Culture’s Role in the Ecosystem

Growing Entrepreneurial Communities
ESTABLISH A STRONG CULTURE
What is Culture?

A feeling of inclusiveness, trust and passion that bolsters change, innovation and the desire to make a significant difference.
Why is Culture Important?

- Fuels the energy
- Keeps bringing people back to the table
- Ensures a more sustainable effort
- Is enduring, healing and inclusive
What Does Culture Eat?
At the Table Together

“Don’t let culture eat strategy for breakfast. Have them feed each other.”

... Ken Favaro, Senior Partner at Strategy&
Today’s Agenda
How Culture Affects

• Targeting who you want to serve
• Working with disparate organizations
• Tackling silos
Identifying Primary and Secondary Audiences

• Start-ups or growth businesses
• Funders
• Service providers
• Economic development
One Size Does Not Fit All

• Each audience has different
  – Needs
  – Methods of learning
  – Ways they communicate
  – Cultures
• Getting their input the same way doesn’t work
Start-Ups & Early Stage

• Hungry for information and education
• Easier to reach them and get their attention
• Operational more than strategic
• One-to-many programs work well
Growth Companies

• More strategic than operational
• Expanding teams and markets
• Challenging to reach
• Rely on trusted sources
• Peer-to-peer is important
• Need to feel loved
Funders and Stakeholders

• Want to reach growth companies
• Will pay their dues with start-ups
• Desire a seat at the table
• Stretched for resources
• Need feedback and thank you’s
Fewer Headaches

Understanding cultures up front means fewer headaches down the road.
Disparate Audiences

• Traditional versus new thinkers
• Different cultures
• Is it even possible to pull them together?
Can Three Play Together?

THE STORY OF THREE CARS AND CULTURE
The Story

• Enterprise surpasses Hertz for #1 spot
• Purchased Alamo and National
• All three companies had different cultures and operations, and ways of approaching their customer
How the Story Ended

• Enterprise took advantage of National’s and Alamo’s operational experience at airports
• Enterprise’s culture was infused into National and Alamo
• Two years later, Enterprise, National and Alamo held the top three spots in annual J.D. Power and Associates study
Do I Really Need These People?  

*The Importance of Balance*

- Resisting temptation to pick and choose
- The lasting consequences of leaving someone out
The Story of the Wolf
Wicked Wolves, Grumpy Beavers, Pushy Bison and Annoying Elks

How to handle the critics
Outlasting the Critics

**Sooner or later**, the critics move on.

**Sooner or later**, the ones who told you that this isn’t the way it’s done, the ones who found time to sneer, they will find someone else to hassle.

**Sooner or later**, your work speaks for itself.

Outlasting the critics feels like it will take a very long time, but you’re more patient than they are.

... *Seth Godin*
Silos

• How they start
• Who they hurt
• How they change
How Silos Form

• We’re excited, so let’s get to it!
• Let’s all go do our own thing!
Too Many!

- Trip over each other
- Compete for audience
- Compete for attention
- Compete for money
- Confuse everyone
Who Do They Hurt?

• Entrepreneurs
  – Confused about who does what
  – Often still not served

• Funders
  – More requests and more confusion

• The silos themselves
  – Audience and money spread thin
  – More competition
How Do They Change?

• Breaking down sounds painful
• Connect instead
• Clear understanding and communication
• Clean up ineffective relationships and unresolved conflict
Bringing it Home

• Culture is essential and must come first
• You must get ready to be
  – Challenged and solve problems
  – Work with the wolves, elk, bison and beaver
  – In the middle, exude positivity, and garner and build trust.
• You must be hungry for change
• You must be a little bit crazy