

## How to Drive Cultural Changes in the Workplace

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An [organization's culture](#) defines the proper way to behave within the organization. This culture consists of shared beliefs and values established by leaders and then communicated and reinforced through various methods, ultimately shaping employee perceptions, behaviors, and understanding.

[Changing an organization's culture](#) is one of the most difficult leadership challenges. That is mainly because an organization's culture consists of an interlocking set of goals, roles, processes, values, communications practices, attitudes, and assumptions.

Organizations that successfully operate the culture management process increase efficiency and productivity at all levels. Culture yields countless benefits at these companies: an ability to better implement strategic plans and achieve results, improved retention and recruitment of employees, and increased shareholder wealth among them.

### Culture Management Begins with Committed Leadership

It is important to remember that organizations do not change but people do. Particularly the leaders in companies can drive impact, so starting with behavioural change within the leadership can be the quickest way to [shift culture](#).

Although much of a strong corporate culture should be organic and built from grassroots initiatives, having the support and [encouragement of leadership](#) is key in implementing lasting change. The culture of a business is always a reflection of its leaders' beliefs and values. Those in key leadership positions set the organisation's first example for others. For this reason, leaders need to be passionate about building a strong culture and actively engaged in making the cultural shift happen. Leaders are responsible for first articulating the primary cultural beliefs of the organization, and then proactively embodying those beliefs, mobilizing all employees to engage in shaping the new culture in a personal way.

## Meetings as a Platform for Culture Management

In research by Cliff Scott (December 2007), shows that corporate executives spend almost 23 hours in meetings every week. As such a constant part of the average workday, meetings provide a valuable opportunity to strengthen the desired culture of your company. Meetings provide a golden opportunity to manage your culture effectively. Using storytelling to convey progress towards results for the workers and to encourage greater transparency. Recognize worthy workers for their efforts towards significant milestones. Take a couple of minutes to ask your team for valuable feedback on your leadership effectiveness, and what you can do better.

## Understand the Culture

Understand what your [organization's culture](#) is really like. What principles and habits every day define your organisation? Define the new culture clearly, fully explaining the attributes of the culture and the acceptable behaviour in the new culture.

## Listen to employees

Involve the employees, supporting and bringing their new ideas into action. Have individual employees teach and/or evaluate one another where appropriate. Every single employee's involvement gives them a stake in realizing cultural change. People often [resent change](#) when they have no involvement in how it should be implemented.

Nobody lives the corporate culture more than the staff, so it's important to get their opinions. Instead of reacting brashly and impulsively to existing issues, use [survey data](#) to understand the current perceptions of your employees about the culture. Whenever it comes to making changes, employees are most likely to listen if they feel valued and are engaged and help innovate. Take advantage of a wide range of data sources, such as employee surveys and focus groups, to understand the perspective of the business. Employees notice when you take the time to listen to and value their input, which can engage them in the process and excite them about new possibilities.

## Measure and adapt

You must constantly adapt and perfect your ideas and processes to see real change. One of the best ways to do that is to involve the employees through surveys, think tanks, focus groups, and more.

## Values

To change a culture you need to start with values outside the compliance department since values are the key to [cultural transformation](#). Get people to take values seriously because it will drive a more successful company and make the compliance officer's job much easier. One way to do this is to rally around an important social purpose and let that inspire the conversation. Change people's mindsets, by sourcing their real motivations and values (again, authentic values that are right for your company).

## Create Conditions to Align with Culture

Change the physical environment to reflect, and allow the new culture to be accepted. If teamwork is the topic, [rearrange the office to allow for better teamwork](#); Where safety is a topic, spend the money on making physical conditions safe in the office, factory, or service vehicles. Similarly, align incentives to fit the culture.

## Align culture with strategy and processes

Clarify your business strategy and ensure that the cultural change is aligned with the business direction, vision, and principles. Understand how the change will be reflected across the business including informal structures, reporting, training, recruiting, etc.

Look at your mission, vision, and values and see how they work with your HR processes including recruiting [performance management](#), rewards, advantages, and talent promotion. Consider how recruitment and talent management are building your culture into your future.

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