

# “Is That Company Right for You? How to Find a Good Cultural Fit”

*Equis Staffing*

Written By: Stephanie Ogozaly

When applying and interviewing with a new company, job seekers know to carefully review the job duties, salary, and benefits, but many forget to consider one other very important thing: company culture. Many candidates will fail to ask questions about the company’s culture in the interview process, despite the fact that culture can have a significant impact on how successful you’ll be in the role.

A company’s culture and values can even affect how satisfied you are with a job once you have it, according to research by Glassdoor. This is often why you’ll see companies touting the benefits of working for them, whether it is work-life balance or cool in-office perks.

But company culture isn’t all about Ping-Pong tables, “free beer Fridays,” and an on-site massage therapist. While these kinds of perks can be nice, they don’t necessarily relate to the company culture. (And in some cases, you might be too busy to even use them in the first place – which *can* relate to company culture.) So, if it’s not the perks, then what is company culture?

Company culture is comparable to someone’s personality. It defines the way the company treats employees and the overall environment in which they work. It includes a variety of factors, such as the company’s mission, values, ethical standards, objectives, work environment, and expectations. For example, some companies might have an informal, team-based atmosphere with minimal supervision while others might have a very structured and traditional hierarchy with a lot of oversight. It varies from company to company, and you’re likely to be happier with your job if your values match the company culture.

As a job seeker you may be wondering: *How do I find a company culture that matches what I’m looking for?* Here are our tips for finding the right company culture for you:

## **Know what excites you.**

In what environments are you the most productive? What personality types do you get along with? What work environments make you feel creative and energized? Think about your own personal preferences before you start looking for jobs. Examine your past work experiences to pinpoint the environments where you felt like a superstar employee – what did they all have in common and why were you happy there? You’ll want to look for jobs at companies that match up with these experiences.

## **What is your lifestyle?**

Are you a workaholic who doesn’t mind putting in overtime on a regular basis? Or, do you prefer to leave at 5pm and enjoy your time at home? Do you need a flexible schedule that allows you to manage child-care or other commitments? You’ll want a work environment that also keeps you happy at home, so consider what is important to you in terms of your lifestyle.

## **What are your values?**

Think about your core values and what is important to you. Understand how your values dictate your personality and character, and then apply this thinking to the company’s set of values. Are you a match? Think about how you apply your values to your everyday life. Does the company apply their corporate values to their daily operations in the same way, or do they seem to be all talk?

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## **Consider the extras.**

We don't recommend choosing a company just because of the perks (seriously, there's only so much Ping-Pong you can play), but it is important to weigh these factors when making a final decision. You may not care about the flashy perks like a beer fridge or futuristic napping pods, but what does the company do to retain its workers? Do they offer great healthcare or retirement packages? How often do they show employee appreciation? All the extras (whether silly or serious) can make your work environment more enjoyable, so don't be afraid to ask about them. (But be careful not to dwell too long on the perks. You don't want the interviewer to believe that you're only interested in the company for the fun stuff.)

## **Get the inside scoop.**

If there's someone in your network that has worked at the company, reach out to them. Getting an inside look at how the company really operates can be incredibly beneficial, especially since HR reps or hiring managers will be more likely to paint a rosy picture. You might get a more accurate look at things from another source.

## **Do some sleuthing.**

Search for news and mentions about the company online. How are people talking about them? Do past employees have positive things to say? How does the company talk about itself? How do they talk to customers? What is the narrative?

## **Ask.**

Yes, it is that simple. When you're interviewing, ask your interviewer to describe the company culture and what it's like to work there. This will be especially effective if you have the ability to ask more than one person about the culture. Do their answers differ at all? Keep your ears open.

In the end, finding the perfect company culture for you has a lot to do with your own personal values and how they sync up with the company's mission. Ignoring culture fit when choosing a new company is a great way to ensure that you'll be back on the job hunt again very soon, so don't ignore it when considering your options.