

Transforming Culture

Culture is the worst behavior you are willing to tolerate

CULTURE MYTHS

Myth one: there is one culture in a company. While the experience of working in a company differs from one to the next, each company has multiple cultures: the day-to-day experience of employees on their teams. The experience of working on a team in accounting is likely different than the experience of a team in HR. These team cultures are why some teams thrive and some struggle. When shaping culture, it is important to focus on tools to support shaping at the organization and team levels.

Myth two: You can "fix" culture.

You can actively shape culture. But "fixing" culture implies there is a moment you are done. Culture is a living thing that requires ongoing and intentional shaping. Neglect your culture and instead of shaping, you will be facing major transformation.

Myth three: Culture is defined and described by the CEO/Senior Leaders.

Leaders set a tone with culture, role modeling desired behaviors and upholding what is reinforced, rewarded or discouraged. However the experience of culture is what is felt by each employee daily. Culture shaping requires going beyond senior leadership and equipping people leaders and teams with awareness and tools.

Myth four: Our culture is our values.

Companies put a lot of time and money into defining the values they wish to uphold and not enough time helping teams define their experience of the values. Most values are too vague for teams to know what to reinforce and encourage or discourage. Teams assume they trust one another and don't realize behaviors like talking behind each other's backs do not upholding that value. Teams have to define their norms: what the values mean for them and how they will uphold them.

Myth five: Culture is measured in an annual engagement survey and is owned by HR.

Traditional approaches to culture no longer work. Culture is owned by each employee being mindful of behaviors and what they reinforce or discourage in others in real time. Annual engagement surveys are dated, limited to the questions asked and often not actionable.

Does your company culture begin and end with yearly people surveys?

Do you regularly discuss culture in your meetings?

Do you hear your employees describe feeling the "Sunday Scaries" and dread coming to work?

Culture is the operating system for your organization. Each behavior and action makes up the code, determining how effectively it runs. Just like you have to update your phone or computer's operating system for it to stay current, be agile and defend risk, you have to do the same for culture.

Gartner research shows 42% of CEOs list culture as a top priority for the next two years and view it as key to driving their business growth. However, many leaders don't know where to start to understand their culture or drive intentional change.

Your organization has its own culture that is reinforced and encouraged daily through employee experiences —intentionally or not. Your culture impacts whether employees go through the motions, feel engaged, or give more calories per hour and experience faster resilience and wellness.

Culture transformation is a layered process, inclusive of leadership, team development and storytelling.

It's time to take a hard look
at your company culture

Culture Transformation

Eber Leadership Group has a signature seven-step culture transformation approach.

We work with you to design and implement the culture transformation plan together so your organization learns how to continually shape and monitor culture.

Build Awareness

Conduct awareness sessions to help leaders and employees see things they can't unsee and learn actions that drive culture change. **Result:** a deeper understanding of culture, research, responsibility and actions for shaping across all levels.

Assess Current Culture

Identify the story your current culture tells. Gather data points through interviews, surveys, focus groups, and existing data points such as exit surveys, and culture surveys. Those are combined with analysis of development approaches, reward and recognition systems, operating rhythm, performance management and rituals. **Result:** a report on the strengths and weaknesses of your existing culture and considerations for shaping.

Define & Align Business, Talent and Culture Strategies:

Define the ideal culture through a series of design thinking workshops with employees. Take the outputs to working sessions with C-suite, and align the business, talent and culture strategies. **Result:** a culture strategy plan detailing the phases of transformation and monitoring.

Equip People Leaders & Teams

Provide development & tools that define the expectations of the people leaders in your organization to develop and engage employees and teams. Provide tools to people leaders and teams to define team norms and shape their local culture. **Result:** a development plan and toolkit inclusive of formal and informal resources for leaders and teams to leverage to create their own healthy culture.

Create Inspiring Leaders

Transform the development of your top talent to create a pipeline of leaders that reinforce the desired culture. These year-long experiences help each individual identify their own strengths and weaknesses, receive coaching, and participate in key learning experiences with a cohort, while working on their own individual development plan. **Result:** A year-long development experience that deepens leadership expertise and prepares these leaders for their next role.

Build Circles of Influence

Circles of influence are small communities of people that can positively shape culture. This often includes women's networks, learning cohorts, people in same geographic regions, affinity groups and business resource groups. **The outcome:** plans and tools to develop, equip and listen to these groups to help accelerate culture transformation.

Storytelling

Strengthen culture by intentionally planning and sharing stories about heroes, rituals, shared values and positive examples. Develop your leaders to embrace storytelling to shape culture by sharing what is valued. **The outcome:** a toolbox of stories and plan for how to leverage storytelling to intentionally shape culture.



Karen Eber is an international consultant, keynote and [TED speaker](#). Karen is the CEO and Chief Storyteller of [Eber Leadership Group](#). This talent development boutique specializes in transforming culture, building empathic and curious leadership and teams, and helping leaders influence and inspire with storytelling.

