

Understanding the Organization Atmosphere and Culture

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Abstract

Despite a growing interest in atmospheric phenomena within management and organization studies, a distinct line of research on atmospheres can hardly be identified. The present article reviews existing concepts of atmosphere in management and organization studies to promote a common understanding of how to conceptualize atmospheres. On the uppermost level, dualistic and non-dualistic concepts of atmosphere are distinguished. This article shows that non-dualistic conceptions are more appropriate for researching atmospheres than dualistic conceptions, but still need further development. In case of this paper, it is shown that considering the socialites of atmospheres is especially important to foster such a development. Furthermore, it is suggested that a full-range consideration of atmospheres needs to take both aesthetic and anaesthetic elements into account. In sum, the article pleads for a more systematic discussion of non-dualistic conceptions of atmosphere and seeks to mark a starting point for a distinct and coherent area of research on atmospheres within management and organization studies.

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Introduction

Organization is like our second home where we spend the half of our life. The culture and the atmosphere is the most important aspect of the Organization.

The Organizational Climate is a barometer for judging the employee sentiment about their employer's policies and practices. By measuring the readings of barometer, organizational policies and practices can be made more aligned with organizational goals and strategy.

Unlike organizational culture, which is more fuzzy concept, organizational climate can be easily segregated into concrete with a direct relation to the measured outcomes. This flexibility makes it a vital variable for those in leadership positions, who can then measure the anticipated response for a new policy or change or even employees responses to an existing policy's measures.

The culture refers to the shared values, beliefs, norms and the artifacts that shape the behavior and interactions of individual within the company. It represents the collective identity, personality and "way of doing things" in an organization. Organizational culture is often to as unwritten rules that govern how employees think, act and make decisions.

Organizational culture affects all aspects of your business, from punctuality and tone to contract terms and employee benefits. When workplace culture aligns with your employees, they're more likely to feel more comfortable, supported, and valued. Companies that prioritize culture can also weather difficult times and changes in the business environment and come out stronger.

Importance

➤ **Employee Engagement Increased**

A work environment that possesses organizational culture is driven by purpose and clear expectations. This motivates and inspires employees to be more engaged in their work duties and interactions with others. It also leads to high levels of workforce engagement, which drives productivity. Having a strong connection to an organization and its people creates an atmosphere of positivity that is hard to ignore.

➤ **Turnover Decrease**

People who feel valued and respected at a company are less likely to leave it. That's why it's essential for brands to foster a winning organizational culture that supports their core values and mission statement. Happy employees mean less turnover, which saves companies time and money in hiring process. Companies that achieve a strong culture must take steps to maintain and improve it.

➤ **Employee Engagement and Retention**

A healthy organizational culture fosters high levels of employee engagement, job satisfaction, and commitment. When employees feel connected to the company's culture, they are more likely to stay with the organization for the long term, reducing turnover rates.

➤ **Performance and Productivity**

An aligned and positive culture can significantly impact employee performance and productivity. When employees feel a sense of belonging and purpose within the organizational culture, they are motivated to contribute their best efforts and go the extra mile.

➤ **Organizational Reputation and Employer Branding**

A strong culture positively impacts an organization's reputation and employer branding. Organizations known for their positive cultures become sought-after employers, attracting top talent and enhancing their competitive advantage in the market.

➤ **Organizational Alignment and Goal Achievement**

Culture serves as a guiding force that aligns employees' actions and behaviors with the organization's goals and objectives. When the culture is aligned with the strategic direction of the company, employees are more likely to work towards achieving shared objectives.

How to build an appropriate and highly performed organizational culture.

✚ **Personalize the employee experience**

As modern consumers, your employees expect personal experience, so it needs to focus on ways to help each team member identify with the culture. Tools like pulse surveys and employee-journey mapping are great ways to discover what the employees value and what their ideal corporate culture looks like. Take what we learn and tailor the actions to personalize the employee experience for the team. Once you start treating your employees with the same care you treat your customers, a culture that motivates each individual at the organization is sure to follow.

✚ **Focusing on learning and development**

Great workplace cultures are formed by employees who are continually learning and companies that invest in staff development. Training initiatives, coaching and providing employees with new responsibilities are all great ways to show your team that you're invested in their success. A culture of learning has a significant business impact. It also found that companies that had experienced revenue growth in the previous financial year were twice more likely to use innovative learning technologies and three times more likely to increase their learning and development budgets.

✚ **Develop a plan for working your culture into the day-to-day work experiences**

Company culture is, at the core, about the experience people have with your organization on a day-to-day basis. So, when developing the company culture, it's important to think about how you're going to bring that culture to life in the daily work environment. Company culture is to be built around diversity. That might mean offering employees paid time off for any cultural or religious holidays they celebrate. Even if they don't fall under your normal paid holiday schedule. Or, using the work-life balance example. You might implement a communication policy that lets employees know they're not expected to respond to work emails after 6 pm or on weekends.

✚ **Setup Goals**

Everyone in their daily life sets up the in their personal and professional life. Think about the values and how can bring those values to life in your culture. Recognize that building around diversity means creating an inclusive culture. The goals might include increasing your diversity hiring by 50% in the next 6 months or adding more women to your leadership team, you also need goals on inclusion and belonging. These goals might include increasing the retention rate of diverse employees, or increasing the percentage of your workforce that answer positively when asked if they feel a sense of belonging on their team. (BetterUp has tools that can help you build a culture of inclusion.)

Or maybe you want your company culture to revolve around work-life balance. In that situation, your goal might be to have every employee take at least three weeks of PTO each year. The point is, culture is bigger than any single focus area or goal. But company culture is just a concept until you put it into action. So make sure to set clear goals around the culture you want to build.

