

Courageous Leaders

E-WORKBOOK SERIES

Easily Applied
Culture Shifts
in 5-minutes



SIX SIGNS You Are A Great Leader

by Shelley D. Smith

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**Easily Applied
Culture Shifts
in 5-minutes**

Each workbook provides courageous corporate leaders with easily applied actions that create intentional shifts in culture... in the literal pockets of time leaders can find each day. As a corporate culture expert, I have stood beside thousands of corporate leaders as they dared to shift their corporate culture into something that not only made them proud, but also more profitable, more peaceful and more attractive to potential employees and / or shareholders. This work — for me — began way before the term “culture” was a popular phrase in leadership, continued through the “dark ages” when many HR positions and functions went on the chopping block of the 2007-2008 recession, and persists to this day. Over the years, I have learned that culture-changing leaders must embrace the following:

- ✓ Real time course corrections -- that make a real-world difference in your workplace culture— are possible and gain impact and momentum over time.
- ✓ Corporate cultures are not built in a day; they are built every day.
- ✓ Recognizing and re-mediating common warning signs in your culture is key to avoiding big, embarrassing and costly situations. (You can download my “yellow flag” list now, right [here](#).)
- ✓ Without a “point person” who makes it their mission to assess, remediate and direct company culture, culture is left to develop on its own. This is why each of our Culture Curator member companies FIRST identify the “culture curator” within their organization. (Click Here for More on, [“What IS a Culture Curator?”](#) if you’d like to know what goes into embracing or assigning this important role in your company.)

There are many ways to continue this conversation beyond the workbook or bundle you just purchased.

LEARN MORE

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CAUTION CAUTION

12 CAUTIONS

“Yellow Signals” that your Workplace Culture is Shifting into the “Red”

By Shelley Smith

YELLOW LIGHT CAUTION ITEMS

1. Complaints about communication

1. lack of
2. too much - too fast - too many changes – waste of time
3. saying one thing and doing another
4. unclear priorities
5. lower participation on calls and idea sharing or feedback
6. team turns into ‘yes’ followers, instead of their usual two-way conversations
7. strained interactions between managers and team members

2. Gossiping behaviors

1. confusion about what is going on - what the direction is amongst employees
2. employee relations issues on the rise
3. stress comments increase
4. anxiety comments increase
5. working more hours - less work / life balance comments and concerns arise
6. comments around burnt out become a norm
7. different employees receiving different messages
8. constant “off-hours” communication is happening

3. Business growth slows when competition is still growing

4. Rapid employee turnover

1. comments are made by yourself or other leaders “they are lucky to have a job” positions become harder to fill – longer to fill

5. Glass door negative reviews on the incline

6. You have a gut feeling the shift is happening and it doesn't feel right

7. Unrealistic deadlines and work load – shifts and changes

8. Comments that the team is lazy, unproductive or unresponsive

9. Resentment is building up

10. Accountability is sliding and becoming even more difficult than in the past

11. Appreciation and rewards are being missed or forgone

12. Emotional intelligence has gone out the door, especially with empathy

12 CAUTIONS

What makes a great leader?

This is one question that we have all reflected on at some point in our careers. There are many potential answers to this question, and some common traits that appear time and time again include confidence, competence, charisma, etc.

Though these are helpful traits for leaders to have, there are many others that great leaders display. I want to share with you six signs of a great leader that are not as obvious as others. Remember that leadership is not about having a title. It is something that you see and feel when people begin to follow you or others.

Here are the six signs YOU are the courageous leader your culture needs:

1. Become More Curious

Curiosity is something we associate with children, so why is it a sign of a great leader? Well, great leaders drive innovation, and being curious is definitely required for forward-thinking. Curiosity inspires you to tune into your environment so that you can ask different questions on how to motivate people as well as find new solutions to old problems.

Let's take the example of an employee who does the bare minimum. Without curiosity, a leader may place that person on a PIP (performance improvement plan). But with curiosity, a leader may try a different approach. They could look at what drives them from a behavioral standpoint. Is this employee's current role as a behavioral fit? If not, would they be better suited in a different role? Could this employee's manager be responsible for their poor work performance? Do they both need a coaching session to help them build on their strengths and learn how to gracefully pivot when other opportunities arise? Or is this person a poor fit for their current team? If so, then it's time to move them to another team. If you recall, in the past I've said that people don't leave organizations and they don't leave managers. They leave teams.

