



**Introducing The Emotional
Culture Deck – why emotion
matters in the workplace**

INTRODUCING THE EMOTIONAL CULTURE DECK



Most organisations don't care how their people are, or should be feeling at work.



“But studies show the significant impact emotions have on how people perform tasks, how engaged and creative they are, how committed they are to their organisations, and how they make decisions.” – HBR

Instead, most companies tend to focus the shared values and set behaviours that set the overall tone for how employees think and behave at work.



That's incredibly important, but research shows the other critical part to how people think and behave is the emotional culture – how people feel at work.

Studies show the significant impact emotions have on how people perform tasks, how engaged and creative they are, how committed they are to their organisations, and how they make decisions.



Emotional culture influences employee satisfaction, motivation, connection, engagement, burnout, teamwork, and even 'hard' measures such as financial performance and absenteeism.

Positive emotions are consistently associated with better performance, quality and customer service.





Negative emotions such as group anger, sadness, fear, and the like usually lead to negative outcomes, including poor performance and high turnover.

When leaders ignore or fail to understand emotion, they're glossing over a vital component of what makes organisations tick, and their companies and people suffer.

But when leaders recognise emotions in the workplace, and consciously shape them, they can better connect with and motivate their employees.



This above material is referenced from the Harvard Business Review article ‘Manage Your Emotional Culture’, and supporting research by Sigal Barsade (Professor of Management at Wharton) and Olivia A. O’Neill (Senior Scientist at the Center for the Advancement of Well-Being).

<https://hbr.org/2016/01/manage-your-emotional-culture>

So what is The Emotional Culture Deck and how will it help you, your leaders, your people and your company?



[Click here to watch the story of why and how we created The Emotional Culture Deck](#)



The Emotional Culture Deck

The deck is for all organisational leaders, regardless of the size of their team or organisation.

Who need to understand what drives and motivates the people in their organisation, but struggle to bridge the conversation gap.

The Emotional Culture Deck provides an insanely simple card-based tool for structured face-to-face conversations about workplace culture, feelings, and employee experiences.

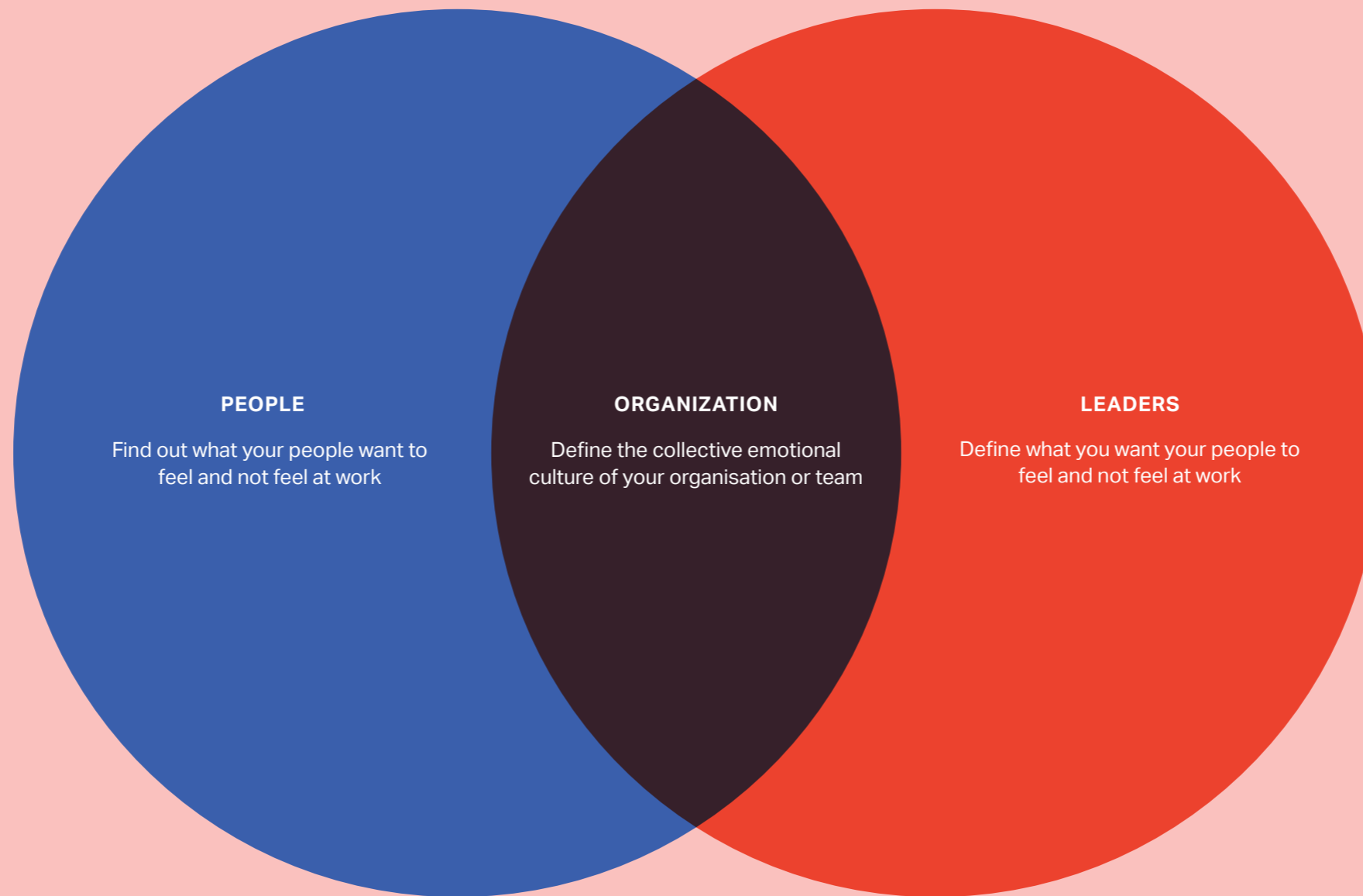
In a way that means empathy and human connection become a core part of an organisation's style and success.

