

Culture assessment must precede change projects

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Identifying what an organisation's culture currently looks like is a critical step before actually shifting it, leadership and culture expert **Fiona Robertson** says in her new book [Rules of Belonging](#).

She says workplace culture can be divided into 10 main dimensions, and she shares a [DIY culture diagnostic tool](#) that HR practitioners can use to measure:

- Candour – the extent to which we say what we really think;
- Internal/external focus – the extent to which the focus is on pleasing the boss and colleagues versus external customers;
- Collaboration – the extent to which work is done primarily by individuals versus groups;
- Autonomy/initiative – the extent to which tasks are self-directed versus directed from above;
- Mistake tolerance – the extent to which mistakes are avoided or welcomed and learnt from;
- Time horizon – the extent to which short, medium or long-term thinking and planning is prioritised;
- Task/people orientation – the extent to which getting things done versus the people who do them are valued;
- Concentration of power – the extent to which the authority to make decisions and control the allocation of resources is centralised or decentralised;
- Innovation – the extent to which tried-and-tested solutions is favoured versus continually looking for new ways to do things; and
- Control/flexibility – the extent to which agreed processes and procedures are followed.

The data from the diagnostic can then be used to conduct a culture shift analysis by considering the following questions for each of the dimensions:

1. "Does our current setting on this dimension help or hinder us to successfully execute our strategy?"
2. What shift, if any, would be better?
3. How large is the shift needed?
4. How impactful would that shift be in accelerating the successful execution of our strategy?
5. How quickly would that shift make a positive difference?

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