

Culture in the Workplace

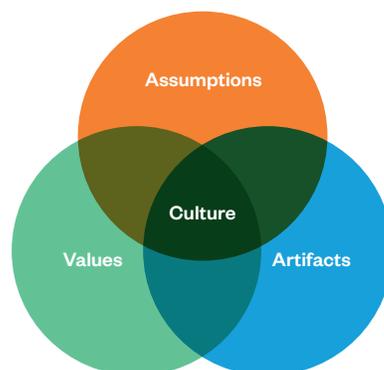


Culture is the intersection of values, assumptions, and artifacts unique to an organization. It evokes strong emotions that motivate employees to perform. An aligned culture unifies and motivates a workforce and can also foster collaboration and innovation. Culture creates a sense of order, continuity, and commitment that permeates every aspect of the organization—from employee interactions to customer perceptions.

When culture and business goals align, employees are more in tune with what it means to be part of your organization. A healthy culture is, in fact, a catalyst for employee engagement, collaboration, and innovation—all of which help your business yield higher returns.

What Is Organizational Culture?

It involves how an organization functions and expresses itself—it's the organization's personality, and encompasses three basic components: values, assumptions, and artifacts.



Values

What a company does, its mission, and how it represents itself

Assumptions

The attitudes, often unconscious, formed through company processes and actions that inform what employees think

Artifacts

What a company represents in the form of products, technologies, publications, processes, dress code, location, and architecture

Culture is directly related to engagement—truly engaged employees are far more likely to be creative and perform better. Research suggests that architecture, interior design, and furnishings provide a tangible way to support—or even change—the culture of an organization. When leaders make the important connection between space and its effects on organizational culture, it pays dividends, especially when it comes to attraction, retention, and engagement of top talent.

Organizations have a primary culture and—oftentimes—numerous subcultures. Recognizing the predominant culture profile as well as the subcultures is necessary to provide appropriate workspaces that harness the ways in which teams work.

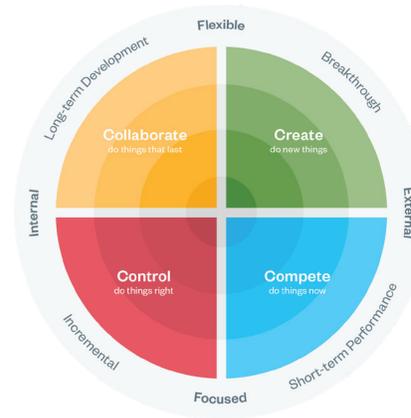
Align Culture with Workplace Design

Once we understand the organization’s preferred culture type, we can create spaces to align and help achieve business goals. Workspace design in the form of common areas, meeting spaces, and individual workspaces are artifacts that either help or hinder a company’s effectiveness.

Haworth has an exclusive partnership with the Innovatrium, an organization based in Ann Arbor, Michigan, to leverage their business model known as the Competing Values Framework™. Because architecture and design are intertwined with culture, the Competing Value Framework’s categories are helpful as a foundation from which to create appropriate workspaces.

“It is important to understand how an organization works, its culture and competencies, before you can effectively design a workspace where innovation happens.”

Dr. Jeff DeGraff, PhD
Professor and Author



Leveraging the Competing Values Framework, we look at organizational and individual needs by culture type: Collaborate, Compete, Control, and Create.

Source: Cameron, Kim S. and Quinn, Robert E. Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture, Third Edition. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011.

Collaborate: Doing things together, with internal partnerships and team building, in a flexible, people-centered work environment.

Create: Doing things first, differentiated by a high degree of experimentation and individuality.

Control: Doing things right, through internal procedures, with a need for stability and control.

Compete: Doing things fast, through external competition, with a drive for results.

A team doesn’t all need to be in one physical location to have a strong connection through their culture. An organization’s success is rooted in how well its people work together to accomplish goals, coordinating collaborative efforts with individual work needs, wherever they work. We know that there will be a mix of in-office and remote work options that are likely to maximize employee and organizational performance.

A successful culture is dynamic—like your organization. By examining and understanding the subcultures that exist, alignment of organizational culture to business strategies and goals can begin. That healthy culture, in turn, will keep employees engaged for better returns on creativity and innovation.

Want to learn more?

We can assist you with a more people-centric approach in your workspace design, which can improve worker quality of life, lead to more engaged and healthier employees, and improve your bottom line. To explore how we can align your culture to your workspace, please contact your local Haworth sales representative.