Company Culture:
A Research Project

1. Abstract

The contents of this report will contain the end results of a series of interviews taken with companies in the Helsinki tech' sector. The purpose of which is to learn about the best practices of company culture and understand how it's being used to drive business goals alongside growth.

Initially, the focus will be on the theoretical insights discovered during the research, before shifting to the practical learning. To jump straight into the practical benefits, press here.

2. Theoretical Insights Into The Findings

2.1 How is Company Culture Perceived?

<mark>What is company culture?</mark>

A question we asked ourselves and all whom we interviewed, and there wasn't a right or wrong answer. Company culture is an abstract, intangible element that defines the personality of a company by influencing the environment in which it works. Each company is different, and each is made of differing individuals. **Company culture is the metaphorical glue that provides a common framework for values**, **ethics**, **expectations and goals whilst providing the basis to make decisions to further them**. It works differently for every organisation, and therefore, has multiple ways in which it can be implemented and practically used, meaning there isn't a set right or wrong path.

The definition above derives from a collective impression of company culture by those interviewed, and ourselves. This initial perception was touched on at the start of the interviews with the hope of gauging how company culture is viewed in its raw form before specifics affect the overall picture. This provided interesting insights into how company culture is perceived, and most importantly, highlighted the significance of implementing best practices at the earliest possible stage due to the impact on all aspects of an organisation.

2.2 Values And 'The Why': An Introduction

Purpose is the key to any culture; without having reasoning or a framework of reference, direction and scope are quickly forgotten. This begs the question of how it can be achieved and implemented across the entire organisation. The beginning to an answer lies within concise descriptions and keywords defined by all employees that best represent the vision of the company and those within. The methods most practised are company values and

answering the 'why'. These practices are the **basis of company culture**, and the first step toward the inclusion of all within the process of creating the culture.

2.2.1 The 'Why?' Why Do We Exist?

What is 'The Why', and how does it benefit a company culture? Each organisation has a reason for its existence; however, not all have defined this within a concise statement. The formulation of a succinct phrase provides direction and the ability to plan for the future. It sounds simple and almost obvious, but the impact of this clarity is commonly underestimated. **By simply putting thoughts to paper, coherency is formed for multiple audiences**. Not only will employees understand what the company cares about, but customers' initial questions and concerns can be addressed before even connecting with the organisation. Importantly, unique qualities are identified and promoted, airing what is individual about the business as a whole: and this is what should be revered.

> `'The Why' doesn't have to be a mission statement, just an honest reflection of the company's core objective.`

However, there is not a defined method of production or a set process which is best used to achieve this. Organisations have different reasons for existence, and this should be celebrated through 'The Why', be it a personal story or a specific inspiration for a company's existence. The critical factor is to understand that this is the foundations of the company culture but will adapt with time. **Motivations change**, **organisations evolve and reasonings adapt with growth**. 'The Why' will always reflect the underlying character of an organisation, and therefore must be understood, created and acknowledged by all within as well as being open to change.

2.2.2   Values

Organisational values are essentially the guiding principles that develop into a decision-making framework. They help to set the tone for the company culture and create an identity through unity. However, each individual carries their own values, so, how does a company successfully establish a core set everyone can agree upon?

Founders' values form the DNA of a company and set the baseline of the culture, but the people complete it. **Transitioning from founder to team values is essential**. The key is honesty, and to include everyone in the process. Values represent a personal outlook, and **an organisation is essentially an organism made up of individuals who have their own respective opinions**. Including everyone within the creation process results in all voices being heard, and through applying an abstract approach, honest, personal findings are found, which is exactly what is needed. The results can then be defined as a team and tangible rules applied, ending in a core set of values that represent the company as a whole.

