

**CULTURA ORGANIZACIONAL, DESEMPEÑO E INNOVACIÓN  
EN LA EMPRESA SISTEMAS FOURGEN S.A.**

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BOGOTA 2011**

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**TRABAJO DE GRADO  
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## **INTRODUCCIÓN**

En los últimos años, ha surgido un interés mundial por entender los rasgos culturales de las organizaciones y sus colaboradores, entendiendo que este es un factor definitivo para establecer la forma como se desenvuelven las empresas y el modo en que reaccionan a los cambios de su entorno.

Dada esta inquietud, la Universidad de la Sabana inició hace algunos años una investigación a través de la cual busca entender el patrón cultural de las empresas bogotanas y la relación que éste tiene con los cambios que se generan al interior de las mismas, con la forma como interactúan con los demás actores del mercado y aún más importante, con la manera en que buscan ser agentes de INNOVACIÓN, teniendo en cuenta aspectos como el involucramiento de los empleados, la adaptabilidad y consistencia de cada organización, en general, y el direccionamiento establecido por las directivas. Todos estos aspectos se miden y relacionan a través de una herramienta denominada MÉTODO DENISON, con base en el cual se realizó la presente investigación.

En este sentido, este trabajo constituye sólo una contribución a ese gran proyecto de investigación que viene realizando la Universidad.

# **CULTURA ORGANIZACIONAL, DESEMPEÑO E INNOVACIÓN EN LA EMPRESA SISTEMAS FOURGEN S.A**

## **1. PROBLEMA DE INVESTIGACIÓN**

### **1.1. Ámbito de Aplicación**

El trabajo de investigación, será aplicado en la empresa SISTEMAS FOURGEN S.A., dedicada a la comercialización de productos y servicios en el sector informático, principalmente enfocados a las necesidades de clientes que manejen puntos de venta en su cadena de abastecimiento.

### **1.2. Tema de Investigación**

La investigación realizada busca conocer la influencia de la cultura organizacional de la empresa en aspectos como su desempeño y el grado de innovación que ésta alcanza.

### **1.3. Antecedentes**

La Universidad de la Sabana viene trabajando desde hace unos años en un proyecto de investigación denominado **Cultura organizacional, desempeño e innovación en empresas Bogotanas**, a través del cual se viene estudiando la cultura de un conjunto de empresas de la ciudad de Bogotá con el ánimo de conocer su influencia en el comportamiento de quienes forman parte de tales organizaciones y en el desempeño e innovación de éstas. Para noviembre de 2007, se había realizado el estudio en 39 empresas y la idea es continuar ampliando la muestra para poder llegar a conclusiones más serias respecto a la interrelación entre el perfil cultural y los indicadores de desempeño organizacional, para luego comenzar a incorporar otras variables de tipo sectorial, que finalmente permitan contar con conclusiones contundentes para la toma de decisiones en términos de administrar la cultura organizacional en favor del logro de los objetivos y el desempeño efectivo de las empresas en su entorno.

Esta investigación se basa en el MODELO DE CULTURA ORGANIZACIONAL DE DENISON, el cual está fundamentado en cuatro características principales de la cultura corporativa y se desarrolla mediante la aplicación de la Encuesta de Cultura Organizacional de Denison (en inglés, DOCS - Denison Organizational

Culture Survey), a través de la cual se mide la presencia de tales características en la organización y los aspectos que necesitan de un plan de acción en busca de mejorar el desempeño general de la empresa.

En aras de contribuir con el avance de este proyecto, la presente investigación se realizó aplicando la misma metodología en una empresa bogotana en particular, denominada Sistemas Fourgen S.A., la cual pertenece al sector de la informática.

## 2. OBJETIVOS

### 2.1. Objetivo General

Estudiar la cultura en la empresa Sistemas Fourgen S.A., identificar su impacto en el desempeño y la innovación en la organización, y formular recomendaciones para la administración de la cultura en la compañía.

### 2.2. Objetivos Específicos

- ✚ Verificar de acuerdo al modelo de cultura organizacional de Daniel Denison la existencia de las características críticas de la cultura organizacional en la empresa Sistemas Fourgen S.A.
- ✚ Identificar el perfil cultural existente en Sistemas Fourgen S.A. a partir de la aplicación de la encuesta sobre cultura organizacional de Daniel Denison (Organizational Culture Survey).
- ✚ Evaluar el impacto de las características de la cultura en un conjunto de variables críticas para el desempeño organizacional.
- ✚ Proponer y sustentar principios para la *Administración de la Cultura Corporativa* en el Sistemas Fourgen S.A., que propicien el mejoramiento del desempeño organizacional, y en especial de los procesos de innovación.



### **3. MARCO DE REFERENCIA**

#### **3.1. RESEÑA HISTÓRICA SISTEMAS FOURGEN S.A.**

“Sistemas Fourgen S.A es una compañía creada en 1991, como resultado, de dos años de trabajo en el desarrollo de un Software para Punto de Venta, llamado desde entonces "FOURGEN POS", el cual fue diseñado bajo el sistema operativo UNIX, y con la base de datos INFORMIX.

Desde entonces pertenece al sector de la informática y se ha dedicado a brindar soluciones para el manejo de la administración total de la información en el punto de venta, a través de sus tres actividades básicas:

Comercial: En lo que tiene que ver con la venta y distribución de los productos.

Productiva: En el desarrollo de software.

Servicios: La empresa presta servicios en consultaría, instalación, capacitación, soporte, mantenimiento y reparación.

Hoy por hoy, es la mayor empresa Colombiana enfocada 100% a brindar Soluciones para de Puntos de Venta, con mas de 4,000 licencias instaladas, en mas de 500 clientes a lo largo y ancho del territorio colombiano, además de otras instalaciones en Venezuela, Ecuador y Pamama.

La empresa se encuentra posicionada en Colombia como el líder de soluciones POS (Punto de Venta) en cadenas de almacenes de 1 a 4 puestos de pago y almacenes entre 5 y 50 puestos de pago.

En 1996 se asocio con la compañía americana MSS Global Inc. para desarrollar y comercializar "RETAIL - Una Solución POS en Microsoft". Después de analizar y mejorar la funcionalidad de la aplicación y pensando en las necesidades de los diferentes usuarios, en 1998 empezó su comercialización en nuestro país, teniendo una alta acogida y con mucho éxito, reemplazando las ASP, basado como el mejoramiento del producto Fourgen POS.

En la actualidad también cuenta con la solución líder en el sector de Comidas Rápidas, Restaurantes, Bares y Discotecas, ALOHA, la cual también localiza y hoy es su mejor representante en Suramérica. Así mismo para lograr proveer una solución integral a los clientes, cuenta además, con la distribución directa de

fabricantes como ELO, Microtouch, HP, IBM, NCR, EPSON, PSC, Metrología, Preh, MMF.

En el 2003 se asocio con la catalogada como mejor empresa de servicios públicos (Agua, Energía, Gas, Teléfono) de Latinoamérica "Empresas Publicas de Medellín EPM" quien es líder también en telecomunicaciones para ofrecer un producto maduro a un mercado muy interesante (Segmento medio y bajo) con un potencia de mas de 200,000 establecimientos comerciales, con el cual el servicio de ASP les permitirá a los clientes enfocarse mejor en sus negocios, tener siempre la información a la mano para la toma de decisiones y a unos costos menores.

Sistemas Fourgen tiene grandes negocios con los cuales ha sostenido proyectos de gran envergadura a nivel nacional en diferentes puntos de venta. Además vale la pena resaltar que tiene cobertura a nivel nacional desde los llanos hasta el Chocó y desde Leticia hasta la Guajira.

Cuenta con personal calificado y capacitado, fundamentado en valores como el compromiso y la honestidad, con el fin de garantizar al cliente calidad, excelente servicio y la mejor solución.", Hoy tienen un equipo de mas de 100 profesionales altamente capacitados y calificados, en las diferentes áreas de la compañía como son Comercial, Administrativo y de Servicios el cual cubre las áreas de Capacitación, Instalación, Soporte, Help-Desk, Desarrollo de Software, Reparaciones de HW, Servicio al Cliente e Investigación de nuevas tecnologías, para garantizarles a nuestros clientes lo ultimo de la tecnología en Hardware y Software.”<sup>1</sup>

## **3.2. DIRECCIONAMIENTO ESTRATÉGICO SISTEMAS FOURGEN S.A.**

### **3.2.1. Actividad**

En Sistemas Fourgen se desarrolla dos actividades empresariales fundamentales como son:

- a. Comercial: En la Venta y Distribución de nuestros productos
- b. De Servicios: En Consultoría, Instalación, Capacitación, Soporte, Mantenimiento y Reparación.

La compañía busca la diferenciación por medio de los servicios, en donde debemos tender a ser siempre los mejores.

### **3.2.2. Sector**

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<sup>1</sup> Tomado de la página: [http://www.fourgen.com.co/01-compania/quienes\\_somos\\_3.htm](http://www.fourgen.com.co/01-compania/quienes_somos_3.htm)

La Empresa pertenece al sector de Informática

### **3.2.3. Necesidad fundamental a satisfacer**

La Empresa satisface fundamentalmente la necesidad de ADMINISTRACIÓN TOTAL DE LA INFORMACIÓN EN EL PUNTO DE VENTA.

### **3.2.4. Productos**

Sistemas Fourgen Produce y Comercializa los siguientes productos:

- a. Software: Para la Administración de Puntos de Venta
- b. Hardware: Computadores y Periféricos para Punto de Venta
- c. Servicios: En Consultoría, Instalación, Capacitación, Soporte, Mantenimiento y Reparación.

### **3.2.5. Clientes**

La orientación estratégica de Clientes a quienes se considera importante vincular los esfuerzos de la empresa, están determinados por:

- Segmento Bajo: de 1 a 4 usuarios o licencias independiente del numero de sitios.
- Segmento Medio Bajo: de 5 a 10 usuarios o licencias independiente del numero de sitios.
- Segmento Medio Medio: de 11 a 24 usuarios o licencias independiente del numero de sitios.
- Segmento Medio alto: de 25 a 49 usuarios o licencias independiente del número de sitios.
- Segmento Alto: más de 50 licencias o licencias independiente del numero de sitios.

### **3.2.6. Mercado**

Sistemas Fourgen desarrolla su actividad ante clientes ubicados en el contexto Nacional.

En el corto Plazo, nuestras aspiraciones y potencialidades están vinculadas a la participación en el contexto Latinoamericano.

### **3.2.7. Factores claves de éxito**

Son considerados como Factores Distintivos, aquellos en los que la Empresa destinará importantes recursos, esfuerzos y conocimientos para que en su desarrollo y mejoramiento, sean vinculados a través de la estrategia empresarial como son los factores:

- a. Personal Capacitado
- b. Mentalidad hacia la Innovación
- c. Capacidad de Respuesta Inmediata
- d. Soluciones de Calidad en Informática
- e. Actualización Tecnológica
- f. Cobertura de Servicios y Comercialización
- g. Respaldo y Garantía de los Productos y Servicios
- h. Empaquetamiento de los Productos y Servicios
- i. Infraestructura de Servicios.

Hacen parte de la Misión los siguientes factores:

- a. Mentalidad hacia la Innovación
- b. Capacidad de Respuesta Inmediata
- c. Soluciones de Calidad en Informática

### **3.2.8. Tecnología**

Apoya el crecimiento y desarrollo de la Empresa a través del liderazgo y profundo conocimiento de las siguientes Tecnologías:

- a. Dura: Equipos y Herramientas especializadas para la optimización en la Administración de la Información haciendo uso de la más alta Tecnología.
- b. Blanda: Conocimientos y Habilidades especializadas en Información aplicadas a soluciones en Punto de Venta.

Otras Tecnologías de apoyo que generarán Alto nivel de Especialización en la empresa son:

- a. Conocimientos en Informática y Nuevas Tecnologías
- b. Gerencia de Proyectos
- c. Sistemas de Control y de Medición Organizacional
- d. Sistemas de Comercialización en Punto de Venta
- e. Gerencia del Servicio
- f. Control de la Calidad

### **3.2.9. Grupos de Interés**

En el desarrollo de su estrategia empresarial, vinculan selectiva y prioritariamente los siguientes Grupos de Interés:

- a. Clientes
- b. Proveedores
- c. Distribuidores
- d. Empleados
- e. Gobierno
- f. Aliados de Negocios
- g. Competidores
- h. Entidades Financieras
- i. Familia de los Empleados
- j. Instituciones de Educación
- k. Asesores y Consultores Empresariales
- l. Instituciones Gremiales

Harán parte en la definición de su Misión los siguientes Grupos de Interés:

- a. Empleados
- b. Clientes
- c. Proveedores y
- d. Distribuidores

### **3.2.10. Valores**

Serán los valores más representativos de la actuación, desempeño y comportamiento de las personas que hacen parte de esta organización los siguientes:

- a. Compromiso
- b. Respeto
- c. Cumplimiento
- d. Respaldo
- e. Honestidad
- f. Confianza
- g. Trabajo en Equipo
- h. Calidad
- i. Servicio y
- j. Perseverancia

Harán parte de su definición de Valores en la Misión de la Empresa, los siguientes:

- a. Honestidad
- b. Compromiso

- c. Calidad y
- d. Servicio

### 3.2.11. Código de ética

Sistemas Fourgen S.A. fundamenta su actuación en el respeto a los derechos humanos, a la vida y la libertad de expresión y se encuentra comprometida con el fomento de la paz en nuestra ciudad y país.

De la misma forma se compromete a brindarle a cada uno de sus trabajadores las mismas oportunidades independiente de su religión, raza, sexo, estado civil, edad, nacionalidad, condición social o ideología política.

Sistemas Fourgen S.A. mantiene relaciones transparentes y honestas con sus empleados, proveedores, clientes, competidores, accionistas, gobierno y sociedad en general y por ende rechaza cualquier intento de soborno o competencia desleal.

### 3.2.12. Misión

*En Sistemas Fourgen, empresa **Internacional** del sector informática, estamos **comprometidos** con nuestros clientes en el cumplimiento de nuestros compromisos, a través de productos de **tecnología de punta** de la más alta **calidad**, garantizando así mismo la prestación de servicios asociados a través de personal altamente **calificado e idóneo**, manteniendo un **desarrollo tecnológico** para nuestros clientes, asegurándoles un beneficio al igual que para nuestros empleados y accionistas.*

### 3.2.13. Visión

*Sistemas Fourgen será una **Organización Internacional**, con la mejor **calidad en Servicio**, altamente especializada en **soluciones para el comercio y la hospitalidad**, que generara el mayor valor agregado acorde con las expectativas de los clientes, las nuevas **propuestas tecnológicas** y la **productividad** esperada de nuestras soluciones.*

### 3.2.14. Política de Calidad

*Proporcionamos a nuestros clientes tanto internos como externos productos y servicios que cumplan con sus **necesidades y expectativas**, **garantizando la calidad como un compromiso diario**, incorporando **conocimiento** y tecnología que satisfaga las necesidades del mercado.*

*Contamos con personal **calificado y capacitado**, fundamentado en valores como el **compromiso y la honestidad**, con el fin de garantizar al cliente **calidad, excelente servicio y la mejor solución**.*

### **3.2.15. Objetivo corporativo**

*Lograr el **reconocimiento y valoración** de nuestros productos y servicios diferenciales por parte de los clientes.*

## **3.3. CULTURA Y DESEMPEÑO ORGANIZACIONAL**

### **3.3.1. Concepto general de Cultura**

En forma general, el diccionario de la Real Academia de la Lengua Española define la cultura como “Conjunto de modos de vida y costumbres, conocimientos y grado de desarrollo artístico, científico, industrial, en una época, grupo social, etc.” Por otra parte, enmarcada en un contexto popular, este mismo diccionario postula la definición de cultura como un “conjunto de las manifestaciones en que se expresa la vida tradicional de un pueblo.”

El término CULTURA proviene del latín, e inicialmente se utilizaba para designar el cultivo de los campos. Posteriormente, hacia el siglo XVI, se usaba para referirse al cultivo de cualquier facultad y en el siglo de las Luces (siglo XVIII) fue cuando tomó el sentido figurado del “cultivo del espíritu”, llegando a considerarse como el estado de la mente humana, de manera que algunos de los pensadores de la época la veían como un fenómeno natural distintivo de los seres humanos, respecto al resto de los animales. La cultura era entonces entendida como un conjunto de conocimientos acumulados por la humanidad a lo largo de la historia, independientemente de variables como la etnia, ubicación o época.

Durante el siglo XIX el término fue tomando importancia para las emergentes disciplinas sociales, de manera que hacia el año 1.871, Edward B. Tylor, publicó una de las definiciones más aceptadas de cultura que elevó el término como materia de estudio sistemático:

“...aquel todo complejo que incluye el conocimiento, las creencias, el arte, la moral, el derecho, las costumbres, y cualesquiera otros hábitos y capacidades adquiridos por el hombre. La situación de la cultura en las diversas sociedades de la especie humana, en la medida en que puede ser investigada según principios generales, es un objeto apto para el estudio de las leyes del pensamiento y la acción del hombre.”

A partir de este momento, muchas disciplinas comenzaron a estudiar a profundidad el término en contextos sociales, ecológicos, etc, hasta que hacia finales del siglo XX, Schein se refirió a la cultura como un “patrón de supuestos

básicos que un grupo dado ha inventado, descubierto, o desarrollado mientras aprende a enfrentar sus problemas de adaptación externa y de integración interna, y que ha funcionado tan bien para ser considerado válido, y que por lo tanto, se enseña a los nuevos miembros como la manera correcta de percibir, pensar y sentir en relación con esos problemas”.

De esta manera, queda claro que la cultura se basa en un conjunto de creencias y supuestos adoptados por un grupo social, los cuales determinan su interacción con el entorno.

### **3.3.2. Cultura Organizacional**

La cultura organizacional, en términos generales, se entiende como un conjunto de valores, normas y creencias compartidos por los miembros de una organización en el cual se basan las interacciones entre ellos y con su entorno como organización. Sin embargo, esta cultura es dinámica y está en constante transformación, de lo cual depende su supervivencia en un mercado globalizado como el que enfrentan las organizaciones hoy en día.

En este contexto, en 1990 Denison afirmó que “la cultura organizacional aporta los valores, creencias y principios que sirven como fundamento para el sistema gerencial de una organización, como también los comportamientos y prácticas que tanto ejemplifican como refuerzan esos valores, creencias y principios básicos. Tanto estos como los comportamientos o prácticas permanecen porque tienen sentido para los miembros de una organización.”

Los líderes de las organizaciones tienen, por tanto, un papel fundamental en la construcción y administración de la cultura corporativa a favor del logro de las metas esperadas, pues ellos pueden definir planes y tomar cursos de acción orientados a fortalecer los aspectos menos desarrollados de la cultura para potencializar y mejorar significativamente el desempeño de la organización tanto en áreas específicas como a nivel general frente a los retos del entorno.

### **3.3.3. Concepto de Desempeño**

De acuerdo con el Diccionario de la Real Academia de la lengua Española, este concepto consiste en la acción de cumplir y ejercer las obligaciones inherentes a una profesión, oficio o actividad. Así, al hablar de desempeño organizacional, nos referimos a la capacidad corporativa de cumplir con las obligaciones adquiridas con los diferentes grupos de interés, en términos de rentabilidad, bienestar, crecimiento, etc.

Para este trabajo de investigación, se analizó un conjunto particular de indicadores de desempeño organizacional, que serán descritos en detalle posteriormente.



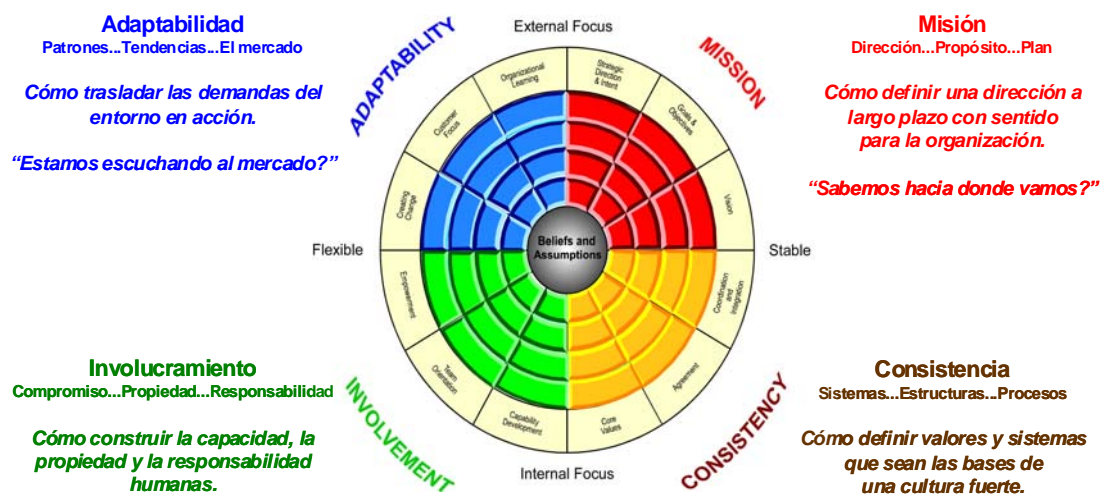
### 3.3.4. Relaciones entre Cultura y Desempeño Organizacional

En el entendido de que la cultura de una organización determina la forma como sus miembros interactúan con el entorno, durante años muchos autores han planteado que la cultura puede entonces favorecer comportamientos que refuerzan, definan y mejoren el desempeño corporativo en ciertos factores o variables críticas, marcando así la diferencia entre organizaciones exitosas y no exitosas.

Para corroborar estas afirmaciones, muchos investigadores organizacionales han encontrado relaciones entre la cultura y el crecimiento (Calori y Sarnin, 1991), el desempeño global (Denison, 1990) y más aún, en aspectos de tipo individual como el compromiso hacia la empresa ((O'Reilly, 1991). De hecho, en 1992, Kotter y Heskett encontraron que las organizaciones con culturas muy consolidadas y fuertes, alcanzaban mayores niveles de retorno sobre la inversión, mayores ingresos y cambios positivos en el precio de las acciones.

### 3.4. MODELO DE CULTURA ORGANIZACIONAL DE DENISON

El modelo de diagnóstico cultural de Denison busca identificar la influencia de la cultura en el desempeño organizacional con base en un conjunto de características culturales básicas ya identificadas, que parecen tener el mayor impacto en el desempeño. El modelo parte de la base de que la cultura está definida por una serie de creencias y supuestos arraigados en los miembros de la organización, que influyen el nivel de desarrollo de las cuatro características culturales de involucramiento, consistencia, adaptabilidad y sentido de misión.



La información relevante para el estudio es recopilada a través de una encuesta que mide cada una de estas características a través de tres índices, que a su vez son medidos mediante cinco ítems por cada índice, incorporados en la encuesta.



### 3.4.1. Involucramiento

Las organizaciones efectivas empoderan a su gente, la orientan al trabajo en equipo y desarrollan capacidades humanas en todos sus colaboradores. Cuando hay un alto nivel de involucramiento, los empleados están comprometidos, tienen un gran sentido de pertenencia y están convencidos de que su trabajo constituye un aporte importante para el logro de los objetivos de la empresa. En el modelo, el involucramiento se mide con base en los siguientes tres índices:

- ✚ **Empoderamiento:** los empleados tienen autoridad, iniciativa y capacidad para gerenciar su propio trabajo, de manera que existe un gran sentido de pertenencia y responsabilidad en toda la organización.
- ✚ **Orientación de Equipo:** el trabajo cooperativo y en equipo para el logro de los objetivos es valorado por todos los miembros de la organización. La empresa confía en que sus colaboradores trabajan en equipo para hacer las cosas bien.
- ✚ **Desarrollo de capacidades:** la empresa invierte constantemente en desarrollar las habilidades y capacidades de su equipo humano para

mantenerse competitiva y encontrar nuevas necesidades y oportunidades de negocio.

Desde el punto de vista del método, se entiende que entre mayor sea la autonomía y responsabilidad de cada colaborador en su trabajo, entre más y mejor desarrolladas estén sus habilidades para llevar a cabo su labor y entre más valor aporte como parte de un equipo efectivo para el alcance de los objetivos, más involucrado estará con la empresa y por lo tanto, más dispuesto a generar los resultados esperados y aún más, a excederlos.

### 3.4.2. Consistencia

Las investigaciones demuestran que las empresas consistentes y bien integradas, también son altamente efectivas; es decir, las organizaciones donde las personas basan sus comportamientos en un conjunto de valores fundamentales, donde tanto los líderes como los colaboradores están dispuestos a generar acuerdos aún en los momentos críticos y las actividades para el logro de los objetivos están correctamente coordinadas e integradas, tienen, obviamente, una cultura más fuerte y desarrollada que aquellas que carecen de estos rasgos distintivos. En el modelo se mide la consistencia mediante los siguientes índices:

- ✚ **Valores fundamentales:** todos los miembros de la organización comparten y creen en un conjunto de valores que constituyen la identidad de la organización.
- ✚ **Acuerdos:** los miembros de la organización están en total capacidad de llegar a acuerdos en momentos críticos y reconciliar grandes diferencias cuando éstas ocurren.
- ✚ **Coordinación e Integración:** las diferentes unidades y funciones de la organización pueden trabajar en conjunto de manera sinérgica para el logro de las metas comunes.

En otras palabras, a la luz del método se puede evidenciar la consistencia cuando, en general, quienes forman parte de la organización tienen en común un código de conducta establecido, están dispuestos a negociar de manera beneficiosa para todos y para la organización los aspectos críticos y entienden que forman parte de una cadena que debe funcionar perfectamente coordinada para alcanzar en forma efectiva las metas fijadas, independientemente de las diferencias, dificultades o amenazas que existan en razón a motivos de origen interno o externo que puedan afectar el desempeño de la organización.

### 3.4.3. Adaptabilidad

Paradójicamente, algunas veces las organizaciones mejor integradas internamente, pueden llegar a ser las más difíciles de cambiar, de modo que la

integración interna y la adaptación externa, pueden estar en lados opuestos. Las organizaciones adaptables son dirigidas por sus clientes, toman riesgos, aprenden de sus errores y están en capacidad de generar los cambios. Constantemente mejoran su capacidad de agregar valor para los clientes y tienen aumentos tanto en sus ingresos como en su participación de mercado. Los índices que miden la adaptabilidad de una organización son:

- ✚ **Creación del cambio:** la organización es capaz de crear formas de afrontar las necesidades de cambio, de leer los mensajes del ambiente del negocio, reaccionar rápidamente a las tendencias y anticiparse a futuros cambios.
- ✚ **Enfoque al cliente:** la organización entiende y reacciona a las demandas de sus clientes y se anticipa a sus futuras necesidades, lo cual refleja el grado en el que la organización está enfocada en satisfacerlos.
- ✚ **Aprendizaje Organizacional:** la organización recibe, traduce e interpreta las señales del entorno y las convierte en oportunidades para fomentar la innovación, el conocimiento y el desarrollo de habilidades.

Para poder medir la adaptabilidad de la organización, es necesario analizar hasta qué punto es pionera en ideas y valores agregados para el mercado, qué tanto se ocupa de escuchar, conocer, entender y satisfacer las necesidades cambiantes de sus clientes y uno de los medidores más importantes de la adaptabilidad: qué tanto INNOVA en su quehacer y en su oferta de valor hacia el mercado. Visto de otra forma, en el contexto del método Denison, las organizaciones altamente adaptables siempre van un paso delante de la competencia.

#### 3.4.4. Misión

Quizá el distintivo cultural más importante de todos es el sentido de misión, pues las organizaciones que no saben con certeza a dónde se dirigen, generalmente terminan en otra parte. Las organizaciones exitosas poseen un claro sentido de propósito y dirección que define sus metas y objetivos estratégicos y expresa la visión de la empresa a futuro. Por eso, cuando la misión básica de una organización cambia, se requieren otros cambios a nivel de estructura, de estrategia, de cultura y de comportamiento que deben ser acompañados por un liderazgo contundente que defina la cultura necesaria para soportar la nueva visión. En este modelo, la misión está definida por los siguientes índices:

- ✚ **Dirección e intención estratégica:** una intención estratégica clara lleva consigo un propósito definido para la organización y deja clara la forma en que cada miembro de la organización debe contribuir al logro de la meta.
- ✚ **Metas y objetivos:** un conjunto de metas y objetivos definido puede asociarse a la misión, la visión y la estrategia y le da a cada uno una dirección concreta en su trabajo.

- ✚ **Visión:** La organización tiene una visión compartida del estado futuro deseado. Ésta incorpora los valores fundamentales y captura el compromiso de los colaboradores mientras que provee de guía y dirección.

En este sentido, la característica cultural de MISIÓN se ve reforzada y evidenciada cuando todos los colaboradores tienen plenamente claro el norte de la organización en el corto, mediano y largo plazo en lo que tiene que ver con su desempeño y su responsabilidad hacia sus clientes, sus competidores, sus empleados y accionistas. Si en la cultura organizacional hay claridad sobre la misión, todos los colaboradores conocen la forma como deben contribuir al alcance de cada una de las metas fijadas, con roles y tareas medibles encaminados a llegar exactamente al punto en el futuro donde se ha propuesto estar la organización. Quizás es en esta característica es donde mayor incidencia tienen las demás, pues tratándose de definir el norte y las metas específicas, se debe contar con el involucramiento de la gente, la consistencia misma de la empresa y la capacidad de adaptación de todos los miembros, para reorientar exitosamente los esfuerzos y tomar el nuevo rumbo garantizando los resultados.

### 3.5. ADMINISTRACIÓN DE TENSIONES CULTURALES

Al igual que muchos otros modelos de liderazgo y efectividad, el modelo Denison se enfoca en algunas tensiones o contradicciones que deben ser administradas. En este modelo, se analizan las tensiones entre estabilidad y flexibilidad y entre el ambiente interno y externo. De igual forma son consideradas las tensiones “diagonales” del modelo; por una parte, la contradicción entre **consistencia interna** y **adaptación externa**, y por otra, la contradicción entre **misión** e **involucramiento**. Para las organizaciones resulta muy difícil lograr un equilibrio entre estos aspectos, razón por la cual es normal encontrar que cuando una empresa está altamente integrada y controlada, le es difícil enfocarse en el cliente y, de la misma forma, aquellas organizaciones con un fuerte enfoque de visión, tienen dificultades para alcanzar altos niveles de involucramiento. Por lo tanto, el reto es lograr que todas las características culturales tengan el grado adecuado de desarrollo.

### 3.6. CREENCIAS Y SUPUESTOS

El modelo se basa en el conjunto de creencias y supuestos que tienen los empleados, el mercado, los clientes y la industria, con respecto a la organización, los cuales le dan a ésta un sentido lógico, aunque en la práctica son muy difíciles de medir. Por esta razón, un cambio radical de la empresa, implica la

transformación no solo de la organización, sino también del conjunto de creencias y supuestos que la soportan y, por ende, de la cultura organizacional. Para esto, y con el fin de contribuir en el proceso de diagnóstico y al mejor desempeño de las compañías, este modelo presenta una combinación de las acciones gerenciales, las características culturales y los supuestos que la fundamentan.

#### **4. METODOLOGÍA**

Tal como se mencionó anteriormente, la metodología utilizada para esta investigación de tipo descriptivo, se basa en el Modelo de Cultura Organizacional de Denison y la encuesta que lo fundamenta.

Teniendo en cuenta que la organización cuenta con 100 empleados, se consideró pertinente aplicar la encuesta a todos ellos, por tratarse de un número de personas manejable para los efectos del estudio y porque el hecho de aplicarla a toda la población garantiza la fiabilidad de los resultados.

Debido a que el personal de la empresa está distribuido en otras ciudades además de Bogotá, la encuesta fue aplicada mediante el envío de ésta por correo electrónico a todos los colaboradores, direccionada desde la Gerencia Administrativa, explicando la finalidad de la misma. La recopilación de las encuestas diligenciadas se llevó a cabo en un transcurso de aproximadamente 2 meses, al final de los cuales se procedió a tabular las respuestas utilizando el formato establecido para el estudio que se viene realizando en la Universidad de la Sabana, en el cual se resumen los resultados con base en la estadística descriptiva, con el fin de mostrar las percepciones de los colaboradores y las características culturales, demográficas y de innovación presentes en la organización.

## **5. EXPOSICIÓN, ANÁLISIS Y DISCUSIÓN DE RESULTADOS DE LA INVESTIGACIÓN**

### **5.1. CARACTERÍSTICAS DEMOGRÁFICAS DE LA ORGANIZACIÓN EN ESTUDIO**

A continuación se presentan las principales características demográficas evidenciadas en la encuesta realizada en Sistemas Fourgen S.A.

- ✚ Aproximadamente el 73% de los empleados de la organización se encuentran entre los 20 y los 40 años de edad, lo cual indica que en general, la empresa está conformada por personas jóvenes.
- ✚ Hay un equilibrio entre la presencia de hombres y mujeres dentro de la organización.
- ✚ El 67% de los colaboradores de la empresa tienen un nivel de formación técnico o profesional, mientras que un 14% de ellos tienen estudios de posgrado.
- ✚ El 33% de la población pertenece a las áreas de Ingeniería y montaje e Investigación y desarrollo, que al interior de la organización están estructuradas como una sola área de Servicios. De otra parte el 36% forma parte del área de Mercadeo y Ventas.
- ✚ De acuerdo con las respuestas obtenidas, en forma general, los empleados de la organización están distribuidos así: un 52% forma parte del nivel no gerencial, 19% están en la gerencia media, el 13% constituye la gerencia de línea, el 4,2% de ellos conforman el nivel gerencial ejecutivo, el 2% compone la presidencia y vicepresidencia de la organización y un 8% no respondió en concreto a esta pregunta.
- ✚ El 45% de los colaboradores de esta organización, tiene una antigüedad de entre 1 y 4 años en la empresa, mientras que el 25% de ellos lleva menos de un año trabajando con Sistemas Fourgen S.A.

### **5.2. PERFIL CULTURAL DE LA ORGANIZACIÓN EN ESTUDIO**

#### **5.2.1. Características básicas y sesgos culturales**

En el gráfico que se muestra a continuación, se presentan los promedios agregados de las cuatro características básicas y los cuatro sesgos de la cultura organizacional de la empresa Sistemas Fourgen S.A. El valor obtenido para cada característica, corresponde al promedio de los índices evaluados, mientras que la calificación de los cuatro sesgos corresponde al promedio de las dos características que los definen; así, por ejemplo, el valor obtenido para el sesgo



ESTABILIDAD, es el promedio entre los valores de las características MISIÓN Y CONSISTENCIA.

		<i>Foco Externo</i> 3,46	
	<u>ADAPTABILIDAD</u> 3,38		<u>MISION</u> 3,55
<i>Flexibilidad</i> 3,44		<i>Creencias y Supuestos</i>	<i>Estabilidad</i> 3,47
	<u>INVOLUCRAMIENTO</u> 3,49		<u>CONSISTENCIA</u> 3,40
		<i>Foco Interno</i> 3,45	

Pese a que todos promedios se encuentran en un rango de valores más bien reducido, se resalta la característica cultural MISIÓN como la de mayor fuerza dentro de la organización. Esto significa que la empresa tiene definido un norte a largo plazo y que está claro para los individuos cuál es la visión a futuro y los objetivos estratégicos establecidos por la alta dirección.

Por otra parte, la segunda característica cultural de mayor relevancia es el involucramiento, lo cual demuestra que en Sistemas Fourgen S.A., existe un nivel importante de empoderamiento en las personas, así como una fuerte orientación al trabajo en equipo y una disposición manifiesta al desarrollo de capacidades humanas individuales. Es decir, los colaboradores de esta organización parecen estar comprometidos en el logro de las metas y objetivos de la empresa.

En cuanto a los sesgos de la cultura, se puede concluir, con base en los resultados obtenidos, que hay un equilibrio ente estabilidad, flexibilidad, foco interno y foco externo.

### 5.2.2. Características culturales e índices evaluados

CARÁCTERÍSTICA	PROMEDIO
INVOLUCRAMIENTO	3,49
CONSISTENCIA	3,40
ADAPTABILIDAD	3,38
MISIÓN	3,55
<b>GRAN PROMEDIO</b>	<b>3,46</b>

Tabla 1. Características culturales en Sistemas Fourgen S.A.

Con base en la tabla anterior, se puede observar que, tal como se comprobó anteriormente, la característica de MISIÓN es la que tiene mayor arraigo en la empresa en estudio, mientras que la menos desarrollada en esta empresa, es la característica de ADAPTABILIDAD, la cual es muy necesaria en un entorno de rápidos cambios como el que enfrentan las organizaciones actualmente. De esta manera, se llega a una valoración promedio de **3,46** para el perfil cultural de Sistemas Fourgen S.A, resultante de promediar los valores obtenidos para las cuatro características principales. Para analizar más detalladamente estos resultados, a continuación se presentan los promedios obtenidos tanto a nivel de cada característica básica, como de los índices que las conforman.

<b>INVOLUCRAMIENTO</b>	<b>3,49</b>
FACULTAMIENTO	3,48
ORIENTACIÓN AL EQUIPO	<b>3,56</b>
DESARROLLO DE CAPACIDADES	<b>3,44</b>

**Tabla 2. Involucramiento y sus índices**

Tal como se analizó anteriormente, el involucramiento es la segunda característica cultural más fuerte al interior de la organización analizada. Los índices que componen esta característica son el facultamiento, la orientación al equipo y el desarrollo de capacidades. En este caso particular, la orientación al equipo es el índice que se encuentra más arraigado en las creencias y supuestos de los empleados de la empresa a todos los niveles.

<b>CONSISTENCIA</b>	<b>3,40</b>
VALORES CENTRALES-FUNDAMENTALES	<b>3,60</b>
ACUERDO	3,41
COORDINACIÓN E INTEGRACIÓN	<b>3,19</b>

**Tabla 3. Consistencia y sus índices**

Los índices que determinan la característica cultural de la consistencia son los valores centrales de la organización, la capacidad de generar acuerdos y la coordinación e integración de las diferentes funciones para alcanzar los objetivos colectivos. En Sistemas Fourgen, la consistencia está mayoritariamente determinada por los valores centrales en los cuales se basa el comportamiento de los miembros de la organización mientras que el índice menos favorable en términos de consistencia, es la coordinación e integración interna.

<b>ADAPTABILIDAD</b>	<b>3,38</b>
CREACIÓN DEL CAMBIO	<b>3,34</b>
ENFOQUE EN EL CLIENTE	3,35
APRENDIZAJE ORGANIZACIONAL	<b>3,45</b>

**Tabla 4. Adaptabilidad y sus índices**

La característica de la adaptabilidad, que le permite a la empresa responder a las demandas de su entorno en forma efectiva, está definida por su capacidad para crear el cambio, su enfoque en las necesidades de los clientes y su forma de traducir y capitalizar las señales del ambiente en el cual se desempeña; en este sentido, parece haber un equilibrio entre los tres índices, aunque el aprendizaje organizacional está en un nivel un poco más alto que los otros dos en la organización.

<b>MISIÓN</b>	<b>3,55</b>
DIRECCIÓN E INTENCIÓN ESTRATÉGICA	<b>3,66</b>
OBJETIVOS Y METAS	<b>3,66</b>
VISIÓN	<b>3,32</b>

**Tabla 5. Misión y sus índices**

La característica cultural de MISIÓN, tan marcada en la organización en estudio, se define con base en los índices: dirección e intención estratégica, objetivos y metas y visión. En Sistemas Fourgen S.A., encontramos que los individuos tienen clara la intención estratégica de la organización, así como las metas y objetivos comunes, de manera que cada cual entiende su contribución al logro de ellos.

Para consolidar el análisis de las características básicas de la cultura organizacional y establecer los índices con mayor y menor desarrollo alcanzado en este caso particular, se analizaron, independientemente de la característica que determinen, tanto los dos índices con los mayores promedios, como los dos con los promedios más bajos, encontrando que los índices con mayor promedio obtenido (3,66) son precisamente la **dirección estratégica** y los **objetivos y metas**, ambos relativos a la característica del sentido de misión.

Por otra parte, los índices con los valores más bajos fueron, en primer lugar, con un promedio de 3,19, la **coordinación e integración**, índice que marca el grado de consistencia de la organización, y en segundo lugar, la **visión** con un promedio de 3,32, que al igual que los dos índices mejor calificados, tiene influencia en el sentido de misión que poseen los colaboradores.

### **5.2.3. Índices evaluados e ítems**

Para alcanzar un mayor nivel de detalle en el análisis de los resultados en cuanto a las percepciones de los colaboradores de la empresa, se presentan a continuación los resúmenes de los promedios agregados obtenidos para cada característica, sus índices e ítems, haciendo hincapié en los ítems de mayor y menor promedio obtenidos para cada índice evaluado.

## ✚ INVOLUCRAMIENTO

<b>INVOLUCRAMIENTO</b>		<b>3,49</b>
<b>FACULTAMIENTO</b>		<b>3,48</b>
1. La mayoría de los empleados se involucran activamente en su trabajo.	3,79	MÁS ALTO
2. Las decisiones se toman en el nivel en donde se encuentra la información más adecuada.	3,21	MÁS BAJO
3. La información se comparte ampliamente para que esté disponible para todos cuando la necesiten.	3,54	
4. Todos piensan que pueden producir un impacto positivo.	3,52	
5. La planificación empresarial es un proceso continuo que involucra a todos en cierto grado.	3,33	
<b>ORIENTACIÓN AL EQUIPO</b>		<b>3,56</b>
6. Se alienta activamente la cooperación de todos en los diferentes niveles de la organización.	3,45	
7. Las personas trabajan en equipo.	3,64	
8. Las tareas se completan gracias al trabajo en equipo, no a la jerarquía o a los jefes que vigilan.	3,34	MÁS BAJO
9. Los equipos de trabajo son nuestros componentes primarios o básicos.	3,61	
10. El trabajo se organiza de forma que cada persona pueda ver la relación que existe entre sus funciones individuales y las metas de la organización.	3,77	MÁS ALTO
<b>DESARROLLO DE CAPACIDADES</b>		<b>3,44</b>
11. La autoridad se delega para que las personas puedan actuar por cuenta propia.	3,56	
12. La capacidad de las personas está mejorando constantemente.	3,83	MÁS ALTO
13. La empresa invierte continuamente para mejorar las destrezas de los empleados.	3,24	
14. Las capacidades de las personas son una fuente importante de ventajas para la empresa que le ayudan a competir mejor.	3,80	
15. A menudo ocurren problemas porque no tenemos las destrezas necesarias para realizar el trabajo.	2,75	MÁS BAJO

Tabla 6. Involucramiento: índices e ítems.

## CONSISTENCIA

<b>CONSISTENCIA</b>		<b>3,40</b>
<b>VALORES CENTRALES-FUNDAMENTALES</b>		<b>3,60</b>
16. Los líderes y gerentes hacen lo que dicen.	3,20	MÁS BAJO
17. Existe un estilo gerencial característico y un conjunto específico de prácticas gerenciales.	3,42	
18. Existe un conjunto de valores claros y consistentes que gobiernen nuestras prácticas empresariales.	3,53	
19. Si ignoramos nuestros valores básicos nos metemos en un aprieto.	3,78	
20. Existe un código de ética que guía nuestro comportamiento y nos indica lo que debemos y no debemos hacer.	4,05	MÁS ALTO
<b>ACUERDO</b>		<b>3,41</b>
21. Cuando hay desacuerdos, trabajamos con ahínco para obtener soluciones de beneficio mutuo.	3,72	MÁS ALTO
22. Existe una cultura sólida.	3,57	
23. Es fácil ponerse de acuerdo en la empresa incluso frente a problemas difíciles.	3,31	
24. A menudo tenemos problemas para llegar a un acuerdo sobre asuntos clave.	2,80	MÁS BAJO
25. Existe un acuerdo claro sobre la forma correcta e incorrecta de hacer las cosas.	3,65	
<b>COORDINACIÓN E INTEGRACIÓN</b>		<b>3,19</b>
26. La metodología que seguimos en nuestro negocio es consistente y predecible.	3,38	MÁS ALTO
27. Las personas que están en diferentes partes de la organización comparten una perspectiva común.	3,36	
28. Es fácil coordinar proyectos entre las diferentes partes de la organización.	2,93	MÁS BAJO
29. El trabajar con una persona que está en otra parte de esta organización es como trabajar con una persona de otra organización.	3,11	
30. Las metas están alineadas en todos los niveles.	3,17	

Tabla 7. Consistencia: índices e ítems

## ✚ ADAPTABILIDAD

<b>ADAPTABILIDAD</b>		<b>3,38</b>
<b>CREACIÓN DEL CAMBIO</b>		<b>3,34</b>
31. La forma de hacer las cosas es muy flexible y se puede cambiar fácilmente.		3,34
32. Respondemos bien a la competencia y a otros cambios en el entorno comercial.		3,72
33. Continuamente se adoptan métodos nuevos y mejorados para realizar el trabajo.		3,31
34. Generalmente hay resistencia a las iniciativas que surgen para realizar cambios.		2,80
35. Las diferentes partes de la organización generalmente cooperan entre sí para realizar cambios.		3,54
<b>ENFOQUE EN EL CLIENTE</b>		<b>3,35</b>
36. Los comentarios y recomendaciones de los clientes a menudo producen cambios.		3,28
37. Las sugerencias de los clientes influyen en nuestras decisiones.		3,45
38. Todos los miembros comprenden a fondo los deseos y las necesidades de los clientes.		3,16
39. Nuestras decisiones generalmente ignoran los intereses de los clientes.		3,18
40. Alentamos el contacto directo entre nuestra gente y los clientes.		3,70
<b>APRENDIZAJE ORGANIZACIONAL</b>		<b>3,45</b>
41. Vemos nuestras fallas como una oportunidad para aprender y mejorar.		4,15
42. Se alienta y recompensa el innovar y tomar riesgos.		3,16
43. Muchos detalles importantes pasan desapercibidos.		2,54
44. El aprendizaje es un objetivo importante en nuestras labores cotidianas.		4,13
45. Nos aseguramos de que "la mano derecha sepa lo que hace la izquierda".		3,28

**Tabla 8. Adaptabilidad: índices e ítems**

## ✚ MISIÓN

<b>MISIÓN</b>		<b>3,55</b>
<b>DIRECCIÓN E INTENCIÓN ESTRATÉGICA</b>		<b>3,66</b>
46. Existe dirección y un propósito a largo plazo.		3,73
47. Nuestra estrategia obliga a otras organizaciones a cambiar su método de competencia en la industria.		3,43
48. Existe una misión clara que le da significado y dirección a nuestro trabajo.		3,88
49. Existe una clara estrategia para el futuro.		3,88
50. No es clara nuestra dirección estratégica.		3,39
<b>OBJETIVOS Y METAS</b>		<b>3,66</b>
51. Existe un acuerdo generalizado sobre nuestras metas.		3,72
52. Nuestros líderes fijan metas ambiciosas, pero realistas.		3,69
53. Nuestra dirigencia ha comunicado oficialmente los objetivos que intentamos alcanzar.		3,54
54. Seguimos continuamente nuestro progreso en relación a las metas que hemos establecido.		3,71
55. Las personas comprenden lo que hay que hacer para que seamos exitosos a largo plazo.		3,66
<b>VISIÓN</b>		<b>3,32</b>
56. Compartimos una visión común acerca de cómo será la organización en el futuro.		3,62
57. Nuestros líderes tienen una visión a largo plazo.		3,95
58. Las ideas a corto plazo a menudo comprometen nuestra visión a largo plazo.		2,48
59. Nuestra visión estimula y motiva a nuestros empleados.		3,25
60. Cumplimos nuestras exigencias a corto plazo sin comprometer nuestra visión a largo plazo.		3,29

**Tabla 9. Misión: índices e ítems.**



### 5.3. PERFIL DE DESEMPEÑO DE LA ORGANIZACIÓN EN ESTUDIO

#### 5.3.1. Indicadores de Desempeño

La encuesta del método Denison también permite evaluar, a través de 7 preguntas, la percepción que los colaboradores de las organizaciones tienen respecto a 6 indicadores de desempeño críticos, así como del desempeño de la empresa a nivel global. La escala utilizada para la medición de estos indicadores determina si el desempeño es bajo (1 ó 2), promedio (3) o alto (4 ó 5). A continuación se presentan los promedios agregados de los indicadores de desempeño encontrados en Sistemas Fourgen S.A.:

INDICADOR DE DESEMPEÑO	PROMEDIO
1. Crecimiento en ventas e ingresos	3,58
2. Porcentaje de mercado	3,76
3. Rentabilidad y rendimiento del activo	3,71
<b>4. Calidad de productos y servicios</b>	<b>3,97</b>
5. Desarrollo de nuevos productos y/o servicios	3,67
<b>6. Satisfacción de los empleados</b>	<b>3,09</b>
7. Rendimiento general de la empresa	3,67
<b>DESEMPEÑO PROMEDIO</b>	<b>3,63</b>

Tabla 10. Perfil de desempeño de la empresa.

Tal como se puede observar en la tabla anterior, el indicador de desempeño con el mayor promedio obtenido (3,97) fue el de **Calidad de productos y servicios**, seguido por el *porcentaje de participación de mercado* calificado con un promedio de 3,76, lo cual es lógico ya que si la empresa ofrece productos que a los ojos del mercado son de buena calidad, un mayor número de clientes buscará adquirirlos y por ende, la organización tendrá mayor participación. En contraste, la **Satisfacción de los empleados** obtuvo la calificación más baja, con un promedio de 3,09, seguida por el *Crecimiento en ventas e ingresos* que alcanzó un promedio de 3,58, lo cual indica que aún cuando la participación del mercado parece estar a favor de la empresa, no se logra un aumento de los ingresos en la misma proporción, quizás influenciado por la baja satisfacción de los empleados, aspecto en el cual, al parecer, hacen falta mayores esfuerzos por parte de la organización.

En aras de analizar el aspecto de la innovación, cabe resaltar que, aún cuando la calidad de productos y servicios es el indicador más positivo en la organización, el desarrollo de nuevos productos y/o servicios aparece con la cuarta calificación, lo cual muestra que este factor tan importante para lograr el éxito en los actuales mercados globalizados, debería tener un mayor interés por parte de la empresa, contribuyendo así a un mejor desempeño a nivel general.

### 5.3.2. Correlación entre características culturales e indicadores de desempeño

A continuación se presentan las correlaciones entre los indicadores de desempeño y las características culturales en Sistemas Fourgen S.A. En primer lugar, todas las correlaciones obtenidas, son positivas, la más alta es de 0,47 y se dio en los siguientes casos:

- ✓ Entre el indicador *Participación de mercado* y la característica *Adaptabilidad*, indicando la capacidad de la empresa para ajustarse a las necesidades cambiantes del mercado, logrando resultados efectivos en términos de participación.
- ✓ Entre el indicador *Satisfacción de los empleados* y la característica *Adaptabilidad*, demostrando que entre mayor llegue a ser su capacidad de adaptación a la organización le será más fácil mantener la motivación y satisfacción de los empleados.
- ✓ Entre el indicador *Calidad de Productos y Servicios* y la característica *Involucramiento*; es decir, que la calidad de los productos y servicios que ofrece Sistemas Fourgen, está influenciada por el compromiso de sus colaboradores hacia la organización.

De acuerdo con el modelo de cultura de Denison, la adaptabilidad y el involucramiento definen el grado de FLEXIBILIDAD de la organización, el cual debería ser alto en este caso, teniendo en cuenta las características del negocio y el sector al cual pertenece la empresa objeto de estudio.

Por otra parte, la correlación más baja se dio entre el indicador *Desarrollo de nuevos productos/servicios* y la característica *Adaptabilidad*, seguida por la correlación entre el mismo indicador y las características *Consistencia* y *Misión*, que según el modelo definen qué tan estables son las organizaciones. Este contraste indica que el origen de las innovaciones en el portafolio que ofrece Sistemas Fourgen a sus clientes, no está concentrado en las características culturales de la empresa, aún perteneciendo al sector de la tecnología, lo cual validaremos en el análisis de las características de innovación, de acuerdo con los resultados de la encuesta.

INDICADORES AGREGADOS DE DESEMPEÑO	CARACTERÍSTICAS CULTURALES AGREGADAS	INVOLUCRAMIENTO	CONSISTENCIA	ADAPTABILIDAD	MISIÓN
Crecimiento en ventas e ingresos		0,46	0,42	0,42	0,42
Participación de mercado		0,46	0,39	0,47	0,41
Rentabilidad y rendimiento del activo		0,35	0,37	0,34	0,34
Calidad de productos y servicios		0,47	0,42	0,35	0,41
Desarrollo de nuevos productos y/o servicios		0,45	0,29	0,23	0,29
Satisfacción de los empleados		0,42	0,46	0,47	0,36
Desempeño general de la empresa		0,37	0,33	0,37	0,39

**Tabla 11. Tabla de correlaciones entre indicadores de desempeño y características culturales.**

#### 5.4. CARACTERÍSTICAS DE INNOVACIÓN

La Encuesta de Cultura Organizacional de Denison contiene un grupo de preguntas relacionadas con la percepción de los colaboradores respecto a las características de innovación de la organización. Para realizar un análisis detallado en este sentido, a continuación se presentan cada una de las preguntas de este grupo con sus posibles respuestas y un análisis de los resultados generales de la encuesta:

74	Usted cree que su empresa es	poco innovadora	medianamente innovadora	satisfactoriamente innovadora	altamente innovadora	la más innovadora del sector
		1	2	3	4	5

El 37% de los encuestados, considera que Sistemas Fourgen S.A. es una empresa satisfactoriamente innovadora, mientras que un 32% la ve como una empresa altamente innovadora. Sin embargo, un 4,1% de los colaboradores tiene una percepción negativa del desempeño innovador de la organización.

75	Usted piensa que la casilla que mejor describe donde se concentran las innovaciones de su empresa es	en procesos administrativos	en procesos productivos	en nuevos productos o servicios	en procesos administrativos y procesos productivos	en procesos administrativos y nuevos productos y servicios	en procesos productivos y nuevos productos y servicios
		1	2	3	4	5	6

El 46% de los empleados piensa que las innovaciones en Sistemas Fourgen se concentran en nuevos productos o servicios, seguidos de un 24% que considera que éstas están concentradas en los procesos administrativos y productivos. Por

otra parte, sólo un 1% de los encuestados creen que las innovaciones están básicamente en los procesos administrativos.

76	Usted piensa que las innovaciones en su empresa son	pocas de gran importancia	pocas de pequeña importancia	muchas de pequeña importancia	muchas de pequeña importancia y pocas de gran importancia	muchas de gran importancia
		1	2	3	4	5

Un 32% de los empleados piensa que la empresa realiza muchas innovaciones de gran importancia, un 26% considera que realiza muchas innovaciones de pequeña importancia y un 22%, que lleva a cabo pocas innovaciones de pequeña importancia.

77	Usted cree que las innovaciones de su empresa se originaron en	dentro de la empresa	fuera de la empresa	dentro y fuera de la empresa
		1	2	3

En este caso, un 78% de los colaboradores consideran que las innovaciones de la empresa se han generado tanto al interior como fuera de ella.

78	Usted cree que dentro de la empresa las innovaciones se originaron en	Directivas	Equipos de trabajo	Directivas y equipos de trabajo	Individuos	Equipos de trabajo e individuos	No se
		1	2	3	4	5	6

Un 37% de los encuestados cree que al interior de la empresa las innovaciones se originaron en directivas y equipos de trabajo, seguido de un 22% que considera que fueron originadas únicamente en los equipos de trabajo.

79	Usted cree que por fuera de la empresa las innovaciones de su empresa se originaron en	Proveedores	Clientes	Competencia	Consultores	Centros de desarrollo tecnológico	Otros
		1	2	3	4	5	6

El 58% de los colaboradores de Sistemas Fourgen considera que las innovaciones generadas fuera de la empresa, tuvieron origen en los clientes, mientras que el 19% de ellos cree que tuvieron origen en la competencia.

	Usted piensa que el impacto de las innovaciones que se generaron en cada área funcional de la empresa es:	Nulo	Poco	Medio	Satisfactorio	Excelente	No se
<b>80</b>	Finanzas y contabilidad	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>81</b>	Ingeniería y montaje	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>82</b>	Manufactura y producción	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>83</b>	Investigación y desarrollo	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>84</b>	Ventas y mercadeo	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>85</b>	Compras	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>86</b>	Recursos humanos	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>87</b>	Administración	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>88</b>	Personal de apoyo	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>89</b>	Asesoría profesional	1	2	3	4	5	6

El 57% de los encuestados piensan que el impacto de las innovaciones generadas en el área de Finanzas y contabilidad está entre medio y satisfactorio, pero el 20% considera que el impacto fue poco.

Más de un 85% de los empleados percibe que el impacto de las innovaciones originadas en el área de Ingeniería y montaje es medio o satisfactorio, mientras que un 2% de ellos considera que el impacto en esta área fue nulo.

Un 62,5% de los encuestados considera que el impacto de las innovaciones del área de Manufactura y producción es medio o satisfactorio, mientras que un 25% expresa no saber el nivel de impacto en esta área, lo cual se puede explicar en el hecho de que el negocio de la tecnología no tiene, propiamente un área de esta naturaleza.

El 69% de los colaboradores considera que el las innovaciones generadas por el área de Investigación y desarrollo tuvieron un impacto satisfactorio o excelente, mientras que un 22% percibe que este impacto tuvo un nivel medio. Es decir, más del 90% de los colaboradores de la empresa ven con buenos ojos las innovaciones generadas en esta área.

El 73% de los encuestados creen que las innovaciones del área de Ventas y mercadeo han tenido un efecto satisfactorio o excelente para la organización.

Casi un 70% de los encuestados tiene una percepción positiva del impacto que tienen las innovaciones generadas en el área de Compras, pues lo consideran medio o satisfactorio.

Aproximadamente un 64% de los colaboradores de Sistemas Fourgen S.A. consideran que las innovaciones del área de Recursos Humanos han tenido un impacto medio o satisfactorio para la empresa.

El 65% de los encuestados consideran que el impacto de las innovaciones originadas en la Administración ha sido medio o satisfactorio.

El 50% de los encuestados cree que las innovaciones generadas por el personal de apoyo han impactado medianamente o muy poco a la empresa. Sin embargo, el 34% de ellos, considera que estas innovaciones han tenido un impacto satisfactorio.

Un 68% de los empleados cree que las innovaciones originadas en la asesoría profesional externa, han impactado mediana o satisfactoriamente a Sistemas Fourgen.

## 6. CONCLUSIONES

- ✓ Los resultados de la encuesta muestran que Sistemas Fourgen tiene un alto sentido de misión y que posee facilidad para ejecutar las labores que la conduzcan al logro de su misión. Sin embargo, los ojos de la organización están aún enfocados en los logros de corto plazo.
- ✓ Sistemas Fourgen S.A., posee gran capacidad para captar y aprender las mejores prácticas en la industria y debe aprovechar esta capacidad para generar rápidamente los cambios y hacerlos evidentes para sus clientes, en aras de mejorar sus resultados.
- ✓ La organización posee una fuerte estructura de valores y una capacidad suficiente para alcanzar acuerdos en caso de presentarse conflictos, pero debe trabajar en el logro de una consistencia sostenible y permanente, pues la integración es clave para la estabilidad de la empresa.
- ✓ Sistemas Fourgen posee un conveniente equilibrio entre su enfoque de misión y el involucramiento de sus colaboradores, lo cual le permite garantizar que la gente está comprometida con un **objetivo común**.
- ✓ La empresa debería prestar mayor interés en desarrollar nuevos productos y servicios aprovechando su fortaleza en cuanto a la calidad del producto que ofrece y la creciente incorporación de tecnología en el mercado que atiende.

## 7. RECOMENDACIONES

- ✓ Al estar los ojos de la organización enfocados en el corto plazo, es recomendable mejorar la planificación y el enfoque a largo plazo, para garantizar el cumplimiento de las metas y objetivos esperados. Para esto, se sugiere que la gerencia lidere un proceso de revisar y replantear los objetivos de la empresa a largo plazo y establezca, en conjunto con sus colaboradores, tareas e indicadores puntuales que midan permanentemente el avance de la empresa hacia su meta de largo plazo. Esto permitirá que todos los colaboradores de la empresa estén enfocados en lograr la visión de futuro de la empresa, entendiendo que las actividades y tareas que se realicen y se midan serán parte de una carta de navegación que va a un único destino, y que no se trata de pequeñas metas aisladas.
- ✓ Aunque la organización está muy orientada al trabajo en equipo, es necesario fortalecer el desarrollo de capacidades y el empoderamiento para lograr un desempeño más efectivo de los equipos y que éstos aporten más valor a los resultados de la compañía. Esto se puede lograr mediante la definición de un programa de desarrollo de competencias individual, acorde con las funciones y necesidades de cada cargo, que permita llevar a todas las personas al pleno desarrollo de las capacidades y competencias para lograr el empoderamiento, tomar decisiones adecuadas, oportunas y trabajar en equipo productiva y eficientemente.
- ✓ Se recomienda hacer énfasis en la gestión por procesos, donde se definen claramente los roles y relaciones en un esquema de cliente interno para lograr una consistencia sostenible. Una buena forma de implementar la gestión por procesos, es basarse en el conjunto de normas ISO 9000, las cuales constituyen una guía muy contundente para lograr estandarizar la manera de actuar de la organización, dando uniformidad y consistencia a todas las actividades que se realizan y que tienen influencia directa o indirecta sobre el desempeño de la empresa ante sus clientes en términos de calidad y oportunidad tanto del producto como de los servicios que ofrece.
- ✓ Teniendo en cuenta que en Sistemas Fourgen, el nivel de Adaptabilidad tiene alta influencia en el desempeño de la empresa, es importante que la organización trabaje en fortalecer su capacidad de adaptación a los cambios del entorno para mejorar sus resultados tanto a nivel interno como externo. Entendiendo que la adaptabilidad es más requerida cuando se está reaccionando a los movimientos del mercado, sería recomendable fortalecer el área y la labor de mercadeo de la organización, en el sentido de generar estímulos hacia el mercado innovando con productos y servicios que agreguen

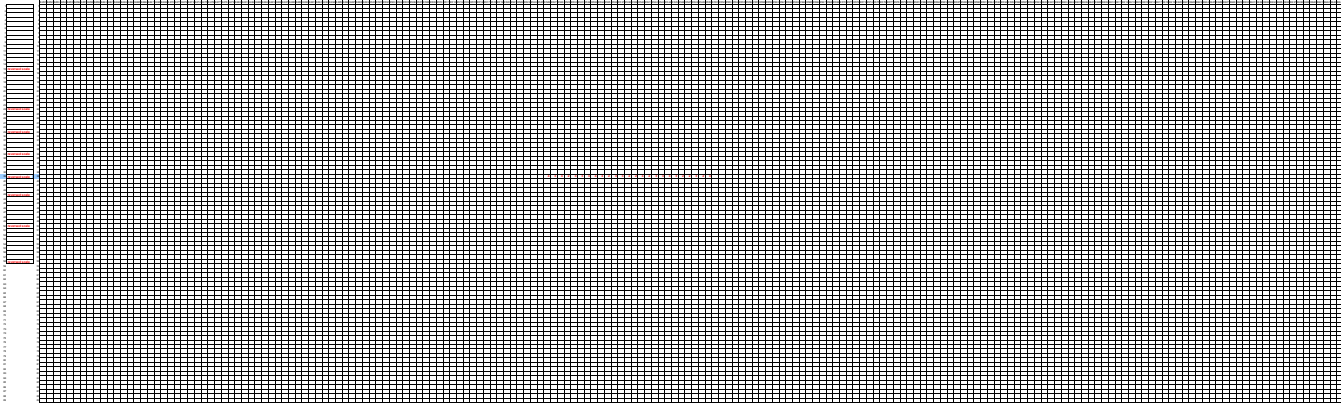
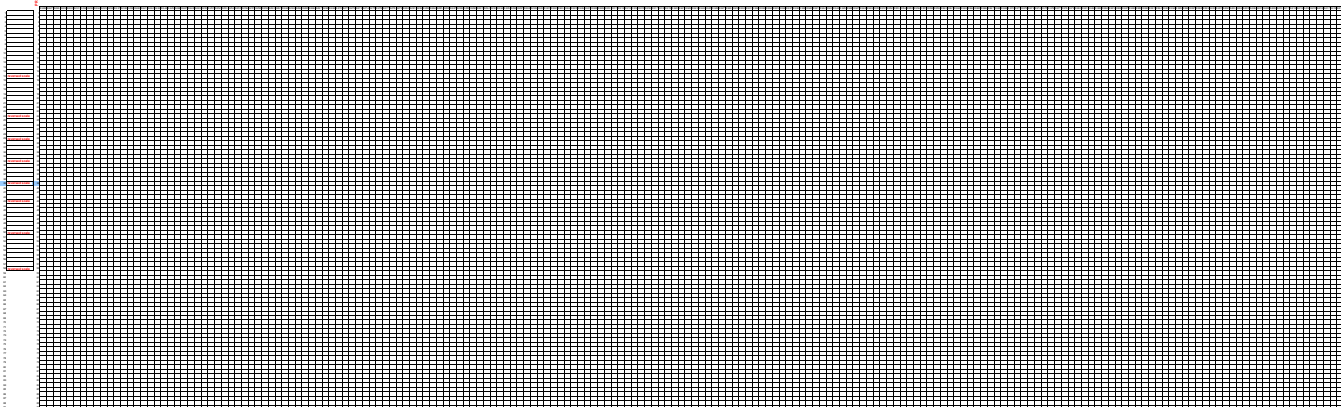
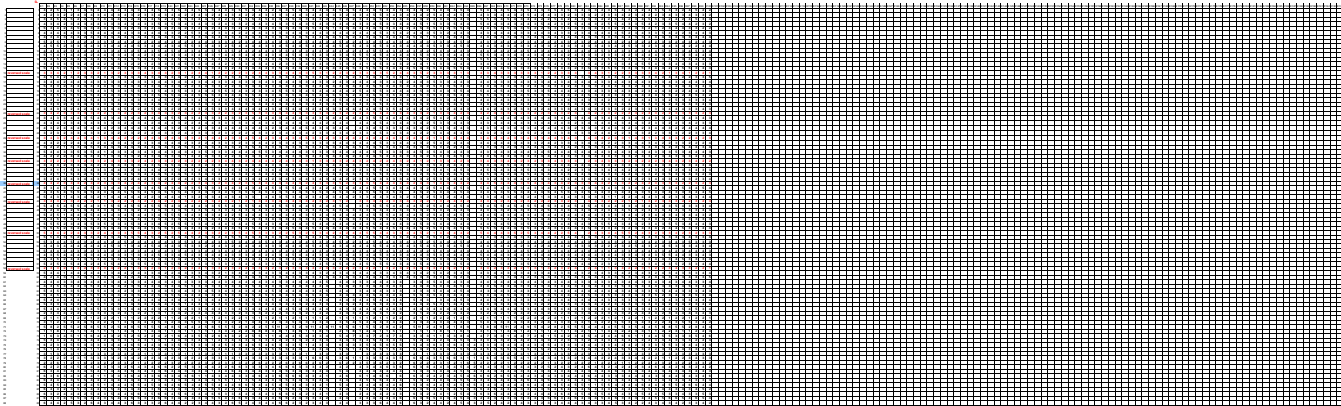


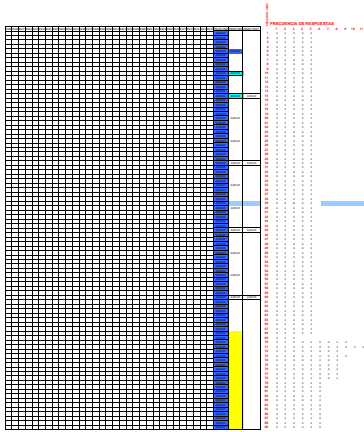
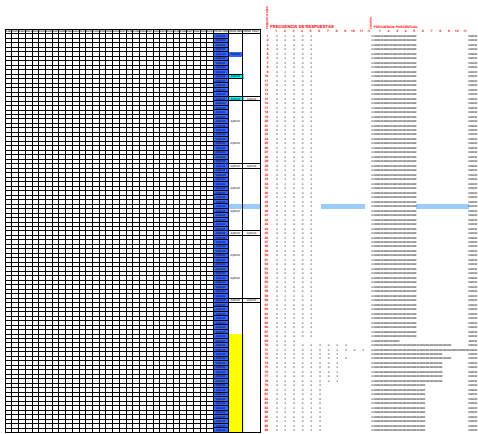
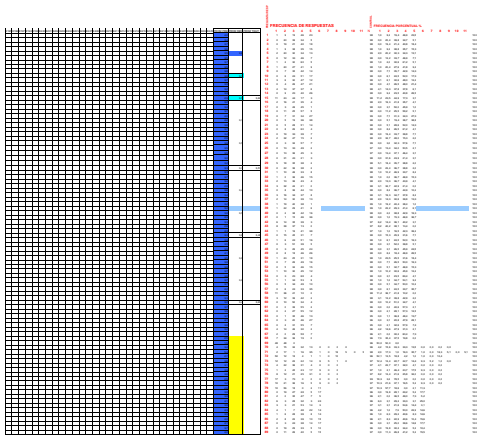
valor, y no emprendiendo acciones como respuesta a las demandas del mercado o las propuestas de la competencia. Esto implicaría incorporar personal con competencias y experiencia específica en el área de mercadeo y desarrollar un plan concreto para mover al mercado.

- ✓ Adicionalmente, otro factor que puede coadyuvar la optimización de la adaptabilidad en Sistemas Fourgen sería la realización de un programa de capacitación por reemplazos en cargos que participen en procesos críticos para el desarrollo del core business de la organización. Con esto, podrían estar varias personas capacitadas para llevar a cabo actividades que son de vital importancia para garantizar los tiempos de respuesta prometidos y requeridos por el mercado.
- ✓ Es muy importante mantener en alto el INVOLUCRAMIENTO de los colaboradores, para garantizar la estabilidad y el ambiente de trabajo propicios. Se recomienda implementar un plan de incentivos basado en la calidad de los aportes que cada persona puede realizar a través de su rol dentro de la organización, para mejorar el desempeño de la misma frente a sus clientes, de manera que las personas sientan que vale la pena su compromiso con la empresa y que existe un verdadero reconocimiento a su esfuerzo, que puede ser en dinero o a través de otro tipo de incentivos.
- ✓ Teniendo en cuenta que un porcentaje importante de los colaboradores considera que una fuente de innovación efectiva es la asesoría de profesionales externos, se recomienda hacer un plan de capacitación y diagnóstico de oportunidades de mejora a través de empresas consultoras que puedan aportar nuevas y mejores formas de llevar a cabo las actividades de la empresa, dándole herramientas para lograr mayor estabilidad y efectividad en su desempeño.
- ✓ Se recomienda realizar un estudio de mercado para conocer exactamente las tendencias y las oportunidades de negocio que existen, con miras a enfocar los esfuerzos de la organización en el desarrollo de productos innovadores que permitan la integración de diferentes áreas o procesos involucrados en el negocio de sus clientes potenciales, mejorando así su oferta de valor e incrementando sus posibilidades de crecimiento.

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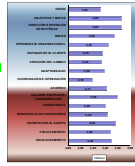
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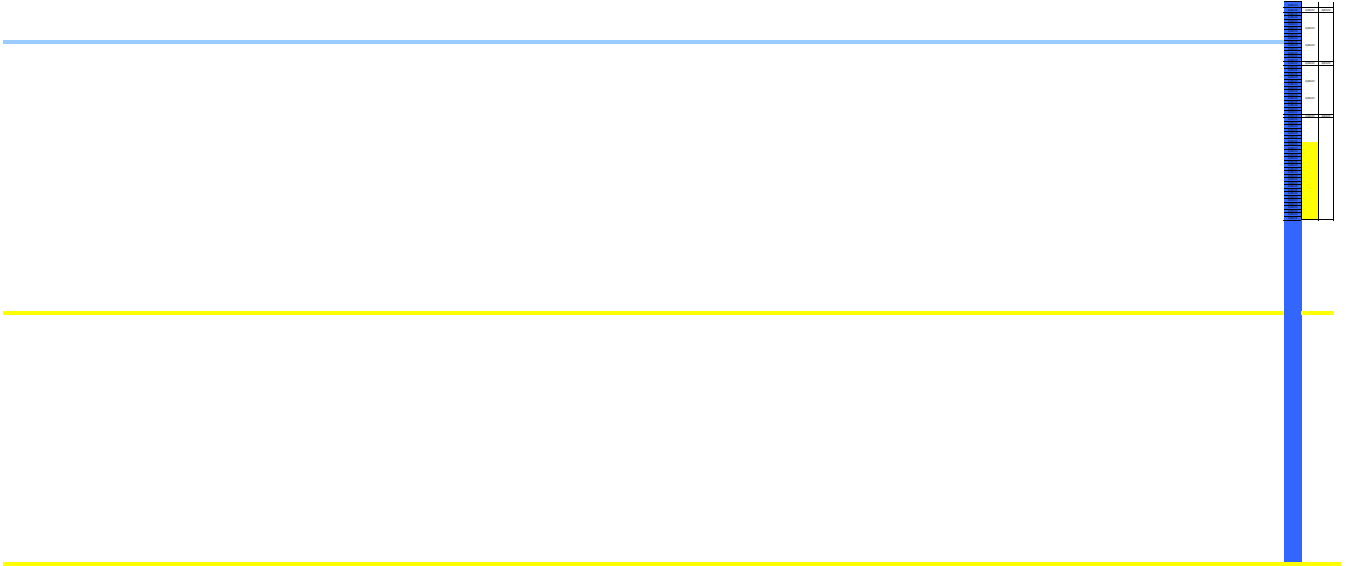
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Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Q1	10	12	15	18	20	22	25
Q2	15	18	22	25	28	30	35
Q3	20	25	30	35	40	45	50
Q4	25	30	35	40	45	50	55
Annual	70	85	102	118	133	147	165

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Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Q1	10	12	15	18	20	22	25
Q2	15	18	22	25	28	30	35
Q3	20	25	30	35	40	45	50
Q4	25	30	35	40	45	50	55
Annual	70	85	102	118	133	147	165

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Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Q1	10	12	15	18	20	22	25
Q2	15	18	22	25	28	30	35
Q3	20	25	30	35	40	45	50
Q4	25	30	35	40	45	50	55
Annual	70	85	102	118	133	147	165

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50	50	50	50	50

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ENCUESTA 1

E1

pregunta	respuestas										TABLA- CIÓN	
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24	1	2	3	4	5						reversed scale	
25	1	2	3	4	5						4	
26	1	2	3	4	5						4	
27	1	2	3	4	5						4	
28	1	2	3	4	5						4	
29	1	2	3	4	5						reversed scale	
30	1	2	3	4	5						4	
31	1	2	3	4	5						3	
32	1	2	3	4	5						4	
33	1	2	3	4	5						reversed scale	
34	1	2	3	4	5						reversed scale	
35	1	2	3	4	5						4	
36	1	2	3	4	5						4	
37	1	2	3	4	5						3	
38	1	2	3	4	5						4	
39	1	2	3	4	5						reversed scale	
40	1	2	3	4	5						4	
41	1	2	3	4	5						4	
42	1	2	3	4	5						3	
43	1	2	3	4	5						reversed scale	
44	1	2	3	4	5						4	
45	1	2	3	4	5						3	
46	1	2	3	4	5						4	
47	1	2	3	4	5						3	
48	1	2	3	4	5						4	
49	1	2	3	4	5						4	
50	1	2	3	4	5						reversed scale	
51	1	2	3	4	5						4	
52	1	2	3	4	5						2	
53	1	2	3	4	5						3	
54	1	2	3	4	5						4	
55	1	2	3	4	5						4	
56	1	2	3	4	5						4	
57	1	2	3	4	5						4	
58	1	2	3	4	5						reversed scale	
59	1	2	3	4	5						4	
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62	1	2	3	4	5						4	
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69	1	2	3								2	
70	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9		4	
71	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	3
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73	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9			1
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75	1	2	3	4	5	6						5
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77	1	2	3	4	5							3
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83	1	2	3	4	5	6						4
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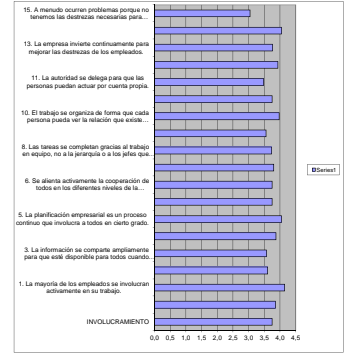
## PASOS:

- advertencia: no introducir ni borrar filas o columnas en ninguna hoja de este archivo
- 1) LAS ENCUESTAS SE TABULAN ASÍ EN LA HOJA LLAMADA: "TABULA"
  - 2) EN LA HOJA TABULA, INTRODUZCA POR COLUMNAS LA INFORMACIÓN DE LAS ENCUESTAS TAL COMO FUERON RESPONDIDAS LA LETRA "E" SEGUIDA DE UN NÚMERO SE REFIERE A UNA ENCUESTA ASÍ E25 SIGNIFICA ENCUESTA 25
  - 3) CONSULTAR HOJA 3. SALIDAS
  - 4) CONSULTAR HOJA 4 SALIDA FRECUENCIAS

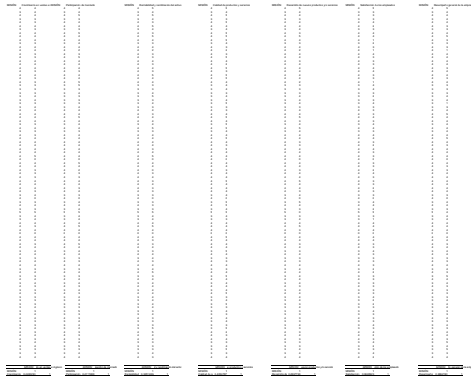
nota de advertencia: no tocar ni modificar HOJA TRAB

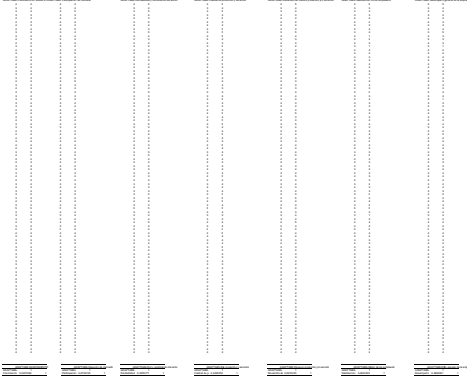
<b>INVOLUCRAMIENTO</b>	<b>3.8</b>	
<b>FACTIBILIDAD</b>	<b>3.8</b>	
1. La mayoría de los empleados se involucran en su trabajo.	4.1	MA
2. Las decisiones se toman en el nivel en donde se encuentra la información más relevante.	3.4	
3. La información se comparte ampliamente para que esté disponible para todos quienes la necesitan.	3.4	
4. Todos tienen que pueden producir un impacto positivo.	3.0	
5. La planificación siempre toma en cuenta los problemas críticos que involucra a todos en la organización.	3.8	
<b>ORIENTACIÓN AL EQUIPO</b>	<b>3.8</b>	
6. Se alienta activamente la cooperación de todos en los diferentes niveles de la organización.	3.7	
7. Las personas trabajan en equipo.	3.5	
8. Las tareas se completan gracias al trabajo en equipo, más que a la jerarquía o a los trabajos aislados.	3.7	
9. Los equipos de trabajo son nuestros componentes primarios o básicos.	3.6	
10. El trabajo se organiza de forma que cada persona pueda ver la relación que existe entre sus funciones, individuales y las metas de la organización.	4.0	
<b>DESARROLLO DE CAPACIDADES</b>	<b>3.8</b>	
11. La capacidad de las personas está mejorando constantemente.	3.5	
12. La capacidad de las personas está mejorando constantemente.	3.9	
13. La empresa invierte continuamente para mejorar sus valores de servicio al cliente.	3.8	
14. Las capacidades de las personas son una fuente importante de ventajas para la empresa que la ayudan a competir mejor.	4.0	
15. A menudo ocurren problemas porque no tenemos las destrezas necesarias para realizar el trabajo.	3.0	ME
<b>CONSISTENCIA</b>	<b>3.6</b>	
<b>VALORES CENTRALES E FUNDAMENTALES</b>	<b>3.6</b>	
16. Los líderes y gerentes hacen lo que dicen.	3.5	
17. Existe un código que indica el comportamiento y un conjunto específico de prácticas reconocidas.	3.5	
18. El comportamiento de quienes cloran y conciben que gobiernan nuestros negocios empresariales.	3.9	
19. El comportamiento de quienes cloran y conciben que gobiernan nuestros negocios empresariales.	3.7	
20. Si existe un código de ética que define nuestro comportamiento y lo indica lo que debemos y no debemos hacer.	3.5	
<b>ACUERDO</b>	<b>3.7</b>	
21. Cuando hay desacuerdos, trabajamos con ahínco para obtener soluciones de beneficio mutuo.	3.7	
22. Existe una cultura sólida.	3.5	
23. El fácil consenso de acuerdo en la empresa incluso frente a problemas difíciles.	3.4	
24. A menudo tenemos problemas para llegar a un acuerdo sobre asuntos clave.	3.1	ME
25. No hay un acuerdo claro sobre la forma correcta e incorrecta de hacer las cosas.	3.6	
<b>COORDINACIÓN E INTEGRACIÓN</b>	<b>3.6</b>	
26. La metodología que seguimos en nuestro negocio es consistente y eficiente.	3.7	
27. Las personas que están en diferentes partes de la organización comparten las perspectivas comunes.	3.6	
28. Es fácil coordinar proyectos entre las diferentes partes de la organización.	3.4	
29. El trabajar con una persona que está en otra parte de esta organización es como trabajar con alguien de otra organización.	3.2	ME
30. Las cosas están articuladas en todos los niveles.	3.9	
31. Las cosas están articuladas en todos los niveles.	3.0	
<b>ADAPTABILIDAD</b>	<b>3.6</b>	
<b>CREACIÓN DEL CAMBIO</b>	<b>3.4</b>	
32. La forma de hacer las cosas es muy flexible y se puede cambiar fácilmente.	2.9	ME
33. Respondemos bien a la competencia y a otros cambios en el entorno comercial.	3.7	
34. Continuamente se adoptan métodos nuevos y mejorados para realizar el trabajo.	3.4	MA
35. Generalmente hay resistencia a las iniciativas que surgen para realizar cambios.	3.1	ME
36. Los diferentes partes de la organización generalmente cooperan entre sí para realizar cambios.	3.6	
<b>ENFOQUE EN EL CLIENTE</b>	<b>3.6</b>	
37. Los comentarios y recomendaciones de los clientes a menudo producen cambios.	4.0	
38. Las capacidades de los clientes influyen nuestras decisiones.	3.9	
39. Todos los miembros comprenden a fondo los deseos y las necesidades de los clientes.	3.3	
40. Nuestras decisiones generalmente ignoran los intereses de los clientes.	3.9	
41. Nos enfocamos al cliente desde nuestra postura hacia los clientes.	3.6	
<b>APRENDIZAJE ORGANIZACIONAL</b>	<b>3.6</b>	
42. Nuestra cultura favorece el aprendizaje para el personal y el equipo.	4.1	MA
43. Muchos detalles importantes pasan desapercibidos.	3.1	ME
44. El aprendizaje es un objetivo importante en nuestra cultura organizacional.	4.0	
45. Nos aseguramos de que "la mano derecha sabe lo que hace la izquierda".	3.4	
<b>MISSION</b>	<b>3.9</b>	
<b>DESCRIPCIÓN E INTENCIÓN ESTRATÉGICA</b>	<b>3.9</b>	
46. Existe dirección y un propósito a largo plazo.	4.0	MA
47. Nuestra estrategia obliga a otras organizaciones a cambiar su método de competencia en la industria.	3.4	
48. Existe una misión clara que le da significado y dirección a nuestro trabajo.	4.2	MA
49. Existe una clara estrategia para el futuro.	4.2	MA
50. No se clara nuestra dirección estratégica.	3.9	
<b>OBJETIVOS Y METAS</b>	<b>4.0</b>	
51. Existe un acuerdo generalizado sobre metas reales.	3.5	
52. Nuestros líderes fijan metas ambiciosas, pero realistas.	3.6	
53. Nuestros superiores han comunicado eficazmente los objetivos que necesitamos alcanzar.	4.2	MA
54. Ingenuamente continuamente muestra progreso en relación a las metas que hemos establecido.	4.1	MA
55. Los superiores comprenden lo que hay que hacer para que seamos exitosos y nos permiten comprender lo que hay que hacer para que seamos exitosos.	3.0	
<b>VISION</b>	<b>3.6</b>	
56. Compartimos una visión clara acerca de cómo será la organización en el futuro.	4.0	
57. Nuestros líderes tienen una visión a largo plazo.	4.0	
58. Los líderes a corto plazo a menudo comprometen nuestra visión a largo plazo.	3.8	ME
59. Nuestra visión es clara y nuestra visión es clara.	3.5	
60. Cumplimos nuestras exigencias a corto plazo sin comprometer nuestra visión a largo plazo.	3.5	

De los mejores y peores puntajes, se debe encontrar respuesta a las siguientes preguntas:  
 Por qué?  
 ¿Qué esperaba este resultado?  
 ¿Es posible mejorar el promedio del puntaje?  
 Cómo?



