

HOW LANGUAGE DRIVES CULTURE

3 Key Questions to Consider

The use (or avoidance) of certain words can be key to an organization's success (or failure). Moreover, the words used by leaders at all levels of an organization play a significant role in creating a winning culture.

QUESTION 1:

DOES THE LANGUAGE USED IN YOUR ORGANIZATION ALIGN TO YOUR MISSION AND VISION?

How people speak about and with one another matters. When done well, it can move the organization forward. Consider Walt Disney World. The theme park is part of a larger entertainment organization. The very language used at Disney World ensures alignment to the entertainment-focused company.

Disney World employees are cast members, visitors are guests, and rides are attractions. When a cast member walks into a theme park, she is walking on stage. She doesn't put on a work uniform. Regardless of her role, she wears a costume.

QUESTION 2:

DO THE WORDS YOU AND YOUR COLLEAGUES USE SUPPORT YOUR VALUES?

When asked to describe what their organization values, many leaders point to a sign on the wall.

Unfortunately, the beautiful sign announcing "collaboration," "trust," "expertise" and other such desirable values is often the opposite of the language used throughout the organization.

Let's face it. In the end, the day-to-day dialogue will drown out the sign on the wall.

QUESTION 3

WHAT SHOULD YOU START OR STOP SAYING TODAY THAT COULD MOVE THE ORGANIZATION FORWARD?

Many times, small things lead to big changes.

Small changes in your language can have a huge impact on the entire organization. If you want to change your team, change your language and change your behavior.

After all, sustainable change always comes from the inside-out and often starts with you.

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