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BALTIMORE

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culture  
shock  
how to give your corporate  
culture the jolt it needs

a marriage of

GIANTS

Can a \$650 million firm  
acquire 2,000 new faces  
overnight without losing  
its personal touch?



# culture shock

*Give your corporate culture the jolt it needs*

Companies invest a lot of time and money in attracting talent, servicing customers and applying quick-fix morale boosters. But perhaps the cheaper – and more effective – approach is to concentrate on cultivating a strong and positive corporate culture. If you make your workplace a place employees want to be, productivity and service increases are bound to follow. SmartCEO asked these CEOs how they would describe their corporate culture, the role they play as leaders and why their cultures give them a competitive edge.



**BRANDON SCIVOLETTE, CEO,**  
Elite Moving Labor LLC

**My Culture:** "I would describe it as vibrant and optimistic. All of our employees and licensees are 100 percent trusted to make their own decisions and we listen to them no matter what."

**My Role:** "It's important for the leader to establish how they want everyone to act and do business, and from there, it trickles down."

**Why It Matters:** "The culture does a lot for you, working behind the scenes. If you have motivated employees and you keep them happy, the longer you have them and they work a lot harder and go out of their way. It gives us an extra edge."

**A. K. JAY JAISWAL, CEO,** Ascend Healthcare Systems LLC

**My Culture:** "One of the elements of our culture is that you should say what you need to say, but always remember that you cannot take it back. If you have said too many irrelevant things, you make yourself irrelevant. We don't have group discussions and exchange of ideas. We encourage people to come up with bright ideas. We make them own it. We are very frank in our conversation. No one is allowed to take an offense."

**My Role:** "My role is to accept responsibility for all bad in the company. If there was ever an example of the buck stops here, it stops at my desk."

**Why It Matters:** "If we had a culture in which individuals did not own the responsibility, they would be waiting for someone to authorize them to do something. To wait to solve a problem because you are uncertain is not an option."

**AL RUBEING,**  
president, Rubeling & Associates



**My Culture:** "Teamwork is a really big thing here. No one is out for his or her own personal gain. We trust our people. They appreciate the partners in the firm because we can relate to their world. We aren't aloof people – we've been where they are. Management will never let you fail."

**My Role:** "How I affect the culture comes down to my vision. I feel I'm here to help people meet their mission. I've been blessed with talents of being an effective communicator and leadership, and I like to get things done."

**Why It Matters:** "I'm a student of leadership, and what makes me tick is that if you treat people with dignity and respect, it will breed loyalty."

**RICHARD KANE,** president and CEO,  
International Limousine Service

**My Culture:** "I think culture brings together the physical workspace, high-caliber folks and the company's mission, which in our case is a satisfied client."

**My Role:** "Part of my job as a CEO is to provide the tools for our team. I'm putting money into the company to make sure the folks we attract are the kind of people who want to work in our professional environment. So you attract a better-qualified individual that is more committed to the mission."

**Why It Matters:** "If you focus on the employee, what will end up happening is the client will see that, indirectly. Ultimately, the client is taken care of."



"Culture is what happens when no one is looking. It's the way things get done around here. It's how things happen."



**KELLIE TOMNEY,**  
owner and CEO,  
Employer Brand Works  
Pty Ltd

## ART IMITATES LIFE

The hidden benefits of BAE's corporate artwork

It's impossible to miss when you walk BAE Systems Land & Armaments Group's Arlington, VA-headquarters: a multi-story mobile with cables stretched floor to ceiling. Look closer and you'll notice something special about the art installation: it's made up of gears, sprockets and track marks woven among springs and light bulbs and thinking brains. It's not just another vanilla corporate sculpture; it's a piece that represents what BAE is all about – using its employees' brain power to build some of the world's most sophisticated armored combat vehicles and

