2024 State of Culture

Insights into the evolving role of culture from around the globe.





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The authors would like to thank the sponsors of this year's Global State of Culture study and report. Your support is greatly appreciated as we truly value your partnership.











elcome to the 2024 Global State of Culture Report, where we explore the ever-evolving workplace landscape! This year, we've gathered insights from a larger pool of participants compared to previous years, highlighting how organizations continue to adapt, grow, and innovate. From employee wellbeing to cultural drivers of profit and growth, our findings reveal both progress and areas for improvement as we navigate the future of work together.

In this year's report, we explore a variety of cultural attributes, beliefs, values, and assumptions that drive performance, we examine how the topic of organizational culture has evolved over the last few years, and we take a deep dive into topics like employee wellbeing, turnover, managing change, and customer outcomes.

Our study includes three key findings resulting from our analysis. We highlight the most notable year-over-year changes in scores by demographics and discuss the origin of these trends while providing conclusions and recommendations for organizations going forward. We identify trends among performance clusters, using the Culture Mosaic to discuss the drivers of Elite performers and Low Performers alike. Finally, we outline the cultural drivers of organizational performance outcomes such as sales growth, employee turnover, profit, and ability to achieve the organization's mission, and provide recommendations on ways to leverage culture to influence these organizational outcomes.

Employee engagement and well-being remain critical topics over the last few years of our research. In 2022, 31% of senior leaders reported significant increases in employee engagement, compared to 6% among

non-senior leaders. In 2023, 54% of Elite performers reported improvements in employee well-being. This report builds on those findings, examining how organizations are managing engagement and well-being, especially as concerns about burnout continue to grow.

Innovation continues to be a major focus of respondent organizations. In 2021, organizations that successfully pivoted during the pandemic reported higher scores in innovation, and in 2023, 20% of organizations reported developing new innovations as a result of changing conditions. This year, we delve deeper into how innovation remains a critical factor in organizational success and agility.

We invite you to enjoy this report, provide us with your thoughts and experiences, and let us know what areas of study would be most beneficial to you in the coming year as we continue this process into the future.

We thank you for your interest in learning more about these critical components of organizational success and hope you enjoy the journey.

The gC | GGS Research Team

Organizational culture

has long been recognized as a critical driver of performance, innovation, and adaptability. Over the past few years, our annual reports have highlighted the evolving nature of workplace culture around the globe, especially as organizations have faced unprecedented challenges. In 2021, as businesses navigated the COVID-19 pandemic, the importance of agility and remote work became clear when 68% of respondents believed that remote work would continue to be a dominant model. By 2022, this shift had solidified, with a majority of respondents acknowledging that workplace culture had a direct impact on employee engagement, customer satisfaction, and innovation, with 85% of senior leaders emphasizing its influence on these outcomes.

Each year, our research has reinforced the idea that culture is more than just a buzzword—it's a strategic enabler of long-term success in organizations among all sectors and industries. In 2023, we saw a strong correlation between organizations that prioritized culture and their ability to innovate and thrive in times of disruption, with 20% of respondents reporting that their organizations had developed new innovations as a result of adapting to external pressures. This year, as we look back on those insights, we continue to build upon the foundational lessons from past reports—deepening our understanding of how culture shapes organizational resilience and growth.

As the workplace continues to evolve, themes of remote work, employee engagement, well-being, and innovation have remained at the forefront of our research. In the 2021 report, we explored how organizations adapted to the abrupt shift toward remote and hybrid work, with many respondents predicting a permanent change in the way work is conducted. By 2022, a majority of respondents recognized that this shift was not temporary. That year, 75% of respondents agreed that culture was critical to business performance and 56% of senior leaders reported improvements in customer satisfaction due to their evolving workplace strategies. The 2023 report further reinforced the need for a well-aligned culture, revealing that organizations who prioritized agility and collaboration were more likely to innovate and thrive.

In 2024, we continue to expand on these themes, delving deeper into how organizations are responding to the challenges of sustaining engagement, fostering innovation, and promoting employee well-being in an increasingly flexible work environment. **Building on insights from the previous three years of research, this report provides a holistic view of how culture shapes not only organizational performance but also long-term adaptability and success.**

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4⁺ DECADES

of empirical research has established the link between various aspects of organizational culture and performance.

Theoretical Background

In our fast-paced world, adaptability is key for individuals and organizations to stay relevant. Research consistently shows that organizational culture plays a crucial role, not just in adapting to change but also in excelling amidst it. The authors of this report, backed by extensive experience, have been deeply involved in shaping successful organizational cultures. Our handson involvement with diverse teams globally, coupled with years of research, has led to the development of the Mosaic Performance Framework. This practical framework helps us grasp and communicate culture and climate effectively, giving organizations the tools they need to navigate change smoothly.

Literature strongly supports the significant impact of organizational culture on performance. It influences various aspects of sustainable workplace dynamics, including productivity, adaptability, customer satisfaction, loyalty, employee engagement, organizational citizenship behaviors, and safety.

Mosaic Performance Framework

Sustainable organizational performance is dependent on a multitude of factors—a mosaic—that must be carefully managed, balanced, and adapted to best meet the challenges presented both in the external environment and internal context. The Mosaic Performance Framework is supported by a battery of assessments designed to be used together over time to give leaders the insight they need to proactively shape their performance. Rooted in Quinn & Rohrbach's theoretical model known as the Competing Values Framework, the Mosaic Performance Framework provides organizations with the ability to understand how their culture, leadership, and workforce capability create a dynamic that either supports or derails their ability to achieve their goals (Quinn & Rohrbaugh, 1983).

This battery of assessments consists of three separate assessments: The Culture Mosaic, Team Mosaic, and Leadership Mosaic. For this report, we focus on the Culture Mosaic. The Culture Mosaic hones in on the work practices and behaviors that high-performing organizations display, and links those behaviors to key performance outcomes. It also explores how the natural dynamic tensions that exist within an organization can impact culture change efforts. Specifically, progress in one area of the model may come at the expense of other important areas of culture. The Culture Mosaic seeks to understand and manage these dynamic tensions while providing a framework to institute meaningful culture change within an organization. To concretely examine these tensions, we distinguished values in four distinct categories: Inspire, Deliver, Enable and Adapt, each comprised of three subcategories.

Background + Framework

This section provides an overview of the Culture Mosaic survey and assessment tool used as the basis for this research.

BACKGROUND AND FRAMEWORK

METHODOLOGY

Mosaic

A research-based framework used to assess culture and climate in ways that link to a wide variety of business performance outcomes.



The Culture Mosaic is comprised of four dimensions of organizational culture and climate that impact organizational performance:

INSPIRE

A commitment to purpose and strategy that is underpinned by and aligned to values.

DELIVER

Disciplined and efficient execution enabled by collaboration and coordinated decision making.

ENABLE

An organization where learning and capability development are valued, and empowered teams thrive.

ADAPT

Customer intimacy coupled with an orientation towards the future and the capacity to enact change.

Learn more about The Culture Mosaic.

Methodology

The 2024 State of Culture Report built upon the same rigorous research methodology used in previous years. Data was gathered through a comprehensive 60-item survey that covered various aspects of organizational culture, including employee engagement, innovation, decision-making, and well-being.

This year's survey gathered significantly more responses, allowing us to capture a broader and more representative view of organizational culture trends. Our larger sample size enhanced the statistical significance of our findings, providing more robust insights into how culture impacts performance across organizations of varying sizes and structures. Additionally, our study gathered responses from a more varied group of respondents, thereby improving the validity of our findings. While the survey framework has remained consistent to ensure year-over-year comparability, the growing number of respondents each year is encouraging and allows for more granular analysis and identification of emerging trends.

Demographic information collected this year included respondents' age, organizational level, tenure, and

organizational size. This helped us examine how different groups experience workplace culture and allows for a nuanced analysis of trends. Unlike previous years where industry segmentation was explored, this year's report focused more on how workplace culture affects individuals across these demographic dimensions, providing a fresh perspective on how employees at different levels of the organization perceive and engage with their work environment.

The Survey

The 60-item State of Culture Survey consists of questions on a 5-point Likert scale and matrix-style questions. Topics in this year's study included a wide variety of items pertaining to organizational culture, climate, organizational performance, and employee performance metrics. Every respondent received the full battery of items.

Target Population

Since any given organization naturally creates its own culture (and sometimes sub-cultures) our target population for gathering responses to the State of Culture Survey was any employee who experienced

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their organization's culture in some way. We sought responses from individuals in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors and aimed to gather responses from organizational leaders and individual contributors alike. To segment our pool of respondents, we asked them to optionally self-report other demographics such as age, education level and gender. Our sample of respondents also included both HR and Organizational Development (OD) professionals as well as non-HR/OD professionals.

