



# CREATING A GREAT WORKPLACE CULTURE TO ATTRACT AND RETAIN TALENT



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**As the business landscape shifts and new employees join the workforce, it is not uncommon for organisations to recognise a need to proactively change their culture.**

Formed over many years, often by personnel who have long since left the company, the office culture pervades all. By its very definition, culture is the manifestation of humans regarded collectively. In workplace terms, a culture can be gleaned in many different ways, some a lot more subtle than others. The social life of the staff, team structures, office layout and décor, brand, work systems and HR, recruitment, internal and external communication, all drive and reflect the culture. The key is to know when and how to change it, as the organic lifecycle of a company can and will demand it.

Changes since then, however, have been huge; we now have a more female and international workforce; technology is at the heart of all business, and our education system has adapted accordingly. The culture of a company is much more varied now than a few decades ago, when things such as flexitime, pool tables, hot-desking and duvet days would have seemed a laughable concept to your average HR or CEO.

So if you feel your culture is still stuck in the past, or needs to be changed to appeal to more staff, here are ten tips on how to manage the process. It's not a quick fix – much more a long haul, but if managed correctly, you and your company will reap the rewards.

## Recognise and understand that the culture needs to change

It sounds obvious but many senior management or HR teams are not aware of the overall culture of the company, let alone the minutia from team to team. Why does the culture need to change? Is staff turnover too high, morale too low, is there a general feeling of being out of date, lackluster? Has there been a raft of new recruits? Initial identification of any problems is the right start.

# 1

## Consider the team

You need to consider the motivations of your team – both explicit (i.e. promotion, salary, hours) and implicit (satisfaction, team relationships, implicit learning). These will vary from person to person so it is helpful to manage 360 interviews, as part of a business audit, to help shed light on any issues. Common themes will arise, which is good. It is vital that the needs of the staff are considered when attempting to shift a status quo.

# 2



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## Mission statement and values

What are the objectives of your company, what does it stand for? This may take you right back to the start, as what you are doing is essentially a kind of rebrand. But by setting out your ethos you can then map how you want that to translate throughout the company and all who work in it.

# 3



# 4

## Set a timeline

Never lose track of your long-term goal. You may need to be flexible, as there will be variables along the way. Setting out goals however, and outlining the aims of the cultural change, will help you manage it and steer it back on course if need be. Be patient!

This will not be an overnight process.



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## Management buy-in

The process of any change cannot be managed without complete co-ordination from the management team. They will be the ones who will help implement any changes so involving them in the audit and planning is imperative.

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## Communication

As much transparency as possible is needed in the communication to your team. It is an acknowledgement that things are being updated and a demonstration of a forward-looking management, that needs to be promoted positively and honestly throughout.



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## Remember the past

Culture is built on heritage - and heritage is strongly linked to loyalty. For this reason, look to retain some traditions while starting new ones, however trivial they may seem. Your staff will appreciate it.

# 7

# 8

## Make it sustainable

Do not try to make changes that are too broad-brush or just too bold. Ensure your plan is workable and will not take you, or most importantly your CEO, too far from the main business objectives.

## Measure

A set of targets, made at the start, will enable you to measure the success of the culture change. These will vary according to your business and the reason for the change. Your measurement could be based on staff turnover, number of meetings, frequency of social events or sales figures. Do obtain staff feedback as part of the tracking process, getting regular updates on how the changes are being received.

# 9

## Be realistic

# 10

Always remember that culture develops over time. Recognising this, and being patient and flexible, will help you to drive through your plans. Creating real sustainable changes in a business that is set in its ways is no easy ride. But by planning and mapping it out thoroughly, recruiting the right staff (existing and new) and keeping your eye on the bigger picture, you will get there in the end; all the while retaining the elements of the business that helped it grow in the first place.

