



## Stanford eCorner

### Culture Archetypes: One-team Culture

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Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/1855/Culture-Archetypes-One-team-Culture>

Andy Friere, Co-founder and CEO of Axialent, describes the one-team culture archetype, one of the five basic cultural archetypes into which organizations fall: 1) Achievement, 2) Innovation, 3) One-team, 4) People-first or 5) Customer-focused. Specifically, Friere suggests that one-team cultures trade off the optimization of individual systems or people for the benefit of the entire organization. Friere describes the behaviors, symbols and processes that build this type of culture as well as the actions that destroy it.



#### Transcript

One team: one team is basically saying, "We are willing to sub optimize our subsystem in order to optimize the overall system. What optimizes a subsystem not always optimizes the overall system. An example would be an organization. Global companies: many of you either have many stores in many places in the same country, or you have several countries where you operate in. Well, you're a one firm culture if you're really focusing on building standard processes, even knowing that what would be optimal for that specific neighborhood is different from what would be optimal for the overall system. The metaphor I always use is in a soccer team. If you were to go to the defense team and you say, "What's your goal as the defense team? How am I going to assess your performance?" They're going to say, "I need to let the opponents score the minimum number of goals." That's the way you assess defense. If you're attack, then you say, "Well, I measure success based on the number of goals we score." That's what an attack team would say. Basically, the super, \$20 million players would say, "How many goals have I scored, and are we really scoring a lot of goals?" A one team culture is one where, in the scenario of losing 4 to 5, winning 2 to 1, or tying 0 to 0, in a not sophisticated one firm culture, the defense would say, "I'd rather tie 0 to 0." Why? Because no one scored me any goal. And the attack would say, "I'd rather lose 4 to 5, because I've scored four goals." And the best for the team is to win 2 to 1.

So really, a real team is one where people are really willing to say, "You know what, I feel a conflict here. What's best for me is not best for the firm. So I put it on the table and let's discuss what would be best for the firm. And once we agree on that, I'm willing to align myself behind that." So I'm not going to start questioning and say, "I never agreed with that. That was your opinion, but I was never part of it. I never bought into that idea." No. A one firm culture is one where we say, we discuss, we have friction, we have meaningful discussions. But once we make a decision, we are all aligned behind it. So when a decision is made, individuals speak and act in support of it. Work is done by one group on behalf of the whole, people have this sense of, "I'm not only committed to delivering my goals, but I'm also committed to helping you deliver yours." So the remuneration system encourages people to facilitate the success of others.

Structures and reporting line recognizes dual citizenship. People get moved, so if you have several stores, you keep on moving people around, because that's what's going to allow them to have more perspectives. And the belief is that what goes around comes around, that most people are well-intended and their actions have a worthy motive, even if you haven't quite figured it out yet, that people can be accountable for things they don't control, so they help each other. And generosity and sharing, cooperation, trustworthiness, openness and diversity is what really is ingrained at a values level in a one firm culture.

The deal breakers are those typical organizations with barons. I mean, owners of pieces of land that say, "Don't cross the line. This is my world. I do it well, don't get into my thing. I know how to run it, don't bother me." That is they typical deal breaker for a one firm culture. So if you really want to do that, you need to say, "No barons, no dukes, no owners of property right.

We're here to build what's best for the team." Silo mentality: how many meetings do you get together, and people start fighting for their own agenda, rather than saying, "I put my agenda on the table to try to see what's best for the whole." Well, how much of that happens? It's a question of degrees. It's not that it's either 0 or 100, it's a question of degree.