Data Collection

The survey was administered using Qualtrics, an online survey platform, and data was collected for a period of six months spanning from January to June of 2024. Professional and personal networks of the research team, marketing with social media promotion and "word of mouth" was utilized to recruit respondents via a snowball sampling approach.

Who Took the Survey

In this year's State of Culture Survey, we gathered insights from a diverse group of respondents, painting a vivid picture of today's organizational landscape. Among

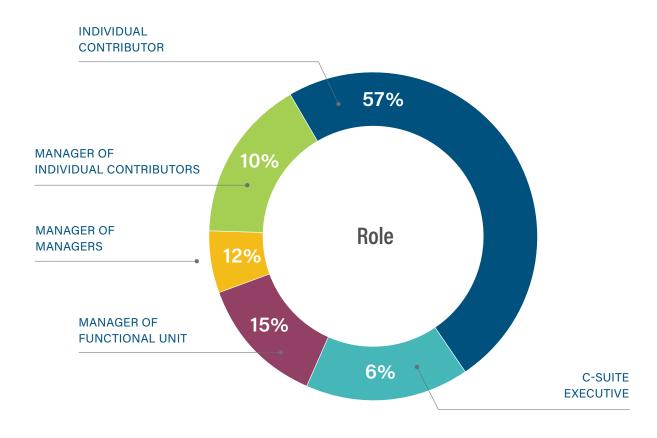
the participants, 57% were individual contributors, while 43% held managerial or leadership roles, ensuring a balanced perspective across professional levels. The age groups represented were wide-ranging, with 9% of respondents from ages 18-29, 18% from both 30-39 and 40-49 groups, 32% ages 50-59, and 23% ages 60+.

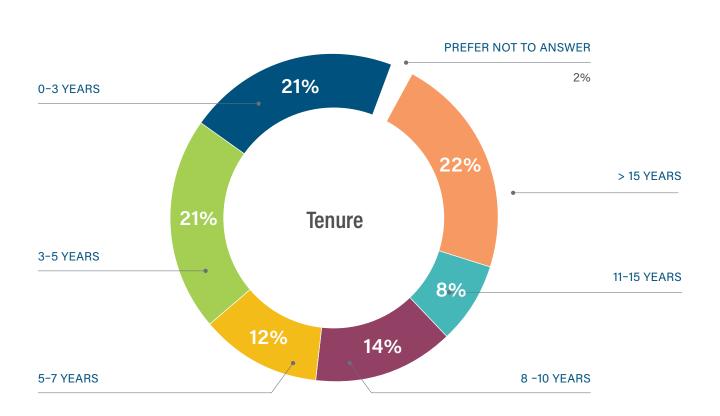
Additionally, the survey captured insights from individuals with various levels of tenure within their organizations, with 42% having been with their organization for less than five years, 26% with 5-10 years of tenure, and 32% with more than 10 years. Respondents came from organizations of various sizes, with 49% of responses coming from organizations with fewer than 500 people. 28% of respondents came from organizations with 500-5,000 people, with 23% hailing from large organizations with more than 5,000 people.

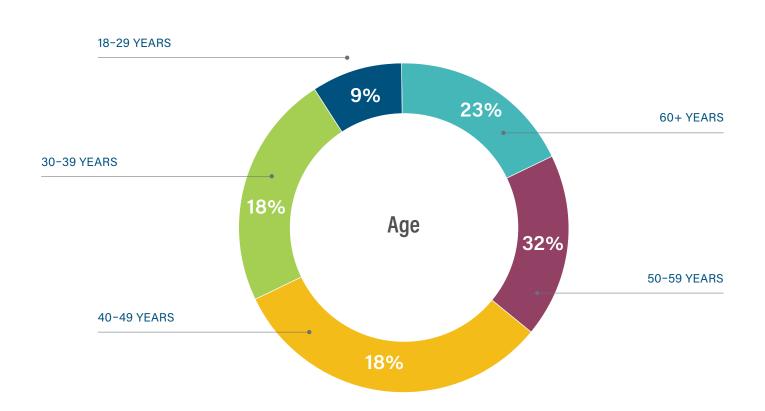
The healthy distribution of respondents across role levels, age groups, tenure and organizational size bolsters the generalizability of our findings, enabling this State of Culture Report to be relevant to a wide range of organizations throughout various sectors, geographic locations, and industries.

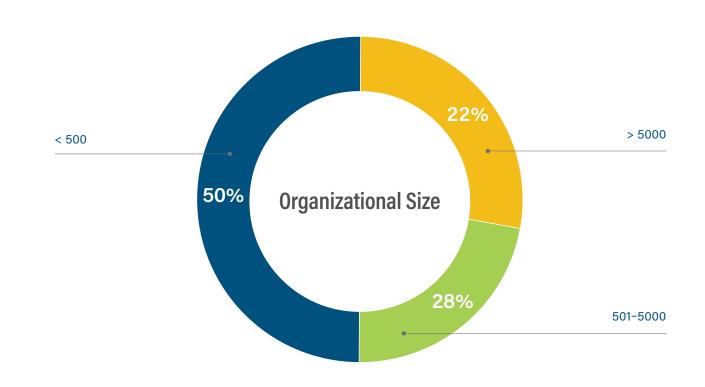
Demographics + Firmographics

Our respondents serve as a solid foundation to build upon our longitudinal analysis for years to come. DEMOGRAPHICS AND FIRMOGRAPHICS





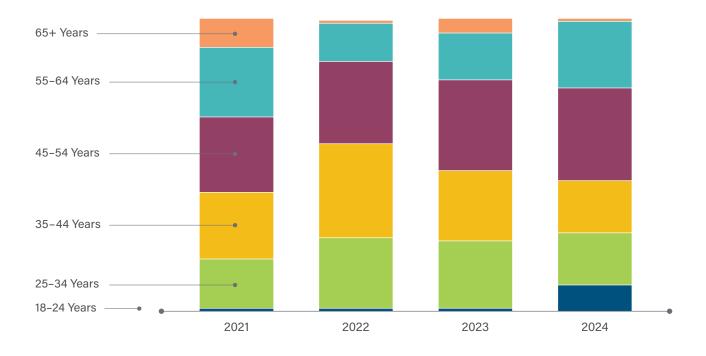




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Demographic Insights

When examining differences in perception by demographic category, several key trends come to light.



Respondents by Age

Figure 1. A review of respondents broken down by age over the past four years of the State of Culture Report.

Overview

To examine groups by age, we broke down our respondents into three categories:

- · Young: Age 18-29 years old
- Mid: Age 30-49
- · Oldest: Age 50+

Several findings reinforce our ideas of how different age groups navigate within the workplace, yet others show us insights into how culture and climate can improve overall success.

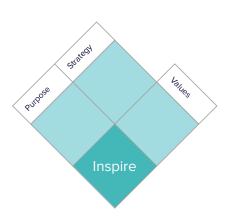
When reviewing the data, several important topics of interest were revealed. Employee turnover improvements were viewed more positively in younger groups than older. We found that age groups 20-29, 30-39 and 40-49 were over three times more likely than older groups of

age 50-59 and 60+ to say employee turnover improved. On average, 37% of younger age groups cited an improvement versus only 11% of respondents in older groups. The next significant topics noted were employee wellbeing and customer satisfaction. The 40-49 year old group reported greater improvements in both areas when compared to younger groups. Findings show that 48% of respondents reported that their wellbeing had improved. This is twice as much as the next best group comprised of 20-29 year old respondents. Furthermore, the same group of 40-49 year old respondents cited an improvement in customer satisfaction (+54%). This improvement is more than twice as much as the next best group, age 30-39 years old (+26%). This phenomenon warrants further investigation, as it is unclear why this age group performed so well in 2024.

DEMOGRAPHIC INSIGHTS: AGE

Inspire

A quadrant of the Culture Mosaic Framework that contains the "tiles" for Purpose, Strategy, and Values.



40% 30% 30% SPACE FOR INVOLVEMENT COACHING SPEAKING UP IN CHANGES STRATEGY INVEST IN **ORGANIZATIONAL CUSTOMERS** SAFETY LINKED TO WORK 34% 34% 34%

YOUNGEST (<25)



OLDEST (55+)

Year-Over-Year Improvements and Declines by Age

Figure 2. The youngest and oldest respondent groups showed notable improvements in several areas this year when compared to last year. There was also a consistent decline across both age groups in differing categories.

