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## One Mans Dream: How a Company's Unique Culture can Translate into Long Term Success

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One Man's Dream: How a company's unique culture can translate into long-term  
success

An honors thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Accounting

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Abstract:

This thesis answers the question of whether a unique organizational culture can help a company find long-term success. My main focus of the thesis was on the Walt Disney Co., a company that I think has set the standard in organizational culture and is where I will be starting my professional career. My aim was to find what aspects of culture are most important to have, and how companies can use their culture to gain a competitive advantage.

In order to answer this question, I researched companies that have been recognized for having a very successful organizational culture, as well as companies that have struggled. From this research I could compare and contrast the differences in order to identify the aspects of culture that have either been successful or detrimental. I also interviewed two professional women to get their perspective on organizational culture, and I surveyed a small representation of University of Arkansas soon-to-be graduates to see whether organizational culture could play a part in their decision of where they want to start their career. I also researched the effect of globalization on organizational culture and how it could potentially cause companies to have to change their organizational behaviors and work environment.

I have concluded that in order for a company to be successful, they need to create a unique organizational culture that cannot be copied by competitors in order to give them a competitive advantage. I created a ten-step process that companies can use to help them achieve their ideal organizational culture. I recognize that there is not

necessarily one monolithic static organizational culture, and have taken that into consideration as I have gone through the paper.

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## **Introduction**

“You can’t sell it outside if you can’t sell it inside.” This quote by Stan Slap gives a perfect vision of the importance of organizational culture. It is the cornerstone that the company is founded on, and can be detrimental to their success. The purpose of this paper is to discover how organizational culture can help a company achieve success and what companies can do to help align their culture with the values they want to portray. I will compare companies with very successful cultures to those who have suffered, focusing mainly on the Walt Disney Company. I used interviews and surveys as my methods to get an insight on what current employees of large companies think of culture and an insight on what soon-to-be college graduates think of culture as it pertains to their prospective careers. Finally I created a 10-step program that companies can use to realign their company culture.

### **Introduction to Culture**

There are many factors that contribute to a company’s success. A company could have a strong brand, an innovative product, or perhaps a unique marketing strategy. But how can a company sustain long-term prosperity? How can a company distinguish themselves from the rest to consistently stay on top? Surprisingly, I discovered the answer lies in not what a company is doing externally, but in the inner works of the company that dates back to the day it started. In order for a company to establish themselves professionally, they first must create their own distinct culture and climate that they believe will help them flourish. Before one can dive into the specific aspects of culture, we must determine what culture is. I believe Edgar Schein defines it

best by saying organizational culture “is a pattern of basic assumptions-invented, discovered, or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration-that has worked well enough to be considered valid and therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems”. A culture is the reason why the organization exists. Going beyond just a common goal, a culture consists of anything you can see or hear in a firm. It gives the employees a sense of purpose and belonging, and helps the company set a certain standard. Culture helps to not only support organizational objectives but, when set in place properly by management, can cause a unique cohesiveness that allows a company to stand the test of time.

Schein divided culture into three different levels. The first level is artifacts and creations, which is anything physical and visible in the company. The second level is values, defined as “those things that an organization states it holds dear to itself”. The values of a company help direct how it wants to be seen by the public. The last level consists of basic assumptions. Basic assumptions about a company’s culture are drawn from how well the artifacts align with the values. Lets focus in on values for just a moment. We all know that not everyone has the same values, and it can be difficult to find common ground when you are working with a very diverse group of people. The principles of an organization stem from the values of the individuals, however the statement of a belief and the action of an individual may not match up with each other. So how can a company successfully relate their values to the employees in order to create a certain culture? Finding this balance can be difficult, and this is the topic that I will be digging into deeper in my research of supportive and successful organizational



cultures. To begin the discussion on companies that have embraced their culture and used it to their advantage, I first want to hone in on a company that has personally changed my life, The Walt Disney Company. After dissecting the culture of Disney and how it has evolved, I will then compare and contrast companies that have successful cultures versus ones that have misaligned ones. We can then start to get a better understanding of how culture really can make a difference in a company's success.

## **Research**

### **Walt Disney Co.**

#### **Introduction.**

The Walt Disney Company's core mission is "to be one of the world's leading producers and providers of entertainment and information" (Farfan, Barbara 2014). They are constantly trying to find ways to "develop the most creative, innovative and profitable entertainment experiences and related products in the world" (Wilson, Matt 2013). Disney has always found a way to stand out, not only in their products, movies, and theme parks, but also in their elite customer service and the unforgettable experience they provide to guests visiting their parks. Disney's greatest asset is the people they recruit, from the top dogs in the corporate office to the part time employees in the parks. The standard for everyone is the same, and once an employee goes to work they are considered "part of the show" and are responsible for maintaining that Disney magic. The people who work for Disney truly believe in the core purpose of the Disney brand, and have a heart for bringing it to life. Disney has 6 underlying principles that they expect their employees to uphold (Sparks, Wally 2007). The first is innovation. Disney has always been able to stay ahead with their products and ideas, and they

encourage their employee's imaginations to soar. By encouraging free-thinking, Disney has allowed their workers to develop a sense that they are important and their ideas matter, and from this they have created an experience for guests that is unmatched by anyone else. The second is quality. Disney has a very high standard of excellence that they expect from their staff and they maintain that same high standard for their products as well. Community is the third principle they believe in, and I believe it is one of the main reasons Disney has such a unique organizational culture. The Walt Disney Company stresses that they are one big family, and will treat each other as such. They genuinely care about the well-being of their employees, and want to create the most positive work environment that they can. Every Disney employee I have talked to has said that the comradery in the business is what builds the sense of cohesiveness between the staff, and this is something that they all say they have not seen anywhere else. This idea of family is also rooted in what Disney wants to provide with their parks, because Walt Disney himself wanted to create an experience that could be shared by all generations (Wilson, Matt 2013). The fourth principle Disney focuses on is storytelling. They believe every product tells a story, and they want their employees to be part of that story as well. Stepping into one of the Disney parks is like stepping into a show, and the workers are part of putting on the act. The last two principles, Optimism and Decency, are ones that Disney promises to their employees with the intent that they will reciprocate. Disney expects a level of honor and respect from their employees since the guests have so much trust in them. When people think of Disney they think of fun, and that is something that the employees need to have as well.

