

OPINION

6 workplace priorities that deserve your attention

Strategy doesn't shape culture. People do.

What they're feeling, how they're connecting, what they're carrying behind the scenes – that's what defines your workplace. And that's where change needs to start.

In organizations across the country, patterns are emerging. Leaders are overwhelmed. Teams are burned out. Employees are questioning whether the workplace still works for them.

And yet, the potential is enormous – because when organizations choose to lead differently, the ripple effects are real. If we want resilient, future-ready workplaces, we must focus less on performative culture statements and more on how people actually experience work.

Here are six workplace priorities for 2025:

1. Make trust a system

Everyone says trust matters – but most organizations haven't defined what it looks like. And if you haven't defined it, you can't build, teach, or measure it.

Get specific. Instead of vague ideas about "being trustworthy," name the behaviors that build trust in your culture. What does accountability look like? What does respect sound like in a meeting? Trust becomes real when it's tied to observable actions. It must be more than a value on the wall – it has to be lived, measured and protected.

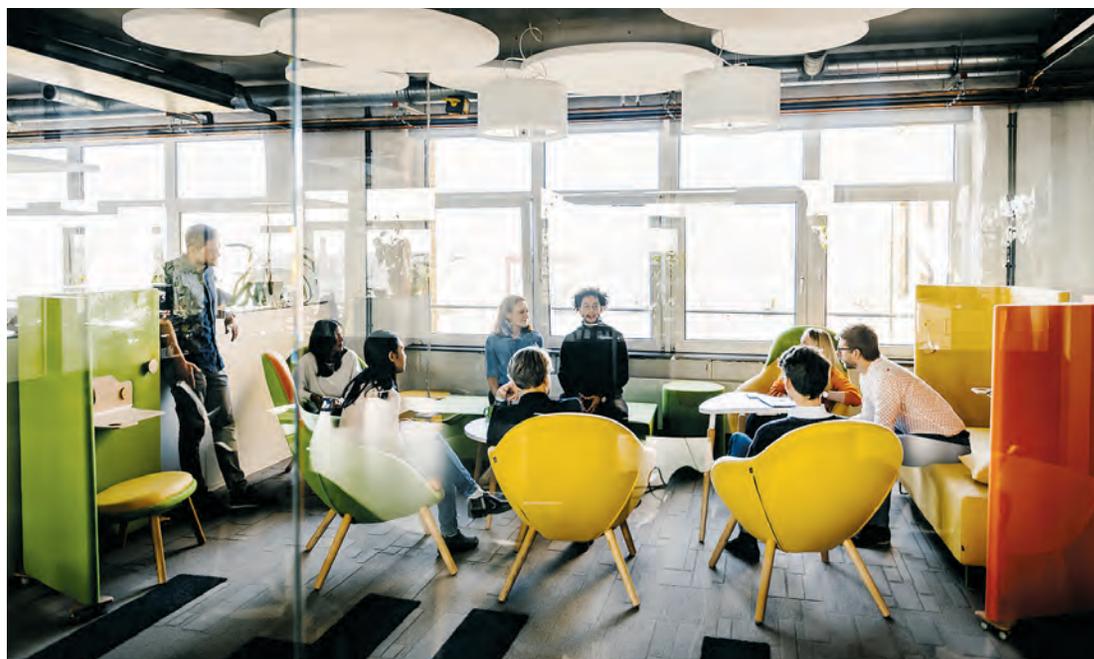
2. Peer-to-peer relationships

Top-down leadership isn't enough. The strongest cultures are built on intentional peer relationships.

A simple practice: required monthly peer meetings. These aren't performance reviews – just 30 minutes for colleagues to connect, offer feedback and support each other. When trust flows laterally – not just vertically – teams move faster and care more.

3. Practice presence and listening

In a world of nonstop Zoom calls and distractions, presence is a leadership superpower. And it's not about perfection – it's about intention.



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Here are six workplace priorities for 2025 – especially if you want to lead with more intention and impact.

I call them micro-moments of presence. Choose three moments this week – your 1:1s, how you give feedback, or how you reset after a tough call. Then, remove one distraction in each. The best leaders aren't always available, but they're fully present when it matters.

4. Manage energy, not just time

Time management isn't enough anymore. Without energy, your plans won't land.

Try setting core hours – a daily block when everyone is expected to be present, but outside of that, people flex around their energy and life.

If you've got working parents, avoid critical meetings at 8 a.m. or 3:30 p.m. If your team is fried by Friday, try no-meeting Fridays.

5. Embrace agile thinking

Agility matters more than ability. It means owning mistakes, staying open to new ideas, and leading with flexibility. However, with back-to-back meetings and never-ending to-do



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lists, it can be hard to embrace agility. Agility requires that we slow down and have time to think.

Require team members to schedule weekly 60-minute time blocks for thinking time. And then make sure you protect that time at all cost.

6. Normalize failure

If perfectionism still drives your culture, innovation stalls. One of the most powerful things a leader can do is fail first.

Talk about a missed opportunity. Share a regret. When leaders own failure, they create space for others to try, learn, and grow without fear.

These ideas aren't flashy, but they're powerful. They humanize the workplace. And culture doesn't shift through speeches or strategy decks. It shifts through experience.

Whether you're a CEO or new manager, take these ideas seriously. Not because they're trendy – but because they work. They make teams stronger. Conversations braver. And the workplace a place we all want to be.

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