2.2.3   Have Values Been Made as a Team?

Noteworthily, all companies who have shifted from start-up to scale-up have recognised the importance of creating values as a team.
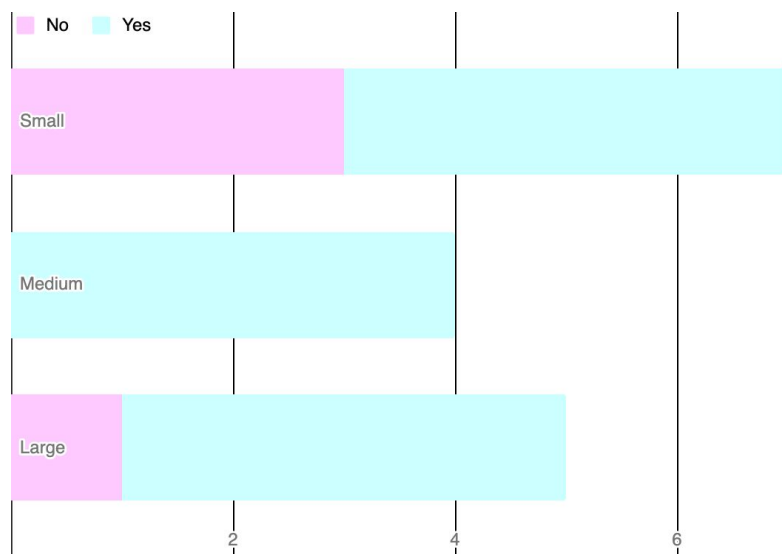

Figure 1 - Chart representing the creation of values by a team of those interviewed.

2.2.4 'The Why' v Values

Having a phrase to stand by provides purpose, accountability and a path for all to follow. On the other hand, customised values represent the organisation as one entity while creating cohesion and laying the framework for decisions.

Which is better? The answer: neither.

The decision should not rest with which approach to take, but which method is best suited to a particular organisation. Applying both methods is not incorrect, in fact, they both boast unique advantages that blend with one another. The objective is to establish these concepts early as the infrastructure of company culture is founded during the course of these practices, but also to include each and everyone in any related activity or future adjustments. **Taking unique perspectives and combining them into a consensus harmonises the workforce**, not only adding accountability and responsibility to those who partook in the production, but providing a reference point for any subsequent decisions.

However, the practical advantages of creating values and answering 'the why' doesn't end with the formation of organizational alignment; there is a need to **communicate these findings to new hires** as they will provide an **anchor during the onboarding process**. The expansion of these processes holds potential for further iterations with the creation of a culture handbook, which provides further benefits such as employer branding.

"Effectiveness without values is a tool without a purpose." - Edward de Bono, Author and Inventor

Ultimately, the creation of alignment fuels the progress of a company's core mission: and this unity is reflected in answering 'the why' and identifying shared reflective values within the organisation; providing direction for the future, and the ability to make effective decisions along the way.

2.3   Motivations

The common approach to tackle motivations within the workplace is to measure employee satisfaction and act based on the results. Unfortunately, this reactionary method can miss vital information. **A satisfied employee does not directly translate to an engaged and motivated member of the team**. Motivation breeds betterment, and therefore by acknowledging individual motivations, business performance increases as a result of a more fulfilled workforce.

`Company culture shapes motivation and engagement.`

Each individual is motivated uniquely, and with the inclusion of all within the creation of the values, there's a likely chance the outcome will cover core motivations of the workforce. By recognising each individual and including them from the beginning; not only are personal drives identified, but reactionary measurements are avoided through determining unique objectives.

The benefits are crucial. A concerning issue in a modern business environment is employee retention. **Through encouraging the company culture to identify motivations and recognise concerns**, **retention rises**. Why? People feel appreciated and are encouraged by having their voice not only heard, but welcomed.

Below are examples of what drives people who were involved in the research:

> » The ability to learn and develop.
> » The overall atmosphere and commitment combined with the ability to influence a company.
> » Interpersonal relationships.
> » Seeing the growth of people hired.
> » Heterogeneous work environment
> » Global leaders of the market.
> » Working on meaningful projects.

All of the examples are directly connected to the culture of a company, highlighting the importance of personal motivations within the culture itself. All motivations must be nurtured as they help to form and drive the culture forward.

2.4   Decision-Making Structure

A reflection of a company's culture can be found within its decision-making structure. Traditionally, a hierarchical model heavily influenced by the business sector the organisation resides in is implemented. However, modern trends are leaning toward a flat, open structure that promotes autonomy and responsibility.

Companies within the tech' sector reap the benefits of an open structure. **Shared ownership creates drive**, which leads to initiative and independence, resulting in the ability to make decisions across the workforce. This can be further broken down into specific teams, allowing for **multiple iterations and sprints to be run in conjunction**, creating **a cross-functional**, **self-driving unit**. An anchor such as a team lead is in place if needed, but operates as a support for others, aiming to make every team members working life easier.

