

i3

FROM BIO TO BUSINESS  
A Q&A with Maryland's biotech leaders

TOO BIG TO BE SMALL  
MorganFranklin discovers the right way to grow

THE COMPANY KIDS  
What managers and parents have in common

October 2009

- Leadership
- Family Business
- Finance
- Technology
- Law
- Sales & Marketing
- Talent
- Management
- Culture

Baltimore  
smart

CEO

Required Reading for Growing Companies [www.smartceo.com](http://www.smartceo.com) \$2.95

CEO OF THE YEAR

DAVID  
williams  
MERKLE INC

EIGHTH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

8

He knows a lot about your household. He knows even more about dominating the database marketing industry.

2,000 THINGS



INDIVIDUALS. IDEAS. INFORMATION. on CULTURE

# culture club

## JOIN THE RANKS OF CEOs WHO NURTURE THE COMPANY NATURE

BY JEANINE CLINGENPEEL

Corporate culture is a wiggly thing to pin down. You can't see it, touch it or taste it, but you can sense it within five minutes of walking into a company's office. Culture is total sum of the values and traditions that make a company unique, and it influences everything from the way employees answer the phone to the kind of clients you choose to do business with. Although you can't quantify it on the balance sheet, business leaders know that a positive culture can make the difference between thriving or failing. These CEOs talk about what makes their cultures tick and the role they play in creating and maintaining that unique atmosphere.



**TERESA TAYLOR**, president and CEO, Proteus Technologies

**My Culture:** "Our culture is one of technical discovery, collaboration and mentoring. As the company has grown, the culture has become somewhat more formal, as additional staff members have come onboard to handle niche capabilities."

**My Role:** "CEOs have to lead by example and reinforce the culture

through their own actions. Our leadership team is available, their doors are open, and they participate in a variety of outreach activities and encourage communication to shape our culture."

**My Advice:** "Define it, speak it, live it."

**SID FUCHS**, CEO, OAO Technologies

**My Culture:** "Our culture is very collegial and supportive, and it's migrated to one with more of a sense of urgency and focus around customers and growth."

**My Role:** "I am the steward of the culture. The CEO's major responsibility is to establish an environment where the team can be successful. Many CEOs believe their sole job is sales, working the network or engineering solutions, but I look at myself as the coach, bringing together the best team, creating the game plan with the team, and getting us ready to execute on Sunday."

**My Advice:** "People will focus on what the boss focuses on. Wherever you shine your light is where employees will shine their light, so make sure you are focused on high-leverage activities and investments."



**PETE STEVENSON**, CEO, Latisys

**My Culture:** "Our company was formed by an acquisition, so we had to take two cultures in two parts of the country and have them work together. We had to establish a culture around the strategy. As long as we continue to have that achievement-oriented culture, the rest of the business works well."

**My Role:** "I'm the cheerleader and example setter. In the CEO role, people listen to everything you say and they hang on your words, so you have to be really thoughtful."

**My Advice:** "If the culture is broken, it's awfully hard to turn around, and it often requires a change in leadership. Ask yourself if you're at the root of the problem. If the answer is yes, it might be time to think about doing something else."

**PATRICIA SCOTT**, president, A Better Answer, Inc.

**My Culture:** "In one word: relaxed."  
**My Role:** "My job is to work with [employees] to make sure they are happy with the environment. I was extremely rigid when I started the company. I felt everything had to be black and white. Today, the culture is more relaxed because I am."

**My Advice:** "Some companies don't seem to care how their employees feel as long as they get the job done. I want my people to succeed."



### The Sky is NOT the Limit.

What is success. How do you define it? Measure it? Whatever the scope of your needs, you need a model to get it done. Effectively. That's where we come in.

#### Agency

Our account services, strategy, and creative departments immerse themselves in the challenges facing your business to develop solutions from the inside out.

#### Studio

Sound stage, film and video, design, and interactive – we keep everything under one roof to deliver a full-service, one-stop resource for productions of all sizes.

#### New Media

We develop interactive marketing tools and leverage the reach of social media to encourage two-way conversation with your customers.

#### Content

Our award-winning storytellers harness the power of narrative to teach, entertain, and sell while making your products and services an essential part of the experience.

#### Training

We merge proven instructional design principals with advanced training tools to provide an unmatched educational experience that improves employee and organizational performance.

