

The Results Pyramid[®] :

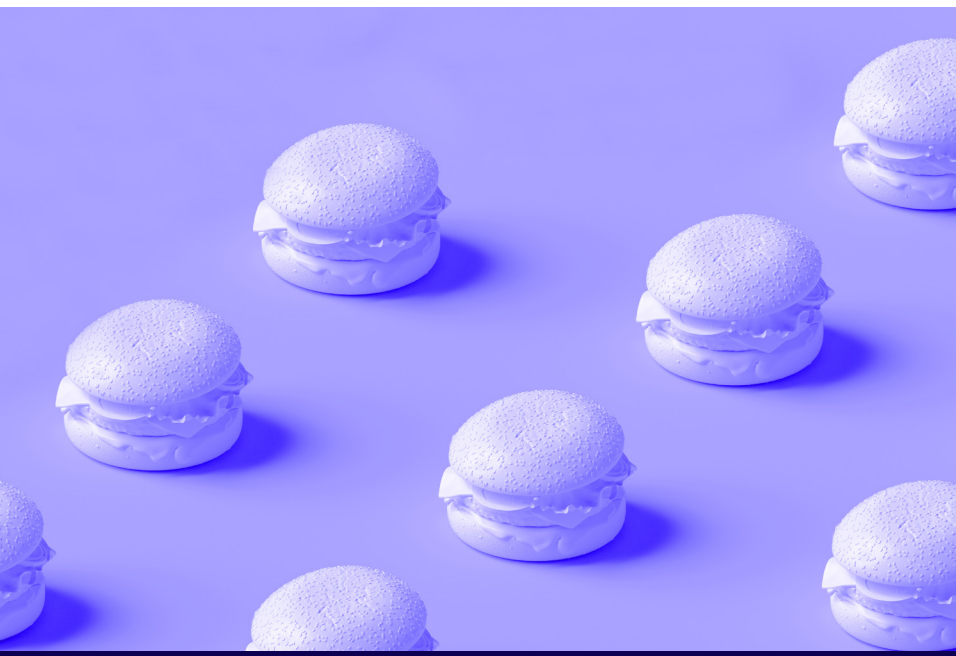
**Building a Foundation
for Culture Change**



When a 7-year-old girl stopped by the Chili's in Midvale, UT, she ordered her favorite meal: a cheeseburger with pickles, a side of fries, and a chocolate milk. When her burger was brought to her, it was cut in half.

"It's broken!" she exclaimed. "I need another one that's fixed." Her server, as well as the kitchen staff, jumped into action to make her a new, non-broken cheeseburger. Why? Because they wanted to give the little girl, and her family, the best experience possible. This would lead them to the belief that Chili's has a customer-centric culture that empowers employees to provide excellent customer service. Customers will leave the restaurant happy with their meal and the service they received.

The communicated belief that the restaurant is dedicated to excellent customer service has led to a growing number of hungry patrons stopping by for lunch and dinner.



**The result
of this
growth is a
10x increase
in their
stock price.**

Your Experiences Drive Results

Organizational culture is the binding ingredient in a workplace made up of people from different backgrounds with different beliefs. It creates a sense of shared expectations (behavior you'll likely see from your co-workers), as well as a shared sense of purpose and meaning (a reason for everyone to work together as a team).

Cultivating a strong culture - one that is aligned, accountable, and engaged, but also agile enough to adapt to change - starts with creating positive **experiences** for your employees that lead them to hold certain **beliefs** about your organization. These beliefs dictate their **actions**; these actions then lead to your organization's **results**.

We layer these elements one on top of another to create the model we call The Results Pyramid®. This is the heart of our methodology and is foundational to our approach to culture change. It's a simplified way to explain how to create a working environment that ultimately leads to the results you need to achieve. The research in organizational science supports this methodology, as does

the three decades of experience we have guiding business transformations.

In this ebook, we'll explain how these sequential steps relate to and inform one another. We will also give you actionable insights you can put into practice to begin shifting your culture - ultimately leading to the results you need.

The research in organizational science supports this methodology, as does the three decades of experience we have guiding business transformations.



