

*Impact Consultancy's*  
**Team Culture  
design kit**



**IMPACT**  
CONSULTANCY LLC  
LOVE WORK LIFE

# INTRODUCTION

Most of us want to build teams made up of people that love what they do and feel empowered to make things better. This doesn't happen on it's own. Our journey can be filled with ups, downs and uncertainty about how to proceed.

If you're reading this, chances are you are having a hard time implementing new ideas or leading change with your team. Constantly working against a resistant culture can leave leaders feeling tired and burned out. Leaders that make a difference, like YOU, shouldn't feel worn out because of a bad team culture.

So how do you become the kind of leader that can build a team culture that people love? At Impact, we help business leaders like you beat the confusion that's holding back your team and limiting your performance. How? By showing you how to design and build your culture so your business can grow.

We've helped thousands of leaders do it — from large and complex organizations, to small locally based nonprofits.

Stop being sabotaged by your team's culture. Let us help you become the influential leader that knows how to inspire change and build engaged teams.

We'll walk you through the process in this guide.

# STEP 1

## Assess Your Teams' CURRENT THINKING

### **Are your employees on the same page?**

Let's begin by assessing your staff. How do they see your team culture?

#### **Here's how to learn.**

- You're going to approach at least five of your employees, one by one, and invite them to have a quick conversation with you. Tell them they're not in trouble and this will just take a few minutes.
- Let them know you are interested in learning more about the team's potential to grow together.
- Then ask them to tell you their thoughts to the following 2 questions:
  1. Name and describe our team culture in 30 seconds or less.
  2. What one thing would you change or improve about our team culture that you think would make a real difference for our performance or engagement?
- Set up your smartphone to record each response or scribe real-time. When they're done, appreciate them for their willingness to share and let them know you'll circle back later.
- After you've interviewed everyone, transcribe each response on the next page. Feel free to copy the next page if you're interviewing more than 5 employees.

1. Using voice memo feature on your smartphone, hit record

2. Ask employee to name & describe the team culture *and* one thing they would improve about the culture that would make a real difference for the team's growth.

3. Say thanks and move on to the next person.

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Employee Name

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## Evaluating responses

All done? Now tack that page on the wall and study the responses.

As you do, ask yourself these questions:

- Are the answers similar, or are they all over the map?
- Do you employees answer quickly and with confidence, or do they hesitate and stumble?
- Do these answers line up with your assessment, or are they wildly different?

If you're like most teams, you'll have a wide variety of answers that may not align with your own vision for the culture.

## What is this confusion costing you?

If you have this level of confusion among your employees, it's no wonder that you experience resistance or apathy. Each member of your team is making up their own version of what the culture is and should be. They're filling the void with their own story.

And it's not really the fault of your employees. They just need a clear, unified framework they can use to explain how they want *to be* as a team.

## STEP 2

### Draft a team culture map

Next, you and your team are going to develop a team culture map.

What is a team culture map, exactly?

**A team culture map is a magical tool that helps you build the team culture you want.**

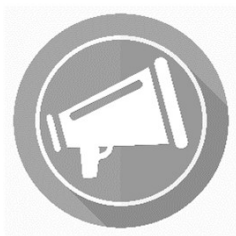
It's not actually magic. It's just you visually connecting the dots with your team.

When you are crafting your map, it helps to understand there are 4 breakdowns that your map will help fix:

1. The team culture is unclear
2. How we show up to live the culture is unclear
3. How we drive our culture is unclear
4. Who owns driving the culture is unclear

Given these 4 breakdowns, there are 4 parts to a culture map.

### The four parts of a strong culture map



declare



define



design



drive



# Team Culture Map

## DECLARE CULTURE

*"How we want to be"*

Culture of:

Which means:

## DEFINE BEHAVIORS

*"How we want to show up to live the culture"*

1

2

3

## DESIGN SYSTEMS

*"What we will leverage to drive the behaviors"*

## TOOLS/ PRACTICES

*"What we will do to engage in the behaviors"*

DRIVE FREQUENCY:

ALIGNMENT

# Part 1: Declare the Culture

## Declare how we want to be

Most teams haven't taken the time to declare the kind of culture they want to experience. Just this act alone is a statement. It's not strong enough to truly create a culture, but it's a needed first step.

