Creating a Startup Culture

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Startup Qualities

- Mission-obsessed
- Totally aligned around vision, strategy
- Shared values
- Open to risk (and learns from failure)
- Everyone counts
- Fun
We behave to support a culture...
... and our behavior shapes our culture.
What is culture anyway?
Culture is:

A pattern of shared, basic assumptions that a group learns, finds effective and teaches to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to problems.

-- Edgar Schein, MIT
Changing culture

1. Acknowledge ‘what is’
2. Set a vision
3. Change behaviors
Organizational Culture exists on three levels:
Artifacts

(What we see around the workplace)
Espoused values
(What people say they believe in)
Underlying assumptions
(Ideas so engrained ‘we neither confront nor debate them’)

Identifying those assumptions
6 Questions

• Who has the easiest access to resources?
• What are the sacred cows?
• Which legendary heroes and villains do people tell stories about?
• What behaviors do bosses reward or ignore?
• Where are gaps between what we say and do?
• What kinds of people fail in my newsroom?
Changing culture

1. Acknowledge ‘what is’
2. Set a vision
3. Change behaviors
What must change?
(Be specific.)
Behavior Opps

• Meetings
• One-on-Ones
• Memos
• Awards
• Assignments
Which behaviors will I change?