RENEGADE

AGENCY | STUDIO | NEW MEDIA | CONTENT | TRAINING

1. 866. 4RENEGADE WWW.GETRENEGADE.COM



**P.J. BRADEN**, president, Gryphon Technologies

**My Culture:** "I would describe our culture like a fraternity. It is a very flat organization."

**My Role:** "I think it starts from the top. You have to reinforce it constantly, and when new people come in, you have to bring them into your culture, not let them drag you the other way."

**My Advice:** "It has to be real. It can't be artificial. Your entire system, your mindset, your policies, your holiday parties – everything has to be in line."

**GREG CANGIALOSI**, president, Blue Sky Factory

**My Culture:** We are a work-hard, play hard culture, with a strong work ethic. We are focused and laid back. We foster a fun work environment where something interesting is always happening."

**My Role:** "I do think the culture starts with the CEO and the type of person the CEO is. All those aspects are the way I would describe myself. You live the culture as the CEO. You can't be one way and expect your company to be totally different."

**My Advice:** "Once that culture is formed, you start to attract other like-minded people as a natural by-product, and we've seen a lot of that lately. We are very slow to hire mainly because of that cultural fit."



**MATHEW ZUCKERMAN**, Ph.D., CEO and president, Alkane, Inc.

**My Culture:** "Our company culture is open, transparent and driven by our mission."

**My Role:** "The culture is an extension of my personal values, and I strive to communicate these values to the people in my company. I demand authenticity in communication and I set an example for the company by my communications."

**My Advice:** "The CEO should look into him or herself to define the core values, not something written in a book or the bathroom wall. If the CEO really can express his or her core values, the corporate culture rings true."

**LESLIE MANCUSO**, president and CEO, Jhpiego

**My Culture:** "Our culture is passionate, committed, driven by our mission and extremely global."

**My Role:** "I believe the CEO certainly has to be the model for what the organization believes. Without question, you have to bring in the right leadership team, and they reflect our culture."

**My Advice:** "As CEOs, we have to have that culture of listening, so you are understanding the challenges. If leaders aren't listening to staff, if there is not an ongoing exchange, I think a culture can get off track."



**LEAH MESSINA**, founder and CEO, Sinuate Media

**My Culture:** "We try to keep an open environment, always as creative as possible and keeping up with the latest developments. We are not a suit-and-tie kind of place – more flip flops and T-shirts."

**My Role:** "We moved into new office space, and I work in a space that's open to everyone else. It's a pretty flat organization. In our new space, I feel we have been able to collaborate more."

**My Advice:** "It's important to get feedback from the staff about what's not working. Sometimes staff is not always willing to share all their feelings, so you have to try to break through that concern."

**EVA SWERSEY**, president and co-founder, Body Elements

**My Culture:** "We want to create and maintain a warm, nurturing environment. But we also want to be equally results oriented. We are committed to reliability, results, consistency and ultimately making people look and feel great."

**My Role:** "The culture is always set from the person at the top. When I hire someone, I set the tone."

**My Advice:** "In hiring new people, I used to look for experience, and I was finding that I wasn't hiring the right type of people. I realized it was the core values and the culture I really needed to look for."



## culture q&a

Why is having a positive culture important?



**PAUL EIKENBERG**, owner, CyberGuys

"It frames the decisions that are made in the company. If you have a well-established culture, you don't need extensive policies on how to react to every problem. It makes the job of owning the business a lot easier. Too many small business owners are afraid to go away for a few days, but if you have a culture you are comfortable with, you don't need to worry about what happens when you aren't there."

"People want to be part of something bigger than themselves. There needs to be that element of fun that mitigates the seriousness of struggling through tough times."

**MICHELLE BOGGS**, president and CEO, McKinley Marketing



**MATT DOUD**, president, Planit Agency

"When your employees are performing at their highest level, when your teams are firing on all cylinders, when they enjoy coming to work because they enjoy the challenges as well as the perks, you have a formula for reducing turnover and for building a following that brings passion, commitment and the extra effort that rises you above the competition. Can you find that asset on a balance sheet? No.

But I see it as valuable, if not more so, than any company asset."

"A positive company culture is a magnet for the best employees. You want the cream of the crop. If they have a choice, they'll come to a company where there is a good culture. I think it's a magnet for the best clients, too. There is no downside to having a positive company culture, but there are a lot of negatives for not having one."

**JOYCE BOSCH**, president and CEO, Boscobel Marketing Communications



**GEORGE C. SHERK JR.**, president, Whitmore Group

"It feeds so much creative energy. If you have people engaged in the company and mission, wonderful ideas come out of it. It's a place you want to work, a place customers want to work with. In a company where people like what they are doing and who they are doing it for, it's a positive energy that is self-fulfilling."

