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CORPORATE CULTURE

CORPORATE CULTURE IS...

...the shared "taken for granted" assumptions, beliefs, values, expectations and rules that members of a company hold.

...comprised of the attitudes, experiences, beliefs and values of an organization.

...the way things get done around here.

...the moral, social and behavioral norms of an organization based on the beliefs, attitudes and priorities of its members.

IDENTIFYING CORPORATE CULTURE ON THREE LEVELS:

- 1: ORGANIZATIONAL PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES: Facilities, offices, furnishings, visible awards and recognition, dress/appearance
- 2: ORGANIZATIONAL PROFESSIONS OF SELF: Missions, slogans, policies, procedures, budget, newsletters, documentation etc...
- 3: ORGANIZATIONAL ASSUMPTIONS/BELIEFS: Interpersonal relationships and interactions, unspoken/unwritten rules, value systems, expectations, politics

ELEMENTS THAT INFLUENCE CORPORATE CULTURE:

- THE PARADIGM: Agency Mission, Vision Statement, Philosophy
- CONTROL SYSTEMS: Policies, Procedures, Payroll, Performance Appraisals, Parent/Teacher Conferences, Fiscal Management
- ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES: Chain of Command, Supervisory Roles, Communication flow
- POWER STRUCTURES: Decision making, Role of Managers (Micro/Macro Managers), Do decision makers encourage input/ideas
- SYMBOLS: Logos, Appearance of Staff/Facilities, Paperwork, Signage, Employee Lounge
- RITUALS AND ROUTINES: Habituated Business Practices, Management Meeting, Staff Meeting, Graduations, Special Events, Professional Development Calendar
- STORIES AND MYTHS: Things people remember most, overall impressions, the gossip or "word on the street."

CHANGING/SHAPING CORPORATE CULTURE:

- Common and consistent expectations
- Buy-in/Commitment
- Defined Roles
- Leadership
- Accountability/Consequences
- Complementary knowledge and skill
- Development of required competencies
- Power/Decision Making
- Rewards

METHODS FOR MEASURING/DETERMINING CORPORATE CULTURE:

- 1: Observation and interpretation of managerial and employee behaviors
2. Examination of Agency Crucial Documents
3. Surveys of Employees and Clients perceptions
4. Interviews with employees and clients

QUESTIONS TO ASK CLIENTS AND STAFF TO GAUGE THE PERCEIVED CORPORATE CULTURE:

- 1: List ten words to describe the agency
- 2: What types of things are really important around here?
- 3: How are the employees/children/parents valued here?
- 4: What professional skills are valued by the agency?
- 5: What personality characteristics are valued by the agency?
- 6: What are the agency's expectations of you?
- 7: What are the agency's expectations of the parents?
- 8: What value is placed on continuing education?
- 9: Why do you attend continuing education classes?
- 10: What behaviors get rewarded?
- 11: What employee behaviors elicit consequences?
- 12: What parent behaviors elicit consequences?
- 13: What is your impression of the agency's overall attitude towards money?
- 14: How effective is top-down communication?
- 15: How effective is peer communication?
- 16: How effective is agency/client communication?
- 17: What is your impression of the Executive Director?
- 18: What is your impression of the parents?
- 19: What is your impression of the staff?
- 20: How are decisions made?
- 21: How are emergencies handled?
- 22: How are new ideas received?
- 23: What would happen within the agency if the Executive Director suddenly left?