Purepost Knowledge Center

Personal Development Series
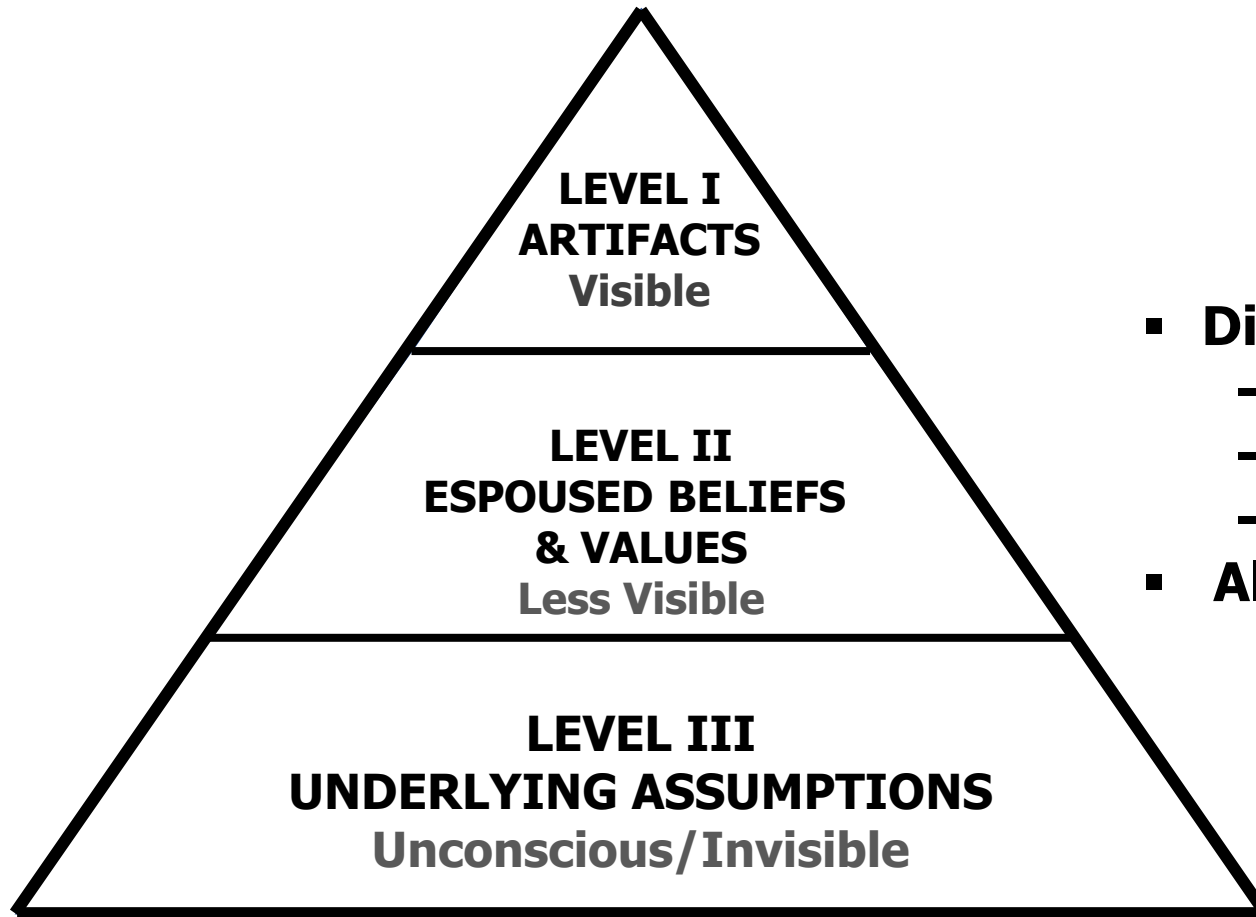## Module 7
Understanding the Impact of Culture in the Workplace

Webinar Handouts

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Workplace Culture Formal Definition

