



Developing Organisational Culture

A Guide for the Health Service

HR Capability and Culture, Engagement and Culture Team

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Foreword

I am pleased to present the new HSE's *Developing Organisational Culture, a Guide for the Health Service*.

Endorsed by the HSE Executive Management Team, this guide was developed over a number of months in consultation with a range of stakeholders and it stems from a need identified by staff across the Health Service.

The purpose of the guide is to support and enable staff and managers to more fully understand the factors contributing to organisational culture, and to build a greater awareness of how to further develop a positive culture in the workplace. The guide emphasises the importance of using research and evidence to support culture change, and it also highlights the collective role and responsibilities of all staff, not just leaders, in striving for culture change, in providing safer, better healthcare to those who depend on us.

The HSE's core values of Care, Compassion, Trust and Learning are central to creating a shared understanding of how we contribute to a positive work environment. High performance is critical to delivering on the priorities of Sláintecare and the Health Service People Strategy (2019-2024). Continuing to develop our organisational culture where we value and enable our staff to be the best they can be and where there is confidence in the services we provide is key to our future success.

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Purpose of the Guide

The purpose of this guide is to be a reference point to enable staff and managers to develop a better understanding of the area of organisational culture.

The guide aims to:

- Build an understanding and awareness around the factors contributing to organisational culture.
- Enable workplace teams to begin to assess their workplace culture and determine the areas of strength and weakness.
- Establish the steps to be taken in order to enable culture change.

The development of this guide has been informed by Organisation Development principles and methodologies. Organisational Development is a planned, organisation-wide approach to improving organisational effectiveness. It involves change through people and is rooted in a sound evidence base, embracing the technical elements of the organisation (such as structures, management practices etc.) as well as the social elements (such as culture and values, the way people think, feel, communicate and behave towards each other).

This guidance document is structured as follows:

Section 1:

An introduction to organisational culture, developing the business case for culture in the Health Service Executive (HSE), and the role of the HR Capability and Culture function - Engagement and Culture team.

Section 2:

How to assess culture, and to analyse the gaps between the current culture and the desired culture.

Section 3:

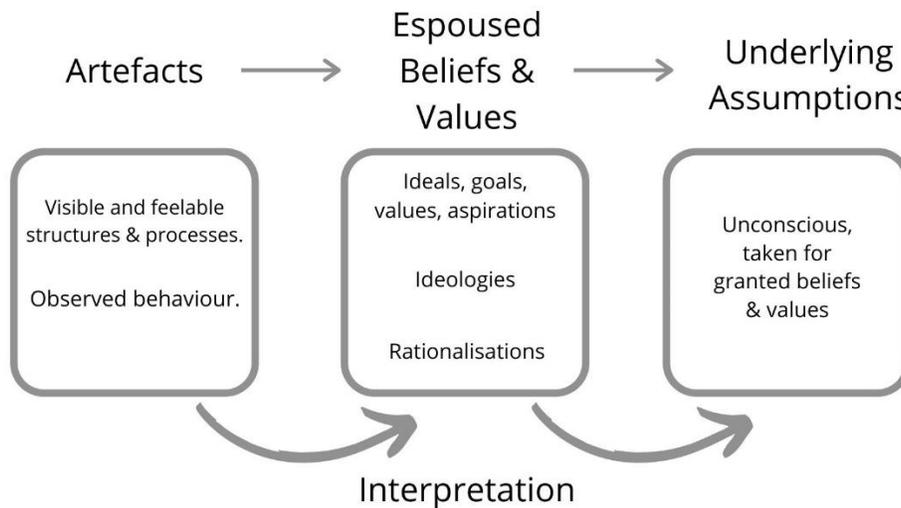
Specific tools and supports to aid the process of culture assessment and to inform the selection and planning of culture change and behavioural interventions.



Section 1

Understanding Organisational Culture

There are many definitions of culture in the literature but according to Schein (2010) the culture of an organisation is its personality and character. As illustrated below, organisational culture is made up of the shared beliefs, artefacts and assumptions about how people should behave and interact, how decisions are made and how work activities are carried out. Culture shapes peoples' behaviour and values at work.



Adapted from Schein (2010)

Referring to the Johnson and Scholes Culture Web Model, Grant Thornton (2017), describes two sets of drivers of culture in organisations - formal and informal:

Formal Drivers	Informal Drivers
Leadership	Conversations
Strategies	One to One Interactions
People Management	Stories
Resource Management	Unwritten Rules
Business Processes	Rituals



Link between Culture and Engagement

Culture and engagement are often used interchangeably and while the two concepts are highly correlated they have important distinctions. Employee engagement is generally defined by the level of connection, motivation and commitment a person feels towards their workplace. It involves the basic psychological needs that must be met for employees to perform their specific role well.

The Health Service National Staff Engagement Forum has defined employee engagement as follows:

“Staff are engaged when they feel valued, emotionally connected, fully involved, enthusiastic and committed to providing a good service... when each person knows that what they do and say matters and makes a difference.” (2016).

Employee engagement is a direct outcome of a healthy and performance orientated culture as employees understand clearly what is expected of them. A positive culture drives behaviours and norms that support the organisation to achieve results by setting clear goals, defining employee’s responsibilities, creating a trusting environment and encouraging staff to continuously grow, develop and do their best work.



