



ELP Keeping Culture Alive

Ensuring that a positive and productive culture is kept alive within an organisation requires ongoing effort and consistent reinforcement from leaders. Here are some strategies that leaders can use to sustain the culture they are trying to create:

Strategies to Sustain Organisational Culture

1. Lead by Example

- Consistency in Actions: Leaders should embody the values and behaviours they want to see in their teams. Consistent actions reinforce the desired culture.
- Visibility: Be present and actively engage with employees, demonstrating commitment to the culture.

2. Regular Communication

- Clear Messaging: Frequently communicate the organisation's values, vision, and goals. Use various channels such as meetings, newsletters, and emails.
- Two-Way Dialogue: Encourage open communication and feedback. Regularly solicit input from employees to ensure the culture remains relevant and inclusive.

3. Recognition and Rewards

- Celebrate Successes: Recognize and reward behaviors that align with the desired culture. Publicly celebrate successes and contributions that exemplify the organisation's values.
- Incentive Programs: Implement programs that reward employees for demonstrating cultural values, such as employee of the month, bonuses, or other incentives.

4. Ongoing Training and Development

- Continuous Learning: Provide ongoing training and development opportunities that reinforce cultural values and promote skill-building.
- Cultural Onboarding: Ensure new hires receive thorough orientation on the organisation's culture, values, and expectations.

5. Alignment of Policies and Practices

- Consistent Policies: Ensure that all policies, procedures, and practices are aligned with the desired culture. This includes hiring, performance evaluations, promotions, and disciplinary actions.
- Cultural Fit: During the hiring process, assess candidates for cultural fit as well as technical skills.

6. Empowerment and Autonomy

- Empower Employees: Give employees the autonomy to make decisions and take ownership of their work. Empowerment fosters a sense of responsibility and commitment to the culture.
- Supportive Environment: Create an environment where employees feel supported and valued, encouraging them to uphold and contribute to the culture.

7. Regular Cultural Assessments

- Culture Surveys: Conduct regular surveys to assess the health of the organisational culture. Use the feedback to make necessary adjustments and improvements.
- Focus Groups: Organize focus groups to dive deeper into cultural issues and gather qualitative insights.

8. Leadership Development

- Develop Future Leaders: Invest in leadership development programs to ensure future leaders are equipped to sustain and evolve the culture.
- Mentorship Programs: Establish mentorship programs to guide new and emerging leaders in understanding and promoting the culture.

9. Flexibility and Adaptability

- Adapt to Change: Be open to evolving the culture in response to changes within the organisation and the external environment. Flexibility ensures the culture remains relevant and effective.
- Continuous Improvement: Encourage a mindset of continuous improvement, where the culture is regularly reviewed and enhanced.

Examples and Best Practices

1. Zappos' Culture of Customer Service

- Example: Zappos is renowned for its customer service culture. The company's CEO, Tony Hsieh, emphasized leading by example and maintaining clear communication about cultural values.
- Practice: Zappos has a thorough onboarding process that includes cultural training. They also have a "Culture Book" where employees share stories and reflections about the company culture.

2. Netflix's Culture of Freedom and Responsibility

- Example: Netflix promotes a culture of freedom and responsibility, giving employees significant autonomy while expecting high performance.
- Practice: Netflix maintains this culture through clear communication of values, alignment of policies with cultural principles, and by empowering employees to make decisions.

3. Google's Culture of Innovation

- Example: Google fosters a culture of innovation by encouraging employees to spend 20% of their time on projects that interest them.
- Practice: Google supports this culture through regular training, innovation workshops, and by recognising and rewarding innovative contributions.

By implementing these strategies, leaders can create a dynamic and resilient culture that evolves with the organisation while staying true to its core values. This sustained cultural alignment helps drive long-term success and employee engagement.