Unlike impersonal, reductive, digital approaches that make people feel like undervalued cogs and reduce engagement.

Only the Emotional Culture Deck is simple enough to get up and running in minutes, yet powerful and flexible enough to drive lasting organisational change.



Define your emotional culture



12 Ways to

Apply

The Emotional

Culture Deck



1

Leadership
development

2

Employee
engagement

3

Culture
strategy &
change

4

Change
leadership

5

Stakeholder
Engagement

6

Employee
Experience
Strategy

7

Team
Mergers

8

Recruitment
& On-boarding

9

Team Agile
Check-Ins

10

Communication
Strategy

11

Project
Reviews

12

Conflict
Resolution

1 LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Do you want to help your leaders become develop and grow and better serve their teams and people? Leadership that brings out their humanity and encourages more of openness and vulnerability?

2 EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Do you want to nudge your people to step up and build greater emotional intelligence, self awareness and empathy. Plus develop better understanding of their motivations, desires and barriers at work?

3 CULTURE STRATEGY & CHANGE

Do you want to co-create the culture of your team with your people, and move away from a top-down, one way, communications exercise?

4 CULTURE LEADERSHIP

Do you need to nudge your leaders to move beyond functional change leadership and think about the human and emotional side of change to influence and enthuse others through change?

5 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Do you want to shape the way your teams engage with stakeholders? Stakeholder engagement with an awareness of how human feelings influence the experiences your people deliver?

6 EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE STRATEGY

Do you want to redesign your employee experience touch points? Employee experience with empathy and human emotion at the core?

7 TEAM MERGERS

Are you bringing teams together or forming new teams? Do you want your teams to quickly build rapport with each other?

8 RECRUITMENT & ONBOARDING

Do you want to bring forward to human side of your organisation from day one and make your recruitment and onboarding interactive, fun and memorable?

9 TEAM AGILE CHECK-INS

Do you want to nudge your people and teams to be more open, connected vulnerable with each other on a regular and consistent basis?

10 COMMS STRATEGY

Do you want to inject some humanity and empathy into your (internal & external) communications?

11 PROJECT REVIEWS

Do you want to transform the way your teams review projects and nudge them to explore the emotional drivers and blockers of projects?

12 CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Do you want to help teams and people or teams better manage conflict in your workplace?



Testimonials

Promise we're not blowing our own trumpet. Check out what some of the people we've worked with have said about the workshops we've run with their teams.



MELISSA CANTELL
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

The session was fantastic - the team loved the topic, loved the ECD tool and are very fired up now about how to bring our emotional culture to life. The consistent feedback was that changing the conversation to focus on how we want to feel as humans, not how we need to behave as a corporate, was very freeing, and as a result we got into some very meaningful conversations very quickly.

There was a lot of emotion - the team are passionate about their people and got quite constructively angry at times - but the process also made it really clear that changing things is within their accountability and remit, and doesn't need to involve complex plans. Our commitment was that the outcomes from the day won't be another corporate artefact that gets cascaded, put on the wall and forgotten - they will live and breathe with each leader in whatever way works best for them, and it's up to each of us to make the change happen.