Organisational Culture and Performance

In 2015, the Global Human Capital Trends Report rated culture and engagement as the most important issues overall globally for organisations in terms of Human Resource and Talent Management challenges. In 2016, Deloitte reported that companies with highly engaged workforces outperformed peers by 147% in earnings per share.

In healthcare settings, research published in the British Medical Journal (BMJ) by Braithwaite et al (2017), found a consistently positive association between organisational and workplace culture and patient outcomes across multiple studies, and countries. In a related study also published by the BMJ in 2017, Bradley et al, show how positive culture change and improved performance was achieved through greater engagement, participation and involvement of all members of the multidisciplinary team in the care of patients with myocardial infarction.

Gallup's report on the effect of engagement on key business outcomes, (a 2019 meta-analysis covering 82,000 teams in 230 organisations in 73 countries) showed that organisations with highly engaged employees had:





Organisational Culture and Leadership

The Kings Fund (2014), and the Centre for Creative Leadership in a paper titled 'Developing Collective Leadership for Health Care' acknowledges that cultures are dynamic and co-created by all in the organisation - clinicians and frontline staff as well as managers. However, they highlight the pivotal role of leaders specifically in enabling cultures of high performance and engagement:

'Leaders have the power to reward and punish; they control information and resources; they make choices about structure; and they shape the work lives of others for better or worse. Leaders therefore command much of our attention. We note what they value - what they pay attention to, monitor, reward and reinforce' (West et al, 2014)

Healthcare in Ireland is increasingly delivered by groups of professionals and networks of teams across different organisations, all of which have their own culture and subcultures. This requires leaders to work collectively, across organisational boundaries, prioritising overall patient care and building a cooperative leadership culture.

Leaders' Role in Shaping Culture

Schein (2010), describes the different approaches available to leaders to assist them in shaping and embedding organisational culture.

Embedding Mechanisms:

- What leaders pay attention to, measure, and control on a regular basis.
- How leaders react to critical incidences and organisational crises.
- How leaders allocate resources.
- Deliberate role modelling, teaching and coaching.
- How leaders allocate rewards and status.
- How leaders communicate, select, recruit, and promote.

Guided by leaders, the culture that develops is reflected over time in the organisation's design and structure, its systems and processes and its rituals and the stories that are shared about important events and people.



Organisational Culture and Change

Today's World of Work

The world of work is changing rapidly and is very different and more complex than even a few years ago. Today, more technologically advanced and digitally connected workplaces demand greater cross-functional working and inter-team collaboration. With a multigenerational and internationally mobile workforce employees' motivations and needs are changing, driven more by purpose, meaning and work life integration rather than by career ambition. Employees are less likely to prioritise staying in a single job until retirement and instead are more likely to choose a job that interests them and fits with their passion and values. Employees place less emphasis on job satisfaction and more on personal growth. Culture is a clear differentiator for an organisation's capacity to attract and retain high calibre talent and skills (Wong, 2020).

A commonly quoted statistic is that 70% of all change efforts fail to deliver the intended outcomes. Many of the reasons identified in the research evidence relates to an organisational culture which is not aligned to the organisation's strategy and which results in lack of focus and direction. Another contributing factor in failed change efforts according to the evidence is poor leadership, which fails to communicate a powerful vision for change and fails to engage, motivate and involve stakeholders early in the process.

Impact of unforeseen events on Culture and Engagement across the Health Service

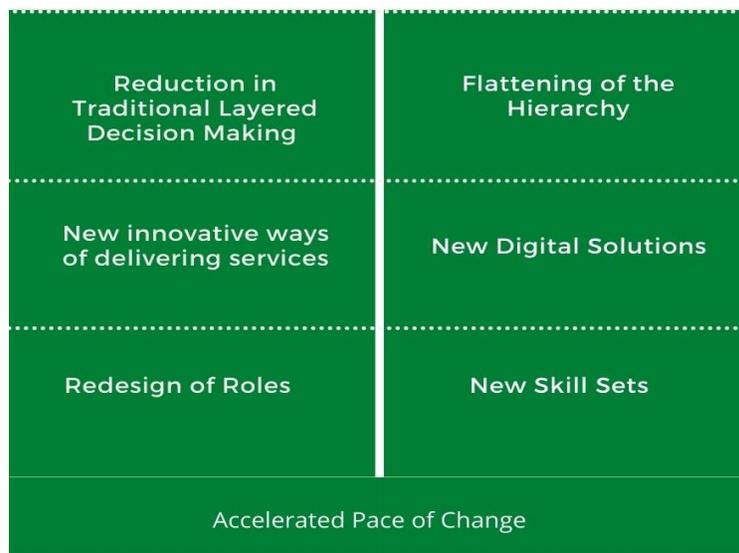
The Covid-19 pandemic has had a major impact on the HSE in terms of how the organisation operates and how all staff do their work. In order to learn about staff experience throughout this challenging time, the HR Capability and Culture function - Engagement and Culture team conducted research in the form of a pulse survey.

