

Tribal Identity Tips

Shared Identity + Profound Meaning = Tribe = Trust

In Power Your Tribe chapter 8 we talk about a Cultural GAME plan and the power of it to transform your tribe.

A GAME plan is only as effective as the emotional experience that surrounds it and is reinforced by it. To boost the emotional experience you'll want to:

- Bring **profound meaning** to your workplace
- Craft a **cultural identity and employee experience rich in trust**
- Use neuroscience-based techniques that will **increase human performance, cohesiveness, innovation**

And it all starts with our leader, the culture they put in place and continue reinforcing. Let's unpack this. When we experience trust in our leader Serotonin and Dopamine are released, which makes us feel good because:

- Oxytocin (a human bonding hormone) levels increase
- Cortisol (a stress-related hormone) levels decrease

The result? Increased resilience and emotional agility in stressful times *due to* trust of the leader, and ultimately the trust of the tribe. This then supports self-regulation, our ability to manage our emotional state. **Note** - self-regulation occurs in the prefrontal cortex and voila—this can only occur when we're in our Smart State!

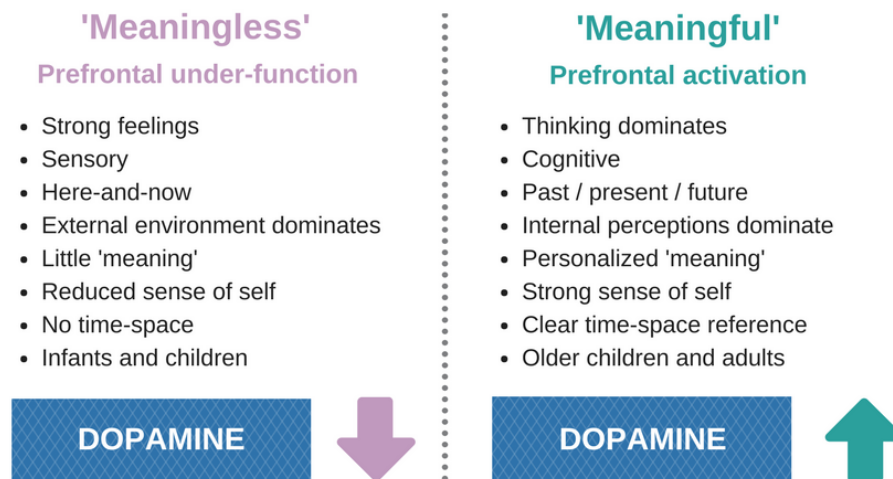
Think back to the Logical Levels of Change, and how the environment was on the outer ring. There are 2 qualities of an optimal work environment that helps a tribe become and stay agile.

An *enriched environment* is an interactive, stimulating environment which leads to increased surface area of brain cells. The result? Team members making more connections, solving problems faster, figuring things out faster and innovating better.

Enriched cultures create a more meaningful and purpose-driven workplace. A more meaningful and purpose-driven workplace yields countless benefits:

Two Basic Modes for the Human Brain

Two Basic Modes For The Human Brain



Trust also creates *reliable environments*.

A brain in a more reliable (trust their leader) and enriched (stimulating) environment will have more branches. More branches equal more surface area which equals more connections which equals more meaning (personalizing things around you).

The net-net of these two qualities in an environment is that the brains of the team have more branches. More branches = more surface area = more connections = more positive meaning is made.

More positive meaning results in:

- More fulfillment
- More contribution
- More innovation

- More loyalty
- More emotional agility
- More retention
- More engagement

And to boost meaning we need to create a Tribal Identity rich in purpose. This helps us to feel powerful together, understand where we fit in and how to belong to the tribe, gives us shared beliefs, increases the potency/power of our individual identity (because we belong to such a cool tribe), and our core is strengthened is here.

What A Tribal Identity Is

Tribal identity is how we describe ourselves. At EventBrite the employees are called “Britelings” and they see themselves as shining smart creators. At Google they are Googlers and are collaborative innovators. In the early days of Microsoft the engineers were awarded lab coats for great achievements as they were seen as brilliant scientists inventing the future. Some sales teams see themselves as cowboys and cowgirls out on the range rounding up customers. Our team at STI sees themselves as providing Ritz Carlton level 5 star service. What is your tribal identity? Once you have your Cultural GAME Plan in place you can reinforce your tribal identity with your cultural rituals. Note the lab coats above as an example.

Tribal Identity check in:

Does your culture have a clear identity? If so, what is it?

Does everyone throughout your organization agree with and feel inspired by the identity?

Does your identity reinforce safety, belonging, mattering?

Profound Meaning check in:

- ☐ Are your mission, vision, values working as well as they could be? (see our in-depth coverage of this topic in our book SmartTribes)
- **Mission** - Our emotional (“we believe”) purpose, why we get up in the AM
- **Vision** - Where we’re going together (aspirational), and why it matters
- **Values** - Who we are/how we behave as we fulfill our Mission and drive toward our Vision--these must be alive, celebrated, modeled by all



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Do you have an effective process to recruit *true* tribe members? When you are recruiting you'll want to start the process by screening for value alignment. See our Recruiting for Values resource on PowerYourTribe.com.

- ☐ Does your team have high trust and transparency around performance?

Tribal Rituals check in:

- ☐ How do your culture rituals support your identity values? Are they enough to motivate belonging and mattering? Example: some of our clients have annual mini golf tournaments in the office where each "hole" is a plastic cup for a given value. Once you get the ball in the hole you share with all present who models this value powerfully and how, and how you'd like to model it more powerfully. Another client celebrates the "super powers" of each employee as their tribal identity is of super heroes. Outside of each cubicle you see the person's "super powers" and you know who to come to if you want to cultivate yours.
- ☐ Is it safe to fail in your culture? Do you see "failure" as simply feedback as to what didn't totally work, or is failure condemned?

Let us know how the above helps your tribe!