Do you have a CULTURE OF OWNERSHIP?

Culture eats strategy for lunch. A Culture of Ownership creates a strong and sustainable source of competitive advantage. In a Culture of Ownership, people are not merely satisfied or engaged—they think and act like partners or owners in the enterprise.

Take the following quiz to assess whether your organization has a strong Culture of Ownership.

1. We have a meaningful statement of values

   Y/N Our statement of values is authentic, not generic boilerplate—those values define who we are, what we stand for, and what we will not stand for; it is included in performance appraisals and new employee orientation; our people are expected to know and to live these values.

   Y/N Our statement of values is prominently featured on our website, in our recruiting and appropriate promotional materials, and in physical locations around our organization.

   Y/N We have a formal process to teach values-based life and leadership skills and help our people correlate their personal values with the organization’s statement of values.

   Y/N Personal and organizational values are an important element in the performance appraisal process and failure to love our values is grounds for corrective action up to and including termination of employment.

2. We have defined our ideal culture

   Y/N We have a published cultural blueprint, culture code, or other document that describes our unique cultural superstructure.

   Y/N We have a chief culture officer, a culture committee, or other mechanisms in place to promote our Culture of Ownership, and reinforce this culture with activities and celebrations.

   Y/N Our recruiting process seeks to assure a good fit between the attitude and personal values of the individual and the core values and Culture of Ownership of our organization, while also recognizing that diversity can enrich our culture.

   Y/N We promote our Culture of Ownership to external audiences to create competitive distinction in our marketplace and for recruiting and retaining great people.
3. We have well-established expectations regarding attitudes and behaviors

Y/N We have defined our ZTBs (zero tolerance behaviors) to include bullying and intimidation, malicious gossip and rumor-mongering, rudeness and incivility and other forms of toxic emotional negativity, and members of our leadership team have been trained in how to appropriately correct breaches of those expectations.

Y/N We have taken The Pickle Challenge for Charity™, declared our organization to be a PFZ (Pickle-Free Zone), and shared The Pickle Pledge™ with all employees and providers, including in new employee orientation.

Y/N We regularly (at least once per year) assess employee perceptions of our culture and how well employees, including leaders, adhere to our expectations regarding attitude and behavior in the workplace.

Y/N We explicitly link our expectations regarding attitude and behavior to be emotionally positive, self empowered, and fully engaged with the core values of the organization.

4. We expect a spirit of ownership from our leaders

Y/N Leaders at every level of the organization are expected to participate in culture-enhancing activities.

Y/N We do not allow any member of the leadership team to opt out of being part of our Culture of Ownership.

Y/N Every member of the leadership team is expected to sign a statement or pledge of commitment that among other things commits them to knowing and living our values and to promoting those values within their areas of responsibility.

Y/N We do not tolerate any leader behaving like a jerk, and never rationalize away such behaviors because of their high performance in other dimensions of the job.

5. Commitment to the individual

Y/N We are absolutely committed to protecting our people from being bullied, intimidated or threatened in any way, and to creating a safe environment in which people can address their concerns without fear of retribution.

Y/N Recognizing that people do not leave their personal concerns in the parking lot when they come to work, we offer programs to help them with personal financial management, parenting skills, personal self-mastery and self empowerment and other forms of personal development, as appropriate.

Y/N We use daily huddles, informal support groups, and other mechanisms to foster a spirit of fellowship in our organization.

Y/N We treat employees like partners or owners by sharing key financial, quality, patient satisfaction and other key indicators and encouraging them to understand how those parameters affect, and are affected by, their work.

SCORING

18–20—Strong Culture of Ownership:
You have a strong Culture of Ownership that engages employees, providers, volunteers, boards and others at every level of the organization. There is a strong sense of pride and a spirit of fellowship. Your commitment to values and culture are a powerful source of competitive advantage for your reputation in the community and for recruiting and retaining the best staff.

14–17—Emerging Culture of Ownership:
Your culture is good but not great. There are some areas of the organization that have a strongly positive culture but others that are more likely to have a culture of optionality. Tolerance for cynical attitudes and toxic emotional negativity interfere with your efforts to promote a remarkable culture. You have significant opportunities to engage your people in co-creating a more positive and productive Culture of Ownership.

< 14—Weak Culture:
Your culture is more characterized by optionality than it is by ownership. Leaders tolerate inappropriate attitudes and behaviors with the excuse that at least the work is getting done. Creating a Cultural Blueprint for your Invisible Architecture™ of core values, organizational culture and workplace attitude will be a great place to start. For more practical tips and strategies read Building a Culture of Ownership in Healthcare.