Cover Story: How do you do culture?

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Jama Software CEO [Eric Winquist](#) wasn't afraid to borrow culture-boosting ideas from other companies and he hasn't been afraid to tweak them as the company has grown. He got the idea for an 11:11 meeting from the company 1-800-Got-Junk. At Jama, it started as an all-hands meeting that happened every Tuesday at 11:11 a.m. and lasted for 11 minutes. It worked for about a year until the company hit 70 people, said Winquist. Now it happens monthly and is live streamed for remote workers.

Simple Finance Corp.'s core value is customer communication. That means internalizing feedback from users, said CEO [Josh Reich](#). It's a value that has elevated the company's customer relations representatives from traditional call center employees who are sometimes detached from the workforce to front-line employees with the authority to make decisions and contribute to product development. Roughly 62 percent of product ideas come from the CR team.

Cloudability has 27 employees but it is on pace to double in size this year. With this in mind, the company is focused on hiring new employees who will thrive in and enhance the company's culture. Making smart new hires now will help ensure that Cloudability's culture will scale as the company grows, said co-founder [J.R. Storment](#). To help, Storment recently hired an HR specialist. "You really need to hire the best people and it's not how smart they are and how quick they can dive into the job but are they going to be folks that can make this a great place to work," he said. "That can be more important than skillset because that is what keeps the team together in hard times."

Puppet Labs, led by CEO [Luke Kanies](#), is developing strategies to ensure that company values and culture are intertwined in a way that still allows it to be nimble enough to make changes when needed. This is reflected in the hiring process. Puppet creates employee groups to take part in vetting potential new hires. Hiring team members are trained to test for culture, said [Laura Stepp](#), who heads up human resources and organizational development. For instance, one company value is iteration, so interviewers know how to ask an applicant about how they build projects or what they do with feedback.

Webtrends, under the direction of new CEO Joe Davis, is working to rebuild a positive and inspiring culture after months of turmoil. It got a big assist when Webtrends moved into newly remodeled space in the U.S. Bancorp Tower, which for one, allowed the company to consolidate employees on a single floor. The office is open to help break walls between departments and foster interactions and "white board moments" on one of the many writable surfaces. Employees also offered input on amenities — they now have bike parking that is accessible through the freight elevator — and named and decorated the different conference rooms.