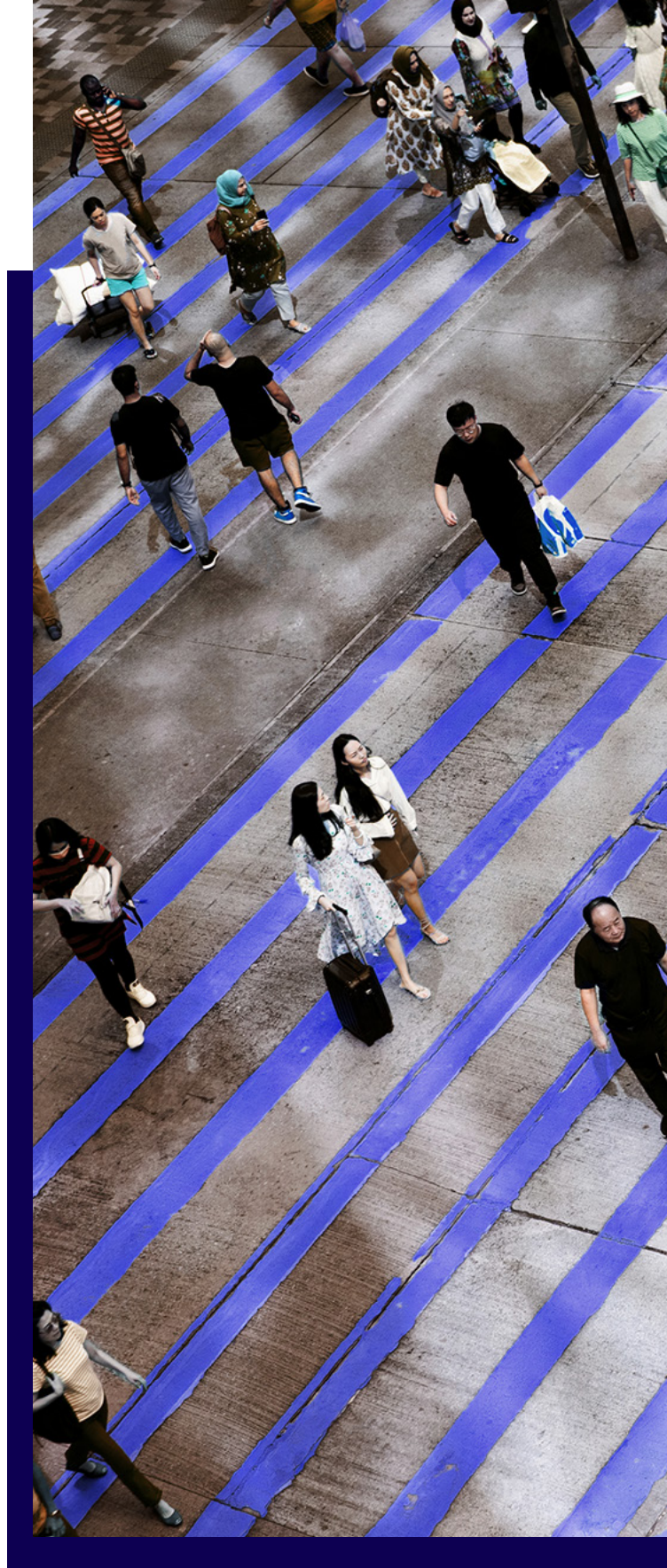
Experiences

Experiences are the foundational layer of The Results Pyramid for a reason: they ultimately dictate every choice we make, and therefore, the outcomes of all of these choices. This is how experiences drive results.

Everything that happens to us in life is an experience. Being chosen last to play a team sport; receiving positive feedback at work; getting rear-ended at a stoplight: these are all experiences that happen to us. And in all of these cases, the experiences lead us to a belief - but more on that later.

Our experiences shape who we are, even more so than beliefs do. This is because beliefs don't just pop into our brains unprompted. They are formed when we have certain experiences. Armed with our beliefs, we are able to justify any action - good, bad, or indifferent.

Everyone exists within certain subsets of society: in their household, in their workplace, in their geographic location. In each of these subsets lives a set of shared beliefs created from collective experiences, and those beliefs and experiences inform the behavior of the people within the culture. The same is true for your organization.



