



Ten Questions for Determining a Company's Culture

As companies and, particularly, their leadership teams look at the critical tools they have for defining their current situation and where they want to go strategically, culture plays a critical role in enabling, or impeding that progress. Following are 10 questions one can use in better understanding the existing culture of the leadership team and the company. These questions can also be used in defining the future state culture for an organization.

1. What behaviors are rewarded? Punished?
2. Where and how are people actually spending their resources (time, money, attention)?
3. What rules and expectations are followed, forced, and ignored?
4. Do people feel safe and supported talking about how they feel and asking for what they need?
5. What are the sacred cows? Who is most likely to tip them? Who stands the cows back up?
6. What stories are legend and what values do they convey?
7. What happens when someone fails, disappoints, or makes a mistake?
8. How is vulnerability (uncertainty, risk, and emotional exposure) perceived?
9. How prevalent are shame and blame and how are they showing up?
10. What's the collective tolerance for discomfort? Is the discomfort of learning, trying new things, and giving and receiving feedback normalized, or is there a high premium put on comfort (and how does that look)?

(Ken Minter, Excerpted from Brene Brown's book, *Daring Greatly*)