



Clear Impact

Simple truths. Consistently applied.

## Edgar Schein's Twelve Steps for Culture Change

Edgar Schein studied the factors that are most important in shaping an organizational culture, and therefore the ones that are also most important for consciously shifting an organizational culture. The organizational culture is “the way we do things around here” – how people behave towards themselves and others. These are the twelve most important ones, **in descending order of importance**.

**Primary Mechanisms** – the major “tools” that leaders have available to them to teach their organizations how to perceive, think, feel, and behave based on their own conscious and unconscious convictions.

1. What a leader attends to, measures, rewards and controls is the main factor affecting culture
2. How leaders react to critical incidents and organizational crises (do you or they get defensive, go on the attack, support, blame?)
3. How leaders allocate resources
4. Deliberate role-modeling and, teaching and coaching
5. How leaders allocate rewards and status
6. Criteria for recruitment, selection, promotion, performance management and dismissal

### Secondary Mechanisms

7. Organizational design and structure
8. Organizational systems and procedures
9. Rites and rituals of the organization
10. Design of physical space and buildings
11. Stories and myths about key people and events
12. Formal mission statements, charters and ethical code

From Edgar Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition (2010)  
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