**Episode #48**

**Speaker 1** [00:00:01] Welcome to the Cabrera Lab Podcast.

**Speaker 2** [00:00:07] This is one of my favorite topics actually. Partially because it's a topic I thought I knew a lot about, and then I started researching it, and I actually realized I didn't know a lot about it, and then talking to you, I learned even more about it. So I think this will be a good episode. Culture. Organizational culture.

**Speaker 1** [00:00:24] VMC islands and culture.

**Speaker 2** [00:00:27] So maybe we should start where we ended last time. Yes. If you remember, at the end of the learning podcast episode, you did a big C. Yes. And also, we have talked about it when we use it in slides. We have V-M-C-L. And then we have a line. And then, we say, underneath all of those things is culture. So let's talk about that.

**Speaker 1** [00:00:49] Yeah, so if you draw a big C, that's culture. And VMCL is really about adaptive leadership to build adaptive organizations, right? So it's about adaptive leaders with the goal of building an adaptive organization. And those adaptive leaders need to take systems thinkers and do organizational learning. That's the L in VMCL. In order to build organizational capacity, that's the C. that capacity has to be completely directed at and focused on the mission, which is the M, and the mission done repeatedly brings about the vision. And if you get real clarity on the vision and the mission and the capacital systems through your cat map and the organizational learning systems, and you build a team of great systems thinkers, then what you do is you use those things to build a culture. And so the whole thing is about culture driving the emergent property of your vision. So if you go back to those, that flock of birds, right? The culture of those birds is that they all, each individual bird shares the same mental model of the rules of the system, right. And in the case of the murmuration behavior where the thing's going like that. all the birds share the same rules and so they follow those rules and then you get this remarkable superorganism which is the perfect analogy and metaphor for organizations that are adaptive. We want an organization to be made up of many individual organisms or people and somehow those people somehow mysteriously come together to act as if they're one organism, one super organism that adapts to its environment, right? Yeah. That's fundamentally what we want of any organization. And that's what a super organism is. So nature can teach us about how to design and run and manage and lead organizations. And this is how we do it. We build culture. So culture really is about, do we have the same set of shared mental models? Yeah. And that's super critical.

**Speaker 2** [00:03:11] Well, and I think at this moment, it would be good to remind people, or especially leaders, the difference between organizational learning and culture, because they both deal with mental models.

**Speaker 1** [00:03:24] So a mental model is information organized. We organize information to make meaning or mental models out of it. So we call that M equals I.O. Individual learning is just a change in mental model, right? Organizational learning. So that's, you know, an individual person who learns any time their mental model changes, that's a that's an act of learning. And that doesn't always have to be, you video. Quote-unquote positive or negative. You could have negative learning. You can have positive learning and all that kind of stuff Anytime an organization changes their mental model meaning that the that the different people in the organization collectively share a change in mental model

**Speaker 2** [00:04:06] Meaning everybody's learned the same new, they've learned a new thing together. Together. Yes.

**Speaker 1** [00:04:12] So, again, that doesn't mean that you have to have a hundred percent. You could have sixty percent of your organization learn something and it could have a dramatic effect on the organization, right? But that is organizational learning because that change in mental model has occurred across the collective agents or your employees or the birds or however you want to think about it. So that's organizational learning. Now, culture... which a lot of people, when they think about culture, when you look at the research on culture and the way that people describe culture and the they talk about culture. It's really, I brought some props. When we think about a culture, we think of it as like this mysterious enigma that is very powerful, but we don't really know what it is. We don't know how to purposefully build it. It's like a cloud. It's this cloudy. Enigma it's like you try to capture it and you can't figure it out and and so, you know metaphorically I think we think of it almost like a cloud and what I want to show and and help people to understand is that That is not serving us to think of culture as this powerful yet Mysterious thing that no one really knows how to build and it kind of just happens or doesn't happen and there's not really any anything you can do about it, or it's very difficult to build, or any of the things that go along with that kind of frame of thinking.