Less than 25 Years

The youngest age category reported that their organizations have made significant progress in several performance outcomes compared to last year (see fig. 2). There were improvements in organizational safety (+40%), employees being involved in linking strategy to their work (+30%), and investment in customers (+30%). This speaks to the possibility that seeking team members' input on an organization's products and services can have a positive internal impact with employees feeling safe to speak up as well as an external benefit to the organization's investment in customers. Conversely, this demographic category also felt strongly that their organizations are less effective at coaching people and teams (-34%), providing space for speaking up (-34%), and being involved in shaping changes that impact them (-34%). The message from younger respondents is clear. Their employers need to be doing a better job at creating a level of psychological safety necessary for them to feel comfortable speaking up and the space for them to do so without fear of retribution. Younger respondents seek coaching, mentoring and support to develop in their roles/careers and want to

have a voice in decisions that affect them and their ability to do their jobs effectively.

Mid-Age Categories

When examining our two mid-age categories together, respondents showed significant year-over-year improvements in one quadrant of our Mosaic Framework known as Inspire, and more narrowly, within its underlying category of Strategy. Other improvements in this group include areas in the Enable quadrant, specifically regarding opportunities to contribute and progress, coaching of people and teams, and learning from mistakes. Interestingly, this is nearly the opposite perspective compared to younger respondents.

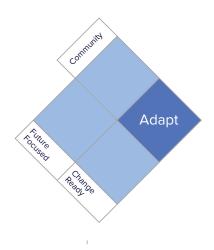
Areas of significant year-over-year decline within this age category were most heavily centered around the Deliver quadrant, specifically the Customer tile (gathering customer feedback, customer outcomes, what customers want and value). Other notable decreases within this group include having a well-understood purpose that inspires commitment to their work. The finding that these age groups are quite

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DEMOGRAPHIC INSIGHTS: AGE

Adapt

A quadrant of the Culture Mosaic Framework that contains the "tiles" for Community, Future Focused, and Change Ready.



misaligned with their younger colleagues introduces the notion of generational differences in the workforce, a concept that is not new but cannot be ignored.

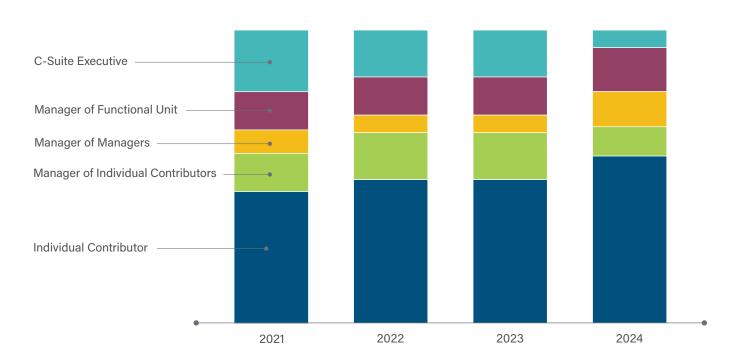
Furthermore, declines in the area of the Customer tile could indicate that business leaders are focusing more on internal aspects of culture and climate as opposed to external factors. This, in and of itself, is not necessarily harmful for organizations so long as they do not take their finger off the pulse of their customers and client base in a rapidly changing world.

55+ Age Categories

Finally, when examining the oldest age group in our study at 55+, findings show that the largest year-over-year increases centered around the Adapt quadrant (see fig. 2), specifically questions in relation to implementing organizational change (+29%) and providing resources for change to be successful (+9%). These two survey items fall within the Change Ready tile, specifically. Other improvements include decision-making processes being transparent, consistent, and

effective, which also rose significantly in comparison to last year's reported responses (+23%).

This oldest group of respondents reported the most significant year-over-year decreases in their perceptions of their company's ability to achieve the organization's mission (-25%), ability to manage relationships with stakeholders and partners (-28%), and employee turnover (-29%). These findings add an interesting perspective on change. While these respondents report significant improvements in their organizations' abilities to implement change, it seems that the pace of change may be having negative impacts in other, more externally facing areas. This reinforces the basis of the Competing Values Framework on which the Mosaic Framework is structured. Specifically, dynamic tensions that exist across the framework allow for organizations and leaders to shift focus and attention to various areas based on their needs. The caution, however, is to find the right balance among competing categories within the Mosaic Framework, as too much focus in one area may create unintended risk and consequences in others.



Respondents by Role

Figure 3. A review of respondents broken down by organizational role over the past four years of the State of Culture Report.

Overview

This year's findings by role showed multiple disparities between senior leaders and all other respondents. There were notable disagreements between responses from Individual Contributors and those of leaders at any level. When analyzing the data by role, it became clear how sentiment increasingly differs with one's level within an organization. This indicates a large gap between senior leaders' understanding of the organization and events taking place.

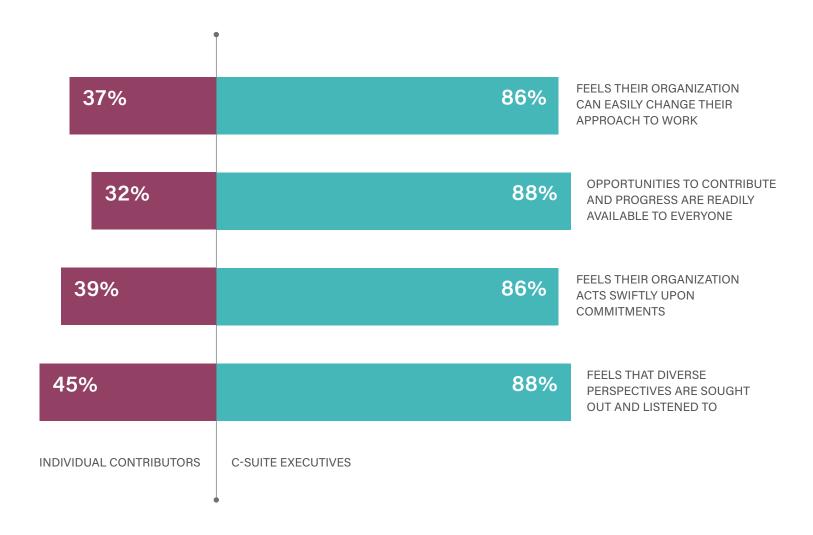
Senior Leaders and Individual Contributors

To begin, we focused on a question regarding an organization's ability to change their approach to work.

We see that Individual Contributors (37%) noted that it was difficult for their organization to change their approach to work, even when there is a good reason for change. However, almost none of the senior leader respondents saw their organization's ability to change as being difficult. The majority of C-Suite (86%) and Managers of Managers (64%) respondents said it was easy to change their organization's approach to work. This disparity suggests a disconnect between senior leaders' viewpoints and those of Individual Contributors. It is possible that the decision to change an approach to work made by more senior leaders may not result in notable changes throughout the lower levels of the organization. Or the decisions intended to change an

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DEMOGRAPHIC INSIGHTS: ROLE



Individual Contributor and C-Suite Perceptions

Figure 4. A significant difference exists when it comes to several culture perspectives between C-Suite and Individual Contributor respondents.

organization's approach to work are easily made but ill-informed and do not have the intended effect as those decisions and policy changes make their way down the organizational structure.

When reviewing a question about opportunities to contribute and progress, lower-level respondents were much more likely to say opportunities to contribute and progress are more readily available to certain groups compared to others. C-Suite respondents did not agree here. In fact, a statistically significant number of the top two role categories combined (C-Suite and Manager of Managers) responded by saying opportunities to contribute and progress are equally available to everyone within their organization.

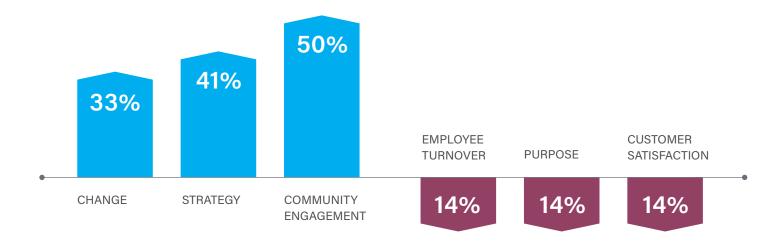
We also see the trend continue with an organization's ability to effectively communicate change or potential change. Lower-level respondents felt that this is often done at the last minute while higher-level respondents say this is done in a timely manner. We see a similar effect on the topic of acting swiftly upon commitments. Both C-Suite (86%) and Managers of Managers (73%) reported that commitments are swiftly acted upon, compared to only 39% of Individual Contributors. This means that higher level leaders are twice as likely to say resolved decisions reflect commitments that are swiftly acted upon compared to Individual Contributors. Also, 25% of Individual Contributors reported that resolved decisions do not lead to timely action, yet no C-Suite respondents agreed with this sentiment.

