

INTRODUCTION TO A JUST, LEARNING CULTURE

A just, learning culture encourages transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement. Employees are encouraged to report mistakes without fear of punishment, fostering innovation. However, several barriers such as resistance to change, lack of leadership commitment, and fear of failure complicate its implementation. Overcoming these barriers is essential for success.

Creating A Learning Culture: 9 Tips

80%

of employees say that having learning & development opportunities would help them feel more engaged

84%

of employees in the best performing companies are getting the training they need. Opposed to 16% in the worst performing companies.

#1



Make learning a priority from day one

Provide new hires with pre-boarding courses right after signing the contract. Here you can introduce them to your company values, add introductions of some departments, and give tips for the first day at work. This helps people get used to learning from the very beginning.

#2



Lead by Example

Have managers and company leadership participate in the learning process by acting as coaches or mentors. Or organize "Train-the-Manager" sessions for Managers. These sessions will help them understand how to ensure behavior change through on-the-job coaching.

#3



Block time for learning

Encourage people to block time in their calendars for upskilling and learning during office hours. Don't forget to lead by example and block some time in your own calendar too!

#4



Set a goal

Example: at AIHR, we've set a goal for our team of 50 people to dedicate a total of 2500 hours to development and learning in 2021. This translates to about one hour per working week for each of us.

#5



Experiment with learning methods

The world of learning methods is your oyster, so don't be afraid to experiment and see what works best for your people! Consider creating learning journeys with a mix of different content types

#6



Reward learning

Start company-wide initiatives that reward people for their dedication. The prizes can either be small and less formal (think a shout out in an email or via Slack) or big and more formal (an official award at the end of every month, for example).

#7



Maximize organizational knowledge

Leverage organizational knowledge by using internal experts in learning initiatives. You can have some seasoned Sales Managers run a webinar on their best practices or set up finance for non-finance professionals e-learning as a part of your onboarding process. By doing this, you also start distributing ownership over learning with the rest of the organization.

#8



Create champions

Instead of management telling why learning is important, turn the learning-junkies into champions by providing them a podium to inspire others by showcasing their achievements and how they are using new knowledge and skills to become better at their job.

#9



Incorporate learning into coaching

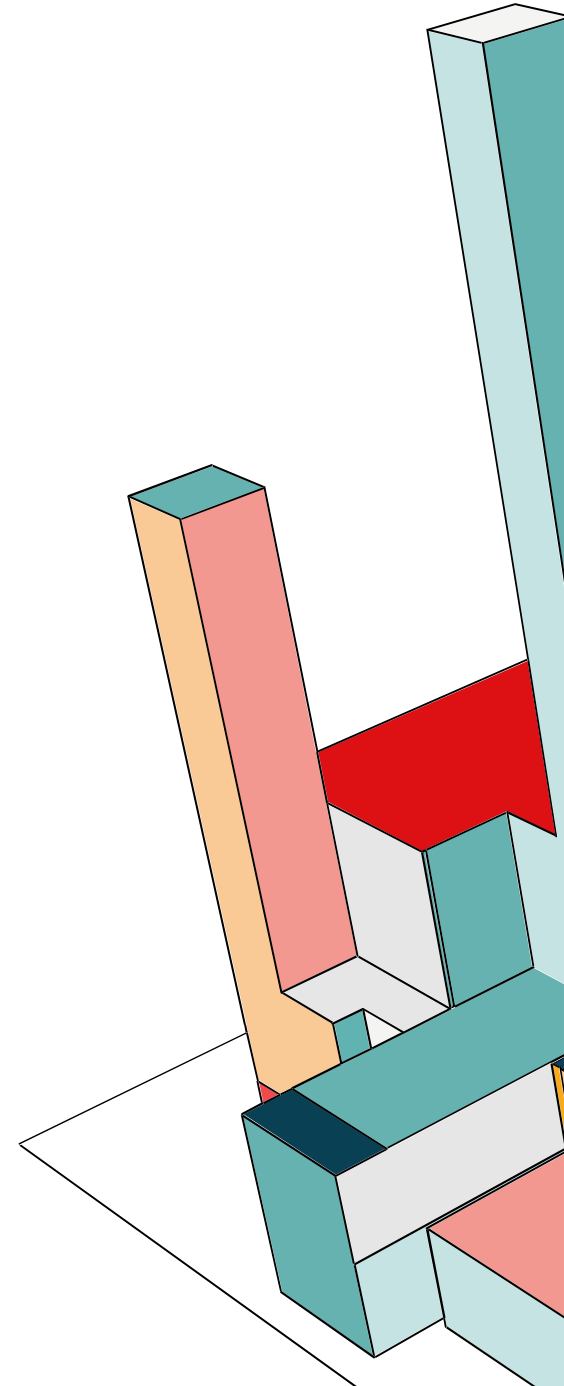
Enable managers to set development goals with their people and provide a learning library that they can use as a resource to help their employees upskill. Encourage them to making learning a talking point during performance reviews and regular one-on-ones to discuss the impact from previous learning activities and determine the next steps.

