CULTURE CODE FRAMEWORK

Agency Building Program

A SELF-STUDY ACADEMY COURSE & WORKBOOK FOR SUCCESS

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Recruiting and hiring talented insurance agents is a daunting task for any insurance agency manager or owner charged with not only finding great candidates, but also bringing on board the right talent who will help the agency grow, thrive, and profit.

Having a unique (and compelling) company culture code at your disposal can help you attract, influence, and engage talented insurance agents, lessen the burden of screening and weeding out unqualifies candidates, speed the hiring process and ideally lower your cost-per-hire.

With a defined Company Culture Code you will target insurance agents with the right skill set for your agency, make insurance agents unfamiliar with your organization aware of open positions, and foster agent retention and morale by promoting a healthy work environment.

A company culture code is the guiding set of values and principles that breathe life into your insurance agency.

Whether it's accountability, adopting an "open to change" philosophy, doing less with more or simply being humble, a defined culture code facilitates not only a profitable environment for teams but also helps attract like-minded agents, who can help the agency grow and do good work.

Beyond agent satisfaction and talent attraction, putting faith in an company culture can also reap other tangible benefits for agencies like cutting time-to-hire, and cost-per-hire.

As you'll discover in guide for agency building and development, we'll help you define your agency's culture code, with action plans for each. This workbook also includes a PowerPoint template to help you get started with the hands-on exercise of physically building a culture code of your own.

Culture Code Framework

A defined company culture can set you apart from your nearest talent competitors and weed out unqualified insurance agents or bad fits for your culture. As noted, it also contributes to your agency's productivity and morale.

From our research, we've learned that the most important things agents want to learn about agencies include: what makes the agency an attractive place to work, compensation & bonus programs, benefits, mission, vision, and values.

Tying it all together in a defined code that lives and breathes at your agency is what creating a company culture code is all about.

Your Values

Creating your agency's unique set of values is the first and most critical step in developing a culture code. After all, your agency's core values provide agents and other employees clarity on what is truly important for their success, clarity on personal conduct and what to expect from each other.

Whether you're a large, recognized brand or a small start-up, company mission and vision go hand and hand with values – across roles, teams, departments, and the entire agency.

How do you define a culture that is unique to your agency and attracts the right agents?

A good place to start is by reviewing why agents like working at your agency and what makes it a special place in their eyes. At a glance, you can uncover key themes (pros and cons) on your Glassdoor company profile, including potential areas to showcase, improve or simply address.

After you conduct your research, convene a meeting with key stakeholders – from your managers to executive leadership. Review and discuss if what you've uncovered regarding your insurance agency matches what you envision your values to be.

Remember, company values don't live in a vacuum or only inside a Human Resource Manager's playbook. Once established, to ensure they're adopted and taken to heart – buy-in from employees is absolutely essential. Therefore, don't be shy about trumpeting your values at all-hands meetings, during new hire onboarding and inside all of your insurance agency's communications.

Company Policies

Your insurance agency's policy and procedures establish the rules of conduct, outlining responsibilities of both your insurance agents and management.

Having policies in place protects the rights of your employees as well as the business interests of your agency.

Whether it's a generous, one-year maternity leave allowance or simply "always use good judgement in the workplace" directives, policies should go hand in hand with your insurance agency's values, so each reinforces the other.

Perks, Benefits and Career Development

Between healthcare, unlimited PTO and catered lunches, the choices and budgeting for company perks and benefits can seem endless. As an insurance agency, it's important to decide which perks warrant the greatest investment to not only retain agents, but also attract talent in a competitive marketplace.

Remember, it's not all about compensation. In fact, 27% of people consider career growth opportunities a top consideration before accepting a job offer.

The best insurance agencies invest in their employees in other areas, from onboarding an agent engagement programs to ongoing training, which continues to pay off in increased production, career growth and job satisfaction.

Before posting open jobs at your insurance agency, meet with your HR and recruiting teams. Agree on the type of candidates you hope to attract and who'll do well inside your agency's culture. Research what those candidates value most concerning perks, benefits and career development – the answers may surprise you!

For example, if Millennials are the talent pool you're targeting, having career development plans in place will be critical to recruitment success, as 60% of this demographic considers growth opportunities to be most attractive perk.

(Source: Glassdoor Survey, March 2016)

Always meet with your finance team to review internal budgets for perks and benefits for career development. Briefing them on what appeals to your target audience can win buy-in for your talent acquisition efforts.

Physical Workspace & Location(s)

Don't overlook the obvious: your work environment.