The research undertaken by Core Research on behalf of the HSE in June 2020 aimed to learn about staff experiences, how they adapted, the challenges they faced, what worked well and what required further improvement and development within the HSE.

The methodology for the research took a phased approach starting broadly with a quantitative first step in the form of a pulse survey followed by a deeper qualitative phase involving a series of staff focus groups.



KEY THEMES THAT EMERGED FROM THIS RESEARCH
RELATING TO CULTURE AND ENGAGEMENT



These challenging events placed unprecedented demands on the HSE which prompted a dramatic shift in the organisation's culture. Critical to this rapid change was the clarity of direction and purpose provided by the HSE Executive Management Team. This enabled greater productivity from staff. This led to increased capacity at local level for decision making, enhanced team working and problem solving in order to meet the unprecedented volume and complexity of needs that presented. The capacity to experiment in order to develop solutions was also critical to the success of health services as it managed the response to the pandemic. This shift demonstrated a significant reduction in the layers of decision-making, a flattening of the traditional hierarchical way of working and the development of greater levels of trust between national leadership and local services. All of the above highlights the shift in the organisational context which became a key driver for culture change, enabling the HSE to respond and perform at a high level.

The cyber-attack in May 2021 on the HSE was another event that had a substantial impact on the culture and engagement of the organisation. These events accentuated the human capacity for adaptation and altruism.

'Leaders have an opportunity right now to move beyond the initial reactive response to COVID-19, to intentionally shape their culture for recovery and beyond. This needs to be done in conjunction with the organisations purpose and strategy.' – KPMG, 2020



Successful Culture Change

Success in the future depends on the HSE's capacity to bring these strengths of clarity of direction, purpose, adaptability, teamwork and agile decision-making to the fore on an everyday basis, not just during a crisis, but as part of a continuous culture change. The overall consistent goal is to deliver high quality services to patients, service users and the public supported by a culture of engagement and high performance.

Staff engagement and culture, although different, are closely connected and are linked to high performance in healthcare settings leading to better outcomes for patients. In order to continue to create a culture of high performance with a strong emphasis on improving services and further building the trust and confidence of staff and the public, culture and engagement need to be a strategic priority for health services leaders.

'In uncertain times, trust emerges as a critical factor for success- trust in government, trust in healthcare systems, and trust in leaders'. – KPMG 2020.



The Role of the HR Capability and Culture

Engagement and Culture Team

The Engagement and Culture Team is available to support organisations, units and workplaces who wish to review their culture and staff engagement processes and practices. The focus is on expanding an understanding of human factors in a way that impacts positively on the cultural fabric of the organisation and workplace. It supports individuals, teams and organisations to develop and grow, and make sustainable improvements. The processes designed include components to support the organisation, and to maintain development by equipping staff with appropriate skills, tools and methodologies.

Specific expertise is provided in areas such as:

- Conducting and analysing culture audits and surveys.
- Human Dynamics and Team Dynamics.
- Large group planning interventions.
- Team, interdisciplinary and interagency working.
- Facilitation of group events and focus groups.
- Individual and group coaching.
- Psychometrics.
- Organisation Development tools and methodologies.



Section 2

Assessing the Organisation and Workplace Culture

We have established in Section 1 that Organisational Culture will evolve even without input, but in the absence of guidance the culture that develops may not always be as expected.

So how do we go about assessing culture and planning actions? Overall research of culture assessment indicates that there are three fundamental steps involved:

1. Assess current culture.
2. Determine what the desired culture is.
3. Conduct a gap analysis and develop an action plan.

Step 1: Assess Current Culture

Vision and Mission describes 'why' an organisation exists. Strategy outlines 'what' should be done and 'when'. Structure details 'who' will do what, but it is culture that shapes 'how things will be done'.

Within the HSE there is no singular culture and while there may be a culture relating for example to the Centre, local organisations will have their own unique cultures and subcultures.

Since culture impacts on how an organisation performs, the initial focus should be on where performance needs to be improved. When an organisation has a new strategy, or a change agenda, then considering how the organisation's culture impacts the issue is a critical step in the action planning process.

Initial impressions of an organisation's culture and level of staff engagement can be gained by:

- Reading – documents, strategies, reports, minutes of meetings, etc.
- Observations – physical and technical environment and infrastructure.
- Survey data.
- Staff retention data.
- Service user feedback.



In the HSE, the strategic direction is mainly represented in the following documents:

- Sláintecare Implementation Strategy 2021 – 2023.
- HSE Corporate Plan 2021 – 2024 which articulates a vision for ‘a healthier Ireland’, ‘with the right care, at the right time and in the right place’.
- The Health Services People Strategy 2019 – 2024.

In most organisational change efforts, it is much easier to draw on the strengths of the culture than to overcome the constraints of the existing culture. This process will provide a picture of what is happening in the organisation from different perspectives and assess whether there is a need to change as well as readiness to change. The process will also help explain possible discrepancies which surface between the values that are espoused versus those that are observable on a day-to-day basis in organisations and workplaces.

The initial phase of assessment is followed by a deeper analysis of the taken for granted beliefs and assumptions that are held by the staff/employees. This is best achieved by talking to people one to one and/or holding focus groups and assessing aspects of organisational life in terms of whether they are a strength or a constraint on what the organisation is trying to achieve.

