

# CULTURE: WHY IT IS IMPORTANT & HOW TO HIRE FOR IT

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"HIRING THE RIGHT PEOPLE TAKES TIME, THE RIGHT QUESTIONS AND A HEALTHY DOSE OF CURIOSITY. WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR WHEN BUILDING YOUR TEAM? FOR US, IT'S PERSONALITY." RICHARD BRANSON



Culture is both the secret sauce of successful organizations, and the achilles heel of those who are struggling.

Creating a culture that is both meaningful and impactful isn't an easy task. In fact, Deloitte's 2016 Global Human Capital Trends report uncovered that while 86% of respondents believe "corporate culture" is important to success, 28% have no clue what their organization's culture actually is. In their 2017 report, Deloitte identifies culture and engagement one of the top trends for building the organization of the future.

But culture-building isn't just a marketing campaign, or a selection of perks, and perhaps that's where many organizations

veer off course. Culture change is, first and foremost, behavior change that's communicated and implemented across the organization (and not just from the top down). While HR plays a significant role in creating frameworks for change, a true transformation can't happen without it being a team effort.

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**86%**

*of executives believe Corporate Culture is important to success*

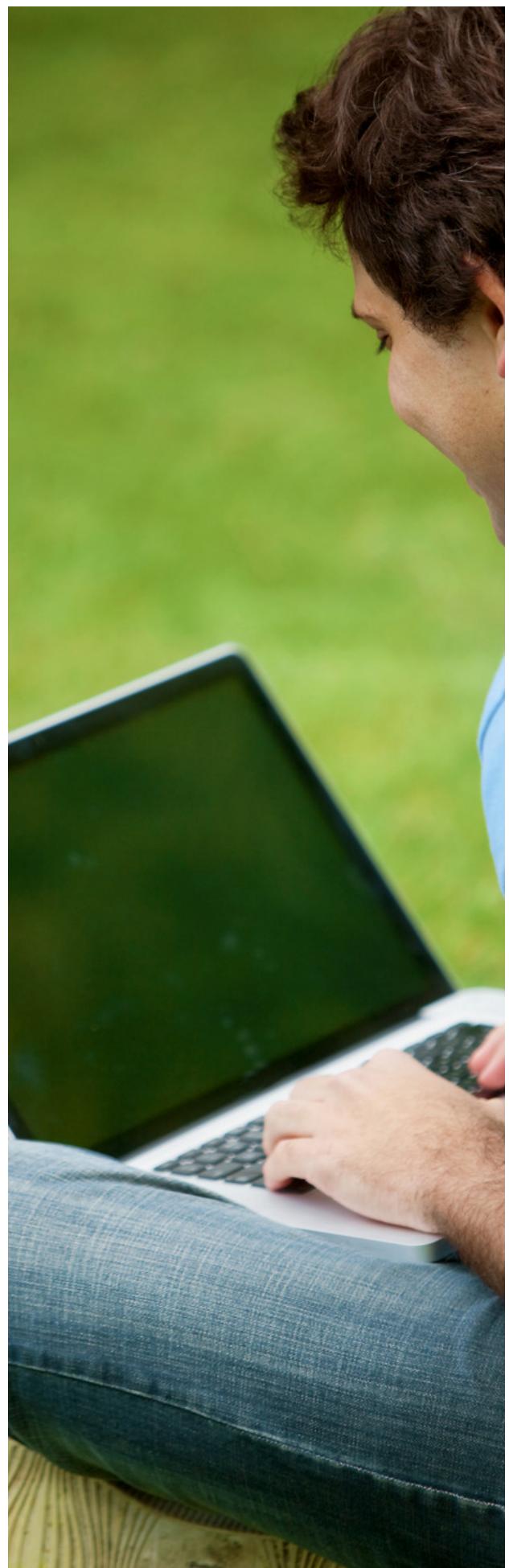
# DEFINE YOUR CULTURE

Saying that you want to strive to build a good culture is one thing. But, how do you go about taking actionable steps do it?

Here's a few tasks you can try out to help define your culture:

- Your true culture should be a reflection of the core values and principles of your business and the work you set out to accomplish.
- Make sure you get input from managers and your HR team, as their thoughts will be a valuable component in helping to establish your culture.
- Get input from your employees, too. Listen and engage with them, across every aspect of your organization. You'll be surprised at how they view your company and what they expect or want from its culture.

