

Why

Because shaping the right supportive culture to encourage entrepreneurship and innovation is not always possible for every leader and not all leaders have an extensive enough influence to change corporate culture (see shape culture tool card). Harvard Business School have discovered that next to culture there is also something that they call the climate of a department or a team. Culture is the broader values, norms and beliefs that shape an organization. Climate is far more localized and defines how it feels to work for a specific leader at a particular point in time. Culture can be thought of as the organization's atmosphere; climate is the local "weather" that people experience within that atmosphere at a certain point.

What

Application of the 6 dimensions of climate to analyze your team or department and to decide on what to change and how.

How

Use the following 6 dimensions of climate to analyze your department or team in order to create a climate that generates the engagement, commitment and performance you need:

Flexibility:

all unnecessary rules, procedures, policies and practices are eliminated and new ideas are readily accepted.

Responsibility:

people have a high level of autonomy to accomplish task and to resolve problems without having to constantly seek approval. They may take calculated risks.

Standards:

goals are challenging but attainable and there is a focus on continuous improvement.

Rewards:

team members are recognized for and rewarded for their performance.

Clarity:

people have knowledge and a good understanding of the company's strategy, direction and goals and they fully understand what is expected from them in light of this broader picture.

Team-commitment:

people are very willing to help each other and to make sacrifices and they feel trust and pride in the team when working on a common objective.

You could put these 6 items in a short questionnaire and ask people to rate them on a 7-point scale. Make sure that they can do this anonymously (e.g. ask HR to conduct it) otherwise you risk getting socially desired answers. Based on the results you can start a dialogue with your team to make improvements. Within this tool card set you can find different ways to work on this. In particular, we suggest the open space and appreciative inquiry methods.

When

Whenever you feel that atmosphere and climate could be a crucial factor in blocking entrepreneurship and innovation. It makes sense to do this once every year to optimize climate.

Skills and necessary training

Have a read of the Harvard Business Review article "Introduction to Organizational Climate."
Consult and work with HR to shape climate.

Possible workshop exercise

Discuss the 6 dimensions and how you see them within your department or team. Can you say something in general about them on a company level or do you see big differences between departments and teams?

Critical success factors

People feel confident that it is possible to talk about and rate the 6 above elements openly and/or anonymously within a setting where results will be handled in a constructive way.