

5 simple questions to understand culture

11 OCTOBER 2019

The culture problem

Defining Culture

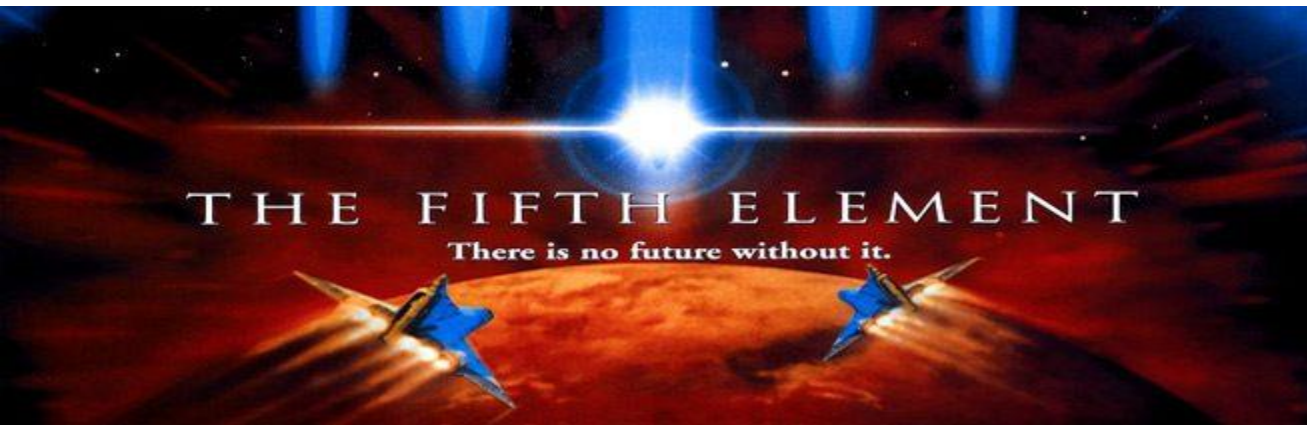
- “How we do things around here”
- “What you do when no-body’s looking”
- “the habitual behaviours and mindsets that characterise an organisation”
- “...that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society”

The 5 Question Approach

How to assess a culture

Components of the approach

3 QUESTIONS



How to assess a culture

3 QUESTIONS

- What is rewarded?
- What is managed?
- What is ignored?



- Who is the most powerful person in the room?

How to assess a culture



Some Examples of assessment/management

An Actuarial Function

Rewarded

- Accurate and far-seeing work done on time

Managed

- Work process, people development, professionalism

Ignored

- How you organise yourself, how people work together, how the team communicates, hours you work, time in the office

Most powerful

- Chief Actuary

Example

A Non-profit or Governmental Organisation
(or Compliance function?)

Rewarded

- Delivery of the balanced scorecard plan

Managed

- Supporting management

Ignored

- Quality or fitness-for-purpose

Most powerful

- The regulator?

Example

A Corporate

Rewarded

- People who suck up to the CEO and say yes.

Managed

- Dissent is not tolerated. People are managed out rather than tasks being managed for value.

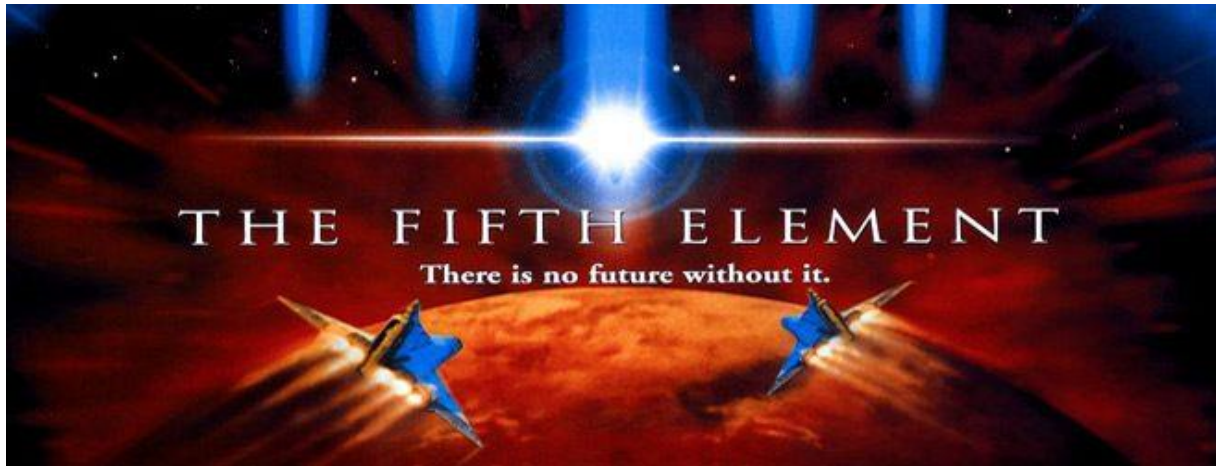
Ignored

- If your face fits, you can do what you like.

Most powerful

- The CEO

How to assess a culture



Is there anything that you see or do in your work which causes a twinge of conscience?

How to assess a culture

Summary

Ask

- What is rewarded?
- What is managed?
- What is ignored?

and who is the most powerful person?

Do you have any qualms of conscience?

to get an assessment of an organisation's culture

How to ~~assess~~ a culture **manage**

Summary

Ask

- What ~~is~~ **should be** rewarded?
- What ~~is~~ **should be** managed?
- What ~~is~~ **should be** ignored?

and who ~~is~~ **should be** the most powerful person?

