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Business Management

Convergence Matters

When employees' views of the culture align, engagement and customer orientation benefit. by Boris Groysberg, Jeremiah Lee, Jesse Price, and J. Yo-Jud Cheng

From the Magazine (January–February 2018)



Spotlight Series / **The Culture Factor**

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Summary. High levels of employee engagement and customer orientation correlate with closely aligned views among employees regarding which cultural characteristics are salient in the company.



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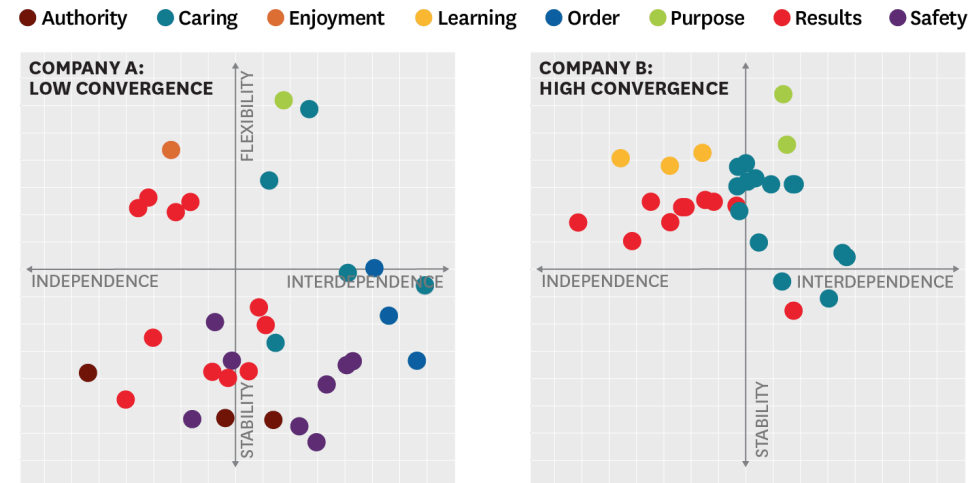


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When we compared employees' views on their organization's most salient cultural attributes, two types of organizations emerged: *low convergence* (employees rarely agreed on the most important cultural attributes) and *high convergence* (views were more closely aligned). In the two examples below, each dot represents one employee.



FROM "CONVERGENCE MATTERS," BY BORIS GROYSBERG, JEREMIAH LEE, JESSE PRICE, AND J. YO-JUD CHENG, JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2018

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Note that in the low-convergence organization, seven of the eight cultural attributes were cited as most important, and every quadrant is represented. That means employees viewed their company in varying and often opposite ways. Some saw a *caring* organization, for example, while others saw one that emphasized *authority*.

Why is high convergence important? Because it correlates with levels of employee engagement and customer orientation. However, if the culture you have is not the one you want, high convergence will make it harder to change.

A version of this article appeared in the [January–February 2018](#) issue of *Harvard Business Review*.

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