## **Training.**

All of these principles are what drives Walt Disney Co.'s culture, but how can they be certain that the employees will follow through? The magic of Disney begins with the vast amount of training required to make every visitor's experience one they will never forget. Every single employee, from the cast of characters to the workers in the restaurants, receives intense training at the Disney Institute in a very structured learning environment (Kober, Jeff 2007). The point of the training is to give every staff member the tools to carry out their job correctly, and to stress the idea of being customer-responsive. The employees are then introduced to the kind of culture within Disney and how they can contribute to it. Walt Disney once said, "You can dream, create, design and build the most wonderful place in the world but it requires people to make the dream a reality." Walt Disney realized early on that the only way his company would be a success is by implementing strategic training and organizational behavior methods so that all of his employees would be able to create the environment he was striving for. This original idea still drives Disney's training mechanisms. At the Disney Institute, a wide variety of classes are available including ones about people management, quality service, creative leadership, and customer loyalty (Kober, Jeff 2007). The wide variety of training and the many benefits help motivate their employees to put their 100% every day, which helps to supplement the organizational culture of the company. At the Disney Institute, they believe in the Y theory of motivation, which says, "employees enjoy working and are creative individuals that seek self-direction." (Danielski, Adam 2009). Many other organizations believe that employees need external motivation from

their superiors and need to have strict direction, which can hinder the flow of creativity and ideas. On the first day of training, staff members participate in an orientation program called Traditions, which is used to submerge the employees into the mission, vision, and dream of Disney (Kober, Jeff 2007). This immediate introduction to Disney's culture and ideals is another way that they guarantee everyone is on the same page, which was exactly how Walt Disney wanted it. By offering first class business standards, Disney has been able to make the company operate with a fantastic organizational culture. The detailed thought and mass amount of resources that go into creating their training system eventually helps to benefit the massive number of employees that exist through out the Disney Company. The intense focus that Disney puts into each employee is easily paid back by the customer satisfaction, which is the main reason for Walt Disney Co.'s continued success. Disney has been able to create a culture for their employees where they feel that they are valued as an individual and a vital part of the team.

### **Leadership.**

At the heart of every company is the one piece of the puzzle that is vital to the company's success. At the heart of the Walt Disney Company is none other than Walt Disney himself. His leadership style and beliefs on organizational culture and behavior have shaped the current leadership in Disney we see today. Walt Disney came to California in 1923 with nothing but passion and dreams and created a company that has lasted over 90 years. His style of leadership at the time was unpopular, but has proven to be the backbone of the Disney we know today. Walt had several leadership philosophies (Tonn, Rebecca 2010). His first was that he genuinely believed in people.

He knew the value of the people you surround yourself with and wanted to build strong relationships with his employees and his customer base. He also believed in leading by example. He had a very strong value system, which reflects on the strict values that Disney's culture is founded upon today. Walt Disney always wanted to show respect for his employees and make sure to let them know how grateful he was for them. He believed a reward system was not just something to encourage employees to do better but a way to show his appreciation for their loyalty and commitment. Walt Disney also demanded creativity and innovation in the workplace, and always gave his workers an opportunity to present new ideas to him. This enables employees to reach into places they didn't even know existed. Walt wasn't afraid of change, even if it was risky. He wasn't afraid of big ideas, and always knew they would come out on top in the end. Disney has tried several things in the past that have not worked out how they wanted it to, but the failures have only led to even bigger payoffs in the end. Another philosophy of Walt was to let your past frame your future. He used his events of the past and mistakes to push him. The culture of Disney could be seen as one that is always looking forward to the future, but actually it is rooted in tradition and the experiences of the many people in the company that came before them. The most important thing Walt Disney believed in as a leader, in my opinion, was to never lose your sense of childlike wonder. He never let his work overcome his imagination and he delighted in the simple things in life. The one thing I have never wanted to do is grow up too fast, and I believe Walt Disney had this same thought. He made his work fun, which helped him to lead a life of joy and fulfillment. People always wonder why the cast members at Disney just

seem so happy, and I believe it is because of this. The culture at Disney is truly full of magic and Disney wonder, just the way Walt would have wanted it.

Walt Disney set a very high standard for leaders of the Walt Disney Company. While there have been some who have not lived up to this standard, many have been able to carry on Walt's leadership legacy in a way that is unmatched by any other company. The leadership style at Disney is very much a participative one (Danielski, Adam 2009). Sometimes a participative leadership style means the leader is weak-minded and unaggressive, but this is completely the opposite in Disney. It permits the worker to become part of the team and the community that is so important to Disney's culture. The Walt Disney Co. also is known for their very strict structure in an organization, which gives the leaders a legitimate energy. The hierarchy within Disney is very firm, since it is such a large company. However, those with high authority are held to the same standard as those without it, and communication through the organizational structure is meant to be one that is open and comfortable. The power of those at the top is not obtained from fear or rewards, but from acceptance of those lower-level employees who are counting on the management to do their due diligence that the company deserves. The respect for the company as a whole has caused the strict organizational structure to be a very successful part of Walt Disney. To motivate their employees, the company uses an expectancy theory style (Danielski, Adam 2009), which states, "We are motivated by desirable things that we anticipate we are able to achieve". The leaders at Walt Disney are encouraged to set goals for the employees that are challenging but not unreachable. This helps to encourage growth and creative thinking, which is exactly what Walt would have wanted. When looking for committed

employees, the Walt Disney Co. often tries to find those who already have an emotional attachment towards the organization and already believe in the company's core values. They use questionnaires during the recruiting process to find these special employees. The purpose of this is to insure that the employees are going to have an affective commitment to the goals, and will be able to fit in with the culture of Disney. All of these tools and traits of Disney's leaders, combined with the ideals Walt put in place many years ago, help to make up a unique leadership style.

### **Rules and Expectations.**

Along with great leadership, Disney also has set some very specific rules and regulations regarding the way they want to be seen to the public. These expectations have given Disney a way to make sure their employees are in line with the kind of culture they want to have. When the cast members are in the parks, they become part of the attraction and entertainment. Since they are seen by millions of people per year, Disney enforces certain rules regarding their appearance. For example, employees of Disney are not allowed to have tattoos, excessive piercings, and unnatural makeup and hair color. These strict guidelines are a put-off to some people, and about 10% of Disney's employees leave annually for this reason (Sparks, Wally 2007). However this is exactly what Disney wants. They want to weed out the individuals that are not a good fit in order to have a staff that is aligned to the brand and what they stand for. While this idea seems very unnecessary and harsh to some, it is one of the ways Disney has been able to deeply root their culture into their employees. Disney staff is also required to have their own private transportation; they are not allowed to take any sort of bus or train where potential guests could see them. They are also supposed to follow what

Disney calls the “seven service guidelines”, which include always keeping eye contact, greeting every guest, displaying appropriate body language, and thanking everyone (Sparks, Wally 2007). These rules seem outrageous to expect from every person, every day, which leads me to question, “How far is too far to preserve the magic?” This is a topic that I will be going in to detail a little later on. However, Disney does do a good job of keeping up communication with people who are unhappy with the way things are going. They do a bi-annual survey to see what the employees are feeling and how they can make their experience at the company better (Wilson, Matt 2013).