1. A **pattern** of shared **basic assumptions**,

2. Invented, discovered, or developed by a given group,

3. As it learns to **cope** with its problems of **external adaption** and **internal integration**,

4. That has worked well enough to be considered valid and therefore,

5. Is to be **taught to new members** of the group as the

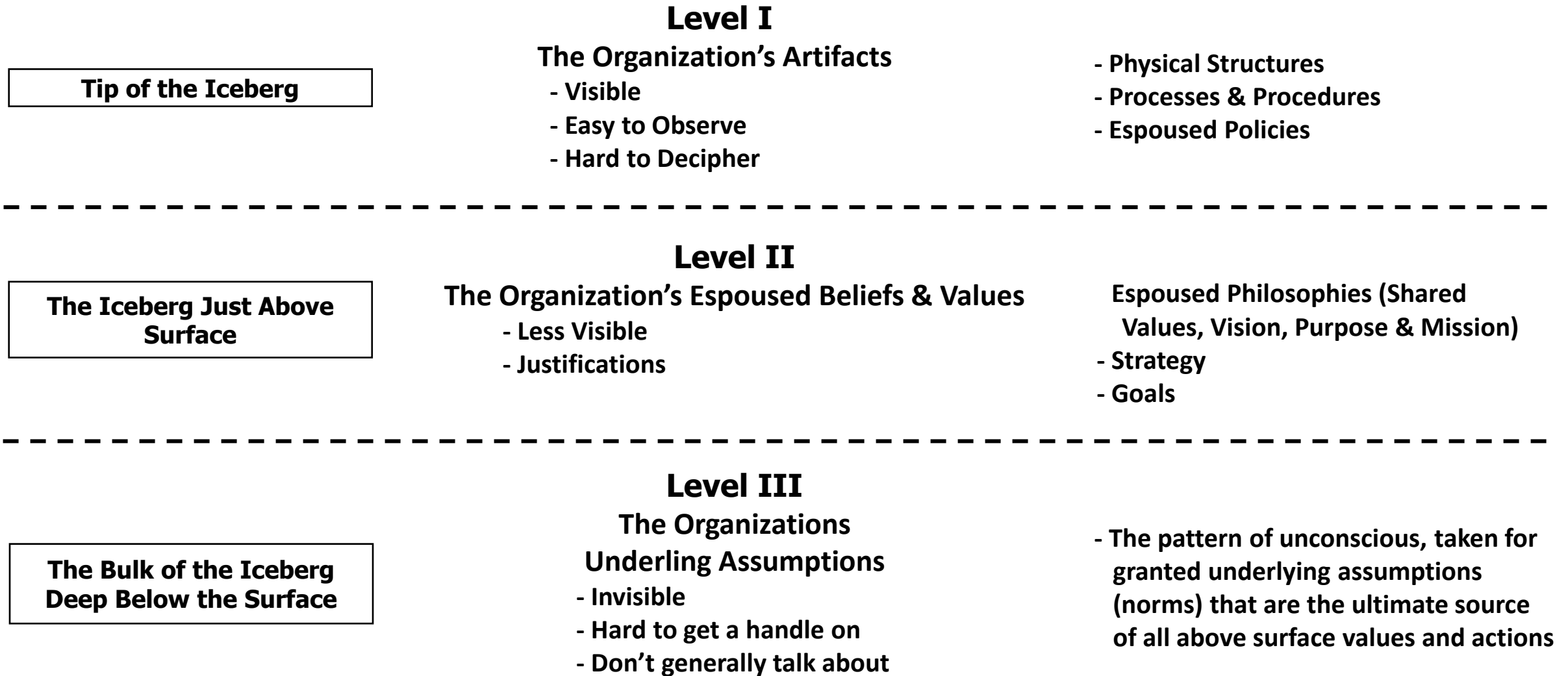6. Correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to those problems.

