



# Nourish Your Workplace Culture

MANAGEMENT CONNECTION



## HOW TO CREATE HEALTHY, THRIVING CULTURES THAT OTHERS CAN LEARN FROM

One of the exercises that I utilize in training workshops asks managers to describe their workplace culture in just a few words. Often, class members respond with terms like innovative, customer-focused, or driven. Then I follow up with “How would your employees describe it?” or “How would your customers describe it?” This is where it gets interesting. These descriptions don’t necessarily sync-up with their own view of their culture. The heart of this exercise involves exploring the why (i.e., the gap), and the strategies and tactics that can be utilized to more closely align the desired culture with the one that is actually experienced by employees and customers.

In today’s competitive environment, organizations use a variety of methods to assess not only their cultures, but also to make cultural improvements. They may utilize employee or client surveys, conduct focus groups, or hire experienced outside consultants and/or facilitators to help. There is a plethora of sources to turn to for assistance in this arena, but no one is able to offer a guaranteed quick fix for a less than optimal culture, or a miracle cure for a toxic culture. But there are increasingly well-publicized examples of employers who have healthy, thriving cultures that others can learn from.

One such company happens to employ one of my closest college friends, who regularly raves about her job despite



**Mary Lynn Fayoumi, CAE, SPHR, GPHR**

is President & CEO of the Management Association, an employers' association which provides human resources services to over 1,000 member organizations.

the physical demands and challenging hours. And, in spite of other career opportunities available to her, she chooses to work at Trader Joe's. Not familiar with Trader Joe's? It's a chain of neighborhood grocery stores featuring food and drinks from around the world. Their vibe is cool and quirky.

In an article published in October 2017 in the Chicago Tribune titled "Not Your Average Joe," many of the positive cultural attributes I have been hearing about over the years from my friend are highlighted. When I did a little further online digging, I found many additional glowing endorsements of Trader Joe's culture. If you haven't experienced it first-hand, Trader Joe's utilizes a nautical theme and calls their employees a Crew. Crew members work together collaboratively and rotate duties on a regular basis. Managers trust their Crew to act responsibly and use their own creativity to serve customers. Trader Joe's Careers page states, "We are looking for hard-working, fun people – people with a passion for food, learning, and creating delight for others. We take our jobs seriously, wear ourselves lightly, and are always looking to improve our Crew." The Careers page goes on to describe a very generous benefits package and the key tenets of their culture. Although the abundant benefits are no doubt a magnet for employees, I suspect that it's the culture of teamwork and fun that keeps their crew engaged and fulfilled long term.

Study after study has shown that it's not just a paycheck and benefits package that make employees happy and committed to an organization. Factors like flexible scheduling, great mentors, advancement potential, and yes, a positive company culture, keep staff members from jumping ship.

While no organization or culture is perfect, Trader Joe's seems to be a shining example of a company where there is very little gap between how leaders, managers, employees, and customers describe the culture. That is certainly a worthy goal, and an outcome that is the result of intention combined with hard work.

Other companies consistently mentioned when describing best corporate cultures include Southwest Airlines, Facebook, Google, Nike, Apple, and The Walt Disney Company. Explore their websites to learn more about their company culture initiatives. Although these are big names with big budgets, I would argue that those factors have little to do with employee satisfaction. Even a small rural hospital, a 50-bed long-term care center, or a school district can be a sought-after employer if they cultivate

*Continued on page 18*

## NUTRITION & FOODSERVICE PROFESSIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM

- Enroll anytime, online or by mail
- Work at your own pace
- Online RD preceptor from UND available
- Excellent ANFP exam pass rates

**Enroll today!**

**[dietarymanagers.UND.edu](http://dietarymanagers.UND.edu)**

**1.800.CALL.UND**

**UND** UNIVERSITY OF  
**NORTH DAKOTA**

**ANFP** Association of  
Nutrition & Foodservice  
Professionals  
Approved Training Program



a culture of teamwork, inclusion, caring, and fun. When managers demonstrate and promote a positive workplace culture, employees become more engaged on the job. This staff engagement impacts and improves the quality of customer interaction.

