

# Tuning CULTURE

**Purpose Quests**  
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**Signs, symbols  
& artefacts**  
**Brand**

*Core Processes*

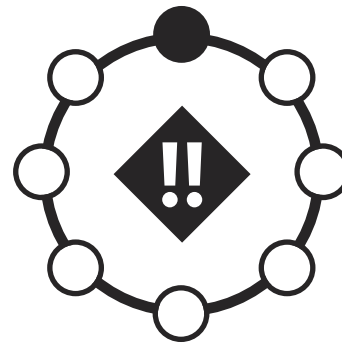
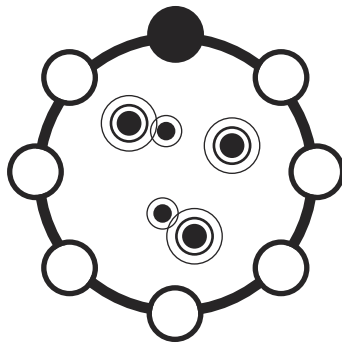
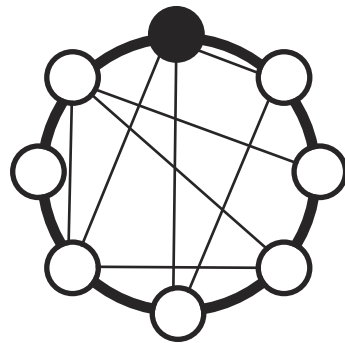
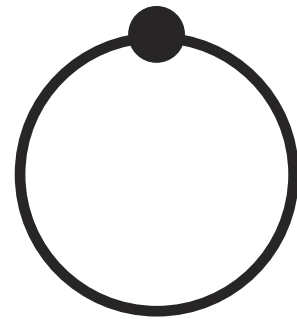
*Core Teams*

*Catalysts*

*Leading Cultural  
Integration & Large-  
Scale Change*

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## PURPOSE QUESTS

“We were told we would have the breakthrough at 11am on the last day. It happened at 11.10. How did they do that?”

Much research has been done on the value-adding dimensions of working with core purpose. But purpose is not a fancy strap-line thought up by a small internal group or external agency. It is the unconscious DNA of the organisation as organism, which enlivens and animates the human system. It is pre-coded. It expresses what we stand for and how we stand out.

**nowhere** was founded on our unique approach to helping companies discover their core purpose – not to be confused with values, vision or mission. Over a three-month period, we work with clients to touch into different levels and dimensions of their organisation through a series of three-hour workshops. These workshops prime the organisation for what is to come, as well as gathering the conscious and unconscious data held in the people and the culture. This is then collated into a rich resource and stimulus

for a small team of eight (including the CEO) to then undertake a four-day PurposeQuest.

The Quest is usually somewhere simple but remote, ensuring that the purpose team's patterns of thought and behaviour are disrupted. This allows them to focus all their energy on the process of discovering the organisation's core purpose, until it 'pops' in a moment of collective breakthrough on the morning of the fourth day.

The purpose is then tested and prepared to be brought back to the organisation. You should never have to sell a purpose to the people. It shouldn't be an 'aha' moment, more of an 'of course' response – like welcoming home an old friend. But the ultimate test is how it is received energetically, which you can tell in an instant. For purpose is the wellspring of creativity, innovation and performance.





## BACKBONES

“Our backbone gives us the strength to push the boundaries of possibility, every day.”

