

Every Person Can Make a Positive Difference to a Culture

We often spend more time at work than we do at home with our families. So if you feel that the culture around you is starting to diminish, it's up to each person to take the lead and reshape it into a place we do enjoy. We each can take ownership of those aspects with which we do have control. Some ways we can all positively contribute to creating a culture that is welcoming, pleasant and fun includes:

1. **Check out your own behavior.** Are you a person you'd like to work with? If you aren't, then hone a better attitude, and fix what needs fixing.
2. **Focus on what's right, not what's wrong.** Nothing or no one person is perfect. If you believe it, you can see it. Pick out things that are working, and showcase people who are making a difference.
3. **Remind yourself of why you go to work.** Remember, you're there to do a job and to accomplish a goal. Attend to the results you're seeking, and let the small irritating stuff go.
4. **Hang out with the winners.** Avoid the 'Debbie Downers,' the 'Peter Pessimistics,' and the 'Greta Gossips.' They'll only drag you down to their level.
5. **Candidly confront when needed.** Avoid getting angry and raising your voice. Start with stating facts, explain your interpretation of those facts, share how you feel, and then say how this led to you deciding to chat with this person about this issue.
6. **Recognize, compliment, and reward those who make a difference.** Set the tone and showcase the behaviors that you want repeated. Stop reinforcing the bad, and start acknowledging the good, better, and best.
7. **Project a positive and confident professional image.** Putting your best professional image forward is critical to your success. Image comes in many forms, like poise, language use, tactfulness, attitude, responsiveness, dress/attire, organizational skills, etc.
8. **Balance work and pleasure.** If most of your life revolves around your workplace, it is easy to see why you may not be able to relax and keep tasks separate. You need variety and good balance. Find a hobby, make friends with people both inside and outside your company, give yourself a break. You'll come back to work more relaxed, have greater energy, and be able to enhance your productivity.
9. **Analyze things when they go wrong and right.** Know what works and what doesn't. Continue to enhance your processes and people skills. It makes no sense to keep repeating mistakes. Learn from them and move on.
10. **Continue to grow.** Take classes, expand your network, join a professional association, get certified in your field, read applicable journals/periodicals, follow the latest trends, and stay ahead of the curve.
11. **Know that change is inevitable.** Embrace change and make it work for you, not against you. No one is totally in charge, but knowing what you have control over and letting go of those things you can't control, is a healthy way to view change.