Think back to some of your best and worst customer service moments. When dining out, we've all had experiences with waitstaff who made a meal more positive or memorable with their obvious care and service focus. The food may have been average, but the service stood tall in a business



**MAKE SURE YOUR  
WORKPLACE IS FOCUSED**  
on a culture of positivity,  
innovation, inclusion, and  
teamwork.

## freshgranted

**Accurate, automated labeling means  
fresh and flavorful ingredients.**



**DCGx**  
NEW Dual Printer  
Option

The Date Code Genie can  
simplify your food labeling  
system, repurpose labor  
and improve production  
and safety in your kitchen.

# datecode genie®

For more information, visit  
**datecodegenie.com** or call **800.774.0519**.



climate where customers often feel unappreciated. A positive company culture translates to strong customer service. A workplace culture focused on quality and integrity is vital to every business, but it's especially important in healthcare centers, educational institutions, and other businesses where customers rely heavily on employees for best practices.

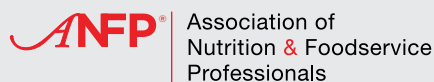
Likewise, a poor company culture is evident to staff and clients alike. Employees have no sparkle and little desire or motivation to go the extra mile when the organization's top tier leaders don't endorse or support such behaviors.

There is no magic pill available to create and sustain an ideal culture, but there is a secret sauce that is made up of key ingredients delivered on a consistent basis. Trader Joe's and other companies have clearly found the recipe and are giving other organizations an outstanding example of a culture worth striving for. Make sure your workplace is focused on a culture of positivity, innovation, inclusion, and teamwork. It will pay dividends in terms of your reputation and your bottom line. **E**

## MANAGEMENT CONNECTION

Reading *Nourish Your Workplace Culture* and successfully completing these questions online has been approved for 1 hour of continuing education for CDM, CFPPs. CE credit is available ONLINE ONLY. To earn 1 CE hour, purchase the online CE quiz in the ANFP Marketplace. Visit [www.ANFPonline.org/market](http://www.ANFPonline.org/market), select “**Publication**,” then select “**CE article**” at left, then search the title “*Nourish Your Workplace Culture*” and purchase the article.

- When discussing workplace culture, the goal is to have descriptions from the following groups align:
  - Human resources and legal counsel
  - Managers, employees, and customers
  - Suppliers and delivery drivers
- Employers that have healthy, thriving cultures promote:
  - Teamwork and positivity
  - Diversity and inclusion
  - All of the above
- Employee satisfaction is directly linked to:
  - Sundays off
  - Positive company culture
  - A generous sick leave policy
- Companies can assess their culture through:
  - Employee surveys and focus groups
  - Outside consultants and facilitators
  - All of the above
- Big name companies with big budgets
  - Are most likely to have a positive corporate culture
  - Are less likely to have a positive corporate culture
  - Are no more likely than small companies to have a positive corporate culture
- A good way to learn more about a company's culture is to:
  - Visit their website, especially their Careers page
  - Audit their financial records
  - Consult the Better Business Bureau
- When managers demonstrate and promote a positive workplace culture:
  - Employees benefit
  - Customers benefit
  - Both of the above



## ANNUAL REPORT

ANFP has released its Annual Report for fiscal year 2017 (June 1, 2016 - May 31, 2017).

Take an in-depth look at highlights from the past year in areas such as:

- Strategic Plan
- Membership
- Advocacy
- Analytics & Technology
- Education & CE
- Live Events
- CBDM
- And more!



### PDF DOWNLOAD

To download the report, visit [www.ANFPonline.org/news-resources/ANFP-news](http://www.ANFPonline.org/news-resources/ANFP-news).