What is your workspace like and what makes it special? If you have multiple locations, are there common amenities like a breakroom or smaller conference room?

On the more subjective side, how do agents feel when they come to work each day? Does the environment live up to your established company values and culture code or does it work against each other?

Meet with your facilities team to discuss what makes your office(s) unique (you may have forgotten all about that "quiet room" or special maternity parking) and possible future expansion

in new cities, regions, or states. Have you thought about going national?

Engage agents to upload photos to your social media pages and Glassdoor that showcase what makes your location(s) special. When you sign up for a free employer account on Glassdoor, you are able to actively manage and monitor any photos posted to your page. This is also how you will respond to any reviews.

Additional Resources

Once your culture code is clearly defined and formalized, it's time to tell the world! One smart way is to package it as part of "Why Agents Choose _____" messaging on platforms and channels where agents research agencies for which to do business – not just on your careers page and "About Us" section.

For more guidance on how to develop your insurance agency's Company Culture, feel free to reach out to Agent Pipeline. We're here to help you develop and grow you agency in every way! Give us a call at 800-962-4693 now.

Culture Code Workbook

Can you define your core values? Use this simple list below as an example of some values you may consider for your insurance agency. Check the box of ones that you feel like align with your agency and that inspire you!

❑ Acceptance	❑ Dependability	❑ Honor	❑ Resolution
❑ Accessibility	❑ Determination	❑ Hospitality	❑ Respect
❑ Accomplishment	❑ Dignity	❑ Humility	❑ Sacrifice
❑ Accuracy	❑ Diligence	❑ Independence	❑ Satisfaction
❑ Achievement	❑ Direction	❑ Inspiration	❑ Security
❑ Acknowledgement	❑ Diversity	❑ Integrity	❑ Selflessness
❑ Adaptability	❑ Drive	❑ Intelligence	❑ Service
❑ Adventures	❑ Education	❑ Kindness	❑ Simplicity
❑ Agility	❑ Effectiveness	❑ Knowledge	❑ Skillfulness
❑ Ambition	❑ Efficiency	❑ Leadership	❑ Stability
❑ Appreciation	❑ Empathy	❑ Learning	❑ Strength
❑ Assertiveness	❑ Encouragement	❑ Liberty	❑ Structure
❑ Availability	❑ Endurance	❑ Loyalty	❑ Success
❑ Awareness	❑ Energy	❑ Mindfulness	❑ Support
❑ Balance	❑ Excellence	❑ Modesty	❑ Synergy
❑ Benevolence	❑ Experience	❑ Motivation	❑ Teamwork
❑ Boldness	❑ Expertise	❑ Open-minded	❑ Thankfulness
❑ Capability	❑ Exploration	❑ Openness	❑ Thoroughness
❑ Carefulness	❑ Fairness	❑ Optimism	❑ Timeliness
❑ Closeness	❑ Family	❑ Organization	❑ Traditionalism
❑ Commitment	❑ Fearlessness	❑ Originality	❑ Trust
❑ Compassion	❑ Fidelity	❑ Passion	❑ Truth
❑ Confidence	❑ Flexibility	❑ Perseverance	❑ Understanding
❑ Connection	❑ Focus	❑ Persistence	❑ Unity
❑ Consistency	❑ Fortitude	❑ Precision	❑ Virtue
❑ Continuity	❑ Generosity	❑ Preparedness	❑ Vision
❑ Contribution	❑ Gratitude	❑ Privacy	❑ Vitality
❑ Cooperation	❑ Growth	❑ Proactivity	❑ Warmth
❑ Courage	❑ Guidance	❑ Professionalism	❑ Wealth
❑ Courtesy	❑ Harmony	❑ Prosperity	❑ Willingness
❑ Creativity	❑ Health	❑ Punctuality	❑ Wonder
❑ Credibility	❑ Helpfulness	❑ Reason	
❑ Curiosity	❑ Honesty	❑ Reliability	

What core values will resonate with your customers?

What principles should guide your choices?

What do you want your agency to be known for?

How will your values distinguish you from competitors?

