CALL FOR PAPERS

People + Strategy Journal
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Making Culture Real
Executive Editor: David Reimer
Guest Editor: Karalyn Smith
Managing Editor: Deborah Stadtler

Of the many truisms that exist around culture, “culture eats strategy for breakfast” surely tops the list. But what if we’ve been thinking about it all wrong—what if culture is strategy? That question is no longer an internal debate for boardrooms and the executive suite. Rather it is a lived challenge at the intersection of internal goals, desired employee brand, stated values, and the external experience of customers, clients, and shareholders.

A client experience in a retail location can become a tweet storm. An employee’s experience with management can start a trend on Glassdoor or spill over into policy debate. And as recent news stories have highlighted, a company’s sense of higher purpose can suddenly morph into a public/private debate over whether goods and services should be provided to everyone on its supplier or customer list.

While virtually every organization is in the process of adapting and operationalizing its strategy and business model in shorter and shorter cycles, culture is often an after-thought. But if culture is your strategy, then what does it take to turn decades of platitudes about culture into intentional shifts in the way organizations work, behave, innovate, and go to market?

In short: how do you make culture real? Topics for exploration may include, but are not limited to:

External vs Internal Environments. What are the collisions and connections and how do you navigate those? How does culture define and evolve from that?

Structure vs Autonomy. How do you balance structure and guidelines with creativity and innovation, and the need to empower your people?

Managing the Antithesis of Balance. Some workplaces (and roles) are intensely all-in. How do you structure meaningful revitalization or reflection periods that people need in an “all-in” ecosystem?

Measuring Culture’s Impact. Beyond the limits of engagement surveys, how do you know what’s working?

Adapting Culture Amid Shifting Business Models. How do values adapt over time as the strategy evolves?

Culture, Compensation and Promotion. When does what gets measured and rewarded serve to reinforce or undermine desired culture?

Real Talk. When a leaked story or an internal breakdown exposes flaws in the culture, how do you seize that moment to help engineer the culture you really want?

Changing the Conversation. How is the culture conversation coming up differently than it was in the past? What are you teaching/talking about differently and what questions are you trying to solve?

Cross-Border Culture. When an organization is huge and everywhere, how much of culture is local and how much is global? What role does the customer play in culture?

Positive Culture in a Variable Employee Economy. How do you drive a culture of alignment and enthusiasm in a workforce with a large bloc of contract employees?

Changing an Award-Winning Culture. What if all the optics are right about your culture from outside the organization, but all your decision-makers are white while minorities occupy only lower-level positions?

Articles should be strategic, impactful, actionable, data-based, grounded in research or practice, approach the topic from any of numerous angles, and be readable with minimal jargon.

Audience
The typical reader is a senior-level HR executive seeking practical advice based on sound evidence. Our readers are experienced, knowledgeable, and work in and for a variety of organizations across the globe.

Submission Process
Please submit a one-page proposal to the editors prior to submitting the completed article. All proposals will be reviewed and returned with comments. If accepted, we will guide you on the development of your article.

Criteria for evaluation include significance of contribution to the field of HR; timeliness; originality; provocative nature of content; and quality of supporting data.

Writing Guidelines
Articles should range from 2,500 to 3,500 words. Please include high-resolution graphics or charts to help present any complex information in a visual format. Limit references to no more than 10.

Submission Information
Send all proposals to editor@hrps.org. Please designate in the subject line that the submission is for the Spring 2020: Making Culture Real.

November 8, 2019: Proposals due. Submit a one-page overview with the author’s bio.

November 18, 2019: Feedback provided.

December 9, 2019: Articles due. Submit a well-written draft ready to be edited.

December 16, 2019: Feedback provided. We will indicate if the article is accepted, and, if so, what revisions are needed.

January 13, 2020: Final articles due.

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