Positive Workplace Culture

Workplace culture may be best understood as the values, norms, customs, and beliefs that inform the behaviours, actions, and choices of those working. Essentially, it's the way things are done. A workplace culture is impacted by all staff, from executives to frontline personnel.

Positive Workplace Cultures

A positive workplace culture does not mean a workplace without conflict, challenges, or pain points. Rather, it is one that is equipped to navigate through these concerns. It can be described as a workplace that demonstrates a commitment to understanding their people and prioritises their wellbeing and support needs.

Positive workplace cultures encourage input and contribution across all levels – they demonstrate value of all and acknowledge the capacity of each person to contribute, no matter their role and responsibility. These workplaces empower people to grow, and increase capacity to achieve and succeed, both personally and professionally. In addition, it acknowledges and celebrates these achievements.

Positive workplace cultures also focus on creating a shared sense of ownership of the organisation's goals and promote a collegial work environment.

A positive workplace culture is mutually beneficial to both employees and employers.

Organisations with positive cultures often experience high staff retention, which minimises the loss of skills, provides continuity, and reduces costs of hiring and training. Employees often feel more productive in their role and experience less work-related stress and anxiety. Employees also feel more connected with their colleagues in a safe and accepting environment.

But what if we are unhappy with our current workplace culture, or what if we think there is room for improvement? Unfortunately, for many organisations, there is a discrepancy between the aspired culture and reality.

It may seem insurmountable at times, but it is possible to improve our workplace culture. While the below is by no means an exhaustive list, it is food for thought for both individuals and organisations.

Team and Individual Strategies
Engage Genuinely
Engage in genuine conversations with your peers, and demonstrate curiosity and interest in getting to know them. Offer support where you can, empathy when required, and always listen.

Speak Up
Speak up if you notice inappropriate or consequential behaviour that serves to undermine the safety, health, or wellbeing of yourself and others.

Identify Toxic Behaviours

Identify behaviours toxic to workplace culture through exit interviews and regular, genuine, conversations with staff. Work with leaders to establish appropriate responses to these behaviours and move quickly to manage areas of concern.

Build an Inclusive Environment

Build an environment of inclusiveness that values and celebrates differences and creates opportunities for all employees.

Receive Feedback

Create a culture of safety around feedback so employees provide and share their knowledge, experience, and opinions, as well as thoughts and feelings on matters of importance to them. These ultimately impact the organisation.

Final Words

We all hold personal responsibility when it comes to our workplace culture. Our choices, actions, and behaviours shape the space we are in, and we have an obligation to do something about it.

If you would like to learn how you can change and shape your workplace culture, Acacia EAP can help.

Be Respectful

Maintain honest, open, and fair communication. Acknowledge and celebrate other employees' abilities, qualities, and achievements.

Participate

Participate in team-building activities to demonstrate your commitment to your colleagues, as well as your desire to connect meaningfully with them.

Be a Positive Presence

You have a great capacity to influence the sense of support and value a colleague feels. Be mindful of how you present yourself, the language you use, and the stories you share with others.

Organisational Strategies

Redevelop Organisational Values

Develop and/or review your organisation's core values, vision, and mission statements. These overarching frameworks serve as principles that give purpose and direction to staff. Make sure these are clearly defined and effectively communicated.

Integrate Positive Behaviour Processes

Embed positive behaviour into your organisation's values and your performance framework. Specifically, integrate reviews of employee's behaviours into the performance appraisal process and place as much value on this as performance.

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