



Is Your Organisational Culture a Mile Wide and an Inch Deep?

Every company is made up of key elements that affect its performance and growth. These elements need to be properly understood and engaged, and they need to be interconnected to function most effectively. Those elements are your strategy, your processes and your employees. The way in which you ensure they are working together, and in the right way, for your business is through your organisational culture. And before you stop reading, no, chances are, your organisational culture **isn't** working well for your company.

All talk, no action

Aha, you might say, *“that doesn't apply to me, our organisational culture is excellent, here are the five words that sum it up...”* Yes, we've all heard those words before. We've probably used or are using them right now. Let's see if we can guess – words like transparency, integrity, communication, respect and excellence. Did we get any right? These are the type of words that so many companies use to make promises to their customers and employees, ones they often don't intend to (not) keep. The fact is that organisational culture is another benefit of your overall processes that if not done correctly could cost you talent and money; and it isn't as easy as painting giant words on a wall.

The unwritten constitution

Don't misunderstand us, we love plans, lists and words, but they need to have value to be effective. Your organisational culture is derived from the values your company embodies, both written and unwritten, and cemented by the behaviours within your business. If you want your organisational culture to be one that is open, encouraging, innovative and collaborative, (*and trust us you do*), then you need to make sure that these sentiments aren't just handed out. Management need to show employees that they believe in this ethos, that they intend to uphold them at all times; an organisational culture can only be fully accepted when your employees see it in action, consistently. The cascading effect of behaviours and attitudes will run down from the top to the bottom. A good organisational culture is not only reflective of a brand your customers, and stakeholders, want to engage with, it is an excellent motivator for your employees. Increasingly, the most talented employees look for roles that appeal to their needs, so the reputation of a company as a place to work and its overall ethos could make the difference between the right person joining your team or not. Your organisational culture needs to empower your employees and prevent the establishment of a fear-based atmosphere or uncivil behaviour.

The toxic cost

In such a diverse landscape, our workplaces have evolved to include a vast range of people with very different backgrounds, ways of doing things and ways of communicating. Enabling an environment that encourages candid discussions and a free exchange of ideas is a good way to combat this and overcome potential cultural nuances in terms of customs and structures. But this diversity also makes it much harder to spot toxic employees. Toxic employees are like poison to an effective organisational culture. Toxic employees can take many forms; a manager who always talks down to staff or takes credit for their work, a team member who doesn't pull their weight, a leader with favourites or a nasty individual looking for ways to manipulate their environment. The fact is that these type of employees not only cost you in terms of their own performance, but they can drastically impact the productivity of others and potentially cause a good member of staff to quit – costing you your investment, their talent and future success. We all understand the importance employees play in your company's success, but the more impediments you put in front of them, the weaker they will be.

The secret of success

As we stand at the beginning of the [fourth industrial revolution](#) that will hopefully utilise rapid technological advances to improve all of our lives, it is hard to ignore the gargantuan shift occurring in how our workplaces operate. Gone are the days of traditional hierarchies, draconian commands and mindless acquiescence. Globally successful brands are recognising the need to incorporate different approaches in order to grow more effectively. [Google themselves conducted a study](#) that showed cultivating an environment in which every team member felt able to speak as much as the others was essential to achieve higher performance levels. Taking the time to develop more inclusive leadership strategies, hone soft skills and have an accountable and accessible feedback system is going to be hugely beneficial overall, for productivity and revenue generation. Demonstrating and encouraging emotional intelligence increases your brand's emotional capital, which is more and more essential to generating the best results for your bottom line.

To create the best and most effective organisational culture within your business you need to establish which factors most need to be address and if your company is capable of high-level change in order to improve its performance in the long run. Taking the time now could save you a lot in the future.

If you would like to get expert advice on aligning your company's organisational processes, get in touch with Identify Action at <https://identifyaction.com/> or via email on action@identifyaction.com.

Identify Action is a strong, talented team, whose members have been part of the UAE's explosive economic development since 1991. We are of different nationalities and backgrounds, and together have experience of a wide range of regional and multinational industries, at both shop floor and management level.