Furthermore, there is a direct disparity between C-Suite respondents and Individual Contributors regarding decision-making. Individual Contributors (40%) responded unfavorably, by saying decision-making is highly subjective and based on rank or personal opinion. No C-Suite respondents responded in the same way to this item. Moreover, 86% of C-Suite respondents responded by saying that decision-making is supported by data and insights. This variation in perspective can mean many things. Perhaps lower-level employees are not privy to the data that informs key decisions in their organizations or executives are succumbing to social desirability in their responses. Whatever the root cause or causes, this gap in perspective is worth noting.

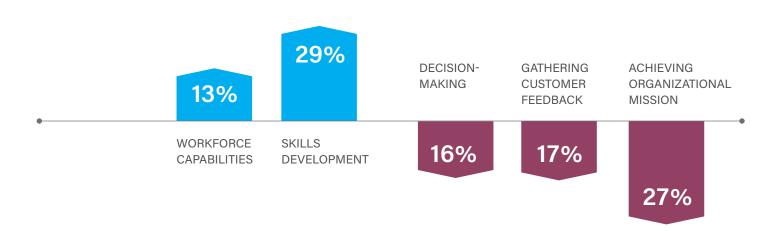
Last, we see differences in the way respondents view how diverse perspectives are sought out and listened to within the organization. Most C-Suite respondents (88%) felt that diverse perspectives are currently sought out and listened to in their organization. Many Managers of Managers (73%) agreed. However, only 45% of Individual Contributors felt this way. This finding—that senior leaders are almost twice as likely to say diverse perspectives are sought out and listened to as compared to Individual Contributors—presents a key disparity in the lived experience and perspectives based on where one resides within an organization. Also, mid- and lower-level respondents were five times more likely to report that diverse perspectives are not sought out and listened to than higher-level respondents.

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DEMOGRAPHIC INSIGHTS: ROLE



C-SUITE



INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTORS

Year-Over-Year Improvements and Declines by Role

Figure 5. The C-Suite respondent group showed notable improvements in several areas this year with relatively little decline. Individual Contributors had improvements as well, with a few areas of decline to note.

Year-Over-Year Trends by Role

C-Suite

When examining year-over-year trends by respondent role, we are also able to see some interesting insights emerge that are worth noting. At the C-Suite level, senior executives reported significant year-over-year increases (see fig. 5) in investing in developing relationships with the community in which they operate (+50%), organizational strategy (+41%), and organizational change (+33%). While there are trends across groups related to organizations developing the strength to implement change, it seems that this capability may come at a cost. Interestingly, senior leaders report significant improvements in their organizations' abilities to develop relationships with their communities, stakeholders, and partners. This perception contrasts with feedback from other respondents that these relationships are being diminished.

The largest year-over-year declines amongst C-Suite respondents were in employee turnover (-14%), a sense of purpose inspiring commitment to work (-14%), and customer satisfaction (-14%). This decrease in customer satisfaction reported by senior leadership seems to be a soundbite that aligns with other respondent categories and seems to confirm a trend for organizations to more of an internal focus to the detriment of a more external focus. While this trend in the short-term may be a result of the massive disruptions caused by the Covid

pandemic, and while it may have been necessary to swing the pendulum of organizational focus internal in order to stabilize and align efforts in a new operating environment, this focus may become a liability in the long-term if no one is "minding the store" and keeping a focus on customers and the external environment in which these organizations operate.

Management Roles

Respondents in management roles seemed to feel a bit differently. When comparing year-over-year responses, those at the Manager of Managers level reported the most significant increases in communicating change or potential change (+155%), managing behaviors that aren't aligned to company values (+142%), and addressing inefficient processes and practices (+134%). Managers of functional units reported the largest year-over-year improvements in the Culture Mosaic quadrant of Inspire, specifically in the Strategy tile. This feedback seems to support this trend toward focusing internally as well as organizations being able to master the ability to adapt to change.

The largest year-over-year decreases amongst manager respondents centered around the Customer tile within the Deliver quadrant. Internally, employee engagement (-16%) and turnover (-9%) experienced the largest declines within this group. These trends may indicate that while organizations have become better at adapting

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DEMOGRAPHIC INSIGHTS: ROLE

Investing in individual contributors to ensure follow through on organizational brand promises will likely have a significant impact on the organization's ability to successfully adapt to change.

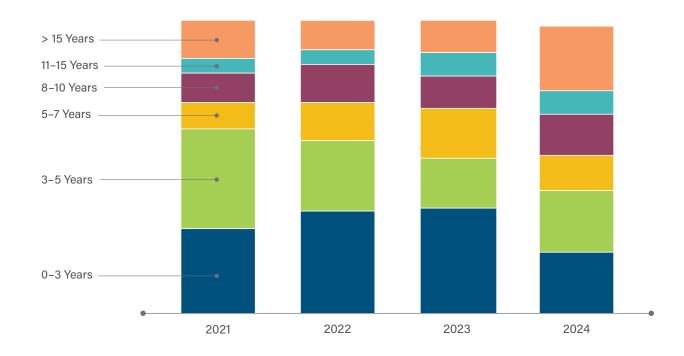
to changing requirements, it may be having negative impacts on their people. This reality may serve these organizations in the short-term, but the research is clear, an inability to effectively manage their dynamic tensions will cause underperformance in the long-term.

Individual Contributors

Individual Contributor responses reported the most significant year-over-year increases in the Enable quadrant, under the Capability Development tile, specifically in prioritizing the development of the skills and capabilities of the workforce (+29%) and using workforce capabilities as a key source of advantage (+13%) (see fig. 5). This is a heartening trend and shows a strong interest by leaders to provide their employees with the knowledge, skills, and tools they need to effectively adapt to organizational changes. As organizations evolve, or transform, due to changes in the external environment, this focus internally is a natural reaction. Investing in Individual Contributors to ensure

follow through on organizational brand promises will likely have a significant impact on the organization's ability to successfully adapt to change, as indicated in other data in this report. Leaders need to do their best to, not only focus intently on their own internal factors, but balance their efforts with key activities and investments focused on the external environment in which they operate.

The most significant year-over-year decreases for the Individual Contributor demographic centered on company purpose influencing decision making (-16%), gathering customer feedback (-17%), and ability to achieve the organization's mission (-27%). This, again, supports to the notion that a collective focus on the internal may be creating a risk. Organizations and leaders that are best able to manage this dynamic tension, in order to prevent their organizations from losing sight on the external, will undoubtedly outperform their competitors who are less able to do so.



Respondents by Tenure

Figure 6. A review of respondents broken down by tenure over the past four years of the State of Culture Report.

Overview

The main significant finding when examining the Tenure demographic over time is related to employee engagement. There has been an increase in overall employee engagement among the "middle tenured" respondents, who are not the lowest (less than three years) or the highest (more than 15 years). The remaining demographic tenures all show improvements regarding employee engagement while the least and most tenured respondents showed a flatter distribution.

An examination of the data by a Tenure grouping of less than 3 years, 3-10 years, and greater than 10 years yielded interesting results. The least tenured respondents (<3 years) reported significant

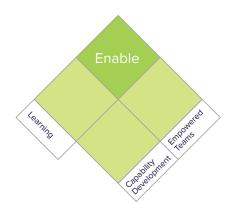
year-over-year increases in the Enable quadrant of the Mosaic Framework. We saw the largest improvements in these three specific Mosaic survey items: developing the skills and capabilities of our workforce (+56%), how well mistakes are handled in the workplace (+31%), and avoiding making the same mistakes twice (+27%). Conversely, the least tenured respondents showed the most significant year-over-year declines in the Deliver quadrant, under the Customer tile, specifically with frequency of gathering customer feedback (-10%), understanding what customers want and value (-11%) and the organization's ability to achieve their mission (-28%). This suggests that newer (and potentially lowerlevel) employees have noticed how organizations have focused resources on internal improvements, often at the expense of external, more customer-facing metrics.

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DEMOGRAPHIC INSIGHTS: TENURE

Enable

A quadrant of the Culture Mosaic Framework that contains the "tiles" for Learning, Capability Development, and Empowered Teams.



