

Member Communication Experience

In the fast-paced and ever-changing AEC industry, developing a learning culture within your company is essential. Organizational culture is generally understood as a company's behavior of employees. A learning culture signals that you support your employee's need for professional development (a non-negotiable for Millennials and GenZ) and that you embrace creativity, innovation, and an expectation that the future holds bigger and better things. Additionally, a learning culture motivates people, creates better business results, and is a great recruitment and retention tool.

A perfect example of how a learning culture can transform an organization is shared by Brent Darnell, who offers an [online leadership development program](#) via CMAA:

We took all 235 folks of a midsized contractor through leadership and personal development training, and it changed their entire culture from an older, stuffy, stodgy culture to one that was driven by relationships. And even better – this shift in culture led them to win a multimillion-dollar project. They implemented their newly acquired emotional intelligence concepts on a \$45 million project that they were chasing. They were third on price, so they went into the presentation focusing on connecting with the selection committee. I think they thought, "Since we're not going to get this project anyway, let's do this Brent Darnell crap." They focused on connections and marrying the passions of the client with their passion



for building – and they were awarded the project! Since then, they have created such close connections with the company that they have been awarded an additional \$35 million worth of work, without bidding. That shift in culture is adding to their bottom line.

Although Brent's example included all employees in the company, and a prescriptive learning process, you can be equally effective with something small and simple as well. For

Cost-effective methods for fostering a learning culture:

- » Create a page on your internal website that aggregates



About the Author

Dr. Nanette Miner is a leadership development and workplace-learning expert. As [The Training Doctor](#), she has revolutionized the way that individuals are prepared for leadership roles in their organizations. Rather than a chosen few, her process is aimed at ensuring everyone in the company has the skills and business acumen of a leader. This approach ensures both immediate and long-term return-on-investment (ROI) for an organization.

Brent Darnell is the owner and president of [Brent Darnell International](#) and a mechanical engineer and a graduate of Georgia Tech. He is a leading authority on emotional intelligence and a pioneer in its use in the construction industry to improve social competence and leadership skill among managers and executives. He is an adjunct professor at Auburn and Penn State universities. He is the author of the [Tough Guy](#) series. His programs, books, and online courses, including [CMAA's Leadership Library](#), are helping to transform the industry.

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