



**Business Culture
Intelligence Report
2022**

The Young Professionals Culture

- Understanding talents and the future of work

Dear Reader,

Due to the high-paced, rapidly changing, and competitive labour market, people's knowledge and ideas are critical for innovation and growth. People are, now more than ever, seen as the most important company asset. Where there is people, there is culture, and our purpose is to radically improve how culture is understood and applied to make people thrive in the company growth. Culture is measurable and it impacts business performance and growth. Our strong belief is that culture now more than ever is important and neglecting it will increase risk and block corporate growth.

Resources are scarce, and the "talent war" has been described as more competitive than ever. The cost, frustration and energy drain on both sides when new recruits leave after 12-18 months. These numbers are increasing, and the battle for the best new heads and hearts has been the headache for CEOs, CHROs and People and Culture leaders too long.

Our ambition with this year's Business Culture Intelligence (BCI) report is to give new insight to both companies and the young professionals about the context of their "merging cultures". This will be beneficial when they meet. In this study we aimed to understand what kind of culture, values and mindsets the young professionals represent, and how that fits the existing corporate culture. The importance of that is to help leaders to attract, develop and empower young professionals that come into the company, so they thrive and grow AND STAY. Just as important, to give insight to young professionals in what to look for and expect in their first jobs company culture.

With better culture insight, companies will get more accurate insight of which cultures new recruits thrive in. The receiving team will get more insight in who they get onboard. With this dataset, it is easier for leaders to understand culture, change it faster and build the culture they need for the growth they want.

We'd love to get your feedback, input or requests for new analytics.

Tone S. Ringstad
CEO and Founder





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1. Executive summary

Culture has traditionally been hard to assess, and even harder to replicate, mostly due to lack of scientific data, frameworks, and a useful culture guide /playbook. The costly consequences are that leaders often postpone or avoid culture initiatives, and change takes too long. In today's labour market it is harder than ever to attract, develop and retain people. This is caused by several factors, one key is the pandemic aftermath. It is therefore important to know who you work with, and know your employee culture, not to mention the employees you really want to attract. How can you make better decisions on how to attract and retain them?

The foundation of this report was to investigate the young professionals' values and actual culture, to uncover a potential values difference between the current workforce and the new workforce. Key findings and conclusion are presented below.

1.1 Key findings

1. Young professionals represent another culture than the 7000+ population wide norm group
2. More focus on PASSION, BELONGING, CARE, CURIOSITY compared to norm group
3. Less focus on productivity, team development, vision and control compared to norm group
4. More individual focus than team focus
5. More relationship-oriented than tasks oriented
6. A higher score in the belonging mindset than norm group
7. Their culture code consists of engagement, development, relationships, and life balance

1.2 Conclusions to be drawn from the report

There is a difference in values between young professionals and existing employees within the workforce today. This difference will be important to understand to attract, develop and retain young professionals in the future. The most characteristic insight we found was that young professionals want to keep developing themselves. They want to be heard, included and have a well-balanced life where other things than work matter. They are different from the rest of the business communities by having less focus on team synergy, productivity, effectivity, and control. They are focused on team development and close collaboration, but less focus on cross functional team synergies. They need more foundational relationships built on caring, belonging and respect.





2 Background and objectives

2.1 Objectives of the report

1. Identify and describe the young professional and young professionals' culture
2. Analyse the differences detected in comparison to the norm group
3. Recommendations to attract, develop and retain young professionals

2.2 Background

Over the past 20 years, data and learning from more than 200 teams with testing, piloting, pivoting, and succeeding with culture projects are gathered. The foundation for an evidence-based approach to culture transformation, on which Culture Intelligence now operates, has been developed into a full-scale Culture-as-a-service platform. The Culture ecosystem is now a bold mix of the cloud native Azure technology, 40+ certified partners, a broad variety of customers, external board members and investors and an advisory board with engaged external ambassadors supporting company growth (www.cultureintelligence.io).

2.3 The database

The database exceeds 7000 surveys, each represented with a unique link of values priorities. While in line with GDPR, privacy and information security regulations, this database allows benchmarking, comparisons, and analytics of culture data to respond to new and relevant questions regarding business culture within a company or demographic cluster.

The data collected are values priorities from individuals, gathered through a highly specialized survey based on values dilemmas, where participants are asked to prioritize their own personal values. The selected values are then displayed on the culture map and visualized in a variety of analytics.

The data from young professionals were obtained **from July 2022 to August 2022**. They were compared with data from 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021

- Participants: 73
- Countries: Norway, Denmark, United Kingdom, United States, Bangladesh, Pakistan
- Education level: Currently pursuing bachelor's degree, Bachelor's degree, currently pursuing post-graduate degree, Post-graduate (Masters/PhD degree)
- Age groups: 20-31 years





3 Methodology and definitions

Culture Intelligence is defined as the ability to acquire culture data, link them to knowledge and skills and apply them within a business environment and strategic context to grow the company.

Culture is defined as " the sum of values priorities and mindset preferences that drive behavior, actions, relationships and decision-making by a leader or in a defined team or company".

Values are defined as the ideals that give significance to our lives, that are reflected through the priorities we choose and that we act on repeatedly and consistently. This means that personal values impact the way we act, make decisions and collaborate. Understanding the underlying system of what people in a team or an entire company value and how these values are represented in real life, identify the essence of the current culture.