In my research of the Walt Disney Company and business leaders, one question kept coming up again and again: “How do they develop the world’s most engaged, loyal, and customer-centric employees year after year?” This is a question I also was curious about in my search for how to create the “perfect” company culture. I found the answer through the “Four Circumstances”, which give levels of support and a clarity of purpose to Disney’s organizational culture. The circumstances are Innovation, Organizational Support, Education, and Entertain (Lipp, Doug 2013). Innovation consists of risks and being willing to stir the pot. Organizational support means leaders must provide enthusiastic and sustained support; be cheerleaders of employee growth and development! Leaders must always set the tone in a way that makes everyone listen. Education is woven in through training and development, and is an indispensable commodity that cannot be repeated by others. Entertain involves developing people through engaging and memorable experiences; even Walt himself said, “Laughter is no enemy of learning!”

### **Criticisms.**



While it seems that the unique culture Disney has created has no flaws, everything is not all fairytales and pixie dust in the Disney Corporation. Like I said earlier, many people criticize the culture of Disney for being too intense to the point that the individual can get lost in it. This is known as “emotional labor” (Hochschild, 1983). Emotional labor means that the worker must regulate their emotions in such a way that they put on a façade to the public, no matter how they are really feeling. The cast members at Disney are part of the experience for the guests, and because of this they are to assume a new personified role when they go to work. Their individual concerns are to be put aside, and instead they have to focus solely on the satisfaction of the guests. This idea of emotional labor is found mostly in doctors and actors, but since the employees of Disney are “playing a part”, it makes sense that they would feel this as well (Smith, Caroline 2006). Critics argue that, while the culture of Disney is very unique and deeply rooted in the true Disney dream, employees are actually hurting it because they are being put on the back burner. Success seems to be the driving factor behind the organizational behavior at Disney, and their methods of preserving their culture may be too extreme (Mujtaba Asad, Muhammad 2014). The Walt Disney Co. has heard these concerns and has responded by saying that one area they have tried to improve on is “not giving recognition for perfect attendance.” (Tonn, Rebecca 2010) In the past, employees were required to come to work under any circumstances, including being sick. Those who followed this rule were seen as the ones who cared the most and were highly praised for their dedication. Disney is now doing a better job of encouraging a work/life balance, and wants employees to know that the company will “get along without them when they are not able to work at the normal standard”. In my opinion, I do

not think that the expectations Disney has of its employees are too strict. I think their distinctive culture has helped them to make better business decisions about horizontal integration, and has helped them to stay true to their roots in a rapidly changing world. I think Disney has set the bar as far as using their remarkable culture to ignite their success, and it is something that I personally admire and think other companies should take notice of as well.

### **Successful Companies**

The Walt Disney Company is not the only one to use their special organizational culture to their advantage. Upon research of other successful companies, I wanted to find ones that are well known for doing things just a little bit different internally.

#### **Zappos.**

The first one I found was Zappos, an online retailer. The most notable part of Zappos culture is that above everything they encourage “Creating Fun and a Little Weirdness”. (Heathfield, Susan 2014). And by weird they mean a tank full of tarantulas that employees can get in to win a gift card at the company meeting! Zappos also promotes open communication, creativity, positivity, humbleness, and embracing change. Zappos enforces their culture from the minute they meet potential employees. Recruits go through a 4-month “social setting” type interview process that include a cultural fit interview. Once a recruit is hired, they attend training sessions that focus on each of their 10 core values individually, and if after a month the individual doesn’t feel like they are the proper fit to the company’s culture, they are offered a \$3,000 stipend to leave (Groth, Aimee 2014). In order to receive raises, employees can attempt to pass several skills tests, which include ethical problem solving; each employee is also

required to participate in team-building activities that are supposed to take up 10-20% of their office time (Heathfield, Susan 2014). Zappos is even trying to adapt a more “self-governing” operating system, which gives employees more free range to expand on their own ideas (Wilson, Matt 2013). Zappos focus on their core values and their ability to create an unorthodox culture has enabled them to get around the limits of a conventional corporate structure. Zappos competitive advantage is truly found in the exceptional work environment and in the way they treat their employees. The one main difference I have found between Zappos and Disney is in Zappos transparency. Zappos' website includes a live "tweet wall" of everything its employees post to Twitter and it is completely unfiltered and unedited. Zappos wants everyone to know the good, bad, and indifferent things about the company and use the criticism to help them grow, while Disney wants to maintain their “perfectly magical” image no matter what.

### **Southwest Airlines.**

Another company that has been able to make a name for themselves through their peculiar way of internal working is Southwest Airlines. They are one of the most respected companies in an industry that has a very bad reputation. Like Disney, Southwest's main focus is on their clients and how they can help them through exceptional customer service. Southwest's culture is stemmed in their unique business strategy, which was to be the low-cost leader in the industry through simple flight patterns and quick turn-around time at the gates. From the beginning their CEO Herb Kelleher put an enormous amount of emphasis on culture and customer experience, and has passed down his ideals to the other leaders in the company (Nisen, Max 2013). Southwest's secret behind their culture and success is not one that can be calculated

using a list or a formula; it is actually quite simple. Kelleher had a simple set of values that he used to guide every business decision, and he made sure those values led to decisions that were efficient and expedient. Southwest tries to install three ideals in each person they hire: a warrior spirit, a servant's heart, and a fun-loving attitude (Makovsky, Ken 2013). Southwest enforces these values by putting on an elaborate recognition system for those employees that go above and beyond. These values are more emotional than the typical ones at most companies, and I think this along with the simplicity of their organizational structure are the main reasons why Southwest has been able to remain profitable in an unprofitable sector.

