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## RYP Quarterly

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### Symptoms of A Healthy Culture

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*The research around organisational culture and its importance to performance has been well documented. In recent times academics have found that organisations with a “healthy and aligned team culture” outperform those that don’t. Well hallelujah! As the saying goes: Culture always precedes performance.*

#### So, What Is Culture?

Culture reveals itself in so many ways, however the most important is the lived experience of staff, customers, suppliers, and key stakeholders. Culture is the tone and way in which things are done.

For instance, if your favourite restaurant changes ownership, the layout, menu, table settings and décor may all be the same, but the feeling and vibe will be different with new staff, processes, and energy. This is culture.

Similarly, as an individual or team your vibe always precedes how you are perceived by others. You only get one chance at a first impression, and how you do this reflects the culture of any Team. **A key part of any culture is how self-aware the management and staff members** are of their team chemistry (dynamics) and whether the leader cares, and the team actively pursue, discuss, and explore their desired team culture week in week out.

#### A Healthy Culture Requires:

1. **Absolute commitment, focus and role modelling** by the Executive Leadership Team and Front-Line Leaders
2. **A focus on staff and customer fulfillment**, (their lived experience) over and above just the achievement of KPI’s
3. **Alignment of all staff roles with the organisational mission** – purpose throughout the entire organisation
4. **A commitment to building the capability of Front-Line Leaders** to coach team performance and engage their staff around the desired culture (way things are done)



5. **An authentic and observable passion** to ensure the upfront promises to any customer and staff member is indeed the lived experience.
6. **An adult learning approach to professional development** that focuses on local application and team understanding (learn – practice – apply – refine)
7. **Meaningful measurement of performance** on the things and items that matter (not just trying hard). The focus must be about performance and improvement, not items which should be taken for granted such as turning up on time or having the right attitude.
8. **A diversity of talent is important**, which means hiring people for their collective attributes and skills. But it requires no skill to have a positive energy, be respectful or demonstrate good manners.
9. **An understanding that staff are people and have families**, they are not machines! All staff have emotions and work best when they feel they are respected and important members of the team. All staff are trying to balance the competing priorities of business, family, and personal well-being.
10. **The giving and receiving the gift of feedback** is encouraged, and it is safe to do so. This creates an environment of continuous improvement, trust, and respect. Remember the 1:5 rule. For every 1 negative you give, follow up with 5 positives. Catch people doing the things right! This is called “positive shaping.”

### **It's all about the '3 Fs and 1 D'.**

**When all is said and done, you can observe any team chemistry by looking for and observing the following dynamics.**

#### **FUN:**

- What is the team's level of fun, energy, enjoyment, and passion for the job?
- Are they smiling, energised and have an enthusiastic vibe about them or not?

#### **FOCUS:**

- Are the team focused on the task at hand and self-aware of how the day is progressing?
- Are they aware of the needs of others (*the lived experience of clients and staff*)?

#### **FAMILIARITY:**

- Do they know each other?
- Do they work collegiately or in silos?
- Are they aware and connected to the front and back ends of the business?
- How do they measure the impact of their performance on the business?



## DISCIPLINES:

- What are the standards they perform to?
- How do they measure and monitor their performance?
- How is feedback given and received?
- What are the different communication mechanisms (formal & informal) used to ensure all team members are aligned and engaged?

*Remember it is the unwritten rules which unite and define team chemistry.*

## To Finish:

**Culture is caught not taught.** It revolves around the actions and behaviours of the team, and the symbolism of the Leaders (what is rewarded, recognised, measured, and ignored by any Manager or Leader). Staff always mirror image the behaviours and attitude of their Leaders.

**If a team has a toxic leader,** they will “work around” the person as best they can which creates a whole new set of team dynamics and micro cultures. You often see this with different shifts within the same organisation. Same Vision – Mission – Values but some team shifts outperform their colleagues. The difference is almost inevitably one of “culture” and how they are being Led and Managed.

## ***Facta Non Verba – Deeds Not Words***

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