

Startups are a breed of their own. They engage their employees with a sense of possibility, and hope that in turn the company will reap the benefits of the hard work put in by their team members.

Typically, the culture is one of long hours and hard work, balanced by the lure of fun perks. Companies can offer free dinners, air hockey tables, video games, and creative decor. These benefits reinforce a sense of pride in the company brand, sparking creativity and the next best idea.

Recently, we've been contacted by a number of our clients who are struggling with questions about creating culture. How they can build and maintain a startup culture of their own? What can their company do to stand out from the pack? Outside of the "Valley-esque" perception of swag, fun events, and "walking the talk," what can you do?

This survey may be a few years old, but the insights remain true: employees value transparency and communication.

7 Vital Trends Disrupting Today's Workplace



Transparency is the #1 factor

contributing to employee happiness. Management transparency had a correlation coefficient of 0.94 with employee happiness.



36% of employee responses gave peer-to-peer recognition

proving that a lightweight, frequent system boosts intra-organization recognition.



Nearly 1 in 5 responses included a suggestion

putting organizations that don't promote employee suggestions at an innovation disadvantage.



Team play and collaboration

rank as the top traits employees love about their co-workers.

300+

global organizations

&

over 40,000

anonymous survey responses

42% of employees



know their organization's vision, mission, and cultural values. An alarmingly low number.

Employee happiness



depends more on co-workers supervisors

The correlation between employee happiness and their rating of co-workers was 23% higher than between happiness and rating of their direct supervisor.

82% of respondents



say that their manager has clearly outlined their role and responsibilities.

Source: TINYpulse.com Engagement Survey. © 2013

Here, we've listed three ways that you can build and maintain culture, retain employees, and become an employer of choice among startups.

Know Your Why

"People don't buy *what* you do, they buy *why* you do it."

Simon Sinek's TED talk "[Start With Why](#)" focuses on the importance of *why*. A leader who knows both their own purpose and the company's is better able to engage their team at a

personal and professional level.

The “why” allows employees to connect with the work they are doing. It helps people find greater meaning and purpose in their day-to-day. This deeper sense of purpose allows a greater sense of worth and belonging, both of which are key satisfaction indicators.

Communicate Change

Transparency leads to trust, and trust leads to sense of belonging. Open communication creates a deeper understanding of how an individual employee contributes to the company’s overall goals. When employees understand required changes, they feel more ownership and a greater sense of pride in their work.

Build A Brand That Resonates

Employees want to feel pride in the company that they work for, and to share the great things they’re working on with their friends and family. When you truly believe in the work that you’re doing, you feel a deeper sense of belonging. Bonus: when your team feels engaged with the mission and knows that their contributions matter, they tend to stick around.

It takes careful thought to build a strong startup culture. If you need helping getting started, feel free to [get in touch!](#)