"I like the analogy of rowers in a boat. If people are pulling in different directions, you will never reach your destination. Our culture enables all of us to pull in the same direction. It provides a level of comfort and support, while simultaneously setting a pretty high bar."

**LES BIDER**, CEO, PinnacleCare



**BETH JOHNSON**, president, RP3

"Our success lies squarely on the ability of our people to excel, to go beyond the capabilities of other firms and achieve greater results for our clients. Our culture is what attracts these people and what gives them the means to reach their highest potential. If you strip away an agency's culture, you have only fancy computers and expensive software. Savvy marketers require a smarter, faster, more ingenious brand of agency. Our culture is what makes this happen."

"When times are good, culture sits in the backseat and makes sure you don't get reckless as you gain momentum. It's the fabric that holds it all together."

**DAVE CAMPBELL**, COO, Optimal Networks



"I spend 75 percent of my waking day physically here. I want it to be a place I enjoy coming and that my employees enjoy."

**ANTHONY PARKER**, president, Parker Tide, Corp.



# MAJOR LEAGUE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ANY SIZE BUSINESS.

## LET THE ORIOLES TAILOR A PARTNERSHIP PACKAGE THAT FITS YOUR NEEDS.

Companies of all sizes have success each season connecting with consumers and growing their business by partnering with the Orioles.

Call our Corporate Sales Team today to tailor a customized partnership that's perfect for your company, your needs, and your budget.

To get started,  
call 410-547-6143.

**Orioles** THIS IS BIRDLAND.

888-848-BIRD

**Orioles.com**

## counter culture

You can't define your company values. Your employees are leaving in droves. You just don't want to come to the office anymore. Yes, you have a culture crisis. What causes a good culture to go bad? And what can CEOs do to fix it?



"When the culture has gone bad, it's usually when you've hit an inflection point where the company needs to become more rigorous, but leadership tries to do it from an authoritative vantage point. When you manage a culture in transition, it is really important to have buy-in instead of trying to flip a switch. If your culture has gotten off track, go back to the basics of what made the culture successful in the beginning. If it didn't have a positive culture to begin with, it probably would not have gotten out of the starting blocks."

SEAN GORMAN, CEO, Fortius One



"I do worry that as we grow larger, the culture will become 'diluted,' and it will become harder to maintain some of our core values, as I have seen this happen at other companies. I believe that we can prevent this from happening through actions such as keeping the lines of communication open with employees, requiring all leaders to maintain face-to-face interaction with employees and clients, and promoting consistent behavior and approaches in our leaders through our corporate leadership training program. When everything ties together and conveys a consistent message, you are able to create a strong company culture."

GRACE DITTMAR, CEO, Trusted Mission Solutions, Inc.



"As a growing company, we began adding more processes and procedures. At one point, we felt like we were getting too far away from our culture. We came to a realization that we were putting too many inflexible processes in place. We were all about being flexible with clients and employees, so we were going against our core values. My advice is that if your company is getting off track, get back to your core. What was the culture when you started and what are your core values that are still valid today?"

DANIEL COHEN-DUMANI, CEO, Portal Solutions



"Culture gets off track when you are not paying attention to the details. Any new employee could come in and change the culture. If you are not watching what happens, your culture just becomes whatever it was at their last jobs, and those assumptions start creating conflicts. If you don't do a good job of training and making sure you are on top of those things, then your culture starts getting out of whack."

ANDREW ROSS, president, The Children's Guild



"The recession was a very stressful time for us. It tested the trust we had in each other, the relationships we had with our customers, our belief in what we were doing, and it tested our patience with each other. We didn't go off track or do anything different to get back on track; we just made a conscious choice to commit to our values. Coming through the other side of that experience has made us far stronger than we were a year ago, and more certain in what we have built. Whether you have ignored it or worked hard on it, you have a culture you deserve right now."

BOB CORLETT, president, Staffing Advisors

"I can see the potential to get off track. Our main hindrance is rapid growth and segmentation due to our virtual workforce. If you believe culture is important, you have to invest in it. We do that by investing our time and energy in company meetings so we are communicating well. It's better to find out what people are thinking and figure out how to get there. It takes a little bit of work and communication."

BRIAN S. PARISH, president, iData, Inc.





