

The PEOPLE Principles™ Framework

A Strategic Framework for Leading People-First Future-Ready Businesses



The Cost of Culture Confusion

Right now, businesses are bleeding time, energy, and talent – not because of external factors or disruption, but because of internal misalignment.

Consider this. The data speaks for itself:

- Only **21% of UK employees** strongly trust their leadership (HR Review, 2024)
- Disengaged employees cost the UK economy an **estimated £340 billion** annually (Oxford Economics)
- 78% of hybrid workers** say poor communication is their biggest barrier to productivity (Microsoft Work Trends, 2023)
- 86% of employees** cite poor communication as the root cause of failure (Pumble, 2024)
- Work-related mental health issues cost the UK economy **£57.4 billion annually** (MHFA England, 2024)

This isn't a leadership crisis. It's a design crisis.

We've been leading with systems, not with people. And now it shows.



Why Traditional Models Fail

Most culture or engagement models focus on perks, policies or surface-level fixes.

- They introduce values posters, but don't support the behaviours behind them.
- They run staff surveys but rarely follow through.
- They create performance frameworks, without addressing energy, trust or clarity.

These things might look good on the surface. **But they don't change how people feel, think, lead or work.**

Because you can't treat culture like a campaign. And you can't fix engagement with a new HR system.

It's not that leaders don't care.

It's that most models are disconnected from how people actually experience work – emotionally, socially, and strategically.

Hybrid Didn't Break Your Culture It Revealed It

For over 20 years supporting complex, large-scale transformation across health, government and growing businesses,

I saw the same problem everywhere: **Change was being designed from the top – and resisted from the bottom.**

Leaders were overloaded. Staff were disengaged. Culture was happening – but nobody was really leading it.

When COVID-19 hit, hybrid working was rolled out at speed – a survival tactic, not a strategic decision.

In hairdressers, in boardrooms, and across kitchen tables, I listened. I Watched. I Noticed. And what became clear was that hybrid didn't create culture problems. It simply made them impossible to ignore.

- Communication was already **top-down**
- Engagement was already **shallow**
- Change was already **something leaders did to people** – not with them.

Now that we're here, **hybrid isn't going away.** And sadly, our systems, habits and leadership models still haven't caught up.

The PEOPLE Principles™ Framework was built in that moment. Designed not as a crisis patch, but as a practical answer for a changed world.

A framework to:

- ✓ Make culture **visible and usable**
- ✓ **Help leaders spot where things are going wrong**, and
- ✓ Create shared ownership for **performance, engagement and trust.**

What are the PEOPLE Principles™?

The PEOPLE Principles™ are six interconnected elements that underpin how a business 'feels', 'functions', and 'performs'.

They create a full-spectrum map of your cultural health – and offer practical, human-first ways to shift from firefighting to flow.

Each principle represents a core layer of a thriving business – and when one is missing, performance suffers.

Purpose

What happens when it's missing: Without it, people drift. Priorities blur. Staff lose connection to the mission.

What shifts when it's applied: Clarity about purpose realigns decision-making, motivation and strategic energy.

Commercial value: Improves direction, employee retention, and motivation.

Engagement

What happens when it's missing: Disengaged teams go silent or resistant. Connection fades.

What shifts when it's applied: Real engagement creates belonging, voice and participation.

Commercial value: Boosts trust, performance, and proactive problem-solving.

Ownership

What happens when it's missing: Without ownership, everything defaults to leadership. Bottlenecks build.

What shifts when it's applied: Clear roles and permission empower people to act.

Commercial value: Frees leadership capacity, speeds up decision-making.

Participation

What happens when it's missing: When people don't feel included, change is resisted – or performed.

What shifts when it's applied: Co-creation invites commitment and fresh thinking.

Commercial value: Supports innovation, change readiness and team resilience.

Leadership

What happens when it's missing: When leadership feels inconsistent, people become cautious or cynical.

What shifts when it's applied: Calm, consistent leadership creates confidence and clarity.

Commercial value: Reduces overwhelm and increases team alignment.

Empowerment

What happens when it's missing: If people aren't supported to grow, they'll either stay stuck or leave.

What shifts when it's applied: Empowerment shifts performance from pressure to possibility.

Commercial value: Enhances productivity, wellbeing and loyalty.

A System, Not a Set of Tips

The PEOPLE Principles™ reflect how people actually experience work, they:

- ✓ Surface **unspoken issues**
- ✓ Encourage **shared responsibility**
- ✓ Give leaders a **usable language for change**, and
- ✓ Make culture and performance **'measurable and manageable'**

They are designed as a connected framework or model – not as standalone ideas. And they function like a wheel or ecosystem. So, if one principle is missing, then the rest are weakened.

For example:

- ✗ Leadership without empowerment **becomes control.**
- ✗ Purpose without participation **becomes a poster.**
- ✗ Engagement without ownership **becomes dependency.**

That's why this model works – **because it connects how people think, feel and act with how the business performs.**



What Changes When You Apply the Principles?

After **3–6 months** of embedding the PEOPLE Principles™Framework, here's what shifts:

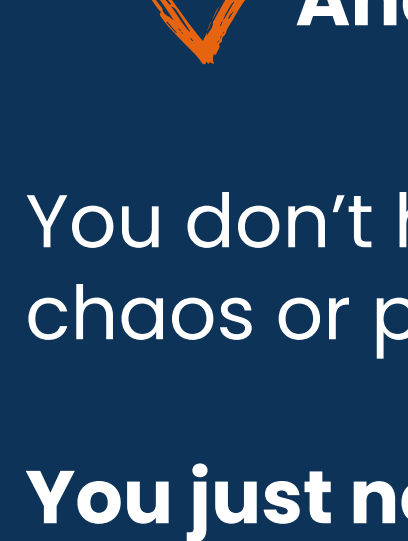
- Reactive firefighting → **Proactive rhythm**
- Silence and compliance → **Open, trusted dialogue**
- Team fragmentation → **Shared ownership and direction**
- Micromanagement → **Empowered, self-led delivery**
- Burnout and bottlenecks → **Sustainable, human performance**



How It's Applied?

The framework to:

- ✓ **Diagnose cultural and performance challenges (Diagnostic)**
- ✓ **Embed rhythm and habit across teams (Programme)**
- ✓ **Support business leaders 1:1 (Coaching + Consultancy)**



You don't need a new system. You need a new lens.

The PEOPLE Principles™ Framework won't give you another performance framework.

It gives you something better: A way to actually see what's driving (or draining) your business.

When you start leading from clarity, not just pressure, everything changes:

- ✓ **Communication opens up**
- ✓ **People step up**
- ✓ **Trust goes up**
- ✓ **And results follow**

You don't have to keep firefighting your way through hybrid chaos or performance gaps.

You just need to lead differently – and this is where it starts.

If you would like to see how aligned your business is with the **PEOPLE Principles® Framework**, take the **free quick 2 mins Business Check Up now.**

START THE CHECK UP

www.armshawassociates.com