Mindsets are defined as levels of organizational maturity, and all mindsets have a specific focus, based on the underlying values. Mindsets guide thinking and attitudes, and act as a lens for understanding data and making decisions. The higher mindset a person has focus on, the more complexity and ambiguity they can handle. Mindset goes from foundation, to focus and then to vision.

Culture map is a framework for mapping, analyzing and transforming culture. The framework is constructed by a system of 100 unique values, each with a specific definition and suggested action learning to develop it. Seven unique mindsets also with suggested action learning, and eight predefined culture codes to drive development.

The **culture survey** is used to capture individual values priorities. Our SaaS solution aggregates individual data into a team or organization level and displays culture data into insights in values, mindsets, culture codes to give culture intelligence.

The culture journey is built on four steps; Awareness, Actual, Aspired and Action. Each step has actions and processes for developing a team. The essence is that culture is built to fit the business strategy and should be highly integrated in all business perspectives.

The business value opportunities are to decrease the gap between actual and aspired culture. This underlying methodology is correlated to a Positive Inquiry method; to discover what kind of culture the team has and identify and encourage that particular part so they can be conscious about it and expand upon it. Next, they dream big and imagine their ideal culture represented by what we define as a Culture Code and design development paths to move them forward.





4 Report results

4.1 Insight of the young professional values priorities

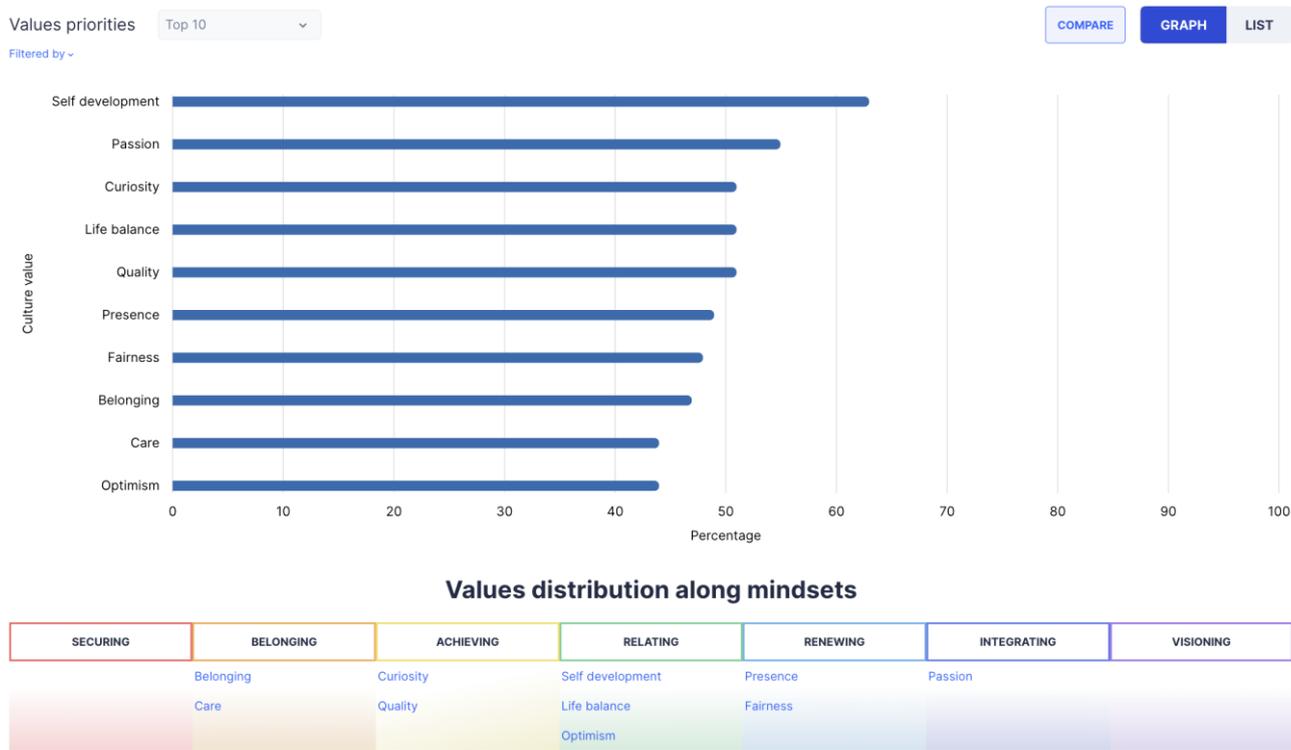


Figure 1: Top ten Values priorities

When analysing the young professional culture, we identified the highest prioritised values. The young professional culture displays the highest priorities on **self-development, passion, curiosity, life balance and quality**. In simple young professional language, it states: “it’s important to me to work in a place where I can develop myself, where we are passionate about what we do, be able to deliver according to expectations while having a life and keep searching for the new and unknown insights and truths”.

Self-development alone can easily be interpreted as a value that benefits the individual and not the organization in totality. However, the desire to be your best with the intention to grow will benefit everyone. When prioritizing this value, people spend time reflecting on what they need to develop, how they can better develop to be achieving their own and ultimately the organizational goals, and what the next steps will be when development happens. Backed up with **curiosity**, this value pair is the trigger for high focus on learning. **Quality** is about wanting to do a good job and deliver what you have agreed to deliver.