Consider the pain-points your team experiences or the important attitudes you will need them to possess to meet the new challenges your business will face. Declare what kind of culture you will need to drive. Here are some examples:

- Coaching culture
- Culture of innovation
- Inclusion
- Safety
- Leadership or Initiative
- Proactive culture (predictive)
- Continuous improvement
- Collaborative culture
- Competitive culture

Stay away from cultures of "high performance" or "engagement." Instead, ask what is missing that would propel high performance (i.e.- culture of accountability).

Last, state what the culture means in 1-2 sentences. Be concise. Perhaps what it means or why it matters. The dialogue your team has will be important because they are creating shared meaning on the culture you are choosing to build.

Enter your final versions on the Culture Map.



## Part 2: Define the Behavior

### Declare how we will live the culture; how we'll show up

Once you have landed on the culture you want to build, you have to define how you will live it. Behaviors are important to call out because they are how we express our belief in and commitment to the culture.

A couple things to consider when you are defining your behaviors.

- 1. Be appropriate in your next step.** Building culture is a journey. If you want a coaching culture, but people aren't used to receiving feedback, you probably don't want to start with behaviors like, "Ask for feedback daily." It won't happen. It might be more appropriate to say, "*Team members will identify and share 1 thing each day they think they could have done even better.*" In some cases, you will have to build towards the level of safety and openness you eventually want. You know your team... engage with them and see how far they're open to going, but don't push so far that they shut down.
- 2. Be quantifiable.** Don't define vague behaviors. Examples include, "People are empathetic... or vulnerable... or open to feedback." There is nothing wrong with any of those things happening, but the problem is that you CAN'T SEE THAT HAPPENING. If someone were to practice showing empathy, what would they be doing or saying? That's how we want to capture each behavior. Verbs like, "ask (feedback/help)... share (stories/ideas)... tell (what you heard)... attend (meetings on time). Make each behavior statement *observable*.
- 3. No more than 1-3 behaviors.** Any more and people won't be able to engage. It's too much to remember and practice. Your Culture Map only has room for 3 behaviors to remind you of this principle.

Agree on and enter your final versions on the Culture Map.

## Part 3: Design the Systems

### **What will we leverage to drive the behaviors and What will we do to engage in them...daily**

This is the most magical part of the mapping process. It's also the most difficult because many of us haven't been taught to identify the systems around us. Much to our detriment, these systems evolve over time without intention and can wreak havoc on our people, time, energy, resources, ability to deliver value.

In short, a system is a set of interconnected tools, practices, and processes that work together for a purpose. Businesses may have payroll systems, recognition systems, performance management systems, or supply chain systems to name a few. Seeing the system will help you see what kinds of behaviors are being driven today, and how to embed new behaviors to match your culture.

At Impact, we're really good at helping teams see their systems, make them visual, and then improve them to build better processes and better cultures.

Think about some of the systems you have that support your team. Make a simple diagram to show how they work. Which ones make the most sense to embed our new behaviors in? o

Identify your systems, tools & practices and enter them on the Culture Map.

## Part 4: Drive the Culture

### **The manager is the Cultural Architect**

Seeing yourself as the Architect is an important distinction to own. It doesn't mean that you are solely responsible for creating the culture. You can't. It does mean you are responsible for convening your team and helping them determine what they need to be, how they need to act, and how you will drive the needed behaviors.

This isn't a skill often taught to those who enter management, so they're left to build the skills needed to deal with the fall-out of having a defunct culture: conflict resolution, difficult conversations, managing expectations, etc.

