



## CORPORATE CULTURE AS A TOOL FOR STAFF RETENTION

Corporate culture refers to the values, beliefs, and behaviours that determine how a company's employees and management interact, perform, and handle business transactions. It comprises values, beliefs, ethics, and attitudes that identify an organisation and guides its practices. Organisational culture sets the context for everything that describes an organisation and how an organisation is perceived.



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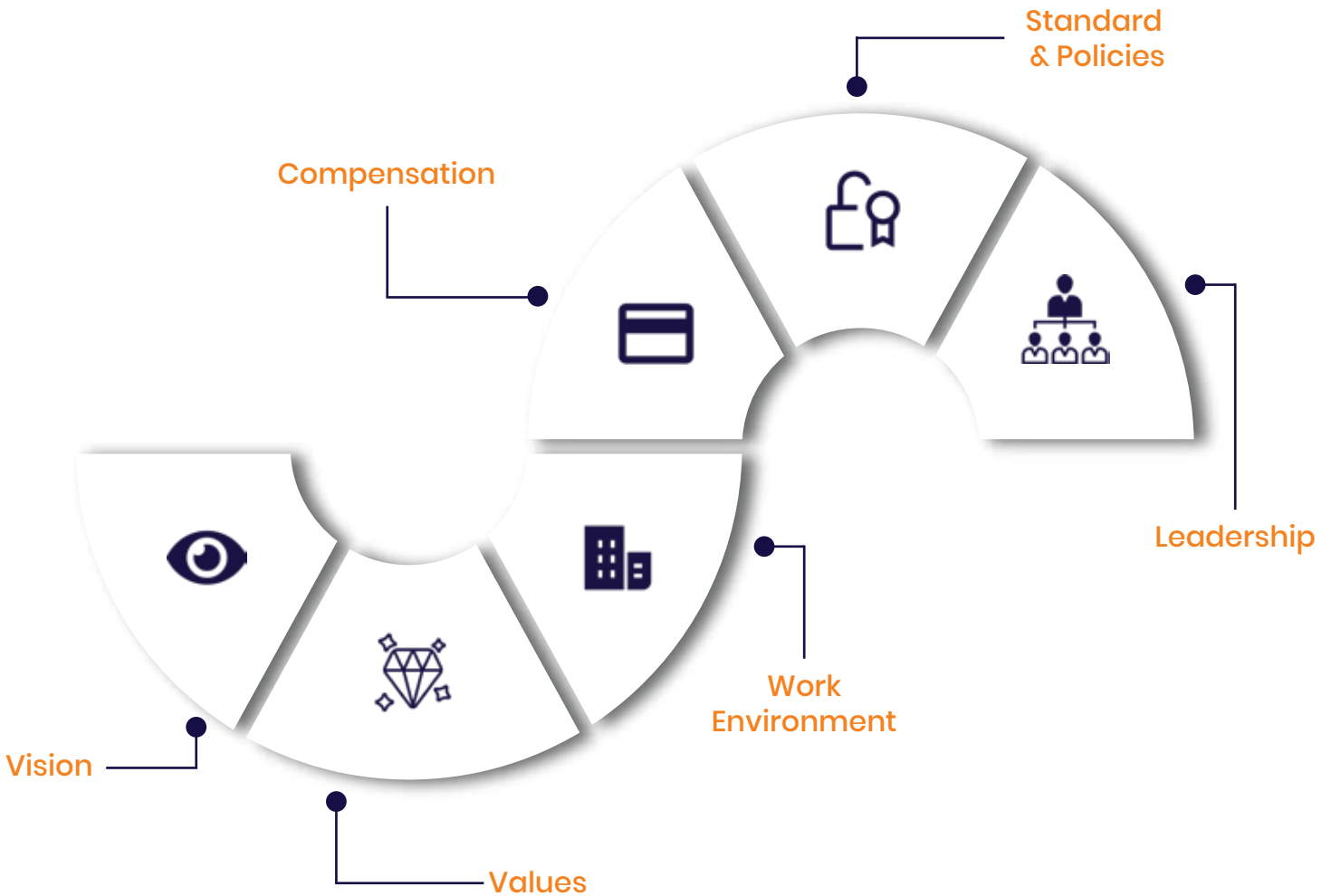
No one-size-fits-all culture template meets the needs of all organisations as industries and situations vary significantly. According to Senior and Fleming (2006), organisational culture will continue to remain a source of competitive advantage as it has come to embrace much of what is included in the hidden part of the organisation and plays an important role in enhancing or hindering the process of change.

Organisational Culture can be demonstrated, in a variety of ways such as leadership style, dress mode, team structure, and corporate communication, and can be instilled in the mindset of employees on a daily basis, either through meetings, team collaboration, training, company programs, townhalls, and many more.

