

Best Practices

3 STAGES OF CULTURAL DISCOVERY

What's the gap between your desired culture and the reality in your company? You can't know the real answer to that question without getting input from a wide representation of employees. A Discovery Phase that includes both qualitative and quantitative inquiry is the first step towards a Strategic Communications Plan that will actually deliver on your business objectives.

Here are the three stages we recommend for the Cultural Discovery process:

1 Leadership Interviews

Start at the top, by sitting down with members of the leadership team to discuss where they would like their culture to be. Ask about their vision for the organization, as well as their mission and values. Get them to talk about their one-year or five-year goals for the business. You can't develop a communications plan to align employees with the vision if you don't understand what that vision looks like.

2 Employee Interviews or Focus Groups

This can be done one on one, either in person or by phone, or in group sessions, although like any focus group, one strong personality can dominate the discussion without a skilled moderator to foster more inclusion.

For a representative sample, make sure you're including employees of different business units, geography, seniority, gender, ethnicity and from functions that cover the gamut from sales to enterprise services to manufacturing or the frontline. This is a time consuming stage, but will provide some of the most critical insights for strategic development.

3 Employee Survey

Surveys allow you to quantify the themes and issues you've uncovered in the qualitative stages of Discovery and to gather more general cultural statistics about the employee population. The most useful surveys are structured in ways that allow for a close look at the cultural differences between business units and other silos, geography and demographics.

An effective cadence for a comprehensive survey is once or twice a year. Including a number of open-ended questions helps ferret out the intention behind the responses. But keep in mind that it's important to build in an appropriate level of anonymity so that employees feel safe in answering openly.

For a couple of reasons, employee surveys should be fielded regularly. First, these are important tools that measure changes or improvements and allow leaders to understand what's going on inside the company. Second, if surveys only occur in the midst of major change, lots of angst and negative energy can become associated with an otherwise helpful tool.

Want to see more?

If you're interested in Cultural Discovery for your company, Tribe can help. Please reach out to:

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Our core practice areas are:

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- + Vision and Values
- + Internal Branding
- + Change Management
- + Recruiting and Retention
- + Training and Development

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