

BUILT BY BRIDGE

Bridge Ecosystem Audit

An independent, evidence-led view of the culture people experience and the ecosystem shaping it.



What people experience shapes how organisations perform.



THE PRODUCT

A clearer view of culture as it is lived

Culture is often discussed through values, engagement scores or leadership intent. Each offers useful information, but none gives a complete picture on its own. The Bridge Ecosystem Audit brings the available evidence together with the experiences and behaviours that sit behind it. The result is a current, connected view of how the organisation is working and how that work is being experienced.

The Bridge Ecosystem Audit looks across the organisation rather than locating culture within one function, team or level of leadership. It examines the formal and informal influences that shape everyday decisions, relationships and performance, and maps the way those influences connect. This makes it possible to see where the culture is consistent, where experiences differ and what may be producing those differences.

The methodology provides a clear structure while allowing the work to be shaped around the organisation. Its scale, methods and points of participation reflect the size and make-up of the workforce, the available evidence, the circumstances prompting the review and what the organisation most needs to understand.

Most culture reviews ask what the culture is.
Bridge asks what is creating it.

Culture is the outcome

Most culture reviews begin by asking what the culture is. Bridge begins by asking what is creating it. Culture is not a separate organisational issue. It is the outcome of leadership behaviour, communication, trust, relationships, people systems, working conditions, performance expectations, informal influence and the choices people make each day.

A low engagement score may point to dissatisfaction, but the score does not explain what is feeding it. A concern about psychological safety may be connected to leadership behaviour, inconsistent decisions, workload, hierarchy or what has happened when people have spoken up in the past. A communication challenge may have less to do with the volume of information than with whether people trust its source, understand its relevance or see actions that match the message.

Looking at these subjects separately can produce a series of isolated actions. Looking at the ecosystem shows how one part may be supporting, weakening or compensating for another. This shifts the work from describing the culture to understanding the conditions producing it.

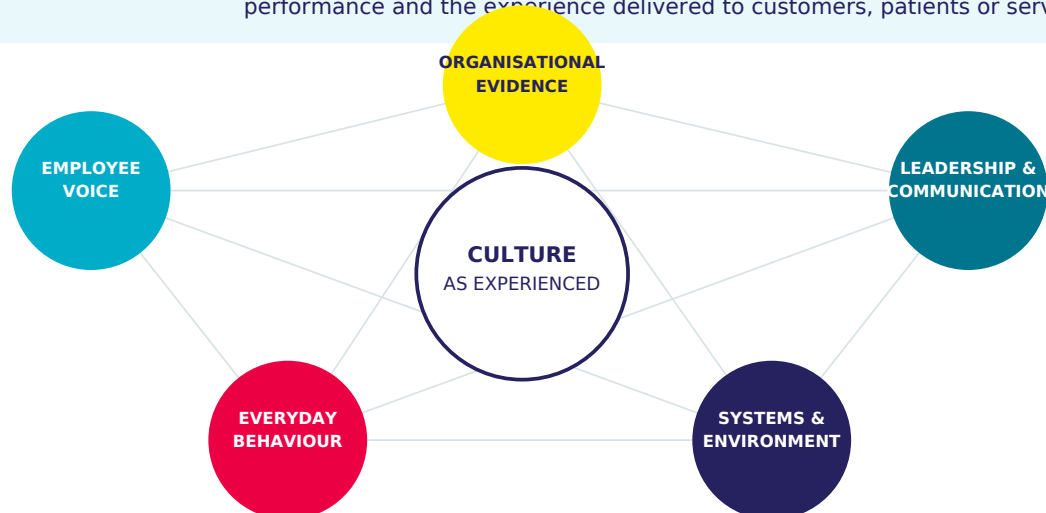


THE ECOSYSTEM

Mapping the culture ecosystem

Every organisation has its own culture ecosystem. Some influences are visible through structures, policies and formal leadership. Others sit within relationships, habits, local practices, stories and assumptions that have built up over time. Each influence can affect culture in its own right, but its effect may change when it combines with other parts of the system.

Leadership and influence	How leadership is experienced in practice, including visibility, decision-making, accountability, consistency and the influence of people who hold authority without necessarily holding senior roles.	Employee voice and communication	How information moves through the organisation, whether people can question and contribute, what happens after they speak, and where messages become diluted, reinterpreted or blocked.
Relationships, trust and psychological safety	The quality of working relationships, the level of trust between groups and the extent to which people feel able to be honest, raise concerns, admit uncertainty and challenge established ways of working.	Systems, environment and everyday work	How policies, processes, workload, resources, physical and working environments, reward, recognition and informal workarounds shape what people are actually able or expected to do.
Microcultures and lived experience	How culture varies between teams, locations, professional groups or levels of seniority, and how those different experiences affect belonging, behaviour, performance and the experience delivered to customers, patients or service users.		



THREE CONNECTED REALITIES

Intended, perceived and demonstrated culture

INTENDED

What the organisation means to create

PERCEIVED

How people understand and experience it

DEMONSTRATED

What behaviour, systems and responses show

The Bridge Ecosystem Audit compares three connected versions of organisational culture. Intended culture is what leaders and the organisation mean to create through their purpose, values, standards and decisions. Perceived culture is how people understand and experience those intentions. Demonstrated culture is what everyday behaviour, systems and organisational responses show in practice.

These versions may be closely aligned, but they are rarely identical. A value may be widely supported while a process makes it difficult to demonstrate. Leaders may believe a message is clear while employees hear different versions through different parts of the organisation. A team may create a strong local culture that protects its people, while the same strength masks a weakness elsewhere in the wider system.

