

## **Organizational Culture: Making Room for Problem Gambling Services**

Organizational culture involves the underlying beliefs, assumptions, values and ways of interacting that contribute to the overall work environment. Integrating problem gambling services into an organization may prove challenging, as the existing culture can reject the change. Failures and successes experienced by a nonprofit AOD treatment agency attempting to provide PG prevention and treatment services will be discussed. Examples of easy-to-implement strategies will be shared.

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## **Outline**

- Define organizational culture
- Schein's Levels of Culture
- Organizational Change and resistance
- Ideas for incorporating PG into existing services

# What is Organizational Culture?

- A system of meaning shared by the organization's members
- An organization's culture defines the proper way to behave within the organization. This culture consists of shared beliefs and values established by leaders and then communicated and reinforced through various methods, ultimately shaping employee perceptions, behaviors and understanding. Organizational culture sets the context for everything an organization does.

## Strong versus Weak Culture

*Culture is the social glue that helps hold an organization together by providing appropriate standards for what employees should say or do*

### **STRONG**

- Success is more likely
- Consensus regarding cultural priorities
- Core values are intensely held and widely shared

### **WEAK**

- An ineffective culture can bring down the organization and its leadership.
- Disengaged employees, high turnover, poor customer relations, and lower profits

## Levels of Organizational Culture

**Artifacts** – symbols of culture in the physical and social work environment

### Values

**Espoused:** what members of an organization say they value

**Enacted:** reflected in the way individuals actually behave

**Assumptions** – deeply held beliefs that guide behavior and tell members of an organization how to perceive and think about things

Visible, often not decipherable



Greater level of awareness



Taken for granted, Invisible, Preconscious

## Artifacts: How Culture Lives

**Personal Enactment:** Behavior that reflects the organization's values.

**Ceremonies and Rites:** Sets of activities that are enacted repeatedly on important occasions.

**Stories:** Rich carriers of organizational culture that give meaning and identity to organizations.

- Top management participants in PGAM. Management-behavior exemplifies culture...trickles down...

- Volunteer banquet, etc.

- Stories about the boss, getting fired, how the agency deals with new employees, etc.

## Artifacts: How Culture Lives

**Rituals:** Everyday practices that are repeated frequently. Typically unwritten, rituals send a clear message about the way things are done in an organization.

**Symbols:** Symbols communicate the culture through unspoken messages, and include company logos, company colors, and even mental images held by employees.

- Rituals: Sanitizing during cold and flu season ☺

- Symbols: Most organizations have a logo that is printed on letterhead, promotional materials, swag, etc.

## Final Thoughts on Culture

### Subculture

- Reflect common problems, situations, or experiences.
- EXAMPLE: Treatment or Prevention Department

*Culture can be a liability by functioning as a barrier to change...*

# Organizational Change

When the intention for change is announced:

- 15% of the workforce is eager to accept it
- 15% of the workforce is dead set against it
- 70% is sitting on the fence, waiting to see what happens

Evans, 2014

# Resistance to Change

- Fear of Failure/Future
- Defense Mechanism
  - *Resentment: loss of status, pay, comfort, power, etc.*
- Protect the “best interest” of the organization
- Need better understanding
- Competing Commitments
  - *Lack reward system*
- Breaking Routines

(Johnson & Breckon, 2007; Brown, 2018; Evans, 2014)

## Quick and Easy

Amp up agency appearance during big gambling days

- Super Bowl
- March Madness
- Kentucky Derby
- Rivalry sport games

Observe special days, weeks, months and incorporate PG into them

- Recovery Month (September)
- Gift Responsibly (December)
- PGAM (March)
- World Mental Health Awareness Day (October 10—this year)

Update policies and letterhead to include PG services

Visual displays: “Now providing services for PG!”

## References

Brown, G. (2018). Resistance to change in an organization’s structure and culture. Retrieved from <https://smallbusiness.chron.com/resistance-change-organizations-structure-culture-16622.html>

Schein, E. H. (1984). Coming to a new awareness of organizational culture. *Sloan Management Review*. 25 (2), 3-16.