

How to Create a Positive Company Culture



What makes a company a “great place to work”? Is it the salary? The benefits? The perks? Or could it be something less tangible, like the core values that drive workplace culture?

The path to success requires help from bright, talented, and tenacious people, and to enlist their help, you need an organization that’s attractive enough to draw them and rewarding enough to keep them.

Building a positive company culture is important—and definitely takes time, resources, and skill.

But it’s not as tough as it might sound, and when your organization makes the effort, you’ll be rewarded with energized, engaged staff and management that are as enthusiastic as growing your business as you are.

What Is a Positive Company Culture?

Every organization, from small businesses to giant corporations, has its work environment and approach to handling everything from decision-making to production to social media.

The practices companies establish to reflect their core values, principles, and ethical standards define their corporate culture.

However, a company's values affect more than its internal controls, policies, and workflows; employee satisfaction, morale, and well-being are assets, too, and woe to the company that overlooks the impact of corporate culture on keeping the people who help it build a strong bottom line engaged, happy, and productive.

How important is this impact? According to a 2018 LinkedIn survey, 65% of respondents said they'd rather work for a lower wage than work at a company with a negative corporate culture.

Nearly a third (26%) said they'd willingly give up a fancy title to avoid the same headache. And a full 70% said they'd pass on a chance to work at a leading company if it had a negative company culture.

It makes sense, then, for companies who want the best and the brightest to pursue a positive workplace culture. But great company cultures don't spring forth out of the ether, fully formed. As the name implies, company cultures take time to develop and grow, and require careful tending.

A positive company culture is one that prioritizes employee well-being and satisfaction, promotes work-life balance, and provides meaningful work supported by collaboration, communication, and shared enthusiasm for collective goals.

These companies encourage their employees to develop strong work relationships that empower the whole team, and help new hires connect with the company and its culture to ensure they're part of the shared vision from day one.

In prioritizing employee satisfaction, health, and happiness, they enjoy higher employee retention, a stronger bottom line, and productivity that less positive organizations would struggle to match.

Benefits of a Positive Company Culture

While no two companies will ever have the exact same definition of "positive culture", organizations with positive workplace cultures share a set of common benefits, including:

• **Lower stress. Higher morale.**

In a world where the average worker can expect to spend more than 13 years of their life at work, and more than half feel physically drained after an average workday, taming the tiger of stress matters.

Positive cultures focus on communication and prioritize healthy productivity through strong interpersonal support and collaboration, ensuring your team members are not only happier to be at work, but more productive, too.

• **Exceptional Collaboration and Communication**

Greater innovation, productivity, and profitability begin with teams who are confident, communicate well, and share the same vision for success.

• **Better Recruiting Results**

Like people, companies have reputations. And if an organization has a bad rap on the mean streets of the Internet job sites, it's going to struggle to attract, and keep, top-shelf talent. This is especially important as companies worldwide struggle to maintain their agility and operational continuity in the face of challenges like the COVID-19 pandemic with new hires and remote teams.

• **More Loyal Employees**

Happy employees are more productive, healthier, and much more loyal to their companies. These employees work hard and play hard—and they tend to stick around, which really matters in an economy with more than a trillion dollars of voluntary turnover each year.

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Companies Prioritizing Positive Company Culture

While applicants may not choose potential employers based solely on organizational culture, it certainly contributes to a company's allure (or lack thereof).

Managing corporate culture has become something of an industry in itself, with companies like employment site GlassDoor creating their own standards for what constitutes a "great company culture" and other sites like Comparably handing out awards for positive company culture.

Naturally, not every company holds itself to all or even most of these standards, but those who do tend to hire and retain team members who sing their praises. When everyone at an organization is a good "culture fit,"

A few companies living up to the ideals of positive company culture in the contemporary marketplace include:

Twitter

With perks like free food, an on-site gymnasium, and a communication-focused workplace culture that regularly brings executives together with staff for open and honest discussion and collaboration, Twitter's team members perch high in the branches of employee satisfaction.

Add in the freedom to work from home "forever" in the new normal, and it's easy to see why tech professionals continue to flock to the social media giant.

Zappos

The Vegas-based online shoe retailer may be owned by Amazon these days, but it still wants folks to embrace its original, exceptionally service-minded company culture. That's why it offers folks \$2,000 to quit if they feel the company isn't a good fit during the first week of training.

But positivity and dedication to employee AND customer service are baked into the company's identity, and a dual-layer hiring process and an annual culture

book guides every policy and interaction.

Plus, with perks like generous time off, an employee concierge, and “mandatory fun,” Zappos is a perfect fit for folks who are ready to dedicate themselves wholeheartedly to the company’s culture and cause.

GoDaddy

As infamous for their wacky commercials as they are famous for their hosting services, GoDaddy embraces positive company culture by supporting both the health and happiness of its employees and collaborative relationship building inside and outside the office.

Healthy food and lifestyle coaching keep team members at their best, while a bevy of retreats and town halls (along with a healthy dollop of over-the-top company parties) help them connect with one another and forge the bonds needed to keep everyone on the same page and working toward GoDaddy’s success.

Building a Positive Company Culture for Your Own Organization

Not every organization has a bottomless budget or a freewheeling company culture.

But every business, big or small, can leverage their values to create a positive work culture that will draw, support, and nurture the best employees for their goals.

You can help your own company culture become more positive by:

• Collaborating with Staff on Creating Your Best Culture

Nobody said you have to toss your company’s history and values out on the street and start from scratch. Your employees are invaluable sources of insight and your partners in shared success. Collaborate with them to find out what’s working, what isn’t, and what they’d like to see change to

better meet their needs and the needs of your business.

Remember to center and prioritize your employees' concerns and input. If they feel heard, understood, and—most importantly—valued, then employee engagement and satisfaction (along with productivity and creativity) will rise.

• **Investing in Employee Wellness**

Mens sana in copore sano isn't just a motto; it's a way of life. If your employees' mental, physical, or emotional health is suffering, so is your company's productivity and profitability. Providing resources your employees can use to live their healthiest, best life—including insurance, access to counseling, healthy food and snacks, exercise and leisure areas, etc.—will ensure your company's in the pink, too.

• **Getting Social**

If your team members are cut off from one another, from management, or from executive leadership, they may not have the *esprit de corps* necessary to complete a project on time and under budget—let alone guide your company to the top of the heap. Team building sessions, company retreats, and open dialogue sessions with leadership can help build connections. But don't overlook the rich potential of company parties, celebratory meals, and activities outside the office, such as company sports teams, company outings to amusement parks and other entertainments, or even social clubs. The stronger their interpersonal relationships, the more effectively your team can work as, well, a *team*.

• **Locate and Empower Your Company's Culture Heroes**

The special folks who truly embody your company's core values and have the enthusiasm and sparkle to share their passion with the rest of your organization are invaluable when building a positive corporate culture. Find ways to help them inspire others through leadership.

The Power of Positivity

It's no secret that investing in the satisfaction, well-being and happiness of your team members is also an investment in the well-being and performance of your company.

By creating a positive environment, focusing on communication and collaboration, and ensuring your company's values are appealing to, and shared by, your staff and customers, you'll establish a corporate culture congruent not only with your high standards, but the desires and passions of the folks you rely on to help your company thrive, innovate, and grow.

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