



CULTURE CLEANUP

Toolkit

How to reset a team
(without burning it down)

By Bobbie Racette
Founder & CEO, Virtual Gurus | Board Member

Welcome



Hi, I'm Bobbie

“You can’t build something bold on a broken foundation.” That’s a hard truth I learned the hard way.

This isn’t a playbook written by an HR consultant or a corporate trainer. This is what I’ve lived — as a queer, Indigenous founder leading a rapidly scaling team, navigating deep burnout, and confronting a culture that I let slide too long.

What you’ll find in this toolkit isn’t about perfection. It’s about repair.

And what comes next when you decide to do things differently.

Bobbie Racette



Section 1

QUESTIONS EVERY LEADER SHOULD ASK WHEN CULTURE FEELS "OFF"



Toxic culture doesn't always announce itself with drama.

Sometimes it's subtle. And silence is the biggest red flag. Use these five questions as a diagnostic tool. Ask them alone. Ask them with your leadership team. Ask them before you hit a breaking point.

- 1. What do people complain about most often — and who's allowed to say it out loud?** Go deeper: Are there different rules depending on status or identity?
- 2. What kind of behaviour do we tolerate in high performers that we'd never accept from anyone else?** (This one will sting. That's okay.)
- 3. Who's quietly opting out?**
Think: missing meetings, not speaking up, "quiet quitting." Track patterns by team, identity, or tenure.
- 4. What's left unsaid in our 1:1s?**
Go deeper: are people performing emotional labour just to feel safe?
- 5. If I joined this company tomorrow, what would shock me or make me leave?**
Your answer is your first action item.

Section 2

THE SCRIPT THAT CHANGED MY LEADERSHIP

There was a moment I had to reset the tone — not with a performance plan or a policy, but with a conversation.

This script helped me address team dynamics with honesty, clarity, and care — and you can adapt it to your own style.

“I’ve realized we’ve created an environment where not everyone feels safe, supported, or respected — and that’s on me.

I take responsibility for what I’ve let slide, and for how that’s affected the team.

Things are going to change. Not through slogans or workshops, but through choices — mine, and ours.

This is the line. And if that’s uncomfortable, that’s okay. But this team is going to be one where people can do great work and feel seen while doing it.”

You can adapt this for your voice. Mean it. And then follow through.

Section 3

BOUNDARIES THAT WORK (AND DON'T SOUND LIKE HR JARGON)

Instead of...	Try saying...
"Let's all respect each other's time."	"We end meetings on time. I'll hold us to that."
"We encourage open communication."	"If you're frustrated, you don't need to wait. Come to me directly as soon as you feel comfortable to do so."
"We value work-life balance."	"We don't message after hours unless it's urgent. I'll model that."
"We're working on our culture."	"We've made mistakes. We're fixing them. Here's what we're doing this week to take action."

Pro tip: Boundaries don't need explanation. They need consistency.



Section 4

QUARTERLY CULTURE CHECK-IN



Every quarter, I ask my team (and myself) three things:

Where are we drifting from our values?
Be honest. “We value transparency” doesn’t mean much if decisions happen in back rooms.

Where are we thriving, and who’s driving it? Celebrate what’s working and who’s making it happen, especially behind-the-scenes contributors.

What hard conversation did I avoid this quarter? Then I schedule it.

I block 90 minutes for this activity to do by myself, and then I bring insights into our leadership sync. It keeps us accountable. It keeps me grounded.

CULTURE ISN'T "NICE". IT'S STRATEGY.

One of the biggest blind spots I see in founders and execs — especially in startups — is treating culture like a side project. Culture is your first product. It’s the thing your best people will stay for (or leave over). It’s not a “vibe.” It’s your strategic operating system.

If you don’t define it, someone else will.



You don't need a consultant to fix your culture.

You need courage. Clarity. And the guts to say,
“We messed up. We’re doing better.”

I did. And we’re still doing the work.

If this toolkit helped, I’d love to hear what part hit
hardest. Drop me a message on [LinkedIn](#), share
it with your leadership team and start your own
culture cleanup conversation.

No ceilings.
No toxic workplaces.
Just better.

www.bobbieracette.com

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