To tune a culture you need the right set of intangible assets. These include:

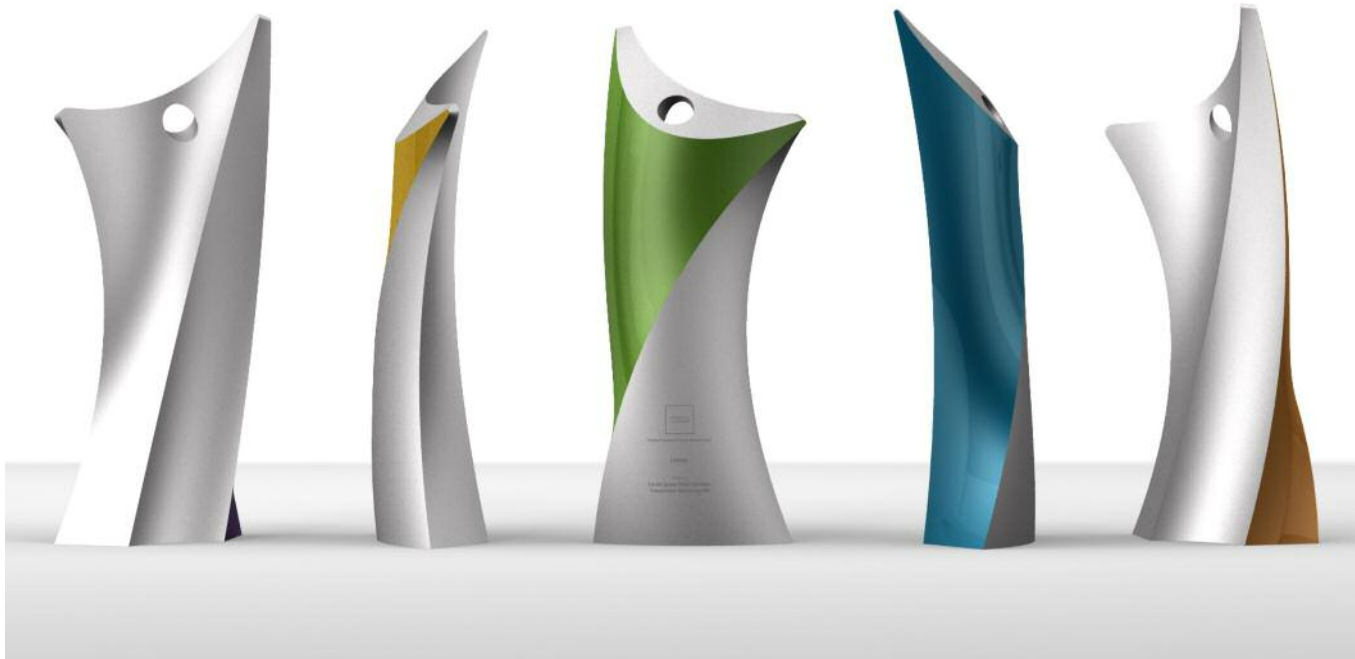
- core purpose and core values – why you are here, and what you stand for
- a sense of a future space that you can uniquely claim and make your own – your North Star
- a series of breakthrough strategies for moving from the now and here, towards your North Star
- a brand story that attracts and weaves your current and future stakeholders into the journey ahead
- and a leadership model that activates all of the above and translates it into work and ways of working differently

Together these assets create what we call an organisational backbone, an interconnected set of ‘core foundations’ born from the wisdom of the organisation itself.

Everything hangs off this backbone. And, everything needs to be congruent with it. It describes who you are, where you have come from, where you are going, and how you are going to get there.

Building a backbone is the first phase of tuning culture. Using it is the next. Without this deep sense of core identity, it is almost impossible to become a shaper/maker culture of innovation.





## P+V (AWARDS)

“I never knew all of the amazing things our people do in this company.”

One of the best ways of bringing an organisation’s core purpose and values to life is through the power of storytelling. Using the guise of an annual awards programme, anyone, or any team, at any level of the organisation, can submit a story about something they have achieved that embodied one or more of the core values in action.

These stories are judged cross-functionally and/or regionally, ahead of finalists going onto the global awards ceremony, hosted within the Annual Global Leadership Conference.

Learning to tell our stories is a great way of building pride, sharing knowledge and aligning what we say with what we do and how we behave.







## SIGNS, SYMBOLS AND ARTEFACTS

“Every time I physically see our backbone I remember why I come to work each day.”