One of the most critical issues facing organisations is how to retain employees, employees may leave an organisation for various reasons which may include inefficient management, lack of growth and progression, inadequate compensation, and poor culture.

A Columbia University study shows that the likelihood of job turnover at an organisation with a high company culture index is a mere 13.9 percent, whereas the probability of job turnover in low company cultures is 48.4 percent.

## What are the Elements of Corporate Culture?



### Vision

A great culture starts with a vision and or mission statement. These simple turns of phrases guide a company's values and provide it with purpose, which determines and sways employees' decisions. Research indicates that more engaged employees are more productive, and they are more effective corporate ambassadors in the larger community. Employees who find their company's vision meaningful have engagement levels of 68%, which is 18 points above average (Fernandes, 2019).

### Values

This is an integral part of any organisation; it defines the atmosphere of a workplace. They are guiding principles every employee of a particular organisation should emulate. Core values vary from business to business, they create unity amongst workers. No matter the service a company provides, a strong, well-defined set of company values can attract new employees, keep current employees happy and retain them whilst increasing overall workplace productivity.

**“When people feel like they belong to an organisation, they become vested, they feel secure, heard...”**

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### **Work Environment**

A flexible working environment has a high impact on employees. Opperman (2002) defines the working environment as a composite of three major sub-environments: the technical, human, and the organisational environment. Technical environment refers to tools, equipment, technological infrastructure, and other physical or technical elements that enable employees to effectively perform their respective responsibilities and activities. The human environment refers to stakeholders holistically; peers, subordinates, seniors, and others with whom employees relate, teams and work groups, interactional issues, leadership, and management. This environment is designed in such a way that it encourages informal interaction in the workplace so that the opportunity to share knowledge and exchange ideas could be enhanced. This is a basis to attain maximum productivity. Organisational environment includes people, systems, procedures, practices, values, and philosophies.

A good work atmosphere exhibits a positive path toward job satisfaction and this in turn generates positive attitudes. A company's work style affects how many employees they can retain; a Quantum Workplace report also found

that employees who are offered flexible work options are four times less likely to become a retention risk. All these are facilitated by the human environment.

### **Compensation**

This accounts for a high percentage of why an organisation can lose its best hands. Compensation does not only include salary but also benefits and other perks. Every employee regardless of their field wants to know that her compensation is competitive with what others who perform similar work in other organisations are earning.

Asides from periodic salary increases, as well as growth entitlements, bonus and awards are also excellent ways of retaining employees as it makes them feel appreciated and increase morale and enthusiasm.

Over 70% of employees say that lack of recognition from their employers may make them change employers. Recognising an employee promotes motivation, and communicating with employees to know what motivates them shows that they are important and will likely put in more work. Recognition may be a flexible work schedule, internal recognition, or promotion.

### **Standards and Policies**

Organisational rules are also a strong determinant of employee retention. Policies that do not support the growth of its employees, will result in a high employee turnover. Without a clear career path/ growth path, employees are likely to become unsettled, disgruntled and eventu



ally move to another employer. As humans we like to grow and not remain stagnant, as such, employees need to know that they are working towards some progression that they can clearly see, measure, and can achieve in the organisation where they work. Also, policies like exam leave, staff leave, and compassionate leave should be made effective in the workplace.

### Leadership

It is mostly said that people quit their bosses, not their jobs. In order to keep employees, organisations should look inward into their people management, task distribution, goal, priority setting, and overall staff engagement. Leaders who do not engage their staff are likely to lose them, they must create an environment where their subordinates feel supported, motivated, respected, valued, and have a sense of

purpose. Constant communication is very important in this regard, as this also mitigates the effect of burnout; Microsoft found that high productivity can mask an exhausted workforce as 20% of workers say their employers do not care about work-life balance, 54% feel overworked and 39% are just exhausted. Leaders must always model the company's values

## CONCLUSION

A healthy corporate culture creates an environment for passion- and excellence-driven work; it strengthens interpersonal relationships, and creates a sense of ownership in the hearts of employees regarding the organisation. When people feel like they belong to an organisation, they become vested, they feel secure, heard, and are likely to stick around for a long time because they see themselves in the picture of the future that the organisation represents and are proud to be associated with what they have helped build.

Increased employee engagement can reduce the high rate of employee retention as engaged employees are likely to stay loyal to their organisation, and a healthy corporate culture is a tool to optimising this engagement and getting employees to be more involved in the business of running of the business, beyond their daily tasks.

**For assistance in the design and implementation of your corporate culture as a tool to reducing staff turnover, and for improved productivity, send us an inquiry to [mc@pedabo.com](mailto:mc@pedabo.com)**