The purpose is not to search for perfect consistency. It is to understand where differences matter, what is creating them and whether they support or weaken the organisation's intentions. This provides a more useful view of cultural drift than a single score or general statement about whether the culture is good or poor.

The challenges it addresses

Organisations usually hold more cultural evidence than they realise. Employee surveys, exit information, customer or patient feedback, performance data, policies, complaints, workforce measures and leadership observations all contain parts of the picture. The challenge is that these sources are often owned by different teams, considered at different times and acted on separately.

The Bridge Ecosystem Audit is particularly useful when engagement results raise questions that need deeper investigation; when leaders receive conflicting accounts of organisational life; when values and everyday experience appear out of step; when different teams have developed markedly different cultures; or when change, growth, merger or leadership transition has altered how the organisation works.

It can also help when the organisation is performing well but relies heavily on individual resilience, informal relationships or the commitment of particular people. Understanding those strengths as part of the ecosystem makes it easier to protect what works and reduce dependence on conditions that may not be sustainable.

THE METHOD

The Bridge Ecosystem Audit in practice

Each Bridge Ecosystem Audit follows an established sequence. The detail is tailored, but the discipline remains consistent so that findings are grounded in evidence, tested from more than one perspective and connected back to the wider organisational system.

Establish the evidence

01

We review the information that already exists and identify what it shows, what it does not show and where further enquiry is needed.

Listen broadly

02

We create appropriate ways for people across the organisation to contribute, building a picture that is not limited to the loudest, most senior or most readily available voices.

Explore in depth

03

We use focused conversations to understand what sits behind the evidence, where experiences differ and how the organisation's systems and relationships are experienced in practice.

Test and connect

04

We compare the different sources, test sensitive or conflicting themes and examine how individual influences connect across the ecosystem.

Map and synthesise

05

We bring the findings together into a Culture Ecosystem Map and a clear account of the strengths, tensions, patterns and cultural risks visible at that point in time.

Create practical direction

06

We identify priorities and recommendations that respond to what is producing the culture, providing a practical basis for what happens next.

The detail is tailored. The discipline remains consistent.



STRUCTURE WITH FLEXIBILITY

Structured methodology, flexible application

No two organisations have the same ecosystem, so the Bridge Ecosystem Audit is not delivered as a fixed list of activities. The methodology gives the work its structure; the application determines how that structure is used. A smaller organisation may need direct access to most of its workforce, while a larger or dispersed organisation may require a carefully designed combination of data, representative groups, locations and communication routes.

Depending on the context, the Bridge Ecosystem Audit may draw on employee surveys, document and data review, focus groups, individual interviews, employee pop-ups, leadership sessions, observation and journey or relationship mapping. The choice of methods is led by the questions the organisation needs to answer and the people whose experience must be understood.

Employee surveys	Document and data review	Focus groups	Individual interviews
Employee pop-ups	Leadership sessions	Observation	Journey and relationship mapping

Independent.
Confidential.
Transparent.

Independence, confidentiality and transparency are important throughout. People need to understand why the Bridge Ecosystem Audit is taking place, how they can participate and how their contribution will be used. Participation is not treated as a mechanism for collecting comments. It is part of building an account of the culture that employees can recognise and leaders can use.

The methodology gives the work its structure; the application determines how that structure is used.

THE OUTPUT

What the organisation receives

The Bridge Ecosystem Audit produces a joined-up evidence base rather than a collection of separate observations. The precise outputs reflect the scope of the work, but the core purpose remains the same: to show the culture being experienced, the ecosystem producing it and the practical direction for what should happen next.

A Culture Ecosystem Map

A visual representation of the significant influences, relationships and points of connection shaping the culture.

A clear Bridge Ecosystem Audit report

An evidence-led account of cultural strengths, differing experiences, areas of consistency and inconsistency, and the conditions contributing to them.

Prioritised recommendations

Practical recommendations linked to the findings, distinguishing immediate attention from longer-term development and avoiding a list of disconnected initiatives.

A route into action

A shared basis for leadership discussion, decision-making and communication, with the option to develop the organising idea, narrative and internal engagement needed to carry the work forward.

The difference it makes

The Bridge Ecosystem Audit gives leaders a clearer view of what is working, where experiences differ and what is driving those differences. It connects employee voice with organisational evidence and behaviour, helping the organisation move beyond isolated scores, assumptions or individual concerns.

The work makes strengths easier to recognise and protect. It also shows where a well-intended action may be weakened by another part of the system, where local experience is out of step with organisational intent, and where change is most likely to have a wider effect. This allows priorities to be based on what is producing the culture rather than on its most visible symptoms.

Because employees contribute directly, the outcome reflects a culture they recognise rather than one defined for them. For leaders, it provides an independent and practical account of the organisation at a particular point in time. For the wider organisation, it creates a clearer basis for what should be protected, strengthened or changed.

A culture employees recognise. A practical basis leaders can use.

EXPLORE FURTHER

Explore further

The Bridge Ecosystem Audit can be shaped for organisations of different sizes, structures and sectors. The starting point is a conversation about what is prompting the review, what evidence already exists and whose experience needs to be understood.

Supporting fact sheets, infographics and related Bridge articles provide further detail on the ecosystem model, intended, perceived and demonstrated culture, and the Bridge Ecosystem Audit journey.

Speak to Bridge**info@insidebridge.com**

Visit the Built by Bridge section at insidebridge.com

Change minds. Change business.

