Making Culture Your Strategic Advantage

A Design Framework to Activate Your Organization with Purpose
Making Culture Your Strategic Advantage

Is your culture capable of achieving your performance goals and desired outcomes? Do your employees know how to embody your corporate identity and deliver on brand expectations? Are you successfully engaging your ecosystem of stakeholders to activate your vision and strategy? Are you trying to be more…agile? …innovative? …collaborative? …inclusive? …customer-centric? …purpose-driven? …sustainable?

It all starts with your culture design.

Whether you are a start-up, launching a new brand, or an established organization undergoing a transformation or a merger, your culture will determine your success.

Introducing a design framework for activating purpose to develop sustainable organizational cultures.

- Evolve organizational culture to efficiently execute strategies and maximize business performance
- Leverage purpose to deliver differentiated brand experiences that builds loyalty and advocacy
- Create purpose-centric cultures that inspire, empower, and enable employees to be their best selves
- Build cultural competency to improve your organizational agility, adaptability, and resiliency to change
Our Common Purpose

Hi, there! My name is Jason. I published this paper to help business leaders better understand the dynamics of culture and learn how to develop organizational cultures that maximize business performance, while making a positive social impact. My personal mission for over a decade has been helping companies operate and innovate toward creating a sustainable future for their business, our economy, our social needs, and our environment. I found, to achieve this, it starts with the practice of culture design, which became my reason for launching Culture Design, LLC.

I believe that building socially conscious organizations is our path to global sustainability. The relationships we cultivate and experiences we create for people can change how we collectively view and engage with the world. Instilling people with a greater sense of purpose can positively transform how they relate to their colleagues, customers, vendors, and friends, family, and neighbors. It leads to greater care for their work, their company, their community, for humanity, and for themselves. Serving with purpose can elevate an entire society, empowering us to reach our greatest potential. When companies learn how to activate their organization with purpose, they too can reach their highest potential.

Culture evolves whether you want it to or not. To successfully engage stakeholders to execute a new strategy, you must design your culture with intention and evolve with purpose. It will be your strategic advantage, and it is the socially responsible and sustainable way to manage your business. The result will be stronger brand loyalty, advocacy, and improved business performance, while serving as a change agent for social good and the global sustainability agenda. Thank you for your commitment and welcome to the movement!

Jason Burnham
Founder, Culture Designer
Culture Design, LLC

Evolve with purpose.

The Social Impact of Our Common Purpose

Culture Design is a proud supporter of the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals. The practice of developing sustainable organizational cultures directly impacts half of the SDGs, and indirectly impacts the remaining half due to the interconnectivity and interdependency of integrated systems. Establishing a sustainable organizational culture is one of the most socially responsible actions a company can take to support the global sustainability agenda.

Sustainable culture design directly impacts the SDGs highlighted with boarders.
Making Culture Your Strategic Advantage

**A Design Framework to Activate Your Organization with Purpose**

Purpose is the seed of inspiration, and your culture is the water that makes it grow. Companies are continually trying to keep up with the pace of change to remain relevant and competitive in the market. They are adopting agile ways of working in a race to satisfy the rapidly evolving needs and expectations of their customers, employees, and popular culture. There is a growing global awareness of the importance of making our planet cleaner, safer, fairer and more prosperous. Consumers are increasingly attracted by companies that put sustainability high on their agendas. This is particularly true of younger generations, who are increasingly interested in working for environmentally and socially responsible companies. New social norms have given rise to new business norms…

- Differentiated, consistent customer experiences are a strategic priority to build loyalty, retention, and advocacy.
- Values-based employee experiences are critical to improving organizational performance and business outcomes.
- Operating in a socially conscious and responsible way is a requirement for long-term growth and sustainability.

These new norms now require companies to evolve with purpose to not only thrive, but to survive.

Recent research has demonstrated that design-focused and purpose-driven companies outperform others by over three hundred and fifty percent. Your culture creates the environment that determines how well your organization performs, which will ultimately lead to your success. The first step to success is to design a purpose-centric culture. Purpose-centric cultures are those that inspire, empower, and enable employees to be their best selves. Employees come to work every day with pride for the brand, passion for their work, and a commitment to excellence. There is a heightened sense of ownership with higher creativity, collaboration, and alignment. A purpose-centric culture instills employees with an individual purpose that aligns to a common purpose and creates shared value for your entire ecosystem of stakeholders, including the global community. This all leads to a significant increase in performance.

Over the last ten years, Culture Design, in collaboration with a team of social scientists and change practitioners developed a sustainable culture design and transformation methodology. We have tested this model with a multitude of companies to validate its application of use, flexibility, stability, and scalability. This document will showcase our methodology and introduce you to Culture Design’s framework for designing high-performing and sustainable cultures, in a way that allows you to begin applying best practices tomorrow to make culture your strategic advantage.
Culture design improves performance by 227%.

Culture design is necessary for sustainable business success. 84% of a company’s value is in intangible assets, with over 25% attributed to brand value. Customer experience drives over two-thirds of customer loyalty, outperforming brand equity and price combined. Since employees design and deliver the customer experience, organizations with the highest levels of employee engagement yield 90% better growth rates than the competition. This means your brand experience is one of the most important variables impacting business results.

