

How one CEO built a high-performance culture — without a culture program.

The Harald Matzke story: from managing team performance to teams that manage their own performance.

The Challenge

As CEO and co-founder of cubus, a German IT company, Harald knew strategy was nothing without execution. But within cubus:

- Teams were **defaulting to activity over results**.
- The **measurement system was undermining the very performance it was supposed to drive**.
- The development team hated being measured.
- The sales and services teams were gaming their KPIs.
- The vision and mission statements were, in Harald's words, so "weasely" that people didn't understand what the company was working toward or how they contributed to its success.

Harald wanted a high-performance culture. He just hadn't found the right lever yet.

"Strategy is great. But strategy is nothing without execution."

The Result

The result was more than Harald set out to achieve.

A performance culture strong enough that Harald could dismantle the traditional performance management system.

cubus reorganized into self-managed teams with no boss. Each team owned its results, designed its measures, and made its own decisions to drive performance.

No culture program. No values workshop. No campaign to shift mindsets. The culture arrived as a byproduct of how measurement was used.

Harald has since sold cubus, and his deep belief in this approach led him to help other organizations do the same — as a licensed PuMP Affiliate.

"Why do I know the results are brilliant? It's because I have my PuMP measures."



Harald Matzke,
former CEO of cubus,
now PuMP Affiliate

The Change

Through PuMP, Harald used three levers that transformed how cubus managed performance and, as a result, transformed its culture.

- Lever 1: He gave each team **a clear, shared picture of real-world success** and what it looked like at their level — mapped to the company's strategic direction. Teams saw what they were working toward, and busyness transformed into results.
- Lever 2: He **stopped imposing measurement** on teams and helped them **design their own KPIs** — not to satisfy a reporting requirement, but to learn from them and improve. Genuine accountability took hold and replaced gaming.
- Lever 3: He **trusted teams to manage their own performance**. That trust, backed by evidence from their own measures, made it possible for teams to understand and manage their own impact on the success of cubus.

"I'm totally convinced that this must be a self-experience by teams — not something that anyone from a hierarchical perspective tells them to do differently."

Watch the webcast replay
→ [RolterAssociates.com/Culture-Symptom](https://rolterassociates.com/Culture-Symptom)

Listen to Harald's case study
→ pump.academy/case-studies/

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Is your organization ready for a performance culture?

Three diagnostic questions for leaders — based on what actually works.

A high-performance culture isn't built by targeting culture directly. It's built by pulling three specific levers in how your organization measures performance. Harvard Business School researchers found that in every successful culture transformation they studied, culture changed as a result of leaders changing their systems — including measurement.

This is exactly what Harald Matzke, CEO of cubus, discovered firsthand. Rate your organization on each lever below.

Clarity - Lever 1: Teams can see what success looks like at their level.

Can every team in your organization describe — in one clear sentence — what success looks like for them, and how it connects to your strategy?

1 Teams have no shared picture of success 1 2 3 4 5 Every team has a clear, results-focused view of their contribution

WHAT HARALD DID: Gathered the management team and rewrote cubus's "weasely" vision into a clear picture every team could map their results to.

Ownership - Lever 2: Teams own their measures rather than report to them.

In your organization, do teams actively use their KPIs to learn and improve — or do they manage the numbers to look good?

2 Measures are imposed & used to judge people 1 2 3 4 5 Teams own their measures & use them to drive improvement

WHAT HARALD DID: Let teams design their own KPIs instead of imposing them and replaced the individual bonus system with a team bonus system.

Autonomy - Lever 3: Teams improve performance without being pushed to.

In your organization, do managers spend more time coaching and enabling their teams — or directing and checking on them?

3 Teams wait to be directed; managers focus on pushing 1 2 3 4 5 Teams self-manage; managers focus on strategy & coaching

WHAT HARALD DID: Trusted teams to run their own domains, removed the management layer entirely, and let the expert in each domain make the decisions.

Your lowest score across the three levers is your culture's ceiling. The levers work together — strength in one doesn't compensate for weakness in another.

- If Lever 1 is your lowest score, start with clarity. Teams can't own what they can't see.
- If Lever 2 is your lowest score, start with ownership. A feedback loop changes more than a report card ever will.
- If Lever 3 is your lowest score, start with trust. The system needs to invite ownership before teams will take it.

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