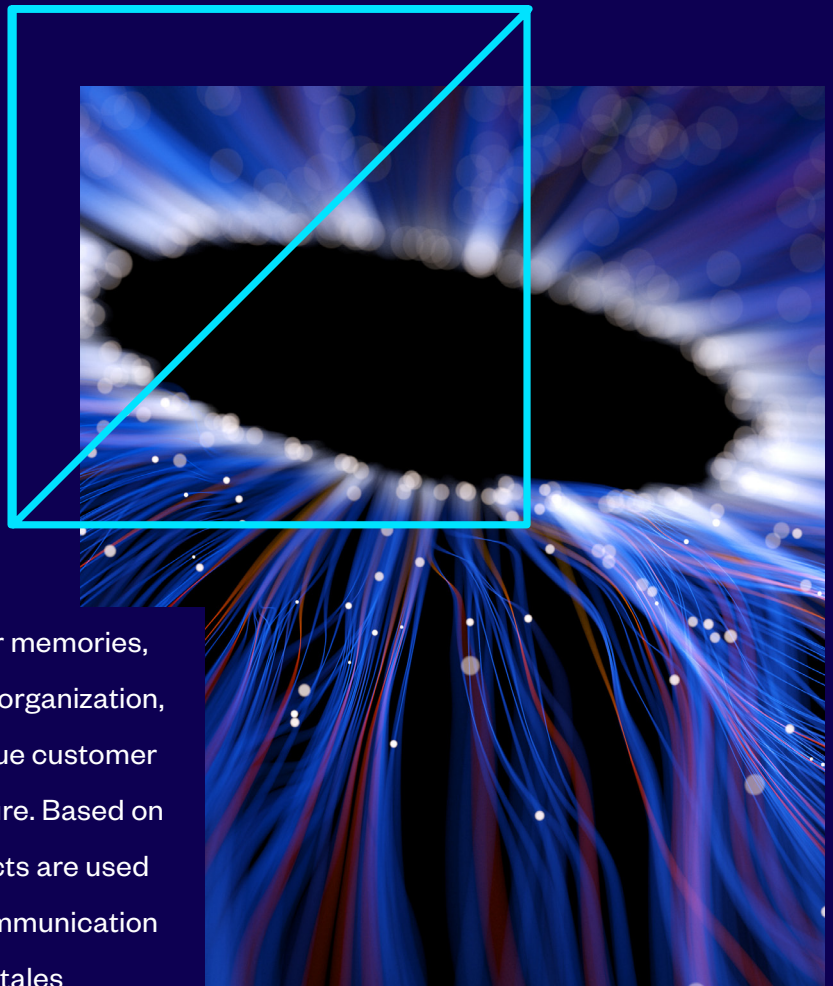


Every day, when your employees come to work (or log on remotely), they have a series of experiences. You, as a leader can control many of these experiences. While you can't control all of the experiences employees create for one another, you can influence the way employees behave by introducing a set of guidelines ([cultural beliefs](#)) for the ways in which everyone interacts with one another.

Before you create a set of experiences for your people, you must first decide on what results you need to achieve. These targeted results (or Key Results) will inform the experiences you need to create.

For example, if your goal is to increase productivity by 150% in the next four years, you must create a culture that values and rewards diligent employees for their hard work. This means regular [Focused Recognition](#), frequent [feedback exchanges](#) between employees and leadership, and organization-wide [alignment](#) on your Key Results.

What the research says:



Experiences are tangible events stored in our memories, and include easily referenced artifacts. In an organization, legendary tales, such as a story about a unique customer experience, become artifacts within the culture. Based on the neuroscience of storytelling, these artifacts are used as a method of persuasion, empathy, and communication to shape ideal behaviors. So in this way, even tales of experiences you haven't had become internalized experiences for yourself.

Culture Tip:

Create positive experiences for your team by both seeking and offering regular appreciative and constructive feedback.

Beliefs

Our experiences shape our beliefs. All beliefs are founded based on the perception of our experiences, even as early as infancy. Every experience we have leads us to a belief, either about ourselves or about the world around us. Beliefs both shape our behavior and establish meaning in our lives.

