

Survey Feedback and Process Observation Instrument

PART A

Critical Organizational Evaluation, Culture and Leadership Survey Issues

How did the organization get to be the way it is? What are the people here like to work with? Why? What are the spotlight measures of performance and the spotlight rewards and punishments? What is done to help a person along once he or she starts work in this organization? What does it take to do well in the organization? How are good people recognized? How does one find out how one is performing in this organization? What are the ways one finds out what is really going on in the organization? How does the organization make use of a person's experience and ideas? If the organization had to stop doing some of the things it now does, what would not be changed? Which outside groups does the organization pay attention to? Why? How? What must the organization do particularly well in order to succeed? How does one go about selling a new idea in this organization? Who are the key individuals and groups one has to persuade? What are the important strategies and tactics for getting things done in the organization? What are the most important tacit assumptions that members of the organization share about work, human nature, and human relationships? What does the organization stand for? What is its motto? What does it take to be highly successful in this organization? What kind of person is most respected? What is considered heroic? What is considered serious punishment in this organization? What kinds of mistakes are not forgiven? What company folklore, rituals, symbols, and ceremonies best reveal the essential character of the organization? Make believe this organization is a person: How would you describe this person? What are the main rules that everyone has to follow in this

organization? Who are the three or four key people in the leadership of the organization? How did they get to the top? Organizational Effectiveness and Satisfaction issues? What is the one thing the organization doesn't do as well as it should? Where is the organization headed? What is the employee turnover in the organization relative to other comparable organizations? Status of Individual in the Organization? What is the prospective boss like? On which key groups or individuals, in addition to one's prospective boss, would one be most dependent to get the job done successfully? What are the biggest hurdles that have to be overcome to do the job well? What important sources of support are potentially available for getting the job done well? Is there a possibility of becoming stereotyped in the organization? What is the status of those who are similarly stereotyped? What are the prospects for the newcomer's acceptance into the culture? Organization's Agenda for the Individual? Why does the organization want to hire the individual? What does it value about the individual? Where are the individuals now who previously held the job for which the individual is being recruited? Why did they move on? Is "bait and switch", "bait and keep", or "bait and eat" the organization's agenda?

PART B

Research Process Observation Checklist

Why should an organizational leadership influence culture?

- Problems with existing systems
- Cut-throat competition
- Market or environmental change
- Merger or acquisitions
- New Opportunities
- Organizational Growth

Evolving Cultural Frameworks - Analysis, Objective Setting and Leadership Commitment

- Establishes a clear picture of the current situation
- Sets specific measurable objectives
- Commits leaders to a vision for cultural influence.
- Enables appropriate definitions
- Drives connections between organizational performance framework and culture as it is influenced by the leader
- Aligns the culture management process to the problem and setting.
- Provides groundwork for the broad-scale introduction and integration of the culture management process
- Analysis covers broad categories: Performance and evolving cultural analysis.

Performance Analysis

Performance data encompass bottom-line financial and behavioral measures

Performance Analysis: Strategic Design Questions

- Does business and financial performance influenced by organizational culture
- Does culture in turn affect leadership behavior or does the leadership behavior in the context of performance influence culture
- What are the human and economic costs of current behavior?
- What new behaviors are likely to produce the largest human benefit and economic returns?
- How will the economic and human impact be measured?
- How will behavior be measured?

Evolving Cultural Analysis

Every setting and group handles culture a little bit differently. Some groups need change to occur at a rapid pace, while others call for a more deliberate approach. In some settings, those in power need to lead the change process, while in other settings, cultural change works only when those at the bottom of the power hierarchy demand change.

Evolving Culture analysis examines how culture change efforts should be organized to maximize the likelihood of success.

Evolving Cultural Analysis: Strategic Design Questions

- How will the past influence the culture management process?
- Who will be involved in the culture management process?
- Who should play a leadership role in steering the process?
- What should the structure, composition and purposes of committees and/or task forces be?
- What is the best strategy for introducing the process?
- What is the best timeline for project development?

Values, Beliefs and Norms

- Values are heartfelt beliefs about the appropriate way to behave.
- Values constitute the should and shouldn't of individual and cultural life.

While the concept is most familiar on an individual level, groups, organizations and communities also adopt values.

Values, Beliefs and Norms: Strategic Design Questions

- What are the current core values or belief systems that are related to goals?
- How did these core values come into being?
- Who or what influenced these core values?
- Why do organizational members believe in what they do?
- Did the leader influence these beliefs?
- How might current value systems get in the way of adopting cultural solutions?