Mid-Tenure

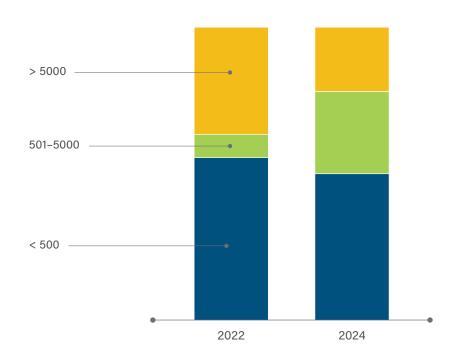
Mid-tenured respondents (3-10 years) showed the most significant year-over-year increase in the Adapt quadrant, specifically in the Change Ready tile, and the Enable quadrant under the Capability Development tile. The most notable increase within mid-tenured respondents comes from a survey item related to organizational change, stating that their organization plans ahead and provides the resources and support needed to make change successful.

The most significant year-over-year decreases for this mid-tenure category were focused in the Adapt quadrant, specifically the Community tile. Investing in developing relationships with the community in which they operate and their organization's ability to manage stakeholders and partners saw notable declines among the mid-tenured respondents. Other notable decreases included the way mistakes are handled, having a well-understood purpose, and decision-making resting with those closest to the work.

15+ Years Tenure

Respondents with 15+ years of tenure at their organizations reported significant year-over-year improvements in opportunities to contribute and progress (+70%), customer experience (+49%) and organizational strategy (+45%). The most significant year-over-year decreases amongst this tenure group included decision making resting with those closest to the work (-15%), limiting employee turnover (-11%), and contributing to the community in which the organization operates (-10%).

All tenure groups generally agree that year-over-year performance has improved internally within their organization, while external factors have declined. This trend provides evidence that shows the dynamic tensions organizations encounter when allocating time and resources internally versus externally.



Respondents by Organizational Size

Figure 7. A review of respondents broken down by organizational size over the past four years of the State of Culture Report.

Overview

When examining the data from the perspective of organizational size, we found that nearly half of the respondents worked in organizations with less than 500 people. Some interesting trends that cut across organizations—regardless of size—are worth pointing out. All three size groups reported significant increases in career development opportunities (+14%, +14%, and +13% year-over-year respectively) as well as year-over-year increases in team cohesion and collaboration (+16%, +13%, and +13% respectively). There was also a similar decline across all three organizational size groups reporting a significant year-over-year decrease in work-life balance (-10%, -11%, and -9% respectively).

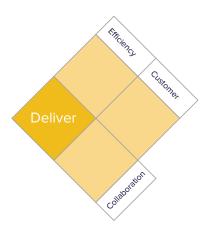
While the less than 500 employees group reported more positive responses to items in the Culture Mosaic survey that comprise all four domains of the Mosaic Framework (Inspire, Adapt, Engage, and Deliver) the most significant differences fell with the Inspire and Deliver domains. We find moderately statistically significant differences, primarily in the Deliver and Enable domains of the framework. This finding showcases a perception that larger organizations begin to lose the ability to align team members and ways of working as they grow. While this finding seems intuitive to an extent, it presents a clear opportunity and need for larger organizations to increase their efforts to create and maintain alignment long-term or risk their ability to perform.

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DEMOGRAPHIC INSIGHTS: ORGANIZATIONAL SIZE

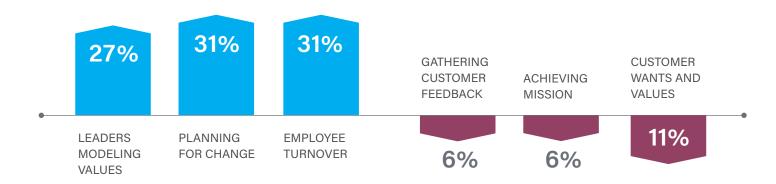
Deliver

A quadrant of the Culture Mosaic Framework that contains the "tiles" for Efficiency, Customer, and Collaboration.



20% 21% COMFORT IN EMPLOYEE ACHIEVING MISSION IMPLEMENTING STRATEGY COACHING CHANGE 10% 11% 11%

SMALLER ORGANIZATIONS



LARGER ORGANIZATIONS

Year-Over-Year Improvements and Declines by Organization Size

Figure 8. The C-Suite respondent group showed notable improvements in several areas this year with relatively little decline. Individual Contributors had improvements as well, with a few areas of decline to note.

When looking at the largest year-over-year differences in responses across demographics, Deliver performed the poorest of all four Mosaic quadrants, having the fewest questions that improved (4) and the most questions that declined (20) compared to last year. Within the Deliver quadrant, the Customer tile, consisting of four questions, contained 16 of the 20 Deliver questions that declined from last year. Specifically, the questions of gathering customer feedback, what customers want and value and customer outcomes were the most prevalent declines across all demographic groups.

Small Organizations

Smaller organizations indicated notable improvements in the coaching of people and teams (+24%), organizational strategy (+21%) and the ability to implement change (+20%). Conversely, the largest declines for this group included employee turnover (-11%), ability to achieve the organization's mission (-11%) and feeling comfortable speaking up (-10%).

Mid-Size Organizations

Mid-sized organizations showed the largest improvements in organizational strategy (+80%), processes to make decisions (+80%) and the

organization's ability to plan ahead for change (+77%). The largest declines in this group came from gathering customer feedback (-19%), the organization's ability to manage stakeholders and partners (-11%), and leveraging customer feedback (-10%).

Large Organizations

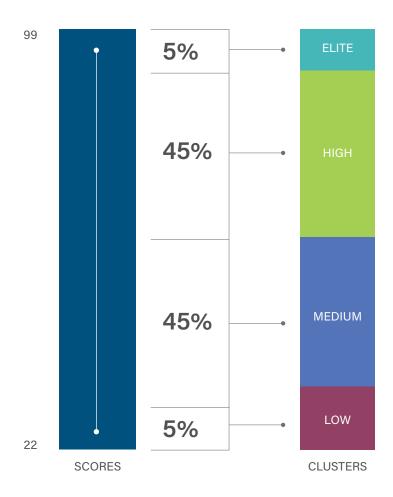
Larger organizations showed improvements in employee turnover (+31%), the organization's ability to plan ahead for change (+31%) and leaders being role models for company values (+27%). This group's declines came from the Deliver quadrant, under the Customer tile, with knowing what customers want and value (-11%) as well as gathering customer feedback (-6%). The performance outcome of ability to achieve the organization's mission (-6%) comprised the top three declines for this group.

These year-over-year changes by organizational size generally follow the same emergent pattern for 2024, in that organizations have been focused internally—working to improve performance, processes and strategy. This has come at the expense of external metrics, which highlights the complicated dynamic tension that exists in resource allocation.

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Performance Clusters

Our research divided respondents into four performance clusters, which gave us several key insights into organizational performance.



Mosaic Scores and Performance Clusters

Figure 9. Each respondent received an average Culture Mosaic score based upon their answers to our survey questions. The scores were divided as shown above and assigned a performance cluster for further research.

During analysis, respondents were divided into four groups based on the overall average of their scores in the Culture Mosaic portion of the State of Culture survey. These groups were clustered into the following four categories: Elite, High, Medium and Low performers. Elite performers consisted of respondents whose average Culture Mosaic scores were in the top 5% of respondents. Low performers consisted of respondents whose average Culture Mosaic scores were in the bottom 5% of respondents. The remaining 90% of respondents were divided equally into High (5th to 50th percentile) and Medium (51st to 95th percentile)

performer groups. This distribution of respondents afforded the researchers with the ability to understand how clarity and alignment from a cultural perspective impacts performance on a variety of organizational performance indicators such as employee turnover, sales growth, customer experience, product/service quality, and organizational safety. Different aspects of the State of Culture survey were analyzed to understand the relationship between culture and organizational performance, while using differences between Elite and Low performers to contrast behaviors and norms that are consistently demonstrated in each.

PERFORMANCE CLUSTERS

PERFORMANCE CLUSTERS

Elite performers outperformed low performers by at least one standard deviation, indicating that elite performers are highly capable at managing the critical dynamic tensions that exist across the Mosaic Performance Framework.

Understanding Elite Performers

We identified and studied Elite performers in this year's report as a separate group in our analysis in order to really understand what it is that the "best of the best" are doing differently from their peers. Comparing Elite performers against the Low performers group, we find that Elite performers significantly outperform Low performers in all four domains of the Culture Mosaic.

