

## Company Culture & its impact on growth

Culture is defined as the complex whole of a group of people bound by family/society /country/organisation/company . This can include everything that gives a group its identity under a common umbrella.

Five basic characteristics that all cultures share in common are :- learned, shared , symbolic, integrated, and dynamic. In family , culture is like family DNA .There may be different types of personalities in a family but all share some typical values, beliefs ,rituals ,attitudes & behaviour unique for the family . Variation in personalities only changes the outward expression not its intrinsic quality.

Similarly a country culture determines the identity of the country in the behaviour of its inhabitants ,the way they communicate, rituals & norms they follow. Country culture gets so much embedded that it's tough to change. An example in lighter perspective is that Britishers left our country 70 years ago but still the British culture of formal dress of wearing suit is the ritual to be followed for admission interview for a number of reputed social clubs in various cities in India ! Even the strong personalities in the country have accepted it as club culture & followed the practice. The fundamental is that culture is so intrinsic that it's difficult to change unless change is felt by all under the same umbrella

Company culture also is sum total of the values, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours that employees share and use on a day to day basis in their work. The culture determines how employees describe where they work, their understanding about the vision & objective of the organisation they work for, and how they see themselves as part of the organization. The common components across cultures are symbols, values and norms. All cultures include symbols which confer meanings to things and events. These symbols are expressed through what we call **language**. **Language** conveys the beliefs and values of a culture.

Organizational **culture** is a system of shared assumptions, values, and beliefs, which governs how people behave in organizations. These shared values have a strong influence on the people in the organization and dictate how they dress, act, and perform their jobs . **Company culture** is the personality of a company. It defines the environment in which employees work. Company culture includes a variety of elements, including work environment, company mission, value, ethics, expectations, and goals.

**Culture** is the behaviour that results when a group arrives at a set of - generally unspoken and unwritten - rules for working together. Company culture refers to the beliefs and behaviors that determine how a company's employees and management interact and handle outside business transactions. Often, company **culture** is implied, not expressly defined, and develops organically over time from the cumulative traits of the people the **company** hires. Culture is the work environment that the employer create for employees. Employees are motivated and most satisfied when their needs and values are consistent with those manifested in company's workplace culture.From the initial application until an employee is hired, both the employer and the prospective employee attempt to determine if the applicant is a good cultural fit.

Culture is difficult to define, but a strong cultured organisation generally know when it has found in an employee who appears to fit the company culture. A misfit to the culture with strong personality may create a havoc. Hence selecting the right fit is vital for small & medium enterprises ,more so if it's a startup.

Culture is the environment in which all the employees work all of the time. Culture is a powerful element that shapes employees' work enjoyment, work relationships, and work processes. But, culture is something that can not be seen but can be felt when one enters the workplace.

About few years ago I joined a start up IT company as a facilitator to assess & help the owner to find ways to improve the cultural fit of the company's employees. I was impressed when the owner told me his understanding of the company culture. He said "to me culture is everything. It determines who we are, what we believe in & how we work together to get things done". On my questioning how it helps in achieving business excellence he answered "when we fundamentally believe in the same things, agree to do everything we can to make it happen and have a whole lot of fun doing it, great results have to follow" .

He was damn right. This company in next 6 years grew from a small start-up to a global player with business excellence. The owner only ensured that while experiencing the growth all the stakeholders of the company stayed true to its corporate soul -it's culture and had lots of fun along the way. The company in its course to success did not drift from its values, attitudes and working together with enjoyment. In a recent interview the chairman said. "even as we grow rapidly & change in shape & size our "cultural personality " remained intact and people around us began to take notice . We are known for our positive energy, enthusiasm and passion and our value . "Fun & Profit " inspired us to to have & deliver on both. That is the core strength of building up our competitive advantage."

Something as simple as how the modular workstations are graced tell a lot about how employees view and participate in that company's culture. Company's bulletin board content, the company newsletter, the interaction of employees in meetings, and the way in which people collaborate, speak a lot about a company's culture.

One can take a culture walk inside a company's office & workplace to see, appreciate, and observe the company's current culture. Company culture needs to be changed if the culture that has developed is unsupportive of reaching Company's business goals or of the environment of working which is necessary to achieve the goal. Culture change is tough, but achievable if the needs are communicated & understood well by all

### **Types of organisational culture**

Conceptually there are four types of organizational culture : Clan culture, Adhocracy culture, Market culture and Hierarchy culture.

working environment in a **clan culture** is a friendly one. People have a lot in common, and it's similar to a large family. The leaders or the executives are seen as mentors or maybe even as father figures. The organization is held together by loyalty and

tradition. There is great involvement. The organization emphasizes long-term Human Resource development and bonds colleagues by morals. Success is defined within the framework of addressing the needs of the clients and caring for the people. The organization promotes teamwork, participation, and consensus.

**Adhocracy Culture** is a dynamic and creative working environment. Employees take risks. Leaders are seen as innovators and risk takers. Experiments and innovation are the bonding materials within the organization. Prominence is emphasized. The long-term goal is to grow and create new resources. The availability of new products or services is seen as success. The organization promotes individual initiative and freedom.

**Market Culture** is a results-based organization that emphasizes finishing work and getting things done. People are competitive and focused on goals. Leaders are hard drivers, producers, and rivals .

**Hierarchy Culture** is a formalised and structured work environment. Procedures decide what people do. Leaders are proud of their efficiency-based coordination and organization. Keeping the organization functioning smoothly is most crucial. Formal rules and policy keep the organization together. The long-term goals are stability and results, paired with efficient and smooth execution of tasks. Trustful delivery, smooth planning, and low costs define success.

To sum it up let me use the quotation of a highly successful global entrepreneur, who said :-

"Culture is one of the most under appreciated essentials in business. No matter how visionary, brilliant and far reaching a leader's strategy might be it can all come undone if it is not fully supported by a strong & spirited corporate culture."

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