

## 7 Tips to Cultivate an Amazing Culture

When I decided to start a company focused on promoting well-being, I knew that we also needed to foster and encourage wellness for our own employees. Over the years, I've worked with some of Silicon Valley's most recognizable leaders at some of the most successful companies, and I have learned that making your employees and their families the focal point is the key to engagement. Posting your company values up on the walls isn't what makes a culture; genuinely caring about your employees and their well-being is what does. Here are my tips to creating an employee-centric culture with wellness at its core, that will help you attract and retain top talent:

1. **Live Joyfully** – Infuse joy into every day, because joy is not meant to be a reward at the end of a life well-played.

Create joyful moments and breaks for employees. It's easy to get caught up in the work that needs to get done and falsely label these breaks as frivolous. But there are small, easy ways to infuse joy for little to no cost, and the cultural rewards are enormous. Take your fun seriously!

***Real world example:** Pinterest hosts Studio Nights with local businesses for small groups of 15-20 employees to learn about something new together - like how to make artisan chocolate!*

2. **Inspire Others to Action** – Have a passion and vision and share it. Paint a picture of where you're headed, how you'll change the world, and the impact your team can have in manifesting this new reality. If they can see how they can become a part of it, then they will follow you into battle.

You cultivate followership by demonstrating leadership. Telling people to follow you is not enough. Show people a future they want to be a part of, inspire them with that common vision, and they will make the choice to act.

***Real world example:** When my friend, Natalie Fair, a top executive at Pinterest, decided to shift her career focus from CFO to coaching employees, her CEO and colleagues all encouraged her to present her dream in an all-staff meeting, rather than sending an email. She received an incredibly supportive, engaged response from employees because of her human delivery in a typically digital environment.*

3. **Take Care of Yourself** - Get enough sleep, exercise, good food, and fun. Mental, physical, and emotional well-being should be a daily priority.

Airplane safety has the right idea - you should always put your oxygen mask on first before helping others. If you don't make time for self-care, you won't be able to bring your best to work.

***Real world example:** As a busy founder, CEO, and mom, I stay centered with a mantra I call 8-3-3: 8 hours of sleep a night, 3 nutritious meals a day, and 3 sweaty workouts/challenging yoga practices/meditation sessions per week. For me, this is non-negotiable. I suggest that everyone find their own "non-negotiable" that you must do to maintain your own well-being.*

4. **Practice Resilience** – Being able to bounce back and be tenacious is a key skill for having a rich

life.

Resilience comes not from pushing yourself harder, but from allowing yourself to let go. Strive to be the rock in the river that lets the rush of water sweep over you without dragging you downstream.

**Real world example:** *My friend, Hilary Schneider, CEO of LifeLock, went through her own humbling experience while trying to sell the company. As they faced repeated rejection on their path to the sale, the team made the decision to be each other's best advocates. This meant that they would be honest and open with their feedback and recognize that no one gets everything right the first time. They embraced the motto that "feedback is a gift" and made it core to their culture.*

5. **Seek & Support**— We want to always appear confident at our jobs, which can hold us back from seeking support when we need it. In fact, it is a sign of courage, not weakness, to ask for help, and your willingness to show vulnerability can bring colleagues closer and create a community bond.

In turn, mentor and encourage the people you work and play with to create a safe place for people to give and seek support.

**Real world example:** *To encourage employees to feel more comfortable giving and receiving feedback, LifeLock managers changed their 1:1 meetings to be out in the open instead of behind closed conference room doors. This created a culture of transparency that led to increased trust and support.*

6. **Swap Life Stories** – Share where you came from, and listen to others' stories to create a trust-based and authentic relationship. It's personal, so why pretend otherwise?

Oftentimes, employees choose to hide big life events from colleagues, such as caring for a sick parent or taking on an extracurricular commitment. They don't want colleagues to assume the personal event will take away from work performance. This creates a barrier that inhibits close connections.

**Real world example:** *Pinterest created an employee group for moms that begins each meeting with a "mom share", allowing members to give voice to their personal experiences in a supportive environment.*

7. **Be Yourself** – Know where you came from, where you want to be, and always be true to your authentic self.

Too often, we play the role we believe our employer wants us to play, rather than being authentic. We are more than our job title, we are sons, daughters, spouses, partners, parents, and friends. Create a culture where you can bring your whole self to work each day.

**Real world example:** *To bring Grokker IRL for our customer Synaptics, we hosted a "fun run" on campus. Employees looking out their windows at the event saw their colleagues of all levels joining in and spontaneously ran down to participate. The event grew organically as*

*employees dropped their corporate personas and let themselves relax.*

**About the Author: Grokker CEO Lorna Borenstein**

Lorna is a speaker, contributing author, and C-suite peer adviser on how to create an engaged company culture that sustains and develops high-quality talent. As founder and CEO of Grokker, Lorna is changing how busy people get and stay healthy by delivering premium, on-demand video wellness content and a supportive online community of experts and enthusiasts, available at any time. After 15 years in high-profile roles at eBay, Inc. (EBAY), Yahoo! (YHOO), and Move, Inc., Lorna has developed a blueprint for creating employee-centric cultures. At Grokker, Lorna works with her network of fellow Silicon Valley leaders to redefine the startup culture to encourage healthy lifestyle actions and well-being.

**About Grokker**

Founded by mother, yogi, and internet veteran Lorna Borenstein, Grokker is a personalized wellness service for busy people on-the-go. Whether employees have 5 minutes or 50, Grokker offers engaging video content from top experts including yoga, fitness, healthy eating, and meditation and a vibrant online community of experts and enthusiasts. Grokker is available on your PC, mobile device, Apple Watch, and TV through Comcast, Amazon Prime, Apple TV, Roku, and Chromecast. Learn more at [www.grokker.com/wellness](http://www.grokker.com/wellness) Learn more at [www.grokker.com/wellness](http://www.grokker.com/wellness)