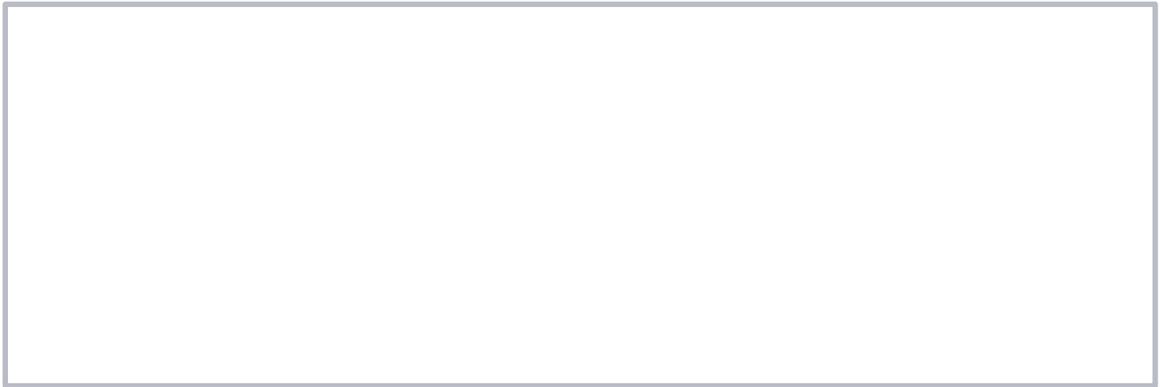What qualities do you value in employees?

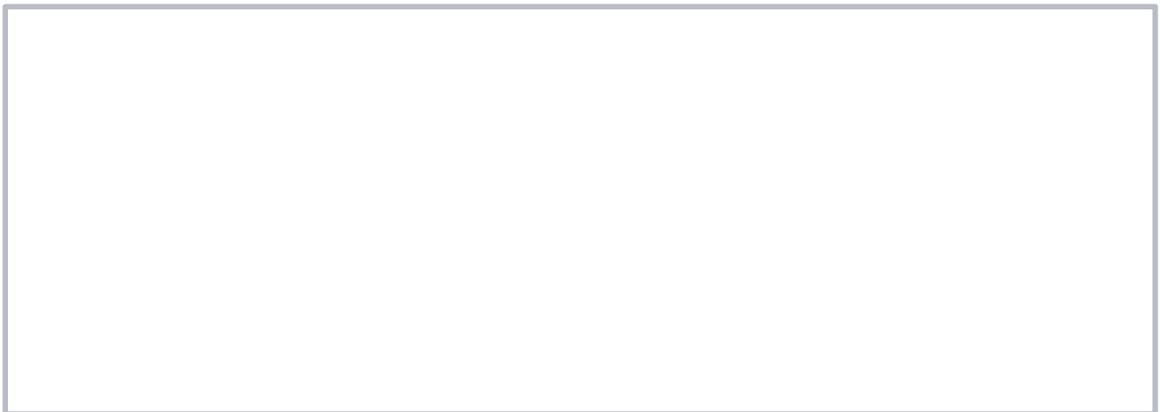What is your company's mission statement?

What do you believe in?

What is your commitment of service?

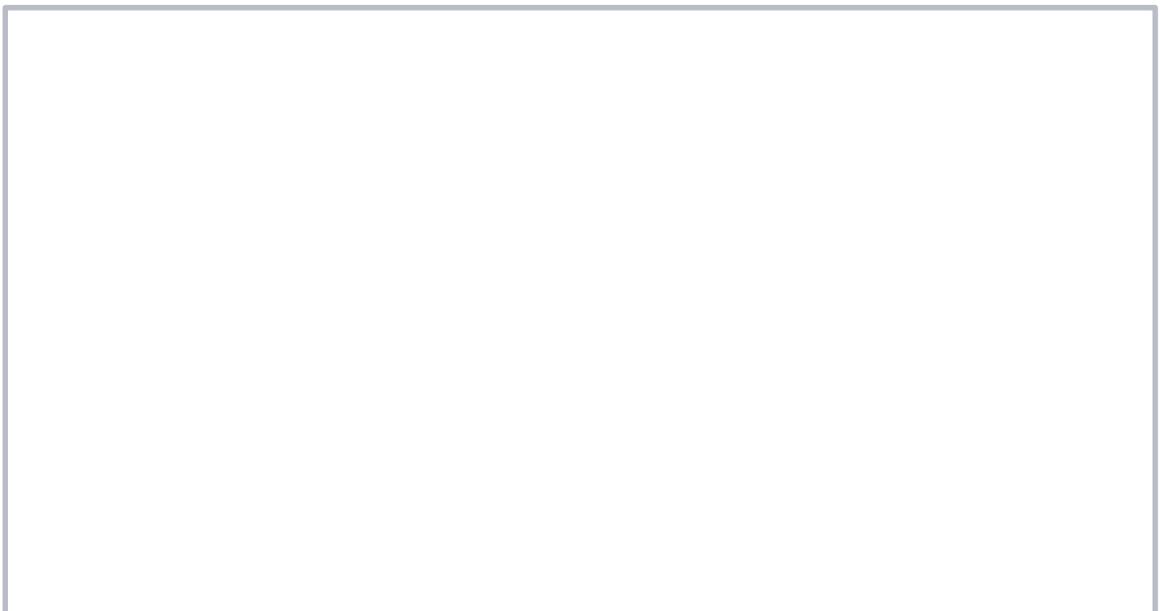Of your beliefs and commitments, what makes you different than other insurance agencies?

