

The 5 Pillars of a Christ-Centered Culture

A practical framework for faith driven leaders who want to build something that lasts. Culture is not a program you launch, it is the sum of what your people experience every day under your leadership. These five principles, drawn from scripture and tested, can be a foundation of a workplace that forms people, honors God, and outlasts any single season of success.

PILLAR 01

Integrity — Moral Consistency in Every Room

*"With an upright heart he shepherded them and guided them with his skillful hand." —
Psalm 78:72 (KJV)*

Culture is built by the consistent character of the people leading it. When leaders model integrity in private as well as in public, the entire organization absorbs that standard. Integrity means alignment between what you say and what you do, in the meeting room, in the hiring decision and in the conversation no one else will hear. Organizations anchored in integrity build a foundation of trust that no performance system can replicate.

This week:

- Identify one gap between your stated values and your current practices and name it honestly.
- Ask your team: "Where do our systems quietly pressure people toward compromise?"

Example — Week Action

A CEO notices that the company publicly champions work life balance, yet the unwritten norm is that emails sent after 9 p.m. receive praise as "hustle." In the next all hands, she names the contradiction openly: "We say balance matters, but our habits say otherwise. Starting Monday, leadership will not send or expect responses to non-urgent messages after 7 p.m." She then announces a calendar blocking policy and models it herself for thirty days.

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Reflect: Is our leadership primarily shaped by external accountability or internal conviction?

Example — Reflection

A regional director realizes he only reviews expense reports carefully right before the board audit. The rest of the year, he approves them quickly to avoid friction. He asks himself: "Would my standard change if no auditor ever came?" Recognizing the answer is yes, he sets a personal discipline of reviewing every report with the same rigor year-round, not because someone is watching, but because consistency is the standard he wants to embody.

PILLAR 02

Humility — A God-Centered Mindset That Puts Others First

"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves." — Philippians 2:3 (KJV)

Humble leaders build higher trust teams, make better decisions, and retain people more effectively than ego driven leaders. Humility is not the absence of confidence, it is the presence of a Christ centered perspective. In organizational life, humility creates cultures where ideas flow freely, correction is received openly, and the mission is served rather than the leader's reputation.

This week:

- Identify one decision in the next two weeks where you will publicly defer to a team member's judgment.
- Ask one of your direct reports: "Where do I most need to grow?" — and receive it well.

Example — Week Action

A VP of Operations has been pushing a new vendor management process she designed. A logistics coordinator, who has been on the floor for eleven years quietly raises concerns about one step in the workflow. Rather than defending the plan, the VP pauses the rollout in the next team meeting and says publicly: "Marcus flagged

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something important. I'm deferring to his field experience on this step. Marcus, will you lead the revision?" The team notices, trust rises.

Reflect: What would it look like if every person on the team genuinely considered others more important than themselves?

Example — Reflection

A department head imagines a Monday morning where each team member's first question is not "What do I need today?" but "Who on this team is stretched, and how can I clear a path for them?" *He begins testing this with a five minute opening ritual at weekly stand-ups: each person names one colleague they will proactively serve before Thursday.* Within a month, the team's internal communication scores jumped and two high performers who had been quietly job searching changed their minds.

PILLAR 03

Servant Leadership — Serving Rather Than Ruling

"But whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: and whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all." – Mark 10:43-44 (KJV)

Jesus permanently redefined greatness. Kingdom, leadership is measured not by how many people serve you, but by how many people you serve. The shift from manager to servant leader changes the fundamental question of leadership from "How do I get this person to perform?" to "How do I help this person become?" Servant-hearted leaders develop people trusting that developed people achieve more than directed people ever will.

This week:

- Identify one person on your team and plan one specific act of service for them, something that costs real time or comfort.
- Replace the phrase "I manage X people" with "I lead/serve X people" – let language shape culture.

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Example — Week Action

A senior manager learns that a newer team member is struggling to prepare a client presentation for the first time. Instead of delegating feedback through Teams, he clears two hours on Wednesday afternoon and sits with her not to take over, but to walk through the narrative structure, answer questions, and encourage her thinking out loud. The presentation lands well. She is more confident. He has invested something that cannot be replaced: his actual time and attention.

