Cultural Web Tool

Peter Drucker is quoted as stating that 'culture eats strategy for breakfast.' That is because your team and organisational culture are key to the success of your innovation. How do you keep the entrepreneurial spirit as you grow and bring on new staff? How do you identify things that might have been helpful in your first stages of growth, but are now limiting you?

Gerry Johnson and Kevan Scholes developed a simple tool to help map and explore culture called the Cultural Web*. We have recreated this below, and suggest that to ensure your culture will support your scaling journey you carry out the following:

1 Go through each of the factors in the diagram below and iIdentify the most important stories, symbols, power structures, rituals, routines and control systems. Also assess your organisational structure for creeping hierarchies and silos. Finally write how you would describe the paradigm, or dominant world view in your organisation. Each person involved in the activity should do this by writing these on sticky notes and placing them around the relevant section in the tool.

2 Discuss in your team which of the factors you have identified are helpful for the next stage in your scale journey, and which might have a negative impact on your culture and your ability to scale.

3 Prioritise which of the factors require further attention. This might be aspects of your culture you want to keep and reinforce, or aspects you want change.

4 Plan tangible activities that will deliver the outcomes you are seeking to achieve for your culture.

*You can find out more about their tool in the book 'Fundamentals of strategy', G. Johnson, R. Whittington, and K. Scholes. Published by Pearson Education, 2012.

Cultural Web

5 CONTROL SYSTEMS

How autonomous are staff in decision-making?

3 POWER STRUCTURES

How is formal and informal power structured in the organisation?

6 RITUALS AND ROUTINES

What rituals and routines have been developed? Are they still working for their intended purposes?

1 STORIES

What are the prevalent stories that are told in your organisation, and what does it say about you?

2 SYMBOLS

What are the status symbols, or other symbols of what is important and what conveys inclusion and power?

7 PARADIGM

How would you describe the dominant world view in the organisation, is it diverse or mono-chromatic?

4 ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Have you already started to create hierarchies? Are there silos developing?