People have been forming beliefs since the beginning of human civilization. They are more than just how we see the world; they're a self-preservation tactic. For example, if you were a caveman, and you stepped outside of your dwelling at the wrong time and were eaten by a saber-toothed tiger, your companions would form the belief that it's best to be cautious when exiting the dwelling. This differs from [instinct](#) in that instincts are not formed by experience; they are present at birth and are shared by all members of a species. It's what happens in our bodies to lead us to run away from the saber-toothed tiger when it chases us, rather than turning around and trying to pet it.





When we apply this thinking to organizational culture, it's easy to see the role beliefs play for your employees. When they have positive experiences with you, with their peers, and with their work, they will develop positive beliefs about their roles and the organization as a whole.

If your goal is to give each employee in your organization the belief that it's a great place to work, you must create experiences to reinforce that belief. If you want employees to believe their input is valued, you must regularly collect and implement feedback.

There is, however, a negative side to beliefs. For example, if someone in your IT department has a negative experience working with someone in your HR department, it can lead to some detrimental beliefs about the organization as a whole.

Unfortunately, people often become "stuck in their ways" and are unable to change their beliefs. But you can't consider them a lost cause. It's possible to reverse those negative beliefs by creating new, positive experiences for them!

What the research says:



Beliefs drive our intrinsic motivation and self-determination, which ultimately supports personal and organizational goals. In other words, once these beliefs have been internalized, employees will continue to mentally reference them, whether consciously or unconsciously, which ultimately drives their behaviors and helps them understand the importance of their roles in the organization. When there are consistent positive experiences to back up these beliefs, they only become stronger over time.

Culture Tip:

Continually find ways to understand and reinforce the positive beliefs your employees hold. Seek to also understand negative beliefs so you can create new experiences to reshape them.

Actions

Many people don't realize that the actions they take on a daily basis are determined by their beliefs. Central to this link is the [Theory of Planned Behavior](#). There is substantial evidence to support the idea that our behaviors are predictable based on our motivation and ability - or in other words, our intentions. Our beliefs dictate our intentions. Our intentions then turn into actions. We can often predict the actions or behaviors of a person based on their beliefs.

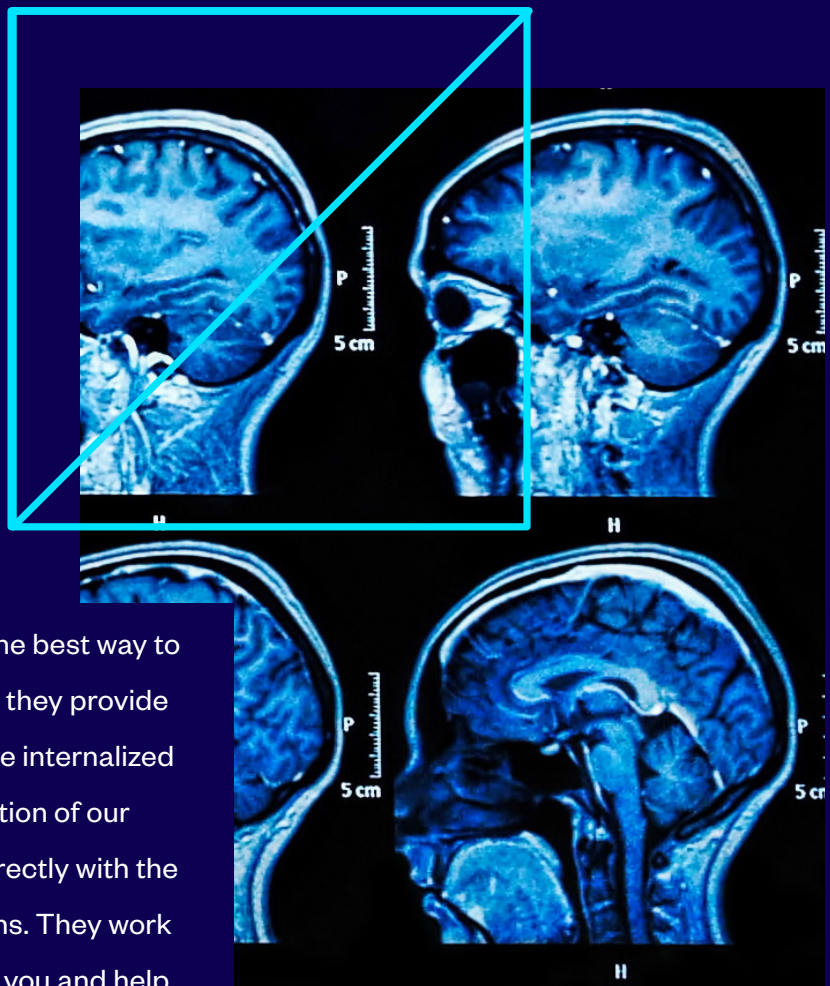
For example, if you see a red light, you believe, based on experience, that stopping at a red light is both crucial to your safety and the safety of those around you, as well as a way to avoid a ticket. Your intent is to stop at all red lights. Your action is pressing the brake pedal until you come to a complete stop.

