



Organisational Culture

The Challenge

When organisational effectiveness is assessed, analysts rightly scrutinise the relevant industry output metrics. Identifying what the organisation delivers is fundamental to understanding how to improve unsatisfactory performance or build on success.

Understanding **how** an organisation achieves its outputs creates far deeper insight into realising sustainable organisational improvement. Appreciating how organisations create winning performance involves going beyond technology, strategy, commercial acumen and operational excellence; these are important.

The defining organisational success factor is having a compelling culture.

Culture - summarised as “the way things get done around here” - describes the way in which people interact with each other, their stakeholders and the wider community.

Culture is the self-perpetuating collection of shared beliefs, values, knowledge, methods and rituals: it is the social framework within which groups of people function.

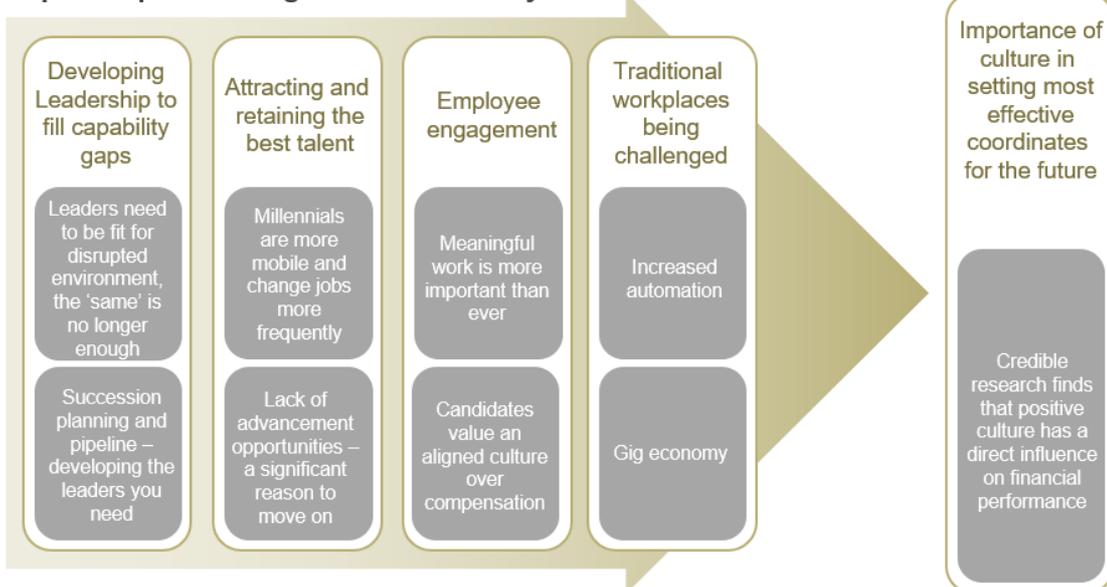
Why is culture important, right now?

Embedding a culture that reflects both the organisation’s values, behaviours and aspirations and its overarching purpose and vision creates a positive climate in which people can:

- bring their authentic selves to work
- be the best of what they are
- do what they do best, every day

Leaders who establish and nurture a highly effective organisational culture will create an environment in which everyone’s aspirations can be realised, including those of the organisation.

Top 5 People Challenges in 2018 and beyond



Source: Forbes online, July 2017, based on Deloitte and Korn Ferry survey data



Can organisational culture be created?

Organisational culture is the combination of all the behaviours of its leaders and influential people, as observed by the organisation's members and other stakeholders.

Every action exhibited; every decision made; each behaviour displayed contribute to the prevailing culture.

So, to the extent that leaders can be developed to 'behave' appropriately, culture can be created and doing this with authenticity and trust avoids perceived manipulation or prescription. Developing organisational culture begins with leader development. Culture develops as organisations see a consistent set of behaviours; behavioural role models become established; expectations form and the unwritten rules of corporate engagement take root.

