

Understanding Organizational Culture

Ernesto M. Rodriguez, Chief
Austin/Travis County EMS



Learning Objectives

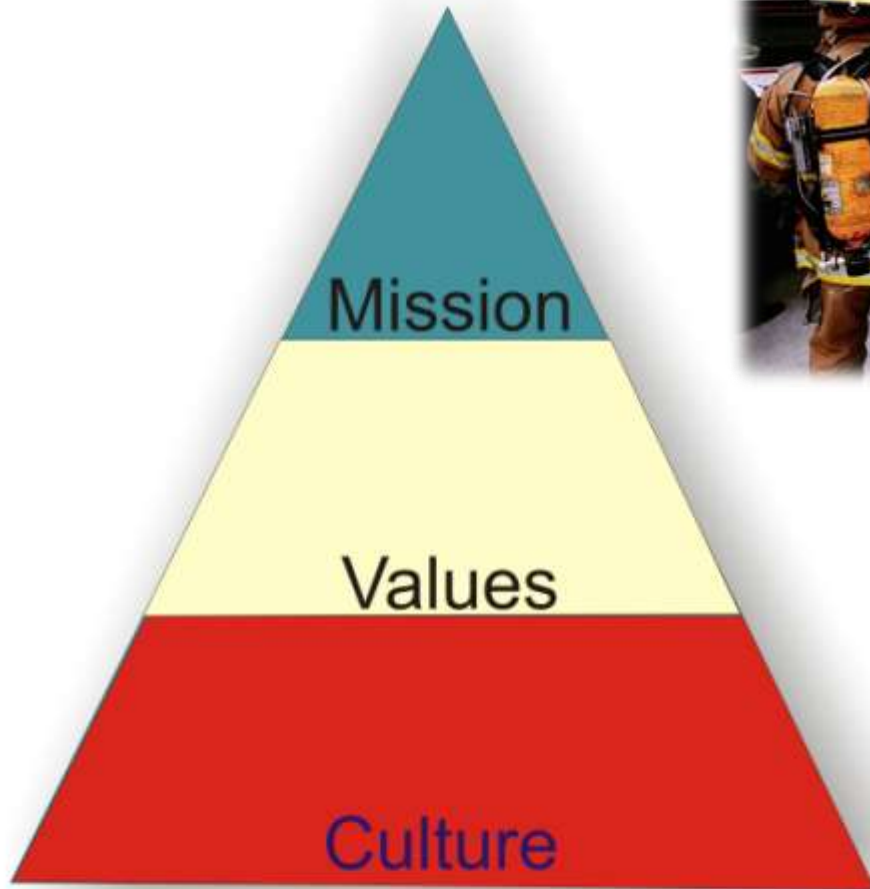
- Define Organizational Culture
- Establish importance of culture
- Learn how to evaluate current culture
- Signs that you may need to change it
- Changing culture
- Responsibility for culture
- Case study in progress

So What is Organizational Culture

- Unwritten description of your organization
- Answers the question “How are you going to act?”
- Often described by employees with phrases that contain “They” or “We”
- Relayed in the stories you hear inside your organization
- Deeply held assumptions about values, beliefs, and norms



Does Organizational Culture Matter?



Are there any indicators that your culture might need a change?

- You know your culture might need to change if...
 - Your organization lacks diversity
 - You have more than two generations working together
 - Your organization doesn't meet performance expectations
 - Your citizens aren't supportive
 - Your employee moral is poor

How can you figure out what your culture really is?

- Ask your employees
 - What happens when you make a mistake?
 - Do you trust your supervisor?
 - Does management care what you think?
 - Do you have good tools to work with?
 - How much training do you get every year?
 - What kind of stuff gets celebrated?
 - What kind of stuff gets you into trouble?



Ten Perception Areas to Explore

- Rules & policies
- Goals & measures
- Customs & norms
- Training
- Ceremonies & events
- Management behaviors
- Rewards & recognition
- Communications
- Physical environment
- Organizational structure

Changing Your Culture

- Concentrate on the gaps between the current culture and your desired culture
- Begin to influence the stories within your organization – replace fiction with fact
- Realign areas where your desired culture clashes with current practices
- Compare your intentions to your actions
- Be intentional about the changes you desire



Who's Responsible for Culture?

- Top Executive is ultimately responsible
 - Evaluating current culture
 - Identifying gaps
 - Intentionally reforming culture
 - Transforming the organization
 - Setting the example
 - Holding others accountable
- Everyone has to commit

ATCEMS a Case Study in Progress

- From Leader to Leadership [open](#)
- From Employee to Owner
- Strategic Planning
 - SWOT Analysis
 - Community Needs
 - Performance Reviews
- Customer Satisfaction
- Employee Job Satisfaction
- Cultural Perception

