



Ontos Global

Culture Practice

Methods

ONTOS global

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Business Practices
(formal & informal)
What we do and how we do it



Communication Practices
How we express ourselves (form and content)

SYMBOLS
FRAMES
STORIES/MYTHS
Jargon
COMMON ANALOGIES
COMMON VICTORIES

Shared tacit assumptions
(cultural schemas)



What is culture and how do you change it?

We have learned a lot about the brain and culture in last 35+ years. One of the most important insights is that culture is a *cognitive phenomenon*, the product of the interaction between our neurobiology and the social and physical world. These interactions produce *shared implicit assumptions*, or cultural schemas, that underwrite everything that is “culture”, from beliefs, values, norms, symbols, language (jargon), how we collectively make sense of our environments, and even brands and office layouts.

Ontos culture change practice is rooted in this new science of culture.

By taking full advantage of these insights, our interventions have the potential to be highly impactful and sustainable because they are interventions at the source. Sustainable culture change requires changing the collective cognitive orientations, or shared mindsets, on which culture is based. This is done by surfacing implicitly held shared assumptions and intervening across the major core practices (physical, social, communicative) they fuel. By changing practice, and sustaining the change, you rewire collective neural circuitry, which means the change is aligned with strategy and becomes self-sustaining.

CULTURE CHANGE APPROACH (summary)

Approach

Our approach to culture entails 5 holistic phases. Each of these is customized to the context of our clients and their business and transformation agenda, thus this is a sample outline only.

1 Identify

The first step is to identify the dominant tacit assumptions (cultural schemas) in your organization. This is done in using one or more of the following methods depending on the size of the organization:

- *Interviews with key leaders*
- *Group discovery with leadership groups*
- *Simulations*
- *Participant observation (action research)*
- *Review of key artifacts (documents, presentations, websites, etc.)*

2 Map & Dialog

Once the dominant assumptions are surfaced, we map these across the landscape of your organizational practices to see where and how they fuel what you do. We then review results with key leaders.

Culture change is a *dialogic* process: as leaders become aware of their own deeply held assumptions and those of their colleagues, they collectively begin to see what is possible in change.

3 Architect

With dominant cultural assumptions identified and mapped, we architect the interventions across practices necessary to achieve the desired future state. This entails designing the blueprint for how your desired culture will be underwritten by new assumptions embedded and reinforced in key practices. This entails the following:

- *Define the aspired culture(s)*
- *Determine gaps to dominant assumptions and steps to align*
- *Map assumptions to core practices*
- *Architect new practices, as necessary*
- *Sequence the change (timeline)*
- *Enroll coalitions*
- *Develop communications*
- *Investigate and adopt necessary technology*

4 Engage – execute the steps in the Plan phase

5 Monitor - Monitor interventions and modify them as necessary to ensure new practices are instilled and learned across the organization.





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