

Quick Tip Sheet

Assessing a Workplace Culture

.....

Now more than ever, it is becoming increasingly important to work for a company or organization that fits your needs and values. Students want to feel that they belong in an organization and work for a place that not only values them for their skills but for who they are as a person. This Quick Tip Sheet will help you navigate how to assess an organization's workplace culture from a variety of perspectives.

Assessing a Workplace Culture: Online Research

One of the simplest ways to assess a company or organization for its workplace culture is to assess what they have made available online.

Workplace Culture: Company Website

- Review the "About" tab to learn of the company's mission, vision, and value statements.
- Check whether or not the company has a "People" section to learn more about the individuals working there by reading their biographies.
- Browse through the company's "news" or "updates" sections on the website to see what types of news, discussions, etc. the company is involved with.

Workplace Culture: Social Media Platforms

- Conduct a search on social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc. to learn of what type of content the company is sharing and talking about.
- Review the "stories" or previous posts and tweets from companies to learn of their stance on societal issues.
- Decipher whether or not the company is simply "showing face" for supporting important issues that you care about or if they are actually "doing the work".

Workplace Culture: Reviews from Past/Current Employees

- Use glassdoor.com to read reviews from former and current employees about the company and what it feels like to work there.
- If you have a LinkedIn account, search for the company on LinkedIn and then review the list of employees associated with the companies page. Message these employees to request some time to ask questions about the organization and culture

Quick Tip Sheet

Assessing a Workplace Culture

.....

Assessing a Workplace Culture: During Interviews

How do you ask about company culture?

- Start off by stating a value or need that you have and then ask if that value or need is present in their workplace:
 - *“I work best in a collaborative environment and only you know best if this is a collaborative environment. Can you tell me about whether or not you value collaboration in your workplace and if so could you provide an example of how that manifests?”*

Additional questions for assessing a workplace culture:

- *“Is there a lot of collaboration between different departments? If so, what does that look like?”*
 - This may give you some perspective as to whether or not the department is in a “silo” or if they truly are collaborative in nature.
- *“What does work/life balance look like within your organization?”*
 - This is a fair question to ask and gives you a sense of what their level of understanding and flexibility may be as it pertains to work/life balance.
- *“What is your management style?”, “What is your manager’s management style?”*
 - Asking this first question in your interview with the manager and then the second question if you interview with your future potential coworkers will allow you to determine if the team is on the same page.
- *“When you mention that there are resources available to support employees, what do you mean by this? People resources, financial resources?”*
 - This question can transition into a conversation about types of additional support that may be available. This can also be a transition to discussing salary and benefits.
- *“Who will I be interacting with the most and who are going to be my “go-to” people in this position?”*
 - The way in which this question is answered will provide you with perspective on how the company is organized and how much of a role this position plays in the company.

Potential “red flags” to consider:

- *“We are like a family here”* - At first this may sound nice but where is the boundary between personal and professional?
- *“We go above and beyond”* - This also sounds good, but, does this mean you are working more outside of your normal hours?
- *“We have so much fun here, it doesn’t feel like work”* - Sounds a bit too good to be true. You may want to ask for further clarification on this.