THE CULTURE BUILDING KIT

Your Founder's Blueprint for Building Teams People Love

✓ **Define Your Culture Foundation**

✓ **Create Magnetic Team Values**

✓ **Build Rituals That Stick**

✓ **Scale Without Losing Your Soul**

For entrepreneurs and solopreneurs who refuse to settle for 'just another workplace'

Created by Entrepreneuria Global, LLC

MODULE 1: CULTURE FOUNDATIONS

What Culture Really Is (And Why It Makes or Breaks Everything)

THE TRUTH ABOUT CULTURE

Culture isn't:

- Free snacks and ping pong tables
- A poster on the wall with generic words like 'integrity'
- Something you build 'later' when you're bigger
- HR's responsibility

Culture IS:

- **How decisions get made** when the founder isn't in the room
- **What behaviors get rewarded** vs. what gets ignored
- **How people treat each other** on the worst days, not just the best ones
- **The unwritten rules** that govern 'how we do things here'

WHY CULTURE FROM DAY ONE?

Your first 5 hires set the template for hire 50. Every hiring decision, customer interaction, and team conflict either reinforces or erodes your culture.

The Compounding Effect:

Weak Culture	Strong Culture
High turnover	Magnetic employer brand
Slow execution	Faster decisions
Founder burnout	Team that self-manages
Culture debt	Scalable growth

YOUR CULTURE STATEMENT

Before diving into templates, capture your culture vision in one powerful paragraph:

> *"We're building a company where creative problem-solvers thrive without bureaucracy slowing them down. We hire for curiosity over credentials, ship imperfect solutions to learn fast, and treat customer obsession as our competitive advantage. We win together and celebrate the hell out of it."*

✍■ YOUR TURN: Draft Your Culture Statement

Write 3-5 sentences that capture the *feeling* and *behaviors* you want to define your team:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

MODULE 2: CORE VALUES WORKSHOP

Translating Your Vision Into Behaviors That Scale

THE PROBLEM WITH MOST COMPANY VALUES

They're vague, unmemorable, and don't actually guide decisions. "Integrity" and "Excellence" sound nice but mean nothing when someone asks: "Should we delay the launch to fix this bug?"

Great values are:

1. **Specific** – Tied to real behaviors, not platitudes
2. **Memorable** – 3-5 max, easy to recall under pressure
3. **Differentiating** – They sound like YOU, not every company
4. **Actionable** – They help people make decisions independently

DISCOVERY PROMPTS: UNCOVER YOUR VALUES

Answer these questions honestly. Your values should emerge from the patterns.

■ **Think about your best day in business so far. What made it great?**

_____

■ **Who's someone you've loved working with? What specific behaviors made them exceptional?**

_____

■ **What's a decision you're proud of, even though it was hard or costly?**

_____

■ **What behavior have you seen that made you think, 'That's NOT how we do things here'?**

_____

■ **If you could only hire people who shared ONE trait, what would it be?**

_____

■ What would make you fire a customer or turn down revenue?

YOUR CORE VALUES FRAMEWORK

Instructions: Define 3-5 core values using this template. Each value needs a name, definition, and specific behavioral examples.

VALUE #1

Value Name:

What It Means (1-2 sentences):

What This Looks Like in Action (3 examples):

1. ■ Example: _____
2. ■ Example: _____
3. ■ Example: _____

What This Does NOT Look Like (anti-examples):

1. ■ Anti-example: _____

VALUE #2

Value Name:

What It Means (1-2 sentences):

What This Looks Like in Action (3 examples):

1. ■ Example: _____
2. ■ Example: _____
3. ■ Example: _____

What This Does NOT Look Like (anti-examples):

1. ■ Anti-example: _____

VALUE #3

Value Name:

What It Means (1-2 sentences):

What This Looks Like in Action (3 examples):

1. ■ Example: _____

2. ■ Example: _____

3. ■ Example: _____

What This Does NOT Look Like (anti-examples):

1. ■ Anti-example: _____

■ VALUES VALIDATION TEST

Before finalizing, run your values through these filters:

THE HIRING TEST

- ■ Would these values help me choose between two qualified candidates?
- ■ Can I picture asking interview questions based on these values?

THE DECISION TEST

- ■ Would these values guide a tough product/customer/investment decision?
- ■ Have I personally made decisions that align with these values?

THE DIFFERENTIATION TEST

- ■ Do these sound distinctly like MY company (not generic corporate-speak)?
- ■ Would a competitor roll their eyes at these or copy them?

THE MEMORY TEST

- ■ Can I recite all my values without looking?
- ■ Could my team member explain what each value means on the spot?

