



CULTURE: LOST IN THE SHUFFLE?

By Bill Kaiser, Vice President, CultureWise™

Leaders certainly have plenty on their plates these days. So many competing priorities make focusing on one or two, very difficult. I'm sure some of your targets and expectations have been revised and some projects or initiatives are on the back burner. That being said, we still need to prioritize and deliver results.

Far be it from me to tell you what those priorities should be and in what order. That would be misguided, presumptuous, and tad bit arrogant. I don't know your challenges and certainly can't decide for you what is most important to focus on to deliver the results you desire. However, I would like to alert you to a bias and dispel a myth that may be preventing you from prioritizing your culture as a critical driving force towards your company's success.

Biases Against Prioritizing Culture

In Patrick Lencioni's book, *The Advantage*, the author makes a great case for why focusing on your organization's health (culture) supersedes anything else in business. He identifies three biases that interfere with leaders embracing culture as a key strategic initiative.

1. **The Adrenaline Bias.** Many leaders suffer from the adrenaline addiction – the thrill of firefighting and the daily rush of “knocking things off the list.” They don't seem to want to slow down and take the time to deal with issues that are critical and that they feel are not particularly urgent.
2. **The Quantification Bias.** The benefits of a high performing culture are difficult to quantify. Culture permeates all aspects of your company and that makes it difficult to isolate its impact in a precise way. It requires conviction and intuition rather than analyzing spreadsheets.
3. **The Sophistication Bias.** Leaders believe differentiation and dramatic improvement in employee performance in a crowded, competitive marketplace can only be found in complexity. Driving a higher performing culture is easier and more straightforward than many leaders think. Therefore, they have difficulty embracing the idea that working on their culture is a real opportunity for creating a meaningful advantage.

Lencioni admits, in some ways, it's hard to blame them for having these biases. After years of “off-site meetings filled with ropes courses and trust-falling exercises, even the most open-minded executives have come to be suspicious of anything that looks or sounds touch-feely.”

A Closer Look

Let's take a closer look at *The Sophistication Bias*. Again, consider the times we're in and the many competing priorities we are challenged with. Entertaining an initiative or change, with the perception that it may cause operational chaos or turmoil, quickly lands it in the "not this quarter" pile. But what if the change was simple, easy to implement, and most importantly, led to sustained success?

Four Simple Steps

Achieving a high performing culture doesn't require a rocket science degree from MIT or a Wharton MBA. It's a matter of 4 simple steps.

1. Define the behaviors ("fundamentals") that drive your success.
2. Create a structured, systematic way ("rituals") to teach those behaviors over and over.
3. Engage your workforce for maximum impact.
4. Deliver high-quality teaching content, daily, through a mobile app.

We're proud that over 320 companies have partnered with us to create higher performing cultures in their organizations. Just about every industry is represented in the mix of clients. But several beliefs are common. One, they recognize the dramatic impact their culture has on the performance of their people. Two, they understand that their culture is a distinct competitive advantage in the worlds they compete in. And third, they realize that their culture is too important to leave to chance. Leaders have to define, drive, and leverage the culture they want in their organizations.

So maybe it's time to shuffle the deck and reprioritize to make sure that your culture is at the top, or near the top, of your priority list. Your results will make you glad you did.

To learn about the clear and proven steps you can take to begin a culture building journey, reach out to Carlos Quintero at 864-349-1032 or 770-842-8744, or email carlos@one2onecx.com

ONE to ONE CX, LLC is a Licensed Consultant and Implementation Specialist for CultureWise™



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