



How Healthy is Organizational Culture in Your Nonprofit Organization?

Humentum's Organizational Culture Health Check



Introduction

About Humentum

Humentum strengthens social good organizations through practical expertise, curated resources, and collective problem-solving. Our decades of experience working with thousands of nonprofit organizations around the world translate into deep understanding and visible results. We create practical solutions to improve finance, people, and risk processes through:

- Experienced consulting delivered by a global team with decades of on-the-job experience
- Individual, group, and organization-wide training
- A robust membership platform for peer-to-peer collaboration

We have team members based across the United States, Africa, South America, Europe, United Kingdom, and India. We also work with over 100 expert associates and trainers based in a range of countries around the world to deliver our consultancy projects and trainings for members and clients.

What can the Humentum Organizational Culture Health Check do?

Humentum's Organizational Culture Health Check helps you assess the health of your organization's organizational culture. It is designed as a self-assessment tool so you can identify the areas where you need to improve.

The Health Check is a set of statements that covers all key areas of NGO organizational culture. For each statement, you will need to consider how well your organization is in line with the best practice statement. By the end of the Health Check, you will be able to tell if the organizational culture in your organization is healthy or sick - and whether you need to call a doctor!

You may opt to complete this Health Check again after a year or two and assess and monitor your progress.

What can the Humentum Organizational Culture Health Check NOT do?

Every organization is different and organizational culture practices must reflect this. A 'one size fits all' approach cannot work. However, the key aspects of best practice are the same for most organizations most of the time. They are the foundation of best practices. Humentum's Organizational Culture Health Check only provides a general indication of the health of your organization's culture.

Additionally, the Organizational Culture Health Check is not an audit and it does not describe a standard set of procedures which are relevant in every situation. It is not appropriate to set a score as a 'pass rate' for a partner assessment. It is not appropriate to compare scores of two organizations and make conclusions about differences between them.

Who is the Organizational Culture Health Check designed for?

Humentum's Organizational Culture Health Check is designed for HR and leadership teams in nonprofit organizations to complete individually or together.

How to use the Humentum Finance Health Check

The Health Check includes explanations in each section. The most useful way to complete this is in a 2-3 hour meeting or working group.

Taking each statement of best practice in turn, discuss whether it is true, or is in place, or happens in your organization. Agree on a score based on what actually happens, not what is supposed to happen. The available scores are only 5, 4, 1, and 0.

Explanation	Score
Our practice is completely in accordance with the statement	5
Close to 5, but not quite there	4
Close to 0, but not that poor	1
This is not in place, is not true, or does not happen	0

Clearly, a degree of judgement is required to decide between '4' or '1', and it is not an exact science. If you cannot give yourselves a clear cut 5 or 0, you need to decide which one you are closer to.

Often the real value in this exercise is not the score itself, but rather it is the conversations and the details of issues that arise. Make good notes and keep a list of action items as they come up.

Section 1. Foundations of Culture

Starting with culture as the foundation of a people & culture, or organizational culture strategy is essential because it shapes the behaviors, values, and practices needed to execute the business strategy. By ensuring that people initiatives are directly aligned with the broader goals of the organization, you foster a workforce that is both engaged and strategically positioned to drive success.

Ref.	Statement of Best Practice	Score			
1.1	We bring our values to life every day, in the way we work and how we support each other	5 ☐	4 ☐	1 ☐	0 ☐
1.2	Psychological safety isn't just a goal, it's something we actively practice across all teams	5 ☐	4 ☐	1 ☐	0 ☐
1.3	Our leaders keep communication open, honest and consistent	5 ☐	4 ☐	1 ☐	0 ☐
1.4	Everyone's voice matters here. Employees are encouraged to speak up, share feedback, and know they'll be heard.	5 ☐	4 ☐	1 ☐	0 ☐
1.5	Our culture is rooted in trust, teamwork, and genuine care for one another.	5 ☐	4 ☐	1 ☐	0 ☐
Total Score for Foundations of Culture					

Section 2. Recruitment & Onboarding

Having the right people, in the right seats, at the right time is fundamental to any people-first organization's ability to advance its mission and deliver meaningful impact. Recruitment ensures an organization attracts individuals whose skills, values, and potential align with its strategic goals. Onboarding, is where culture begins: it's the moment new hires connect with an organization's purpose, understand expectations, and begin contributing with confidence.