How do you expect your employees to carry on your mission?

How will you provide them tools to do this? (i.e., training, growth opportunities, etc.)

What types of development and training programs will you offer, and how often?

How will you know your agents are living up to your agency's culture?

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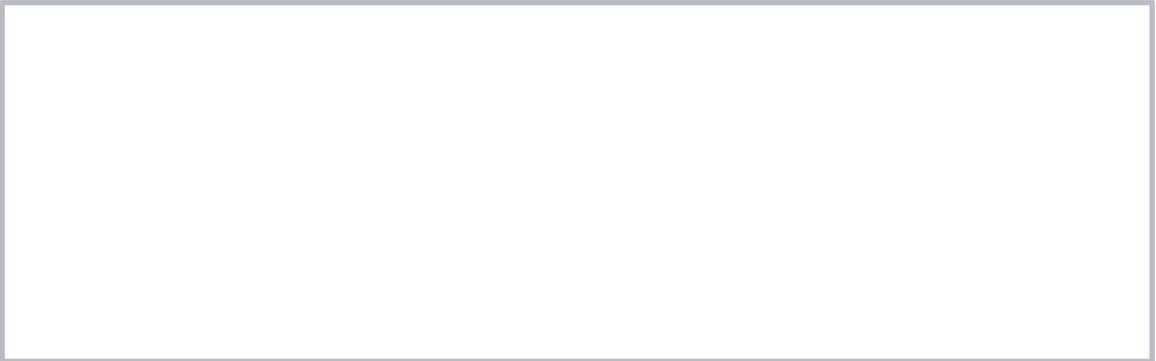What are your expectations of your agents for carrying the company culture amongst themselves and to your clients?

How will you remain transparent to your clients regarding your company culture?

How will you remain transparent within your company regarding company culture? Will you have an open door policy, or a no door policy?
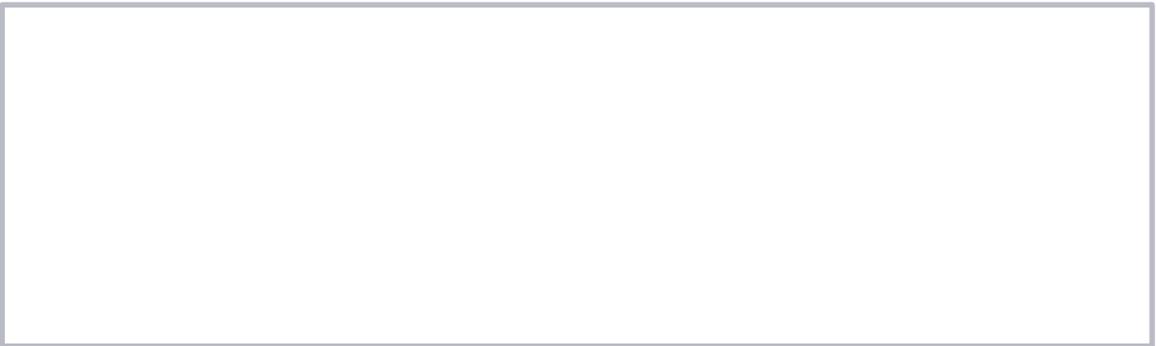
What will your office look like? Will you have cubicles? Will you offer a smaller offices?

What practices do you plan on putting in place for your office?

How will you engage your agents in following the practices of your culture?

