

# Culture Matters

## Building a Great Workplace for Employee and Business Success



A WHITE PAPER PROVIDED BY ULTIMATE STAFFING SERVICES

From Google to Zappos to The Container Store, some organizations are just known for their ability to cultivate a “Best Place to Work” culture and build an engaged, passionate workforce. They also happen to be some of the most profitable and successful companies out there.

These businesses all started with just a handful of employees and no brand reputation, perhaps similar to how your workplace got its start. So what do they do differently and how do their best practices lead to a more engaged workforce? This white paper by Ultimate Staffing Services explores why culture matters to your workforce and organization’s business success, and outlines the many benefits of establishing and maintaining a positive workplace culture. Additionally, it provides action items that you and your management team can begin tackling today in order to get your organization on track toward becoming a Top Workplace.

### Culture: The Nitty Gritty

Your workplace culture can either inspire the best within employees or reduce businesses to average. Great managers know what their teams want—a healthy place with inspired people and boundless organic growth. That’s common knowledge to organizations widely considered Best Places to Work. These Top Workplaces

also know that culture is the key driver of results at work.

Becoming a Top Workplace doesn’t mean forcing unique practices on your employees in an effort to be different and unique. Each organization, and even each individual department, develops its own culture organically and, in fact, is often very similar to other Best Place to Work employers. The qualities that make a culture excellent are about 80% generic and 20% unique, according to Curt Coffman, renowned workplace culture expert and Chief Science Officer of The Coffman Organization. An employer’s competitive advantage arises from the 20% “difference” that delivers on the brand promise.

**The truth is that competitors may be able to copy your strategies or replicate your technologies, but your people and their passion for your brand can’t be duplicated.** Those two elements are the keys to success for your team or organization, and the road to achieving the following benefits of a strong workplace culture.

### The Benefits

#### Minimal Employee Turnover

According to the Great Place to Work Institute, which determines and analyzes the annual list of 100 Best Companies to Work For, voluntary turnover is much lower in top businesses that make it into the list than average companies across various industries... up to a whopping 65% lower, their survey found.

Achieving a higher employee retention rate avoids a slew of downsides arising from turnover such as:

- Damaged employee morale
- Slowed productivity
- Potential profit loss and damaged client relationships

#### A Stronger Brand and More Loyal Following

When employees are proud of their workplace and the role they play in achieving their organization’s mission and purpose, they become brand ambassadors who can accomplish more than your marketing budget. The Social Workplace Trust Study completed by Human1.0 and the Great Place to Work Institute determined that:

- Coworkers in “high trust” organizations are three times more likely to spread word about their companies on social media than average employees
- They are also twice as likely to express pride in their workplaces

#### Heftier Profits and Organizational Growth

According to Quantum Workplace’s Employee Engagement Trends Report, which compiled survey findings from more than 400,000 employees at approximately 5,000 companies, engagement tends to positively impact sales and profits.

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- Employers whose employees responded more favorably regarding engagement levels were more likely to report profit escalations throughout the three-year period analyzed by Quantum Workplace
- Businesses that reported increasing sales within the same three-year period experienced a 70.3% employee engagement rate, compared to 59.5% employee engagement within businesses that reported decreasing sales

Data from the Great Place to Work Institute's analysis of *FORTUNE Magazine's 100 Best Companies to Work For* suggests that workplaces with strong company cultures are also better at addressing the challenges inherent in intense organizational growth and change.

## How to Realize These Benefits in Your Workplace

Cultivating a Best Place to Work environment and experiencing the perks above will not happen overnight, but your organization or department can begin to implement small changes in everyday processes and practices, such as the suggestions below. Eventually, these tweaks may result in significant institutional changes.

### Hire for Culture Fit and Potential

Great managers understand that they cannot change who a team member is at their core, but they can teach them how to do something. Therefore, instead of hiring based solely on skill set, hire for culture and personality fit as well as potential.