Cultures are defined by their signs, symbols and artefacts. They create texture and depth to our sense of belonging and place. They unify us in our diversity. And, they form a subtle tacit language that weaves us into a larger, purposeful story.

When you tune culture, details matter. It means attending to the small things that make the difference – so people feel welcomed, seen, appreciated, and held.

This part of our practice, led by our design team, has been with us from the beginning, co-creating with our clients and partners signs, symbols and artefacts for conferences, office spaces, branded environments and as suites of communication.





## BRAND

“Our brand allows my story to be part of a bigger story.”

While we are not a brand agency, we often find ourselves refreshing and transforming corporate brands. Our expertise lies in two areas.

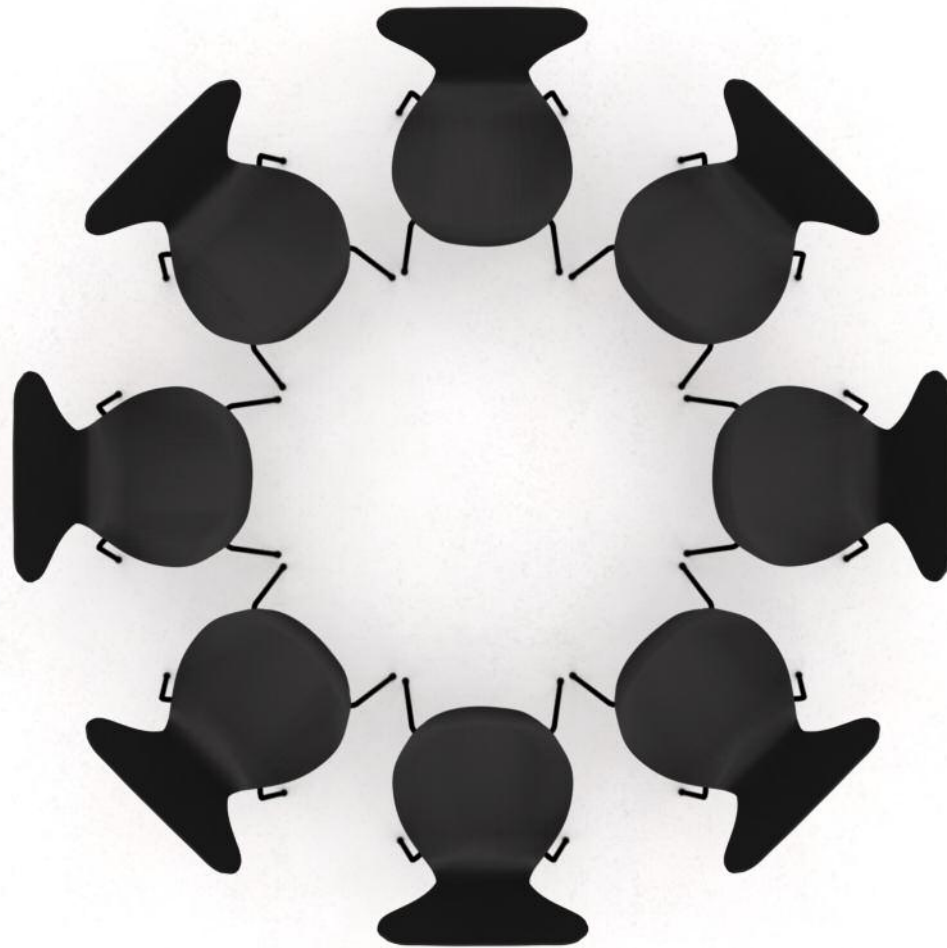
First in how corporate brands need to be built from the inside-out, as a vibrant embodied narrative. And second how the brand then ripples out into the world at scale to become a strange attractor.

To do this we build brand ambassadors inside organisations, who become the master storytellers; and we sit in the space between organisations and their agencies, to help both break free of their own orthodoxies.

This is how a corporate brand becomes a tuning fork that resonates with the world.







