

4 leaders' secrets to create a high-performing culture



Do you ever look at industry leaders and wonder: “What’s their secret?” We’ll give you a hint: It’s about more than having the best product or the most funding. According to a recent study, [94% of executives and 88% of employees](#) believed that workplace culture directly impacted the overall success of their business. So, how can leaders create a high-performing culture? Building a remarkable company takes more than just ping-pong tables and nap pods; it’s about cultivating a strategic environment where people can thrive.



In this curated list, we’ll delve into the often-overlooked practices that successful leaders leverage to create [high-performing cultures](#). You’ll have the unique opportunity to tap into the wisdom of real leaders who’ve nurtured incredible organizations, all thanks to powerful cultural shifts. These aren’t flashy gimmicks but rather core principles established

by The Arbinger Institute that have helped propel countless organizations to the top. It's time to ditch the surface-level perks and unlock the true potential of your team.

1. Treat people like people



Leader: Scott O'Neil, CEO | Harris Blitzer Sports & Entertainment

Scott O'Neil's secret weapon: Treating everyone with respect! It sounds simple, but it's powerful. A high-performing culture is about setting clear expectations and holding people accountable. This includes providing constructive feedback and fostering open communication. Employees who feel valued and trusted are more likely to go the extra mile.

Why this works:

Treating people with respect builds trust. Employees who feel safe sharing ideas, asking questions, and making mistakes are more likely to be innovative and engaged. A [culture of respect](#) also reduces micromanagement and empowers employees to take ownership of their work.

2. Ask the golden question – “how can I be helpful?”



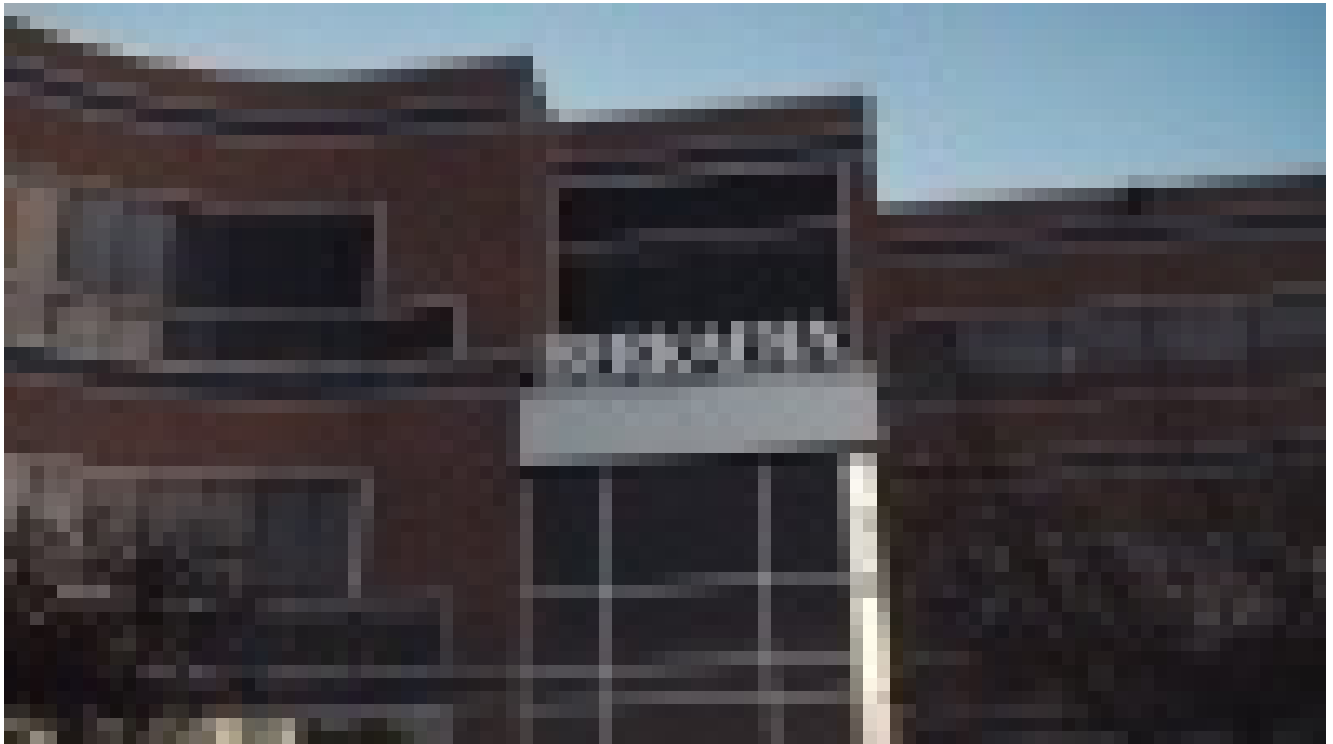
Leader: Monique Davis, Deputy Superintendent

