



The challenges of maintaining a company culture in a growing business

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A company's culture is critical to its success – it can be what sets them apart from their competitors and can be a huge contributing factor to attracting and retaining talent. It's also something that millennials and Generation Z (our future leaders) are particularly interested in when exploring job opportunities with a new company.

Fundamentally our culture is about putting employees at the heart of everything we do. As we grow, we must consciously and actively monitor and review our approach so that we're ready to flex and adapt to maintain our company culture.

Whilst we are by no means experts on this topic, this article aims to discuss some of the challenges companies may face and to give examples of some of the ways we are overcoming these challenges.

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How does company growth affect its culture?

As a company grows – particularly during times of fast growth – it can become difficult to maintain the company culture and it is unreasonable to believe that a company's culture will not evolve as it grows.

A constant stream of new people can make the office seem like an unfamiliar place for longer-term employees who find themselves constantly meeting new colleagues. What once felt like a small family community, can suddenly seem quite strange, especially if new employees operate in a counter cultural way.

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Therefore, firms must plan for how they will continue to find people who are the 'right' cultural fit in terms of company culture during the recruitment process, as well as reinforcing their values during the company induction.

Office space can be a real issue, especially for organisations who downsized their office space during the pandemic, but who are now experiencing a high volume of growth.

Office space is the hub for the firm, enabling collaboration and interaction, however the manner in which offices are being used post pandemic is changing. The facilities must enable more frequent time spent working from the office with quiet space to conduct video calls to clients or colleagues working from their homes.

"Office space is the hub for the firm, enabling collaboration and interaction..."

Facilitating collaboration with growing teams who may not be close in proximity or know each other very well

well can be challenging. Clear communications and cultural cohesion is key.

How are we overcoming these challenges at Be UK?

There are of course a wide variety of initiatives and activities that can be done to overcome these challenges and this will likely vary by organisation. Below are some examples of how we're actively working to maintain our company culture as we grow.

Hiring the 'right' people

For us in particular, we place a lot of importance on hiring the 'right' people – i.e. not only self-starters, team players and subject-matter experts – but assessing whether or not someone is the right cultural fit for us.

"...we place a lot of importance on hiring the 'right' people..."





Being a part of the Be UK family

From day one, we like to make each new joiner feel welcome and part of the 'Be UK family'.

Each new joiner has an induction on their first day, where they're given information about our company benefits, values, learning and development, internal initiatives, etc. They are also introduced to their team and taken out for lunch.

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We assign each new joiner with a 'buddy' who is there to help them settle in, answer any questions they may have and to generally be a friendly face within the company.

Each consultant has a development triangle, made up of a coach and an engagement manager, who are responsible for supporting them with their learning and development goals, as well as providing pastoral care.

This is reflected throughout our recruitment process, with a multi stage approach to robustly test all aspects of a candidates experience, with our CEO meeting every single person at the final stage.

By hiring the right people and taking our time over the hiring decisions we make, we ensure that our new joiners embody the aspects of our culture which are most important to hold on to as we grow.

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The coach and engagement manager communicate regularly with each other to focus on the consultant's specific development needs, and therefore helps to ensure they're providing the best possible support to each consultant.

A friendly, accessible and approachable leadership team

We take pride in having an accessible, friendly and approachable leadership team, who are committed to the principles of servant leadership and reinforce these behaviours in everything they do.

A particularly important aspect of this is that we continue to recruit managers who share our values and commitment to people and culture.

We also have an open door policy and our employees are encouraged to get to know the partners. We run weekly 'partner chats', where employees have the opportunity to have an informal chat with colleagues and a partner, which is a great way for them to meet colleagues they may not have met and get to know each partner.



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A collaborative environment with transparent communication

We have a weekly 'huddle' each Friday, where everyone joins a Teams call and we discuss key company updates, including business development,



wellbeing, CSR, ED&I, birthdays, **Be UK** anniversaries, any shout outs – i.e. if an employee has done a great job and / or received excellent feedback from a client – it's a great way to get everyone together (albeit virtually), communicate key company updates and celebrate successes.



Each team has weekly calls, where they discuss things like key business development updates and news within their industry. These calls are a great way to bond and share knowledge and collaborate with their team members, as well as keep up-to-date with what they're all working on.

Having fun and looking after our people

We host monthly "Thirsty Thursday" drinks as a great way to socialise with colleagues after work.

We have bought a Nintendo Switch for the office, which can be a great way to encourage team building and generate a bit of friendly competition.

We also host quarterly training and development afternoons followed by a social event – these are an excellent way for colleagues to learn and network during the day, and to have fun and get to know their colleagues out of the office.



We have also created a variety of clubs and societies including: wellbeing, CSR, ED&I, social, tennis, football, golf and book club, which enable our employees to play a part in driving our company culture, to celebrate diversity and to get to know their colleagues outside of their day-to-day teams.

We're investing in our employee wellbeing through a variety of initiatives and activities – including hiring smoothie bikes during World Wellbeing Week and providing healthy snacks, such as fruit, cereal and milk alternatives.



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Companies need to invest time and money in developing, maintaining and policing their company culture, as without this they can become a soul-less company, which can make it difficult to attract and retain great people.

Whilst companies will want to avoid becoming overall bureaucratic, people policies and practices are essential and underpin all of the above – guidelines and training must be in place to ensure consistency and to maintain quality.

| In summary

As a company grows, it is naïve to think that its culture will not change, however, a management team that is motivated to focus on maintaining the key aspects of their culture is critical.

A greater focus on communication and collaboration is key to ensuring employees continue to feel connected to the company; they want to be kept up-to-date and be able to communicate and interact with their colleagues – effective and timely communications, as well as opportunities to socialise and engage with each other are therefore vital.

Collaborating with team members is also hugely important and can help employees feel part of a team and feel their opinions and input are valued.

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About us

Be | Shaping the Future UK (**Be UK**) is a subsidiary of Be | Shaping the Future, a well-established management and technology consultancy with over 1,800 consultants located across 12 European countries.

We work with the leading financial services organisations to shape their future through our transformation consultancy and advisory services, covering the following sectors:

- Cards and payments
- Retail and commercial banking
- Capital markets
- Finance
- Risk, regulatory and compliance

We take pride in building relationships with our clients and we work collaboratively to drive change for a bigger and better future.

Contact

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CEO



Chris joined **Be UK** in 2019 with a vision to position it for growth.

He has over 20 years of financial services management advisory and delivery experience, having worked across a variety of markets, including: risk, finance, capital markets and regulatory change.

Throughout his career, Chris has led a variety of large-scale projects, with a strong track-record of delivering operational risk strategies, operating model efficiencies, regulatory compliance and cost savings. In the latter part of his career, he has focused on growing high-quality management consulting businesses.

Chris is a true believer of servant leadership and is passionate about looking after **Be UK's** employees, ensuring they have all the tools, resources, training, development and support they need to succeed and thus deliver great service to our clients.

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