**ANDY STEINEM, CEO, Dahl-Morrow International**

**My Culture:** "Professional, but not stuffy. Take what you do seriously without taking yourself too seriously."

**My Rule:** "One of my first jobs was on Capitol Hill. I learned that each senator's office was a reflection of his or her personality. One was warm and fuzzy; one was off-the-wall-brilliant. Their ethics, how they treat people – it's a driving force around a culture."

**My Advice:** "Because we are a smaller organization, the personality of everyone who comes in is important to the overall tenor of the organization. If you have one bad apple, it reverberates throughout the organization."

**DAVID M. DOGGETTE, principal, 2HB Software Designs, Inc.,**

**My Culture:** "When the partners and I put this company together, we decided to build a company we'd be happy to work for. The culture of the company is based off that premise first and foremost."



**HEINAN LANDA, president and CEO, Optimal Networks**

**My Culture:** "It's a culture of 'tell the truth, do the right thing, and everyone benefits.' In a sense, the culture is a conglomerate of the people who work here. It needs to be discovered rather than mandated."

**My Rule:** "Demonstrate it and celebrate it when you recognize it. The CEO is the culture keeper and you have to guard it with your life."

**My Advice:** "The culture here used to be worse. Some people would have called it repressive. It was the byproduct of having a leader who didn't belong. But the seeds of a good culture were always there. Once that leader was no longer here, it allowed a stronger and more positive culture to express itself."



**HUNT BURKE, CEO, Burke & Herbert Bank & Trust Company**

**My Culture:** "Our culture is very mature – being 157 years old. It's one of not making rash decisions, being consistent in the approach and seeing the bigger picture."

**My Rule:** "Everyone is looking at the CEO, so it is important to be hands on. You can't run the place from Hawaii and expect the company will run itself. You have to be there and be an example."

**My Advice:** "I've admired executives who have a great salesperson who did not fit the culture and refused to conform, and they let them go. It is a hard decision, but sometimes you have to make those decisions to make the point that the most important thing is the culture and not one person's numbers."

Shop online for your  
**OFFICE, BREAK ROOM and CATERING NEEDS.**

Delivery is available!

**SANTONI'S**  
*Super Market*

"Your Friendly Neighborhood Grocer Since 1930!"

3800 East Lombard Street • Highlandtown • (410) 276-2990  
[www.santonismarket.com](http://www.santonismarket.com)

**Does your E-Mail Inbox feel like this?**

Call to schedule a **LIVE DEMO** of the leading **E-MAIL ARCHIVING SOLUTION**

**CTI** 1-800-606-6060  
IT Security, Compliance and Business Continuity  
[www.WEBCTI.com](http://www.WEBCTI.com)

Logiword | Partner  
Symantec  
NetApp

## The Origin of Culture

Is your culture reactive or proactive? By Theresa Gale

"It's how we do things around here." Ever heard your employees utter this phrase? That sentiment, when explored, reveals the visible yet oftentimes unspoken values, norms and behaviors that become the natural way of doing things in a company – in other words, the company culture.



The definition of culture suggests that it just "happens" without much intentionality, and most often it does. However, most cultures arise as a direct result of the values, beliefs and behaviors of the leader or leaders. When leaders aren't aware of this process, they can lead a company culture down a dangerous path.

All too often, when a business is in start-up mode, the owners form a company in reaction to their prior business experiences. Bill, a former consultant for a top accounting firm, leaves because the firm is too hierarchical and the trek to partnership is too political. In his new firm, he brings on talented people and immediately makes them partners. When the partners are not covering their share of work or expenses, he becomes resentful. Two female physicians leave a mostly male-dominated practice to create a practice where women doctors could work part time and raise a family. The practice is thriving today, yet it has been difficult to integrate male physicians who want full-time employment.

What does your company's culture say about you and what's important to you? Did you create a company in reaction to your past experiences – or with a set of beliefs and values that support your current success?

Managing your company's culture requires a bit of detective work. Begin by observing how you do business, what your beliefs and values are and what behaviors you do that support them. Ask your employees why they do things a certain way. Be open to hearing what they have to say. Don't try to justify, discount or correct them; merely listen. Once you've collected your data, ask yourself, "Is this the kind of company I want to lead? Or is it time to change how we do things around here?" If change is in order, it's time to roll up your sleeves, communicate the change, and be the change you expect from others.

Theresa Gale is co-owner of Transform, Inc. [www.TransformInc.com](http://www.TransformInc.com).