A detailed guide for conducting a culture assessment can be found in Section 3, page 20.



Step 2: Determine what is the desired Culture

What culture are we aiming for?

The desired culture the HSE is aiming to achieve is described in the Corporate Plan 2021 – 2024 as follows:

‘A culture where staff feel valued and supported to be the best that they can be where there is a common sense of purpose and pride in the team and all our people are treated with dignity and respect’.

The elements of the desired culture are further described as:

- Developing strong relationships and collaborating across the HSE by having a relentless one team focus, where ‘our people feel proud to work for the HSE’.
- Communicating in a meaningful way to engage staff, so that they are aware and actively involved in decisions to work towards delivering our strategies and plans.
- Providing regular feedback to staff and actively seek their feedback. Listening carefully to the views of staff and recognising their contribution.
- Equipping our people with the tools, skills and resources necessary to innovate, adapt and effect positive and rapid change.
- Developing, supporting and retaining existing staff. Engaging a newer generation of healthcare employees by encouraging increased flexibility in our work patterns, locations and ways of learning with people moving through their work and careers to fit their personal needs.
- Creating an environment that enables a healthy work life balance and a culture where everyone is free to raise concerns.
- Empowering staff to be resilient and supporting them to deal with the pressures of constant change.
- Developing the next generation of leaders critical for the future.



Qualities of a great Organisational Culture

While every organisation's culture is different, and while it is important to retain what makes the organisation unique, research indicates that the cultures of high-performing organisations consistently demonstrate certain qualities:

- **Alignment** is achieved when an organisation's employees act on and share the vision and objectives of the organisation.
- **Appreciation** towards employees has been proven to have positive outcomes in the workplace. Simple gestures of appreciation can help to build a positive workplace culture, where employees feel recognised and valued for the work they do.
- **Trust** is a fundamental aspect of any high performing organisation. By building a culture of trust, employees have been proven to perform better if they are a part of a high trust organisation.
- **Resilience** is referred to as a positive adaptation, or the ability to maintain or regain mental health, despite experiencing adversity. Resilience is a key quality in a high performing culture where change is inevitable. Building resilience into the organisations culture will teach leaders and employees to effectively and efficiently respond to change.
- **Teamwork** is crucial for a positive organisational culture. A culture of teamwork creates opportunities for employees to work together, be a part of cross-functional teams, to develop their skills and to achieve the overall goal.
- **Integrity** is a crucial element of building trust into an organisation's culture. Honesty and transparency amongst staff and management are key for a positive workplace culture to exist.
- **Psychological Safety** is defined as "*being able to show and employ one's self without fear of negative consequences of self-image, status or career*". In other words, psychological safety means team members feel accepted and respected within their current roles.

Adapted from Wong (2020)



Step 3: Conduct a Gap Analysis and develop an Action Plan

How we achieve the desired Culture?

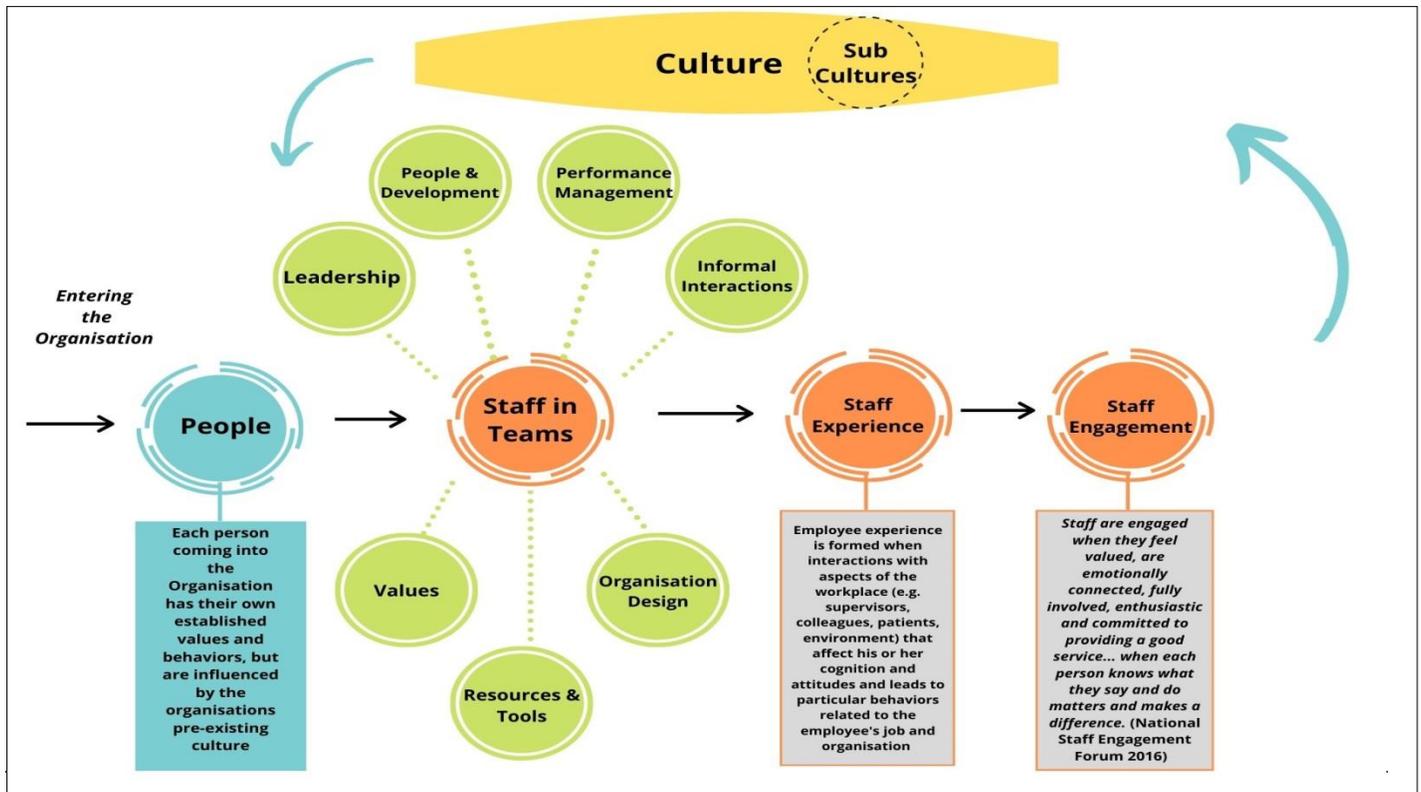
Hemerling Kilmann, (2013) identified seven context levers that influence and shape organisational culture;