A long horizontal grid consisting of two rows and 40 columns. Each cell in the grid is a small square, and the grid is filled with a repeating pattern of horizontal lines, resembling a musical staff or a data table.



A musical score consisting of two staves. Each staff contains a sequence of notes and rests, written in a standard musical notation style.





Year	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual Total	Change vs. 2018	Change vs. 2019	Change vs. 2020	Change vs. 2021
2018									
2019									
2020									
2021									

Revenue

Operating Profit

Profit After Tax

Operating Profit

Profit After Tax

Operating Profit

Profit After Tax

Operating Profit

INDICADORES AGREGADOS DE DESEMPEÑO	CARACTERÍSTICAS CULTURALES AGREGADAS INVOLUCRAMIENTO	CONSISTENCIA	ADAPTABILIDAD	MISIÓN	
Crecimiento en ventas e ingresos	0,46	0,42	0,42	0,42	0,43
Participación de mercado	0,46	0,39	0,47	0,41	0,43
Rentabilidad y rendimiento del activo	0,35	0,37	0,34	0,34	0,35
Calidad de productos y servicios	0,47	0,42	0,35	0,41	0,41
Desarrollo de nuevos productos y/o servicios	0,45	0,29	0,23	0,29	0,31
Satisfacción de los empleados	0,42	0,46	0,47	0,36	0,43
Desempeño general de la empresa	0,37	0,33	0,37	0,39	0,36

## What is Organizational Culture?

### **What is culture?**

Late nineteenth and early twentieth century studies of social anthropology gave us the term "culture." These studies of "primitive" societies - Eskimo, South Sea, African, Native American - revealed ways of life that were not only different from those in America and Europe, but were very different from each other among themselves. Each society revealed its own unique way of *adapting* as a social system. The concept of culture thus represents, in a very broad and holistic sense, the qualities of any specific human group that are passed from one generation to the next because they are believed to be *useful for survival and adaptation*. The American Heritage Dictionary defines "culture" more formally, as the "totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought characteristic of a community or population."

### **What is organizational culture?**

Every organization has its own way of doing things that influences virtually every aspect of working life -- from how long coffee breaks are to how products and services are sold. Thus, organizational culture refers to the underlying values, beliefs and principles that serve as a foundation for an organization's management system, as well as the set of management practices and behaviors that both exemplify and reinforce those basic principles. These principles and practices endure because they have meaning for the members of an organization. They represent strategies for survival that have worked well in the past and that the members believe will work again in the future.

Some aspects of organizational culture, such as individual behavior and group norms, are very *visible*. "Working hard," "dressing conservatively" or "acting friendly to customers" are aspects of culture that are easy to observe. Other aspects of culture are harder to observe, since they represent the *invisible* assumptions, values and core beliefs. Examples of this less visible level of culture might be a belief in the importance of "doing things right the first time," "being honest and ethical in all transactions," or "going beyond expectations to satisfy the customer."

The messages that come from an organization's culture are closely linked to the organization's strategy and management practices, and have great impact on the people who work there. The cultural system can not be easily seen or touched -- yet it is there all the same. And more importantly, the people in the organization know it very well. The law of the culture often outweighs any other law. In many organizations, it may be the strongest message of all.

### **Where do organizational cultures come from?**

The ideas, behavior patterns and solutions that become embedded in a culture can originate anywhere, from an individual or group, or at the bottom or top of the organization. Organizations with strong cultures usually internalize ideas associated with a founder or other early leaders, and articulate them as a vision, a business strategy or a philosophy.

Organizations have cultures because the conditions needed for their creation are commonplace. Solutions that repeatedly appear to solve problems tend to become part of the culture. The longer the solution seems to work, the more deeply it becomes embedded in the culture.

Cultures can grow to be extremely strong, reinforced by common values, behavior patterns and practices, with many close connections between deeply held assumptions and visible concrete behaviors. When a culture is strong, it can have very powerful consequences. It can enable a group to take rapid and coordinated action to respond to a competitor or to satisfy a customer. Unfortunately, during changing times, a strong culture can also lead intelligent people to walk, in concert, off a cliff.

### **Why is organizational culture important?**

A clear understanding of organizational culture is important for all leaders because it influences the way that their organizations react to the changing demands of the business environment. At any given time, the culture of an organization is strongly influenced by the past successes and past learnings about how to adapt and survive. As the business environment changes, leaders must constantly anticipate the necessary changes and actively monitor the relationship between the demands of the environment and the capabilities of the organization.

When there is a “gap” between the capabilities of the organization and the demands of the business environment, many organizations attempt to close that gap by re-engineering or by making broad structural changes. These changes are often helpful, but most successful organizational changes also require changes in the mindset, values and behavior of the organization’s members. Without creating these changes, changes in basic capabilities of the organization are impossible. That is why many organizations are discovering that successful change requires careful attention to the “soft” side of organizations – the values and beliefs that are the “heart of the company”, the policies and practices that put those values into action, and the importance of teaching the members of the organization an understanding of how they create value for their customers.

### **What is the *Denison Organizational Culture Survey*?**

Over the past fifteen years, Dr. Daniel Denison, formerly of the University of Michigan Business School, and currently Professor of Organizational Development at IMD - International Institute of Management Development in Lausanne, Switzerland, has done a number of studies examining the relationship between organizational culture and organizational effectiveness. Dr. Denison’s research can be found in his book, *Corporate Culture and Organizational Effectiveness*, as well as in many related articles. His research has uncovered a persistent relationship between four cultural traits of organizations and the business performance of organizations. Using these four traits, *Involvement*, *Consistency*, *Adaptability* and *Mission*, Dr. Denison and William Neale developed the *Denison Organizational Culture Survey*.

The survey is a 60-item instrument that is designed to give a simple, yet comprehensive analysis of the culture of an organization by evaluating the underlying cultural traits and management practices that influence business performance. Results are presented in a Summary Report that includes the organization's graphic profile, a line-item report summarizing the organization's scores on each individual item, and a listing of "Levers for Change" that may be appropriate for the organization.



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# **“Similarities and Differences Existing in Cultural Profiles of Colombian Organisations of Higher and Lower Performance”**

**Rafael Ricardo Bray**  
**Principal Researcher**

**Ignacio Gómez Roldán**  
**Associate Researcher**





## Research Objectives

- To evaluate the characteristics of cultures existing in a sample of 66 Colombian organisations located in Bogotá, Colombia, by means of the application of Denison Organisational Culture Survey
- To evaluate the influence of cultural characteristics in a set of critical organisational performance indicators







## Methodology (1)

- **Denison Organisational Culture Survey (DOCS) composed by 73 items was applied in 66 organisations**
- **3338 individual surveys constituted the data base**
- **DOCS measures 12 indexes using 5 questions each for a total of 60**





## Methodology (2)

- DOCS also assesses perceptions about critical performance indicators:

*Sales growth, market share, profitability, quality of products and services, innovation, employee satisfaction, and overall performance*

- Five-point Likert scales were used





## Methodology (3)

- **Data were aggregated to the organisational level**
- **Mean scores were obtained**
- **Correlations between traits and indexes and performance indicators were calculated**





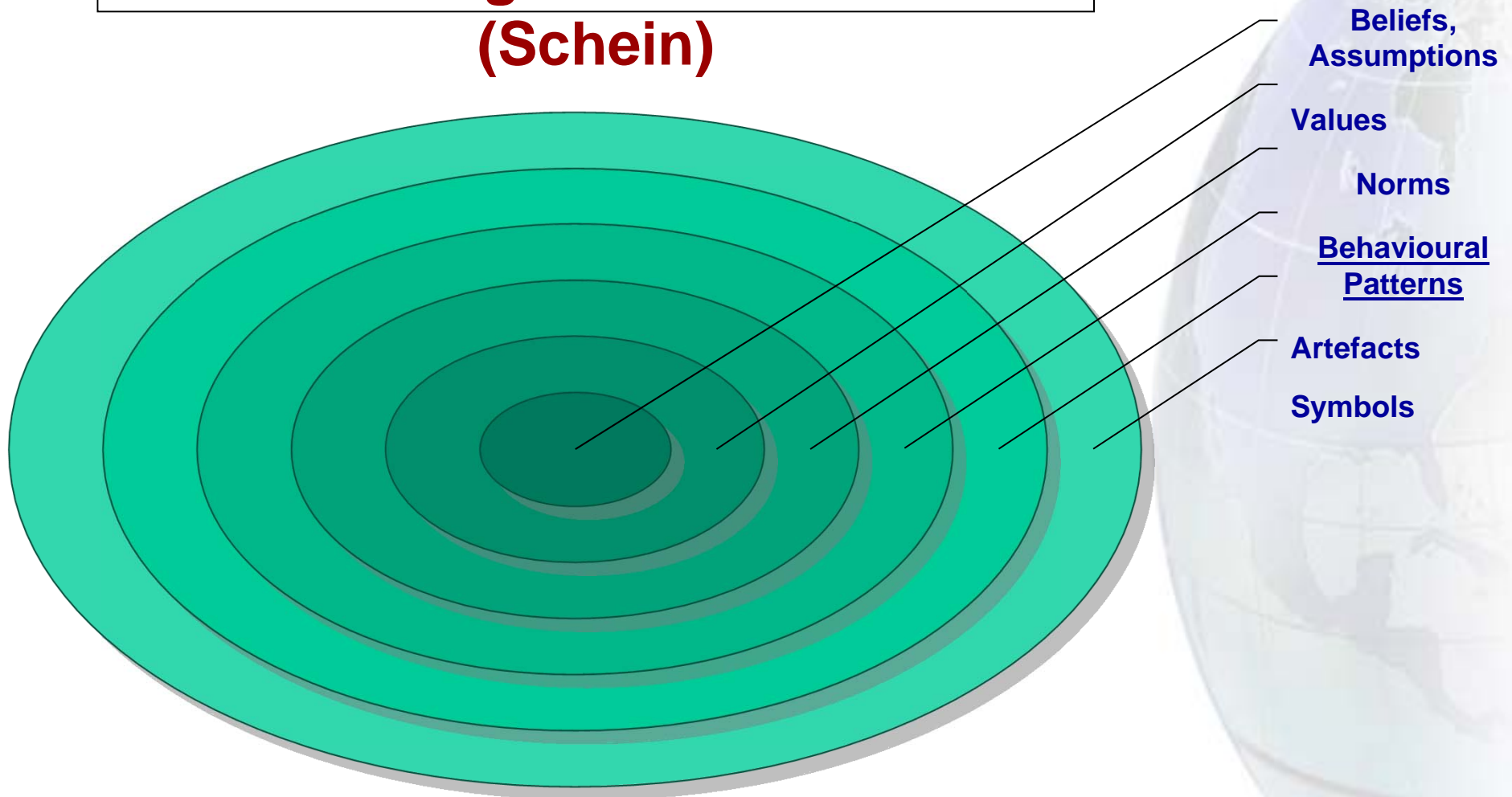
## The Concept of Culture

**“Pattern of basic beliefs and assumptions that a group has invented, discovered or developed while it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, and that has functioned so well to be considered valid, and consequently is taught to new members as the correct way of perceiving, thinking and feeling regarding those problems”**

**(Schein, 1985)**



## Levels of Organizational Culture (Schein)





## Organizational Culture, Behaviour and Performance

- At the core of culture are beliefs and assumptions

(Schein, 1985)

- Culture also includes behaviour patterns and practises that spring from and exemplify and reinforce those beliefs and assumptions

(Denison, 2000)



## Organizational Culture, Behaviour and Performance (2)

- Denison's proposal integrates the tangible and intangible levels of culture and facilitates the articulation among culture, behaviour and performance
- Culture is viewed less as a natural, organically emergent phenomenon and more as a manipulable and manageable competitive asset

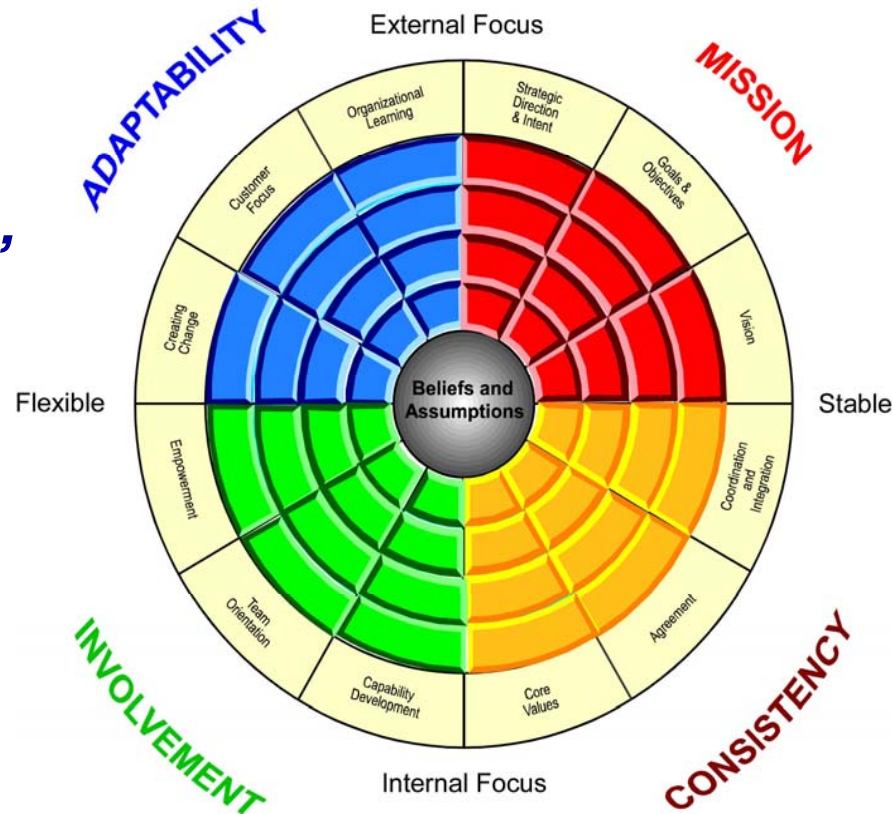
(Baker, 2004)



# Denison Model

**“Are we listening to the marketplace?”**

**“Are our people aligned and engaged?”**



**“Do we know where we are going?”**

**“Does our system create leverage?”**





## Adaptability

### Indices:

- *Creating Change*
- *Customer Focus*
- *Organizational Learning*

## Mission

### Indices:

- *Strategic Direction and Intent*
- *Goals and Objectives*
- *Vision*

## Involvement

### Indices:

- *Empowerment*
- *Team Orientation*
- *Capability Development*

## Consistency

### Indices:

- *Core Values*
- *Agreement*
- *Coordination and Integration*





## Cultural Traits and Organizational Performance Indicators

<b>Profitability/ Return on Assets</b>	<b>Revenue Growth/ Sales Growth</b>	<b>Market Share</b>	<b>Innovation</b>	<b>Quality of Products and Services</b>	<b>Employee Satisfaction</b>
<i>Supported by</i>	<i>Supported by</i>	<i>Supported by</i>	<i>Supported by</i>	<i>Supported by</i>	<i>Supported by</i>
<b>Mission</b>	<b>Mission</b>	<b>Mission</b>			<b>(Mission)</b>
<b>(Involvement)</b>			<b>Involvement</b>	<b>Involvement</b>	<b>Involvement</b>
<b>(Adaptability)</b>	<b>Adaptability</b>	<b>Adaptability</b>	<b>Adaptability</b>		<b>(Adaptability)</b>
<b>Consistency</b>				<b>Consistency</b>	<b>Consistency</b>



## Cultural Profiles of Organisations of Lower Performance

		<b>External Focus</b> 3,35		
	<b>ADAPTABILITY</b> 3,32		<b>MISSION</b> 3,39	
<b>Flexibility</b> 3,38		<b>Beliefs and Assumptions</b>		<b>Stability</b> 3,37
	<b>INVOLVEMENT</b> 3,44		<b>CONSISTENCY</b> 3,35	
		<b>Internal Focus</b> 3,40		



## Cultural Profiles of Organisations of Higher Performance





## Performance Mean Scores

INDICATORS	LOWER PERFORMERS (10)	HIGHER PERFORMERS (10)	TOTAL SAMPLE (66)
1. Sales / Revenue Growth	3,08	3,93	3,72
2. Market Share	3,02	3,90	3,62
3. Profitability / ROA	3,05	3,92	3,67
4. Quality of Products or Services	3,45	4,11	3,89
5. New Product Development (Innovation)	3,16	3,96	3,64
6. Employee Satisfaction	3,25	3,79	3,62
7. Overall Organisation Performance	3,17	4,20	3,88



## International Comparison between Overall Performance and Culture

TRAIT/INDEX	RUSSIA	COLOMBIA
<b>INVOLVEMENT</b>	<i>0,44</i>	<i>0,35</i>
Empowerment	0,35	0,29
Team orientation	0,42	0,30
Capability development	0,38	0,31
<b>CONSISTENCY</b>	<i>0,31</i>	<i>0,33</i>
Core values	0,30	0,27
Agreement	0,24	0,24
Coordination and integration	0,29	0,31
<b>ADAPTABILITY</b>	<i>0,46</i>	<i>0,37</i>
Creating change	0,35	0,30
Customer focus	0,39	0,29
Organisational learning	0,40	0,31
<b>MISSION</b>	<i>0,20</i>	<i>0,34</i>
Strategic direction and intent	0,26	0,30
Goals and objectives	0,19	0,30
Vision	0,07	0,27





## Conclusions

- The robustness of cultural profiles was associated with better perceptions of performance by organisational members
- More balanced organisational culture profiles were articulated with higher organisational performance
- For both Russia and Colombia, adaptability and involvement, determinants of organisational flexibility, were the strongest correlates of overall performance



## Conclusions

- **Transition economies and economies evolving from closed to open might present similar cultural demands for organisations**
- **Business environments are turbulent in both economies and might force organisations to be flexible in order to survive and grow**





## Conclusions

- For Russian, as well as for Colombian organisations, cultural traits did have a real positive association with performance perceptions of organisational members
- Russian data were taken from:  
*Organizational Culture and Effectiveness:  
Can American Theory Be Applied in Russia?*  
Carl F. Fey. Stockholm School of Economics  
Daniel R. Denison. International Institute for Management  
Development, Switzerland  
Organization Science © 2003 INFORMS  
Vol. 14, No. 6, November–December 2003, pp. 686–706

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en Empresas Bogotanas”**

# Resumen

- La cultura es un factor determinante y explicativo, entre otros, del desempeño organizacional, y en especial, de los procesos y resultados de los esfuerzos de innovación.
- La cultura es compartida, y por ello puede utilizarse para la comprensión y la interpretación de los fenómenos colectivos organizacionales, tales como el desempeño.
- La cultura influye en el comportamiento de los miembros, y por lo tanto en el desempeño de las organizaciones. Al respecto, la literatura ha documentado empíricamente una variedad de resultados de desempeño organizacional que se relacionan con la cultura.
- **Las anteriores consideraciones llevan a plantear la conveniencia de realizar el diagnóstico científico de las culturas de las organizaciones colombianas en aras de conocer su influencia en el comportamiento de sus miembros y en su desempeño en función de los resultados esperados, y en especial de los procesos y de los resultados en innovación.**
- El diagnóstico científico de las culturas organizacionales es fundamental para una correcta administración de dichas culturas.
- La administración de la cultura en función del alto desempeño organizacional se ha convertido en una competencia gerencial crítica para alcanzar mayor competitividad en el entorno de la globalización.

# Objetivo General

- **Estudiar la cultura en las organizaciones bogotanas, identificar su impacto en el desempeño y la innovación en la organización, y formular recomendaciones para la administración de la cultura en las organizaciones.**

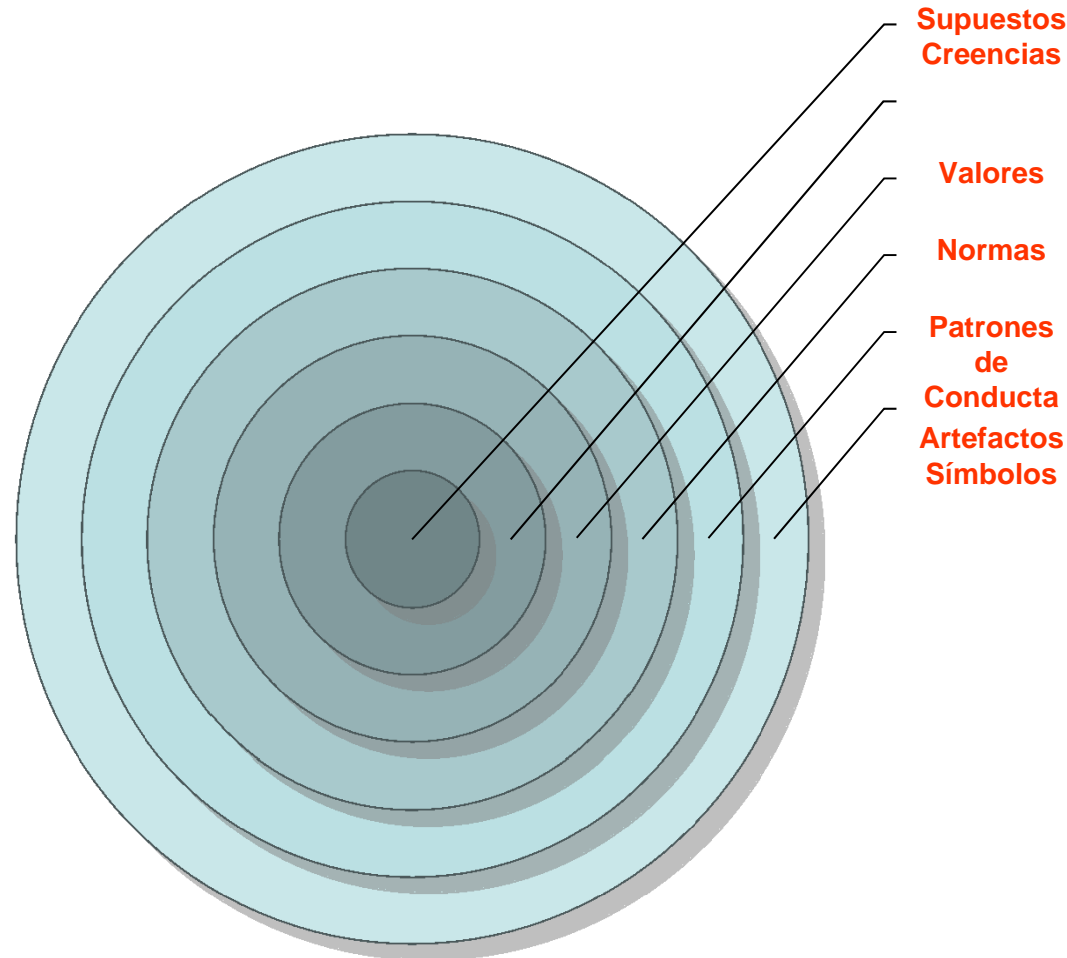
# Objetivos Específicos

- Verificar de acuerdo al modelo de cultura organizacional de Daniel Denison la existencia de las características críticas de la cultura organizacional en un segmento de empresas bogotanas.
- Identificar los perfiles culturales existentes en un segmento de organizaciones bogotanas a partir de la aplicación de la encuesta sobre cultura organizacional de Daniel Denison (Organizational Culture Survey).
- Evaluar el impacto de las características de las culturas en un conjunto de variables críticas para el desempeño organizacional.
- Proponer y sustentar principios para la *Administración de Culturas Corporativas* en el ámbito de las empresas bogotanas, que propicien el mejoramiento del desempeño organizacional, y en especial de los procesos de innovación.

# Preguntas a Resolver

- 1. ¿Al igual que en muchas organizaciones de diversos países de Norteamérica, Europa y Asia, en una muestra de empresas bogotanas se encuentran las mismas características básicas de la cultura organizacional que aparecen en el Organizational Cultural Survey (Encuesta de Cultura Organizacional) elaborado por Denison y asociados?
- 2. ¿Cuáles son las características básicas de las culturas de esas empresas y cómo son sus vínculos con un conjunto de variables críticas para el desempeño organizacional?
- 3. ¿Es posible afirmar, con base en las correlaciones encontradas, que en el caso de la muestra seleccionada, las características básicas de las culturas están asociadas con los diversos niveles de desempeño de la organización?
- 4. ¿Las conclusiones del estudio nos permiten profundizar en el conocimiento de las características básicas de las culturas de las organizaciones bogotanas y de su relación con un desempeño más competitivo?
- 5. ¿Es posible, en consecuencia, proponer y sustentar premisas para la administración de las culturas corporativas, que propicien mejorar el desempeño organizacional, y en especial los procesos de innovación, frente a las exigencias de la competitividad en un entorno de globalización?

# Niveles de la Cultura Organizacional (Schein)



# Overview of the Denison Model

The Denison Model is based on four key concepts:

**Adaptability**  
Patterns...Trends...Marketplace

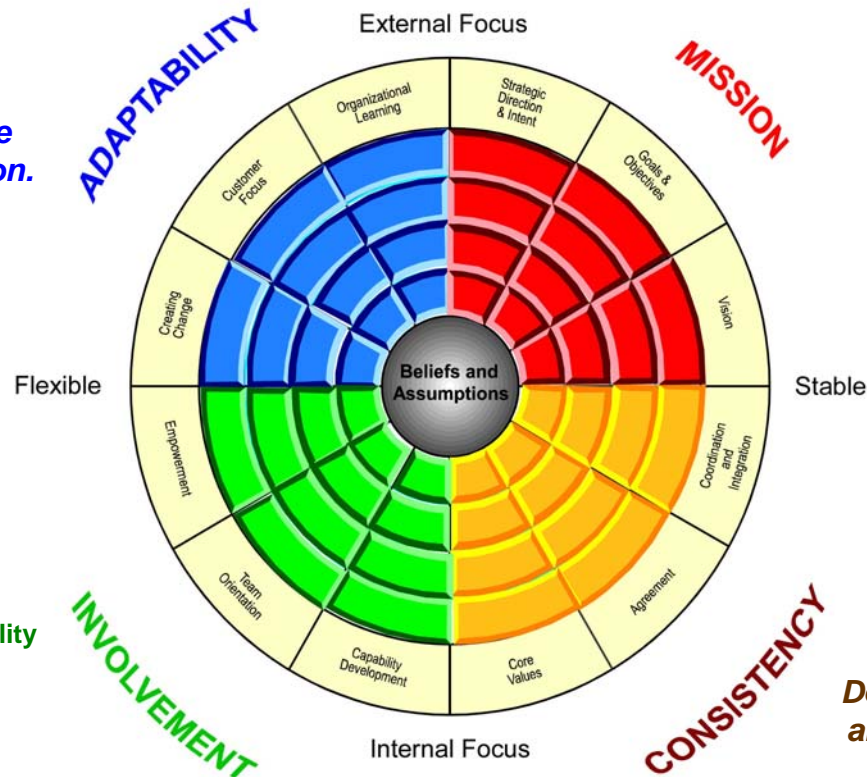
*Translating the demands of the business environment into action.*

*“Are we listening to the marketplace?”*

**Involvement**  
Commitment...Ownership...Responsibility

*Building human capability, ownership and responsibility.*

*“Are our people aligned and engaged?”*



**Mission**  
Direction...Purpose...Blueprint

*Defining meaningful long-term direction for the organization.*

*“Do we know where we are going?”*

**Consistency**  
Systems...Structures...Processes

*Defining values and systems that are the basis of a strong culture.*

*“Does our system create leverage?”*



## Adaptability

**Patterns...Trends... Market Place**  
*Translating the demands of the business environment into action*  
*“Are we listening to the marketplace?”*

### Indices:

- Creating Change
- Customer Focus
- Organizational Learning

## Mission

**Direction...Purpose...Blueprint**  
*Defining a meaningful long-term direction for the organization*  
*“Do we know where we are going?”*

### Indices:

- Strategic Direction and Intent
- Goals and Objectives
- Vision

## Involvement

**Commitment...Ownership...Responsibility**  
*Building human capability, ownership and responsibility.*  
*“Are our people aligned and engaged?”*

### Indices:

- Empowerment
- Team Orientation
- Capability Development

## Consistency

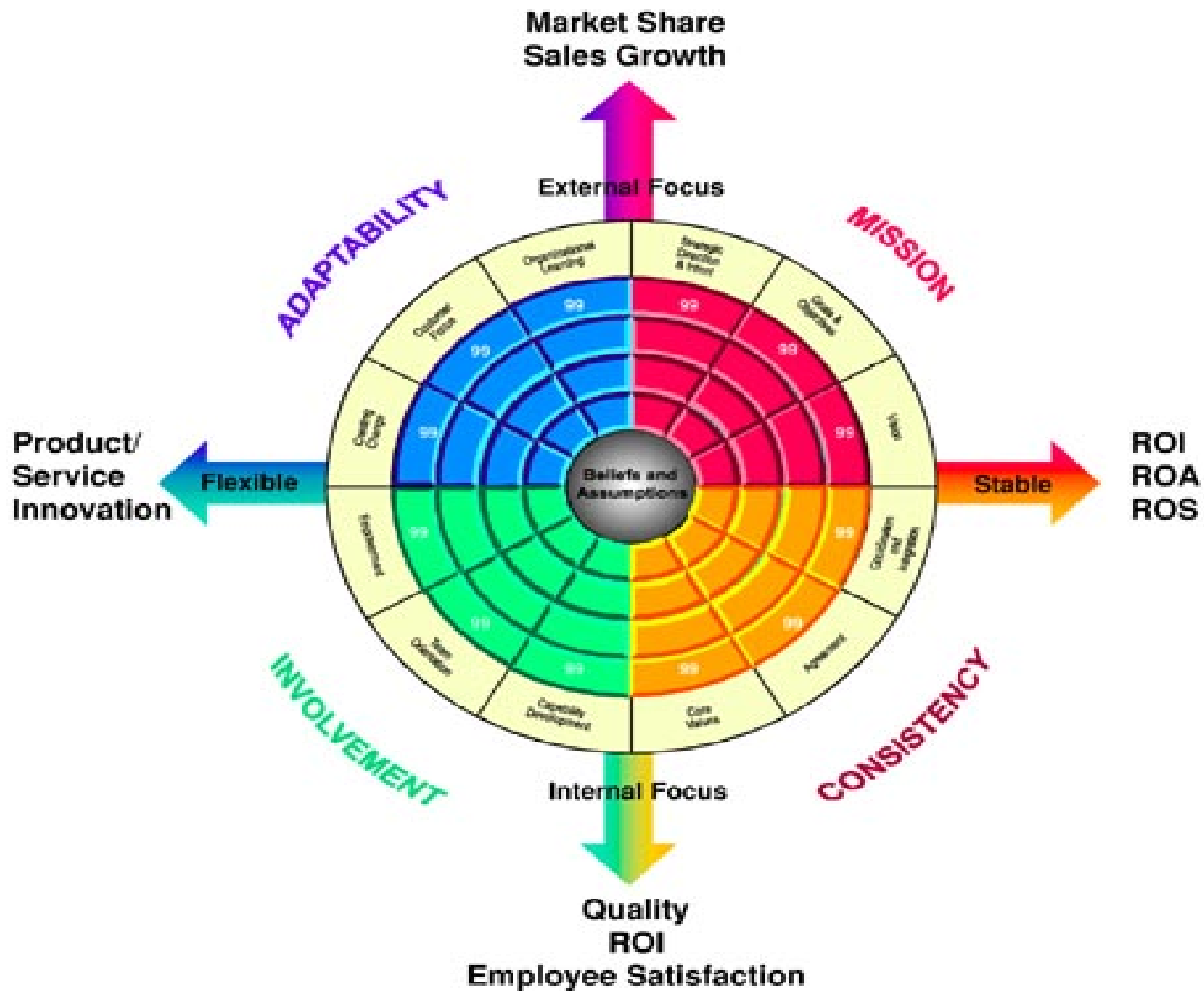
**Systems...Structures...Processes**  
*Defining values and systems that are the basis of strong culture*  
*“Does our system create leverage?”*

### Indices:

- Core Values
- Agreement
- Coordination and Integration



# The Denison Organizational Culture Model and Organizational Performance Indicators



# Cultural Profile and Organizational Performance Indicators

## Denison's Findings

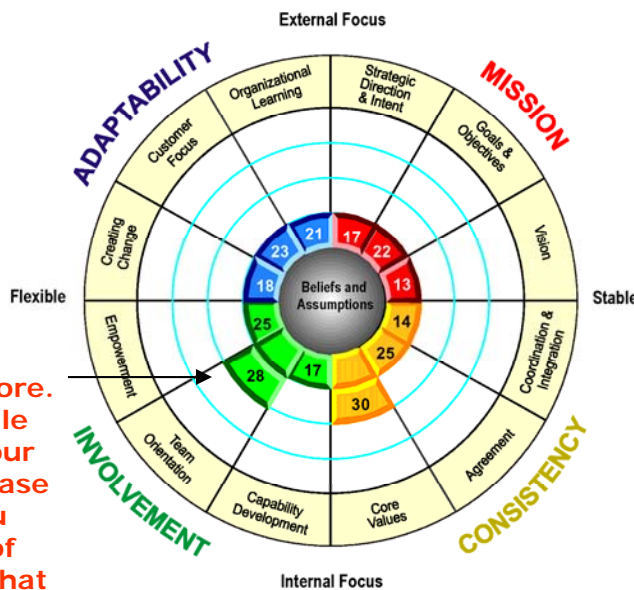
Profitability/ Return on Assets	Revenue Growth/ Sales Growth	Market Share	Innovation	Quality of Products & Services	Employee Satisfaction
<i>supported by</i>	<i>supported by</i>	<i>supported by</i>	<i>supported by</i>	<i>supported by</i>	<i>supported by</i>
Mission	Mission	Mission			[Mission]
Involvement			Involvement	Involvement	Involvement
Adaptability	Adaptability	Adaptability	Adaptability		[Adaptability]
Consistency				Consistency	Consistency

Source: Denison, D.R., & Neale, W.S. (1996). Denison organizational culture survey: Facilitators guide. Ann Arbor, MI: Aviat.

# Impact on Performance

If we compare the 102 firms in the top and bottom 25% based on their overall average of the 12 indexes, companies with higher culture scores have greater profitability, sales growth, and market value than those with lower culture scores.

Bottom 25%



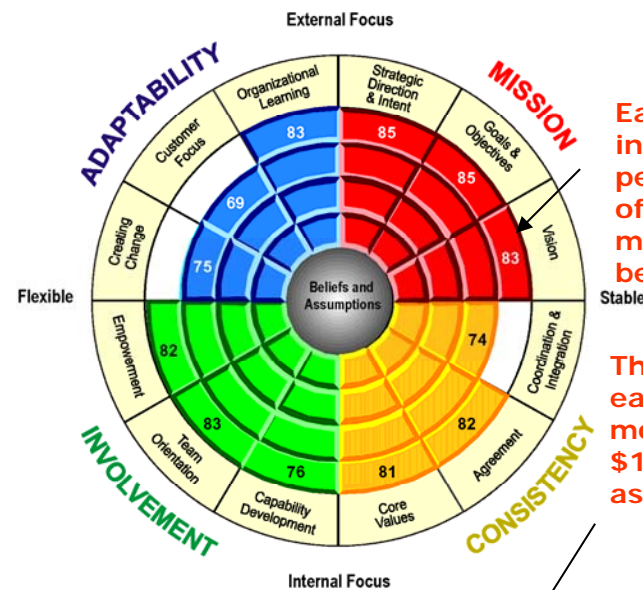
Each of the 12 indexes has a score. It is the percentile score based on our normative database which shows you the percentage of 707 companies that scored lower on the index.

**Return-on-Assets** 4.5%

**Sales Growth** .1%

**Market-to-Book Ratio** 3.5

Top 25%



Each color bar indicates the percentile quadrant of the score. The more color the better.

These firms are earning almost \$2 more on every \$100 spent on assets!

**Return-on-Assets** 6.3%

**Sales Growth** 15.1%

**Market-to-Book Ratio** 4.4

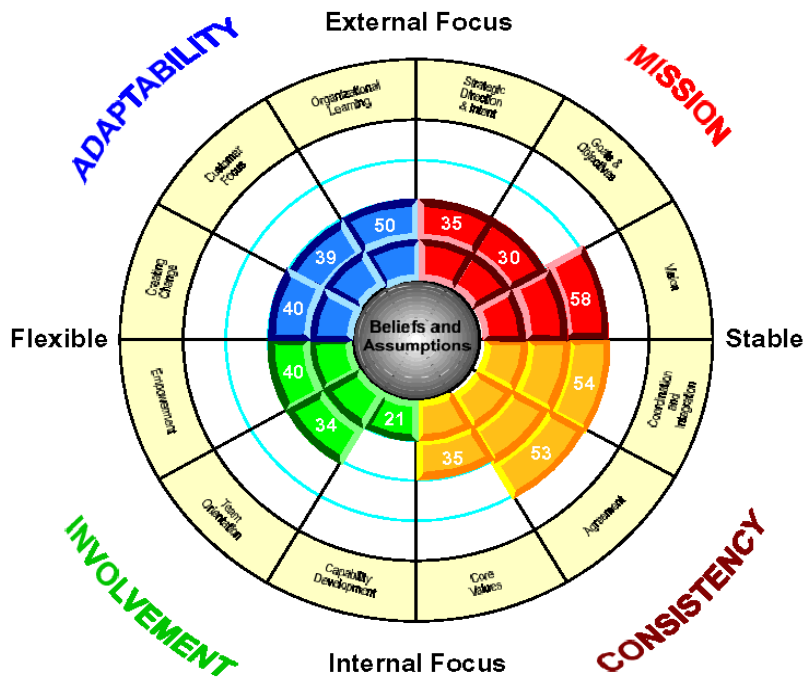
The market value (share price x #shares) is 440% of book value (which is a company's assets minus liabilities).

Managers in the top 25% are creating more value in the marketplace.

# Customer Satisfaction

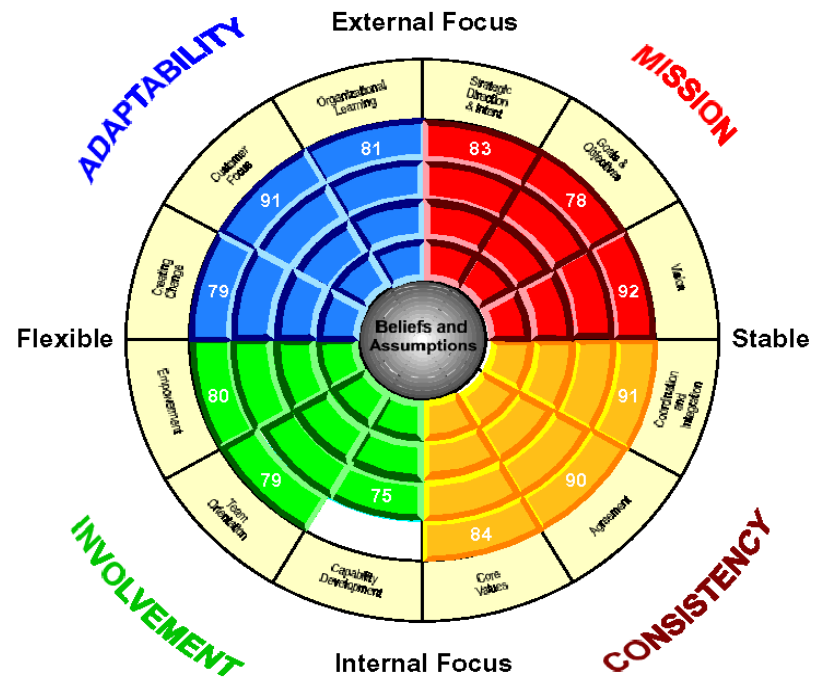
In a separate study of 240 automotive dealerships, firms with higher culture scores have higher customer satisfaction ratings.

Below 50% Highly Satisfied



N=10

Above 80% Highly Satisfied



N=12

# **The Denison Organizational Culture Model**

- **is behaviorally based**
- **was designed and created within the business environment**
- **uses business language to explore business-level issues**
- **is linked to bottom-line business results**
- **is fast and easy to implement**
- **is applicable to all levels of the organization**

# What is Unique about the Denison Model of Organizational Culture?

- **Two unique features of the Denison model stand out: the research and the proven effectiveness.**
- **The Denison model provides an easy-to-interpret, business-friendly approach to organizational culture that is based on sound research principles.**
- **The culture survey has been used successfully in thousands of organizations around the world.**
- **The Denison model links organizational culture to bottom-line performance metrics such as sales growth, return on equity (ROE), return on investment (ROI), customer satisfaction, innovation, employee satisfaction and more.**
- **The model and related culture survey are based on over 20 years of research and practice by Daniel R. Denison, P.hD. and William S. Neale, M.A., M.L.I.R.**

# What is Unique about the Denison Model of Organizational Culture?

- The Denison survey has a strong research foundation.
- Offers proven reliability and validity.
- Provides results compared to a normative, benchmarking database.
- Ties survey results to bottom-line performance metrics through statistical analysis.
- Applies to a broad spectrum of organizations (all industries, non-profit, governmental, education, etc.).
- Has been used globally (translated into 20+ languages)



# Conclusions

- Your organization's culture can have a dramatic impact on your bottom line.
- Culture is a controllable aspect of your organization that can improve your profitability, sales growth, market value, innovation and employee and customer satisfaction.
- Developing your culture today will improve your performance tomorrow.

**Edgar H. Schein, The Corporate Culture Survival Guide,  
1999, p.3.**

- ***“Culture matters... If the organization begins to fail, this implies that elements of the culture have become dysfunctional and must change.***
  - ***Failure to understand culture and take it seriously can have disastrous consequences for an organization.”***

**V CONGRESO INTERNACIONAL DE ANÁLISIS ORGANIZACIONAL  
MODERNIDAD, ÉTICA E INTERVENCIÓN EN LAS ORGANIZACIONES**

**Guanajuato, México  
8, 9 y 10 de noviembre de 2007**

**Ponencia  
“Cultura Organizacional y Desempeño  
en Empresas Bogotanas”**

**Mesa # 2  
Cultura en las Organizaciones**

**Rafael Ricardo Bray  
Ignacio Gómez Roldán**

**Universidad de La Sabana  
Escuela Internacional de Ciencias Económicas y Administrativas  
Grupo de Investigación “Cambio e Innovación Tecnológica”**

## **Resumen**

La cultura influye en el comportamiento de los miembros, y por lo tanto en el desempeño de las organizaciones. La literatura ha documentado una variedad de resultados de desempeño organizacional que se relacionan con la cultura. Estas consideraciones plantearon la conveniencia de realizar una investigación sobre las culturas de organizaciones bogotanas en aras de conocer su influencia en el comportamiento de sus miembros y en el desempeño organizacional. Esta ponencia constituye el primer avance de resultados de investigación. La investigación se basó en el modelo de cultura de Denison, el cual sustenta las interrelaciones que existen entre la cultura, los comportamientos o prácticas gerenciales, y el desempeño y la efectividad de las organizaciones. El modelo resalta la importancia de vincular los comportamientos o prácticas gerenciales con los supuestos y creencias subyacentes al estudiar la cultura organizacional, el desempeño y la efectividad.

Los resultados obtenidos señalan que las empresas de la muestra han realizado un avance importante en la clarificación de sus destinos estratégicos y que poseen ya un potencial de valor apreciable en la postura actitudinal de sus colaboradores. De acuerdo con el modelo de cultura de Denison, en las empresas de la muestra existe un balance entre los cuatro sesgos culturales de flexibilidad, estabilidad, foco externo y foco interno. En esta ponencia se describen las estimaciones sobre las principales asociaciones entre características culturales e indicadores de desempeño organizacional.

### **1. Introducción**

El proyecto de investigación que sustenta esta ponencia se propuso los siguientes objetivos:

- Evaluar las características de las culturas existentes en una muestra de organizaciones bogotanas a partir de la aplicación de la encuesta sobre cultura organizacional de Denison (Denison Organizational Culture Survey).
- Evaluar la influencia de las características de las culturas de las empresas mencionadas en un conjunto de indicadores críticos del desempeño organizacional.

- Proponer y sustentar recomendaciones para la administración de culturas que propicien el mejoramiento del desempeño organizacional.<sup>1</sup>

Esta ponencia constituye el primer avance de resultados de investigación de dicho proyecto. Para comenzar se describe la metodología utilizada y luego se explican los fundamentos teóricos. Posteriormente se presenta el modelo de cultura de Denison a partir del cual se hizo el estudio. A continuación se analizan y describen los primeros resultados. Al finalizar se presentan algunas conclusiones sobre los logros del proyecto de investigación.

## **2. Metodología**

Se aplicó el Denison Organizational Culture Survey (DOCS) constituido por 60 preguntas cerradas a una muestra de los miembros de cada una de 39 organizaciones radicadas en Bogotá, Colombia, que participaron en el estudio.<sup>2</sup> 1655 encuestas individuales conformaron la base de datos. El DOCS se ha venido utilizando por más de 20 años, habiendo alcanzado un sello global ya que ha sido traducido a más de 30 idiomas.<sup>3</sup> La encuesta de Denison ha sido diseñada para generar un análisis directo, sistémico y comprensible de la cultura organizacional por medio de la evaluación de los comportamientos o prácticas que influyen en el desempeño. Se entiende por evaluación el método sistemático que se aplica para obtener evidencias por medio de pruebas, exámenes, cuestionarios, encuestas y otras fuentes colaterales que permitan establecer inferencias sobre las características de un objeto o fenómeno en función de un propósito específico. (Foxcroft & Roodt, 2002). Para el caso de esta investigación, la encuesta registra las percepciones de cada miembro sobre 60 comportamientos o prácticas específicos que manifiestan los índices

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<sup>1</sup> El grupo de investigación “Cambio e Innovación Tecnológica”, responsable del proyecto, obtuvo la categoría A por parte de COLCIENCIAS.

<sup>2</sup> El tamaño de la muestra asume un nivel de confianza del 95% y un margen de error de 5 puntos. Equipos de estudiantes por empresa aplicaron la encuesta y tabularon los datos. Posteriormente, estudiantes asistentes de investigación prepararon la base de datos agregada para el conjunto de la muestra de empresas.

<sup>3</sup> Las diferentes versiones del DOCS (Denison Organizational Culture Survey) se pueden encontrar en el link respectivo (online demos) en [www.denisonconsulting.com](http://www.denisonconsulting.com). Para este estudio se utilizó la traducción española oficial para América Latina que aparece en dicha página.

constituyentes de las características básicas del perfil cultural de su organización. De acuerdo con las ciencias cognitivas, se define la percepción como el proceso mental de adquisición, interpretación, selección y organización de información sensorial. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perception>). La percepción de un individuo particular recibe las influencias de una variedad de factores que incluyen la intensidad y las dimensiones físicas de los estímulos, las experiencias pasadas, y factores de atención tales como la disponibilidad para responder a los estímulos, y la motivación y el estado emocional. (Robbins, 1998). Denison y Mishra (1995) afirman que esta encuesta no solo se enfoca en los comportamientos o prácticas internos, sino que también examina los comportamientos o prácticas que definen las interacciones de la organización con el entorno.

Para cada una de las cuatro características culturales básicas el modelo define tres índices, y posteriormente mide cada uno de los doce índices resultantes con cinco ítems o preguntas. Cada ítem evalúa un comportamiento o práctica específico para un total de 60. Una vez tabulada la información, se obtuvieron los promedios de los puntajes recogidos en las encuestas que respondieron los miembros de las empresas de la muestra, por características culturales, índices, ítems e indicadores de desempeño. A nivel de ítem, los encuestados tuvieron cinco opciones posibles de respuesta de acuerdo con el diferencial semántico de Likert, tal como se indica a continuación:

Muy en desacuerdo	En desacuerdo	Neutral	De acuerdo	Totalmente de acuerdo
1	2	3	4	5

De acuerdo con Davidson (2004), una escala de clasificación, como el diferencial semántico de Likert, se puede definir como una agrupación de planteamientos, palabras o símbolos que facilitan el registro de la fuerza de una variable particular. Según Babbie y Mouton (2001), el valor de la escala de Likert es la ordinalidad clara de las categorías de respuesta y su capacidad para medir la intensidad de los diferentes ítems.

A continuación se corrieron las correlaciones entre los promedios agregados de las características básicas de la cultura de la muestra de empresas y los promedios agregados de un conjunto de indicadores críticos del desempeño organizacional en las áreas de finanzas, ventas, participación de mercado, innovación, calidad de productos y servicios y satisfacción de empleados. En síntesis, la investigación realizada fue inicialmente del tipo descriptivo ya que se reseñaron las características o rasgos y demás componentes del fenómeno objeto de estudio. En este caso, se buscó describir las características, los índices e ítems que muestran en detalle la constitución de las culturas propias de las organizaciones de la muestra. De igual manera, la investigación tuvo elementos de tipo correlacional ya que tuvo como propósito mostrar asociaciones, no relaciones causales, entre las características de la cultura organizacional y un conjunto de indicadores de desempeño organizacional. (Bernal, 2006, p.112, 113).

### **3. Cultura y Desempeño Organizacional**

#### **3.1. El Concepto de Cultura**

Por lo general, las definiciones de cultura organizacional o corporativa asocian explícitamente el concepto de cultura con *algo sostenido en común o compartido* entre los miembros: creencias, supuestos, valores y normas. (Jacques, 1952, p. 25; Pettigrew, 1979, p.574; Siehl y Martin, 1984, p.227; Trice y Beyer, 1993, p.2; Smircich y Stubbart, 1985, p.727; Walsh y Ungson, 1991, p.60). Aun más, según la definición muy conocida de Schein, los supuestos fundamentales constituyen el aspecto central y más importante de la cultura organizacional. Según este autor, la cultura se refiere al “patrón de supuestos básicos que un grupo dado ha inventado, descubierto, o desarrollado mientras aprende a enfrentar sus problemas de adaptación externa y de integración interna, y qué ha funcionado tan bien para ser considerado válido, y que por lo tanto, se enseña a los nuevos miembros como la manera correcta de percibir, pensar y sentir en relación con esos problemas”. (Schein, 1985, p.6). El concepto de cultura representa entonces, en un sentido amplio y holístico, las

cualidades de un grupo humano específico que se transmiten de una generación a otra porque se cree que son útiles para la supervivencia y la adaptación. Para el caso de las organizaciones, Denison (1990, p.2) afirma que la cultura organizacional aporta los valores, creencias y principios que sirven como fundamento para el sistema gerencial de una organización, como también los comportamientos y prácticas que tanto ejemplifican como refuerzan esos valores, creencias y principios básicos. Tanto estos como los comportamientos o prácticas permanecen porque tienen sentido para los miembros de una organización. (Denison ,1990)

### **3.2. Estudios sobre Cultura y Desempeño**

Dado que la cultura organizacional es compartida, o sostenida en común, se puede utilizar como marco básico para el análisis y la interpretación de los fenómenos organizacionales. En concreto, por ser compartida, la cultura guía los patrones cotidianos de comportamiento e influye profundamente en la toma de decisiones de los individuos y de los grupos al interior de las organizaciones. Al final, por dirigir el comportamiento de las personas, y por lo tanto el desempeño organizacional y la capacidad de respuesta a los retos del entorno, la cultura determina en gran medida el éxito o fracaso frente al logro de resultados buscados por las empresas. En otras palabras, la cultura organizacional puede impulsar o entorpecer el logro de una ventaja competitiva real. Siguiendo a Schein, puede afirmarse que la cultura organizacional puede aumentar la efectividad de las personas si sus creencias y supuestos fundamentales motivan patrones de comportamientos favorables a los indicadores críticos de desempeño organizacional. En la misma dirección, Goffee y Jones (1998) plantean que la cultura organizacional es tal vez la fuerza individual más poderosa para la cohesión interna en la organización actual. Los líderes pueden influir en la forma de evolución de la cultura, y posicionar de esta manera la organización hacia una ventaja competitiva sostenida que no pueda ser fácilmente copiada por sus competidores. Las prácticas o comportamientos en un contexto cultural pueden establecer la diferencia entre una organización exitosa y otra en camino al fracaso. Quick



(1992) por su parte, argumenta que la cultura es el tejido conectivo que articula y mantiene unida a la gente de una organización de tal forma que pueda tener éxito frente a los retos.

En apoyo a los anteriores planteamientos, la literatura especializada ha documentado empíricamente una variedad de resultados de desempeño organizacional que se relacionan con la cultura. Por ejemplo, se ha encontrado que la cultura organizacional se relaciona con el crecimiento de la firma (Calori y Sarnin, 1991) y el desempeño global de la firma (Denison, 1990; Denison y Mishra, 1995; Kotter y Heskett, 1992). Otros estudios han señalado que su efecto se puede observar directamente al nivel individual, en resultados tales como el compromiso (O'Reilly et al., 1991). Los investigadores organizacionales también han desarrollado tipologías de las culturas organizacionales para describir a las firmas exitosas. (Cheng, 1998; Denison y Mishra, 1995, O'Reilly et al., 1991). Por su parte, Kotter y Heskett (1992) relacionaron el desempeño promedio en un período de diez años con medidas de la fortaleza de la cultura corporativa y encontraron que, entre industrias, las firmas percibidas con culturas fuertes generalmente tenían superiores niveles promedio de retorno sobre la inversión, crecimiento del ingreso neto, y cambios en el precio de la acción. De igual manera, Gordon y DiTomaso (1992) hallaron que el desempeño de compañías de seguros aumentó en la medida en que había consenso alrededor de los valores culturales. También Denison, al usar evidencia cuantitativa y cualitativa, afirmó que el consenso alrededor de los valores organizacionales aumenta la efectividad organizacional. (Denison, 1990). Es claro que estos investigadores han partido del supuesto de que la cultura organizacional es un fenómeno susceptible de medición. Adicionalmente, la revisión de resultados de los estudios mencionados tiende a ver la cultura organizacional más como un activo competitivo susceptible de ser intervenido y administrable en términos del desempeño, y menos como un fenómeno natural y orgánicamente emergente. (Baker, 2002, p.2) Al respecto, Schein argumenta que el liderazgo hoy en día es esencial para la creación, la administración, y, de vez en cuando, para la destrucción y reconstrucción de la

cultura. De hecho, este autor afirma, “la única cosa de importancia que los líderes hacen es crear y administrar la cultura” y “el único talento de los líderes es su habilidad para comprender la cultura y trabajar con ella” (Schein, 1992, p.5).

#### **4. El Modelo de Denison para el Diagnóstico Científico de la Cultura Organizacional en Función del Desempeño<sup>4</sup>**

En general, este modelo presenta las interrelaciones que existen entre la cultura organizacional, los comportamientos o prácticas gerenciales, y el desempeño y la efectividad de la organización. El modelo resalta la importancia de vincular los comportamientos o prácticas gerenciales con los supuestos y creencias subyacentes al momento de estudiar la cultura organizacional, el desempeño y la efectividad. La cultura organizacional está compuesta por una serie de supuestos y creencias compartidas por los miembros sobre los clientes, competidores, proveedores, accionistas, ellos mismos y otros. Según Denison, esos supuestos y creencias no permanecen ocultos, sino que se manifiestan en una serie de comportamientos o prácticas visibles. Dado que son observables, esos comportamientos pueden ser medidos, cuantificados y correlacionados con variables de resultados críticos para el desempeño organizacional. Estos comportamientos o prácticas a su vez refuerzan las creencias y supuestos fundamentales de donde se originan. El comportamiento de las personas termina por generar la cultura que las mismas personas y otros experimentan. Aun más, si bien es cierto que las creencias y supuestos dirigen el comportamiento, también es verdad que el comportamiento dirige los resultados. En consecuencia, si a los gerentes les interesan los resultados, es tanto práctico como apropiado diagnosticar la cultura a través de su expresión más obvia, los comportamientos o prácticas de las personas. (Fisher, 2000)

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<sup>4</sup> La descripción del modelo se basa extensamente en el texto de Daniel Denison: Organizational Culture: Can it be a Key Lever for Driving Organizational Change? June 2000. International Institute for Management Development.

De acuerdo con Denison, la utilización de la cultura en el análisis y apalancamiento del cambio organizacional demanda una estrategia persuasiva para los administradores. Esta estrategia debe responder a sus preocupaciones legítimas sobre el valor instrumental del cambio cultural. Según este autor, los gerentes han de ser conscientes de la evidencia que conecta la cultura con el desempeño organizacional. También hay que ayudarles a entender los impactos, tanto positivos como negativos, de la cultura en sus propios negocios. Igualmente, es necesario hablar de la cultura en un lenguaje que tenga sentido para los gerentes y que pueda conectarse rápidamente con los comportamientos suyos y de los miembros organizacionales. (Denison, 2000),

Por las razones anteriores, Denison ha desarrollado, en sus propias palabras, un modelo de cultura organizacional basado en el comportamiento; diseñado y creado dentro del entorno de los negocios; expuesto en el lenguaje que se utiliza en el manejo de asuntos de negocios; articulado a los resultados de gestión; rápido y fácil de aplicar; y aplicable a todos los niveles de cualquier organización (Denison, 1990; Denison y Mishra, 1995; Denison, Cho, y Young, 2000). En síntesis, el modelo describe y aplica una teoría de la cultura organizacional que se articula al desempeño de la empresa desde una perspectiva gerencial orientada, naturalmente, a resultados críticos para la supervivencia y viabilidad de las organizaciones. En desarrollo de lo antes expuesto, el modelo se fundamenta en la tradición investigativa sobre cómo la cultura influye en el desempeño organizacional, y se enfoca en aquellas características culturales que, según los resultados de investigación, tienen un impacto clave en el desempeño de las organizaciones.

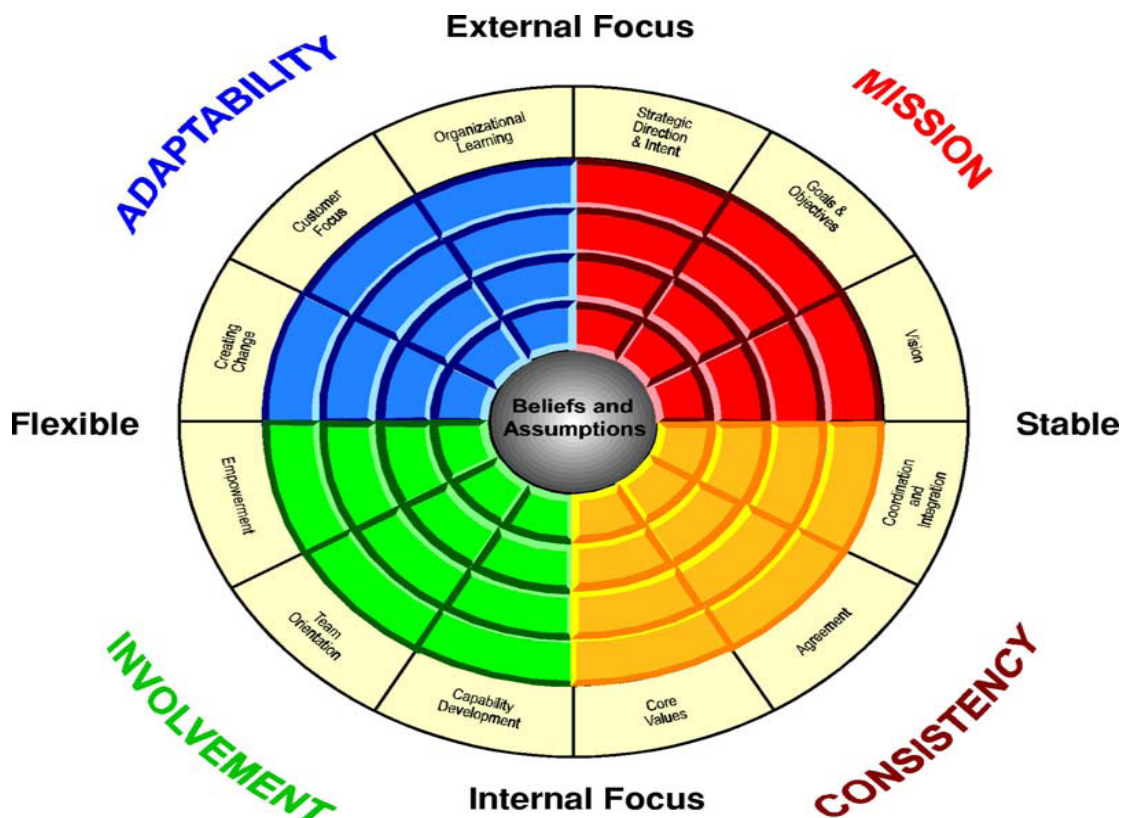
Así pues, el modelo se basa en cuatro características culturales que han mostrado tener una fuerte influencia sobre el desempeño organizacional: involucramiento (involvement), consistencia, adaptabilidad, y misión. Denison enfatiza la asociación positiva entre estas características culturales y el desempeño total de las empresas. Según Jaffee, la regulación normativa a

través de estas características culturales es la forma más efectiva, en términos de costo beneficio, de control de la conducta humana. (Jaffee, 2004). Cada una de estas características se mide a través de tres índices, y cada uno de estos índices se mide a través de cinco ítems de cuestionario. Este modelo se ha desarrollado a partir de investigaciones realizadas durante más de 20 años en más de 3,000 organizaciones y con más de 100,000 personas encuestadas (Denison, 1990; Denison y Mishra, 1995; Denison y Neale, 1996).

El modelo de Denison primero recoge información de miembros de varios niveles de la organización sobre sus percepciones de la cultura organizacional, tal como se manifiesta a través de sus acciones y actividades. Posteriormente, los datos se describen por medio de un modelo bidimensional que destaca los asuntos cruciales del enfoque interno versus el enfoque externo y de la flexibilidad versus la estabilidad y sus impactos en el desempeño y viabilidad de la organización. De acuerdo con Denison, Lief y Ward, estas dos dimensiones deben verse más como transacciones (tradeoffs) relativas antes que opciones radicales, dado que tanto un enfoque interno como un enfoque externo son necesarios para el éxito de los negocios, al igual que tanto la flexibilidad como la estabilidad. (Denison, Lief y Ward, 2004) Este modelo de cultura organizacional es un mecanismo que facilita la generalización, sin descartar la peculiaridad de cada organización. De esta manera se pueden establecer comparaciones entre diversas organizaciones. Una vez se aplica el cuestionario de diagnóstico cultural, se pueden identificar áreas de mejoramiento y diseñar un curso de acción que ayude a corregir debilidades y a acentuar fortalezas culturales. Dado el caso, por ejemplo, se puede diseñar un plan de acción que fortalezca aquellas características que fomentan la innovación y la respuesta ágil y efectiva a los cambios en el entorno organizacional. (Ricardo, 2006)

El siguiente gráfico representa las características e índices que constituyen la cultura organizacional según Denison. Los cuatro cuadrantes del modelo representan las cuatro características básicas de cualquier cultura

organizacional. A su vez, cada cuadrante incluye tres índices de comportamientos o prácticas que se conectan con cada una de las características. Las características y los índices se representan en términos de dos dimensiones subyacentes, flexibilidad versus estabilidad sobre el eje horizontal y de los focos externo e interno sobre el eje vertical.



**Gráfico 2. El Modelo de Cultura Organizacional de Denison<sup>5</sup>**

A continuación se describen esas cuatro características culturales:

#### **4.1. Involucramiento (Involvement)**

Las organizaciones efectivas facultan a su gente, se construyen a sí mismas alrededor de los equipos, y desarrollan la capacidad humana a todos los niveles. Los miembros de la organización están comprometidos con su trabajo y sienten que poseen una parte de la organización. Las personas, a todos los

<sup>5</sup> Organizational Culture: Measuring and Developing It in Your Organization. William H. Mobley, Lena Wang, and Kate Fang. Harvard Business Review China. March, 2005, page 6.

niveles, sienten que tienen al menos alguna influencia en las decisiones que afectan sus trabajos y que estos están directamente conectados con los objetivos de la organización. En síntesis, esta característica demuestra que tanto la organización se orienta a la construcción de la capacidad, el sentido de propiedad y la responsabilidad humana. En términos de una pregunta; *¿Están las personas alineadas y comprometidas con la organización?* Esta característica se mide con tres índices:

*Facultamiento (Empowerment)*. Los individuos tienen autoridad, iniciativa y habilidad para administrar su propio trabajo. Esto crea un sentido de propiedad y responsabilidad hacia la organización.

*Orientación al Equipo*. Se valora el trabajo cooperativo en función de los objetivos comunes, de los cuales todos los empleados se sienten responsables. La organización confía en el esfuerzo de los equipos para que se haga el trabajo.

*Desarrollo de Capacidades*. La organización invierte continuamente en el desarrollo de las habilidades de los empleados con el propósito de mantener y mejorar la competitividad y satisfacer las necesidades actuales del negocio.

#### **4.2. Consistencia.**

Las organizaciones son efectivas en razón de su consistencia e integración interna. El comportamiento de las personas se fundamenta en un conjunto de valores centrales (core values), los líderes y sus seguidores poseen la habilidad de lograr acuerdos (aún cuando existan diversos puntos de vista), y las actividades de la organización están bien coordinadas e integradas. Las organizaciones que poseen esta característica tienen una cultura distintiva y fuerte que influye significativamente en el comportamiento de las personas. Un sistema compartido de creencias y valores funciona como un sistema de control internalizado. La consistencia es entonces una fuente poderosa de estabilidad e integración interna que resulta de un marco mental (mindset) común y de un alto grado de conformidad. En síntesis, esta característica señala hasta donde la organización se orienta a la definición y operacionalización de valores y sistemas que sean la base de una cultura

fuerte. En una sola pregunta: *¿El sistema organizacional como un todo genera el apalancamiento que exigen sus actividades específicas?* Esta característica se mide con los siguientes índices:

*Valores Centrales.* Los miembros de la organización comparten un conjunto de valores que crean un sentido de identidad y un conjunto claro de expectativas.

*Acuerdo.* Los miembros de la organización son capaces de lograr acuerdos en asuntos críticos. Esto incluye tanto el nivel subyacente del acuerdo como la habilidad de reconciliar diferencias cuando ellas ocurran.

*Coordinación e Integración.* Diferentes funciones y unidades de la organización son capaces de trabajar juntos bien para lograr sus objetivos comunes. Las fronteras organizacionales no interfieren con la realización del trabajo.

#### **4.3. Adaptabilidad.**

Las organizaciones adaptables son impulsadas por sus clientes, asumen riesgos y aprenden de sus errores, y tienen capacidad y experiencia en la creación del cambio. Estas organizaciones están continuamente mejorando su capacidad de entregar valor a sus clientes. Las organizaciones fuertes en adaptabilidad generalmente experimentan crecimiento en las ventas y de su porción de mercado. En breve, esta característica señala que tanto la organización convierte las demandas del entorno de los negocios en acciones de respuesta. Puesto en una pregunta: *¿La organización “escucha” a su mercado?* Esta característica se mide con los siguientes tres índices:

*Creación de Cambio.* La organización es capaz de generar estrategias adaptativas que sirvan para enfrentar necesidades cambiantes. También es capaz de “leer” el ambiente de negocios, reaccionar rápidamente a las tendencias actuales y anticipar cambios futuros.

*Enfoque en el cliente.* La organización entiende y responde a sus clientes y anticipa sus futuras necesidades. Esto refleja el grado hasta el cual la organización es impulsada por la preocupación de satisfacer a sus clientes.

*Aprendizaje Organizacional.* La organización recibe, traduce, e interpreta las señales del entorno y las transforma en oportunidades de estímulo a la innovación, ganancia de conocimiento, y desarrollo de capacidades.

#### **4.4. Misión**

Tal vez la característica cultural más importante sea el sentido de misión. Las organizaciones que no saben para donde se dirigen terminan generalmente en cualquier parte. Las organizaciones exitosas tienen un claro sentido de propósito y una dirección que define las metas organizacionales y los objetivos estratégicos y que expresa la visión de lo que la organización quiere ser en el futuro. En pocas palabras, esta característica muestra hasta donde la organización ha definido una dirección a largo plazo con sentido para sí misma. En términos de una pregunta: *¿Sabe la organización hacia donde se dirige?* Esta característica se mide a través de los siguientes índices:

*Dirección e Intención Estratégicas.* Claras intenciones estratégicas comunican el propósito de la organización y explicitan la contribución de cada miembro y cómo cada quien puede dejar su huella.

*Metas y Objetivos.* Un conjunto claro de metas y objetivos se articula a la misión, la visión, y la estrategia, y le suministra a cada quien una clara dirección para su trabajo.

*Visión.* La organización posee una visión compartida de un estado futuro deseado. Ella incluye los valores centrales y captura los corazones y las mentes de los miembros de la organización, al mismo tiempo que les da guía y dirección.

#### **4.5. Administración de Tensiones Culturales**

Este modelo se enfoca sobre un conjunto de tensiones o contradicciones que hay que administrar. Algunas de ellas son la tensión entre estabilidad y flexibilidad y entre enfoque interno y enfoque externo. Estas tensiones son las dimensiones básicas que subyacen al modelo. Adicionalmente, se presentan las tensiones diagonales entre consistencia interna y adaptación, y entre la misión definida desde arriba en la jerarquía y el compromiso que se genera desde abajo. En el núcleo del modelo, de acuerdo con Schein, están las creencias y supuestos subyacentes. (Schein, 1985), Aunque estos niveles más profundos de la cultura organizacional son más difíciles de medir, ellos



constituyen la fuente donde se originan el comportamiento y acción de los miembros organizacionales. Las creencias y los supuestos acerca de la organización y su gente, el cliente, el mercado y la industria, y las propuestas de valor básicas de la firma crean una lógica compacta que mantiene a la organización firmemente unida.

El involucramiento y la consistencia enfrentan la dinámica interna de la organización pero no la interacción de la organización con el ambiente externo. En contraste, la adaptabilidad y la misión se enfocan en las relaciones entre la organización y el ambiente externo. De otro lado, el involucramiento y la adaptabilidad enfatizan la capacidad de la organización para la flexibilidad y el cambio. Por el contrario, la consistencia y la misión enfatizan la capacidad para la estabilidad y la dirección. Un sistema organizacional orientado a la adaptabilidad y el involucramiento introducirá más variedad, más insumos y más soluciones posibles en una situación dada que un sistema orientado hacia un alto nivel de consistencia y un fuerte sentido de misión. En contraste, un sesgo hacia la consistencia y la misión reducirá la variedad y colocará un mayor énfasis en control y estabilidad.

#### **4.6. Características Culturales y Desempeño Organizacional**

Denison estudió la correlación entre las características culturales del modelo (involucramiento, consistencia, adaptabilidad y misión) y un conjunto de medidas de efectividad organizacional. Al respecto, misión y consistencia (estabilidad) impactan medidas de desempeño financiero tales como retorno sobre activos, retorno sobre inversión y retorno sobre ventas. En cuanto a involucramiento y adaptabilidad (flexibilidad), estas características impactan el desarrollo de productos y la innovación. Esto típicamente significa mayores niveles de innovación en productos y servicios y creatividad, al igual que una respuesta rápida a las cambiantes necesidades de clientes y empleados. En referencia a adaptabilidad y misión (enfoque externo), ellas impactan el ingreso y el crecimiento en las ventas y en la participación de mercado. Por su parte, involucramiento y consistencia (foco interno) reflejan su efecto en indicadores de calidad, retorno sobre inversión y satisfacción de los empleados.

La siguiente tabla resume los impactos de la cultura en las variables críticas del desempeño organizacional:

Rentabilidad/Retorno sobre Activos	Crecimiento en Ingresos/Crecimiento en ventas	Participación de Mercado	Innovación	Calidad de Productos & Servicios	Satisfacción de los Empleados
<i>Soportados por</i>	<i>Soportados por</i>	<i>Soportados por</i>	<i>Soportados por</i>	<i>Soportados por</i>	<i>Soportados por</i>
Misión	Misión	Misión			[Misión]
Involucramiento			Involucramiento	Involucramiento	Involucramiento
Adaptabilidad	Adaptabilidad	Adaptabilidad	Adaptabilidad		[Adaptabilidad]
Consistencia				Consistencia	Consistencia

**Tabla 1. Impacto de la Cultura en las Variables Críticas del Desempeño.**<sup>6</sup>

Aunque, por lo general, las cuatro características culturales del modelo tienen un impacto positivo en el desempeño organizacional, al menos en la superficie, algunas de ellas puede parecer que contradicen a otras. Por ejemplo, culturas consistentes en grado extremo pueden llegar a ser muy cerradas y volverse muy resistentes al cambio. En contraste, las culturas muy adaptables pueden tener problemas en el logro de altas metas de eficiencia y de sentido compartido de propósito que se encuentra a menudo en culturas bien integradas. De manera semejante, la misión y el involucramiento pueden parecer contradictorias: el sentido y la dirección establecidos por la misión organizacional pueden limitar el involucramiento de algunos miembros organizacionales. Tal como muchas organizaciones han descubierto, la simple declaración de una nueva misión organizacional no implica necesariamente el apoyo y el compromiso de los miembros organizacionales. Por la misma razón, el alto involucramiento entre los miembros organizacionales no implica necesariamente un sentido claro de dirección y propósito. No obstante lo anterior, según Denison, la cultura de una organización efectiva debe incluir las cuatro características representadas en el modelo aquí descrito. Así pues, una

<sup>6</sup> Denison, D.R., & Neale, W.S. Denison Organizational Culture Survey. Facilitator Guide. Denison Consulting. Ann Arbor. Michigan. 1996.

organización efectiva ha de tener una cultura que sea adaptativa, pero también muy consistente y predecible. De la misma manera, dicha cultura debe estimular un alto compromiso en el contexto de un sentido compartido de misión.

## 5. Tendencias de los Perfiles Culturales en las Organizaciones del Estudio

### 5.1. Características Básicas y Sesgos Culturales

El siguiente gráfico recoge los promedios agregados de las 39 empresas del estudio sobre las cuatro características básicas y los cuatro sesgos posibles de la cultura. El promedio para cada característica se construyó a partir de los promedios de sus respectivos índices. En el caso de los sesgos, sus promedios se produjeron a partir de los promedios de las características que los sustentan.



**Gráfico 3. Características Básicas y Sesgos Culturales**

Aunque todos los promedios son todavía modestos, se destaca misión como la característica cultural más fuerte seguida por involucramiento. Tal parece que las organizaciones de la muestra han avanzado hacia la definición de un claro sentido de propósito y una dirección que define las metas organizacionales y los objetivos estratégicos y que expresa la visión de lo que las organizaciones quieren ser en el futuro. De otra parte, las organizaciones demuestran progresos significativos en el facultamiento de sus miembros, la construcción de sí mismas alrededor de los equipos de trabajo, y el desarrollo de las capacidades humanas a todos los niveles. En breve, los resultados obtenidos dan a entender que las empresas de la muestra ha realizado un avance importante en la clarificación de sus destinos y que poseen ya un potencial de valor apreciable en la postura actitudinal de sus colaboradores. De acuerdo con los resultados obtenidos, hay un balance entre los cuatro sesgos culturales de flexibilidad, estabilidad, foco externo y foco interno.

## **5.2. Características Culturales e Índices**

La siguiente tabla recoge los promedios agregados de las 39 empresas del estudio sobre las cuatro características básicas y los respectivos índices que las conforman. Para este nivel de análisis se identificaron los dos índices de más alto promedio y los dos índices de menor promedio para el conjunto de las cuatro características.

<b>Características y sus Índices</b>		
<b>1. Involucramiento</b>	<b>3,70</b>	
Facultamiento	3,79	Más Alto
Orientación al Equipo	3,77	
Desarrollo de Capacidades	3,54	
<b>2. Consistencia</b>	<b>3,62</b>	
Valores Centrales o Fundamentales	3,78	
Acuerdo	3,53	Más Bajo
Coordinación e Integración	3,54	
<b>3. Adaptabilidad</b>	<b>3,61</b>	
Creación del Cambio	3,51	Más Bajo
Enfoque en el Cliente	3,67	
Aprendizaje Organizacional	3,65	
<b>4. Misión</b>	<b>3,73</b>	
Dirección e Intención Estratégicas	3,77	
Objetivos y Metas	3,83	Más Alto
Visión	3,59	

## **Tabla 2. Características Culturales e Índices**

Los índices objetivos y metas, y facultamiento obtuvieron los más altos promedios agregados. Tal parece que las organizaciones de la muestra tienden a poseer un conjunto claro de metas y objetivos que se articula a la misión, la visión y la estrategia, y le suministra a cada quien una clara dirección para sus actividades cotidianas. De otra parte, la fortaleza en facultamiento expresa que las personas, por lo general, perciben que tienen autoridad, iniciativa y habilidad para administrar su propio trabajo. Esto crea un sentido de propiedad y responsabilidad hacía la organización. Los índices más débiles son acuerdo y creación del cambio.

### **5.3. Índices e Ítems**

Para este nivel de análisis se identificaron el ítem de más alto promedio y el ítem de menor promedio en cada uno de los índices para las 39 empresas de la muestra. La tabla siguiente resume los promedios agregados para la característica involucramiento y sus índices e ítems.

<b>INVOLUCRAMIENTO</b>	3,70	
<b>FACULTAMIENTO</b>	3,79	
1. La mayoría de los empleados se involucran activamente en su trabajo.	3,87	Más Alto
2. Las decisiones se toman en el nivel en donde se encuentra la información más adecuada.	3,74	
3. La información se comparte ampliamente para que esté disponible para todos cuando la necesiten.	3,70	Más Bajo
4. Todos piensan que pueden producir un impacto positivo.	3,82	
5. La planificación empresarial es un proceso continuo que involucra a todos en cierto grado.	3,85	
<b>ORIENTACIÓN AL EQUIPO</b>	3,77	
6. Se alienta activamente la cooperación de todos en los diferentes niveles de la organización.	3,63	Más Bajo
7. Las personas trabajan en equipo.	3,79	
8. Las tareas se completan gracias al trabajo en equipo, no a la jerarquía o a los jefes que vigilan.	3,77	
9. Los equipos de trabajo son nuestros componentes primarios o básicos.	3,80	
10. El trabajo se organiza de forma que cada persona pueda ver la relación que existe entre sus funciones individuales y las metas de la organización.	3,84	Más Alto
<b>DESARROLLO DE CAPACIDADES</b>	3,54	
11. La autoridad se delega para que las personas puedan actuar por cuenta propia.	3,43	
12. La capacidad de las personas está mejorando constantemente.	3,81	Más Alto
13. La empresa invierte continuamente para mejorar las destrezas de los empleados.	3,45	
14. Las capacidades de las personas son una fuente importante de ventajas para la empresa que le ayudan a competir mejor.	3,80	
15. A menudo ocurren problemas porque no tenemos las destrezas necesarias para realizar el trabajo.	3,21	Más Bajo

**Tabla 3. Involucramiento y sus Índices e Ítems**

La tabla siguiente resume los promedios agregados para la característica consistencia y sus índices e ítems.