The culture mapping process is meant to equip the manager with the know-how and tools to effectively steward the culture of their team. Once the culture map is complete, leaders are taught how to assess if the map they created is effectively driving the culture they want. This keeps them in the role of process-owner for the development of culture.

Once your Culture Map is complete, congratulate your team and post it proudly. The real work starts here, but now you have a roadmap and team alignment on your side so you can lead with confidence and in collaboration with your employees.

## STEP 3

### Lead a culture mapping session

#### **How to lead a successful culture mapping session**

The most important part of this guide is creating a culture map with your team. It typically takes 2-4 hours depending on the size of your team. Here are some tips for making this session a success.

1. Schedule a 2-4 hour meeting. Make sure your room has a whiteboard or flip charts.
2. Invite your team. If your team is larger than 10 people, choose your leaders. (If you're not sure who to invite, we can help you decide.)
3. Use the template on the next page to frame your invitation to your team. You can cut & paste into the email invite.
4. Have snacks and coffee at the meeting. Everybody likes snacks.
5. Share what you learned from your interviews. Really hone in on where you believe you can change or improve your culture the most. Ask your team what they think.
6. Begin to work on declaring the culture you want to be. Let the conversation unfold. Having a finished culture map is powerful, but the dialogue you'll have along the way matters a lot.

# Communicating change

## How to Effectively Communicate Change

People aren't always ready to go in new directions. We find that when preparing people for change, it's best to follow a framework that moves them through a story that they feel a part of.

Use the following questions to frame your email invite, your opening remarks, and any other change you may engage in.

### The Problem

*Start by stating the problem or pain point that most of your team face.*

In this step we are confirming that we see/know about the issues people are dealing with and are seeking to confirm or expand our understanding.

*Example: Most team members struggle to get the support & recognition they want because we operate in silos*

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### The Impact

*Talk about the impact the problem or pain point is causing people to feel.*

In this step we are acknowledging that we are aware of the consequences our team issues are creating.

*Example: This makes many of you feel isolated and uncared for [by management]*

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### **The Solution**

*Talk about your solution to the problem you just stated.*

In this step we are sharing how we propose to take action to address the pain.

*Example: I'd like to lead an alignment session next Wednesday to help us clarify the culture we want for our team*

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### **The Difference**

*Clearly explain how people will feel after you solve the problem.*

In this step we are describing how someone's life changes as a result. Describe the transformation of what's possible when that pain goes away.

*Example: I want to lead a team where you get to come to work feeling valued and recognized for the difference you make everyday.*

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### **The Call to Action**

*Clearly explain what people need to do next.*

In this step we are telling people what action to take with you.

*Example: Please accept my invitation to attend this Alignment Session Wednesday, June 10, from 1-3pm.*

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### **Now Let's Put it All Together**

*Team members are struggling to get the support & recognition they want because we operate in silos. This makes many of you feel isolated and uncared for [by management]. I'd like to lead an alignment session next Wednesday to help us clarify the culture we want for our team, because I want to lead a team where you get to come to work feeling valued and recognized for the difference you make everyday.*

## What's Next?

Once you and your team have a clear sense of the culture you want and how to drive it, you'll begin to experience less resistance and more ownership to make it come to life.

- You'll eliminate resistance to change
- You'll all be using unified language when you talk about culture
- You will improve team collaboration
- Grow leadership within your team by teaching the culture map
- By referencing the culture map you'll stay aligned and clear about the culture you want
- You'll create openness to new ideas
- Build team agility and responsiveness by having them work on their culture instead of having the culture work them!

But there's more to a clear and compelling culture map. In fact, at Impact, we teach an entire culture-driven framework that helps organizations of all sizes eliminate confusion and inefficiency with their management so their business can grow.

We offer live public and onsite workshops, as well as tailored consultations to help businesses implement this framework, clarify their culture, and unify their team.

**Attend a workshop**

[Impactconsultancy.org/culture-mapping](https://impactconsultancy.org/culture-mapping)

Or call Chris Anibarro at 206-372-3326