1. **Leadership:** leaders' role-modelling behaviours; their manner of communication, especially reinforcing desired behaviours; how they spend their time, manage their priorities, and interact with direct reports.
2. **People and Development:** the kind of employees who are recruited and hired; opportunities for meaningful work and the kind of career paths and personal growth the organisation enables; how talent is promoted and retained; the coaching that supervisors provide; the organisation's learning and development programmes.
3. **Performance Management:** the key performance indicators that the organisation uses to define and track performance drivers, and its policies and practices regarding compensation, benefits, reviews, promotions, rewards, and penalties, including the consequences of undesirable behaviour.
4. **Informal Interactions:** networks, the nature of peer-to-peer interactions, gatherings and events.
5. **Organisational Design:** organisational structure, processes and roles, decision making, and collaboration processes, office layout and design, and relationships between local services and the Centre.
6. **Resources and Tools:** the projects that are funded, access to human resources, management systems, and analytical tools.
7. **Values:** the collective beliefs, ideals, and norms that guide people's conduct and help them adhere to priorities, especially when facing a business dilemma.

These context levers enable organisations not only to understand the forces shaping the current culture but also to specify what needs to be done to achieve and sustain the desired culture.



The diagram below illustrates how the seven organisational-context levers influence staff experience and the overall organisational culture. This includes every interaction that occurs during the work life of the staff member. When staff have a good experience in the organisation their overall engagement increases. When staff are engaged the culture of an organisation improves.



Arriving at the desired culture involves comparing the information gathered relating to the current culture with the assessment of the desired culture and conducting a gap analysis. This analysis will identify areas of strength and capabilities and also areas requiring improvement, and will:

- Identify critical barriers to organisational effectiveness and performance
- Achieve alignment by removing detrimental behaviours and embedding generative ones
- Align values and behaviours to strategy
- Identify new values needed in the future to ensure organisational viability

To develop the desired culture, a set of interventions needs to be planned using the gap analysis and the Seven Context Levers outlined above. For further guidance, see Section 6 – Essential Templates, HSE Change Guide (2018). Available at: <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/resources/changeguide/resources/>

See Section 3 for further tools and resources.



Section 3

The following tools and resources will inform the process of action planning and culture development by building on the three steps outlined in Section 2;

Culture Analysis Tool (page 21 - 22)

There are various culture analysis tools reported and evaluated in the research literature (Malik 2019, Simpson 2019), and available commercially. However, having a good understanding of the components and factors that contribute to developing and maintaining organisation culture will enable the development of a culture assessment process that is relatively straightforward and in keeping with the organisation's context. The culture analysis tool presented on page 20 is designed to provide guidance on what factors to consider in the culture assessment process and the appropriate relevant evidence to document.

Values in Action Programme (page 23)

In 2016, the HSE introduced the Values in Action (VIA) programme, which is a behaviour based social movement approach developed to improve the culture and to make the health service a better place for staff, patients and service users. The VIA programme has been revised to respond to current and emerging organisational needs and aims to build a culture in the HSE which will create a more positive environment for staff and improved experiences for patients and service users. It also aims to ensure that the values of Care, Compassion, Trust and Learning are evident daily in the workplace

The MINDSPACE Model (page 24)

Most traditional behaviour change interventions focus on changing behaviour from the standpoint of providing all the relevant information and making the assumption that the individual will then consciously make a decision to change behaviour or not. Based on the work of Daniel Kahneman and Professor Paul Dolan the MINDSPACE model proposes a different approach to changing behaviour by altering the surrounding factors/ or context within which people operate. In terms of identifying opportunities and actions for culture change this model provides alternative options for influencing behaviour.