One of the first actions to be taken in order to achieve a flat structure is the implementation of trust. **A trust culture operates under the onus that trust breeds trust**. The organisation itself needs to be the one who takes the first step, putting their trust in the employee from day one. Employees should be encouraged to try new things and decide their own workflow. **Providing autonomy and moving away from micro-management increases the productivity and effectiveness of the overall team**. The elevation of responsibility cuts unnecessary layers in the workflow whilst adding accountability and speed: especially in relation to communications and decision making.

Can unlimited autonomy have adverse consequences?

There are notable, negative side effects of a completely flat structure. Unlimited autonomy can have adverse implications on employee motivation, especially if they are junior. Without the tracking of goals and objectives, an employee's direction and self-confidence can turn wayward. **A lack of feedback creates an air of uneasiness**, especially if there is no contact with team leads due to a busy or fully autonomous work environment. This communication loss forms due to an overbearing arch of trust. Organisations need to recognise an employee's individual preferences and act upon them. **Simple actions such as feedback**, **reviews or weekly meetings help to provide encouragement by reaffirming the trust in an employee**, without abandoning the individual to unlimited autonomy. This is essential when tackling burnout, and a key hindrance to the symptoms.

Ultimately, soft skills are necessary to assess each situation in its own context, the import rests in the practice of communication, and having that outlet for concerns and feedback alongside the autonomy.

2.5   Intro' to HR processes

Once an organisation has established processes, it's important to constantly review and update internally. But, how does it work for smaller companies in the tech' sector? A common theme that presented itself followed an engineer first pattern, in which the workforce would eventually grow to the point where it needed to hire the first non-engineer. Practically, it makes complete sense as the tech' itself needs to be created: nevertheless, the importance of the culture shouldn't be diminished, especially when aiming to retain staff.

Reactionary thinking restrains the growth of company culture. **Proactive measures allow for organic stems of culture to grow**, **and avoid slow processes with punishing learning curves**. Implementing early procedures relating to specific processes, whilst understanding the breakpoints of scalability, strengthen the culture and help to avoid the clutter inherited by the first HR focused employee.

2.6   Hiring Process & Onboarding

During the recruitment phase company culture reveals its true brilliance by combining differing practices to achieve a successful outcome: in this case, a new hire. Applying predefined company values to the hiring process is essential. Although fundamental talent and strong skill-sets are crucial factors in a potential hiree, the culture-fit needs to be correctly addressed. **Culture is never static**, especially when bringing fresh elements into an enclosed environment. The importance of recognising that **culture changes with every new hire** cannot be stressed enough. Therefore, every time the hiring process ends and a new starter begins their journey within an organisation they are bringing their own opinions, voice and motivations.

The hiring process is the catalyst for company culture.

Blanket rules cannot be applied to the hiring process as they are contextual events that have definitive requirements. Priority and value need to be assigned for what is needed at the time. However, an emphasis must be placed on specific elements in order to avoid negatively impacting company culture. As previously mentioned, culture-fit is essential. This can be evaluated by **applying company values to the hiring process whilst humanising the interview process**. A tendency for technical tasks and interviews have taken priority, neglecting soft skills that are indispensable within smaller tech' companies.

Successful cultures contain an interesting constant in their hiring processes: recruitment by recommendation. Initially **recruiting acquaintances or friends prioritises the culture-fit** whilst gaining the necessary skills needed.

> "From the very beginning, our criteria was 'would we really want to grab a drink with this person, even if we weren't in business together?'" - Tony Hsieh, CEO of Zappos

The practical value of company culture doesn't end with the hiring of a new starter. The onboarding process is the next step significant step that is inherently affected by the environment the culture influences. By understanding the traditional view of first impressions, it becomes evident that the onboarding process helps to define the initial perception of an organisation.

The onboarding process can be used as a tool to define the company culture by putting a focus on interaction and communication. The importance of meeting differing units and associating faces with departments is underestimated. Not only does it help to smoothly onboard a new starter, but it also sets the tone and expectations of the culture. By spending time with each department, meeting people and understanding each role, the onboarding process promotes the positive aspects of a culture.

