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# Company Culture and the Hiring Match

## The key to a successful hire

**The world has changed significantly in the first nineteen years of the new millennium, especially the world of recruitment. Long gone are the days when a new employee was selected based purely on their hard skills and job stability. No more is it solely the candidate who has to convince the company to hire them. No longer does a successful interview with the line manager mean guaranteed acceptance.**

*Company culture includes an organisation's expectations, experiences, philosophy, and values that hold it together and is expressed in its self-image, inner workings, interactions with the outside world, and future expectations. It is based on shared attitudes, beliefs, customs, and written and unwritten rules that have been developed over time and are considered valid.*

In 2019, the cultural match counts more than ever. A new employee has to be part of a team, not an island within the company. Nowhere has this been more noticeable than in the field of IT recruitment.

There have always been IT positions with a need for soft skills. Just imagine the Business Analyst bridging the gap between the business and the IT development teams or the Change Manager guiding the business teams through newly implemented software solutions. Nevertheless, today, all IT positions are required to possess the soft skills needed to work in a collaborative environment. SCRUM, AGILE, etc., all these methodologies mean even a developer, a system engineer, or a CISO doesn't just develop code, maintain the infrastructure, or make sure the network is secure by themselves any more; they are part of a larger group working towards a common goal – keeping the business competitive

This evolution should also be reflected in the recruitment process. One of the largest drivers in making sure a new hire is the right hire and will add benefit to the company's bottom line should be to understand and

*"Today, all IT positions are required to possess the soft skills needed to work in a collaborative environment."*

match them to the company culture in which they will be working.

The smartest and most motivated candidate may thrive in an environment that embraces a collaborative approach. But that same person might not be able to reach their full potential in a hierarchical organisation.

We do, however, notice that while quite a few companies understand the need for a good 'cultural match', they have never gone through an exercise of defining their company culture in detail and adapting their recruitment process accordingly.

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## The Effect of Company Culture on Employee Engagement

**To better understand the importance of a well-defined company culture, let's have a look at its influence on your workforce's engagement.**

**Employees who are 'engaged', i.e. involved in and enthusiastic about their work, are positively contributing to their organisations in five key areas:**

### Higher Quality and Profitability

When employees feel satisfied with their work environment, they feel a greater connection to the company, and therefore, are more likely to produce quality, which adds to your bottom line.

### Higher Retention and Lower Turnover

The hiring and onboarding process for new employees is very expensive and time-consuming. You want to get a return on your investment for this process, and therefore, you have to keep your new employees engaged

Employee engagement not only benefits new employees, but will also help retain top employees and decrease turnover rates.

### Higher Productivity

Engaged employees are interested in and connected to what they are doing and are more likely to do it well. They want to actively contribute to the company's growth. According to a 2017 study by Gallup, an engaged employee is 17% more productive.

### Less Absenteeism

Engaged employees feel that they are part of the organisation they work for, and therefore

### Genuine ambassadors

A huge benefit of having engaged employees is that they are loyal to their company, and therefore, act as company ambassadors to the outside world.

*"Throughout Western Europe, employee engagement levels are relatively low. Regionally, just 10% of employed residents are engaged — involved in and enthusiastic about their work. By comparison, 33% of employees in the U.S. are engaged."*

*Source: Gallup Survey 2017*

*Since your company culture is one of the key factors influencing your employee's happiness in the company, their job, and their interaction with those around them, a company has to understand its own company culture. A company has to hire with their company culture in mind in order to benefit from the advantages of employee engagement. This will definitely offer your company a powerful competitive advantage.*

**ISTORM**
IT & NEW MEDIA BELGIUM PERMANENT SA
Klipperstraat 15, 2030 Antwerpen

RPR Antwerpen/RPN Anvers
BTW/TVA BE 0828.062.373

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## Company Culture and the Right Personality

**In 1999, Robert Quinn and Kim Cameron carried out a study on organisational culture, effectiveness, and success. They found that in an organisation, there are always polarities, like flexibility vs. stability and internal vs. external focus – these two polarities were found to be most important in defining company culture and construct a quadrant with four distinct types of cultures.**

We can also see which kind of employee best matches each company culture using these four types.

**The Clan culture**

Clan cultures take a family-like approach to operations. Instead of competing against one another, employees are extremely collaborative and employers are committed to their staff. This, in turn, drives employee engagement and loyalty. Leadership takes the form of mentorship.

In a clan culture, you will be looking to recruit employees who have a strong desire to get along and value consensus over putting their own ideas forward.
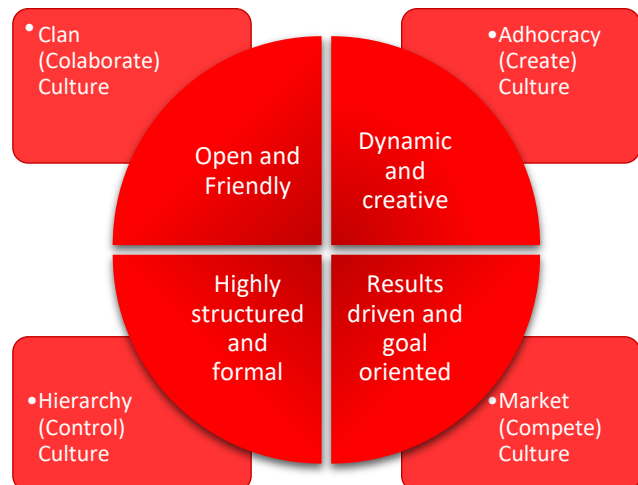
**The Adhocracy culture**

This culture embraces spontaneity and creativity. Businesses that are governed by this model tend to be versatile and able to adapt very quickly. Roles aren't clearly defined in adhocracies. Employees do what they're best at and try to avoid building anything that resembles a bureaucracy.