**Speaker 2** [00:05:40] I think that's a very common misperception because I remember at the beginning I said, you know, there was a lot of stuff I didn't realize I didn t know. So for me, when I came in as I saw, oh, culture is just it's there. It's what happens. You have no control over it. It just sort of emerges from all the people. And you know that was that. And then as we started, you know doing these ideas and teaching things at Cornell And I did some research along that. That's exactly right, which is you can actually build and shape a leader can build and

**Speaker 1** [00:06:13] purposefully.

**Speaker 2** [00:06:13] Their culture, which I had...

**Speaker 1** [00:06:15] Yeah, it's kind of mind-boggling because culture is so powerful, you know, the old saying culture eats strategy for lunch, meaning it's such a powerful thing that we should utilize it. But if we continue to think that it's a mystery, then it's hard to utilize. So what I want to show you with this little demonstration is that yes, culture is this cloud that is perceived as mysterious. But if we kind of zoom into culture, what we realize is it's just a collection of mental models that are shared. It's just the collection of mental models that are share. What we realize is, oh, okay, we have this mental model that we want people to really deeply understand. It's different than the traditional mental model for our organization. We're doing something different. Everyone in the organization has to understand this mental models. Everybody in the organization has to understand this one. And there's a bunch of mental models. It could be a mental model about how we do meetings. It could a mental about our processes. But there's four really important mental models, the most important mental model. And that is your vision, your mission, your capacital systems and your learning. Those are the starting point of the most mental models You're also probably going to have some kind of culture code or values, so that's going to be, you know, probably the fifth most important mental model. You're going to have, this is the way we do meetings, this the way, you know... Handle work. Handle and work. Yeah, exactly. You are going to have all these other ones, but it starts with the first four.

**Speaker 2** [00:07:58] So when we said CHECK20 was, we create a culture of vision, mission, capacity, and learning. This is what you're saying is the culture at the very base is around these four shared Yeah.

**Speaker 1** [00:08:11] Yeah, meaning we all share the same vision. Yes. We have the same mental model, not just the vision statement, but we all have the say mental model of vision. We have same mental of mission. And again, are you going to get 100% of your employees? Probably not. You're going to have people that are in the corner, quiet, quitting. You're gonna have people who are, you know, what?

**Speaker 2** [00:08:33] I'm so glad I quit it all the time.

**Speaker 1** [00:08:36] But if you have 80% of the people in the boat are rowing in the same direction for the same reason to reach the same goal If you have 60% of people in a boat doing that you're gonna get there Partially because the other 40% aren't all operating off the same shared mental model which means You got 60% people that are all driving the same Direction and then the other forty percent of the other people are going like this way and that way It's not an orchestrated event right and so You're gonna, the boat's gonna go in the right direction. And if you can get 65% of your people, then the boat is gonna go faster. If you're gonna get 70%, then the boats gonna go faster along that vector, right? So you start by building the most important mental models and then we add mental models as we go. We add mental model about what's our customer, who's our costumer, value proposition, all kinds of other things that are part of, and those things that I just mentioned are actually in the mission. but who your customer is and why you're doing what you're doing and all that kind of stuff.

**Speaker 2** [00:09:38] of tiny touches when you're shipping something and you want to remind them that there's quality put into the shipping process and you put a little card in or a sticker or I don't know.

**Speaker 1** [00:09:50] Those are all kind of cultural mental models. So culture is this cloud of mental models that really isn't mysterious at all. And the thing is, you can't build shared mental models by just sending an email. No. Right? That's shared information. But remember, mental models or meaning is information organized the same way, right? So, we share. Mental model when the information that we have is organized the same way, right? That's when we share a mental model. So a leader's job or the leader's jobs across the organization is to pick them, you know Get the really clear on the most important mental models and get those shared across the organization and that's not as simple as Sending an email saying this is our vision statement Because a vision statement is not a vision mental model. Mental models are held in the hearts and minds of people. And so we need to get it in the hearts and the minds of the people. We need to make them see how valuable this vision is as a daily tool for work. This mission helps us do our daily work. It's a tool that if designed properly will help us do the work.

**Speaker 2** [00:11:10] You just said, in your example, say of 60% who are all going in the same direction, that means there's 40% who aren't. So what does a leader do to try to get people moving in the right direction, going in...

**Speaker 1** [00:11:24] Convert the unconverted, that's what a leader does all day long, is convert the unconvert and we have two tools that we've developed for this purpose. One is called CBG, which is a culture building graph, and one is called culture marketing.