<b>CONSISTENCIA</b>	3,62	
<b>VALORES CENTRALES-FUNDAMENTALES</b>	3,78	
16. Los líderes y gerentes hacen lo que dicen.	3,59	Más Bajo
17. Existe un estilo gerencial característico y un conjunto específico de prácticas gerenciales.	3,69	
18. Existe un conjunto de valores claros y consistentes que gobiernen nuestras prácticas empresariales.	3,85	
19. Si ignoramos nuestros valores básicos nos metemos en un aprieto.	3,90	Más Alto
20. Existe un código de ética que guía nuestro comportamiento y nos indica lo que debemos y no debemos hacer.	3,86	
<b>ACUERDO</b>	3,53	
21. Cuando hay desacuerdos, trabajamos con ahínco para obtener soluciones de beneficio mutuo.	3,64	
22. Existe una cultura sólida.	3,60	
23. Es fácil ponerse de acuerdo en la empresa incluso frente a problemas difíciles.	3,49	
24. A menudo tenemos problemas para llegar a un acuerdo sobre asuntos clave.	3,21	Más Bajo
25. Existe un acuerdo claro sobre la forma correcta e incorrecta de hacer las cosas.	3,71	Más Alto
<b>COORDINACIÓN E INTEGRACIÓN</b>	3,54	
26. La metodología que seguimos en nuestro negocio es consistente y predecible.	3,72	Más Alto
27. Las personas que están en diferentes partes de la organización comparten una perspectiva común.	3,54	
28. Es fácil coordinar proyectos entre las diferentes partes de la organización.	3,46	
29. El trabajar con una persona que está en otra parte de esta organización es como trabajar con una persona de otra organización.	3,31	Más Bajo
30. Las metas están alineadas en todos los niveles.	3,68	

**Tabla 4. Consistencia y sus Índices e Ítems**

La tabla siguiente resume los promedios agregados para la característica adaptabilidad y sus índices e ítems.

<b>ADAPTABILIDAD</b>	3,61	
<b>CREACIÓN DEL CAMBIO</b>	3,51	
31. La forma de hacer las cosas es muy flexible y se puede cambiar fácilmente.	3,36	
32. Respondemos bien a la competencia y a otros cambios en el entorno comercial.	3,82	Más Alto
33. Continuamente se adoptan métodos nuevos y mejorados para realizar el trabajo.	3,74	
34. Generalmente hay resistencia a las iniciativas que surgen para realizar cambios.	3,04	Más Bajo
35. Las diferentes partes de la organización generalmente cooperan entre sí para realizar cambios.	3,58	
<b>ENFOQUE EN EL CLIENTE</b>	3,67	
36. Los comentarios y recomendaciones de los clientes a menudo producen cambios.	3,76	Más Alto
37. Las sugerencias de los clientes influyen en nuestras decisiones.	3,74	
38. Todos los miembros comprenden a fondo los deseos y las necesidades de los clientes.	3,53	Más Bajo
39. Nuestras decisiones generalmente ignoran los intereses de los clientes.	3,68	
40. Alentamos el contacto directo entre nuestra gente y los clientes.	3,62	
<b>APRENDIZAJE ORGANIZACIONAL</b>	3,65	
41. Vemos nuestras fallas como una oportunidad para aprender y mejorar.	3,97	Más Alto
42. Se alienta y recompensa el innovar y tomar riesgos.	3,45	
43. Muchos detalles importantes pasan desapercibidos.	3,17	Más Bajo
44. El aprendizaje es un objetivo importante en nuestras labores cotidianas.	3,95	
45. Nos aseguramos de que "la mano derecha sepa lo que hace la izquierda".	3,71	

**Tabla 5. Adaptabilidad y sus Índices e Ítems**

La tabla siguiente resume los promedios agregados para la característica misión y sus índices e ítems.



<b>MISIÓN</b>	3,73	
<b>DIRECCIÓN E INTENCIÓN ESTRATÉGICA</b>	3,77	
46. Existe dirección y un propósito a largo plazo.	3,86	
47. Nuestra estrategia obliga a otras organizaciones a cambiar su método de competencia en la industria.	3,65	
48. Existe una misión clara que le da significado y dirección a nuestro trabajo.	3,93	Más Alto
49. Existe una clara estrategia para el futuro.	3,83	
50. No es clara nuestra dirección estratégica.	3,56	Más Bajo
<b>OBJETIVOS Y METAS</b>	3,83	
51. Existe un acuerdo generalizado sobre nuestras metas.	3,77	Más Bajo
52. Nuestros líderes fijan metas ambiciosas, pero realistas.	3,79	
53. Nuestra dirigencia ha comunicado oficialmente los objetivos que intentamos alcanzar.	3,83	
54. Seguimos continuamente nuestro progreso en relación a las metas que hemos establecido.	3,90	Más Alto
55. Las personas comprenden lo que hay que hacer para que seamos exitosos a largo plazo.	3,83	
<b>VISIÓN</b>	3,59	
56. Compartimos una visión común acerca de cómo será la organización en el futuro.	3,79	
57. Nuestros líderes tienen una visión a largo plazo.	3,90	Más Alto
58. Las ideas a corto plazo a menudo comprometen nuestra visión a largo plazo.	2,89	Más Bajo
59. Nuestra visión estimula y motiva a nuestros empleados.	3,69	
60. Cumplimos nuestras exigencias a corto plazo sin comprometer nuestra visión a largo plazo.	3,66	

**Tabla 6. Misión y sus Índices e Ítems**

La especificidad de los significados de los ítems cuyos promedios agregados fueron lo más altos y los más bajos expresa por sí misma su relevancia para la interpretación de aquellos como fortalezas y debilidades culturales para esta muestra de empresas. Al respecto, el ítem 41, *vemos nuestras fallas como una oportunidad para aprender y mejorar*, obtuvo un promedio agregado de 3,97, constituyéndose en el resultado más alto dentro del total de 60 ítems. Este ítem encabeza el índice aprendizaje organizacional cuya importancia estratégica para la supervivencia y el desarrollo de las organizaciones ha sido ampliamente

reconocida. (Senge, 1992). Sin embargo, paradójicamente, el ítem 34, *generalmente hay resistencia a las iniciativas que surgen para realizar cambios*, obtuvo un promedio agregado de 3,04, constituyéndose en uno de los resultados más bajo dentro del total de 60 ítems. Tal parece que se ha tomado conciencia del análisis de las fallas como punto de partida para el aprendizaje que propicia el cambio, pero existen fuertes factores de resistencia que entorpecen la implementación de las iniciativas de mejoramiento. El ítem 58, *las ideas a corto plazo a menudo comprometen nuestra visión a largo plazo*, obtuvo un promedio agregado de 2,89, constituyéndose en el resultado más bajo dentro del total de 60 ítems. El resultado en este ítem señala una debilidad cultural que podría neutralizar los buenos resultados obtenidos en otros ítems. El cortoplacismo es endémico en muchas organizaciones, no sólo colombianas sino de todas las latitudes. Además de generar estrés, desgaste y desmotivación en las personas, este fenómeno tiene graves consecuencias negativas para la capacidad estratégica de adelantarse y estar preparados para los retos del futuro.

Análisis e interpretaciones similares a los anteriores se podrían hacer para los promedios agregados resultantes en cada característica, índice e ítem. De esta manera se obtendría una valoración sistémica en detalle de las fortalezas y debilidades culturales y de sus implicaciones estratégicas para las 39 empresas investigadas. Las limitaciones de extensión de esta ponencia obligan a presentar sólo un ejemplo de las posibilidades analíticas e interpretativas del DOCS (Denison Organizational Culture Survey). Sin embargo, este breve ejercicio demuestra la capacidad de la encuesta para la evaluación de las características de las culturas existentes en esta muestra de organizaciones bogotanas. De todas maneras, la simple presentación de promedios mayores y menores a nivel de característica, índice e ítem permite de entrada la obtención de una visión general sobre las tendencias agregadas de los perfiles culturales presentes en la muestra de empresas. Se invita entonces al lector a examinar los resultados obtenidos para la muestra de empresas, y de esta manera

pruebe por sí mismo las potencialidades analíticas e interpretativas del DOCS y la teoría que lo sustenta.

## 6. Tendencias de los Perfiles de Desempeño en las Organizaciones del Estudio

### 6.1. Indicadores de Desempeño

Además de las 60 preguntas básicas sobre comportamientos o prácticas que expresan el perfil cultural, el DOCS incluye 7 preguntas sobre percepciones sobre el desempeño de la organización. Tales preguntas apuntan a identificar la evaluación que cada encuestado otorga a su empresa en 6 indicadores críticos para su desempeño estratégico y la percepción global del encuestado sobre ese desempeño. A nivel de indicador de desempeño, los encuestados tuvieron cinco opciones posibles de respuesta de acuerdo con el diferencial semántico de Likert, tal como se indica a continuación:

Bajo		Promedio	Alto	
1	2	3	4	5

La siguiente tabla presenta los promedios agregados de los indicadores de desempeño para la muestra de 39 empresas. En general, los resultados son todavía modestos. En efecto, todos los indicadores se ubican en un rango de 3,62 a 3,89. Se destaca el indicador *calidad de productos y servicios* con el mayor promedio 3,89, por encima del indicador *desarrollo de nuevos productos y/o servicios* (innovación) que alcanza un promedio de 3,64. Tal parece que en las organizaciones de la muestra se han hecho esfuerzos por el mejoramiento de la calidad. Sin embargo, las empresas pueden estar rezagadas en el impulso a la innovación. Este indicador de desempeño es especialmente crítico para la competitividad organizacional en el entorno de la globalización. De otro lado, el indicador *satisfacción de los empleados* obtuvo el más bajo promedio, 3,62. Este resultado también muestra el atraso de estas empresas en el

mejoramiento de este indicador igualmente crítico para la competitividad organizacional.

INDICADORES DE DESEMPEÑO	PROMEDIO
1. Crecimiento en ventas e ingresos	3,72
2. Participación de mercado	3,62
3. Rentabilidad y rendimiento del activo	3,67
<b>4. Calidad de productos y servicios</b>	<b>3,89</b>
5. Desarrollo de nuevos productos y/o servicios	3,64
6. Satisfacción de los empleados	3,62
7. Desempeño general de la empresa	3,88

**Tabla 6. Indicadores Agregados de Desempeño**

## **6.2. Correlaciones entre Indicadores Agregados de Desempeño y Características Culturales Agregadas**

La siguiente tabla presenta las correlaciones entre indicadores agregados de desempeño y características culturales agregadas para la muestra de 39 empresas bogotanas. Todas las correlaciones son positivas. Aun más, 14 de 28 correlaciones están en el rango de 0,31 a 0,41. La correlación más alta, 0,41, se dio entre el indicador *satisfacción de los empleados* y la característica consistencia. Esta característica señala hasta donde la organización se orienta a la definición y operacionalización de valores y sistemas que sean la base de una cultura fuerte. De otro lado, la correlación entre el indicador *satisfacción de los empleados* y la característica involucramiento aunque menor, 0,36, sigue siendo positiva. Esta característica demuestra que tanto la organización se orienta a la construcción de la capacidad, el sentido de propiedad y la responsabilidad humana. De acuerdo con el modelo de cultura de Denison, involucramiento y consistencia (foco interno) deben reflejar su efecto en el indicador *satisfacción de los empleados*. La correlación menor, 0,16, se dio entre el indicador *rentabilidad y rendimiento del activo* y la característica consistencia. De acuerdo con el modelo de cultura de Denison, misión y consistencia deben influir en el resultado de este indicador. Estudios realizados

por Denison y asociados también encontraron asociaciones de valores semejantes a los hallazgos para la muestra de empresas bogotanas. ([http://www.denisonconsulting.com/dc/Portals/0/Docs/Paper\\_Psychometric\\_Overview.pdf](http://www.denisonconsulting.com/dc/Portals/0/Docs/Paper_Psychometric_Overview.pdf))

INDICADORES AGREGADOS DE DESEMPEÑO/ CARACTERÍSTICAS CULTURALES AGREGADAS	INVOLUCRAMIENTO	CONSISTENCIA	ADAPTABILIDAD	MISIÓN
61. Crecimiento en ventas e ingresos	0,19	0,18	0,23	0,23
62. Participación de mercado	0,19	0,21	0,19	0,24
63. Rentabilidad y rendimiento del activo	0,17	0,16	0,20	0,18
64. Calidad de productos y servicios	0,31	0,31	0,35	0,34
65. Desarrollo de nuevos productos y/o servicios	0,31	0,32	0,33	0,33
66. Satisfacción de los empleados	0,36	0,41	0,37	0,32
67. Desempeño general de la empresa	0,35	0,33	0,37	0,34

**Tabla 7. Correlaciones entre Indicadores Agregados de Desempeño y Características Culturales Agregadas**

## 7. Conclusiones

Los resultados obtenidos demuestran que el DOCS (Denison Organizational Culture Survey) facilitó la medición de los comportamientos o prácticas que constituyen los índices, las características y los sesgos culturales en una muestra de empresas bogotanas. Adicionalmente, fue posible medir la asociación de las características culturales básicas con una serie de indicadores críticos para el desempeño organizacional.

Este primer avance de investigación señaló el gran potencial del modelo de cultura de Denison para el conocimiento científico y la administración de nuestras organizaciones. Cultura y desempeño son factores claves para el análisis organizacional contemporáneo, tanto desde la perspectiva académica como desde la visión gerencial. El modelo de cultura de Denison es consistente con este planteamiento ya que facilitará la convergencia de intereses entre los

que buscan el desarrollo de la ciencia de las organizaciones y aquellos que requieren lograr resultados de gestión en entornos cada vez más competitivos. La intención del proyecto es ampliar gradualmente la muestra de empresas. Para el final del año 2007 se aspira a tener una base de datos conformada por 100 organizaciones. De esta manera, se podrá tener una visión más exhaustiva de las semejanzas y diferencias en perfiles culturales y de sus asociaciones con los indicadores críticos del desempeño organizacional. Será factible realizar comparaciones intersectoriales e involucrar variables como tamaño de empresa, años de funcionamiento, participación de inversión extranjera, etc.

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# **Perfil Cultural y Desempeño Organizacional en Empresas Bogotanas**

## **Abstract**

Organizational culture influences members' behavior and therefore organizational performance. The academic literature has documented a variety of performance outcomes related to specific characteristics of organizational culture profiles. This paper examines the main trends existing in cultural profiles found in a sample of 36 Colombian organizations located in Bogotá. Besides, statistical correlations existing among specific traits of cultural profiles and performance indicators are described. This study was founded on the Organizational Culture Model of Daniel Denison and associates that sustains the interrelations between organizational culture, behavior and organizational performance.

## **Keywords**

Organizational Culture; Behavior Patterns; Organizational Performance; Cultural Profile; Performance Profile; Cultural Dimensions; Cultural Characteristics; Indexes; Items.

## **Resumen**

La cultura influye en el comportamiento de los miembros, y por lo tanto en el desempeño de las organizaciones. La literatura ha documentado una variedad de resultados de desempeño organizacional que se relacionan con la cultura. Este artículo examina las principales tendencias existentes en los perfiles culturales encontrados en una muestra de 36 empresas colombianas localizadas en Bogotá. De igual manera, se describen las estimaciones sobre las asociaciones entre características específicas de dichos perfiles culturales y un conjunto de indicadores críticos del desempeño organizacional.

## **Palabras clave**

Cultura Organizacional; Patrones de Comportamiento; Desempeño Organizacional; Perfil Cultural; Perfil de Desempeño; Dimensiones Culturales, Características Culturales, Índices, Ítems.

## **Introducción**

El proyecto de investigación que sustenta este artículo se propuso evaluar las características de las culturas existentes en una muestra de organizaciones bogotanas a partir de la aplicación de la Encuesta de Cultura Organizacional de Denison y evaluar la influencia de esas características en un conjunto de indicadores críticos del desempeño organizacional. Este artículo constituye el primer reporte de resultados. Para comenzar se presenta un conjunto de planteamientos teóricos sobre cultura y desempeño organizacional y el modelo de cultura organizacional de Denison. Posteriormente se describe la metodología utilizada. A continuación se analizan y describen los resultados. Al finalizar se presentan algunas conclusiones.

## **1. Cultura y Desempeño Organizacional**

### **1.1. Los Estudios sobre Cultura Organizacional**

La fuente de los estudios sobre cultura organizacional se encuentra en la visión de las organizaciones propia del enfoque de las relaciones humanas que se originó en los años cuarenta del siglo pasado. Este enfoque afirmaba que las bases informales, no materiales, interpersonales, y morales de la cooperación y el compromiso eran más importantes para la motivación y el desempeño que los controles formales, materiales e instrumentales. El énfasis sobre la cultura cambió la atención de los aspectos técnicos y funcionales (el llamado lado “duro”) de la administración, que podían ser más fácilmente cuantificados y

analizados empíricamente, hacía los aspectos interpersonales y simbólicos (el llamado lado “suave”) de la administración que requerían estudios cualitativos, y en profundidad, de la vida organizacional. (Baker, 2004:2).

Una revisión crítica de los diversos enfoques sobre cultura organizacional y sus respectivas definiciones desborda los límites de este texto. Al respecto, muchas definiciones de cultura le dan mayor importancia a los componentes cognitivos, tales como supuestos, creencias y valores. Mientras que otras definiciones amplían el concepto para que incluya comportamientos y artefactos. De esta manera, se ha perfilado la distinción, ya muy común, entre los niveles visibles y ocultos de la cultura organizacional. (Baker, 2004:3). Según la visión de Schein, los supuestos fundamentales constituyen el aspecto central y más importante de la cultura organizacional. En efecto, la cultura de una organización se refiere al “patrón de presupuestos básicos que un grupo dado ha inventado, descubierto, o desarrollado mientras aprende a enfrentar sus problemas de adaptación externa y de integración interna, y qué ha funcionado tan bien para ser considerado válido, y que por lo tanto, se enseña a los nuevos miembros como la manera correcta de percibir, pensar y sentir en relación con esos problemas”. (Schein, 1985:6). De otro lado, para Jones, “la cultura organizacional es el conjunto de valores y normas compartidos que controlan las interacciones entre los miembros organizacionales y entre estos y las personas externas a la organización”. (Jones, 2004:95). Por su parte, para Smircich y Stubbart, “una organización es un conjunto de personas que comparten muchas creencias, valores, y supuestos que los estimulan a generar

interpretaciones de sus propios actos y de los actos de otros que se refuerzan mutuamente” (Smircich y Stubbart, 1985:727). Para el caso de las organizaciones, Denison afirma que la cultura organizacional aporta los valores, creencias y principios que sirven como fundamento para el sistema gerencial de una organización, como también los patrones de comportamientos y prácticas que tanto ejemplifican como refuerzan esos valores, creencias y supuestos básicos. Tanto estos como los patrones de comportamientos o prácticas permanecen porque tienen sentido para los miembros de una organización (Denison ,1990:2). De las definiciones presentadas se puede concluir que una vertiente teórica tiende a enfatizar que la cultura es intangible puesto que consiste de creencias, supuestos, valores, normas y marcos de referencia. Por otro lado, otra perspectiva plantea que la cultura influye en aspectos tangibles tales como el comportamiento de los miembros organizacionales. Los presupuestos o creencias básicos, que son el núcleo de la cultura organizacional, influyen en los valores, los cuales a su vez influyen en las normas y patrones de comportamientos y en los artefactos y símbolos, o acciones y productos de las personas y los grupos. (Dessler, 1998:368). Sin desconocer la existencia y relevancia de los aspectos intangibles, la visión que destaca los aspectos tangibles parece ser la más apropiada para la concepción gerencial de la cultura organizacional ya que facilita su diagnóstico e intervención en aras del mejoramiento del desempeño. Cómo se verá más adelante este artículo privilegia este sesgo interpretativo de la cultura por su relevancia para la transformación organizacional desde la perspectiva gerencial.

## **1.2. Estudios sobre Cultura y Desempeño**

La literatura especializada ha documentado empíricamente una variedad de resultados de desempeño organizacional que se relacionan con la cultura. Por ejemplo, se ha encontrado que la cultura organizacional se relaciona con el crecimiento de la firma (Calori y Sarnin, 1991) y el desempeño global de la firma (Denison, 1990; Denison y Mishra, 1995; Kotter y Heskett, 1992). Otros estudios han señalado que su efecto se puede observar directamente al nivel individual, en resultados tales como el compromiso (O'Reilly et al., 1991). Los investigadores organizacionales también han desarrollado tipologías de las culturas organizacionales para describir a las firmas exitosas. (Cheng, 1998; Denison y Mishra, 1995, O'Reilly et al., 1991). Por otra parte, se relacionó el desempeño promedio en un período de diez años con medidas de la fortaleza de la cultura corporativa y encontraron que, entre industrias, las firmas percibidas con culturas fuertes generalmente tenían superiores niveles promedio de retorno sobre la inversión, crecimiento del ingreso neto, y cambios en el precio de la acción (Kotter y Heskett, 1992). De igual manera, se halló que el desempeño de compañías de seguros aumentó en la medida en que había consenso alrededor de los valores culturales (Gordon y DiTomaso, 1992). También, al usar evidencia cuantitativa y cualitativa, se afirmó que el consenso alrededor de los valores organizacionales aumenta la efectividad organizacional. (Denison, 1990).

Es claro que los estudios mencionados interpretan la cultura organizacional más como un activo competitivo susceptible de ser intervenido y administrado

en términos del desempeño, y menos como un fenómeno natural y orgánicamente emergente. (Baker, 2002:2) Al respecto Schein plantea:

“la única cosa de importancia que los líderes hacen es crear y administrar la cultura” y... “el único talento de los líderes es su habilidad para comprender la cultura y trabajar con ella” (Schein, 1992:5).

Denison está de acuerdo con Schein al afirmar que en el núcleo de la cultura subyacen creencias y supuestos fundamentales de los cuales el comportamiento y la acción se originan (Denison, 2000). En efecto, Denison afirma que la cultura incluye los patrones de conducta y las prácticas que ejemplifican y refuerzan esas creencias y supuestos básicos. Las contribuciones combinadas de estos dos autores a la comprensión de lo que la cultura significa parecen ser las más apropiadas para fundamentar una perspectiva gerencial de la misma. En consecuencia, este artículo incorpora la propuesta de Denison porque, a partir de la perspectiva de Schein, su modelo integra teórica y operacionalmente los niveles intangibles y tangibles de la cultura y de esta manera facilita la articulación entre cultura, comportamiento y desempeño organizacional. De otra parte, el modelo de Denison señala cómo la administración de la cultura se ha convertido en una competencia gerencial crítica. Esta competencia involucra, por supuesto, que el gerente pueda determinar a través de un diagnóstico sistémico cual es el perfil de cultura de su organización, y que cuando se necesite, pueda establecer los cambios que esa cultura requiera en función de un mejor desempeño. (Baker, 2004:1) El modelo de Denison, por supuesto, se ubica en la vertiente teórica que interpreta a la cultura como un activo competitivo susceptible de ser medido, intervenido y gerenciado en función del desempeño organizacional. Este sesgo

teórico y práctico obviamente define y limita el alcance del análisis y de la interpretación de los resultados de investigación que se examinan en este artículo.

### **1.3. El Modelo de Denison para el Diagnóstico Científico de la Cultura Organizacional en Función del Desempeño<sup>1</sup>**

Fisher afirma:

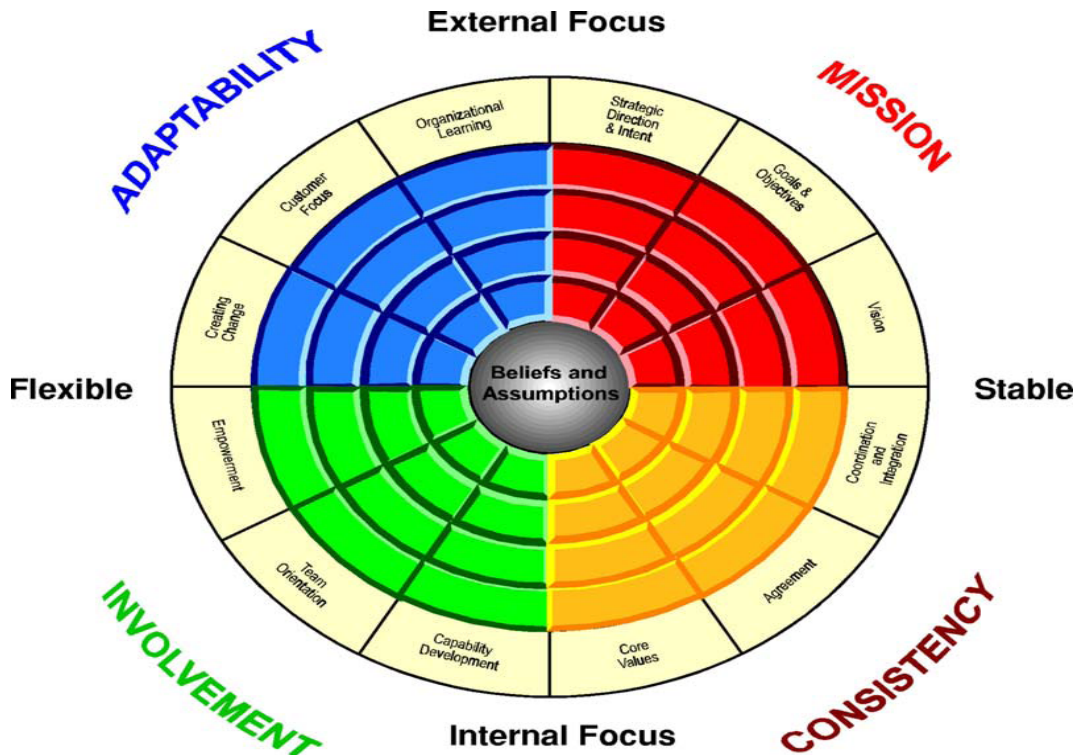
“De esta forma cuando su interés está en el terreno de los resultados, Denison argumenta, es tanto práctico como apropiado acercarse a la cultura por la vía de su dimensión más obvia...la manera en que la gente actúa”. (Fisher, 2000:45)

Así pues, el modelo de cultura de Denison se basa en cuatro características culturales, o tipologías de patrones de comportamiento o formas de actuación, que han mostrado tener una fuerte influencia sobre el desempeño organizacional: Involucramiento (Involvement), Consistencia, Adaptabilidad, y Misión. Cada una de estas características se mide a través de tres índices, y cada uno de estos índices se mide a través de cinco ítems de cuestionario. Este modelo se ha desarrollado a partir de investigaciones realizadas durante más de 20 años en más de 3,000 organizaciones y con más de 100,000 personas encuestadas (Denison, 1990; Denison y Mishra, 1995; Denison y Neale, 1996). En el gráfico 1 se representan las características e índices que constituyen la cultura organizacional (Mobley, Wang, Fang, 2005:133). Los cuatro cuadrantes del modelo representan las cuatro características básicas de

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<sup>1</sup> La descripción del modelo se basa extensamente en el texto: Denison, D. (2000). *Organizational culture: Can it be a key Lever for driving organizational change?* Lausanne. International Institute for Management Development.

cualquier cultura organizacional. Cada cuadrante incluye tres índices de comportamientos o prácticas que se conectan con cada una de las características. Las características y los índices se representan en términos de dos dimensiones subyacentes, Flexibilidad versus Estabilidad sobre el eje horizontal y del Foco Externo y del Foco Interno sobre el eje vertical.



**Gráfico 1. El Modelo de Cultura Organizacional de Denison**

A continuación se describen las cuatro características culturales de las organizaciones efectivas con referencia a su fundamentación en la literatura sobre estudios organizacionales:



### **1.3.1. Involucramiento**

Las organizaciones efectivas facultan a su gente, se construyen a sí mismas alrededor de los equipos, y desarrollan la capacidad humana a todos los niveles. (Becker, 1964; Lawler, 1996; Likert, 1961). Los miembros de la organización están comprometidos con su trabajo y sienten que poseen una parte de la organización. Las personas, a todos los niveles, sienten que tienen al menos alguna influencia en las decisiones que afectan sus trabajos y que estos están directamente conectados con los objetivos de la organización. (Spreitzer, 1995). En síntesis, esta característica demuestra que tanto la organización se orienta a la construcción de la capacidad, el sentido de propiedad y la responsabilidad humana. En términos de una pregunta; ¿Están las personas alineadas y comprometidas con la organización? Esta característica se mide con tres índices: Facultamiento, Orientación al Equipo y Desarrollo de Capacidades.

### **1.3.2. Consistencia.**

Las organizaciones son efectivas en razón de su consistencia e integración interna. (Davenport, 1993; Saffold, 1988). El comportamiento de las personas se fundamenta en un conjunto de valores centrales (core values), los líderes y sus seguidores poseen la habilidad de lograr acuerdos (aún cuando existan diversos puntos de vista), y las actividades de la organización están bien coordinadas e integradas. (Block, 1991). Las organizaciones que poseen esta característica tienen una cultura distintiva y fuerte que influye significativamente en el comportamiento de las personas. Un sistema compartido de supuestos,

creencias y valores funciona como un sistema de control internalizado. La consistencia es entonces una fuente poderosa de estabilidad e integración interna que resulta de un marco mental (mindset) común y de un alto grado de conformidad. (Senge, 1990). En síntesis, esta característica señala hasta donde la organización se orienta a la definición y operacionalización de valores y sistemas que sean la base de una cultura fuerte. En una sola pregunta: ¿El sistema organizacional como un todo genera el apalancamiento que exigen sus actividades específicas? Esta característica se mide con los siguientes índices: Valores Centrales, Acuerdo y Coordinación e Integración.

### **1.3.3. Adaptabilidad.**

Las organizaciones adaptables son impulsadas por sus clientes, asumen riesgos y aprenden de sus errores, y tienen capacidad y experiencia en la creación del cambio. (Nadler, 1998; Senge, 1990; Stalk, 1988). Estas organizaciones están continuamente mejorando su capacidad de generar y entregar valor a sus clientes. Las organizaciones fuertes en adaptabilidad generalmente experimentan crecimiento en las ventas y de su participación de mercado. En breve, esta característica señala qué tanto la organización convierte las demandas del entorno de los negocios en acciones efectivas de respuesta. Puesto en una pregunta: ¿La organización “escucha” a su mercado? Esta característica se mide con los siguientes tres índices: Creación de Cambio, Enfoque en el cliente, Aprendizaje Organizacional.

#### **1.3.4. Misión**

Las organizaciones exitosas tienen un claro sentido de propósito y una dirección que define las metas organizacionales y los objetivos estratégicos y que expresa la visión de lo que la organización quiere ser en el futuro. (Mintzberg, 1987, 1994; Ohmae, 1982; Hamel y Prahalad, 1994). En pocas palabras, esta característica muestra hasta donde la organización ha definido una dirección a largo plazo con sentido para sí misma. En términos de una pregunta: ¿Sabe la organización hacia donde se dirige? Esta característica se mide a través de los siguientes índices: Dirección e Intención Estratégicas, Metas y Objetivos y Visión.

En resumen, el modelo mide cuatro características culturales básicas:

- “1. Misión-el grado hasta el cual la empresa conoce porqué existe y cual es su dirección;
2. Involucramiento-el grado hasta el cual los individuos a todos los niveles de la empresa están comprometidos y sostienen esa dirección como propia;
3. Adaptabilidad-la capacidad que tiene la empresa de saber lo que quieren sus clientes, y el grado hasta el cual ella puede responder a las fuerzas y demandas externas;
4. Consistencia-los sistemas y procesos empresariales que apoyan la eficiencia y la efectividad en el logro de las metas.” (Fisher, 2000:46)

#### **1.3.5. Características Culturales y Desempeño Organizacional**

Denison y Mishra estudiaron la correlación entre las características culturales del modelo (Involucramiento, Consistencia, Adaptabilidad y Misión) y un conjunto de medidas de desempeño organizacional. Al respecto, Misión y Consistencia (Estabilidad) impactan medidas de desempeño financiero tales como Retorno sobre Activos, Retorno sobre Inversión y Retorno sobre Ventas.

En cuanto a Involucramiento y Adaptabilidad (Flexibilidad), estas características impactan el Desarrollo de Productos y Servicios (Innovación). Esto típicamente significa mayores niveles de innovación en productos y servicios y creatividad, al igual que una respuesta rápida a las cambiantes necesidades de clientes y empleados. En referencia a Adaptabilidad y Misión (Enfoque Externo), ellas impactan el Ingreso y el Crecimiento en las Ventas y en la Participación de Mercado. Por su parte, Involucramiento y consistencia (Foco Interno) reflejan su efecto en indicadores de Calidad de Productos y Servicios, Retorno sobre inversión y Satisfacción de los Empleados. (Denison y Mishra, 1995)

La tabla 1 resume los impactos de la cultura en las variables críticas del desempeño organizacional (Fisher, 2000:47):

Rentabilidad/Retorno sobre Activos	Crecimiento en Ingresos/Crecimiento en ventas	Participación de Mercado	Innovación	Calidad de Productos & Servicios	Satisfacción de los Empleados
<i>Soportados por</i>	<i>Soportados por</i>	<i>Soportados por</i>	<i>Soportados por</i>	<i>Soportados por</i>	<i>Soportados por</i>
Misión	Misión	Misión			[Misión]
Involucramiento			Involucramiento	Involucramiento	Involucramiento
Adaptabilidad	Adaptabilidad	Adaptabilidad	Adaptabilidad		[Adaptabilidad]
Consistencia				Consistencia	Consistencia

**Tabla 1. Impacto de la Cultura en las Variables Críticas del Desempeño.**

## 2. Metodología

En la investigación se aplicó la Encuesta de Cultura Organizacional de Denison constituida por 73 preguntas cerradas a una muestra de los miembros de cada una de 36 organizaciones radicadas en Bogotá, pertenecientes a diversos

sectores.<sup>2</sup> 1655 encuestas individuales conformaron la base de datos. Las empresas investigadas accedieron voluntariamente a participar en el estudio. Los únicos criterios de selección fueron la localización en Bogotá y su constitución legal. Se seleccionó la encuesta de Denison porque es un instrumento que permite generar una descripción y un análisis directo, sistémico y comprensible de la cultura organizacional por medio de la evaluación de los patrones de comportamiento o prácticas que influyen en el desempeño.<sup>3</sup> La encuesta registra las percepciones sobre 60 patrones de comportamiento que manifiestan los índices constituyentes de las características básicas del perfil cultural. De igual manera, la encuesta recoge las percepciones sobre 7 indicadores de desempeño y 6 variables demográficas. Para cada una de las cuatro características culturales básicas el modelo define tres índices, y posteriormente mide cada uno de los doce índices con cinco ítems o preguntas. Cada ítem evalúa un patrón de comportamiento específico para un total de 60. Una vez tabulada la información, se obtuvieron los promedios de los puntajes recogidos en las encuestas por características culturales, índices, ítems e indicadores de desempeño. A nivel de ítem, los encuestados tuvieron cinco opciones posibles de respuesta desde muy en desacuerdo a totalmente de acuerdo. A continuación se corrieron las correlaciones entre los promedios agregados de las características y los promedios agregados de un conjunto de indicadores de desempeño.

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<sup>2</sup> El tamaño de la muestra asume un nivel de confianza del 95% y un margen de error de 5 puntos. Equipos de estudiantes por organización aplicaron la encuesta y tabularon los datos. Posteriormente, estudiantes asistentes de investigación prepararon la base de datos agregada para el conjunto de la muestra de organizaciones.

<sup>3</sup> Las diferentes versiones del DOCS (Denison Organizational Culture Survey) se pueden encontrar en el link respectivo (online demos) en [www.denisonconsulting.com](http://www.denisonconsulting.com). Para este estudio se utilizó la traducción española oficial para América Latina que aparece en dicha página.

### 3. Análisis e Interpretación de las Tendencias Agregadas en los Perfiles Culturales de las Organizaciones de la Muestra

#### 3.1. Dimensiones Culturales y Características Básicas

En el gráfico 2 se recogen los promedios agregados de las 36 empresas del estudio sobre las cuatro características básicas y las cuatro dimensiones posibles de la cultura. El promedio para cada característica se construyó a partir de los promedios de sus índices. En el caso de las dimensiones, sus promedios se produjeron a partir de los promedios de las características sustentadoras.

		<i>Foco Externo</i> 3,67		
	Adaptabilidad 3,61		Misión 3,73	
<i>Flexibilidad</i> 3,65		Creencias y Supuestos		<i>Estabilidad</i> 3,67
	Involucramiento 3,7		Consistencia 3,62	
		<i>Foco Interno</i> 3,66		

**Gráfico 2. Características Básicas y Sesgos Culturales**

Se destacó Misión como la característica cultural más fuerte seguida por Involucramiento. Los resultados obtenidos dan a entender que las empresas de la muestra han realizado un avance importante en la clarificación de sus

destinos y que poseen ya un potencial de valor apreciable en la postura actitudinal de sus colaboradores. La relativa fortaleza de la característica Misión podría explicarse por el impulso dado a partir de los años ochenta a los procesos de planeación y gerencia estratégica en las organizaciones colombianas. Estos procesos se originaron por una parte en la inclusión de la teoría y la práctica de la formulación estratégica en los curriculums de formación de gerentes, y de otra parte en el trabajo de firmas consultoras que acompañaban y asesoraban a las empresas en la elaboración e implementación de sus plataformas estratégicas. Usualmente, estas formulaciones incluían las ya clásicas definiciones de visión, misión y objetivos estratégicos. De acuerdo con el modelo de Denison, que articula la cultura al comportamiento y al consecuente desempeño, el sentido amplio de misión le permite a una organización dar forma al comportamiento presente al visualizar su relación con un estado de desempeño futuro deseado. De esta manera, la capacidad de internalizar e identificarse con la misión contribuye al compromiso de las personas a corto y a largo plazo. El éxito es más probable cuando los individuos y las personas dirigen su comportamiento comprometido al logro de metas. (Denison y Neale, 1996:(2)-14). En consecuencia, los esfuerzos de formulación estratégica realizados en las organizaciones de la muestra han contribuido al compromiso de las personas ya que la segunda característica cultural más fuerte fue justamente Involucramiento.

### 3.2. Características Culturales e Índices

La tabla 2 recoge los promedios agregados de las 36 empresas del estudio sobre las cuatro características básicas y los respectivos índices que las conforman.

<b>Características y sus Índices</b>	
<b>1. Involucramiento</b>	<b>3,70</b>
Facultamiento	3,79
Orientación al Equipo	3,77
Desarrollo de Capacidades	3,54
<b>2. Consistencia</b>	<b>3,62</b>
Valores Centrales	3,78
Acuerdo	3,53
Coordinación e Integración	3,54
<b>3. Adaptabilidad</b>	<b>3,61</b>
Creación del Cambio	3,51
Enfoque en el Cliente	3,67
Aprendizaje Organizacional	3,65
<b>4. Misión</b>	<b>3,73</b>
Dirección e Intención Estratégicas	3,77
Objetivos y Metas	3,83
Visión	3,59

**Tabla 2. Características Culturales e Índices**

#### 3.2.1. Involucramiento

El índice Facultamiento obtuvo un mayor promedio que Desarrollo de Capacidades. De acuerdo con la teoría del modelo de Denison, cuando Facultamiento es mayor que Desarrollo de Capacidades, esto puede ser con frecuencia una indicación de que las personas están tomando decisiones sin estar debidamente entrenadas para ello:

“Esto puede ser un desastre potencial que acontece cuando la gente confunde facultamiento con abdicación o piensa que al decir la palabra mágica (facultamiento) los individuos se vuelven capaces de tomar decisiones de negocios sin importar la



experiencia, la educación, el conocimiento y la habilidad". (Denison y Neale, 1996:(4)-19)

Por otra parte, Orientación al Equipo obtuvo un mayor promedio que Desarrollo de Capacidades. De acuerdo con Denison y asociados:

"Muy a menudo este hecho puede señalar muy poca sustancia real para los equipos de trabajo. En este caso, la gente simplemente asiente y cumple sin mayor compromiso y sentido de propiedad. Hay equipos por guardar la apariencia de que se trabaja en equipo, pero en realidad esto no establece una diferencia (Denison y Neale, 1996:(4)-19).

En síntesis, con relación a la característica Involucramiento, la relativa debilidad del índice Desarrollo de Capacidades puede dejar sin significado real a los avances en Facultamiento y Orientación al Equipo. El Desarrollo de Capacidades parece ser el índice que fundamenta a los otros dos índices y por ende a esta característica cultural como un todo para el conjunto de las organizaciones de la muestra. El relativo atraso en Desarrollo de Capacidades podría explicarse por la visión aún frecuente en nuestro medio organizacional de considerarlo más un gasto que una inversión en productividad y competitividad. Es paradójico que en tiempos de dificultad, que requieren a lo mejor de nuevas o mejores capacidades, los recortes presupuestales en las empresas se enfoquen prioritariamente a restringir las posibilidades de su desarrollo. Conviene destacar como el ítem 1, *la mayoría de los empleados se involucran activamente en su trabajo*, obtuvo un promedio de 3,87, el más alto para el índice. Este resultado indica la disposición actitudinal de los miembros organizacionales a entregar en el trabajo lo mejor de sí mismos. No obstante, el ítem 15, *a menudo ocurren problemas porque no tenemos las destrezas necesarias para realizar el trabajo*, obtuvo un promedio de 3,21, el más bajo

para el índice. Estos resultados confirman la debilidad fundamental de los procesos de Facultamiento. No basta con delegar tareas y responsabilidades, es necesario invertir en el Desarrollo de Capacidades. De esta manera, la actitud personal positiva se combinaría con las capacidades técnicas en función de la productividad, la competitividad y el desempeño organizacional.

### **3.2.2. Consistencia**

El índice Acuerdo obtuvo un menor promedio que Coordinación e Integración y Valores Centrales. Al respecto dice la teoría:

“Cuando Acuerdo es menor que Valores Centrales y Coordinación e Integración, la organización puede tener buenas intenciones pero llegar a disgregarse cuando el conflicto o diferentes opiniones surgen. Durante las discusiones, todos hablando al tiempo, las personas ignorando los aportes de otras, o el marginamiento pueden ser los comportamientos más observados. La clave es que nada se resuelve y la gente se mantiene soplando las mismas velitas repetidamente” (Denison y Neale, 1996:(4)-20).

Los promedios bajos en Acuerdo y Coordinación e Integración podrían explicarse por la relativa facilidad que existe en nuestro medio cultural nacional para la proclamación de valores y credos organizacionales y por las dificultades prácticas para resolver conflictos interpretativos o de implementación sobre esos mismos valores y credos. Esta dificultad para el acuerdo se nutre del poco desarrollo de competencias comunicativas y de negociación y solución de conflictos. Es claro que las dificultades para lograr acuerdos no favorecen la coordinación e integración que se requiere para implementarlos. El ítem 19, *si ignoramos nuestros valores básicos nos metemos en un aprieto*, obtuvo un promedio de 3,9, el más alto para el índice valores centrales que obtuvo el

mayor promedio para la característica. No obstante, el índice 24, *a menudo tenemos problemas para llegar a un acuerdo sobre asuntos clave*, obtuvo un promedio de 3,21, el más bajo para el índice acuerdo y para la característica. Estos resultados refuerzan lo ya afirmado sobre las dificultades prácticas para resolver conflictos interpretativos o de implementación sobre los valores centrales.

### **3.2.3. Adaptabilidad**

El índice Enfoque en el Cliente obtuvo un mayor promedio que Aprendizaje Organizacional y Creación del Cambio. Al respecto la teoría afirma:

“Cuando Enfoque en el Cliente es mayor que Creación del Cambio y Aprendizaje Organizacional, esto tiende a significar que la organización puede ser muy buena para satisfacer las necesidades del cliente por el día de hoy, pero probablemente no se está preparando para lo que el cliente pueda necesitar el día de mañana. Esta situación representa un enfoque pasivo o de status quo del enfoque en el cliente. Puede realizarse un esfuerzo sobrehumano para satisfacer al cliente sin mirar a los patrones y tendencias que emergen en el horizonte. La organización tiende a estar un paso por detrás del cliente antes que un paso adelante.” (Denison y Neale, 1996:(4)-20).

El bajo promedio de Creación del Cambio podría deberse al afán de los miembros organizacionales por lograr resultados a corto plazo debido a las presiones que generan gerentes e inversionistas. Esto impide dedicar tiempo, recursos y esfuerzos a conocer tendencias en necesidades futuras de los clientes, que llevarían naturalmente a generar cambios que preparen a la organización para enfrentarlas. Es paradójico que haya aprendizaje organizacional, aunque parece ser que se limita a la solución de necesidades inmediatas de los clientes. Al respecto, el ítem 41, *vemos nuestras fallas como una oportunidad para aprender y mejorar*, obtuvo un promedio agregado de

3,97, constituyéndose en el resultado más alto dentro del total de 60 ítems. De igual manera, el ítem 44, *el aprendizaje es un objetivo importante en nuestras labores cotidianas*, obtuvo un promedio de 3,95. Estos ítems forman parte del índice Aprendizaje Organizacional cuya importancia estratégica para la supervivencia y el desarrollo de las organizaciones ha sido ampliamente reconocida. (Senge, 1992). Sin embargo, paradójicamente, el ítem 34, *generalmente hay resistencia a las iniciativas que surgen para realizar cambios*, obtuvo un promedio agregado de 3,04, constituyéndose en uno de los resultados más bajo dentro del total de 60 ítems. Tal parece que se ha tomado conciencia del análisis de las fallas como punto de partida para el aprendizaje que propicia el cambio, pero existen fuertes factores de resistencia que entorpecen la implementación de las iniciativas de mejoramiento.

#### **3.2.4. Misión**

El índice Objetivos y Metas logró un mayor promedio que los índices Dirección e Intención Estratégicas y Visión. En realidad, los promedios de los dos últimos son relativamente cercanos. En términos de la teoría:

“Cuando Objetivos y Metas son más altos que Dirección e Intención Estratégica y Visión, esto a menudo es una indicación de que la organización es buena para la ejecución, pero sin un sentido real de dirección, propósito o planeación a largo plazo. El foco es usualmente el corto plazo dedicándose la organización al funcionamiento cotidiano sin mirar hacia delante. Los “ojos” de la organización están desbalanceados- y se enfocan primariamente en las ganancias del presente y no en el horizonte. (Denison y Neale, 1996:(4)-19).

Para el caso de las empresas de la muestra, la situación no es tan dramática como dice la cita anterior, dado que hay una fortaleza relativa en el índice

Dirección e Intención Estratégicas. Sin embargo, es paradójico que dicha fortaleza se acompañe por una relativa debilidad en la formulación de una visión a largo plazo. Tal parece que los ejercicios de formulación estratégica se quedan cortos en el desarrollo de escenarios futuros que prevean tendencias y demandas y que obliguen al replanteamiento dinámico de la dirección e intención estratégicas. Las misiones pueden tender a ser definiciones cristalizadas en el tiempo presente con insuficiente articulación a visiones de futuro. Obviamente, el efecto natural es la distancia entre esas visiones y los objetivos y metas a corto plazo. El ítem 58, *las ideas a corto plazo a menudo comprometen nuestra visión a largo plazo*, obtuvo un promedio agregado de 2,89, constituyéndose en el resultado más bajo dentro del total de 60 ítems. El resultado en este ítem señala una debilidad cultural que podría neutralizar los buenos resultados obtenidos en otros ítems. El cortoplacismo es endémico en muchas organizaciones, no sólo colombianas sino de todas las latitudes. Además de generar estrés, desgaste y desmotivación en las personas, este fenómeno tiene graves consecuencias negativas para la capacidad estratégica de adelantarse y estar preparados para los retos del futuro. Poco o nada se gana para el desempeño organizacional si las visiones a largo plazo se fragmentan e inutilizan por las presiones de los resultados a corto plazo.

#### **4. Análisis e Interpretación de las Tendencias Agregadas en los Perfiles de Desempeño de las Organizaciones de la Muestra**

##### **4.1. Indicadores de Desempeño**

Además de las 60 preguntas básicas acerca de comportamientos o prácticas que expresan el perfil cultural, el DOCS incluye 6 preguntas sobre el desempeño de la organización en 6 indicadores críticos y una de percepción global sobre ese desempeño. A nivel de indicador de desempeño, los encuestados tuvieron cinco opciones posibles de respuesta con base en el diferencial semántico de Likert, desde muy bajo hasta muy alto.

La siguiente tabla presenta los promedios agregados de los indicadores de desempeño para toda la muestra. Todos los indicadores se ubican en un rango de 3,62 a 3,89. Se destaca el indicador Calidad de Productos y Servicios con el mayor promedio 3,89, por encima del indicador Desarrollo de Nuevos Productos y Servicios (Innovación) que alcanza un promedio de 3,64. Tal parece que en las organizaciones de la muestra se han hecho esfuerzos por el mejoramiento de la calidad. Sin embargo, las empresas pueden estar rezagadas en el impulso a la innovación. Este indicador de desempeño es especialmente crítico para la competitividad organizacional en el entorno de la globalización. De otro lado, el indicador Satisfacción de los Empleados obtuvo el más bajo promedio, 3,62. Este resultado también muestra el atraso de estas empresas en el mejoramiento de este indicador igualmente crítico para la competitividad organizacional.

INDICADORES DE DESEMPEÑO	PROMEDIO
1.Crecimiento en Ventas e Ingresos	3,72
2. Participación de Mercado	3,62
3. Rentabilidad y Rendimiento de Activos	3,67
4. Calidad de Productos y Servicios	3,89
5. Desarrollo de Nuevos Productos y Servicios (Innovación)	3,64
6. Satisfacción de los Empleados	3,62
7. Desempeño General de la Empresa	3,88

**Tabla 7. Indicadores Agregados de Desempeño**

#### **4.2. Correlaciones entre Indicadores Agregados de Desempeño y Características Culturales Agregadas**

La siguiente tabla presenta las correlaciones entre indicadores agregados de desempeño y características culturales agregadas para la muestra de 36 empresas bogotanas. Todas las correlaciones son positivas. Aun más, 14 de 28 correlaciones están en el rango de 0,31 a 0,41. La correlación más alta, 0,41, se dio entre el indicador Satisfacción de los Empleados y la característica Consistencia. Esta característica señala hasta donde la organización se orienta a la definición y operacionalización de valores y sistemas que sean la base de una cultura fuerte. De otro lado, la correlación entre el indicador Satisfacción de los Empleados y la característica Involucramiento aunque menor, 0,36, sigue siendo positiva. Esta característica demuestra que tanto la organización se

orienta a la construcción de la capacidad, el sentido de propiedad y la responsabilidad humana. De acuerdo con el modelo de cultura de Denison, Involucramiento y Consistencia (Foco Interno) deben reflejar su efecto en el indicador Satisfacción de los Empleados. La correlación menor, 0,16, se dio entre el indicador Rentabilidad y Rendimiento de Activos y la característica Consistencia. De acuerdo con el modelo de cultura de Denison, Misión y Consistencia deben influir en el resultado de este indicador.

Si bien los coeficientes de correlación no son tan altos como para confirmar estadísticamente de una vez por todas una estrecha relación entre desempeño y las características culturales consideradas hay que anotar que las correlaciones encontradas presentan el signo positivo esperado, tal como se resume en la tabla 8.

INDICADORES DE DESEMPEÑO/ CARACTERÍSTICAS CULTURALES	INVOLUCRAMIENTO	CONSISTENCIA	ADAPTABILIDAD	MISIÓN
61. Crecimiento en ventas e ingresos	0,19	0,18	0,23	0,23
62. Participación de mercado	0,19	0,21	0,19	0,24
63. Rentabilidad y rendimiento del activo	0,17	0,16	0,2	0,18
64. Calidad de productos y servicios	0,31	0,31	0,35	0,34
65. Desarrollo de nuevos productos y/o servicios	0,31	0,32	0,33	0,33
66. Satisfacción de los empleados	0,36	0,41	0,37	0,32
67. Desempeño general de la empresa	0,35	0,33	0,37	0,34

**Tabla 8. Correlaciones entre Indicadores Agregados de Desempeño y Características Culturales Agregadas**



## Conclusiones

En términos del perfil cultural agregado, la Encuesta de Cultura de Denison facilitó la medición de los comportamientos o prácticas que constituyen los índices, las características y las dimensiones culturales en una muestra de empresas bogotanas. En efecto, se destacó Misión como la característica cultural más fuerte seguida por Involucramiento. De acuerdo con el modelo, Misión es la característica cultural que fundamenta el desarrollo de Involucramiento, Consistencia y Adaptabilidad. En consecuencia, las organizaciones estudiadas mostraron una tendencia positiva en esa dirección. No obstante, al interior de Misión aparecieron desarrollos desiguales de sus índices constitutivos. Aunque se reconoció el avance en Dirección e Intención Estratégicas, el desarrollo del índice Visión fue menor. En general, aunque las organizaciones se han esforzado en cimentar la característica Misión, hay mucho por hacer para reducir la distancia y aumentar la coherencia entre los objetivos y metas a corto plazo y las visiones a futuro. Las presiones por los resultados a corto plazo provocan que la formulación de visiones se quede en parte en el terreno de las buenas intenciones y de las pocas realizaciones. Sin embargo, fue evidente que los esfuerzos de formulación estratégica han contribuido al compromiso de las personas con sus organizaciones ya que la segunda característica cultural más fuerte es justamente Involucramiento. En este sentido como propone el modelo, la característica Misión, a pesar de sus falencias, ha comenzado a fundamentar el desarrollo de la característica Involucramiento.

Dado los bajos promedios obtenidos, es conveniente el fortalecimiento de las características Adaptabilidad y Consistencia. La primera, junto con Involucramiento, es clave para la flexibilidad de la organización frente a entornos cada vez más dinámicos y exigentes. La dimensión Flexibilidad adquiere especial relevancia en el contexto de la globalización y de la implementación de tratados de libre comercio. Sólo aquellas organizaciones con culturas flexibles podrán sobrevivir y desarrollarse en esos ambientes. Consistencia por su parte brinda el soporte operacional que permite a la organización responder en el corto plazo y prepararse para los retos del futuro.

En términos del perfil de desempeño, fue posible medir la asociación de las características culturales básicas con una serie de indicadores críticos para el desempeño organizacional. Sin embargo, los resultados fueron modestos. Es posible que, a medida que aumente el tamaño de la muestra de empresas en el futuro se encuentren correlaciones más robustas entre indicadores de desempeño y las características culturales que el modelo de Denison propone.

Este primer avance de investigación señaló el gran potencial del modelo de cultura de Denison para el conocimiento científico y la administración de nuestras organizaciones. Cultura y desempeño son factores claves para el análisis organizacional contemporáneo, tanto desde la perspectiva académica como desde la visión gerencial. Los resultados obtenidos refuerzan e impulsan la intención inicial del proyecto de ampliar gradualmente la muestra de

empresas. Para el final del año 2008 se aspira a tener una base de datos conformada por alrededor de 100 organizaciones. De esta manera, se podrá tener una muestra cada vez más representativa en términos estadísticos y una visión más exhaustiva de las semejanzas y diferencias en perfiles culturales y de sus asociaciones con los indicadores críticos del desempeño organizacional.

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# CORPORATE CULTURE AND ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS: IS THERE A SIMILAR PATTERN AROUND THE WORLD?

Daniel R. Denison, Stephanie Haaland  
and Paulo Goelzer

## ABSTRACT

*This chapter presents two studies that examine the link between corporate culture and effectiveness in a variety of national settings. The first study compares results from 230 organizations from Europe, North America and Asia and reveals a surprising level of similarity in results across these regions. The second study presents the results from targeted samples of 218 supermarkets from Canada, Australia, Brazil, the U.S., Japan, Jamaica, and South Africa. These results show a common pattern in five of the countries, and a divergent pattern of findings in Jamaica and Japan.*

*The results suggest that it is quite possible to measure and compare the cultural traits of organizations and their impact on business performance across nations, and to find empirical support for a general framework. But how can these findings be reconciled with the vast literature on cross-cultural differences? Discussion of this point reaches an interesting conclusion: Perhaps there is a common set of cultural traits that can be used to understand the effectiveness of organizations, but that are expressed quite differently in different national settings.*

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## INTRODUCTION

One of the most difficult challenges in the field of international management is the application of theories and models developed in one part of the world in order to understand phenomena that occur in another part of the world. Much of the early concern about this issue concentrated on the relevance of American theories abroad (Hofstede, 1980a). But more recently, the same problem has been faced in Japanese theories of quality control (Imai, 1986) or knowledge creation (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995), or by European theories of joint ventures or organizational design (Doz, 1986; Taylor, 1991). The goal of these efforts is to develop a useful general frame of reference, but also allow for the sensitivity to local variation that is required when applied in context.

Some of the biggest challenges for developing theories with cross-cultural relevance occur in the area of organizational studies. Differences in behavior, work values and culture have been studied by researchers in many different countries. Several frameworks have proven useful for understanding cultural differences (Hofstede, 1980b; Trompenaars, 1994, 1998), and have helped to establish some relatively universal dimensions (e.g. individualism) that can be useful in understanding differences across national cultures. But few researchers have attempted to understand the impacts that these behavioral differences have in different national contexts.

The logic of cross-cultural comparison and validation has been discussed at length by several authors (Adler, 1991; Boyacigiller & Adler, 1991). But in most areas of the literature, the biggest challenge is the almost total absence of comparative data. Our literature review found very few studies that offered a comparison of the effectiveness of organizations across several countries that could be linked to differences in organizational culture, work values and behavior. The evidence that global leaders need to understand the impact of the organizational cultures they are creating is usually unavailable.

This chapter takes a bold, but risky approach to these challenges by examining the link between organizational culture and effectiveness with two separate studies. The first study examines this link with data from 230 organizations from Europe, North America and Asia, and reveals a surprising level of similarity in the results across these regions. The second study examines the same topic using data from 218 organizations from seven countries: Canada, Australia, Brazil, the U.S., Japan, Jamaica, and South Africa. This study focuses on samples of supermarkets that were part of an independent cooperative operating in a similar fashion in each country. The results show a high level of similarity in five of the countries, but a divergent pattern of findings from Japan and Jamaica. These two studies constitute a preliminary and exploratory step, rather than a comprehensive study, but they

do illustrate that a general theory about organizational culture can be applied in multiple contexts, with results that highlight both similarities and differences across regions.

This chapter begins by describing a model of organizational culture used in this study and discusses some of the research, conducted primarily in the U.S., which has established a link between culture and effectiveness. We then pose several general research questions that guided our study. After that, we describe our samples, the data collection and analysis strategies, and report our results for both of the studies. Our discussion at the end of this chapter summarizes our findings, reflects upon their implications for cross-national research, and then considers some of the approaches that might facilitate future research in this area.

## **CORPORATE CULTURE AND ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

A number of scholars have developed integrative frameworks of organizational culture (Allaire & Firsirotu, 1984; Hatch, 1993; Martin, 1992; Ott, 1989; Schein, 1985, 1990), but little consensus exists with regard to a general theory. Since culture is a complex phenomenon ranging from underlying beliefs and assumptions to visible structures and practices, healthy skepticism also exists as to whether organizational culture can actually be "measured" in a comparative sense. Research on the link between organizational culture and effectiveness is also limited by lack of agreement about the appropriate measures of effectiveness. Despite these challenges, better understanding of this topic remains critical to the development of organizational studies.

The current literature has its roots in the early 1980s. Deal and Kennedy (1982) and Peters and Waterman (1982) focused attention on the strategic importance of organizational culture and stimulated interest in the topic. Kotter and Haskett (1992) expanded on this by exploring the importance of adaptability and the "fit" between an organization and its environment. This chapter applies the culture framework developed by Denison and his colleagues (Denison, 1984, 1990, 1996; Denison & Mishra, 1995, 1998; Denison & Neale, 1996; Denison, Cho & Young, 2000; Denison, Haaland & Neale, 2002; Fey & Denison, in press). This stream of research has developed an explicit model of organizational culture and effectiveness and a validated method of measurement. Using data from 764 organizations, Denison and Mishra (1995) showed that the four different cultural traits – mission, consistency, adaptability and involvement – were related to different criteria of effectiveness. This research found that the traits of mission and consistency were the best predictors of profitability, the traits of involvement and adaptability the



best predictors of innovation, and the traits of adaptability and mission the best predictors of sales growth. Denison, Haaland and Neale (2002) have linked the elements of the model to differences in customer satisfaction in two industries, and Fey and Denison (in press) have presented an application of this model to foreign-owned firms operating in Russia.

The Denison model is based on four cultural traits of effective organizations that are described below with references to the organizational studies literature. A more complete review of these traits is provided by Denison and Mishra (1995).

*Involvement.* Effective organizations empower their people, build their organizations around teams, and develop human capability at all levels (Becker, 1964; Lawler, 1996; Likert, 1961). Executives, managers and employees are committed to their work and feel that they *own* a piece of the organization. People at all levels feel that they have at least some input into decisions that will affect their work and that their work is directly connected to the goals of the organization (Katzenberg, 1993; Spreitzer, 1995).

*Consistency.* Organizations also tend to be effective because they have "strong" cultures that are highly consistent, well-coordinated, and well-integrated (Davenport, 1993; Saffold, 1988). Behavior is rooted in a set of core values, and leaders and followers are skilled at reaching agreement even when there are diverse points of view (Block, 1991). This type of consistency is a powerful source of stability and internal integration that results from a common mindset and a high degree of conformity (Senge, 1990).

*Adaptability.* Ironically, organizations that are well-integrated are often the most difficult ones to change (Kanter, 1983). Internal integration and external adaptation can often be at odds. Adaptable organizations are driven by their customers, take risks and learn from their mistakes, and have capability and experience at creating change (Nadler, 1998; Senge, 1990). They are continuously changing the system so that they are improving the organizations' collective abilities to provide value for their customers (Stalk, 1988).

*Mission.* Successful organizations have a clear sense of purpose and direction that defines organizational goals and strategic objectives, and expresses a vision of how the organization will look in the future (Hamel & Prahalad, 1994; Mintzberg, 1987, 1994; Ohmae, 1982). When an organization's underlying mission changes, changes also occur in other aspects of the organization's culture.

Like many contemporary models of leadership and organizational effectiveness, this model focuses on the contradictions that occur as organizations try to achieve internal integration and external adaptation (Hatch, 1993; Schein, 1990). For example, organizations that are market-focused and opportunistic often have

problems with internal integration. On the other hand, organizations that are well-integrated and over-controlled usually have a hard time adapting to their environment. Organizations with a top-down vision often find it difficult to focus on the empowerment and the “bottom-up” dynamics needed to implement that vision. At the same time, organizations with strong participation often have difficulty establishing direction. Effective organizations are those that are able to resolve these contradictions without relying on simple trade-offs.

At the core of this model are underlying beliefs and assumptions. These “deeper” levels of organizational culture are typically quite unique to each firm, and are difficult to measure and harder to generalize about. They are often best understood from a qualitative perspective. Nonetheless, they provide the foundation from which behavior and action spring (Schein, 1985). The four traits of organizational culture presented by Denison and Mishra (1995) have been expanded by Denison and Neale (1996), and Denison, Cho and Young (2000) to include three sub-dimensions for each trait for a total of 12 dimensions. This version of the model is presented in Fig. 1.

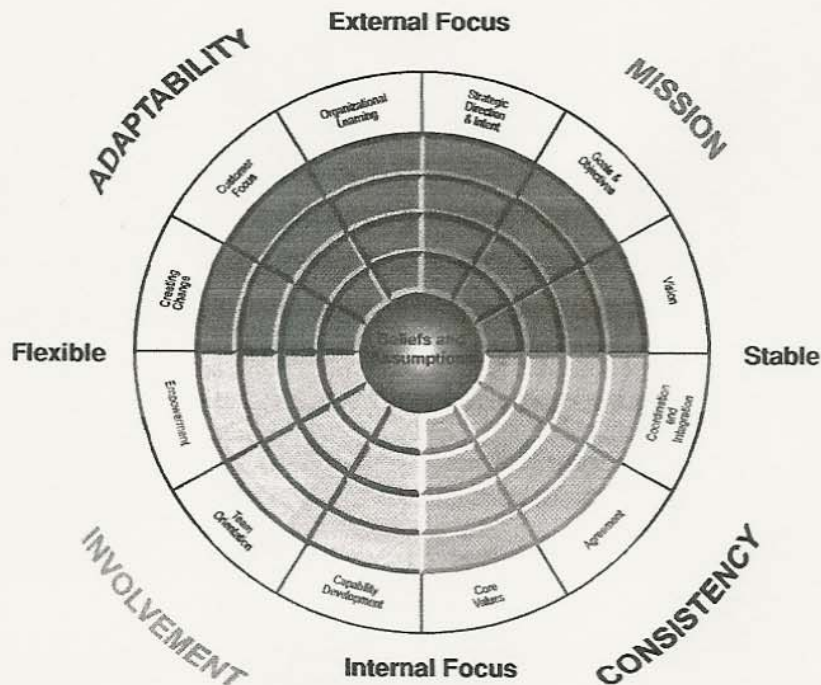


Fig. 1. The Denison Organizational Culture Model.

This model is often used as part of a diagnostic process to profile specific organizations in order to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of their cultures, and to suggest ways in which the organization's culture may influence its effectiveness. The following example helps illustrate the application of the model.

*Example of a Manufacturing Company in Decline*

This one-hundred-year-old manufacturing company has dominated its industry for many years, but it now faces a new type of competition that seriously undercuts its products on price. After years of success, the business has been declining for the past five years, and this past year was the first time that senior executives did not receive bonuses. The profile for the top management team of this organization is presented in Fig. 2. The data for this profile came from a survey of the top 50 people in the organization (Denison & Neale, 1996). Each index is measured by five survey items, using a five-point Likert scale, which are averaged to produce an index score. The results are presented in terms of percentile scores, indicating the

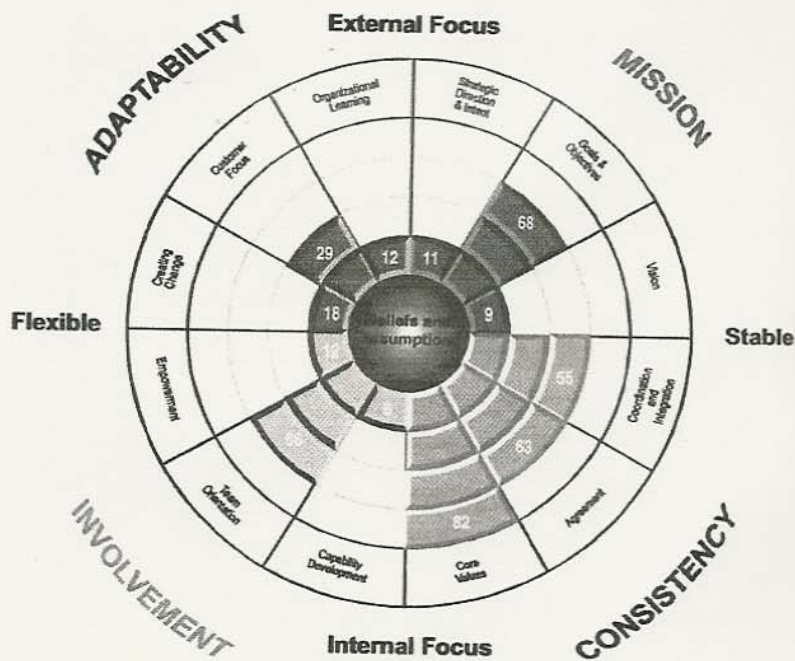


Fig. 2. Profile of a Manufacturing Company in Decline.

percentage of organizations in the benchmark database of over 700 organizations (Haaland, 2002) that scored lower than the organization profiled.

Examination of the culture profile of the management team reveals some key organizational problems: all of the measures of adaptability are poor; learning and creating change fall in the first quartile; and customer focus falls in the second quartile. The only strength in the area of mission is the operational focus on goals and objectives, indicating that there is little long-term vision or strategy. Involvement is also low, showing strengths only in the area of team orientation. The only real strength that appears in this profile is in the area of consistency, with a top quartile score in core values.

When the top management team looked at this profile, there was a long silence. "What does this profile tell you about your organization?" the consultant asked. After a long silence, one of them replied, "Yeah, we're a team alright – but we're *going down together*." "Yeah, that's us," said another. The core values that held the group together were well-suited to the organization's past, but not necessarily to their future. The management team also quickly linked other aspects of the profile to their situation – the emphasis on operational issues in the mission area reflected the President's "mail room to board room" career path and the relative neglect of longer-term strategic issues. They had created many "teams" in the organization, but these teams had little impact on the way that work was actually done.

Looking at this culture profile brought together a number of different symptoms of the organization's decline and linked them to the behavior of the top management team. Their tendency to ignore the customer and the competitive environment and reason from the "inside-out" – taking the internal logic of their organization as a given and wondering why no one brought their products anymore – also came through strongly in this analysis. Since prior research has shown that internally-focused companies have lower growth rates (Denison & Mishra, 1995; Denison, Haaland & Neale, 2002), the analysis also made them more aware that they were unlikely to solve some of their most basic problems without a change in the behaviors and skills of their leaders.

This survey has been translated into 14 languages and used in over 30 countries. A number of studies have examined the empirical link between culture and effectiveness in North America, but very few have attempted to examine this link across cultures.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study explores one basic research question: *Are there cross-cultural differences in the relationship between organizational culture and effectiveness?* This

general research question has many facets, but in this chapter, we focus on whether the pattern identified in the original research in North America is similar to the patterns in other parts of the world, and whether there are distinctive patterns that are unique to specific countries. This question also requires us to see if the culture data itself varies significantly across different regions of the world. A final question concerns the explanation for the pattern of findings – Which factors account for the observed differences or similarities? These are the general research questions that guided the research presented in this chapter.

## METHODS

The sample for the first study reported in this chapter was drawn from the archive of organizations that have completed the *Denison Organizational Culture Survey* over the past five years. The sample included 36,820 individuals from 230 organizations drawn from different industries, and including organizations of all sizes and stages of growth. In order to be included in this study, firms had to have at least 25 respondents from a representative population of employees in the firm. On average, the response rate for each of these organizations was around 60%, with internal samples that varied from management teams to a complete census of the organization. The majority of companies in this sample were based in North America ( $n = 188$ ). Eight of the companies are based in Asia and 34 are from Europe-Middle East-Africa (EMEA). Global companies headquartered in all regions typically have many respondents from outside of the region.

Of the companies in this sample, 48% were listed in the Forbes Global 1,000 List for 2001. Approximately 20% are from the consumer cyclical industry including automotive sales and dealerships, home building companies, publishing, and retail. Another 13% of the companies in this sample come from the consumer staples industry including restaurants, beverage manufacturers, personal care products, food, and tobacco sectors. Companies in the technology sector account for 13% of the companies in this sample, and the health care sector, basic materials sector, and financials sector each account for 11% of the sample. Seven percent of the companies come from the capital goods sector, 3% each from the utilities sector and the communications sector, and 1% from the transportation sector. The remaining 7% come from public or non-profit organizations such as schools and government agencies.

The sample for the second study reported in this chapter included 2,162 employees of independently-owned local grocery stores within seven countries. The number of participants and stores per country are as follows: 749 respondents from 92 stores in Australia, 326 respondents from 17 stores in Brazil, 197

respondents from 13 stores in Canada, 306 respondents from 18 stores in Jamaica, 96 respondents from 20 stores in Japan, 185 respondents from 20 stores in South Africa, and 255 respondents from 38 stores in the United States. All respondents were full-time employees with positions ranging from non-management to management to store owner.

In total, 6,736 surveys were mailed out worldwide. Total response rate was 42%, but 658 of these surveys could not be used because they didn't complete enough questions, or could not be linked back to the appropriate store. This resulted in a usable response rate of 32%.

The stores participating in this study are part of the International Grocers Alliance (IGA). IGA, headquartered in Chicago, IL, was founded in 1926 and today is a global alliance of more than 4,000 licensed stores, with aggregate annual sales of \$21 billion. IGA currently has operations in 40 countries, commonwealths and territories. Retailers who choose to join IGA, a voluntary non-profit supermarket network, acquire the size and strength to compete in the marketplace while maintaining their flexibility and autonomy as small business operators. IGA is owned by a set of wholesalers and retailers. The system is made up of supermarkets affiliated with IGA wholesalers and distributors in each country. There are two types of affiliation that supermarkets may have with IGA: (1) as a corporate store, where the wholesaler is the owner of the store; or (2) through a "sponsorship," where the owner-operator joins the IGA system as a licensed store.

Countries selected to participate in this study contained a minimum of 15 IGA affiliated stores. All stores in Brazil and Jamaica were surveyed because a smaller number of total stores exist in these two countries. In Canada, Australia and South Africa supermarkets were randomly selected to participate in the study. In the United States and Japan surveys were sent directly to a sample of high- and low-performing stores. The U.S. sample was chosen from a balanced sample of stores with high and low ratings on an annual store assessment processed by an independent third party inspector. In Japan, an independent "retail counselor" identified high and low performing stores. Stores in Japan were surveyed in Japanese, and stores in Brazil were surveyed in Portuguese. All other stores were surveyed in English.

The survey items for this study were taken from *The Denison Organizational Culture Survey* (Denison & Neale, 1996). This survey measures twelve indices of organizational culture using five questions each for a total of 60 questions. All items used a five-point Likert scale with response categories ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. These twelve indices are used to measure the four main cultural traits defined by the model – involvement, consistency, adaptability, and mission. The survey also assesses employees' perceptions of store performance on variables including sales growth, profitability, quality of products and services,

employee satisfaction, and overall organizational performance. All measures were aggregated to the organizational level for this analysis. A complete listing of all items used in this study is included in the Appendix.

## RESULTS

The results from both studies are reported in the same way. First, we report the simple correlations between the twelve indexes of organizational culture and the subjective ratings of overall effectiveness. Next, we report a series of one-way ANOVAs to understand the significant differences in scores from each of the countries and regions.

### *Study One*

The correlations between the twelve culture indices and overall subjective performance for the three regions, North America, Asia, and Europe-Mid-East-Africa (EMEA), are presented in Table 1. All correlations between overall performance and culture indices were significant for North America (mean  $r = 0.60$ ) and EMEA (mean  $r = 0.64$ ). None of the correlations were significant for the Asian companies, although the size of the correlations are almost identical (mean  $r = 0.62$ ). Similar results were also found for four other subjective indicators of performance; sales growth, profitability, quality, and employee satisfaction. These results are not presented here, but are readily available upon request.

**Table 1.** Correlation between Culture and Overall Effectiveness by Region.

	North America	Asia	EMEA
Empowerment	0.65*	0.57	0.60*
Team Orientation	0.61*	0.71	0.53*
Capability Development	0.70*	0.48	0.50*
Core Values	0.61*	0.65	0.69*
Agreement	0.58*	0.62	0.73*
Coordination & Integration	0.69*	0.62	0.74*
Creating Change	0.48*	0.87	0.68*
Customer Focus	0.36*	0.19	0.62*
Organizational Learning	0.50*	0.82	0.52*
Strategic Direction & Intent	0.55*	0.66	0.79*
Goals & Objectives	0.60*	0.54	0.62*
Vision	0.53*	0.71	0.67*
Number of Organizations	169	7	34

**Table 2.** ANOVA of Differences in Culture Scores Across Countries.

	North America	Asia	EMEA
ANOVA of Differences in Adaptability			
North America	**		
Asia	-0.003	**	
EMEA	-0.001	0.002	**
ANOVA of Differences in Mission			
North America	**		
Asia	-0.008	**	
EMEA	-0.003	0.005	**
ANOVA of Differences in Involvement			
North America	**		
Asia	0.001	**	
EMEA	-0.003	0.002	**
ANOVA of Differences in Consistency			
North America	**		
Asia	0.007	**	
EMEA	0.002	-0.005	**

The one-way ANOVAs assessing the significance of mean differences on the culture scores between the three regions, North America, Asia and Europe-Mid-East-Africa, are presented in Table 2. Interestingly enough, the three regions did not differ significantly from each other in any of the four organizational culture traits measured in this study. Mean differences of less than 0.08 were noted for the involvement, consistency, adaptability, and mission traits across all three geographic regions. The largest differences were noted between EMEA and Asia in all four traits. Asian companies gave slightly lower ratings than did EMEA companies on the traits of involvement and consistency, but EMEA organizations gave slightly lower ratings than Asian organizations on adaptability and mission. Overall, however, these differences are very small.

#### Study Two

The correlations between the twelve cultural indices and the subjective overall performance ratings for each country are presented in Table 3. All twelve culture indices were significantly correlated with overall performance ratings in Australia (mean  $r = 0.33$ ), the United States (mean  $r = 0.60$ ), and Brazil (mean  $r = 0.79$ ). All indices except organizational learning were significantly correlated with overall performance ratings in South Africa. In Canada, however, only strategic



**Table 3.** Correlation between Overall Performance and the 12 Indices by Country.

	South Africa	Canada	Jamaica	Australia	United States	Brazil	Japan
Empowerment	0.60*	0.38	0.08	0.27*	0.68*	0.84*	0.08
Team Orientation	0.61*	0.43	-0.06	0.32*	0.60*	0.86*	0.11
Capability Development	0.70*	-0.06	0.26	0.23*	0.56*	0.81*	0.14
Core Values	0.54*	0.34	0.34	0.39*	0.63*	0.83*	0.47*
Agreement	0.63*	0.37	0.20	0.34*	0.54*	0.78*	0.28
Coordination & Integration	0.54*	0.45	0.18	0.37*	0.56*	0.88*	0.23
Creating Change	0.82*	0.34	0.00	0.35*	0.63*	0.75*	0.23
Customer Focus	0.45*	0.06	0.25	0.24*	0.45*	0.62*	0.24
Organizational Learning	0.12	0.13	0.11	0.33*	0.67*	0.76*	-0.10
Strategic Direction & Intent	0.69*	0.77*	0.44	0.38*	0.57*	0.79*	0.55*
Goals & Objectives	0.76*	0.58*	0.22	0.42*	0.68*	0.81*	0.25
Vision	0.45*	0.43	0.26	0.36*	0.61*	0.79*	0.29
Number of Stores	20	13	18	92	38	17	20

direction and intent ( $r = 0.77$ ) and goals and objectives ( $r = 0.58$ ) were significantly correlated with overall performance ratings. For Japanese stores, only core values ( $r = 0.47$ ) and strategic direction and intent ( $r = 0.55$ ) were significantly correlated with overall performance. Finally, no significant correlations between culture indices and overall performance ratings emerged for Jamaica (mean  $r = 0.19$ ).

Next, one-way ANOVAs were performed to assess mean differences in organizational culture ratings across countries. Table 4 shows the results for the involvement trait. South Africa significantly differed only from the United States. On average, stores in the United States rated involvement indices 0.293 points lower than did their South African counterparts. Canadian stores significantly differed from stores in the United States and Japan. Canadians rated involvement indices 0.35 to 0.40 scale points higher than Japan and the U.S. Jamaican stores also significantly differed from stores in the U.S. and Japan. Jamaicans rated the involvement indices 0.44 to 0.50 scale points higher than did stores in the U.S. and Japan. Australian

**Table 4.** ANOVA of Differences in Involvement Scores Across Countries.

	South Africa	Canada	Jamaica	Australia	United States	Brazil	Japan
South Africa	**						
Canada	-0.102	**					
Jamaica	-0.187	-0.008	**				
Australia	-0.206	-0.104	-0.002	**			
United States	0.293*	0.400*	0.480*	0.500*	**		
Brazil	0.010	0.198	0.282	0.301*	-0.198	**	
Japan	0.250	0.352*	0.437*	0.456*	-0.004	0.155	**

**Table 5.** ANOVA of Differences in Consistency Scores Across Countries.

	South Africa	Canada	Jamaica	Australia	United States	Brazil	Japan
South Africa	**						
Canada	-0.007	**					
Jamaica	-0.130	-0.006	**				
Australia	-0.176	-0.103	-0.005	**			
United States	0.009	0.160	0.218*	0.263*	**		
Brazil	0.003	0.101	0.158	0.204*	0.006	**	
Japan	0.347*	0.419*	0.477*	0.523*	0.259*	0.319*	**

stores significantly differed from stores in the U.S., Brazil and Japan, with mean differences resulting in Australians rating involvement indices 0.50, 0.30 and 0.46 points higher than U.S., Brazilian and Japanese stores, respectively. As previously noted the U.S. stores rated involvement indices significantly lower than South African, Canadian, Jamaican and Australian stores. Japanese stores rated involvement indices significantly lower than Canadian, Jamaican and Australian stores. Brazilian stores only differed significantly from Australian scores.

Japanese stores rated the consistency trait significantly lower than did all other stores. These results are presented in Table 5. South African and Canadian stores were not significantly different than any other country besides Japan. Jamaica gave significantly higher mean ratings to consistency than did the U.S. and Japanese stores. Australian stores rated consistency significantly higher than did U.S., Brazilian and Japanese stores. As previously noted, the U.S. rated consistency significantly lower than did Australian and Jamaican stores, but rated consistency significantly higher than did Japanese stores.

ANOVAs for Adaptability are shown in Table 6. For the adaptability trait, there were no significant differences in mean ratings noted between Canadian stores and any other country. Japanese stores gave significantly lower adaptability ratings than did any other country with the exception of the U.S. and Canada. South African,

**Table 6.** ANOVA of Differences in Adaptability Scores Across Countries.

	South Africa	Canada	Jamaica	Australia	United States	Brazil	Japan
South Africa	**						
Canada	0.008	**					
Jamaica	-0.008	-0.157	**				
Australia	-0.003	-0.107	0.005	**			
United States	0.201*	0.124	0.281*	0.231*	**		
Brazil	-0.002	-0.010	0.006	0.001	0.219*	**	
Japan	0.314*	0.236	0.393*	0.343*	0.113	0.332*	**

**Table 7.** ANOVA of Differences in Mission Scores Across Countries.

	South Africa	Canada	Jamaica	Australia	United States	Brazil	Japan
South Africa	**						
Canada	-0.001	**					
Jamaica	-0.226	-0.214	**				
Australia	-0.006	-0.005	0.166	**			
United States	0.187	0.199	0.413*	0.247*	**		
Brazil	-0.007	-0.006	0.154	-0.001	-0.259*	**	
Japan	0.361*	0.373*	0.587*	0.421*	0.174	0.433*	**

Jamaican, Australian and Brazilian stores rated adaptability significantly higher than did U.S. and Japanese stores, but did not differ from each other.

The final culture trait, mission, again showed Japanese stores giving significantly lower ratings than all other countries except the U.S. These results are presented in Table 7. South African and Canadian stores did not differ significantly from any other countries besides Japan. Jamaican, Australian, and Brazilian stores again gave significantly higher ratings to mission than did the U.S. and Japanese stores.