Adaptability  
Opportunities  
Strategy  
Teamwork  
Creativity  
Strong  
Trust  
Results  
Respect  
Entrepreneurial  
Orientation  
Communication  
Sense  
Fun  
Meaning  
Goals  
Clear  
Fairness  
Learning  
Engagement  
Responsibility  
Environment  
Employees  
Loud  
Philanthropic  
Employee



Job candidates think a lot differently about where they want to work. Gone are the days of working for a single employer for a lifetime, before retiring and setting off to the golden years.

Today, employees are likely to bounce around from company to company, and a variety of factors helps them decide when to leave and where to go. Cultural influences, a company's mission, and transparency are no small part of those decisions.

So, can you be the company your employees want you to be?

Absolutely. We think so.

## WHY CULTURE? IT MATTERS TO YOUR FUTURE EMPLOYEES

It all starts with forming a culture and fostering an environment that people actually want to be part of.

According to research from the Duke Fuqua School of Business, more than 90 percent of executives surveyed said culture is important at their firms. Seventy percent said culture is among the top five things that make their companies valuable.





Increasingly, your future employees will be holding you to a higher standard when evaluating where they can begin or continue their career.

In today's marketplace, many brands are elevating their presence through creative, purpose-driven, and conscious approaches. The latest Super Bowl advertisement that brings a tear to your eye, or makes you think about a cultural moment or even a political movement is equal measures an attempt to bring their mission forward into a new age as well as a recruitment tool.

By now, it should be increasingly clear why hiring for culture is crucial for your business.

Employees that fit well with a cultural identity and see the potential to accomplish meaningful work had superior job performance and greater overall job satisfaction.

According to a survey of recruiters, 84% of them agree that cultural fit -- not the time and cost to hire for a specific role -- is one of the most important recruitment factors.

**EMPLOYEES THAT FIT WELL WITH A CULTURAL IDENTITY HAD SUPERIOR JOB PERFORMANCE**

# HIRING FOR CULTURE

**Be Human.** Your most important capital are your employees -- the people who comprise your organization and will help define its successes. When you're interviewing people -- think about how to be human and have conversations that go beyond the conventional, tired question and answer sessions in a drab meeting room. Tailor conversations according to the role and invite team members who will collaborate with them into the dialogue during interviews.

**Be Open.** When talking to prospective employees, show them around the office and let them soak in what makes your company, culture and identity unique.

**Think In New Ways.** What makes your organization unique? How can you search out employees in new places. Go beyond job search sites and find potential candidates in unique places. Are there skilled workers discussing topics on social media channels like LinkedIn, or spending time writing quality answers on Quora -- then drop them a line and see what they're looking for. Sourcing employees in meetups or other settings also could work.

**Think out of the box:** When you're hiring your future cultural ambassadors, think about the new ways you can find your employees. AllBirds exemplifies this by always listing a "Dream Job" opening on their site that allows you to fill out an application for a role that's not even listed.



**Ask great questions:** Here are some questions that will help assess culture fit in an interview:

- Describe the work environment and culture where you are most productive
- What type of culture do you thrive in? (Does the response reflect your organizational culture?)
- When you work with a team, describe the role you are most likely to play
- Walk me through a time where you went above and beyond for a customer
- What values are you drawn to?
- Why do you want to work here?
- How would you describe our culture based on what you've seen? Is this something that works for you?

## ASK GREAT QUESTIONS & LISTEN TO THE ANSWERS

It's important to really listen to the answers you'll get from these questions. Ask yourself (and have anyone from your team who is interviewing) if these answers align with your culture. Do the candidates' values match up with your company values? Were there contradictions that came up? Or, were there questions that were not answered? In the end, be sure to follow your gut instinct. Visualize working with this person and ask yourself if they seem like a strong cultural match to your business.





Job Descriptions that Mirror Culture. A cold job description simply can't help showcase your culture to a prospective hire. For people who apply to Zappos, they're instantly connected with what exemplifies their culture even as they're reading the job description. They take that very seriously in their hiring -- the first interview is a cultural fit interview. Technical background matters very little here, what matters most is the candidate's cultural fit. There's a good lesson here: First you hire for culture, then you hire for skill. You can always train someone to be better, skill-wise.

Not properly hiring and vetting for culture can have a ripple effect of negative consequences like increased turnover, decreased productivity, a lack of direction,

low morale, and worse, a negative reputation that impacts your ability to acquire talent in the future.

## CULTURE IS A LIVING THING

Think of your culture like a living, breathing thing. It can grow and change over time. But, most importantly, it's about respect and alignment to corporate missions and values.

This starts from the very first employee who is hired, and continues well after the company has been established. Be conscious of these concepts early and it will help set you up for success.



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