

# 5 THINGS ALL GREAT LEADERS DO TO CREATE A CULTURE OF LEADERSHIP

BY BILL HOGG

*This is the first in our [leadership speaker](#) series of articles that looks at stimulating change for passion & profits.*

What's the secret to creating a culture of leadership that will take your organization forward for years to come? There is no secret -- it starts at the top with you.

In my experience as a [leadership speaker and consultant](#), it starts with senior leaders reflecting internally -- to understand their purpose, gain clarity about what they stand for and what the organization stands for -- and identifying how to communicate this with the rest of your organization.

It is the strength of individuals who make an organization world class. And companies that make [leadership development](#) a strategic priority have the ability to attract and retain the best leadership talent, and move to the head of the pack.

## Leadership Culture Starts at the Top

Transformational leaders understand that a culture of leadership doesn't start with a written document, but by the behaviours they model every day. You can't simply write down what you want your leadership culture to be and expect others to follow. Your culture is made up of the values you live daily -- and those are not aspirational -- they are actual.

Leaders must understand and communicate a clear vision to create an environment that attracts people who share their same values.

You lay the groundwork by being clear with your purpose, and by leading by example and modeling the behaviours they would like to see practiced. Only then can you begin to establish the right structures and processes to foster and reinforce the desired culture.

If you want to develop great leaders, you first need to learn to be a great leader yourself.

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## 5 Things All Great Leaders Do to Create a Culture of Leadership

While it's easy to assume that great leaders were born to lead -- and some are -- more often great leadership is a result hard work, gaining experience over time, continuously evolving, and being open to learning new skills and trying different approaches. Thankfully, most of us were not born a natural leader, we had to learn -- and this willingness to grow and develop will help create a culture of leadership.

Here are 5 things that great leaders do to help create a culture of leadership:

1. **Define clarity of purpose:** All great leaders find their purpose. It's clearly defined, and it is the catalyst for everything they do. Purpose helps to fuel their work ethic and drive their passion for what they do. More importantly, they create a purpose that resonates with others, and they communicate organizational

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values and vision in a way that brings people together to rally behind their vision, creating a strong culture of leadership.

- 2. Walk the talk:** You must reinforce company culture and values daily and with consistency. Leadership culture is a living and breathing entity. Strong leaders understand that organizational culture is dynamic and know it's critical to reflect a culture of leadership through their actions. If your team sees you practicing what you preach, they will be more open to buy-in. Values should be a regular touch point in decision-making to ensure they are being lived every day -- not just when it is easy or convenient.

Leaders also establish a culture of leadership when they hire new people by hiring for character over competence (Read [Three Critical Elements for Finding the Right People to Work in High Performance Environments](#)) and establishing expectations clearly during onboarding, training and coaching, and by putting people in leadership positions who share the same values and live them consistently. Read more: [Why Leaders Need to Reinforce Company Culture and Values](#).

- 3. Work on self-awareness:** Leaders need to be willing to change first -- before organizations can change and transform. Leaders need to have the ability to be self-aware, as well as organizationally and culturally aware, of the impact of their actions and decisions. They allow others to have a voice, they are open to critique and outside ideas, and they are willing to grow individually and professionally. Read more: [Leaders Need to Change First Before Organizations Change](#).
- 4. Recognize the value of people:** Great leaders understand that the most valuable resource in their organization is people. They invest in people and help them develop their own leadership capacity -- scaling it throughout the organization. Transformational leaders have a genuine desire to lift people up to achieve their own success.
- 5. Create transformative organizational change:** Leaders themselves need to be transformative in order to inspire higher performance and a customer-focused culture. As discussed in, [6 Ways for Leaders to Create Organizational Change](#), "how you approach change is just as important as what you want to change. If you want to be a [transformative leader](#) and create long lasting organizational change, you need to approach it in a way which minimizes negative reactions, is aligned with business strategies and corporate cultures, and is inclusive in nature."

Anyone can be in a leadership position, but this doesn't mean they are a leader. There is a difference between managing and leading. Managers look after things/checklists (budgets, invoices, scheduling, reports) and usually do so from behind a desk.

However, people are led. Great leaders know that to connect with their teams, they need to be engaged -- ready to step in and support their people, even working side by side to get the job done. Leaders take the time to build their social skills and interact with others so that there is a strong teamwork atmosphere.

Forget about looking for the secret formula or shortcuts to create a culture of leadership. You won't find them. Start by taking a look in the mirror and reflecting on your own leadership. This is the first place to look for answers about how to create a culture of leadership.

*The next article in our [leadership speaker](#) series will examine the critical elements for finding the right people for your organization.*

For more information about this topic or to book Bill for a [leadership speaking](#) engagement, feel free to [contact Bill Hogg](#) or visit us online at [www.BillHogg.ca](http://www.BillHogg.ca) where you can [sign up to receive an article](#) like this each month or download [Bill's 1-sheet](#).

## Change Instigator | Transformational Leadership Expert | Professional Speaker



*Bill is the "just do it" guy who has walked in your shoes. He is recognized as the **Performance Excelerator™** because of his uncanny ability to stimulate change, transform organizations -- to create long-term, profitable relationships with customers and accelerate performance, productivity and profits with leaders and employees.*

*Bill provides world class executive consulting, dynamic keynote presentations and transformative workshops for clients that include; Anheuser-Busch InBev, The Bay, Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan, Pita Pit, RBH, State Farm Insurance, Toronto International Film Festival and ServiceOntario.*

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