Stanford eCorner

Culture is a Decision Framework

Cyriac Roeding, *Shopkick*

October 16, 2013

Video URL: http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/3201/Culture-is-a-Decision-Framework

Cyriac Roeding, co-founder and CEO of Shopkick, believes the execution of culture in companies is highly underrated, and that a steady, shared culture provides direction for employees who are making small and large decisions all day long. According to Roeding, "If you have a strong culture, it blows everyone in a shared direction."

Transcript

Culture I believe is highly underrated. People like to talk about culture but the execution of culture is actually very underrated I think. And I wanted to explain why I think culture is so important. Let me give you an example. Let's say you started a new company and you are the newbie. And you're sitting at your little desk and there are people around you and now you're thinking about hmm, can I get up and get a coffee. I just started here. Is that going to be okay? What if I hang out for 15 minutes in the kitchen, is that going to be okay? This is where culture comes in. Culture is a decision framework. It's not just some fuzzy little nice little things, values; it is a decision framework.

In that moment you make your decision based on the culture of the place. And then you go to the kitchen and you hang out there and you might have had the best idea of the day talking to other people, hanging out having your coffee, which you would never have had if you had stayed sitting at your desk. So my point here is with this very little example, this happens all day long. The decisions are constantly being made. So culture is like a wind and it blows into one direction. If you have a strong culture, it blows everyone into one direction. So if everyone moves in the same direction you are basically adding up the forces, maybe even multiplying them. If you are moving into different directions you kill each other's energy. That's why culture is very important. It's a wind, a force that's blowing.