

Subscribe to our newsletter

By subscribing, you agree with Revue's Terms of Service and Privacy Policy and understand that Transforming Talent Insights will receive your email address.

Your email address...

Subscribe now

Jun 27, 2019 Issue #35 Your Culture-Fit Pants Are Too Tight

View online



Elizabeth M. Lembke - Chief Talent Navigator (HR Consultant) @elizabethlembke

Around five years ago, there was a big buzz in companies in regards to hiring for "culture fit". The thought was, that folks hired, would be able to seamlessly adjust into the company without causing a lot of adjustment waves because they would just "get it". They would inherently vibe with the norms, rituals, decision making processes and social ways of working. The easy fit hire would enable teams to get up to speed and productivity quickly in comparison to the hire of a person lacking the "culture fit". Those lacking in culture-fit would cause friction and would a) either need more time / energy to assimilate or b) the group would have to accommodate an individual. If this integration process was unsuccessful, either the team would sink in the quagmire of conflict or turnover would happen, thereby increasing costs-of-hire and frustration for all parties involved.

Therefore, "hire for culture fit" was considered a win-win all around.

There were some drawbacks though. One challenge was that everyone was measuring it differently - some around values, some around behaviour, some around practices, background, some around "would I want to go out for a beer with them?" So false assumptions abounded. But what really caused the downfall, was that promoting the idea of teams reminiscent of Stepford Wives, are not the ideal neighbourhood for fostering creativity or diversity in viewpoints. Lars Schmidt, Founder Amplify, reflected the criticism well when he said:

"Culture fit has become a weaponized phrase that interviewers use as a blanket term to reject candidates that don't match the hiring manager's view of the ideal candidate; and as such, it has become the embodiment of unconscious bias."

"The implicit message these self-reinforcing cultures send is that if you don't fit, if you don't think like us or at least pretend to be on board, you might as well leave because, otherwise, life will be very uncomfortable" writes Jon Bischke, CEO of Entelo. Or like Emily Chang calls it the Brotopia.

So the conversation has been adjusted to "culture add". Jodi Ordioni, Chief Brand Officer Brandemix says "when you consider if a candidate is a "culture add" then you are looking for candidates to bring in new ideas, a different point-of-view, and bringing out different traits in others in a collaborative, positive way. Ideally, this person will fill in what you might be missing to give you that competitive edge for your products or services."

Is this where the conversation ends? Not in my opinion. I believe that the conversations and decisions ought to be centered around "value fit, culture add, and impact apparent."

Meaning that in a principle-based based organization, I believe that at the core of talent hires/promotions/side moves/team constellation decisions the following ought to take center-stage:

- Value-Fit: the espoused and lived values resonate between the parties,
- Culture-Add: diversity in thought and approach for constructive collaboration,
- Impact-Apparent: the "why, what for and how one can inherently grow"

In my opinion, this is the best way to bust out of those too tight pants.

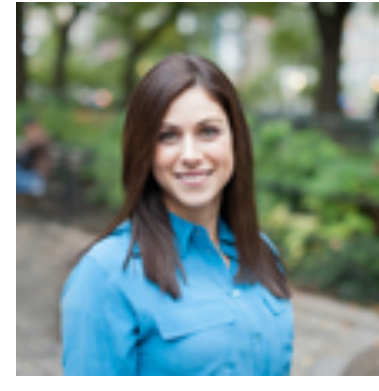


Adding the pizzazz

Culture Fit? Let Loose in the Middle

21st Century HR: Ep4: The End Of Culture Fit

A podcast, in which the aforementioned Lars talks to Dashlane Chief People Officer Ciara Lakhani about "culture fit", building inclusive companies, and why startups struggle with diversity.



(In essence, it is preface to the following links of this post.)

21stcenturyhr.fireside.fm



The Case Against Hiring for Culture Fit Jon-Mark Sabel

In a good blog post, Jon-Mark tackles the questions:

- Where did the notion of "cultural fit" come from?
- When did "cultural fit" become "cultural snobbery"?
- How can you reframe company culture in a way that increases productivity and fosters innovation?

www.hirevue.com

Value Diversity? Stop Hiring for Culture Fit - Astrid Andrea Martinez

In a more-personal account type of article, Astrid goes into the what it feels and looks like, if you are different than the cultural norms. This is helpful for those who struggle with the question "but what is the problem?"



medium.com

Got your Values Tie On? Add a bit of Pizzazz



Adam Grant: Hire for Culture Fit or Add?

At a talk for Start-ups held at Stanford, Prof Adam Grant goes into research showing how firms that hire candidates based on how well they will fit into the company's culture actually perform. "At the early start - great, after going public - dangerous." It is a short talk around the value of "cultural contribution".

www.youtube.com

Values at Work: The Impact of Personal Values in Organisations - Sharon Arieli, Lilach Sagiv & Sonia Roccas

This applied psych report is included for nerdy-types like me who like to see how values play out at work, in the choices we make, and what triggers a reaction when the values are challenged.



onlinelibrary.wiley.com

Impact Comes from Plurality of Thought

Culture Fit vs. Authenticity: When Being Yourself Collides with Organizational Values David Livermore

How do we give people the safety to be themselves while also expecting flexibility as a "team player"? And when are an organization's values unifying and when do they squelch diversity and innovation? This is a good discussion basis for how we as organizational leaders can better foster more inclusive environments that encourage diversity of thought and just ask for better code-switching capabilities.

culturalq.com



Diversity's new frontier Diversity of thought and the future of the workforce

"Advances in neurological research can help organizations operationalize diversity of thought and eventually change how they define and harness human capital." Well, okay then!

This report is a good summary for anyone looking for better arguments around the "why should we". It is good for anyone trying to get away from the zoo animal type of D&I KPI's (major nod to my friend Balazs Paroczay (@TheBalazs)) to the better discussion of fostering constructive discourse.

www2.deloitte.com

Question: How do you currently work with Value-Fit, Culture-Add, and Impact Apparent?

After attending last week's HRD Summit in Amsterdam as a special guest and hearing some dismaying statements around what culture and diversity are, I was encouraged to dedicate this edition to hopefully improve the conversation and thoughts. I am, of course, very curious to hear yours!

If this is something that you and your organization are looking to change in terms of approach, just let me know and we can determine what could be right for your organization and team.

Until next time, wishing you all my very best regards,

Liz

Did you enjoy this issue? Yes No



Elizabeth M. Lembke - Chief Talent Navigator (HR Consultant) @elizabethlembke

Feeding the Passion for Transformation: Be it Talent, Culture, Work or HR

In order to unsubscribe, click here.

If you were forwarded this newsletter and you like it, you can subscribe here.

Created with Revue by Twitter.

Elizabeth Lembke, Transforming Talent Consulting: www.transformingtalent.co and www.transformingtalent.de

Subscribe to our newsletter

By subscribing, you agree with Revue's Terms of Service and Privacy Policy and understand that Transforming Talent Insights will receive your email address.

Your email address...

Subscribe now