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Three Levels of Workplace Culture

**LEVEL I
ARTIFACTS**
Visible

**LEVEL II
ESPOUSED BELIEFS
& VALUES**
Less Visible

**LEVEL III
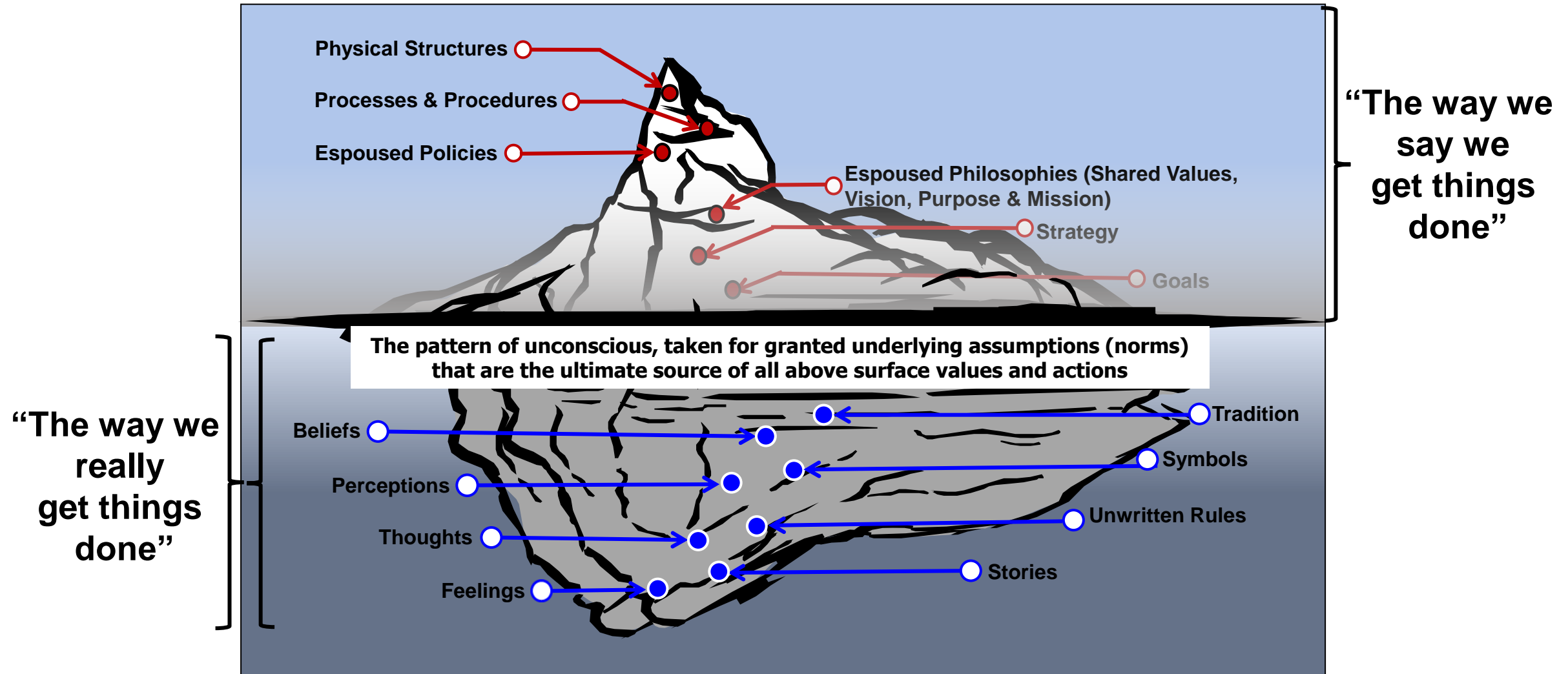UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS**
Unconscious/Invisible

Edgar Schein Culture Model

- **Divides Culture into Three Levels**
  - **The Upper Level**
  - **The Middle Level**
  - **The Lower Level**
- **Also referred to as the Iceberg Model**

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How Schein's Three Levels of Culture Lines Up with the Iceberg Analogy

Level I
The Organization's Artifacts

Tip of the Iceberg

- Visible
- Easy to Observe
- Hard to Decipher

- Physical Structures
- Processes & Procedures
- Espoused Policies

- -

Level II
The Organization's Espoused Beliefs & Values

The Iceberg Just Above Surface

- Less Visible
- Justifications

Espoused Philosophies (Shared Values, Vision, Purpose & Mission)
- Strategy
- Goals