- What core project values (or themes) might inspire collective action?
- What differences exist in the ways sub cultures view potential values?
- How strongly do organizational members value the changes now being contemplated?

Values, Beliefs and Norms

A norm is an expected and accepted behavior: "It's the way we do things around here." These social standards of behavior may or may not be consistent with individual or cultural values.

Norms: Strategic Design Questions

- Why do we believe in norms that have been established over time?
- What norms stand in the way of goals?
- What norms support goals?
- Have norms come in the way of performance
- How well do current norms reflect individual and cultural values?
- Why membership alignment?
- Does the leader desire an culturally aligned organization
- Define alignment
- Defining organizational members
- Mechanisms that define and perpetuate the culture
- Formal structures laws, rules and policies
- Informal structures grapevine
- Managerial processes that facilitate or hinder alignment

Information about organizational support can be organized into the following broad categories:

- Organizational architecture, methods, styles and modeling;
- Manpower planning, talent definition, competency required and recruitment/ selection
- Induction, socialization and orientation;
- Career planning, learning, training and development
- Rewards, punishment and recognition
- Confrontation and conflicts
- Communication systems;
- Relationships and interactions
- Artifacts, symbols, myths and rituals
- Management and allocation of resources
- How are behaviors being modeled?
- Why would like behaviors to be modeled?
- What can be done to increase the modeling of desired behavior and/or to reduce the modeling of behaviors that run counter to program goals?
- Are key behaviors rewarded and recognized?
- What will increase the positive impact of rewards and recognition?
- How are inappropriate behaviors being rewarded and recognized?
- How can these rewards and recognition systems be modified?
- How are behaviors that run counter to goals being confronted?
- How could inappropriate behavior be more effectively confronted?
- How are behaviors that are consistent with goals mistakenly being confronted?
- What opportunities exist for reducing such activity?

- What is being said about behaviors in general and specific situations?
- What opportunities exist for increasing constructive dialogue through formal and informal measurement and communication channels?
- What does the current use of time and financial resources say about project-related behavior?
- Are there better ways to demonstrate a commitment to desired behavior?
- How are rituals, myths and symbols linked to project-related behavior?
- Are there ways in which desired project-related behavior can be integrated into cultural myths, symbols and rituals?
- How does the development of relationships such as friendship influence project behavior?

Systemic and Timely Support-Forms

- Patterns of communication
- What is the individual and organizational sponsorship
- Who leads behavioral change process
- Does the CEO ask and receive feedback
- What constitutes management to people
- How is authority defined
- Are roles clear
- Do members understand their goals and expectation and is there an agreement
- Integration in interpersonal relationships
- Team working Styles
- Listening and advice giving
- Feedback Modeling
- Making things happen

- Facilitating factors in the organization in enabling culture to prosper
- Eliminating barriers to change
- Celebrating success.

Such support can be essential when people attempt to modify their personal behavior.

Systemic and Timely Support: Strategic Design Questions

- Have goals and need for support pre determined or defined?
- Is their clarity on what support is essential?
- Who will support cultural change (e.g., family, friends, coworkers, boss, etc.)?
- What forms of support are given (e.g., help with goal setting, modeling, eliminating barriers, locating supportive environments, working through relapse, and celebrating success)?
- What gaps exist?
- Are members of the culture receptive to support being offered?
- Do members of the culture ask for the support needed to accomplish organizational goals?

Context, Consideration and Climate

Some cultures embrace needed change while other cultures are highly resistant

Three attributes seem to determine a culture's receptivity to change:

- Setting a context in the sense of community
- Providing an appropriate consideration for shared vision

- Deriving a climate for positive outlook.

Context, Consideration and Climate - Sense of Community

- What is the organizational context? How has this context come about? Is there a time horizon to this context?
- A sense of community is present when people feel as if they belong and trust one another
- Sense of belonging includes an awareness that others "care" and that the individual, in turn, has a responsibility to care for others.
- People are not viewed exclusively in terms of performing a single role or function.
- Individuals are seen as unique, complex and evolving; complete with hopes, dreams and personal history.

Sense of Community: Strategic Design Questions

- Do members of the culture really get to know one another (i.e., dreams, special interests, history, etc.)?
- Have the members understood the context?
- Do people come through for one another in times of need?
- Do people feel as if they belong and are welcomed?

