



How to Develop Corporate Culture That Attracts Top Talent

What sets companies like Google, Salesforce, and Hyatt apart from the rest? These companies are regularly named at the top of lists as the **best companies to work for**. Experts cite stories of companies offering unique benefits, clear training programs, and perks like snacks and nap areas to highlight what sets these employers apart from the rest.

But the best employers don't always need to stock Doritos in the break room or host company kickball tournaments to appease their employees. The best companies have a clear and healthy culture that employees respond to.

When you have a thriving company culture, your employees will pay you back for your efforts. Here is why you need to invest in your overall culture and a list of concrete steps you can take today to support your workforce.

Why Should You Invest in Your Corporate Culture?

There is a clear business case for investing in your company culture. The more engaged and happy your employees are in their workplace, the more likely they are to produce.

- **One study at the University of Warwick found that happy employees were 12 percent more productive than the average worker, while unhappy employees were 10 percent less productive than average.**
- **Another study from the New Century Financial Corporation found that disengaged employees produce 28 percent less revenue than those who are engaged.**

Your investment in a healthy culture can produce a clear ROI to your brand, as long as you know what to look for and what to measure. Outside of productivity, there are multiple other reasons why you should care about the company culture in your office and take steps to improve it. The benefits of a positive company culture start the day a prospective employee walks in for an interview and extends through their last day at the firm.



8 Reasons to Care About Your Company Culture

1. **Better Talent Acquisition:** a positive company culture attracts better prospects, deepening your hiring pool, because more people will want to work at your company.
2. **More Aligned Employees:** team members in a healthy company culture are more aligned with overall corporate goals and the company mission statement.
3. **Increased Collaboration:** employees who enjoy working together are more likely to form partnerships on projects to move the company forward.
4. **Happier Customers:** when you put employees first, they want to do more for customers, resulting in a better experience for everyone involved.
5. **Lower Turnover:** engaged employees are less likely to leave, lowering expenses and decreasing lost productivity from unfilled positions.
6. **Better Succession Planning:** lower turnover rates mean you can prepare existing employees to step into leadership roles and continue your company's growth.
7. **Increased Revenue:** as we saw above, happier employees are productive employees who work to grow your company.
8. **Happier Shareholders:** Being named one of [Glassdoor's](#) "Best Places to Work," is associated with a 0.75 percent stock jump.

It's time to stop looking at your corporate culture as an HR expense and start treating it like an investment in your company. Your culture affects employees at all levels of your firm, with impacts reaching to every aspect of production.

5 Steps to Build a Great Corporate Culture

Step One: Assess Your Existing Company Culture

Every employer wants to think they have a great company culture, but that doesn't mean they do. What you see as a CEO or HR manager often differs from what actually goes on between employees. Even if you do have a healthy culture, there is always room for improvement.

There are multiple ways you can evaluate your culture:

- **Hire an outside firm that specializes in culture reviews and recommendations.**
- **Conduct anonymous surveys with employees.**
- **Set up individual employee interviews at all levels to see what they think.**
- **Schedule open town halls to start discussions around company culture and improvements.**

In all likelihood, your company will utilize a handful of different options to review your existing culture. You may introduce the culture initiative through a town hall meeting and then take the discussion to the individual or small group level.

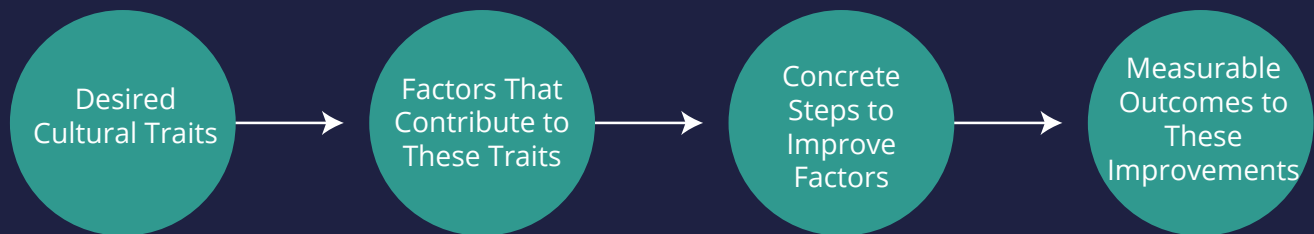
This process can make or break your cultural improvement efforts. If you ask the wrong questions, or ask them in the wrong format, you could walk away thinking that your culture is fine, when really your employees aren't telling you what you need to know. Communication expert Alison Davis shared a few of the top questions she asks when reviewing a company's culture:

- **What actions are needed to improve the current company culture?**
- **How do leaders assert their authority within the company?**
- **How is success rewarded and failure addressed?**
- **How does our culture shape how you manage your roles and responsibilities?**
- **Do any values or policies have unintended consequences for how employees work together?**

These are the hard questions. The goal is to find out how you can improve, not to validate any existing beliefs that your company is flawless in every way.

Step Two: Identify the Changes You Want to Make

Your evaluation should give you a clear idea of what you want to change within your company. Many you want to close communication gaps that leave some employees out of the loop and make them feel isolated. Maybe you want to increase trust in your staff that management is acting in their best interest. As you identify these traits, you can develop steps to achieve your goals with measurable outcomes.



