



Our culture

The Centre is a learning organisation that offers clients learning opportunities along a continuum. We deliver formal learning, education and skills programs as well as community development programs that embrace informal learning. So to, we encourage our staff to embrace their own learning and model lifelong learning. Peter Senge described a learning organisation as:

“a group of people working together collectively to enhance their capacities to create results they really care about”.

As an organisation we encourage our clients and ourselves to be lifelong learners – this includes being curious and taking responsibility for our own learning, whether it is formal learning for the job, or learning about what each of us do here at The Centre, or learning how to productively connect with each other to achieve our vision. We achieve wonderful outcomes with our clients that are often life changing and transformational.

What is organisational culture?

A culture provides group members with a way of giving meaning to their daily lives, setting guidelines and rules for how to behave, and most important reducing and containing the anxiety of dealing with an unpredictable and uncertain environment. Culture stabilises and normalises events and thus makes day-to-day functioning possible.

(Schein, 1991, What is culture? In P. Frost et al, *Reframing Organisational Culture*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.)
The following outlines our collective understanding of The Centre’s organisational culture.

Our values

- **Respect** – We respect the right of all people to access opportunities to learn, grow and achieve the goals that are appropriate for them as an individual within their own circumstances.
- **Integrity** – We value excellence and accountability in everything we do; we are committed to always being honest and trustworthy.
- **Empathy** - We provide a safe environment that embraces diversity and equality. We value every person’s potential and their right to take action to improve their lives.
- **Growth through innovation** - We create to inspire our communities and individuals to achieve positive change. We are bold, relevant and open to change. We embrace formal and informal learning, and welcome every opportunity to develop wisdom, skills and knowledge

Below are the specific behaviours that we care about most and that support our values – **and that we aspire to**. If these sound like you, and describe the people you want to work with, the more likely you will thrive and be fulfilled working here at The Centre

We do what we say and say what we do – we honour the commitments we make

- We accomplish amazing results and outcomes through our work, including positive impacts on our learners’ and clients’ lives and on our communities
- We spend time debating, discussing and deciding on strategy then we trust each other to do the work
- We take pride in getting it right and demonstrate consistently strong performance so our colleagues can rely upon us as individuals
- We don’t tolerate mistakes due to carelessness or lack of care and attention
- We are individually accountable for our work and actions

We speak the truth with integrity and honesty

- We seek what is best for The Centre, rather than what is best for ‘myself’ or ‘my group’
- We are loyal to The Centre and its communities, and we are proud of our programs that seek to make a difference in people’s lives
- We accept and give constructive and respectful feedback with colleagues up, down and beside us in our organisation

We are resourceful – we find a way for 'it' to happen

- We are tenacious and optimistic
- We inspire people more than manage people
- We are flexible, adaptable and embrace change

We are curious and solution oriented

- We don't talk about problems without thinking about possible solutions at the same time
- We seek effective and efficient solutions to problems
- We encourage collaborative decision making and take responsibility for decisions made
- We make decisions based on the long-term not near term
- We respect decisions that are made and we explain the basis for decisions where possible
- We take smart risks, have good tries, and are open to possible failure, but we will learn from that failure
- We identify root causes and get beyond treating symptoms

We work collaboratively and we share relevant resources and knowledge willingly

- We strive to be the best team mate we can be by living our values and by being collaborative and generous
- We share information and ideas broadly and systematically with each other
- We nurture and embrace differing perspectives to make better decisions
- We respect confidentiality of information as appropriate

We support people to create and change – we encourage innovation

- We recognise lack of innovation and ideas is a potential threat so we strive to be creative and innovative as we go about our work
- We are open minded in the search for the best ideas – both big and small
- We challenge prevailing assumptions and suggest better approaches
- We embrace innovation and enthusiastically create and implement useful new ideas
- We foster freedom and empowerment
- We keep nimble by minimising complexity and finding time to simplify
- We thrive on change and innovation

We are personable and approachable

- We actively listen and seek to understand before reacting
- We reflect on our practice and strive to continuously improve our performance and approach to our work
- We think about the impact on people when developing and implementing systems and processes
- We value constructive conflict as a way to actively explore issues and seek resolutions
- We are concise and articulate in spoken and written communication

We treat people with respect and are non-judgemental, genuine and authentic

- We insist upon decent human interactions
- We only say things about fellow employees that we would say to their face
- We question actions and behaviours that are inconsistent with our values
- We say what we think, when it is in the best interests of The Centre, even if it is uncomfortable
- We treat people with respect, independent of their status or regardless of any personal disagreement

We have a positive attitude and we are passionate

- No matter what level we are in our organisation, we work in partnership with the people around us to create conditions where we all love being at work
- We inspire others with our thirst for excellence and our passion

We accept each other as individuals and value diversity

- We strive to be inclusive and welcoming to everyone who steps inside our door
- We don't tolerate discrimination in any form
- We are known for our selflessness, candour, authenticity, transparency and for being non-political