5 Top Tips You Need to Know to Change Company Culture

You've been told a lie. As a result of this lie, you've let other priorities take over and you remain frustrated with your company culture. Coming to work isn't the joyful experience you once anticipated.

The lie is that culture is led from the top. Yes, the strategy for an organization's culture should be designed by those with the best vision for the company, but we all know that doesn't always happen. And it doesn't mean that we have to abdicate all responsibility and effort to the top of the house either.

"Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek." Barack Obama

I've worked with many clients who were part of a larger organization. Like you, they wanted to create high performing teams that delivered amazing business results. And, to bring a little more happiness into the workplace along the way. Like the proverbial pebble thrown in the pond, once others saw the result of their focus on their culture, the ripples began to flow out.

Every individual plays a role every day in how the workplace experience is being shaped. Therefore, culture can be changed through the efforts of one person at a time, even without being led from the top. Here are 5 practices you can embrace to shift what's going on around you.

1. **Reflect** on what you'd like to see in the culture around you. What would you like more of? What would you like to experience less of? Become aware of the feelings of stress and flow as you go about your work.

2. **Make notes** for a week on the behaviours that you exhibited that supported the culture you want. Maybe there were a few instances where you didn't behave in a way that supported an amazing environment for your co-workers. Becoming self-aware is a key step to understanding the impact and contributions you're making.

3. For a month, **pick a value and focus on it**. My colleague Alan Williams wrote a wonderful book, *The 31 Practices, Release the power of your organization's values every day.* He provides a framework of 31 practical behaviours for creating a sustainable shift in culture.

4. If a month seems too overwhelming, set an intention each morning to focus on a value. For example, if you decide you want more collaboration **wear a lens** of collaboration in everything you do that day. Review every email, have you done an outstanding job to be collaborative yourself, have you recognized and appreciated collaboration, or have you suggested how more collaboration would produce an even better result? The same concentration on the value during a meeting will shift how you think and view the interactions going on.

5. **Partner up** with your colleagues for an even greater impact. Talk about what is working well that you should all keep doing. Identify a few areas that could use some more emphasis. And don't forget to be intentional about the things you should all stop doing. Stopping is sometimes even better than starting.

You don't need a huge project or program to make significant changes to the workplace experience. You don't even need the leaders at the top to be actively championing it. You do need to decide that you will no longer stand by and let things stay as they are.

"What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make."
Dr. Jane Goodall, anthropologist

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