HERE IS A GREAT INFO GRAPHIC.

<https://www.aihr.com/blog/creating-learning-culture/>

RESISTANCE TO CHANGE

Resistance to change is a significant barrier. Many employees and leaders are uncomfortable altering traditional practices, especially when accepting mistakes. Fear of failure can prevent the acceptance of a learning-focused culture. Addressing resistance involves clear communication and demonstrating the benefits of change.





LACK OF LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT

Leadership commitment is crucial for implementing a just learning culture. Without support from top management, such initiatives often fail. Leaders must model the behavior they expect from others, including owning mistakes. A lack of leadership commitment undermines trust in the process and inhibits the development of a just culture.

An abstract graphic on the left side of the slide. It features a collection of 3D rectangular blocks in various colors: red, orange, yellow, teal, and light blue. These blocks are arranged in a somewhat chaotic but structured manner, some standing upright and others lying flat. Behind the blocks is a large, solid red rectangular area that resembles a wall. The entire graphic is set against a light blue background.

FEAR OF ACCOUNTABILITY AND PUNISHMENT

Fear of punishment for mistakes hinders the development of a just culture. In environments where failure leads to blame, employees hesitate to report issues, preventing learning opportunities. A just culture must emphasize shared responsibility and avoid a punitive approach, promoting continuous improvement instead of assigning blame.

