

#41 – Culture Is What Repeats

Before we begin, I want to define what I mean by *culture*.

When I sat down to write this post, I was a little hesitant.

I don't spend much time thinking about "corporate culture" or workplace culture. I'm certainly not high enough up the organizational chart to define it, and that's not really what this series is about.

Instead, I'm using the word in a much simpler sense.

Culture is what emerges from a group of people working together over time.

It's not unlike what grows in a petri dish. You can influence the environment, but what develops is the result of many small interactions happening over and over again.

Sometimes the result is exactly what you expected.

Sometimes it isn't.

When I talk about culture in Teams, I'm not talking about policies, values statements, or defining behaviors.

I'm talking about what naturally begins to form when people start working together in shared spaces rather than an endless stream of individual chats.

A construction crew might discover a new technique that makes the work flow more smoothly. Over time, that technique becomes part of how the crew works.

The same thing can happen in Teams.

Small habits become patterns.

Patterns become expectations.

And before long, a culture begins to emerge.

With that context in mind, let's get into the post.

When people hear the word *culture*, they sometimes think about values statements, mission statements, or organizational initiatives.

But in Teams, culture often shows up in much smaller ways.

It shows up in habits.

Do people reply in threads instead of starting new conversations?

Do files live where others can find them?

Do channel names make sense six months later?

Can someone return from vacation and quickly understand what happened while they were gone?

None of these things are particularly dramatic.

But over time, they shape the experience of working together.

A good channel culture isn't about everyone behaving the same way.

It's not artificial positivity.

It's not mandatory participation.

It's not social conformity.

It's something simpler than that.

It's a collection of small habits that make collaboration easier than it would otherwise be.

You might think of it as communication hygiene.

Not because there are rules to follow, but because certain habits make it easier for people to understand, contribute, and pick up where others left off.

When people consistently reply in context, conversations become easier to follow.

When files stay connected to the work they support, information becomes easier to find.

When discussions happen in channels instead of disappearing into chats, knowledge becomes easier to share.

Individually, these choices seem small.

Collectively, they create an environment where work becomes easier to re-enter, easier to understand, and easier to continue.

That's culture.

Not something announced.

Something practiced.

Last time, we talked about how channels can develop a rhythm of their own.

This time, we looked at how small habits quietly shape the culture inside those spaces.

Next time, we'll explore how good channel cultures begin to make Teams feel less like software and more like a shared workplace.

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