Shared Vision

A shared vision exists when people recognize that they hold similar value systems. With a shared vision, members of the culture are enthusiastic about cultural goals and the processes by which they will be achieved. A shared vision implies a sense of inclusion: members of the culture are not being left behind. Is there an appropriate consideration, meaning a value to share a vision?

Shared Vision: Strategic Design Questions

- Do people recognize that they share common values (or at the very least can be enthusiastic about one another's values)?
- Are people excited about sharing what they believe in as that what the organization believes in to?
- Can people describe shared goals and strategies for achieving those goals?
- Do people find their shared goals and strategies inspirational?
- Who or what determines goals?

Climate and Positive Outlook

- Establishing a climate of cheer
- Enabling building blocks to commence
- Evaluating need for corrections, improvement, course changes and growth
- With a positive outlook, people look for opportunities rather than obstacles, strengths rather than weaknesses in one another

- There is a general recognition that cultural and individual strengths will make it possible to improve upon current conditions

Climate and Positive Outlook: Strategic Design Questions

- Do people have faith that constructive cultural change is possible?
- Do people recognize individual and organizational strengths or do they focus on what is wrong?
- Do people view needed cultural change as an opportunity for improvement, or do they view change as a problem?
- Do people make use of individual and organizational strengths in addressing needed change?
- Do people view individual, group, and organizational and/or community goals as being in conflict with each other?

Leadership Drivers in Influencing Culture and Commitment

- Obtaining leadership commitment is a key element
- Has your leadership been of influence or relevant in this context
- Demonstrated commitment to an evolving cultural change
- Some level of leadership commitment is often apparent before the cultural analysis begins.
- It is not uncommon, for example, for community or organizational leaders to sponsor the initial analysis.
- It is also frequently true that deeper levels of leadership commitment are necessary to move the organizations beyond contemplation.
- Leaders learn as they learn of an evolving culture

- Leaders identify drivers that influence their personal and professional disposition towards influencing culture
- Leaders determine to what degree would they influence culture

Leadership Drivers Commitment: Strategic Design Questions

- How would leaders determine an evolving culture?
- How should leaders call attention to the economic and human costs of the current culture?
- How should leaders state the intended benefits of the culture change effort? What is the best strategy for reviewing past failed approaches to change?
- How will leaders recognize the role of culture in those failed efforts?
- How will leaders get an opportunity to experience the desired culture?
- Will this happen at a retreat or through field visits to other cultures?
- How will leaders commit to a specific timeline and cost structure for project development?
- How will leaders help identify benchmarks of success?
- What is the best way to teach leadership skills and concepts that will make them useful in the culture change process?
- How will leaders link their personal values and vision to the organization?

Influencing an Evolving Culture

- Introduces members of the culture to the organizational vision and invites participation in the change process

- Efforts to teach skills in creating a climate that supports change--i.e., one with a sense of community a shared vision, and a positive outlook
- Usually organized around a focus group
- The workshop provides a forum for relating organizational goals to personal values and experiences
- Introductory focus groups are designed to enable members to visualize and to experience the desired culture
- Focus group tend to cover three broad subject areas—Accepting and understanding, Defining and identifying and Absorbing and changing

Influencing Cultural Accepting and Understanding

- Members of the culture should become familiar with the key lessons of the Analysis and Objective Setting phase
- Such lessons include the current human and economic costs of the existing culture
- Such costs are presented in terms of their impact on individuals as well as their impact on the organization, community and society
- Review the history of past change attempts that did not succeed.
- Measure what benefit could acceptance and understanding bring to bear to the individuals and organizations.
- What were their strengths and why did they fall short?
 - Was it focused on a single factor (e.g., laws in the alcohol prohibition movement)

- Inadequate involvement people (e.g., a memo from management)
- Unsystematic (e.g., they relied on a campaign or on a single seminar experience)

Understanding the power of an evolving culture.

- This issue is sometimes addressed by discussing the impact of cultural norms.
- Evolving cultures are open, undefined and are subject to influence
- Organizational desirous of change seek to evolve a culture that best fits them in a context
- Most norms go unexamined. As a result, it is eye-opening to see how behavior is managed through norms.
- Such an understanding is useful in reducing the likelihood of finger pointing and individual blame placing.
- The discussion can also be instrumental in helping people to realize that they will need to work together to bring about meaningful results.
- It can be of advantage to develop an understanding of the building blocks of culture--values, norms, and organizational support systems, peer support and climate.
- Feedback from the cultural analysis helps build such a conceptual framework.
- A conceptual framework grounded in current realities empowers participants to plan their participation in the culture change process.

