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## Focus

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### Changing Company Culture - I

#### Part 1 - Framework

A company's culture is its shared values, beliefs, and norms of behavior. The values create the beliefs which govern acceptable behavior. The culture is created with or without a plan by management.

Suppose you want to change the culture, either because the business situation has changed or for other reasons. Can the leader change a corporate culture? If so, how?

Culture is not created or changed overnight. But it *can* be changed. Systematically changing the company culture is best carried out within a *framework for cultural change*. Remember the following when building a framework for change.

- Values seldom need changing. Beliefs that influence specific behaviors often do.
- Behaviors are beliefs turned into action. Behaviors deliver the results.
- Link rewards to performance.
- Engage in robust, confrontational dialog on key issues.
- Leaders get the behavior they exhibit and tolerate.

A very practical technique for changing attitudes is to engage in the desired behavior first, rather than trying to change an attitude in hopes of changing behavior. **Don't think yourself into a new way of acting. Act yourself into a new way of thinking.**

Changing a culture, or even making a sustainable improvement in outcomes, starts at the top. The entire senior management team must be willing to embrace a culture of discipline.

- Disciplined people,
- Disciplined thought, and
- Disciplined actions

The final key is the courage to hold each other accountable.

*Tom Wagner*

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