Monique Davis emphasizes the importance of effective communication. A high-performing culture thrives on open dialogue and active listening. Instead of pointing fingers, leaders should focus on solutions and how they can support their teams. Imagine a salesperson missing their quota. In a blame-oriented culture, the manager might criticize the salesperson's performance. However, in a high-performing culture, the manager would have regular check-ins, offer coaching, and explore potential roadblocks together.

Why this works:

Open communication builds trust and [psychological safety](#). When employees feel comfortable asking for help and providing feedback, it fosters collaboration and problem-solving.

3. Leverage tools for conflict resolution



Leader: Hilary Provinse, Executive Vice President | Berkadia

When you have an “eat-what-you-kill” mentality in a business, motivation runs high, and so do fears. Hilary Provinse faced this challenge when building a high-performing culture that embraced community and collaboration despite the organization’s commissions-based, competitive sales environment. By shifting their mindset and focusing on the company’s ultimate goal rather than individual conquests, they could strike a balance. What once were debates transformed into collaborative conversations focused on the end-all goal: getting more market share from clients! With communication frameworks prioritizing [conflict resolution](#), team members were encouraged to embrace new perspectives, recognize strengths and weaknesses, and ultimately achieve better results.

Why it works:

Clear communication is the foundation for collaboration. It keeps everyone aligned on goals and expectations, reducing confusion. Open sharing allows teams to identify strengths and weaknesses, enabling effective task delegation and support. This also fosters early problem-solving and builds trust. When team members feel safe to express themselves, they’re more likely to be creative and seek help.

4. Allow your company mission to ring true



Leader: Terry Lim, COO | Pet Food Express

What happens when purpose drives a business instead of numbers? You create a high-performing culture where people are driven to perform for the betterment of all. The leadership team at Pet Food Express gives power to its people by entrusting them to make decisions and take actions that keep the company's vision alive. This level of trust and encouragement has created a community where people communicate comfortably, avoid micromanaging, and leverage expectations to ensure balanced growth.

Why it works:

When you listen to and support your team, encouraging them to explore solutions that align with the company mission, you create an environment of ownership and accountability. This trust fosters a culture where individuals feel valued and empowered, leading to increased innovation and productivity. By prioritizing open communication and shared goals, you establish a high-performance culture where people and productivity thrive.

Cultivate high-performance culture by investing in people

Clear communication is the foundation for collaboration; it keeps everyone aligned on goals and expectations, reducing confusion. Transparency allows teams to identify strengths and weaknesses, enabling effective task delegation and support. This also fosters early problem-solving and builds trust. When team members feel safe to express themselves, they're more likely to be creative and voluntarily seek help. This open dialogue fuels innovation by leveraging perspectives. No one is perfect, communication allows teams to learn from mistakes and continuously improve together.

Ready to unlock the potential in your team? **Download our [culture report](#)** to learn more tactics for cultivating a [high-performing culture](#) built on respect, open communication, and trust. It's the surest path to a thriving organization!