**Speaker 2** [00:11:44] culture marketing.

**Speaker 1** [00:11:45] Yep, which is literally taking all of the skills and functions and techniques and technology that we have available to us in marketing, external marketing of products and services. I mean, you know, it's becoming more and more of a not an art form, but a science marketing has over the years. So it started off as almost an art form. There were certain people that are really good at marketing today. It's almost more of a science, there's a practice to it. We know what works, we know what doesn't work. People can get good at it. Take all that edifice of marketing and just turn it inward. And instead of selling products and services externally, you're selling mental models internally. And the beauty is you know where your customers live. Your customers are your employees. You know what their email is. because it's your company's email. You know where their office is because it is in your building. So you have the list of your customers already. You have the total list of all of your customers and the goal is to sell them on the value of these most important mental models.

**Speaker 2** [00:12:59] Right, and what about if they're resistant?

**Speaker 1** [00:13:01] convert the unconverted, and that's where CBG comes in.

**Speaker 2** [00:13:05] So...

**Speaker 1** [00:13:05] culture building graph.

**Speaker 2** [00:13:06] OK, so let's stick on CBG for a minute. Yeah. Because we're out and about a lot. And we talk to all different kinds of organizational leaders and different types of big bureaucracies, entrepreneurs, Silicon Valley. And I would say, and I think you might agree, that one of the big complaints is, I'm having a hard time getting everyone on board. I'm going to have a hard hard time getting everyone the same page. And when you're saying, you, Derek, are saying, Well, the first page is vision. How do you, so how do you using CBG, move people from sort of, I don't know, I don' want to say anti-vision, but not on board with the vision or not seeing the vision to actually getting on the canoe and going the right, you know, paddling the right way.

**Speaker 1** [00:13:55] Basically what you have is something like a normative curve in your organization Right, and this is this is what we call cbg or culture building graph And if if we split that normative, curve right down the middle You have the unconverted and the converted

**Speaker 2** [00:14:14] Meaning the people who are on board with the vision, the people.

**Speaker 1** [00:14:16] Yeah, these are the people that are on board. These are the people that aren't on board, right? And it could be for whatever mental model, this is the beauty, you can take whatever mental model and run it through CBG, whatever mental model that you want to do a culture marketing campaign around, you you can Take that mental model. And think about the unconverted versus the converted. So if it's vision, yeah, if vision is the mental model that your starting with vision and mission, let's say. we're going to do a vision mission campaign, then what we're gonna do is we're gonna say, well, who's on board and who's not on board with the vision, right? Now we're to split the on board into two groups and we're split the not on-board into two groups, right, and we gonna treat this almost like you would treat a vote in Congress, right, where you're like trying to whip up the votes.

**Speaker 3** [00:15:11] Yeah, and they had those big boards, like, well, Senator Smith has to come over and we gotta get this guy from Wyoming.

**Speaker 1** [00:15:17] Exactly. So you've got Senator Smith, you know, except this is an employee, right, and then you've got another employee. So, you can literally just put their little pictures on magnets and put them on your board somewhere in your office, or we have an electronic version of this that we use, and you've your people, right? You've got people here with their pictures, like little nice little snapshots of them, and you understand who's on board. Now, these folks over here. we're going to call these folks. So everybody on the right is converted. Everybody on the left is unconverted. Now, these people on the far right, they're going be called your leaders.

**Speaker 3** [00:15:59] Like thought leader.

**Speaker 1** [00:16:00] Thought leaders, basically, people who are, who are really on board, like they're driving it, they're loving it, right?

**Speaker 2** [00:16:07] I mean, they're actively trying to help move people with you.

**Speaker 1** [00:16:12] Yeah, they're like your kitchen cabinet. They're like the go-to people, and they just want to run because they see the vision, they see to mission, they understand, or whatever it is that you're trying to bring into the culture. So those people are over on the right, and there's a small amount of those people. That's why the curve is like this. To the left of them is the adopters, and those people have adopted it. But they're trying to figure it out. They're definitely on board, but they're learning. They're figuring it out, they're learning how to implement it, all that kind of stuff. These folks over here, in the unconverted column, are called fence sitters. So they're sort of like, I don't know which way this is going to go. Maybe I'll sit the fence and see how things shake out.

