

# COLUMNIST



**Andrew Thornton**

## Create a win-win culture

**Running your business for the benefit of all who contribute to it is the key to long-term success**

**T**he creation of a 'win-win' culture is the end goal of being a heart-centered organisation.

The opposite of this is a 'win-lose' culture, which is Donald Trump's way of operating, and is often the approach of alpha-male leaders.

This philosophy suggests bosses or owners ought to be able to get what they want at the expense of employees, suppliers, customers or the environment.

I, however, believe it is possible to operate businesses in which all stakeholders win, not just the bosses and shareholders.

All parties should have the common goal of a thriving organisation in mind, and cooperate to deliver this rather than compete against each other for individual gain.

The other nine components of a 'heartful' business help you build this win-win culture. They have been shared previously in

this column, and are as follows.

**Organisational purpose:** you must have a clear purpose about what you stand for as a business that is meaningful to all key stakeholders.

**If your primary aim is to make as much cash as possible for your shareholders, its difficult to create a win-win culture.**

**Individual purpose:** individuals within the business are clear about their purpose. If you, as a business leader, aren't clear about what motivates you to get out of bed in the morning, it's going to be hard for you to inspire others to follow you.

**Psychological safety:** to create a win-win culture, you have to create safety – without this, you will have a fear-based culture, one where people are apprehensive and cautious. They may follow your lead, but their hearts won't be in it.

**Authenticity:** without you as a leader being authentic, you are



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not going to get very far. If you are not authentic, how can you expect your colleagues to be?

What you end up with is a bunch of inauthentic people doing their best to survive, and that's not going to lead to a thriving organisation.

**Culture:** without being clear on what sort of culture you want to create, there is little chance of it being a win-win one.

Without this clarity, an unconscious culture will develop, one where unspoken rules prevail, and people never really know where they stand. I have certainly never seen a win-win culture created unconsciously.

**Ways of being:** having a set of values or principals that guide your every move as a business.

**Modelling behaviour:** if leaders don't lead the way here, there is no chance others will follow.

**Habits:** you need to anchor your ways of being with habits, things you set out to do in your quest for a win-win culture.

**Self-awareness:** you need the awareness to be able to choose how you act so that you can create this win-win culture.

It is as simple as that. You need to start somewhere, so ask yourself what you can do today to start your journey towards a win-win culture. Pick one or two things, and get started now.

### ★ Homage to Patagonia

**+ PATAGONIA IS A** great example of an organisation with a win-win culture. The US-based outdoor-clothing brand has a very clear purpose to 'build the best product, cause no unnecessary harm, and use business to inspire and implement solutions to address issues related to the environment and social justice'. Most of Patagonia's people join the company as they believe in this purpose; the company engages its suppliers in this, and its customers understand it. Patagonia allows people to be authentically themselves and is happy to walk away from things that don't fit its purpose. The company's leaders, from CEO Ryan Gellert downwards, model this and want to grow continuously. For example, Patagonia recently decided that, to stay true to its purpose, it would only deal with banks that had active policies of not lending to companies that caused environmental damage. Clear and consistent.

*Andrew Thornton is the former owner of Thornton's Budgens, founder of Heart in Business and co-author of 'Putting the Heart Back into Business', available for purchase now from [heartinbusiness.org/book](http://heartinbusiness.org/book)*