### **Google.**

Google is an additional company that focuses on their employees and the specific culture their founders intended on. Google has gone above and beyond with the work environment they set up for their employees. On their campus they have 25 restaurants, a shuttle service, a laundry mat, and on-site gyms, all free for their employees (Jackson, Lisa 2013). While the visible expression of gratitude to their employees may seem elaborate, the secret behind their corporate culture is actually pretty simple. Google's culture is rooted in the philosophy of their founders, which was to always have Trust. Google believes "Trust is a mutual relationship of transparency and sharing" (Chatterjee, Surojit 2012). Not only is trust important to have in their industry of information sharing, but also important that their employees feel that management trusts that they will do their job well. Since Google has embedded trust into their organizational structure, this allows employees the freedom to be innovative and have open communication with the whole firm. Google employees are encouraged

to work on individual projects during their office time, and if the project is impressive enough they can present it to top management. Google also has a program called the Global Education Leave program where they offer to help pay for an employee who wants to further their education (Thompson, Scott 2013). Each employee feels like they are really loved and taken care of, and Google makes sure that their best interests are put first. Mistakes are celebrated in the Silicon Valley, and people are encouraged to ask the tough questions to executives with the knowledge that they will always be answered honestly. New hires are given mentors to help them learn how to think big and take risks. Each new hire is also given a portion of the companies stock as a bonus so they can see the fruits of their labor. Google is in a sector that is constantly changing and they always need to stay a step ahead in order to keep their competitive advantage. To do this, Google uses their remarkable organizational culture to cultivate the kind of behavior that can put them ahead in their industry.

### **Common Factors.**

Each of these companies has a very different organizational culture, yet they all have similarities that contribute to each of their individual success. One of the common factors between all four is creativity and innovation. We can conclude that the work force of today has moved past wanting just the normal 9 to 5 job where they are told exactly what to do; instead people want to be free to express themselves and to feel like they can have a say in what is happening in the company. This trend is something that I think companies should start taking advantage of in order to completely satisfy their employees. Another common factor of all four cultures is that big risks are encouraged in order to have big pay offs. The world is rapidly changing, and companies need to

learn to adapt with them. By putting themselves out there, sometimes in ways that may seem crazy, all four of these companies have experienced great success both in profitability and in the satisfaction of their employees. The last thing that I think each company has done is make their employees feel like they are making a meaningful impact in society and doing something that will help people. I believe that we as people want to know that what we are doing is good in the bigger picture. All of these four companies make sure to recruit and invest in employees that will be loyal to the company and the message they are trying to send. I truly think that by creating these wondrous and sometimes-crazy organizational cultures, all four of these prosperous companies have established themselves as companies that will go down in history as some of the most successful of all time. Based on my research of these four companies, we can concur that their unique cultures definitely help contribute to the success they have experienced.

### **Unsuccessful Companies**

Not every company is fortunate enough to have a well-established culture. Some companies have not yet figured out the secret thing that makes them click, while other companies may have had a great organizational culture until something happened that made it change. No matter what the case is, companies with a misaligned culture normally tend to suffer financially and in the amount of turnover they have.

#### **Goldman Sachs.**

An example of a long-standing company that has run into some trouble recently is Goldman Sachs. Goldman Sachs has been offering financial help to clients for over 143 years. A veteran employee Greg Smith said that the culture at Goldman was their

“secret sauce”, and that it “wasn’t just about making money, it had something to do with the pride and belief in the organization”. This ex-employee, who left the company after commenting that the culture was “toxic”, said that he had lost that pride and belief in the company (Levin, Marissa). He described the environment as being destructive and he directly holds the executives responsible for the disintegration of the culture. As soon as the top management began to put making money above doing the right thing, the employees lost sight of the true spirit of the company. It is now up to the remaining leadership at Goldman Sachs to weed out the morally bankrupt employees so that wanting to reach maximum profitability does not overshadow the client’s best interests. If leaders do not manage culture, then it will become their responsibility to destroy it in the hopes of building it back up again. Besides corrupt leadership, there are other theories of why Goldman Sachs culture has deteriorated over the years. Some people think the shift was caused by their IPO in 1999 or their subsequent focus on proprietary trading. Still others use a sociological theory called “organizational drift” (Lattman, Peter 2013). This drift is caused when a variety of pressures result in a slow change to the firms business practice. For Goldman Sachs, the change was the shift to a public company structure, which limited the executive’s personal risk and transferred it to the shareholders. The IPO led to rapid growth and increasing profits, which started the slippery slope to manipulation and greed. The focus on money over clients eventually caused a drift away from the companies values and roots. By realigning their culture, I believe Goldman Sachs will be able to once again recruit the right people who will help the company reach its full glory.

### **Dish Network.**

Another company known for having internal troubles is Dish Network, a satellite-TV provider. Dish has consecutively been named the number one worst company to work for, based on an employee review system (Vuong, Andy 2013). They are in a sector that has a large amount of subscribers, a great deal of competition, and a large amount of customer complaints. According to the Glassdoor reviews, employees are regularly complaining about poor pay and poor benefits. There are also common complaints about long hours, lack of paid holidays, and mandatory overtime. But beyond that, much employee discontent is due to the leadership in the company. Management does not care about their lower-level employees, and a veteran of the company said “Setting foot in Dish headquarters is a danger to the soul” (Hannan, Caleb 2013). Much of this malice can be traced to Charlie Ergen, the founder and chairman of Dish. Although he is no longer CEO, he is still their largest shareholder. No president of Dish had lasted more than 4 years because of the pressure they felt under Ergen. He has been described as a man who “pounds people into submission”. Ergen unilaterally makes decisions that he thinks are right, and asks for no other opinion on the matter. He didn’t invite input or share his thought process because he felt he was always right. The other employees didn’t feel important enough to be included, and finally lost their belief in the company. He also kept a very tight reign on employees and wanted to know what they are doing at all times in order to make sure it was right. He even installed finger scanners at the front door to see if employees came in late. There was no trust, and no encouragement that the staff was doing a good job. Ergen also did not understand that the world is a changing place and he refused to be flexible. And under him, the company has racked up a large amount of lawsuits (Ryan, Liz 2012).



Ever since Ergen relinquished the role of CEO, the company has relaxed some but the damage is done. The tone at the top from the beginning was destructive and malicious, and the employees today suffer from it. However, Dish has realized their multitude of problems and trying to make improvements. They have increased their 401(k) plans and raised tuition reimbursement. They also have started a new management-training program called Lead that is going to be focused on building a culture of trust and employee engagement (Vuong, Andy 2013). Because of poor leadership and a company founded on no true values, Dish has a long way to go until they have developed a culture that is nurturing and inspiring.