Evolving Cultures - Understanding: Strategic Design Questions

- How will the economic and human costs of the current culture be shared?
- What will be said about the impact on the individual?

- What will be said about the impact on the group, organization or society?
- How will past cultural influence attempts be explained?

Evolving Cultures - Accepting: Strategic Design Questions

- What lessons about culture change can be integrated into this explanation?
- What of the culture deserves acceptance and understanding?
- What degree of personal risks do we undergo in such an acceptance?
- What is the best mechanism to teach about the power of culture?
- Will some cultural norms reveal this power?
- Can the discussion of culture be summarized in such a way that people will understand the futility of negative blame-placing and realize the importance of joining together in finding a lasting solution?
- What is the best strategy for sharing about core values, norms, peer support, organizational support and climate?
- How will people develop an appreciation of the process of culture change?

Evolving Culture - Defining and identifying

- Culture mapping participants need to identify meaningful goals.
- Goal-setting activity to be done at both individual and collective levels.
- Do an individual behavioral assessment
- Once this is accomplished, groups set joint goals
- Leaders share their vision for program outcomes.

- Leaders speak of themselves and their understanding before moving on to defining and identifying
- Leaders demonstrate their commitment to influence the evolving cultural change process
- Goals may be organized by short- and long-term objectives and/or around the degree of difficulty

Evolving Culture - Defining and identifying: Strategic Design Questions

- How will participants assess their own behavior?
- How will individual goals be set?
- Will they be organized around degree of difficulty?
- Will they be organized around a timeline?
- How will groups be given feedback on current behavior?
- How will groups establish behavioral goals?
- Will these goals be organized around degree of difficulty?
- Will they be organized around a timeline?

Evolving Culture - Absorbing and changing

- Members of the culture should be given an opportunity to develop a evolving cultural change plan.
- Adequate time and space should be available to make absorption happen
- Absorption means transformation in a context
- Individual and group behavior should be observed, recorded and feedback provided.
- Leaders commit their desire to transmit the learning of an evolving culture

- Leaders ask for new ways to relook at current culture and how does it differ from the evolving culture
- In the process new ideas are also generated.

Evolving Culture - Absorbing and changing: Strategic Design Questions

- What format will individual action plans take?
- Are their team goals to be taken up?
- What is the conflict management approach to be adopted?
- How do we handle personal and sensitive issues as they come up for reckoning?
- Will specific action steps be recommended?
- What format will group level action plans take?
- Will specific action steps be recommended?
- How will people be informed about the availability of support programs and materials?
- Will people be invited to participate in committees and task forces?
- If so, how will this be handled?
- How will new ideas and suggested cultural changes in current plans be shared?
- How will this information be integrated into the cultural change process?

Influencing an Evolving Cultural Integration

Integration takes place on multiple levels

The Influencing Integration phase focuses on:

- Individual self-help
- Peer support
- Organizational support and
- Leadership development.

Individual-Level Integration

- Working with the individual, sometimes called self-help, is the primary cultural change strategy in many Western cultures.
- Self-help activities include
individual counseling and therapy,
attending seminars,
watching appropriate audio visuals and videos,
reading books and pamphlets
using computer programs.
- Combine some form of personal assessment with an action plan. They emphasize insight, inspiration, and willpower.
- Typical self-help efforts adopt a *therapeutic model* of change.
- Address problem behavior by focusing attention on the needs, history and skills of the individual.
- Driven by personal learning and mastery of skills and knowledge
- Teach skills in managing internal dialogues and belief systems.
- Pleasure-based approaches focus on satisfying biological needs and on examining inner feelings and motivations.
- Individual focused change initiatives play an important role in culture change projects like:

- It can help people develop social skills needed to work with others.
- Brings clarity about personal goals and values makes it easier to commit to organizational and community goals.
- Increased awareness about personal strengths and styles
- It fosters individual initiative and creativity.
- Self-help initiatives present special challenges to culture change projects.
- Individual initiative is sometimes viewed as competing with culture change.
- The most effective self-help programs engage people in developing their own individual initiative while finding or building supportive environments
- Self-help materials and programs must frequently be revised to reestablish the link between personal and cultural change
- Builds an ability to relate to another through a better understanding of self
- Learn to find ways to relate to the evolving culture and its impact of self, teams and organizations.