Do you have any qualms of conscience?

to decide how the organisation should be managed

How to assess a culture

Summary

Treat culture as an emergent property

All you can do is manage (reward/manage/ignore) properly...

...but design your management and check the results

From theory to practice

About Holloway Friendly

June 2016

28 people

Stable sales

Old fashioned

October 2018

75 people

Sales doubled, built a sales and a marketing function

Modern underwriting and claims philosophy

Better rates



The Results

Holloway Friendly

Rewarded

- Success, supporting values, no blame
- But not all rewards were perceived as fair

Managed

- Not sure how to answer: management patchy
- Too many meetings

Ignored

- Nothing...and this is a problem

Most powerful

- 1: the CEO, 2: the NEDs

The Board's View

Holloway Friendly

Rewarded

- Targets and objectives, customer outcomes

Managed

- Everything, development of talent

Ignored

- Nothing

Most powerful

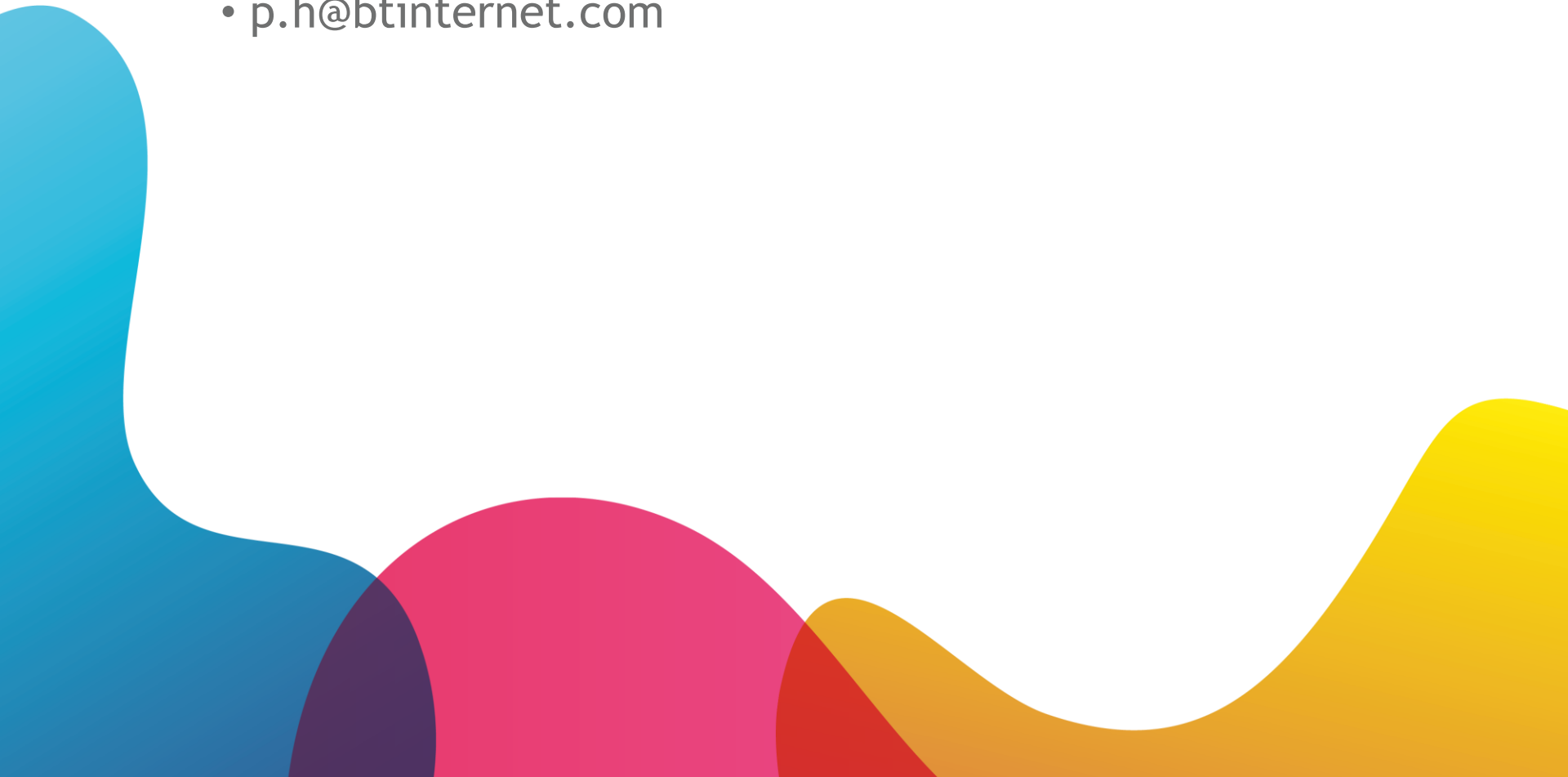
- Members

Next Steps

- Address the perceived unfairness in reward
- Introduce a leadership development programme
- 360° feedback for leaders
- Reduce helicopter management
- Find ways to address stress
- Keep up the communication

The Approach

- A short paper is available describing the approach
- p.h@btinternet.com



The background of the entire page is a vibrant, abstract design featuring large, flowing, organic shapes in a rainbow color palette. The colors transition from deep blue on the left, through purple, magenta, red, orange, and finally to bright yellow on the right. The shapes overlap and curve, creating a sense of movement and energy.

Holloway

Friendly

Keeping life colourful

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