Adhocracies need to hire employees who have a strong desire for individual ingenuity and freedom, people who don't need supervision, and who can work without a clear framework.

**The Hierarchy Culture**

This culture is founded on structure and control. The work environment is formal, with strict institutional procedures that have been implemented for guidance. Day-to-day operations are based on organised coordination and monitoring.



- Clan (Colaborate) Culture — Open and Friendly
- Adhocracy (Create) Culture — Dynamic and creative
- Hierarchy (Control) Culture — Highly structured and formal
- Market (Compete) Culture — Results driven and goal oriented

The ideal employee in a hierarchical culture is someone who craves consistency and uniformity. There is little to no room for individual initiative.

**The Market Culture**

This culture is built upon the dynamics of competition and achieving concrete results. The focus is goal-oriented, with targets that are tough and demanding. The organisation is united by a common goal to succeed and beat all rivals.

Because of the results-oriented nature of the market culture, an employee has to feel good in a highly competitive atmosphere and needs to be extremely goal-oriented.

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**Company Culture as a Part of the Recruitment Process**

**When you welcome someone new into your team, you want them to be a long-lasting, valuable employee within your organisation. You can always provide the resources and tools to help employees get better at their jobs, but you can't teach them to align with your cultural values.**

### Defining your company culture

Defining your company culture is not something that can be done in an afternoon. However, there are three steps you can take with your team to incorporate it into your near-future recruitments.

#### Interview Your A-Players

Interview your current top performers. Find out what made them want to join your company, what gets them out of bed each morning, what is different from their last job, etc.? This gives you insights into why these people like to work in your team and if interviewees will share the same motivation.

#### Identify Core Culture Values

Where the previous point allows you to gather information about individual motivational factors, it is also important to understand the real-world values that identify your company. This step starts with yourself. Write down the values you think are the most important in your team/company. Next, survey your team, asking them the same question you just asked yourself. You can assess the common themes and distil the company's core values using the answers you receive.

#### Use Your Company Culture

It is not enough to just assess your company culture internally. You have to actively use your findings while writing your job descriptions and interviewing candidates. How many times have you seen a job description promising a "motivated team"? Make your description really stand out and describe your culture in detail. During an interview, take the time to let a candidate reflect upon their ideal team and company. Then see how this compares to your company culture findings.

Studies have shown that over 25% of all new employees who leave a company within the first year do so because they feel they don't fit into the company culture. This underlines how crucial shared values are in creating a stable and motivated team that will work well with each other. But how exactly do you go about integrating the company culture and values into your recruitment process?

As indicated earlier, your company culture is the first thing to define when recruiting, be it for a permanent position or for a project. At iSTORM, we notice that this step is often not detailed enough or is sometimes even entirely skipped when drawing up a job description. This is guaranteed to have negative effects.

*"Not all candidates will match your technical requirements 100%, but as long as you ensure the candidate matches your company culture, you've already taken a major step towards a successful hire."*

We've all been there – the 'perfect' candidate is sourced, who has great talent, the required expertise, and professional experience that matches perfectly with the position we're trying to fill. The first steps of the recruitment process went well and we want to fast-track this candidate before a competitor scoops them up. This is the point where you have to ask yourself: Did I put enough effort into assessing the candidate's cultural match? You might have gotten the most knowledgeable person on the planet, but does this technical

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skill really help you when the candidate disrupts the coherency of your team?

Of course, you will not be recruiting the same kind of people with the same backgrounds and experiences all the time. You need a healthy mix of personalities. Not all candidates will match your technical requirements 100%, but as long as you ensure the candidate matches your company

culture, you've already taken a major step towards a successful hire. Combine this mindset with company training and professional development and you will see winning results. You will not only have a hire who integrates into the team well, but you will also have an employee who sees the effort you put into their development. That is the recipe for a successful long-term collaboration.

## So Why Bring in a Specialised Recruitment Firm?

**Working with an external expert for your specialised recruitment needs can have definite added value. By leveraging their extensive market knowledge and experience, they can provide an invaluable outside view on your company culture and they know how your company is perceived by candidates.**

At iSTORM, we always start with an analysis of your company culture by means of both an on-site visit and an analysis of your external communications. We will discuss our findings with you and together, we will assess any points for attention. This gives you the benefit

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of an 'outside view' and also offers you a good opportunity to actively think about the culture in your company and to see if and where improvements are possible.

The result will not only be a better job description and recruitment process for your current needs, but the newly acquired insight into your company culture will also be a valuable tool for the future. It can be used for any future recruitment, for motivating, guiding, and improving the engagement of your current

employees, and it can help to pinpoint action points to make your organisation more flexible and increase results.

**A final thought**

As we previously stated, hiring with a focus on your company culture increases employee satisfaction, retention, productivity, and profitability immensely.

Recruiting this way is not just about what is beneficial for your company, but it is also about what is best for the candidate.

It's also unfair to hire an employee purely for their expertise, knowing that they will not match your company's culture well. They will thrive more in an environment that suits their beliefs and values better.

So let them explore their options somewhere else and find the candidate who matches your company and will stay motivated for the long term.

Philip Nijns

Business Unit Manager iSTORM
Antwerp, Flemish-Brabant, Limburg