Executive leadership and people managers directly influence and shape the culture of the organization, which drives employee engagement and employees’ passion and ability to deliver the desired brand experience. When employees are satisfied and engaged at work, it increases their sense of identity and purpose, which has a positive impact on employee performance and their commitment to the organization’s success.

Unfortunately, 62% of today’s workforce is not satisfied with their current job and turnover has cost companies $223 billion over the past five years. The primary reason people are leaving companies is due to a lack of effective leadership and an unhealthy culture created by people managers. Therefore, culture design is now a strategic imperative for every organization to achieve strategy realization, brand activation, and operational excellence.

Sources: Beyond Performance 2.0; McKinsey & Company; The Construct, Measurement, and Impact of Employee Engagement Study 2014; IDEO’s Creative Difference Survey; Society for Human Resources Management

Design-focused and purpose-driven organizations outperform S&P 500 companies by over 3.5 times due to...

- Fostering purpose with consistent intentions: +20%
- Connecting monthly with stakeholder ecosystem: +25%
- Saving time for problem solving and refinement: +25%
- Collaborating daily with teams across functions: +38%
- Exploring and testing 5+ ideas in parallel: +50%
- Providing autonomy and clarity of the process: +69%

Leadership’s commitment to culture will impact an organization’s ability to manage change...

- By putting equal emphasis on both business performance and organizational health, change programs improve their odds from 30% to 79%.
- Transformations are 5.3 times more likely to succeed when leaders model the behavior they want employees to adopt.
- Nearly 50% of employees cite the CEO’s visible engagement and commitment to transformation as the most effective action for engaging frontline employees.

Organizations with the highest levels of employee engagement experience the following results...

- 87% showed a predicted increase in revenue in the subsequent 3 years.
- 86% reported increase in market share.
- 57% reported lower employee turnover.
- 90% of the publicly traded companies reported higher stock prices.
Change requires the will of the people. We install the will.

Leveraging Culture Design’s culture design framework, this document will provide you with a model and some tools that you can begin utilizing tomorrow to help you activate purpose within your organization and make culture your strategic advantage.

DISCOVER
What is our current culture?
Assess the current state of the culture to align on needs and priorities.
- Cultural Competency
- Current State Assessment
- Management Alignment

DESIGN
What is our desired culture?
Design a culture strategy to achieve future state goals and outcomes.
- Future State Design
- Gaps & Feasibility
- Evolution Strategy

DIFFUSE
How do we evolve culture?
Co-create and educate stakeholders to close current-to-future state gaps.
- Co-Creation Innovation
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Leadership Development

DEVELOP
How do we sustain culture?
Institute cultural governance to manage and sustain desired culture.
- Guiding Principles
- Governance Model
- Performance Management
What is culture?

Culture is the manifestation of the collective consciousness and behavior of your employees and partners. Your culture manifests through values, beliefs, and activity guided through shared assumptions and group norms. It consists of your team’s mental models and action logics, motivations and assumptions, mindsets and behaviors, the stories and legends they share, rituals they practice, the symbols they identify with, and their emotional and physical environments.

- Mental Models & Action Logics: How we process information and make decisions
- Motivations & Assumptions: What influences our decisions and behaviors
- Mindsets & Behaviors: Held attitudes and the actions we take as a result
- Stories & Legends: Memes that shape our thoughts, values, and beliefs
- Rituals & Symbols: Practices and artifacts that connect us to our identity
- Emotions & Environment: Surroundings that influence how we think and feel
Cultures are complex adaptive systems and memes are their DNA.

Information is transferred as memes – not words. Memes are ideas that are poised to spread and generate the flow of thoughts and new ideas. Our attention and our thoughts create memes and keep them alive through culture. To change organizational culture, you must first change what is possible in the collective mindset. How new memes are introduced should be determined by first understanding how existing memes are being disseminated and propagated and their influence on how employees think, feel, and act. Memetics helps understand the internal narratives (e.g., beliefs, stigmas, expectations, attitudes, cultural sensibility, etc.) that are influencing current mindsets and behaviors.

How memes spread through your organization influences how culture evolves. Each meme has both an individual and interconnected influence on collective perception and behavior. Assessing the memetics of the organization informs you of the behavioral resistances that must be overcome to achieve your future state goals and desired outcomes. Understanding the memetic landscape of your culture provides insight into how you must frame narratives for communications and education programs to maximize resonance, overcome cognitive dissonance, and create new beliefs that inspire and influence change.

All memes are not created equal.

- **ALPHA**: Central themes and defining features of the way culture is thought about and admired.
- **SHADOW**: Antagonist thoughts and beliefs that work against the long-term health of a culture.
- **VULNERABILITY**: Characteristics and weak areas that make culture vulnerable and unsustainable.
- **PARASITIC**: Distractions and diversions that pull conversations away from topical strengths.
- **SYMBIOTIC**: Topics that form natural synergies with Alpha memes and spread on their own.
Your culture is your brand and your brand is the experience.