Focus on **life balance** indicates that young professionals prefer to have a balance between work life and private life. This is not solely a trend seen within this generation, but a shift has been rising rapidly after the pandemic. **Presence** is about being able to impact and take part in decision making





processes process. **Fairness** is to treat people right.

Support, belonging and care are relational-focused values. Belonging points to the need to feel connected to the people around you, support points to supporting people around them in their tasks and thoughts. Care is about being able to provide others with physical and emotional care they need. It is about showing interest in people's personal lives, not only in work-related matters. Having close connections and strong bonds is essential for this generation. It includes showing openness to where people are comfortable coming to you with problems.

4.2 The young professional mindsets

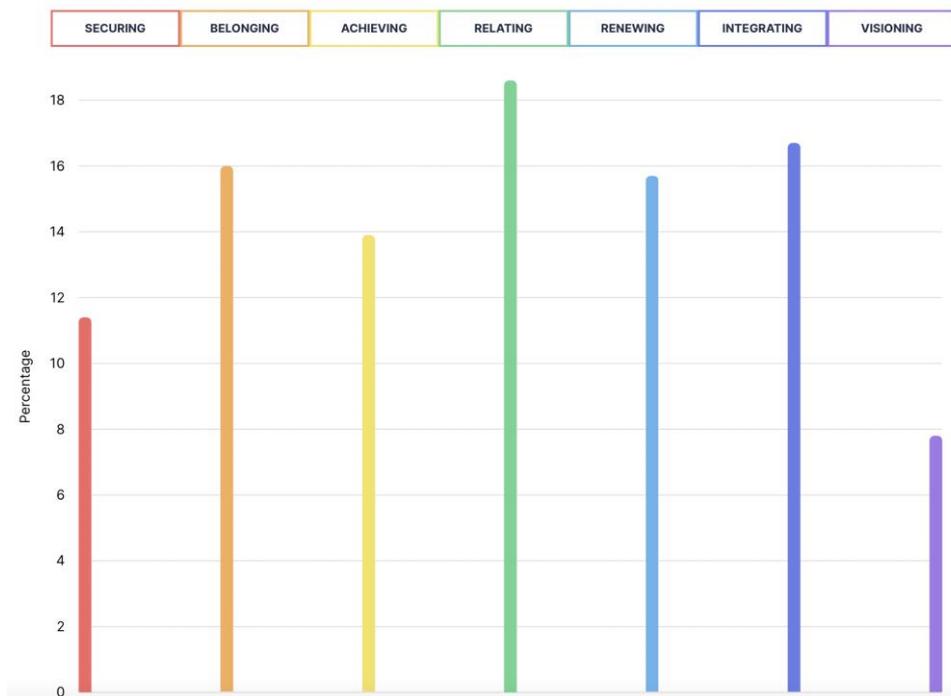


Figure 2: The seven mindsets for the population

The **relating mindset** (in green) is the most preferred mindset for this population. The values that support this mindset are **self-development, life balance, optimism, inclusion, action and openness**. This mindset focuses on everyone being included and valuable and all people having a voice. The other people around you are viewed as a resource, not a competition, and they should all be treated right.

The relating mindset is in the middle of the framework, where the individual focus meets the need for developing teams and work together. People will focus on collaboration is essential and enable others to function collaboratively and be involved. People or teams with high scores in these values are great team workers, always with everyone on board. People in a very high relating mindset will





search for consensus, which may cause delays and raise the cost of decision-making processes.

The second most preferred mindset is the **integrating mindset**. This mindset is also about relationships, but at a higher level, such as integrating different unities and making team synergies. It is a high focus on mutually accountable relationships and cross-functional work.

Leadership is by empowerment and authenticity. Knowledge is the sum of long, deep, and wide experiences put together to form clusters of experience and applied expertise. People and teams with high scores in this mindset have a focus on integrating their teams with other teams cross-functionally. Synergy is created, likely to be producing better results for customers or peers. Empowering teams are engaging for young professional, and partnerships are built in local communities and society at large. **Passion, closeness, synergy, authenticity, and courage** are most vital for young professionals in this mindset.

The third most prominent mindset is the **belonging mindset**. It is the foundation for teams, friends and family, and a group that wants to belong together. The values that have high scores by young professionals are belonging, support, care, respect, and self-worth. The values that have high scores by young professionals are **belonging, support, care, respect, and self-worth**.