**Speaker 2** [00:17:05] All right, let's see how it all plays out.

**Speaker 1** [00:17:07] And over here on the far left is your naysayers.

**Speaker 2** [00:17:10] And those are the people we hear about a lot. We hear a lot about those.

**Speaker 1** [00:17:13] Yeah, which is amazing because whenever you have somebody over here, they get a tremendous amount of attention because the squeaky wheel gets the grease, right? And leaders will often get in, you know, in sort of pissing matches with these people. And then these people are sort of all watching. Right. And so there's strategies to deal with who's in which camp. Now, it's very important to understand, with CBG, the goal is to get everybody moving this direction. We want, if somebody's in this camp, we want them to move here. If somebody's here, we want to move her. If somebody is here, we want him to move there. And generally speaking, we want everybody on the left to move to the right. And it's a super inclusive party. That's the great part. There's no, it, it it's not exclusionary. Everybody who wants to be over on the right gets to be on the over on right. So That's the CBG in a nutshell. Now the important part is understanding how to incentivize these groups. These are differentially incentivized groups and we make a lot of leadership mistakes when we determine how to interact with these groups.

**Speaker 2** [00:18:27] Right, and who to incentivize.

**Speaker 1** [00:18:29] And who to incentivize and how to incentivise them and what kinds of things to utilize, right? So the first thing is knowing where the person is and part of that is having a conversation with them. So you take Senator Smith and you take him out to lunch and you find out, like, where do you stand on the bill, you know, blah, blah and what's getting in the way and, you, know, why aren't you converted? And then, oh, you need the, okay, and then there's horse trading or whatever. How do we incentivize or change the dynamics of this thing? Well, your thought leaders, what are they motivated by? They're really actually motivated by the work. So we don't need to incentivize them per se. We need to just show them the love and let them run. They're like horses that want to run, right? So show them love and then let them on.

**Speaker 2** [00:19:20] Because they don't need extrinsic motivation. They don't even. They're intrinsically connected to it. They're motivated by it. They don' need an alarm clock to go to work.

**Speaker 1** [00:19:28] Yeah, you hit on it. They're intrinsically motivated. So let them run. Let them show them the love. Let him run. Yeah, let them be free. They are like wild stallions. Let'em be free and run. You know, your adopters, they're kind of, there's more extrinsic motivation needed here, right, to facilitate and motivate the learning curve that they're on. And so what you want to do here is take all of your incentives, and we'll talk about incentives in a minute. But let's say that you have a whole bucket of incentives, You have all, we call this the incentives analysis, and you've got all this bucket of incentives. Yeah. We can figure out what those are in a second. They could be financial, they could be cultural, they could symbolic, recognition, all kinds of stuff. You wanna take all of those incentives and put them right there.

**Speaker 2** [00:20:17] All of them.

**Speaker 1** [00:20:17] every single one of them right there and only there.

**Speaker 2** [00:20:21] It's counter intuitive.

**Speaker 1** [00:20:21] It's totally counterintuitive, and what most leaders do is they take these incentives and they put it where the frustration is, which is with these fence sitters. And they go, oh, let's put all our incentives there. And what that does is it incentivizes fence sitting.

**Speaker 3** [00:20:39] which is not the point.

**Speaker 1** [00:20:40] And what we want to do is put all of our incentives here. All of our incentive go here. If somebody is willing to convert, they get incentives.

**Speaker 2** [00:20:49] So what you're saying is you put the incentives here, but you let these people see that the incentives are here. So that's why they want to move over.

**Speaker 1** [00:20:58] that's the next step. Let them see it. So then what we want to do here, since this is like an incentives desert, right? We want to create an incentives desert here. All the incentives are here. What we want do here is take photos of all the incentive giving, right, because basically all of adult life is just high school all over again, right. So we want, oops, I just made a Well, we want to take. party for what we call party photos. These are party photos and we want to put those there.

**Speaker 2** [00:21:32] Photos of this, but here.

**Speaker 1** [00:21:34] Yeah, we call them party photos. So it's all the different ways that you can show how much fun it is to be over here, how cool this party is. This is a cool party. And by the way, it's much better than high school because everybody's invited to this party. Everybody's allowed to come to this party if you're willing. The only door charge is adoption. This episode is sponsored by Training Camp. the ultimate online spot for building the mental fitness that drives personal and professional change and success. At training camp, you'll have access to the science and practice of thinking with personalized thinking assessments, tiered training, and best of all, practice that improves skill. Go to CabreraLab.org to learn more. And now, back to the episode. So party photos are all the cool things that are happening over here.

