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Organizational Culture

The culture of an organization is a buzzworthy topic in today's business world, but the actual definition is rather nebulous. It's more than a mission statement or benefits package. It's even more than the environment and people in the office. Culture is a combination of the values, beliefs, and norms that the people in the organization work towards and uphold. Culture includes tangible things like office space, desk layouts, or gym memberships; essentially the culture of an organization could be described as the unique personality of a particular workplace.

Every organization already has a culture, good or bad. It is up to the leaders to take a hard look and determine if the culture is healthy, progressive and conducive to success. Changing the culture takes patience and deliberate conscious planning.

The way of doing business, how staff treat one another, and how they treat clients are all part of the organization's culture. Does the organization share a common ground on communication, feedback and collaboration?

What environment does the employee base work in? Is it designed intelligently and with a culture-oriented mindset, or is it set up as simply and efficiently as possible?

Do the values and beliefs that management hold about the organization and its path sync with the rest of the employee base? Culture is not something that can be assigned or enforced; it is the core of the organization. It permeates the organization from the boardroom to the shop floor.

Questions can keep piling up but in the end what needs to be done is to determine what culture your organization currently has and what changes you would like to see. Your organization is up to you to shape. A successful, modern organizational culture is transparent, responsive, flexible and inclusive. People tend to model what they see, so be aware of the precedents, good and bad, that you and your management team are setting.