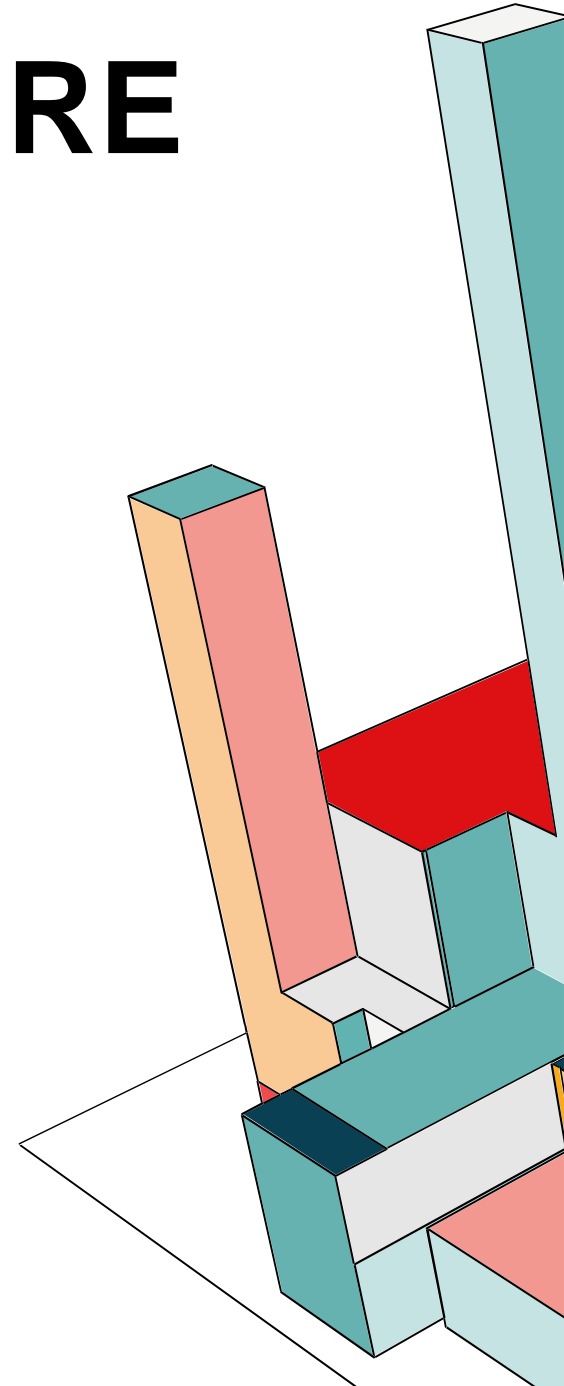
INADEQUATE TRAINING AND RESOURCES

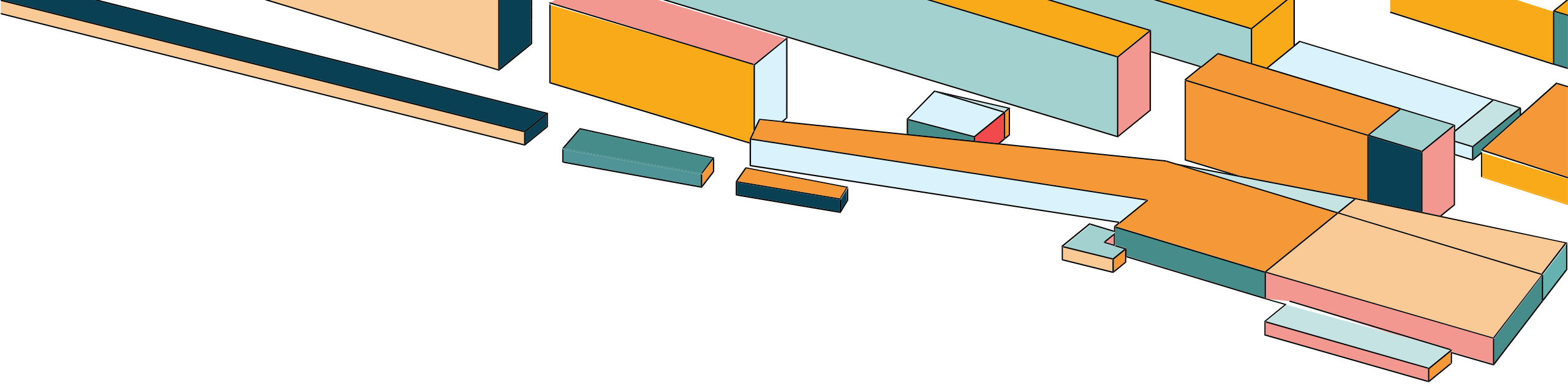
Lack of training and resources further complicates the establishment of a just culture. Employees must understand the principles behind such a culture and be trained to report incidents safely. Without sufficient resources, systems to support these processes may not be effectively implemented, causing the initiative to falter.



ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND HIERARCHY

Rigid organizational structures hinder open communication and learning. Hierarchies can perpetuate blame cultures, preventing transparency. A just culture requires flatter structures where employees feel empowered to speak up, share feedback, and report mistakes without fear of retribution. Flattening hierarchies can facilitate better communication and collaboration across all levels.





Overcoming barriers requires a proactive approach, including clear communication, leadership support, and proper training. Leaders must demonstrate vulnerability by admitting mistakes creating a safe environment for learning. Organizations can build a culture that fosters trust, accountability, and continuous improvement by overcoming resistance and fear.

OVERCOMING BARRIERS AND BUILDING A JUST CULTURE

Citations:

Edmondson, A. (2019). *The Fearless Organization: Creating Psychological Safety in the Workplace for Learning, Innovation, and Growth*. Wiley.

Reason, J. (2000). *Human Error*. Cambridge University Press.