■ FOUNDER TIP: VALUES IN ACTION

Don't just post values on Notion—weave them into everything: Reference them in weekly standups, call them out in retrospectives, include them in your interview scorecard, use them as criteria in performance conversations. If "Move Fast, Learn Faster" is a value, ask candidates: *"Tell me about a time you launched something imperfect. What did you learn?"*

MODULE 3: TEAM RITUALS PLANNER

Creating Cultural Moments That Stick

WHY RITUALS MATTER

Culture isn't built in annual retreats. It's built in the small, repeated moments that become "just how we do things."

Rituals serve three purposes:

1. **Connection** – Combat isolation (especially for remote teams)
2. **Recognition** – Celebrate progress and wins consistently
3. **Learning** – Create space for growth and knowledge sharing

RITUAL CATEGORIES & EXAMPLES

DAILY RITUALS (5-15 minutes)

- Morning standup (async or live)
- End-of-day wins Slack thread
- Daily team question (e.g., "What's energizing you today?")

WEEKLY RITUALS (30-60 minutes)

- Friday wins & lessons learned
- Weekly demo/show-and-tell
- Rotating "Hot Seat" (team member shares work + gets feedback)

MONTHLY RITUALS (1-2 hours)

- All-hands with open Q&A;
- Values spotlight (recognize someone who embodied a value)
- Learning session (team member teaches something)
- Virtual coffee roulette (random 1:1 pairing)

QUARTERLY RITUALS (Half or full day)

- Offsite or virtual retreat
- Strategic planning workshop
- Culture audit & retrospective
- Customer empathy session (review feedback together)

YOUR RITUAL PLANNER

Create 3-5 rituals that fit your team's rhythm and reinforce your values.

RITUAL #1

Ritual Name: _____

Frequency: ■ Daily ■ Weekly ■ Bi-weekly ■ Monthly ■ Quarterly

Duration: _____ **Format:** ■ Synchronous ■ Asynchronous ■ Hybrid

Purpose (What cultural goal does this serve?):
_____

How It Works (Step-by-step):
_____
_____

Who Owns It: _____

Which Value(s) Does This Reinforce: _____

RITUAL #2

Ritual Name: _____

Frequency: ■ Daily ■ Weekly ■ Bi-weekly ■ Monthly ■ Quarterly

Duration: _____ **Format:** ■ Synchronous ■ Asynchronous ■ Hybrid

Purpose (What cultural goal does this serve?):
_____

How It Works (Step-by-step):
_____
_____

Who Owns It: _____

Which Value(s) Does This Reinforce: _____

RITUAL #3

Ritual Name: _____

Frequency: ■ Daily ■ Weekly ■ Bi-weekly ■ Monthly ■ Quarterly

Duration: _____ **Format:** ■ Synchronous ■ Asynchronous ■ Hybrid

Purpose (What cultural goal does this serve?):

_____

How It Works (Step-by-step):

_____

Who Owns It: _____

Which Value(s) Does This Reinforce: _____

◼ FOUNDER TIP: START SMALL, STAY CONSISTENT

Don't launch 10 rituals on day one. Pick 2-3 that feel natural and commit to them for 90 days. Rituals only work if they're consistent.

Red flags your ritual is dying:

- The team groans when it's scheduled
- It feels like a checkbox, not a moment people value
- No one notices when you skip it

Green flags your ritual is working:

- People reference it in other conversations
- Team members proactively contribute without reminders
- New hires ask about it in onboarding

MODULE 4: RECOGNITION & FEEDBACK LOG

Building a Culture of Appreciation That Feels Real

WHY RECOGNITION SYSTEMS FAIL

Most companies treat recognition as an afterthought or a once-a-year performance review. That's too late and too infrequent.

What great recognition looks like:

- ■ **Frequent** – Weekly, not annually
- ■ **Specific** – Names the behavior and the impact
- ■ **Peer-driven** – Not just top-down from managers
- ■ **Values-aligned** – Reinforces what matters most

RECOGNITION TRACKER TEMPLATE

Use this log to capture and celebrate wins in real time. Review monthly to identify patterns and ensure everyone feels seen.

MONTH: _____

Date	Team Member	What They Did	Value	Recognized By

FEEDBACK PROMPT CARDS

Use these frameworks to give recognition that lands.

THE SPECIFIC PRAISE FORMULA

Template:
"[Name], I noticed [specific behavior/action]. This is a perfect example of [company value]. The impact was [specific result/outcome]. Thank you for [how it helped the team/customer/business]."

Example:
"Jamal, I noticed you stayed late to help debug the customer issue even though it wasn't your project. This is a perfect example of 'Customer Obsession.' Because of your help, we turned an angry user into a raving fan who just referred two clients. Thank you for putting the team and customer first."