Your brand is a collection of shared beliefs based on what you represent, influence, and the value you provide to society. These beliefs are inspired and shaped by the relationships and experiences of your ecosystem of stakeholders. Your stakeholders are collectively influencing one another's perspectives of your brand based on their shared experiences with your company. Customer, employee, and societal needs and expectations are constantly evolving. You need an organizational culture that is adaptable to the pace of popular culture change to build and sustain loyalty, retention, and advocacy.

Culture does not have physical boundaries. Cultural systems encompass smaller systems of subcultures. Any group of people who interacts with one another creates a set of social rules and norms that determine how people within the group engage with each other. That's culture. Every location, function, and department will have their own distinct culture. And, the industries and communities you operate within will have their own culture. Add to this, each of your partners' organizations has similar cultural dynamics, which makes culture design and change management highly complex.

For global organizations or companies that have various locations across different regions, it is even more complex. The popular culture of a particular location will have tremendous influence over the organizational culture of that regional office or facility. Organizations must account for local sensibilities, lexicon, values, beliefs, traditions, and social norms to create a culture, aligned to a common purpose, and deliver a consistent brand experience across all touchpoints. For a strategy to be executed effectively or to deliver the desired brand experience consistently, you need to design for the complexities of the global organizational culture, and its affiliated subcultures.
Culture creates the environment that empowers people to thrive.

For organizations, the practice of culture design resides at the intersection of your corporate identity, stakeholder engagement, and brand experience. Your identity aligns your organization to a common purpose and defines who you are and why you exist. A purpose-driven stakeholder engagement strategy brings your identity to life through the behaviors of your employees and commitments to your customers and community. The organizational embodiment of your identity and how you cultivate brand relationships will determine your ability to design and deliver experiences that live up to the aspirations of your brand.

One of the biggest misconceptions in culture change management is the notion that strategic efforts are meant to control employee behavior. When in actuality, the objective is to create an environment that influences a shift in the mindset of employees, allowing desired behaviors to emerge through individual agency. Because organizations are complex adaptive systems, one can never truly control the individual behaviors of the entire organization. Business leaders should focus on creating the development and operational infrastructure that inspires, empowers, and enables employees to execute new strategies and deliver the desired brand experience effectively.

Managers should be servant leaders who help employees establish their sense of purpose and align it to the common purpose. Provide employees with a set of principles to help guide their behaviors to support the delivery of your brand promise and customer commitments. Coaching and mentoring employees to focus on cultivating relationships and making connections that deliver the desired brand experience will lead to greater business performance and social impact. Relationships influence brand perception. Culture is a system of relationships. And, how you connect with people will determine if your relationship is capable of building loyalty, retention, and advocacy.
How do we evolve culture?

Culture is shaped by the ideas we share, the stories we tell, and behaviors we observe that influence how we think, feel, and act. Your culture will be defined by how you innovate and execute new strategies, communicate and educate employees, operationalize new systems and processes, and reward and recognize behaviors. Organizational development and transformation should begin with culture design. To create a sustainable culture that maximizes performance and strategy execution, you must strengthen the mechanisms that activate your organization with purpose and equip your team to thrive. When you understand what influences change, you can become a proactive change agent and direct its course.

### Mechanisms for Activating Purpose to Develop Sustainable Cultures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identity &amp; Purpose:</th>
<th>Collaboration &amp; Alignment:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who you are, how you are perceived, and why you care</td>
<td>Cross-functional cohesion to accelerate strategy execution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety &amp; Belonging:</td>
<td>Inspiration &amp; Empowerment:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being accepted and free to show and employ one’s self</td>
<td>Instilling the passion and abilities to operate autonomously</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity &amp; Inclusion:</td>
<td>Enablement &amp; Commitment:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal representation, opportunity, and participation for all</td>
<td>Providing ongoing development and operational support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design &amp; Innovation:</td>
<td>Principles &amp; Governance:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How you ideate, create, and deliver your brand experience</td>
<td>How decisions are prioritized, executed, and managed</td>
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</table>
Culture transforms through the diffusion of innovation.

Mid-level managers can be your greatest resisters or most powerful agents of change. There are four main elements that influence the spread of new ideas or perspectives that facilitate change – the new idea (innovation), communication channels, time, and a social system. This model is called the Diffusion of Innovation (also known as Crossing the Chasm). An effective stakeholder engagement strategy aligns people around a common vision and purpose, shared value creation, and a set of guiding principles and behaviors. This approach drives collective action to achieve your future state desired outcomes. Change cascades through an organization. New ideas can come from anyone, but senior leadership and management must support and enable the change efforts to ensure a successful transformation.

Consensus implies widespread adoption and agreement among the majority of actors and stakeholders of the new norms, resulting from the execution of the new idea. Adoption increases through the ongoing conditioning of new behaviors and consensus allows for a system-wide improvement in cross-functional collaboration and alignment. There will always be those who are resistant to change at all levels of the organization. Over time, change resisters will either adapt to the new social norms or transition out of the organization. While transformation will occur over time through these phases, opportunities to engage various stakeholder groups should occur in parallel to accelerate the transformation process.

