A New Era Of Culture Shaping Has Emerged: Here's How It May Affect Organizations

By
Mostafa Sayyadi, The Change Leader Consulting Inc.
Michael J. Provitera, Barry University

Management scholars have identified three dimensions for organizational culture that stand out as we recover from the pandemic. One is the dimension of trust, which is expressed by mutual trust and respect for the common good. The second is the dimension of learning that focuses on exploration and innovation. The third is collaboration, which is an example of actively supporting employees. These three dimensions simplify the complexity of an organization's culture and shape it. In this article, we intend to introduce a new approach using these three dimensions to better understand and shape culture more effectively. This new approach involves all members of the organization and builds greater results for organizations in the post-COVID-19 era. Using these three cultural dimensions has a surprising impact on the success of companies.

> Culture is a vital factor of an organization's success and yet not so easy to develop, sustain, and grow. In The post-pandemic era, culture acts as a compass and a lighthouse that brings organizations to the shore of prosperity and success.

Keywords: Corporate Culture, The Post-Pandemic world, Trust, Collaboration, Learning, Change Leadership, The Future of Work

Culture formulates boundaries that shape behavior and is the platform for acceptance and rejection of any behavior by the workforce (Bausch, 2022; Cross, et al., 2020; Davis, 2020; Johnston, 2020). When culture is aligned it acts as a dynamic glue to keep the company focused and future oriented (Jöhnk, et al., 2022; Morrison-Smith & Ruiz, 2020; Redding, 2015). The COVID-19 crisis and the long-term disconnection of managers and employees was a shock for many managers (Belitski, et al., 2022; Lagios, et al., 2022; Röglinger, et al., 2022). Organizations need a new approach that involves all members of the organization. A new development of a cohesive organizational culture that defines culture as a collective responsibility. "Culture eats strategy for breakfast" is a quote from legendary management consultant and writer Peter Drucker.

The New Approach

All members of the organization are responsible for the continuous development of culture (Cardona & Rey, 2022; Fietz & Günther, 2021; Kregel et al., 2022). Thus, official and unofficial leadership roles are necessary in the development of a new culture (Hofstede, 2007; Tipurić, 2022). Employees, as informal cultivators of the culture, share their attitudes and views in their continuous support of a dynamic culture (McGhee et al., 2022; Pilehvar, 2022). The human resource management department is responsible for monitoring this process so that there is maximum coordination between the views of employees and the definition of culture by senior managers (Kregel et al., 2022; Leso et al., 2022; Ribeiro & Gomes, 2016). This human resource process offers training and development and cultural activities (i.e., music, entertainment, camaraderie, and fellowship) throughout the year. (Dougherty & Dreher, 2000).

Regardless of the size, industry, and type of activities in an organization, culture can be defined and developed using three dimensions:

Trust

The dimension of trust is defined as mutual trust and respect for the common good (Kramer, 2010; Six, 2007). Employees are united by trust and have mutual faith in employee behaviors, intentions, and abilities (Ladebo, 2006). Our consulting experience for a multinational mining company also confirms these findings. In this company which obtained the best indicators of trust:

- Managers and employees strongly trusted the ability and intentions of each other to achieve organizational goals.
- They prioritized organizational interests over individual interests.
- Their relationships were based on mutual faith.
- They generally trusted each other.

Collaboration

The collaboration dimension is based on actively supporting the employees and providing them with the necessary resources to thrive (Manca et al., 2018; Wild, 2019). This dimension also leads to the growth of the willingness of employees and managers to accept responsibility for failure (Hall et al., 2019; Rigtering & Behrens, 2021). Our experience of more than 20 years of management consulting around the world also confirms these findings. Our consulting experience in the organizations that have achieved this cultural dimension at the highest level tells us that this cultural dimension improves by developing an effective work environment in which:

- Managers and employees enjoy collaborating.
- Managers and employees Support and help each other.
- Managers and employees accept their responsibility for failure and do not pass it on to someone else.

Learning

The learning dimension, which is associated with the growth in the motivation to learn and explore creates better opportunities (Fan & Cai, 2022; Vu et al., 2022; Wijnen, et al., 2018). Learning becomes a platform for the development of new innovations (Chew & Ng, 2021). Our consulting experience for a multinational financial company in Melbourne, Australia also showed us that this company, which had obtained the best indicators in this cultural dimension, provided an effective workplace in which:

- Growth opportunities for employees through informal personal development programs (such as job rotation) and formal training programs were provided to improve the learning culture.
- Attendance at seminars and gatherings was also encouraged by upper management, employees, and managers in this company.

Thus, using trust, collaboration, and learning can enhance organizational culture. Clawson (2021), a prominent professor of organizational behavior, argues that the scores must be very high – somewhat above 90 percent – for leaders in trust, collaboration, and learning.