THE GROWTH FEEDBACK FORMULA (Constructive)

Template:
"I've noticed [specific behavior]. I want to share this because I believe you're capable of [higher standard]. Here's what I'd love to see: [specific alternative behavior]. This would help you/us [specific benefit]. Can we talk through how to make that shift?"

Example:
"I've noticed you've been quiet in team meetings lately. I want to share this because I believe your perspective is valuable and I know you have strong ideas. Here's what I'd love to see: share one insight or question in each meeting, even if it's half-formed. This would help us make better decisions and help you build visibility. Can we talk through how to make that shift?"

THE PEER SHOUTOUT FORMULA

Template:
"Shoutout to [Name] for [what they did]! This made my day/week/job easier because [impact]. You're crushing [value]! ■"

Example:
"Shoutout to Maria for jumping in to cover customer support when I was slammed with the product launch! This made my week infinitely less stressful and our customers didn't miss a beat. You're crushing 'We Win Together'! ■"

■ FOUNDER TIP: OPERATIONALIZE APPRECIATION

1. **Weekly Ritual:** End every team meeting with "Who do you want to shout out this week?"

2. **Slack Channel:** Create a #wins or #props channel for anytime recognition

3. **Quarterly Ritual:** Give out value-based awards (fun names, not cheesy trophies)

4. **Onboarding:** Train every new hire on how to give great feedback using your formulas

5. **Manager 1:1s:** Reserve 5 minutes to review who they've recognized and who might be overlooked

Recognition mistake to avoid: Generic praise like "great job" or "you're awesome." That's forgettable. Specific, values-tied recognition sticks.

MODULE 5: CULTURE SCALING STRATEGIES

Preserving Your Culture While Growing Fast

THE SCALING CHALLENGE

Your first 10 hires absorbed culture by osmosis—working closely with you, seeing how decisions get made, feeling the vibe. But hire 25 through 50? They never met you in the early days.

The culture decay risk:

- New hires don't understand "why we do things this way"
- Middle managers recreate the cultures they came from (not yours)
- Remote workers feel disconnected from the cultural core
- Speed of execution creates shortcuts that contradict values

STRATEGY #1: CULTURE-FIRST HIRING

Hiring is your #1 culture-building (or destroying) lever.

Hiring Process Checklist:

- ■ Job descriptions reference 1-2 core values explicitly
- ■ Interview scorecard includes values-based questions
- ■ Team interviews include culture-fit assessment (not just skills)
- ■ You check references with culture questions
- ■ Final decision includes 'gut check': Does this person make the culture stronger?

STRATEGY #2: CULTURAL ONBOARDING

Your onboarding should feel like an immersion in your culture, not just an orientation to tools.

Cultural Onboarding Checklist:

- ■ Day 1: Founder explains company story, mission, and values personally
- ■ Week 1: New hire gets paired with a 'culture buddy' (not their manager)
- ■ Week 1: New hire shadows 3 different people to see values in action

- Week 2: New hire participates in at least 2 team rituals
- Week 3: New hire presents 'What I've learned about our culture' in team meeting
- 30-Day Check-in: Manager asks about cultural resonance and clarity
- 60-Day Assignment: New hire contributes to one cultural initiative

STRATEGY #3: VALUES IN PERFORMANCE & GROWTH

If values don't show up in performance conversations, they're just wall art.

Performance Review Framework:

Evaluate on TWO dimensions: Results AND Values Alignment

Results	Values Alignment	Action
■ High	■ High	PROMOTE & CELEBRATE This is your model employee
■ High	■ Low	COACH AGGRESSIVELY Talented jerk who will poison culture
■ Low	■ High	SUPPORT & DEVELOP Right fit, wrong role or needs training
■ Low	■ Low	EXIT QUICKLY No ambiguity. Not the right place

STRATEGY #4: REMOTE & HYBRID CULTURE SCALING

Remote work doesn't kill culture—lack of intentionality does.

Remote Culture Playbook:

- ■ Over-communicate values in every channel (Slack, Notion, Email, Zoom)
- ■ Create async rituals that work across time zones
- ■ Use video strategically (weekly all-hands = video; daily standup = async text)
- ■ Build 'water cooler' moments digitally (random coffee chats, #random channel)
- ■ Bring the team together IRL at least once a year (quarterly if budget allows)
- ■ Make decision-making transparent (share the 'why' in public channels)
- ■ Celebrate wins visibly (don't let remote work hide great work)

STRATEGY #5: WHEN CULTURE FEELS OFF

Culture drift happens. Catch it early with regular audits.

Quarterly Culture Audit Questions:

1. On a scale of 1-10, how well do you understand our company values?

2. Can you give an example of a recent decision that reflected our values?

3. Do you feel recognized for living our values? If not, what's missing?

4. What's one cultural strength we should protect as we grow?

5. What's one cultural risk or gap you're noticing?

6. If you could change one thing about our culture, what would it be?

Review responses with your leadership team and adjust.

