

CLARITY, COMMITMENT, CONSISTENCY

CULTURE ASSESSMENT

In simple terms, culture is the way people show up, treat each other, and approach their work; it's the rules of engagement that define what it means to be part of a team. Exceptional culture is achieved through clearly defined behaviors and mindsets that are universally understood, that everyone takes ownership and accountability for, and that absolutely no one is exempt from.

In order for culture to be something tangible that employees actually live and experience every day, it must be present and integrated into the processes, operations, and DNA of the organization. That means being incorporated into hiring & on-boarding, coaching & feedback, training & development, rewards & recognition, and other core aspects of employee experience.

How to use this assessment: Ask these questions to evaluate and pinpoint where your organization's culture is today based on Galen's "Clarity, Commitment, Consistency" approach. As you identify the biggest areas of opportunity for growth, use the action steps from each section to help you design and establish an intentional culture and bring it to life within your organization.

CLARITY

- Are you relying on broad, general concepts and values like 'Respect' or 'Excellence' to teach people how to be?
- Do you have clearly defined behavioral ground rules in your organization? Do they address how people are expected to approach their work and also how to treat others?
- Do those ground rules speak to specific, vital topics like feedback, conflict, navigating change, accountability, work ethic, diversity & inclusion, etc?
- How and when are these articulated to employees? Are behavioral norms unspoken and learned through observation, or are they presented in a way that everyone has a clear understanding of how to contribute successfully to your culture from day one?

To focus on increasing clarity in your culture, here are some action steps to take:

- Generate a list of clear and specific behaviors that leave no room for interpretation to employees about how they're expected to show up as part of your team. (I refer to this document as your "Cultural DNA Code")
- Use authentic, real, straightforward language that's unique to your organization. Make it feel like it was written by real humans, not an HR jargon generator.
- Inspire people, don't make it feel like a list of rules or a safety compliance manual. The focus is not on policing bad behavior, it's about articulating what exceptional looks like.
- Use "We statements" to reinforce that all behaviors apply to everyone. (For example: "We see feedback as vital to improvement, and we actively seek it out from others.")
- Make your Cultural DNA Code all fit onto one page in a layout that's simple to understand.

COMMITMENT

- Within your organization, is absolutely everyone held accountable to the same standards of behavior and performance?
- Are there discrepancies between the behaviors that define your culture, and what is allowed to take place in terms of behavior and performance? Does it vary from team to team?
- Are there employees in your organization that are exempt or "untouchable" from having to act in alignment with your culture due to their seniority or tenure in the organization?
- Is it understood by everyone that acting out of alignment with your culture is something that would definitely be addressed, and doing it repeatedly would put someone's job at stake?
- Who "holds the cards" when it comes to holding others accountable to your culture? Are leaders exempt from feedback, is it safe for employees to speak truth to power?

To focus on increasing commitment in your culture, here are some action steps to take:

- Get clear as a leadership team that the rules of engagement that define your culture truly apply to everyone in the organization regardless of title, tenure, or skill set — no exceptions.
- Reframe mindsets that accountability is not about punishment, it's about unwavering commitment. Understand that whatever you allow, you endorse.
- Hold leaders to the highest standards to model and exemplify the behavioral expectations that exist for employees at every level.
- Be committed to removing someone from the organization if they repeatedly act out of alignment with your culture after attempts to change their behavior.
- Develop feedback and evaluation processes that reinforce your commitment to culture and empower all employees to have a voice in holding the organization accountable.

CONSISTENCY

- If you asked 10 randomly selected employees across your organization to describe your culture, how consistent would their answers be? Would they understand what you mean?
- Is your culture present and integrated into core processes and the experience of employees? When and how does it get talked about or revisited?
- Is feedback and coaching to employees and leaders structured around your cultural behavior expectations as the basis?
- Is your culture consistent and clear enough that it would remain intact even if a number of key people changed positions, left, or were replaced for any reason?

To focus on increasing consistency in your culture, here are some action steps to take:

- Develop a plan to intentionally integrate your Cultural DNA Code into core processes; hiring, onboarding, team conversations, training & development, feedback & coaching, etc.
- Get clear about the answer to this question: "How do we treat people how to be here, and how do we revisit, reinforce, highlight, and evaluate that on an ongoing basis?"
- Establish monthly team meetings where you revisit your Cultural DNA Code and every person reflects about how they're showing up in relation to those behaviors. Make it an opportunity for your team to also share positive kudos and acknowledge each other by highlighting great examples of those behaviors in action.