2. Know Your People Better

You need to know the people that work for you, their strengths and weaknesses, and their goals and aspirations. I really want you to focus on their strengths and those things that already exist. In the 2019 CEO Benchmarking Report, 37 percent of the CEOs polled said that finding the right talent is one of the biggest challenges they face. Only 28 percent of them said that building better operational processes and aligning employees to their strategies were the biggest challenges.

Here is some advice when it comes to finding the right talent and strategy. You need to make sure that you design the talent around the people and not the other way around. You have to make sure that they are aligned with your business strategies. As you begin to mold the culture, you have to select an organizational model that works best for the culture you're looking to create and for the people you are hiring. You should also create a strategic plan with core values that actually promote the needed behaviors in your people. Then you complete the talent mapping exercise to make sure that you have ongoing feedback that enables you to continue that momentum and build the strength of your team.

3. Develop Self-awareness

This is a huge one. We have to first understand ourselves, why we do what we do, and our motivations. We must understand our strengths as well as our blind spots so that we can push ourselves, stay aligned with what we love to do, and also find people who can help us become stronger. This helps us naturally pivot ourselves to serve the needs of others with intention.

4. Pursue Success; Ask for Help

You shouldn't be afraid to get it wrong. Don't be afraid to pursue success by asking others for help. Don't be afraid to pursue your vision and the success and the failure that comes with that. If we try to avoid failure, we never get the opportunity to learn our lessons, and if we never learn our lessons, then we'll keep going into things blindly. This hinders us from stopping to reflect on what it is that we need to start doing, stop doing, and keep doing. Failure does have many benefits.

You have to learn to lean into your fear and turn it into something that thrusts you forward. This will help you look at and experience things differently, thus allowing you to have more creativity and embrace your inner curiosity. It also brings out the creativity and curiosity in those around you.

5. Demonstrate Integrity

Integrity is about doing the right thing, being honest, holding yourself accountable for your actions, and admitting when you're off-track. Having curiosity and demonstrating integrity builds trust across all levels inside your organization, and leading with integrity also gives you an edge when it comes to managing change. When employees trust that you're leading with integrity and you have their best interests in mind, they won't fear the change as much because they know you're going to be open with your information every step along the way.

6. See The Big Picture

Leaders who see the big picture are responsible for developing the organization's mission, vision, values, and goals. They can turn those goals into your goals by allowing you to take that big vision and encouraging or mentoring you to make those goals your own. A great leader helps you understand what's in it for you, and as you begin to own it, that's when their original goals come to fruition.

Knowing what it takes to be a great leader can help you align your culture every day so that you can de-stress your environment, have fun, prevent your team from burning out, and ensure purposeful experiences within your organization. Culture matters start with people, so enjoy the teamwork and collaboration around you, especially the ones you don't see or recognize.

Courageous Leader Actions

Curiosity

1. Are you showing up curious now? YES or NO
 1. How?
 2. When?
 3. Why?
2. How can you be more curious?
 1. How will this benefit me and the team?
 2. How will I know it is working?

Knowing Your Team

1) How well do you know your team members?

- 1. Make a list of their names, what you know personally, professionally, their hopes, their dreams, their strengths, their interests, their passions, their direction, what they need most and least from you, etc. What stresses them out?

Name	Know	Don't Know but should

Self-awareness

1. My behavioral strengths are? Or I am not sure take a 5 minute [behavioral assessment](#) now.
2. My passions
3. My perfect day
4. List examples of how you pivot out of your own needs into others

What I got wrong

1. When is the last time you asked for help?
 1. What was it?
 2. Why did you ask?
 3. How did that feel?
 4. What was the outcome?
 5. What did I learn?
2. When was the last time I got something wrong or it didn't go the way I expected?
 1. What was it?
 2. What went sideways?
 3. What did I learn?
 4. What did I share with others?

Integrity

1. What was the last thing I stood up for inside of my team/company?
 1. What happened?
 2. Who was involved?
 3. Did standing up end in a better outcome?
 4. Would you do it again?
 5. What else should you 'stand up' for?
 6. Have you helped others 'stand up'?