What does the success of your culture look like?
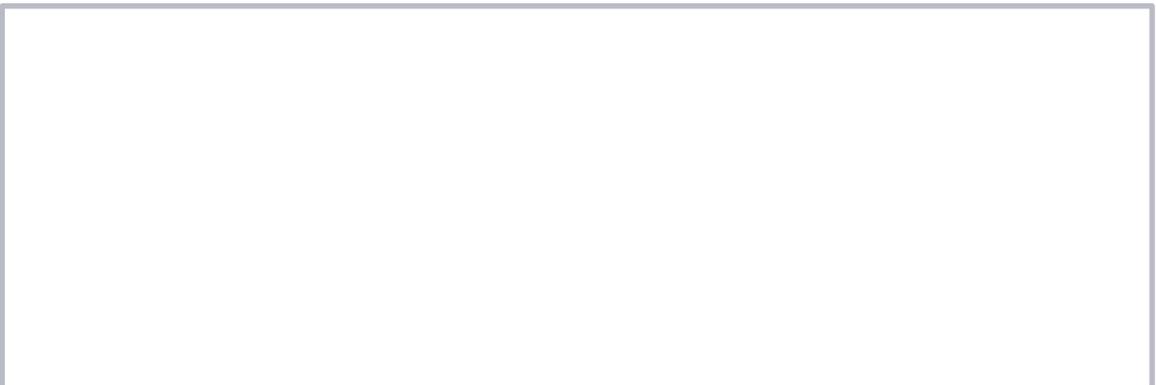
Is risk-taking encouraged, and what happened when people fail?

What is one thing you would change about your agency if you could?

What is one thing your employees would change about your agency if they could?

How are you impacting the people around you?

How are employees recognized for their results?

Is there a lot of collaboration with management, executive leadership, or individual sales agents?

How do managers and agents share feedback?

What are the most common causes of conflict within your insurance agency and how is it resolved?

What activities do your agency offer to promote team building?

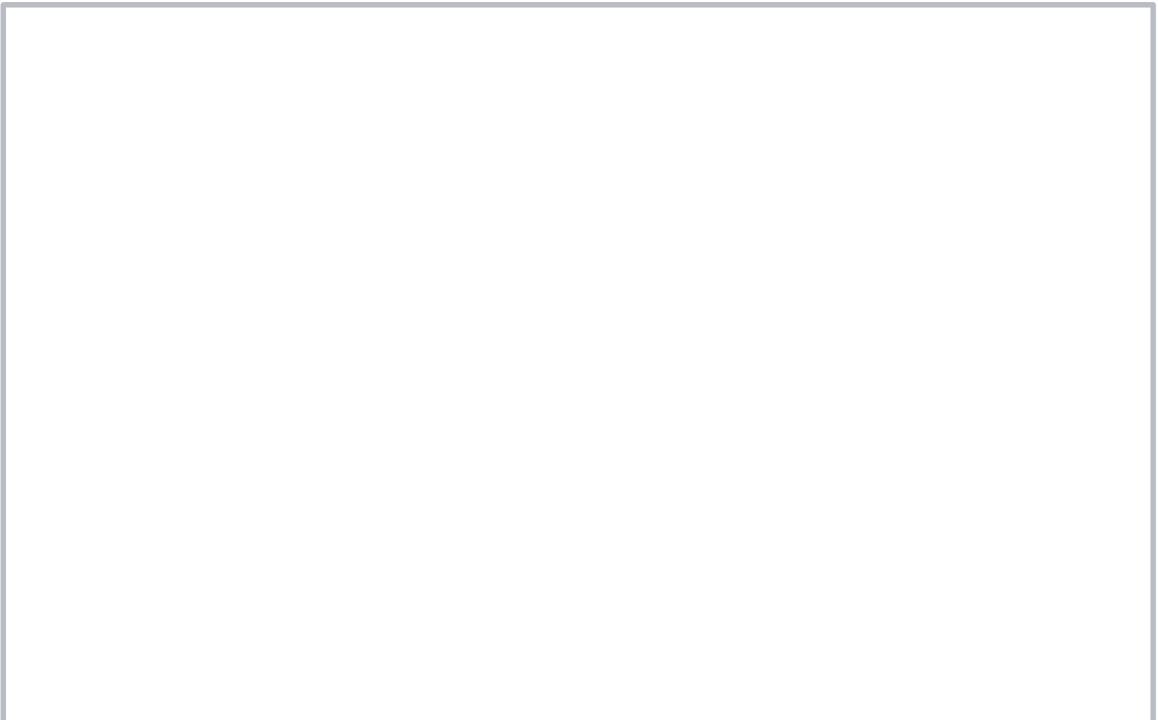What are some things your insurance agency has done to accommodate employees with families?

What kind of people seem to be the most successful here?

How does your insurance agency promote work-life balance?

How does your culture shape your insurance agency's goals and responsibilities?