But this path from belief to action has other applications - and implications.

If you were a manager, and you witnessed another manager in a similar role get punished for speaking up in a meeting **(experience)**, you would probably think "my opinions are not welcome in meetings," **(belief)**, which would lead you to keep your ideas and suggestions to yourself **(action)**.

What actions will lead your organization to the results you need to achieve? If your goal is to generate revenue growth in a given fiscal year, you'll need to set your employees up for success to archive this. Create experiences for them that encourage the belief that their role is directly tied to this outcome. Then reinforce their behavior by rewarding the actions that get you closer to your goal, such as outstanding client interactions.

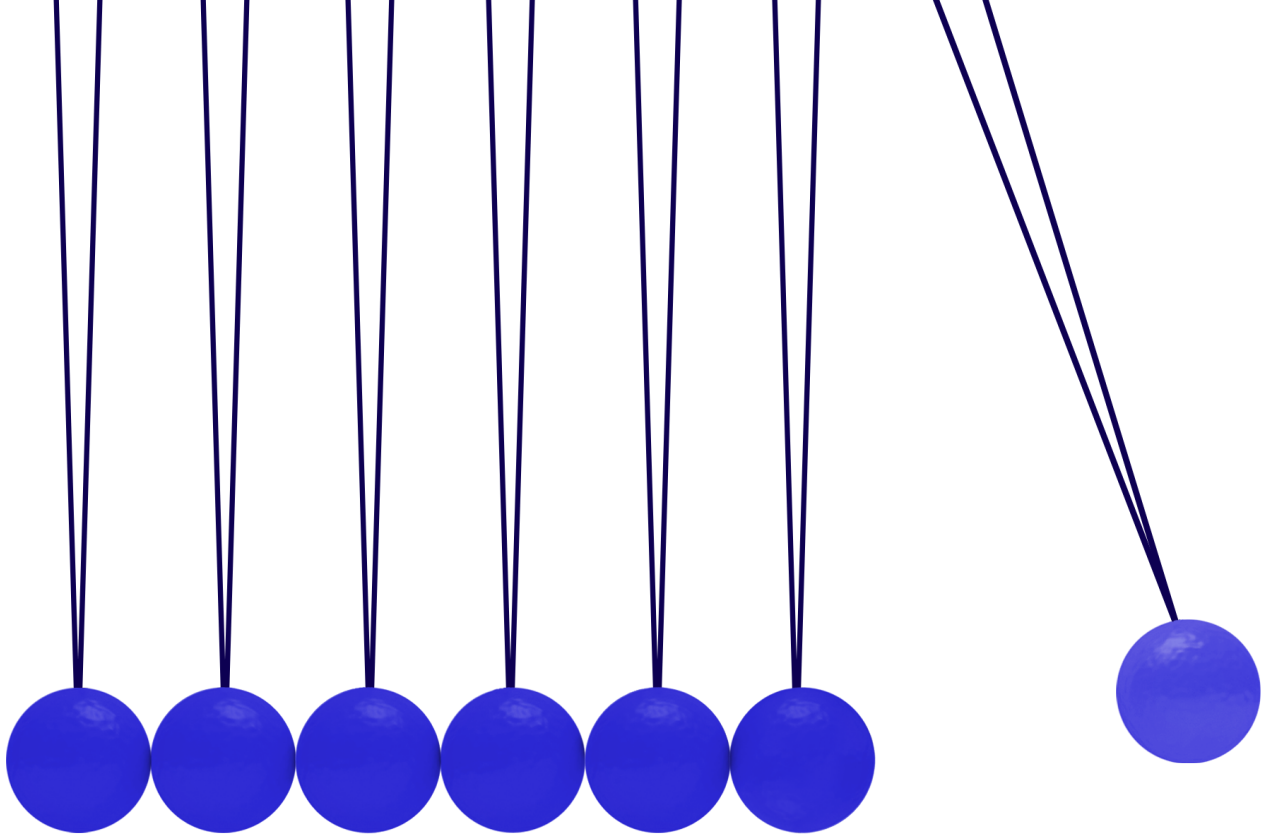
What the research says:



Beliefs predict our actions, and actions are the best way to measure the effectiveness of your culture, as they provide an indicator of whether or not employees have internalized your organization's values and goals. The section of our brain responsible for belief communicates directly with the section that is responsible for dictating actions. They work together to give meaning to the world around you and help you connect directly with it.

Culture Tip:

When faced with a problem, focus on changing the experiences and beliefs that led to the action more so than focusing solely on the action itself.



Results

The Results Pyramid is so named for the top layer: results. That's because everything we've talked about - experiences, beliefs, and actions - all lead us here.

Newton's third law tells us that every action has an equal and opposite reaction. For our purposes, we'll refer to these reactions as the results.

Every action we take has a result, regardless of how mundane it might seem:

- Working hard at your job = recognition from your leaders and/or peers
- Dropping your child off for ballet practice = your child learns how to dance ballet
- Putting your spoon in the dishwasher = your spoon will be clean when you need it

No matter what outcomes you are targeting personally or professionally, you must work backward from the result you want to the experiences you need to create in order to achieve that result. This is the most efficient way to shift your culture.

When we discuss culture change, it works like this:

Step 1: Create positive experiences for everyone in the organization.

Example: At Jessica's company, her CEO recently introduced an initiative of focused recognition, where everyone is regularly congratulated and recognized for their achievements and efforts.

Step 2: These experiences lead to new beliefs about your value in the organization.

Example: Jessica received recognition for a job well done with a new client. She feels valued by her company and peers.

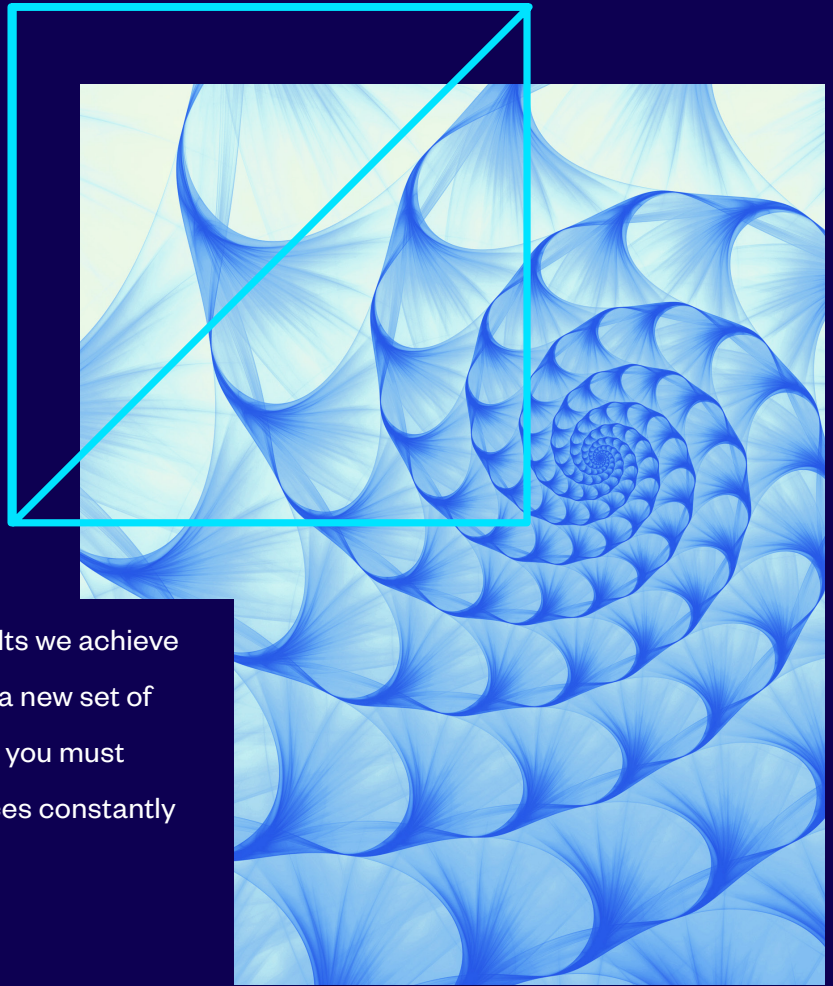
Step 3: Armed with new beliefs about your role, you begin to change your actions.

