

CULTURE

Listening and Activation Framework (CALF)

How leaders respond to the truth of a diagnosis is where culture is truly shaped.

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**AUTHENTIC
ORGANISATIONS**

Helping you to be your best self

*The moment
most culture
frameworks
skip.*

The diagnostic told the truth.

The leader looked away.

*The intervention landed on
nothing.*

The Culture Problem Nobody Names

01

The diagnostic told the truth.

Organisations invest in culture research. The findings resonate. They name what everyone already felt but could never say.

02

The leader looked away.

In the space between revelation and response, leaders encounter what their culture actually is — and decide, consciously or not, what to do with it. This is where most culture work dies.

03

The intervention landed on nothing.

Without working through leadership response, even the best activation runs on unstable ground. Values on walls. Behaviours without ownership. Change without root.

The Framework: Three Sequential Processes

Culture work moves from truth outward — through listening, through response, through activation.

LISTEN

The Diagnostic

*What is the organisation actually experiencing?
Not what it says — what it lives.*

Listening sessions, leadership interviews, and stakeholder conversations surface the power dynamics, identity negotiations, and the gap between espoused values and daily decisions. Behavioural science applied to root causes — not themes.

The diagnostic holds up a mirror. What leaders do next is the work.

RESPOND

Leadership Response Mapping

How leaders engage with what the diagnostic reveals is where culture is truly shaped — or lost.

Four archetypes — the Exit, the Pragmatist, the Lone Wolf, the Rebuilder — map recognisable patterns of defensive and generative response. Understanding the archetype determines what activation must address first.

No other approach names this moment. It is where most culture work dies.

ACTIVATE

Social Compact, Behaviours & Capability

How do values become commitments? What do we owe each other — and how will we know?

Values contextualised in each team's own language. A witnessed social compact between leadership and people. A behaviour framework that makes the compact holdable. The Culture Playbook sustains it when we leave.

Not a values launch. A mutual agreement — specific, witnessed, reviewed.

RESPOND — The Leadership Response Archetypes

How leaders engage with what the diagnostic reveals is where culture is truly shaped — or lost.

E

The Exit

When the Mirror Is Too Much

The leader buries the findings. In contexts where external moral authority has already eroded, this silence confirms that speaking up changes nothing. The organisation forfeits its moral authority with its own people.

Activation:

Build psychological safety with the leader first. The compact cannot be made until the leader can face the mirror.

P

The Pragmatist

Learning in Layers

Defaults to structural fixes. Single-loop learning — tactics change, governing assumptions do not. In African contexts, people read the gap between espoused values and enacted decisions immediately and adjust accordingly.

Activation:

Sequence structural and relational work deliberately. The shift from compliance to conviction must be named before it can happen.

L

The Lone Wolf

Doing It Alone, and the Cost

Acts without distributed ownership. A facade of conformity consolidates — people perform alignment while privately disengaged. Culture cannot be owned by one person. It lives in relationship or it does not live.

Activation:

Build collective accountability from day one. The social compact requires witnesses, not just signatories.

R

The Rebuilder

Holding the Work in Progress

Looks and acts — consistently, visibly, over time. Makes decisions that are costly to self in order to honour the compact. These moments are noticed, narrated, and become the organisation's own evidence of its integrity.

Activation:

Formalise and amplify. The compact is kept alive through review, story, and the willingness to name both what was honoured and what was not.

ACTIVATE — From Truth to Social Compact

“Values are not content to be communicated. They are commitments to be kept — specific, witnessed, and tested against the hardest decisions, not the easiest ones.”

Values Contextualisation

Each value translated into the specific language and reality of each division, team or department — what ‘integrity’ demands in this team, in this sector, with these power dynamics

The gap between compliance and conviction is named explicitly: are we performing this value or do we actually hold it?

Values-to-behaviour mapping: what observable decisions demonstrate each value when it is costly to do so

The Social Compact

A witnessed agreement in front of peers specifies commitments, like ‘We will share diagnostic findings with our full team within 30 days.’ In contrast, vague statements like ‘We value transparency’ are not commitments.

Three components: what leadership commits to do; what the organisation commits to provide; what is expected in return. Reciprocal, not cascaded

Reviewed at six months. The same leaders return and name what was honoured, what was broken, and what the gap reveals about where power still overrides values

Capability & Culture Playbook

Leadership behaviour framework: what each value looks like in practice at senior, people manager, and team member level — grounded in the diagnostic, not imported from elsewhere

People manager capability: the coaching language and embedded routines that make the compact visible in daily work, not reserved for review cycles

The Culture Playbook holds the compact. A standing question in every leadership meeting: what have we done this month that contradicts what we said we stand for?

“

*Diagnostics are not the culture
change.
They are an invitation.*

*The real question is:
who will lead differently, now
that the truth has been seen?*

*— Dr Ruwayne Kock
Founder & CEO, Authentic Organisations*

Why Authentic Organisations?

Grounded in African practice, not imported theory

Our approach is built on decades of culture work across South Africa and the African continent. Ubuntu is not decoration. It is the epistemological foundation — the understanding that the community's health is the measure of leadership.

Qualitative diagnostics that reach root causes

We do not report themes. We apply behavioural science and work psychology to name the identity, relational, and systemic dynamics that surfaced. That is what makes activation possible.

We work across the full system

From diagnostic to values activation to the Culture Playbook. We do not hand you a framework and leave. The measure of success is that you no longer need us in the room.

Contact us

AO has developed leaders and cultures across the continent, in organisations, universities, and the public sector, grounded in African humanist values and decades of rigorous applied practice.

Consulting • Coaching • Development

Start the conversation.

A 30-minute diagnostic call. No commitment.

We listen to where you are, share what we see, and explore what culture renewal could look like.

Book an appointment with Dr Ruwayne Kock

[30-minute Diagnostic Call](#)

Email us at:

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