* A new idea can represent an actual idea implemented, or any new strategy, tactic, capability, or initiative that is intended to be adopted by the organization.
Your current cultural state is the effect of all decisions ever made since the inception of your organization. The larger the organization is, the older it is, and the more geographically dispersed it is, the more complex it is to influence and sustain collective action. Starting with this premise, it is not enough to deploy an employee engagement study to understand the drivers and influencers of the employee experience and the impact on your cultural competency. To effectively drive change and create a sustainable culture, employee pain points must be alleviated, and unmet needs must be satisfied – well-being must be established. Employees must also be inspired, empowered, and enabled to deliver the organization’s desired brand experience.

By leveraging evolutionary science, you can obtain a depth of understanding and context not possible through traditional qualitative and quantitative methodologies. You need to go beyond assessing what the culture is and uncover the root causes to why the culture is. Gain actionable insight on how it came to be, and how you can evolve to achieve your desired future state. Through a combination of surveys, stakeholder interviews, focus groups, and social analytics, identify the barriers and resistances to change to overcome at the functional, managerial, and organizational levels. Uncover where your greatest strengths reside and where opportunities exist to scale best practices, as well as innovate new capabilities to help accelerate change.

Everyone has individual needs, values, beliefs, and emotions that affect how they think, feel, and behave in varying situations and environments. To drive collective action, engage each employee individually. Meet him or her where they are and guide them along their journey towards your desired future state. How leaders and colleagues interact with each employee will shape their mindsets and influence their behaviors. Assessing your culture this way will provide input into the design of communication strategies, education programs, and rewards and recognition programs to inspire and empower employees. It will also identify where there are operational gaps to be addressed to enable change. This depth of analysis provides the insight necessary to shift mindsets and facilitate behavior change systematically, sustainably, and purposefully.
When developing new strategies or setting new goals, your first question should be, “Is our culture capable of...?” Answering this question in advance can mean the difference between success and failure, and in many cases, very costly failures. It is best first to understand your cultural competency and what is needed to ensure success. To deliver the desired brand experience, your employees and partners must be capable of embodying the brand and purpose and bring it to life within their respective roles and functions. Your culture will determine whether or not your organization has the competency and feasibility to do so. Systemically assessing foundational and transformational needs and priorities is essential to sustainably managing your culture to support the execution of new strategies, meet business objectives, and innovate for the future. Leveraging Culture Design’s Cultural Competency model, analyze the key dimensions and attributes that have the greatest influence and impact on your culture, and ultimately, organizational performance. By understanding the current state of culture through this framework, you can identify the gaps that must be closed to evolve toward your desired future state.

How competent is our culture?

**Cultural Competency Model ©**

**Maturity Development Phases**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMMON PURPOSE</th>
<th>PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY</th>
<th>STAKEHOLDER COMMITMENT</th>
<th>INDIVIDUAL AGENCY</th>
<th>ORGANIZATIONAL ACTUALIZATION</th>
<th>CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employees feel accepted, respected, and trust their colleagues and managers. They can show and employ one’s self without fear of negative consequences. Teams are safe to take socially responsible risks and encouraged by leaders to make values-based decisions.</td>
<td>Management is aligned and committed to ensuring there is a healthy and sustainable culture. Employees and partners are connected to a distinct culture, have pride and passion for the organization, and committed to supporting new strategic initiatives, leadership decisions, and shared value.</td>
<td>Employees are inspired, empowered, and enabled with the capability and ability to independently act on one’s will and serve as active agents of positive change and creativity. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are central to the evolving cultural dynamics of the organization.</td>
<td>Desired culture and future state goals are achieved across the entire organization. Self-governance, cross-functional collaboration, and alignment drives co-creation innovation and performance guidelines. Individual purpose is contextualized to roles and connected to the common purpose.</td>
<td>Organization is agile, adaptable, and resilient to paradigm shifts and changing market dynamics. Culture evolves with purpose and strategic decisions, business priorities, and operational changes are based on purpose-centered guiding principles and governance model.</td>
<td></td>
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# Cultural Competency Assessment

## Foundational Needs

### COMMON PURPOSE
- How aligned are employees and partners to the organizational purpose and brand identity?
- How well do employees and partners know how to bring your mission, vision, values, and brand promise to life to deliver the desired brand experience within their roles and functions?
- How do employees feel about the culture, and are they enabled and proud to deliver the desired brand experience?

### PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY
- How trusted are leaders and managers, and can employees express themselves and provide feedback without fear of negative consequences?
- How safe do teams feel to take socially responsible risks, and are they empowered by their managers to make values-based decisions?
- How much do employees trust one another, and how openly do they share and collaborate without territorialism?

## Transformational Needs

### STAKEHOLDER COMMITMENT
- What is leadership’s understanding of culture and the impact it has on business performance?
- How well do managers understand their role in creating a healthy and sustainable culture and how much of a priority is it for them?
- How integrated do employees and partners feel, how passionate are they about the organization, and how committed are they in supporting the mission, new strategies, and leadership decisions?

### INDIVIDUAL AGENCY
- How well do managers inspire, empower, and support their teams with the skills, knowledge, tools, and freedom to be their best selves?
- Are diversity, individuality, and unique contributions to the team respected, appreciated, and prioritized?
- How inclusive is the organization, and are there opportunities for everyone to participate and share their ideas, perspectives, and feedback?

