

Defining What We Do: Shaping a New Story for Your Team

A checklist for reflecting on corporate identity and purpose

As we emerge from the pandemic into a new period of uncertainty, we are seeing a fundamental shift in the focus of corporate leaders and their teams.

At the core is a need for greater humanity in leadership. Now more than ever, people are looking for social and emotional connections and a more profound sense of purpose in their work.

People are more conscious of an organization's environmental, social, and governance agenda when choosing which companies to work with or purchase from.

Consequently, businesses need to reflect on their identity and purpose and move from an old set of scripts to a new story.

Reflecting on Corporate Identity and Purpose

How should leaders of teams bring that humanity into the foreground, and how do they lead their teams? Leaders need to be intentional in writing their new stories and bringing them to life.

As a start, ask yourself and your team these questions about your organizational purpose. The answers will help frame a new story and guide the direction of your team's new shared agenda.

- 1. To what extent does your organization connect decisions to the overarching purpose and values of the business?** The why of your organization's mission acts as the team's North Star, and communicating it is a powerful part of your story.
- 2. Is your organization transparent and open in explaining why decisions are taken?** Explaining decisions through frequent and honest communication is an essential thread that keeps the team connected, informed, and aligned.
- 3. Does your organization provide opportunities for the team to set the tone and direction of the team environment?** Offering a forum to share feedback on what is and isn't working can help shape the team's new story.
- 4. Do you know how people are feeling? Are they able to bring their whole selves to work?** Tuning in and listening help create a shared agenda about what's essential to the team.
- 5. Are you creating an environment where people can experiment and challenge?** Consider what you can do as an organization to ensure people feel psychologically safe and confident to make mistakes they can learn from.

6. **Do you show appreciation?** Practicing gratitude and encouraging others to do so can support the behavioral changes needed to move forward with a new sense of purpose.
7. **How do you balance collaboration and competition?** The team wins together by promoting collaboration over competition, and a more profound sense of connection is felt.
8. **What team norms are needed to create a growth mindset?** Spend time talking about the cultural enablers and barriers to success. High-performing teams tune in to culture and link it to the why of organizational purpose.
9. **Does your team buy into and identify with its values?** Decide how you and your team can role-model these values so that they become part of who you are as an organization and help foster inclusion and belonging.
10. **What are the dreams and aspirations of your team members?** Make time to engage in dialogue around career progression so that the direction of team members and the organization remain aligned in their ambitions.

Shaping the New Story

Against a backdrop of uncertainty and seismic societal changes, a new story is being written. Leaders will need to tune in to their teams to bring their new script to life.

If you are curious about the answers to these questions and would like to have a conversation with one of RHR International's team effectiveness experts, please get in touch with us:

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