Individual Level Integration: Strategic Design Questions

- What format(s) should self-help material and support take: counseling, videos, books, pamphlets, and newsletters?
- How will those involved in self-help activities be given opportunities to share their experiences?
- How will self-help programs include a role for cultural support?

Peer-Level Integration

- Support group members share their common experiences with a given problem behavior or experience.
- Groups play important roles in supporting individuals through difficult personal changes.
- Peer-level integration efforts addresses the needs of ongoing social networks such as work teams, families and friends.
- Unlike support groups, which tend to be time limited, "natural" social networks continue to provide support for years and sometimes for a lifetime.
- Peer integration efforts are designed to increase the quantity and improve the quality of support
- Building peer level interface through evolving culture adaptation programs that focus on goals, tasks, values and beliefs.
- Manages personal motivation and inner energy to succeed given peer comparisons
- Acts as a successive hurdle to cope with resistance from self and others and develop appropriate coping mechanisms.
- Enables competitive spirit into group working situations
- Makes the task of the leader simpler given enhanced peer capability to understand for self and for others
- Monitoring progress of cultural assimilation through peer focus groups that discusses on learning, contribution, issues, deadlines and things to be done.
- Derives action goals

Peer-Level Integration: Strategic Design Questions

- What support groups, if any, should be organized?
- How long and how often will they meet?
- How will friends be involved in the change process?
- What training might friends receive?
- How will family members or housemates be involved in the change process?
- What training might these people receive?
- How will coworkers support each other?
- How often should co-workers discuss their culture change efforts?
- What training in peer support will coworkers need?

Organization-Level Integration

Organizational support systems are composed of formal and informal policies and procedures.

Organizational supports can be organized into the following *twelve* broad and overlapping categories:

Defining Structures

- Articulating Roles, tasks and objectives to accomplish
- Identifying talent
- Enabling absorption through Orientation
- Building capabilities
- Institutionalizing mechanisms to derive behavior
- Facilitating Confrontation;
- Managing Communication systems;

- Symbols, myths and rituals; and
- Allocation of resources.
- Defining time frame
- Defining space and boundaries



Organizational Integration: Strategic Design Questions

- Who will lead in recruitment, selection and orientation processes?
- What support will be needed to bring about such integration?
- Who will lead integration in rewards and recognition (e.g., awards, promotions, pay, work team bonuses)?
- What support will be needed to bring about such integration?
- Who will lead integration in training (e.g., courses organized, mentoring, internships)?
- What support will be needed to bring about such integration?
- Who will lead changes in confrontation processes (e.g., reprimands, demotions, pay cuts, firings)?
- What support will be needed to bring about such integration?
- Who will lead integration in communication systems (e.g., newsletters, computer bulletin boards, survey feedback, sharing of financial and customer satisfaction data)?
- What support will be needed to bring about such changes?
- Who will lead integration in the allocation of resources (e.g., money, time, and information)?
- What support will be needed to bring about such changes?
- Who will lead integration in the decision-making processes (delegation of authority, formation of task forces, work team self-management)?
- What support will be needed to bring about such integration?

- Who will integrate group membership (e.g., restructuring, reporting relationships)?
- What support will be needed to bring about such integration?
- Who will lead changes in myths, rituals and symbols (e.g., Organizational stories, and celebrations, rites-of-passage)?
- What support will be needed to bring about such integration?

Give special training to task force leaders in how to

- Implementing task forces
- Create work teams,
- Hold successful meetings,
- Measure program impact.

Leadership Level Integration: Strategic Design Questions

- What skills will leaders need in order to successfully model their commitment to desired change?
- What new leadership roles might be necessary to bring about desired change?
- How will these new leaders be trained?
- How will leaders foster a climate that supports change?

Ongoing Evaluation, Renewal and Extension

- This is both an *ending* and a *beginning*

- A beginning because performance, programmatic and cultural measures are repeated for evaluation purposes
- And an ending because successes are celebrated
- Represents a beginning in that new performance, programmatic and cultural objectives are established
- Celebrate accomplishments
- Don't focus on what has not been achieved.
- Avoid discounting successes.
- Combine internal recognition with external public acclaim
- Publish project findings
- Project extension renews commitment
- Extension efforts help establish support in the broader culture
- Assisting others generates new ideas for the home front
- Effective evaluation and renewal can reduce the likelihood that the change effort will create bureaucracy

Evaluation, Renewal and Extension

Ongoing evaluation, Renewal and Extension - Strategic Design Questions

- What performance, programmatic and cultural goals were achieved?
- What new goals, if any, should be set?
- How will accomplishments be celebrated?
- What steps need to be taken to maintain and deepen cultural change?