## Collective Action

### ORGANIZATIONAL ACTUALIZATION
- How capable and efficient is the organization at executing new strategies and do all functions and departments act as one cohesive team?
- How well do employees know how to deliver with purpose through day-to-day interactions with customers, colleagues, and partners?
- How innovative and self-governing is the organization and how well are new ideas curated and executed across the company?

### CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY
- How future-ready and agile is the organization at evolving to be adaptive to unforeseen obstacles and changing market dynamics?
- How are strategic decisions, business priorities, and operational changes aligned with the common purpose?
- Are managers and employees adhering to a set of guiding principles and governance structure that ensure they are delivering the organization’s mission, vision, and promise?
Management Alignment

Workshop Goals & Objectives

• Align on future state goals, business case for change, and change management needs
• Understand the cultural impact required for success and how to achieve desired outcomes
• Identify how leaders can shape the culture to improve organizational performance

Workshop Agenda & Key Exercises

• Establishing future state goals and assessing the needs, priorities, and expectations for change management
• Closing the cultural gaps to accelerate change, maximize performance, and deliver the desired brand experience
• Defining the behaviors and practices leaders must embody to be culture designers and proactive agents of change
• Prioritizing quick wins and key action items to facilitate and sustain a desired culture that achieves strategic objectives

High performing teams that can accelerate change depend on collaboration and alignment. And, it starts at the top. 70% of all change initiatives fail due to executive leadership not understanding and appreciating what is required to drive organization-wide change that achieves their strategic objectives. It starts with building the cultural competency of the organization. The cultural competency of your organization is shaped by management’s behavior. How leadership innovates and executes new strategies, communicates and educates employees, operationalizes new systems and processes, and rewards and recognizes employee behaviors will define the culture and determine its ability to achieve your future state goals. Management must become conscious of the influence and impact they each have on how the culture evolves and gain the skills and knowledge to become proactive change agents.

The first step to ensuring a successful transformation or strategy execution is to align management to the purpose for change, how change will occur and the barriers for change. Management also needs to be aligned in what their respective roles will be in the culture design and change management process. Without securing the collaboration, commitment, and know-how from executive leadership, systemic change will not be possible. Facilitate a Management Alignment Workshop to educate leaders to the needs and requirements for co-creating and managing the desired culture. Design the workshop to empower leadership to accelerate change to execute strategic initiatives, maximize business performance, and deliver your desired brand experience.
You cannot change the past, but you can create the future.

When executing a new strategy, or optimizing the brand experience, define your future state goals and desired outcomes. This will serve as your design target for future state design. The future state could include, but is not limited to:

- Company or brand perception in the market
- Values, promises, or behaviors for employees to deliver
- Financial targets and growth projections over a set time
- Increases in customer loyalty, retention, and advocacy
- Operational efficiency achieved through process redesign
- Improvements in employee retention and engagement
- Development of a more sustainable supply chain
- Implementation and employee adoption of a new system

Regardless of what your future state goals are, it is important to articulate and document them. The next step is future state design and strategy development to achieve your goals. For example, if your goal is to increase customer retention by 10% over the next three years, how will that be achieved? Will it be through better customer service? Or, perhaps by providing greater value through products and services? What new capabilities will be needed to achieve the desired experience? Defining the future state parameters will help you identify the gaps between your current and future state and determine what is required to manage a successful transformation.

### Brand Experience Innovation

#### SAMPLE TEMPLATE

#### Future State Goals

Increase customer retention by 10% within the next three years. Become the preferred provider in our category within the next five years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Desired Outcomes</th>
<th>Empathy Mapping</th>
<th>Experience Ideation</th>
<th>Cultural Competency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is the desired customer experience we aim to deliver?</td>
<td>What do customers need and want at each stage of the customer journey?</td>
<td>How will we deliver the desired experience to build loyalty and advocacy?</td>
<td>How capable is our culture to deliver the desired customer experience?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### GAPS & FEASIBILITY ANALYSIS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current State Gaps</th>
<th>Needs &amp; Priorities</th>
<th>Resource Planning</th>
<th>Feasibility Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What are current customer expectations, pain points, and unmet needs?</td>
<td>What is needed to close gaps and strengthen the cultural competency?</td>
<td>Who and what is required to manage and sustain change to achieve our goals?</td>
<td>When can the new ideas and capabilities be implemented?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Making Culture Your Strategic Advantage

Change requires the will of the people. Just because you established future state goals and desired outcomes does not mean your culture is currently capable of achieving them. The success of any strategy execution will be determined by how well you engage employees and manage the transition process. Without the right communication, education, and operational support to execute your strategy, you can expect to receive employee resistance to the change. A multitude of variables will determine the success of achieving your goals within your target time frame:

- Current state gaps and cultural competency
- Size of organization and number of locations
- Cultural context and varying sensibilities
- Strategic alignment of needs and expectations
- Commitment of resources and prioritization
- Stakeholder engagement and development
- Governance and performance management

Many change initiatives fail due to leadership’s lack of understanding of how systemic change occurs, or because of mismanaged expectations for the support and resources required to facilitate change. Before embarking on your transformation journey, develop a change strategy to migrate your organization from the current state to your future state. Inform employees of the case for change, how it will directly impact them, and set expectations for their role and purpose in the transformation.

