All workplace cultures should have a deeply held set of values that are shared by those working and living in it. They tell staff how to behave and what attitudes they need to achieve the vision of your organisation.

**What are workplace values?**

Values are the beliefs and views that people hold about what’s right or wrong and good or bad. They apply to all aspects of life and influence how a person behaves in different situations.

As an adult social care employer you should have workplace values which reflect the things that you believe are most important to your organisation, the way it works and how these are applied to the people you support.
The values within a positive workplace culture should align with the values needed for person-centred, high quality care and support. They might be values such as:

- dignity and respect
- working together
- showing a commitment to quality care and support
- learning and reflection.

It’s essential to recruit people who have the right values to work in adult social care, and continue to develop these values to maintain a positive workplace culture. When the values of your staff match your workplace values this can help you deliver high quality and consistent care and support.

When they don't, it can lead to recruitment and retention challenges and foster bad practice which can damage your culture.

“Employing personal assistants and the way you want to work with them is completely down to the individual. Some people I know want a very professional and quite detached relationship with their PAs. The most important thing for me is that my PAs are liberal and open minded and we are on the same wavelength. I’m very clear and upfront about this in my job adverts and in interviews. I don’t want the people I need to help me live my life to judge me or challenge me about my lifestyle, I want people around me who I’m really comfortable with!

Shana Prezaro, Individual Employer

“Nurturing our workplace culture requires a shared understanding between the organisation’s vision, the management, the workforce and learning/development opportunities. The management must sign up to the vision and must model the required values and behaviours. The workforce should be recruited on the basis that they have values and behaviours that complement the organisation’s vision. They should get ongoing guidance and support through learning and development opportunities, to embed the required values and behaviours throughout the workforce.

Wren Hall
Exercise

Orchard End Services is a small organisation that supports young adults with learning disabilities to live in their community.

Mike, one of the directors, strongly believes that their services should be personalised to meet individual wants and needs. He’s developed a workplace culture that’s dynamic, enterprising and energetic. His staff must be forward thinking, creative, team players and able to work independently and responsibly in the community.

He’s recently advertised for a new worker to support individuals to develop their own care and support packages. After the interview he has two potential members of staff. Both of them have the right skills, values and attitudes to work in social care - Mike’s now looking for that ‘cultural fit’.

Susan’s worked in the care sector for 10 years in both domiciliary and residential services for autistic people. She holds a level 3 qualification in health and social care and has applied for this post because she’s previously worked with Mike’s team and is impressed by the services they provide. She strongly believes that everyone has the right to choose and control their own care and support. She also wants to broaden her own experience and learn new skills, as she hopes to achieve a manager’s post in a few years’ time.

Jacky started her career as a housing officer. Several years ago she moved jobs and has now been working with a small charity supporting unemployed young people to get involved in voluntary work in their local area. She’s passionate about the development of vibrant communities and the inclusion of all citizens. She’s motivated to improve her practice and learn new skills. She’s enrolled onto a distance learning course that will lead to a social science degree within the next year. She’s applied for this post as the charity has insufficient funds to continue and she will be made redundant.

Who would you choose to work in Mike’s service?

What factors influenced your decisions?

Thinking about your own organisation, what wording would you use to advertise a post to ensure that future staff shared your workplace values (so there’s a cultural ‘fit’)?
How to develop and embed shared values in your workplace

Taking a values-based approach to your recruitment and retention can help you develop and embed shared workplace values.

This approach involves identifying your workplace values and embedding them throughout your organisation, including in your recruitment and retention practices.

This ensures that you recruit staff who have the right values to work in your organisation, and more importantly keep them.

Resources to help: Values-based recruitment toolkit

Our online toolkit can help you:
- identify your values
- embed your values
- include values in recruitment and selection
- reinforce values in induction
- include values in supervision and appraisals
- ensure values are embedded in leadership and management.

It includes:
- examples of core values
- examples of what employers would like/don’t want to see – which shows how values look in practice
- guidance to include values in job descriptions and person specifications
- using profiling systems to assess candidate’s values
- how you can learn to do values-based interviews.

Visit www.skillsforcare.org.uk/values
Visit our online toolkit

This is section two of our ‘Culture for care’ toolkit. View the rest of the toolkit on our website, or email us to request a printed copy at marketing@skillsforcare.org.uk

**Culture for care toolkit**

Workplace culture is the character and personality of your organisation. It’s made up of your organisation’s leadership, values, traditions and beliefs, and the behaviours and attitudes of the people in it. Having a positive workplace culture is vital to delivering high quality care and support.

Our ‘**Culture for care**’ toolkit explains what workplace culture is and how you can develop a positive one in your organisation. It’s for adult social care employers of all sizes, including individual employers.

There are activities you can do as you go along and some longer activities at the end. You can also use them with front line care workers (and other staff) to help you develop your workplace culture.

Find out more at [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/culture](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/culture)