This flowchart helps you turn high-level ideals like “improve communication,” into action items like “set up weekly check-ins,” and “review company goals in quarterly town halls.” This process will make it easier to execute your cultural improvements and evaluate what efforts work and which ones don’t.



Know the Difference Between Perks and Culture

As you identify cultural problems and set goals for improvement, make sure you are addressing corporate culture, not desired employee perks.

When people list their top places to work and name Google, they typically mention the free meals and slides built into the company to explain why they think it would be a cool place to work. However, these aspects are perks, not culture. Even the most toxic companies in the world can install slides or place vegetables in the vending machines.

Below is a handy chart to give you an idea for the difference between perks and culture, so you can focus developing a healthy workplace that your employees enjoy showing up to every day:

PERKS	CULTURE
Generous or unlimited vacation days	Employees who feel comfortable using their vacation without guilt
Free lunch beer on Fridays	Coworkers who eat together instead of taking lunch alone or at their desks
Bean bag chairs and an open floor plan	Teams that collaborate together and form groups to execute projects
A work from home policy	Managers who trust employees to get work done even if they're working remotely
Bonuses for the top performers in the company	Employees who use their sick days because they don't feel pressured to come in
A company gym or wellness program	

[Kickstarter](#) is a great example of a company that focused on perks instead of culture. A few years ago it launched a new unlimited vacation policy. Employees could take all the time they wanted to travel, be with their families, and enjoy personal time. Employees actually used less vacation time than before because they felt pressured to come in and work. The company culture was toxic to the point where employees wanted to look like good workers by not using their vacation time. Within a year, the policy changed.

Step Three: Brainstorm Ways to Achieve Your Cultural Goals

There is good news for founders and executives who feel overwhelmed by the cultural changes you want to make: you don't have to do it alone! Even if you decide to improve your corporate culture internally without outside support, you can use your team members to help you find ways to achieve your goals.

Once you have identified a handful of ways to improve your culture, reach out to your team for ideas on how to achieve those goals. You may already have this information at your fingertips if you interviewed your staff before launching your cultural improvement initiative.

Encourage your employees to come up with ideas on how you can reach your cultural goals. There are multiple ways you can do this:

- **Ask each employee (regardless of their level in the company) to come up with steps they can take to achieve the company's culture goals.**
- **Set up a submission email for team members to offer suggestions to management and HR.**
- **Offer rewards or incentives for employees who come up with plans to improve the company culture.**
- **Highlight successful ideas and initiatives that work in your company.**
- **Learn what other companies do to improve their culture and see if those tactics can apply to your business.**

Every company has its own problems and unique solutions.

You don't have to pick one solution or set the changes you make in stone. Consider multiple options and test different ideas to see how they work.



Step Four: Get Management Buy-In for a Top-Down Approach

Your managers are the key to determining how successful your cultural improvements will be. If your executive team brushes off the changes as unimportant to daily operations or not worth prioritizing, then your employees won't be willing to make any changes either.

Your managers set the priorities for your staff and determine the values and expectations of the company.

Many companies take a top-down approach to improving the overall culture. While they may introduce the changes on a full-scale level, HR will begin training executives on cultural improvements and then ask them to pass the information down to managers, supervisors, and then individual employees.

This top-down process makes it easy to hold small groups of people accountable for following the cultural improvement goals. If one department or team isn't prioritizing the efforts, then HR can identify the source of the apathy.

The top-down approach only works if employees can provide feedback as to whether their managers are taking the efforts seriously or not, or if there are clear metrics to prove that all team members are making an effort. Otherwise, HR has to rely on feedback from management, which can skew responses based on what the HR and executive team wants to hear.

Step Five: Evaluate Your Cultural Improvement Efforts

As you take steps to improve your company's culture, check to see how your efforts are received.

- **Are your employees receptive to the changes?**
- **Are managers dedicating time and effort to focus on culture?**
- **Are your results tangible and permeating through the company?**

For your company culture to truly change, it must be part of every aspect of your company. Sometimes, a healthy culture can exist in one department but not another.

You may notice some unexpected side effects or changes as a result of these improvements. For example, some employees may decide that it is time to leave because they can't get away with bad habits anymore. This is completely normal and part of the growing process.

Avoid Falling Back Into Old Habits

Corporate culture isn't a static entity. A healthy culture that you create at one point in time can sour and become toxic.

This often occurs during busy and stressful times in a company's operations. Keep an eye out for these symptoms to make sure that your culture isn't reverting back to its old ways:

- **Your employees are disengaged in their work.**
- **Complaints about managers and coworkers to HR increase.**
- **Your turnover rates start to creep up again.**
- **Your team stops meeting deadlines and goals on time.**
- **The number of new projects decreases as employees stop collaborating or working to do better.**
- **There is a lack of empathy for team members as employees stop considering the other points of view of their coworkers.**

It is unlikely that your employees will walk up and tell you that the culture is bad. This is why it is essential for HR and management to maintain and improve upon the cultural improvement initiatives that you implemented.



Continuously Strive to Improve Your Culture

You are never really done improving your overall culture. Even if your employees tell you they are satisfied working for you, there is always room to grow and improve. By following these steps, you can work to maintain a healthy culture and try to identify new ways to keep employees engaged, motivated, and eager to do more.

Want to talk about how Corban OneSource can handle the must-haves so your staff can focus on culture?

[Contact us](#) for a free discovery call today at (844) 394-3279.

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