

## Corporate Culture: Reactive or Created



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What would it be like to work in an environment in which leaders and co-workers are not reacting and over-reacting to every twist and turn of the economy, the pandemic, and even the whims of co-workers? It is possible. We do it every day at Mark Kamin and Associates.

It's the way we're built. We create our culture. And, for the past forty years, we've been coaching the top leaders to do the same at companies like Exxon Mobile, Hewlett Packard, General Electric, Good Year Tire and Rubber, Roche Labs, IBM, and many others.

Our foundation is constructed on four basic principles, and I'll spell them out. But first, I want to say more about company culture. It is not top-down management. That's not what we're aiming for. Together, with the executive leadership team and staff, we identify the current culture, the way it is, while it's actually happening in real time, in the

offices, and in the factories. And, then we set up a series of conversations that allow people to disconnect from the current culture, and together, as a team, distinguish what it takes to create a culture for high integrity, accountability and authentic team. So, the new culture gets designed together, rather than top down by a team of executives who dictate, “This is who we are. This is what we stand for. Now, follow the rules.”

People from all levels of the organization participate in the design of the new culture from the safety workers to middle management to the C-Suite. And, we coach them in the four foundations I mentioned a moment ago. These four pillars are at the source of how we accomplish breakthrough performance outcomes.

The first pillar is Integrity<sup>1</sup>. We define integrity as the state of being whole, complete, or undiminished. Consider integrity to be like the hull of a ship. If there’s damage to the hull, the ship takes on water, but if the integrity of the hull is whole and complete, the ship operates as designed. In fact, we use integrity as one of the tools that creates workability.

The second pillar is authenticity<sup>1</sup>. People have been socialized their whole lives to put looking good and not looking bad way ahead of being authentic. The damage to a culture is that without straight talk, there is no possibility for team. We show people the power of authentic communication and how to set aside pre-existing, unconscious ways of protecting themselves, and to start talking with real candor and being open to intimacy and connectedness.

The third pillar is being a part of something bigger than oneself<sup>1</sup>. You want to have a vision that’s bigger than you. It’s something you can live into, rather than react from.

The fourth pillar is being cause in the matter<sup>1</sup>, which means responsibility. And, we are not using the definition of responsibility as blame, shame, guilt or fault. We’re talking about responsibility as the willingness to experience yourself as causing what’s happening in life, not being at the effect of what’s happening in life. So, I could be a stand for “I am cause in the matter of the sales results here. Good, bad, whatever it is.”

When these elements are in place, our clients are ready to create a new future that shapes performance in a way that is close to unimaginable.

Our next blog, we will dive deeper into elements of creating a new future.

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