



Human Optimization

Pod Club Discussion Questions



E4 Creating Winning Cultures: Building and Maintaining an Optimal Culture for Teams and Individuals

Guest: Christina K. Zorn, Chief Administrative Officer of Mayo Clinic.

The three big questions explored in the podcast:

Question 1

What exactly is “culture” and why is it so critical to success?

Question 2

How does “culture” impact behavior and outcomes at work and at home?

Question 3

What steps can I take to contribute to a positive culture in the workplace and for my own personal development?

Discussion Questions:

1. Christina Zorn defines culture as "the culmination of our shared values, behaviors, attitudes, and priorities." How would you describe the culture of a team or organization you are currently a part of, using these elements?
2. The podcast highlights four essential elements of a strong culture: shared values, shared purpose, sense of belonging, and psychological safety. Which of these elements do you believe is most crucial for a team's success, and why?
3. Dr. Camp and Ms. Zorn discuss Peter Drucker's quote, "Culture eats strategy for breakfast," emphasizing culture as the "foundation." Can you think of an example, either personal or professional, where a strong or weak culture significantly impacted the success or failure of a strategy?
4. The discussion differentiates between leaders articulating culture and individuals living it out. What's one specific action you could take this week, regardless of your formal role, to reinforce a positive cultural value in your workplace or personal life?
5. The podcast describes two types of "toxic cultures": one where people are afraid to speak up, and another where people are too comfortable and resist change. Have you experienced either of these? What were the consequences for the group or individuals involved?
6. Modern threats to healthy culture, such as social media's unhealthy comparisons and political polarization, were mentioned. How do you personally navigate these threats to maintain a healthy individual or group culture? What strategies do you find effective?

7. The episode encourages individuals to define their own personal culture. If you were to write out in one sentence how you want to be known by others, what would that sentence be?
8. The call to action suggests identifying three things you love about your work environment and telling someone who embodies them. What impact do you think this simple act of recognition could have on the culture of your team or organization?
9. Now, make a plan to go tell someone (outside of your Pod-Club group) 1 thing about them that embodies an ideal workplace culture. After you do that, report back to the group on how it went.
10. Based on this episode, what is one small change you are going to make to help improve in this area. How are you going to keep yourself accountable to that and measure your success? (Be sure to keep it simple, start small, and make it very clear).