### **Hewlett Packard.**

Sometimes companies just haven't been able to figure out their sweet spot with their culture, and one example of that is in Hewlett Packard. Most recently, their chairman and two other board members have stepped down due to their dissatisfaction with the company, and this has not been the first time that HP leaders have backed out. In 2006 Patricia Dunn resigned after a suspicious press leak scandal, and in 2010 Mark Hurd left after some sexual indiscretion rumors were spread (M.G 2013). His successor was ousted the following year. A disastrous deal with a British software company and uproar from investors has not helped the situation. All of these can be contributed to HP's own organizational drift, the issue that Goldman Sachs faced as well. Corporate culture at HP has always been described as "The HP Way", dubbed by the founders. But intense competition in the PC business has caused HP to be distracted from really establishing a corporate culture that works for them. HP has lost their congruence between strategy and posture, and employees have lost the positive attitude that things

will turn around (Dong, Jocelyn 2002). The high-tech industry has caused the company to become more cutthroat, and have been worn down by the pressure to stay ahead of competitors. The looming merger of Compaq is feared to be the worst thing for HP's culture, because it will further the confusion on what exactly they stand for. Employees have said the only culture is a "culture of fear", and there is no pride in the company because there is a complete disregard for employee input (Bradt, George 2012). While HP has always done a good job of thinking long-term, once the founders' left they took the fundamental part of HP with them. To find their place in their competitive market, HP needs to go back to their roots and take some notes of how things were done, and hopefully can build up a culture that is successful and aligned with the goals of the company.

### **Reasons for struggles.**

All of these three companies have struggled with their culture for various reasons. One culture was once good but has degraded over the years, one has struggled for the entire term of the company due to management, and one has yet to find a culture that can fit to their industry. But even though the reason all of these companies have suffered is different, there are still some similarities in the reasons for the downfalls. The biggest common factor I see is bad leadership. Management sets the tone for the rest of the company, and once the leader has failed, the company will fail. Executives need to lead by example and be the ones to stress to lower-level employees that they are valued. Another common factor is that employees have lost faith in the company. They no longer believe that the company is what it says it is, and this causes demoralization. Why would workers give there 100% when they don't feel like the

company is giving them what they need? Without a good work environment, employees find it hard to find their place in a company. The last common factor is the idea of “espoused values”. Espoused values means that the organization does have values that they are committed to, but they have not been able to attain them yet. Usually they are not the values demonstrated in behavior nor are they the same ones that are professed to the public. The images of these companies have been damaged due to the reputation they have earned through their employees. By aligning a company with their values and actually putting them to use, culture will be able to flourish and the company will have a backbone that they can now rely on.

## **Methodology**

### **Interviews**

In order to gain qualitative, first-hand experience on how unique cultures work, I conducted 2 different interviews with employees of companies with successful cultures. Each interview was a phone interview lasting about 30 minutes. Below is a full transcript of the conversations we had.

#### **Cathy Crotty: Walt Disney Co.**

The first interview was with Cathy Crotty, a veteran executive of the Walt Disney Company. Mrs. Crotty worked for Disney for 10 years in their International Marketing department. She recently moved back to her home state of Colorado due to her husband’s job transfer, but she is still an avid Disney fan. By asking her in-depth questions about Disney’s culture and her experience there, I was able to verify that the research I had done on the company was supported and gain a better understanding of the unique culture Disney has built. Mrs. Crotty was very receptive of my questions and

assured me she would answer them in the most honest and respectable manner. Below is the written-out description of my time with her.

Q: What was it like working for Disney?

A: It was the best professional experience that I have ever had. That is actually a very hard question because no answer will do it justice. People always ask how I could work for Disney and still love the parks so much; it never took the magic away from me. For me, the best part was when I got to interact with guests. Seeing the delight in their eyes is something most people working for other companies don't get to see. You don't normally get to see the fruits of your labor like we do.

Q: How would you best describe Disney's culture?

A: It is actually quite simple. We give employees a sense of ownership in the company and make sure they have a thorough understanding of the corporate values. We inspire people everyday to be creative and share ideas. We call it the Disney Way.

Q: Now what exactly is the Disney Way, particularly as it applies to the employees?

A: Disney employees are extensively trained and well compensated. Management makes sure that everyone has the same feelings about the company, not just the executives but even down to the summer employees as well. The cast members know their roles in the show, know their scripts you could call it.

Q: This idea of Disney employees being part of the “show”, do you think this adds extra pressure to the employees to act a certain way?

A: I think that the cast members don't mind being part of the show; therefore there is no pressure. That is what they are there to do, they work for the most magical place on Earth and it's automatically a happy place. Disney wants cast members to know that it's their show, not somebody else's. There is an atmosphere of trust and Disney makes sure to give employees the tools to do their job and then its up to them. We aren't always looking over their shoulders all the time to make sure it is perfect. Our employees know what is expected of them and if there is a problem we welcome their ideas and input of how to make it better.

Q: How does Disney motivate its cast members to be creative?

A: There is a regular meeting about 2 or 3 times a year called the “Gong Show”, where any employee can present an idea for a film, product, or something for the parks to the board. The movie Hercules came from this meeting! It benefits everyone because they get thousands of good ideas from employees and employees get a chance to be creative and possibly come up with a breakthrough idea. The employees are encouraged to freely submit ideas and they are always listened to. It is something that Walt wanted of his workers.

Q: I know that Walt also came up with the unique term “Imagineering”, a combination of Engineering and Imagination. How does Disney inspire their employees to keep this idea of imagination and dreams going?

A: Every year we go on “Dream Retreats” where we encourage the executive teams to go off-site for a few days to help define goals and make sure they are in line with our values, and acknowledge any barriers that they might run into with the new plans. The founding idea for these come from Walt Disney’s “Dream, Believe, Dare, Do” philosophy. The point of the retreats is to realize exactly why we are all here, which is to keep the dreams of one man going.

Q: In your opinion, what is the biggest mistake a company can make when trying to develop a culture?

A: Many companies think everyone in the company knows what they’re supposed to be doing and what is expected of them, which isn’t always the case.

Q: How does Disney keep this from happening?

A: Through our training and orientation program, Traditions. Immediately employees are fully immersed into the culture and everyone knows exactly what their job is, how to do it, and what is expected of them. Even our short-term summer employees go through this program, and other cast members do the training in order to give a view of the company through the eyes of other employees. I think this helps reinforce the culture more than anything else.

Q: What makes Disney’s culture different from other companies you’ve been in?

A: Well there are several differences that I personally have noticed. The first is the work environment. Everyone in the office has a slight obsession with Disney and what it

stands for; that is the best word I can think of to describe it. What Walt Disney did was change our society and taught us to never give up on our dreams, and we all believe in his vision with all of our hearts. It would be quite a task to find a more devoted and passionate company. We'll all even take an afternoon and go to the parks for a few hours if we have time! We are all so close it really is like a family. Another big difference is that the companies I have worked for in the past have not wanted to invest much in employees until they have been there 6 months or so, because nowadays turnover is so high. They don't want to waste the time and money on developing great employees, which is so unfortunate to me. When people aren't immediately acquainted with the corporate vision it is hard for them to truly believe in the mission. Disney avoids this by taking interest in the employees from day one.