A successful example of using these dimensions can be seen in the organization named Tesla, which reached an extraordinary level of a learning culture in a short time and established relationships based on trust, developing collaboration, and providing required training (Harvard, 2016), offering employees empty stock ownership with very little value five years ago and later helping them reap stock surges (Backhaus, 2021). Elon Musk noted: "I'm interested in things that change the world or that affect the future and wondrous new technology where you see it and you say '***Wow, how did that even happen***?'" An-

other example is BHP Group Limited. This Australian Mining company, which was severely affected by the Corona crisis and its performance decreased substantially, has achieved a better level of performance than before this crisis by implementing an effective project to change the organizational culture and develop these three cultural dimensions (Calzada Olvera, 2022; Sánchez & Hartlieb, 2020). Based on these ideas, we depict a new framework for corporate culture as shown in Figure 1.

Discussion

Strategy and objectives along with the goals of the organization need to be disseminated throughout the organization (Samans & Nelson, 2022; Serrat, 2017). Transparency is key here for collaboration so that managers and employees can collaborate with each other and add value instantaneously for customers (Adhvaryu et al., 2022). Senior leadership continuously hold meetings with middle managers and the human resources department to create maximum alignment and coordination of cultural norms (Funk et al., 2022; Moe et al., 2021). Once a pilot is aligned, the plan is rolled out to all employees (Livijn, 2019). Successful examples of the comprehensive participation of all members of the board of directors in defining culture can be seen in Honda, Toyota, Samsung, and Apple, where the boards of directors are actively coordinated and aligned with others, including middle managers and the human
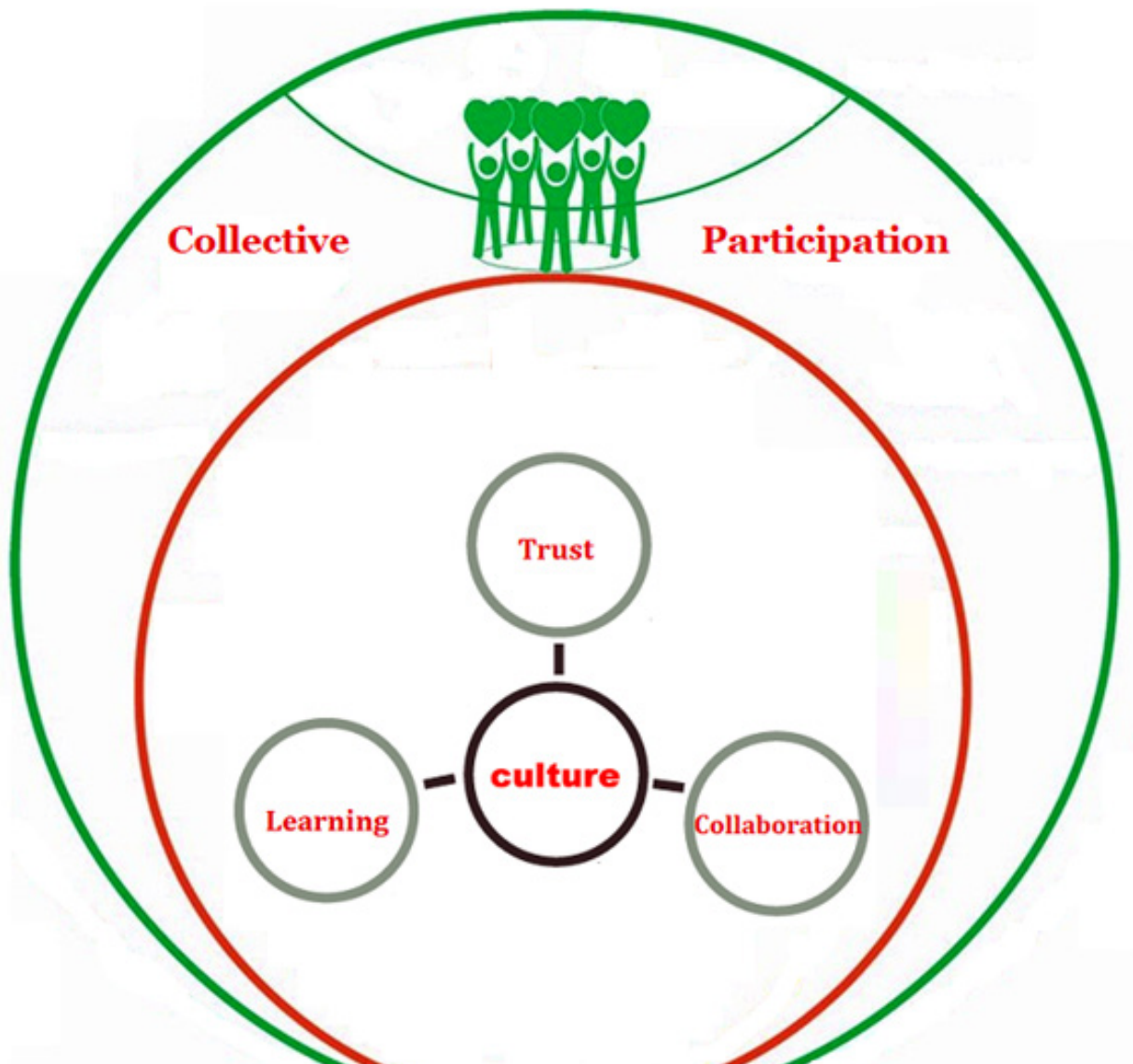

Figure 1: The Proposed Framework

resource department. The way these companies define culture, which is based on the principle of the wisdom of the crowds, highlights the idea that collaboration and the free flow of information can ultimately lead to better results, and this benefits the entire system (Surowiecki, 2004).