Overall, the correlations presented here show a strong and consistent pattern in Brazil, South Africa and the U.S. Australia and Canada show a similar, but somewhat weaker pattern. Canada's small sample may have contributed to these results. In Japan and Jamaica, however, the pattern is quite different. In Jamaica, the correlations between culture and effectiveness measures are generally very low. In Japan, a few correlations are quite strong, but the pattern is mixed.

The difference of means tests also highlighted several interesting patterns. First, the results show that Jamaica has a much weaker pattern of correlations between the culture and effectiveness measures, but that the overall level of culture scores is very similar to Canada, South Africa, Australia, and Brazil. Second, the differences in means tests consistently show significantly lower scores for both the U.S. and Japan. Before considering a substantive explanation for these differences, however, it is important to point out the difference in sampling procedures used within these two countries. As noted earlier, both Japan and the U.S. used sampling procedures designed to contrast high and low performing stores. This sampling procedure may have resulted in lower performing stores, which presumably also had lower culture scores, being over-represented.

## DISCUSSION

The two studies reported in this chapter make a modest empirical contribution to understanding one of the fundamental challenges of leadership in a global

environment. The first study presents a summary of a large empirical database on organizational culture and effectiveness. Despite everything that we know about the importance of cross-cultural differences, these results show a very similar pattern across these major regions of the world. The link between company culture and effectiveness, at least as it is measured in this study, appears to be both strong and consistent. In addition, the mean scores for the culture measures are essentially the same for the samples of organizations in each of these three regions.

How can this be? Almost every article and discussion on the topic focuses on the importance of cultural *differences*. Yet, in one of the few comparative examinations of the issue, we see almost no difference. After scratching our heads for a while, we offer several explanations for this unexpected outcome.

First, the purpose of the model used for in study was to help understand the impact that organizational culture has on organizational effectiveness. Thus, the purpose of the concepts is to build an organizational-level model that elaborates the cultural factors that help distinguish effective and ineffective organizations. This content is designed to be general enough to apply to a wide range of organizations and to predict one narrow, but important outcome. The intent of the model is quite different from those that are specifically designed to describe the differences that exist between national cultures.

Another factor that should be considered in explaining these "no difference" results may be the fact that respondents tend to "self-norm," by comparing their own situation to other organizations in their same country or region. This "self-norming" process reminds us that survey data are always the result of making judgments relative to expectations. When expectations are rooted in a particular national context, that may indeed limit the differences that appear across cultures.

Even though these results provide good support for the usefulness of these organizational traits and measures for predicting the effectiveness of firms in different national contexts, we would *not* argue that this means that these traits are expressed in the same way in each of these contexts, or that the same meaning would be attached to the same behaviors in different national contexts. On the contrary, we would take these results to mean that a concept like empowerment is important around the world, but we would not argue that this means that the same behaviors would necessarily constitute empowerment in different national contexts. Thus, the model probably says much more about the presence of a desirable set of traits than it does about how those traits are expressed.

Examples help to illustrate this dilemma for all of the concepts in the model. But some of the most vivid examples concern the expression of involvement and empowerment in high power distance countries. One career ex-patriot Citibank

executive told this story about taking a new job in Riyadh to help revitalize a Saudi-Pakistani joint venture bank:

Each day, when I went in, everyone that was working in the area outside my office would stand up and salute. The first day I was honored, but it soon became annoying. One day, I left something in my car and had to go back out to get it, and then come back in. Each time they stood up and saluted! Up, down, up, down – how were we supposed to get anything done?

When I told them not to stand up and salute when I came in, they obeyed, but I had hurt their feelings. They saw this as conveying respect, not subservience, and were a bit insulted that their attempt to honor me had been rebuffed. It took me some time to recover. My admonition that we were “all working together as a team” was confusing to them – I was moving too far too fast. Only then did I understand the true challenge that I faced.

Expressing regard for cultural diversity itself can also vary across cultures. A Dutchman who ran HP Tech Support call centers in Amsterdam that operated in 38 languages contributed this story about visiting corporate headquarters:

When I first went to work in California, I would describe the way that we worked in Amsterdam, by saying things like, “well the Italians did it this way and the Germans did it that way and the French did it their own way – what a mess,” and then we would laugh and sort things out. But before long, one of the American managers pulled me aside and said, “Stop saying that – it is offensive to all of us.” I was really confused until I realized that Europeans naturally explain everything in terms of nationality, whereas Americans rarely speak directly about national differences at work.

There are several limitations in both of these studies that should also be considered. In the first study, there is a very limited sample from Asia. The small sample that is available shows the same pattern of results as the larger sample, but statistical significance is very low, and thus our confidence in these findings is compromised. As this database continues to grow, we will be able to redo this analysis to confirm that this preliminary summary is not misleading. The first study also relied on large regional categories that could mask distinct variations within each of these regions. In a separate analysis, we did compare results from several EU countries that had samples of 15 to 20 firms, and saw similar results to those reported in this study. Once again, as this database grows, it will be possible to make these comparisons in greater detail. One final limitation of this first study concerns the wide range of organizations and sampling schemes employed within the organizations. Clearly, the results would be more representative if they were controlled for size, industry, level of respondents, and size of the internal sample. Other research on this database has shown that these differences are relatively small compared to the large differences that exist between organizations, but these findings would still be strengthened with a study design that allowed for these factors to be controlled.

There are also a number of limitations to the second study. Our original intent in the second study was to examine a similar set of organizations across different

national contexts, so that the type of organization could be held constant. This feature of having multiple units of the same (or similar) organizations available for comparison offers a number of advantages. Although the benchmark research by Hofstede (1980b) is often criticized because of its reliance on one organization, IBM, as the sole source of data, we would argue that this is also a key strength of the study. To a degree, it allows for an "apples to apples" comparison across nations. While this may be a poor choice of metaphor to use in a study of supermarkets (!), comparing similar organizations is at some point essential to identifying differences and similarities across nations. Reliance on one MNC of one nationality may "attenuate" the influence of national culture, but it also offers a relatively constant point of reference.

The biggest limitation of the second study is that the country specific samples were influenced by choices made in each country. This has resulted in "high/low" samples of organizations in two of the countries, Japan and the U.S., with random samples or a complete census in the other five countries. Adding in a specific sample of low-performing organizations appears to have had a strong influence on the difference of means tests, and somewhat less of an influence on the correlational analysis.

When the findings from the two studies are compared, the low results for the U.S. in Study Two are clearly not reflected in Study One. The correlations, however, are much more comparable between the two studies. Indeed, since most of the firms in the Asia sample in Study One are from Japan (five of eight), it also seems like the difference of means tests in Study Two may be influenced by the sampling procedure. In this case, however, the correlations in Study One and Study Two for Japan and Asia are still contradictory.

Considering the results from these two studies helps to identify future targets for research. A focus on industries such as retail or hospitality that have comparable operating units in many locations, and have comparable measures of their performance, would offer several advantages. This would offer a point of reference for understanding differences between countries and would offer a way to move beyond the subjective measures of effectiveness used in the studies reported in this chapter. Choosing several MNCs with different national origins, but a common presence in different national contexts, would also provide an important point of comparison.

For global leaders, these studies provide an interesting point of reference for the choices they make about building their organizations and cultures. The findings suggest that a common perspective on organizational culture may indeed be possible in multinational corporations. Furthermore, these characteristics can be measured and tracked and appear to have a somewhat predictable impact on effectiveness. Nonetheless, the discussion of these results also emphasizes that

the way in which these traits are expressed varies greatly across national cultures. This additional complexity paints a clear, yet challenging picture of the challenges that face a global leader: Attempting to create a common set of organizational traits that are expressed in different ways in different national contexts.

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## APPENDIX A

### ITEMS AND INDEXES FOR EACH TRAIT

Index	Scale	Item
Involvement	Empowerment	1. Most employees are highly involved in their work.
		2. Decisions are usually made at the level where the best information is available.
		3. Information is widely shared so that everyone can get the information he or she needs when it's needed.
		4. Everyone believes that he or she can have a positive impact.
		5. Business planning is ongoing and involves everyone in the process to some degree.
	Team Orientation	6. Cooperation across different parts of the organization is actively encouraged.
		7. People work like they are part of a team.
		8. Teamwork is used to get work done, rather than hierarchy.
		9. Teams are our primary building blocks.
		10. Work is organized so that each person can see the relationship between his or her job and the goals of the organization.
	Capability Development	11. Authority is delegated so that people can act on their own.
		12. The "bench strength" (capability of people) is constantly improving.
		13. There is continuous investment in the skills of employees.
		14. The capabilities of people are viewed as an important source of competitive advantage.
		15. Problems often arise because we do not have the skills necessary to do the job. <sup>a</sup>
Consistency	Core Values	16. The leaders and managers "practice what they preach."
		17. There is a characteristic management style and a distinct set of management practices.

## Appendix A. (Continued)

Index	Scale	Item
		18. There is a clear and consistent set of values that governs the way we do business.
		19. Ignoring core values will get you in trouble.
		20. There is an ethical code that guides our behavior and tells us right from wrong.
	Agreement	21. When disagreements occur, we work hard to achieve "win-win" solutions.
		22. There is a "strong" culture.
		23. It is easy to reach consensus, even on difficult issues.
		24. <i>We often have trouble reaching agreement on key issues.*</i>
		25. There is a clear agreement about the right way and the wrong way to do things.
	Coordination and Integration	26. Our approach to doing business is very consistent and predictable.
		27. People from different parts of the organization share a common perspective.
		28. It is easy to coordinate projects across different parts of the organization.
		29. <i>Working with someone from another part of this organization is like working with someone from a different organization.*</i>
		30. There is good alignment of goals across levels.
Adaptability	Creating Change	31. The way things are done is very flexible and easy to change.
		32. We respond well to competitors and other changes in the business environment.
		33. New and improved ways to do work are continually adopted.
		34. <i>Attempts to create change usually meet with resistance.*</i>
		35. Different parts of the organization often cooperate to create change.
	Customer Focus	36. Customer comments and recommendations often lead to changes.
		37. Customer input directly influences our decisions.
		38. All members have a deep understanding of customer wants and needs.
		39. <i>The interests of the customer often get ignored in our decisions.*</i>
		40. We encourage direct contact with customers by our people.
	Organizational Learning	41. We view failure as an opportunity for learning and improvement.

**Appendix A. (Continued)**

Index	Scale	Item
Mission	Strategic Direction & Intent	42. Innovation and risk-taking are encouraged and rewarded.
		43. <i>Lots of things "fall between the cracks."</i> *
		44. Learning is an important objective in our day-to-day work.
		45. We make certain that the "right hand knows what the left hand is doing."
		46. There is a long-term purpose and direction.
		47. Our strategy leads other organizations to change the way they compete in the industry.
	Goals & Objectives	48. There is a clear mission that gives meaning and direction to our work.
		49. There is a clear strategy for the future.
		50. <i>Our strategic direction is unclear to me.</i> *
		51. There is widespread agreement about goals.
		52. Leaders set goals that are ambitious, but realistic.
		53. The leadership has "gone on record" about the objectives we are trying to meet.
Vision	54. We continuously track our progress against our stated goals.	
	55. People understand what needs to be done for us to succeed in the long run.	
	56. We have a shared vision of what the organization will be like in the future.	
	57. Leaders have a long-term viewpoint.	
	58. <i>Short-term thinking often compromises our long-term vision.</i> *	
	59. Our vision creates excitement and motivation for our employees.	
		60. We are able to meet short-term demands without compromising our long-term vision.

\*Items in italics are worded negatively in the survey. Responses are reversed for analytic purposes.

## APPENDIX B EFFECTIVENESS QUESTIONS

Comparing the performance of your organization with others in the industry, how would you assess your company performance in the following areas? Please mark one response per item.

---

	Don't Know 0	Low Performer 1	2	Average 3      4		High Performer 5
Sales Growth	0	1	2	3	4	5
Profitability/ROI	0	1	2	3	4	5
Quality of Products and Services	0	1	2	3	4	5
Employee Satisfaction	0	1	2	3	4	5
Overall Organizational Performance	0	1	2	3	4	5

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# Organizational Culture and Effectiveness: Can American Theory Be Applied in Russia?

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## Abstract

This paper examines the link between organizational culture and effectiveness for foreign-owned firms operating in Russia. Beginning with a model of organizational culture developed in the United States, the paper presents a multimethod analysis of culture and effectiveness in a transition economy. We argue that effectiveness in Russia relies more on adaptability and flexibility than it does in the United States. Furthermore, the legacy of the Communist era forces firms in Russia to deal with a workforce with a unique time perspective and a unique set of subcultures that often undermine attempts at coordination and integration. We first explore these ideas using survey data on 179 foreign-owned firms operating in Russia and compare the results to those obtained for firms in the United States. We then present four case studies designed to ground the results in the Russian context, and to document cultural dynamics not captured by the model.

*(Organizational Culture; Effectiveness; Russia; Transition Economies)*

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Many organizational researchers have examined corporate culture as a source of competitive advantage (Barney 1986, Ott 1989, Pfeffer 1994, Wilkins and Ouchi 1983), but explicit theories are few and empirical evidence is limited (Denison and Mishra 1995). The theories that do exist (Denison 1990, Kotter and Heskett 1992, O'Reilly 1989) have been developed and applied only in the United States. Scholars focusing on the applicability of American management theories abroad (Adler 1991; Boyacigiller and Adler 1991; Hofstede 1980a, 1993; Lammers and Hickson 1979) have asked, "Is organization science, as it is currently conceived, applicable across countries?" and "To what extent must organizational theorizing be modified due to national differences?" (Boyacigiller et al. 2003, p. 17).

This paper contributes to the ongoing debate by presenting a study of organizational culture and effectiveness that focuses on a set of foreign-owned firms operating in Russia. The study also compares the Russian results

to results previously obtained in the United States. Russia merits study for several reasons. Russia is the largest country in the world in terms of territory; it has the 6th largest population, and the 14th largest GDP (World Bank 2001). The legacy of Russia and the United States as cold war superpowers gives Russia special importance to global stability. Furthermore, because foreign investment is critically important to Russia's success as a key transition economy (Denison 2001, Lawrence and Vlachoutsicos 1990), the cultural problems encountered by foreign firms doing business in Russia (Elenkov 1998, Fey 1995, Fey and Beamish 2001, Kvint 1994) seem particularly important to address.

Our paper begins with an overview of the Russian context and its influence on organizational culture. Next, we introduce the model of organizational culture underlying this study and use this model to develop a set of research questions. We then present quantitative findings on the linkage between organizational culture and effectiveness, based on data from 179 foreign-owned firms operating in Russia, and we compare these findings to results from the United States. This quantitative analysis is followed by four qualitative case studies designed to ground the quantitative results in the Russian context and to help examine several significant cultural dynamics that were not fully represented in the model.

## The Russian Context

Russia has a well-educated, low-cost labor force and is rich in natural resources. However, Russia has not reached its economic potential during its transition to a market economy, partly because few outsiders appear to understand how to operate there. Russia has been plagued by problems such as organized crime, intractable bureaucracy, and an unstable political and economic system. Foreign firms have shown increased interest in Russia, but they often encounter cultural problems (Cattaneo 1992, Fey 1995). Shekshnia (1998) also suggests that organizational culture is a key determinant

of success. As Luthans et al. (1993, p. 742) noted, “The assumptions . . . are that the Russians are failing badly because they know little about modern management techniques and, in fact, U.S. and Russian management systems are quite different. The time has come to assess these assumptions.” Thus, we begin by reviewing the Russian management literature in areas closely related to organizational culture: management practices, work values, and national culture.

*Russian Management Practices.* Historically, Russian decision making has been very centralized, with little empowerment. This pattern was primarily imposed from the top, but to some degree was also encouraged from below. Because Russian managers have traditionally been punished for negative results, even those beyond their control, they tend to exhibit learned helplessness (Kets de Vries 2000) and a strong desire to want someone *else* to make decisions. To counter this ingrained problem, it is necessary to create a system of involvement in which employees are rewarded for taking initiative and held accountable for their actions, but not punished for unpredictable outcomes (Puffer and Shekshnia 1996). Other authors (Lawrence and Vlachoutsicos 1993, May et al. 1998) also stress the importance of accountability. In Russia, being able to blame someone else is often regarded as tantamount to solving a problem.

Human resource management (HRM) practices typically reflect and reinforce national culture and organizational culture. One study of 66 Russian managers at the Tver Cotton Mill found that extrinsic rewards and behavioral management increased worker performance, but that participative techniques resulted in decreased performance (Luthans et al. 1993, Welsch et al. 1993). Puffer and Shekshnia (1996) argue that individual bonuses should be tied to initiative and personal accountability and that firms should organize social events and other group activities with workers, provide small-group incentives, and provide a mix of short- and long-term incentives. Fey et al. (1999) also stress the benefits of using bonuses in Russia. Russians also appear to be highly motivated by development opportunities (Fey and Bjorkman 2001, May et al. 1998, Shekshnia 1998). For example, a recent study by Fey and Bjorkman (2001) showed that training is highly valued and is linked to firm performance. These HRM practices reflect important cultural values regarding empowerment and accountability.

Another recurring theme in the management literature is the poor flow of information. As Vlachoutsicos and Lawrence (1990) have noted, Russian organizations often have good vertical flow of information, but

poor horizontal flow from department to department. Information is typically seen as power, creating barriers to coordination and integration. Several authors have advocated using teams to achieve coordination because Russians like working in groups and are good at doing it (Puffer 1992, Puffer et al. 1998, Vlachoutsicos 2001).

*Russian Work Values and National Culture.* Organizational cultures are embedded in and shaped by national cultures. Puffer underscores several differences between Russian and U.S. business ethics (Puffer and McCarthy 1995), noting that giving bribes and ignoring senseless rules are more acceptable in Russia than in the United States, while blowing the whistle on fellow workers, having large salary differentials, and laying off people are more acceptable in the United States than they would be in Russia. Other authors (Holt et al. 1994, Ralston et al. 1997) have noted that Russian managers, compared to their American counterparts, value power more, need gratification less, and place lower value on tradition and higher value on security and stability. Russians are also said to be less individualistic and less open to change. Elenkov (1997) compared Russia to the United States on Hofstede’s (1980b) four dimensions of national culture. The table below compares Elenkov’s results for Russia to Hofstede’s (1980b) results for the United States.

	Elenkov (1997) Russia	Hofstede (1980b) United States
Individualism	40	91
Uncertainty avoidance	87	46
Masculinity	50	62
Power distance	89	40

These results show that Russians are group oriented (Vlachoutsicos 2001) and prefer to avoid uncertainty. Both might be expected, given the social security imprinted by the Communist system and the surprises dealt to Russia in the past. Russians report medium masculinity and appear to have a fairly high power distance (the extent to which a society accepts that power in institutions and organizations is distributed unequally), reflecting the large social gap that exists between workers and managers in Russia. Further understanding of Russian character is offered by the famous 19th century Russian historian Kliuchevskii (1990). He describes a set of stereotypical Russian behaviors, including resourcefulness, patience under adversity, deprivation, and spurts of energy, combined with a tendency to dissemble and an inconsistency in seeing things through. He also describes Russians as circumspect, cautious, and ambiguous with a preference for looking back instead of forward. Finally,

he argues that Russians prefer to work in groups and to monitor results rather than set goals.

Although there is no specific Russian management literature on organizational culture and effectiveness, this review of the literature on management practices, values, and national culture highlights several important issues: The cultures of Russian organizations exhibit a unique set of issues concerned with involvement, empowerment, and accountability, as well as a serious set of issues with respect to achieving coordination and strategic direction as Russians adapt to the emerging market economy. These issues are reflected in the approach to culture taken in our study.

## Organizational Culture and Effectiveness

A number of scholars have developed integrative frameworks of organizational culture (Allaire and Firsirotu 1984; Hatch 1993; Martin 1992; Ott 1989; Schein 1985, 1990), but little consensus exists with regard to a general theory. Because culture is a complex phenomenon, ranging from underlying beliefs and assumptions to visible structures and practices, some observers question whether culture can actually be “measured” in a comparative sense. Research on the link between organizational culture and effectiveness is also limited by lack of agreement about the appropriate measures of effectiveness.

The current literature has its roots in the early 1980s. Deal and Kennedy (1982) and Peters and Waterman (1982) focused attention on the strategic importance of organizational culture and stimulated interest in the topic. Kotter and Heskett (1992) expanded on this by exploring the importance of adaptability and the fit between an organization and its environment. This paper builds on the framework developed by Denison and his colleagues (Denison 1984, 1990, 1996; Denison and Mishra 1995, 1998; Denison and Neale 1996; Denison et al. 2002). This stream of research has developed an explicit model of organizational culture and effectiveness and a validated method of measurement. This model is based on four cultural traits of effective organizations, which are briefly described below with references to their grounding in the organizational studies literature.

*Involvement.* Effective organizations empower people, organize around teams, and develop human capability (Becker 1964, Lawler 1996, Likert 1961). Executives, managers, and employees are committed and feel a strong sense of ownership. People at all levels feel that they have input into decisions that will affect their work and see a direct connection to the goals of the organization (Katzenbach 1993, Spreitzer 1995).

*Consistency.* Effective organizations tend to have “strong” cultures that are highly consistent, well coordinated, and well integrated (Davenport 1993, Saffold 1988). Behavioral norms are rooted in core values, and leaders and followers are able to reach agreement even with diverse points of view (Block 1991). Consistency is a source of stability and internal integration resulting from a common mindset (Senge 1990).

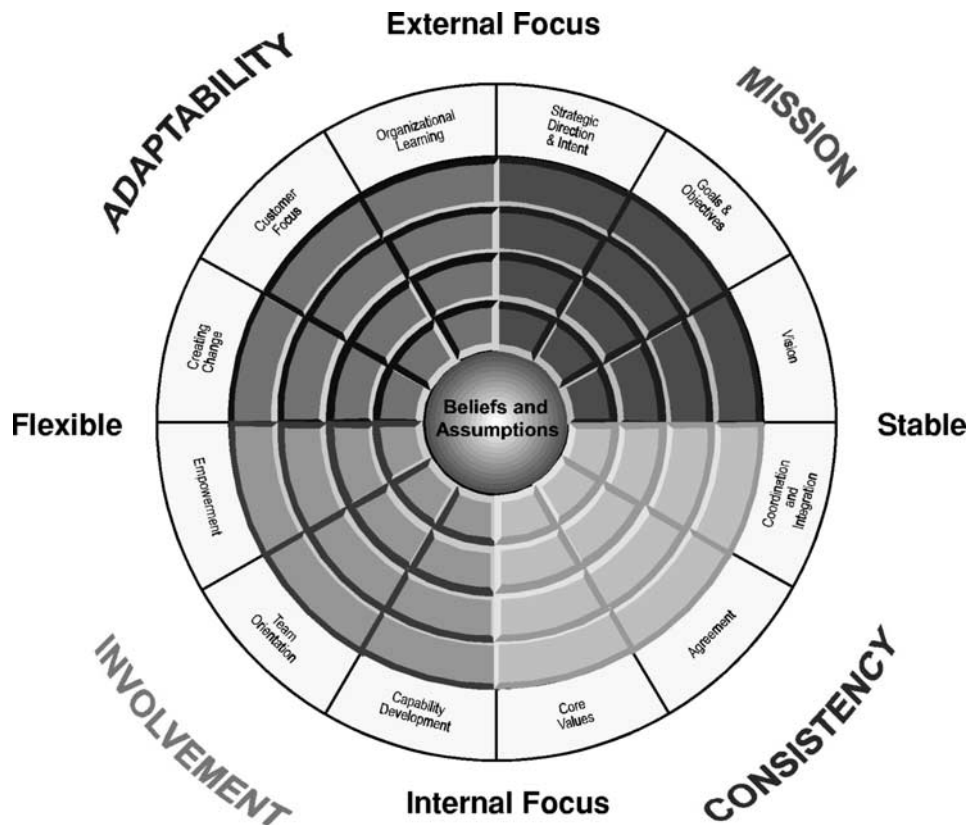
*Adaptability.* Ironically, organizations that are well integrated are often the least responsive (Kanter 1983). Internal integration and external adaptation can often be at odds. Adaptable organizations are driven by their customers, take risks and learn from their mistakes, and have capability and experience at creating change (Nadler 1998, Senge 1990, Stalk 1988).

*Mission.* Effective organizations have a clear sense of purpose and direction, defining goals and strategic objectives, and expressing a vision of the future (Mintzberg 1987, 1994; Ohmae 1982; Hamel and Prahalad 1994). When an organization’s underlying mission changes, changes also occur in other aspects of the organization’s culture.

Applying this framework to top executives in 764 organizations, Denison and Mishra (1995) showed that four different cultural traits were related to several criteria of effectiveness. This research found that profitability was most highly correlated with the traits of mission and consistency. In contrast, innovation was most highly associated with the traits of involvement and adaptability, and sales growth was most highly associated with the traits of adaptability and mission. Like many contemporary models of organizational effectiveness, this model focuses on the contradictions involved in simultaneously achieving internal integration and external adaptation (Hatch 1993, Schein 1990). For example, organizations that are market focused and opportunistic often have problems with internal integration. On the other hand, organizations that are well integrated and overcontrolled usually have a hard time adapting to their environments. Organizations with a top-down vision often find it difficult to focus on the empowerment and the “bottom-up” dynamics needed for alignment. At the same time, organizations fostering broad participation often have difficulty establishing direction. Effective organizations are those that are able to resolve these contradictions without relying on simple trade-offs.

At the core of this model are underlying beliefs and assumptions. These “deeper” levels of organizational culture are typically difficult to measure and harder to generalize about. However, these underlying beliefs and assumptions result in organizational practices that are observable and that are represented by the four key traits

Figure 1 Model of Organizational Culture



of involvement, consistency, adaptability, and mission presented in Figure 1. This model incorporates many of the concepts identified in our review of the Russian management literature and thus serves as a useful framework for our study.

This study took a unique approach to applying this model in the Russian context. The model was used as a framework to test the idea that organizational culture influences effectiveness, but the model was also used as a reference point for understanding aspects of the culture of Russian organizations that may not have been well represented in the model. The first part of this study presents a quantitative test of the model examining the relationship between culture and effectiveness. The second part of this study then presents four case studies to ground the concepts.

In contrast to the typical approach of qualitative theory building followed by quantitative theory testing, the two parts of this study were conducted in tandem. As such, this study took several risks. For example, if the quantitative study had not supported the usefulness of the model for understanding culture and effectiveness in the Russian context, then it would have made little

sense to use the model as a framework for the qualitative research. Using two approaches simultaneously allowed us to go back and forth between them to gain a better understanding of what was “behind the numbers” and to develop a better picture of areas where the concepts had a different meaning in Russia than in the United States.

### Research Questions

The research questions guiding this investigation concern the applicability of the model in Russia, differences in the link between culture and effectiveness in Russia and the United States, and the underlying meaning and applicability of these concepts in Russia. The first two questions are examined through a quantitative study of 179 firms, and the third research question through four qualitative case studies.

As noted earlier, there is good support in the literature for the importance of the four cultural traits in the model. However, these findings are based upon samples of firms in the United States. Because many authors have suggested that national culture is likely to influence the way management theory “works” outside of the United States



(e.g., Adler 1991; Boyacigiller et al. 2003; Boyacigiller and Adler 1991; Hofstede 1993, 1980a, b), we first need to determine if a link exists between the four traits and effectiveness in Russia.

**RESEARCH QUESTION 1.** To what extent are involvement, consistency, adaptability, and mission associated with the effectiveness of firms in Russia?

Past research has shown that different cultural traits are related to different criteria of effectiveness (Denison and Mishra 1995, Cameron and Whetten 1983, Pennings 1976). However, differences in national culture may influence the specific impact that the four traits have in Russia. Because the United States is more individualistic, but Russians dislike uncertainty more and have greater power distance (Hofstede 1980a, Elenkov 1997), we might expect that involvement would be more important in the Russian context. In addition, since the beginning of Perestroika in 1987, the business environment in Russia has been turbulent and unpredictable (Holt et al. 1994, Puffer et al. 1998). As a result, adaptability is likely to be particularly important for firms operating in Russia. In contrast, mission and consistency, which are likely to be more important in a stable country like the United States, may be less important in Russia.

**RESEARCH QUESTION 2.** What is the specific pattern between the four traits and various criteria of effectiveness in Russia? How does the pattern in Russia differ from the pattern in the United States? Do the traits of adaptability and involvement have a stronger impact in Russia than they do in the United States?

Even if the first two research questions receive good quantitative support from the comparative study, numbers cannot tell the whole story. This is particularly true in cross-cultural research. For example, in the United States when someone nods his or her head up and down, it means "yes." However, the same action in Bulgaria means "no." The same action has exactly the opposite meaning in the two countries! Our case studies are used to address three main issues: First, they point out patterns of behaviors that reflect the concepts in the model and resemble patterns observed in the United States. Second, we use the case studies to describe patterns of behavior that fit with the concepts but are very different from patterns in the United States. Third, our case studies help us to highlight some of the underlying dynamics that help to explain these differences. These qualitative case studies help point out areas where the concepts in the model travel fairly well, but also identify specific patterns of behavior and underlying dynamics that may be quite different in Russia. Thus, our third research question takes a look at what is behind the numbers.

**RESEARCH QUESTION 3.** What are the patterns of behavior that illustrate the concepts in the model in Russia? Which patterns of behavior are similar to those that might be observed in the United States? Which patterns of behavior are different from those that might be observed in the United States? What are some of the underlying forces that drive these different patterns of behavior?

These three research questions are examined using two linked studies: The first two questions are examined in a comparative study of 179 firms, while the third question is examined through a set of four case studies.

## Testing the Model: A Comparative Study

This section of the paper presents the quantitative results from a survey of 179 foreign firms operating in Russia. This first part of the research examines the impact of organizational culture on effectiveness in Russia, and then compares those results to similar results from a sample of firms from the United States.

### Methodology

The population for this study included all foreign firms operating in Russia in October 1997, with a parent firm headquartered in Canada, Germany, Finland, France, Sweden, or the United States. We combined lists of firms from each country's embassy for a total of 789 firms. 478 of the firms met our criteria of having at least 15 employees in Russia, operating before June 1995, and being located in Moscow or St. Petersburg. We chose to focus on foreign-owned firms for several reasons: Foreign-owned firms in many ways serve as a "bridge" between local and global firms. If the model does not apply to foreign-owned firms, it seems unlikely that it would apply to indigenous firms. Foreign-owned firms also tend to experiment more as they try to find a way to survive and prosper. Finally, the success of foreign-owned firms is necessary to ensure the continued investment of foreign capital.

Data collection occurred between October 1997 and January 1998. After calling to confirm that the company met the sampling criteria, we personally delivered a questionnaire to the firm for a senior manager to complete. Whenever possible, the researcher described the project and had the manager complete the questionnaire at that time. However, sometimes the manager opted to complete the questionnaire later and return it by fax. If questionnaires were not received within one week, we began a follow-up procedure including three telephone calls, faxing another questionnaire, and a fourth

telephone call as a final reminder. Companies whose questionnaires had not been returned by the end of this procedure were considered nonrespondents.

This procedure yielded 179 usable questionnaires completed by a senior manager in each firm, for a 37% response rate. Respondents were either general managers, deputy general managers (80%), or human resource managers (20%). 122 were Russian and 57 were foreign. Position of the respondent was initially included in the regression equations, but proved non-significant and was dropped from subsequent analyses to preserve degrees of freedom. We confirmed that the mean size of responding firms was virtually identical to the population mean for foreign subsidiaries in Russia<sup>1</sup> (Goskomstat 1998). Using a single respondent to depict a firm's culture has several limitations. It would, of course, be much better to have a large sample of respondents from each firm, or in-depth case studies of each of the 179 firms. However, that would require a huge investment of resources. Because of the comparative focus of the first part of this study, we opted for the approach that would result in as large a sample of *firms* as possible. Single-respondent studies are also quite common in the recent organizational and strategy literature (e.g., Birkinshaw et al. 1998, Delaney and Huselid 1996, Delery and Doty 1996, Denison and Mishra 1995, Geringer and Hebert 1989, Lee and Beamish 1995, Shaw et al. 1998). A comparative citation analysis shows that single-respondent studies published in top journals are cited frequently,<sup>2</sup> suggesting that when properly executed, their results are accepted.

Some readers may also be concerned that gathering data from a single executive respondent may lead to common method bias. However, using a similar set of measures, Denison and Mishra (1995) showed that culture measures correlated more highly with objectively measured effectiveness than with perceptual measures of effectiveness. Given the well-known dominance of most directors of firms in Russia, we would also argue that it is more accurate to use the general director or deputy general director as a sole respondent in Russia than it might be in other countries. In any case, Fey (1997) has shown that respondents in different parts and levels of an organization tend to have similar assessments of an organization's culture.

Survey items were drawn from the Denison Organizational Culture Survey (Denison and Mishra 1995, Denison and Neale 1996, Denison et al. 2002) and were translated into Russian and back into English, checked by Russian experts, and pilot tested. The four traits in the model each have three indexes that are the mean of three five-point Likert scale questions

ranging from 1–5 (strongly disagree to strongly agree). Appendix A includes a complete list of all these items.

Following Denison and Mishra (1995), effectiveness was measured using seven five-point Likert items, ranging from 1 = poor to 5 = excellent. These items included overall performance,<sup>3</sup> market share, sales growth, profitability, employee satisfaction, quality of products and services, and new product development. These six specific effectiveness measures yielded a one-factor solution which we labeled the effectiveness index ( $\alpha = 0.84$ ). While some scholars have criticized the use of subjective measures of effectiveness, we found them useful for several reasons. First, because Russian accounting standards are still emerging, it is nearly impossible to obtain comparable financial data. Second, because firms operating in Russia have such diverse goals, comparing their short-term financial performance makes little sense. Third, virtually no centrally collected financial information is available. Finally, Russians are often secretive and unwilling to share financial information. Thus, in Russia the benefits of using subjective measures far outweigh the drawbacks. Furthermore, there is good precedent for using perceptual measures (Delaney and Huselid 1996, Denison and Mishra 1995), and prior research has shown that subjective measures of performance correlate well with objective measures of performance (Powell 1992).

We also included control variables for size, industry, firm age, country of origin, and nationality of the respondent. We measured firm size as the number of employees and controlled for concentration in manufacturing. Firm age has little variance because foreign firms were not allowed into Russia prior to 1987. We also controlled for industry, using six of the SIC-based categories prevalent in our sample:

- (1) electrical, industrial, and precision instrument manufacturing;
- (2) wood, paper, textiles, food, and metal manufacturing;
- (3) all other manufacturing;
- (4) banking, insurance, real estate, advertising, and accounting;
- (5) wholesale and retail trade;
- (6) other services.

Finally, we included dummy variables to control for the influence of the home country of the parent firm and to separate Russian and non-Russian respondents. The U.S. comparison sample used in this study comes from Denison et al. (2002) and includes 36,542 respondents from 94 firms from the United States. For this sample there are  $\geq 25$  respondents from each firm. Responses were aggregated at the firm level before conducting the analyses. Intraorganizational response rates ranged

from 48% to 100%. Surveys were completed by a wide variety of respondents in the different organizations. The surveys were completed between 1997 and 1999 and cover a wide variety of industries. Tests for industry effects revealed no significant industry effects on the relationship between organizational culture and effectiveness, and thus controls for industry were dropped to preserve degrees of freedom.

**Results**

The validity of the Russian culture measures is supported by the factor analysis presented in Table 1. The data factor nicely into four dimensions with relatively low cross loadings and all of the Cronbach alphas are greater than 0.70. Thus, the factor analysis demonstrates good convergent and discriminant validity.

Table 2 addresses the issues raised in Research Question 1, and offers support for the model. All four of the model's cultural traits are associated with perceptions of organizational effectiveness in the 179-firm Russian sample; 31 of 32 correlations among the various dimensions of organizational culture and effectiveness reached statistical significance. To compare U.S. and Russian managers as proposed in Research Question 2, Table 2 reports correlations from a sample of 94 U.S. firms

(Denison et al. 2002). This comparison shows that all four cultural dimensions in the Russian data are less highly correlated with overall performance, employee satisfaction, quality, and product development, than was the case in the United States. On the other hand, in the Russian data the cultural traits correlate more highly with market share, sales growth, profitability, and the effectiveness index. In Russia, adaptability and involvement are the strongest correlates of the effectiveness index, overall performance, profitability, and product development; involvement and mission are the strongest correlates of market share, sales growth, employee satisfaction, and quality. This pattern contrasts with the U.S. results, which show that mission correlates most highly with five of eight effectiveness dimensions.

A more definitive look at the relationship between organizational culture and effectiveness is provided by the regression results. Table 3 reports the Russian results. It shows that the control variables are insignificant, with two minor exceptions: (1) Firms in the electrical, industrial, and instrument manufacturing sector are slightly less profitable, (2) larger firms tend to receive somewhat higher quality ratings. Table 3 shows that all of the culture traits except consistency are significant predictors of some aspect of effectiveness, providing substantial support for the first research question. The results also support the idea that different aspects of culture are linked to different elements of effectiveness. For example, Table 3 shows that sales growth is most highly associated with mission and that profitability is most highly associated with adaptability. Finally, Table 3 shows that involvement is the most important dimension of organizational culture for firms whose primary goal is employee satisfaction. A correlation matrix of the variables used in the regression analyses is presented in Appendix B.<sup>4</sup>

Overall, adaptability and involvement seem to be the most important determinants of effectiveness in the Russian context. They account for 12 of the 15 significant relationships associated with effectiveness and are also the most significant in the effectiveness and overall performance models. These results contrast with the regression results for the U.S. data, which are presented in Table 4. In the United States, mission is the organizational cultural trait most highly associated with effectiveness, as it is significantly associated with five of the eight effectiveness measures. Involvement is also significantly associated with employee satisfaction and the overall effectiveness index. Thus, involvement appears to be important for creating an effective organization in both the United States and Russia. However, mission appears to be the most important trait in the relatively stable United States, while in Russia's transition economy,

**Table 1 Factor Analysis of Organizational Culture Measures<sup>1</sup>**

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
Involvement				
Empowerment	0.21	<b>0.83</b>	0.08	0.14
Team orientation	0.01	<b>0.79</b>	0.18	0.09
Capability development	0.10	<b>0.75</b>	0.12	0.31
Consistency				
Core values	<b>0.89</b>	0.11	0.05	0.23
Agreement	<b>0.89</b>	0.26	0.18	0.09
Coordination and integration	<b>0.83</b>	0.17	0.24	0.26
Adaptability				
Organizational learning	0.14	0.21	<b>0.80</b>	0.16
Customer focus	0.26	0.10	<b>0.83</b>	0.17
Creating change	0.16	0.07	<b>0.80</b>	0.36
Mission				
Vision	0.22	0.33	0.16	<b>0.67</b>
Goals and objectives	0.00	0.06	0.27	<b>0.84</b>
Strategic directions	0.00	0.29	0.14	<b>0.78</b>
Eigenvalue	5.11	1.79	1.18	1.03
% Variance explained	42.60	14.91	9.79	8.55
Alpha (for bold items)	0.81	0.89	0.86	0.76

Note. <sup>1</sup>N = 179.

**Table 2 Culture and Effectiveness Correlations**

	Overall Performance	Market Share	Sales Growth	Profitability	Employee Satisfaction	Quality	Product Development	Effectiveness Index
<i>Russian Data</i>								
Involvement	<b>0.44**</b>	<b>0.33**</b>	<b>0.38**</b>	<b>0.37**</b>	<b>0.46**</b>	<b>0.42**</b>	<b>0.33**</b>	<b>0.48**</b>
Team orientation	0.42**	0.28**	0.35**	0.34**	0.44**	0.41**	0.30**	0.45**
Capability devel.	0.38**	0.32**	0.33**	0.34**	0.35**	0.34**	0.32**	0.44**
Empowerment	0.35**	0.25**	0.32**	0.27**	0.41**	0.35**	0.24**	0.36**
Consistency	<b>0.31**</b>	<b>0.22**</b>	<b>0.25**</b>	<b>0.28**</b>	<b>0.23**</b>	<b>0.27**</b>	<b>0.12</b>	<b>0.29**</b>
Core values	0.30**	0.30**	0.22**	0.25**	0.21**	0.24**	0.11	0.28**
Agreement	0.24**	0.17*	0.24**	0.20*	0.16*	0.21*	0.07	0.21**
Integration	0.29**	0.20*	0.22**	0.29**	0.25**	0.27**	0.13	0.30**
Adaptability	<b>0.46**</b>	<b>0.30**</b>	<b>0.27**</b>	<b>0.45**</b>	<b>0.33**</b>	<b>0.31**</b>	<b>0.36**</b>	<b>0.54**</b>
Org. learning	0.40**	0.30**	0.24**	0.39**	0.28**	0.26**	0.33**	0.49**
Customer focus	0.39**	0.16*	0.24**	0.40**	0.29**	0.24**	0.31**	0.47**
Creating change	0.35**	0.32**	0.22**	0.36**	0.28**	0.28**	0.28**	0.42**
Mission	<b>0.20**</b>	<b>0.30**</b>	<b>0.45**</b>	<b>0.26**</b>	<b>0.38**</b>	<b>0.37**</b>	<b>0.27**</b>	<b>0.39**</b>
Vision	0.07	0.10	0.33**	0.13	0.18*	0.19*	0.13	0.38**
Goals	0.19*	0.30**	0.31**	0.19*	0.34**	0.33**	0.23**	0.27**
Strategy	0.26**	0.38**	0.48**	0.34**	0.45**	0.41**	0.33**	0.40**
<i>U.S. Data</i>								
Involvement	<b>0.55**</b>	<b>0.14</b>	<b>0.26**</b>	<b>0.22*</b>	<b>0.73**</b>	<b>0.54**</b>	<b>0.42**</b>	<b>0.42**</b>
Team orientation	0.50**	0.07	0.22*	0.20*	0.66**	0.49**	0.34**	0.32**
Capability devel.	0.55**	0.27**	0.32**	0.26**	0.70**	0.55**	0.46**	0.43**
Empowerment	0.50**	0.09	0.21*	0.17*	0.71**	0.47**	0.40**	0.35**
Consistency	<b>0.55**</b>	<b>0.19*</b>	<b>0.26**</b>	<b>0.28**</b>	<b>0.70**</b>	<b>0.58**</b>	<b>0.37**</b>	<b>0.31**</b>
Core values	0.53**	0.22*	0.26**	0.27**	0.69**	0.53**	0.32**	0.27**
Agreement	0.49**	0.21*	0.25**	0.28**	0.58**	0.51**	0.34**	0.34**
Integration	0.49**	0.09	0.20*	0.20*	0.64**	0.54**	0.40**	0.49**
Adaptability	<b>0.51**</b>	<b>0.14</b>	<b>0.26**</b>	<b>0.16</b>	<b>0.65**</b>	<b>0.50**</b>	<b>0.45**</b>	<b>0.35**</b>
Org. learning	0.45**	0.04	0.20*	0.13	0.65**	0.44**	0.34**	0.33**
Customer focus	0.43**	0.14	0.19*	0.09	0.53**	0.47**	0.35**	0.19**
Creating change	0.48**	0.18*	0.29**	0.22*	0.56**	0.44**	0.51**	0.38**
Mission	<b>0.58**</b>	<b>0.26**</b>	<b>0.38**</b>	<b>0.33**</b>	<b>0.68**</b>	<b>0.51**</b>	<b>0.43**</b>	<b>0.46**</b>
Vision	0.57**	0.18*	0.34**	0.27**	0.73**	0.56**	0.44**	0.45**
Goals	0.50**	0.22*	0.33**	0.35**	0.56**	0.40**	0.33**	0.33**
Strategy	0.57**	0.34**	0.39**	0.33**	0.61**	0.47**	0.44**	0.49**

Note. <sup>1</sup>N = 179 for Russian data, N = 94 for U.S. data.

\*p < 0.05, \*\*p < 0.005.

adaptability is the more important factor. The observation that different organizational cultural traits are more important in the United States and Russia addresses Research Question 2.

These comparative results are quite encouraging. The culture measures achieved a high level of validity, showing that comparative cross-national research on culture and effectiveness is quite possible. The correlation and regression results show many important similarities to the results from prior research from the United States, but present one important difference: In Russia's

turbulent transition economy, stability traits such as mission and consistency are less strongly associated with effectiveness than are the flexibility traits of involvement and adaptability. The results also make good intuitive sense and encourage us to turn our attention to what lies behind the numbers.

### Taking a Closer Look: Four Case Studies

The quantitative part of this study shows that many of the concepts in the organizational culture model appear

**Table 3 Regressions of Effectiveness on Organizational Culture Dimensions: Russian Data<sup>1</sup>**

Independent Variable	Dependent Variables							
	Overall Performance	Market Share	Sales Growth	Profitability	Employee Satisfaction	Quality	Product Development	Effectiveness Index
Involvement	0.27***	0.20*	0.21*	0.18*	0.33****	0.29****	0.18*	0.26***
Consistency	0.13	0.05	0.13	0.07	0.05	0.12	-0.06	0.05
Adaptability	0.30****	0.09	0.05	0.31****	0.02	0.00	0.26***	0.34****
Mission	0.09	0.10	0.36****	-0.01	0.22**	0.21**	0.08	0.06
Firm size	0.08	0.14	0.06	0.11	0.10	0.18**	0.02	0.12
% Manufacturing	-0.03	-0.05	-0.05	-0.11	-0.11	-0.13	-0.02	-0.04
Firm age	0.08	0.12	0.01	0.07	0.05	0.00	0.07	-0.07
Industry 1 <sup>2,3</sup>	-0.03	-0.10	-0.03	-0.17*	-0.09	-0.14	-0.03	-0.10
Industry 2 <sup>2,3</sup>	0.06	0.04	0.04	-0.05	0.02	0.07	11	-0.05
Industry 3 <sup>2,3</sup>	0.09	-0.06	0.01	0.00	-0.00	0.02	-0.08	-0.06
Industry 4 <sup>2,3</sup>	-0.01	-0.06	0.09	-0.01	-0.10	0.01	-0.03	-0.02
Industry 5 <sup>2,3</sup>	0.08	-0.10	0.03	-0.10	0.02	0.02	-0.01	-0.08
Home country Canada <sup>3</sup>	0.10	-0.08	-0.05	-0.02	0.03	0.05	0.01	-0.08
Finland <sup>3</sup>	0.09	-0.12	0.09	-0.08	0.08	-0.01	-0.01	-0.08
Germany <sup>3</sup>	0.01	-0.15	0.02	-0.09	-0.11	-0.08	0.05	-0.02
Sweden <sup>3</sup>	0.04	0.02	-0.03	0.03	0.00	0.02	0.08	-0.02
United States <sup>3</sup>	0.05	-0.13	-0.02	-0.08	-0.00	-0.05	-0.07	-0.01
Manager U.S./Russian	0.06	-0.09	0.13	0.01	0.05	0.03	0.01	0.05
F full model	4.27****	2.72****	4.08****	4.32****	4.14****	4.10****	2.39****	6.18****
Full model R <sup>2</sup>	0.32	0.23	0.31	0.33	0.32	0.32	0.21	0.41
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.25	0.15	0.24	0.25	0.24	0.24	0.12	0.34
Δ adjusted R <sup>2,4</sup>	0.24	0.10	0.23	0.20	0.23	0.21	0.10	0.33
F for Δ adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	12.44****	4.87****	12.05****	10.49****	12.30****	11.20****	4.62****	20.15****
DF	160	160	160	160	160	160	160	160

Note. \*p < 0.05, \*\*p < 0.01, \*\*\*p < 0.005, \*\*\*\*p < 0.001.

<sup>1</sup>N = 179; standardized regression coefficients (Betas) are reported.

<sup>2</sup>Industry 1 = electrical, industrial, and precision instrument manufacturing; Industry 2 = wood, paper, textiles, food, and metal manufacturing; Industry 3 = other manufacturing; Industry 4 = banking, insurance, real estate, advertising, and accounting; Industry 5 = wholesale and retail trade.

<sup>3</sup>Industry 6 = "other services" and home country "France" are excluded from the regressions so that the model is not overdetermined.

<sup>4</sup>"Δ adjusted R<sup>2</sup>" shows the amount of additional variance explained by adding the four organizational culture variables as a set to regressions including all 14 control variables.

**Table 4 Regressions of Effectiveness on Organizational Culture Dimensions: U.S. Data<sup>1,2</sup>**

Independent Variable	Dependent Variables							
	Overall Performance	Market Share	Sales Growth	Profitability	Employee Satisfaction	Quality	Product Development	Effectiveness Index
Involvement	0.21	-0.18	-0.10	-0.01	0.52****	0.13	0.06	0.35***
Consistency	0.10	0.07	-0.13	0.21	0.19	0.45**	-0.13	-0.13
Adaptability	-0.06	-0.13	-0.01	-0.38*	-0.11	-0.02	0.32	-0.21
Mission	0.38**	0.46**	0.58****	0.47***	0.17	0.04	0.24	0.48****
F	18.09****	3.13*	5.90****	5.64****	41.44****	16.36****	9.21****	13.44****
R <sup>2</sup>	0.36	0.09	0.16	0.15	0.56	0.34	0.22	0.26
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.34	0.06	0.13	0.12	0.55	0.318	0.20	0.24
DF	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90

Note. \*p < 0.05, \*\*p < 0.01, \*\*\*p < 0.005, \*\*\*\*p < 0.001.

<sup>1</sup>Standardized regression coefficients (Betas) are reported above.

<sup>2</sup>N = 94.

to have an impact in the Russian context. However, even where the results appear to indicate a similar impact in the United States and Russia, it could be a mistake to assume that the concepts have the same *meaning* in the Russian context as they do in the U.S. environment. For example, empowerment may be important in both contexts, but empowerment may entail very different behaviors in the two contexts. Thus, the first objective of the case studies is to ground the model in the Russian context through more detailed description. The second objective is to highlight aspects of the cultures of these firms that have an important impact on effectiveness but are difficult to describe using only the concepts in the model. This section begins with a description of the case study methodology, followed by background descriptions of the four firms, and a summary table. Next, we ground the concepts of the model in the reality of the cases. The final part of this section focuses on several key themes that emerged from the case studies that were not well represented in the model but help to provide a better understanding of culture and effectiveness in the Russian context.

### Case Study Methods

We began by identifying a subset of the 179 firms that had at least 70 employees and had manufacturing and sales operations in Russia. To control for the national culture of the parent firm and to facilitate access, we identified 13 Swedish firms that met these criteria and selected four firms representing a range of effectiveness levels (Eisenhardt 1989). We then conducted 10 interviews in each firm. In each case, we interviewed one expatriate (either the GM or Deputy GM) and conducted the remaining interviews with Russians. In each firm, we interviewed the GM, the HR Manager, two production employees, one production manager, one marketing employee, one marketing manager, one financial or accounting employee, one engineer, and one engineering manager. Sixty percent of the interviews were conducted in English and the rest in Russian with a translator present. The interviews were semistructured, following Merton et al. (1963) approach. The core questions focused on the following topics: the interviewee's background, the organization's values, the unique aspects of the organization's history, the subgroups in the firm, the organization's management and business practices, and the link between the organization's culture and effectiveness. The purpose of these interviews was to understand the organization and the impact that its culture had on effectiveness.

Two researchers were present at each interview. Both took notes independently and typed them up each

night. Any inconsistencies were discussed and resolved. Researchers' impressions were kept separate from the interviewees' impressions, and all data were included in the write-ups even when not specifically requested in the interview guide (Yin 1984, Eisenhardt 1989). Interview notes from the two researchers were compared to highlight differences and produce a master set of interview notes. Next we followed the "memoing" process (Glaser 1978) to record patterns that the researchers noted within each site and across sites to identify the matches between the empirical pattern and the predicted pattern (Yin 1984).

Our presentation of the case studies begins with brief background descriptions of each firm. This is followed by a discussion of the cases in terms of the four traits defined by the model, illustrating them with examples from the cases. The final section focuses on several key themes that emerged from the case studies that were not well represented by the model but are important for understanding firms in Russia.

### Four Case Studies: General Background

**AGA.** Headquartered in Stockholm, Sweden, AGA is one of the world's leading producers of industrial gas (e.g., oxygen, hydrogen, argon) with 1999 sales of U.S.\$1.76 billion and over 10,000 employees in 40 countries. AGA has a matrix structure with three business areas (manufacturing industry, process industry, and health care industry) and country organizations.

AGA entered Russia in 1908. After an interruption during the 1917 revolution, AGA began supplying the Russian market via its Finnish subsidiaries in 1934. In 1999, AGA Russia employed over 350 people, with a head office in Moscow, a sales office in St. Petersburg, and factories in Kaliningrad and Moscow. AGA Moscow experienced financial losses in Russia in 1997 and 1998, but cut expenses in 1999 and thus made a small profit even though their prices are high and the industry has overcapacity.

In 1995, AGA Moscow invested U.S.\$10 million in a plant with a capacity of 100 tons per day. The "new" factory was an old AGA factory from Finland that was disassembled, shipped to Russia, and then reassembled in Balashikha, just outside of Moscow. AGA Moscow also set up 20 distribution stations throughout Russia. The Moscow office in Balashikha is divided into the sales department, mainly made up of new personnel, and the production side, mostly comprised of workers from the acquired production facility.

**Alfa Laval.** Alfa Laval produces dairy equipment for separating milk and cream, as well as heat exchangers. It has 13,800 employees in 110 subsidiaries in 50 countries

producing annual revenues of U.S.\$1.8 billion. Alfa Laval acquired the Potok factory outside Moscow in 1993 and renovated it to create a modern-looking factory in 1996. Today, with 300 employees, the factory is somewhat too large for Alfa Laval Potok's current needs.

Alfa Laval Potok has 20 distributors in different regions of Russia. In Novosibirsk, Alfa Laval Potok has a successful distributor covering most of Siberia and accounting for 50% of the total Alfa Laval Potok heating revenues. Alfa Laval Potok had poor initial results and many challenges to overcome. However, it appears that Alfa Laval has adapted well to the Russian environment, making its first profit in 1999. Alfa Laval Potok was originally supposed to focus on producing separation equipment, but this market had overcapacity. As a result, Alfa Laval Potok switched the majority of its efforts to producing heat exchange equipment for district heating, which was a more promising business. This move took courage on their part and shows a good ability to adapt to the Russian market. Alfa Laval's efforts to switch its focus to heat exchangers, trim excess personnel and assets, and aggressively pursue sales explain why it is now profitable.

*AssiDoman.* The Swedish firm AssiDoman is one of Europe's largest forest-product companies, with 18,000 employees and sales of U.S.\$3 billion, 60% from outside Sweden. AssiDoman is divided into five business areas: forestry, packaging, craft products, cartons, and barrier coating. It first entered Russia when it acquired 57% of the paper-producing company Segezhabumprom in Karilea. This company ran into serious problems, and AssiDoman has only recently managed to liquidate this investment.

Nonetheless, AssiDoman still saw opportunity in the Russian market and invested U.S.\$25 million to open a new factory in St. Petersburg in 1997. This modern factory focuses on the production and sales of corrugated packaging in northwestern Russia. Russian native Dennis Belkovsky (Managing Director) and his Danish wife Malene Ratajczak (Finance and Administration Director) manage the plant with an enlightened management style. According to AssiDoman, the Russian market for corrugated cardboard is growing rapidly. Its factory, which covers 15,000 m<sup>2</sup>, is capable of producing 60 million m<sup>2</sup> of cardboard per year when working three shifts. Currently, however, only one shift, with 80 employees, is working.

*Lift.* Lift (a pseudonym) is a division of a large global firm that develops, produces, sells, and services elevators. The parent company has 200,000 people, sales of U.S.\$22 billion, and is organized in a matrix structure with national companies in one dimension and

30 business areas in the other dimension. Lift Moscow is a joint venture formed in 1994. Lift owns 80% of Lift Moscow and the Moscow Mechanical Complex owns the remaining 20%. In practice, Lift Moscow functions like a wholly owned subsidiary. Lift Moscow was supposed to be Lift's golden door to Russia, but its potential has not been reached because it has been unable to sell many elevators. Fortunately, it has been able to adapt by cutting the work force from 550 to 350 employees and by aggressively pursuing service contracts.

Because Lift Moscow produces only small elevators designed for residential use, local governments that have limited resources are their primary customers. Lift has had great difficulty selling elevators for cash and has resorted to barter. For example, in one recent deal, Lift "sold" a U.S.\$1.2 million elevator system to a town. The town paid for the system by bartering U.S.\$1.15 million in electricity to a pulp and paper company that bartered U.S.\$1.1 million in paper to a trading company that paid Lift U.S.\$1 million cash. Many foreign firms refuse to consider barter deals even though they can be an effective way of doing business in Russia. Indeed, barter deals have several drawbacks—they take much longer and require a 20% markup to be profitable. However, they allow firms to make sales that would not otherwise be possible. The use of barter deals and the focus on service are two key examples of how Lift has adapted.

### **Grounding the Model in the Russian Context**

To summarize the case studies, we present several ratings of the culture and effectiveness measures. The researchers' assessments, the survey evaluation of the GM, and the survey evaluation of the 10 interviewees are all presented in Table 5. These results show that the different assessments are quite consistent.

Each of these cases provides examples that help ground the model in the Russian context. Some of the examples show direct similarities to firms in a Western context, while other examples appear to illustrate the general concepts outlined in the model, but show many differences from firms in the West. This section presents our qualitative findings.

*Involvement.* Several of the cases provide examples of involvement similar to what might be found in the West, while other examples provide a very different feel. For example, the AssiDoman production manager rewarded workers who could operate multiple machines and put a chart on the wall where workers could see how many machines they were certified to operate. Nonetheless, strong leaders who exert tight control are an enduring Russian tradition and the overall level of involvement

**Table 5 Ratings of Culture Traits and Effectiveness for Case Study Firms**

	Involvement	Consistency	Adaptability	Mission	Overall Performance	Effectiveness Index
AGA: Industrial Gases						
Researcher	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
GM	2.3	2.7	2.0	2.7	2.3	2.2
Average 10 respondents	2.6	2.0	2.7	2.0	2.0	2.0
Lift: Elevators						
Researcher	Low	High	Medium	Medium	Low	Low
GM	2.7	4.3	3.3	3.0	2.7	2.7
Average 10 respondents	2.4	4.0	3.6	3.1	2.5	2.4
Alfa Laval: Heat Exchangers						
Researcher	High	Low	High	Medium	Medium	Medium
GM	4.0	2.7	4.3	3.3	3.7	3.8
Average 10 respondents	3.7	2.9	4.0	3.2	3.5	3.9
AssiDoman: Cardboard Boxes						
Researcher	Medium	Medium	High	High	High	High
GM	3.7	3.7	4.3	4.7	4.7	4.6
Average 10 respondents	3.3	3.5	4.5	4.3	4.4	4.4

seems quite a bit lower than would likely be the case in the West. For example, the same production manager who rewarded workers for mastering multiple machines exerted very tight control over workers and would not allow them to make personal calls home, even if they had a sick child. Workers also complained that management often made them clean their aging machinery over and over again when work was slow. Nonetheless, workers still appear to place high value on capability development. In this same organization, when workers were asked if they would prefer an extra month's pay or the chance to attend a one-week training course, most said that they would choose the training course. This is consistent with assertions that Russians may attach higher value to development than their counterparts in the West (Puffer 1992).

Other examples of involvement appear to be more unique to Russia. Top management at Alfa Laval would often delegate decisions to middle management. However, because top management had an "open-door" policy, the middle managers would come back over and over again, asking top management to "decide" on an issue that had officially been delegated to them. Top management would respond by asking for the pros and cons of different alternatives but in the end tried to make the middle managers decide. Top management thought that this was better than abruptly telling middle management that it was their job to decide. Over time the middle managers slowly learned to make decisions on delegated issues. Alfa Laval, in fact, was probably the

best example of high involvement among the four case studies.

AGA provides a useful example of how expectations of involvement and the sense of belonging to a team often follow functional lines. AGA had two very different subcultures. People in the top management, sales, and accounting departments were young, new to the firm, highly motivated, and open to trying new ways of working. People in the production department were older and had been working at the plant for many years. This second group of employees primarily wanted stable jobs with salaries they could live on and were not eager to change the way they had worked for years. Both groups were motivated by membership in their functional subgroups but not by their membership in the organization as a whole. While this general phenomenon occurs in firms in the West, it was clearly more extreme in AGA. For example, the first time we interviewed two factory workers, we asked, "How does it feel to work for AGA?" They replied, "We don't work for AGA." Further questioning revealed that what they meant was that they worked for the Balashikha plant and regarded AGA as only an investor. The management/sales/accounting group viewed the production workers as ineffective employees that they inherited with the plant, many of whom wanted their salaries without having to work hard. However, the factory employees saw the management group's high salaries and fancy offices as a major problem that was preventing AGA from being profitable. "After all," one of the production



workers commented, “the sales employees cost money, but they are not really producing anything.”

*Consistency.* Several of the cases illustrate aspects of the cultural trait consistency that parallel observations made in firms in the West. The AGA and Alfa Laval cases reveal serious problems with coordination and integration stemming from the differing mindsets across functions and the poor communication between departments.

Coordination and communication problems are, of course, also common within firms in the West. However, the cases suggest that the scale and scope of these deficiencies are substantially greater in Russia. For example, we asked questions about each firm’s core values. In Lift, several of the employees gave the same answer, “The core value of the firm is to maintain the formal system.” Their response does point to a consistent set of core values, but shows that they think that the primary purpose of the firm is to maintain the integrity of the authority structure—not a response that an employee in the West would often give. Another example illustrating both the applicability of the general concept and the idiosyncrasy of its application in Russia came from AGA. When we asked one lower-level employee whether he agreed with management’s decisions, he replied, “Right now, people really have no choice other than to agree.” This comment shows the relevance of the general concept of alignment and consensus across levels, but also illustrates the different connotation attached to “agreeing” in Russia.

*Adaptability.* The case studies illustrate a number of aspects of adaptability. The data reflect certain dynamics similar to those in Western organizations, while others are quite different. AssiDoman’s use of two-person sales teams provides an example paralleling what might be found in the West. To respond more quickly to customers, AssiDoman paired one salesperson on the road with another salesperson in the office. This assured that customers would be able to contact someone even when their sales representative was on the road. The pairing was also helpful in that the salesperson on the road could rely upon his or her partner in the office to make certain that orders were placed with the production department on a timely basis. Although one salesperson with a laptop and cell phone would probably do this job in the West, the example shows how a small team with shared responsibility can make the system respond more quickly to customers.

Other examples of adaptability that are more specific to the Russian context came from Alfa Laval and Lift. In an effort to survive, Alfa Laval quickly changed its

focus from separation equipment to heat exchangers. In Lift, the original focus on producing and selling new elevators in Russia was expanded to also include servicing existing elevators. Servicing existing elevators became the main part of Lift’s business. The few new elevators that Lift was able to “sell” were often arranged through barter. Drastic strategic changes of this sort may occur as a part of restructuring in the West, but in the Russian context they are clearly a more routine aspect of “business-as-usual.” This underscores the importance of adaptability as a concept, even if it takes a different form in the Russian context. Russian firms’ approaches to creating change are also instructive. On one hand, Russians appear to be able to endure change of almost any sort, sustained by their combination of resignation, fatalism, and ingenuity in the service of survival. On the other hand, their concept of a proactive approach to change in which individuals shape their own future appears quite limited. It is noteworthy that the most adaptable firm, AssiDoman, used an “open-to-change” mindset as a key criterion in the recruitment of new employees.

*Mission.* Because of the continuous state of turbulence in the Russian business environment, a clear sense of mission is difficult to establish. Thus, with few exceptions, the positive examples in our case studies had to do with the way that drastic organizational changes were communicated to employees. For example, the two least effective organizations, Lift and AGA, both changed direction quickly, but did little to communicate these changes to their employees. In Lift’s case, the change from production, sales, and service to only service was not communicated throughout the organization. Changes were simply made on the operational level, and employees were expected to follow. In AGA’s case, a series of unmet sales targets quickly changed its strategic goals from expansion to survival. However, employees seemed largely unaware of the rationale for these changes. Two other cases, Alfa Laval and AssiDoman, illustrate the use of mission to foment change. In Alfa Laval, the strategic rationale for the shift from separation equipment to heat exchangers was well communicated and well understood throughout the firm. In AssiDoman, we saw one of the few examples of creating a proactive sense of mission. The subsidiary was led by a husband and wife team who made a deliberate attempt to create an organization that was, in their words, “a good place to work.” Their success in communicating this mission was evident in a number of their employees’ comments in interviews.

Our analysis of the data from these four case studies also supported the quantitative findings in another important way. Our informants provided many more examples of the impact of adaptability and involvement on

a firm's effectiveness than of consistency and mission, which appeared to be far less powerful determinants of effectiveness in the Russian context. Comments relating to involvement and adaptability also contained many examples of creative solutions to problems posed by the Russian context. Our queries about consistency and mission elicited some interesting examples, but these cultural traits clearly are less salient in the turbulent Russian business environment. Thus, the results of the case studies mirror the quantitative findings.

### **Understanding Organizational Culture in the Russian Context**

In the previous section, the qualitative results reported for each of the four traits fell into two different categories: (a) qualitative findings that fit well with the concepts in the model and were illustrated through patterns similar to what one might encounter in the West, and (b) qualitative findings that fit reasonably well with concepts in the model, but felt quite different from the patterns typically encountered in Western firms. This section of the paper takes this analysis one step further and focuses on several cultural dynamics that are not as well represented in the model and are quite different from the conditions typically encountered by Western firms.

First, it is important to acknowledge the influence of the Communist era on the culture of firms in Russia. Like firms in most transition economies, our case study firms were "functionally incomplete" (Newman and Nollen 1998). During the Communist era, the functions of strategy, finance, sales, and marketing were primarily performed by the state. Thus, one of the major transitions has been to establish these functions at the firm level. From a cultural point of view, these changes often feel more like a merger or acquisition (of the new functions) than like cross-functional differences in the West. They influence all aspects of firm operation that require cross-functional coordination. Second, the tradition of central control and authority means that the salience of any conception of the firm or the value chain is weak or nonexistent compared to the power of the functional boss. Russians often regard firm-level goals as distant and unfamiliar priorities compared to maintaining the integrity of one's functional area.

This pattern is clear in several of the cases. Indeed, one of our first impressions of AGA was of the coexistence of two separate worlds. The top management and the sales and accounting departments make up one world, while the manufacturing department makes up another. Most employees in the former group were

young, ambitious, and new to the firm, while the second group was older and had worked at the factory for years. The first group was housed in a separate building that was much nicer than the factory building. Communication between the two groups was limited.

A similar picture comes from Alfa Laval. Several top managers were Swedish, with poor knowledge of Russian. They tended to work with younger English-speaking Russians. The language barrier created an "us" versus "them" feeling and undermined team spirit. "Us" referred to the people on the fourth floor, who speak good English, are new at the production plant, and perhaps worked at Alfa Laval's sales subsidiary prior to the acquisition of the factory. "Them" referred to the older managers from Potok with limited knowledge of English, located on the third floor.

One employee at the Potok plant told us about the difficulty he had understanding the Alfa Laval culture. Prior to Alfa Laval's acquisition of Potok, meetings were very formal with chairs assigned according to position. Now, Alfa Laval Potok employees are encouraged to work together as equals to try to solve problems. This is difficult for older managers. To them, communication between people of different levels is unnatural. To learn the new style, the old managers went to Sweden for a week to see the new management style in action. As one participant said, "I understood right then how work was to be done. It is like the old Russian proverb that says it is better to see something once than to hear it one hundred times." In Lift, we saw a picture of authority distribution that was more traditional in Russia. When we asked one manager if workers could suggest product modifications he answered, "You don't understand: Workers work; managers know everything."

These examples illustrate a difficult challenge faced by firms in Russia. Many firms, in effect, have two workforces. The first consists of older workers, with a traditional Russian mindset, who resist change. They are primarily found in production and engineering where there is no substitute for their technical expertise. The second workforce is made up of young, aggressive "New Russians" who are generally eager to adapt. Members of this group are driven by career ambitions and often have some training in business, English, or a few years experience working for a foreign firm in sales or marketing. It also appears to be a common pattern to place younger workers in charge of older ones early in their careers, adding to the tension.

The impacts of subcultures are well established in the organizational research literature (Hatch 1993, Martin 1992, Van Maanen and Barley 1984) and provide one point of reference for understanding these dynamics.

Indeed, one shortcoming of the culture model used here, like other general models (Hofstede 1991, Kotter and Heskett 1992), is that it can foster the impression that organizations have unitary cultures. Researchers using these approaches need to be aware of the subcultures that exist and the dynamics they create. Kliuchevskii's (1990, pp. 58–64) comments on the Russian "tendency to dissemble," "preference for working in groups," and "circumspect nature" highlight elements of Russia's national culture that may help give rise to organizational subcultures.

Another example from AGA helped clarify the impact that these dynamics can have on effectiveness. When we visited the factory we noticed a bottleneck which seemed to be caused by operating only one forklift despite three others parked nearby. We learned that the forklifts had been purchased three months ago, but three of them had been idle for the last five weeks with broken sparkplugs. We traced this problem through the system: The operators said that they had informed their supervisors of the problem. The supervisors told us that they had reported the problem to the repair center. The repair center director told us that those sparkplugs were difficult to get in Russia and had been ordered from Germany. Each person felt that he had done his job and that there was nothing to do but wait for the sparkplugs to appear. While the workers were upset that they did not have three of their four forklifts, no one took the initiative to ensure that the sparkplugs would arrive faster. Further, no one seemed upset that a major investment in the forklifts was going to waste and that workers' time was being used inefficiently. In reality, a phone call to Germany probably could have had a box of sparkplugs delivered FedEx to Moscow in a few days. Top managers at AGA Russia were unaware of this problem and would have taken action if they had known.

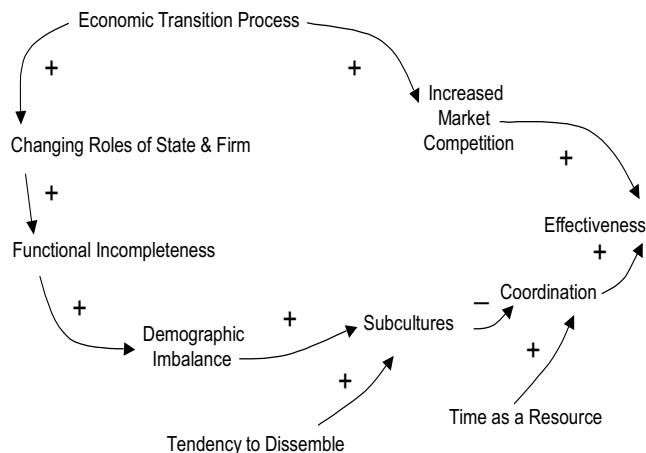
This example also points out the importance of the concept of time as a resource. In many Western firms, competitive strategies based on time are well established (Stalk 1988). None of the case study firms viewed time in the same way as a well-managed firm in the West. The proclivity for responding only to central authority means that most Russian workers and managers place little value on responsiveness, the goals of the firm, the shared responsibility of employees, or the mechanisms by which unresolved problems are surfaced for managers to address. In contrast to the literature's treatment of differences in time perspective as a stable national characteristic (Bluedorn 2000; Giddens 1990, 1991; Hall 1976; Hofstede 1991; Trompenaars 1998), we uncovered significant differences between the four firms, suggesting that individual firms have great latitude in the extent to

which they reflect national tendencies. Our findings also suggest that a firm's concept of time may be influenced by its exposure to the West and by the level of competition in its industry.

The cultural dynamics described above are summarized in Figure 2. As the economic transition shifted the division of labor between the state and the firm, existing firms were rendered functionally incomplete. Adding the functions of management, finance, strategy, and marketing created an imbalance in the demographics of these firms and spawned subcultures with little shared sense of the firm as a whole. Within this context, coordination problems are widespread and their solution is essential for effective organizational performance. The problems of coordination across subcultures are influenced by several Russian national characteristics, particularly the tendency to dissemble and the concept of time as a resource. These intrafirm dynamics are also influenced by the changes taking place in the economic system that require firm-level economic transitions and by increasing levels of market-based competition. As noted earlier, the dynamics noted in Figure 2 could have been explained simply by reference to the concepts in the organizational culture model. Indeed, consistency and coordination, empowerment, and the presence of a firm-level mission all could be discussed with reference to concepts in the model. However, discussing the examples only in terms of the concepts in the model would miss the underlying pattern uncovered in the case studies and presented in Figure 2. This pattern is very useful in understanding the culture of organizations in Russia.

These four case studies have grounded our conceptual model in the realities of the Russian context and addressed the issues posed in our third research question.

**Figure 2 Cultural Dynamics of Firms in Russia**



In general, the case studies support the idea that the model is a useful starting point for understanding issues of culture and effectiveness in the Russian context. Indeed, we could have discussed the dynamics highlighted in this section in terms of the model, but doing so would have missed the point that concepts can have different meanings in different contexts, even as they have wide applicability across those different contexts. The case studies highlight an interesting distinction between the behaviors that illustrate the concepts in the model and are similar to what one might observe in firms in the West and those behaviors that illustrate the concepts, but are very different from what one might observe in a firm in the West. This distinction is very helpful because it illustrates that the concepts may travel fairly well, helping to account for the quantitative support for the model, but that the specific patterns of behavior that exemplify the concepts may vary quite a bit across cultures. Indeed, this aspect of the study provides an interesting example of how a theory can provide a useful framework and point of reference for understanding cultural patterns that go far deeper than just the model.

## Discussion

This study has taken an American model of organization culture and effectiveness and applied it to understand the performance of a set of foreign-owned firms operating in Russia. Several clear substantive differences have emerged from this research. The first is the importance of flexibility in Russia. Adaptability proved to be the most useful dimension in the model for understanding overall effectiveness. This finding also makes good intuitive sense given Russia's turbulent and unpredictable environment. This stands in contrast to a more stable environment like the United States, where mission appears to take on a much greater importance. Involvement also appears to be important to effectiveness in Russia. Under Communism, competition between groups was encouraged, but competition between individuals was discouraged. As a result, Russians like working in groups and are good at it (Vlachoutsicos 2001).

Other substantive insights emerged from the case studies. These provided good support for the applicability of the model, but also focused our attention on issues specific to Russia. The most distinctive pattern that we observed was the combination of dynamics, summarized in Figure 2, that is driven by the "functionally incomplete" organizational structures inherited from the Communist era. These dynamics appear to be an important feature of the organizational cultures of firms operating in transition economies (Newman and

Nollen 1998). Future research on international management and cross-cultural differences should not neglect this important set of issues faced by managers in transition economies.

This study speaks to several other issues in the organizational literature. First, this paper has made a modest contribution to the longstanding debate about the wisdom of using theories developed in one part of the world to understand organizational phenomena in other parts of the world (Adler 1991, Boyacigiller and Adler 1991, Boyacigiller et al. 2003). The paper provides an interesting point of reference in that debate. On one hand, this study illustrates that a model of organizational culture developed in the United States can be applied in the Russian context and can be useful for predicting differences in effectiveness. However, in addition, the research shows that the model can be a useful foundation for understanding differences in the culture-effectiveness relationship across cultures. Differences between national contexts can often be clarified through comparative analysis. The use of a general model is helpful, if not essential, to the comparative process.

The novel combination of qualitative and quantitative methods used in this study will also be of interest to organizational researchers. The study began by using an existing model of organizational culture and effectiveness as a starting point for the research. The first part of the study presented a quantitative test of the model and showed that the model was useful in understanding effectiveness, but that the results were somewhat different from the results for a sample of U.S. firms. The quantitative results were used as probes to inform our research questions rather than tools to refute falsifiable hypotheses. The second part of the study selected four firms for in-depth qualitative analysis. These case studies generated a number of examples that served to ground the theoretical concepts in the realities of the Russian context. The case studies offered examples that fit well with the model, but also highlighted themes that were invaluable in understanding the realities of the Russian context but were not fully anticipated by the model.

In contrast to the typical approach of qualitative theory building followed by quantitative theory testing, this study pursued both methods at the same time and allowed us to move more quickly toward our goal of understanding the link between culture and effectiveness in the Russian context. As mentioned earlier, this approach carried several risks. Until we had established the validity of the model in the Russian context, it did not make much sense to plan to use it as a framework for interpreting the qualitative data. This meant that we were continuously comparing the findings from the two methods. For example,

when we began to analyze our survey data we also continued analyzing our qualitative results to make certain that the model could be a useful frame of reference for interpreting the results from both studies. Had we done the qualitative study first, we could not have explored the themes that emerged from the quantitative study to the same extent that we have here. Had we conducted the qualitative study second, we could not have understood if the model had validity and meaning in the Russian context. It is also worth noting that we use the quantitative data as a probe to inform our general research questions, rather than as a tool to refute falsifiable hypotheses. In other words we follow the logic of exploration, rather than the logic of verification.

When it became clear that the quantitative results supported the model, our focus changed. It then made sense to use the qualitative data for several different purposes. The first purpose was to help illustrate the concepts in the model and to ground the findings in the reality of Russian organizations. This step of qualitative elaboration worked quite well, and it helped us to see many interesting and unanticipated insights that were hiding behind our quantitative analyses. However, the qualitative data also served a second purpose of describing examples that fit well with the concepts in the model but illustrated those concepts with behaviors, dynamics, and patterns that were quite different from what might be observed in a Western context. This taught us an important lesson: The model may be “valid” in the Russian context, but there may still be much to learn about what the constructs actually mean in that context.

This discovery also taught us a healthy respect for the linkage between theoretical concepts and the actual behavioral patterns that exemplify them. As Denison (1996) noted, the link between concepts and behavior

can vary greatly among countries. He cited the example of the meaning attached to individuals wearing surgical masks on the streets of Tokyo and Los Angeles. In Tokyo, wearing a surgical mask was portrayed as a form of prosocial behavior by those who had a cold and wished to make certain that they did not transmit it to others. In Los Angeles, wearing a surgical mask was a means of protecting one’s self from the dangers of the natural and social environment. The concepts of collectivism and self-interest are salient in both contexts, and the same behaviors existed in both contexts. The link between the two, however, is exactly the opposite.

In an effort to help explain the differences that we observed in effectiveness across organizations, the final stage of the qualitative analysis focused on the most distinctive cultural pattern that we observed, linking functional incompleteness, subcultures, time perspective, and coordination to help explain the differences that we observed in effectiveness. This pattern influences many of the concepts and measures in the model, but reveals a far more fundamental dynamic than we could describe using any single dimension. Combining these insights enabled us to both validate the model and to provide a more complete understanding of the dynamics of organizational cultures in the Russian context.

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**Appendix A. Items and Indexes for Each Trait**

Index	Scale	Item
Involvement	Empowerment	(1) Decisions are usually made at the level where the best information is available.
		(2) Information is widely shared so that everyone can get the information he or she needs when it’s needed.
		(3) Everyone believes that he or she can have a positive impact.
	Team orientation	(4) Working in this organization is like being part of a team.
		(5) This organization relies on horizontal control and coordination to get work done, rather than hierarchy.
		(6) Teams are the primary building blocks of this organization.
	Capability development	(7) This organization is constantly improving compared with its competitors in many dimensions.
		(8) This organization continuously invests in the skills of employees.
		(9) The capability of people in this organization is viewed as an important source of competitive advantage.

**Appendix A. (cont'd.)**

Index	Scale	Item
Consistency	Core values	(10) The leaders and managers follow the guidelines that they set for the rest of the organization.
		(11) There is a clear and consistent set of values in this organization that governs the way we do business.
		(12) This organization has an ethical code that guides our behavior and tells us right from wrong.
	Agreement	(13) When disagreements occur, we work hard to achieve solutions that benefit both parties in the disagreement.
		(14) It is easy to reach consensus, even on difficult issues.
		(15) <i>We often have trouble reaching agreement on key issues.*</i>
	Coordination and integration	(16) People from different organizational units still share a common perspective.
		(17) It is easy to coordinate projects across functional units in this organization.
		(18) There is good alignment of goals across levels of this organization.
	Adaptability	Creating change
(20) This organization responds well to competitors and other changes in the business environment.		
(21) This organization continually adopts new and improved ways to do work.		
Customer focus		(22) Customer comments and recommendations often lead to changes in this organization.
		(23) Customer input directly influences our decisions.
		(24) <i>The interests of the final customer often get ignored in our decisions.*</i>
Organizational learning		(25) We view failure as an opportunity for learning and improvement.
		(26) This organization encourages and rewards those who take risk.
		(27) We make certain that we coordinate our actions and efforts between different units in this organization.
Mission		Strategic direction and intent.
	(29) This organization has a clear mission that gives meaning and direction to our work.	
	(30) This organization has a clear strategy for the future.	
	Goals and objectives	(31) There is widespread agreement about goals of this organization.
		(32) Leaders of this organization set goals that are ambitious, but realistic.
		(33) The leadership has clearly stated the objectives we are trying to meet.
	Vision	(34) We have a shared vision of what this organization will be like in the future.
		(35) Leaders of this organization have a long-term orientation.
		(36) Our vision creates excitement and motivation for our employees.

Note. \*Items in italics are worded negatively in the survey. Responses are reversed for analytic purposes.

**Appendix B. Correlations for Russian Data<sup>1</sup>**

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
(1) Adaptability																	
(2) Consistency	0.44**																
(3) Involvement	0.53**	0.34**															
(4) Mission	0.46**	0.30**	0.45**														
(5) Firm size	-0.03	0.00	-0.02	0.03													
(6) % Manufacturing	-0.12	-0.07	-0.09	-0.06	0.07												
(7) Firm age	0.05	0.04	0.12	0.11	0.29	0.11											
(8) Industry 1 <sup>2</sup>	0.06	0.06	0.11	0.02	-0.04	0.02	-0.05										
(9) Industry 2 <sup>2</sup>	-0.08	-0.17	-0.01	-0.01	-0.04	0.02	-0.05	-0.10									

**Appendix B. (cont'd.)**

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
(10) Industry 3 <sup>2</sup>	0.03	0.02	-0.01	0.02	-0.05	0.04	0.13	-0.12	-0.14								
(11) Industry 4 <sup>2</sup>	-0.03	-0.03	0.05	0.05	0.14	0.04	0.03	-0.12	-0.14	-0.17*							
(12) Industry 5 <sup>2</sup>	-0.08	-0.01	-0.05	-0.12	0.04	-0.07	-0.04	-0.14	-0.07	-0.20**	-0.20**						
(13) Canada	0.00	-0.04	0.07	-0.07	-0.03	-0.06	-0.11	-0.09	0.03	0.05	-0.07	0.01					
(14) Finland	0.04	-0.10	0.01	0.05	0.04	0.04	-0.01	0.09	0.08	-0.02	-0.06	-0.07	-0.14				
(15) Germany	-0.08	-0.05	-0.05	0.04	0.13	-0.05	-0.01	-0.04	-0.03	-0.04	0.08	-0.06	-0.15*	-0.22**			
(16) Sweden	0.03	0.05	-0.07	-0.01	-0.04	-0.02	0.11	0.04	-0.05	-0.08	-0.03	0.08	-0.10	-0.15*	-0.16*		
(17) United States	-0.03	0.05	-0.01	-0.07	-0.08	0.10	-0.03	-0.04	0.01	0.03	0.03	0.09	-0.22**	-0.34**	-0.36**	-0.25**	
(18) Manager United States/Russian	-0.07	-0.12	-0.07	-0.21**	-0.01	-0.16*	0.07	-0.07	-0.08	0.11	0.01	-0.10	0.03	-0.07	0.13	0.11	-0.15

Note. <sup>1</sup>N = 179.