Q: In your personal opinion, do you think Disney's organizational culture is the reason why they have been so successful?

A: It definitely has played a huge part. We set the bar in customer service and constantly make people happy. To me, that is more important than making a lot of money.

Mrs. Crotty's attitude about Disney and her insights on the culture were expected due to the research I had done. She further verified my research question that a unique culture can contribute to favorable outcomes.

**Mackenzie Dolder: ConocoPhillips.**

To gather more evidence, I wanted to do one more interview, this time of an entry-level employee of a different company in a different industry. ConocoPhillips is

another successful company that has been known for their satisfying work environment. I interviewed Mackenzie Dolder, an IT employee of ConocoPhillips in Bartlesville, OK. Ms. Dolder started off as an intern and was recently hired on as a full-time employee. I chose her as a way to gain perspective of culture from a recent-grad student with little business experience, as opposed to Mrs. Crotty. The interview with Ms. Dolder is listed below.

Q: How would you describe Conoco Phillips culture?

A: ConocoPhillips has a very lax working environment that is centered on making work as enjoyable as possible. The company is constantly looking for new ways to help motivate their employees and keep them involved and happy within the company. ConocoPhillips provides very flexible working hours that allow employees to make the most of the time they have.

Q: What kinds of things were expected from the employees?

A: A huge part of working at ConocoPhillips is understanding and following their core values known as SPIRIT values. SPIRIT stands for Safety, People, Integrity, Responsibility, Innovation, and Teamwork. The employees of ConocoPhillips are expected to dress in business casual every day and have the option of wearing jeans on Fridays. The employees are expected to treat each and every person with the upmost respect no matter if they are an intern or a supervisor.

Q: How much emphasis was placed on the company's values?



A: As mentioned previously, ConocoPhillips' core values are demonstrated by their SPIRIT value, which is top priority within their company. The most important value within the SPIRIT values is Safety. ConocoPhillips takes extreme measures to ensure all employees' safety no matter if they are in the field or in the office. ConocoPhillips always puts their "people" or employees as their top priority. They are always looking for new ways to make their work experience more enjoyable.

Q: What was the best part of the working environment?

A: My favorite part of working at ConocoPhillips was how they encouraged us as interns to communicate and interact with other supervisors and other departments throughout the company. We were not limited in any way and were able to explore different areas within the company that caught our interest. I was lucky enough to be able to present my summer project during an innovation forum in front of 200 people and every single supervisor and manager congratulated me as if I was an equal to them. I also enjoyed all of the outside involvement opportunities ConocoPhillips offered to the interns and employees to get to know one another. Some of the opportunities included summer intermural sports events, volunteering opportunities, baseball games, game nights, and much more.

Q: Was there anything about the culture that you did not like?

A: I cannot really think of anything I did not like about the company, it was a great place to intern at and I couldn't imagine a better company to start my professional career at. If only it wasn't in such a small town!

Q: What is the common thread that ties everyone together?

A: The common thread that ties the company together is definitely the SPIRIT values. Each and every employee comes to work knowing these core values and their importance. These values are all what each person strives to do within the company. Everyone in the company is always looking for ways to not only improve ConocoPhillips, but themselves and each other.

Q: How do people from different departments interact?

A: It is not uncommon at all for employees from different departments to interact with one another. This summer, the IT intern program spent a lot of time interacting with the Finance interns as well as the Supply Chain interns. They really pushed for us to get to know one another and our intern groups became no longer separated. I also noticed that much of the employees from different departments interact with one another on a regular basis. Throughout the summer, my supervisor would have meetings with other departments such as Finance to help solve technical issues they might be enduring. I also interacted with other departments when working on my summer project.

Q: How much does the company invest in new employees?

A: One of the greatest parts of ConocoPhillips is their Intern and New Hire program they offer. Both the intern and new hire programs are very similar. Both programs include an 8-week program that helps show the interns and new hires what ConocoPhillips does and how they operate. In the intern program, we are assigned a summer project and are

given the opportunity to visit the headquarters located in Houston, TX. The new hire program is a little different in the sense that the New Hires spend their 8-week summer program touring the different sites and both the Bartlesville and Houston offices. They also are put into a three-year program where they change jobs every year for those first three years. The best part of both the new hire and intern program is that every person participates in a job fair where each person is able to see every open job or intern position available. At the end of the job fair, each intern and new hire ranks their top 6 positions and they are matched with a job on their list. For new hires, the jobs for the next three years are taken from their ranked list. Both new hires and interns are also given mentors to help guide them through their programs.

Q: Did the company encourage creativity and open communication between managers and employees?

A: Yes, ConocoPhillips encourages their employees to communicate and work with different employees and managers from different departments even as an intern. During my time as an intern, I reached out to different supervisors and managers within ConocoPhillips to gain research and information for my summer project. Every employee, regardless of their position within the company, was more than willing to provide feedback and their knowledge they had to offer. I was also granted the opportunity to share my summer project with different departments within ConocoPhillips to see how my project could be used within their department.

Q: In your opinion, should a company's culture play a part in a recent graduate's choice of where they want to start their professional career?

A: I firmly believe that a company's culture should be an important consideration to know graduates seeking to start their professional career. A company's culture can be a defining factor in an employee's happiness and work ethic within their job.

### **Survey**

Ms. Dolder's positive outlook on ConocoPhillips culture again shows that having a distinctive culture can cause a company to be more successful, and also brings up a new point of interest for me. Recent graduates look for many things in their first-job search, but how many of them think about the culture of the company? Do they even really know what that consists of, and if they don't how could it ultimately affect their first-job experience? With the growing use of technology and the diversity that is being seen in the workplace, companies have to constantly find ways to attract new talent. One way they can do this is by pushing their culture and the things about their business that young professionals are looking for. To see what students on our campus are looking for in a first job, and to see if a company's culture could affect their decision to work there, I decided to do a quick survey.