✚ **Value of your own**

The company's set of values is what dictates all of the elements of your company culture. That includes how people treat each other to what kind of expectations there are around work. Defining your own values in the company or its culture is very important. Sit down with your leadership team and clearly define the values you want to incorporate into your company culture. For example, your company values might be sustainability, respect, and transparency. Or they might be kindness, equality, and innovation. Or maybe integrity, honesty, and fairness feel like your core values. Whatever your values are, it's important to define them from the get-go—because it's those values that will act as the foundation of your company culture.

Elements

▪ **Respect**

We all know this: You need to show people respect to earn respect in return. Respect can take many forms, but the best workplaces regularly show respect by recognizing employees' efforts, seeking employees' input, and caring for employees as people with lives outside of work. For example, many of the 100 Best Companies trust their employees to work flexible hours and from remote places. This workplace flexibility makes employees more dedicated and engaged because they feel respected and trusted to meet their business goals in a way that works for their life. Many companies today even offer unlimited paid vacation and let employees work from anywhere; strong employee relationships prevent people from abusing the policy.

▪ **Pride**

Employees who have pride in their workplace believe in the company and what it stands for, from what it produces, to how it operates, to how it engages with the local community. Pride is much more than a pat on the back. When employees feel proud of their workplace, they are more engaged: According to our data, they are 2 times more likely to want to stay with the organization for a long time and 6 times more likely to endorse their workplace to others. Ideally, employees feel pride in all three areas, but this isn't always the case — and that could be a problem. That's because workplace pride needs to be reinforced over time, through consistent actions, no matter the circumstances.

▪ **Effective Leadership**

Leadership can make or break a team. A great leader will inspire, motivate, and drive innovation. A bad one will demoralize, kill productivity, and push employees to walk out the door.

The Great Place To Work leadership effectiveness index measures business leaders in four areas.

- aligns their words and actions
- avoids favoritism
- demonstrates competency, honesty, and approachability
- shows genuine interest in employees as people

Effective leadership is more than hitting company targets. It is fostering a team mentality that ensures everyone is working together and to their best of abilities. That environment will then help to hit those necessary targets. The good thing is that people don't need to be born as great leaders. A great leader can be created. The Best Workplaces invest in leadership development, identifying employees with leadership potential, and helping them to learn the skills and qualities needed to succeed — and thereby creating a pipeline of future leaders.

▪ **Values**

The company's core values are your guiding star: the beliefs and principles that shape who you are, what you do, and why you do it. The best workplaces lead with shared values rather than rules and policies. That's because when rules are the guiding force, rather than an organization's values, trust isn't at the core of the employer-employee relationship. Shared values can engage and empower, which in turn boosts innovation, creativity, and productivity.

▪ **Belonging**

Belonging in the workplace is an employee's sense that they are accepted and valued by the organization. This goes beyond feeling appreciated for what they do, and into feeling appreciated for who they are. Every company says it values employees. The 100 Best Companies don't just say it; they show it. They celebrate employee accomplishments, they ensure new employees feel welcomed from day one, and they embrace the diversity and individualism of their employees.

▪ **Innovation**

When managers create a safe environment to express ideas and make suggestions, employees are **31 times (!) more likely** to think their workplace is a breeding ground for innovation. Workplaces that have innovative cultures inspire employee loyalty, confidence, and willingness to give extra.

▪ **Fairness**

Humans place a high value on fairness. Companies where employees feel like everyone is getting a fair opportunity consistently report more positive employee experiences. Fairness is an area that great workplaces excel at, as our workplace study revealed. When rating equal compensation and recognition, employees score these companies 37 to 42 percentage points higher than the national average. Employees at these companies also report issues with favoritism and politicking far less often. On employee surveys, these companies score 38 percentage points higher when asking their people about these experiences. Surprisingly, fair pay isn't the factor that most impacts employees' overall workplace satisfaction and intent to stay. Other, less tangible aspects of the workplace, such as pride and strong leadership, play a much larger role. Employees say that being paid fairly for their work makes them twice as likely to think their workplace is great. But when employees are proud of their work, they are 20 times more likely to say it's a great workplace.

▪ **Credibility**

Employees at great workplaces find their people managers and leaders to be more credible: According to our research, 83% of employees at the 100 Best Companies said management's actions match its words, versus 42% of employees at the average workplace. Trustworthy, credible, and personable managers have a significant positive impact on:

- Employee retention
- Overall workplace satisfaction
- Employees' willingness to recommend their company
- Motivation to give extra effort at work

When employees say managers are honest and ethical, they're five times more likely to want to work there for a long time, and 11 times more likely to think the workplace is great.

▪ **Accountability and Autonomy**

Ideally the team members have a voice and a sense of independence. Alienated and dehumanized employees are the last thing your organization needs. Giving people the autonomy and opportunity to the accountable is one of the key elements to companies with great cultures. Providing your team members with sense of autonomy and accountability shows that you recognize them as a human beings with minds and responsibilities.

▪ **Recognition and Appreciation**

Rather than keeping your recognition rites for special events, it's better to entrench the element in your work culture. You'd be surprised at how positive reinforcement transforms productivity for the better, especially with aspects like engagement and retention. So, recognizing people for their achievements and efforts—no matter how small—can light up your organization's culture. Keep in mind that recognition can come in many forms, including appreciation posts, work perks, and promotions.

Conclusion

Organizational culture is a critical aspect of any company, impacting employee engagement, productivity, and overall success. As an HR professional or hiring manager, understanding and effectively managing organizational culture is essential. By utilizing the strategies, assessment methods,

and examples provided in this glossary, you can foster a positive and thriving culture that attracts top talent, drives employee satisfaction, and supports organizational goals. Embrace the power of organizational culture to create a workplace that inspires and excels.