<sup>2</sup>Industry 1 = electrical, industrial, and precision instrument manufacturing; Industry 2 = wood, paper, textiles, food, and metal manufacturing; Industry 3 = other manufacturing; Industry 4 = banking, insurance, real estate, advertising, and accounting; Industry 5 = wholesale and retail trade.

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (two-tailed).

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed).

**Endnotes**

<sup>1</sup>To test for response bias, we confirmed that the respondent firm size of 91 was almost identical to the population of foreign subsidiaries in Russia with more than 15 employees, which averaged 92 employees (Goskomstat 1998).

<sup>2</sup>We conducted a comparative citation analysis for a 1996 issue of *Academy of Management Journal* 39(4), which included two single-respondent studies; Delery and Doty, cited 75 times according to the social science citation index and Delaney and Huselid, cited 55 times. These single-respondent studies compare positively to other studies in the same issue of *Academy of Management Journal* which are cited, on average, only 21 times. Thus, scholars appear to see significant value in single-respondent studies.

<sup>3</sup>It is interesting to note that when the six specific effectiveness measures are regressed on our general effectiveness measure (overall performance), we find that sales growth, profitability, quality of products and services, and employee satisfaction are the significant drivers of overall performance in the Russian data. New product development and market share have positive betas, but are not significant. In the case of the U.S. data, the results are the same except that market share is also significant.

<sup>4</sup>These results are also encouraging in that they show that correlated measurement error between the independent and dependent measures could not have accounted for all the significant results. If this were the case, we would expect to find all of the variance claimed by the first variable entered into the regression equation, thus leaving only one significant predictor. Since all of the equations have more than one significant predictor, this suggests that the results are quite robust.

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## **ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE:**

### **Measuring and Developing It in Your Organization**

by William H. Mobley, Lena Wang, and Kate Fang

Think about organizations that are the leaders in your business or industry sector. What is it that is giving them competitive advantage? Cost? Quality? Technology? Product and process innovation? Customer service? Logistics chain? Talent? Or brand? Yes, each of these may be a key factor that helps organizations differentiate themselves. However, there is a much less obvious and less tangible factor that also can be a determining source of competitive advantage. That factor is *organizational culture*.

#### ***Defining Organizational Culture***

Culture is a conceptual word that has been discussed for thousands of years by anthropologists, sociologists, historians and philosophers. Each society is underpinned and defined by a distinctive culture. Culture is a set of values, beliefs, common understanding, thinking and norms for behaviour that are shared by all members of a society. You cannot precisely define it, but you can sense it and feel it. Culture provides guidance to behaviours in the society, in apparent and sometimes unnoticeable ways; and it profoundly influences your decision-making.

The same understanding that applies to societies can be well applied to management science. Organizations are quite similar to societies and communities in the sense that they are constituted by a group of people who distinguish themselves by clear boundaries from other work groups. Through working together, people gradually develop their own way --- a habitual or sometimes taken-for-granted way --- in achieving unitary objectives; and by adapting to, while being adapted by, other people in the organization.

To have a strong and effective organizational culture, you will want to be asking questions like these: Do all employees in my organization have a common understanding of our purpose, strategy and goals? What are the core values in our organization and do all have a common understanding of these values? Do we have a team spirit in our organization? Is everybody highly involved and committed? How do we define success? How do we handle agreement and disagreement? What behaviours are regarded as deviant in your company? How adaptive and innovative are we as an organization? The feelings of every member towards every aspect of corporate life, when counted together, constitute your organizational culture.

At the surface level, culture can present itself as visible symbols, slogans, languages, behaviours, histories and stories, dress codes, heroes, legends, rituals and ceremonies. But underlying these visible signs of culture, are the core values, beliefs and shared assumptions of each employee that help define the organization's culture. Do not expect your organization's culture to be easily changed by switching your logos, rearranging the layout of your office space, or repeating some heroic stories to your employees. They may work to a certain degree but are definitely far from adequate to win your employees' hearts and their minds, as well as the market. What you need is some deeper analysis and reflection of your people's collective beliefs and assumptions. Only when you understand these in more depth will you be able to define appropriate steps to strengthen your organization's culture and effectiveness.

### ***Why should leaders care about organizational culture?***

If you consider the organizational culture issue to be of little importance to your organization, you may want to rethink your views. Organizational culture has been extensively studied over recent decades. This research affirms a strong link between organizational culture and organizational performance. The reason is obvious: bureaucratic control could only buy employees' bodies but not their hearts. A strong organizational culture, however, can be a primary generator of real motivation and commitment. In a strong and cohesive culture, the organization's core values are both

intensely held and widely shared. This high intensity of common beliefs makes it relatively easier to draw consensus among employees, to build a focus on important goals and objectives, to reduce potential conflicts, to cultivate a learning environment, and to lower staff turnover. A strong culture has a unique absorptive power to congregate people. Employees no longer need to be compelled to work hard but do so willingly. They identify themselves with their organization, just as they do with their families and communities.

You may be questioning at this stage. You can see the impacts culture produces on my organization's internal integration, but how about our economic performance? Is there any convincing case? The answer is a definitely yes, based for example, on the results from large-scale surveys conducted among a broad range of companies. In Kotter and Heskett's 11-year research into 207 firms, they come up with exciting results: companies with cultures that emphasize all the key managerial constituencies (customers, stockholders, employees) outperform by a huge margin firms that do not have those cultural traits. During this 11-year period, the former group achieved an increase of 682% in revenue while the latter had only a 166% increase. Considering workforces, the former expanded 282% compared to 36% for the latter. The contrast is even more conspicuous in stock prices: 901% increase versus 74% increase; and for the growth in net income, 756% versus 1%.

### ***What Kind of Culture Do We Want?***

You may have started thinking: 'I want my organization to have a strong culture! How do I get that done?' However, we first must offer a warning. Strong culture does not unconditionally bring immense advantages. While benefiting from cohesive values and work objectives, you might also be confronted with an inflexible cultural barrier if you want to make changes. Once people get used to a culture, they begin to develop a protective instinct against any change. Under this circumstance, strong culture could bind people together to form a defensive or non-adaptive strategy, sometimes to the extreme of being catastrophic and uncontrollable. However, if

replaced by a weak culture, things would be much the opposite: as the group is fragmented and people are individualistic, they are less likely to form collective resistance; structural change and innovative techniques are therefore much easier to be put into action.

In a dynamic market economy, organizations that are slow in reaction to external changes would be very fragile. We frequently notice that many companies are now labelling 'innovation' as one of their central objectives and are investing in R & D and bringing in new management or technical tools. What they frequently ignore, is that innovation cannot be easily implanted. A full and actual integration of it takes a long time, since it is much easier to accept it technically than culturally and emotionally. People are forced to forget all about their familiar system and to become fresh-hands again. It is not a good feeling, particularly when they encounter problems during the learning process. However, if your organization possesses a learning environment where people always keep up with the latest trends in your industry, where challenging the status quo and constant search for improvement are valued, you could probably avoid the above problems. An excellent culture should be flexible to environment, and each individual, including both top management and bottom employees, should be open to change.

In a word, a desired organizational culture is stable and flexible --- stable in their vision, values and mission, but elastic in the structure and operations; it should focus on both external adaptation and internal integration --- adapting to the customer and market and satisfying to employees at the same time.

### ***How Do We Know Our Culture?***

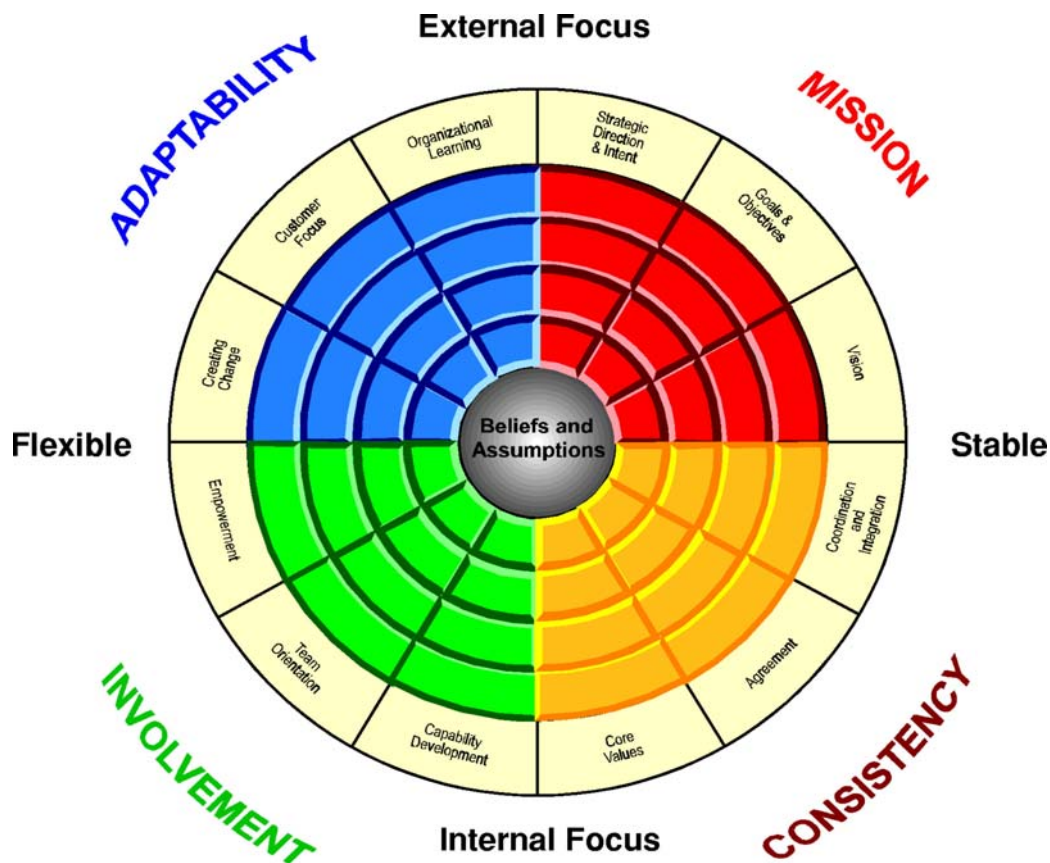
Let's turn now to some practical information about understanding and measuring your organizational culture. This is indeed a difficult task. During recent years, academics and practitioners in management science have focused on studying how to measure the dimensions of organizational culture and how such measures relate to the effectiveness and competitiveness of the organization. Here, we would like to present

what we believe to be one of the most valid and useful models and measures of organizational culture. It was developed by Dr. Daniel Denison, a famous professor at IMD. In the early 1980s, he studied the performance data from 34 firms and found that in those organizations whose work is more sensibly organized and where individuals are more involved in decision-making, Return on Investment (ROI) and Return on Sales (ROS) are two to three times higher. The longer the research lasts (such as 5 years after), the more significant the performance gap between high-end and low-end companies. After the first set of studies, he continued and expanded the range of companies that his research covered; the total number of companies has reached 764 by 1995 and is still growing rapidly year-by-year.

The result of this global research is that four cultural traits (adaptability; mission; involvement; and consistency) influence organization performance to a significant degree. Through a precise examination by statistical tools, the effects of these four traits are remarkably reflected in Sales Growth, Return on Assets (ROA), Quality; Profits; Employee Satisfaction; and Overall Performance. From this vast database – now contributed by more than 1,500 companies from every part around the globe (covering North America, Australia, Asia, South America, and Europe), more than 550 were selected out to form a reliable norming benchmark. Within this organization pool, small, medium-sized and large multinationals are included, many from the Fortune Global 1000 companies. They significantly differ in the number of employees (ranging from 10 to 866,730); in gross revenue (from \$200,000 to \$184,000,000,000) and in company life band (from 5 years to 200 years). As you can see, this database is large, technically and scientifically reliable.

The findings from a company's use of this organizational culture measure are displayed in a colourful and easily understood pie-shaped circle, shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1. The Denison Organizational Culture Model**



Let us look at this model as shown above. At the very centre of it lie an organization's basic beliefs and assumptions. These beliefs and assumptions are the wellspring of behaviour and action, but are well hidden under the surface of daily corporate life. However, we can still approach culture in a more measurable and useful manner. The four-trait model in Figure 1 provides such a possibility. Each of the four coloured quarters above is further divided into three sub-dimensions as defined below.

**Involvement** is about building employees' capability, ownership, and responsibility. Your organization's score on this trait reflects how much the organization focuses on developing, informing, involving your people and getting them engaged.

*Empowerment:* Are your people empowered with real responsibility? Have they created a sense of ownership and initiative?

*Team orientation:* Value is placed on working cooperatively towards common goals. Do you rely on team effort to get work done?

*Capability development:* Do you continually invest in the development of your employees' skills to stay competitive, meet ongoing business needs, and meet employees desire to learn and develop?

**Consistency** is to examine whether you have a strong and cohesive internal culture.

*Core Values:* Does your company have a shared set of values that creates a strong sense of identity and a clear set of expectations among organization members?

*Agreement:* Are leaders skilled enough to achieve high agreement and reconcile different opinions on critical issues?

*Coordination & Integration:* Do different functions and units of the organization work together well? Do departmental or group boundaries interfere with cooperation?

**Adaptability** is focusing on an organization's ability of adapt quickly to the signals from the external environment, including customers and the marketplace.

*Creating Change:* Are we afraid of taking risks to create change? Are we learning to read the business environment, envision changes in process and procedures, and make timely change?

*Customer Focus:* Adaptable organizations are driven by their customers; are you able to understand your customers, satisfy them and anticipate their future needs?

*Organizational Learning:* Can you interpret the signals from the environment into opportunities for encouraging innovation and gaining knowledge?

**Mission:** Successful organizations have a clear sense of purpose that defines long-term directions. The Mission trait is useful in identifying whether you are in danger of shortsightedness or you are equipped with systematically defined strategic and action plans.



*Vision:* Do you have a shared view of a desired future state? Is that vision understood and shared by all in the organization?

*Strategic Direction & Intent:* Are you planning to 'make your mark' in your industry? Clear strategic intentions convey the organization's purpose and make it clear how everyone can contribute.

*Goals & Objectives:* Is a clear set of goals and objectives linked to the mission, vision, and strategy adequately provided so that everyone could draw as reference in their own work?

Now look at the whole picture. The two traits on the left side of the pie (*involvement + adaptability*) focus on change and flexibility while the other two on the right (*mission + consistency*) shows the capability to remain predictable and stable over time. Divided by the horizontal middle line, the upper part (*adaptability + mission*) is something related to an organization's adapting ability in response to the external environment and the bottom part (*involvement + consistency*) emphasizes the issues on internal integration of systems, structures and processes.

One of the uniqueness of this model is that it focuses on two paradoxes that each company is constantly seeking to balance. One is *consistency* versus *adaptability*: companies that are market-focused may encounter problems with internal integration but those too well integrated may be over-controlled and lacks adequate flexibility to adjust to the environment. The other is top-down vision (*mission*) versus bottom-up (*involvement*): organizations with too much emphasis on general corporate mission may frequently ignore the issue of employee empowerment and buy-in, but organizations with strong participation may have a hard time in establishing direction.

Besides the self-evident indications from the four colourful quarters, it is also meaningful to see this graph as a whole, no matter vertically, horizontally or diagonally. What's more, different traits relates to different aspects of your company's performance. According to the research results, external perspective greatly influences Market Share and Sales Growth, while internal focus is more about Return on Investment and Employee Satisfaction; the effect of flexibility is strongly related to innovation of new products and services, and stability is directly contributing to

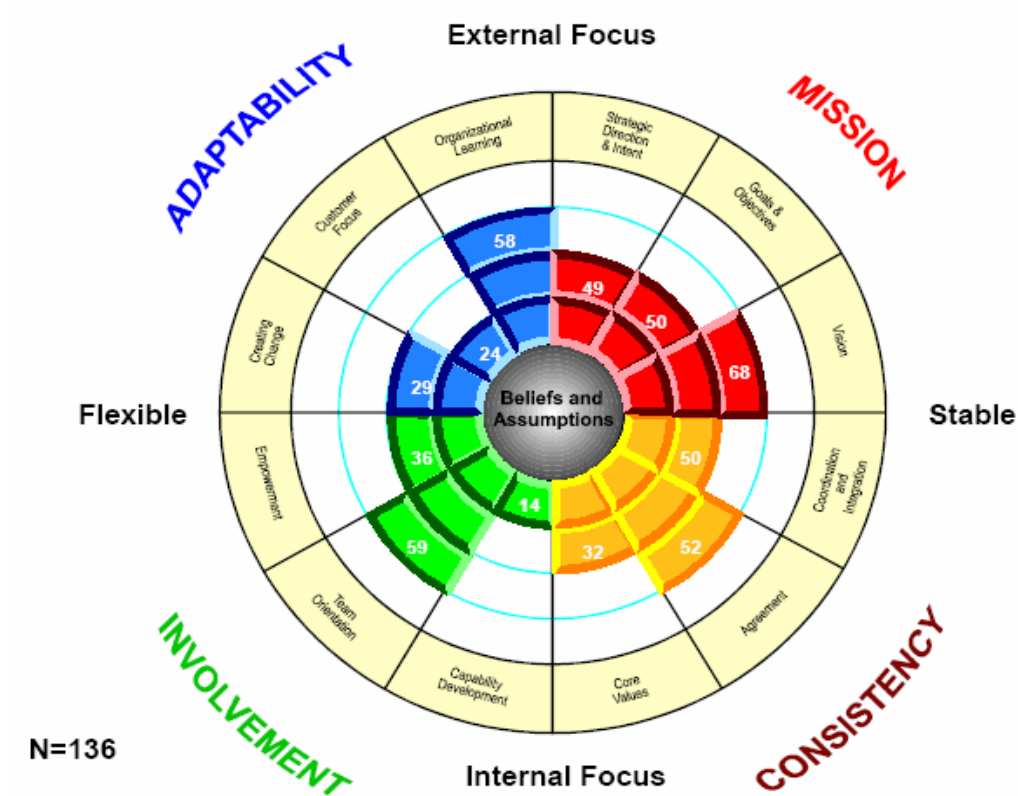
financial performance such as Return on Assets, Return on Investment, and Return on Sales.

### ***Measuring Organizational Culture in China***

With the permission and cooperation of Dr. Denison, we have translated and cross-translated the Denison Organizational Culture measure into Chinese and have used it with a variety of organizations in China; including a Chinese insurance company, the China sales and marketing units of a global high-tech company, the China manufacturing and China based regional headquarters of a global office furniture company, the China commercial unit of a global consumer products company, and three hospitals in south and east China. The organizational culture measure asks employees at all levels to describe their organization in a survey questionnaire composed of 60 questions. It takes around 15 minutes to complete, either on-line via the internet or in hard copy, both Chinese and English languages are provided upon request.

Let us take a look at how the Organizational Culture measure can be used. Figure 2 presents the organizational culture profile as described by 136 employees at all levels of the China operations of a global office furniture company based in Shanghai. The numbers presented for each organizational culture dimension are percentile scores based on comparisons with over 550 companies that have completed the organizational culture measure. For example, the score of 59 on Team Orientation indicates that 59% of the companies are lower and 41% of companies are higher than this company on this particular dimension. The score of 14 on Capability Development says that 14% of companies are lower and 86% of companies are higher on this dimension.

**Figure 2: Organizational Culture Profile for a Global Office Furniture Company  
in China**



Perhaps a brief introduction of background information on this company will help you understand the situation better and match it with the organizational culture profile. This Shanghai based company is the Asia Pacific and China headquarters of a major global manufacturer of office furniture, which has an aggressive global expansion strategy of setting up and/or acquiring manufacturing facilities around the world. The global company tries to leverage, across geographies, its various resources such as global major accounts, product lines and procurement capabilities, to work in a more integrative way rather than to have isolated product development and sourcing in different locations.

Under this global strategy, many organizational changes initiatives were happening in this company. Historically a manufacturing-driven company, they have

shifted their focus to become customer-driven, and would like to collaborate with architects and designers to define and provide satisfactory workspace solutions, emphasizing on positive customer experience. Previously importing 70% of their components from North America with products designed mainly in US and Europe, they were stepping up on localized sourcing, production and product development. This helped to both lower the cost and push down from the high-priced segment to the medium-priced segment to meet the local customer's price expectations, and to be closer to Chinese customer's specific needs.

An important decision was made to move the company's Asia Pacific regional headquarters from Hong Kong to Shanghai. There were two primary reasons behind this move. Firstly, the centre of their business has been shifted to Shanghai as many of their global clients are moving their Asia Pacific headquarters, R & D centres etc. from Hong Kong, Singapore, Tokyo to Shanghai. Secondly, such a movement would help it better integrate the Shanghai manufacturing plant into the big picture of their Asia Pacific area; the China branch was previously largely neglected due to being disjointed from the headquarters' key decisions, especially on those issues regarding marketing.

The regional top management team members were moved to Shanghai and a sales office and the Shanghai plant were restructured... People in the Shanghai branch (both plant and sales office) were motivated because it enhanced their ability to learn by being closer to a regional team. However, integrating the marketing and operations team in the Shanghai factory remained an issue. These two had some historical frictions, but the situation was further compounded by the fact that marketing was 'entering' into the domain of operations, which required a sharing of power and a willingness to integrate. Besides, with of the pace of change and the coming of a new management team, scepticism emerged from both the former regional team and the central corporate, being unsure of the possible impact by organizational change and the future status after taking that strategic direction.

In summary, the company's aspiration is to get control of their destiny and to be an active contributor to the global strategy. Their primary objectives, after the move,

are focused on following issues: seeking closer integration of marketing and operations, initiating more proactive local design, sourcing and strategic alliances, developing local talent, and building a cohesive leadership team with a high performance organizational culture.

Examine the situation and match it with the culture profile. What are some of the change management actions you would consider if you were the Managing Director of this company? There are typically four steps in looking at the organizational culture profile:

1. Look at the general profile and identify main strengths and weaknesses;
2. Look at key strengths;
3. Look at key weaknesses;
4. Put forward action steps.

What can we learn from this organizational culture profile? Among other things, you can see that the dimensions associated with Vision, Team Orientation, Organizational Learning and Agreement are above average. The high score on Vision may be interpreted as people in the organization have a clear idea as to the Vision of this company. Team Orientation and Agreement dimensions indicate that the employees are aligned to work well in teams. The high score on Organizational Learning reflects the changes that are happening in the industry and market, and that the company is trying to learn about the external environment in order to better adapt to it.

The dimensions of Capability Development, Customer Focus, Creating Change and Core Values are relatively low. Capability Development has the lowest score of all dimensions: it may mean that the employees have not received adequate training and development opportunities, or at least, would not think they have adequate opportunities. Though transforming into a customer-driven company, the low score on Customer Focus indicates that this transformation is not yet completely successful. The low score on Creating Change, coupled with the changes that are taking place in the organization, suggests that there is still some change resistance among the employees and the leadership needs to make efforts to ensure buy-in for the change and provide managers with change management skills.

If we divide the figure into left and right parts, you may see that all scores on the right side are at least in the second quartile (>25), while the lowest three scores are all on the left side of the wheel. We would conclude that this company is more stable than flexible; better at Mission and Consistency than Adaptability and Involvement. With the rapidly changing external environment (fast growing business opportunities) and the rearrangement of internal structure and processes, this company needs to build more on Adaptability and Involvement to excel.

Would you be interested to know the actions considered by the Managing Director and his leadership team of this company? With the help from Denison model, they thought carefully about some of the key issues and came to the following agenda:

1. With regard to Capability Development dimension: give employees more room for self-development. The company may consider implementing training and development needs analysis and action plans with every employee and put in place the processes for well developed, communicated and implemented individual development planning and review.
2. As for the Customer Focus dimension: do real enhancement to the Customer Focus mindset among all employees. The company will start customer focus initiatives including team visits to customers; Customer Management System (CMS) upgrade; communication, follow up, and outcome tracking on all customer issues.
3. On the Core Values dimension: make sure all of the organization members have shared core value. In achieving this, more communications will be encouraged: they may conduct “Line of sight” workshops, communicating around core values, strategic intent and vision.
4. To address change resistance and ensure buy-in of all, they would need to strengthen coordination and integration among sales, marketing and manufacturing. In addition, change management and coaching workshops will be conducted.

Other steps may include:

- ✓ Tracking costs and trends in employee turnover
- ✓ Adding Organizational Culture to the Balanced Scorecard metrics

In the 18 months since the organizational culture measure was first taken, this company has adopted a number of actions to strengthen its organizational culture and has experienced significant increases in sales, profitability, customer satisfaction and employee satisfaction. We expect a follow-up organizational culture measure later this year will reveal significant improvement in the relevant organizational culture dimensions that have been addressed by the company's leadership over recent months.

We hope you could have developed some skill in interpreting the Denison organizational culture model after reading all the above explanations and sample illustrations. Here are some other organizational culture profiles from organizations in China. What is your analysis of these situations?

Figure 3 shows the organizational culture profile of a Chinese insurance company. It is one of the traditional small insurance companies with a hierarchical structure. As you may know, the insurance industry in China is undergoing profound changes. In addition, at the time when the survey was administered, this company has just gone into a joint venture with a big international company, bringing about internal changes and frictions. The profile well depicts such a problematic situation, which is compounded by severe external competition and significant internal tensions. Do you see some possible actions that would follow from this profile? What dimensions would you think are the most urgent needs? Could you provide some suggestions?

**Figure 3. The Organizational Culture Profile for Chinese Insurance Company**

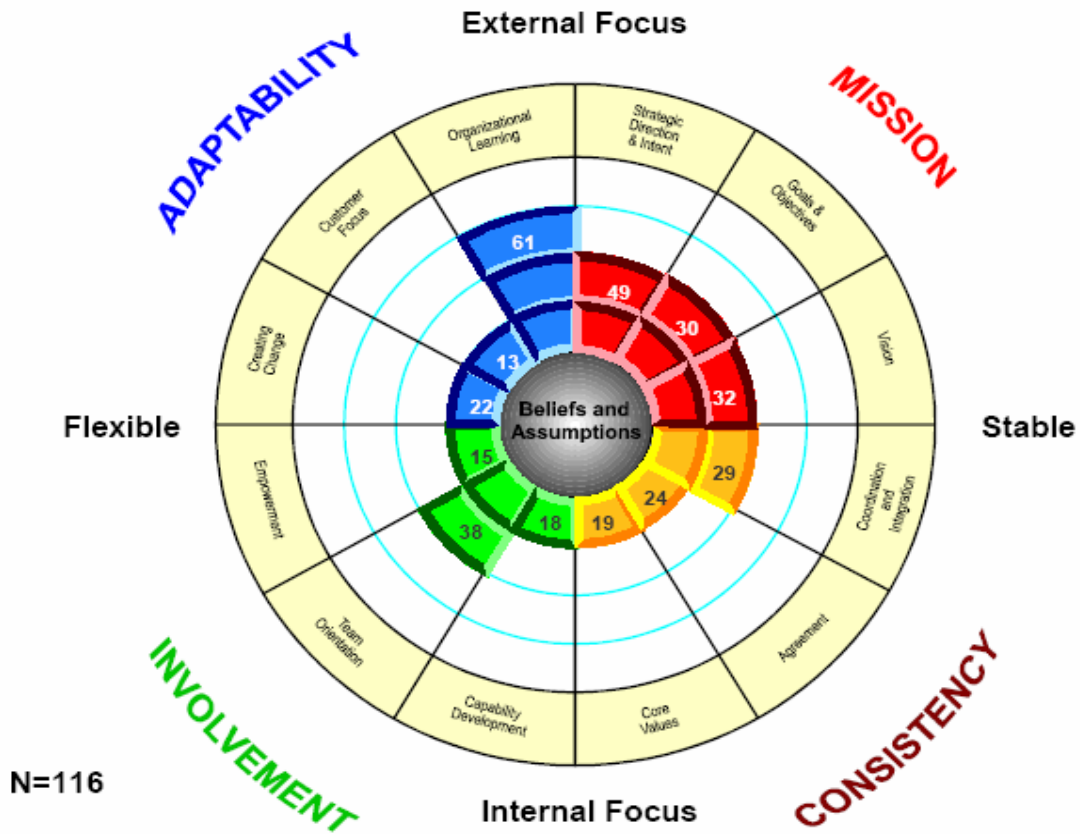


Figure 4 projects a completely different situation. Every cultural trait of this profile is looking quite good, and 9 of the 12 dimensions are well above average. This is the survey result of a global consumer products company in China. Sales driven and task oriented, they are the market leader and out-perform almost all their competitors. What action steps would you recommend for this company? Perhaps additional attention to Customer Focus and to Individual Capability Development?



**Figure 4: The Organizational Culture Profile for a Global Consumer Products Company in China**

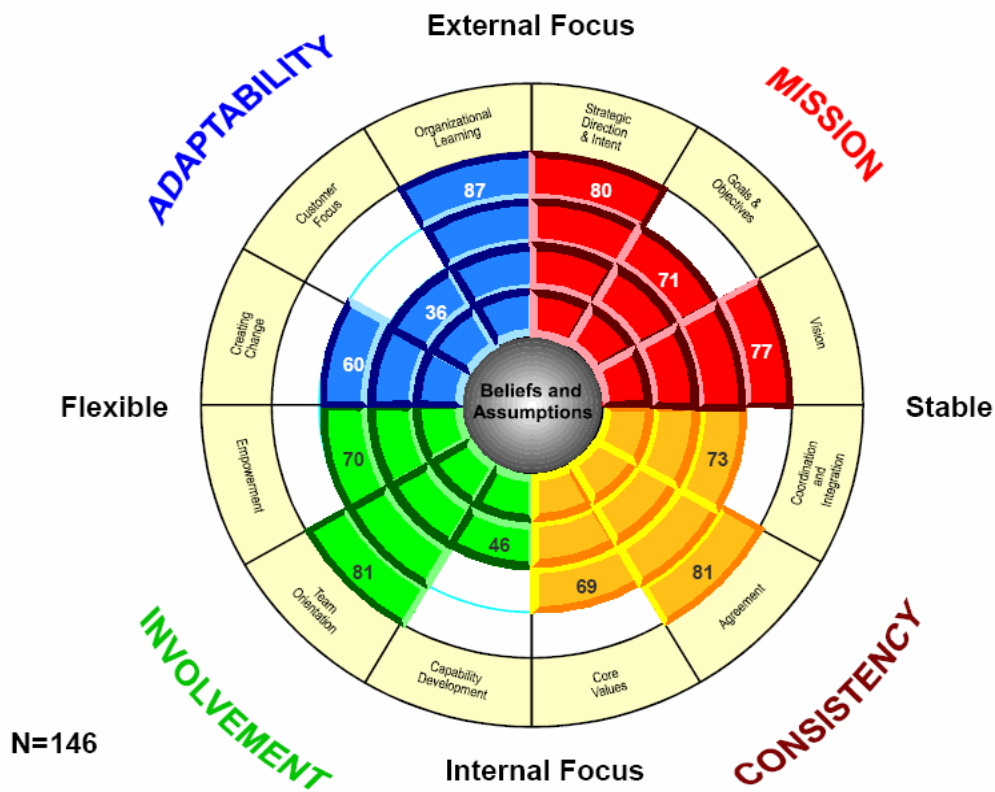
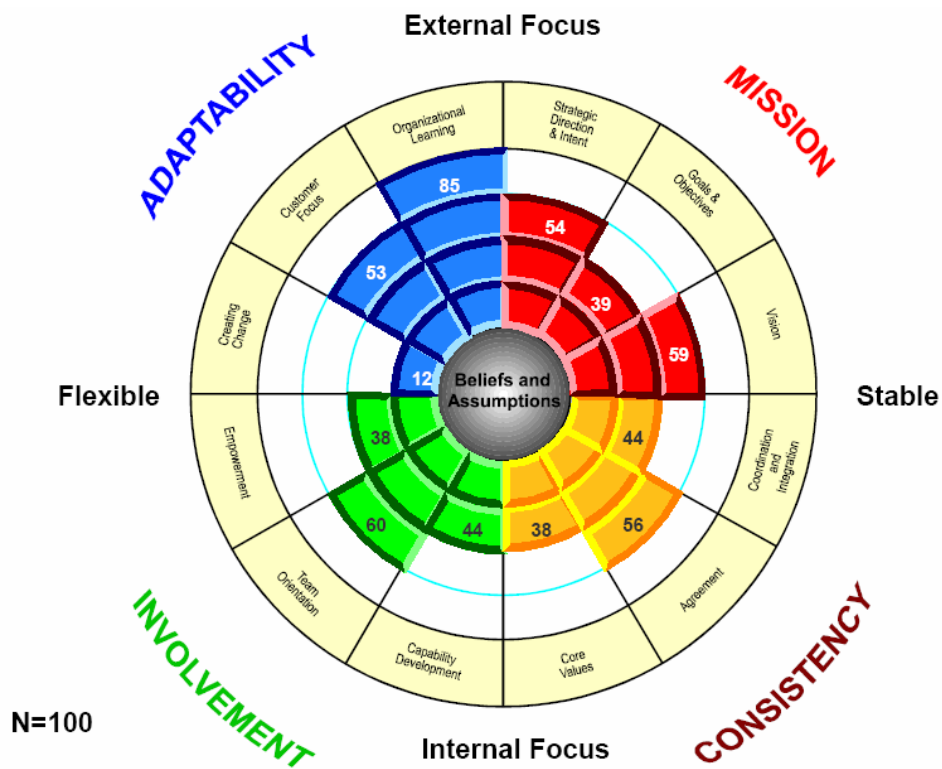


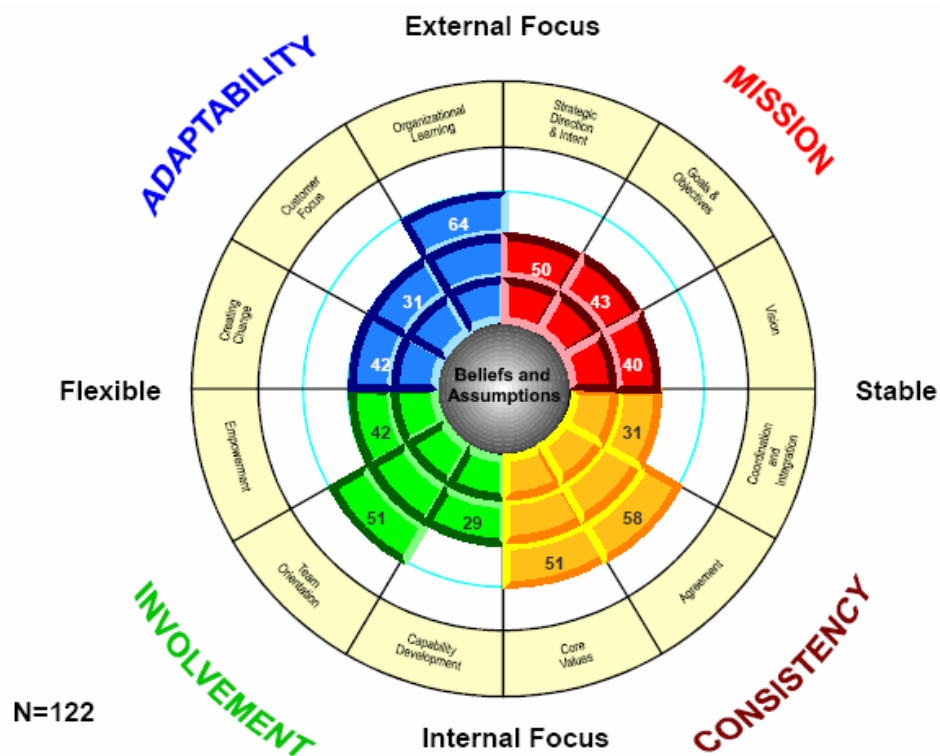
Figure 5 is the cultural profile of a hospital. It used to be a typical example of those traditional state-owned big hospitals, but was about to transform into share-holding structure and to solve the redundancy problem by downsizing, at the time of the survey. With pressure from the top to reform and discontent from employees on downsizing, what action steps do you envision based on the cultural diagnosis provided below?

**Figure 5. The Organizational Culture Profile for a China Hospital**



The last example is the graph in Figure 6 of the China sales units of a global high-tech company. It faces severe market competition at the time of the survey and its market share was shrinking. What would you suggest they do to fight back on their competitors and rebuild their market position?

**Figure 6. The Organizational Culture Profile for a Global Hi-Tech Company in China**



Each of these organizations above finds the cultural data helpful to better know about their organization and people, to identify necessary change initiatives and to measure the effects of changes in their organizations. Would you find this a useful diagnostic and change management measurement tool?

### *Uses of Organizational Culture Measures in China*

We believe there are a number of valuable uses for organizational culture measures. Organizational culture measures can be a highly useful diagnostic tool for visualizing the balance in your organization between Consistency and Adaptability, between Mission focus and Involvement, between Stability and Flexibility, and

between Internal and External focus. Each of the organizations profiled above is doing just this. As already discussed, the organizational culture measure can be a valuable tool to assess where you may want to focus your change management time and attention. For China organizations that are merging, moving to shareholder status, and/or adapting rapidly to the market economy, the organizational culture measure can be a valuable input to the transformation process. The China hospital profiled above is doing just this. Further, as more companies in China are adopting a rigorous Balance Scorecard, the organizational culture measure can provide useful metric for the people development, customer focus and other strategically important components of your balanced scorecard. The consumer products company profiled above is doing just this. By correlating some of your key effectiveness measures, e.g. sales versus goal, employee satisfaction and turnover, leadership with unit organizational culture, you can analyze not just descriptive differences among units but also the organizational culture correlates of the effectiveness criteria. The high-tech company profiled above is doing just that.

**In summary,** measuring organizational culture can provide you with important information that will help guide your transformation and change processes. When organizational culture is measured before, during and after change initiatives, it can be one important change effectiveness metric. Organizational culture measure can be an important addition to your balanced scorecard metrics. And most importantly, you can demonstrate how organizational culture and changes in organizational culture are related to changes in your organizational effectiveness. In short, measurement of organizational culture can be a strategically important addition to your tool kit as you continue to develop your competitive advantage.

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# LIKE IT OR NOT ... CULTURE MATTERS

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Caroline J. Fisher

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So you think business culture doesn't matter. Perhaps you think it's a passing fad, big in the 1980s and starting to show its trendy head again—and this too shall pass. Or maybe you are one of those who actually think culture matters, but you figure you'll focus on it when "things slow down around here." Well, business culture does matter, and as an HR professional you really can't afford to wait to deal with it. You must make a compelling case for top executives to take notice and focus on the true costs of having an operational culture that leaves people feeling dispirited, disenfranchised, and demotivated. It might be the most important thing you can do to support sustainable bottom-line results.

## WHY ARE WE SO CONFUSED ABOUT CULTURE?

The concept of organizational culture first appeared in the historical record in 431 B.C. At that time, Pericles believed Athens could win the Spartan war through strong, unified teamwork. But the idea didn't make a significant appearance in business literature until the early 1980s, when the authors of *In Search of Excellence*<sup>1</sup> presented a strong case that the key to excellent business performance was to be found in the culture of an organization. Unfortunately, problems with their research emerged over time, and business leaders had a hard time moving these notions from the bookshelf to the shop floor.

The academics entered the scene, and although the business world seemed intrigued with the notion that a business might have a culture (not unlike a society, presumably), academia failed to deliver a clear or consistent definition to work with. At one point, there were 164 different definitions of culture, many of which would make your eyes roll back.

Another problem with this thing called culture was the confusion about where it comes from. Some argued that culture "hap-

pens” with no particular rhyme or reason; others contended that culture is an enduring manifestation of the founder’s leadership style. (See **Exhibit 1**.) Just as unclear were the arguments about how to change a culture. Viewpoints ranged from “impossible to change a culture once it’s established” (the founding-father paradigm) to “possible to change, but it requires years, even decades.” Indeed, in those years, there was chaos on the culture front, amounting to nothing short of “paradigm wars.”

Then there were the natural disagreements over how to measure a company’s culture. A powerful force in the academic community insisted that the only way to truly understand your business’s culture (that was viewed as utterly unique and not comparable to any other’s) was to send in a team of researchers to

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### **Exhibit 1**

#### **Business Culture: Myths and Truths**

**Myth:** Culture is intangible, esoteric, and difficult to manage.

**Truth:** Culture is behavioral, measurable, and manageable. It takes awareness. It takes attention. It takes leadership.

**Myth:** We still don’t understand how corporate culture works or how it is directly linked to bottom-line business results. It’s too “squishy.”

**Truth:** Eighteen years of research involving 1,200 companies show us clearly how culture works—and reveal a clear link between it and a company’s profitability, sales/revenue growth, market share, quality, innovation, and employee satisfaction.

**Myth:** Culture is solely embedded in the founder of the company or, worse yet, “culture just happens.”

**Truth:** Effective cultures are almost always the result of thoughtful leadership, involving the entire organization in a focused direction. As a leader, by taking the right steps, you can rapidly change your organization’s culture at any point in its evolution.

**Myth:** Culture is a luxury to be thought about when there is extra time and resources.

**Truth:** Cultural issues have strategic impact that must be managed to preserve business value and ensure success. There is probably nothing you can do with your time and money that will have more long-term leverage for your business success than focus on your culture.

**Myth:** Changing corporate culture is a cumbersome, difficult, and painstakingly slow process.

**Truth:** By precisely targeting and developing behaviors that support known results and applying lessons learned through others’ experience, you can quickly achieve both culture change and its desired performance improvements.

spend months probing your organization's symbolic and mythological underground. It was almost heresy to imply that culture could be subject to any kind of quantitative assessment.

As long as culture stayed in the realm of qualitative, it was almost impossible to link it to quantitative business performance—things like profitability, market share, sales growth, etc. The question “what does it affect?” was long left unanswered in basic business terms.

So it is no mystery that discussions of culture have seemed irrelevant to the business community. Although the concept continued to appear in business literature (with some claims of a direct linkage with business performance), true understanding of culture remained beyond the reach of common sense—let alone business know-how. (After all, if I can't define it, can't measure it, can't change it, and am unclear how it links to results, why bother? May as well dish up another program of the week!)

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***While it is true that belief drives behavior, it is equally true that behavior drives results.***

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#### **LOOKING AT CULTURE THROUGH A BUSINESS LENS**

As the paradigm wars waged on, a small band of researchers set out to establish a way to quantify and measure business culture. One of these researchers was Daniel Denison<sup>2</sup>, now at the University of Michigan business school. He was driven by the conviction that, to make the concept of any use to business and to draw a compelling link with bottom-line business performance factors, there had to be a way to numerically measure “culture.”

For Denison, it was a matter of moving culture out of the academic realm and into the arena of everyday business realities. The traditional view said culture is embedded in a set of assumptions and beliefs held by the business regarding customers, competitors, employees, suppliers, shareholders, and others. Denison's view was that these assumptions and beliefs don't remain hidden, but are manifested in a set of outward behaviors toward these groups—and that, since they are observable, these behaviors are quantifiable.

It may well take an army of researchers to get a handle on something like assumptions and beliefs, but behaviors are easy to measure! And, after all, isn't it people's behavior that creates the culture that everyone experiences? While it is true that belief drives behavior, it is equally true that behavior drives results. So when your interest is in the realm of results, Denison argued, it is both practical and appropriate to approach culture via its most obvious dimension ... the way people act!

Shifting the focus away from the intangible and esoteric to the tangible and behavioral (and thus measurable) allowed breakthroughs in understanding business culture. Nine hundred and



fifty businesses of all sizes and sectors participated in the development of Denison's culture model, which is rooted in workplace behaviors and expressed in workplace language. It is a model designed in the business context, developed by business leaders, and understood from the business perspective—a far cry from traditional culture models developed in the academic context, described in academic language, and requiring a team of translators to make the perilous leap from the ivory tower to the corporate office. From Denison's model, it was a short jump to a quantitative culture assessment, which then opened the door to examining the link between culture and things like profit, market share, return on investment, sales growth, and more.

### **THE LINK BETWEEN CULTURE AND BOTTOM-LINE RESULTS**

Over the next few years, Denison's model was applied to over 1,200 companies, ranging in size from 10 people to over 300,000, and representing all ages, industries, and sectors. The findings are compelling. They will enable you to understand in an entirely new way why you are or are not achieving the results you want.

The model measures four basic business culture traits:

1. *Mission*—the degree to which the company knows why it exists and what its direction is;
2. *Involvement*—the degree to which individuals at all levels of the company are engaged in and hold that direction as their own;
3. *Adaptability*—the ability of the company to know what customers want, and the degree to which it can respond to external forces and demands;
4. *Consistency*—the company's systems and processes that support efficiency and effectiveness in reaching goals.

This model does something that other culture models fail to do. It embraces, rather than ignores, the basic paradoxes faced by businesses and their leaders. It accounts for the deep challenges of leadership familiar to most business leaders today: "It's not about doing either this *or* that. To be successful I must do this *and* that, even if those two things are in direct conflict with each other!" You know it well, don't you? You need both higher quality and lower cost. You need both precision *and* speed. You need growth *and* efficiency. You need to please both shareholders *and* employees; both regulators and customers—even when serving one appears to hurt the other.

The cold hard reality is that you have to pay attention to the inside *and* the outside of your business; to the short term *and* the

long term; to things that provide focus and precision *and* to things that offer flexibility and fluidity. Denison’s model reflects this reality. *Mission* represents external focus and supports stability; *involvement* represents internal focus and supports flexibility; *adaptability* represents external focus and supports flexibility; *consistency* represents internal focus and supports stability.

Denison’s research shows that the highest performing companies are those that show strength in all four areas. In other words, they have developed cultures that fully address the paradoxical demands facing them. They are crystal clear about why they exist and where they are going (*mission*). Their people embrace this defined direction, have line of sight from job to company goals, and bring the full complement of their skills to their work (*involvement*). They hear what their customers want or understand customer needs enough to lead their customers to new products/services, and they are able to learn what is needed to respond to changing marketplace demands (*adaptability*). And they have systems, structures, and processes in place to help align them as a company, while being both efficient and effective in their pursuit of results (*consistency*).

As a business leader, you might be saying, “Yeah right, if we were strong in all those areas, we’d be turning good results, too.” But, wait—the findings tell us more. Sure, they show us that the highest performing companies are strong in all areas simultaneously (for example, showing 31 percent return on investment or more). The findings also show us that there are relationships between individual culture traits and specific performance measures. Denison’s findings are summarized in **Exhibit 2**.

Revenue growth and market share (both externally oriented performance measures) are supported by the externally oriented cultural traits of *mission* and *adaptability*. Quality and employee

**Exhibit 2**

**Denison’s Findings**

Profitability/ Return on Assets	Revenue Growth/ Sales Growth	Market Share	Innovation	Quality of Products & Services	Employee Satisfaction
<i>supported by</i> Mission	<i>supported by</i> Mission	<i>supported by</i> Mission	<i>supported by</i>	<i>supported by</i>	<i>supported by</i> [Mission]
Involvement			Involvement	Involvement	Involvement
Adaptability	Adaptability	Adaptability	Adaptability		[Adaptability]
Consistency				Consistency	Consistency

Source: Denison, D.R., & Neale, W.S. (1996). Denison organizational culture survey: Facilitators guide. Ann Arbor, MI: Aviat.

satisfaction (internally oriented performance measures) are supported by the internally oriented culture traits of *involvement* and *consistency*.

Innovation (a performance measure related to flexibility) is supported by the flexibility-enhancing culture traits of *involvement* and *adaptability*. The performance measure of profitability, by far the most comprehensive and complex measure of business performance, is supported by strength in all four cultural areas.

In 1997, I conducted a second phase of research at the California School of Professional Psychology. These findings confirm Denison's and extend them down the path of understanding what creates success in today's businesses.

These research findings revealed that *mission* alone, as a single cultural factor, affects the greatest number of bottom-line performance measures in a company. (Of Denison's list, all except innovation were affected.) Thus, if a company is simply clear on why it exists and has a vision, goals, and strategies that are embraced throughout the company, five of the six performance factors can be affected. The fact that innovation is not affected by *mission* alone is logical—a singular focus runs counter to the diverse thinking required for innovation and creativity.

*Involvement* is the second most important culture trait, affecting four of the six performance measures (all except market share and sales growth). *Adaptability* affects three of the six (sales growth; market share; and innovation); *consistency* affects two of the six (quality and employee satisfaction).

There are two critical messages here. First, as a business leader, when you're facing a crisis or trying to produce a step change in results, do not focus on *consistency* alone. Ironically, when leaders face such challenges, they usually impose a new system or process or structure—an attempt to gain control. But when this is done without an accompanying emphasis on *mission* and *involvement*, you're bound to miss your mark. At best, you might incrementally improve product quality or employee attitudes. It's equally likely that you'll end up worse off than before, having increased the levels of cynicism and resistance to any future changes that really will become necessary.

The second message is perhaps more important. If you want to produce breakthrough results (not just incremental change, but a whole new level of performance), look to *mission* and *involvement*. Between these two culture traits, all six performance measures can be affected. The other two culture traits (*adaptability* and *consistency*) count, of course, for full and sustainable performance over the long run—but without *mission* and *involvement* they won't get very far.

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***These research findings revealed that mission alone, as a single cultural factor, affects the greatest number of bottom-line performance measures in a company.***

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With regard to employee satisfaction, my research shows that like profitability in Denison's research, it is supported by strength in all four culture traits. It is becoming clear that employees are not only looking for things associated with *involvement* (having a say) and *consistency* (effective support systems), but they are also demanding *mission* (being part of companies doing positive things and with a clear path) and *adaptability* (providing customers with what they want, and having flexibility in learning and changing to meet new demands).

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***The corporate world has spent trillions of dollars attempting to change over the last 15 years.***

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### SO WHY IS ALL THIS SO IMPORTANT?

The corporate world has spent trillions of dollars attempting to change over the last 15 years. Training programs, consulting services, process improvements—the list goes on. By one estimate, customers as well as employees rate the effectiveness of these programs at 10-20 percent.<sup>3</sup> And that might be optimistic!

There are many reasons for this rate of failure. Often, the desired outcome or result was not clearly defined up front, with an initiative applied to clearly match that result. Often a leader desires to see a broad range of performance improvement and applies the latest management fad, hoping somehow it's the answer. Alas, usually it's not.

Sometimes, such initiatives can create meaningful change over time. For example, even though an employee survey has never changed a company, we have slowly learned that employee input *is* important, and its value has, in many cases, elevated surveys to far more than just another check-off item in a manager's list of "things I gotta do." The problem with an evolutionary approach, however, is that companies don't have the time, energy, or resources for that anymore.

Companies today can't mess around. They need results—and they need to precisely target their changes to hit those results on the nose! If a leader first defines a very specific result (i.e., increased sales growth or increased innovation) and then intervenes at a cultural level to achieve that result (*adaptability* and *mission* for sales growth; *adaptability* and *involvement* for innovation, etc.), they would be far more likely to get the result they want, not to mention getting it faster!

Another benefit of the cultural approach to getting results: A company can monitor and gauge how well it is developing its baseline sustainability—its ability to perform for the long haul. After all, companies with strength in all four culture categories win consistently over time.

Viewing an organization through the cultural lens is useful for other reasons as well. If a company is weak in all areas of culture, the best place to start is with *mission* and *involvement* (remember, you can ultimately affect all six performance measures through these two traits). This can be true of start-up ventures (do you know why you're doing what you're doing and do your people see your vision?); merging companies (creating a common "third point" of focus to help each group take their eyes off each other and put them on the goal); or companies in decline (that once thrived even without a clear understanding of why they existed; competition no longer allows this luxury).

The links between individual culture traits and specific performance indicators let you precisely target your organization's culture to meet specific results and to consciously build and monitor the organization's culture to ensure sustainable success. Remember, hope is not a strategy. If you truly understand something, you can make the right choices to do something about it.

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***The links between individual culture traits and specific performance indicators let you precisely target your organization's culture to meet specific results and to consciously build and monitor the organization's culture to ensure sustainable success.***

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### **WHAT BUSINESS LEADERS OFTEN DON'T WANT TO ADMIT**

There are four ways to avoid dealing with your corporate culture:

1. Argue that the research is flawed and you need more proof.
2. Contend that your company is different, and the usual rules don't apply to you.
3. Acknowledge that it's something the company should think about—then delegate it.
4. Get really mad about last quarter's results and hire another marketing guy.

It's *easier* to tell yourself that culture doesn't matter or ... even if it *does*, it can't be managed. But if you are convinced that culture is a strategic lever for success, you've cleared one of the biggest hurdles between you and getting the results you want.

So figure it out. What results do you want from your business? Improved profitability? Increased innovation? Then:

- Take a long hard look:** Determine what your culture really looks like right now. Profile it; sharpen your understanding of its dynamics and implications. This is no time for "amateur night at the Lodge" — engage the experience and perspective of professionals.
- Focus on what matters most:** Identify those factors that directly support the results you want. Consider their impli-

cations in the context of your industry and the marketplace. Again, this is where the right expertise can really pay for itself.

- Prepare for the change:** Clarify your expectations, check your commitment, enroll key teammates, identify critical support resources for the long haul.
- Make it happen:** And hold on tight.

As hard as it may be to deal with, culture *is* the work of today's HR professionals and management. And the behavior changes needed to shape a business culture must start at the top, and be constantly reinforced by HR. These changes must weave through every level and every function and be consistently led and strategically managed. You can't just talk about it—you have to *do* it.

### **ANSWERING THE HARD QUESTIONS**

So, you ask, why aren't the "change programs" you've initiated having more impact? Why aren't the dollars you've invested in training your people paying off? What is it going to take to move this company to the next level of performance and beyond?

The answer to these questions can be found in what may be the last place you'd normally care to look: your business culture. Those "hard" results you've dreamed so much about have now been discovered smack-dab in the middle of "soft stuff." Yes, culture matters—and it matters in a big way. When all is said and done, it matters as much as profits and market share and sales growth.

With the right tools, information, and support, you can quickly understand the essence of your business culture—see exactly how it's supporting or hindering your company's performance. You can then zero-in on those aspects of your culture that lead to the specific results you long for. It's about understanding the true relationship between culture and bottom-line results—then using this understanding in a very deliberate and pragmatic way to get what you want.

Properly led, resourced, and managed, it doesn't even have to be a long, drawn-out process. If you take your stand, engage the very best of yourself and your people, and take advantage of the resources now available through the hard work, study, and experience of others, things can happen more quickly than you might ever have imagined possible. ♦

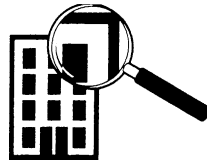
### **NOTES**

1. Peters, T.J., & Waterman, R.H. (1982). *In search of excellence: Lessons from America's best run companies*. New York: Harper & Row.

2. ARC began working with Dr. Denison a few years ago and added his tools to the firm's consulting and facilitation repertoire.

3. Ashkenas, R.N. (1995). Beyond the fads: How leaders drive change with results. In C.E. Scheiner, ed., *Managing strategic and cultural change in organizations*. New York: The Human Resource Planning Society.

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## RESEARCH IN ACTION

# *Corporate Culture and Organizational Effectiveness:*

# Is Asia Different From the Rest of the World?

**DANIEL R. DENISON    STEPHANIE HAALAND    PAULO GOELZER**

One of the most difficult challenges for the field of international management is the application of theories and models developed in one part of the world to understand phenomena that occur in another part of the world. Much of the early concern about this issue concentrated on the relevance of American theories abroad. But more recently, the same problem has been faced by Japanese theories of quality control and knowledge creation; or by European theories of joint ventures or organizational design. The goal of these efforts is to develop a useful general frame of reference, but also allow for the needed sensitivity to local variation.

Some of the biggest challenges for developing theories with cross-cultural relevance

come in the area of organizational studies. Differences in behavior, work values, and culture have been studied by many researchers in many different countries. Several frameworks have proven useful for understanding cultural differences (e.g., Trompenaars and Hofstede) and have helped to establish some relatively universal dimensions (e.g., individualism, power distance) that can be useful in understanding differences across national cultures. But few researchers have attempted to understand the impacts these behavioral differences have in different national contexts.

The logic of cross-cultural comparison and validation has been discussed at length by several authors. In most areas of the literature, however, the biggest challenge is the

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almost total absence of comparative data. Our literature review found very few studies that offered a comparison of the effectiveness of organizations across several countries that could be linked to differences in organizational culture, work values, and behavior. The evidence global leaders need in order to understand the impact of the organizational cultures they are creating is usually unavailable.

This paper takes a bold but risky approach to these challenges by examining the link between organizational culture and effectiveness with two separate studies. The first study examines this link with data from 230 organizations in Europe, North America or Asia, and reveals a surprising level of similarity in the results across these regions. The second study examines the same topic using data from 218 organizations from seven countries: Canada, Australia, Brazil, U.S.A., Japan, Jamaica, and South Africa. The second study focuses on samples of supermarkets that were part of an independent cooperative operating in a similar fashion in each country. The results show a high level of similarity in five of the countries, but a divergent pattern of findings from Japan and Jamaica. These two studies constitute a preliminary and exploratory step rather than a comprehensive study, but they do illustrate that a general theory about organizational culture can be applied in multiple contexts, with results that highlight both similarities and differences across regions.

The paper begins by describing a model of organizational culture used in this study and discusses some of the research, conducted primarily in the U.S.A., that has established a link between culture and effectiveness. We then pose several general research questions that guided our study. After that, we describe our samples, the data collection and analysis strategies, and report our results for both of the studies. Our discussion at the end of this paper summarizes our findings, reflects upon their implications for cross-national research and then considers some of the approaches that might facilitate future research in this area.

## **CORPORATE CULTURE AND ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

A number of scholars have developed integrative frameworks of organizational culture, but little consensus exists with regard to a general theory. Since culture is a complex phenomenon ranging from underlying beliefs and assumptions to visible structures and practices, healthy skepticism also exists as to whether organizational culture can actually be “measured” in a comparative sense. Research on the link between organizational culture and effectiveness is also limited by lack of agreement about the appropriate measures of effectiveness. Despite these challenges, better understanding of this topic remains critical to the development of organizational studies.

The current literature has its roots in the early 1980s and focused attention on the strategic importance of organizational culture. Kotter and Heskett expanded on this by exploring the importance of adaptability and the “fit” between an organization and its environment. This paper applies the culture framework developed by Denison and his colleagues. This stream of research has developed an explicit model of organizational culture and effectiveness and a validated method of measurement. Using data from 764 organizations, Denison and colleagues showed that four different cultural traits (mission, consistency, adaptability and involvement) were related to different criteria of effectiveness. Their research found that the traits of mission and consistency were the best predictors of profitability, the traits of involvement and adaptability were the best predictors of innovation, and the traits of adaptability and mission were the best predictors of sales growth. Later research has linked the elements of the model to differences in customer satisfaction in two industries, and others have presented an application of this model to foreign-owned firms operating in Russia.

The Denison model is based on four cultural traits of effective organizations that are described below. Suggested references

are included in the subsequent bibliography section.

### **Involvement**

Effective organizations empower their people, build their organizations around teams, and develop human capability at all levels. Executives, managers, and employees are committed to their work and feel that they own a piece of the organization. People at all levels feel that they have at least some input into decisions that will affect their work, and that their work is directly connected to the goals of the organization.

### **Consistency**

Organizations also tend to be effective because they have “strong” cultures that are highly consistent, well coordinated, and well integrated. Behavior is rooted in a set of core values, and leaders and followers are skilled at reaching agreement even when there are diverse points of view. This type of consistency is a powerful source of stability and internal integration that results from a common mindset and a high degree of conformity.

### **Adaptability**

Ironically, organizations that are well integrated are often the most difficult ones to change. Internal integration and external adaptation can often be at odds. Adaptable organizations are driven by their customers, take risks and learn from their mistakes, and have capability and experience at creating change. They are continuously changing the system so that they are improving the organizations’ collective abilities to provide value for their customers.

### **Mission**

Successful organizations have a clear sense of purpose and direction that defines organizational goals and strategic objectives and expresses a vision of how the organization will look in the future. When an organization’s

underlying mission changes, changes also occur in other aspects of the organization’s culture.

Like many contemporary models of leadership and organizational effectiveness, this model focuses on the contradictions that occur as organizations try to achieve internal integration and external adaptation. For example, organizations that are market-focused and opportunistic often have problems with internal integration. On the other hand, organizations that are well-integrated and over-controlled usually have a hard time adapting to their environment. Organizations with a top-down vision often find it difficult to focus on the empowerment and the “bottom-up” dynamics needed to implement that vision. At the same time, organizations with strong participation often have difficulty establishing direction. Effective organizations are those that are able to resolve these contradictions without relying on simple trade-offs.

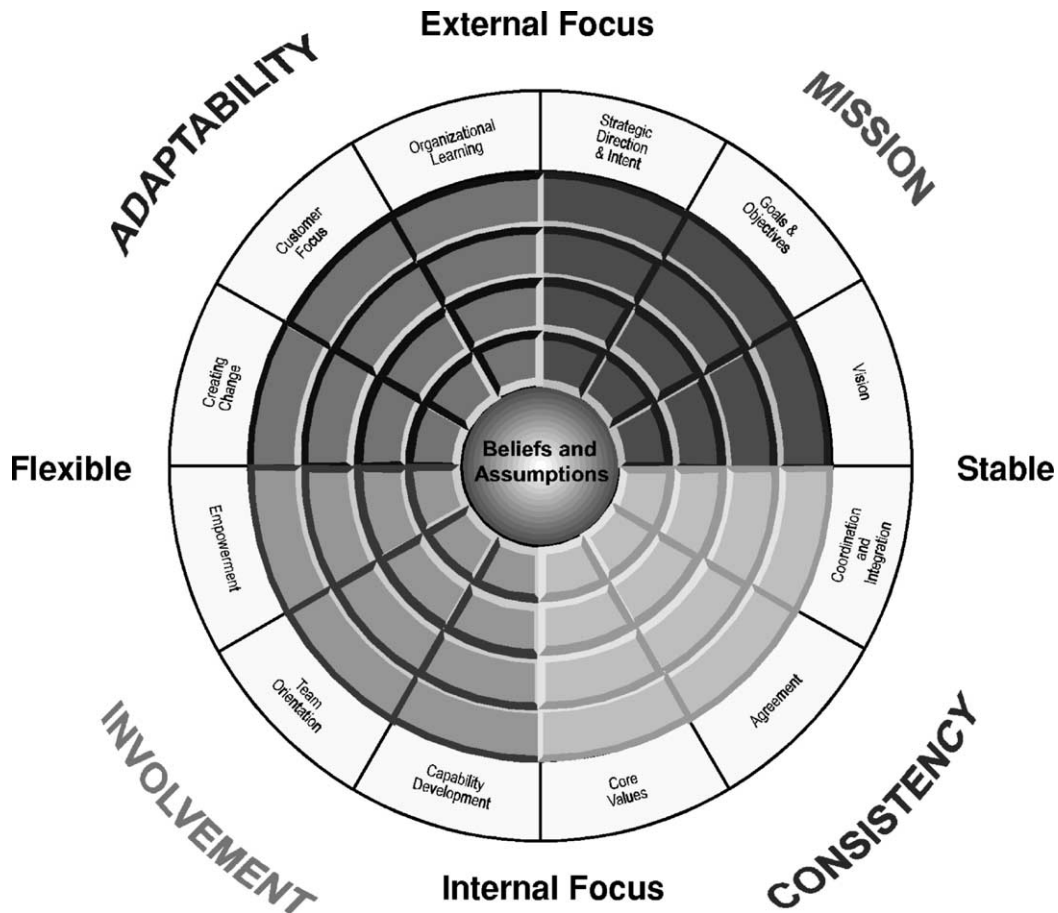
At the core of this model are underlying beliefs and assumptions. The “deeper” levels of organizational culture are typically quite unique to each firm and are thus difficult to measure and harder to generalize about. They are often best understood from a qualitative perspective. Nonetheless, they provide the foundation from which behavior and action spring. The four traits of organizational culture presented by Denison and Mishra have been expanded upon to include three sub-dimensions for each trait, for a total of 12 dimensions. This version of the model is presented in Fig. 1.

This model is often used as part of a diagnostic process to profile specific organizations in order to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of their cultures and to suggest ways in which the organization’s culture may influence its effectiveness. The following example helps illustrate the application of the model.

### **Example of a Japanese Consumer Electronics Company**

This section of the paper illustrates the application of the culture model by presenting a

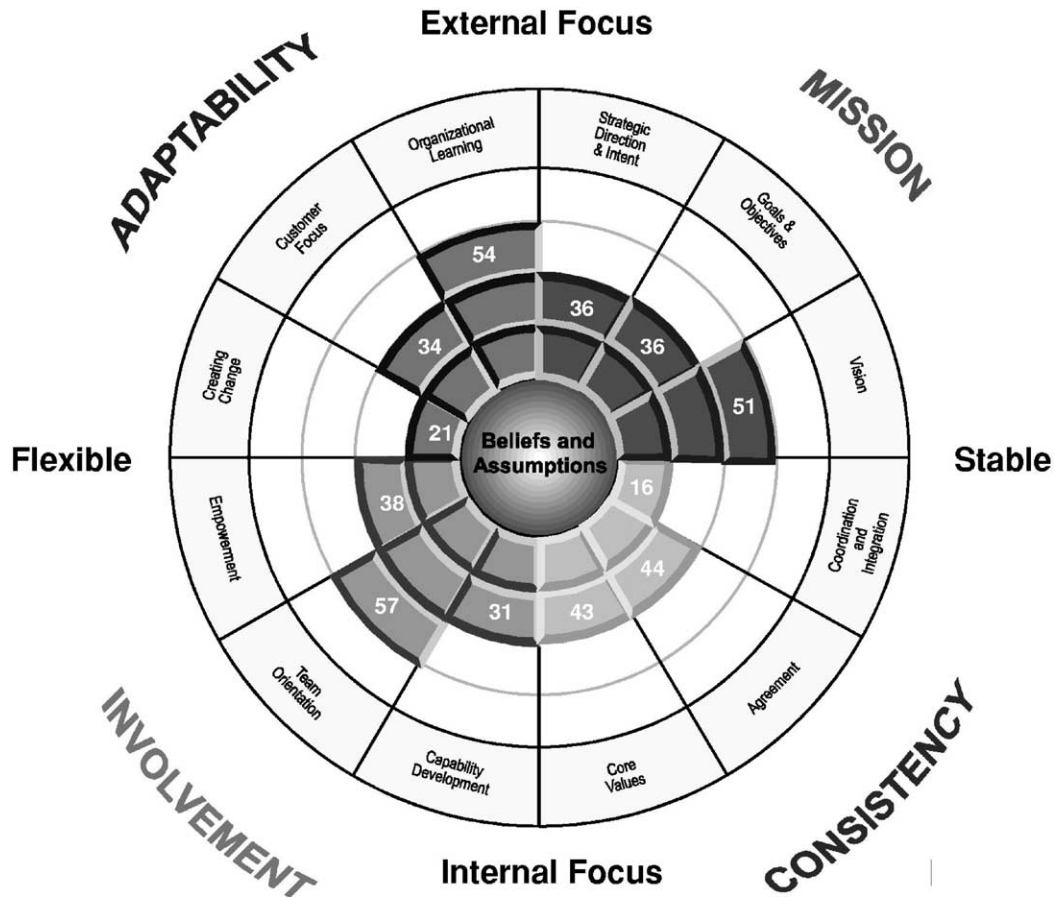
**FIGURE 1 THE DENISON ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE MODEL**



brief example of the globalization of a major Japanese consumer electronics company. Like most, this company began by designing and producing their products in Japan, and developing extensive sales organizations and dealer networks in Europe, the U.S.A., and other markets. As the company evolved through the 1980s and 1990s, they gradually moved some low-end production out of Japan, primarily to other, lower-cost production locations in Asia. The strength of the company's products and technology, and their established global brands and marketing presence allowed them to continue successfully throughout the 1990s despite the decline in the Japanese economy.

By the late 1990s, however, they began to consider a different model of globalization. Growing emphasis on the Internet in business and consumer applications led to increasing demand for their products to be integrated with more general information technology solutions. Selling discrete products ("boxes") was still the core of their business, but they experienced growing demand for both integration and for the customization of their products to meet the needs of local and regional markets. These changes led the company to begin planning that the next stage of their evolution would involve the creation of more fully-integrated operations in each of the major geographic

**FIGURE 2 PROFILE OF a JAPANESE CONSUMER ELECTRONICS COMPANY**



regions. Research and product development, as well as production, needed to be established in each of the regions outside of Japan.

The culture profile for a top management sample of this organization is presented in Fig. 2. The data for this profile came from a survey of 75 executives who were two to three levels from the top of the organization, represented all geographic regions, and included both expats and locals. Each of the 12 indexes are measured by five survey items, using a five-point Likert scale, which are averaged to produce an index score. The results are presented here in terms of percentile scores, indicating the percentage of organizations in the benchmark database of

over 700 organizations that scored lower than the organization being profiled.

Examination of this culture profile reveals some key organizational issues. Overall, the highest scores are only slightly above average, pointing to the many challenges that face management. Two of the indexes, creating change (21st percentile) and coordination and integration (16th percentile) are particularly low, pointing to the challenges the organization faces in reacting to the demands in the marketplace. When both adaptability and consistency scores are low, this usually points to an organization that is struggling with the logic of their value chain or trying to reinvent their value chain.

Both are true in this case. Another area that presents a major challenge is capability development (31st percentile). Creating a more fully integrated organization in each major region of the world will require a significant change in the competencies and capabilities of executives and employees. In the past, investment in career development was primarily targeted at Japanese employees who were on foreign assignment.

As our brief example shows, this approach was useful in helping to highlight several key cultural issues that are critical to the company's future evolution. The survey and model has been translated into 14 languages and used with organizations in over 30 countries. In practice, the model has worked well in many different national contexts. As we noted in our literature review, a number of studies have examined the empirical link between culture and effectiveness in North America, but very few have attempted to examine this link across cultures. That is the purpose of this paper.

## EXPLORING CROSS-CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

This study explores one basic research question: *Are there cross-cultural differences in the relationship between organizational culture and effectiveness?* The general research question has many facets, but in this paper, we focus on whether the pattern identified in the original research in North America is similar to the pattern in other parts of the world, and whether there are distinctive patterns that are unique to specific countries. This question also requires us to see whether the culture data itself varies significantly across different regions of the world. A final question concerns the explanation for the pattern of findings—which factors account for the observed differences or similarities? These are the general research questions that guided the research presented in this chapter.

The sample for the first study reported in this chapter was drawn from the archive of

organizations that have completed the *Denison Organizational Culture Survey* over the past five years. The sample comprised 36,820 individuals from 230 organizations drawn from different industries, and including organizations of all sizes and stages of growth. In order to be part of the study, firms had to have at least 25 respondents from a representative population of employees in the firm. On average, the response rate for each of these organizations was around 60 percent, from internal samples that varied from management teams to a complete census of the organization. The majority of companies in the sample are based in North America. Eight of the companies are based in Asia, and 34 are from Europe/Middle East/Africa (EMEA). Global companies headquartered in all regions typically have many respondents from outside of the region.

Of the companies in this sample, 48 percent are listed in the Forbes Global 1,000 List for 2001. Approximately 20 percent are from the consumer cyclical industry—including automotive sales and dealerships, home building companies, publishing, and retail. Another 13 percent come from the consumer staples industry, including restaurants, beverage manufacturers, personal care products, food, and tobacco sectors. Companies in the technology sector account for 13 percent of the companies in this sample, and the health care sector, basic materials sector, and financials sector each account for 11 percent. Seven percent of the companies come from the capital goods sector, 3 percent each from the utilities sector and the communications sector, and 1 percent from the transportation sector. The remaining 7 percent come from public or non-profit organizations such as schools and government agencies.

The sample for the second study reported in this chapter included 2,162 employees of independently-owned local grocery stores within seven countries. The number of participants and stores per country are as follows: 749 respondents from 92 stores in Australia, 326 respondents were from 17 stores in Brazil, 197 respondents from 13 stores in Canada, 306 respondents from 18 stores in Jamaica, 96

respondents from 20 stores in Japan, 185 respondents from 20 stores in South African, and 255 respondents from 38 stores in the United States. All respondents were full-time employees with positions ranging from non-management to management to store owner.

In total, 6,736 surveys were mailed out worldwide. Total response rate was 42 percent, but 658 of the surveys could not be used because respondents didn't complete enough of the questions or could not be linked back to the appropriate store. This resulted in a usable response rate of 32 percent.

The stores participating in this study are part of the International Grocers Alliance (IGA). IGA, headquartered in Chicago, IL, was founded in 1926 and today is a global alliance of more than 4,000 licensed stores, with aggregate annual sales of \$21 billion. IGA currently has operations in 40 countries, commonwealths, and territories. Retailers who choose to join IGA, a voluntary non-profit supermarket network, acquire the size and strength to compete in the marketplace, while maintaining their flexibility and autonomy as small business operators. IGA is owned by a set of wholesalers and retailers. The system is made up of supermarkets affiliated with IGA wholesalers and distributors in each country. There are two types of affiliation that supermarkets may have with IGA: (1) as a corporate store, where the wholesaler is the owner of the store, or (2) through a "sponsorship," where the owner-operator joins the IGA system as a licensed store.

Countries selected to participate in this study contained a minimum of 15 IGA-affiliated stores. All stores in Brazil and Jamaica were surveyed because a smaller number of total stores exist in these two countries. In Canada, Australia, and South Africa, supermarkets were randomly selected to participate in the study. In the United States and Japan, surveys were sent directly to a sample of high and low performing stores. The U.S. sample was chosen from a balanced sample of stores with high and low ratings on an annual store assessment processed by an independent third party inspector. In Japan, an independent "retail counselor" identified high

and low performing stores. Stores in Japan were surveyed in Japanese, and stores in Brazil were surveyed in Portuguese. All other stores were surveyed in English.

The survey items for this study were taken from The *Denison Organizational Culture Survey*. This survey measures twelve indices of organizational culture using five questions each for a total of 60 questions. All items used a five-point Likert scale with response categories ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. These twelve indices are used to measure the four main cultural traits defined by the model—involvement, consistency, adaptability, and mission. The survey also assesses employees' perceptions of store performance on variables including: sales growth, profitability, quality of products and services, employee satisfaction, and overall organizational performance. All measures were aggregated to the organizational level for this analysis. A complete listing of all items used in this available from the authors.

## RESULTS

The results from both studies are reported in the same way. First, we report the simple associations between the 12 indexes of organizational culture and ratings of overall effectiveness. Next, we examine whether there are significant differences in scores from each of the countries and regions.

### Denison Organizational Culture Database

The relationships between the 12 culture indices and performance for the three regions, North America, Asia, and Europe, Mid-East, Africa (EMEA) are presented in [Table 1](#). All correlations between overall performance and culture indices were significant for North America and EMEA. None of the correlations were significant for the Asian companies. Similar results were also found for four other subjective indicators of performance: sales growth, profitability, quality, and employee satisfaction.

**TABLE 1 CORRELATIONS BETWEEN DIMENSIONS OF CORPORATE CULTURE AND OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS BY REGION**

	NORTH AMERICA	ASIA	EMEA
Empowerment	.65*	.57	.60*
Team orientation	.61*	.71	.53*
Capability development	.70*	.48	.50*
Core values	.61*	.65	.69*
Agreement	.58*	.62	.73*
Coordination and integration	.69*	.62	.74*
Creating change	.48*	.87	.68*
Customer focus	.36*	.19	.62*
Organizational learning	.50*	.82	.52*
Strategic direction and intent	.55*	.66	.79*
Goals and objectives	.60*	.54	.62*
Vision	.53*	.71	.67*
Number of organizations	169	7	34

\*  $p < .05$ .

**TABLE 2 AVERAGE CULTURE TRAIT SCORES BY REGION**

CULTURE TRAIT	REGION		
	NORTH AMERICA	ASIA	EMEA
Mission	3.32	3.39	3.35
Adaptability	3.25	3.28	3.26
Involvement	3.43	3.42	3.45
Consistency	3.28	3.21	3.26

We also tested to see if there were differences between the culture scores for the three regions. Interestingly enough, the three regions did not differ significantly from each other on any of the four organizational culture traits measured in this study. The mean scores for each region are presented in Table 2 and show that the differences are very small. The Asian companies in the sample had slightly stronger scores on mission compared with companies from North America or EMEA, and slightly lower scores on consis-

**TABLE 3 CORRELATION BETWEEN PERFORMANCE AND THE 12 INDICES BY COUNTRY**

	SOUTH AFRICA	CANADA	JAMAICA	AUSTRALIA	UNITED STATES	BRAZIL	JAPAN
Empowerment	.60*	.38	.08	.27*	.68*	.84*	.08
Team orientation	.61*	.43	-.06	.32*	.60*	.86*	.11
Capability development	.70*	-.06	.26	.23*	.56*	.81*	.14
Core values	.54*	.34	.34	.39*	.63*	.83*	.47*
Agreement	.63*	.37	.20	.34*	.54*	.78*	.28
Coordination and integration	.54*	.45	.18	.37*	.56*	.88*	.23
Creating change	.82*	.34	.00	.35*	.63*	.75*	.23
Customer focus	.45*	.06	.25	.24*	.45*	.62*	.24
Organizational learning	.12	.13	.11	.33*	.67*	.76*	-.10
Strategic direction and intent	.69*	.77*	.44	.38*	.57*	.79*	.55*
Goals and objectives	.76*	.58*	.22	.42*	.68*	.81*	.25
Vision	.45*	.43	.26	.36*	.61*	.79*	.29
Number of stores	20	13	18	92	38	17	20

\*  $p < .05$ .

**TABLE 4 RANK ORDER OF CULTURE TRAITS BY COUNTRY**

COUNTRY	CULTURE TRAIT RANK			
	MISSION	ADAPTABILITY	INVOLVEMENT	CONSISTENCY
Jamaica	1st	1st	2nd	2nd
Brazil	2nd	3rd	5th	5th
Australia	3rd	2nd	1st	1st
Canada	4th	5th	3rd	3rd
South Africa	5th	4th	4th	4th
United States	6th	6th	7th	6th
Japan	7th	7th	6th	7th

tency. Overall, however, these differences are very small.

### Grocery Stores

The relationships between the 12 cultural indices and performance ratings for each country are presented in Table 3. All 12 culture indices were significantly correlated with overall performance ratings in Australia (mean  $r = .33$ ), the United States (mean  $r = .60$ ), and Brazil (mean  $r = .79$ ). All indices except organizational learning were significantly correlated with overall performance ratings in South Africa. In Canada, however, only strategic direction and intent ( $r = .77$ ) and goals and objectives ( $r = .58$ ) were significantly correlated with overall performance ratings. For Japanese stores, only core values ( $r = .47$ ) and strategic direction and intent ( $r = .55$ ) were significantly correlated with overall performance. Finally, no significant correlations between culture indices and overall performance ratings emerged for Jamaica.

We also tested to see whether there were differences in the organizational culture ratings across countries in this second study. In general, Jamaica, Brazil and Australia received the highest scores, while Japan, U.S.A. and South Africa received the lowest scores. As shown in Table 4, these patterns were quite consistent across the four culture traits, although Brazil did depart from this pattern by having high scores on the external traits of mission and adaptability combined with relatively low scores on the internal traits of involvement and consistency. Canada

showed the opposite pattern: the internal traits of involvement and consistency received the highest scores, while the external traits of mission and adaptability received lower scores.

### DISCUSSION

The two studies reported here help us understand one of the fundamental challenges of leadership in a global environment. The first study presents a summary of a large empirical database on organizational culture and effectiveness. Despite everything that we know about the importance of cross-cultural differences, these results show a very similar pattern across these major regions of the world. The link between company culture and effectiveness appears to be both strong and consistent. In addition, the scores for the culture measures are essentially the same for the samples of organizations in each of these three regions.

How can this be? Almost every article or discussion on the topic focuses on the importance of cultural *differences*. Yet, in one of the few comparative examinations of the issue, we see almost no difference. After scratching our heads for a while, we offer several explanations for this unexpected outcome.

First, the purpose of the model used for this study was to help understand the impact that organizational culture has on organizational effectiveness. Thus, the purpose of the concepts is to build an organizational-level model that elaborates the cultural factors that



help distinguish effective and ineffective organizations. It is designed to be general enough to apply to a wide range of organizations and to predict one narrow, but important outcome. The intent of the model is quite different from those that are specifically designed to describe the differences that exist between national cultures.

Even though these results provide support for the usefulness of these organizational characteristics and measures for predicting the effectiveness of firms in different national contexts, we would *not* argue that the characteristics are expressed in the same way in each of these contexts. Nor would we argue that the same meaning would be attached to the same behaviors in different national contexts. On the contrary, we would take these results to mean that a concept like empowerment is important around the world, but we would not argue that this means the same behaviors would necessarily constitute empowerment in different national contexts. Thus, the model probably says much more about the presence of a desirable set of traits than it does about how those traits are expressed.

