



**Macdonald
Associates
Consultancy**

Tools of Leadership

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Unless the leaders are new into an organisation, the culture existing in that organisation is the result of the current leadership's behaviours, systems and symbols (the three tools of leadership). Therefore, changing and improving a culture (along with resulting behaviour) may require changes to one or more of these three tools of leadership. The process of culture change therefore is not about telling people what to believe or how to perceive the world. It is about you as a leader intervening to do something different in terms of behaviours, systems and/or symbols to create conditions in an organisation that are likely to give rise to a positive unified culture where people exhibit the behaviours that are desired in the workplace.

The three tools of leadership can be used to encourage productive workplace behaviour underpinned by appropriate new perceptions. That is, if you use these three tools effectively as a leader, you can create the culture you want in your team. The old culture will still exist in people's memories. It was based on their experience of the past behaviour, systems and symbols. The new culture will be based on their current experience of different behaviour, systems and symbols.

A symbol is something which stands for something else (e.g. in sports think of colours, logos, chants, etc). Because symbols are shorthand, they can quickly communicate a lot. The higher up in an organisation your role is the more likely it is that your behaviour will become symbolic.