

# The Critical Importance of Vision Alignment in Your Church

## Does culture trump strategy?

Annette Franz, a Customer Experience executive, recently weighed in on the discussion with an interesting answer. Read on...

First, what is **culture**? I think Herb Kelleher, a man who knows a thing or two about culture, defines it best: "*Culture is what people do when no one is looking.*" Culture is the set of values and norms that guides how the business operates.

And, what is **strategy**? Basically, it's a plan or direction. It outlines how you are going to achieve the goals of the business. From BusinessDictionary.com: "*The overall scope and direction of a corporation and the way in which its various business operations work together to achieve particular goals.*"

I tend to view strategy and culture as two sides of the same coin. I think they need to go hand in hand; why should they compete?

Does one trump the other? No. Why? Because I think **vision and purpose are more important** and are the ones that do the trumping!

What is **vision**? According to BusinessDictionary.com: "*An aspirational description of what an organization would like to achieve or accomplish in the mid-term or long-term future. It is intended to serve as a clear guide for choosing current and future courses of action.*" I would add that it is not only aspirational but also inspirational.

What is **purpose**? It's your Why. It's the reason for being, the reason for doing.

Vision is where. Purpose is the why. Strategy is the how. And culture is the who and what. They're all important. Vision and strategy are set by the executives, but culture tends to be driven by the employees. Sure, executives need to support it, but this is where employees get to take over. Strategy is top-down, while culture tends to be bottom-up. Culture can't be shoved down your throat, where I think strategy can be. For better or worse.

*Vision without execution is hallucination.* -Thomas Edison

But...

*If you don't know where you are going, you'll end up someplace else.* -Yogi Berra

**I think both purpose and vision trump culture and strategy.** They are the north star. They guide you when you're lost. They point you in the right direction when competing ideas are spreading you too thin. Strategy comes out of the vision and the purpose. Culture ultimately does, too, because you're going to hire the right people and set the right stage to deliver on your

vision and your purpose. And when you've hired the right people - those who are [aligned with your vision](#) and your purpose -to do that, then they'll give their hearts and souls to make sure you succeed.

*Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality. -Warren Bennis*

Read more from Annette [here](#).