

Corporate culture audit: complete guide & checklist

Imagine this: You step into your office each morning, not to the usual humdrum routine, but to an atmosphere buzzing with enthusiasm, creativity, and purpose.

That's the power of a thriving corporate culture.

Corporate culture, also called organizational culture, company culture, or work culture, is basically the personality and identity of a company. It includes the values, beliefs, norms, and behaviors that shape how the organization operates.

But a thriving corporate culture isn't something that's created overnight. It must be thoroughly planned out and implemented while making sure it's nurtured and embraced by all members of the organization.

In this guide, you will learn how to cultivate a successful corporate culture.

Whether you're an HR professional, a C-Suite executive, or an employee you'll be equipped with the knowledge and tools to start transforming your workplace into a beacon of success.

Why investing in your corporate culture is important

If you are reading this, you may already know the benefits of a strong corporate culture. However, your colleagues may not. This is why we want to equip you with as much information as possible so you can help champion a stronger and happier culture in your workplace.

Here are a few key points on why it's important to invest in your corporate culture:

Sense of belonging and purpose

Companies with a strong sense of shared purpose and values have a [17% increase in performance](#). A well-defined corporate culture provides employees with a sense of belonging and purpose, instilling pride in their work and fostering a collective commitment to the company's mission.

Employee engagement and productivity

Companies that maintain high employee engagement levels experience a [21% increase in profitability, a 17% boost in productivity, 10% higher customer ratings, a 41% reduction in absenteeism, a 59% decrease in turnover, and a 70% decrease in safety incidents](#). A successful corporate culture drives employee engagement and productivity. When employees feel connected to the culture and aligned with its values, they are more likely to engage in their work.

Employee retention

Employees who rate their corporate culture poorly are [24% more likely to leave their company](#). It should come as no surprise that a strong corporate culture has a direct impact on employee retention. Employees who feel a sense of belonging and connection to the culture are more likely to stay with the company for the long term.

External perceptions

[46% of candidates believe company culture is very important](#) when applying for a job, with 88% of job seekers citing it as at least of relative importance. A positive culture can enhance the company's reputation as an employer of choice, attracting top talent and bolstering its competitive advantage in the marketplace.

What role do leaders play in shaping corporate culture?

Leaders act as role models, architects, and custodians of the company's values and behaviors and play an important role in shaping corporate culture. To create a strong corporate culture, leaders must:

- **Set the tone:** Leaders establish the tone for the company through their words, actions, and decisions, signaling to employees what is valued and expected.
- **Define and articulate values:** Leaders play a crucial role in defining and articulating clearly and consistently the core values that underpin the company's culture.
- **Drive alignment:** Leaders are responsible for communicating a clear vision for the future and aligning the actions and priorities of employees with the company's values, goals, and mission.
- **Nurture talent:** Leaders should invest in the growth and development of their team members, providing opportunities for learning, advancement, and skill-building.
- **Foster open communication:** Leaders create an environment where open communication flourishes, encouraging dialogue, feedback, and collaboration across all levels of the company.
- **Lead by example:** Perhaps most importantly, leaders lead by example, demonstrating the values and behaviors they expect from others.

What commonalities do exceptional workplace cultures share?

No two workplaces are the same, but it's not surprising that many companies with award winning culture value similar principles. These principles include:

Values and vision

Corporate values and vision define the company's purpose, identity, and aspirations. A clear and compelling vision inspires employees, aligns their efforts, and reinforces the company's commitment to its mission.

Decision-making and leadership

The decision-making process reflects the values and priorities of a company. Effective leadership inspires trust, motivates teams, and navigates the company towards its vision.

Communication and collaboration

A corporate culture that prioritizes open communication encourages innovation, problem-solving, and a sense of belonging among team members. Collaborative environments leverage diverse perspectives and talents to drive creativity and achieve common goals.

Work environment and employee experience

A positive workplace culture promotes work-life balance, well-being initiatives, and opportunities for growth and development. It celebrates achievements, values contributions, and recognizes the unique talents of each individual.

Performance and accountability

A culture of accountability emphasizes personal responsibility, ownership, and results. Accountable cultures promote a performance-driven mindset where individuals strive for excellence, take initiative, and deliver on their commitments.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion

Fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace is essential for creating a culture of belonging where all individuals are valued and respected. Companies that focus on DEI recognize the unique perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences of their employees.

Customer focus and service

Companies that prioritize customer-centricity understand and anticipate customer needs. A culture of customer service encourages empathy, responsiveness, and continuous improvement to ensure positive interactions at every touchpoint.

Adaptability and innovation

Companies that embrace change and innovation encourage experimentation, creativity, and continuous learning. A culture of innovation fosters a growth mindset, encourages risk-taking, and celebrates learning from both successes and failures.

Corporate culture audit checklist

Ready for the checklist? Hopefully you haven't skipped ahead to this section, as we wanted to provide you with as much information as possible so you can achieve success.

The Corporate culture audit checklist serves as a questionnaire and roadmap for building a positive, cohesive culture that drives organizational success. By asking the following questions related to the above principles of corporate culture and taking action based on your company's feedback, you can better align your workforce with your company goals, foster employee engagement, enhance performance, and create an inclusive environment.