4.3 Comparison to the norm group's values

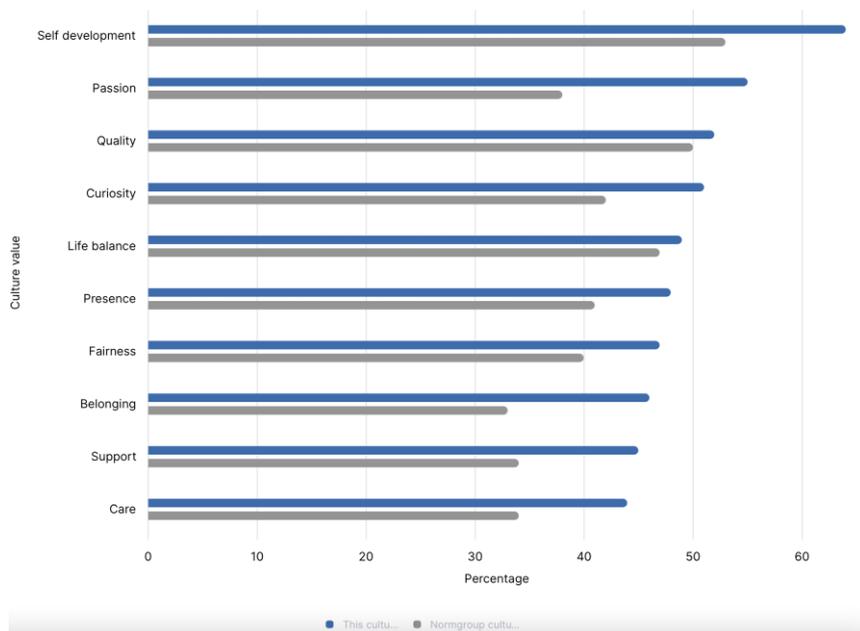


Figure 3: Comparison of top ten values prioritized between young professional culture and norm group

The difference in values priorities is the best-known indicator for culture differences or subculture identification. The two cultures need to be analyzed from both sides, to really understand what is important for one subculture, but not so much for the other, and the other way around.





The biggest difference in values differences is seen in the values listed in the diagram below. This is useful to plan onboarding and integration of young professionals. They will not be like the average culture when it comes to these seven values. On the other hand, they will struggle to get onboard on the seven values probably in place already. The best use of this is to process the data openly between the two groups and plan together what expectations and development that is good for integration.

50% higher score in the young professional culture	50% higher score in the norm culture
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Self worth	<input type="checkbox"/> Vision
<input type="checkbox"/> Search	<input type="checkbox"/> Compliance
<input type="checkbox"/> Closeness	<input type="checkbox"/> Control
<input type="checkbox"/> Social affirmation	<input type="checkbox"/> Growth
<input type="checkbox"/> Being liked	<input type="checkbox"/> Service
<input type="checkbox"/> Risking	<input type="checkbox"/> Team - development
<input type="checkbox"/> Prestige	<input type="checkbox"/> Cross functional





4.4 Comparison of values with 2019 students

In 2019, similar data were conducted from students at BI Norwegian Business School to map this year's student culture. Their ten most prioritized values are shown in the table below.

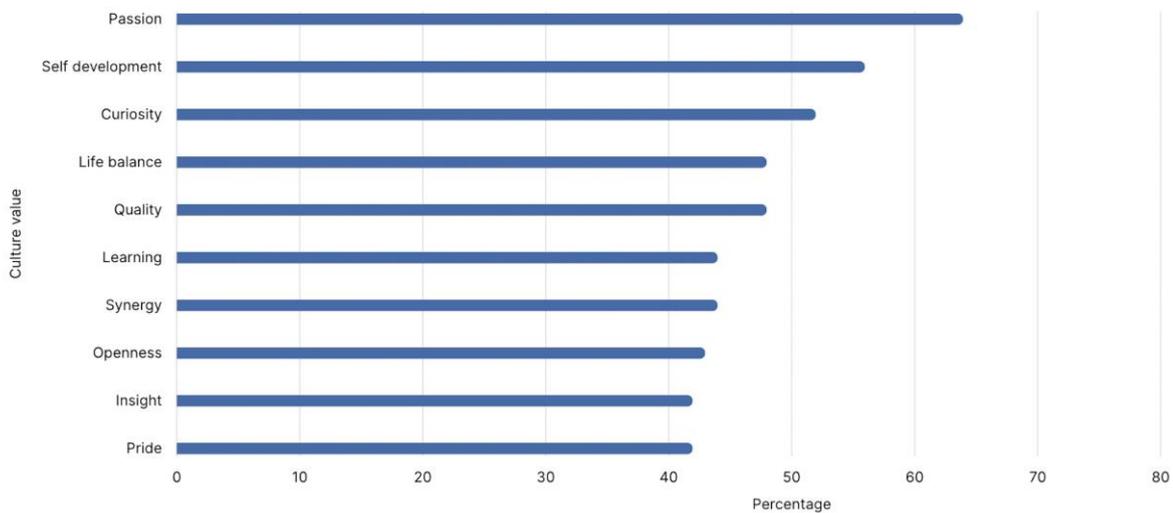


Figure 4: Top ten values prioritized for students at BI Norwegian Business School, 2019

Comparing these values to students three years later shows that five out of ten top values are the same and are still the most vital and strongest values for young professionals. They are ranked at the five highest but in slightly different ranking order. This strengthens the reliability of this year's young professionals' results.





4.5 Comparison of norm group's mindsets

To better form an understanding of the meaning of the differences in values and how this can relate to behaviours seen in everyday work, it will be discussed in relation to the seven mindsets.