**Speaker 2** [00:22:32] So let's pause for a minute and give a couple of examples of that. So if you remember, I don't know which episode it was, the last couple of episodes, we talked about wow stories. Where Ritz-Carlton would take an employee who'd done something quite remarkable in terms of customer service, would make actually a pretty high production video and highlight that story to the entire organization. So that is not a party, it's a party video.

**Speaker 1** [00:22:57] Yeah, when we say party photos, we're not being literal there, we're being metaphorical. A party photo could be anything. It could be a newsletter that talks about all the great things that these people are doing or getting. It could just be people hearing about things. It could actual photos. It could videos. It's anything that's just demonstrating how cool it is to be over here.

**Speaker 2** [00:23:21] A conference opportunity, a training opportunity, a Presidents Club Strip.

**Speaker 1** [00:23:25] Yeah, President's Club, anything you name it. Yeah. Okay. You name it there are there are as many Party photos as there are incentives and there are lots of incentives and not all of them We actually have lists of incentives And maybe 20 percent of them are financial Right, right. There's so many other incentives. I mean you can take a one dollar pin Yeah, and turn it into the thing that people want most right? Sure. So uh You know, there's tons of incentives other than financial, but there's also financial incentives, right? Party photos, right. And then over here.

**Speaker 2** [00:24:02] Yeah, we haven't talked about them yet.

**Speaker 1** [00:24:03] you get to the naysayers and what do you do with them? Again, there's a small number of naysaysers, but they're squeaky, right? They tend to be squeaky.

**Speaker 2** [00:24:09] You get a lot of attention.

**Speaker 1** [00:24:10] They get a lot of attention. What we want to do here is kind of a, like a judo deflect their energy, like a jujitsu. We don't want to spend a lot of time over here, but we, we want to do two things. One is, especially if we're a new leadership or something like that, we wanna, we wanna hear what they're saying to make sure that they're not rebels with a cause.

**Speaker 2** [00:24:33] meaning their objections might be something that's actually worthy.

**Speaker 1** [00:24:37] Right. And so we want to have a quick conversation to figure out, are these rebels with a cause or rebels without a cause? Meaning they're just rebels because they're rebels. They're going to rebel against anything. They are going to naysay anything. If they're rebels with the cause, then they actually might be a form of thought leader that's just frustrated with how things have been going. And you don't want to lose that opportunity to quickly move this person over to your camp. But if they're just naysayers without a cause, rebels without a course, they're just rebels because they want to be rebellious, or just not even rebellious but sort of naysaying, negative, then what we want to do is kind of ignore them. Now, of course, if you can remove them from your organization, then you can do that as well.

**Speaker 2** [00:25:23] Meaning they're not a good fit if they're They're not good. They're not a good and I think it's important to say this isn't about the personality.

**Speaker 1** [00:25:29] No.

**Speaker 2** [00:25:29] This is about the degree to which people are on board with the vision. So there's nothing personal about the CVG.

**Speaker 1** [00:25:37] And it's about fit. It's about it. Like, if this person doesn't fit, then it's part of the leader's job to be like, hey, let's find you a better place where you're not coming to work every day and just creating stress for yourself and everybody else. And where would you like to be? What's going on? But again, some people are just going to be in this role. It's part their identity. And you don't want to waste a lot of time fighting that, because these people are all watching. And if they see that these people get attention by being naysayers, that's going to cause people to want to get that attention, that negative attention, right? Which is the exact opposite of the directionality of the CBG. So anything that's causing people to go this way is a bad CBG action. We want people to be going this way. We want the trend to be doing this way for people to be moving to the right.

**Speaker 2** [00:26:29] So naysayers are naysaysers for the reason that they're not on board. But also, I like to think of them as detractors. And the reason is, if you remember many, many years ago, we were working with one of our very favorite superintendents, and he was struggling because there was about maybe 20% of his staff was in this category. And he was under the mental model that everybody should be at every meeting.

