



ILLUSTRATION: ZARIF FAIAZ

THE CULTURE CURE

How to build a positive work culture in your office

Recognising and rewarding achievements cannot be overstated. Employees who receive regular recognition for their efforts are less likely to seek other jobs, as validation meets emotional needs beyond financial compensation. This highlights the importance of appreciation in boosting employee morale.

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In today’s competitive business landscape, fostering a positive work culture, boosting employee morale, and enhancing team cohesion are not just desirable—they are essential for organisational success. Companies that prioritise these elements often experience increased productivity, reduced turnover, and a more engaged workforce.

The importance of an encouraging culture
A positive work culture is characterised by shared values, beliefs, and behaviours that create a supportive environment for employees. Such a culture not only attracts top talent but also retains it. According to a report by Hays, globally, 47% of employees leave their positions due to poor company culture, underscoring the critical role of a supportive work environment in employee retention.

Strategies to build a positive work culture
Promoting work-life balance is crucial. The Financial Times highlights that flexibility in work arrangements plays a significant role, with a notable number of workers willing to trade salary for

remote work options. Companies like Saga and JLL emphasise hybrid models to balance employee freedom and career growth.

Fostering open communication is another vital strategy. A study published in the Journal of Organizational Behavior found that psychological safety—a climate where individuals feel safe to take interpersonal risks—is linked to improved team innovation performance. This environment encourages employees to share ideas without fear of negative consequences, thereby enhancing collaboration and creativity.

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Enhancing team building
Effective team-building initiatives are instrumental in fostering collaboration and trust among employees. A significant 73% of employees express the desire for their company to increase its investment in team building,

according to data from flair.hr. This sentiment reflects the value employees place on activities that strengthen team bonds.

Organising regular team-building activities can strengthen bonds and improve collaboration. Encouraging cross-functional projects allows employees from different departments to work together, fostering a broader understanding of the organisation and enhancing teamwork. Providing platforms for social interaction creates opportunities for employees to interact informally, building stronger relationships and a sense of community.

Boosting employee morale
High employee morale is linked to increased engagement, productivity, and retention. Conversely, low morale can lead to higher turnover rates and decreased performance. A study published in the International Journal of Organizational Analysis found that a positive organisational culture positively impacts employee performance, leading to increased productivity, efficiency, and quality of work.

Ensuring fair compensation and benefits is fundamental to employee satisfaction. Creating a safe and inclusive environment

where employees feel safe to express their ideas without fear of judgment is essential. Empowering employees by giving them autonomy in their roles and involving them in decision-making processes can enhance their sense of ownership and satisfaction.

The role of leadership
Leadership plays a pivotal role in shaping work culture, morale, and team dynamics. Leaders who demonstrate empathy, transparency, and support can significantly influence positive outcomes. Leading by example, providing regular feedback, and supporting work-life balance are crucial leadership strategies. For instance, some companies have implemented four-day workweeks to promote employee well-being, leading to increased motivation and job satisfaction.

Building a positive work culture, boosting employee morale, and enhancing team building are interconnected endeavours that require deliberate strategies and committed leadership. By implementing the approaches outlined above, organisations can create an environment where employees thrive, leading to sustained success and growth.

Pokémon Go sold to Saudi-owned company for \$3.5 billion

NEXT STEP DESK

Niantic Labs, the US tech company behind the global phenomenon Pokémon Go, has agreed to sell its gaming division to Saudi Arabia-owned Scopely for \$3.5 billion. Pokémon Go became a cultural sensation upon its 2016 launch, blending augmented reality (AR) with real-world exploration. Players roam streets to catch virtual Pokémon like Pikachu, battling others and teaming up at landmarks. The mobile game became the fastest of its kind to earn \$100 million and the most downloaded in its first month of release.

Niantic faced turbulence after Go’s initial success. Spin-offs like ‘Harry Potter: Wizards Unite’ flopped, leading to layoffs and game closures. Now, Scopely — a mobile gaming giant bought by Saudi Arabia’s Savvy Games for \$4.9 billion in 2023 — will over Pokémon Go like ‘Pikmin Bloom’ and ‘Monster Hunter Now’. The original development team, led by Ed Wu, will stay on. Scopely also owns other games, such as Monopoly Go!, Stumble Guys, Yahtzee with Buddies, Star Trek Fleet Command, Marvel’s Strike Force, WWE Champions, Scrabble Go, etc.

Bangladesh has an active Pokémon Go community, with players regularly submitting landmarks called ‘PokéStops’ and ‘Gyms’ in various locations across Dhaka and other divisions since the game’s launch in 2016. According to the Bangladeshi community, there are around 1,000 active players in the country, with 300–400 regulars in Dhaka alone. Local players also frequently attend community-hosted in-person events, with over 100 players participating in the Go Fest event at Ramna Park, Dhaka, in July 2024.