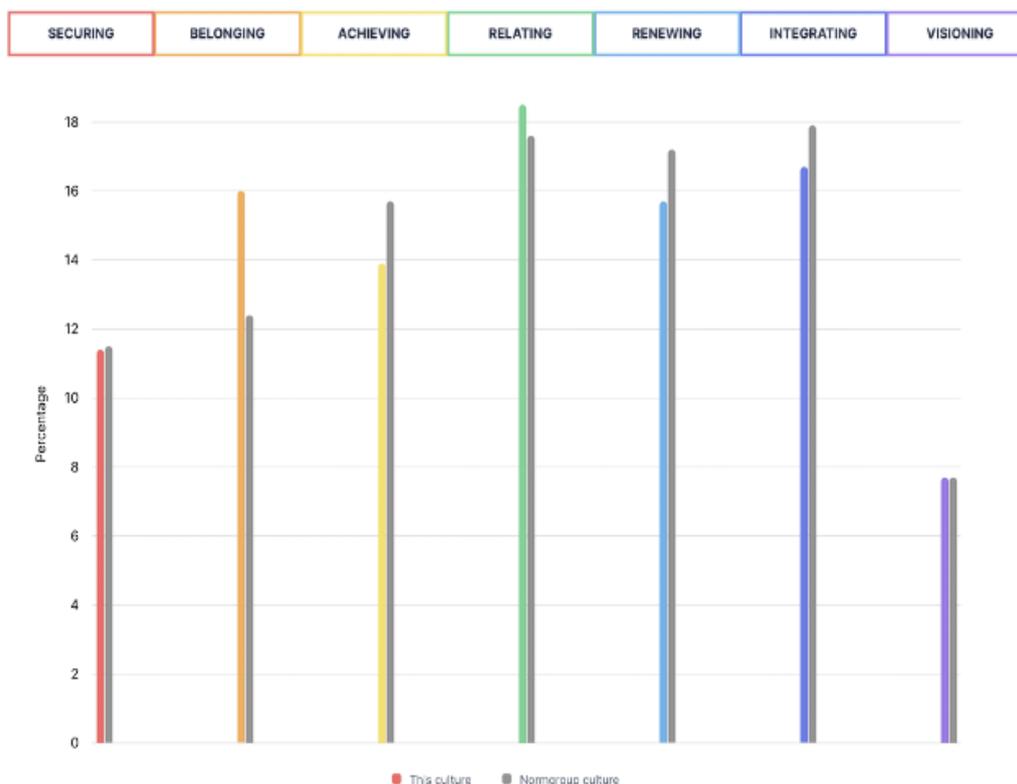


Figure 5: The comparison of the seven mindsets between the population and norm group

One of the most significant findings in the data was the differences in the belonging mindset. Our data show that young professionals score much higher on values in the belonging mindset compared to the norm group.

There are several potential reasons for this. The desire and need for belonging are rooted in us, and it is naturally important factors throughout our lives. However, people in their twenties and early thirties are going through several changes affected by uncertainty and ambition. This stage of life can be viewed as one of the most crucial developmental periods of your working life. Young professionals go from three-five years of higher education, where social support and the student community are central. In this stage of life, the minority have started their own family and community, and will therefore search for this belonging in other arenas, such as through social channels and your workplace. The need for belonging does not come alone but is closely followed by care and support. Having an environment built on these values will be crucial to well-being at work for this generation compared to the norm-group.

Some of the values young professionals scored higher on in the belonging mindset, compared to the norm group, were **belonging, support, care and self-worth**. The findings indicate a robust relational focus for this population, where having people around who show respect and





acknowledgement is highly valued. The feeling of being appreciated and seen by your organization and employees are therefore necessary for performance. **Self-worth** is defined as wanting to feel valued for who you are and not only for what you do. This is twice as important for the young professional population compared to the norm group. Their score in comparison to the norm group might indicate that the future of work will demand to work under conditions that align with their values, which is predominantly within the relating mindset, which is accurately described in the previous section. **Self-development, life balance, passion and inclusion** are some of the highly prioritized values which will be important for a future employer to be aware of.

The integrating mindset is the strongest mindset for the norm group. They are reasonably similar, but there are some differences in the value priorities within the mindset. The norm group scored higher on **synergy, cross-functional and team development** which are values that have a high focus on team performance. The young professionals, on the other hand, score higher on **passion, closeness, and courage**, which is directed more towards an individual focus, but at the same time important factors and values for team performance. This difference is vital to acknowledge, as it shows a similarity on the surface but reveals a clear difference in the underlying value priorities within the mindset.

The achieving mindset describes people and teams where there is a high presence of familiar tasks, and task orientation is higher than relationship orientation. People show high commitment to the institution but can be reluctant to change. Leadership is considered effective when rules are clearly communicated, and tasks are controlled. A prominent reason why young professionals initially score lower on this mindset compared to the others might be because they are relationship-oriented over tasks oriented. A clear difference can be seen between young professionals and the norm group, and in three values there is a significant difference between the groups. This is seen in **responsibility, achievement, and productivity**.

There are several similarities between the two groups. These are within the securing and visioning mindsets. Looking more closely at the values within these mindsets, it shows that the two groups are similar in valuing **physical function, financial security, and affection** which are values that belong to the securing mindset. The scores concurred in **wisdom, sustainability, and freedom** within the visioning mindset.





