



## Creating a Culture of Valued People



# Culture is hard work

### Culture change gets harder before it gets easier

Change efforts usually fail because no one ever says that change is going to slow you down and make things harder for a while. In the midst of the difficult moments people revert back to "normal" because it works and is easier. We like tourists show up for a week in a new culture and find it charming. However, if you live there for years you are likely to experience culture shock, as the new language and ways are a struggle and stressful. However, if you persist and you learn the target culture you find it comforting and it becomes your new normal. But that takes time and effort. You need to learn a new language, new ways of doing things, and new ways of thinking. Bottom line it is hard, and you have to be determined, and you need support from those around you.

### Capabilities Traps

MIT researchers have studied what happens to groups as they attempt to change. They call it the capability trap. It is the trap that we fall into as we learn new capabilities. First the new idea is a novelty that people try at first. But then the new ways are hard, and actually slower than the old ways. Most give up in the trap and never see any new benefits. However, if the group persists through the difficult times they will reap the benefits of the new ideas. According to MIT groups who can persist through the trap get into growth cycles of perpetual improvement. Those that don't stagnate and wither, and get stuck in the "change never works" mentality.

### Be aware and be encouraging

The first step to change is to be aware that change is difficult and slowing down is normal. Identify when you are feeling the stress of change. Keep telling each other the story that we will be better when we learn to grow and become together. It won't be hard forever and it will become our new normal.

### Exercise for Group

Does anyone have stories where they experienced the capabilities trap before and have seen people get stuck in the trap part?

Does anyone have stories where they experienced the capabilities trap before and and got through the trap and saw new benefits?

This could be in new cultures, sports, education, parenting?

What does it feel like when you master the new and it becomes your normal?

### Summarize this lesson in your own words or sketch.

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### Habit Exercise for this week.

This is a thought habit.  
Remember each day a new story where you persisted through some thing difficult to grow and become something more than you were before? Write the name of this story in the blank.

MON story .....

TUE story .....

WED story .....

THUR story .....