Common practices include the **creation of slide decks**, **informative documents**, **guides and playbooks**. These practices hold their own benefits and help to occupy a mind, but **lack the ability to scale due to leaning toward a manual creation process**. Companies within the tech' sector have an opportunity to **incorporate automation into the onboarding process**. Interaction and motion are becoming indispensable tools in the field, yet they are not being utilised in important internal processes. Combined with simple gamification, such as an achievement based checklist, the onboarding can transition into a more motivating, fun experience that's fuelled by organisations specific cultures; rather than what's expected: a day of reading, a quick hello and a lot of questions that remain unanswered.

> `"Pay attention to your culture and your hires from the very beginning." - Co-founder and Executive Chairman of LinkedIn`

Social aspects of onboarding are just as necessary for practical and cultural reasons. The assignment of a mentor is a popular method to encourage acclimatization whilst providing a point of contact. However, **mentors should also be available for social elements**: having a lunch buddy is just as pivotal to an onboarding process.

An interesting element of onboarding lays with distributed teams and remote workers. It brings new challenges of how to successfully onboard a new starter into the company and the culture. Face-to-face connections are achieved by using video conferencing to familiarise coworkers and provide the building blocks for relationships. Having that visible aspect provides both social and professional expectations whilst welcoming new employees.

The above are just examples of how things can be done differently to the norm. **Onboarding is not a generic experience**, and this must be taken into account when considering changes. Just like with values and 'the why', each organisation will have its own take on how it should be done. The important factor is to **reflect the values during the onboarding**, and to remember that it **doesn't end with the first week**.

2.7   Feedback

A strong feedback culture fosters growth for organisations as a whole and each individual operating within it. Value is placed on opinions of all instead of the few resulting in the advancement of talent rather than the hindrance. As previously mentioned, culture nor the people that operate inside it are static; therefore, opinions need to have outlets in order to maintain and develop a strong, unified organisation.

People are the priority; **they make the culture and each organisation has the privilege and the ability to cultivate and champion their own by giving a voice to every individual**. The trust developed during the inclusion of all in the decision-making structure and onboarding sections of a company's culture is rewarded through feedback. Employees who trust the organisation they work for and have their ideas acknowledged offer insightful, honest feedback as they are motivated to do so. This not only supports wellbeing and productivity but creates **inter-connected motivations that result in the collective progression of the company**.

There are numerous forms of feedback that help to guide the growth of a company's culture. Face to face feedback is a common mechanism used by organisations of all sizes. Having an opportunity to speak 1 on 1 with a colleague, team lead or CEO improves communication skills and provides greater alignment within the company. Although valuable, this method can struggle to keep up with the growth of a company and fail to catch the wellbeing of all employees. However, the key flaw is the lack of anonymity.

<mark>Anonymous feedback provides a safe platform to raise or report grievances.</mark>

Anonymous outlets are indispensable. They offer feedback that cannot be sourced elsewhere, no matter how open and transparent the culture is. Intriguingly, sources for anonymous feedback can be actualised with relative ease. Having an open, easily accessible form will allow specific concerns to be addressed. An intriguing implementation is to have these anonymised suggestions discussed in the team meetings: giving viability to the concept and enabling ideas to be heard.

Surveys provide continuous improvement at the same time as tracking employee wellbeing. They are a vital part of the feedback as they **reduce the expenditure of time by automating the process whilst providing clear and actionable data**. The balance of frequency needs to be found for each organisation. Larger businesses can benefit from a weekly or biweekly survey, whereas smaller businesses need only send the survey once a month. If surveys are exclusively conducted quarterly or biannual the end results are ineffective. **Culture is not stagnant and needs to be frequently developed to maintain continuous growth**.

68.5% of those interviewed have an automated feedback cycle in place, of which 54% run bi/weekly surveys.

Weekly meetings help to reinforce feedback as part of company culture. It's a practice that businesses of all sizes undertake, for good reason. **Consistency creates a habitual nature to feedback**, **providing increased opportunities for identifying pain points and correcting courses**. Equipping the workforce with the ability to adapt and learn is a crucial asset for any organisation. A specific advantage weekly meetings provide companies in the tech' sector, especially consultants, is an opportunity for the team to gather on-site. As distributed teams work on client premises the benefit of a weekly meet allows all to gather at the office, giving all an outlet to discuss feedback, as well as seeing the entire team.

93.75% of those interviewed have weekly meetings as a team.

