Stanford eCorner

Write Down Your Culture

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Dharmesh Shah, co-founder and CTO of HubSpot, discusses why a company should document its culture. A self-taught expert on the topic, Shah says defining your company's culture will foster a clear and common understanding and serve as a resource that can be cited and revisited any time. Employers shouldn't be able to say they "hire for culture fit unless you can tell people what that culture is."

Transcript

- I talk to entrepreneurs and people all the time that says we hire for culture fit. We hire for culture. Then my question, that's awesome that you hire for culture fit what's your culture? Just describe it. I'm not trying to be aggressive. I'm not a confrontational guy at all, but what is it, I'm curious. And, if you can't tell me what your culture is that means when you say we hire for culture fit that means you hire people just like yourself. And your using culture as a shorthand for being able to hire people just like yourself. So you should not be allowed to say that we hire for culture fit unless you can tell people what that culture is. 'Cause otherwise you have all sorts of biases that kick in and that's a very, very dangerous thing. So this is probably one of the most important reasons to write your culture down.

It doesn't haven't be a 128 slide powerpoint deck like we have but it should be written down. Even if it's an email. Something has to exist that people have access to so they know what it is. And then a closing note is: every company, however many people is going to have a culture. Cultures exist, period. Anytime more than one person is together. And, I'm not suggesting you go off and spend hundreds of hours but every hour, five hours, 10 hours you spend in those early days, have dramatic leverage and you might as well build a culture you're going to love and build a company you want to work for and work in. Thank you.