Changing behaviour by changing language (page 26)

The thinking behind this approach is anchored in social discourse theory and the idea that people make sense of the reality they find themselves in through social discourse and interaction with others. Conversation, interaction and dialogue can either result in creating new narratives and realities or reinforce the old and this gets passed on between people. Changing the way we talk about things can lead to different actions.

Using group dynamics to shift behaviour (page 27)

From the various studies and publications exploring the role of group dynamics in effecting behaviour change is the belief that the basic unit of change is groups and not individuals. Through understanding the processes for how various patterns form within a group we can then change the processes to lead to new patterns and new behaviours.

Building a culture of trust (page 28-29)

While there is abundant evidence to show that an engaging and employee-centric culture enhances an organisation's performance and capacity to retain staff, neuroscience research conducted by Zak (2017) indicates that it is the capacity to build trust in an organisation which makes a meaningful difference. Through this research Zak proposes eight ways that managers and leaders can create and manage a culture of trust.

Staff Survey 2021 (page 30)

The Your Opinion Counts Staff Survey 2021 has enabled the Health Service to build a more accurate picture of how staff feel about working in the Health Service in Ireland. Staff feedback is invaluable and is used as the basis for ongoing discussions between managers and staff. There are opportunities to further build on this learning by responding to the Staff Survey results and taking the actions required. Better collaborative decision making in teams and creating more opportunities to recognise the achievements of staff will ultimately improve the culture of the organisation. This will in turn build greater trust and confidence in our services, amongst staff, patients and the public. The overview of the main themes assessed by the Health Services Staff Survey are outlined on page 29.



Culture Analysis Tool

Culture analysis tool to guide the assessment of the current Organisation culture:

Culture Category and Questions	What to Look For
<p>Physical Characteristics and General Environment</p> <p>What do the physical components of the organisation say about the culture?</p> <p>How does it feel to be in this environment? Are employee and service user needs considered in the planning? Layout? Design?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleanliness and Organisation • Signage (quantity and style), furniture and accessories • Colours, symbols and logos, lighting, sounds
<p>Customs and Norms</p> <p>What regular behaviours and expectations are in place that affect the culture?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greetings, language and phrases, dress code • Unspoken rules and norms • Expectations set by leadership, common leader/employee interactions
<p>Ceremonies and Events</p> <p>What is systematically celebrated and recognised at this organisation?</p> <p>Are there service champions?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular staff events held • Service quality acknowledgement • Formal versus informal gatherings
<p>Rules and Policies</p> <p>How formalised is the organisation?</p> <p>Is the culture more rule based or empowering? Are employee needs balanced with rules and policies?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies and procedures, number of Standard Operation Procedures (SOP's) • What is prohibited versus what is permitted • Employee perceptions of their role and function
<p>Measurement and Accountability</p> <p>What gets measured in this organisation?</p> <p>What measures are most important?</p> <p>Are measures consistent with vision, mission, and values?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types of measures used • How senior leaders, supervisors and employees are evaluated, performance reviews • Measures versus espoused values
<p>Leader Behaviour</p> <p>What do leaders make a priority here?</p> <p>Are leaders at varying levels role models?</p> <p>Which leaders are most respected here and why?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leader focus on tasks versus people • Leader-employee interactions • Employee perceptions of leadership



Culture Category and Questions	What to Look For
<p>Rewards and Recognition</p> <p>What gets rewarded in this organisation? How are employees recognised for their efforts?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee perception of reward value • Amount of encouragement provided? • Are leaders genuine in their praise? • Formal versus informal rewards
<p>Training and Development</p> <p>What efforts are made to invest in people? Is there a range of training and development opportunities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amount and types of training • On-the-job versus formal • Leadership development programmes
<p>Communication</p> <p>How are messages, both formal and informal communicated? What do stories told in this organisation reveal?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do employees find things out? How much do employees find out through the grapevine? • Email versus memos versus face-to-face • Number and types of meetings
<p>Structure and Culture Development Efforts</p> <p>How is the organisation structured? Does the organisational structure (hierarchy) impact the culture? How quickly are decisions made? Are employees empowered to solve problems rapidly?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Layers on the organisational chart • How formal are the chains of command? • Disconnects between the top and bottom of the structure, communication barriers • Vision, mission, values, goal consistency • Senior leader activities to build the culture • Employee view on the culture

Adapted from Malik, R., et al. (2019)

As a result of conducting a culture analysis feedback process there will be an ability to:

- Use the feedback from the culture analysis to identify the cultural strengths and weaknesses within your organisation.
- Engage in gap analysis to identify changes that the organisation can make to improve its culture.
- Identify specific steps that can be taken to facilitate organisational change.
- Identify specific actions to take towards changing the organisational culture for the better.



Values in Action

Valuing staff is crucial for delivering high quality health services. Every member of staff has a unique role in valuing, respecting, and listening to those we supervise and manage, those who manage us, and our colleagues and our peers. Every day thousands of health service staff across Ireland live the HSE values of Care, Compassion, Trust and Learning.

Nine behaviours have been identified that bring these values of Care, Compassion, Trust and Learning to life.