The Primeast Approach

We start with values. Understanding the underlying drivers of behaviour helps to define how they shape cultural development. Behaviours are sometimes contextual, relating to immediate circumstances or emotional states. Some intrinsic behaviours stem from our past, upbringing and key life influences. These beliefs and values set our behavioural compass.

Using values as a basis for decision-making creates links with the desired future because values transcend both context and experience. Values based decision-making enables leaders to handle complex situations and to be adaptable.

“Since the world we live in, particularly the business world, is becoming increasingly complex, chaotic, and unpredictable, values provide a more flexible mode of decision making than beliefs.” *Richard Barrett, Barrett Values*

How does all this really help?

This approach - using values as the core 'currency' of organisational culture – achieves several outcomes, illustrated below.





How will you know when you've got it?

You'll know you've got high levels of engagement and alignment when:

- Employees seem to work well together without high levels of supervision or direction
- People offer discretionary effort to each other when customers demand it
- People seem to work 'in flow' (i.e. they have opportunities to do what they do best and can give themselves wholly to this)
- Difficult conversations can be had without fear of personal attack
- Decisions are reached after consultation with the affected people in a spirit of openness and objectivity
- Employees act spontaneously as advocates for their organisation

So, how can Primeast help?

If organisational culture is important for you – and it probably should be – you will want to know:

How can I identify my company's culture right now?

How do I know if it's working for us?

What can I do about it?

Primeast works with clients in an enquiry-framework. We:

- Engage with you and your stakeholders to find out what is important for the organisation
- Recommend the most appropriate method for measuring current culture
- Conduct work to establish desired culture
- Collaborate with you to design a culture development programme - ensuring that operational and interpersonal elements are complementary, relevant and directly linked to your organisation
- Putting your employees at the centre of our work ensures that culture development is peer supported
- Help employees to embrace being in a values-led organisation
- Provide organisation specific culture enhancing experiences relevant to your managers' or leaders' capabilities

Primeast Client Story: Understanding culture during Rolls-Royce British-Spanish M&A

"We ran a competitive tender to identify the consultants that we felt could best help us understand the working cultures and opportunities of bringing together two organisations...Primeast were professional, experienced and very knowledgeable, and tailored their solution to meet our business need. Although it is still too early to comment on the outcome, the actions we have identified have been well received and should play a significant role in the success of integrating two companies."

Colin Whitaker, Director of Global HR Services at Rolls-Royce



Rolls-Royce



Rolls-Royce was keen to understand how to integrate a new Spanish acquisition by exploring the different ways of working between the two companies and engaged Primeast as its solution provider. We offered a non-threatening approach, entirely focussed on the two parties (rather than the pre-conceptions of a benchmarked or normed approach).

Rolls-Royce was keen that the acquisition took on the appearance of a merger, to protect the various stakeholder relationships. Furthermore, it was important that the project-outputs acceptable to the relevant regulatory bodies.

Primeast developed a values-based culture survey in Spanish and English, to provide quality insight into the respective 'ways of working' of each party and relevant client functions. Crucially, we provided specific insight into critical cultural drivers and identified the values that would characterise the new organisation's future success. Working with over 600 respondents, we conducted several Barrett Values Centre surveys resulting in a summary for functions and locations for each company. Primeast shared the outputs and resulting insights with the senior integration steering group in May 2017.

Conducting a *cultural due diligence* was fundamental because it gave senior people the reassurance that the cultural 'stretch' between the organisations was bridgeable, demonstrated some shared views about how the future is perceived by both parties, highlighted some cultural 'pinch-points' and provided the basis for an improved integration plan.

Let's talk

Call us for an informal conversation about how we can support you with the organisation development challenges you face right now:

Call Primeast UK
Tel: +44 (0) 1423 531 083

Call Primeast North America
Tel: +1 281 719 1493

Email
enquiries@primeast.com

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