Examples help to illustrate this dilemma for all of the concepts in the model. But some of the most vivid examples concern the expression of involvement and empowerment in high power distance countries. One career ex-patriot Citibank executive told this story about taking a new job in Riyadh to help revitalize a Saudi-Pakistani joint venture bank:

*Each day, when I went in, everyone who was working in the area outside my office would stand up and salute. The first day I was honored, but it soon became annoying. One day, I left something in my car and had to go back out to get it, and then come back in. Each time they stood up and saluted! Up, down, up, down—how were we supposed to get anything done? When I told them not to stand up and salute when I came in, they obeyed, but I had hurt their feelings. They saw this as conveying respect, not subservience,*

*and were a bit insulted that their attempt to honor me had been rebuffed. It took me some time to recover. My admonition that we were “all working together as a team” was confusing to them—I was moving too far too fast. Only then did I understand the true challenge that I faced.*

Expressing regard for cultural diversity itself can also vary across cultures. A Dutchman who ran Hewlett-Packard Tech Support call centers in Amsterdam that operated in 38 languages contributed this story about visiting corporate headquarters:

*When I first went to work in California, I would describe the way that we worked in Amsterdam, by saying things like, “well the Italians did it this way, and the Germans did it that way, and the French did it their own way—what a mess,” and then we would laugh and sort things out. But before long, one of the American managers pulled me aside and said, “Stop saying that—it is offensive to all of us.” I was really confused until I realized that Europeans naturally explain everything in terms of nationality, whereas Americans rarely speak directly about national differences at work.*

Considering the results from these two studies does help to identify future targets for research. A focus on industries such as retail or hospitality that have comparable operating units in many locations and comparable measures of their performance would offer several advantages. It would offer a point of reference for understanding differences between countries, plus a way to move beyond the subjective measures of effectiveness used in the studies reported in this chapter. Choosing several multinational corporations with different national origins, but a common presence in different national contexts, would also provide an important point of comparison.

For global leaders, these studies provide an interesting point of reference for the choices they make about building their

organizations and their cultures. The findings suggest that a common perspective on organizational culture may indeed be possible in multinational corporations. Furthermore, these characteristics can be measured and tracked and appear to have a somewhat predictable impact on effectiveness. Nonetheless, the discussion of these results also emphasizes that the *way in which these traits are expressed* varies greatly across national

cultures. This additional complexity paints a clear, yet challenging picture of the challenges facing a global leader—attempting to create a common set of organizational traits that are expressed in different ways in different national contexts.



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**Universidad de La Sabana**

**Escuela Internacional de Ciencias Económicas y Administrativas**

**Grupo de Investigación  
“Cambio e Innovación Tecnológica”**

**Proyecto de Investigación:  
“Cultura Organizacional,  
Desempeño e Innovación  
en Empresas Bogotanas”**

**Rafael Ricardo Bray  
Investigador Principal**

**Ignacio Gómez Roldán  
Investigador Asociado**

**Caso  
OSP**

**Enero de 2008**

## 1. Introducción

El presente documento muestra en primer lugar los elementos básicos del proyecto sobre cultura organizacional, desempeño e innovación en empresas bogotanas. En especial, se incluye una síntesis del modelo teórico que sustenta la encuesta de cultura organizacional de Denison (Organizational Culture Survey). Este instrumento se utiliza para obtener la información cuyo análisis e interpretación permite construir el perfil cultural organizacional. En segundo lugar, aparece la descripción del perfil cultural de OSP, que se obtuvo a partir de la aplicación de la encuesta de cultura organizacional de Denison.

## 2. Resumen del Proyecto

- La cultura es un factor determinante y explicativo, entre otros, del desempeño organizacional, y en especial, de los procesos y resultados de los esfuerzos de innovación.
- La cultura es compartida, y por ello puede utilizarse para la comprensión y la interpretación de los fenómenos colectivos organizacionales, tales como el desempeño.
- La cultura influye en el comportamiento de los miembros, y por lo tanto en el desempeño de las organizaciones. Al respecto, la literatura ha documentado empíricamente una variedad de resultados de desempeño organizacional que se relacionan con la cultura.
- Las anteriores consideraciones llevan a plantear la conveniencia de realizar el diagnóstico científico de las culturas de las organizaciones colombianas en aras de conocer su influencia en el comportamiento de sus miembros y en su desempeño en función de los resultados esperados, y en especial de los procesos y de los resultados en innovación.
- El diagnóstico científico de las culturas organizacionales es fundamental para una correcta administración de dichas culturas.
- La administración de la cultura en función del alto desempeño organizacional se ha convertido en una competencia gerencial crítica para alcanzar mayor competitividad en el entorno de la globalización.

## 3. Objetivos

El presente proyecto busca los siguientes objetivos:

### 3.1. Objetivo General

Estudiar la cultura en las organizaciones bogotanas, identificar su impacto en el desempeño y la innovación, y formular recomendaciones para la administración de la cultura en las organizaciones.

### 3.2. Objetivos Específicos

- Identificar los perfiles culturales existentes en una muestra de organizaciones bogotanas a partir de la aplicación de una encuesta sobre cultura organizacional de Denison (Denison Organizational Culture Survey).
- Verificar de acuerdo al modelo de Denison la existencia de las características básicas de la cultura organizacional en una muestra de empresas bogotanas.
- Evaluar el impacto de las características de los perfiles culturales de las empresas de dicha muestra en un conjunto de variables críticas que miden el desempeño organizacional.

- Proponer y sustentar principios y recomendaciones para la *Administración de Culturas Corporativas* en el ámbito de las empresas bogotanas, que propicien el mejoramiento del desempeño organizacional, y en especial de los procesos de innovación y sus resultados.

#### 4. Propósitos

Con la realización de este proyecto se pretende contribuir a:

1. Al mejoramiento de la administración de la cultura en las organizaciones colombianas en pro de su mejor desempeño.
2. Al avance de la teoría organizacional y de la teoría administrativa.
3. Al mejoramiento de la enseñanza y del aprendizaje de la teoría organizacional y de la teoría administrativa en los programas de formación de administradores.
4. A la formación de futuros docentes e investigadores.
5. Al desarrollo académico de La Universidad de La Sabana y de la Escuela Internacional de Ciencias Económicas y Administrativas.

#### 5. Metodología

Esta investigación de tipo descriptivo correlacional se realizará con un grupo de 50 empresas de la ciudad de Bogotá, consideradas como empresas medianas y pequeñas.

En tales empresas se aplicará la encuesta cerrada de cultura organizacional elaborada por Daniel Denison y asociados (la versión en español del OCS: Organizational Culture Survey) a una muestra representativa de los miembros de cada organización participante en el estudio.

La encuesta de Denison ha sido diseñada para generar un análisis directo, sistémico y comprensible de la cultura organizacional por medio de la evaluación de los comportamientos o prácticas que influyen en el desempeño. Se entiende por evaluación el método sistemático que se aplica para obtener evidencias por medio de pruebas, exámenes, cuestionarios, encuestas y otras fuentes colaterales que permitan establecer inferencias sobre las características de un objeto o fenómeno en función de un propósito específico. Para el caso de esta investigación, la encuesta registra las percepciones de cada miembro sobre 60 comportamientos o prácticas específicos que manifiestan los índices constituyentes de las características básicas del perfil cultural de su organización.

De acuerdo con las ciencias cognitivas, se define la percepción como el proceso mental de adquisición, interpretación, selección y organización de información sensorial. La percepción de un individuo particular recibe las influencias de una variedad de factores que incluyen la intensidad y las dimensiones físicas de los estímulos, las experiencias pasadas, y factores de atención tales como la disponibilidad para responder a los estímulos, y la motivación y el estado emocional. Esta encuesta no solo se enfoca en los comportamientos o prácticas internos, sino que también examina los comportamientos o prácticas que definen las interacciones de la organización con el entorno.

Para cada una de las cuatro características culturales básicas el modelo define tres índices, y posteriormente mide cada uno de los doce índices resultantes con cinco ítems o preguntas. Cada ítem evalúa un comportamiento o práctica específico para un total de 60. Una vez tabulada la información, se obtuvieron los promedios de los puntajes recogidos en las encuestas que respondieron los miembros de las empresas de la muestra, por características culturales, índices, ítems e indicadores de desempeño

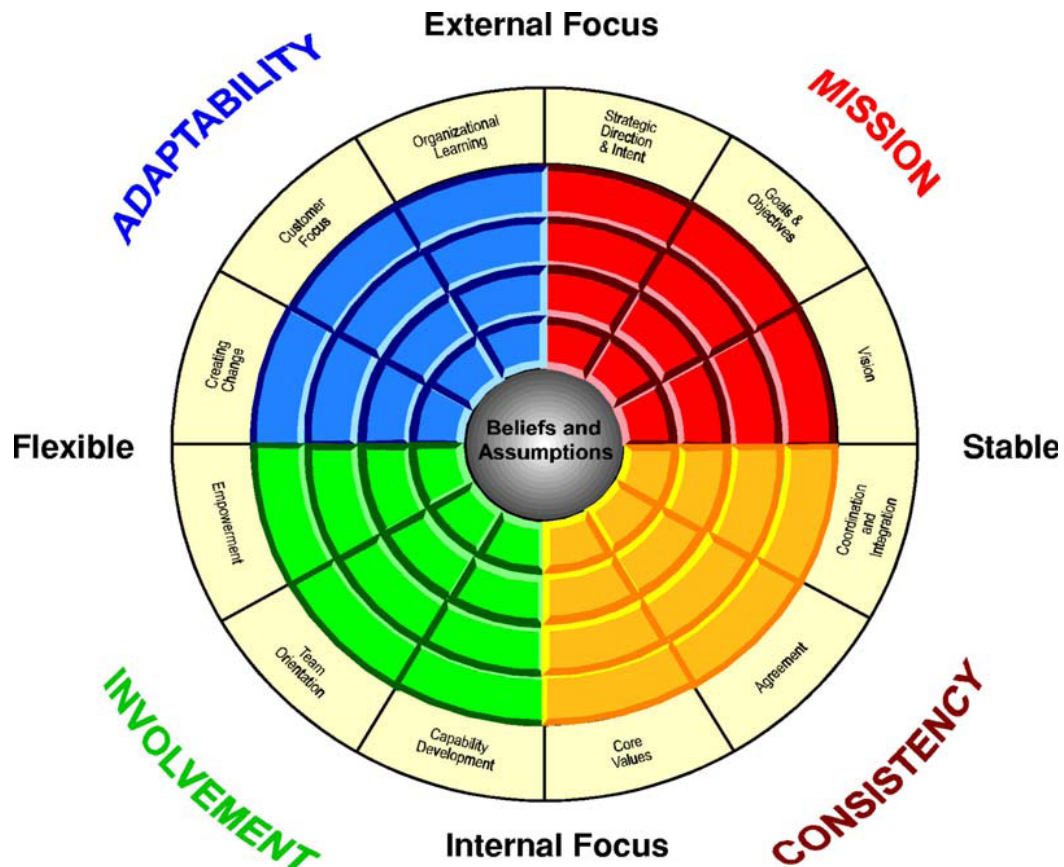
Los directivos de OSP aceptaron que su empresa participara en el presente estudio. Para el efecto, se aplicó la encuesta a todos sus 74 miembros. Su base de datos será incorporada a la gran base de datos de la muestra de empresas bogotanas sin mostrar la información específica por empresa. Una vez descrito el modelo de Denison, se presenta el perfil cultural de OPEN CARD S.A.

## 6. El Modelo de Denison para el Diagnóstico Científico de la Cultura Organizacional en Función del Desempeño

La visión tradicional afirma que la cultura está compuesta por una serie de supuestos y creencias compartidas por los miembros organizacionales sobre los clientes, competidores, empleados, proveedores, accionistas y otros. Según Denison, esos supuestos y creencias no permanecen ocultos, sino que se manifiestan en una serie de comportamientos visibles hacia esos grupos. Dado que son observables, esos comportamientos pueden ser medidos, cuantificados y correlacionados con variables de resultados críticos para el desempeño organizacional.

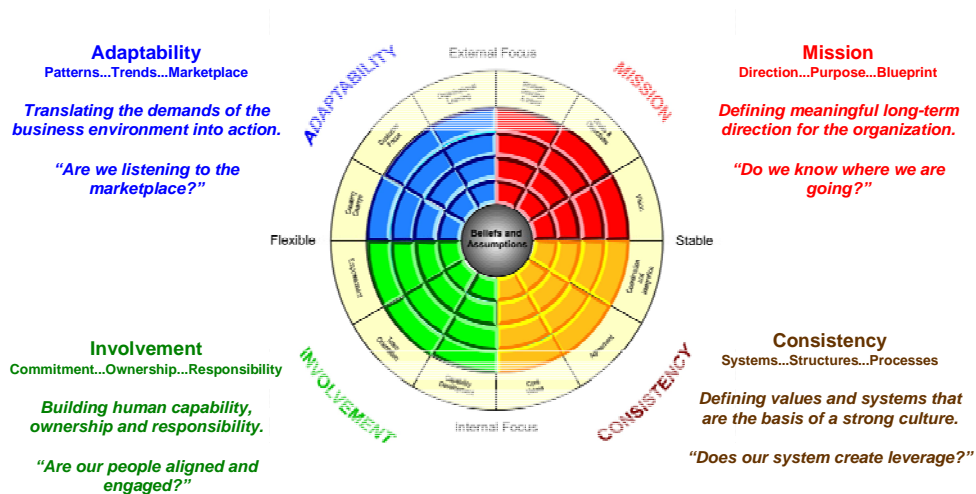
Por las razones anteriores, Denison ha desarrollado, en sus propias palabras, un modelo de cultura organizacional basado en el comportamiento; diseñado y creado dentro del entorno de los negocios; expuesto en el lenguaje que se utiliza en el manejo de asuntos de negocios; articulado a los resultados de gestión; rápido y fácil de aplicar; y aplicable a todos los niveles de cualquier organización. En síntesis, el modelo describe y aplica una teoría de la cultura organizacional que se articula al desempeño de la empresa desde una perspectiva gerencial orientada, naturalmente, a resultados críticos para la supervivencia y viabilidad de las organizaciones.

El modelo de cultura organizacional de Denison se basa en cuatro características culturales que han mostrado tener una fuerte influencia sobre el desempeño organizacional: involucramiento (involvement), consistencia, adaptabilidad, y misión. Denison enfatiza la asociación positiva entre estas características culturales y el desempeño total de las empresas. Cada una de estas características se mide a través de tres índices, y cada uno de estos índices se mide a través de cinco ítems de cuestionario. De esta manera, el cuestionario abarca un total de 60 ítems. Este modelo se ha desarrollado a partir de investigaciones realizadas durante más de 15 años en más de 3,000 organizaciones y con más de 100,000 personas encuestadas



## Overview of the Denison Model

The Denison Model is based on four key concepts:



El modelo de Denison primero recoge información de miembros de varios niveles de la organización sobre sus percepciones de la cultura organizacional, tal como se manifiesta a través de sus acciones y actividades. Posteriormente, los datos se describen por medio de un modelo bidimensional que destaca los asuntos cruciales del enfoque interno versus el enfoque externo y de la flexibilidad versus la estabilidad y sus impactos en el desempeño y viabilidad de la organización. Estas dos dimensiones deben verse más como transacciones (tradeoffs) relativas antes que opciones radicales, dado que tanto un enfoque interno como un enfoque externo son necesarios para el éxito de los negocios, al igual que tanto la flexibilidad como la estabilidad. Este modelo de cultura organizacional es un mecanismo que facilita la generalización, sin descartar la peculiaridad de cada organización. De esta manera se pueden establecer comparaciones entre diversas organizaciones.

Una vez una organización aplica el cuestionario de diagnóstico cultural, puede identificar áreas de mejoramiento y diseñar un curso de acción que le ayude a corregir debilidades y a acentuar sus fortalezas culturales. Dado el caso, por ejemplo, se puede diseñar un plan de acción que fortalezca aquellas características que fomentan la innovación y la respuesta ágil y efectiva a los cambios en el entorno organizacional.

A continuación se describen esas cuatro características culturales:





### 6.1. Involucramiento (Involvement)

Las organizaciones efectivas facultan a su gente, se construyen a sí mismas alrededor de los equipos, y desarrollan la capacidad humana a todos los niveles. Los miembros de la organización están comprometidos con su trabajo y sienten que poseen una parte de la organización. Las personas, a todos los niveles, sienten que tienen al menos alguna influencia en las decisiones que afectan sus trabajos y que estos están directamente conectados con los objetivos de la organización. Esta característica se mide con tres índices:

*Facultamiento (Empowerment).* Los individuos tienen autoridad, iniciativa y habilidad para administrar su propio trabajo. Esto crea un sentido de propiedad y responsabilidad hacia la organización.

*Orientación al Equipo.* Se valora el trabajo cooperativo en función de los objetivos comunes, de los cuales todos los empleados se sienten responsables. La organización confía en el esfuerzo de los equipos para que se haga el trabajo.

*Desarrollo de Capacidades.* La organización invierte continuamente en el desarrollo de las habilidades de los empleados con el propósito de mantener y mejorar la competitividad y satisfacer las necesidades actuales del negocio.

### 6.2. Consistencia.

Las organizaciones son efectivas en razón de su consistencia e integración interna. El comportamiento de las personas se fundamenta en un conjunto de valores centrales (core values), los líderes y sus seguidores poseen la habilidad de lograr acuerdos (aún cuando existan diversos puntos de vista), y las actividades de la organización están bien coordinadas e integradas. Las organizaciones que poseen esta característica tienen una cultura distintiva y fuerte que influye significativamente en el comportamiento de las personas. Un sistema compartido de creencias y valores funciona como un sistema de control internalizado. La consistencia es entonces una fuente poderosa de estabilidad e integración interna que resulta de un marco mental (mindset) común y de un alto grado de conformidad. Esta característica se mide con los siguientes índices:

*Valores Centrales.* Los miembros de la organización comparten un conjunto de valores que crean un sentido de identidad y un conjunto claro de expectativas.

*Acuerdo.* Los miembros de la organización son capaces de lograr acuerdos en asuntos críticos. Esto incluye tanto el nivel subyacente del acuerdo como la habilidad de reconciliar diferencias cuando ellas ocurran.

*Coordinación e Integración.* Diferentes funciones y unidades de la organización son capaces de trabajar juntos bien para lograr sus objetivos comunes. Las fronteras organizacionales no interfieren con la realización del trabajo.

### 6.3. Adaptabilidad.

Las organizaciones adaptables son impulsadas por sus clientes, asumen riesgos y aprenden de sus errores, y tienen capacidad y experiencia en la creación del cambio. Estas organizaciones están continuamente mejorando su capacidad de entregar valor a sus clientes. Las organizaciones fuertes en adaptabilidad generalmente experimentan crecimiento en las ventas y de su porción de mercado. Esta característica se mide con los siguientes tres índices: *Creación de Cambio*. La organización es capaz de generar estrategias adaptativas que sirvan para enfrentar necesidades cambiantes. También es capaz de “leer” el ambiente de negocios, reaccionar rápidamente a las tendencias actuales y anticipar cambios futuros.

*Enfoque en el cliente*. La organización entiende y responde a sus clientes y anticipa sus futuras necesidades. Esto refleja el grado hasta el cual la organización es impulsada por la preocupación de satisfacer a sus clientes.

*Aprendizaje Organizacional*. La organización recibe, traduce, e interpreta las señales del entorno y las transforma en oportunidades de estímulo a la innovación, ganancia de conocimiento, y desarrollo de capacidades.

### 6.4. Misión

Tal vez la característica cultural más importante sea el sentido de misión. Las organizaciones que no saben para donde se dirigen terminan generalmente en cualquier parte. Las organizaciones exitosas tienen un claro sentido de propósito y una dirección que define las metas organizacionales y los objetivos estratégicos y que expresa la visión de lo que la organización quiere ser en el futuro. Esta característica se mide a través de los siguientes índices:

*Dirección e Intención Estratégicas*. Claras intenciones estratégicas comunican el propósito de la organización y explicitan la contribución de cada miembro y cómo cada quien puede dejar su huella.

*Metas y Objetivos*. Un conjunto claro de metas y objetivos se articula a la misión, la visión, y la estrategia, y le suministra a cada quien una clara dirección para su trabajo.

*Visión*. La organización posee una visión compartida de un estado futuro deseado. Ella incluye los valores centrales y captura los corazones y las mentes de los miembros de la organización, al mismo tiempo que les da guía y dirección.

### 6.5. Administración de Tensiones Culturales

El modelo de Denison se enfoca sobre un conjunto de tensiones o contradicciones que hay que administrar. Algunas de ellas son la tensión entre estabilidad y flexibilidad y entre enfoque interno y enfoque externo. Estas tensiones son las dimensiones básicas que subyacen al modelo. Adicionalmente, se presentan las tensiones diagonales entre consistencia interna y adaptación, y entre la misión definida desde arriba en la jerarquía y el compromiso que se genera desde abajo.

En el núcleo del modelo, de acuerdo con Schein, están las creencias y supuestos subyacentes. Aunque estos niveles más profundos de la cultura organizacional son más difíciles de medir, ellos constituyen la fuente donde se originan el comportamiento y acción de los miembros organizacionales. Las creencias y los supuestos acerca de la organización y su gente, el cliente, el mercado y la industria, y las propuestas de valor básicas de la firma crean una lógica compacta que mantiene a la organización firmemente unida.

El Involucramiento y la Consistencia enfrentan la dinámica interna de la organización pero no la interacción de la organización con el ambiente externo. En contraste, la Adaptabilidad y la Misión se enfocan en las relaciones entre la organización y el ambiente externo.

De otro lado, el Involucramiento y la Adaptabilidad enfatizan la capacidad de la organización para la flexibilidad y el cambio. Por el contrario, la Consistencia y la Misión enfatizan la capacidad para la estabilidad y la dirección. Un sistema organizacional orientado a la adaptabilidad y el involucramiento introducirá más variedad, más insumos y más soluciones posibles en una situación dada que un sistema orientado hacia un alto nivel de consistencia y un fuerte sentido de misión. En contraste, un sesgo hacia la consistencia y la misión reducirá la variedad y colocará un mayor énfasis en control y estabilidad.

## 6.6. Características Culturales y Desempeño Organizacional

Denison estudió la correlación entre las características culturales del modelo (Involucramiento, Consistencia, Adaptabilidad y Misión) y un conjunto de medidas de efectividad organizacional. Al respecto, Misión y Consistencia (Estabilidad) impactan medidas de desempeño financiero tales como retorno sobre activos, retorno sobre inversión y retorno sobre ventas. En cuanto a Involucramiento y Adaptabilidad (Flexibilidad), estas características impactan el desarrollo de productos y la innovación. Esto típicamente significa mayores niveles de innovación en productos y servicios y creatividad, al igual que una respuesta rápida a las cambiantes necesidades de clientes y empleados. En referencia a Adaptabilidad y Misión (Enfoque Externo), ellas impactan el ingreso y el crecimiento en las ventas y en la participación de mercado. Por su parte, Involucramiento y Consistencia (Foco Interno) reflejan su efecto en indicadores de calidad, retorno sobre inversión y satisfacción de los empleados.

### The Denison Organizational Culture Model and Organizational Performance Indicators



La siguiente tabla resume los impactos de la cultura en las variables críticas del desempeño organizacional:

Denison's Findings

Profitability/ Return on Assets	Revenue Growth/ Sales Growth	Market Share	Innovation	Quality of Products & Services	Employee Satisfaction
<i>supported by</i> Mission	<i>supported by</i> Mission	<i>supported by</i> Mission	<i>supported by</i>	<i>supported by</i>	<i>supported by</i> [Mission]
			Involvement	Involvement	Involvement
	Adaptability	Adaptability	Adaptability		[Adaptability]
				Consistency	Consistency

Source: Denison, D.R., & Neale, W.S. (1996). Denison organizational culture survey: Facilitators guide. Ann Arbor, MI: Aviat.

Aunque, por lo general, las cuatro características culturales del modelo tienen un impacto positivo en el desempeño organizacional, al menos en la superficie, algunas de ellas puede

parecer que contradicen a otras. Por ejemplo, culturas consistentes en grado extremo pueden llegar a ser muy cerradas y volverse muy resistentes al cambio. En contraste, las culturas muy adaptables pueden tener problemas en el logro de altas metas de eficiencia y de sentido compartido de propósito que se encuentra a menudo en culturas bien integradas. De manera semejante, la misión y el compromiso pueden parecer contradictorias: el sentido y la dirección establecidos por la misión organizacional pueden limitar el compromiso de algunos miembros organizacionales. Tal como muchas organizaciones han descubierto, la simple declaración de una nueva misión organizacional no implica necesariamente el apoyo y el compromiso de los miembros organizacionales. Por la misma razón, el alto compromiso entre los miembros organizacionales no implica necesariamente un sentido claro de dirección y propósito.

No obstante lo anterior, según Denison, la cultura de una organización efectiva debe incluir las cuatro características representadas en el modelo aquí descrito. Así pues, una organización efectiva ha de tener una cultura que sea adaptativa, pero también muy consistente y predecible. De la misma manera, dicha cultura debe estimular un alto compromiso en el contexto de un sentido compartido de misión.

## 7. El Perfil Cultural de OSP

Una vez tabulada la información recogida de 31 miembros de la empresa a través de la aplicación de la encuesta de cultura organizacional de Denison (Denison Organizational Culture Survey), se obtuvieron los promedios estadísticos por característica (trait), sesgos o tendencias verticales y horizontales, índices, ítems e indicadores de desempeño. A nivel de ítem, los encuestados tuvieron cinco opciones posibles de respuesta de acuerdo con el diferencial semántico de Likert, tal como se indica a continuación:

Muy en desacuerdo	En desacuerdo	Neutral	De acuerdo	Totalmente de acuerdo
1	2	3	4	5

Una escala de clasificación, como el diferencial semántico de Likert, se puede definir como una agrupación de planteamientos, palabras o símbolos que facilitan el registro de la fuerza de una variable particular. El valor de la escala de Likert es la ordinalidad clara de las categorías de respuesta y su capacidad para medir la intensidad de los diferentes ítems.

En consecuencia, los promedios que se presentan a continuación se despliegan en un rango de 1,0 a 5,0. Para este reporte se hace una presentación descriptiva del perfil. Se espera que una vez conocido este perfil cultural, al interior de la empresa se suscite un diálogo y una reflexión que faciliten el intercambio de posibles interpretaciones y la adopción de estrategias para el fortalecimiento del perfil cultural de OSP

### 7.1. Características y Sesgos Culturales

El gráfico 1 recoge los promedios de las cuatro características básicas y de los cuatro sesgos o tendencias posibles del perfil cultural de OSP. El promedio para cada característica se construyó a partir de los promedios de sus respectivos índices. A su vez, el promedio de cada índice se elaboró a partir de los promedios de sus respectivos ítems. En el caso de los sesgos, sus promedios se produjeron a partir de los promedios de las características que los sustentan. Los promedios de los sesgos se utilizaron para obtener el gran promedio de promedios cuyo valor es 3.67. Este promedio se puede usar para comparar los promedios relativos por característica, índice e ítem.

## Gráfico 1. Características y Sesgos Culturales

### Análisis del Perfil Cultural de OSP

		<i>External focus</i> 3,73		
	<u>ADAPTABILITY</u> 3,75		<u>MISSION</u> 3,71	
<i>Flexible</i> 3,74		<i>beliefs and assumptions</i>		<i>Stable</i> 3,596
	<u>INVOLVEMENT</u> 3,74		<u>CONSISTENCY</u> 3,48	
		<i>Internal focus</i> 3,61		

Aunque todos los promedios son modestos frente al mejor resultado posible, 5.0, se puede destacar que las características culturales más fuerte de OSP son adaptabilidad con 3,75, seguida por involucramiento con 3,74.

En consideración a lo anterior, los resultados obtenidos, aunque todavía modestos, dan a entender que OSP ha realizado un avance importante en la clarificación de su orientación estratégica adecuándose al entorno y que posee ya un potencial de valor apreciable en la postura actitudinal de sus colaboradores.

En las actuales circunstancias el perfil cultural de OSP se inclina hacia el sesgo de foco externo con 3.73 y flexibilidad con 3.74.

### 7.2. Índices e Ítems

A continuación aparecen cuatro tablas que desglosan los promedios obtenidos por las características del perfil cultural de OSP, y sus respectivos índices y los ítems que conforman cada índice. Se destacan en color azul los siete ítems que obtuvieron los máximos promedios, al igual que se resaltan en color rojo los siete ítems que arrojaron los mínimos promedios.

Tabla 1

<b>INVOLUCRAMIENTO</b>	<b>3,74</b>		
<b>FACULTAMIENTO</b>	<b>3,66</b>		
1. La mayoría de los empleados se involucran activamente en su trabajo.	4,13	MA	
2. Las decisiones se toman en el nivel en donde se encuentra la información más adecuada.	3,50		
3. La información se comparte ampliamente para que esté disponible para todos cuando la necesiten.	3,25		ME
4. Todos piensan que pueden producir un impacto positivo.	3,84		
5. La planificación empresarial es un proceso continuo que involucra a todos en cierto grado.	3,59		
<b>ORIENTACIÓN AL EQUIPO</b>	<b>3,88</b>		
6. Se alienta activamente la cooperación de todos en los diferentes niveles de la organización.	3,78		
7. Las personas trabajan en equipo.	3,88		
8. Las tareas se completan gracias al trabajo en equipo, no a la jerarquía o a los jefes que vigilan.	4,25	MA	
9. Los equipos de trabajo son nuestros componentes primarios o básicos.	3,84		
10. El trabajo se organiza de forma que cada persona pueda ver la relación que existe entre sus funciones individuales y las metas de la organización.	3,66		
<b>DESARROLLO DE CAPACIDADES</b>	<b>3,68</b>		
11. La autoridad se delega para que las personas puedan actuar por cuenta propia.	3,81		
12. La capacidad de las personas está mejorando constantemente.	3,97		
13. La empresa invierte continuamente para mejorar las destrezas de los empleados.	3,31		ME
14. Las capacidades de las personas son una fuente importante de ventajas para la empresa que le ayudan a competir mejor.	4,31	MA	
15. A menudo ocurren problemas porque no tenemos las destrezas necesarias para realizar el trabajo.	3,00		ME

Tabla 2

<b>CONSISTENCIA</b>	<b>3,48</b>		
<b>VALORES CENTRALES-FUNDAMENTALES</b>	<b>3,87</b>		
16. Los líderes y gerentes hacen lo que dicen.	3,28		ME
17. Existe un estilo gerencial característico y un conjunto específico de prácticas gerenciales.	3,47		
18. Existe un conjunto de valores claros y consistentes que gobiernen nuestras prácticas empresariales.	3,44		
19. Si ignoramos nuestros valores básicos nos metemos en un aprieto.	3,78		
20. Existe un código de ética que guía nuestro comportamiento y nos indica lo que debemos y no debemos hacer.	3,59		
<b>ACUERDO</b>	<b>3,49</b>		
21. Cuando hay desacuerdos, trabajamos con ahínco para obtener soluciones de beneficio mutuo.	3,44		
22. Existe una cultura sólida.	3,31		ME
23. Es fácil ponerse de acuerdo en la empresa incluso frente a problemas difíciles.	3,56		
24. A menudo tenemos problemas para llegar a un acuerdo sobre asuntos clave.	3,66		
25. Existe un acuerdo claro sobre la forma correcta e incorrecta de hacer las cosas.	3,47		
<b>COORDINACIÓN E INTEGRACIÓN</b>	<b>3,44</b>		
26. La metodología que seguimos en nuestro negocio es consistente y predecible.	3,31		ME
27. Las personas que están en diferentes partes de la organización comparten una perspectiva común.	3,41		

28. Es fácil coordinar proyectos entre las diferentes partes de la organización.	3,47		
29. El trabajar con una persona que está en otra parte de esta organización es como trabajar con una persona de otra organización.	3,41		
30. Las metas están alineadas en todos los niveles.	3,63		

Tabla 3

<b>ADAPTABILIDAD</b>	<b>3,75</b>		
<b>CREACIÓN DEL CAMBIO</b>	<b>3,71</b>		
31. La forma de hacer las cosas es muy flexible y se puede cambiar fácilmente.	3,69		
32. Respondemos bien a la competencia y a otros cambios en el entorno comercial.	3,94		
33. Continuamente se adoptan métodos nuevos y mejorados para realizar el trabajo.	3,66		
34. Generalmente hay resistencia a las iniciativas que surgen para realizar cambios.	3,50		
35. Las diferentes partes de la organización generalmente cooperan entre sí para realizar cambios.	3,78		
<b>ENFOQUE EN EL CLIENTE</b>	<b>3,84</b>		
36. Los comentarios y recomendaciones de los clientes a menudo producen cambios.	3,81		
37. Las sugerencias de los clientes influyen nuestras decisiones.	3,78		
38. Todos los miembros comprenden a fondo los deseos y las necesidades de los clientes.	3,75		
39. Nuestras decisiones generalmente ignoran los intereses de los clientes.	4,00		
40. Alentamos el contacto directo entre nuestra gente y los clientes.	3,84		
<b>APRENDIZAJE ORGANIZACIONAL</b>	<b>3,69</b>		
41. Vemos nuestras fallas como una oportunidad para aprender y mejorar.	4,03	MA	
42. Se alienta y recompensa el innovar y tomar riesgos.	3,84		
43. Muchos detalles importantes pasan desapercibidos.	3,13		ME
44. El aprendizaje es un objetivo importante en nuestras labores cotidianas.	4,03	MA	
45. Nos aseguramos de que "la mano derecha sepa lo que hace la izquierda".	3,41		



Tabla 4

<b>MISIÓN</b>	<b>3,71</b>		
<b>DIRECCIÓN E INTENCIÓN ESTRATÉGICA</b>	<b>3,85</b>		
46. Existe dirección y un propósito a largo plazo.	4,00		
47. Nuestra estrategia obliga a otras organizaciones a cambiar su método de competencia en la industria.	3,41		
48. Existe una misión clara que le da significado y dirección a nuestro trabajo.	4,03	MA	
49. Existe una clara estrategia para el futuro.	3,94		
50. No es clara nuestra dirección estratégica.	3,88		
<b>OBJETIVOS Y METAS</b>	<b>3,71</b>		
51. Existe un acuerdo generalizado sobre nuestras metas.	3,63		
52. Nuestros líderes fijan metas ambiciosas, pero realistas.	3,81		
53. Nuestra dirigencia ha comunicado oficialmente los objetivos que intentamos alcanzar.	3,47		
54. Seguimos continuamente nuestro progreso en relación a las metas que hemos establecido.	3,81		
55. Las personas comprenden lo que hay que hacer para que seamos exitosos a largo plazo.	3,81		
<b>VISIÓN</b>	<b>3,58</b>		
56. Compartimos una visión común acerca de cómo será la organización en el futuro.	3,66		
57. Nuestros líderes tienen una visión a largo plazo.	4,16	MA	
58. Las ideas a corto plazo a menudo comprometen nuestra visión a largo plazo.	3,06		ME
59. Nuestra visión estimula y motiva a nuestros empleados.	3,56		
60. Cumplimos nuestras exigencias a corto plazo sin comprometer nuestra visión a largo plazo.	3,44		

## 8. Indicadores de Desempeño de la Empresa

En cuanto a la percepción sobre el desempeño de la empresa, se obtuvieron los siguientes promedios:

Tabla 5

DESEMPEÑO	3,63		ME
61. Crecimiento en ventas e ingresos	3,66		ME
62. Porcentaje de mercado	3,38		ME
63. Rentabilidad y rendimiento del activo	3,56		ME
64. Calidad de productos y servicios	3,94	MA	
65. Desarrollo de nuevos productos y/o servicios	3,91	MA	
66. Satisfacción de los empleados	3,31		ME
67. Rendimiento general de la empresa	3,69	MA	

El desempeño de la empresa visto con los parámetros que tienen los empleados para diagnosticar la cultura, da puntajes menores para los aspectos de desempeño de la organización, que para los aspecto de cultura, como se muestra en la tabla 5. Los mayores puntajes se observan en la calidad y desarrollo de nuevos productos y servicios. Destaca con el más bajo puntaje el indicador de satisfacción de los empleados (3,31).

Tanto los indicadores específicos como el relativo al rendimiento general de la empresa son modestos frente al máximo resultado posible, 5.0, de acuerdo con la percepción de los 31 encuestados. De una parte, los indicadores muestran los logros alcanzados, pero por otra, señalan el trabajo por hacer para obtener avances que fortalezcan el desempeño competitivo de la empresa.

## 9. Características innovadoras de la empresa

El cuestionario respondido por los miembros tiene una serie de preguntas adicionales sobre la innovación en la empresa. De los resultados obtenidos presentamos a continuación las respuestas a las preguntas 74 y 76.

Tabla 6

Pregunta 74	1. Poco innovadora	2. Medianamente innovadora	3. Satisfactoriamente innovadora	4. Altamente innovadora	5. La más innovadora del sector
Usted cree que su empresa es	0	0	19,4	71,0	9,7

El 100% de los encuestados, señalaron desde la opción 3 hasta la 5, o sea, que tienen una visión positiva del desempeño innovador de la empresa. Aún más, el 90% de los encuestados ubica a la empresa en las opciones 4 y 5.

Pregunta 76	1. Pocas de gran importancia	2. Pocas de pequeña importancia	3. Muchas de pequeña importancia	4. Muchas de pequeña importancia y pocas de gran importancia	5. Muchas de gran importancia
Usted piensa que las innovaciones en su empresa son	41,9	0,0	0,0	6,5	51,6

Si se suman las respuestas a las opciones 1 y 5, el 94% de los encuestados atribuye gran importancia a las innovaciones de la empresa, sean éstas muchas o pocas. Debe destacarse que un poco más de la mitad de los encuestados piensa que las innovaciones que se hacen en la organización son muchas e importantes.

### **Conclusiones**

Conviene que sea dentro de un dialogo reflexivo dentro de la empresa que se y discutan los resultados obtenidos, teniendo en cuenta el relativo grado de coherencia entre lo que hubiesen esperado obtener y los resultados arrojados por la encuesta. Se recomienda analizar los mayores y menores puntajes obtenidos en los diferentes ítems, índices y características confrontándolos con el marco teórico.

El aprovechamiento del perfil de cultura organizacional radica en el análisis de los resultados que son mucho más que una lectura de los porcentajes de de las opciones de respuesta. Radica en el examen y diálogo dentro de las directivas de la empresa para poder lograr un mayor aprovechamiento de los recursos y las fortalezas culturales de los miembros de la organización

# Chapter 15

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## **Organizational Culture: Can it be a Key Lever for Driving Organizational Change?**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

The topic of organization culture often presents two contradictory images. The first view presents culture as “the glue that holds the organization together”, and as a central part of the change process. This image has many precedents in the applied academic and popular management literature and presents a compelling case for culture being considered a central aspect of any organizational change. This perspective typically introduces culture as a wholistic concept to help managers conceptualize the organizational systems they have created, to understand the natural and social environments to which they are adapting, and to see the link between individual behaviour and organizational contexts (Kotter and Heskett, 1992; Hofstede, 1980a,b; Senge, 1990; Schein, 1992).

The second image of culture, however, is not nearly so optimistic. This viewpoint presents culture as much less central to the change process. As one manager put it, “culture is a word we use to explain what happened when we don’t really know what happened”. In this sense, culture is merely a “marginal” explanation for what has happened – one that we use when we don’t know the real answer, or when we’ve already exhausted all the other important explanations (Abegglen and Stalk, 1985; Treacy and Weirsema, 1995).

To managers, this marginal perspective inevitably means that culture is something

that is “nice to have”, but clearly not a high priority. The academic literature on culture has often helped support this viewpoint by focusing on issues of epistemology over substance and by expressing insights in a form that is not always useful to managers who are searching for leverage during the change process (Denison, 1996; Brannen, 1999).

The approach described in this chapter has specifically tried to conceptualize organizational culture in a way that is useful for managers who are trying to create leverage during the change process. The chapter begins by discussing five important lessons about how to make the culture perspective relevant during the change process. Next, the focus turns to the culture framework that lies at the centre of this approach and presents a brief example of how the model can be applied to analyze an organization. This section is followed by an analysis of three organizations that have used this approach to guide their change process. The final section of the chapter returns to a discussion of the lessons learned about making organizational culture a key point of leverage during the change process.

## **MAKING CULTURE RELEVANT TO THE CHANGE PROCESS: FIVE IMPORTANT LESSONS**

This section outlines five lessons drawn from the author’s experience in trying to use culture as a source of leverage for organization change. These lessons also help articulate the set of priorities that are reflected in the culture framework that follows.

### **Taking the “Native’s Point of View” Seriously**

Much has been made in the academic literature on organizational culture of the importance of the “native’s point of view” – that is, an understanding of the meaning of the situation from the insider’s perspective. But while many academic writers have championed the native’s point of view, we often seem to forget some of the most important characteristics of the “tribes” of managers that we study. As a group our “target audience” has little choice but to be highly instrumental, focusing nearly all of its energy on “producing results”. In most cases, executives are highly time-constrained and outcome-oriented, and not very reflective. Thus, it is important to remember that they often do not have the time to understand the nuances of symbolic meaning that are most appealing to scholars.

It is ironic that a line of research that grew from a concern that organizational researchers should have more empathy for the people and the organizations that they study has not resulted in a body of knowledge that is more useful to the “natives”. The scholarly body of knowledge on organizational culture primarily addresses the epistemological concerns of the researchers themselves over the “best way” to study cultures rather the original concerns of the “natives” (Van Maanen, 1988; Martin, 1992). As a result, many of the concepts that we have developed to understand organizations don’t fit very well with the reality of the organizations. One is reminded of Kunda (1992) discussion in his book “Engineering Culture” of how cynical members of Digital

Equipment Company (DEC) began to describe their own organization using an analysis based on the academic jargon of the consultants and culture gurus who had worked with their organization.

The prime lesson seems clear: To provide leverage for organizational change, the insights of culture research must be presented in a form that makes sense to the members of the organization. The concepts and analytic strategies must be relevant to the narrow range of priorities of this “tribe”, and must be present in a style and form that are as instrumental as it is. The rich and inspired scholarly literature may be very useful for generating insights, but it is often not so useful for expressing those insights in a way that leads to action.

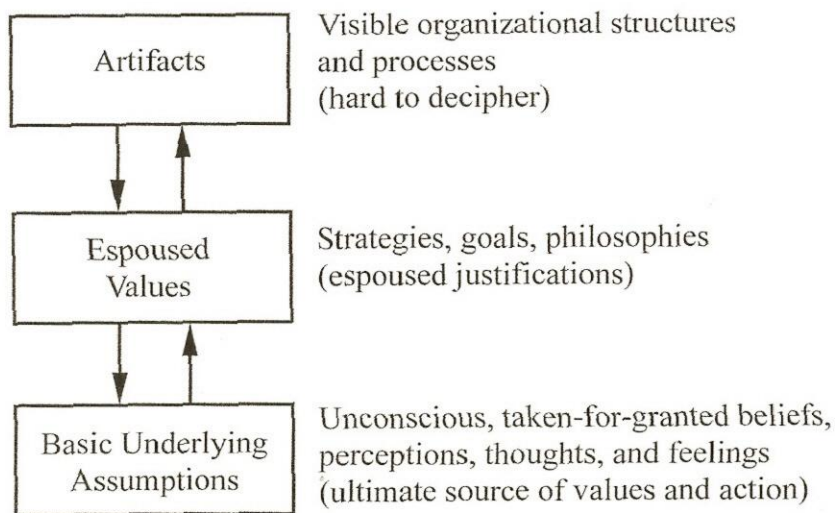
## Creating a Systems Perspective

Many of the basic insights of the culture perspective have been about organizational systems. Beginning with the functionalist anthropology of the 1930s (Weber, 1930; Mead, 1934; Radcliffe-Brown, 1952), culture researchers have been concerned with the issues of internal integration and meaning, as well as external adaptation (Schein, 1992). Trying to explain the joint goals of meaning, integration, and adaptation has led to a focus on topics such as symbols, social structure, language, technology, and cosmology. Human beings create instrumental social systems that “work” – at least for a while – and also create a related system of symbolic meaning that reinforces functional relationships. The systems we create also have lots of inertia – they tend to remain stable until something causes both the symbolic meaning system and the adaptation system to change at the same time.

Contemporary work on organizational culture, however, has taken a more cognitive orientation (Geertz, 1973; Weick, 1979). This perspective focuses on the assumptions and beliefs held by organizational members and their expression through language and symbolic meaning. One interesting example of the influence of the cognitive perspective among culture researchers can be drawn from Schein’s well-known model of the “levels” of organizational culture, presented in Figure 15.1.

Schein’s approach “divides” culture into three levels. He argued that basic underlying assumptions lie at the root of culture, and are “unconscious, taken-for-granted beliefs, perceptions, thoughts, and feelings”. Espoused values are derived from these basic underlying assumptions and are the “espoused justifications of strategies, goals, and philosophies”. Finally, at the top level are “artifacts” which are defined as the “visible, yet hard to decipher organizational structures and processes”.

Schein’s model has influenced a generation of culture researchers to think in terms of distinct levels of culture and to believe that basic underlying assumptions are the foundation for values and artifacts. To be fair, this model does in some ways present a systems perspective on culture that allows us to understand a set of interrelated concepts. But Schein’s model has also tended to lead researchers to take the idea of “levels of culture” a bit too seriously and often made it harder to see the linkage between levels. The perspective has tended to glorify basic assumptions as the true domain of culture without explaining their link to the more visible levels of culture.



**Figure 15.1** Schein's model of culture.

This approach has also tended to emphasize the search for understanding at the cognitive level and to de-emphasize the more visible levels of culture.

Several important questions also go unanswered by Schein's model. To whom are these basic assumptions "unconscious"? Insiders? Outsiders? What happens to underlying assumptions once organizational members become aware of them? Presumably, researchers are aware of these assumptions, while organizational members are not. But what about the assumptions that organizational members are aware of but researchers are not?

Schein's emphasis on "espoused values" also tends to limit our ability to see the links across levels. The emphasis on espoused values begs the question of the role of "values-in-use" in linking basic core assumptions with the actions of organizational members and the more visible manifestations of culture. Finally, Schein's approach has also tended to trivialize those visible layers of culture, labelled as "artifacts", that are judged to be "hard to decipher". In fact, artifacts are quite easily deciphered by organizational members, who spend most of their time dealing with "artifacts". Changes in processes, strategies, structures, and technologies are quickly interpreted by organizational members and consume lots of their time and energy. Many executives react to the concept of "artifacts" quite negatively because it seems to leave an image of organizational members sifting through meaningless artifacts trying to make sense of their organizations and their work lives.

One of the most entertaining examples of the tight linkage between underlying assumptions, values, and artifacts comes from Michael Rosen's article "Breakfast at Spiro's" (Rosen, 1985). This article describes the annual holiday party at a successful American advertising agency. The garish display of wealth, the lavish bonuses, and an opulent setting all build to a climax as aspiring junior partners are awarded the ultimate gift – a fine silk French-made *Hermes* men's necktie! The *Hermes* tie reveals that style and panaché are as important as wealth and success – an important set of values that bind the firm together. The insights about the culture come not from the analytic distinction between the different levels, but in the realization that assumptions, values, and artifacts all fit together.

Thus, the more powerful approach to take when trying to create organizational change is one that links underlying assumptions with values, behaviour, and visible manifestations. The insights that come from the distinctions between levels are far less powerful than the recognition of patterns across levels. It is also important to display a keen knowledge and regard for the visible manifestations of the culture, in hopes that this will lead to a better understanding of the underlying values and assumptions that they represent. Reasoning from the visible manifestations back to the underlying assumptions creates far more leverage for organizational change than starting with the assumptions themselves.

### **Providing a Comparative Benchmark, but Acknowledging Uniqueness**

The organizational culture literature has often argued strongly for the uniqueness of organizations and has been less comfortable with a comparative approach to research and action (Martin, 1992; Denison, 1996). This aspect of the culture perspective can also be a barrier to creating leverage for organizational change. For most practising managers, the assertion that all organizations are unique undermines the importance of culture. If all organizations are unique then the best answer that we can hope for is "it depends". Customers and shareholders compare organizations and their products every day. Thus, in their endless quest for "delivering results", relatively few managers can see beyond a "best practice" perspective on organizational culture. Even if there are many aspects of organizational cultures that cannot be compared, when the objective is to use culture as a lever for change, it is important to begin by focusing on aspects of culture that can be compared.

As Schein's model helps to illustrate, it can be quite difficult to make generalizations about organizational culture when dealing at the level of basic underlying assumptions. The basic assumptions that an organization's members hold are often unique to the history and circumstances under which the organization developed. In addition, it also can be difficult to generalize about organizations when dealing with the visible manifestations of culture such as artifacts. As a matter of fact, many people wear *Hermes* ties, but the artifacts and symbols mean different things in different settings.

Many authors have argued persuasively, however, that organizations can be compared at the "values" level of analysis. For example, O'Reilly et al (1991) and



his colleagues have used a values perspective to study the fit between individuals and organizations in public accounting firms. Perhaps the most interesting example of the power of using a comparative approach that focuses on values has been the cross-cultural work of Hofstede and of Trompenaars (Hofstede, 1980a,b; Hofstede et al, 1990; Trompenaars, 1994). Hofstede's work has focused on four well-known values of individualism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance and masculinity in his analysis of cross-cultural differences between organizations. His research links management and organizational practices with underlying values and assumptions and uses these dimensions to help understand similarities and differences in management practices around the world. His work has also focused on the importance of these same four traits for understanding differences among organizations (Hofstede et al, 1990). Trompenaars (1994) has also used values as a way to understand cross-cultural differences, by focusing on the way that members of different cultures resolve social dilemmas.

The approaches taken by Hofstede and Trompenaars are well accepted in the field of international business and have had a significant impact on practising managers. In contrast, the comparative approach has had far less acceptance among American culture researchers. Does anyone really believe that it is simpler to compare England and France than it is to compare Apple and IBM? The lesson here seems to be that a comparative approach to studying culture is not only viable, but that it is particularly valuable when the purpose is to motivate change.

### **Focus on Performance Implications**

As noted earlier, most executives are highly instrumental and are narrowly focused on delivering results. Academic concerns with epistemology and analytic insights often leave them cold. If executives address the topic of culture at all, it is usually to express frustration with the inability of their organization to implement change. They see the inertia of human behaviour as an obstacle to performance and efficiency. A much smaller proportion of leaders see culture as an important aspect of the capability of the human organization and as an expression of the knowledge that people have about their work.

Some managers, to be sure, do take a broader perspective on culture and its role in creating a motivating work environment. They may still be highly instrumental, but they are nonetheless clear that building a culture is one of the key means to the ends that they are trying to achieve. These executives are often quite reflective about their role as a leader, even as they are instrumental in their approach. Their intuitive belief that organizational culture makes a difference in business performance is supported by the brief literature that does link culture and performance (Denison, 1990; Denison and Mishra, 1995; Gordon and DiTomaso, 1992; Kotter and Heskett, 1992). But this perspective has not had much impact on the academic culture literature. Some academic authors have even argued that focusing culture research on organizational performance could have "socially pernicious" effects (Siehl and Martin, 1990), by presenting a way to conceptualize culture that is explicitly comparative and instrumental. But this research is quite helpful in convincing many leaders that understanding the

culture of their organization and the importance that it has to their business is worth their time.

Using culture as a key lever for organizational change requires a persuasive way to frame the problem for managers. It must address their legitimate concerns about the instrumental value of culture change. Three approaches seem to help: (1) making managers aware of the evidence that links culture and performance; (2) helping them to understand the impacts, both positive and negative, that culture has on their own business; and (3) discussing culture using language that makes sense to managers and can be quickly linked to their own behaviour.

### **Highlighting Symbols and Contradictions**

Studying organizational culture focuses our attention on both meaning and survival. As the members of an organization hand down what they have learned to the next generation, they pass along a curious mix of “what is meaningful”? and “what has led to our survival”? As Schein and others have noted, cultures need to simultaneously fulfil the functions of internal integration and meaning as well as external adaptation. As our example of the “Hermes tie” shows, symbols convey meaning about both integration and adaptation, often at the same time. Getting to know the system of symbols in an organization can increase the leverage for change. Organizational change requires change in both the meaning system and the adaptation system, and these changes are always expressed in terms of the symbols and language of the organization. While these symbols may not be apparent to an outsider, members of an organization can translate the insights of an outsider into a system of symbols that has meaning in the local culture. This can also be a powerful source for change.

To create change, it is also important to focus on the internal contradictions and paradoxes that exist in any organization. All organizations face contradictory demands such as speed and quality, global and local focus, individual and team rewards, and integrating the old and new. The “culture” in fact, can often be most clearly understood as a system of meaning that explains the adaptation strategy that an organization has chosen as a response to a host of contradictory demands. In addition, different factions of the organization often compete with ideas and information to impose their point of view on others in the firm.

An example from a rapidly-growing American computer company helps to illustrate. At its annual company Christmas party, the climax of an evening spent celebrating a year of spectacular growth came when hundreds of balloons were released. Inside each balloon was a new \$100 bill. Whoever scrambled the hardest got the most money. The interesting part of the story is that the company, while dominated by American sales people who had driven the growth (and planned the Christmas party!), had nearly its entire source of competitive advantage generated by the R&D function, which is located outside America. In addition, one of the biggest sources of growth was European expansion. But, the scramble to pop the most balloons and get the most money was led by the same American sales people who were driving the growth. The message, that individual self-interest binds us together, is an attempt to resolve a basic contradiction between the interests of the individual and the interests of the

team. But the message was perceived very differently by each of these groups and not equally shared by all.

Understanding paradox and contradiction is critical in creating change because change often implies finding new ways to reconcile old trade offs. Approaching the culture of an organization as a *logic* for the rich set of trade-offs that an organization has developed over time to help resolve the basic underlying contradictions helps in many ways. First, it helps to focus the discussion of the culture on an examination of the underlying contradictions and key trade-offs. Second, it helps to distinguish different sub-groups and sub-cultures and the sources of conflict on key organizational issues. Third, it helps to focus attention on how key underlying contradictions can be reconceptualized in the future.

These five lessons discussed here serve several purposes in this chapter. First, they are a statement of what the author has learned about using organizational culture as a point of leverage in creating change. As such, they build upon general prescriptions for creating change, such as “start at the top”, or “build a business case”, or “create small wins” (Kotter, 1996). But they are also a foundation for the development of the framework that is discussed in the rest of this chapter, as well as a set of lessons that was derived from applying this framework in a number of organizational change projects.

## A MODEL OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

This section presents a model of organizational culture that can be used for managing change (Denison, 1990; Denison and Mishra, 1995; Denison et al, 2000). Several characteristics differentiate this model from most others. First, it is rooted in research on how culture influences organizational performance, and is focused on those cultural traits that emerged from the research as having a key impact on business performance. In contrast to most frameworks that emphasize the uniqueness of organizational cultures, this model focuses on comparative generalizations about cultures at the values level. At the same time, the model acknowledges that there are many aspects of the deeper cultural levels of beliefs and assumptions that are difficult to generalize about across organizations.

### Understanding the Model

The model, as presented in Figure 15.2, is based on four cultural traits that have been shown to have a strong influence on organizational performance: involvement, consistency, adaptability, and mission. Each of these traits is measured with three component indexes, and each of those indexes is measured with five survey items. A complete listing of the items is included in the Appendix.

#### *Involvement*

Effective organizations empower their people, build their organization around teams, and develop human capability at all levels. Members of the organization are committed

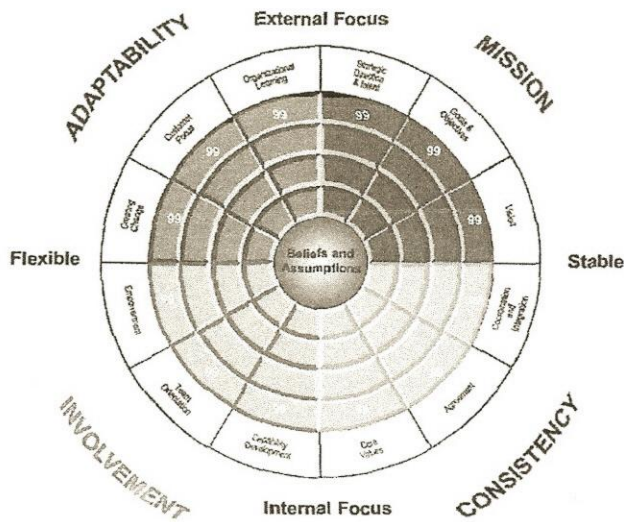


Figure 15.2 Organizational culture model.

to their work, and feel that they *own* a piece of the organization. People at all levels feel that they have at least some input into decisions that will effect their work and feel that their work is directly connected to the goals of the organization. As an executive in one Korean company put it, “high involvement means *an engaged brain* – people apply their minds and hearts to the job and give all they’ve got”. In the model, this trait is measured with three indexes:

**Empowerment.** Individuals have the authority, initiative, and ability to manage their own work. This creates a sense of ownership and responsibility toward the organization.

**Team Orientation.** Value is placed on working co-operatively toward common goals for which all employees feel mutually accountable. The organization relies on team effort to get work done.

**Capability Development.** The organization continually invests in the development of employee’s skills in order to stay competitive and meet on-going business needs.

### Consistency

Research has shown that organizations are also effective because they are consistent and well integrated. People’s behaviour is rooted in a set of core values, leaders and followers are skilled at reaching agreement (even when there are diverse points of view), and the organization’s activities are well co-ordinated and integrated. Organizations with these traits have a strong and distinctive culture that significantly influences people’s behaviour. In a 1990 case about Texas Commerce Bank and its legendary CEO, Ben Love, one of the senior loan officers put it clearly when he said: “I’m proud

to walk in Ben Love's shadow". This type of consistency is a powerful source of stability and internal integration that results from a common mindset and a high degree of conformity. In the model, this trait is measured with three indexes:

**Core Values.** Members of the organization share a set of values that create a sense of identity and a clear set of expectations.

**Agreement.** Members of the organization are able to reach agreement on critical issues. This includes both the underlying level of agreement and the ability to reconcile differences when they occur.

**Coordination and Integration.** Different functions and units of the organization are able to work together well to achieve common goals. Organizational boundaries do not interfere with getting work done.

### ***Adaptability***

But well-integrated organizations are often the most difficult to change. Internal integration and external adaptation can be at odds. Adaptable organizations are driven by their customers, take risks and learn from their mistakes, and have capability and experience at creating change. They are continuously improving the organization's ability to provide value for its customers. Organizations that are strong in adaptability usually experience sales growth and increased market share. When one CEO saw his organization's "bottom heavy" profile showing that involvement and consistency were high but adaptability was low, he immediately saw his organization's recent efforts to control cost in a different light. As he put it, "how can we expect to grow market share when we have our heads in the sand"? In the model, this trait is measured with three indexes:

**Creating Change.** The organization is able to create adaptive ways to meet changing needs. It is able to read the business environment, react quickly to current trends, and anticipate future changes.

**Customer Focus.** The organization understands and reacts to their customers and anticipates their future needs. It reflects the degree to which the organization is driven by a concern to satisfy its customers.

**Organizational Learning.** The organization receives, translates, and interprets signals from the environment into opportunities for encouraging innovation, gaining knowledge, and developing capabilities.

### ***Mission***

Perhaps the most important cultural trait of all is a sense of mission. Organizations that don't know where they are going usually end up somewhere else. Successful organizations have a clear sense of purpose and direction that defines organizational goals and strategic objectives and expresses a vision of what the organization will look like in the future. The most troubled organizations are often those that have had to change their

basic mission. As one future CEO of an electric utility said, “for 50 years, our mission was *to build bigger and better power plants*. Now I have to convince our people that their mission is *to provide consumers with safe and efficient options*”. That’s a big difference! When an organization’s underlying mission changes, corresponding changes in strategy, structure, culture, and behaviour are also required. In this situation, strong leadership is required to define a vision for the future and build a culture that will support that vision. In the model, this trait is measured by three indexes:

**Strategic Direction and Intent.** Clear strategic intentions convey the organization’s purpose and make it clear how everyone can contribute and “make their mark” on the industry.

**Goals and Objectives.** A clear set of goals and objectives can be linked to the mission, vision, and strategy, and provide everyone with a clear direction in their work.

**Vision.** The organization has a shared view of a desired future state. It embodies core values and captures the hearts and minds of the organization’s people, while providing guidance and direction.

## Dynamic Contradictions

Like many contemporary models of leadership and organizational effectiveness, this model focuses on a set of tensions or contradictions that must be managed (Denison et al, 1995). Several contradictions are highlighted by the model – the trade-off between stability and flexibility and the trade-off between internal and external focus are the basic dimensions underlying the framework. In addition, the diagonal tensions in the model between internal consistency and external adaptation and between top-down mission and bottom-up involvement are also important.

Resolving these types of problems without making simple trade-offs is a real problems in most organizations. As the Vice Chairman of one large organization recently asked a group of managers, “ Do we want higher product quality or lower cost? The answer is *yes*”. It is easy to do one or the other, but difficult to do both. Organizations that are market focused and aggressive in pursuing every opportunity are often the same ones that have severe problems of internal integration. Organizations that are extremely well integrated and controlled usually have the hardest time focusing on the customer. Organization with a powerful top-down vision often find it difficult to focus on the empowerment and “bottom-up” dynamics needed to implement that vision. Effective organizations find a way to resolve these dynamic contradictions without relying on a simple trade-off. F. Scott Fitzgerald expressed the same concept when he said that “the test of a first rate mind is the ability to hold two contradictory ideas at the same time and still retain the capability to act” (Fitzgerald, 1945).

## Beliefs and Assumptions are at the Core

At the core of this model are underlying beliefs and assumptions. Although these

“deeper” levels of organizational culture are difficult to measure, they provide the foundation from which behaviour and action spring. Beliefs and assumptions about the organization and its people, the customer, the marketplace and the industry, and the basic value propositions of the firm create a tightly knit logic that holds the organization together. But when organizations change or when they face new challenges from the competition, this core set of beliefs and assumptions, and the strategies, structures, and behaviours that are built on this foundation need to be reassessed. The organizational *system* and the culture that holds it together need to be examined more carefully.

None of the four cultural traits are unique to the model presented in this paper. The ideas came from executives interviewed during the research process and are widely reflected in the academic and popular management literature. They represent ideas about how to create an effective culture that have emerged during the research process. What *is* unique about the model is that it brings these concepts together, and presents them in a way that links managerial actions, cultural traits, and underlying assumptions into a framework based on research about what impacts organization performance. The model also forms the base for a diagnostic process that allows these traits to be measured and helps to paint a clear picture of the culture of an organization that suggests some clear links to action.

## PUTTING THE MODEL TO WORK: THREE CASE STUDIES

The best way to understand the model is to examine specific examples of how it has been used by organizations to understand and change their cultures. The first example, a one-hundred year old manufacturing firm, examines an overall profile of the organization's culture, whereas the second and third examples examine both the overall company profile and the profiles for different functional groups and levels of the organization.

### Manufacturing Company in Decline

This organization manufactures a durable goods product that is sold through a retail network that it does not control. The distribution network itself is consolidating and the company faces real “buyer power” for the first time. It has dominated its industry for years, but it now faces a new type of competition that seriously undercuts its products on price. Although business has been declining for the past five years, this past year was the first time that the senior executives did not receive their bonuses.

A cultural profile of the top management team is presented in Figure 15.3. The data for this profile came from a survey of the top 50 people in the organization (Denison and Neale, 1994). As noted above, each index is measured by five survey items, which are averaged to produce an index score. The results are presented in terms of quartile data, indicating that the organization's percentile score falls in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, or 4th quartile in relationship to a database of nearly 500 organizations. This comparison, in effect, creates a benchmark between the target company and a sample of high and low performing firms.

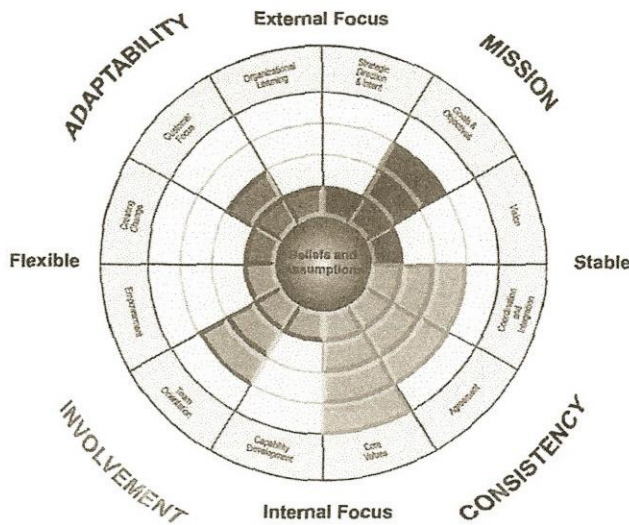


Figure 15.3 Profile of a 100-year-old manufacturing company.

Examination of the culture profile of the management team reveals some key organizational problems: All of the measures of adaptability are poor: learning and creating change fall in the first quartile and customer focus falls in the second quartile. The only strength in the area of mission is the operational focus on goals and objectives, indicating that there is little long-term vision or strategy. Involvement is also low, showing strengths only in the area of team orientation. The only real strength that appears in this profile is in the area of consistency, with the only top-quartile score being in core values.

When the top management team looked at this profile, there was a long silence. "What does this profile tell you about your organization"? the consultant asked. After another long silence, one of them replied, "We're a team – going down together". "Yeah, that's us", said another. The core values that held the group together were well suited to the organization's past, but not necessarily to its future. The management team also quickly linked other aspects of the profile to their situation – the emphasis on operational issues in the mission area reflected the President's "mail room to board room" career path and the relative neglect of longer-term strategic issues. When asked about the team orientation data one of the managers chuckled and said, "well I guess that all of those teams that we put in place aren't working very well yet". They had created teams, but they had yet to change the way that work was actually done.

Looking at this culture profile brought together a number of different symptoms of the organization's decline and linked them to the behaviour of the top management team. Its tendency to ignore the customer and the competitive environment and reason from the "inside-out" – taking the internal functioning of the organization as a given and wondering why no one brought their products anymore – also came through



strongly in this analysis. The analysis also hit home with regard to the company's tendency to have short-term goals and objectives as their only real source of direction and to try to implement its strategy without a high level of involvement from the organization's members.

The analysis also made it quite clear that the behaviour of top management was at the centre of many of these problems. Since the research has shown that internally focused companies do not grow, the analysis also made the top managers more aware that they were unlikely to solve some of their most basic problems without a change in leadership behaviours. This analysis also made them aware of how few of the organization's leaders had the skill set that was needed to improve the situation. As a result, they began using the dimensions in the model as criteria in their leadership development process. Three years later, they have improved, changed the focus of their business, and continued to use the model and their data as a point of reference for their change process.

### **Financial Services Firm: Creating Alignment Across Levels**

The second example presents a more detailed case of a European financial services firm. One of the major issues in this organization was the degree of cultural alignment across levels – some of the business units showed major gaps between the top management team and the rest of the organization, while other business units showed close alignment. This is an important general issue in understanding and “managing” culture – the influence of a top management team on the culture of the organization as a whole. Do the top leaders “create” the culture? Are there significant differences between different sub-groups in the organization? How should the inevitable differences between business units, functions, levels, regions, and different identity groups be reconciled with the concept of an “organizational” culture?

The traditional strength of this firm has been the capability of its analysts and professional staff. They have a high level of expertise and are recognized as the leaders in their sector of the industry. But as they attempt to compete in the increasingly global financial services industry, providing seamless delivery to global clients and cross-selling aggressively from one division to the other on the basis of the value proposition of the corporate brand, they often come up short. These changes in their competitive environment are forcing the organization to change from a classic professional bureaucracy (Mintzberg, 1979), like a law firm or a medical practice, to a service company that relies on a strong internal infrastructure to access all the organization's capabilities and deliver them to the customer.

The overall results for the entire organization, presented in Figure 15.4, are based on 365 responses across the entire management team. The results reflect many of the organization's key problems. Most of the low scores come in the areas of adaptability and consistency, reflecting the fact that the organization is primarily an internally-focused expertise-driven firm rather than an externally focused firm reacting to the marketplace, customers, and competitors. In addition, the problems in the area of consistency show why they often have problems in delivering co-ordinated response to their customers and achieving integration across different parts of the organization.

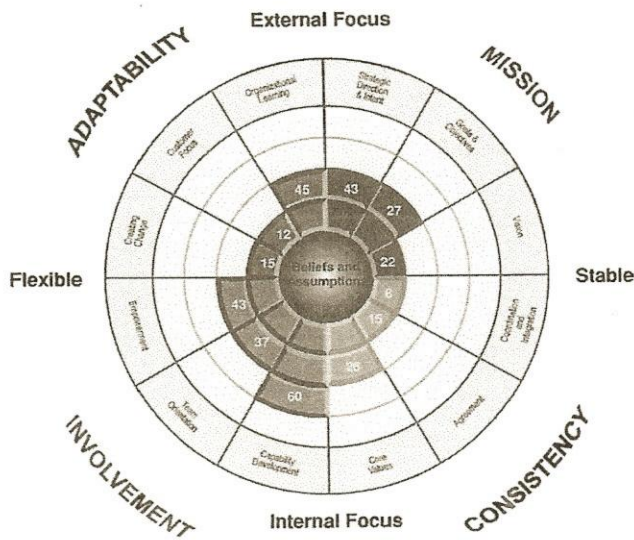


Figure 15.4 Company profile of financial services firm.

This combination of results was seen by many of the members of the organization as an illustration of the struggle they were having trying to understand the dynamics of the marketplace and translate that understanding into an internal system that could deliver their expertise to their customers.

Since this firm was also trying to address these problems by re-defining its vision and mission and communicating this throughout the organization, managers were also quite interested in the different perceptions of the culture across hierarchical levels. As they began to explore this, they quickly saw that some divisions had a large gap in perceptions between the top management team and the rest of the organization, while others had perceptions that were closely aligned.

The results for two of the divisions are presented in this chapter to illustrate some of the dynamics associated with cultural alignment across organizational levels. Figure 15.5 presents the results for the “core business”, while Figure 15.6 presents the results for a recently acquired wholly-owned “subsidiary”, which was acquired to help the company expand geographically.

The core business example in Figure 15.5 shows a substantial gap in nearly all areas between the leadership team and the rest of the organization. The leadership team’s responses were much more positive and seemed to represent a detachment from the rest of the organization. This contrasts rather dramatically with the pattern of alignment in the subsidiary, presented in Figure 15.6, which shows both a positive profile and a high degree of cultural alignment across levels. In fact, in the subsidiary, some of results are more positive in the overall profile than they are for the top management group. Since it is the job of middle management to link the vision of the top leadership to the realities of the marketplace (Nonaka, 1988), these results raised a great deal of concern throughout the organization.

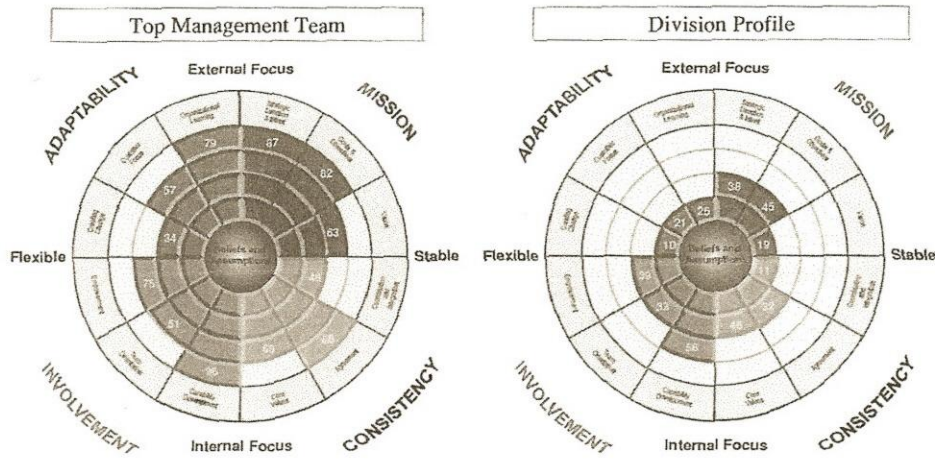


Figure 15.5 Financial services firm: core business.

Business units with a large cultural gap between the top leadership team and the rest of the organization faced a challenge from the executive board to address the problems and achieve better alignment across levels. They were encouraged to learn directly from the business units that had achieved better alignment and to apply the ideas that had worked in their own organizations. The lack of alignment was also considered by the top executives to be a key symptom of their inability to penetrate their professional bureaucracy and “manage” it as an organization. This capability, in turn, was seen as a critical aspect of the transformation of the organization from a niche-based professional bureaucracy to a global financial services firm.

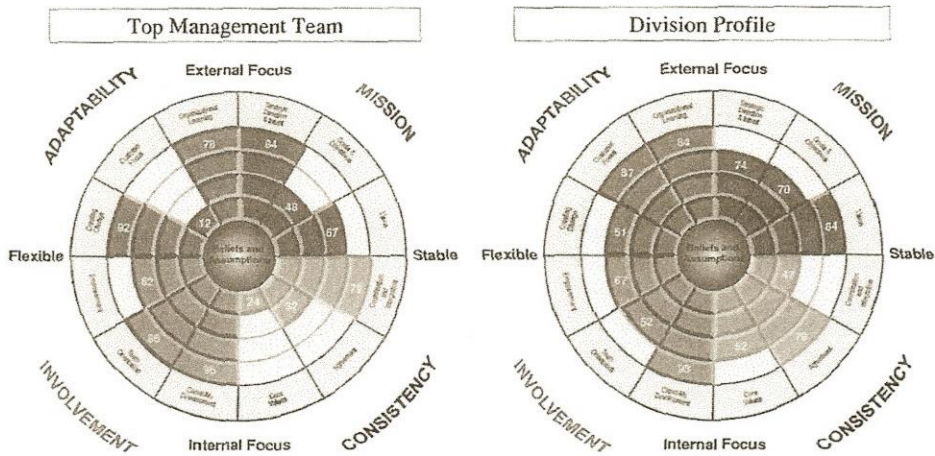


Figure 15.6 Financial services firm: wholly-owned subsidiary.

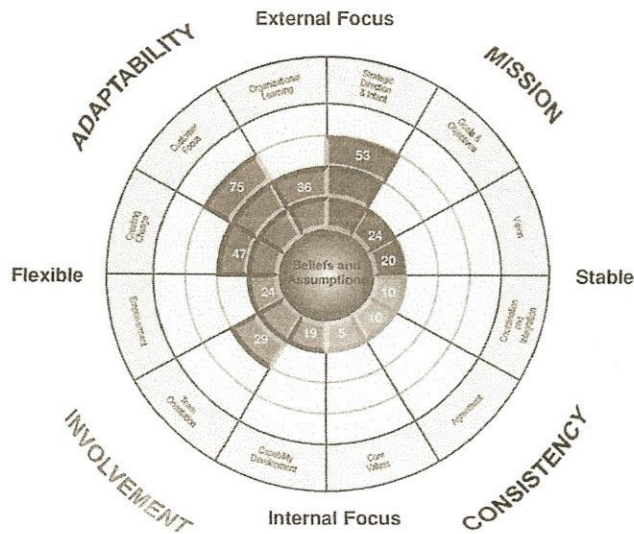


Figure 15.7 Market-facing business unit.

### Speciality Metals Company: Creating a Market-Facing Business Unit

The third example presents the case of a European speciality metals company that created a market-facing business unit to serve the automotive industry. This reorganization changed the balance of power among the functions of the organization and required a substantial redefinition of the roles of all functional groups. Power shifted from the production end of the value chain to the sales and marketing end. But more importantly, the entire value chain now had to respond to the customer and the marketplace. This case is presented in terms of several sets of profiles. The overall results are presented first followed by the results for several of the functional sub-groups.

As the overall results in Figure 15.7 show, reorganizing into a market-facing business unit did have a clear impact on the organizational profile. In contrast to the results for the entire corporation of which this automotive group was a part, most of the highest cultural scores came in terms of the adaptability and external focus. The problems, however, came in recreating the internal infrastructure needed to deliver. This example is based on responses of the 52 top managers and the results are presented in terms of percentile scores.

When the results are compared across the different functional management groups, an interesting pattern emerges. The management team, as shown in Figure 15.8, generally sees a stronger pattern in all areas and is particularly strong with respect to adaptability. Their results, however, still show the need for many improvements in the area of internal consistency. As one member of the organization said, “they get it!” – they understand the changes that the organization is trying to make.

The results for the sales and marketing team in Figure 15.9 show a different pattern. Nearly all of the areas of the model are strengths, except for coordination and integra-

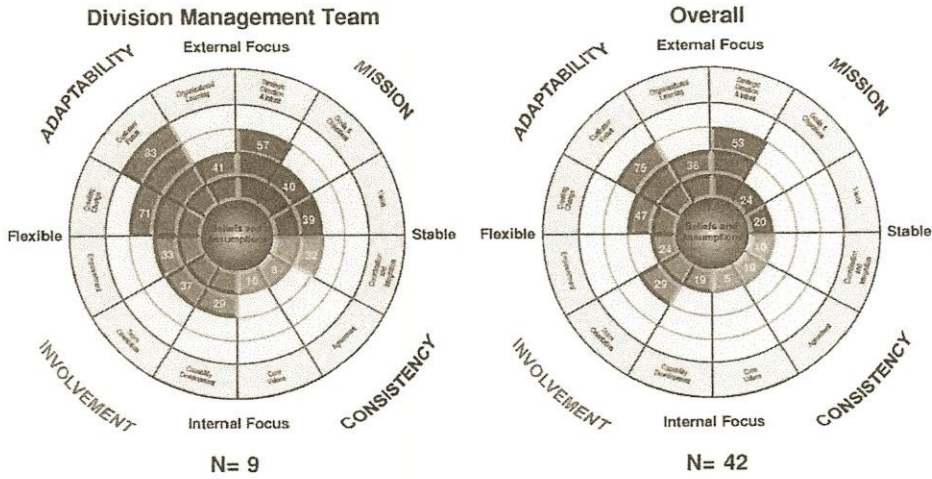


Figure 15.8 Division management team.

tion. The group's discussion of these results focused on the fact that marketing and sales people are very pleased with this reorganization, but from their perspective, still have a lot of trouble getting the organization to respond. Sales and marketing people see that the organization has changed its perspective, but still have a lot of explaining to do to their customers when their organization is unable to respond.

The least favourable perceptions of the organization's culture come from the operations function. Prior to the reorganization, production controlled most of the operation and held a great deal of power. In the past year since the re-organization, many things

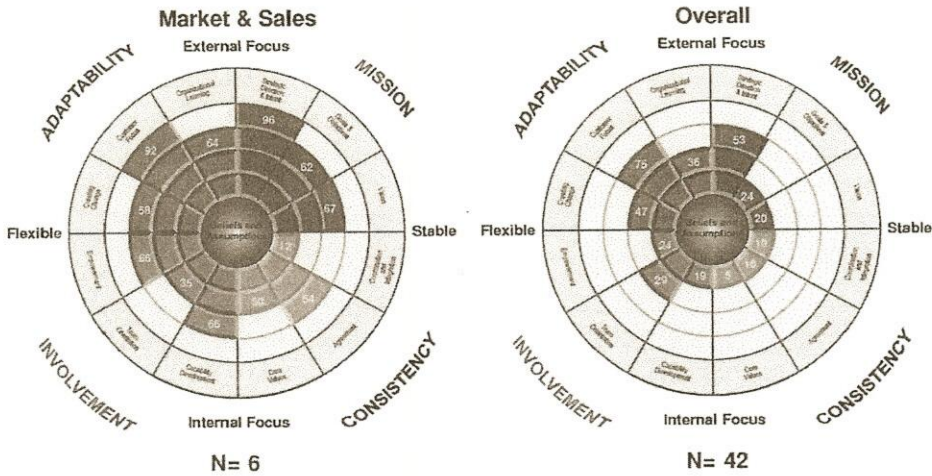


Figure 15.9 Marketing and sales.

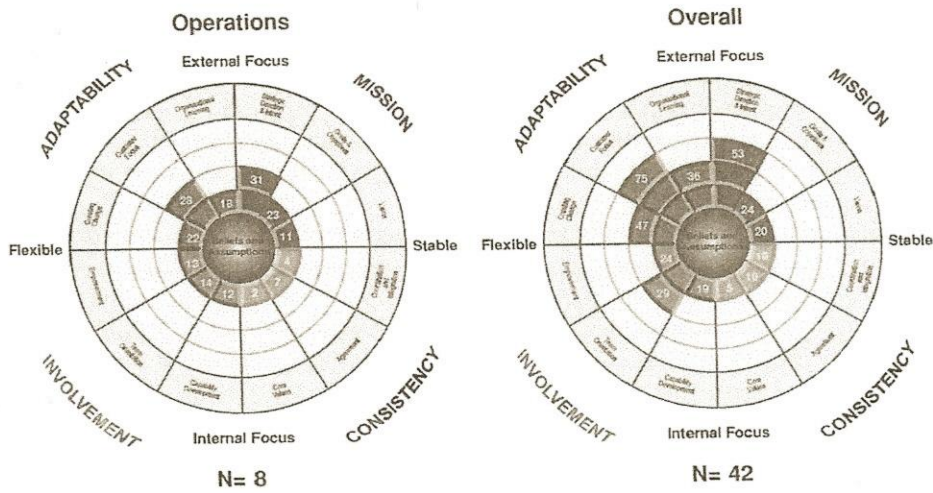


Figure 15.10 Operations.

have changed. Their “line of sight” to the customer has changed and they have yet to recreate a system that allows them to be responsive to the customer. Their results, presented in Figure 15.10, show that a lot of work remains if this organization is to reconstruct their internal infrastructure to be more responsive to the customer.

