

10 Elements of a Great Company Culture

Building a company culture of engaged employees takes years and requires **consistent execution**. I boiled down our culture strategy into 10 essential components I call the "10 Cs of Culture."

1. Core Values

I used to be very cynical about "core values." I thought these were just mottos written on plaques hanging on the wall. But when we implemented our values strategy at Beryl about 10 years ago, I began to see how they guided everyday decision-making and how employees referenced them in meetings. I came to realize they are **essential guideposts** when developed, communicated, and executed in a consistent manner. Values are those behaviors that will never change no matter how the company changes. Today, our values are not only painted on the walls, but also discussed from the first day an employee joins Beryl. We start every big meeting with a conversation about values and tell stories about how our coworkers live by those values on a daily basis.

2. Camaraderie

Camaraderie is about having **fun**. It's about getting to know colleagues not just as colleagues, but what they're like outside the office. To do that, Beryl hosts dress-up days, parties, games, and events all the time. We have annual traditions like family day, the Gong show, March Madness, the fall festival, and a holiday party. We include not only employees, but also their families. We publish a bi-monthly full-color magazine called Beryl Life that is sent to the homes of co-workers. Kids of our employees compete to design the t-shirt for our annual family day and families even participate in our talent show

3. Celebrations

You can't underestimate the importance of **recognizing your team**. While it may be important for your people to hear from the CEO, it also feels great for them to hear from peers. At Beryl, we developed a program we call PRIDE (Peers Recognizing Individual Deeds of Excellence). This allows coworkers to recognize others for living up to Beryl's core values. We also have quarterly contests for people who have received PRIDE certificates. We go out of our way to celebrate personal successes too, like baby showers, sports accomplishments, or educational milestones.

4. Community

Part of the fabric of a successful company culture is connecting with and giving back to the **local community**. Even though Beryl is a national company serving national customers, we have dedicated countless hours to community service in Bedford, Texas (where Beryl is based) to help those in need. This not only helps the organization's Beryl support, but brings great pride to staffers.

5. Communication

At Beryl, I encourage formal and informal **communication consistently** and at all levels of the company. I hold quarterly Town Hall meetings, which includes six meetings over two days. This is a challenge since Beryl is a 24-hour call center; we make money being on the phone, not off it. Yet I also have informal "chat and chews" where I bring in lunch for 12 to 15 people and just ask one question--How's it going?--to get the conversation started. I send a monthly personal letter to the staff with pictures of my family, and set up an internal website called "Ask Paul" for anyone that has a question not easy to share in a group.

6. Caring

Show your employees you genuinely care about them in the **totality of their lives**. To do this at Beryl, we set up a program called BerylCares. Any manager can explain a situation on an internal website that identifies a coworker, and lists what's going on (birth, death, injury, wedding, among other things). That submission generates an email to me that is my trigger to send a personal notecard, make a phone call, or visit someone in a hospital. We also provide behind-the-scenes financial help to people who need extra assistance.

7. Commitment to Learning

Show your employees you're committed to their professional growth. This can be done in small, incremental steps. You might set up a book club, say. But it can become more formal over time by subscribing to online **learning programs** or developing management training courses.

8. Consistency

Culture is based on traditions. When you come up with great programs or events, make them regular events and do them **consistently**. One-time efforts to improve the culture will feel disingenuous. This can take years, but makes a profound difference, that pays off when employees enjoy where they work and genuinely like their colleagues.

9. Connect

Don't isolate yourself at the top. Connect with people at all levels of your company. **Get out of your comfort zone**. At Beryl, I've starred in funny videos that put me in uncompromising or embarrassing positions. If the staff plans a dress-up day or ping-pong tournament, I participate. I laugh and cry with employees, too.

10. Chronicles

Does everyone in your organization know how the company started? Do they know the personal stories of the founders and what led them to build a sustainable business? People want to know they are part of something special and unique. Greet new employees by telling the **history** of the company, and impart stories that led to current culture and strategies.

Read more from Paul [here](#).