

GOOD COMES FIRST



Culture Leaders' Checklist for Creating an Uncompromising Company Culture

From *Good Comes First: How Today's Leaders Create an Uncompromising Culture That Doesn't Suck*, here are ten steps leaders must take to create a more purposeful, positive, productive work culture.

Please note this proven checklist applies equally well to a large organization, a department or division within an organization, or a smaller company or team. This checklist can also be leveraged to support an intact team or a new team. No matter the size of your company or group, it is essential to follow these steps in order.

I understand my organization's current level of performance.

I understand my organization's leaders' current ability to develop respectful relationships.

I've quantified my "Current Culture Score" (and know if improvement is necessary).

I independently created the first draft of our organization's servant purpose.

I've socialized our servant purpose with other leaders and refined it based on their feedback.

We've identified three to five uncompromising company values.

We've defined each value so everyone understands what that value means to us.

We've assigned two to three behaviors that indicate alignment to that value.

As an organization, we model, measure and celebrate alignment to our values.

As leaders, we hold everyone (and each other) accountable for alignment to our values.

Learning More...

Phase by phase, step by step, here is more information for each of the ten items on the Culture Leader's Checklist for Creating an Uncompromising Company Culture...

Discovery Phase | Assess the Quality of Your Current Work Culture

In this first phase, you'll independently—and objectively—assess the quality of your organization's current work culture by evaluating both performance (results) and relationships (respect).

Step 1: Rate Your Team's Performance and Results

On a 1 to 10 scale (10 being highest quality; 1 being lowest), rate the quality of your team's current performance.

Step 2: Rate Your Team's Ability to Create Respectful Relationships

Again on a 10-point scale, rate the quality of your team's overall ability to build and maintain respectful relationships—with each other, internal partners, vendors and customers.

Step 3: Tabulate Your Current Culture Score

Add the rating you gave your team for current performance to the rating you gave your company for their current demonstration of respect. For example, if your "performance score" is an 8 out of 10 and your "relationship score" is a 6 out of 10, your current culture score is 14.

Note: If your current culture score is 15 or less, this indicates that changes are likely necessary to create and sustain an uncompromising—purposeful, positive, and productive—work culture.

Define Phase | Articulate Your Organization's Ideal Company Culture

During the Define phase, you'll craft, socialize, and refine your organization's servant purpose. You'll then carefully choose, define and assign behaviors to your company's core values.

Step 4: Create a First Draft of Your Servant Purpose

Begin crafting your team's servant purpose. This statement answers the question: Other than what you produce or the services you provide and other than making money or producing a profit, what is your team's present-day "reason for being"? Another way to frame your servant purpose is to think about how your products, services, and interactions improve the lives of your employees, customers, and the communities you serve.

For example, one of our Good Comes First companies recently stated their servant purpose as:

“We provide peace of mind to our partners and customers, every job, every day.” (This company is an electrical contractor.)

Step 5: Socialize and Refine Your Servant Purpose

Your leadership team and influential key employees can positively contribute to the creation of your servant purpose. In addition, human nature dictates that people tend to support what they’ve co-created. For these reasons, socialize the first draft of your servant purpose with team leaders and key players on your team. Then, accept their input as you further refine your organization’s servant purpose. When done, your team will have created a servant purpose worth sharing with the entire company.

Step 6: Identify Your Uncompromising Core Values

Engage the team that helped refine your servant purpose in this step. With them, identify three to five values (in one or two words) that you expect all team members to demonstrate in daily interactions with each other, internal partners, and customers.

For example, among Good Comes First companies, values often include accountability, integrity, inclusiveness, innovation, respect, and service.

Step 7: Craft a Specific Definition for Each Value

Add a crisp and clear definition (one to two sentences, maximum) of what that value means explicitly within your ideal work culture.

For example, a definition for respect might be:

“We honor others’ ideas, time, efforts, and unique contributions. We assume good intent on behalf of each person, and we treat them with the same level of kindness and grace we would want for ourselves.”

Step 8: Associate Behaviors to Each Value

For each value, assign two or three tangible, observable and measurable behaviors (not internal feelings or “attitudes”) that would indicate a person’s alignment to that value. Note: So they apply to everybody, these “valued behaviors” must be “I” statements.

For example, a valued behavior for an integrity value might be:

“I do what I say I will do.”

Another example: A valued behavior for the accountability value might be:

“If a deadline is in danger of being missed, I proactively communicate with all stakeholders my plan to get the task/project back on track.”

Align Phase | Enable All Players to Align to Desired Culture

During this phase, your role as a leader is to enable all contributors—starting with your leadership team—to align to your ideal culture. Specifically, you’ll inspire them to appreciate and live the organization’s servant purpose while they model your organization’s values (and valued behaviors) daily.

As we say in *Good Comes First*: “We build company culture upon the desirable, constructive behaviors rewarded. We tear down culture by tolerating disrespectful, destructive behaviors.”

Step 9: Model, Measure and Celebrate

Recognize and reward leaders and players who demonstrate alignment with your formalized values and behaviors; deliberately celebrate each win.

Step 10: Coach and Mentor

As you recognize and reward those who model your formalized values and behaviors, you coach and mentor players who show misalignment. Ultimately, your role is to hold everyone accountable for living your company’s ideal culture.

Next Steps | How Can We Help?

Anywhere along your culture refinement journey, we’re ready to help! Reach out to us at authors@goodcomesfirst.com. We’ll get back to you right away!