PERSONAL	WITH COLLEAGUES	WITH PATIENTS & SERVICE USERS
Am I putting myself in other people's shoes?	Acknowledge the work of your colleagues	Use my name and your name
Am I aware that my actions can impact on how other people feel?	Ask your colleagues how you can help them	Keep people informed - explain the now and the next
Am I aware of my own stress and how I deal with it?	Challenge toxic attitudes and behaviours	Do an extra, kind thing



The MINDSPACE Model

Behavioural economics combines lessons from psychology and economics in order to understand the factors that shape human behaviour and puts forward a different way of thinking about how to influence decision making and human behaviour.

An approach towards altering the context as a model of behaviour change was developed in 2010 by Professor Paul Dolan. This model describes nine elements that aim to shift the focus of attention away from facts and information towards the way people act automatically. This model recognises that people are sometimes seemingly irrational and inconsistent in their choices, often because they are influenced by surrounding factors. Therefore this approach focuses more on changing behaviour without changing minds. The table below lists some of the main ways that change agents can influence behaviour (Dolan, et al. 2010)

Messenger	We are heavily influenced by who communicates information.
Incentives	Our responses to incentives are shaped by predictable mental shortcuts, such as strongly avoiding losses.
Norms	We are strongly influenced by what others do.
Defaults	We 'go with the flow' of pre-set options.
Salience	Our attention is drawn to what is novel and seems relevant to us.
Priming	Our acts are often influenced by sub-conscious cues.
Affect	Our emotional associations can powerfully shape our actions.
Commitments	We seek to be consistent with our public promises, and reciprocate acts.
Ego	We act in ways that make us feel better about ourselves.

Practical implications of this model for an Irish healthcare context include the following;

- The importance of identifying the right person to convey important messages in terms of their authority, level of respect among colleagues and their expertise.
- The capacity to showcase where some of these changes have worked in similar group settings in terms of establishing good group norms.
- Taking the time and effort to show how a change is relevant to the stakeholder group and how they may be involved in leading on the innovations associated with the change.
- Create energy and hope around the change by telling inspiring stories about others who have implemented the change and how it has positively impacted their workplace.



- It is important to establish commitment for the change by encouraging leaders and managers to openly state and document their commitments to staff and teams early on in the change process and translate those commitments into the action planning process.



Changing behaviour by changing language

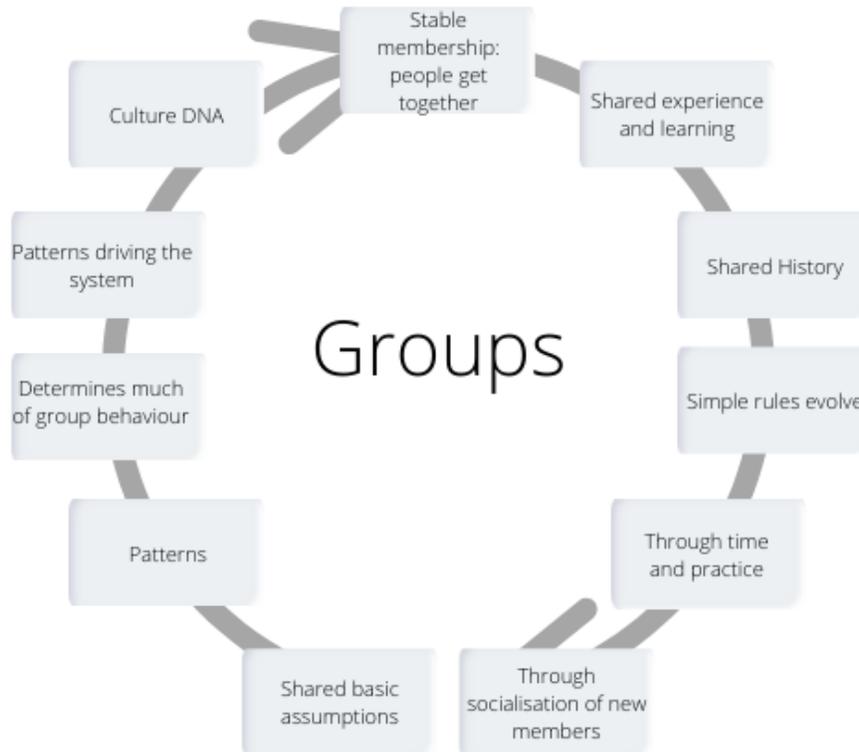
Social Discourses

According to Cheung-Judge (2015), social discourse theory is the way people communicate and the language that is used can be a powerful enabler/disabler of change. Below are a list of sample questions that can be used to stimulate discussions around the topic of organisational culture and to explore common communication/behaviour patterns in the workplace.

- What discourses (narrative, stories, metaphor, etc.) are holding things the way they are in our organisation?
- How can we use conversation as opportunities to construct new possibilities?
- How are prevailing narratives reinforced in day-to-day conversations throughout the organisation and how might we change those conversations?
- What alternative narratives and language can we introduce to raise different perspectives of what can be done or what cannot be done in regard to this change?
- What existing social discourses are supportive of this change?
- How may we seek to change this discourse at multiple levels to support this change effort?
- What form of organisation power and processes can we use to deal with the counter discourses in order to shift perspectives and encourage new behaviours?
- How many levels (intrapersonal, interpersonal, group, inter-group, total system, etc.) of the system shall we target in our attempt to shift social discourses that will give us maximum impact and speed up this change effort?