- How can lessons from this experience be shared with other groups, organizations or communities?
- How can lessons from this experience be applied to other cultural problems?

Observed Criteria for Allocation of Rewards and Status

- Members learn from their own experience with promotions, performance appraisals, and discussions with the boss
- What is rewarded or punished is a message
- Actual practice, what happens as opposed to what is written or said

Observed Criteria for Resource Allocation

- How budgets are created what is acceptable financial risk?
- How much of what is decided is all-inclusive
- Reveals leader assumption

Observed Criteria for Recruitment, Selection,

Promotion, Retirement

- Criteria for recruiting new members reveals leaders vision
- Promotion or Non-promotion communicates leaders values
- Retirement facilities and benefits tells about valuing people's contribution

Conduct Detailed Change Readiness Assessment

- Why
- Current Understanding/Perception
- Key Players & Audience Assessment
- Channel effectiveness for communication
- Past Patterns
- Climate Surveys
- Change Relevant Data
- Key Concerns
- Wishes and Aspirations
- Fears and Concerns
- Meanings Attributed
- Cue Words and Signals
- Don't Tell Me Show me Issues

Organisational Culture Assessment Process

- Obtain Leadership Commitment and Select Participants
- Conduct Large Group Meeting
- Define Organisational culture
- Ask for descriptions of 'artifacts'
- Identify values
- Identify shared underlying assumptions

- Identify Cultural Aids and Hindrances in Subgroups
- Report Assumptions and Joint Analysis

Develop Workforce Integration Plan

- Study Project Plan for acquisition/merger – Strategy, purpose, Output goals and key success factors
- Define Roles and Responsibilities in respect of each member of the integration team
- Study plan
- Assign deadlines and dates
- Obtain clarity on merger goals, time frames and communication priorities
- Communicate with integration team members

Conduct HR Due Diligence Review

a. Compile dues diligence checklist

- HR Policy
- Current Practices
- Built In Systems
- Employee Handbook
- Manpower Plan
- Job Descriptions
- Departmental Role Processes
- Recruitment Practices

- Compensation
 - Benefits
 - Career Planning & Migration Planning Practices
 - Climate Surveys
 - Competency Analysis – Master Profiling
 - Employee Retention
 - Labor Relations
 - Labor Laws
 - Contracts pertaining to employees
- b. Evaluate Potential transition issues and liability Plans
 - c. Performance Management and Measures
 - d. Study risk concerns and its impact on the acquiring company
 - e. Define priority areas on each of the due diligence issues
 - f. Man mark domain knowledge for each area of specialization in each company

Organizational Assessment

- How would you state the Organisational purpose, mission and philosophy of the company?
- What can be talked about or not talked about?
- How do people use power?
- How do people get ahead?
- How do people stay out of trouble?
- What are the unwritten rules?

- Describe the organisation's ethics.
- What are the most commonly told stories about your organisation?
- What do people have to do to get decisions or implementation of key issues or major problems?
- What type of behavior is encouraged and rewarded? How would you describe the management style of the organisation?

HR Policy Issue Resolution

- Resourcing Plan
- Talent Management
- Retention Strategies
- Office Management Policies
- Transfers and R & R Issues
- Vacation
- Training & Development Policy Processes
- Salary Reviews
- Communication
- Office Administration, space, telecom, letterheads, business cards, forms, envelopes, standard stationery, office rules, name plates etc

Culture Signal Evaluation Process

Learning to Read A Culture

- Study the Physical Setting
- Read what the company says about its culture
- Test how the company greets strangers
- Interview company people
- Observe how people spend their time
- Understand career path progression of employees
- Look at the content of what is being discussed or written about
- Pay particular attention to the anecdotes and stories that pass through the cultural network

Things to Look at and ask

- What are the major strengths of this company?
- How well is this company prepared for the future?
- In what ways is this company vulnerable?
- Which areas in the organisation tend to cooperate, and which ones don't?
- Is more effort spent on internal competition or external?
- When a goal or deadline is missed, or a result not accomplished, do people tend to make excuses and blame others or are they highly accountable?
- Is it OK to make a mistake around here?
- Does the organisation tend to be hierarchical and level conscious?
- Do people tend to have a strong work ethic? Is there any stress and burn-out?
- What is our customer service really like?
- Does the culture tend to encourage new ideas or shoot them down?
- Are issues openly discussed in meetings or afterwards in the hall?
- What are the current levels of trust and openness in the organisation?

