Empowering people through

Shaping Organizational Culture

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Three leadership priorities:

1. Articulate mission, vision, values
2. Build trust
3. Empower others

Three leadership priorities:

1. Articulate mission, vision, values
2. Build trust
3. Empower others—influencing organizational culture

What is organizational culture?

Culture refers to those elements of a group or organization that are the most stable and least malleable.

What is organizational culture?

Underlying and often unexpressed assumptions, values, beliefs, and attitudes that have been jointly learned and taken for granted.

Assumptions:

- about people
- about power and relationships
- about time and space
- about ethics
- about identity and purpose

It can be argued that the only thing of real importance that leaders do is to create and manage culture; that the unique talent of leaders is their ability to understand and work within culture; and that it is an ultimate act of leadership to destroy culture when it is viewed as dysfunctional.

—Edgar H Shein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*

Leadership creates and changes cultures, while management and administration act within a culture.

—Edgar H Shein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*

The bottom line for leaders is that if they do not become conscious of the cultures in which they are embedded, those cultures will manage them. Cultural understanding is desirable for all of us, but it is essential to leaders if they are to lead.

—Edgar H Shein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*

Organizational cultural assumptions:

1. Assumptions about people.
2. Assumptions about power and relationships.
3. Assumptions about time and space.
4. Assumptions about ethics.
5. Assumptions about identity and purpose.

Assumptions about people:

Lazy/need incentives

"The average worker wants a job in which he does not have to put much physical effort. Above all, he wants a job in which he does not have to think."

—Henry Ford, 1922

Motivated/need opportunity

"I think most of us are looking for a calling, not a job. Most of us have jobs that are too small for our spirit. Jobs are not big enough for people. There's nothing I would enjoy more than a job so meaningful to me that I brought it home."

—Norah Watson, 1974

Employees look for:

Daily meaning as well as daily bread.

Recognition as well as remuneration.

Worthwhile work.

A meaningful workplace:

1. Sense of purpose: more than producing goods or services, one that makes a difference.
2. Sense of ownership: having some say in how the work is done.
3. Sense of fit: what I do fits into the larger mission.
4. Sense of community: we are doing this together.
5. Sense of contact: we can build worthwhile relationships

Entity A	Entity B

Assumption: People are unmotivated, lazy, dishonest, untrustworthy.

Assumption: People are motivated, responsible, capable, interested, honest.

Decision-making: tends to be more centralized, rules and policies to control behavior, one-way communication, management is more paternalistic.

Decision-making: tends to be more distributed, rules and policies less constrictive, two-way communication, management more collaborative.

Assumptions about relationships:

Age = experience/wisdom	Experience/wisdom distributed
Employees told what to do. Work structured individually. Hierarchical communication. Decisions from top down. Tends for formality.	Employees invited to discuss challenges. Flatter organizational structure. Multi-directional communication. Participatory decision-making. Tends to informality.

Assumptions about time and space:

Time is money—use it carefully. Symbolic meaning to arriving early/late (high commitment or low efficiency/low commitment or high efficiency).

Space: size, location, and furnishings of office
        open office—facilitates communication
        closed office—need to be alone…
        failure to obtain appropriate space
            reward is interpreted negatively

Managers/supervisors are the bearers and transmitters of cultural assumptions. Employee assumptions about the workplace culture are largely influenced by managerial attitudes.

Assumptions about ethics:

Entity A	Entity B
Honesty	Competition (win at any cost)
Integrity	Individualism
Trust	Ladder climbing
Hard work	End justifies the means
Loyalty	Power over others
Commitment	
Respect	
Fairness	

- Mistreatment of employees can be viewed by employees as justifying retaliatory responses (theft, less productivity, absenteeism, noncompliance).

Elements of workplace culture:

Environmental	Behavioral
Polices, rules, regulations	Patterns of communication
Compensation and benefits	Management style
Organizational structure	Decision-making processes
Job design	Degree of feedback and appraisal
Physical workplace	Degree of control or autonomy

Other cultural assumptions

Private vs public

For profit vs Not-for-profit

Service vs acquisition

Goals

Spiritual values (Christlikeness, conversion/baptisms)

Productivity and customer satisfaction are much higher in participatory organizations.

Ethical culture in the workplace

HP Way

A guiding principle at HP: Get the best people, stress teamwork and get employees fired up to work there.

- Personal communication was often necessary to back up written communication.

- Much of the success was from management by walking around.

- Individuals need to be treated with consideration and respect.

- People need the challenge to be their best, to realize their potential and to be recognized for their achievements.

- Personnel's job is to support management, not to supplant it.

- The betterment of our society is not a job to be limited to a few; it is a responsibility to be shared by all.

VERIZON COMMITMENT AND VALUES

…to put our customers first by providing excellent service and great communications experiences. This is what we do and this is why we exist…

INTEGRITY: the heart of everything we do. We are honest, ethical and upfront because trust is at the foundation of our relationships…

RESPECT …(for everyone). We champion diversity, embrace individuality and listen carefully when others speak.

PERFORMANCE EXCELLENCE: very high standard of performance. We prize innovative ideas and teamwork. We never stop asking how we can make the customer experience better, and every day, we find an answer.

ACCOUNTABILITY: take responsibility for our actions as individuals, as team members, and as an organization. We work together, support one another and never let the customer — or our coworkers — down.

GC statement of values:

- *Bible* as the primary reference for life's direction and qualities.
- E*xcellence* in all that we do.
- E*thical and moral conduct* at all times and in all relationships.
- C*reativity and innovation* in the completion of our mission.
- H*onesty, integrity, and courage* as the foundation of all our actions.
- T*rust* placed in us by colleagues and by the world Church membership.
- P*eople* as children of God and therefore brothers and sisters of one family.

GC as employer:

- *Equal opportunity employment.*
- *Equity, fairness and non-discrimination.*
- *Compliance with laws of the land.*
- *Loyalty and fulfillment of contractual obligations.*
- *Atmosphere of safety and happiness.*
- *Respect for human dignity and individuality.*

GC employees:

- *Life consistent with church message and mission.*
- *Respect for Church-owned assets.*
- *Respect for colleagues.*
- *Efficiency and attention on the job.*
- *Personal integrity in financial matters.*
- *Avoiding inappropriate influence.*
- *Maintaining an ethical environment in the workplace.*

Creating and embedding culture

- The effect of leadership charisma—not always predictable or sustainable
- Testing/experimenting with solutions to problems
- Establishing systems to monitor, measure, control, reward
- The power of stories and leadership example
- Formalized statements
- "Little by little" rather than "all of a sudden"

Employees stunned most academics by saying that the code of ethics for their company had very little influence on whether they made ethically correct choices. It was the culture of their companies and the examples set by their leaders that influenced their conduct.

—from a 2004 study by the Journal of Business Ethics

Elements of SDA culture

1. A "called" community
2. A global family (what is the meaning of unity?)
3. Bearers of "truth" (attitude of superiority??)
4. Authority of Bible and Spirit of Prophecy
5. All are gifted, all are needed
6. Shared resources
7. Representative decision-making process
8. Laity/clergy roles fairly distinct
9. Time is short, "end-of-time" tests and hardships
10. Local church/conference/union/division/GC relationship

For consideration:

1. What assumptions (about people, space, time, relationships, ethics, identity) are most helpful in accomplishing mission? What assumptions merit review and adjustment?
2. How do the SDA cultural assumptions stimulate or limit engagement in mission?
3. What can I do in my leadership role to effect positive cultural change in my workplace/church?

Acknowledgements:

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