

LEADER CONVERSATION GUIDE

How to Build a Healthy Organizational Culture - Episode 208

Healthy & High-Performing Masterclass Replay

Culture is difficult to define but easy to feel, and it's hard to overestimate the role culture plays in your team's health and efficiency. A healthy culture can help turbocharge your vision and make progress toward the calling that God has for your church. On the other hand, an unhealthy team culture will actually erode your vision and derail your strategy.

“Culture eats strategy for breakfast.”

— Peter Drucker

Benefits of a healthy culture:

- Reduces turnover
- Raises staff satisfaction
- Attracts the right people
- Minimizes sideways energy
- Allows your team to be high-performing

If culture is so important, why is it so easily ignored? Culture is often pushed to the side because it isn't seen as "urgent" or directly related to the accomplishing of ministry goals. It's a long term play that gets pushed to the background in the midst of the tyranny of the urgent. And oftentimes pastors struggle to connect the dots around how much their team culture impacts the desired results they're working towards.

In most organizations, culture is unspoken and unexamined. But the best organizations and ministries are intentional in the articulation of the kind of culture they want to have. After all, culture is not just a way to make people feel good about where they work. It has very positive results in terms of effectiveness and productivity.

Creating Culture

At The Unstuck Group, we encourage churches to see their culture as a list of **behaviors** rather than a list of **values**. Leaders can expect the behaviors that they consistently exhibit and the ones

they tolerate. In healthy teams, these **behaviors are intentionally and strategically decided upon, articulated, regularly inspected, and celebrated.**

Senior leaders must view themselves as the CCO of their team: **Chief Culture Officer**. You need to understand, champion, advocate for, protect, and model the key behaviors of the culture you desire. This role can't be delegated to anyone else on your team.

*“When churches get culture right,
they have a greater Kingdom impact.”*

There is a huge difference between **nurturing** culture and **mandating** it. People have to believe it, see it, feel it, hear stories about it, and be inspired by it before they will own it. Healthy culture is better **caught** than **taught**.

The end goal is not to create a list of leadership behaviors. The goal is the implementation and integration of desired leadership behaviors. So as a leader, you need to **be the change** before you can see the change. You need to model the behaviors that you want to shape your culture.

Next Steps

Do the hard work of defining these behaviors for your team, in your unique context, with your unique mission.

1. Identify leadership behaviors that are **clear, concise, and compelling**. Define them in a specific way and identify what those behaviors look like in the organization every day.

A great place to start is to ask: What really matters to our senior leader(s)? What are their personal behaviors and values?

2. Don't rush the process. Enter into a collaborative and unhurried process to define your leadership behaviors.

Collaboration and buy-in will increase **ownership**.

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