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If you're reading this, odds are you're an HR leader trying to help your CEO understand the importance and ROI of culture change in your workplace.

We've put this helpful resource together to help guide that conversation.

Note: This isn't our full resource, so feel free to check out our [On-Demand Webinar: A Supersized Decision](#) for more context.

## Step 1: Understand your CEO's language

Your CEO isn't saying no just to say no. Here are some common things they hear:

### Scenario 1

**HR says:** "We need to train our managers."

**CEO hears:** "We need to pull employees away from driving critical business goals."

### Scenario 2

**HR says:** "We need to invest in culture initiatives."

**CEO hears:** "We need to pull money from higher priority initiatives."

### Scenario 3

**HR says:** "We have serious culture challenges that need to be addressed."

**CEO hears:** "A few employees are unhappy."

## Step 2: Reframe for impact

Now let's take those same scenarios and reframe them in your CEO's language.

### Scenario 1

**Instead of:** "We need to train our managers."

**Try saying:** "Underperformance has led to \$XX loss in revenue. Here's how more effective management could have mitigated this loss. And here's how we can avoid this next quarter."

### Scenario 2

**Instead of:** "We need to invest in culture initiatives."

**Try saying:** "Increased turnover has led to drops in productivity, increased spend, and several missed goals. Here's how we can turn things around."<sup>1</sup>

### Scenario 3

**Instead of:** "We have serious culture challenges that need to be addressed."

**Try saying:** "Over the past year, we've lost \$XX and XX hours in legal issues and missed opportunities as a result of culture and compliance challenges. Here's how we can mitigate those moving forward."

## Step 3: Find the middle ground

If your CEO's first answer is "no," that doesn't mean it's time to give up!

Ask smart questions to better understand what's driving their decision and how you can find a solution that meets both of your needs:

- What would a more doable version of this look like? How much time/money would I need to cut in order to get this approved?
- What are your top priorities right now?
- Which parts of this proposal are blocking you from saying yes?
- Is this a "general no" or a "not right now no?" When would you be able to prioritize this?
- What would you need to see before this became a "today" problem?

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<sup>1</sup> \*You will need to provide specifics to accompany this. Simply stating that productivity has dropped is not enough evidence. Be sure to pull actual metrics that demonstrate this, ie: "the sales team reached out to XX fewer prospects this quarter, or we spent \$XX on backfills over the past 6 months, etc."

## Step 4: Doing more with less

You don't need a big tech budget to drive culture change. Here are some other ideas you can try in your organization.

- Some low-lift, in-house options include:
  - Setting up a whistleblower hotline
  - Setting up office hours to give your employees the opportunity to share their feedback on your company's culture
  - Low-lift lunch & learns that spotlight what good conduct and culture looks like
- [Ethena's free manager training](#) because, let's be honest, your organization's managers are the backbone of your culture.
- Leveraging existing budgets like those set aside for [compliance training](#) (these are already legally required, but an effective training like Ethena's can multitask and be used for culture-building as well).