



# CULTURE CODE

PRESENTED BY CULTURE LAB<sup>X</sup>

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A FIELD GUIDE FOR PEOPLE  
CREATING THE FUTURE OF WORK

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Culture Lab<sup>x</sup> is a global community of founders, designers, and practitioners who curate conversations, connect communities, and experiment with the future of work.



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# COMPONENTS OF CULTURE



PURPOSE

CONNECTS  
DAILY WORK  
TO THE VISION



VALUES

BELIEFS ABOUT  
WHAT'S MOST  
IMPORTANT



BEHAVIORS

ACTIONS THAT  
ARE GUIDED BY  
VALUES



RECOGNITION

APPLAUDS THOSE  
WHOM BRING  
COMPANY VALUES  
TO LIFE



RITUALS

REPEATED  
BEHAVIORS THAT  
ESTABLISH A  
COMMUNITY



CUES

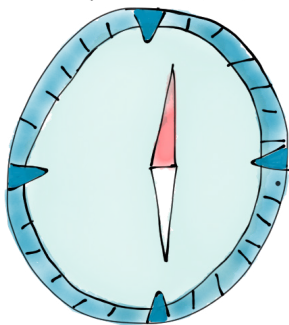
REMINDERS THAT  
KEEP PEOPLE  
IN TOUCH WITH  
PURPOSE

# WHAT IS CULTURE?

**culture** | 'kelCHer |

noun

1. Organizational culture is the behavior of humans within an organization, and the meaning that people attach to those behaviors.
2. Culture includes the organization's vision, values, norms, systems, symbols, language, assumptions, beliefs, and habits.



# PURPOSE

PURPOSE CONNECTS THE WORK TO THE VISION. IT'S THE CENTER POINT AROUND WHICH ALL OTHER CULTURE INITIATIVES SPIN.



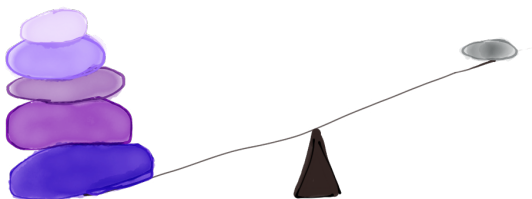
**DO:** Develop a brief, compelling story about what your team and organization are trying to accomplish.



**ASK:** Why are you in business beyond making money? Why do you do what you do?



**RESULT:** When done well, your team feels meaning. Their day-to-day is in sync with the bigger picture.



# VALUES

VALUES ARE BELIEFS ABOUT WHAT'S IMPORTANT, AND WHAT'S NOT. THEY SHAPE YOUR CULTURE AND GUIDE BEHAVIORS.



**DO:** Work with your colleagues to define how you get work done and what is driving those choices. Then codify them.



**ASK:** What are the three most important principles that should guide our decisions?



**RESULT:** When done well, you and your team feel aligned and decisions become clear.



# BEHAVIORS

BEHAVIORS ARE ACTIONS GUIDED BY VALUES. THEY ARE THE COLLECTIVE SET OF WHAT PEOPLE SAY AND DO.



**DO:** Map behaviors that you'd like to reinforce, and those that should stop.



**ASK:** Do our actions reflect our values?  
Are there times when we don't do what we say we do?



**RESULT:** When done well, you and your team feel heard and engaged.



# RECOGNITION

RECOGNITION APPLAUDS THOSE WHOM  
BRING COMPANY VALUES TO LIFE  
AND MAKE YOUR CULTURE GREAT.  
WHAT YOU WATER IS WHAT WILL GROW.



**DO:** Consider both a formal and informal recognition program.



**ASK:** Who is nailing it? Who is actually doing what we want to be doing?  
Are we honoring those contributions?



**RESULT:** When done well, you and your team feel valued and empowered to be better.





# RITUALS

RITUALS ARE REPEATED BEHAVIORS THAT ESTABLISH A SENSE OF COMMUNITY. THEY TELL THE STORY OF YOUR CULTURE AND REINFORCE ITS VALUES.



**DO:** Invest in meaningful activities that provide you and your team with a sense of belonging and familiarity.



**ASK:** What stories do we tell other people about our culture? What does that tell us about our identity as a group?"



**RESULT:** When done well, you and your team feel connected to each other and to the organization.



# CUES

REMINDERS THAT KEEP PEOPLE IN TOUCH WITH THEIR PURPOSE. THESE VISUAL CUES MAKE SURE NO ONE LOSES SIGHT OF THE BIG PICTURE. THEY ARE THE PHYSICAL EXPRESSIONS OF CULTURE.

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**DO:** Design working spaces that cultivate the kind of interactions that will achieve you and your team's purpose.

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**ASK:** When I look around, do I see things that remind me why I'm here?

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**RESULT:** When done well, you and your team feel inspired and know what you're working toward.

# HOW IS YOUR CULTURE DOING?

It's hard to know because culture can be difficult to measure. The following checklist is to help you get started seeing with a critical eye.

# CULTURE REPORT

For each culture component, indicate how well you think your company or business unit is doing.

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STRONG

MODERATE

WEAK

PURPOSE



VALUES



BEHAVIORS



RECOGNITION



RITUALS



CUES



WHAT  
DO YOU  
THINK?

Let us know what you think about the Culture Code.  
Even better, start some experiments of your own.  
Want a Culture Lab in your city? Reach out, we'll get  
you started. Email us: [info@culturelabx.com](mailto:info@culturelabx.com).



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**CONTENT + DESIGN**

Josh Levine      Emily Tsiang  
@akajoshlevine   @emsworld

**ILLUSTRATIONS**

Ximena Vengoechea  
@xsvengoechea

**CONTRIBUTORS**

Terra Judge      Josh Orum  
@breezy\_teezy   @JoshOrum

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