5 Culture alignment

To develop a deeper understanding of what these data tell us, and how the culture data can be of value, further analysis will be presented in this next section. The main findings that will be discussed in this section are impacts on young professionals' alignment to collaboration and innovation. We have also compared to the norm group in our database. This norm group holds 7000 individual people, leaders and teams, from the Norwegian and Swedish business culture. To dig deeper into the analyses, comparisons with industry sectors or organizational leader levels can be conducted.

5.1 Teaming culture code alignment

The graph below represents the teaming culture code, with 20 selected values that together make up a team-oriented culture. The scores represent how much the young professionals prioritise each value in the teaming culture.

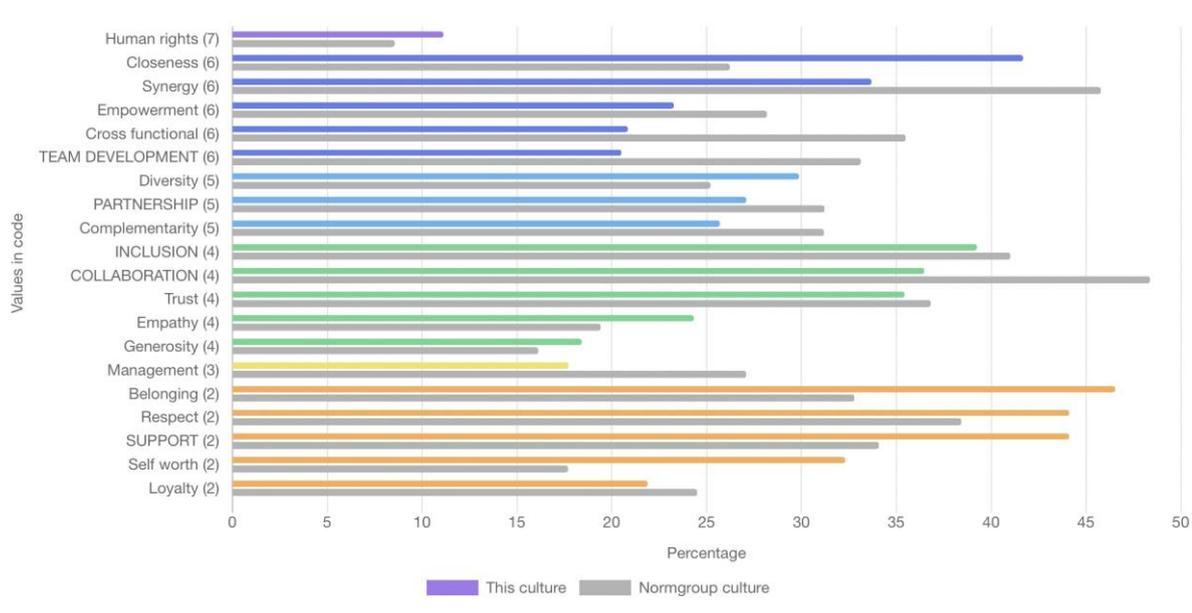


Figure 6: Teaming culture code, Young Professional culture compared to Norm group culture

Teaming in the young professional culture looks different than the norm group. The young professionals focus on other values when they team up to collaborate. The teaming approach is different from the young professionals to the norm group. The norm group prioritise ways to teamwork, whereas talents focus on the relational supportive foundation to make good teamwork.

The young professionals' culture has a more individualistic approach when working, compared to the norm groups' culture, which has a higher focus on collaboration and teaming. As it occurs, young professionals lack the norm groups focus on synergy, cross-functional and collaboration. It does not mean that this generation doesn't know how to collaborate or does not have the focus on it, but for them teaming and collaboration are focused around the values of closeness, belonging, respect and support.

Collaboration and teaming for this generation is viewed as work that is done between people who





share a close, safe and respected relationship where they feel supported and included by the people they work with. If these values are met, you will have a person that is willing to learn and eager to try out new things and situations.

For a person who is already part of the workforce, we see by looking at the norm group, that teaming consists more of synergy, collaboration, inclusion and cross-functional. These values are more focused on the broad perspective and what collaboration in an organization look like. The critical aspect to focus on will be how to ensure an aligned understanding of what collaboration is and what it will look like for the company and the employees.

5.2 Innovation culture alignment

Innovation is described as developing and pioneering new products and services based on ideas and input from others. Having a strategic perspective on innovation and how it may create value for your team is valuable for any organization. Comparing the young professional culture and the norm group to the innovation culture code, it appears that the young professional culture has a higher score on **passion, courage, optimism and curiosity**. However, lower scores on **vision, learning and inspiration**.