#### **Students Represented.**

I surveyed 50 students of various majors selected through a convenience sample. All the students are between the ages of 20 and 25, and will be graduated and entering the work force in a year or less. I wanted to get a good representation of all kinds of students, not just ones in the Walton College of Business. The reason for this was that organizational culture doesn't just affect business students but anyone planning on

pursuing a professional career. Here is the breakdown of the majors represented in the results. From the Sam. M Walton College of Business: 8 Accounting, 4 Finance, 3 Information Systems, 2 Management, 2 Marketing, and 1 Supply Chain Management. From the J. William Fulbright College: 2 Biology, 1 Chemistry, 5 Communication, 4 Economics, 1 History, 2 Journalism/Broadcasting, 2 Journalism/Advertising, 2 Political Science, and 1 Psychology. From the College of Engineering: 1 Chemical Engineering, 6 Computer Science, 2 Industrial Engineering, and 1 Mechanical Engineering.

### **Survey Questions.**

For the survey, I simply asked the subjects to rate various aspects of what they want to have in a first job on a scale of 1 (least important) to 5 (most important). The twelve things they rated were: Work/Life balance, Salary, Friendly co-workers, Benefits, Vacation time, Not having to work overtime, Work environment, Casual dress, Strict rules, Flexible work schedule, Ability to be creative, and Open communication with management. All of these aspects can affect how a company's culture is, and can help us understand the kind of culture that students are looking for in their job search. These twelve categories can be separated into two larger groups, which represent two different aspects of cultures. The first group consists of work-life balance, friendly co-workers, work environment, casual dress, the ability to be creative, and open communication. This group can be called the Intangible Aspects of culture. The second group consists of salary, benefits, vacation time, overtime amount, strict rules, and flexible work schedule. These can be called the Tangible Aspects.

### **Outcomes.**

I was able to draw several conclusions from the outcomes I observed. First, every one except for 3 people rated Work/Life balance a 5. This shows that the majority of the students want a job that can still allow them to enjoy the things they like to do at home. However, a study done by Bellevue University says that more than 65% of Americans do not feel like they have a good work-life balance, and 42% feel used up by the end of the work day and don't feel they have enough energy to put time in anything but work. If what University of Arkansas students want is a good representation of students nationwide, then companies may have to deal with the challenge of finding a way to satisfy this need for work-life balance. Another observation I had was everyone except for 7 people rated Friendly Co-workers a 5 as well. Having a good work environment means being surrounded by like-minded people that get along and work well together. This is why it is critical for companies to determine whether new candidates will be able to fit in with the other workers in order to build good relationships. A study by the Grindstone even says having friendly co-workers may even help you to live longer!

Strict rules was consistently rated the lowest with 2's or 1's. We can conclude that the reason for this is that students want more freedom with the work they do, and don't want to constantly be watched and supervised all the time. This could be bad news for companies that have bureaucratic leaders. A bureaucratic leader makes decisions and follows rules rigorously and expects their followers to do the same. While this type of leadership is sometimes needed, such as when there are safety risks involved, for the most part it is not effective when you are trying to foster good relationships or encouraging employees to be big thinkers. Since these are both reoccurring things we have seen in the cultures of our successful companies, having strict rules can hinder a

company's ability to develop a culture that encourages employee growth and happiness.

I was also able to observe a difference in majors in the results. For the most part, the business and engineering majors ranked the tangible aspects of benefits and flexible work schedule over the intangible aspects such as creativity and casual dress. The opposite was true of majors in the Fulbright College, who rated being able to be creative and openly sharing ideas with management higher than salary and vacation time. Since different majors cater to different industries, companies can determine what is most important to their employees to have in order for them to feel satisfied in their work. They can then use this feedback to align company values with the employee's values. This will result in a cohesive organizational culture.

### **Survey Conclusion.**

Based on the results from my survey, I can conclude that company culture is a very important part of young professionals ideal job and companies should keep this in mind when they are trying to create a culture that will support their objectives. There are some aspects that most students can agree are important to them, however, it would be impossible to find a concrete list of values and benefits that will appeal to every individual in an organization. It is then up to the company to communicate with their employees, learn what is important to them, and then take action. Since soon-to-be graduates seem to now want a job that satisfies them more than just financially, companies can take advantage of this and use their unique culture and organizational behaviors to attract new hires. The number one way they can do this is by enforcing their culture during the interview process. Employers need to relate the strong points of

their organization that go beyond just benefits and pay, and use the culture to convince the future employees why this company is the best place to work for. This could even be a way to create a competitive advantage when it comes to recruiting. Because of this survey, I have thought of a suggestion that companies can do when they are hiring new employees. If a company gave a questionnaire like this one to employees when they apply for the job, they will be able to recognize what it is the employee is looking for. They can then identify the employees that have values that match up with the company and weed out those that have differing desires than what the firm can offer. By doing this, companies can make sure that the organizational culture is one that will motivate employees and foster a successful environment. Below is a table representation of the outcome of the survey.

**Table 1. Number of People that Selected Each Category**

<b>Scale of Importance</b>	1: Least	2: Not very	3: Neutral	4: Somewhat	5: Very
Work-Life Balance	0	0	0	3	47
Salary	6	6	7	10	21
Friendly Co-Workers	0	0	3	4	43
Benefits	0	5	3	10	32
Vacation Time	6	7	7	11	19
No Overtime Work	5	6	7	11	20
	0	3	7	16	24



Environment					
Casual Dress	9	10	6	11	14
Strict Rules	14	36	0	0	0
Flexible Work Schedule	4	3	3	16	24
Being Creative	9	10	8	10	13
Open Communication	3	8	1	12	26

## Globalization

Organizational change could also be described as “an adoption of an organizational environment for the sake of survival” (Radovic-Markovic, Mirjana 2012). So in a world that is rapidly changing, how can companies still keep their old principles while keeping up with the times? Change in an organization is normally seen as frightening and uncertain, and typically the culture of a company is the one constant that holds it all together. But with globalization and the age of new technologies, having a supportive culture that worked 10 years ago may not work for a company anymore. Globalization has caused companies to become extremely diverse. And with more diversity, a greater amount of differing views and values come into play. How can companies balance their founding mission with the globalization of the firm?

There are many reasons why globalization makes having a particular company culture difficult. For example, defining and rewarding performance is different from society to society, and it is up to the company to decide how they want to do it. Do they

stick to the ways its been done since the beginning, or do they change depending on who it is that they are rewarding? For instance, rewarding individual performance is more acceptable in individualistic cultures, while other cultures might see it as selfish and taking away from the community. Once a company enters a new country or region, they have to take things like this into consideration in order to really connect with the people there. Another example is the management style the leaders choose to have. In America, for the most part workers like to have some independence and know that management trusts them. In other countries, employees do not get to have much say in what happens and instead just have to do what they are told. It is then up to the company to determine which style will benefit them the most, even if it is at the expense of someone's values. For example, Korean Air has had to deal with several fatal accidents because the crewmembers were unwilling to challenge the captain and correct the mistakes that they found (Greene, Robert). While in the U.S. this would never be acceptable, in Korea you don't go against your superiors. Having conflicting workforce cultures can impact the effectiveness of the leaders and the organizational culture.