Elite performers were particularly strong in several areas. Figure 10 shows the survey items where these Elite performers scored particularly well. In all of the items displayed, Elite performers outperformed Low performers by at least one standard deviation, indicating that Elite performers are highly capable at managing the critical dynamic tensions that exist across the Culture Mosaic and the Mosaic Performance Framework. Particularly notable in this list is the prevalence of items residing in the Deliver and Adapt domains of the Mosaic Performance Framework. Elite performing organizations seem to excel in these domains that not only have been tied to performance outcomes, but these domains are

also areas where most have struggled. The ability of Elite performers to maintain organizational "fluidity" rather than sticking to one way of doing things regardless of the outcome seems to be a critical capability that warrants discussion. This shows how leaders within organizations—who can shift their teams' priorities and focus in response to changing circumstances—are fundamental to long-term organizational performance. It's clear that, in 2024, managing competing values (internal vs external; flexible vs stable), and maintaining organizational fluidity are essential characteristics for leaders who wish to drive organizational performance.

Conversely, Low performers were clearly struggling in certain areas of the Mosaic Performance Framework above other areas. Figure 11 depicts the survey items that performed the worst among Low performers compared to the overall average. Out of the ten lowest-scoring questions among Low performers, half of them came from the Deliver domain. As noted above, the lowest performing organizations are clearly unable to consistently and repeatedly deliver on their brand

INSPIRE

- Addressing behavior not aligned to organizational values
- · Immediate business needs supporting long-term strategy
- Employees linking strategy to work

ADAPT

- Organizational change being easy to implement
- Communicating change in a timely manner
- People and teams being involved in change efforts
- · Investing in developing relationships with the community

DELIVER

- Decision making guided by organizational values
- Transparent process to make decisions
- · Disagreements being openly explored

Top Questions Among Elite Performers

Figure 10. These ten Culture Mosaic survey items are where Elite performers scored the highest.

INSPIRE

- Short-term priorities aligned with organizational purpose
- Having a clear organizational strategy

ENABLI

- · Developing the skills and capabilities of the workforce
- Enabling individual and team success

DELIVER

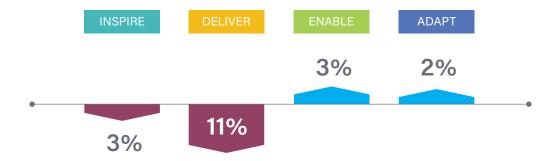
- · Understanding what customers want and value
- Customer feedback informing products/services
- Resolved decisions leading to timely action
- · Ability to Achieve the Organization's Mission
- Collaboration across our organization
- Investing in customers

Bottom Questions Among Low Performers

Figure 11. These ten Culture Mosaic survey items are where Low Performers scored lowest.

PERFORMANCE CLUSTERS

PERFORMANCE CLUSTERS



Change in Performance by Mosaic Domain

Figure 12. Examining the change in favorable responses by the four domains of the Culture Mosaic Survey.

promises to their customers. This imbalance in the Mosaic framework shows a clear commonality that low performing organizations need to acknowledge in order to take corrective action.

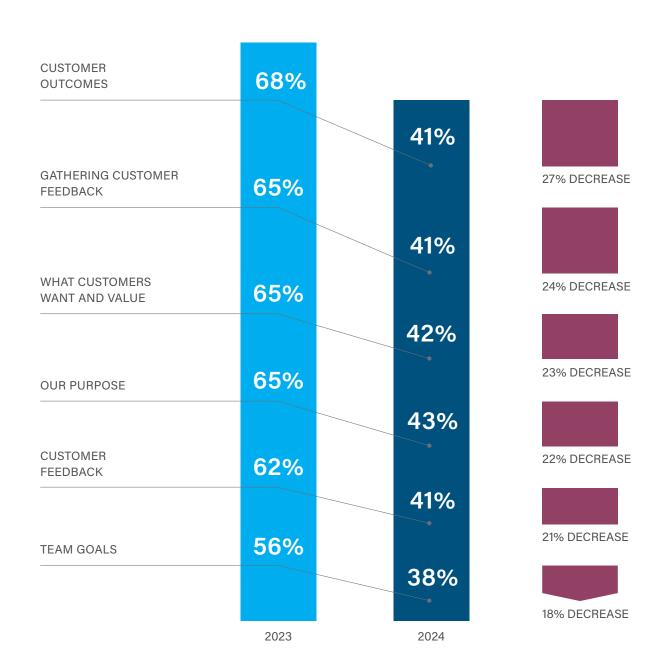
When examining the change in favorable responses by the four domains of the Culture Mosaic Survey, we find some interesting results (see fig. 12). While year-overyear favorability ratings by domain remained relatively neutral in three of the four domains, the Deliver domain saw an 11% decrease. This is significant and indicates that respondents feel that their organizations are less clear and aligned concerning their ability to deliver consistent, repeatable products or services to their clients. In addition, there is also a consistent feeling that organizations are beginning to lose their understanding of the wants and needs of their customers. While there may be any number of causal factors that contribute to this perception, it is important for readers to be aware that this perception is very much the same across respondents. This finding is supported by an analysis

of line-item changes over the last year (see fig. 13) where five of the six items that had the largest year-over-year decline directly related to the organizations' relationships to its customers.

Key Findings by Mosaic Domain

For each demographic group, we compared the average score of each Mosaic survey question from this year with that of 2023. We then created a chart of the three largest improvements and three largest declines for each demographic group. From there, we tagged each question in the chart with its Mosaic domain and tile. We were able to quickly see two emergent trends.

When reviewing the questions that declined the most from 2023 to 2024 across all demographics, items from the Deliver domain were more than twice as prevalent as any other Mosaic domain. Specifically, within the Deliver domain the majority of items that declined belonged to the Customer tile. This indicates a sharp decline in focus on understanding and delivering for the customer.



Year-Over-Year Largest Declines by Mosaic Items

Figure 13. Mosaic items that declined the most from 2023–2024.

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PERFORMANCE CLUSTERS

PERFORMANCE CLUSTERS

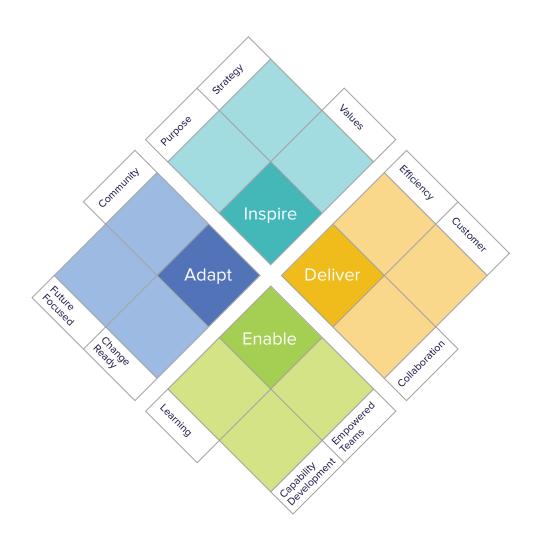
The Deliver domain is focused externally to the organization and...can provide insights into how well an organization serves their customers and how well employees work together to provide consistent and repeatable products and services to their customers.

The second trend we noticed came on the improvements side. The majority of the year-over-year improvements came from two specific tiles. The Strategy tile was responsible for 12 of the 17 increases within the Inspire domain. Also, the Change Ready tile was responsible for 13 of the 16 increases within the Adapt domain.

What does this mean for business leaders working to align their cultures to drive the behaviors that are needed to deliver on their strategies? The Deliver domain within the Mosaic Framework measures an organization's ability to execute via effective collaboration and a focus on efficiency, improvement, and the needs of their customers. This domain is focused externally to the organization and data generated from Deliver domain can provide insights into how well an organization serves their customers and how well employees work together to provide consistent and repeatable products and services to their customers.

Conversely, survey items within the Inspire and Adapt domains are focused internally to the organization and measure the cultural impact of topics such as core values, purpose, strategy, readiness for change, and focus on the future. Results in these two domains are correlated to items such as an organization's sales growth, market share, and innovation.

With the majority of year-over-year improvements across demographics occurring internally within an organization, and the majority of declining factors occurring in external areas, organizations appear to be focusing on their internal teams, structures, processes, and identity. This is likely due to organizations establishing new baselines after recovering from the Covid pandemic. Organizations focusing internally seems to have come at the expense of understanding their customers, dedicating resources to delivering for the customers, and becoming as efficient as possible in their efforts to deliver high quality products and services.



The Culture Mosaic Framework

Figure 14. The Culture Mosaic Framework and it's underlying cometing values framework creates a guide for organizations to balance internal and external forces that drive organizational success.

