



STORIES OF GHOSTS AND GOBLINS

IS YOUR CORPORATE CULTURE
A HALLOWEEN NIGHTMARE?



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IT'S Halloween, the one night of the year when ghosts, goblins and all things spooky rise up to scare the neighbourhood.

Tonight our doorbell will be ringing as the neighbourhood comes alive with trick-or-treating antics... hopefully more treating than tricking! The costumes, homemade and store-purchased, seem to get more elaborate each year, as does the size of the bag to collect the candy!

The carved pumpkin displays have become more ornate and intricate and replaced the simple Jack-o-lantern I remember carrying on a stick as a child.

All of these customs may feel new but can, in fact, be traced back hundreds of years. It is a night of mischief, followed by a day of peace and reflection.

What you may not be aware of is that Nov 1, is All Saints Day, an antidote to all things creepy that may have occurred the night before.

IS YOUR CORPORATE CULTURE A HALLOWEEN NIGHTMARE?

Company culture can be summed up as "how business gets done". Without care and attention a healthy culture can become toxic, a Halloween nightmare that lasts more than one night a year.

In our work with clients around the world there are three immediate opportunities to move a corporate culture forward and make sure that it is not stuck in the dark night.

1 REMOVE THE HALLOWEEN MASK

Organisational values are a great tool. However a poster is not the way to go. If you want a corporate culture built

on trust, candour and teamwork, then your actions need to demonstrate this.

If your employees feel the need to wear a mask or costume to fit in and be successful, then things need to change. The change starts at the highest level of the organisation – role modeling the expectations, not by a memo or motivational poster.

2 CHANGE THE STORIES

Do your employees tell spooky tales about your company and the villain's past and present that work(ed) there? Following a new-hire orientation do your veteran employees "tell the new workers how things are really get done around here?"

Stories are a powerful way to change corporate cultures. Look for the opportunities to reinforce and share the good-news stories. Tales that celebrate the successes and behaviours that are desired, rather than the toxic horror stories that may have been.

3 REWARD THE BEST

Make sure that your reward processes (whether monetary, promotion, or trophies and symbols) recognise the "treats" you want reinforced and not the "tricks" that may keep you stuck.

CONCLUSION

Make sure you are not building or maintaining a Halloween nightmare, remove the masks, change the stories and reward the behaviours that will stand the test of time.

To all your little ghouls and goblins, have a fun Halloween!

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