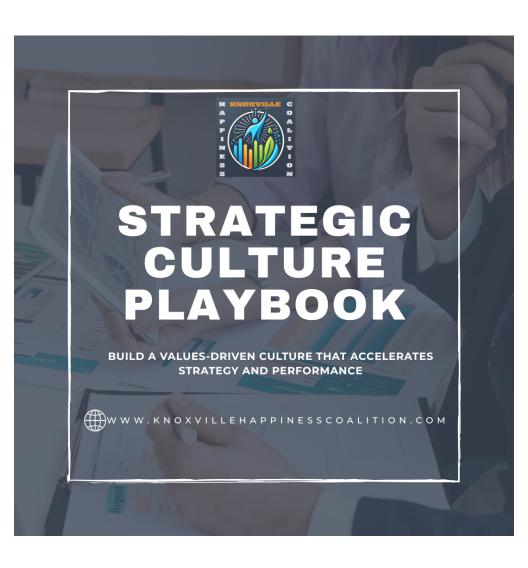# STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP CULTURE PLAYBOOK

BY ALEXIA GEORGHIOU

LEAD STRATEGY THROUGH CULTURE WITH THE V.A.L.U.E.S. FRAMEWORK

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STRATEGIC CULTURE PLAYBOOK

BUILD A VALUES-DRIVEN CULTURE THAT ACCELERATES STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE

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1.
INTRODUCTION: V.A.L.U.E.S. FRAMEWORK

In every organization, culture is the invisible force shaping performance, engagement, and adaptability. The **V.A.L.U.E.S. Framework** provides leaders with a psychologically grounded, research-based method to intentionally shape culture, align people with purpose, and drive lasting results (Seligman, 2000; Fredrickson, 2001, 2009).

V.A.L.U.E.S. stands for:

- **Vision** – Unite employees behind a shared purpose that drives strategy.

- **Action** – Turn purpose into clear, measurable steps that leverage strengths and deliver results.

- **Leadership** – Develop leaders at every level to inspire, empower, and model trust.

- **Unity** – Build cohesive, high-performing teams grounded in respect and shared values.

- **Engagement** – Sustain motivation, commitment, and innovation over time.

- **Synthesis** – Integrate all insights into a unified organizational transformation plan.

Grounded in the science of positive psychology (Seligman, 2000; Fredrickson, 2001, 2009) and supported by transformational leadership and team-building research, the framework taps into the power of meaning, positive emotion, and accomplishment to broaden thinking, strengthen collaboration, and build resilience.

V	**VISION**	Creating a shared purpose that inspires action
A	**ACTION**	Implementing strategies that align strengths with roles
L	**LEADERSHIP**	Developing collaborative leadership at all levels
U	**UNITY**	Building cohesive teams through shared values
E	**ENGAGEMENT**	Maintaining motivation and long-term commitment
S	**SYNTHESIS**	Integrating all elements to create sustainable success

A systematic approach to enhancing organizational effectiveness

2.
WHY THIS MATTERS NOW

Today's leaders face compounded challenges:

- **Uncertainty & Change Fatigue** – Rapid market shifts and restructuring leave teams anxious and disengaged.

- **Siloed Thinking** – Departments operate independently, missing opportunities for synergy.

- **Burnout & Low Engagement** – High workloads, limited recognition, and unclear purpose drain morale.

- **Shallow Culture Efforts** – Efforts focus only on visible behaviors without addressing underlying values.

- **Leadership Gaps** – Managers promoted for technical skills often lack people- and change-leadership capabilities.

The Opportunity: Culture is not a side project—it is the strategy. Leaders who align values with business goals can accelerate execution, improve retention, and inspire innovation.

The V.A.L.U.E.S. Framework for Culture-Driven Strategy

1. Vision – Anchor in Purpose

Goal: Align every person's role with the organization's mission and long-term goals.
Pain Point: Disconnection between daily work and big-picture strategy.

Leader Actions:

- Craft and communicate a compelling purpose that connects to real-world impact.

- Share "line-of-sight" stories showing how individual efforts contribute to organizational success.

- Involve teams in shaping future goals for greater ownership.

- Use future-casting sessions to visualize the organization's 3–5 year destination.

Why It Works: When employees understand why they work, motivation becomes intrinsic, and decision-making aligns naturally with strategy (Seligman, 2000).

2. Action – Translate Vision into Tangible Steps

Goal: Move from inspiration to measurable progress.
Pain Point: Ideas without follow-through; strategy existing only "on paper."

Leader Actions:

- Set SMART goals tied to strategic priorities.

- Identify and remove process bottlenecks.

- Assign clear ownership for every initiative.