Reflect: If Jesus walked into our organization today, would he recognize our leadership culture as his own?

Example — Reflection

A leadership team reviews their calendar for the past quarter. They discovered that 80% of their time was spent in strategy sessions, performance reviews, and reporting meetings and less than 10% was spent in one-on-one conversations with individual contributors. They ask together: *"If the measure of greatness in Jesus's economy is who you serve, what does our schedule say about what we value?"* The exercise leads them to restructure each leader's week to protect dedicated time for the people they lead.

PILLAR 04

Faithfulness — Reliable Stewardship in Small and Great Things

"Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." – 1 Corinthians 4:2 (KJV)

Organizations are built or undermined at the level of small faithfulnesses — the meeting prepared for or not, the commitment kept or quietly abandoned, the follow-up that never came. *God does not require brilliance or celebrated impact; he requires faithfulness.* Leaders who are consistently faithful in small things create cultures of reliability where people trust that what is said will be done. Culture is formed by the accumulation of small moments, not the announcement of big initiatives.

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This week:

→ Audit your open commitments from the past 30 days, categorize each as fulfilled, in progress, or neglected.

→ Establish one team norm: commitments made in meetings are documented, owned, and reviewed at the next meeting.

Example — Week Action

A director pulls up her notes from the past two months and lists every commitment she made to her team, her peers, and her own calendar. She finds eleven follow-ups she said she would handle but did not. Rather than quietly completing them and moving on, she reaches out to each person and acknowledges the gap: "I told you I would have that to you by the 15th. I didn't. I'm sending it now and I'm sorry for the delay." The acknowledgment costs her pride; it earns her team's long-term trust.

Reflect: Can the people around us count on us to do what we say we will do — every time, without being reminded?

Example — Reflection

A leader quietly surveys his three direct reports with one anonymous question: "On a scale of 1–10, how confident are you that when I commit to something, it happens?" The average score comes back 6.2. The number surprises him. He does not dismiss it, he brings the result back to the team meeting, reads the score aloud, and says: "I want to be a 9. Help me get there." The act of naming it publicly becomes the first step toward closing the gap.

PILLAR 05

Compassion — Tenderhearted Care for People as Image-Bearers

"Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." — Colossians 3:12-13 (KJV)

Compassionate leaders resist the organizational tendency to reduce people to their productivity and usefulness. Every person in your organization bears the image of

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God — and deserves to be led accordingly. *Compassion is not a personality trait some leaders have naturally; it is a garment every leader must intentionally put on each day.* Culture changes when people experience leadership that sees them fully, not just their performance, but what they are actually carrying.

This week:

→ Identify one team member who may be carrying something you have not yet acknowledged — and reach out.

→ Ask your team: "What does it feel like to work here when you are struggling?" — then listen.

Example — Week Action

A leader notices that one of her most reliable team members has seemed quieter and slower to respond over the past two weeks. She could assume it is a performance dip. Instead, she sends a short message: "Hey, I've noticed you seem a bit tired lately. No agenda here, just checking in as a person. Is there anything you need from me right now?" The employee replies that his father is in hospice. She immediately adjusts his project load and arranges a meal delivery for his family. He returns two weeks later and tells his colleagues: "This is the first job where I've felt like a person, not a resource."

Reflect: Do our people know, not assume, but actually know, that we care about them as people, not just as organizational resources?

Example — Reflection

An executive team hosts a listening session and asks one question: "When you've gone through a hard personal season, did you feel safe bringing any of that to work?" Of fourteen employees present, three say yes. The other eleven describe adjusting their behavior to appear fine. The team realizes that their culture communicates: "We care about your performance." They begin designing specific, consistent moments, a bi-monthly personal check-in template, a policy allowing flexible scheduling during family hardship that communicate something different: "We care about you."

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These five pillars are not a checklist: *They are a direction of travel.*

Every month of honest engagement with these principles moves leaders and the organizations they lead further toward the kind of character that God honors and that people genuinely thrive under. Formation is the work of a lifetime. Start with one pillar - be faithful with it.



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