Big Picture

1. Alignment
 1. Review your mission, vision, values, culture statements – underline the action words
 1. Are they aligned
 2. How do they show up in yourself, your team, your company
 3. Are your team the same questions
 4. Make a list of alignment vs misalignment
 5. Plan a course of action self and team, keep it simple

Audio Inspiration

Listen



Why should you join the club?

That answer is simple if you have undesired turnover, or trying to attract and retain the best talent through a shared purpose. Are you trying to unite employees with clear and differentiated values, behaviors and actions? What about accountability and trust; are those defined and solid in your company? It doesn't matter if you are the founder, a part of the C-suite, executive team, or somewhere in the middle or beginning - what does matter is your culture and you know it or you wouldn't have landed on this page. This can be you or you can designate a proxy, a champion thus the Curator.

There are many ways to get started - becoming a member is one of them.

So, Welcome To The Club

Benefit #1 Culture Curator Constant

You know that culture isn't built in a day. It's built every day. So as much as I love my time on site with you guys and as valuable as that time is, the benefit it will be greatly expanded by the consistent focus that culture curator membership gives. The first corporate membership of its kind, Culture Curators in Conversation Membership delivers:

- ◆ **CULTURE CHALLENGES:** On the first Monday (non-holiday) of each month I will ask you — or your appointed culture curator — a question, give them a challenge to focus on. We will make it applicable – it will be a brief challenge that they will work on for 2 weeks.

Over the course of a year, these challenges add up to a full and evolving Culture Playbook, which can be used to further evolve your culture, attract top talent and even market your company for increased market share.

- ◆ **DIRECT FEEDBACK:** The first Monday of week 3, members will email me a summary from that month's challenge. Based on the summary they provide, I will email back or we will hop on a call because it is just that important to talk through, walk through, action through, applicability through next steps.
- ◆ **UNBIASED SUPPORT:** Remember working with me as your unbiased person, your unbiased lens to keep you and your proxies focused on those things important inside of your culture.
- ◆ **CONSISTENT SHIFTS CULTURE:** We will work together to ensure we are inching your culture goals forward month by month and also.... aren't allowing moles hills to grow into mountains.
- ◆ **ANNUAL VALUE:** Culture Playbook - defining what RIGHT looks like, sounds like, shows up like. Behavior alignment to your Mission, Vision, Value and Culture Statements. Alignment from job creation, attracting, interviewing, hiring, on-boarding, training development, continued succession planning and more.

A portrait of Shelley D. Smith, a woman with blonde, wavy hair and blue eyes, smiling. She is wearing a dark blue blazer. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with green foliage on the left and a brick wall on the right. There is a small, empty rectangular box in the upper right corner of the image.

Shelley D. Smith is a best-selling author, consultant, and Founder & CEO of Premier Rapport consulting firm. Her experience over the past 35+ years has earned her a reputation as the Creator of the Culture Inquiry in businesses all along the east coast, and beyond. Her success stems from the strength of her personal approach, asking tough questions to hone in on pain points and areas of growth opportunity.

A highly-sought after speaker and business culture inquiry consultant, Shelley asks tough questions to hone in on pain points and areas of opportunity for companies to grow. The most recent of her five published books, titled *How to Avoid Culture Big Fat Failures (BFF)*, has rattled and disrupted corporate America in a highly effective manner.

Her culture approach includes four phases: inquiry, analysis, creation, and curation. Numerous C-suite executives have tapped Shelley for her sharp insight and professional recommendations to shape the culture they've envisioned, increase profitability, decrease employee turnover, and retain top talent. Companies of all sizes are taking note of Shelley's ability to put out fires as well as cultivate a company culture which is more fire-resistant moving forward.

The Premier Rapport consulting firm delivers authentic, focused, actionable, and measurable results in a timely fashion, with an emphasis on long-term solutions. Find Shelley's advice and wisdom in various publications, podcasts, DisruptHR events, SHRM events, and culture conferences, as well as her blog.

Systems include: [ACC](#), [IMPACT](#), EEM, [AoWC](#), ROI Calculator, [Curator Certification](#)