Vision without execution is just a dream.
Engaging stakeholders through co-creation is one of the most effective ways to design and transform organizational culture. The best way to influence change or create an experience for specific stakeholder groups is to listen, empathize, and genuinely understand their needs, challenges, values, aspirations, and expectations. Co-creation workshops provide a platform for them to collaborate and share their ideas for how to best serve and support them.

Co-creation workshops provide the emotional context and emergent ideas from a group dynamic not achieved through traditional research and strategic planning methodologies. People are more inclined to adopt and embrace new mindsets and behaviors when they feel heard and see their contribution to the development of new strategies. This recognition and acceptance is what it means to instill people with purpose – to collectively contribute to something greater than one’s self – and making it intrinsic.

Co-creation workshops are great tools to use for both developing and implementing new strategies. They can be used to innovate and close gaps identified through research, assist with stakeholder alignment to gain buy-in and cross-functional support, and structure and process redesign. We have found that frequent use of co-creation workshops in and of itself improves culture due to the diverse, inclusive, and collaborative nature. The activation of the ideas and feedback curated from these workshops further demonstrates leadership’s commitment to empowerment.

When facilitated effectively, co-creation design workshops inspire and communicates that leadership cares about employees’ contributions and reinforces a sense of identity, trust, safety, and belonging within the organization. The result is greater pride for your brand, greater sense of self-worth for the individual, and greater passion and commitment to supporting the activation of new strategies. All of which culminates in an increase in organizational performance, social impact, and business results. The following pages provide examples of workshops and objectives to consider.
Co-Creation Design Workshops

**IDENTITY & PURPOSE DEVELOPMENT**
- Define mission, vision, values, and brand promise as the foundation for the desired brand experience
- Produce a company manifesto or culture code to align stakeholders and set experience expectations
- Build a narrative framework to communicate your identity and build a sense of common purpose

**CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE INNOVATION**
- Cultivate empathy and understanding of what is most important and valuable to customers
- Satisfy customers’ functional, emotional, and social needs to develop long-term relationships
- Prioritize and prototype new ideas to create value and deliver a differentiated brand experience

**EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE DESIGN**
- Cater to the values and aspirations of today’s workforce to attract and retain valuable employees
- Increase diversity, equity, and inclusion to improve creativity, productivity, and employee engagement
- Deploy the practices needed to inspire, empower, and support employees to be their best selves

**GUIDING PRINCIPLES & BEHAVIORS**
- Shift mindsets to align functions and departments to operate cohesively with a common purpose
- Assign role-specific behaviors for employees to contextualize how to deliver the experience
- Set parameters that empower employees to take responsible risks and make values-based decisions

Who are we, why do we care, and what is our commitment to our stakeholders?

How can we attract and nurture the best talent to reach our full potential?

How can we better serve evolving customer needs and expectations to build loyalty and retention?

How do we consistently deliver our desired brand experience at each touchpoint?
Co-Creation Design Workshops

CROSS-FUNCTIONAL ENABLEMENT

- Integrate co-creation practices to break down silos, improve workflow, and create greater efficiency
- Increase empathy and sharing between colleagues and partners to build trust and transparency
- Adapt strategies to appeal to varying cultural sensibilities and values to drive global adoption

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT & ALIGNMENT

- Develop a communications and education platform to globally diffuse desired culture and experience
- Elevate social consciousness and responsibility in the strategic and operational decision making process
- Strengthen stakeholder relationships to increase commitment and advocacy for strategic initiatives

MANAGERIAL CULTURE DESIGN

- Create inclusive environments to encourage diversity of thought, and celebrate authenticity
- Equip teams with skills, knowledge, and tools to inspire passion and empower with purpose
- Provide a platform for open, honest communication to show employees how much they are valued

GOVERNANCE & MEASUREMENT

- Implement a culture management process to ensure compliance and accountability of cultural initiatives
- Design a measurement scorecard to track progress and performance impact of cultural evolution
- Assemble a cross-functional network of culture champions to inspire and facilitate culture change
Progress is not a linear trajectory, but a dynamic state of constant change.

Your culture is constantly evolving based on how people within your organization relate to each other. Their connections and interactions lead to emergent ways of thinking and behaving that direct the course for how culture will evolve. The key to managing change and influencing the direction of cultural evolution is not controlling and dictating people's behavior, but rather creating an environment that inspires, empowers, and enables employees to be their best selves; to thrive, to evolve with purpose.

An effective Cultural Governance Model focuses on developing the operational infrastructure and social capital of the organization, centered around the company's purpose or the case for change. We refer to this approach as purpose-centered design. Your Cultural Governance Model should establish the management structure, parameters, and process to:

- Innovate and execute new strategies
- Communicate and educate employees
- Operationalize new systems and processes
- Reward and recognize behaviors

Leverage Culture Design’s governance framework to design a model customized to your change management needs, strategic priorities, and organizational structure. This model will serve to improve your cultural competency and guide the activities necessary to achieve your future state goals, deliver your desired brand experience, and sustain your desired culture.