Example: Jessica now knows her hard work is appreciated; but more importantly, she believes that in order to support the organization, she must continue to deliver top-notch client experiences.

Step 4: The actions you take have results.

Example: Because of Jessica's hard work and the recognition she received, everyone on her team is inspired to deliver a positive client experience. The result of this? Record-breaking customer satisfaction scores!

What the research says:



The Results Pyramid is also cyclical: the results we achieve through our actions are the starting point for a new set of experiences. If you have achieved your goals, you must continue to seek out or create new experiences constantly to reinforce beliefs.

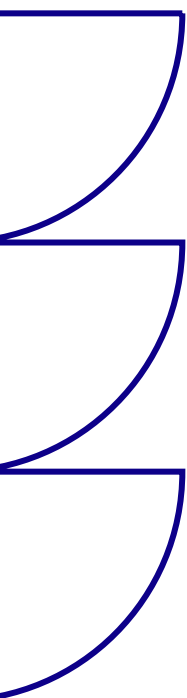
Culture Tip:

Create new goals when you achieve results in order to capitalize on your momentum and continue to grow.

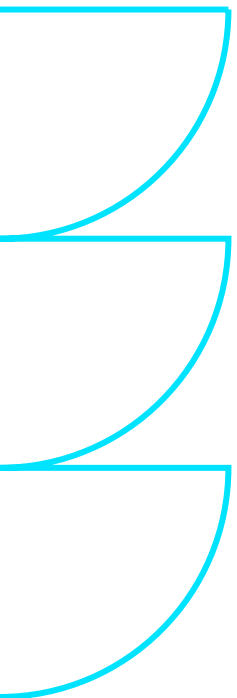


The path to success

Everything in life you want to achieve, whether it's a personal or professional goal, begins with a set of experiences. When we apply this to organizational culture, we can clearly see the trail of success from positive experiences all the way to desired results.



It's important to not get caught up in the actions of your people. You can't build enough new processes, or buy enough new technology, to sustainably change the actions of your teams. It's critical that you start by creating **experiences** that foster the **beliefs** you wish your teams to hold, which will eventually begin to change their **actions**, ultimately leading to your **Key Results**.



A recent analysis of over 400,000 employees across various organizations found that a company's value increased when its internal beliefs aligned with its strategic goals. You don't have to choose between culture and strategy. In fact, when organizations earn the "Best Place to Work" designation from [Glassdoor](#), they tend to earn, on average, 20.3 percent more in the stock market than their counterparts. Culture is an investment with a measurable ROI.

In order to build a resilient, adaptable, and agile culture, you must cultivate sustainable culture change and management. It's not just about achieving results in the short-term. It's about building a foundation that will support your organization quarter-over-quarter and year-over-year.



Learn more about the science and extensive research behind The Results Pyramid's methodology by downloading our White Paper: ["The Results Pyramid® & The Paradox of Culture Change"](#).

CULTURE PARTNERS

For over 30 years, our team has empowered thousands of clients across the world to harness the power of culture. Our human industrial-organizational psychological methods help organizations inspire action by connecting experiences, beliefs, and actions. We believe in the transformative power of culture to improve the professional and personal lives of people everywhere.

Unleash the power of your culture.

WWW.CULTUREPARTNERS.COM