However, a concern arising around feedback is what exactly to do with it. **How do you take action and avoid the stream of information becoming arbitrary**? Act on concerns and most importantly use feedback to continuously improve the processes in place. By updating manual processes, time is gained, allowing for tweaks and improvements to be made consistently. Insightful data can be found by analysing the fulfilment of feedback: for example, determining which teams are exchanging the most feedback can correlate directly to the teams' satisfaction and wellbeing. Frequently gathering feedback will provide abundant streams of actionable data, resulting in the continued progression of an organisation's culture.

2.8   Company Activities

Everyone loves company activities. They are not just a chance to bond, develop rapport and trust with colleagues but an opportunity to celebrate the company culture. Company activities display the core values of an organisation, whilst celebrating the success. Routine stagnates creativity: having an outlet to refresh the atmosphere and provide interaction between one another is a great source for recharging.

`Pokemon? Coffee? Hockey? If there are enough interested parties in a particular activity; form a club!`

There are numerous forms of company activities; from annual trips abroad to a simple beverage after work. **Like everything else attached to company culture**, **the best suggestions are found within the organisation itself**. Communicating with the workforce and having the participation and ideas from all in the creation of events will provide activities favoured by the majority, and therefore change the atmosphere from disgruntled forced attendees to willing contributors.

2.9   Negative Impacts of Toxic Company Culture

When the culture is healthy and organisations are experiencing positive growth, company culture flourishes. When situations change and challenges occur, the real test of a company's culture is revealed. Firstly, **understanding how culture can turn negative is essential**. A number of occurrences can cause a culture to turn toxic, but there are some more prominent than others.

Core values, when aligned, drive businesses forward; however, when they do not serve as a basis for organisational functions or decision making they are easily forgotten and become almost non-existent. Avoiding values from turning into words learned during an onboarding process is key to keeping a culture staying active and fresh.

Feedback maintains growth whilst averting stagnant culture. **If employee suggestions are discarded or the environment fails to encourage honest feedback**, **the culture becomes tainted**. Employee retention, accountability and motivations fall. Blaming and punishment rise, which leads to micro-management and the removal of autonomy. This can have adverse effects for companies which offer remote work as an option, leading to a rise in absenteeism in the office.

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"We can change culture if we change behavior."
      - Dr. Aubrey Daniels, Founder of ADI
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A lack of recognition can become a strain on interactions. Acknowledgement of work and effort is key. Employees' dedication and efforts need to be celebrated in the culture of the company, instead of overworking becoming a badge of honour. A tense environment leads to little or strained interactions, and **without communication**, **a culture fails to serve its purpose**.

Soft skills are of vital importance to combating negative slides in company culture. They also provide warning signals for future problems. A lack of empathy, increased gossip and a slump in team spirit are all signs of unfavourable drops in culture. **Bad culture costs communications** and internal struggles are directly reflected when external communications are brought into the equation, affecting the end customer.

Synergy in Culture is key to maintaining its strength.

Personalities, experiences and leadership styles are all potential culprits for the formation of negative company culture. The key to the preservation of a rigorous culture doesn't lay in a particular area, but the environment as a whole. **The one inter-connecting backbone is communications**. Be it from team leads, designers, developers, HR or the CEO, all need to communicate effectively. Soft skills transcend differences on paper. **Implementing habitual processes that encourage internal communication proactively combats future challenges whilst averting reactionary responses**.

3. Practical Learning from the Insights

3.1 Breakpoints of Scalability

Through conducting the interviews practical learnings have been found via analysing experiences of all as a collective. Culture is affected by the size of the company, and specific needs arise as growth occurs. **Scalability becomes an issue and processes need to be constructed in order to help combat challenges**.

For instance, companies who have around 10 employees or below are afforded the resource of time. Whilst they generally do not contain a specific member of the team for HR needs, 1 on 1 feedback is still afforded. Onboardings are smooth as they are uncommon and responsibility is easily allocated.

> The first breakpoint of scalability occurs at 10+ employees.

Feedback becomes a priority as the culture changes with the growth. The key is to maintain that culture, whilst adding the benefits of the new members of the team. **The need for progression becomes apparent**, **whilst the time to undertake the required actions disappears**. Feedback techniques such as '1 on 1s' become less frequent, prompting the increase in face-to-face, spontaneous feedback. This is when processes are waiting to be utilised. However, they are generally created using manual methods, which fail to tackle the restrictions in time. Automated surveys provide the answer. They not only save time but allow the tracking of employee wellbeing and provide an anonymous outlet for staff to use. In combination with weekly meetings, surveys can be constantly updated and improved, whilst using the collected data as discussion points.