Thank you so much for providing us with a tool that has been so impactful - I had some very experienced people telling me that it was the most meaningful leadership conversation they've ever had in their career, so that's pretty cool.



RICHARD GILHOOLY
HEAD OF PEOPLE & CAPABILITY

It's so important to connect organisational values with the actual state of how people feel, and want to feel, at work. We focus strongly on our culture: staff need to be part of shaping the expressed values, and I think we've done a good job of that, but the opportunity we see in the Emotional Culture Deck is to support ongoing conversations that become part of 'how we do things around here'.

We began by trialling the deck with riders&elephants in a couple of team environments. Our Chief Operating Officer immediately saw the potential, and we brought it to her leadership team. It's a really valuable set of discussions to have for that group, sparking the immediate question of 'how can we ourselves engage' while also being cognisant that this is a positive challenge for everyone across NZ Rugby.

A lot of organisations struggle to make culture real: what do values truly mean? What does performance look like? But it's much easier to start with 'how do I feel' then work outwards to 'what shall we do'. The Emotional Culture Deck is a powerful way to make empathy a key part of how you deliver success.

Absolutely Positively Wellington City Council

Me Heke Ki Pōneke

VICKI MCLAREN ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

We used the deck with Vicki and her team to explore the HR Services and Organisational Development stakeholder engagement strategy.

We brought together a team of 30 HR Services and Organisational Development people within WCC and applied the deck to how they can create better experiences for the stakeholders they deal with on a daily basis i.e. all Wellington City Council employees.

The core question we explored was: "How do we want the people we work with to feel when they engage with us?"

"Facilitating meaningful and productive conversations about workplace behaviours is both incredibly important and really tricky!"

We used The Emotional Culture Deck as a leadership team and then with our wider team of 30 and I was wowed by how it enabled all of us to really think about and discuss the emotional aspects of our work environment.

As I scanned the room full of small working groups they were animated and fully engaged in identifying the behaviours they did and didn't want and when they reported back they had clearly grappled with the tricky bits and were able to share their thoughts as well as some potential solutions."

The Panasonic logo is displayed in white text on a solid blue rectangular background.

PIERS GORDON NATIONAL RETAIL MANAGER

"Thanks very much for the session. The team got a lot out of it. A few of them afterwards mentioned specifically they really enjoyed that compared to some other forms of 'culture and growth' sessions we have done in the past.

We just had some first-half reviews yesterday and got some more really positive feedback on the session. I even started the reviews with the Check-in exercise using the cards where you pick a white (positive) card that represents what you felt last week. I then asked my team to pick a black (negative) card you want to avoid with the end of month pressures looming."

This is what the Key Accounts team had to say about using the decks for the first time:

"I loved the openness in the group, and talking about things that don't tend to get talked about at Panasonic."

"I enjoyed how easy it was to flow from one 'subject' to another in the workshop using the deck. The time seemed to fly by. It was great how using the deck allowed all of us to be fully immersed in the discussion about the type of culture we want to create to be successful."

"I was amazed to hear about how many similarities there were in the group around some of the negative thoughts and feelings that we were all experiencing."



DERRI EVANS
AGILE COACH

“The results have been incredible. I have managed to help my squads improve their productivity and a more high performing and connected team... We have been able to create an environment where people can bring their whole selves to work and have an awesome day every day – which in turn has increased our productivity. Simple!

We’re now currently rolling the deck out across every squad in our Westpac Staff Assist business unit. Soon every squad in the unit will have gone through the exercise and worked together to define the emotional culture of their team with their scrum master.

We’re planning on running Summer School workshops where we will help other leaders from across Westpac learn about how the emotional culture of their team influences how their people think and behave. Plus we’ll teach leaders how to use The Emotional Culture Deck with their teams.

It’s exciting to think that more people within Westpac will be having these conversations and I can help inject more empathy into the way we all work. My hope is that one day we will all be having open conversations about our emotional well being at work, which will create an even higher-performing culture.



FIONA MACKENZIE
PEOPLE & PERFORMANCE MANAGER

We used the deck with Fletcher Living’s Senior Leadership Team as part of their strategic off-site planning days. We brought together their 12 senior leaders, and took them through the process of defining their leadership and culture strategy using the decks.

This is what Fiona had to say about the experience using the decks with her team:

“The culture deck was a very useful tool to engage our leaders and discuss and test what makes our culture so great! Even better, we’ve come away with some tangible actions! Culture is and will be a continued topic of discussion amongst our leaders and teams!”

WWW.THEEMOTIONALCULTUREDECK.COM

WWW.RIDERSANDELEPHANTS.COM

PS.

“People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel”

– MAYA ANGELOU