Make sure to get feedback from employees across all levels and departments. Some ways you can involve employees include small discussion groups, one-on-one interviews, or online surveys.

This checklist is comprehensive, but feel free to select the questions most appropriate for your organization.

1. Values and vision

- What are the core values of the company, and how are they communicated to employees?
- To what extent do employees align with the company's values, and how are these values reflected in their day-to-day actions? How is this encouraged or measured?
- How does the company define its vision for the future, and is it articulated to employees?
- Are there mechanisms in place to ensure that employees understand and support the company's vision?
- How do leaders reinforce the company's values and vision through their behavior and decision-making?
- Are there opportunities for employees to provide input or feedback on the company's values and vision?
- How does the company measure progress toward its vision, and are there key performance indicators (KPIs) in place to track success?
- How do the company values and vision contribute to employee motivation, engagement, and retention?

2. Decision-making and leadership

- How are major decisions made, and who is involved in the decision-making process?
- Is there a clear framework or set of criteria used for evaluating and prioritizing decisions?
- How transparent is the decision-making process, and are employees informed about the rationale behind decisions?

- To what extent do leaders solicit input or feedback from employees before making decisions?
- How are leaders held accountable for their decisions, and is there a system in place for evaluating their effectiveness?
- Are there opportunities for leadership development and training within the company?
- How does the company foster a culture of trust and respect between leaders and employees?
- Are leaders accessible and approachable to employees, and do they actively engage with their teams?
- How are conflicts or disagreements among leadership resolved, and is there a mechanism for addressing dissenting opinions?

3. Communication and collaboration

- How effectively do employees communicate with each other across different departments and levels of hierarchy?
- Are there regular channels in place for open, transparent communication between leadership and employees?
- Are there tools or platforms available to facilitate remote collaboration?
- How are conflicts or disagreements resolved?
- Are there regular team meetings or forums for sharing updates and brainstorming ideas?
- How are ideas or suggestions from employees implemented or acted upon by management?
- Are there clear communication guidelines or protocols in place for important announcements or organizational changes?
- How does the company foster a culture of knowledge-sharing and learning?

4. Work environment and employee experience

- How would you describe the overall work environment?
- What initiatives or programs are in place to promote employee well-being and work-life balance?
- How does the physical (and virtual) workspace contribute to employee satisfaction and productivity?
- How does the organization recognize and celebrate employee achievements and milestones?
- How does the company foster a sense of belonging and community?
- What benefits and perks does the company offer to enhance the employee experience and attract top talent?

5. Performance and accountability

- What systems or processes are in place to measure and evaluate employee performance?
- How are employees held accountable for meeting performance standards and goals?
- What steps are taken to address underperformance or behavioral issues?
- Are performance metrics aligned with company goals and objectives?
- What opportunities are available for professional development and career growth?

6. Diversity, equity, and inclusion

- How does the company define diversity, equity, and inclusion, and why are these values important?
- How diverse is the company's workforce and leadership team in terms of demographics such as race, gender, age, and ethnicity?
- How does the company foster a culture of inclusion where all employees feel valued and respected?
- What steps are taken to address unconscious bias in recruitment, hiring, and promotion processes?
- Are there employee resource groups or affinity networks to support underrepresented groups?
- How does leadership demonstrate their commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion?
- What training or educational programs are available to promote awareness and understanding of diversity issues?
- How does the company measure progress towards diversity, equity, and inclusion goals, and what outcomes have been achieved?

7. Customer focus and service

- How does the company prioritize customer needs and satisfaction in its decision-making processes?
- What measures are in place to gather feedback from customers, and how is this feedback used to improve products or services?
- How are employees trained to deliver exceptional customer service, and what resources are available to support them?
- What metrics or key performance indicators (KPIs) are used to evaluate customer satisfaction and service quality?
- How does the company handle customer complaints or issues, and what processes are in place for resolving them?
- Are there dedicated teams or departments responsible for managing customer relationships and ensuring positive experiences?
- How does the company communicate its commitment to customer focus and service to employees?

8. Adaptability and innovation

- How does the company encourage and support experimentation and risk-taking?
- What processes or structures are in place to identify emerging trends and opportunities for innovation within the industry?
- Are employees empowered to propose and implement new ideas, and what mechanisms exist for collecting and evaluating these proposals?
- How does the company respond to market shifts and changes in customer preferences or behavior?
- How are failures or setbacks viewed within the company, and what lessons are learned from them to inform future innovation efforts?

How ThoughtFarmer can help create a thriving company culture

Once you've conducted your corporate culture audit and have a cultural snapshot of your organization, you can use this to help build out your intranet.

ThoughtFarmer offers an easy-to-build and easy-to-use intranet that streamlines communications, encourages knowledge sharing, and enhances culture. We've helped countless clients with implementing intranet solutions that have made a huge difference in their workplace.

"It's starting to bring people from different locations closer together through the different ways we are sharing things. There has definitely been a bigger feeling of family." Angie Zatezalo, Marketing Manager, PCI

Explore ThoughtFarmer's [intranet solutions](#) for creating a thriving corporate culture, and reach out to our team at hello@thoughtfarmer.com if you'd like to learn more about how we can help to make work better.

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