The second breakpoint of scalability occurs at 30+ employees.

Further growth brings new challenges. Feedback processes tackle the challenges of culture and organisational growth, but, the increase in new staff strains the onboarding process. Manual methods are stored in a drive, which can quickly become a minefield of information. **Onboardings tend to become ad hoc inventions, each of which differs and none of which fully covers everything required**. Automation once again reveals itself as a defining factor in progression. With a digitalised checklist a new starter has an underlying impression of what's expected when they first join a company. Combined with the use of an intranet, or a form of landing page, information relating to specifics can be provided directly to new hires. Company information, differences in departmental work, the introduction of processes and personal touches such as welcome messages from colleagues and CEO can all be collated in one location.

By developing the processes digitally, feedback can be gathered with relative ease, allowing the onboarding to mature organically with growth.

An interesting insight relates to the first day. If a new starter arrives at a prepared desk with a welcoming/onboarding kit awaiting them, the overall processes is likely to be improved. The kit is a way to effectively communicate the tone for the working relationship. A combination of values, information, technology and 'swag' helps to provide direction, answer questions and acclimatise new hires quickly and succinctly.

3.1.2   Will Current Processes Scale?

Interestingly only companies who have experienced large-scale growth believe they have the processes in place to manage scalability.
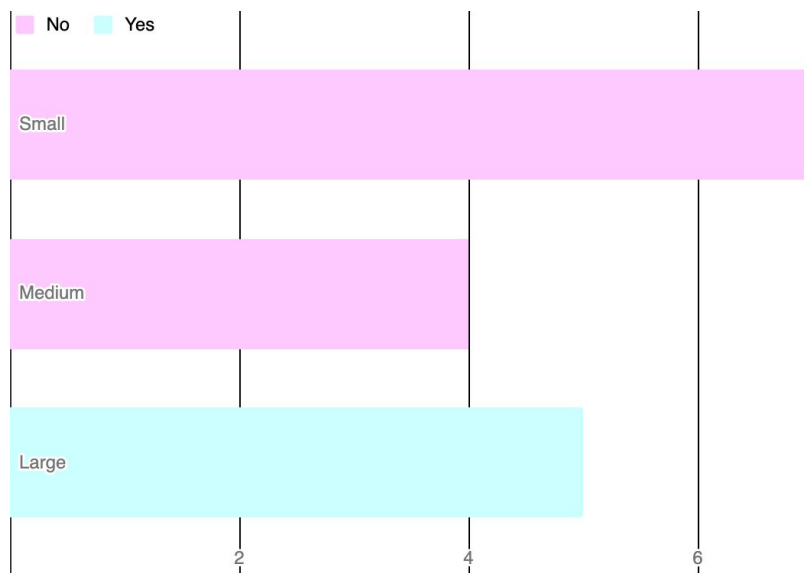

Figure 2 - Chart representing organisations interviewed who believe current processes will scale with growth.

Once the foundations of the processes are in place, the culture grows with the organisation. However, they need to be developed and maintained to cope with future scale. Naturally, the processes improve themselves through communicating with the workforce and assessing the data gathered by the tools used.

4. Benefits Found

Company culture is challenging a more traditional strategic approach and is rapidly becoming a favoured methodology for many organisations. Viewed differently by all, company culture still carries a number of characteristics that provide beneficial transformations to a company's framework.

4.1 Transparency

Companies are inherently closed and have been for generations. Operations occur behind closed doors, and information is traditionally limited to senior management. **Culture conscious companies are revolutionising infrastructure by implementing transparency and avoiding negative connotations associated with a closed environment**. Transparency aids a trust culture, opening communication barriers and allowing the full utilisation of a flat hierarchy.

Making data available helps to remove insecurities and concerns from staff members. When information is available, people tend to not access it regularly: but because they are trusted to do so, motivation and loyalty forms. Transparency also fosters ideas and encourages creativity as it works both ways, allowing for an organisation to identify progressive, positive initiatives and suggestions from within the company.

But should all organisations change to complete transparency?