- In practice, what would get you sidelined or fired in this organisation?

Culture Alignment Processes

Business Focus

- What is the company's primary business?
- What are the core competencies?
- Who are the people who perform them?

Priorities

- How does the company set priorities?
- Who has a voice in it?

Strategic Planning

- What is the nature and quality of the company's strategic planning?
- What is the nature and quality of the company's goal setting?

Performance Standards

- What are the company's performance standards?
- Do they have any?

Job Design

- Are work arrangements conducive to top performance?
- Is staff satisfied with it?

Work Environment

- Is the work environment conducive to top performance?
- Is the staff satisfied with it?

Customer Relations

- What levels of service are provided?
- How great is the company's commitment to customers?

Labor Relations

- What is the company's relationship with the union?

Community Relations

- What are the company's policies with regard to the community?
- What is its image?

Technology

- What is the company's technological sophistication?
- What is the staff's attitude towards technology?

Organisation Design

- What is the organizational structure?
- How is power distributed?

Policies & Procedures

- What is their usefulness?
- How aligned are they with the company's goals?

Definition of Success

- How does the company measure success?

Readiness for Change

- What is the company's attitude toward change?
- How ready is it?
- How experienced is it?

Staff Demographics

- What is the age, ethnicity, language, and education, etc. of employees?

Interactions among People

- How do people get along?
- What is the nature of interactions among people?

Staff Perceptions and Attitudes

- What are the attitudes toward management? Training? Compensation? Policies? Growth?
- Etc.

Staff Expectations and Needs

- What do people expect from the acquisition?

Staff Skill Level

- Does the staff have the skills to achieve the expected synergies?

Leadership

- What is the leadership style?
- What are the sources of power and influence?

Conflict Management

- How is conflict perceived?
- How is conflict dealt with?

Decision Making

- What is the decision making process?
- Who's involved?

Communication

- What is communication like between people in the company?
- What medium(s) is (are) used?
- Who's credible?

Incentives and Rewards

- How are people motivated?

Norms and Values

- Are norms and values shared throughout the company?
- What are they?
- Are they compatible? Do they clash?

Monitoring

- What is the extent and effectiveness of the company reviews?

Accountability

- How are people held accountable

1. Benefits and Social Security Concerns

- Benefit Comparisons

2. Determining Leadership Requirements & Assignments

3. Prepare Employee Communications Strategy

4. Define Transition Data and MIS Requirements

5. Develop Employee Retention Strategies

6. Identify Employee Performance & HR Effectiveness/Efficiency Drivers & Measures

7. Evaluate Key Indicators of AS IS State

Organisational Commitment	
• Sense of pride in this organisation	
• A pleasant place to work	
• Expect to have a long career here	
Job-related Issues	
• Satisfied with my job	
• Doing something important	
• Job is challenging	
• Amount of work is reasonable	
• Advancement opportunities available to me	
• Enough people to do the job here	
• High rate of turnover	
Job Security	
• Able to say what I think without fear	
• Job is secure if I perform well	
• Promotions awarded are deserved	
Compensation and Benefits	
• Paid fairly	
• Salary administration is fair	
• Good benefits	
Supervisor Relations	
• Managers are approachable	

• Know whom to approach with problems	
• Supervisor listens	
• Know where I stand	
• Management is aware of problems with job	
Working Conditions	
• Work space is acceptable	
• Equipment needed to perform job is satisfactory	
Organisational Cooperation	
• Employees do their share	
• Cooperation between workers	
• Cooperation between offices	
• Co-workers help when needed	
• Management keeps me informed of changes	

Organisational Transformation	
• Top management improves the quality of my working life	
• Changes in ownership are good	
• Expectations of changes have been accurate	
• Have been kept informed on ownership changes	

Policy Detailing Areas

The tasks involved in performing a Policy and Procedure Assessment include:

- Review existing policies and procedures
- Discuss with administrator of policy or procedure
- Interview management and employees concerning policies and procedures
- Analyze functionality of policies and procedures
- Prepare Policy and Procedure Assessment Report
- Keep in mind that each policy and procedure should be evaluated based on:
 - The congruence and alignment with the organisation vision, mission, strategy and values
 - Linkages to critical processes and performance measurements
 - The message it sends to employees
 - The message it sends to those outside the organisation
 - Undesired effects created by the policy or procedure
 - Cost affected or impact on business
 - Discrepancies between the intent of the policy or procedure and the result
 - Inconsistencies in application and administration of the policy or procedure
 - Employee and management perceptions of the policy or procedure