■ **FOUNDER TIP: CULTURE IS A DAILY PRACTICE**

You can't hire a Chief Culture Officer and walk away. Founders set culture by what you celebrate, what you tolerate, what you model, and who you promote. Culture doesn't scale by accident. It scales by design and repetition.

MODULE 6: OPTIONAL EXTRAS

Bonus Templates to Make Culture Tangible

EXTRA #1: FOUNDER CULTURE MANIFESTO

Purpose: A living document that captures your cultural vision, non-negotiables, and team commitments.

OUR CULTURE MANIFESTO

Who We Are:
_____
_____

What We Believe:
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

What We Don't Do:
_____
_____
_____

Our Commitments to Each Other:
_____
_____
_____

Signed,

Founder/CEO: _____ Date: _____

EXTRA #2: VIRTUAL CULTURE WALL

Purpose: A living digital space where culture becomes visible—especially powerful for remote teams.

What to Include:

Section 1: Our Values – Visual representation of each core value with real team examples

Section 2: Values in Action – Photo gallery of team moments that embodied values

Section 3: Team Shoutouts & Wins – Running feed of peer recognition and accomplishments

Section 4: Culture Stories – Short stories from team members ("Why I joined," "Proud moments")

Section 5: Inside Jokes & Traditions – The weird, funny, human stuff that makes your team YOURS

Tools to Build This: Notion page, Figma board, Slack canvas, or dedicated website page

EXTRA #3: CULTURE AUDIT CHECKLIST

Purpose: A diagnostic tool to identify cultural health or decay.

Instructions: Rate each statement 1-5 (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree). Scores below 3 are red flags.

CULTURE CLARITY

- ■ Our team can recite our core values without looking them up **Score: ___/5**
- ■ Our values clearly differentiate us from competitors **Score: ___/5**
- ■ New hires understand our culture within their first 30 days **Score: ___/5**

CULTURE CONSISTENCY

- ■ Our values show up in hiring, performance reviews, and decision-making **Score: ___/5**
- ■ Leadership models the values, even under pressure **Score: ___/5**
- ■ We call out behavior that contradicts our values **Score: ___/5**

CULTURE CONNECTION

- ■ Team members feel recognized and appreciated regularly **Score: ___/5**
- ■ We have rituals that bring the team together consistently **Score: ___/5**
- ■ Remote/distributed team members feel as connected as in-office folks **Score: ___/5**

CULTURE SCALING

- ■ Our culture has stayed strong as we've grown **Score: ___/5**
- ■ We're intentional about who we hire based on cultural fit **Score: ___/5**
- ■ We regularly audit and adjust our culture strategies **Score: ___/5**

TOTAL SCORE: ___/60

Scoring Guide:

- **50-60:** Exceptional culture. Keep doing what you're doing.
- **40-49:** Strong foundation, but watch for drift as you scale.
- **30-39:** Culture exists but isn't deeply embedded. Time to operationalize it.
- **Below 30:** Culture is aspirational, not actual. Urgent work needed.

■ **FOUNDER TIP: CULTURE AUDITS AREN'T ONE-TIME**

Run this quarterly (or at least twice a year) to catch issues early. If scores drop in a specific area, dig deeper with team surveys, review recent decisions, and recommit to rituals that reinforce culture.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

Culture is Your Competitive Advantage

Most founders obsess over product-market fit and forget about **culture-market fit**—the magnetic pull that makes top talent choose you over a bigger paycheck elsewhere.

Your culture is:

- The reason customers forgive you when you mess up
- The reason employees stay through hard pivots and late nights
- The reason investors bet on you when the metrics aren't perfect yet
- The reason your company still feels like "you" when you're at 50 people

This kit isn't homework. It's infrastructure.

You're not filling out templates to check a box. You're building the invisible scaffolding that will hold your company together when revenue is uncertain, competitors are circling, and someone has to make a tough call without you in the room.

Your Next Steps:

- **Week 1:** Complete Module 1 & 2 (Culture Statement + Core Values)
- **Week 2:** Launch 2-3 rituals from Module 3
- **Week 3:** Start tracking recognition using Module 4
- **Ongoing:** Revisit Module 5 as you hire and scale
- **Quarterly:** Run the Culture Audit (Module 6) and adjust

Remember:
Culture isn't built in a day. But it's lost in one bad decision.

Build it with intention. Protect it fiercely. Scale it deliberately.

Your team is watching.

Ready to build a company people are proud to be part of?

Let's go.

This Culture Building Kit was designed for founders who lead with heart, move with speed, and refuse to sacrifice culture for growth.

Questions? Feedback? Success stories?
Share your journey with the Entrepreneuria community at **Entrepreneuria.io**