## CORE TEAMS

The real multiplier of value is the development of a choreography of breakthrough interventions that take organisations on phased transformational journeys. This is only possible with a core team of post-conventional leaders – leaders who are able to feel into the intangible and subtle dimensions of what is needed now.

It is they who have the foresight, and first insight, that their organisation's culture has hit a ceiling, and is now getting in the way of their company's potential – however successful it has been to date. They are also self-aware enough to know this will mean that they too will need to transform in order to evoke this new movement. And they relish this challenge.

Core Teams work from a deeper source. While usually small in membership, the size of its reach and impact is often massive in comparison. It is they who open the space for new possibilities and who evoke the organisation to step forward.





## CATALYSTS

We are passionate about supporting and co-creating with groups and communities of internal change agents, and upskilling them in catalyst skills.

Catalysis is different to facilitation and coaching. It is about knowing how to design and catalyse creative-rollercoaster experiences, while being on the rollercoaster yourself. It is about understanding how insight and breakthrough works and how to call them forward by playing with time, space, energy and information.

Moreover, building internal capability with progressive leaders, high potentials, OD practitioners and business partners makes the **nowhere** practice replicable and scalable; enabling organisations to lead their own change programmes, transformations and reinventions.

We develop this vital resource through foundational and product specific trainings, coaching and 'on the pitch' partnerships.



## LEADING CULTURAL INTEGRATION & LARGE-SCALE CHANGE

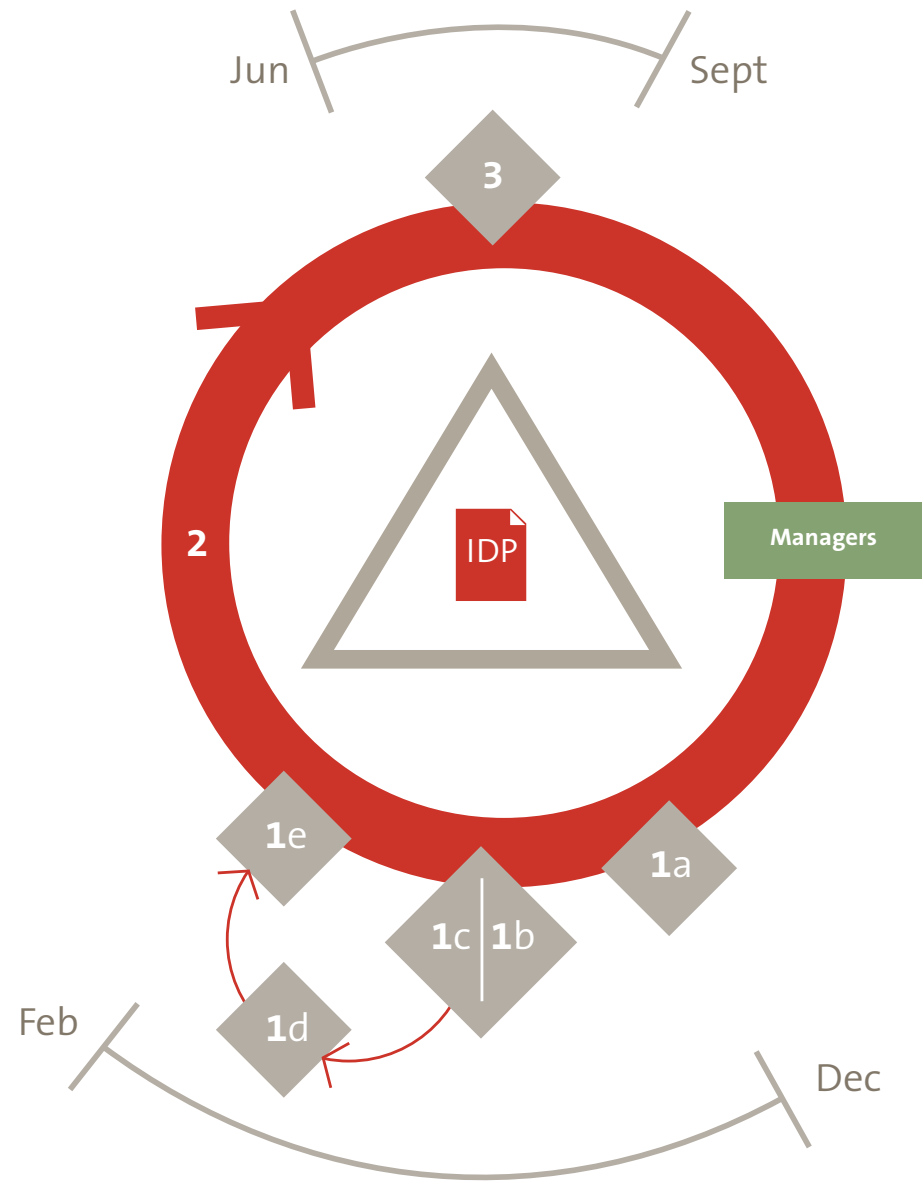
“I have no doubt that without this way of working we would have failed.”