The Cultural Governance Model will be a mechanism to support management in communicating the key aspects of the governance framework, steer policy and practice development, provide a governance structure with roles and responsibilities, and direct strategic and operational decisions of the organization. The model will ensure stakeholder engagement and alignment to the purpose, development of skills and capabilities to improve cultural competency, and management of organizational performance to business outcomes.
The greatest insight of all is understanding how someone thinks, feels, and reacts.

Success will be dependent on the level of passion, commitment, and abilities of your employees. Keeping a pulse on how employee mindsets, behaviors, and emotions are shifting allows you to course-correct and optimize efforts based on the direction your culture is evolving. An essential component to your cultural governance is implementing a measurement platform that provides insights into performance impact, correlated to the framing, sequence, and cadence of change communications, culture-building activities, and education programs. Every employee will internalize and react differently to various forms of engagement. Satisfying the psychological needs and motivations of individuals will be necessary for driving collective action.

New ideas, strategies, and behaviors only propagate if they are symbiotic to the current culture. The goal of maximizing your cultural competency is to create a culture that becomes organically regenerative. A regenerative culture is one that is agile, adaptive, and resilient to change. It is self-governing, self-transforming, and self-sustaining to its purpose and desired cultural state. The measurement platform should inform how strategic initiatives are either improving or eroding cultural competency by key segments, such as functions, departments, business units, and locations. In doing so, you can understand the cultural topography of the organization to prioritize what, where, when, and how to innovate and deploy activities that evolve culture to improve performance and business outcomes.

*Segments can include functions, business units, departments, locations, etc.*
Making Culture Your Strategic Advantage

What we measure determines where we focus and what we are motivated to improve. Just because something is easier to measure does not mean that it is more valuable. Humans are complex, so measuring and understanding how to influence and sustain collective behavior change is complex as well. For this reason, an applied anthropological methodology is needed for your Cultural Governance Model. Start with an assessment of the current cultural state of the organization by its constructs (e.g., functions, departments, business units, locations, etc.). Understand how and why the culture evolved to its current state. This insight will uncover the mechanisms needed to facilitate systemic change by Cultural Dimension and inform the governance required to manage performance.

Reporting and analysis can conform to support the components of the Culture Design governance framework. For example, if your findings reveal that Customer Support employees did not know how to deliver the brand promise within their respective roles or function, you would identify this as a gap within Experience Delivery. This new finding would inform the development of a solution to this issue, with supporting workstreams integrated across all relevant disciplines, such as Strategy Execution, Management Alignment, and Stakeholder Engagement.

The frame of the bigger picture tells a different story.
You can not manage people like pawns and expect them to perform like queens. Governance modeling offers up the opportunity to engage passionate and purpose-driven employees as Culture Champions. These employees are cultural influencers and want to play an active role as change agents. An employee network of Culture Champions can serve a great benefit to the acceleration of adoption or transformation. Culture Champions can provide perspective and input into the development of the Cultural Governance Model, and serve as grassroots facilitators to aid in the dissemination, compliance, and sustainability of culture initiatives across the organization. Building and expanding your Champions network can improve the cultural sustainability of your organization by enhancing its agility, adaptability, and resiliency.

Culture Design recommends conducting a Governance & Measurement Co-Creation Workshop to engage Culture Champions to contribute to the development of the Cultural Governance Model. This workshop will not only inspire and empower Champions but also give them a greater sense of personal ownership in supporting your culture initiatives. Their input through this workshop can help you craft a culture management process, design a measurement scorecard, and assemble additional cross-functional Culture Champions. Culture Champions play a significant role in a governance structure, and their contributions will prove to add great value to designing, transforming, and sustaining your desired culture.

A collaborative leader is not restricted by one’s own ability, but liberated by infinite possibilities.
Culture is complex because people are complex. Culture design and change management require deep expertise and experience. We hope you found this document valuable and applicable to your efforts. Although this document provides you with a design framework and some tools to begin, we highly recommend you contact Culture Design for a free consultation. While we have a defined design process, we customize our approach and solutions to meet your specific needs. Regardless of where you are on your cultural journey, please allow us to assess your needs and customize a solution that is right for you. Thank you for your consideration, and we welcome the opportunity to work together to create a better tomorrow.

In summary…

- Understand how culture evolves to be a proactive change agent that ensures strategy realization
- Align common purpose to deliver differentiated brand experiences that build loyalty and advocacy
- Leverage purpose-centric co-creation to inspire, empower, and enable employees to be their best
- Build cultural competency to improve organizational agility, adaptability, and resiliency to change
- Establish cultural governance and measurement to manage and sustain your desired cultural state

Be the change you want to see.
PURPOSE
Aligning your needs, values, and aspirations with the impact you want to have in the world and acquiring the knowledge and skills to deliver on that vision.

Find your purpose and passion will find you.

What is your purpose?
Your purpose is not your job. Your job should fulfill your purpose. This is Jason Burnham’s motto, and he lives it through the work of Culture Design. Jason is a purpose-driven culture designer and transformation architect who thinks systemically about the impact business has on society. His personal purpose is to improve lives through relationships and experiences, with a mission to empower businesses to be change agents for social good and sustainability, while improving business performance. Jason believes by building socially conscious, purpose-driven organizations, companies can cultivate brand loyalty and advocacy with greater efficiency and have a positive impact on the world.

