

Culture Change in a Department of Anesthesiology

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Culture eats strategy for breakfast.

-Peter F. Drucker, PhD
-1909-2005

Why is Organizational Culture Important?

- It affects the organization's productivity and performance
- It provides guidelines on customer care and service, product quality and safety, attendance and punctuality, and concern for the environment.

<http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/organizational-culture.html>

Definition of Organizational Culture

- Values and behaviors that contribute to the unique social and psychological environment of an organization.
- Expectations, experiences, philosophy, and values ... expressed in its self-image, inner workings, interactions ..., and ... expectations.
- Based on shared attitudes, beliefs, customs, and written and unwritten rules ... developed over time and are considered valid

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Organizational Culture = Corporate Culture

It is shown in:

- (1) the ways the organization conducts business, treats employees, customers, and community
- (2) the extent to which freedom is allowed in decision making, developing new ideas, and personal expression
- (3) how power and information flow through its hierarchy
- (4) how committed the employees might be towards collective objectives

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Toxic Individuals Have Excessive Influence on Corporate Culture

- Bullies
- Antagonists
- Poor performers

Your Tolerance of Toxic Bullies, Antagonists, & Poor Performers Will Define Your Department's Culture

How to Identify the Bullies

- After encountering the person, do people feel oppressed, humiliated or otherwise worse about themselves?
- Does the person target people who are less powerful than him/her?

Robert I. Sutton. *The No Asshole Rule: Building a Civilized Workplace and Surviving One That Isn't* Random House, 2007

Sutton's "Dirty Dozen"

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| • Insults | • Humiliation |
| • Violation of personal space | • Shaming |
| • Unsolicited touching | • Interruption |
| • Threats | • Backbiting |
| • Sarcasm | • Glaring |
| • Flames | • Snubbing |

Robert I. Sutton. *The No Asshole Rule: Building a Civilized Workplace and Surviving One That Isn't* Random House, 2007

How to Identify the Antagonists

- Does this person enjoy arguing for arguing's sake (opinions on every subject)?
- Does this person seek "evidence" for every decision or policy, however obvious (RCT for parachutes)?
- Does this person invoke safety when there is no safety issue?
- Does this person invoke professionalism when the issue is compensation?
- Is this person's motto "There's no team in I?"

How to Identify the Poor Performers

- You need to develop your own metrics based on the needs of your department and medical center
 - Clinical: on time starts
 - Educational: resident/student education encounters
 - Research: appropriate productivity from protected research time

Department Chair = Manager?

- A manager *sets objectives*
- A manager *organizes*
- A manager *motivates and communicates*
- A manager, by establishing yardsticks, *measures*
- A manager *develops people*.

Drucker PF. *The Practice of Management* New York; Harper, 1954, p 344

How to Change Culture

- **Structure and Process.** Allow section and program directors to innovate and to be accountable for results.

See: <https://executiveeducation.wharton.upenn.edu/thought-leadership>
Larry Hrebiniak. *Making Strategy Work*

How to Change Culture

- **Structure and Process.** Allow section and program directors to innovate and to be accountable for results.
- **People:** Bring in fresh blood and thinking. Counsel/isolate/remove antagonists, bullies, poor performers.

See: <https://executiveeducation.wharton.upenn.edu/thought-leadership>
Larry Hrebiniak. *Making Strategy Work*

How to Change Culture

- **Incentives.** Change incentive structure to give authority/control/rewards to those who perform rather than to those who are older.

See: <https://executiveeducation.wharton.upenn.edu/thought-leadership>
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How to Change Culture

- **Incentives.** Change incentive structure to give authority/control/rewards to those who perform rather than to those who are older.
- **Changing and Enforcing Controls.** Increase frequency/intensity of performance evaluations, feedback, and remedial actions. Emphasize activities central to implementing strategy. Hold directors and faculty accountable for results.

See: <https://executiveeducation.wharton.upenn.edu/thought-leadership>
Larry Hrebiniak. *Making Strategy Work*

So What Aside From Culture Leads to Failure of a Chair's Strategy?

- Failure to manage your bosses
- Failure to get advice from others
- Failure to understand that some of the "rules" advocated on LinkedIn or in the HBR must be adapted to the medical school environment
- Failure to obey the same rules as others
- Arrogance
- Rigidity

Did Drucker Really Invent the Quote?

- *More and more management consultants ... are noting explicitly that, because "culture constrains strategy," a company must analyze its culture and learn to manage within its boundaries or ... change it.*^{1,2}
- *As stated in the March 2000 Giga Information Group headline "Culture Eats Strategy for Breakfast!" Will the culture of the recovered paper transaction business stymie those using an e-strategy to improve the marketplace?*^{2,3}

1. Schein Edgar H: "Organizational Culture and Leadership" 1985
2. <https://quoteinvestigator.com/2017/05/23/culture-eats/> (accessed 9.27.17)
3. Moore B, Rose J: North American Papermaker 82 (9):26-28, 2000