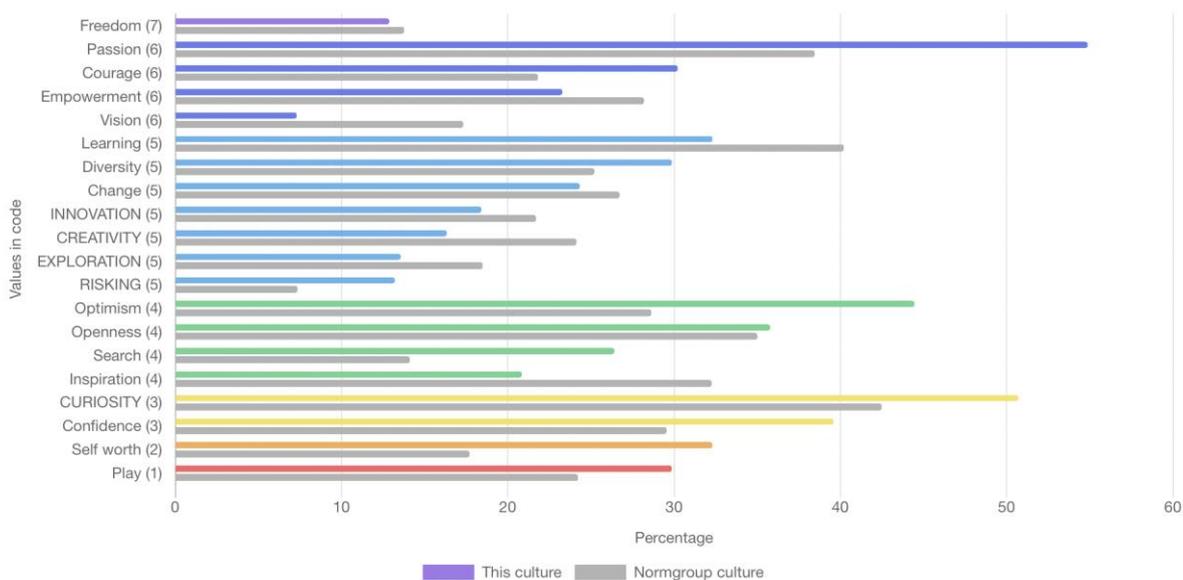


Figure 7: Innovation culture code, Young Professional culture compared to Norm group culture

When recruiting a young professional, or staffing your innovation project with one, you will get an innovator onboard who is both curious and dare to go after what is new, and someone who wants to solve the problem. A person from this group will most likely not be stopped by the conventional way of doing things and will be more willing to take risks than the norm group. The interesting other datapoint is that their focus on learning, defined as continuously acquiring new knowledge and skills, is much lower. The young professionals have focus on self-development, but not so much on the systematically learning processes in an organization. The value **vision** is lower, hence they need to get that focus from other people in the organization.





6 Young professionals Culture Code

After collecting, mapping, analyzing, and interpreting the data from young professionals, a culture code has been designed to explain what the young professional culture is. The twelve values chosen are clustered into four categories to represent the young professional's "brand". The Young Professional Culture Code consists of the brand values Development, Life balance, Passion and Relationships. Each of the four brand values holds three values each for development and application. These are the overall categories that can be used to explain the most important facets that drive the behaviours of individuals in this culture.