This means loosening up on required experience and skills and editing out phrases like "Don't even think about applying unless you have experience doing XYZ..." from your job postings. Focus on pre-screening for required traits like:



**Drive:** find creative ways for an applicant to demonstrate their passion for certain work



**Aligned values:** uncover the individual's ethos, looking particularly for honesty, "perfectionism," and ownership of work



**Bounce back:** can the person take criticism? What do they do with feedback?

*"Much of the time, interviews focus on determining skills, strengths, and weaknesses," states Kristi Kennedy, Senior Vice President for Roth Staffing Companies (the parent company of Ultimate Staffing). "These things are important of course, but not as important as uncovering a candidate's personality and whether they will buy into or become detrimental to your workplace culture. One disengaged employee can poison a happy and productive workforce, but one passionate employee can boost the overall efficiency and engagement of your entire department or organization."*

### Source Feedback from Employees

Rather than attempting to read the minds of your employees, receive straight answers about how to best engage your workforce by reaching out to them. If your organizational structure or size permits, reach out to employees individually (or trickle it down to managers to lead the charge for their teams) to ask:

- Why do you love working for our organization?
- What do you enjoy the most?
- What makes our business special and unique?
- How can we improve your experience here?

If team or organizational discussions are not a feasible option, consider developing an anonymous and confidential employee survey asking these questions, and then holding regular engagement surveys every quarter or on a semi-annual basis. Also, promote these types of open discussions regarding employee engagement, recognition, benefits, etc. in as many areas as possible such as one-on-one manager discussions, performance reviews, and weekly team meetings.

The end purpose is to cultivate an atmosphere of open discussion surrounding employee engagement so that this type of communication is prevalent on a daily

basis within every level of your organization, not something that's discussed a few times per year by senior leadership only.

### Copy Top Workplace Practices

If imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, then don't hesitate to flatter those organizations known as Top Workplaces and imitate some of their best practices! For example, of *FORTUNE's 100 Best Companies to Work For*:

- The average number of hours devoted to training and developing a salaried employee: **73**
- **88** of the top 100 Best Companies offer tuition reimbursement to employees
- The average annual tuition reimbursement amount available to a coworker: **\$7,375**

Of course, the best course of action is to adapt some of these best practices and tailor them specifically for your workforce and their needs and desires.

*"At Roth Staffing Companies, we offer a number of unique recognition and wellness programs aimed at making life better for our coworkers," says Shawna Brown, Roth Staffing's Director of Service. "For instance, our 9/80 Flex Schedule—the only one of its kind within the staffing industry—enables coworkers to work nine longer days within two weeks and enjoy every other Friday off. Some might think this practice to be counterproductive in an industry where coworkers need to be available at a moment's notice to help other workplaces, but we have seen the positive impacts the flexible work schedule has had upon our coworkers; they are less stressed and more energized, they appreciate being able to spend more time with family and loved ones, and are passionate about working for a company that truly appreciates them."*

### Develop an MVPPP/How-To Guide

A quick perusal of workplaces considered the best of the best within their industries would reveal that many of them share one important element: a clear mission or purpose statement.

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*We love to create remarkable experiences... every person, every time.®*



*“Our Mission, Vision, Values, Purpose, and Promise—known internally as our MVVPP—guide everything we do,”* explains Brett Roth, Vice President of Roth Staffing Companies. *“These core philosophies are at the heart of our organization and every coworker has them memorized. But it’s not just about being able to regurgitate a few phrases; each coworker truly believes in our MVVPP and understands his or her role in fulfilling them for clients and Ambassadors, the temporary employees who represent Roth Staffing Companies.”*

When established within a department or organization, a mission/purpose statement and/or a set of core values can act as a how-to guide for coworkers. Without consulting a supervisor, they know how to act when faced with a customer service issue and how to best represent your brand. Essentially, these core philosophies become a compass for your workforce and hopefully become ingrained and self-perpetuating within your firm.