The results for the final group, the headquarters staff who are not a part of the top management team, are presented in Figure 15.11. These results also show a very different pattern from the other functions. They do perceive the increased importance of the customer, but otherwise, their scores are weak in all areas. It is particularly

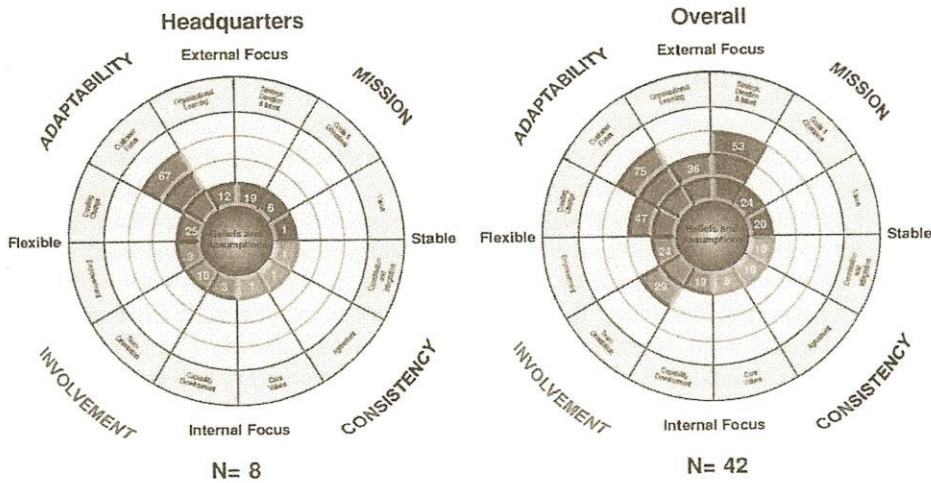


Figure 15.11 Headquarters staff.

interesting that all of the scores in the consistency area are at the 1st percentile, indicating that their scores are among the lowest ever recorded by any organization. But the results do make a lot of sense when taken in context – headquarters staff functions are typically internal service providers who focus on internal customers. Reorganizing into a market-facing business unit has radically changed the nature of the demand for their services and is causing them to totally redefine their role in the organization.

The overall pattern of results presented by this set of profiles helps to illustrate several important points about the culture of the organization. First, there is not one unitary view of the culture and in fact, competing views of the culture are at the heart of the change process. Second, this diverse set of profiles shows how impossible it is to present a unified view of the culture to customers or to other members of the organization. Third, and most important by far is that this analysis of the organization served as a stimulus and a reference point for an energetic, but constructive discussion of how the organization was adapting to the change process.

## **USING CULTURE TO DRIVE THE CHANGE PROCESS: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

This chapter has presented a framework for understanding organizational culture that has been developed as a means to apply the concept of culture to create leverage during the organizational change process. This approach departs from the typical treatment of organizational culture found in the academic literature in several important ways that are discussed in the beginning of this chapter. Highest priority is given to providing a framework that is useful to managers and executives and addresses the needs and concerns of the “natives”, rather than the “anthropologists”. This final section raises three points for discussion.

### **Getting the Culture Issue on the Table**

The approach presented in this chapter is an attempt to get the issue of organizational culture “on the table” as a key part of the change process. The approach is rooted in the observation that while organizational change is not possible without culture change, cultural issues are nonetheless frequently neglected during the change process. All too often, the good ideas that have been developed in the academic culture literature are not positioned in a way that allows the ideas to contribute to understanding and managing the change process. This limits the impact that the ideas can have, and further limits the learning that comes from an active involvement in the change process. As one well-known organizational theorist has noted, “When all is said and done, there is one main obstacle to an emergence on an anthropology of complex organizations: Access”. (Czarniawska-Joerges, 1992). Using the ideas in this chapter to help frame culture issues can help to create the level of access necessary to influence the change process and allow for further learning in the future.

The link between underlying assumptions, values, meaning, behaviour, and action is

inevitably a complex one. Those who understand the culture perspective tend to see these linkages quite clearly and thus have a lot to contribute during the change process. These skills are often rare among managers and executives. Many of them need a lot of help in bringing this perspective into action during the change process.

## Depth of Analysis

This chapter has presented a set of examples that has primarily focused on top management teams and has presented survey data from limited organizational samples. While it is important to recognize that leaders have great influence over the change process, the examples given here should not be taken to mean that the culture perspective is only appropriate at the management level. There are many examples that have used much larger samples and entailed a much greater depth of involvement and analysis than those that have been developed in this chapter. This chapter has presented multiple examples of how the culture perspective has influenced the change process, rather than giving greater depth of analysis on a single case. A similar point about depth of analysis can be made with respect to the use of qualitative and ethnographic insights in these projects. Each of the cases involved substantial time spent on site and the fieldnotes reveal insights from many different organizational settings – not just the Christmas parties! The cases presented in this chapter have been chosen to illustrate the application of the model, and have spent less time presenting the many qualitative insights that have been a part of these projects.

Depth of analysis is critically important in any organizational change process. The approach presented here, in practice, always relies heavily on the clinical insights that are a part of any successful organizational change process. Perceptive insiders and outsiders need to be involved in order to help translate the findings from a model-based analysis of the culture into practical recommendations for action. Depth of analysis is needed to support the insights from the survey data and bring them to life.

I was once in a meeting with a large consulting company that was considering using this model in a number of their organizational change projects. They asked me to meet with their “Research” committee so that they could ask me questions about the method, the measures, the applications, and so on. One of the members of the committee, who had recently received his Ph.D., joined the meeting by speaker phone. He kept asking me questions worthy of a doctoral defence – he asked about rigor, about the validity assessment, and about my assumptions regarding the use of qualitative data. His questions were annoying because they all assumed that the model and method were intended to be applied without any additional insight or knowledge about the organization. After a while, even the other members of the committee who were in the room seemed to be getting annoyed by his line of questioning. After completing his tour de force, he issued a summary critique: “Well then”, he said, “I guess if you only had the survey results, then you wouldn’t really know very much about the organization!” “finally”, I said under my breath to the others seated at the table, “he got it!” Tools and frameworks are just that – they are designed to enhance and extend our capabilities, but they are never a substitute for real understanding of the situation at hand.



## Culture and Competence

It is also important to recognize that the cultural framework described in this chapter could perhaps have been presented as an “organizational effectiveness” framework or an “organizational change” model. In fact, one organization said to us, “we really like the framework, but our CEO won’t let us use the word “culture”. Can we call this thing something else”?

What makes this framework a “culture model”? How is it different from other approaches because it is a culture model? This framework is a culture model because it attempts to link strategies, systems, structures, and behaviours back to a common set of beliefs and assumptions. This approach is rooted in the belief that structures evolve from a set of beliefs and assumptions. During times of change, it is these assumptions and beliefs that need to be reconsidered, not just the structures and “best practices” that have evolved from them in the past. The traits and behaviours that are around the “outside” of the model are simply the outer layers of the onion – an understanding of the core beliefs and assumptions comes only as the layers are peeled away. These traits and behaviours can also serve as a “Trojan Horse” to lure a management team into a discussion of the deeper level of core beliefs and assumptions. They begin with data, benchmarks, and analysis, but they typically end with a more basic discussion of their beliefs and assumptions.

This focus on core beliefs and assumptions also makes the link between culture and competence much clearer. In settings as diverse as the transformation process in Eastern European firms (Kennedy, 1994), cutting edge corporate strategy (Prahalad and Hamel, 1990), and Japanese product development (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995), the message is clear – knowledge is often tacit and contextualized and usually comes embedded in a complex culture and a belief system. For example, a few years ago when Microsoft assumed that the computing world would remain centred around the PC, the knowledge and skills required for the internet seemed to be of secondary importance. As this assumption changed, “competence” was redefined. In pharmaceutical firms, a similar change came as the R&D process began to focus less on chemists developing compounds and more on bio-technologists searching for genetic solutions. Strategies, systems, structures, and behaviours are derived from these basic assumptions and the unique value of the culture perspective is the potential to link these levels together.

Creating a culture provides leverage by creating a “code” for an organizational system that influences behaviour over time. Culture is an important place to intervene when trying to create change that will last. Indeed, changes that are not reflected in an organization’s culture will not last and will not be translated into action. There are many powerful concepts that have been developed to help understand cultures, but the challenge is to put those ideas into action. Hopefully, this chapter has describe one approach that can help executives and scholars to do so.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author wishes to thank IMD for the support that they have provided for this chapter. I also wish to thank the companies that I have used as anonymous examples and Professor Thomas G. Cummings for his comments and suggestions on earlier drafts of this chapter.

## APPENDIX A. ITEMS AND INDEXES IN THE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE SURVEY

Trait	Index	Item
Involvement	Empowerment	1. Most employees are highly involved in their work.
		2. Decisions are usually made at the level where the best information is available
		3. Information is widely shared so that everyone can get the information he or she needs when it's needed
		4. Everyone believes that he or she can have a positive impact
		5. Business planning is ongoing and involves everyone in the process to some degree.
	Team orientation	6. Cupertino across different parts of the organization is actively encouraged
		7. People work like they are part of a team
		8. Teamwork is used to get work done, rather than hierarchy
		9. Teams are our primary building blocks
		10. Work is organized so that each person can see the relationship between his or her job and the goals of the organization
	Capability development	11. Authority is delegated so that people can act on their own
		12. The "bench strength" (capability of people) is constantly improving
		13. There is continuous investment in the skills of employees
		14. The capabilities of people are viewed as an important source of competitive advantage
		15. Problems often arise because we do not have the skills necessary to do the job. (Reversed Scale)
Consistency	Core values	16. The leaders and managers "practice what they preach"
		17. There is a characteristic management style and a distinct set of management practices

*(continued)*

Trait	Index	Item
		18. There is a clear and consistent set of values that governs the way we do business
		19. Ignoring core values will get you in trouble
		20. There is an ethical code that guides our behaviour and tells us right from wrong
	Agreement	21. When disagreements occur, we work hard to achieve "win-win" solutions
		22. There is a "strong" culture
		23. It is easy to reach consensus, even on difficult issues
		24. We often have trouble reaching agreement on key issues. (Reversed Scale)
		25. There is a clear agreement about the right way and the wrong way to do things
	Coordination and integration	26. Our approach to doing business is very consistent and predictable
		27. People from different parts of the organization share a common perspective
		28. It is easy to co-ordinate projects across different parts of the organization
		29. Working with someone from another part of this organization is like working with someone from a different organization. (Reversed Scale)
		30. There is good alignment of goals across levels
Adaptability	Creating change	31. The way things are done is very flexible and easy to change
		32. We respond well to competitors and other changes in the business environment
		33. New and improved ways to do work are continually adopted
		34. Attempts to create change usually meet with resistance. (Reversed Scale)
		35. Different parts of the organization often co-operate to create change
	Customer focus	36. Customer commens and recommendations often lead to changes
		37. Customer input directly influences our decisions
		38. All members have a deep understanding of customer wants and needs
		39. The interests of the customer often get ignored in our decisions. (Reversed Scale)
		40. We encourage direct contact with customers by our people
	Organizational learning	41. We view failure as an opportunity for learning and improvement

*(continued)*

Trait	Index	Item
Mission	Strategic direction and intent	42. Innovation and risk taking are encouraged and rewarded
		43. Lots of things "fall between the cracks". (Reversed Scale)
		44. Learning is an important objective in our day-to-day work
		45. We make certain that the "right hand knows what the left hand is doing"
		46. There is a long-term purpose and direction
		47. Our strategy leads other organizations to change the way they compete in the industry
		48. There is a clear mission that gives meaning and direction to our work
		49. There is a clear strategy for the future
		50. Our strategic direction is unclear to me. (Reversed Scale)
		Goals and objectives
	52. Leaders set goals that are ambitious, but realistic	
	53. The leadership has "gone on record" about the objectives we are trying to meet	
	54. We continuously track our progress against our stated goals	
	55. People understand what needs to be done for us to succeed in the long run	
	Vision	
		58. Short-term thinking often compromises our long-term vision. (Reversed Scale)
59. Our vision creates excitement and motivation for our employees		
60. We are able to meet short-term demands without compromising our long-term vision		

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## ***Sampling for Organizational Surveys***

When choosing a sample for an organizational survey there are several considerations, both politically and statistically, you should take into account.

### ***Political Considerations***

- ❑ Everyone who will be expected to take actions based on survey results should be given the chance to provide input.
- ❑ People who are involved in the process are more likely to feel ownership and contribute to any resulting organizational intervention.
- ❑ Excluding people from the survey can send unintended messages. Will employees feel unimportant or neglected if they cannot participate? Will you appear to be favoring certain groups? Will it emphasize a difference between groups (such as management versus non-management)?
- ❑ Top executives are often viewed as being too busy to participate in surveys. However, getting them involved can make them more vested in the outcomes and change process.

### ***Sample versus census***

*Our recommendation is that you survey everyone in the organization (census). People in different jobs, locations and levels often provide very different feedback on the organization. These differences are often more revealing than the overall results.*

*However, sometimes it is not feasible to survey everyone. If you are deciding between census or sampling, consider the following issues.*

- ❑ Survey as many people as you can.
- ❑ If the intent of the survey is to launch a change initiative, you should consider using a census. This gives everyone a voice and creates more buy-in during the change process.
- ❑ Consider the monetary costs to your company. For larger companies it often makes more sense to sample from a cost and logistical perspective. Smaller companies need such a large proportion of their people sampled to meet the statistical requirements that it is often just as cost-effective to do a census.
- ❑ If you collect sample data, some people might question the accuracy or legitimacy of the results. Sampling is a statistically valid method, but some people will try to use it as an excuse to resist organizational change interventions.
- ❑ If the organization is just seeking a “temperature check” or the results will have limited use, then sampling might be the best approach.



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- ❑ If you are sampling, try to choose a random sample. You should also make sure to choose people from all of the groups that you would like compared in the reports.
- ❑ Whenever sampling is used, certain statistical guidelines should be followed in order to ensure validity of the data. See the guidelines described below.

### ***Probability sampling theory***

There are three major statistical considerations related to sampling.

- 1. Margin of Error** – Margin of error refers to how close the reported value is expected to be to the true value of the population of interest. This reported value is expressed as being within a certain “margin of error”, such as +/- 5 percentage points. This is also referred to as a confidence interval. “How confident are we that the results of our sampled survey are accurate for the entire organization”. A typical level of confidence used for survey work is 95 percent (or +/- 5 points). *For example, if we find that 50% of employees agree with a certain item of the survey we can be quite confident that the true value is between 45-55% of employees agreeing with that item.*
- 2. Level of Confidence** – Level of confidence refers to the amount of certainty that our sample findings are correct (within the margin of error). Most researchers try to achieve at least a 95 percent confidence level. *For example, 95 out of 100 times we will get the same results.*
- 3. Occurrence of Characteristic** – Occurrence of the characteristic refers to how common the characteristic is in the population. For example, do we expect 50% favorable and 50% unfavorable responses or is it closer to 90%-10%? Unless we’re measuring something that we anticipate to be skewed we can usually use the 50-50 assumption.



## Determining Sample Size for Various Populations

You can use the following chart as a guide for determining the number of people to sample. These minimum numbers should result in statistically valid results. However, we always encourage you to sample as many people as possible.

This table assumes that:

- ❑ The sample will be randomly chosen.
- ❑ There will be a 100% response rate. (If a lower response rate is anticipated, you should increase the number of people sampled).
- ❑ There are no systematic differences between respondents and non-respondents.

Population Size	Required Sample	As % of Population
50,000	381	0.8
25,000	378	1.5
10,000	370	3.7
5,000	357	7.1
2,500	333	13.3
1,000	285	28.5
500	217	43.4
250	152	60.8
200	132	66.0
100	80	80.0
50	44	88.0
25	24	96.0

*Note:* Sample sizes assume a confidence level of 95%, a margin of error of 5 points (plus or minus), and a 50/50 split in the characteristic being measured. This based on probability sampling the most respected method used by survey researchers currently (Babbie, 1990).

*Table Source:* Adapted from Rea, L.M. & Parker, R.A. (1992). *Designing and conducting survey research: A comprehensive guide*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.





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### Características innovadoras de su empresa

74	Usted cree que su empresa es	poco innovadora	medianamente innovadora	satisfactoriamente innovadora	altamente innovadora	la más innovadora del sector
		1	2	3	4	5

75	Usted piensa que la casilla que mejor describe donde se concentran las innovaciones de su empresa es	en procesos administrativos	en procesos productivos	en nuevos productos o servicios	en procesos administrativos y procesos productivos	en procesos administrativos y nuevos productos	en procesos productivos y nuevos productos y servicios
		1	2	3	4	5	6

76	Usted piensa que las innovaciones en su empresa son	pocas de gran importancia	pocas de pequeña importancia	muchas de pequeña importancia	muchas de pequeña importancia y pocas de gran importancia	muchas de gran importancia
		1	2	3	4	5

77	Usted cree que las innovaciones de su empresa se originaron en	dentro de la empresa	fuera de la empresa	dentro y fuera de la empresa
		1	2	3

78	Usted cree que dentro de la empresa las innovaciones se originaron en	Directivas	Equipos de trabajo	Directivas y equipos de trabajo	Individuos	Equipos de trabajo e individuos	No se
		1	2	3	4	5	6

79	Usted cree que por fuera de la empresa las innovaciones de su empresa se originaron en	Proveedores	Clientes	Competencia	Consultores	Centros de desarrollo tecnológico	Otros
		1	2	3	4	5	6

	Usted piensa que el impacto de las innovaciones que se generaron en cada área funcional de la empresa es:	Nulo	Poco	Medio	Satisfactorio	Excelente	No se
80	Finanzas y contabilidad	1	2	3	4	5	6
81	Ingeniería y montaje	1	2	3	4	5	6
82	Manufactura y producción	1	2	3	4	5	6
83	Investigación y desarrollo	1	2	3	4	5	6
84	Ventas y mercadeo	1	2	3	4	5	6
85	Compras	1	2	3	4	5	6
86	Recursos humanos	1	2	3	4	5	6
87	Administración	1	2	3	4	5	6
88	Personal de apoyo	1	2	3	4	5	6
89	Asesoría profesional	1	2	3	4	5	6

# **Denison Organizational Culture Survey**

**Facilitator Guide**

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He has co-authored the Denison Organizational Culture Survey and Denison Leadership Development Survey. These surveys and the underlying models have been used globally by over 500 organizations. He has also published the MBTI Challenge Cards and the MBTI Leadership Style Challenge Cards.

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# SECTION ONE - INTRODUCTION

UNDERSTANDING ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE  
AND ITS IMPACT ON PERFORMANCE AND  
EFFECTIVENESS



## Purpose of This Guide

This guide was developed in order to help leaders, consultants, and internal facilitators better understand the *Denison Organizational Culture Survey* as they undertake projects designed to diagnose and change their organizations. The survey design was based on my research and experience over the past fifteen years and is intended to provide practitioners with a tool that will offer a simple, yet comprehensive look at four aspects of organizational culture that typically influence business performance. The survey is also a powerful research tool that helps link each organization using the survey to past research and to current studies.

This guide is designed to anticipate the many questions that professionals have when using the tool. We recognize that the survey is only as good as its *application*, so we have tried to provide you with all the information that you will need to get the maximum impact from using the survey. If you encounter problems or issues that are not addressed in this guide, please let us know. We value the partnership that we form with each user of the survey, and will do everything that we can to support you and your efforts.

There are several parts to this guide. In general, we have tried to address both the technical issues regarding the survey, as well as the issues of process involved in the administration, interpretation and application of the survey results. In my experience, a successful organizational change project not only depends upon a quality survey that is easily interpreted, it also requires a process that incorporates leadership commitment, business understanding, and the needs of key stakeholders. It is this process that moves the organization from interpretation to action planning. While it is impossible to “script” this process from beginning to end, we have tried to give you guidelines on the survey process, the feedback process, and how to focus on “*Lever for Change*.”

Good luck with your project! Let us know how it goes and what we can do in the future to better support your efforts.

Daniel R. Denison, Ph.D.

***"The more responsibility and authority you can give an employee, the better the return on your investment."***

Daniel R. Denison, Ph.D.  
University of Michigan  
Business School  
USA Today

## Introduction

This leader's guide supports your use of the *Denison Organizational Culture Survey* by providing you with the basic background materials on all aspects of the survey, from the technical validity and the interpretation of results to the design of a change process using the survey as a diagnostic tool. The guide begins by giving an overview of organizational culture and how the survey and its underlying model were developed to help address some of the issues that organizations face as they attempt to "manage" their cultures.

The second section of the guide focuses on the model that underlies the *Denison Organizational Culture Survey*. After an initial overview of the model as a whole and a discussion of the impact that the factors measured by the survey can have on the performance of an organization, this section describes how to interpret the results from an organizational profile and from the line-item feedback. This section ends with a detailed discussion of the survey indices and items, and links them directly to the model.

The third section of the guide focuses on the organizational processes that are required to move an organization from the diagnosis and interpretation stage to concrete action. This section gives some guidelines in several areas. Initially, it provides a set of process guidelines designed to help guide your project; second, some guidelines on how to design a feedback meeting; and third, a description of "*Levers for Change*" that have been used successfully by other organizations.

The fourth section of the guide focuses on the logistics of conducting the survey. In this section, guidelines and suggestions are made for each step of the survey administration process, including outlines and supporting materials for conducting planning meetings. And finally, the last section of this guide includes a set of helpful supporting materials. These include a color overhead of the Denison Organizational Culture Survey Model and black and white overhead originals for making presentations and reference materials such as copies of sample reports, a description of the validity of the survey, two of Dr. Denison's articles, and suggested references for further reading.

## Overview

### **What is culture?**

Late nineteenth and early twentieth century studies of social anthropology gave us the term "culture." These studies of "primitive" societies - Eskimo, South Sea, African, Native American - revealed ways of life that were not only different from those in America and Europe, but were very different from each other among themselves. Each society revealed its own unique way of *adapting* as a social system. The concept of culture thus represents, in a very broad and holistic sense, the qualities of any specific human group that are passed from one generation to the next because they are believed to be *useful for survival and adaptation*. The American Heritage Dictionary defines "culture" more formally, as the "totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought characteristic of a community or population."

### **What is organizational culture?**

Every organization has its own way of doing things that influences virtually every aspect of working life -- from how long coffee breaks are to how products and services are sold. Thus, organizational culture refers to the underlying values, beliefs and principles that serve as a foundation for an organization's management system, as well as the set of management practices and behaviors that both exemplify and reinforce those basic principles. These principles and practices endure because they have meaning for the members of an organization. They represent strategies for survival that have worked well in the past and that the members believe will work again in the future.

Some aspects of organizational culture, such as individual behavior and group norms, are very *visible*. "Working hard," "dressing conservatively" or "acting friendly to customers" are aspects of culture that are easy to observe. Other aspects of culture are harder to observe, since they represent the *invisible* assumptions, values and core beliefs. Examples of this less visible level of culture might be a belief in the importance of "doing things right the first time," "being honest and ethical in all transactions," or "going beyond expectations to satisfy the customer."

The messages that come from an organization's culture are closely linked to the organization's strategy and management practices, and have great impact on the people who work there. The cultural system can not be easily seen or touched -- yet it is there all the same. And more importantly, the people in the organization know it very well. The law of the culture often outweighs any other law. In many organizations, it may be the strongest message of all.

## **Where do organizational cultures come from?**

The ideas, behavior patterns and solutions that become embedded in a culture can originate anywhere, from an individual or group, or at the bottom or top of the organization. Organizations with strong cultures usually internalize ideas associated with a founder or other early leaders, and articulate them as a vision, a business strategy or a philosophy.

Organizations have cultures because the conditions needed for their creation are commonplace. Solutions that repeatedly appear to solve problems tend to become part of the culture. The longer the solution seems to work, the more deeply it becomes embedded in the culture.

Cultures can grow to be extremely strong, reinforced by common values, behavior patterns and practices, with many close connections between deeply held assumptions and visible concrete behaviors. When a culture is strong, it can have very powerful consequences. It can enable a group to take rapid and coordinated action to respond to a competitor or to satisfy a customer. Unfortunately, during changing times, a strong culture can also lead intelligent people to walk, in concert, off a cliff.

## **Why is organizational culture important?**

A clear understanding of organizational culture is important for all leaders because it influences the way that their organizations react to the changing demands of the business environment. At any given time, the culture of an organization is strongly influenced by the past successes and past learnings about how to adapt and survive. As the business environment changes, leaders must constantly anticipate the necessary changes and actively monitor the relationship between the demands of the environment and the capabilities of the organization.

When there is a “gap” between the capabilities of the organization and the demands of the business environment, many organizations attempt to close that gap by re-engineering or by making broad structural changes. These changes are often helpful, but most successful organizational changes also require changes in the mindset, values and behavior of the organization’s members. Without creating these changes, changes in basic capabilities of the organization are impossible. That is why many organizations are discovering that successful change requires careful attention to the “soft” side of organizations -- the values and beliefs that are the “heart of the company”, the policies and practices that put those values into action, and the importance of teaching the members of the organization an understanding of how they create value for their customers.

## **What is the *Denison Organizational Culture Survey*?**

Over the past decade, Dr. Daniel Denison, a professor of Organizational Behavior at the University of Michigan Business School, has done a number of studies examining the relationship between organizational culture and organizational effectiveness. Professor Denison's research can be found in his book, *Corporate Culture and Organizational Effectiveness*, as well as in the articles that are included in this guide. His research has uncovered a persistent relationship between four cultural traits of organizations and the business performance of organizations. These four traits, *Involvement*, *Consistency*, *Adaptability* and *Mission*, are the basis for the model underlying the *Denison Organizational Culture Survey*.

The survey is a 60-item instrument that is designed to give a simple, yet comprehensive analysis of the culture of an organization by evaluating the underlying cultural traits and management practices that influence business performance. After organizational members complete the survey, the data are returned to a Scoring Center. Results are presented in a Summary Report that includes the organization's graphic profile, a line-item report summarizing the organization's scores on each individual item, and a listing of "Levers for Change" that may be appropriate for the organization.

## **Applications**

### **What are some suggested applications?**

The *Denison Organizational Culture Survey* is a powerful tool that enables leaders, key stakeholders, and employees to understand the impact their culture has on the organization's performance and learn how to redirect their culture to improve organizational effectiveness.

Companies have used the *Denison Organizational Culture Survey* in many different ways. Following are more detailed descriptions of many of these applications.

## **General Business**

*The Denison Organizational Culture Survey is a tool which helps organizations, divisions and teams (and the individuals within each) attain:*

- A baseline assessment of current cultural strengths and weaknesses.
- An understanding of current culture relative to high performing organizations - within a norming base of approximately 500 companies.
- A benchmark against which to target change efforts - relative to specific desired performance.
- A clear prioritization of short, mid and long-term change efforts - relative to the results sought for each of these time frames.
- An understanding of bottom-line related performance (*profitability, sales/revenue growth, market share, quality, innovation and employee satisfaction*) with direct links to cultural elements which may be supporting or hindering these performance areas.
- The development of individual leaders who can support and sustain the desired benchmarked culture.
- A shared understanding, a shared language, and shared expectations concerning culture and its implications for both individual and group results.
- An understanding and utilization of culture as a business oriented, behavioral, tangible, and results-oriented mechanism as opposed to the intangible, cumbersome, and often difficult-to-implement notions of culture.

## **Merger/Acquisition**

*Implementation of the Denison Organizational Culture Survey within two or more organizations undergoing a merger can facilitate:*

- An understanding of the organizations' areas of similarity and/or difference for the purpose of planning and implementation of integration efforts.
- A prioritization of intervention efforts relative to short, mid and long-term integration demands and goals.
- The creation of a cultural benchmark for which the integrated organizations can strive.
- The creation of a "third thing" (*now understood to be essential to merger success*) which will move the focus from "each other" (*blaming, fear and internal competition*) and toward a common, shared culture to be created.
- The design of leadership selection/development plans across the merged organization which support the creation of the desired, shared culture.

## **Facing Industry Restructuring**

*Implementation of the Denison Organizational Culture Survey within an organization facing industry restructuring can facilitate:*

- The identification of those cultural areas which, although supportive of success in a previous environment, will hinder success in a new environment.
- The identification of those internal cultural strengths which can be leveraged to support success in the changing and uncertain environment ahead.
- Benchmarking against other companies which have successfully transitioned into a restructured and highly uncertain environment.
- The targeting and prioritizing of culture change efforts to match desired results - at the organizational, departmental and team levels.

## **Start-Up Venture**

*Implementation of the Denison Organizational Culture Survey within a new or young company can facilitate:*

- The creation of a cultural benchmark early in the organization's existence in order to focus organizational development efforts on high impact cultural areas.
- The identification of immediate areas of focus which will support the organization and its members in attaining rapid results:
  - *Does the organization have a clear mission ?*
  - *Does it have strong "bench strength"?*
  - *Does it have systems sufficient to support initial performance goals?*
  - *Does it have avenues for effective communication among the ranks and teams for the purpose of operations, addressing customer concerns, and growth?*
  - *Is the organization concerned with the customer's viewpoint and needs?*
- Attainment of a baseline against which the start-up can later assess itself and shift/re-order development efforts as it moves forward.

## **A New CEO**

*Implementation of the Denison Organizational Culture Survey upon arrival of new CEO or top leader can facilitate:*

- The new leader's rapid understanding and interpretation of organizational (*as well as departmental/ divisional/team*) strengths and weaknesses, and prioritization of these areas for both leverage and development.
- The new leader's understanding of the organization's specific performance challenges via a cultural framework (*system functioning, cross-functional break-downs, broad-level as well as specific strengths and weaknesses, links of the organization's culture to performance factors, etc.*).
- A baseline against which the new leader can later measure his/her success in moving the organization forward toward high performance.

## **An Organization in Decline**

*Implementation of the Denison Organizational Culture Survey within an older company facing difficulty responding to change or encountering decline can facilitate:*

- The interpretation of cultural factors and their possible links to the decline of the organization's performance.
  - *Is there a clear mission for the organization?*
  - *Is there enough adaptability/flexibility in the organization to respond to a changing environment?*
  - *Are the systems current and supportive of successful goal attainment?*
  - *Is the organization continuing to learn and develop the competencies of its personnel?*
  - *Is the organization listening to and responding to the concerns of its customers - or is it "doing what has always worked" regardless of what the customer wants?*
- The prioritization of efforts to reverse the decline relative to areas of specific cultural strengths and weaknesses and desired business results.



## **New Strategic Initiative**

*Implementation of the Denison Organizational Culture Survey within an organization or division facing customer service challenges can facilitate:*

- The understanding of whether or not the necessary cultural conditions exist to support the successful implementation of the initiative.
  - *Is the mission clear?*
  - *Is there high involvement and support for the initiative?*
  - *Is there the required adaptability to support a new/different path?*
  - *Are the systems and structures in place to ensure the initiative's quality implementation?*
  
- The prioritization of systemic-efforts (*communication processes, systems, competency requirements, cross-team efforts, etc.*) which must be implemented simultaneous to the new strategy to ensure success.

## **Customer Service Challenges**

*Implementation of the Denison Organizational Culture Assessment within an organization or division facing customer service challenges can facilitate:*

- The identification of the key cultural elements which are acting as barriers to customer service.
  - *Do individuals at all levels embrace and "own" customer service as a performance priority? Are individuals at all levels held accountable for providing quality customer service ?*
  - *Are individuals empowered, trained and provided resources to act on the customer's behalf?.*
  - *Are customer service decisions made at the level where the most information resides?*
  - *Are systems in place to provide integrated responses to customer needs?*
  - *Are customers' concerns sought and integrated into strategic decisions and goals?*
  
- The definition and prioritization of actions to quickly address the cultural weaknesses which are serving as primary barriers to customer service.

## A Unique Culture Model

### **What is Unique About This Culture Model?**

Organizational culture is often seen as an important but elusive phenomenon. Everyone speaks of the importance of organizational culture, particularly since the landmark publication of Peters' and Waterman's *In Search of Excellence* in 1982. However, many executives and organizational change specialists are hard pressed to claim that they can diagnose a culture with the precision needed to improve it and strengthen an organization's performance. By and large, academic research on culture has not supported the efforts of practitioners. It is often theoretical or based on qualitative case studies that can not be reliably replicated in the field. There is a body of survey research, which claims to measure culture, but it is usually limited to questions about organizational climate; about how the organization feels to its employees. However, that is an indirect and limited way of getting at the features of culture that are most important according to major theorists and popular business writers. A culture is based on a widely shared underlying set of beliefs and values that actually affect a broad range of behaviors.

The *Denison Organizational Culture Survey* was developed to overcome the problems with existing approaches. Over 20 years of work was invested in finding ways to measure relevant behaviors and beliefs, rather than focusing on the general emotional climate of the workplace. At every stage there was also a concern with validating the measures and models by subjecting them to the real world test: are we measuring culture in ways that predict performance? The model was subjected to the ultimate test: can it predict revenue generation and profitability? In addition the model was developed for practitioners. The items are specific enough so that a low score on a particular item provides an indication of the proper remedial action.

The *Survey* is not just a collection of 60 items. It is organized with an informative and intuitive model that allows one to discern patterns, not just individual scores.

The following is a comparison of the Denison Model and other culture models.

## **How is this culture model different?**

### **THE DENISON MODEL**

- is behaviorally based
- was designed and created within the business environment
- uses business language to explore business-level issues
- is linked to bottom-line business results
- is fast and easy to implement
- is applicable to all levels of the organization

### **OTHER CULTURE MODELS**

- are often psychologically based or personality based
- are often designed and created within the academic environment
- often use non-business language which must be converted through interpretation to the business context
- are often unclear about specific links to business results; little if any research conducted placing cultural elements in relation to performance
- often require extensive time to implement assessment and/or interpret results in the business context
- were specifically designed for either top level or front line implementation

# The Culture Model and the Bottom Line

## What is the relationship between cultures and organizational effectiveness?

As early as 1984 Dr. Denison was publishing research on the relationship between organizational culture and financial performance. In his initial reports he compared those organizations scoring in the top half of all organizations with those in the bottom half. He then tracked their financial performance for 5 years after the measures were taken. To avoid any biasing of results he confined the study to publicly held firms for which accurate data was obtainable from Standard and Poor's statistical service, COMPUSTAT.

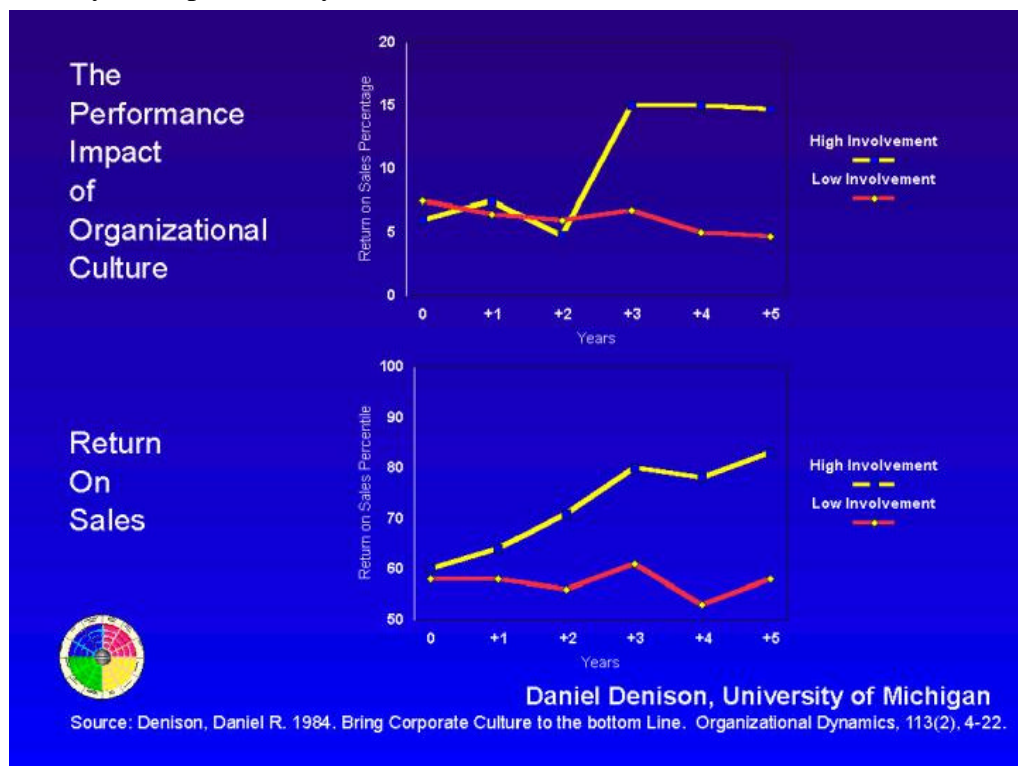
Using this data he calculated the following measurements:

**Return on Investment (ROI)** *Return on Investment* is based on a formula where all income is considered against all investments including minority interest and long term debt. This makes comparisons more meaningful across organizations with different financing arrangements. It is the ultimate investor's criterion of success. See Appendix B for more details on profit ratios.

**Return on Sales (ROS)** *Return on Sales* is a simple ratio of income to sales. It is a good indicator of the efficiency of the company's operations. It is a particularly good measure for comparing firms within an industry.

As you can see from Figure 1 and Figure 2, organizations with stronger cultures (as measured in this case by *involvement*) are also better financial performers. What is very striking is the trend over time. At first stronger cultures do only slightly better, but the effects of stronger cultures are cumulative. By the end of 5 years, the effect is dramatic. The statistical measure for performance was adjusted to standardize scores within an industry since profitability varies across industries.

Figure 1



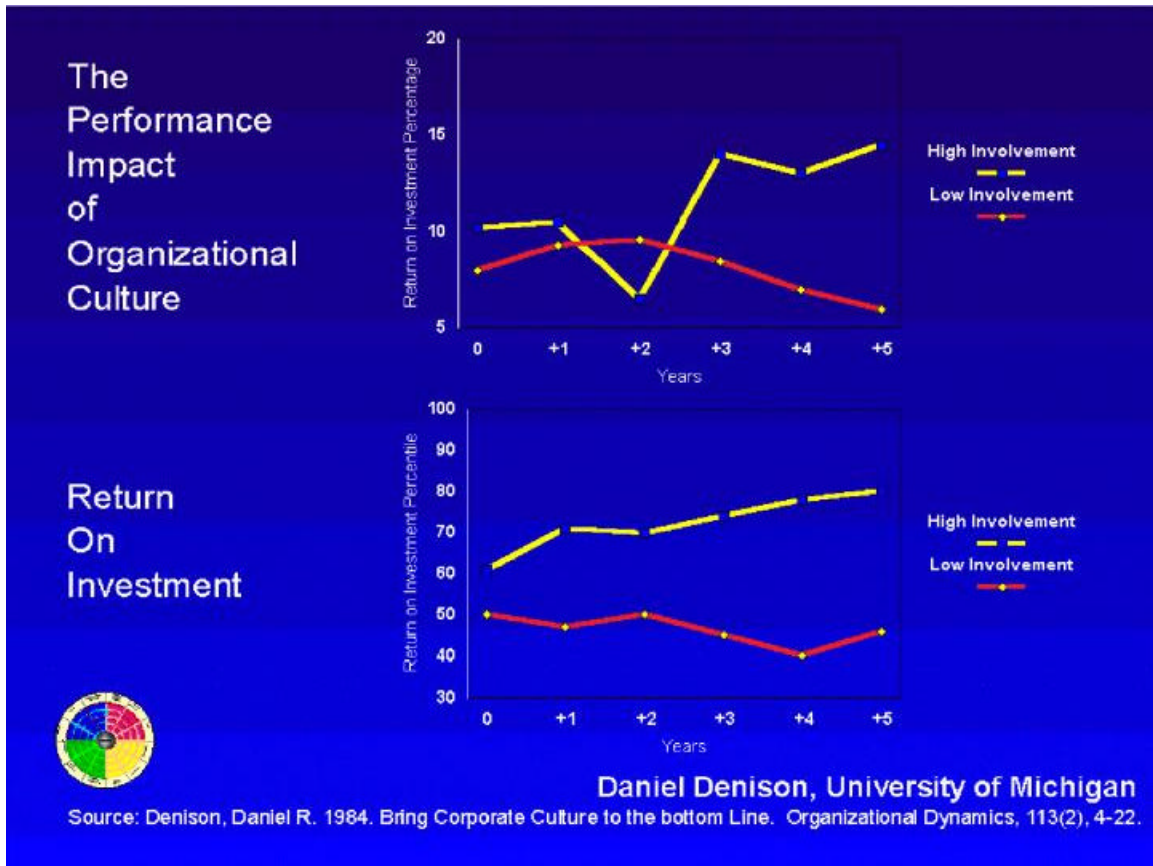


Figure 2

The above tables are based on one indicator of culture, *involvement*. A number of other indicators were tested in Dr. Denison's early research including:

- Job reward
- Decision making practices
- Inter-unit coordination
- Emphasis on human resources
- Organization of work
- Supervisory leadership

All of these measures showed significant relationships to financial performance. However, some the effects did not increase over time. The most substantial long-term effects occurred on organization-wide indicators such as inter-unit coordination and involvement.

**What is the evidence for the Denison organizational culture model?**

Building on his earlier research, Dr. Denison developed the current model which group: measures of an organization's culture into the following four *traits*:

- **Involvement** (by employees in decisions and day to day tasks)
- **Consistency** (of organizational procedures)
- **Adaptability** (organizational change in response to customers and markets)
- **Mission** (a sense of direction and performance expectations)

A full description of the four traits listed above is provided in Section II.

Subsequent evaluations and research confirmed and extended Denison’s earlier results. He again conducted his research using objective measures of business performance. These measures were:

**Return on Assets (ROA)** *Return on Assets* is based on a formula comparing all income against all assets. This is a traditional business performance measure.

<b>A – Correlation Between Culture Traits and Return on Assets</b>				
	Total Sample (N = 220)		Sub-Sample (N = 24)	
	ROA 1989	ROA 3-Year Average	ROA 1989	ROA 3-Year Average
Involvement	0.00	0.09*	0.35**	0.23
Consistency	0.11*	0.14**	0.36**	0.31*
Adaptability	0.07	0.12**	0.25	0.22
Mission	0.11*	0.10'	0.48***	0.55***

**Sales Growth** *Sales growth* is measured as a percentage increase over one year and the average percentage increase over three years.

As you can see in the next figure, there are substantial statistically significant relationships between all of the traits and the performance measures. All of the traits affected Sales Growth, for both one and three years. In addition, all of the traits except *adaptability* significantly affected Return on Assets over one and three year periods. *Adaptability* did not have a significant relationship, but the correlation to Return on Assets was in the expected direction, and the magnitude was substantial.

<b>B – Correlation Between Culture Traits and Sales Growth</b>				
	Total Sample (N = 409)		Sub-Sample (N = 50)	
	Sales Growth 1989	Sales Growth: 3-Year Average	Sales Growth: 1989	Sales Growth: 3-Year Average
Involvement	0.07*	0.05	0.25**	0.25**
Consistency	0.05	0.02	0.18*	0.18*
Adaptability	0.08**	0.08**	0.25**	0.24**
Mission	0.08**	0.08**	0.22*	0.22*

\*p W .10      \*p W .05      \*p W .01

## Are These Results Plausible to Managers?

Dr. Denison surveyed managerial teams at 674 organizations to determine whether the model was in line with their perceptions. Managers were asked to rate their organization against firms on:

- Sales Growth
- Profits
- Quality
- Employee Satisfaction
- Overall Performance

As you can see in the table below, there were significant correlation between the culture scores for these firms and their own manager's perceptions of performance. All of the traits were significantly correlated to overall performance, employee satisfaction and quality. Sales growth and profits showed weaker correlation to some of the traits. However, these are performance areas where results are slower to appear, and this analysis was based on current performance. As shown earlier, performance in these areas over longer periods is significantly affected by culture traits.

### Correlation Between Culture Traits and Subjective Effectiveness Measures

(N = 674)

	Sales Growth	Profits	Quality	Employee Satisfaction ance	Overall Perform-
Involvement	0.04	0.01	0.26***	0.32***	0.16***
Consistency	0.03	0.13'***	0.29***	0.33***	0.29***
Adaptability	0.08**	0.06	0.20***	0.21***	0.18***
Mission	0.22***	0.10'***	0.18***	0.27***	0.35***

Subsequent doctoral dissertation research by C. J. Fisher provided further evidence of the relationship between scores on the *Denison Organizational Culture Survey* and managers' perceptions of performance. As you can see in the next table, there is a substantial pattern of relationships between culture traits and performance.

**Involvement** - High employee *involvement* affects performance in all areas, though its effect is weaker for Sales Revenue and Market Share. In all likelihood, this is because of the short term time frame of this study. As you saw in Figure 1-1, the effects of involvement manifest most dramatically after five years.

**Mission** - A strong, clear organizational sense of *mission* affects all areas of performance with the exception of innovation in product development.

**Adaptability** - *Adaptability* also affects all areas of performance except for profitability and return on assets. Once again, this is likely because of the short-term time frame of the study. As noted in this section, the payoff for adaptability appears over a 3 year period. Initially, adaptability may increase costs, but payoffs materialize at a later date.

**Consistency** - Consistency is the trait with the narrowest scope of short term effect. Its main impact is on quality and employee satisfaction. Clearly, quality and employee satisfaction have an eventual impact on financial performance. Managers in need of very quick improvements of financial performance would do best to focus on improving other traits first.

**Observed Relationships Between Culture  
Traits and Manager Perceptions of Performance\***

PERFORMANCE (perceived)	CULTURE TRAIT			
	Involvement	Consistency	Adaptability	Mission
Profitability/ROA	++			++
Sales Revenue	+		++	++
Market Share	+	+	++	++
Quality of Products and services	++	++	+	++
Product Development and Innovation	++		++	
Employee Satisfaction	++	++	+	++

\* Based on Research by CJ Fisher

\*Statistical regression analysis was used to refine estimates and exclude demographic effects of an organization's size and industry. Instead of correlation, the resulting statistic was a regression coefficient which can not be intuitively presented. The entries of + or ++ in this table are all significant at the .05 level or better. The stronger marking of ++ was applied when the relationship was stronger which is somewhat similar to a higher correlation.

In this section we have reviewed several studies using different approaches. They all converge on the same point: culture, when measured with the Denison Organizational Survey, is an important predictor of organizational performance.



## SECTION TWO - UNDERSTANDING THE SURVEY AND THE MODEL

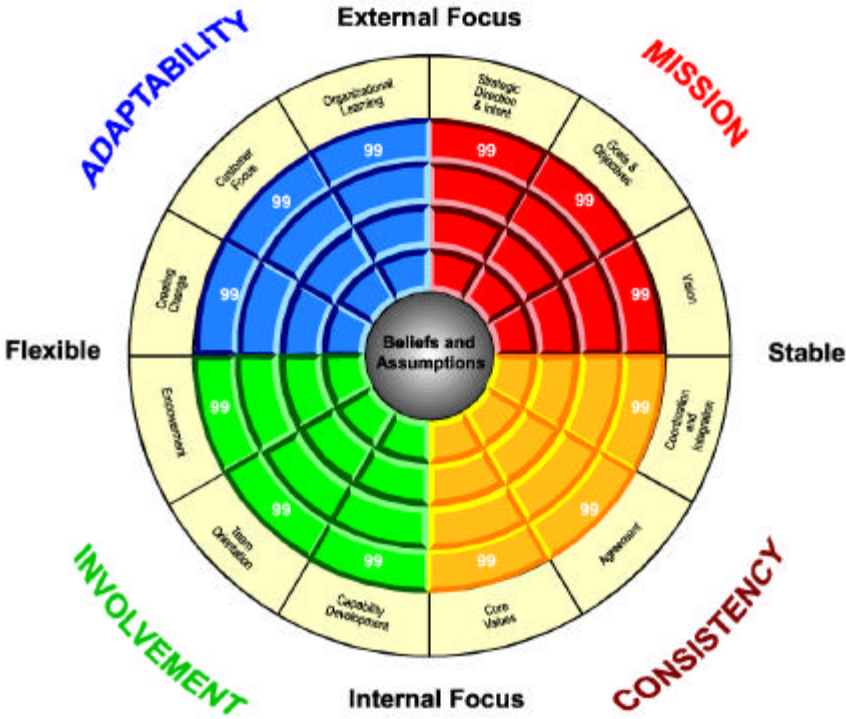
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UNDERSTANDING HOW CULTURE AND  
BEHAVIOR IMPACT THE BOTTOM LINE

# The Culture Model

**What is the underlying model for the *Denison Organizational Culture Survey*?**

The model underlying the *Denison Organizational Culture Survey* is based on the four cultural traits of *Involvement*, *Consistency*, *Adaptability* and *Mission* that have been developed through Dr. Denison’s research. For each of these four traits, the model defines three indices of managerial practice, and then measures these twelve resultant indices with a 60-item questionnaire.



## **Denison Organizational Culture Model Circumplex**

The model recognizes that cultural traits, managerial behaviors, and even organizational strategies can all be linked to a core set of beliefs and assumptions about the organization and its environment. These core beliefs and assumptions lie at the heart of an organization's culture. In the Denison Organizational Culture Model, these core beliefs and assumptions are summarized in terms of four main cultural "traits" that appear, through research, to have an impact on organizational performance.

These underlying traits are expressed in terms of a set of managerial practices -- concrete activities that are linked to the four culture traits. These practices stem from and reinforce the dominant beliefs, values and assumptions of the organization. These managerial practices are measured using the twelve indices that make up the model.

### **Why is the circumplex divided into four quadrants?**

The four quadrants of the model (see p. 2-1) represent the four traits. Each quadrant includes three indices of managerial practice that are linked to each of the traits. The traits and the indices are presented in terms of two underlying dimensions, *flexibility vs. stability* on the horizontal axis and an *external vs. internal* focus on the vertical axis.

**The profile splits horizontally** to distinguish between an external focus (top half) and an internal focus (bottom half). *Involvement* and *Consistency* address the internal dynamics of an organization, but do not address the interaction of the organization with the external environment. *Adaptability* and *Mission*, in contrast, take as their focus the relationship between the organization and the external environment.

**The profile splits vertically** to distinguish between a flexible organization (left half) and a stable organization (right half). *Involvement* and *Adaptability* emphasize an organization's capacity for flexibility and change. Opposite that, *Consistency* and *Mission* emphasize the organization's capacity for stability and direction.

A system oriented toward *Adaptability* and *Involvement* will introduce more variety, more input, and more possible solutions to a given situation than a system oriented toward a high level of *Consistency* and a strong sense of *Mission*. In contrast, a bias towards *Consistency* and *Mission* is more likely to reduce the variety and place a higher emphasis on control and stability.

While research shows that the four traits in the model each have a positive impact on performance, some of the traits, at least on the surface, may appear to contradict others. For example, highly consistent cultures may become inbred, and may be the most difficult to change. In contrast, highly adaptive cultures may have difficulty achieving the high rates of efficiency or shared sense of purpose often found in cultures that are well integrated.

In a similar sense, the traits of *Mission* and *Involvement* may also seem contradictory: the meaning and direction established by an organizational mission may limit the involvement of some of the organization's members. As many organizations have discovered, simply declaring a new organizational mission does not necessarily imply the support and commitment of the organization's members. By the same token, high involvement among an organization's members does not necessarily imply a clear sense of direction and purpose.

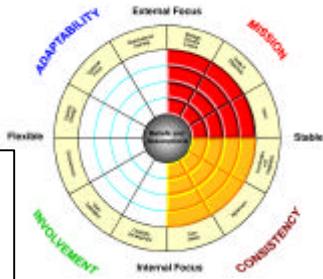
Denison's research has demonstrated that the culture of an effective organization must reflect all of these characteristics. Thus, effective organizations are likely to have cultures that are adaptive, yet highly consistent and predictable, and that foster high involvement, but do so within the context of a shared sense of mission.

## **The Denison Culture Model and Business Performance**

### **How do the traits impact the bottom line? \_\_\_\_\_**

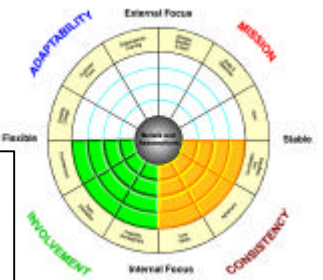
In over a decade of research, Dr. Denison studied the correlation between the cultural traits in this survey (*Involvement, Consistency, Adaptability* and *Mission*) and organizational effectiveness measures. A number of performance indicators were examined for each of the companies included in the research: return on assets, return on investment, product development, sales growth, market share, quality and employee satisfaction. Dr. Denison found that nearly all of the correlation between cultural traits and organizational effectiveness measures were significant and that each of the four cultural traits showed significant positive correlation with a wide range of subjective and objective measures of organizational effectiveness. Using this framework, one can understand how each set of traits may impact specific performance measures and an organization's bottom line.

**Stable**  
Mission  
+  
Consistency



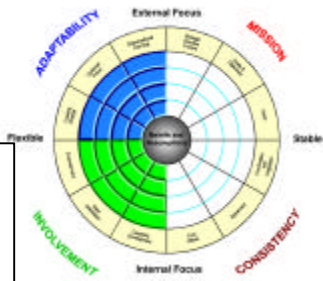
**Mission & Consistency** tend to impact financial performance measures such as Return on Assets (ROA), Return on Investment (ROI) and Return on Sales (ROS). When their rankings fall within the third and fourth quartiles, this typically indicates high returns on assets, investments and sales, and operational strength.

**Internal**  
Involvement  
+  
Consistency



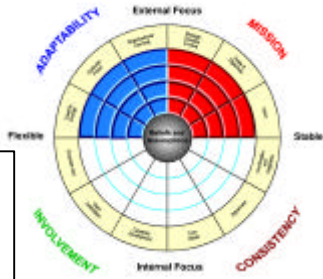
**Consistency & Involvement** tend to impact quality, employee satisfaction and Return on Investment. When their rankings fall within the third and fourth quartiles, this typically indicates higher levels of quality, fewer defects and less rework, good utilization of resources, and higher levels of employee satisfaction.

**Flexible**  
Adaptability  
+  
Involvement



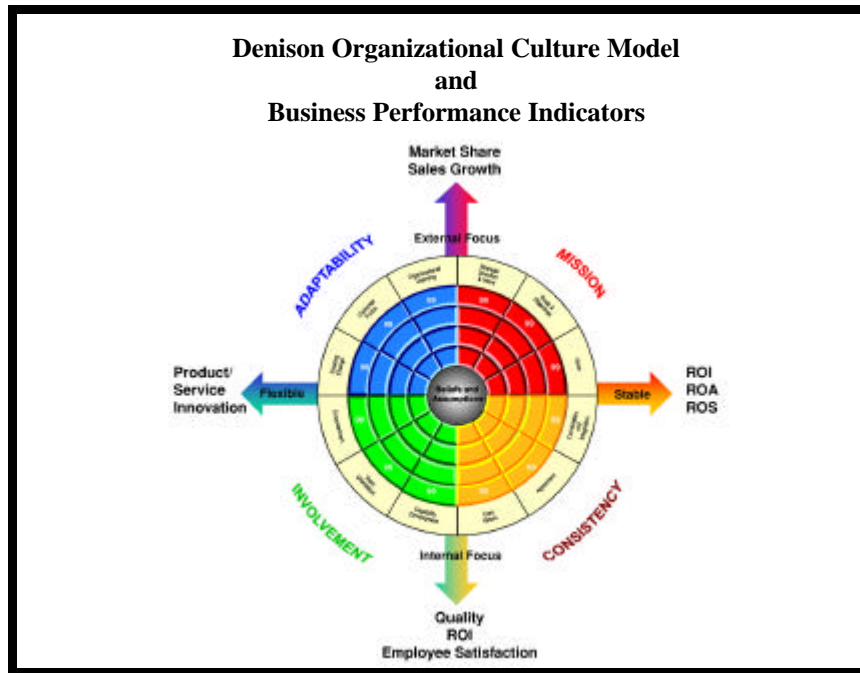
**Involvement & Adaptability** typically impact product development and innovation. When their rankings fall within the third and fourth quartiles, this typically indicates higher levels of product and service innovation and creativity, as well as a fast response to customers' and employees' changing needs.

**External**  
Adaptability  
+  
Mission



**Adaptability & Mission** typically impact revenue, sales growth and market share. When their rankings fall within the third and fourth quartiles, this typically indicates continually increasing sales growth and market share.

The following figure outlines the correlation between the cultural traits and organizational effectiveness measures.



For additional background on this research, two of Dr. Denison's articles are included in Section Five of this guide. A complete discussion of his initial research is found in his book *Corporate Culture and Organizational Effectiveness*.

# Understanding the Results

## **How do you interpret the overall results from the profile?**

To simplify the interpretation of the scores, the profile depicts the scores as a percentage. This method of presenting the data simply compares your organization to other organizations that have taken the survey, and classifies the scores for your organization as a percentage score compared to the average scores of other organizations.

Indices with scores in the first or second quartiles are areas of vulnerability and deserve attention. By scoring under the 50th percentile, the profile shows that more than 50% of organizations score higher in these areas. By reviewing your organization's score for the indices within each trait, you receive a profile of your organization's culture. This will provide you with information regarding strengths and weaknesses of your organization as compared to competitors or other organizations. It will also assist in developing an action plan to direct your organization toward higher performance.

## **How do you interpret the results for each item?**

Much like the circular profile, the line-item section of the Summary Report displays your organization's score on each item as a percentile score. Your organization's score on each item is compared to that found in other companies which have participated in the survey. The line-item report provides important details regarding how an organization's overall score on an index was derived, and identifies specific areas of strength and weakness. It is an excellent tool in the action-planning process to pinpoint specific developmental opportunities.

## **What do the quartiles represent?**

Since the *Denison Organizational Culture Survey* was published at the end of 1995, the database for the survey has been constantly expanding. Currently, at the time that this revised guide is going to press in early 1999, over 500 organizations have used the survey and form the comparison base used to compute the quartile scores for each new organization. The database is updated frequently and by late 1999, we plan to have over 1000 organizations in the database. The "norms" for each item and index are established by re-computing the "cut-points" for the 25th, 50th and 75th percentile each time the database is updated. The database now includes a wide variety of large and small organizations, including manufacturing, service, retail and financial. Thus far the database primarily includes organizations from the USA, but some translations have been completed, and corporate research partners are being established in several other countries.

## **What is the relationship between the percentile scores for the items and the percentile scores for the indices?**

A question that sometimes arises when interpreting the results is the relationship between the percentile scores for individual items and the percentile scores for the overall index. This question often arises when the percentile score for an index is not the same as the average of the percentile scores for the items. An index score is calculated by taking the raw average of the 5 line items for that index, then norming them against other organizations. The raw average is computed by taking the scores from the surveys (1-5) and calculating each item's average. For example, let's say that the raw average of the 5 line items that make up an index are 3.4, 3.6, 4.0, 4.1 and 4.2. To compute the index score, we 1<sup>st</sup> take the raw average of these 5 items (which is 3.86), then compare this average (3.86) against the norm for all organizations for the same index (their raw averages). Since this score is determined from the raw averages of the line items instead of an average of their percentiles, you cannot just take an average of the line items' percentiles for the index score. This further demonstrates the importance of reviewing line-item feedback to clearly understand how your organization's scores were derived and to pinpoint specific areas that need attention.



## Explanation of each of the Traits and Indices

The final part of this section on understanding the survey and the model provides a detailed discussion of each of the four traits and their component indices, and lists the items that make up each.

### ***What is the Involvement Trait?***

*Involvement - Building human capability, ownership, and responsibility.*

Organizational cultures characterized as "highly involved" strongly encourage employee involvement, and create a sense of ownership and responsibility. They rely on informal, voluntary, and implied control systems, rather than formal, explicit, bureaucratic control systems. Out of this sense of ownership grows a greater commitment to the organization and an increasing capacity for autonomy. Receiving input from organizational members increases the quality of the decisions and improves their implementation.

The indices of the Involvement Trait are:

- ◆ Empowerment
- ◆ Team Orientation
- ◆ Capability Development

***Empowerment - Individuals have the authority, initiative, and ability to manage their own work. This creates a sense of ownership and responsibility toward the organization.***

The survey items that comprise the Empowerment index are:

- ◆ Most employees in this organization are highly involved in their work.
- ◆ Decisions in this organization are usually made at the level where the best information is available.
- ◆ Information is widely shared in this organization so that everyone can get the information s/he needs when it is needed.
- ◆ Everyone in this organization believes that s/he can have a positive impact.
- ◆ Business planning in our organization is ongoing and involves everyone in the process to some degree.

***Team Orientation*** - Value is placed on working cooperatively toward common goals for which all employees feel mutually accountable. The organization relies on team effort to get work done.

The survey items that comprise the Team Orientation index are:

- ◆ Cooperation and collaboration across functional roles are actively encouraged in this organization.
- ◆ Working in this organization is like being part of a team.
- ◆ Work is sensibly organized in this organization so that each person can see the relationship between his/her work and the goals of the organization.
- ◆ Teams are the primary building block of this organization.
- ◆ This organization relies on horizontal control and coordination to get work done, rather than hierarchy.

***Capability Development*** - The organization continually invests in the development of employees' skills in order to stay competitive and meet ongoing business needs.

The survey items that comprise the Capability Development index are:

- ◆ This organization delegates authority so that people can act on their own.
- ◆ The capability of the people in this organization is viewed as an important source of competitive advantage.
- ◆ This organization continuously invests in the skills of its employees.
- ◆ The "bench strength" of this organization is constantly improving.
- ◆ Problems often arise in my organization because we do not have the skills necessary to do the job.

### ***What is the Consistency Trait?***

*Consistency - Defining the values and systems that are the basis of a strong culture.*

Consistency provides a central source of integration, coordination and control. Consistent organizations develop a mindset and a set of organizational systems that create an internal system of governance based on consensual support. They have highly committed employees, key central values, a distinct method of doing business, a tendency to promote from within, and a clear set of *do's* and *don'ts*.

Consistency creates a "strong" culture based on a shared system of beliefs, values and symbols that are widely understood by members of an organization. Implicit control systems based on internalized values can be a more effective means of achieving coordination and integration than external-control systems that rely on explicit rules and regulations.

The power of this method of operation is particularly apparent when organizational members encounter unfamiliar situations. It enables individuals to better react in a predictable way to an unpredictable environment by emphasizing a few general, value-based principles on which actions can be grounded.

The indices of the Consistency Trait are:

- ◆ Coordination and Integration
- ◆ Agreement
- ◆ Core Values

***Coordination and Integration*** - *Different functions and units of the organization are able to work together well to achieve common goals. Organizational boundaries do not interfere with getting work done.*

The survey items that comprise the Coordination and Integration index are:

- ◆ Our approach to doing business is very consistent and predictable.
- ◆ There is good alignment of goals across levels of this organization.
- ◆ People from different organizational units still share a common perspective.
- ◆ It is easy to coordinate projects across functional units in this organization.
- ◆ Working with someone from another part of this organization is like working with someone from a different company.

***Agreement*** - *The organization is able to reach agreement on critical issues. This includes both the underlying level of agreement and the ability to reconcile differences when they occur.*

The survey items that comprise the Agreement index are:

- ◆ When disagreements occur, we work hard to achieve "win-win" solutions.
- ◆ This organization has a strong culture.
- ◆ There is clear agreement about the right way and the wrong way to do things in this organization.
- ◆ It is easy for us to reach consensus, even on difficult issues.
- ◆ We often have trouble reaching agreement on key issues.

***Core Values*** - *Members of the organization share a set of values which create a sense of identity and a clear set of expectations.*

The survey items that comprise the Core Values index are:

- ◆ There is a clear and consistent set of values in this company that governs the way we do business.
- ◆ This company has a characteristic management style and a distinct set of management practices.
- ◆ The managers in this company "practice what they preach."
- ◆ This organization has an ethical code that guides our behavior and tells us right from wrong.
- ◆ Ignoring the core values of this organization will get you in trouble.

### ***What is the Adaptability Trait?***

*Adaptability - Translating the demands of the business environment into action.*

Organizations hold a system of norms and beliefs that support the organization's capacity to receive, interpret, and translate signals from its environment into internal behavioral changes that increase its chances for survival, growth and development.

Three aspects of adaptability impact an organization's effectiveness. First is the ability to perceive and respond to the external environment. Successful organizations are very focused on their customers and their competitors. Second is the ability to respond to internal customers, regardless of level, department or function. Third is the capacity to restructure and re-institutionalize a set of behaviors and processes that allow the organization to adapt. Without this ability to implement adaptive response, an organization cannot be effective.

The indices of the Adaptability trait are:

- ◆ Creating Change
- ◆ Customer Focus
- ◆ Organizational Learning

***Creating Change*** - *The organization is able to create adaptive ways to meet changing needs. It is able to read the business environment, quickly react to current trends, and anticipate future changes.*

The survey items that comprise the Creating Change index are:

- ◆ This organization is very responsive and changes easily.
- ◆ This organization responds well to competitors and other changes in the external business environment.
- ◆ This organization continually adopts new and improved ways to do work.
- ◆ Attempts to change this organization usually meet with resistance.
- ◆ Different units in this organization often cooperate to create change.

***Customer Focus*** - *The organization understands and reacts to their customer, and anticipates their future needs. It reflects the degree to which the organization is driven by a concern to satisfy their customer.*

The survey items that comprise the Customer Focus index are:

- ◆ Customer comments and recommendations often lead to changes in this organization.
- ◆ Customer input directly influences our decisions.
- ◆ All members of this organization have a deep understanding of customer wants and needs.
- ◆ We encourage direct contact with customers by members of the organization.
- ◆ The interests of the final customer often are ignored in our decisions.

***Organizational Learning*** - *The organization receives, translates, and interprets signals from the environment into opportunities for encouraging innovation, gaining knowledge and developing capabilities.*

The survey items that comprise the Organizational Learning index are:

- ◆ This organization encourages innovation and rewards those who take risks.
- ◆ We view failure as an opportunity for learning and improvement.
- ◆ Lots of things "fall between the cracks" in this organization.
- ◆ Learning is an important objective in our day-to-day work.
- ◆ We make certain that the "right hand knows what the left is doing."

## **What is the Mission Trait?**

*Mission - Defining a meaningful long-term direction for the organization.*

A mission provides purpose and meaning by defining a social role and external goals for the organization. It provides a clear direction and goals that serve to define an appropriate course of action for the organization and its members. A sense of mission allows an organization to shape current behavior by envisioning a desired future state. Being able to internalize and identify with an organization's mission contributes to both short and long-term commitment to the organization. Success is more likely when individuals and organizations are goal directed.

The indices of the Mission Trait are:

- ◆ Strategic Direction and Intent
- ◆ Goals and Objectives
- ◆ Vision

***Strategic Direction and Intent** - Clear strategic intentions convey the organization's purpose and make it clear how everyone can contribute, and “make their mark“ in the industry.*

The survey items that comprise the Strategic Direction and Intent index are:

- ◆ This organization has a clear mission that gives meaning and direction to our work.
- ◆ This organization has a long-term purpose and direction.
- ◆ The strategic direction of this organization is unclear to me.
- ◆ This organization has a clear strategy for the future.
- ◆ Our organization’s strategy is leading other firms to change the ways that they compete.

***Goals and Objectives** - A clear set of goals and objectives can be linked to the mission, vision, and strategy, and provide everyone with a clear direction in their work.*

The survey items that comprise the Goals and Objectives index are:

- ◆ There is widespread agreement about the goals of this organization.
- ◆ The leaders of this organization set goals that are ambitious, but realistic.
- ◆ The leadership of this organization has "gone on record" about the objectives we are trying to meet.
- ◆ We continuously track our progress against our stated goals.
- ◆ The people in this organization understand what needs to be done for us to succeed in the long run.

***Vision** - The organization has a shared view of a desired future state. It embodies core values and captures the hearts and minds of the organization's people, while providing guidance and direction.*

The survey items that compromise the Vision index are:

- ◆ We have a shared vision of what this organization will be like in the future.
- ◆ The leaders in this organization have a long-term orientation.
- ◆ Short-term thinking often compromises long-term vision.
- ◆ Our vision creates excitement and motivation for our employees.
- ◆ We are able to meet short-term demand without compromising our long-term vision.



## SECTION THREE - CONDUCTING THE SURVEY

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STEP-BY-STEP GUIDELINES FOR  
ADMINISTERING THE SURVEY

## General Guidelines

The *Denison Organizational Culture Survey* is a powerful diagnostic tool, but in order to create organizational change, it must be coupled with an equally powerful *process*. In our experience, the following set of guidelines is very useful in defining and managing the change process.

1. ***The purpose and objectives of the survey must be clear from the start.*** They may range from low-impact objectives such as “taking the temperature of the organization” or “completing this year’s survey” to high-impact objectives such as “provide diagnostic data to build culture accountability into the business-planning process,” or “evaluate the potential of the human organization in one of our new acquisitions.” The purpose and objectives should be clarified from the start. An ambiguous purpose seldom leads to decisive action.
2. ***The “ownership” of the process must be clear from the start.*** “Ownership” of the survey process might also range from low-impact strategy such as “Human Resources says we have to do this, or else” to a high-impact strategy such as “the CEO’s office wants to develop a better understanding of the impact that the work environment is having on our performance.” Broad ownership, with strong and active support from the top, is always best for creating change.
3. ***Define your stakeholders and use them as a steering committee.*** The stakeholders for your project might be “top management in the science and technology organization,” “all business unit heads,” or “the heads of our three largest labor unions.” These stakeholders may or may not be the primary “owners” of the process, but they will nonetheless determine whether it succeeds or fails. Having a clearly defined group to guide your change process is always to your advantage.
4. ***Design the process for built-in accountability.*** Successful culture change projects require managers to be accountable for the *action* that they take as a result of the survey process. Problem areas identified by the survey are regarded as opportunities for improvement and the ability to use the diagnosis to create action plans is the pay-off. Low-impact accountability might be, “will hold feedback sessions with all employees who completed the survey” or “will review the results of the survey at the next meeting of the operating committee”.

Higher impact accountability might include “will incorporate the discussion of the results into the business- planning process at the next top management meeting” or “will require individual business units to present their plans for responding to the opportunities and challenges presented by the survey results.” A process with accountability will reinforce the idea that managing the culture is the collective responsibility of all members of the organization. A process without accountability will reinforce the idea that the culture of the organization is something fuzzy and unmanageable that no one can do much about.

- 5. *Define the process as you define the project.*** Successful projects usually define an integrated set of events built around the culture survey that lead to a clearly defined set of objectives. For example, one client we worked with linked their human resource planning process, an individually focused 360° feedback process for leaders, and the planning process for setting next year’s individual performance targets with the culture survey. Their human resources agenda was, in effect, driven by the problems and opportunities identified by the survey and the discussion of the results by top management.

In another organization, the model and the culture diagnosis was used as a centerpiece of the organization’s management development efforts. When the top management groups from each of the organization’s business units went to a management development session, they came with a survey diagnosis of their organization as a key part of their personal and organizational development agenda.

## Conducting the Survey

A three-phase process is usually followed to administer the *Denison Organizational Culture Survey*. The table below shows the process steps and the flow of information between steps. The activities within each step will be discussed in detail in this section.

<b>Phases</b>	<b>Steps</b>
<b>I Planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Identify the purpose and objectives of conducting the survey</b></li><li>• <b>Select the participants</b></li><li>• <b>Identify desired reports</b></li><li>• <b>Establish a timetable</b></li><li>• <b>Prepare materials and tools</b></li><li>• <b>Complete the DOCS Tracker</b></li></ul>
<b>II Data Collection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Distribute surveys</b></li><li>• <b>Complete Individual Surveys</b></li><li>• <b>Gather and return the surveys to the Scoring Center</b></li></ul>
<b>III Report Generation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Surveys are scored.</b></li><li>• <b>Reports are mailed or delivered electronically to the participating organization.</b></li></ul>
<b>IV Presenting the Reports</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>See Section IV of this guide</b></li></ul>

# I. PLANNING

## Purpose and Objectives

Before administering the survey, it is important to clearly understand the need for the survey and the end results you hope to achieve. Determine the impact you would like the survey to have on participants, how you will share the results with members of the organization, and what actions you want them to take in response to results. Clearer objectives will better enable you to guide the assessment process and achieve maximum results in the action-planning process.

The *Denison Organizational Culture Survey* can be used to:

- ◆ Benchmark your organization's culture to other cultures in higher and lower-performing organizations.
- ◆ Examine sub-groups within the organization.
- ◆ Measure an organization's existing culture and predict its impact on performance.
- ◆ Conduct an action-planning session using the results as a tool for decision making.
- ◆ Determine organizational development and training needs necessary to meet organizational objectives.
- ◆ Measure progress toward organizational goals.

## Selecting Participants

The survey can be administered in several ways depending on your goals for the survey. Administer:

- to an executive group only
- to an entire management team
- across the organization either in its entirety or by obtaining a representational sample
- within a single business unit, profit center, organization, division or department
- within a natural work group or cross-functional team

**Executive Group:** This group should be comprised of the highest level in your hierarchical structure. These people are the "final" decision makers in the organization - those who have ultimate control of corporate resources. Typical titles are President, Vice President, CFO, CEO, etc.

**Management Team(s):** This group represents the level(s) between the executive group and the non-management employees. The number of levels will depend on how many layers you have in your organization's hierarchy. Typical titles are Director, Manager, Supervisor, Project Manager, Team Leader, etc.

**Non-Management Groups:** This group represents the people who get the work done, who understand the day-to-day processes, and who have the greatest impact on the performance of the organization as it relates to the customer and work flow. Typical titles are Clerk, Designer, Salesperson, Associate, etc.

**Organization/Department/Business Unit/Profit Center:** Include the entire organization or department in the survey, where possible. If the organization or department is large, you may need to break it up into the same three categories described above (executive, management and non-management employees), or you may need to choose a representative group of people to speak for the organization/department as a whole.

**Work Group/Team:** The entire team should complete the survey.

## **Report Options**

Decisions must be made up-front to preserve the option of doing data cuts later. Data cuts are used to generate reports of results for subgroups of the total study sample. This section reviews the reasons you might want data cuts, and the different types that are possible.

### **A Single Report for the Entire Study**

In the simplest case, you will desire a single report summarizing the data for all respondents. Many users who initially desire only one report become intrigued by the data in the initial report and end up ordering additional reports which break down the responses by categories such as demographics, organizational position, etc. Even if you are planning on only one report we advise structuring the data collection so that those options remain open. For details on available options, see the material that follows.

### **Additional Reports**

In most situations, you will want more than one report to make some of the following comparisons:

- Levels of management and staff
- Regions
- Line vs. line
- Functions
- Points in time (past vs. present vs. future)
- Profit centers
- Divisions or subsidiaries
- Demographic categories (e.g., professional titles, age, sex, length of service)

Many of our customers add on respondents or reports to make their results more persuasive to their end-users. Target audiences are often more persuaded by results when they have filled out the survey instrument and when they see results reported separately for their own group. In theory, this should not be necessary. The American public regularly believes election predictions based on samples as small as three to five hundred respondents even when there is no breakdown by groups and most of the public has not been part of the survey sample. However, results used to support change efforts are more persuasive when the activity of filling out a form is more widespread and there are reports specific to various groups that have, or believe they have, different cultures.

Hence, some users start with a survey of all top management and report results at that level. In some cases, the organization then decides to report results separately to several levels at the top as well as multiple units within an organization. There is a tradeoff between stimulating buy-in and the costs of the survey. For that reason, some users cover everyone at the top but sample a smaller fraction of respondents at lower levels.

An additional reason for requesting multiple reports is to determine if there are differences in culture between the diverse parts of an organization. You may have good reason to suspect discrepancies or you may wish to establish that suspected differences are not present. Some target audiences have deep convictions and will not be persuaded by results unless they see these results broken out by sub-groups. In some organizations, the results will be used in sub-unit planning and each unit will need its own results.



## Timetable

It is important to carefully plan the time needed to conduct the survey. Be realistic about the time required to distribute and then collect the completed survey. Remember that we require ten business days to score the completed survey and print the feedback packets, so plan your timetable backwards from the time you actually need the completed feedback packets. See bottom of the DOCS Master Tracker in Appendix D for a summary of critical dates that must be identified.

## Materials and Tools

The following is a listing of the various component pieces available for the *Denison Organizational Culture Survey*. It is important that you have an understanding of the various pieces for efficient administration of the survey.

**Survey Instrument** - The actual survey filled out by participants which is returned to the designated collector inside the company. For suggestions on how to distribute and collect surveys, see Data Collection.

**Facilitator's Guide** - This guide provides background on the survey, a description of the model, *Levers for Change*, administration guidelines, and support materials.

**PowerPoint Presentation (see Section 4 of this Facilitator Guide)** - Overheads have been developed to assist the facilitator in explaining the Denison Model and the connection to performance.

**DOCS Tracker** - This form is used to coordinate this process. It specifies the data cuts desired, number of surveys and the timeline agreed upon. (See Appendix D).

**Summary Report(s)** - A **Summary Report** is provided which provides an organization's compiled scores in the form of a graphic profile and line-item feedback. *Levers for Change* are also provided. This summary report can be provided in hard copy or electronic format.

**Profile Transparency** - Transparencies of the Summary Report are available for presenting your organization's graphic profile to a large group.

## **DOCS Master Tracker**

You will need to obtain enough *Denison Organizational Culture Surveys (DOCS)* to distribute to all of the participants you have identified. If you want to break out responses from sub-groups, it is important that you coordinate the coding of the surveys with your Scoring Administrator. The DOCS Master Tracker should be completed for each administration of the survey. This enables the scoring center to create the subgroup responses you desire. (See Appendix D for a completed sample of the Master Tracker and blank Master Tracker forms which you may photocopy).

The surveys should be distributed with a memo explaining the purpose of the survey. The following memo is an example of a memo that could be sent with the survey.

If special items on the survey (items 1-40 on the back of survey) are being used, make sure to specify.

### **SAMPLE MEMO**

The *Denison Organizational Culture Survey* is designed to measure the underlying beliefs, values, and assumptions held by members of an organization, and the practices and behaviors that exemplify and reinforce them. The survey focuses on aspects of an organization's culture that have a direct link to business performance.

Please take a few minutes to complete the attached *Denison Organizational Culture Survey*. Respond in terms that describe your organization as it is today.

It is important that you respond openly and honestly to the survey for accurate results. Your responses are completely confidential and will only be presented as part of the overall organizational profile. Please return the completed survey in the envelope provided to (*name of coordinator*) by (*date*) for processing.

We appreciate your participation.

## II. DATA COLLECTION

### Distribution and collection

Before the *Denison Organizational Culture Survey* is distributed, the data collection process must be defined. The completed surveys must be forwarded to us for scoring and Summary Report preparation.

Our scoring process takes approximately 14 days to complete. Upon completion you will receive a Summary Report that includes your organization's graphic profile, line-item feedback, and *Levers for Change*.

Scoring can be accomplished in several ways:

**OPTION ONE** - Appoint someone in your organization as the survey coordinator. Distribute the surveys to the participants with instructions to return the completed surveys in the envelopes provided to the coordinator. When the coordinator receives all of the surveys, s/he can forward them to DLI for processing.

**OPTION TWO** - Have the surveys completed as an agenda item at a planning or team meeting. Have participants return the surveys in the envelopes provided to the coordinator. The coordinator can then forward them to us for processing.

**OPTION THREE** - Distribute the surveys to the participants with a stamped envelope addressed to us. Advise the participants to complete the survey and insert it in the envelope, and place the envelope in outgoing mail.

### Coordination with the scoring center

Users of the *Denison Organizational Culture Survey* work with a Scoring Administrator to coordinate the processing of surveys. S/he is assigned to your organization at the time the surveys are ordered and is available to answer any questions you may have during the scoring process.

A central contact person from the customer organization needs to be assigned to work directly with the Scoring Administrator. We refer to this person as the Customer Administrator because s/he is the person in charge of coordinating the survey process within his/her organization. This person can be either the facilitator or another individual in the organization who can easily contact participants as needed. The Customer Administrator is responsible for returning all of the necessary paperwork to us either by mail or fax. S/he must provide vital information such as the number of expected participants, Summary Report instructions, assessment time frames, etc. A Data Collection Form outlining the necessary information is provided when the initial order is placed.

### III. REPORT GENERATION

#### **Scoring**

Three options are available for receiving the Denison Organizational Culture Survey Reports.

Surveys are scored.

- We print the full reports in color. The scoring center can also print black and white copies and color transparencies of the reports for an additional cost.
- The Scoring Center can send the survey results on a disk or CD. Printing would be done by the participating organization.
- We can deliver the reports electronically as a pdf file to be printed by the participating organization. To use this option the organization needs Adobe Acrobat software. This can be downloaded from the internet free of charge. ([Http://www.Adobe .com](http://www.Adobe.com))

# SECTION FOUR - EXPLAINING THE MODEL AND PRESENTING FEEDBACK

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STEP BY STEP GUIDELINES  
FOR PRESENTING THE SURVEY RESULTS

## Managing Feedback

### **Who should receive feedback from the survey?**

The most successful organizational change efforts provide feedback that reaches all the members of the organization who completed the survey. In most cases, the results are communicated widely in a series of meetings, usually beginning at the top of the organization, and then moving down. Many times, organizations will also request that the specific data for a group or a division be presented in a separate report that is used for that group's feedback session. When this type of comprehensive feedback plan is coupled with an action-planning process, organizational change starts to happen.

### **What will be needed when the results are viewed?**

You will find the following materials and *equipment* helpful for a survey review meeting:

1. A copy of the Summary Report prepared by us.
2. Overheads of the *Denison Organizational Culture Model* and sample profiles found in the back of this guide, and your company's profile (optional).
3. A copy of the *Levers for Change* section in this guide.
4. An overhead projector.
5. A flip chart, white board, or any other media for recording change actions.

### **What is a reasonable outline and time line for presenting culture feedback?**

A specific time should be established for management *to* review the results of the survey. An agenda item(s) can be added to a regularly scheduled meeting or a special meeting can be planned. You should plan on spending two to four hours discussing the results depending on your desired outcomes. The following agenda is a typical format for reviewing survey results:

## Timetable

Topic	Process	Who	Time
Purpose & Outcomes	Review/Discuss	Team	10 min
Denison Organizational Culture Model	Present	Facilitator	30 min
Review Profiles* *High Performing *Low Performing *Your Results	Review/Discuss	Facilitator Team	30-45 min
Opportunities for Change	Brainstorm/Discuss	Team	30-60 min
Levers for Change	Review/Discuss Buy-in	Facilitator Team	60 min
Closure	Review/Evaluate	Team	5 min

### What is the facilitator's role in the review meeting?

You are there to provide an open and honest environment and to facilitate the review of results and development of action plans. You need to provide the initial information around the *Denison Organizational Culture Model* with the goal of having the participants interactively provide the remaining information on their own.

In other words, if you explain the model well enough, the participants will be able to interpret the sample profiles and your company profile on their own. Additionally, with gentle prompting from you, they should be able to highlight the opportunities for change, as well as move into a discussion on viable action plans.