Performance Clusters Key Findings

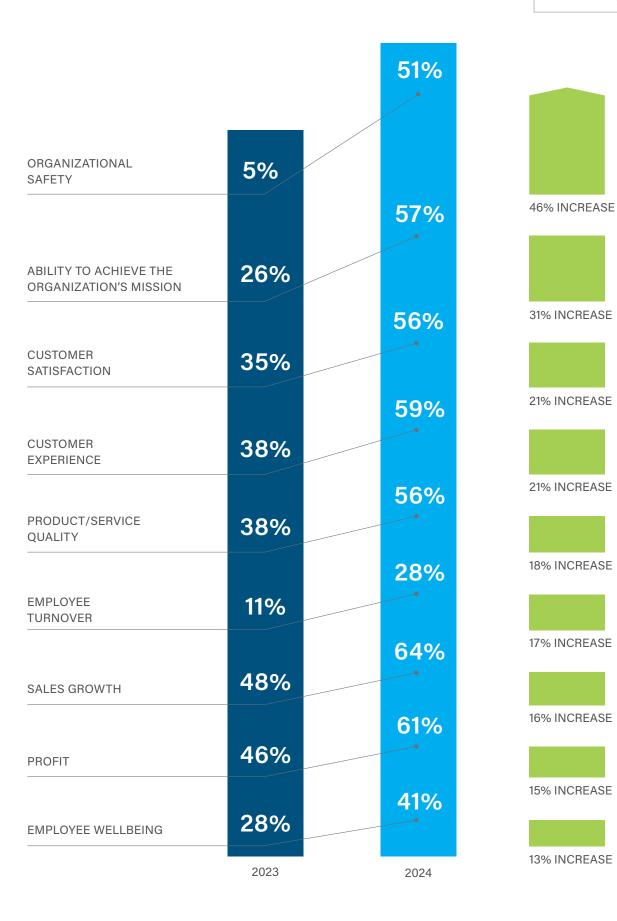
The largest differences between Elite and Low performers' average scores for various performance outcomes were found to be employee turnover and employee engagement. This underlines the importance of organizational culture in this year's study, particularly due to the emergent trend of organizations focusing resources internally. Simply put, organizations that were better able to improve their internal environment were more attractive and engaging to employees.

When examining Low performers in this year's study, it is clear that organizations who struggle to provide alignment and clarity across their teams see significantly lower performance in their ability to achieve their mission and drive organizational safety outcomes. These Low performers also see significantly lower levels of employee wellbeing, higher rates of employee turnover, and lower levels of employee engagement.

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Performance Outcomes

Our study measures several organizational performance outcomes to identify trends over time. This year's data highlighted several interesting findings.



Year-over-Year Largest Increases in Performance Outcomes

Figure 15. Changes in Performance Outcomes from 2023–2024.

PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES

Culture Mosaic

The Culture Mosaic highlights the work practices and behaviors displayed by high-performing organizations and links those behaviors to key metrics known as Performance Outcomes.

Performance Outcomes Overview

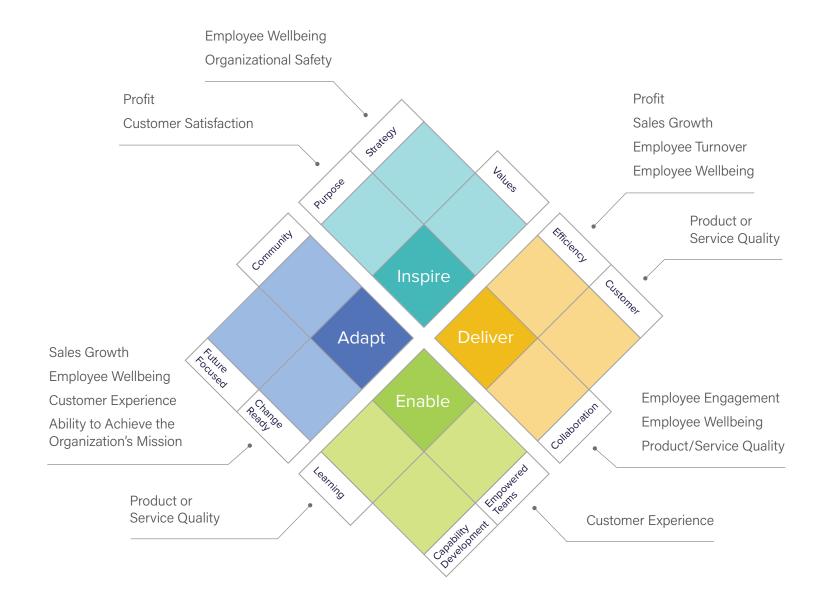
The performance outcomes section of this year's State of Culture study asked respondents about their organization's performance in a variety of performance outcomes compared to last year. Although some demographic groups showed improvements and declines in different performance outcomes, overall every performance outcome improved from last year to some extent. The largest increases are displayed in figure 15 on the previous page.

These findings indicate that organizations best able to create cultures and climates that are aligned and clear are significantly better positioned to drive sustainably better performance than their competitors over time. When looking at the Elite performer cluster, their average scores in several of the performance outcomes (specifically employee engagement and employee turnover) were well above the overall average, with Elite performers scoring up to 20% higher in each performance outcome than the overall average. When looking at the Low performer cluster, their average scores in certain performance outcomes were well below the overall average.

Employee-related performance outcomes also appeared on this list. This indicates that organizations that are less able to create clarity and alignment from a cultural perspective are significantly less able to achieve positive employee-centric performance outcomes. Since employee-related performance outcomes appear among both Elite and Low performers, we can conclude that employee-related factors are important to driving long-term organizational culture health.

Furthermore, we analyzed which areas of the Mosaic Framework were most closely related to each of the performance outcomes that were measured in this year's study (see fig. 16). The Deliver domain was the domain that we found to be the most closely linked to the performance outcomes of employee turnover, employee engagement, profit, and sales growth. The Deliver quadrant was also linked to higher levels of employee wellbeing and product/service quality. These findings lend further support to the reality that the culture and climate that are created within organizations can have significant links to employee-related outcomes.

We also looked at the top ten items of the Culture Mosaic that were most closely related to each

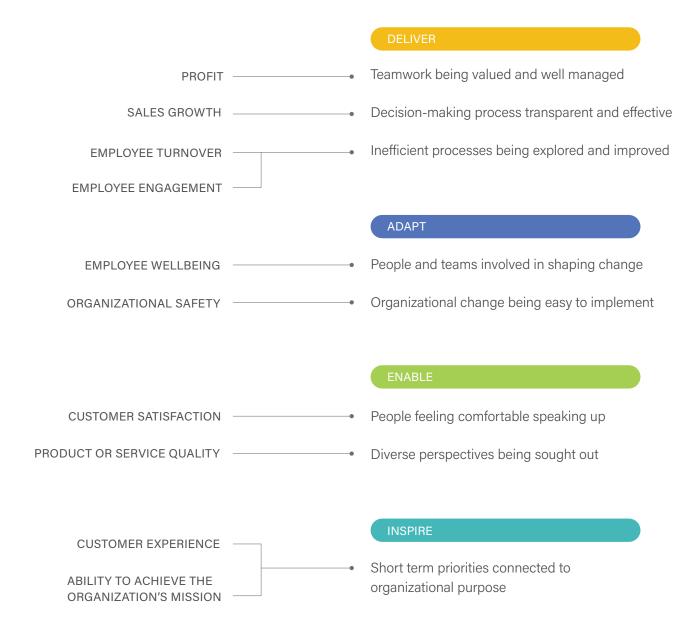


Culture Mosaic Tiles linked to Performance Outcomes

Figure 16. Through our research, each performance outcome has revealed a connection to specific Mosaic tiles.

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PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES



Performance Outcomes tied to Mosaic Item

Figure 17. Shows the Performance Outcome (left) and the Mosaic item (right) that is the biggest driver of that Performance Outcome.

separate performance outcome. When looking across all performance outcomes, we wanted to see which individual Mosaic questions appeared the most in these top-10 lists. These are the top Mosaic questions driving performance outcomes, in order of prevalence:

- 1. Are short-term priorities aligned with organizational purpose?
- 2. Do employees link strategy to work?
- 3. Do we value the way teams work together?
- 4. Are disagreements being openly explored?
- 5. Are people and teams involved in change efforts?
- 6. Do resolved decisions lead to timely action?
- 7. Is there a transparent process to make decisions?
- 8. Are we investing in developing relationships with our community?
- 9. Do we have a clear organizational strategy?
- 10. Do we seeking diverse perspectives?