- Track and celebrate quick wins to build momentum.

Why It Works: Action planning bridges the gap between intent and impact, making strategy a lived reality.

3. Leadership – Influence at Every Level

Goal: Create a culture where leadership is a shared responsibility, not a title.
Pain Point: Over-reliance on top management for direction.

Leader Actions:

- Develop leadership skills at all levels through mentoring and stretch assignments.

- Practice empathy-based leadership, balancing accountability with understanding.

- Model transparency in decision-making.

- Equip teams to resolve conflict constructively.

Why It Works: Distributed leadership accelerates change and builds organizational resilience (Fredrickson, 2009).

4. Unity – Build Collaboration Across Boundaries

Goal: Break down silos and strengthen cross-team trust.
Pain Point: Miscommunication, territorial thinking, and fragmented efforts.

Leader Actions:

- Form cross-functional project teams for key initiatives.

- Facilitate "strength mapping" to leverage diverse skills.

- Establish shared norms for communication and decision-making.

- Recognize collaborative wins as equally important as individual achievements.

Why It Works: Unity fosters innovation by combining diverse perspectives into better solutions (Fredrickson, 2001).

5. Engagement – Sustain Energy and Commitment

Goal: Keep people motivated, valued, and growing.
Pain Point: Declining morale, low participation, and high turnover.

Leader Actions:

- Implement personalized recognition practices.

- Provide meaningful growth opportunities.

- Create feedback loops with visible follow-through.

- Monitor workload balance to prevent burnout.

Why It Works: Engaged employees perform better, advocate for the organization, and strengthen its reputation (Seligman, 2000).

6. Synthesis – Integrate Culture and Strategy

Goal: Merge all V.A.L.U.E.S. elements into a cohesive transformation blueprint.
Pain Point: Culture initiatives that are isolated, short-term events rather than systemic change.

Leader Actions (Based on Synthesis Cards):

Vision Alignment

- Review all Vision Zone insights to create a unified vision statement.

- Identify three ways to communicate it effectively across the organization.

Strategic Action Plan

- Combine all action strategies into a prioritized roadmap.

- Create a 90-day action plan with milestones, owners, and success metrics.

Leadership Development

- Identify needed leadership capabilities.

- Design a development initiative including mentoring, training, and practical application.

Team Cohesion Framework

- Establish collaboration protocols, trust-building practices, and cross-department touch points.

Engagement Strategy

- Build a comprehensive engagement plan covering recognition, development, and feedback systems.

Organizational Transformation Blueprint

- Map interconnections between all elements.

- Assign champions for each pillar.

- Develop a full implementation timeline with success metrics.

Why It Works: Synthesis ensures culture is embedded into operations and strategy, transforming it from an abstract idea into a measurable driver of performance.

3.
90 DAY CULTURE SHIFT PLAN

Practical 90-Day Culture Shift Plan

90-Day Culture Shift Plan

Turn insight into action and embed culture into strategy.

Weeks 1–2 — Diagnose

- Use the Iceberg Model to identify visible behaviors & hidden values.

- Gather employee insights via surveys & focus groups.

Weeks 3–4 — Vision

- Align personal and organizational purpose.

- Share "line of sight" stories linking daily work to big-picture strategy.

Weeks 5–6 — Action

- Set 3–5 clear priorities tied to strategy.

- Remove bottlenecks and assign ownership.

Weeks 7–8 — Leadership

- Launch micro-leadership initiatives for all levels.

- Model transparency and empathy in decision-making.

Weeks 9–10 — Unity

- Host cross-team collaboration workshops.

- Recognize and reward collaborative wins.

Weeks 11–12 — Engagement

- Introduce consistent recognition & feedback loops.

- Create visible progress dashboards to sustain momentum.

Week 13 — Synthesis

- Combine insights into a Culture Blueprint.

- Set metrics for the next 90 days to track impact.

The Strategic Payoff

- **Better Strategy Execution** – Aligned culture removes friction from implementation.

- **Higher Retention & Morale** – Employees feel connected, recognized, and supported.

- **Faster Adaptability** – Distributed leadership and unity speed change adoption.

- **Sustainable Performance** – Engagement fuels results without burnout.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Alexia Georghiou is the founder of the Knoxville Happiness Coalition and author of The Future of Work is Human and The Future of Success is Happiness. With decades of experience as a mental health therapist and educator, she now specializes in organizational culture, change leadership, and workplace well-being. Through her V.A.L.U.E.S. Model—Vision, Action, Leadership, Unity, Engagement, and Synthesis—Alexia helps leaders align performance with purpose. She advises executives and HR leaders, writes, and speaks on human-centered leadership rooted in positive psychology.