

CHANGING CULTURE

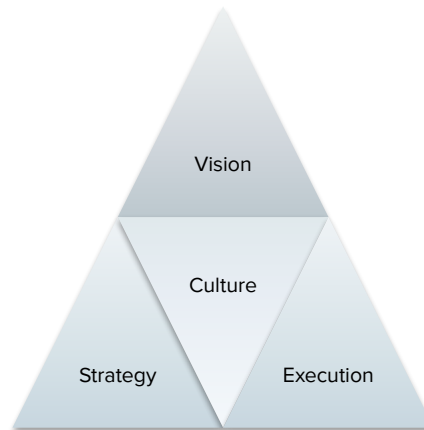
Culture is the collective intuition of the organization. When culture is understood and lived by every individual, they are able to make faster autonomous decisions that remain true to the mission and objectives of the company. Culture is the compass that guides everyone to the company's true north of success.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

- What are your guiding principles as a leader?
- What personal rules do you follow to make decisions when facing uncertainty?
- What does it mean to you to “do the right thing”?
- Are these principles applicable and expandable to the organization’s culture?

01 TRIANGLE OF SUCCESS

An organization’s success is led by its vision, strategy, and execution. Culture lives at the center of these, binding them and helping them to work as one.



“An organization’s purpose is reflected in their culture and is transparent to their customers.”

- Rose Marie Bravo

Culture, and people, sit at the center of your vision, your strategy and your execution. Having a strong culture in place supports each pillar of success for the organization and company. Without the right culture, every element is more difficult to achieve.

02 CHANGING CULTURE

Culture is a muscle

Train it as such. Start with small, quick wins and slowly build up strength. Operationalize culture and break it down into small pieces. Identify shared success with each employee or team leader. Create habits for repeated success.

CASE STUDY

Permeate touchpoints with grace notes.

As a junior buyer, Rose Marie Bravo preferred doing business with Estée Lauder. Small details of quality adorned every point of contact from the fine bone china cup and saucer used to serve coffee to the manner in which company communicated with its buyers. Estée Lauder's clear and confident people first culture was lived in every action it made.

This was possible because it was led from the top. Over twenty years since stepping down as CEO of the company, Leonard Lauder continues to write thank you notes and words of encouragement to individuals in the company on his signature blue stationary.

Lead culture from every chair

You can lead culture from any seat within the company. Culture, both positive and negative, is contagious and one person can make a difference.

As a leader, live the culture 24/7 and lead by example. Exhibit the values of your culture, even in contexts where it involves personal risk and takes bravery to do so. Show these values to everyone, including customers. Culture exists within a company but lives and breathes within the individual. Your impact on the culture of the company becomes your legacy that lives on once you have left.

Culture is impacted by what you say as well as what you remain silent to. Speak up when you see something that does not align with the culture you aspire to create.

Communicate culture

Set culture on a wide scale first to ensure that everyone in the organization understands and is aligned with the cultural values of the company. Define the values in language that people can relate to. To change culture you must appeal to who they are, not what they must do. Make it memorable.

Once everyone is playing the same tune, identify how you can add "grace notes" – the small details that accelerate you to be uniquely defined to your customers.

"Lean in on one big idea that turns people into believers. Being 'the first British luxury lifestyle global brand' isn't a value, but it is a vision. The repetition of the vision drove a change in behavior and the way work was approached. It portrayed a dream and changed the culture"

- Rose Marie Bravo

CASE STUDY

Break down walls to cultural change.

When Rose Marie Bravo moved to Burberry, the senior management had their own private dining room. She broke down the walls between the private room and the factory staff cafeteria to send a clear message that a strong company culture was built as a team. It set a literal and symbolic precedent for the change that was expected of everyone.

Establish trust

Always put people first. Respect and trust are hallmarks of every strong culture. A change in culture must be inclusive. Establish team-based goals but allow employees to personalize their meaning of the shared culture.

Culture is not stagnant and should be allowed to evolve within the bounds of your objectives. Change may arise internally through shifts in the workforce, or externally through shocks such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Release talent detrimental to culture

Do not tolerate poor behavior and a bad cultural fit. Star talent can jeopardize the company if it does not fit the team and the culture. No customer will ever notice a change to a detrimental team member.

Resist short-term temptations

Strong culture is your long-term guide through temporary storms. Be ready to give up the short-term sale to pull the values through to the end.

Guide decisions based on what you know to be true, not on what employees or customers may see. When mistakes are made, own them as a teachable moment.

“Getting the culture right is the hard stuff. But when you get it right, it all comes together.”

- Rose Marie Bravo



Leaders Advancing Leaders

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