Item analysis of the responses to the Mosaic survey in this year's study was conducted in order to understand the cultural values and beliefs that were most strongly correlated with the variety of organizational performance outcomes explored in this year's study. Understanding with greater clarity about specific behaviors that correlate to performance is important as a data point for leaders striving to evolve their cultures to drive performance in the long-term.

Not only did the research team find statistically significant links between each performance outcome

and Mosaic questions, we also noticed certain Mosaic questions that most strongly correlated to multiple performance outcomes. For example, Figure 17 shows how improving inefficient processes and practices can lead to better employee engagement and lower turnover. Additionally, focusing on improving short-term priorities would benefit the customer experience along with the organization's ability to achieve their mission. Figure 17 is a great tool to identify the "low hanging fruit" and provide a good starting point for leaders to address different performance outcomes.

Our team analyzed the evolution of the favorability ratings for the organizational performance outcomes from 2023 to 2024 (see Figure 15). Most notably, all organizational performance indicators experienced an increase in favorability ratings. The largest change came from the strategic level with employees feeling a greater sense of safety in their role. This could be due to organizations settling into a new normal after a volatile post-Covid period that saw many companies expand, contract, consolidate, divest and change in many ways. As a result, employees feel less uncertainty about the future and more comfortable in the job security of their role. Organizations also appear to be focusing on their mission, which could be tied to the improvements that are surfacing in customer satisfaction, customer experience and product/service quality. Although customer-focused items have either declined or underperformed this year, this trend of improvements will be interesting to follow throughout future reports.

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Reccomendations

The most significant takeaways from this year's findings with actionable insights for your organization.

While there is a wide variety of findings in this year's State of Culture report, the following key findings stood out to our team as the most important to explore in detail to expand upon the research.

Mosaic Domains

The Deliver domain of the Mosaic Performance
Framework was the most significant contributor to
organizational performance outcomes. This indicates
that internal collaboration and efficiency, along with
a better understanding of the customer, are key to
ensuring a healthy organizational culture. These aspects
are also significant contributors to sales growth, profit,
employee turnover, and employee engagement.

Demographics

Age

Generational differences in the workforce highlight varying needs and priorities that organizations can address to improve engagement and effectiveness across age groups. Younger employees seek greater psychological safety, coaching, and a voice in decisions that impact their roles, emphasizing the need for

inclusive leadership and development opportunities. Middle-aged groups value strategic clarity and opportunities for growth but show concerns about declining customer focus, suggesting a need to balance internal and external priorities. Meanwhile, older employees value improvements in organizational change processes but express concerns about mission alignment and stakeholder relationships. This indicates that rapid change may unintentionally erode critical connections. Leaders at all levels have a chance to consider these diverse needs to ensure a cohesive and resilient workforce.

Tenure

Tenure groups reveal distinct organizational priorities and challenges that leaders can address to sustain employee engagement and wellbeing. The lowest-tenured employees show significant growth in capability development and learning from mistakes, but show declines in customer focus and mission alignment, indicating the need to balance internal skill-building with external priorities. The mid-tenured employee group excels in change readiness and capability development

RECCOMENDATIONS

Our research shows that focusing on internal collaboration and efficiency, along with a deeper understanding of the customer, is key to ensuring a healthy organizational culture.

but highlights concerns surrounding stakeholder relationships and their autonomy to make decisions. Longer-tenured employees value strategic clarity and opportunities for contribution, though they indicate challenges with turnover and their organization's ability to adapt to change. Since priorities and viewpoints are unique to different tenure levels, organizations can train and empower leaders, starting at the local level, to tailor their approach based on the makeup of their teams. Tailoring initiatives to meet tenure-specific needs requires a thoughtful and multi-faceted leadership approach that can greatly enhance organizational alignment and resilience.

Organizational Size

Organizational size has a significant influence on areas of improvement and challenges. Smaller organizations excel in coaching, strategy alignment, and change implementation but face challenges with employee turnover and psychological safety. Medium-sized organizations show notable progress in strategic

clarity and decision-making, but struggle with maintaining a focus on customers and stakeholder management. Larger organizations show strengths in turnover reduction and value-driven leadership but show weaknesses in understanding and addressing customer needs. Based on their size, organizations have an opportunity to tailor their leadership strategies to address these trends, ensuring that internal improvements are balanced with maintaining strong external relationships and customer focus.

Role

Our data reveals a notable disconnect between the perceptions of senior leaders and those of individual contributors. While C-Suite executives report high favorability in decision-making transparency, alignment, and swift action on commitments, individual contributors often feel excluded, perceiving decision-making as subjective, siloed and poorly communicated. This disparity extends to views on diverse perspectives being sought and listened to, with senior leaders twice

as likely as individual contributors to see this positively. Although perspectives across roles and levels within an organization will often vary, these differences can drive greater alignment and engagement across roles or degrade organizational culture, performance, and outcomes. Addressing these gaps requires challenging leaders to enhance transparency, foster inclusive decision-making processes, and ensure that goals and actions resonate at all levels within an organization.

Performance Clusters

Elite performers are consistently able to manage competing organizational priorities, thereby excelling in the Adapt and Deliver domains. Their focus on aligning strategy with values, making sound and timely decisions, and fostering collaboration positions them as highly capable in navigating complex challenges. Organizations aiming to emulate this should prioritize building clarity and alignment across teams, ensuring that decisions are collaborative, data-driven and agile, while maintaining a strong focus on customer needs and long-term adaptability. This balance is critical to achieving

sustainable performance outcomes such as improved employee engagement, reduced turnover, and enhanced organizational safety.

Performance Outcomes

These findings indicate that organizations best able to create cultures and climates that are aligned and clear are significantly better positioned to drive sustainably better performance than their competitors over time. When looking at the Elite performing cluster, their average scores in several of the performance outcomes (specifically employee engagement and employee turnover) were well above the overall average. Employeerelated performance outcomes also appeared on this list. This indicates that organizations who are less able to create clarity and alignment from a cultural perspective are significantly less able to achieve positive employeecentric performance outcomes. Since employee-related performance outcomes appear among both Elite and Low performers, we can conclude that employeerelated factors are important to driving the health of organizational culture in the longterm.

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While many of the insights identified, support and show additional support, to insights found in previous literature, we are pleased to have further validated the significance of these relationships while exploring the impact of demographics, performance levels and overall performance on the topic of organizational culture. These findings support the notion that organizations who create a clear and aligned culture—able to manage the competing tensions that exist in a dynamic business environment—are those best positioned to thrive in the long-term.

While there are a variety of ways to create clarity and alignment regarding assessing and understanding organizational culture and climate, the current study has shown that the Culture Mosaic serves as an accurate indicator showing aspects of organizational culture that drive a variety of performance outcomes.

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The 2024 State of Culture Study represents a small part of an ongoing research effort to explore how culture and climate serve to support or derail organizations and their efforts to achieve their strategic imperatives.

As our team transitions to preparing for next year's study, we look forward to increasing the overall response rate and developing clear insight of how topics change over time.

In demanding and dynamic times such as we find ourselves in today, it is imperative for us to work together to understand what aspects of culture and climate are driving the performance outcomes we desire. Unfortunately, understanding is not enough. Without the ability to make timely and effective decisions based on that understanding and without being able to drive sustainable change in organizations, many leaders and organizations will find themselves continuing to struggle as the world around them continues to evolve.

We hope the annual State of Culture Study and Report will serve as a valuable tool for leaders to understand what best-in-class organizations are doing to adapt their practices to drive success.

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Partnerships make our research possible. We welcome you to become a sponsor for the 2025 Global State of Culture Study.

Learn More

Final Thoughts

In this section, we share our final thoughts and expectations for future reports.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

About gothamCulture | Gotham Government

gothamCulture is a management consulting firm that draws on our associate's comprehensive expertise and experience in the areas of culture, leadership, and people strategy to provide innovative solutions and client-service excellence. Gotham Government Services provides federal government clients with workforce development and training solutions—including curriculum development, instruction and facilitation services, human performance analysis, and program design and management. Our work is guided by our deeply held shared values, including a commitment to each other and our clients, Unwavering Integrity, Maniacal Pursuit Of Excellence, Relatable Expertise, and Authentic Community. For more information, visit:

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Our ongoing research supporting the annual State of Culture study is informed by our work and dialogue with our peers in the industry. Many thanks to all of our colleagues, peers, and clients who share their perspectives and experiences with us. Your insights and contributions significantly shape our thinking and research over the years.

We are in your debt.

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