

eight TRAITS

of a Healthy Organizational Culture

Any good organization must have an inspiring, shared mission at its core—and it must have capable leadership in place and in development. Assuming these two factors are present, the following eight traits define a healthy corporate or organizational culture.

- 1. Openness and humility from top to bottom of the organization**
Arrogance kills off learning and growth by blinding us to our own weaknesses. Strength comes out of receptivity and the willingness to learn from others
- 2. An environment of accountability and personal responsibility**
Denial, blame, and excuses harden relationships and intensify conflict. Successful teams hold each other accountable and willingly accept personal responsibility.
- 3. Freedom for risk-taking within appropriate limits**
Both extremes--an excessive, reckless risk-taking and a stifling, fearful control--threaten any organization. Freedom to risk new ideas flourishes best within appropriate limits.
- 4. A fierce commitment to "do it right"**
Mediocrity is easy; excellence is hard work, and there are many temptations for shortcuts. A search for excellence always inspires both inside and outside an organization.
- 5. A willingness to tolerate and learn from mistakes**
Punishing honest mistakes stifles creativity. Learning from mistakes encourages healthy experimentation and converts negatives into positives.
- 6. Unquestioned integrity and consistency**
Dishonesty and inconsistency undermine trust. Organizations and relationships thrive on clarity, transparency, honesty, and reliable follow-through.
- 7. A pursuit of collaboration, integration, and holistic thinking**
Turf wars and narrow thinking are deadly. Drawing together the best ideas and practices, integrating the best people into collaborative teams, multiplies organizational strength.
- 8. Courage and persistence in the face of difficulty**
The playing field is not always level, or life fair, but healthy cultures remain both realistic about the challenges they face and unintimidated and undeterred by difficulty.