Transparency can have positive implications, but like other cultural aspects of a company, it isn't a rule that works for everyone. Being closed creates an air of uncertainty, whilst being fully transparent can push focus onto the wrong areas and cause unnecessary panic, especially in smaller consultancy companies when work is paid by the hour. Fiscal information can be hard to interpret, and therefore raises alarms and worries due to misunderstandings. **Transparency is best practised when used to drive a business forward through understanding the limitations of the particular organisation**. Not everyone is ready to be fully open, and that is not a negative aspect. However, in order to create an autonomous culture, the data needed to make decisions needs to be available for all to see.

Conclusively, when an organization's culture is transparent it naturally reassures employees by removing fear and changing communication flows. Without the unease of constant questioning regarding decisions being made, collaboration and innovation replaces interference and micro-management.

4.2   Trust & Autonomy

As discussed previously, company culture rewards organisations who promote trust and autonomy via their processes and structure. However, the integral benefit is the empowerment of employees. **Given the freedom to ideate and experiment employees gain emotional investment in their work**. This in turn generates responsibility whilst reaffirming the backing of the staff, leading to a safe working environment.

<mark>`Like transparency, trust and autonomy remove micro-management.`</mark>

Micro-management can not only generate stress, but cut productivity and increase employee turnover. Importantly, when implementing autonomy in a culture, an incremental approach averts the dangers of workplace freedom, resulting in a happy medium.

4.3   Employer Branding & Employee Retention

Workplace culture drives attitude and behaviours which directly influence the external perspective of an organisation. **A positive culture benefits employer branding by engaging employees**, **encouraging authentic communication and creating a customer-centric drive by motivating staff**. Designing a culture guide helps to raise awareness whilst attaching an image of the company culture. Definitively, the focus should rest on actualising the culture in an organic form: and naturally, employer branding and employee retention will follow.

5. Conclusions

In reflection, the definition to the initial question: 'What is company culture?' is similar to that at the start of the research. However, the understanding of how it can be achieved has progressed with each interview taken.

There are a number of best practices and crucial areas which positively impact the culture. Participation in the creation process is a must. The views of the workforce are essential, providing data that cannot be found elsewhere.

Including everyone in the cultural process from the beginning will ensure the culture is created organically and honestly, as a whole.

Values are the starting point around which the culture can be built. They ultimately provide a framework for all decisions to be made. Secondly, the hierarchy needs to be established early. By trusting the workforce and favouring autonomy over micro-management culture will benefit those in the environment, rather than imposing and limiting employees. The growth of the culture occurs by giving employees a voice through feedback. The data gathered helps to avoid communication losses whilst highlighting problem areas within the culture.

With the basics in place, cultures and organisations have the framework to grow. Onboarding becomes essential with this growth. By providing structure to the welcome processes the culture reaps the rewards of new opinions and voices. Company culture is continuous, ever-evolving and anything but static; therefore, the inclusion of new people, and new ideas, needs to operate smoothly.

Automation provides the structure needed to cope with the expansion. Processes generate usable data while maintaining scalability for future growth.

Developing and maintaining an engaging company culture requires attention, intention and a budget. However, once established, the benefits are real. Although an abstract element, the culture provides visible, tangible results, not only increasing the resilience of an organisation but advancing productivity, loyalty and cohesiveness. Company culture is built on interaction and is consequently unique to each individual organisation. There are no right or wrongs, but the practical value has never been more palpable.

7. Thank You!

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank all who partook in the interviews and wish you the very best with the future.

The journey has been educational, providing countless insights into the positive implications of company culture and understanding the best practices behind the concept. We have begun to implement the first changes within our redesign, starting with our own values. The first workshop has been held and it will not be the last. A general understanding has allowed us to focus our organisational objectives, pinpointing what our motivations and drives are as a company.

You can find us at: https://p11.co/

The research is fuelled by a rebrand being undertaken at Difogic Oy. Company culture quickly became a topic in the office, and primary research was undertaken with the intention of applying it within the frameworks of the re-design. However, it was quickly understood how abstract and open the topic at hand was, therefore; the direction of the research switched to semi-structured interviews. Discussing the experiences and current uses of company culture brought numerous insights, helping to define the importance of culture whilst explaining the practical value.

The interviews were conducted with companies of all sizes. Initially, the research focused on larger companies in order to experience the end goal of a culture and how it can be maintained with progressive growth. The spotlight then switched to growing start-up to scale-ups, resulting in the finding of insights into scalability, best practices and how company culture aids success. All philosophical and practical research has been gathered through the interview process.