**Speaker 3** [00:26:55] Oh, it's her. Retraining. Retrainging. Retra-

**Speaker 2** [00:26:57] All the time and what was happening is exactly what you were saying is a these people were getting a lot of attention So people are starting to think oh, maybe I should be over there and B It meant that all of the work and conversations was more about handling their objections and actually Communicating and moving towards the good parts, which is here's where we're going. Here's the vision. Here is the work We're gonna do here's the impact we're gonna have so it's important to deal with this and what you're saying is push them To the side. They're not literally pulling

**Speaker 1** [00:27:26] Yeah, not giving them the fuel that fuels the fire. I mean, one of the things that we learned in that situation and that we've, you know, this is a classic thing with trainings is leaders a lot of times wanna get everybody through the training. No, don't get everybody though the training, get only the people that are wanting to be on the conversion side in the training and then if you wanna bring some of these people over, bring them over in small groups. with larger groups of converted, right? Because if I take three naysayer fence sitters and I put them with three adopters in a training, what's gonna happen on that dynamic? It's gonna be like, meh.

**Speaker 4** [00:28:10] It's like they can read it.

**Speaker 1** [00:28:11] It's like the canoe that circles, right? Yeah, exactly. Now, if I take three that are adopters, and I put one over, what's gonna happen? You're gonna end up with four adopters. So you want your ratios to be like that as you try to move people over. You don't want your ratio to be in that first example. And so being strategic about that, and also being strategic, understanding that building culture is changing minds.

**Speaker 3** [00:28:41] Oh, I love that.

**Speaker 1** [00:28:42] Building culture is just change. When we see that culture is just these mental models, then building culture is just teaching and learning and changing minds.

**Speaker 2** [00:28:52] You know, so many people get caught in the trap of building cultures about fighting with the personalities and the people, and it's a complete wrong unit.

**Speaker 1** [00:29:02] Or it's about, you know, we've got like cool parties and like swag, and that's culture. Yeah, those are representations of culture. But real culture is the mental models that are driving the meaning, that are driving the direction that people go naturally, because they have those mental models, they go that direction. So what we want to do is build that Now... The CBG, like I said, you could start with vision and mission. It could also be, you know, I hate the way we do meetings. You know, let's change, Amazon did this, right? Let's change the way that we fundamentally do meetings, okay. Well, A, we got the old way that everybody is kind of into.

**Speaker 3** [00:29:49] Oh, that was meant to mean something else.

**Speaker 1** [00:29:50] the old mental model of meetings. Now we have a new mental model meetings and we wanna shift people from this old mental model to this new mental. People don't understand the new mental model so we got some thought leaders on that. And we got early adopters and we just need to move people across. We need to incentivize adoption, we need to meet with people that are influential, that are fence sitting, et cetera. And so. Meetings is the mental model that we're changing. So any mental model that you want to be a part of your culture, right? Of your culture cloud can be run through, can be put at the top of this, at the center point of this CBG and we have conversion, unconversion and we've got these four groups. We have incentives. that's the beginning of culture change. Yes. Because culture is shared mental models and organizational learning is a change in mental model shared. Yes. So the way we get to culture is organizational learning.

**Speaker 2** [00:30:58] Yes, and I don't think a lot of people make that connection or have previously. If you read the research.

**Speaker 1** [00:31:02] Yeah, absolutely.

**Speaker 2** [00:31:03] in the popular literature on it.

**Speaker 1** [00:31:05] This is kind of the strategy that we use to to manage and understand where we're at right But a culture campaign Yes is simply saying we're going to build a campaign just like we would to build A product campaign a marketing campaign externally, but we're gonna do it internally And we're, gonna use all the same tactics and all the, same technologies and all, the same abilities and skills to drive internal culture campaigns around whichever things that we think need to change in the organization.

**Speaker 2** [00:31:39] Right, and that answers the question, well, what do I actually do? Like this is kind of a nice frame to figure out who and how, but it's not what are you doing on the ground? How do I get people to change this mental model? That's right.