Ref.	Statement of Best Practice	Score			
2.1	Our hiring process is fair, open, and focused on skills that matter	5 ☐	4 ☐	1 ☐	0 ☐
2.2	Job descriptions are regularly updated so employees know exactly what's expected in their role	5 ☐	4 ☐	1 ☐	0 ☐
2.3	New team members get a warm welcome with thorough onboarding and support to help them hit the ground running	5 ☐	4 ☐	1 ☐	0 ☐
2.4	Our hiring managers are trained to recruit fairly and inclusively	5 ☐	4 ☐	1 ☐	0 ☐
2.5	We make hiring decisions together and keep everything clear and well-documented	5 ☐	4 ☐	1 ☐	0 ☐
Total Score for Recruitment & Onboarding					

Section 3. Performance & Development

Creating an environment where employees can perform, learn, develop, and grow is vital for a People First organization because it directly supports both individual fulfillment and organizational success.

Ref.	Statement of Best Practice	Score			
3.1	Everyone knows what success looks like with goals aligned to what the organization is striving for	5 ☐	4 ☐	1 ☐	0 ☐
3.2	Feedback isn't a once-a-year thing. It's a regular part of how we grow and succeed together.	5 ☐	4 ☐	1 ☐	0 ☐
3.3	We don't just talk about development, we help make it happen for every employee.	5 ☐	4 ☐	1 ☐	0 ☐
3.4	We don't shy away from tough conversations. Poor performance is addressed with fairness and urgency, to help people get back on track.	5 ☐	4 ☐	1 ☐	0 ☐
3.5	Managers are set up for success with the right training and support, so they can have positive, meaningful chats with employees about how they're doing and how they can grow.	5 ☐	4 ☐	1 ☐	0 ☐
Total Score for Performance & Development					

Section 4. Inclusion, & Wellbeing

Inclusion, and wellbeing are cornerstones of a people-first organization because they reflect a deep commitment to valuing every individual and providing a space where they can thrive as their authentic selves, professionally and personally.

Ref.	Statement of Best Practice	Score			
4.1	Fairness and inclusion aren't just buzzwords. They're built into the way we work, plan, and grow.	5 ☐	4 ☐	1 ☐	0 ☐
4.2	We collect and use data to make our culture better for everyone	5 ☐	4 ☐	1 ☐	0 ☐
4.3	We champion mental health and wellbeing in ways that make a difference	5 ☐	4 ☐	1 ☐	0 ☐
4.4	Diverse thinking is baked into how we make choices that matter	5 ☐	4 ☐	1 ☐	0 ☐
4.5	Staff feel safe and supported to express their identity and experiences	5 ☐	4 ☐	1 ☐	0 ☐
Total Score for Inclusion, & Wellbeing					

Section 5. Employee Engagement & Retention

Employee engagement and retention are critical to the success of any organization, especially a people-first one, because they directly influence performance, culture, and long-term sustainability.

Ref.	Statement of Best Practice	Score			
5.1	We regularly listen to employees through surveys, focus groups, and more, and we take action based on what we hear.	5 ☐	4 ☐	1 ☐	0 ☐
5.2	Exit interviews help us learn and grow, so we can keep making this a great place to work.	5 ☐	4 ☐	1 ☐	0 ☐
5.3	There are real opportunities here to grow, lead, and move within the organization.	5 ☐	4 ☐	1 ☐	0 ☐
5.4	We support a healthy work-life balance, because our employee's wellbeing matters	5 ☐	4 ☐	1 ☐	0 ☐
5.5	Recognition is part of our culture. Fair, meaningful, and often shared often.	5 ☐	4 ☐	1 ☐	0 ☐
Total Score for Employee Engagement & Retention					

Section 6. HR Systems & Policies

Good HR systems and policies are foundational to a well-functioning, people-first organization. They provide the structure, consistency, and tools needed to support employees and leaders effectively.