We have also used the **nowhere** practice to build unified cultures across historic and recent acquisitions.

Cultural integration is a multi-level intervention. It needs to onboard, upskill and transform leaders. It needs to create and ultimately deliver an elegant strategy. It needs to enrol 'the people' and take them on a journey of adventure and disruption, enabling them all to find new places of strength and contribution. It needs to embed a sustainable new pattern, rooted in new ways of working together.

This approach can also be applied to maximising the success of large-scale change programmes, which are notorious for taking much longer, and costing much more, than anticipated. This is because they focus almost entirely on the technical aspects of change and change management, and often miss the systemic and human dimensions of change –e.g., attending to shifts in belonging and core identity. It is therefore all too common to get bogged down in relentless stakeholder management and constant organisational resistance, increasing the likelihood that the whole programme unwinds.





## CORE PROCESSES

Finally, we often help sync and link new ways of working to core processes like Long Range Planning, Annual Operating Plans, KPIs and Performance Management. Without creating a simple 'line of sight' between strategy and work, and between work and incentives, it is very difficult to keep a culture sustainably tuned into the creative frequency of peak-performance.



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Since the mid nineties, **nowhere** has been working behind the scenes and at the highest levels, with multi-national companies all over the world, tuning the creative frequency at which their cultures operate.

Our 'practice' is born from a unique blend of insight traditions, creative and organisational disciplines and doctoral research, and has over twenty years of development and refinement with some of the biggest brands and inspiring leaders.

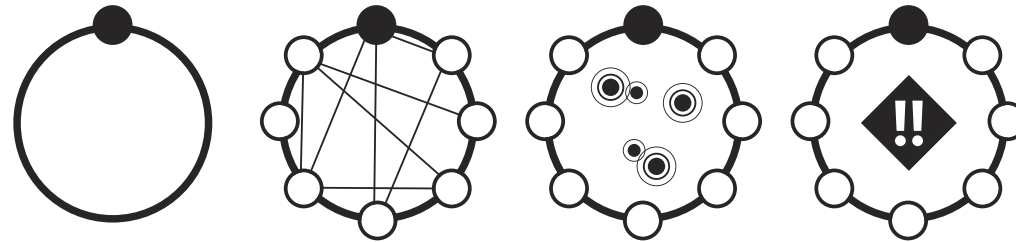
It enables us to work in creative partnership with our clients & partners to:

1. **design, catalyse and choreograph breakthroughs** – including breakthrough teams & meetings, strategies & innovations, cultures & journeys.
2. **transform the way they work** so they can breakthrough the cultural ceiling that many organisations all over the world are hitting up against ie. thinking that doing more of the same, but a little bit better, is good enough (it's not), or thinking you can work harder and longer hours (you can't). The challenge is to think, relate, learn and organise differently.



# nowhere

Catalysing Breakthrough



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