

How much is culture costing your organization, and how do you get leadership on board to change it?

I often see HR struggling to get leadership on board with culture initiatives. Here are a few tools to try, so you can get leadership approval on your better and more positive workplace initiative.



Show Them the Stats

For years, experts have been studying the effects of incivility in the workplace, and the results are not pretty. The fact is that there are serious repercussions of a negative work environment. According to [a study](#) done by Christine Porath, 98% of the thousands of people she polled reported experiencing uncivil behavior in the workplace. In another [study](#), she polled 800 managers and employees in over 50 industries, and found that 48% of employees decreased their work effort intentionally, 66% said that their performance declined, 25% admitted to taking their frustration out on customers, and “78% said their commitment to the organization declined. Negativity is contagious, and it’s time to take it seriously and get leadership on board. The numbers just don’t lie.

Show Them the Money

Many leaders believe there is no tangible cost to a negative culture, which is far beyond the truth. A negative work environment can seriously hurt your bottom line. Disengaged employees mean higher turnover, lower productivity, and lower ROI - after all, employees are your biggest investment.

The next time you schedule a meeting with your boss try filling this worksheet out first. Use the following chart to add up how much your culture is really costing the organization.

Obtaining Leadership Buy-in for Culture Change

Description	Cost
Time spent by HR hiring replacements for people who quit	
Overtime costs associated with unreasonable demands	
Cost of clients who left because of a disengaged employee	
Time spent by manager dealing with complaints	
Cost of employee error on projects	
Estimated total cost of negative culture	

Show Them the Feedback

Now that you can see the tangible costs associated with a negative culture, try digging a little deeper for more proof. Send out an engagement survey or do a culture assessment so that you can convince leadership that there is in fact a problem. When you walk in with tangible evidence about how employees feel about their work and the organization, and proof that it's hurting their productivity, all ears will be on you.

Here are five questions to ask to help you make your case, and notice they will all help you prove your point that the environment affects productivity.

Obtaining Leadership Buy-in for Culture Change

1. My manager regularly communicates what is expected of me.
 - a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Agree
 - d. Strongly Agree
2. I would recommend this organization as a great place to work.
 - a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Agree
 - d. Strongly Agree
3. I believe in and trust the leadership team.
 - a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Agree
 - d. Strongly Agree
4. I am treated with respect and civility every single day.
 - a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Agree
 - d. Strongly Agree
5. This organization inspires me to give my all and do my best everyday
 - a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Agree
 - d. Strongly Agree

Be sure to leave a section for comments! That's where the good stuff that will really help you make your case comes in.

While these survey questions are designed to help you make your case, I have a huge list of climate survey questions (203 to be exact) you can use to complete an actual climate and/or engagement survey. If you are interested in them, as well as learning HOW to

Obtaining Leadership Buy-in for Culture Change

actually change your culture into one that is more positive, check out my new [Culture Makeover Masterclass](#), where I take you through the next steps of building a positive culture.

Here's an email template to help you get the conversation going

The formula for your request email is as follows:

- State the name of your initiative and describe how it will be critical for you and the organization
- Describe what actions are involved in the initiative and what level of involvement will be required from different people in your organization
- Share your estimated investment, and why that price is worth it; offer an ROI if you can
- Describe the qualifications of any consultants or outside parties you will use to help with the initiative
- State your case about how investment will pay off
- Offer to meet with your boss as often as needed throughout the process to keep him or her apprised of everything going on

I wanted to help you out, so I created an [email template](#) for you to use. I used my Workplace [Culture Makeover Masterclass](#) as an example, so it's referencing a course, rather than an entire initiative, but you can tailor it to match your needs.

