

Capturing your culture is your key to growth

Organisational culture can be captured, described, celebrated and put to work as you grow.

Organisational culture is real.

It can be measured, described and celebrated.

You can use it to find the people you want and to keep those you value.

Where desired, you can adjust your culture and reinforce the behaviours you want to see more.

Every organisation already has a culture; it just needs to be captured and then refined.

We first started looking into organisational culture decades ago, but it became vitally important in the 1980s.

At that time some well-established firms needed to expand quickly. They started hiring people from places they hadn't looked at before. When those new hires failed to settle and thrive, organisational psychologists were asked to understand why this was the case.

At this time, an Organisational Psychologist called Edgar Schein calculated that culture was made up of three areas:

- Artifacts (visible, describable aspects of the organisation)
- Espoused values (how people describe the organisation)
- Underlying assumptions (unconscious, unspoken elements of the organisation)

We have a method that captures each of these three areas, and that enables the organisation to state the culture clearly.

Some people believe that organisational culture is by nature exclusive. In truth, it is an inclusive tool when used ethically.

What we can include in a culture

When describing yourselves you can say that you are:

- Detail focused
- Collaborative
- Quality driven
- Responsible
- Smart
- Authentic
- Fun
- Serious/light-hearted
- Formal or informal
- Innovative
- etc. etc. etc.

What we **don't** include

When describing yourselves, you would not want to say anything that may put off any group of people covered by the Equality Act.

For example, you wouldn't say that you had a "young" culture, or that you were all "experienced" at the other end of the spectrum.

Every organisation has enough common culture to steer away from anything discriminatory. We will always guide you on choosing a representation that keeps you free to hire anyone of the right standard.

Once we get your culture to the point where you feel it absolutely represents your organisation, top to bottom, you can put it to work in many ways.

Tell your customers/clients what you all stand for and value.

Enable people to be different, but to all work to the same standards.

Test people at interview for fit with your culture.

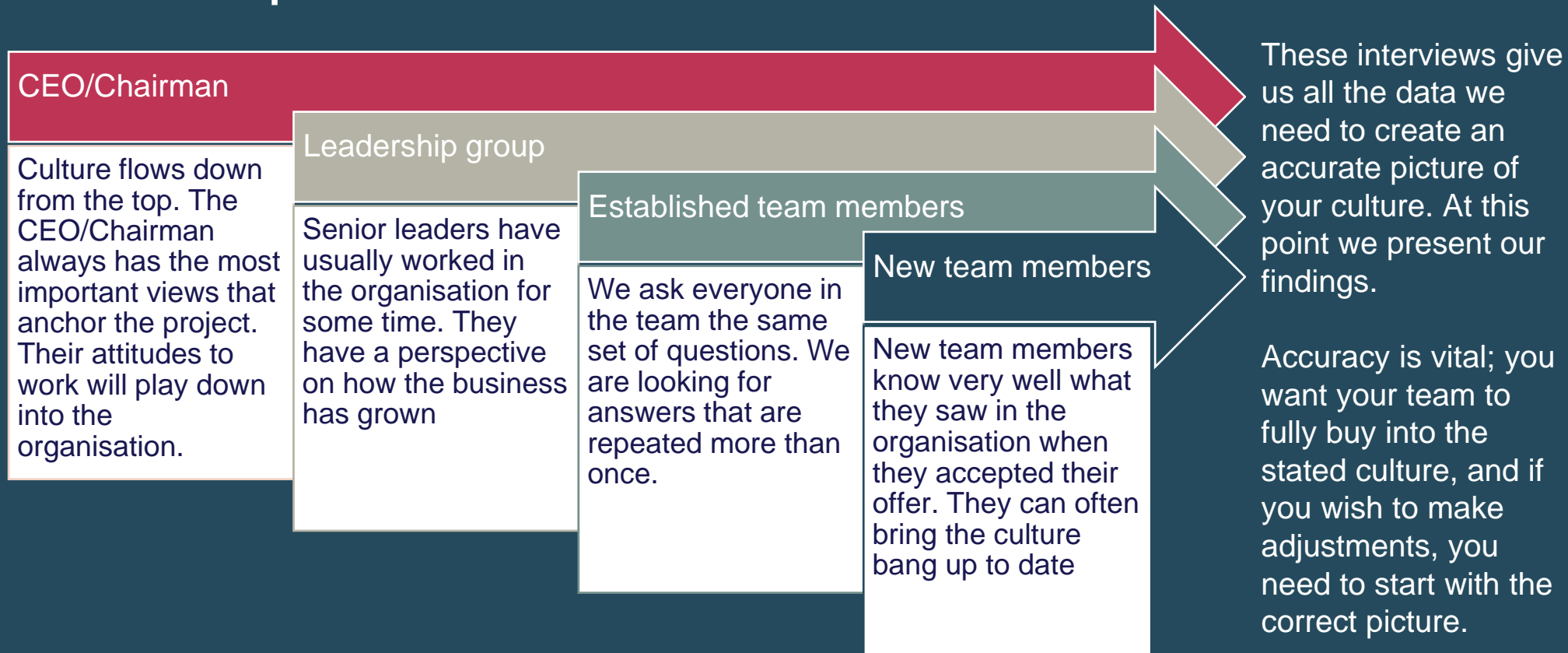
Use the culture to let your team know what you expect from them.