Jason has achieved a very successful career building companies and providing innovative solutions to meet the needs and demands of both business and society. With over twenty years as a global business strategist and management consultant, Jason brings his experience, expertise, and passion to every consulting assignment, keynote, and workshop he delivers. He has been a frequent speaker and contributing writer for leading trade organizations and publications (e.g., AdAge, Sustainable Brands, Patient Experience, Loyalty360, Greenbook, Insight Innovation Exchange, iMedia, Adtech, Sustainatopia) and served on the advisory board for various companies.

In 1998 Jason co-founded Ad Age Top 25, digital marketing agency, Mass Transit Interactive, which was acquired in 2005 by Horizon Media. In 2006, Jason launched his brand strategy and behavioral design firm, Burnham Marketing, providing marketing strategy, organizational development, leadership training, and stakeholder engagement services. In 2010, Jason entered into a joint venture with social science research company, MindTime, to introduce new psychometrics into the fields of research, experience design, persona development, and change management.

Since 2012, Jason has donated his time as a social innovation and change management adviser to the United Nations, to support UNDP transformation initiatives. In 2015, Burnham Marketing merged with customer experience design and cultural transformation firm, Strativity Group. Prior to launching Culture Design in 2019, Jason served as Strativity’s Principal of Experience Innovation, where he built the Communications & Design division and led global organizational transformation and customer experience programs for a prestigious portfolio of brands.
Making Culture Your Strategic Advantage

“Jason is incredibly committed to understanding his customer’s needs and to delivering a fantastic and engaging workshop! He has helped us to get a deeper understanding of what it means to become a customer company and the teams enjoyed having him as a presenter as he is a truly professional presenter and speaker, very charismatic and can capture the audience’s attention and engage with them. He presented across all GEOs at our marketing & partner summits in AMER, APAC and EMEA and it was great to learn from his experience and to get deeper insights into the journey of customer companies. I can highly recommend working with him - it’s a great experience!”
– Eva Marie Schutte, Senior Marketing Manager, EMEA Demand Generation, Core Programs, Autodesk

“When you are serious about initiating authentic CX culture change within your company, look no further than Jason Burnham. He is wicked smart, presents transformational ideas with simplicity and ease, and is passionate about inspiring brands, companies and people. He is a great partner to have on your side.”
– Elaine B. Coleman, Ph.D., Director, CX Design & Strategy, CA Technologies

“Jason brings a unique blend of art and science when helping organizations design and develop a culture that enables strategy realization. His ability to articulate the challenge, provide useful insights and engage stakeholders means he delivers real impact and sustainable change.”
– Brad Meehan, Managing Director, Strativity Group

“I could write an entire book on how awesome Jason is. I’ve had the honor to work with Jason on numerous speaking engagements he’s had at iMedia Summits. He goes out of his way to help everyone and anyone. He’s always on top of his game and is very professional in every matter. I speak for everyone at iMedia and our events when I say that Jason is a pleasure to work with and be around.”
– Franchesca Nguyen, Content & Marketing Manager, iMedia Communications

“Jason led several CX design workshops for us during our Customer Experience transformation. He is a high-energy guy with great insights in change management and culture design. Not only is he great in leading a large group with varying strengths and personalities, he’s also able to take abstract ideas/concepts and turn them into actionable plans that generate quick wins. Our team really enjoyed working with Jason and achieved some great results in a short period of time!”
– Matthew Boretti, Director of Marketing, Strategic Programs, and Service, Teleflex

“I am so pleased and proud to write a note of praise about Jason Burnham! Jason came in as a consultant to help my organization wade through some very complex customer service challenges and workplace issues. The subject matter was very sensitive, and so was Jason’s approach to delving into it. His expertise and personality blended well in presenting material and giving us guidance. There was never a time when I felt that he was not being fully attentive and responsive in his consultations. I hope that I have another opportunity to work with Jason...I learned a lot from him and was subsequently able to teach others with my newfound knowledge.”
– Carolyn Van Brunt, M.A., Certified Diversity Professional, The Music Center

“Relevant, engaging, and professional. We liked Jason and the content he delivered to our three geos so much, that we brought him back to train our channel partners...again worldwide. If culture, brand and customers matter to you, he’s a great source of what’s new, as well as what and how to do.”
– Ron Ludlow, Senior Manager, AMER Core Programs, Autodesk

“Jason has outstanding vision and is a great partner who invests himself entirely in your success. It was an absolute privilege working with him.”
– Lawrence Chao, Region General Manager, Mazda North American Operations

Become part of the movement…
About Culture Design, LLC

Culture Design, LLC leverages evolutionary science, applied anthropology, and systems design to help organizations develop purpose-centric cultures to meet the evolving needs and expectations of society, maintain their relevancy and desirability in the market, and maximize the full potential of their organization to improve business performance. We are a global network of purpose-driven consultants, designers, and researchers, consisting of communication strategists, brand developers, experience designers, anthropologists, social scientists, leadership advisors, executive facilitators, and transformation architects. Our decentralized model allows us to be agile and adaptive to both your specific needs, as well as to the needs of our rapidly changing world.