

If you were going to assess the Cultural aspects of Southwest Airlines which assessment model (Good-to-Great or Baldrige) would you use and why? Make sure to explain what elements of Southwest Airlines organizational culture would make one assessment model a better would fit for an assessment. (Hint: More than one model might be used)

I would use the Good-to-Great assessment model to evaluate the cultural aspects of Southwest Airlines. There are 4 areas of focus of the Good-to-Great assessment model that closely relate to some essential elements of the Southwest Airlines culture. Lets take a look at each of these areas of focus individually to develop a better understanding of why the Good-to-Great assessment model, is the assessment model that most effectively evaluates the cultural aspects of Southwest Airlines.

One area of focus is Level 5 Leadership, which is based on the idea that the leader is an ordinary person with an extraordinary work ethic who is highly focused and disciplined. These leaders will put their own needs aside and do what is best for the company and its people no matter what the cost. Level 5 Leadership is the best way to describe Southwest CEO Herb Kelleher. Kelleher believes in individuality of his employees. He puts his employees first and stands by the idea that if he takes care of his employees, his employees will take care of everything else. This idea of putting his employees first leads me to the next area of focus, *First who... Then What*.

Southwest Airlines puts a strong focus on their employees, they understand the importance of spending a significant amount of time and effort on the who, instead of the what. Their traditional human resources department, was replaced with, "The People Department." Southwest Airlines is extremely selective in their recruiting to ensure that only the best of the best make it all the way. They put a strong emphasis on training, individuality and happiness. They encourage employees to have fun while they work and have truly created and maintained a company culture that will help ensure long-term success.

I also believe, "The Flywheel and the Doom Loop," relates to the way Southwest Airlines refused to give up as they were faced with obstacle after obstacle in the very beginning. They pushed their way past tipping point, past every obstacle, and came out on top. This created an aggressive underdog spirit that still saturates the company culture today.

Finally, The Good-to-Great assessment model discusses the idea of going from Good-to-Great to *Built to Last*, which discusses the steps required to ensure that an organization succeeds in the long run. Southwest Airlines has developed a very effective strategic plan for their business and delivered a flawless execution time after time. They understand what elements give them the competitive advantage and they take full advantages of those benefits.

