

Understanding the Cultural Microsphere

A Targeted View of Workplace Culture

Introduction

Workplace culture is a critical factor in employee satisfaction and organizational success.

At the **MACRO** level, it is rooted in mission, core values, and a defined set of human behaviors that unite the workplace.

Yet, at the **MICRO** level, its application varies across an organization due to the inherent inconsistencies in human behavior.

This concept underscores the idea that individual behaviors and interactions significantly impact one's perception of the overall workplace culture.



The “Cultural Microsphere”



For any individual working in an organization, their **Cultural Microsphere** is the impact of their behavior on others and the influence of others' behavior on them as they work.

It is defined by the ways in which these interactions allow employees to create, collaborate, and innovate to solve problems and produce business outcomes.

It is perceived through the relationships that employees build, curate, and navigate to accomplish tasks.

It is manifested through the **context** of the work, the **resources** used, and both the **value** and the **scope** of the role.

01 CONTEXT



The context derives from the level of **self-awareness** needed to be successful, the obstacles faced (that create a need for innovation or creativity), the **business channels** through which one must operate, and the **diversity of thought** and expertise required.

It is "those aspects of the work environment that require navigation."

"Here's what I'll experience everyday."

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02 RESOURCES



The resources tie in directly to the workplace **infrastructures** (departments, organizations, hierarchies, etc.) that represent the internal supply chain or the company's workflows, and the **tools or equipment** used to conduct work efficiently and effectively.

It is "those aspects of the work environment that require interaction."

"Here's what I'll use everyday."

03 VALUE



This relates to not only the **importance** placed on the role by the organization but also the importance inherently perceived by the role occupant. Value is then realized when an individual **accomplishes goals** by working through the self (intrinsic motivation) or through others (collaboration). When work is **acknowledged**, either by how work gets monitored or by how it gets recognized, value is measured.

It is "those aspects of the work environment that require influence."

"Here's what I'll produce everyday."

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04 SCOPE



Scope is created by how much latitude is awarded to an individual to do their work (**autonomy**), by the degree to which an individual can make **decisions**, by determining **accountability** (who is ultimately responsible for business outcomes), and by how one develops as the role expands and the organization scales.

It is "those aspects of the work environment that require boundaries."

"Here's the impact I'll make everyday."

“The experience of the cultural microsphere leads individuals to make broad assumptions about the organizational culture. In reality, someone in another part of the same company has their own cultural microsphere and will perceive the culture differently in every aspect. This is why the concept of 'workplace culture' is the responsibility of everyone working in the business.”

Christopher Hudson, SHRM-SCP, Assoc. CIPD