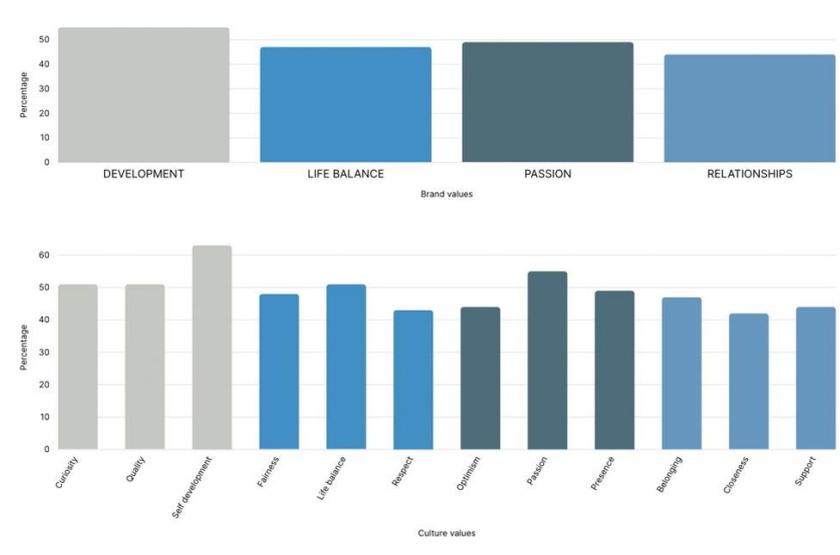


Figure 8: Brand values for Young Professionals

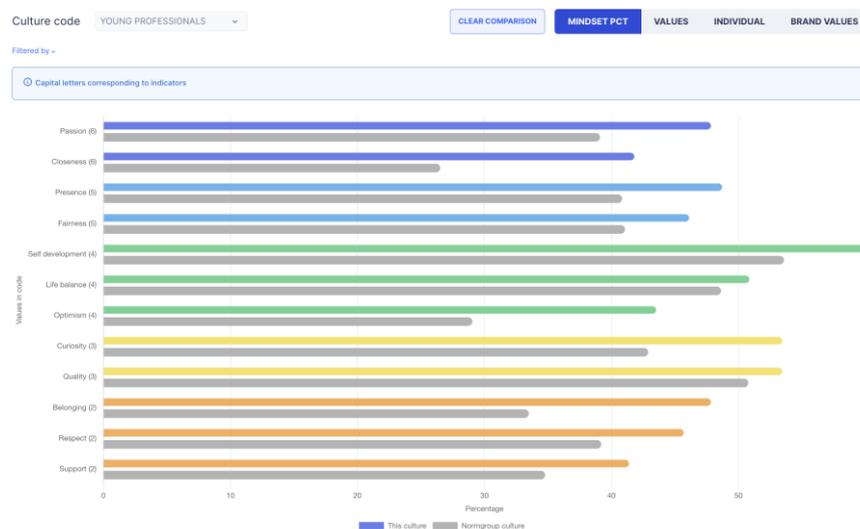


Figure 9: Culture Code for Young Professionals compared to normgroup





7 Recommendations

7.1 How to attract young professionals

To attract the next generation of employees, the culture code should be communicated clearly. The aim is to let them know how they will experience Development, Passion, Life Balance and Relationships with you. It should be visible that this is a culture that is built on respect, support, and belonging, where close relations are valued. This organization will recognize high quality within work tasks, emphasize curiosity and foster opportunities for self-development. In summary, to attract this generation the four brand values and their supporting values should be used as a guide.

7.2 How to develop young professionals

It is important that young professionals get challenging work tasks, that they are fully included in what they are a part of and feel that their voice and opinions matter. Young professionals value fairness and will focus on **Life Balance** towards togetherness and life outside work too. Be engaged in all parts of their life. To get a comprehensive insight to understand how to drive **Development**, focus on the values curiosity, quality and self-development. In the light of their high prioritization of quality, curiosity and confidence, it can reflect that this generation will take on and try to perform their best in most tasks. To engage in **Passion** in work life, it is important to have a positive view, have some fun and show them others' passion. Let people talk about their jobs, their joys, their challenges, and their dreams. To meet the **Relationship**, the work culture should be driven by mutual respect, clear direction and a framework that has room for diversity and development. It shows that they need more belonging than the norm group, which is normal to where they are in their life situation. It is, therefore, crucial to understand that their teaming skills are not fully developed to the same extent as the norm group. This makes it even more important for you as a leader to lead the way and teach the new generation more about teamwork.

7.3 How to retain young professionals

One aspect focuses on the foundations on how to attract young professionals, another one is to create a culture that will make them stay. This generation score up to twice as high on self-worth, search, risk and closeness. Looking at these values in combination with their strong need for belonging, respect and self-development, you must understand how to retain them. If not, they will leave. This generation has a higher score on courage and risk compared to the norm group, so they will move on to find a place to fulfil their values. A positive force in this generation is the focus on being present and the desire to influence together with courage. To successfully create a collaboration between the current employees and the future employees, the relationship must be built on trust and relation. The young professional must feel respected, valued and must be included in the workplace. If an organization manage to do this, they will get a confident, passionate, optimistic, and brave employee. So, provided that the relational part of the culture is present, that one is accepted, respected and allowed to continue to learn, then you will get someone who is willing to try something new and can influence it to a much greater extent than most people.





In summary

On the mission to attract, develop and retain the young professionals, here are four key steps:

1. Build relationships, both foundational and visionary. Include, support, acknowledge and take good care of them. Be there when they need someone to ask, someone to help or simply someone to engage with.
2. Focus on development, listen to what they know, what they think about a problem and make sure their voice is taken seriously. Teach them about teamwork and cross-functional value. Coach them specifically on how they can contribute. Challenge them in big problems, as well as daily operations.
3. Engage in their growth, their interests and show your interests. Engage them in visionary thinking for the company and let them loose in creating new solutions or ideas.
4. Empower, not micromanage, and acknowledge their life balance and their desire to work non-conventional hours and at flexible locations than the rest. However, clearly communicate that the company need to build teams together and how they are part of that.

8 Conclusions

To be competitive, you must understand and know the people you work with, and you must rethink people, culture and new trends. You need to have people who act, are engaged in continuous development and are bold to try out new paths. These are values that are seen in the young professional population, and accordingly, values they score higher on compared to the norm group.

With the identification of a young professional culture code, it is possible for any company to map their existing culture, and then analyse how their culture aligns to the new talents on their way into the company.





Get in contact

We seek partnerships with leaders and teams to continue to grow a culture focused community. We also welcome consultants and corporate leaders and teams to get certified and have access to the Culture Intelligence platform. The certification takes four modules and can be done online for each customer or partner. Mostly we welcome consultants and partners who needs a data driven and tested approach to their culture transformation work! If you are interested in a workshop or culture project, please get in touch via: <https://cultureintelligence.io> or post@cultureintelligence.io

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Further reading regarding culture and impact:

1. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/nextavenue/2020/04/10/is-working-from-home-the-future-of-work/?sh=b03903646b1f>
2. <https://www.businessinsider.com/quit-job-flexible-remote-working-from-home-return-to-office-2021-6?r=US&IR=>
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5. https://sloanreview.mit.edu/article/how-companies-are-winning-on-culture-during-covid-19/?qclid=Cj0KCQjwg7KJBhDyARIsAhrAXaFxFxJK4KheAbqe81B7B6gfuhl6Ok_rdkFCmcLEigwr3jHrr_Nn3Uz9UaAoSOEALw_wcB
6. <https://hbr.org/2021/08/fostering-a-culture-of-belonging-in-the-hybrid-workplace>
7. <https://sloanreview.mit.edu/article/why-every-executive-should-be-focusing-on-culture-change-now/>
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10. Edvinsson, Leif (2002), Corporate Longitude: What You Need to Know to Navigate the Knowledge Economy

