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**A Learning Center**  
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# *Culture: Impact on Organizational Strategies*

## *Session Overview*

- Build on April presentation: A Primer on Culture by Susan Newton
- Benefits and Barriers in the nonprofit culture
- Harnessing cultural benefits and addressing cultural barriers
- Change management and conflict resolution



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# *What is Culture?*

- Embedded assumptions, beliefs, values and behavior patterns, often unexpressed or implied.
- The way things are done.

# *Assumptions*

*Programs strongest when an individual leader has the right and responsibility to make program decisions.*

*The person closest to program implementation will make the best decisions about the program.*



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# *Belief*

*Program decision independence is the best course.*

Case Study

# *Organizational Values*

- Foster an inclusive culture that respects the individual.
- Emphasize quality in programs and services.
- Leverage resources to maximize the value of the organization.

# *Behavior Patterns*

- Developed proposed budgets, staffing plans, program assessments, etc. Raised funds for their own efforts.
- Program directors interpreted the values differently
- Programs were implemented with different procedures, partners, and brands

# *The Culture (the way things were done)*

- Successful programs, yes, but in varying degrees
- Limited cross-program learning
- Constantly reinventing the wheel
- Silos of influence – depending on strength of program leader
- Competition for attention and resources



# *Culture in the Nonprofit sector -Benefits and Barriers*

*It's not just a job*

- Passion
- Values Based
- Working Environment
- Cost Effectiveness

# *Cultural Benefits*

- Passion: Program staff LOVED their work
- Values based: Respected program staff – autonomous decision-making
- Working environment: Flexible, supportive
- Cost effectiveness: ROI of \$64 to \$1

# *Cultural Barriers*

- Program staff LOVED their work –  
Wondered if there was a better way to share the passion
- Respected program – autonomous decision-making -  
Lost opportunities for cross-training and learning
- Flexible, supportive - Felt vulnerable when mistakes were made
- ROI of \$64 to \$1 – Big responsibility to justify spending,  
Expectation to do a lot with a little

Case Study

Worksheet



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*Harnessing Cultural Benefits*

*Addressing Cultural Barriers*

# *Keeping or Changing Culture*

- Strategic Planning
- Programming
- Fundraising
- Operations

# *Keeping or Changing Culture*

- Strategic Planning – Board set new budget and branding goals
- Programming – Established program teams
- Fundraising – Invested in dedicated fund development staff
- Operations – Management team invested with responsibility of decision-making processes

# *Tools for Change*

- Commitment of leadership
- Hiring and on-boarding
- Board recruitment and orientation
- Performance Planning and appraisal (Staff and Board)

# *Tools for Change*

- Commitment of leadership – Reorganization process, embraced by E.D.
- Hiring and on-boarding – New procedures focused on finding the right people, first year orientation
- Board recruitment and orientation – Same as for staff
- Performance Planning and appraisal (Staff and Board) – Plan and assess for strategic direction



# *Moving Towards Change*

- Reorganization process – Used our values: respected the individual
- Hiring and on-boarding
  - Standardized hiring process and included cultural fit assessment
  - Assigned peers for year-long orientation
- Board recruitment and orientation – Same as for staff
- Performance Planning and appraisal (Staff and Board) – Planned and assessed for strategic direction, used performance preference training

Case Study

Worksheet



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*Results – We're Not Done Yet!*

Not everyone wants change!

Leads to conflict.

# *Effective Change Management*

- Comes from leadership
- Engages EVERYONE – where they are
- Is a process

# *Four Stages of Change*

- Denial
- Fear
- Exploration
- Commitment

Handout

# *For Effective Change*

- Engage your stakeholders
- Set benchmarks in your plan
- Align your leadership
- Identify and engage your Culture Keepers, Change Missionaries and Change Agents
- Remove Barriers
- Assign responsibility and empower the responsible
- Celebrate milestones

# *For Effective Change*

- Engage your stakeholders – pre-planning assessment identified problem areas
- Set benchmarks in your plan – gave ourselves a year to make changes
- Align your leadership – the management team took ownership
- Identify your Culture Keepers, and Change Agents – teamed them up
- Remove Barriers – created a transition budget
- Assign responsibility and empower the responsible – team leaders and team standards
- Celebrate milestones – recognition in weekly staff meetings

# *Some Final Thoughts*

- Strategy is intention: What you intend to do; culture is habit – how you behave and “live” every day.
- Planning and documenting new direction and values won’t change the culture. It takes concrete action.
- Culture involves everyone in an organization – it cannot be controlled. Culture CHANGE comes from leadership – who can influence it over time.



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Q & A