**Speaker 1** [00:31:50] meetings. Thanks.

**Speaker 2** [00:31:51] What do I do? And you're saying it's a culture campaign.

**Speaker 1** [00:31:53] It's a culture campaign with the CBG and the understanding of culture. And VMCL is the start, right? I mean, you don't want to build a meeting model if you don' have a vision. Like, you know, a meeting models is relatively, you know, lesser than a vision, and it's, I can't say this enough, a vision and a mission is not a statement. There is a vision statement and there is a mission statement, but that's not your vision. People really get confused by this. A vision is the mental model that is shared by your employees in their hearts and minds. Your vision lives in the hearts and minds of your employees. So if you're going to point to your vision, you have to point it in the heart and minds of your employee. you don't point and say, that's our vision. in a frame on the wall or on the website. That's your vision statement. That's a set of words that represent what is in the hearts and minds of your employees. So a lot of leaders, what they do is they go, oh, we did this offsite, we spent a million bucks. You know, we came up with a vision and mission statement and now we have a vision mission statement. Now you don't. Now you have two sentences. In some, in the worst case scenarios, you have a million dollars less and you have to paragraphs. usually, that nobody can remember, right? That's what happens in the real world. What you want is two very short phrases, which are your vision and mission statement, that have mental models behind them that are built. And then, then the real work begins.

**Speaker 2** [00:33:36] Right, because what you...

**Speaker 1** [00:33:38] Because you've got to CBG it.

**Speaker 2** [00:33:39] You got to see BGA, you got to do the culture campaign around making sure everybody has that shared mental model of what your vision and mission are.

**Speaker 1** [00:33:47] Yeah, and you got to hit it at every meeting a lot. I say all the time. It's like I I'm getting I haven't talked to Bono But I'm guessing Bono doesn't really probably is pretty sick of singing Sunday Bloody Sunday, right? But when you go to a YouTube concert, you want to hear Sunday Bloody, Sunday

**Speaker 2** [00:34:04] and if it wasn't on the playlist.

**Speaker 1** [00:34:06] Yeah, you're going to be pissed at Bono, right? So, you know, leaders think that they can just say something once because they haven't been in a classroom. and they don't understand human learning. You know, if I walked in the classroom thinking that I can say something once and my students will understand it.

**Speaker 2** [00:34:27] Well, even your children.

**Speaker 1** [00:34:28] or my children, yeah, as a parent. You think you can say something one time and your children understand it? Come on.

**Speaker 3** [00:34:34] Exactly. Yeah.

**Speaker 1** [00:34:35] Enough to implement it? Yeah. Come on. Yeah. You're diluting yourself. You're not loving reality. So yeah, you've got a vision statement. You've got to mission statement. OK, now the real work begins. Let's get it in the hearts and minds of people through CBG, culture marketing, incentives, all this kind of stuff. Let's build the organizational learning to get this amazing thing called culture to work in our favor for our organization.

**Speaker 2** [00:35:02] I think also there's a nice parallel to what we were talking about in vision, which is all systems have inside of them the natural function of a visionary or a goal-purpose state. And I think what's interesting is all organizations have a culture. Yes. I mean, a culture exists. Whether you decide how to shape it and whether you are purposeful of the mental models you want in your culture, there's still going to be a culture. And I guess you get to decide, is that culture going to be working for you, like in the direction you want or.

**Speaker 1** [00:35:43] I think that's one of the places that is probably most difficult for people that comprehend about VMCL and culture is exactly what you just said, which is your organization has a vision, has a mission, has capacity, has learning going on, and has a culture, and is in the process of building all those things and creating all those thing as we speak, whether you like it or not. You might also have a vision statement in your back pocket and a mission statement in you back pocket that you claim is the vision and mission of the organization. The proof's in the pudding, as my mother used to say, whether the little statement you have in your back pocket is the same vision and mission that the organization has. And as a leader, knowing that means knowing that there's work to do and that there is that the work is to make sure that the thing that, the espoused vision and mission, the one that we wanted to be, is the actual vision and vision of the organization.

