



Intentional Focus on Employee Engagement Led to Growth in Business Performance

Cox Media partnered with Up Your Culture to create a robust culture, strong employee engagement, and business growth.

ABOUT COX MEDIA

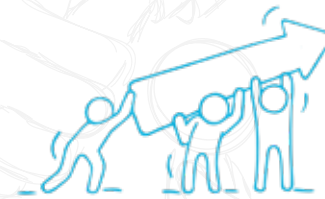
Cox Communications is a family-owned company committed to creating more meaningful moments of human connection through technology. Cox Media is the advertising sales division of Cox Communications, the third-largest cable entertainment and broadband services provider in the country. Cox Media serves approximately 6 million residences and businesses, giving Cox Media's customers the opportunity to reach their ideal audiences wherever they are.

CHALLENGES FACED

Cox Media recognized the need to enhance employee engagement, foster a “people-first” mindset, and eliminate departmental barriers to promote seamless teamwork. They wanted to establish themselves as a people-first company, ensuring their employees at every level felt motivated, inspired, and valued. At the same time, they wanted to tackle the challenge of departmental silos, which hindered cross-functional collaboration and overall productivity.

SPECIFIC GOALS FOR INVESTING IN THE UP YOUR CULTURE PROGRAM:

- ⦿ Take a different approach to business success.
- ⦿ Improve inter-department communication and collaboration.
- ⦿ Go from a numbers-based company to a people-first company.
- ⦿ Increase employee engagement.
- ⦿ Reduce turnover in markets.
- ⦿ Improve interdepartmental communication and collaboration.
- ⦿ Boost productivity.



PRODUCING A POWERFUL PLAN

In 2021-2022, Cox Media partnered with Up Your Culture to create a cohesive culture and strong employee engagement across 7 of their markets.

In their joint roles as Group Vice Presidents, Maryann Balbo and Fran Mallace shared the goal of uniting these markets with their vision of a “people-first company.” They knew that if their company consistently prioritized their people over their ratings, revenue, and profits, the most successful business outcomes would follow.

The Group Vice Presidents valued the fact that the Up Your Culture program aligned with their internal culture initiative and provided them with more hands on deck to successfully drive that initiative. Expressing this to the markets, they shared, “Up Your Culture is not going to change what you’re doing, just enhance it and help you make it even better.”

BUILDING THE STRATEGY

Before the journey could begin, a strong strategy had to be put in place. Our Up Your Culture Engagement Specialists conducted an employee engagement survey to better understand the current culture within each market and the level of engagement at the onset. This allowed them to work closely with the market leaders to identify the most impactful areas of focus and design a solid strategy for success.

THE PATH TO SUCCESS

With a clear understanding of the current state in each market, the Up Your Culture team introduced the Four Engagement Elevators that would lift engagement moving forward:



SHARED MISSION

We helped them create a solid foundation of mission, vision, and values so all their employees had a clear sense of who they were as a company, where they were going, and why they were working so hard to get there.



PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT

We worked with them to consider the growth potential of every employee and how they could strengthen their working relationship. Each leader created a customized development plan for each person with Priority Strategies to ensure success.



VALUED VOICE

We guided them to improve two-way communication between people and departments, so employees felt comfortable sharing their thinking and became more open to the input and feedback of others.



EARNED TRUST

We worked with them to promote transparency and increase the amount of information employees received related to their job and the company. This gave people greater confidence in company decisions and faith in the integrity of their leaders.

The Engagement Elevators were activated with regular workshops, coaching sessions, and meaningful assignments. Our team of Engagement Specialists and Culture Coaches supported the Cox Media leaders and helped them stay on track and accountable to their strategic plan.

“The Up Your Culture program was pretty much **perfect and aligned** with our needs. All the feedback from our leaders has been wonderful. I wish I had this type of structure when I led a market. I did it on my own and didn’t have a road map. Being given a roadmap but being able to customize it to the needs of each market, like Up Your Culture does, is extremely valuable.”



After the first year of the Up Your Culture, every Cox Media market reported improvement.

RESULTS: “GROWTH, GROWTH, GROWTH! EVERYWHERE!”

“Leaders were all-in from the beginning, and their enthusiasm has grown as they continue to **embrace a people-first culture**. In their recent budget presentations, I noticed them leading with their core values and then getting into strategy/financials.”



After the first year working with Up Your Culture, every Cox Media market reported improvement. Not only were their leaders finding anecdotal evidence of success, but the hard data proved it. The end-of-year employee engagement survey demonstrated significant growth in key areas and showed their efforts were already lifting overall engagement.

Maryann Balbo explained, “Our culture was strong across Cox Media; however, there were some areas we needed more focus on, and Up Your Culture helped us do that with intentional work. We have seen leaders who were very numbers-oriented and not people-focused pivot and become the leaders we needed them to be. This program has helped a few markets become culture-first environments, which they weren’t before, so this is very exciting and valuable for our business!”

PUTTING THEIR CULTURE INITIATIVE TO THE TEST

This culture initiative was really put to the test when Cox Media decided to merge two markets into one region during the program. In any other circumstance, this would have caused disruption, but with the knowledge of how to create a shared mission and the experience in creating a strong sense of belonging for employees, the market leader was able to break down silos and build a cohesive team.

What did Cox Media value most about the Up Your Culture program?

- ⊙ Engagement and accountability for leadership teams.
- ⊙ Well-structured and planned.
- ⊙ The Engagement Elevators provided clear direction to build engagement with people.
- ⊙ Inclusion of tangible tools people can use that are very applicable. Not just nebulous abstract things.
- ⊙ The engagement survey.

“This program helped Cox Media merge those markets and have success with it. They are no longer siloed – they are working together, and I believe that is a result of this program. The company could not have had success combining markets without them clearly understanding their own cultures. **Up Your Culture is the real deal.**”



Examples of Success

“In one market, we have seen a leader rise to the occasion with the program. There was so much friction between their department and with other departments, and this leader had friction with her team as well. When the leader of the other department was out on leave, this leader stepped in to lead and care for this team. The development of this leader led to growth from both a business and a culture standpoint.

“Another leader wasn’t comfortable in the space of culture. Once they understood what it was all about, it made sense and is now the blueprint for their market. They moved out of their comfort zone into where they needed to be to align with a People-First Culture.