Design a full suite of People processes that reinforce your culture.

Create an organisation that people just don't want to leave.

Hire from a wider pool to get the very best talent, without disruption to your team.

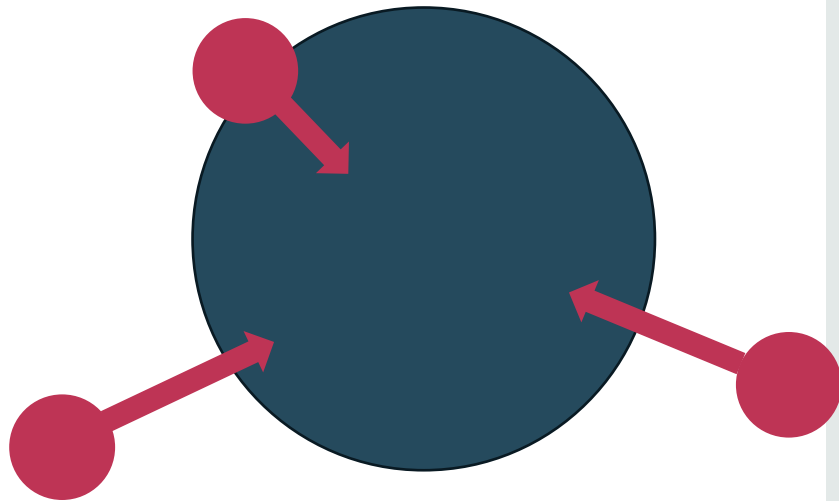
To get an in depth, accurate picture of your culture, we speak to everyone to get their views. You are aiming for a shared understanding that is central to your entire organisation. It should run through your team like the words in a stick of Blackpool rock.



We don't approach this as a fun exercise, and it shouldn't be just a "nice to have". An accurately captured and carefully managed culture can be the key to any organisation's success.

Some people prefer to create a desired culture, and then use organisational change to bend the team towards it. We do not favour this model as it can create enormous upheaval and cause you to lose good people.

Instead we work from what you have, and can then advise you on nudging people towards it through communication and training.



Most of your team will exhibit most of the qualities you desire.

Every organisation has one or two that don't.

Because they have been so invested in capturing the culture, your core team will reinforce the qualities you admire.

Those who don't will either be drawn towards the majority, or they will very obviously sit outside.

They can then be coaxed towards the core culture, or they you have

another tool in your arsenal for dealing with an outlier.

Over time you will start to see gaps in the culture, or rather some qualities that you would like to further refine.

At this point the culture is stable, it is easy to introduce a new element. For example, your team might work hard and take responsibility, but they aren't creative in their problem solving. At this point you only need to train everyone in creative problem solving, and the culture grows.

We work on an organisation-by-organisation basis.

Some organisations will be happy for us to run a standard process, and will be keen for us to run through it with minimal check-ins.

Other organisations will want to be more involved with the process, with more control over the process, and that also works for us.

If you are interested, please contact us to set up an initial meeting. Our only non-negotiable points are that:

- Everyone in the organisation is involved, including the CEO/Chairman and senior leadership team. Without this, the work will have no real value to you.
- You're happy for us to ensure your culture is fully inclusive.

Please get in touch if you'd like to discover more.