**Speaker 2** [00:36:50] and that you built your culture around.

**Speaker 1** [00:36:51] and you build your culture around it. And that's why we use the checks of vision and mission to design good visions and missions. That's another thing I think people don't understand about it. The vision mission checks are, it's a little bit like, what are the design specs for a table? Think of it that way. Well, you need a flat surface where you can put stuff on. It needs to not be wobbly. So it could have four legs, it could have three legs, we could have a lot of different ways. But the design spec is it can't be wobbly, right? It's got to be a certain level. But you could have low tables. You could have high tables. So the design specs of vision and mission are making sure that you have a tool that will work for the job that it's being designed to do. That the vision does the job that it is designed to. That's what those checks ensure. And so we've all been to cafes, especially outdoor seating, where you have these tables that have these holes in them. And they have bumpy surfaces that you put the thing, like a water bottle that has those little feet, and the water can't stand up. And you're like, this table isn't really, it's more art than it is function, form over function. Right. So. We want our vision and mission to be functional tools that we can use every day, that your employees use every single day to do their work. Yeah. And if you do that and you build that into the culture, the boat's gonna go not only the right direction, it's gonna fast in the right directions.

**Speaker 2** [00:38:37] which gets back to culture each strategy for both.

**Speaker 1** [00:38:40] That's our lunch.

**Speaker 2** [00:38:41] Right, because when you understand as a leader that you can very specifically shape and build your culture, it's a tool, it's thing you can use to leverage and push things in the right direction.

**Speaker 1** [00:38:55] Hell yeah. So it really is, I sometimes say, building culture is just ditch digging, right? The hard part of culture is knowing that it's not an enigma, that it actually, it's a not a cloud. It's just a bunch of these mental models that you need everybody to share or as many people as possible to share. And then it's just ditch-digging. And I say that in a really positive way, because like, if you know. where to dig the ditch, why you're digging the ditch. You have all the tools in place to dig the ditch and all it takes is hard work. Well, a lot, most people are really fine with that. They're fine with doing the hard work where it becomes frustrating as you're like, I don't even know where to take the ditch I don' know how do I dig the dish I don''t know if I'm gonna run into gas lines or there's all these things in my way I don's know how to dig a ditch, blah blah blah. But culture, if you understand... What we've talked about here, it's just ditch digging. You just gotta do the work. The work is moving people one by one. It's like you wanna get a vote in Congress. It's really just ditch-digging, right? You gotta meet with each one of these people and move them over one by ones and find what's gonna motivate them to be moved over, to be converted.

**Speaker 2** [00:40:19] Yeah, I think the best quote from this episode is, building culture is changing minds.

**Speaker 1** [00:40:25] It's just changing minds. Yeah, it's just work. You got to work it. That really is the leader's job is to is to get it, you know, be talking to people. LBWA leadership by walking around, talk to people what are what it how? Why are you not making the connection between your work and the vision right now? Yeah, because the way you're doing that isn't making the connection. Yeah. And I want I want you to make that connection. I want to feel like what you're doing. is so important to what the organization wants to accomplish, that you understand that what you're doing is so important, and you'll want to do it in a way that's in alignment with that.

**Speaker 2** [00:41:04] Yeah, and I also think there's a lot of writing and research around strong, clear organizational culture, whether it's that has values and a shared vision, is very much correlated with success and growth of organizations, that it's like one-to-one, better the culture, the better the success.

**Speaker 1** [00:41:26] But again, we mistake culture, especially, you know, you go to the Silicon Valley or any of these places, that we mistake cultural with what kinds of parties are we throwing, what kind of schwag are we wearing, what kind, like, what do people wear, what's their attitude? You know, that's a particular part of culture, but it's not the part of the culture that we're talking about when we say culture eats strategy for lunch. Right. That part of a culture is really, that you have everybody paddling in the same direction. Yes. When you see a team that operates team first, that operates like a team, when you see rowing team, and they're operating, and that boat is just like. That's culture. They all understand their role. They all share the same mental models of how to do it. They've all practiced. They're all skilled. That's team. And that's a culture that's going on the vector. Vector is direction and speed. So they're going on in the right direction. And they're go fast. Yeah. And when stuff happens... that they have to adapt to. They adapt to it and they don't lose direction. They don't get discombobulated. They go, oh, okay, we got an obstacle, we gotta go around it.

**Speaker 2** [00:42:51] Yeah, and then get back on.

**Speaker 1** [00:42:52] And they get back on course. And Alina will put some of the graphics. And I think we have some blogs on this in the book, Flat Mountain Clock, talks about this extensively, has a whole chapter or two on this. There is a chapter on culture. All that will be in the, what do you call the thing below, the description. I think that's a wrap.