Review existing policies and procedures

Obtain copies of all relevant policies and procedures including manuals, memos, training materials. Types of policies and procedures that might be reviewed include:

- Customer service guidelines

- Hiring guidelines
- Firing guidelines
- Compensation systems
- Absenteeism
- Sick leave
- Dress Code
- Purchase approvals
- Chain-of-command procedures
- Employee grievance policy
- Budget planning and control policies
- Work procedures
- Skill and procedure training
- User manuals

Points for discussion may include:

- Alignment with the performance measurements
- History of the policy/procedure (reason for it, past changes, etc.)
- Intent of the policy/procedure (if not clear from the documentation)
- Actual application of the policy/procedure (practice vs. written)
- Employee/management perceptions of policy/procedure
- Effect of policies/procedures in practice

This interview can shed light on problems associated with policies and procedures as well as other facts about the organisation. Some things to look for include:

- Past organisation problems

- Values of management as expressed by the intent of policies and procedures
- Inconsistencies in application of policy or procedure (sends message to employees that they will not be treated fairly, creates animosity between work groups, etc.)
- Match between what is said in the organisation and what is done

Interview management and employees concerning policies and procedures

These interviews are designed to check the effects of the policies/procedures on the individuals in the organisation. Find out how the policies/procedures are communicated to the employees and if they understand them. The interviews should be structured with questions designed to assess the functionality of policy/procedure in question. The following are guidelines for this task:

- Interview a representative sample. Take a cross section of the entire targeted organisation (across departments and across organizational levels).
- Focus on relevant policies / procedures. Based on the assessment and interview with the administrator, identify those policies/procedures which are important. This includes those that seem to be functional (supportive of goals, performance measures) and dysfunctional (blocking goals, performance measures).
- If discrepancies in application exist, interview individuals from both situations. This is necessary to establish the full perception.
- Remember that for employees, the policy/procedure is the current practice, not what is written in the manual.
- Listen for solutions. Employees and managers who are frustrated by a dysfunctional policy/procedure often have ideas for solving the problem.

Analyze functionality of policy/procedure

Many policies/procedures are developed to address a specific and immediate problem. Thought about the impact of such a policy/procedure on the organisation is generally absent or limited. Value is added to the client by assimilating the data gathered through review and interviews so that the effectiveness of each policy/procedure can be evaluated, adjusted or even discarded as necessary. This analysis should result in the classification of policies/procedures that support the organisation's goals and those that do not. There may be insignificant policies/procedures that have no impact either way.

Each relevant policy/ procedure should be analyzed with regard to:

- Intended result, is a positive and consistent with the organisation goals, does it support behavior which will lead toward organisation goals
- Consistency of application, is it applied effectively in all situations or are alternate plans made for different cases
- Actual result, have the results been fulfilling the intent
- Employee and management perceptions, do employees understand the benefit or usefulness, is it obvious or does need to be explained
- Cost and benefit analysis, is the benefit received costing more than the benefits received

Prepare Policy and Procedure Assessment Report

This report should provide the organisation with a clear picture of how their policies and procedures help or hinder the accomplishment of their objectives. Suggested sections for the report include:

- Analysis of company posture on policy/procedure
 - Alignment with organisation goals and performance measures
 - Policy/procedure heavy or light (too many or too few)
 - Policy/procedure restrictive or guiding
 - Perceptions of policy/procedure (how the policies and procedures used, for what results)
 - Extent to which actual result matches intention
 - Effect of policy/procedure on decision making, (are they taken into consideration at all levels of making, do they help or hinder decision making and change)
 - Message sent by policy/procedure (do those affected understand the intent and purpose)
 - Classification of policies/procedures as functional or dysfunctional
 - Analysis of functional policies/procedures
 - Why they are right
 - Benefits gained
 - Concepts to apply in the future
 - Analysis of dysfunctional policies/procedures
 - Problems
 - Employee/management perceptions
 - Cost benefit analysis
 - Recommendation for change
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- Employee Communication Strategy
 - Defining Duplication of Functions, Roles and Activities
 - Identifying Employee Perquisites & fringes Differentiation
 - Scoping final Merger Integration Issues and Challenges

Thank You, For your kind reading,

Ganesh Shermon

***And woods are lovely dark and deep and I have miles to go before I
sleep.....***