Ref.	Statement of Best Practice	Score			
6.1	Our HR policies are clear, easy to find, and always kept up-to-date.	5 ☐	4 ☐	1 ☐	0 ☐
6.2	We take care to keep our employee records accurate, secure, and confidential.	5 ☐	4 ☐	1 ☐	0 ☐
6.3	Employee always know where to go if they need support, and feel comfortable reaching out.	5 ☐	4 ☐	1 ☐	0 ☐
6.4	We use data to guide smart people decisions and spot trends that matter.	5 ☐	4 ☐	1 ☐	0 ☐
6.5	We stay on top of local labor laws and safeguarding requirements, so our employees are always protected.	5 ☐	4 ☐	1 ☐	0 ☐
Total Score for HR Systems & Policies					

Interpreting Your Score

Record your score for each section in this table. Then compare it to the columns on the right & ring or shade the appropriate risk assessment for each section. Finally, add up your total score & see the advice below.

Section	Score	High Risk	Med. Risk	Low Risk
1. Organizational culture		0 – 15	16 – 20	21 – 25
2. Recruitment & onboarding		0 – 15	16 – 20	21 – 25
3. Performance & development		0 – 15	16 – 20	21 – 25
4. Inclusion, & wellbeing		0 – 15	16 – 20	21 – 25
5. Employee engagement		0 – 15	16 – 20	21 – 25
6. HR systems & policies		0 – 15	16 – 20	21 – 25
Total Score		0 - 90	91 - 120	121 - 150

Your score is higher than 121

Well done! Your organization is in a strong position. High scores show that your culture practices are working, but even top performers need to evolve to stay ahead. This is the moment to refine, innovate, and future-proof your approach. Ask yourself:

- What would take us from great to exceptional?
- Are we building the workforce and culture we'll need 2-3 years from now?

The focus now is on momentum. Celebrate success by sharing stories and data that reinforce what's working, while digging into the "why" behind engagement to uncover insights across teams, locations, and demographics. From this foundation, stretch into growth areas such as leadership development, career mobility, innovation, and wellbeing maturity.

Future-proofing also means amplifying employee voice through co-creation, benchmarking against industry leaders, and aligning culture with long-term strategy. Above all, investing in manager capability - to navigate change, lead inclusively, and coach talent - ensures cultural strength is sustained and continues to grow.

Your score is between 91 and 120

Not bad! You're in transition. You've built a solid foundation – and that's worth celebrating. But your health check results also highlight gaps that, if left unattended, could grow into bigger challenges. The good news is you're in a prime position to shift from good intentions to consistent, strategic action. This is the moment to sharpen priorities, engage employees, and turn insight into momentum.

Start by clarifying focus areas: don't try to fix everything at once. Identify the lowest-scoring sections and ask which will have the greatest impact on staff experience or organizational performance. Use this as a chance to pause and reflect – are your organizational practices truly aligned with your future direction?

From there, move beyond compliance to practices that are people-centered, fair, and meaningful. Bring employees into the conversation through listening sessions, focus groups, or culture labs, and strengthen manager capability in coaching, inclusion, and wellbeing. Finally, translate insights into a 6-12 month action plan with quick wins and longer-term milestones, celebrating progress along the way.

Your score is less than 91

There is work to be done! You're ready for a shift. Your organization is ready to move beyond traditional HR practices and embrace a dynamic, people-first organizational culture model. This shift isn't just about systems or policies; it's about bringing your mission, vision, and values to life through every employee experience. With the right focus, you can build a more engaged, empowered, and purpose-driven workforce. Key areas to strengthen include:

- **Organizational culture:** align organizational culture strategy with your mission and goals, evaluate leadership capacity and succession planning and strengthen HR data to support decision-making.
- **Recruitment & onboarding:** plan your workforce strategically, audit recruitment for fairness and inclusion, and ensure onboarding is consistent and culturally effective.
- **Performance & development:** Refresh your performance systems, train managers in coaching and growth, and expand access to training.
- **Inclusion & wellbeing:** Review representation, psychosocial support, and anti-discrimination policies, while building inclusive leadership capacity.
- **Engagement & retention:** Use culture mapping, pulse surveys, and stay/exit interviews to create a workforce that feels valued and connected to your mission.
- **Systems & compliance:** Audit HR technology and processes, ensure compliance across all locations, and close policy gaps to strengthen foundations.

Shifting at this stage is a challenge - but also an opportunity. By tackling these areas with focus and urgency, you can move from risk to resilience and lay the foundation for a truly people-first culture.