity is a great value both companies share, and we are greateful to have such a great partner in Albania.*” (P.Simon, CEO, CEE countries, Heineken, Apr. 2014). Commercial Manager discussion with the researcher, 2016 (Researcher’s notes) |