

Nailing the culture fit

Workplaces come in all shapes and sizes. Finding “the one” for you is just like finding a life partner.

The job you’ve got your eye on might look pretty hot at first glance but if the culture fit isn’t right, however, you’re heading for divorce. Trust us. You don’t want that relationship.

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The challenge is to find out before you commit to the job if the culture at the organisation is for you. Perhaps you play cricket on Wednesdays and you need time off. Will that be acceptable? asks Pete Macauley, regional director at recruiter [Michael Page](#). Or maybe your looking for a flexible working environment that allows you to work from home.

Here’s how to nail the cultural fit:

1. **Know your needs and wants.** Reflect on your career and your current job, says Macauley. What is it that makes you happy? What do you need to make you happy?
2. **Ask questions.** Don’t guess. Ask your interviewer to describe the culture and the organisation’s core values. Are employees interests outside of work important? Does the organisation give back to society? Be specific. Find out how issues such as the Wednesday night cricket game are handled. Ask why people leave the business and why they stay, says Macauley.
3. **Find out how the company treats its employees.** Use contacts or search online for current and former employees and ask them for an assessment of the culture.
4. **Meet the team.** Too often there’s a rushed interview, a job offer, and the next thing you’re sitting at your new desk building up a dose of buyer’s regret. “Meet with as many stakeholders as possible,” says Pet Macauley. Ideally meet your peers in a social situation such as team drinks.
5. **Watch for consistency.** Ask yourself if the message from everyone at the organisation is consistent, says Macauley. If it is, you can be sure you’re being told the truth about the

culture.

6. **Be honest with yourself.** It might look like the best job since sliced bread. But if you're jumping into the fire of a dysfunctional workplace you may well regret the move. Ask yourself if everything you've heard about the organisation really sounds like you. Will you really thrive in this environment? If not, wait for the next opportunity. If this organisation wanted to hire you, another will as well.

Finally, choosing organisations with a good cultural fit can make a huge difference to your career. If you fit, you'll shine and can take the next step up.