Chip startup Celestial AI raises \$250 million

NEXT STEP DESK

Celestial AI, a Silicon Valley startup developing technology to speed up artificial intelligence (AI) systems, has recently raised an additional \$250 million in venture capital, bringing the company’s total funding to \$515 million.

According to Celestial AI, it aims to tackle one of the biggest challenges in AI: the speed of data transfer between computing and memory chips. The startup is leveraging photonics, a technology that uses light instead of electrical signals, to create high-speed connections between chips.

This technology, according to the company’s official website, addresses a critical bottleneck in AI systems known as memory bandwidth, which determines how quickly data can move between components. Memory bandwidth is so crucial that it influences whether chips are subject to US export controls, such as those limiting China’s access to advanced AI technology, explains a Reuters report.

Currently, Nvidia dominates this space with its proprietary NVLink and NVSwitch technologies. However, Celestial AI is developing a “photonic fabric” that acts as a bridge between chips, offering faster data transfer while saving space and power, says the report. CEO Dave Lazovsky explained that the technology provides similar performance to Nvidia’s solutions but with greater energy efficiency and lower latency.

Intel appoints new CEO, industry veteran Lip-Bu Tan; to receive \$1 mln salary

NEXT STEP DESK

Intel has recently named industry veteran Lip-Bu Tan as its new CEO, effective March 18, tasking him with reviving the struggling chipmaker amid fierce competition and declining market share. Tan, 65, will receive a \$1 million annual salary and up to \$2 million in bonuses, but the bulk of his compensation—\$66 million in stock options and grants—hinges on his ability to steer Intel’s turnaround.

The Malaysian-born executive, who previously led Cadence Design Systems and chairs venture capital firm Walden International, takes the helm at a critical juncture. Intel’s stock plummeted 60% in 2024, and its ambitious plan to expand as a contract chip manufacturer under ousted CEO Pat Gelsinger failed to reassure investors. Tan’s appointment has already sparked optimism, with Intel shares rising nearly 20% in 2025, largely driven by his hiring.

Compensation tied to performance
Tan’s compensation package includes \$14.4 million in stock units and a \$17 million performance grant, both vesting over five years. He will forfeit these shares if Intel’s stock price declines over the next three years but could earn more if it outperforms the market. Additionally, he receives a \$9.6 million stock option package

and a \$25 million new-hire grant.

In a show of commitment, Tan has agreed to personally purchase \$25 million in Intel shares and hold them to qualify for the awards. His contract also includes a “change in control” clause, allowing him to retain two-thirds of his stock awards if Intel undergoes a major ownership shift within 18 months—a provision absent in Gelsinger’s agreement.

Challenges ahead
Tan, who resigned from Intel’s board in 2024 over disagreements about the company’s strategy, now faces the daunting task of balancing Intel’s dual roles as a chip designer and contract manufacturer. In a letter to employees, he ruled out splitting the two divisions, instead pledging to strengthen both while addressing concerns about bloated costs and a risk-averse culture.

Analysts have welcomed his appointment, citing his deep industry expertise and investor savvy. However, challenges loom: competitors like Nvidia dominate the AI chip boom, while Intel’s costly push into contract manufacturing strains cash flow. Political uncertainty adds another

layer, as President Donald Trump threatens to revoke subsidies under a 2022 law that granted Intel funding to bolster U.S. chip production.

A veteran’s bet
Tan’s background blends technical prowess—degrees in physics, nuclear engineering, and an MBA—with decades of leadership in semiconductor design and venture capital. At Cadence, he oversaw a surge in revenue and stock value. His continued involvement with startups via Walden International signals a focus on innovation, though Intel clarified his contract requires him to devote “necessary time” to CEO duties, unlike Gelsinger’s “full-time” mandate.

Intel described Tan’s compensation as “market competitive”, emphasising that equity awards align with long-term shareholder value. For now, investors seem cautiously optimistic. As Tan prepares to take charge, the pressure is on to prove his \$66 million gamble can reignite Intel’s fading dominance in the chip industry.

JOBS SPOTLIGHT

United Commercial Bank PLC.
Legal Officer
Deadline: March 27
Eligibility: Bachelor of Law (LL.B) and Master of Law (LL.M) from a recognised university, with prior experience in a bank, financial institution, or law firm.
Minimum experience: 2 years

MJL Bangladesh PLC.
Senior Sales Engineer
Deadline: March 30
Eligibility: BSc in Mechanical Engineering from any reputed university.
Minimum experience: 5-6 years

Eskayef Pharmaceuticals Ltd.
Executive, MIS
Deadline: March 22
Eligibility: BSc/MSc in Computer Science or CSE from any reputed university with prior experience in data warehouse, business analysis, system analysis, DBA, software implementation, cloud platform, etc.
Minimum experience: 1-2 years

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)
Admin & HR Assistant
Deadline: March 27
Eligibility: Bachelor’s degree in Human Resources, Business Administration, or related field. A diploma in administration will be an added advantage.
Minimum experience: N/A

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MARGARET THATCHER