Globalization produces more diverse workforces and not everyone has the same values; therefore it would be hard for companies that are extremely globalized to come up with a set of principles that accurately represent the company as a whole. Our values are normally drawn from our past experiences and influences, and since everyone has a different story, a value may not be as important to one worker as it is to another. The organizational culture and workforce culture must be compatible, and failure to recognize and respect differences can lead to strategies that won't work. Companies

have to find that perfect balance between global consistency and embracing the local culture. For example, Disney has many parks in different locations worldwide, such as Paris, Tokyo, and Hong Kong. The parks are highly Americanized and similar to the ones you would see in California or Florida. This has been very successful in Paris and Tokyo, because people in these countries appreciate the American twist on classic French or Japanese traditions. However, the Chinese people in Hong Kong were very offended that the Chinese culture was not more prominent, and that park has suffered tremendously from it. The normal Disney symbols, such as Mickey Mouse, mean different things in China and Disney did not take the time to research the local customs and perspectives. Disney tried to bring their unique organizational culture into China, but the Chinese wanted to feel like their culture was accepted and they could not identify with what Disney was trying to do (Friedman, Thomas 2003). Disney failed to recognize the cultural differences, respect what the Chinese wanted, and reconcile the differences after they identified the problem.

In order to take advantage of a strong culture in a globalized industry, companies need to realize the culture contrasts between different parts of the world. Through my research I have created a list of different aspects of culture depending on which part of the world you are working in:

#### Eastern/Southern Hemispheres

- Emphasis on Community
- Believe hierarchy decides how people are treated
- People-focused
- External Control

## Western/Northern Hemispheres

- Emphasis on the Individual
- Believe all people are equal
- Task-focused
- Internal Control

### **Recommendation**

We now know that a company's culture definitely helps contribute to their success, but what can companies do to change their culture so it aligns with their values and the image they are trying to portray? As I've discussed before, an organization can lose control over their culture for various reasons, including bad leadership or unsatisfied employees. A study done by TLNT has shown that 96% of firms think cultural change is needed in their organization (Weinzweig, Ari 2014). Many employees are weary of change, and it can be difficult for companies to introduce a new culture because of fear of retaliation. Finding new ways to enhance a company's organizational culture that fits with the company takes a lot of time and research, so I have personally developed a 10-step program that I believe is a great starting-point for companies to change their organizational culture.

1. Evaluate your current culture: Before a company can determine where they are going, they have to know where they are coming from. A company needs to identify their behavioral weaknesses that they believe are holding them back from achieving their full performance potential. But a company shouldn't only focus on the bad; they should also try to identify some of their culture's strengths

that they can horn in on and make better.

2. Define your vision: Once employees know exactly what the vision is that management has created, they can start setting goals that help the vision come to life.
3. Clarify values and expected behaviors: Managers need to find a way to persuade employees to act in a way that aligns with their values. A company can encourage expected behaviors by setting clear rules of how they should behave. Values and expected behaviors also need to be communicated during the recruiting process in order to find new hires that understand and can commit to what is expected of them in the new culture.
4. Communicate your strategic priorities: The number one most important thing that management can do during change is having communication at all times with employees. Executives and lower-level employees need to work as a team in order to work together towards the common goal. Employees need to understand the bigger picture, and they need to be able to have some say in the new direction the company is going. This will help the employees better relate to the new strategy and culture, and they can feel like they are an important part of the company.
5. Engage employees in developing smart goals: A smart goal is one that is not too difficult to achieve, aligns with the company's values and strategy, and motivates the employees to keep moving forward. Letting an employee set their own goal helps them feel like what they are doing is important, which can lead to greater employee satisfaction.

6. Track key measures: Identifying some overall measures that support the performance priorities let employees know exactly what is expected of them performance-wise, and gives a unifying metric of performance that is highly visible.
7. Live out your expectations: Culture is little of what we say and more of what we do. The best way for employees to see how they can contribute to the new culture is by copying what they see the executives do. Organizational culture is built slowly over time, and everyone in a company needs to take responsibility to personally live out the culture.
8. Encourage innovation and free flow of ideas: This is something that has been consistent in companies that have had a lot of success with their cultures. Innovation not only helps the company to come up with new ideas but also gives employees a way to be creative. It can keep work from seeming like the same thing day-to-day, and can help employees create something that they can take pride in.
9. Create communication routines: Transparent, genuine, and consistent communication is critical to creating culture so that all the employees feel like they are a part of the process. Executives need to be open to listening to their employee's ideas, and the communication needs to be informal so everyone is on the same playing field. A new culture is unfamiliar to everyone so constant communication can keep uncertainty away.
10. Build motivation: Feedback and recognition are also critical to the process. A common problem is that there is a mismatch between what an organization says

it wants and what is actually rewarded. A company needs to determine what exactly motivates their employees and then use those motivation tools frequently.

There is no quick fix to organizational culture. It requires constant communication, lots of persistence, relentless follow-ups, and just a little bit of luck. Zingerman says it best that “you can never get rid of the parts of the culture you don’t like. More realistically what works is to gradually build up the strengths around the less desirable elements so that the problems become smaller.” Leaders need to refocus people to help them identify with the core heart of the company, and I believe this ten-step process is the perfect starting point for companies that are unhappy with their organizational culture.

### **Conclusion**

Every organizational culture is unique, and companies can have the upper hand against their competition if they use it to their advantage. Culture is not like a piece of technology or a marketing strategy; it is something more intangible that cannot be easily copied by others. Culture gives employees purpose and gives them something to believe in. It promotes good relationships, which in turn promotes a good work environment, which is so important in today’s business world. In my opinion, a unique culture absolutely does contribute to a company’s success. This study is important because I believe all companies should make it top priority to have their culture aligned with their values. Too many times the bottom line is more important than values and the people in an organization, and based on my research, it is obvious that more and more

people desire to work for and buy from companies that have a good culture and good reputation. Finding the perfect culture fit is becoming increasingly difficult in a globalized world; but I think that once companies can create a unique culture, they have found the key to being successful in every other aspect of their business. After all, Walt Disney said it best himself: “The more you like yourself, the less you are like anyone else, which makes you unique; after all, all our dreams can come true, if we have the courage to pursue them.”



## Resources

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