It is important that executives do not underestimate the vital role of middle managers. These managers act as communication channels between employees and operational levels within the higher echelons of the organization, and this liaison role gives them a deeper view of the experience of employees and lower-level managers regarding the organizational culture (Glaser et al., 2015; Uwadi, et al., 2022). Thus, disseminating information up and down the organizational chart is the sole responsibility of middle management.

Our experience tells us that the dimension of collaboration is key to fostering retention. To improve this cultural dimension, both employees and managers need to accept their responsibility for failure (Hall, Vogel & Crowston, 2019; Rigtering & Behrens, 2021). CEOs must have a tolerance for mistakes if they want people to innovate and create (Durán et al, 2022). This provides a more intimate atmosphere, expanding the opportunity for the development and progress (Campos, 2021).

When our consulting team members were doing management consulting for the Sydney branch of a Japanese large automobile maker, we realized that the CEO played an important role by creating a direct communication channel with the employees through a suggestion box on which it was written "Here, no one blames me for bad news." (Sayyadi & Provitera, 2022). This suggestion box influenced the development of its organizational culture. In prior research, this influence has been also confirmed in the study by Manca et al (2018). Also, in an American organization, Assurant Solutions in Miami, Florida, the CEO, Kirk Landon, had a suggestion box in every department. Any suggestion mattered and he wanted to see any suggestion that was turned down by the managers.

Applications of the Model

A few years ago, we were doing management consulting for a multinational financial company in Melbourne, Australia. Our preliminary findings showed that this company, despite its great financial success, still suffers from a serious weakness in the design and development of its organizational culture. For example, the lack of a flourishing organizational culture had caused top managers to refuse to accept responsibility for their failure. The improvement of this organization required the design and development of a strong organizational culture. This new strong culture would serve the employees to help them meet the organization's goals. We em-

ployed several lecturers from the local university to provide practical executive training for the board of directors and the managers of the human resource department. Training lasted about five weeks, and in this short time, we rejuvenated the organizational culture with a new mindset for productivity, innovation, and creativity.

We used the three dimensions mentioned above, trust, collaboration, and learning, to develop and cultivate culture. By measuring teamwork and innovation before and after the implementation of this cultural change project, we found that teamwork and innovation began to flourish as a direct result of the training. Also, by comparing the level of job satisfaction before and after the implementation of this project, we found that job satisfaction increased. In an open-ended question, we found that a Human Resource manager noted that "now this company is in a much better place to continue our work and not only serve the customer, but serve each other as well." In the interview that we had after this survey with a group of employees and managers, including this HR manager, we realized that trust, collaboration, and learning are the things that many employees and managers were looking for in this organization. We propose that this may be the case with the majority of organizations and this study can provide the wherewithal to continue with this practice of cultural change.

Conclusions

The pandemic is over, and people are flocking back to work in droves. Changing the approach towards in-house versus remote work is an organizational culture essential (Leso et al., 2022). The result of this change in the business environment and the new requirements of the external business environment adhere to a new corporate culture (Kopnina, 2017), one that could be both remote, when necessary, and hosted at the office when mandated (Flood, 2019). Thus, culture has changed, and now requires the collective participation and responsibility of all members of the organization. These new suggestions of cultural adaptability are worth exploring for what we call the development and emergence of an effective corporate culture in the post-corona world; a world that has no boundaries. The biggest problem faced by managers is the lack of such an effective corporate culture. The only way to create this culture is to develop the three-dimensional culture of trust, collaboration, and learning. This continuous improvement will help workers adapt to change and create passion. Today, this is the only way to achieve a thriving culture that ensures the long-term survival of organizations in today's hypercompetitive work environment.

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Review

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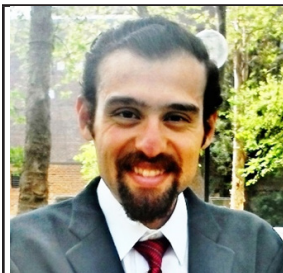
Mostafa Sayyadi works with senior business leaders to effectively develop innovation in companies, and helps companies—from start-ups to the Fortune 100—succeed by improving the effectiveness of their leaders.

Michael J. Provitera is an Associate Professor at Barry University. He is an author of Level Up Leadership published by Business Expert Press.