If your workplace does not yet have a clearly stated mission or purpose statement, consider boiling down employee feedback (explained in the “Source Feedback from Employees” section on pg. 2) into a concise and actionable statement. That’s exactly how we developed Roth Staffing’s Purpose: **“To make life better for the people we serve.”**<sup>®</sup>

## Culture Matters

Relegated to the realm of “fluffy stuff” in the past, workplace culture nowadays has become an organizational element as essential as sales and marketing. Do not make the mistake of letting employee engagement fall by the wayside in favor of focusing purely on profits—this might work in the short term but will most likely lead to a disengaged and less productive workforce in the long run.

Whether your department or organization’s culture is already strong or needs a complete overhaul, Ultimate Staffing Services—a nationally recognized “Best Place to Work”—possesses the expertise and knowledge to act as a valuable resource during your ongoing mission to become a Top Workplace. Start with the best practices above, which can help you and your managers take the first steps toward building a world-class workplace culture that your employees want and deserve. Then, feel free to reach out to Ultimate Staffing Services for more information about why culture matters and how to take your workforce from good to great.

*Sources: Curt Coffman and The Coffman Organization, Quantum Workplace, Great Place to Work Institute, Human 1.0, FORTUNE, Dimensional Research, Zendesk, Tribal Leadership, Delivering Happiness.*

## ABOUT US

### A DIFFERENT KIND OF STAFFING FIRM

In 1994, we envisioned a company unique to the industry, one based on pride and purpose. We wanted Roth Staffing Companies, the parent company of Ultimate Staffing Services, to be an organization our business customers consistently raved about.

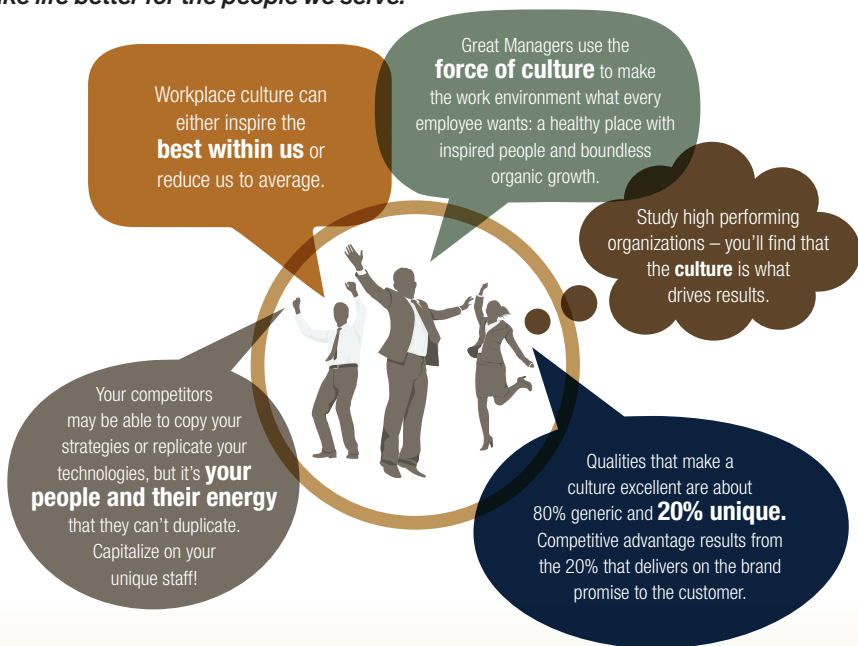
Ultimate Staffing Services currently operates in nearly every major metropolitan market nationwide. We also manage numerous on-site locations.

We are the only national company in the commercial staffing space that has been recognized with all four of the industry’s major awards for service excellence and coworker engagement.

As a business line of Roth Staffing Companies, L.P., we have received awards for quality and service excellence in alignment with the Malcolm Baldrige criteria and we remain the only staffing company to be ranked the #1 fastest-growing, privately-held company in the United States by *Inc.* magazine. We are consistently ranked as one of the largest, privately-held staffing companies in the nation.

### A FULL-SERVICE FIRM

- » Direct Hire Placements
- » Temporary-to-Hire
- » Temporary
- » On-Premise Management
- » Payrolling



*We love to create remarkable experiences... every person, every time.*<sup>®</sup>

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