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A New Cultural Framework To Enable Your Team To Trust, Collaborate And Communicate



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Leadership

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To become high-performing in this new reality, teams and organizations need to evolve their concept of culture into a much

more useful framework. They need a cultural DNA.

A cultural DNA provides a space where all team members cohabit, interact and work toward a common end — while preserving individual cultural identities.

By cultural identities we mean not just one's national, regional or local culture, but also the local office culture; the culture of being a finance, a commercial or a production person; generation or gender culture; the culture one acquires through education, both formal and through the school of life; culture born out of successes and failures, out of happiness and sadness; the culture shaped out of achievements; what we experience with friends and enemies; the legacy from our families, including the good, the bad and the ugly — and so much more.

We bring together people who are professionals, through a rich collection of experiences that we want to preserve, cherish and harness into a cultural DNA that generates value, energy and passion across the organization.

What does a cultural DNA look like?

A cultural DNA blends powerful ingredients to create a common language. It creates a playing field that is embraced by all team members. The cultural DNA becomes the cement the team uses to build its story. The cultural DNA is the common thread that runs through all members of the team and creates a unified sense of purpose, an ability to trust and to collaborate and a willingness to communicate.

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First, we set the cement for understanding and bonding through:

Purpose

Some may say this first ingredient is a classic, but you need to gather people around a common fire. You need to be able to tell people what the project is all about. What are you trying to achieve? What is the light at the end of the tunnel? What will the end of the road look like? People need to feel the passion and they need to make it their own. You need to tell the story — and then they need to tell the story in their own words. They need to own the purpose. If you want them to engage and be passionate about it, they need to make it theirs. They need to own it.

Values, Behaviors And Rituals

Mutual trust is key to building a powerful team. In fact, mutual trust is the key pillar of any relationship. A key ingredient to this cultural DNA is the adoption of a set of values, behaviors and rituals that foster mutual trust. But it's not just about trust. What other values, behaviors and rituals need to underpin our relationships to facilitate and reinforce the vision we have for this team? A team that shares the same values, behaviors and rituals is a team that interacts well together; it's a team that moves out of its comfort zone, and it's a team that's willing to take some risks.

Second, we set the cement for building efficiency into the day-to-day interactions through:

Decision-Making Model

What filters will be used to make decisions? Time? Fulfillment? Happiness? Inclusion? Money? Efficiency? Quality? Innovation? What will we base our decisions on? How will we make decisions? How will formal and informal decisions be made? By one person? By committee? By consensus? By delegation? Decision-making is key in the engagement, empowerment and ownership of team members.

Conflict Management And Innovation Model

Conflict is both necessary and desirable. It is an integral part of the team's daily life and it is key to stimulate creativity and innovation. Conflict helps us shift and transform paradigms. It makes us question the status quo. It puts the "what if" questions on the table. However, human beings tend to personalize conflict and see it as negative personal criticism. There needs to be some clear rules of engagement to generate the desirable environment to promote constructive conflict within the team.

Third, we set the cement for building communication and understanding through:

Leadership Model

We manage things. We lead people. Management is a science, and it has clear and defined rules. Leadership, on the other hand, is an art. Since leadership is about people and people are unstable, we need adaptive leadership styles to deal with instability and fast-

changing environments. There will be various types of leaders within the team, and there will be more than one leadership style available to deal with the multiple situations that arise. What will those leadership styles be? And how do we make them ours and fully connect with these models.

Diversity Model

There is tremendous power in diversity. And yet, in organizations (as in society), we seem to react uncomfortably to anything that falls outside the norm. However, in a world of uncertainty and rapid change, we need to welcome diversity and all of its power and energy to innovate and seek out answers to new challenges.

Cultural, gender, racial, sexual, generational, skill, behavioral, technological diversity — we need to preserve and utilize this diversity to contribute to the success of the team. Unfortunately, many times we tend to want to normalize a team. We want everyone to look the same, to smell the same, to act the same — and we lose the power of diversity. So, how will we harness the power of diversity to add value and contribute to the team's success? How will we ensure that all the team members feel valued and feel like they're contributing from within their rich and diverse experience and background?

Communication Model

Internal and external communication. Formal and informal communication. Communication builds trust. Clarity, transparency, timeliness, simplicity and accessibility: These are some of the words that create trust through communication. The team will be constantly communicating, so communication is a key

Cookies

ingredient in the team’s cultural DNA. What ingredients will be key to how the team will communicate, both within and outside the team?

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