Using group dynamics to shift behaviour



Cheung-Judge, et al. (2015)

Through the years of continuous sharing of experiences, successes, and learning, the group begins to be bound by shared history and depending on how stable and successful the group is, strong patterns will be formed which can influence the group's culture and the culture in the workplace. The following prompts may be used to identify opportunities for behavioural and culture change in the group setting:

- Invite people to highlight the group's patterns that are helpful and vice versa.
- Invite new members to give feedback to the manager or leader after an initial period of working as part of the group.
- Ask group members to highlight the 'unwritten' rules or behaviours that occur within the organisation and compare these to the rules or behaviours that the group abide by.
- Run group workshops to ask members about the various external conditions that may impact the group.



Building a culture of trust

The research by Paul Zak (2017) shows that ‘employees in high-trust organizations are more productive, have more energy at work, collaborate better with their colleagues, and stay with their employers longer than people working at low-trust companies. They also suffer less chronic stress and are happier with their lives, and these factors fuel stronger performance.’

Figures illustrated below show the effects on staff that are working as part of a high-trusting organisation.



Through experiments and surveys the research identified eight management behaviours that foster trust. These behaviours are measurable and can be managed to improve performance:

1. Recognise excellence: Recognising a person after a goal has been met is a tool that can be used to build trust. Public recognition and celebration of success also inspires others to aim for high performance.
2. Induce challenge: When a task is assigned to staff that is difficult but achievable the task releases certain neurochemicals in the brain that intensifies people’s focus and strengthens social connections. Managers need to check in frequently to monitor progress and adjust goals if the task is particularly challenging.
3. Give people autonomy in how they do their work: When staff are given freedom to manage projects in their own way, they develop trusting relationships with management and are ultimately more motivated and engaged.



4. Enable job crafting/choice: Managers should, as best as they can, pinpoint an employee's strengths and allow them to work on the projects which they care about the most. This tool can result in highly productive employees who stay with organisations for many years.
5. Share information broadly: Employees feel more connected to their organisation if they are kept well informed of goals and strategies. The sharing of information within an organisation builds trust amongst employees and management.
6. Intentionally build relationships: Neuroscience experiments show that when people intentionally build social ties at work, their performance improves. When employees feel connected to one another they become more trusting and don't want to let their teammates down. Managers could introduce team building activities to build workplace relationships.
7. Facilitate whole person growth: In order to build a trusting relationship often managers must step outside the areas of work to ask more holistic questions. Assessing the holistic growth of an employee can make them more engaged and trusting.
8. Show vulnerability: Asking for help in the workplace is a huge motivator to engage with others and to build trust. Instead of completing a task alone, managers should try and ask their employees for help on the matter in order to build trusting and engaging workplace relationships.



Staff Survey Themes

1.

My Job

- Satisfaction
- Motivation
- Optimism
- Advocay

2.

My Role

- Trust & Autonomy
- Goals & Objectives
- Security & Pay

3.

My Organisation

- Pride & Culture
- Teamwork
- Performance Recognition

4.

Leadership & Management

- Strategy & Confidence
- Communication
- Support

5.

Covid-19

- Support
- Changes in culture/opinion
- Telehealth/digital working

6.

Training & Development

- Training
- Progression
- Oportunity

7.

Health & Wellbeing

- Health & Wellbeing
- Experience of Stress
- Stress Management

8.

Dignity at Work

- Policy
- Harassment
- Bullying & Discrimination
- Disability

9.

Standard of Care & Service

- Quality of care
- Near misses & incidents

9 Key Themes assessed from the Health Services Your Opinion Counts Staff Survey

The aim of the Staff Survey is to assess staff experiences based on the nine themes outlined below with a view to improving and developing a better health service for all:

The full 2021 Staff Survey Report is available at: <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/staff-engagement/resources/your-opinion-counts-staff-survey-20211111.pdf>



Conclusion

This guide is a reference point for staff and managers, enabling a better understanding of the topic of organisational culture. Staff experience and staff engagement are the fundamental building blocks to a safer, healthier, more focused workforce which in turn creates a healthier organisational culture.

Culture development is not a Human Resources 'job' but is an everyday goal for leaders, managers and all staff.

For many organisations, past efforts to deliver culture change have not always yielded the desired benefits. Evidence is emerging indicating that the primary source of failure of many change projects has been the practice of approaching the change only in terms of procedural or programme change and not as a fundamental shift in the organisation's direction, values and culture. These failed attempts can often have the undesired effects of creating cynicism, loss of morale and diminished trust among employees and reduced levels of employee engagement. This needs to be to the fore of change design work.

It is important to recognise that culture change is not a programme that is implemented. It needs continuous care in order to see real results, which resonates with the proposed 'steps' of improving and supporting staff to be the best they can be', as set out in the HSE Corporate Plan 2021-2024.

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, better strategies and practices have emerged which in turn has created a cultural shift in the organisation, towards a "health service we can all be proud of"
(Corporate Plan 2021-2024 - Paul Reid)



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