- -

Level III
The Organizations Underling Assumptions

The Bulk of the Iceberg Deep Below the Surface

- Invisible
- Hard to get a handle on
- Don't generally talk about

- The pattern of unconscious, taken for granted underlying assumptions (norms) that are the ultimate source of all above surface values and actions

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Ignoring the Invisible Cultural Elements when joining an organization can Sink Your Workplace Satisfaction, Relationships & Progression

Physical Structures

Processes & Procedures

Espoused Policies

Espoused Philosophies (Shared Values, Vision, Purpose & Mission)

Strategy

Goals

"The way we say we get things done"

The pattern of unconscious, taken for granted underlying assumptions (norms) that are the ultimate source of all above surface values and actions

"The way we really get things done"

Beliefs

Perceptions

Thoughts

Feelings

Tradition

Symbols

Unwritten Rules

Stories

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The Role of Culture

1. To attract and keep a talented staff.

2. To drive engagement and retention.

3. To improve relationships among employees.

4. To create an environment for healthy development.

5. To create satisfied employees and increase productivity.

6. To drive financial performance.

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The Influence of Culture

Culture is an Important Influencer in all Workplaces

- It determines how pleasant or toxic your work environment is.

- It has a direct influence on how employees fit into the organization.

- It affects the organization's ability to attract and retain employees.

- It influences what goes on from the time of initial application, through to the hiring process and finally through to the first few weeks on the new job.

- During this time both the hirer and new employee are attempting to confirm whether they are the right cultural fit for one another.

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10 Signs of a Great Workplace Culture

1. Effective communication
2. Diversity
3. Learning opportunities
4. Recognition
5. Respect and fairness

6. Meaning and purpose
7. Strong Teamwork
8. Goals and strategies
9. Respect and fairness
10. Strong leadership

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10 Concerning Signs of a Toxic Workplace Culture

1. People don't communicate, smile, joke and reinforce one another.

2. People are very concerned about job titles, job descriptions and levels in the hierarchy.

3. Insistence on rules and policies over people and everybody is afraid of getting into trouble for breaking the rules.

4. Managers and employees make up two completely separate groups that seldom interact.

5. Employees are unhappy, nobody talks about it openly.

6. There is much talk about infractions and demerits but little to no recognition of extraordinary efforts or achievements.

7. People do not speak up even when they are presented with impossible goals, ridiculous plans or patently stupid ideas they are expected to implement.

8. The informal grapevine is many times more effective as a communications network than any type of official company communication.

9. Employees have little to no latitude in performing their jobs.

10. Fear is palpable in the environment and there is no absolutely no sense of workplace community.

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Ways to Determine a Company's Culture

Additional ways To Find Out What A Company's Culture Is Really Like

- Review the company's website.

- Visit Glassdoor or Salary.com. Search your target by 'company name,' and then delve into the section called, 'Working at ABC Company.

- Check out LinkedIn. Perform an Advanced People Search for folks in the company you are targeting.

- Navigate Facebook.

- Visit bizjournals.com.

- Conduct informational interviews.

- Dig into cultural Questions in your interview.

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Questions to Determine a Company's Culture

Five questions to get a sense of a company values and employee engagement:

1. What makes you proud to work at this company?

2. How does the organization support your professional development and career growth?

3. Is risk-taking encouraged, and what happens when people fail?

4. What role do company values play in hiring and performance reviews?

5. What's one thing you would change about the company if you could?

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Questions to Determine a Company's Culture

Five questions to understand conflict and politics at a company:

1. What causes conflict, and how is conflict resolved?

2. How would you describe "organizational politics" at the company?

3. How are decisions made when there's disagreement and stakes are high?

4. When and how do people like to give and receive feedback?

5. Titles aside, who in the organization has the power to get things done?

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Questions to Determine a Company's Culture

Five questions to gain insight into company's work environment:

1. What are some of the ways the company celebrates success?

2. How do you as a manager or if more appropriate, how does your manager support and motivate your team?

3. What kind of flexible work arrangements do people have?

4. Do you have a matching gifts program or sponsor volunteer events?

5. If you have a specific need, ask about it. For example, "I take my kids to school on Wednesdays, is it OK if I come in late once a week?" (Note: Save a question like this for a final interview.

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