## Explaining the Model

### **What is the PowerPoint Presentation?**

The PowerPoint Presentation (See p. 4-5) is designed to enable you to provide a comprehensive and effective explanation of the Denison Organizational Culture Model. It is compiled in PowerPoint and can be used for a complete presentation or used to print transparencies. An electronic copy of the PowerPoint Presentation is found in the front of this Facilitator Guide.

The presentation is divided into five sections:

- 1 Background information on culture
- 2 The Denison Organizational Culture Model
- 3 The Denison Organizational Culture Model and business performance indicators
- 4 Sample profiles from different companies
- 5 Sample Company feedback report

### **How do I present the organization's culture survey result? How do I use the PowerPoint Presentation?**

We recommend completing the PowerPoint Presentation prior to presenting the organization's feedback. This helps to guarantee that participants understand the model and the business performance implications. The organization's culture survey results should be presented after the sample company data in the PowerPoint Presentation.

### **How do I present the results?**

The following steps are recommended for presenting the organization's results.

Step 1 - Display the Denison Organizational Culture Model and circumplex (not the organization's data) and ask participants in which traits and indices they think they will score strongest and weakest. Record these responses.

Step 2 - Display the feedback circumplex. Ask participants to identify any surprises and encourage some discussion. At this point it may become clear that different participants have different expectations and perspectives on the sample culture.

Step 3 - Give participants a copy of the organization's feedback. This may be a black and white photocopy. Reflection and discussion are enhanced by participants having a copy of the feedback in hand.



Step 4 - Present the participants with the transparency of the four pages of the item-by-item feedback and the summary page of highs and lows. This is meant to familiarize participants with the feedback report process rather than to generate discussion at this point.

Step 5 - Give participants time to individually explore the feedback report. (Approximately 15 minutes).

Step 6 - Give participants your interpretation of the data. See "Interpretation Tips." in the following section.

Step 7 - Give participants an opportunity (about 30 minutes) to discuss the results in small groups. Ask participants to report responses to the following questions - What pleases you most about the feedback? What concerns you most about the feedback? Responses to these questions create additional discussion. Use your judgement and time constraints to determine the appropriate time guidelines.

## Background On Organizational Culture

### Denison Organizational Culture Survey

### Culture is:

**Mental programs:**

*“software of the mind”*

**Learned patterns of thinking,  
feeling and acting...**

*Gerert Hofstede*

### Manifestations of Cultures

▣ **Symbols -**

- words, gestures, pictures, objects,  
dress

▣ **Heroes -**

- people, alive or dead, real or  
imaginary who possess characteristics  
rewarded in a culture, models for  
behavior

## **Manifestations of Culture**

### **▣ Rituals -**

- collective activities, ways of greeting

### **▣ Values**

- core beliefs, norms and paying respect

## **Definition:**

**“ Culture is the sum of the qualities of any specific human group that are passed on from one generation to the next because they are believed to be useful for survival and adaptation.”**

*Daniel Denison*

## **Culture is:**

**....important because it influences the way that organizations react to the changing demands of the business environment.**

*Daniel Denison*

## **Organizational Culture:**

Organizational culture is defined as the...

- underlying values,
- beliefs and
- principles that serve as the foundation for an organization's
- management system,
- practices and
- behaviors.

## **The Denison Organizational Culture Survey**

### **Denison Organizational Culture Survey**

... is based on four Culture traits:

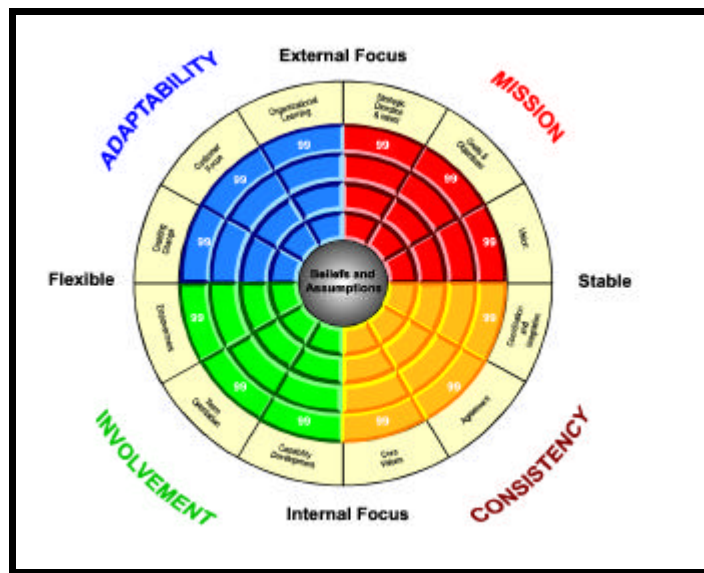
- Involvement
- Consistency
- Adaptability
- Mission

### **The four Culture traits...**

- are linked to performance in a range of specific qualitative arenas (*quality, innovation, employee satisfaction*) to predict financial performance (*profitability, sales growth, market share*)
- facilitate the company's ability to manage either internal or external demands placed on it
- emphasize a company's capacity for flexibility and change

## Each Culture trait:

- defines three indices of managerial practices
- these practices stem from and reinforce dominant beliefs, values and assumptions of the organization.
- a circumplex graphic is used to show how the traits and indices relate to one another and interact to create a picture of the organization's culture.



## Involvement

- Workers see a connection between the work they do and the goals of the organization.
- People in companies showing low involvement, understand only what goes on in their part of the organization, and they don't feel they have much control over the work they do.
- Denison findings: ROI in high involvement organizations is more than two to one when compared to low involvement organizations.

## **Consistency**

- **Points to how effectively a company organizes and coordinates the different jobs that need doing to meet it's goals and objectives.**
- **How well does its people speak the same language, share the same values.**
- **Does the leadership “walk their talk”?**
- **Does the organizational structure support the defined strategy of the organization?**

## **Adaptability**

- **Ability to create change.**
- **Ability to recognize mistakes and learn from them.**
- **Capacity to track and respond to changes in the business environment.**
- **Willingness to be customer driven**

## **Mission**

- **Clarity of direction that keeps the efforts of the total group in alignment.**
- **Understanding long term direction.**
- **Clarity regarding more immediate tasks and actions.**

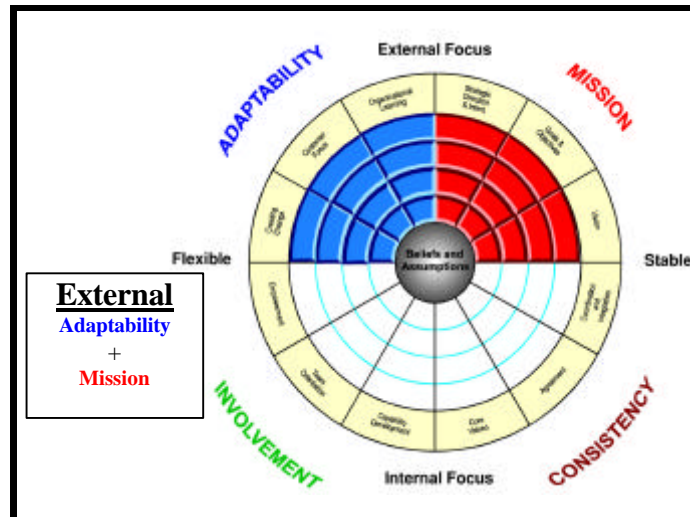
## Indices:

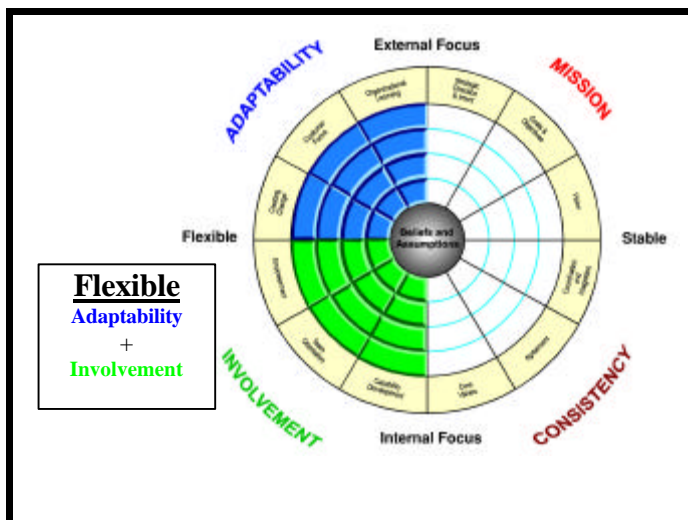
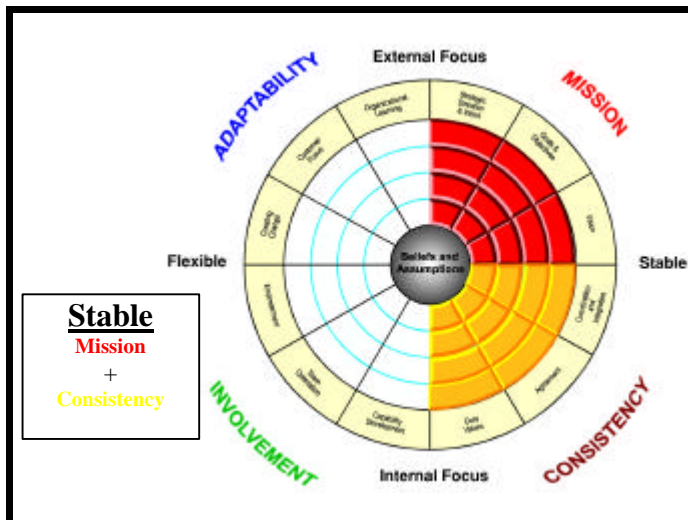
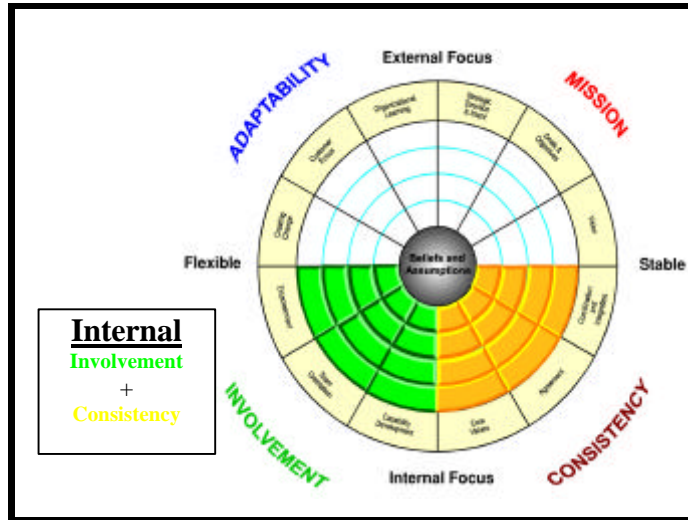
- **Involvement:**
  - Empowerment
  - Team Orientation
  - Capability Development
- **Consistency**
  - Coordination and Integration
  - Agreement
  - Core Values

## Indices: (cont.)

- **Adaptability:**
  - Creating Change
  - Customer Focus
  - Organizational Learning
- **Mission:**
  - Strategic Direction and Intent
  - Goals and Objectives
  - Vision

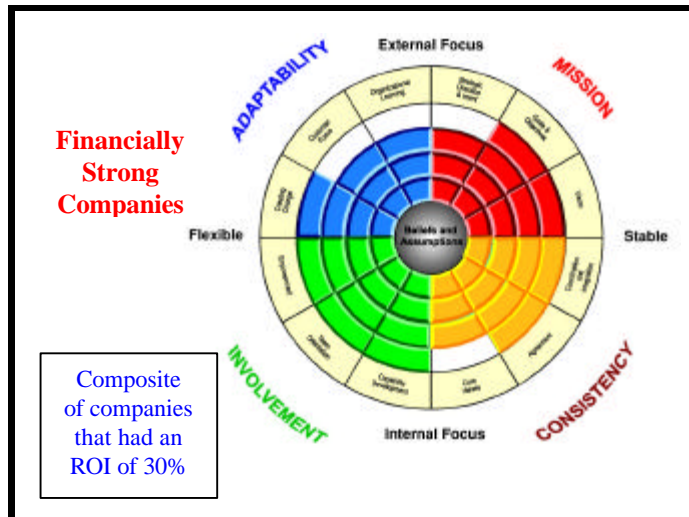
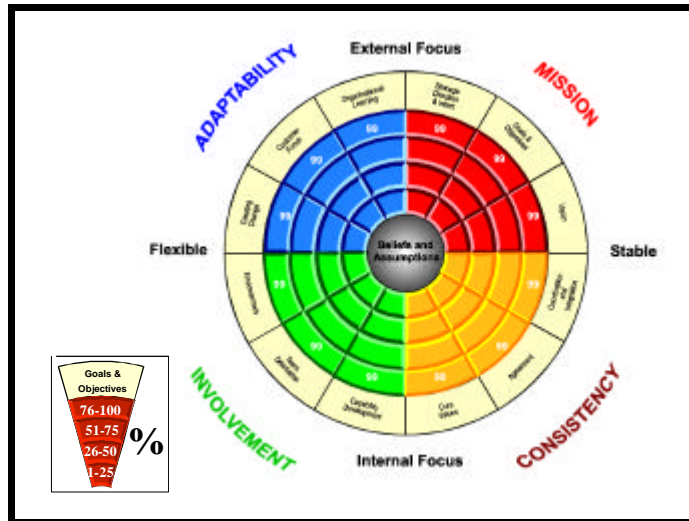
## The Denison Organizational Culture Model and Business Performance Indicators

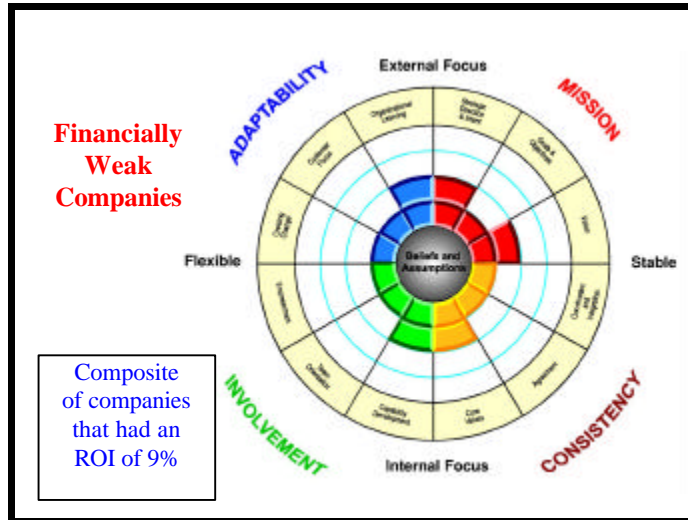




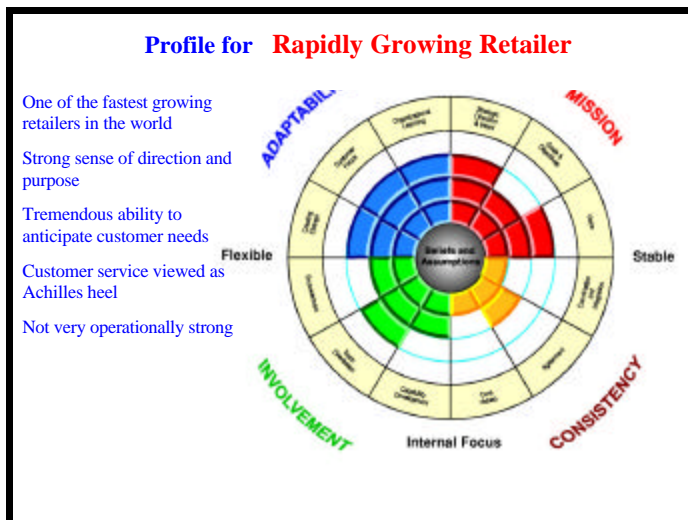
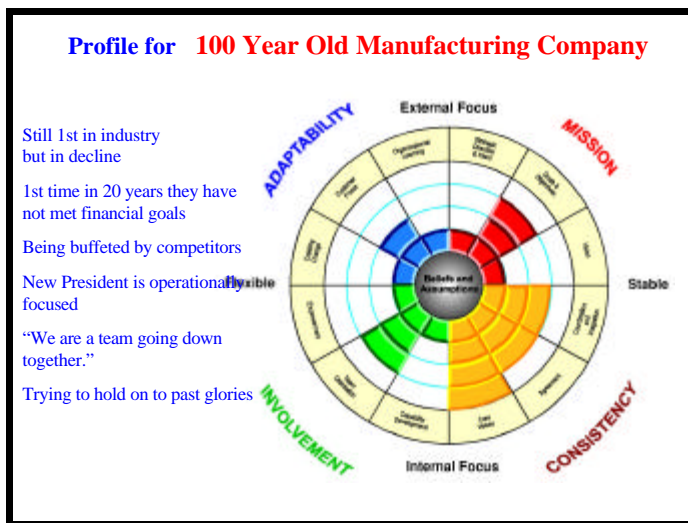


## Denison Organizational Culture Model and Business Performance Indicators



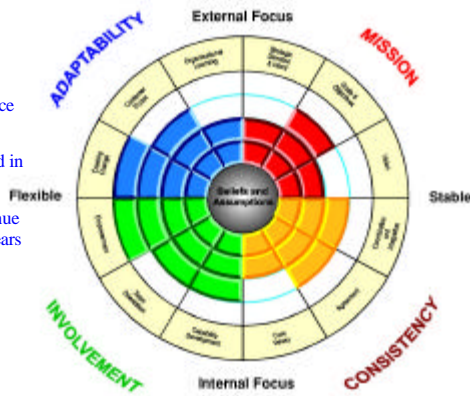


### Sample Profiles from Different Industries



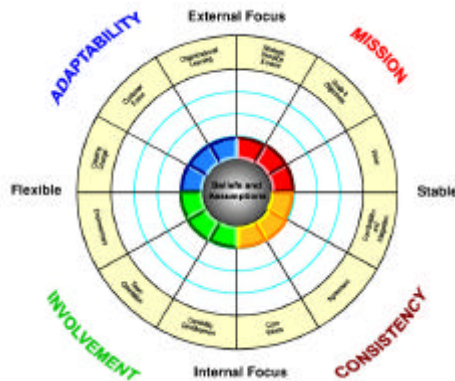
**Profile for Rapidly Growing Telecommunications Company**

Considered the market leader in product and service  
 Highest customer service ratings in the industry  
 Stock price has doubled in past 3 years  
 Rapid increase in revenue growth during past 5 years



**Profile for U.S. Government Agency**

Severe conflict between union and management  
 Grievance rate increasing over past 10 years  
 Quality and customer service described as inferior  
 In red financially during past decade  
 Management values control over employees  
 Several reorganizations during past six years  
 Threat of going out of business



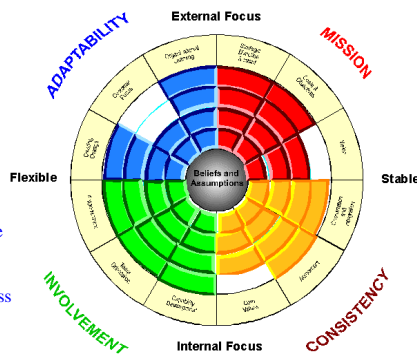
**Profile for Rapidly Expanding Automotive Supplier**

Revenue doubled over past 3 years, projected to double again over next 3 years  
 Market position and share expanded rapidly around the world  
 Current and past CEO known as industry visionary leaders  
 Product quality a continuing problem  
 Profitability has not kept pace with revenue growth



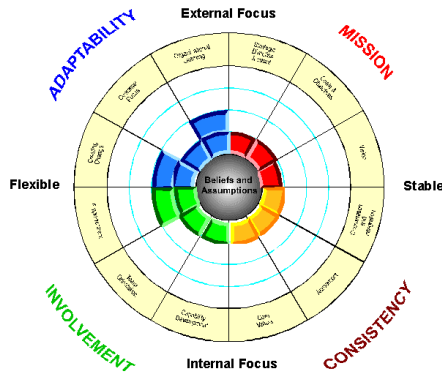
### Profile for **Leading Software Company**

Fastest growing of their size in industry  
 Highest Profitability  
 Highest revenue per employee  
 Most growth has come through acquisitions  
 Recently assigned a Vice President in charge of corporate culture development and business partner relationships

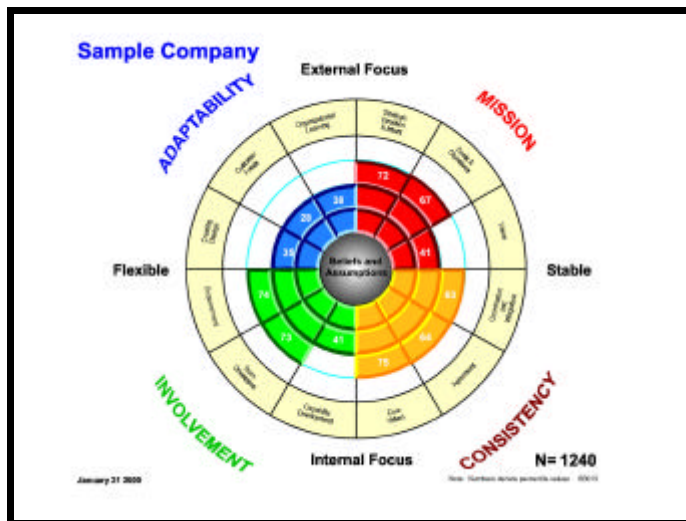


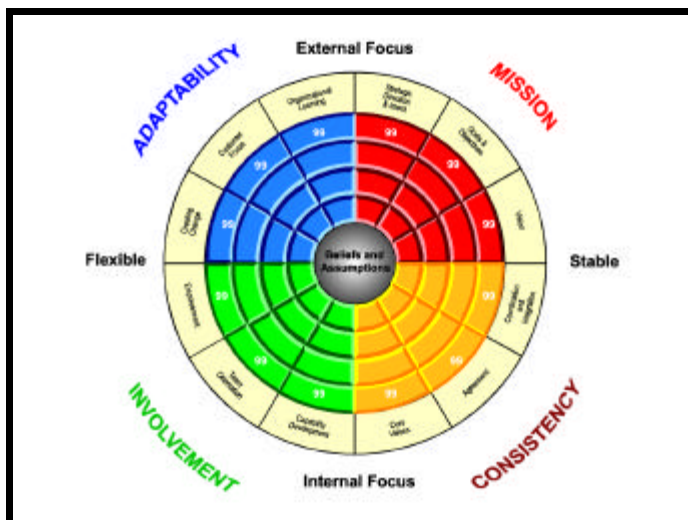
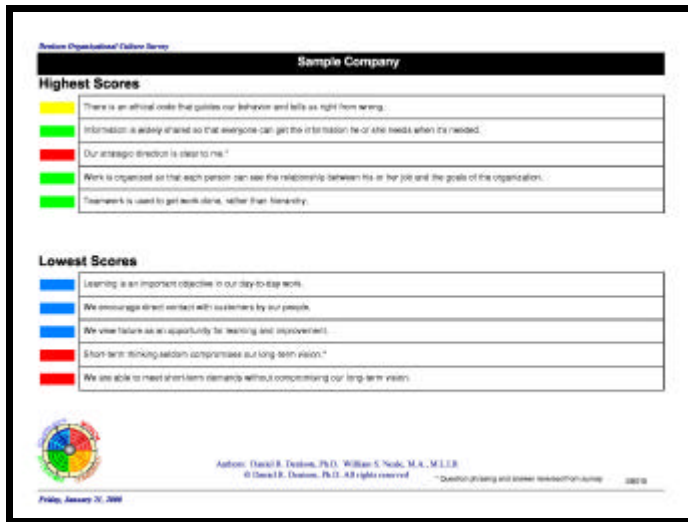
### Profile for **Struggling European Manufacturer**

Difficulty holding market share  
 Fuzzy identity in market place  
 Culture that says your #1 priority is whatever your boss tells you



### Sample Company Feedback Report





## Interpreting Data

### **The Value of Normed Data**

Most users want to know how their organization compares to others. Users ask questions such as: *are we among the upper half of all organizations that are more profitable?* They usually want answers with even more precision, such as: *just where do we stand vis-a-vis other organizations on our items, indexes and traits?* Our standard reports are structured to speak to those items. The reports present results with percentile numbers and quartile graphics which show how your culture compares to a representative sample of all organizations. The statistics and graphics used in presenting results will be explained shortly, after a description of the representative sample against which each organization is measured.

### **How Large is the Norming Database?**

Since the *Denison Organizational Culture Survey* was published at the end of 1995, the database for the survey has continued to grow. As of today, there are over 500 organizations and 40,000 individuals in the database. The database now includes organizations of all sizes in all of the key industries of the U.S. private sector. Economic sectors represented in the database include: manufacturing, services, retail, financial organizations, health care, transportation, computer software, telecommunications and data processing. International use is also growing. The instrument has been translated into Arabic, Chinese (simplified and traditional), Dutch, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese and Spanish. Research partnerships have been established in several non-English speaking countries to expand the norming database and validate the culture model in non-US firms. Data are also being collected in public sector settings such as K-12 schools to evaluate the instrument and, if necessary, adapt it for public sector use.

### **Will My Organization Be Compared to Individuals or Companies?**

The reports will compare your organization to other companies. While we do collect data from individuals the scores of whole companies interest users most.

**Quartiles** In Section I the superior financial performance of companies whose culture scores put them in the top half of the sample were discussed. The top half of the sample was determined by preparing a ranked list of company scores and counting the midpoint. For a norming database of 100 companies the culture score of the 50th company would have been designated the midpoint. Similarly each quartile grouping was determined. Thus, if a company's score was within the range at the bottom quarter of all companies included, a first quartile score was obtained. Similarly, a company in the fourth quartile would have a score within the range of the top quarter of all companies included in the sample.

**Percentiles** A company ranked in the first quartile falls somewhere between the first and the twenty fifth percentile. Conversely, a company at the thirty fifth percentile, is, by definition, in the second quartile. Reports use both quartiles and percentiles to report data. While percentiles have the advantage of being more specific, quartiles sometimes work better in simplifying the graphic reporting of data.

### **How do I evaluate the analysis of the organization's data?**

The following is a set of basic guidelines for presenting and discussing the feedback report.

Overall picture:	What is the strongest trait? What are the strongest indices? What is the weakest trait? What are the weakest indices?
Basic Patterns:	What is the basic pattern? Is one half of the model (top, bottom, right or left) stronger than the others? Is the strength in Flexibility, Stability, Internally, Externally?
Strengths and weaknesses:	What are the greatest strengths? What are the greatest weaknesses?
Item analysis:	What are the highest and lowest items? Is there consistency within each index? Is there discrepancy within an index?
Underlying patterns:	What underlying dynamics can explain the pattern?
Connection to business situation:	Does this feedback reflect performance patterns? industry dynamics?, trends?

## Interpretation Tips

How can I help interpret the feedback report?

The following guidelines can prove helpful for understanding and interpreting an organization's feedback report. We suggest you review the data ahead of time and check it for the following patterns.

### Within the Mission Trait:

- When Strategic Direction and Intent and Vision are higher than Goals and Objectives, this indicates that the organization may have a difficult time executing or operationalizing its mission. At the helm may be brilliant visionaries who have a difficult time translating dreams into reality.
- When Goals and Objectives are higher than Strategic Direction & Intent and Vision, this often is an indication that the organization is good at execution, but without any real sense of direction, purpose, or long range planning. The focus is usually short-term with the organization cranking out the widgets without looking ahead. The organization's "eyes" are out of balance - focusing primarily on the bottom line and not the horizon.

### Within the Involvement Trait:

- When Capability Development is higher than Empowerment, this can be an indication that the organization does not trust capable employees of making important decisions that impact their work. Capable employees may feel frustrated that their skills are not being fully utilized, and leave for better opportunities elsewhere. Consequently, *this combination* is a warning signal indicating the possibility of a high turnover rate of employees who may be leaving for the competition.
- When Empowerment is higher than Capability Development, this often is an indication that people in the organization are making decisions that they may not be capable of making. This may be potential disaster waiting to happen, occurring when people confuse empowerment with abdication or think that by saying the magic word, people wake up capable of making business decisions regardless of experience, education, knowledge or ability.
- When Team Orientation is higher than Empowerment or Capability Development, this often is an indication that there may not be much substance to the team. People tend to be "head boppers" and cheerfully comply without much commitment and ownership. Teams for the sake of team appearance seem to be the norm and don't seem to make a difference.



### **Within the Adaptability Trait:**

- When Customer Focus is higher than Creating Change and Organizational Learning, this tends to signify that the organization may be good at meeting customer needs today, but probably are not preparing for what the customer may need tomorrow. It represents a passive or status quo approach to customer focus. There may be a superhuman effort at satisfying the customer without seeing the patterns and trends emerging on the horizon. The organization tends to be one step behind the customer rather than one step ahead.
- When Organizational Learning and Creating Change are higher than Customer Focus, the organization may be good at recognizing best practices and creating new standards in the industry, but have a hard time applying knowledge gained to everyday work with their own customers. The knowledge is within the organization but, unfortunately, not with customers.

### **Within the Consistency Trait:**

When Agreement is lower than Core Values and Coordination and Integration, the organization may have good intentions but become unglued when conflict or differing opinions arise. During discussions, everyone talking at once, people ignoring the input of others, or withdrawal are frequently observed behaviors. The key is that nothing gets resolved and people keep blowing out the same candles repeatedly.

### **Bottom Heavy/Top Light (Strong Internal Focus)**

- Often when an organization is bottom heavy, you may find people competing against each other rather than fighting the real competition. With such a heavy internal focus, the organization tends to focus on internal competition, rather than external competition. When you have a bottom heavy graph and a relatively high score in Goals and Objectives, this may indicate an organization that has become complacent and is doing everything possible to protect what it has, rather than secure its future. The organization tends to rest on its laurels and past reputation. These organizations are resistant to change, and people that challenge organizational "sacred cows" often do not last long. Stability has changed to complacency.

### **Top Heavy/Bottom Light (Strong External Focus)**

- The entrepreneurial company exhibits a focus on leveraging the external environment, without a focus on systems, processes and controls. The organization may lack the controls necessary to sustain or manage growth and may eventually experience difficulty in delivering to customers.
- If creating Change is higher than Customer Focus and Organizational Learning, and the Mission Index, particularly Vision and Strategic Direction and Intent, are on the low side, this tends to indicate a "change for change sake" mentality, and the changes made are often not perceived by employees as having any particular direction or purpose. This tends to lead to higher levels of anxiety among employees.

### **High Involvement Index with Low Mission (Internal Focus)**

- This pattern usually represents a great bunch of people going nowhere together.

## Action Planning

### **What are some steps for using the survey in an action-planning meeting?**

There are many ways that survey results can be used to create a constructive discussion which leads to action planning. As mentioned earlier, it is difficult to "script" this process entirely, but there are several steps that most organizations find useful to follow.

#### **Step One: Explain the survey process.**

Give a brief description of the organization's reasons for doing the survey, the people who support and sponsor it, and what it is intended to accomplish. Then discuss the link to action planning and the link to other on-going activities. Allow time for questions about the process and the purpose before moving on.

#### **Step Two: Present your organization's overall color organizational profile to the group on an overhead projector.\***

Briefly explain what the quartiles mean and how to interpret the profile. Then ask a simple series of questions:

- What does this tell you about your organization?
- Does this profile fit your own picture of the organization?
- What surprises do you see in these results?
- Which findings confirm the impression of the organization that you already have?

In some cases, you may have to ask specific individuals for their comments, or ask everyone to take 2-3 minutes to write down any reactions that they have to the profile. In most cases, simply presenting the profile and asking these questions leads to a lively discussion about the organization.

\*Note: Your organization's color organizational profile transparency is optional. If you are interested in using this as a part of your presentation, please arrange it with us.

### **Step Three: Focus on the traits and indices with the highest scores.**

This represents the organization's greatest area of strength and where it is operating in a manner similar to higher-performing organizations. Identify those indices within this trait that have the highest score to determine the greatest strengths in this area. It is important to review the line-item report for greater clarity in this effort because it lists the items in each index and the score given for each. This will assist in learning the root cause of an organization's strengths. Note whether this strength represents an internal or external focus and whether it represents a flexible or stable orientation.

Repeat this process with the other traits or indices that have high scores.

### **Step Four: Focus on the traits and indices with the lowest scores.**

This represents your organization's area of greatest vulnerability and where it is operating in a manner similar to lower-performing organizations. Identify those indices within this trait that have the lowest scores to determine the greatest weaknesses. Once again, the line-item report will provide the clarity needed to learn the root cause of an organization's weaknesses in this area. Note whether this weakness represents an internal or external focus and whether it represents a flexible or stable orientation.

### **Step Five: Engage participants in a dynamic discussion about what these results say about the organization and what steps need to be taken for improvement.**

The following discussion questions may help:

- In what ways is your organization out of balance with respect to external versus internal focus and stable versus flexible orientation?
- How does being out of balance impact your organization's performance?
- Are there patterns and trends between the highest and lowest traits and indices?
- Which items appear to reflect your organization's greatest strengths?
- Which items appear to reflect your organization's greatest weaknesses?
- Do subgroups within the organization view the culture in the same way? If not, how do they differ and why?
- Which trait or index would provide your organization with the biggest payoff if it were improved?
- Which traits or indices are the most important for you to work on in order to improve organizational performance? Which are the least important and why?
- What past, present, and possible future influences explain why your organization's profile looks the way it does?

**Step Six: Focus on the trait(s) or indices that show the greatest need for change.**

Read the *Levers for Change* section beginning on page 4 - 26 of this guide for suggestions on how to begin the process of redirecting the organization's culture to that of a higher-performing organization. If several traits or indices have low scores, identify those that will have the greatest impact to work on first. It is important to focus your efforts on specific areas that can be improved. It is easy to become overwhelmed if you try to address every aspect of your organization's culture at one time.

**Step Seven: Develop a strategy for improving key areas in need of change.**

Once these areas have been identified, it is important to develop a plan for how these areas can be improved. Enlist input from members of the team. You may want to break into groups, giving each group a specific trait or index for which to develop an action plan. Have each group report their suggested action plan and gather additional suggestions from the entire group

Link this strategy to on-going activities in the organization that may help leverage your strategy. This may include the business planning process, the performance review process, the management development process, or other organizational change efforts.

**Step Eight: Identify any obstacles to bringing about this change and discuss ways to overcome them.**

Team members are often very enthusiastic after identifying ways to improve situations within their organization. Unfortunately, back in the workplace, they are often confronted with the same situations and roadblocks that caused these problems in the first place. Have team members identify these potential roadblocks ahead of time and develop plans to overcome them.

**Step Nine: Establish commitment from each member of the team to support these action plans and put them in writing.**

To assure that everyone is aware of and understands the plan of action, it is important to capture in writing all of the ideas gained in a planning session so that they can be shared. Be sure that the names of those responsible for certain aspects of the plan are placed next to their area of responsibility to assure commitment.

**Step Ten: Establish check points and accountability along the way.**

In any major change effort, it is important to monitor progress to make adjustments, respond to new situations, and establish new action steps. As a part of your overall plan, establish expected checkpoints with the team.

## Levers for Change

### **Once we understand our results, what are our next steps?**

The first step in a process designed to create cultural change and organizational transformation is diagnosing the current culture. However, the most important part of the process is translating a culture profile into action. To assist in this process, we have included a set of suggestions, called *Levers for Change*, for each of the four cultural traits: *Involvement, Consistency, Adaptability and Mission*. It is necessary to recognize that culture change requires an in-depth understanding of an existing culture, and it is impossible to apply a broad set of standards for change across the business spectrum. Nonetheless, a set of suggestions that have worked well in other organizations can serve as a useful resource.

As discussed earlier in this guide, the four cultural traits measured by the *Denison Organizational Culture Survey* have some natural contradictions. For example, a highly-involved, empowered and team-oriented culture may appear quite different than a culture that is goal-directed and visionary. Or, a well-integrated and coordinated culture appears very different than an adaptive and customer-focused organization. Dr. Denison's research has shown that an effective culture must be strong in all of the areas and learn to balance these conflicting demands.

When reviewing results, it is important to understand that it is only natural to direct efforts toward areas that are more comfortable and familiar, rather than to address areas of unfamiliarity or discomfort. However, when choosing actions or *Levers for Change*, you must be aware of these tendencies and reconcile the conflicting demands. The goal is to maximize organizational strengths and improve organizational shortcomings.

### **Involvement Levers**

Low involvement scores usually signal an organization in which people are disconnected from their work, unaware of its importance and its connection to the rest of the organization, unwilling to accept greater responsibility, and hesitant about working with people outside of their immediate circle. Low involvement organizations usually have classic "hub and spoke" control hierarchies in which people are very dependent on their boss and very concerned about following the orders that come down the hierarchy. Here are some useful suggestions about how organizations can improve their level of involvement:

- **Inform all employees about the business.** Share information about performance, quality, competition and customers throughout the organization. Question instances in which information will only be distributed on a "need-to-know" basis. You will know that you have succeeded when hallway conversation is about the stock price rather than the baseball strike.
- **Require "bottom up" input in all decisions.** Good ideas are not restricted to executives and key decision-makers. Important contributions must come from those who are closest to the work and to the customer. You will know that you have succeeded when people do not hesitate to cross two/three levels of the organization to contribute to a decision.
- **Reduce the number of levels in your hierarchy.** Today, with information technology, network, and matrixed organizations, there is no reason for any organization to have more than ten levels. (Using a span of control of ten, an organization with ten levels can "hold" one million people). Hierarchy is clearly necessary, but when the "pecking order" is more important than product quality, it is difficult to have high involvement.
- **Build the organization around teams, not individuals.** Cross-train people so that they understand how work is done in other areas, and understand how they need to work together to create value for the customer. Reward teams. Provide team training so that people experience success in teamwork and have the support they need to progress on the team learning curve. You will know you have succeeded when people stop complaining about team meetings and see teams as the best way for them to get their work done.
- **Require performance appraisals for everyone.** Performance appraisals should include direct report and peer input, and should focus on career development, as well as current job performance. And remember, the most important part of any performance appraisal is the joint goal setting that goes on face-to-face between boss and direct report.
- **Reward and promote people who build organizational capability.** A key requirement for promotion should be how many people a manager has prepared for promotion. Reward managers based on how well they develop their own people. You will know you have succeeded when you stop worrying about your organization's bench strength and start worrying about how many of your managers are being recruited by other firms because they have learned so much working for you.

## Consistency Levers

Organizations that have low consistency scores typically complain about "things falling through the cracks," and everyone not being able to "sing from the same hymnbook." In fact, one of the low consistency organizations that we worked with referred to themselves as a "loose federation of warring tribes." Customers often get frustrated with these types of companies because no one seems to be able to speak for the entire organization. While there is plainly no one "right" set of values, excellent organizations do believe strongly in the values that are important to them. Here are some of our suggestions about how organizations can improve consistency.

- **Identify your core values and then live by them. Create a** dialogue throughout the organization that will identify what you stand for and how it is linked to creating value for your customers. You will know you have succeeded when employees stop carrying their plastic laminated "mission & values" cards around in their shirt pockets, and start carrying them around in their heads.
- **Actively work to create alignment of behavior and core values.** Put the spotlight on activities that exemplify the core values. Tolerate honest mistakes that are in keeping with the values, but do not tolerate actions that conflict with core values. You will know you have succeeded when employees can make the right decision on their own by simply comparing the demands of the situation with the key values of the organization.
- **Include values, ideology and culture as a regular part of training.** At all levels, training should be set in the context of the culture, the core values and skill development as part of the organization's competitive strategy. You will know you have succeeded when technical training creates both skills and a better understanding of the organization and its purpose.
- **Hire people early in their careers, invest in development, promote from within.** Organizations with the strongest cultures have taken years to build. Shaping a common mindset involves treating values as a factor in promotion, and using on-the-job experiences to shape values and attitudes.
- **Create a common base of experience for people from different parts of the organization.** With large, global organizations that support many different products and technologies, there is often little that the employees share in common. Design career tracks that cross organizational boundaries. Use experience on multi-functional teams to develop a common mindset. You will know that you have succeeded when your people concentrate on common business interests, rather than on their organizational boundaries.



- **Create your own heroes, celebrate your own victories.** Public recognition of those whose achievements reinforce the culture will keep the core values alive and changing with the times. You will know that you have succeeded when there are so many extraordinary achievements that you have trouble picking the best ones.

### **Adaptability Levers**

Organizations with low adaptability scores usually have an inward focus and have difficulty responding to customers, competitors and employees with new ideas. Low adaptability organizations run on inertia, and their past achievements can create barriers for future success. Managers often spend most of their effort responding to departures from standard operating procedures. Top executives in these organizations usually spend their time controlling the organization and managing short-term performance, rather than leading change or thinking long term. Here are a few suggestions about how you can improve the adaptability of your organization.

- **Hire a few outsiders in key roles in your organization.** Outsiders bring new ideas in a way that insiders never can. Be certain to manage the integration of outsiders so that a "new culture - old culture" conflict does not erupt. You will know that you have succeeded when your old organization's "antibodies" stop trying to reject the new ideas.
- **Visit your customers.** Do it often, not to sell, but to listen. Make certain that people throughout your organization do the same, particularly if their jobs do not require them to deal with customers regularly. Find new ways to partner with them. Use focus group videos and information systems to make certain that everyone in the organization is aware of customers' reaction to their products.
- **Reward risk-taking even if it means tolerating some failures.** Try new things, learn from them quickly, and incorporate what works. "Ready, fire, aim" beats "ready, aim, ready, aim..." every time. Failure can be one of your most important sources of learning.
- **Set targets for the percentage of revenue that comes from new products.** Adaptable organizations derive a sizable percentage of their total revenue from newly developed products. Manage this number and reward those who improve it. You will know you have succeeded when you start to actively "cannibalize" your own products before your competitors do. As they say in Silicon Valley, "It's better to eat your own lunch before someone else eats it for you."
- **Redesign your organization around small profit centers.** This forces everyone to respond to market forces, and allows the nimble the chance to produce results. You will know that you have succeeded when the leaders of successful profit centers become teachers and show the less successful ones how they did it.

- **Start managing as if time was your most important resource.** Compressing time and learning to respond quickly will force adaptability. Managing time rather than costs requires that you focus on creating value for customers and nothing else. You will know you have succeeded when people start making decisions that place more emphasis on time than they do on cost.
- **Create forums for learning that are visible and valuable.** Organizations that learn invest time in face-to-face discussion dedicated to sharing, integrating and defining best practice. Those who do not make these investments usually argue that they can not afford the time it takes to learn. You will know you have succeeded when the costs associated with a two-day off-site meeting for a product development team are viewed as a "rounding error" on the overall investment in such a project.

### **Mission Levers**

Organizations that have low mission scores usually have top executives who focus on controlling their organizations, second-guessing their direct reports, and making detailed decisions about products, people and resources. These companies are typically busy reacting to competitors who have redefined the rules of the game and changed the nature of competition. Goals are usually not very meaningful to many employees and the long-term purpose of the organization is not very inspiring. Here are several suggestions about how the sense of mission can be improved in an organization.

- **Give the future the attention it deserves.** Top executives need to adopt long-term strategy and direction as their highest priority. If they do not do it, you can be certain no one else will. You can tell that you are succeeding when the top executives are spending most of their time on issues that have a time horizon of five years or longer. As Casey Stengel once said, "If you don't know where you're going, you're likely to end up somewhere else."
- **Develop a philosophy that long and short-term interests can be reconciled.** Concentrating on the long term does not mean neglecting short term. Finding ways to serve both at the same time needs to become second nature.
- **Concentrate on changing the rules of the game in your industry.** The most successful organizations are always those that change the rules of competition in their industries. Then everyone else is forced to follow their lead and react to their moves. This requires an almost obsessive focus on competitors outside the organization and continuous rethinking about how the organization creates value.

- **Make everyone in the organization familiar with your strategy and vision.** When everyone shares a mental model of a desired future state, the effects are very powerful. It establishes a standard of excellence that redefines ambition. You will know that you have succeeded when people in a dilemma make decisions that are in keeping with the strategy and vision.
- **Involve others in defining and redefining your mission.** Good ideas can come from anywhere, inside or outside of your organization. Involve managers, executives, and employees, as well as stakeholders and customers, in your discussion. Engage them in a discussion of how the organization creates value for society. You will know that you have succeeded when everyone is pleased with the mission, but no one is exactly sure where it came from.
- **Everyone must connect their own goals to the mission, vision and strategy.** Global strategy and vision are not enough. Everyone in the organization, from the boardroom to the mailroom, must be able to define individual goals in terms of the overall mission, vision and strategy of the organization. Strategic direction must be supported at all levels. You will know that you have succeeded when the top executives and shop floor workers can talk about their joint progress toward the same goals.

## SECTION FIVE - APPENDICES

# **Appendix A**

## Validity Statement

# Validity Statement

## The Development of the Survey

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This part of the facilitator's guide describes the validation of the *Denison Organizational Culture Survey*. This discussion of the validity of the survey is divided into several parts: the development of the survey items, data collection and feedback in collaboration with our Corporate Research Partners, the statistical testing and analysis of the data, and the future research agenda.

The *Denison Organizational Culture Survey* was developed from 10 years of research on organizational culture and effectiveness. That research showed a close relationship between the culture of organizations and their patterns of performance, and suggested a number of aspects of the cultures of organizations that have been included in the model. This research is described in Denison's book *Corporate Culture and Organizational Effectiveness*, and in a series of articles that are included at the end of this section (Denison, 1984; 1990; 1996, Denison & Mishra 1995a; 1995b).

The result of this research was the development of the *Culture & Effectiveness Model* that underlies this survey. As described earlier in this guide, the model is centered around four basic cultural traits of organizations, *Involvement*, *Consistency*, *Adaptability* and *Mission*. In developing the survey, we had two explicit goals. First, we wanted to develop a set of items to measure these four traits in a way that would allow us to describe the management practices that were linked to these traits. This meant that the items had to have *high face validity* -- they had to describe a set of relatively familiar management practices in simple language. It also meant that the items had to reflect an *action orientation*, rather than an underlying psychological profile that was difficult to link to specific managerial action. This required the development of a *broader set of measures* than just the four underlying culture traits developed in the earlier research. In writing new items for this version of the survey, we focused on developing three measures for each of the four cultural traits specified in the original model.

The second goal for developing the survey was to build a large data base for future research that would include both further development and refinement of the survey measures and, more importantly, for a systematic test of the relationship between culture and performance with a large sample of organizations. This section of the Facilitator's Guide describes the validity testing done prior to the publication of the survey in November 1995, and then describes the research that is now underway and will be completed in the near future.

## Data Collection and Feedback

In order to collect the data to do validity testing on the survey, we established a group of *Corporate Research Partners* to help us develop this survey. Over 100 organizations were contacted, drawing from previous clients and customers associated with either Orion/Aviat or with the University of Michigan. We asked each participating organization to select a sample of 25-50 members of their organization to use the survey on a trial basis. This phase of the project was a partnership -- they were helping us develop the survey and in turn we were giving them feedback (and often a presentation and discussion of the results). Over 40 organizations participated in the survey as Corporate Research Partners and a total of 960 individuals responded to the survey. In each organization, we tried to get a good representative sample by asking our partners to distribute the survey to either a.) the top management group, b.) a "horizontal slice" of middle management, c.) a "diagonal slice" of the organization, or d.) a random sample. Even in cases where organizations did not follow these guidelines, the size of the overall sample and the diversity of the organizations that were sampled makes this a very good sample for this initial round of validity testing.

In each organization, a member of the development team explained the survey, the data collection process, and the feedback process to a contact person in the organization. In several cases, the survey was introduced as a part of a presentation to top management, a meeting with the group that was going to be surveyed, or a management development workshop. The contact person in each organization was then responsible for collecting the completed surveys and returning them to Aviat for scoring. At Aviat, the data were entered, double-checked, and then used to produce the feedback reports for the *Corporate Research Partners*. The feedback reports included an overview of the data presented on the model, followed by an item-by-item presentation of the results. After this, the data were added to the research archive.

Feedback reports provided data for both the overall indexes and for the individual items in terms of quartile scores. Quartile scores are used because they provide a simple classification of the firm in comparison to other organizations, rather than a complex set of means, standard deviations and percentage distributions. These quartile scores classify each organization as a first, second, third or fourth quartile firm with respect to each item and index. A first quartile score meant that this organization's score was in the lowest 25% of the organizations in our sample, while a fourth quartile score meant that this organization's score was in the top 25% of the organizations in our sample. These quartile scores were established by comparing the 25th, 50th and 75th percentile cut-point for each item and index using the *sample of organizations*. Thus, each organization is compared to a sample of organizations, not to a sample of individuals. These quartile cut-points are continually updated as more data are collected.

## Statistical Analysis

The entire process of data collection with the *Corporate Research Partners* was used to "de-bug" the survey and the survey process. We asked for the advice of the partners and the individual respondents with regard to survey items, concepts, the model, the presentation of the feedback, the use of quartiles, and so on. Thus, this process gave us invaluable experience in using the survey and applying the results, as well as generating a data base for statistical analysis.

The first step in the validity analysis was to establish the reliability of the items in each index. To do this, we computed Chronbach's Alpha for each of the indexes to make certain that the items we had written all resulted in indexes that had internal consistency scores in the recommended range of .60-.90. This first step in the analysis showed that all of the indexes had Alpha coefficients within the range of .62-.84. Thus, we concluded that all of the twelve indexes had acceptable reliability. In cases where we needed to exclude items in order to get to our target of five items for each of the twelve indexes, we excluded the items that increased the Alpha coefficient for the index.

The second stage of the analysis was to do a confirmatory factor analysis to see if the index structure fit the model itself. This model treated the twelve indexes as the observed measures and the four underlying traits as the "latent" variables. This structural equation model was estimated using LISREL 8.1 for Windows. The matrix used in this analysis is presented in Table 1 and the model itself is presented in Figure 1.

The model in Figure 1 shows the lambda coefficients linking each of the indexes to the four traits. These coefficients can be interpreted in a similar way to factor loadings -- a 1.0 lambda would mean that a particular index was perfectly correlated with the latent variable, whereas a lambda coefficient lower than .50 would indicate a relatively weak link between the index and latent variable. These linkages show that the loadings are strong and relatively consistent, indicating good support of the underlying model.

The second set of coefficients shown in the model are the phi coefficients linking the four latent variables of involvement, consistency, adaptability and mission. These coefficients are somewhat like intercorrelations among the four traits, although defining these four traits as latent variables in a structural equation model tends to inflate the phi coefficient to a higher level than a simple correlation. In this analysis, the phi coefficients are very high, indicating a close relationship between the four traits. The good news about this finding is that it supports the idea that these are four characteristics of the cultures of the effective organizations. Thus, if high-performing organizations have one of these characteristics, they are also likely to have the other three. The bad news about this analysis, however, is that it shows that the four traits may be less clearly separable than the model suggests.



Overall, however, this analysis does provide support for the model, and defining these four traits as latent variables, does estimate the relationship between them as .10-.20 higher than would a simple measure of inter-correlation.

The goodness of fit statistics used to evaluate structural equation models show that this model fits the data quite well. The chi-square statistic with 48 degrees of freedom is 217.73 ( $p=0.0$ ), the standardized root mean square residual is .027, and the comparative fit index is .97. These statistics show that despite the problems with the high interrelationships between the four traits that this analysis still meets the basic standards devised for evaluating structural equation models.

The analysis of the relationship between the twelve indexes in the culture model and firm performance and effectiveness is now being completed and will be reported once it is complete and ready for publication. At this point, the only analysis of performance that has been completed is a comparison of the three highest-performing organizations in our sample with the three lowest-performing organizations in our sample. This analysis, presented in Figure 2 shows very clear differences in the profiles of the high and low-performing firms. The high-performance firms have a fourth quartile profile on nearly all of the indexes and a third quartile profile in the others, while the low-performance firms have a first quartile profile on most of the indexes and a second quartile profile in all of the others.

In addition, existing research on the culture and effectiveness model provides a solid background regarding the relationship between performance and effectiveness. Denison (1990) shows the relationship between several of the dimensions in the model and performance over a five-year period, while Denison & Mishra (1995a) present a series of results linking the four basic traits to return on assets, sales growth, and a range of subjective measures of performance. Finally, Denison & Mishra (1995b) present an analysis linking the four culture traits to measures of quality and quality improvement.

There are three related projects now underway that will extend the research base on the *Denison Organizational Culture Survey*. The results of these projects will be made available to past and present users of the survey, and will then be published in the research literature.

## **Future Research**

The first research project is a more detailed examination of the items in the survey that will attempt to develop a refined set of measures that can be used in the future research. This research will be done on a larger sample, and will attempt to describe and understand the differences that occur between different industries, different levels, and different functions of the organizations we have studied.

The second research project will look more closely at the effects of agreement among the respondents in an organization. Do organizations that have higher levels of agreement have other characteristics of performance, or other cultural traits that can help to develop the model? Some past research, for example, has shown that organizations with higher levels of agreement may have higher levels of performance.

# **Appendix B**

## Tutorial on Profit Ratios

## **Profitability Ratio Tutorial**

*Profitability ratios* indicate a company's ability to earn a satisfactory return on sales, total assets and invested capital. Every company is different, and it would be wrong to assume that a company that earns a ten percent return on sales is outperforming one that earns a five percent return, or that a company with an eighty percent gross profit margin is run more efficiently than one turning a thirty percent gross profit. Comparison with industry standards or with companies of similar size in similar businesses is the only reasonable way to interpret the values derived from profitability ratios.

### **Return on Sales**

*Return on Sales (ROS)* is a profitability ratio that measures the trend of a company's earning potential. ROS is an indicator of a company's operating efficiency.

- ROS is an income/sales ratio that compares income with net sales (gross sales reduced by cash discounts, trade discounts, returned sales and other allowances).
- Increasing ROS ratios indicate improvements in pricing, product mix, competitive advantage or operating expense control.
- A decreasing ROS ratio indicates deteriorating earning power.
- $ROS = \frac{\text{income}}{\text{sales}}$

### **Return on Assets**

*Return on Assets (ROA)* – is another profitability ratio that measures the return a company earns on invested capital.

- ROA is an income/assets ratio that measures the speed at which a company turns assets into sales, and hence cash.
- ROA is the true measure of the efficiency of a company's management, which can be measured only by the returns generated on assets employed.
- $ROA = \frac{\text{income}}{\text{assets}}$

## **Return on Investment**

*Return on Investment (ROI)* is a profitability ratio that measures the return a company earns on invested capital.

- ROI is an income/investment ratio that compares income (after all expenses, income taxes, and monetary interest but before provisions for common and/or preferred dividends with total investment (long-term debt, preferred stock, minority interest, and common equity)).
- ROI is the measure of how much a company returns to all investors, both debt holders and equity investors.
- ROI is a measure of a company's effective utilization of resources over time.
- $$ROI = \frac{\text{income}}{\text{investments}}$$

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# **Appendix C**

## **Suggested Reading**

Toward a Theory of Organizational Culture and  
Effectiveness

Bringing Corporate Culture to the Bottom Line

# **Appendix D**

## **DOCS Master Tracker**

(a completed example and the blank form)

# Denison Organizational Culture Survey - Tracker

Date ordered Jan. 5, 1999		Taken by John Doe		
Consultant Jane Doe				Tel 123 456-7890
Company		Contact Sally Smith	Tel 123 456-8901	
Community Health Systems		Collector same	Tel same	
		E-mail	Fax 123 987-6543	
Address		909 North Main Street Anytown, USA		
		<b>Scoring Center Use</b>		
		Litho Codes		
		# Surveys Returned		
#	Department			
1	Sales	33445	to	33460
2	Management	33461	to	33474
3	Customer Service	33475	to	33492
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				
21				
22				
23				
24				
25				

Survey delivery date to customer	Jan. 14, 99
Surveys due back	Feb. 15, 99
Reports delivered to customer	Mar. 3, 99
Customer program date	Mar. 11, 99

Approved \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Completed and bundled surveys must be received ten business days before reports are due to customers.**



# Denison Organizational Culture Survey - Tracker

Date ordered		Taken by			
Consultant					Tel
Company	Contact			Tel	
	Collector			Tel	
	E-mail			Fax	
Address					
				<b>Scoring Center Use</b>	
				Litho Codes	
				# Surveys Returned	
#	Department				
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
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Survey delivery date to customer	
Surveys due back	
Reports delivered to customer	
Customer program date	

Approved \_\_\_\_\_

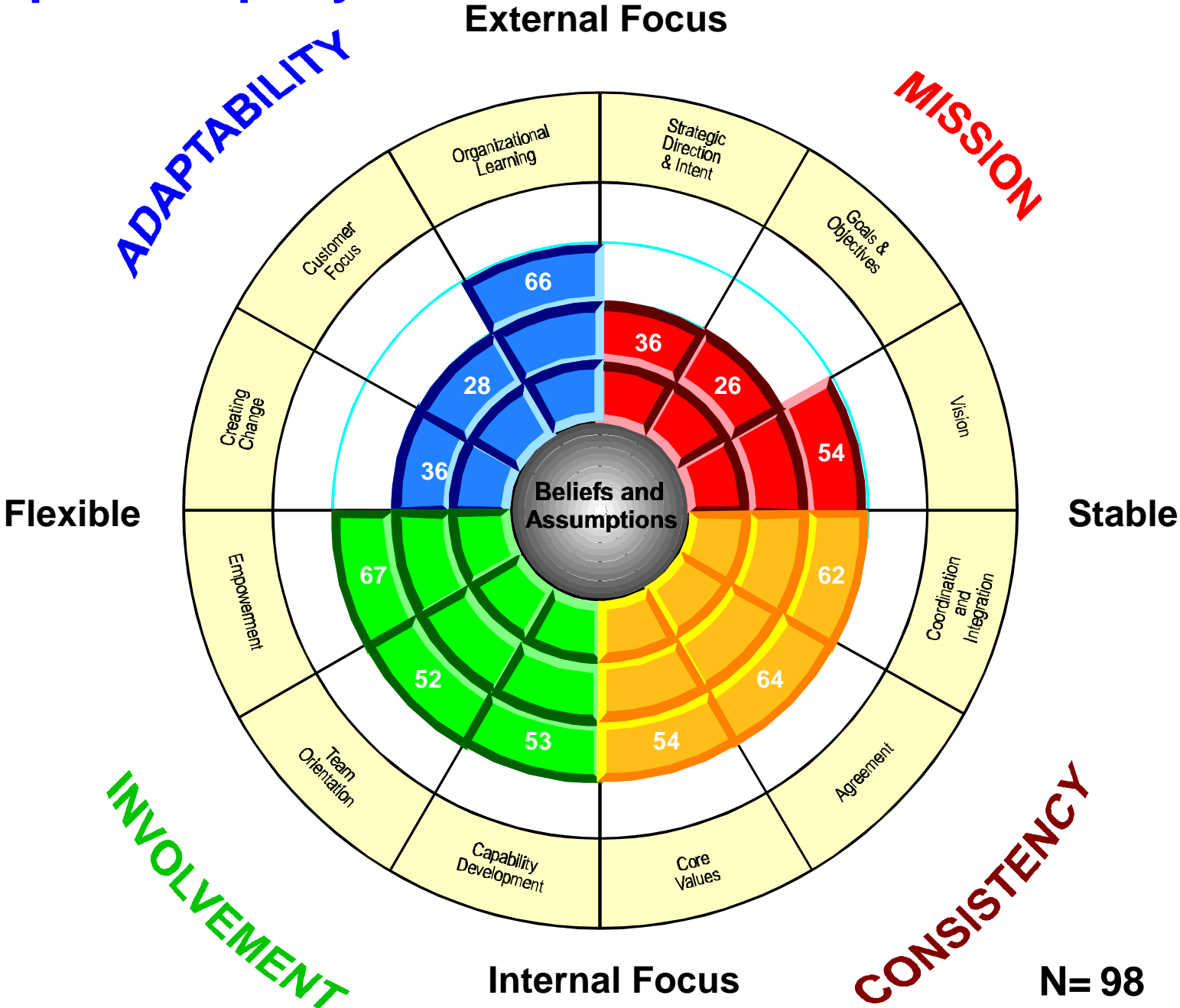
Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Completed and bundled surveys must be received ten business days before reports are due to customers**

# **Appendix E**

## Denison Organizational Culture Survey Sample Report

# Sample Company



# Sample Company

## INVOLVEMENT

Quartile  
Percentile

1st

2nd

3rd

4th

0 25th 50th 75th 100th

### Empowerment

In this organization . . .

Most employees are highly involved in their work. +

74

Decisions are usually made at the level where the best information is available.

67

Information is widely shared so that everyone can get the information he or she needs when it's needed.

63

Everyone believes that he or she can have a positive impact. +

72

Business planning is ongoing and involves everyone in the process to some degree.

47

In this organization . . .

### Team Orientation

Cooperation across different parts of the organization is actively encouraged.

47

People work like they are part of a team.

59

Teamwork is used to get work done, rather than hierarchy.

60

Teams are our primary building blocks.

38

Work is organized so that each person can see the relationship between his or her job and the goals of the organization.

49

In this organization . . .

### Capability Development

Authority is delegated so that people can act on their own.

60

The "bench strength" (capability of people) is constantly improving.

53

There is continuous investment in the skills of employees.

39

The capabilities of people are viewed as an important source of competitive advantage.

35

Problems seldom arise because we have the skills necessary to do the job.\*

66

# Sample Company

*In this organization . . .*

## Quartile Percentile Core Values

The leaders and managers "practice what they preach."

There is a characteristic management style and a distinct set of management practices.

There is a clear and consistent set of values that governs the way we do business.

Ignoring core values will get you in trouble.

There is an ethical code that guides our behavior and tells us right from wrong.

*In this organization . . .*

## Agreement

When disagreements occur, we work hard to achieve "win-win" solutions.

There is a "strong" culture.

It is easy to reach consensus, even on difficult issues.

We seldom have trouble reaching agreement on key issues.\*

There is a clear agreement about the right way and the wrong way to do things.

*In this organization . . .*

## Coordination & Integration

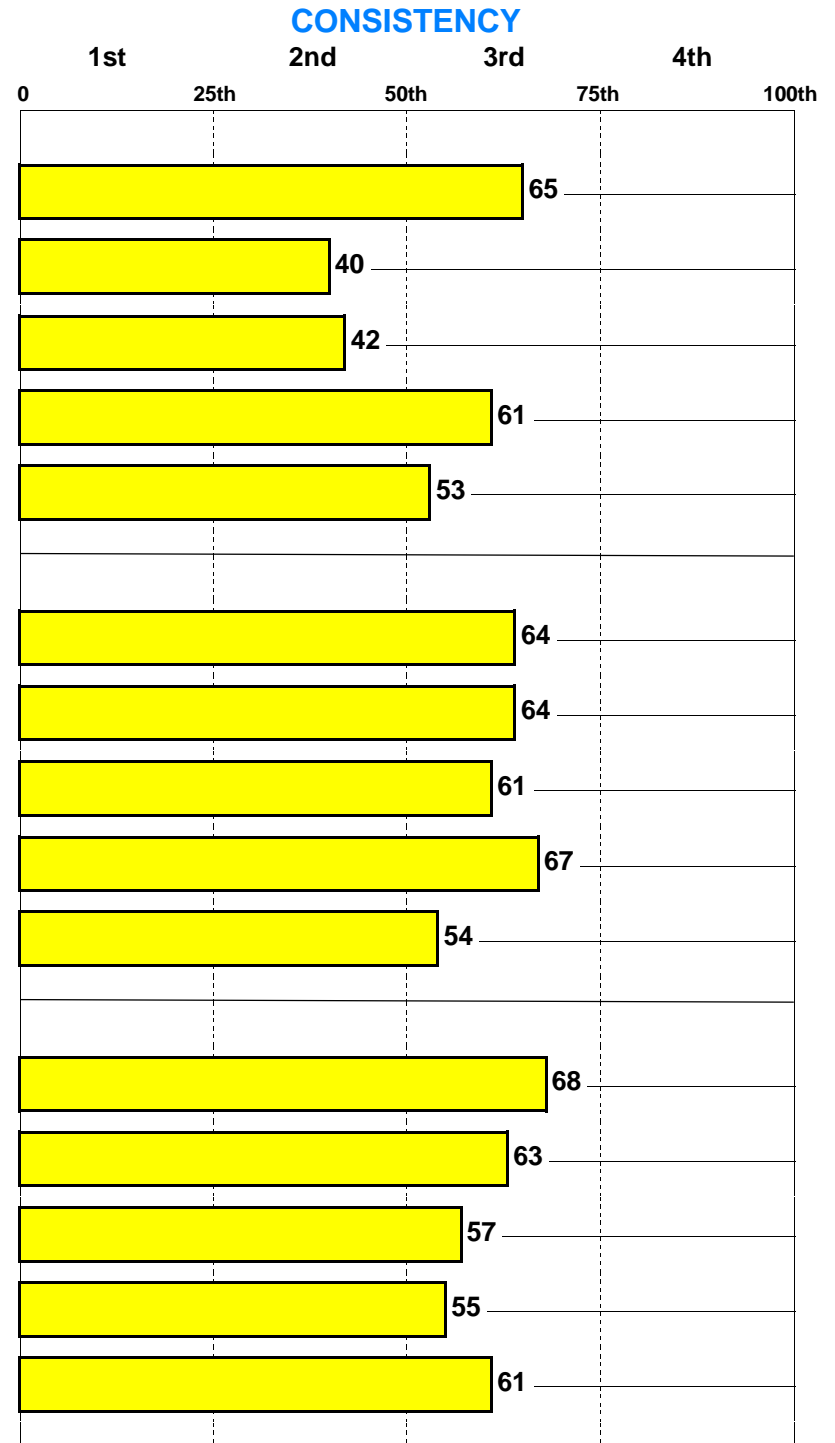
Our approach to doing business is very consistent and predictable.

People from different parts of the organizational share a common perspective.

It is easy to coordinate projects across different parts of the organization.

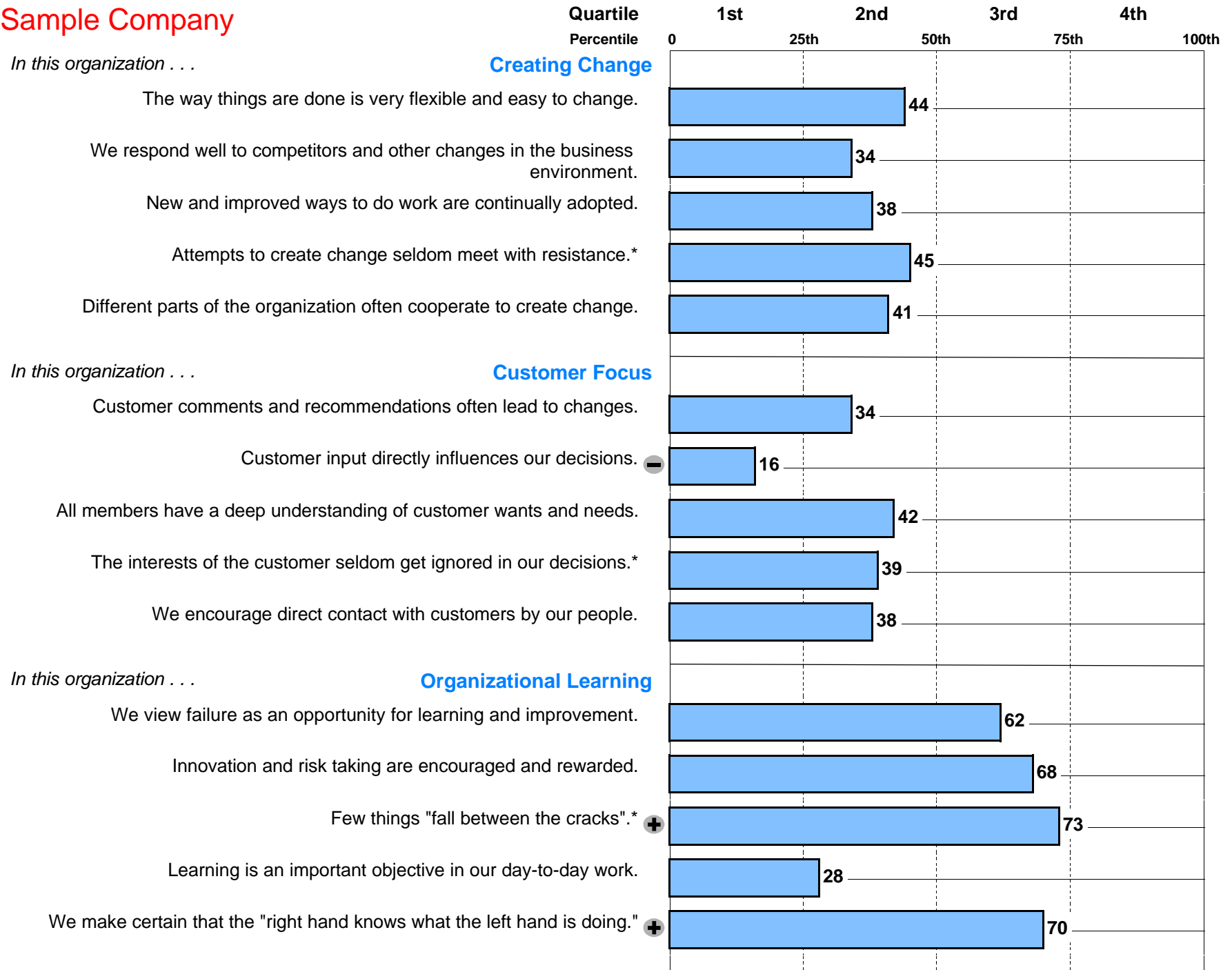
Working with someone from another part of this organization is not like working with someone from a different organization.\*

There is good alignment of goals across levels.



# Sample Company

## ADAPTABILITY



# Sample Company

## MISSION

Quartile  
Percentile

0 1st 25th 2nd 50th 3rd 75th 4th 100th

*In this organization . . .*

### Strategic Direction & Intent

There is a long-term purpose and direction.



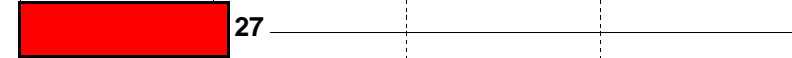
Our strategy leads other organizations to change the way they compete in the industry.



There is a clear mission that gives meaning and direction to our work.



There is a clear strategy for the future.



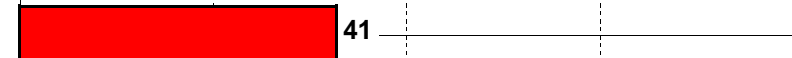
Our strategic direction is clear to me.\*



*In this organization . . .*

### Goals & Objectives

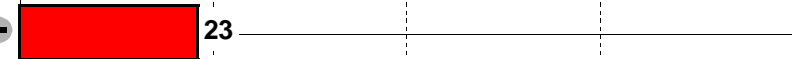
There is widespread agreement about goals.



Leaders set goals that are ambitious, but realistic.



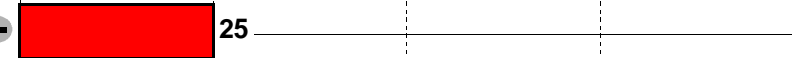
The leadership has "gone on record" about the objectives we are trying to meet.



We continuously track our progress against our stated goals.



People understand what needs to be done for us to succeed in the long run.



*In this organization . . .*

### Vision

We have a shared vision of what the organization will be like in the future.



Leaders have a long-term viewpoint.



Short-term thinking seldom compromises our long-term vision.\*



Our vision creates excitement and motivation for our employees.



We are able to meet short-term demands without compromising our long-term vision.



## Sample Company

### Highest Scores

	Short-term thinking seldom compromises our long-term vision.*
	Most employees are highly involved in their work.
	Few things "fall between the cracks".*
	Everyone believes that he or she can have a positive impact.
	We make certain that the "right hand knows what the left hand is doing."

### Lowest Scores

	Customer input directly influences our decisions.
	Our strategic direction is clear to me.*
	The leadership has "gone on record" about the objectives we are trying to meet.
	We continuously track our progress against our stated goals.
	People understand what needs to be done for us to succeed in the long run.



\* Question phrasing and answer reversed from survey



# **Appendix F**

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# DEBATE TEÓRICO SOBRE LA INTERRELACIÓN ENTRE LA CULTURA, EL DESEMPEÑO ORGANIZACIONAL Y LA INNOVACIÓN\*

(Publicado en la revista *The Anáhuac Journal*-Volumen 6, Número 1. Universidad Anáhuac México Sur-ISSN 1405-8448, Oxford University Press.)

Rafael Guillermo Ricardo Bray\*\*

## Introducción

El siguiente texto desarrolla un conjunto de planteamientos sobre la cultura, el desempeño organizacional y la innovación. El propósito de esta tarea es destacar, con base en la literatura especializada, la importancia crítica de la cultura organizacional como un factor determinante y explicativo, entre otros, del desempeño organizacional, y en especial, de los procesos y resultados de los esfuerzos de innovación. En particular, se discute la relevancia de la cultura en la generación de contextos organizacionales favorables a la innovación tecnológica. El propósito expuesto se justifica por la necesidad de afianzar y profundizar la fundamentación conceptual y metodológica del trabajo investigativo sobre la innovación en organizaciones colombianas, y de estimular el debate académico sobre el tema.

Para comenzar aparecen unas breves notas sobre la historia de los estudios sobre cultura y la etimología del concepto. Posteriormente se presenta una serie de definiciones de cultura organizacional. A continuación se describe el modelo de niveles de la cultura elaborado por Schein (Schein, 1985). Este modelo fundamenta el proceso por el cual la cultura determina el comportamiento de los miembros organizacionales, y por ende, los resultados de desempeño. Luego se presenta un conjunto de resultados de investigación que articulan, por un lado, la cultura al desempeño organizacional en general, y por otro, la cultura y el desempeño al tipo de industria y al tipo de tecnología. Más adelante aparecen algunas consideraciones sobre la evolución de la cultura. Posteriormente se discuten algunas propuestas sobre la cultura y el contexto interactivo favorables a la innovación, y en especial, a la innovación tecnológica.

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\*En la Facultad de Ciencias Económicas y Administrativas de la Universidad de La Sabana se constituyó el grupo de investigación "Cambio e Innovación Tecnológica", reconocido formalmente por COLCIENCIAS el 3 de septiembre de 2004 y conformado por los profesores Mario Martínez, Alvaro Turriago, César Bernal, Luis Ramírez y Rafael Ricardo. Este grupo se dedica al desarrollo de teorías, metodologías e instrumentos para el estudio de los procesos de cambio e innovación tecnológica. Para el efecto, el grupo participa como miembro de la Red de Estudio sobre la Innovación bajo la coordinación del Observatorio Colombiano de Ciencia y Tecnología. La red publicó el libro "La Innovación Tecnológica en la Industria Colombiana-Un Estudio de Dos Cadenas Industriales" en noviembre de 2003. Este texto recoge trece estudios de caso sobre innovación tecnológica en empresas colombianas de las cadenas metalúrgica-metalmecánica y petroquímica-plásticos. El grupo Cambio e Innovación Tecnológica contribuyó con cuatro casos a este esfuerzo investigativo. Actualmente la red se propone adelantar estudios de caso sobre el mismo tema en empresas colombianas de la cadena de alimentos.

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Finaliza el documento con la descripción del modelo teórico, metodológico e instrumental sobre cultura organizacional y desempeño propuesto por Denison y otros autores (Denison, 1990; Denison y Mishra, 1995; Denison, Cho, y Young, 2000). Este modelo, por las razones que se explicarán más adelante, puede ser una herramienta altamente útil para el diagnóstico, la evaluación y la gestión de la cultura organizacional en función del desempeño general, y en particular, de la innovación. Tanto la teoría que lo respalda como el instrumento pueden ser también útiles para la investigación de los procesos de innovación en organizaciones colombianas.

### **Historia de los estudios sobre cultura organizacional**

De acuerdo con Baker, las fuentes de los estudios sobre cultura organizacional se encuentran en la visión inicial de las organizaciones propia del enfoque de las relaciones humanas que se originó en los años cuarenta. Posteriormente, el concepto de cultura organizacional se popularizó en los primeros años ochenta. Los teóricos de las relaciones humanas afirmaban que las bases informales, no materiales, interpersonales, y morales de la cooperación y el compromiso al interior de las organizaciones eran tal vez más importantes para la motivación y el desempeño que los controles formales, materiales e instrumentales enfatizados por los teóricos de la perspectiva racional sobre las organizaciones. (Roethlisberger y Dickson, 1939; Mayo, 1939). A su vez, la perspectiva de las relaciones humanas se nutrió del trabajo sociológico y antropológico sobre la cultura asociado con grupos y sociedades. (Geertz, 1973; Mead, 1934; Durkheim, 1964; Weber, 1947, 1958; Baker, 2004, p.2). Por otro lado, el concepto de cultura organizacional se volvió atractivo para los científicos organizacionales que se habían desilusionado con la investigación organizacional de carácter formalístico y cuantitativo. Baker subraya que el énfasis sobre la cultura organizacional cambió la atención de los aspectos técnicos y funcionales (el llamado lado “duro”) de la administración, que podían ser más fácilmente cuantificados y analizados empíricamente, hacía los aspectos interpersonales y simbólicos (el llamado lado “suave”) de la administración que requerían estudios cualitativos, y en profundidad, de la vida organizacional. (Baker, 2004, p.2)

### **Etimología de la palabra cultura**

La cultura se refería originalmente al cuidado o cultivo de plantas y animales. Este significado se extendió más allá del dominio físico por la identidad

metafórica de las plantas y de los animales con la mente y el alma humanas. En efecto, de acuerdo con la metáfora de la cultura, la sociedad cuida o cultiva a los seres humanos a través de la familia, la comunidad, las instituciones educativas, las organizaciones formales, y las prácticas religiosas, igual que los granjeros cuidan o cultivan sus plantas y animales a través del arado, la poda, la alimentación y el pastoreo (Williams, 1983). Cultura entonces, en su sentido más general, es comportamiento cultivado o totalidad de la experiencia acumulada, o cosechada, que se transmite socialmente, o comportamiento cultivado que se adquiere a través del aprendizaje social.

En consecuencia con lo anterior, la mayoría de los teóricos organizacionales han entendido la cultura, como creación, sostenimiento y desarrollo, o cultivo, de un modo particular de vida entre personas, organizaciones o comunidades. En breves palabras, la cultura organizacional o corporativa se refiere usualmente a la forma de vida cultivada en una organización.

### **Definiciones de la Cultura Organizacional**

A continuación se presenta una serie de definiciones de la cultura organizacional con la intención de ilustrar los diferentes enfoques de los autores más representativos y mostrar la importancia teórica y práctica de la cultura para el análisis, el diseño y la gestión de las organizaciones contemporáneas. Sin embargo, una revisión crítica de estas definiciones desborda los límites de este texto. Al respecto, en opinión de Baker, muchas definiciones de cultura le dan mayor importancia a los componentes cognitivos, tales como supuestos, creencias y valores. Mientras que otras definiciones amplían el concepto para que incluya comportamientos y artefactos. De esta manera, se ha perfilado la distinción, ya muy común, entre los niveles visibles y ocultos de la cultura organizacional. (Baker, 2004, p.3)

En la opinión de Jacques, “la cultura de la fábrica es su manera acostumbrada y tradicional de pensar y hacer las cosas, la cual es compartida en un mayor o menor grado por todos sus miembros, y que los nuevos miembros deben aprender, y al menos parcialmente aceptar, con tal de ser aceptados en el servicio de la firma”. (Jacques, 1952, p. 251). Para Pettigrew, “la cultura es un sistema de significados pública y colectivamente aceptados que operan para un determinado grupo en un tiempo dado. Este sistema de términos, formas, categorías, e imágenes interpreta la situación del grupo para sí mismo.” (Pettigrew, 1979, p.574). Por su parte, en opinión de Siehl y Martin “la cultura organizacional se puede visualizar como el cemento que compacta a una organización a través de patrones de significados compartidos. La cultura se enfoca en los valores, creencias, y expectativas que los miembros llegan a compartir.” (Siehl y Martin, 1984, p.227). De otro lado, según la visión de Schein, los supuestos fundamentales constituyen el aspecto central y más importante de la cultura organizacional. En efecto, de acuerdo con Schein, la cultura de una organización se refiere al “patrón de presupuestos básicos que un grupo dado ha inventado, descubierto, o desarrollado mientras aprende a

enfrentar sus problemas de adaptación externa y de integración interna, y qué ha funcionado tan bien para ser considerado válido, y que por lo tanto, se enseña a los nuevos miembros como la manera correcta de percibir, pensar y sentir en relación con esos problemas". (Schein, 1985, p.6). Según Trice y Beyer "las culturas son fenómenos colectivos que incorporan las respuestas de las personas a la incertidumbre y el caos que son inevitables en la experiencia humana. Estas respuestas se ubican en dos grandes categorías. La primera es la sustancia de la cultura-sistemas de creencias emocionalmente cargadas y compartidas, que llamamos ideologías. La segunda incluye las formas culturales-entidades observables, que incluyen acciones, a través de las cuales los miembros de una cultura expresan, afirman, y comunican unos a otros la sustancia de su cultura". (Trice y Beyer, 1993, p.2). Según Dessler (1998: 366), la cultura organizacional se puede definir "como el conjunto de tradiciones, normas y valores característicos que los miembros de una organización comparten". (Dessler, 1998, p.366). De otro lado, para Jones (2004:195) "la cultura organizacional es el conjunto de valores y normas compartidos que controlan las interacciones entre los miembros organizacionales y entre estos y las personas externas a la organización". (Jones, 2004, p.95). Por su parte, para Smircich y Stubbart, "una organización es un conjunto de personas que comparten muchas creencias, valores, y supuestos que los estimulan a generar interpretaciones de sus propios actos y de los actos de otros que se refuerzan mutuamente". (Smircich y Stubbart, 1985, p.727) De igual manera, Walsh y Ungson plantean que "una organización es una red de significados compartidos entre sujetos que se sostienen a través del desarrollo y el uso de un lenguaje común y la interacción social cotidiana". (Walsh y Ungson, 1991, p.60) Jaffee por su parte, plantea que "las organizaciones no son estructuras objetivas diseñadas para lograr metas medibles sino colecciones de humanos que construyen la realidad con significados y supuestos compartidos". (Jaffee, 2001, p.7)

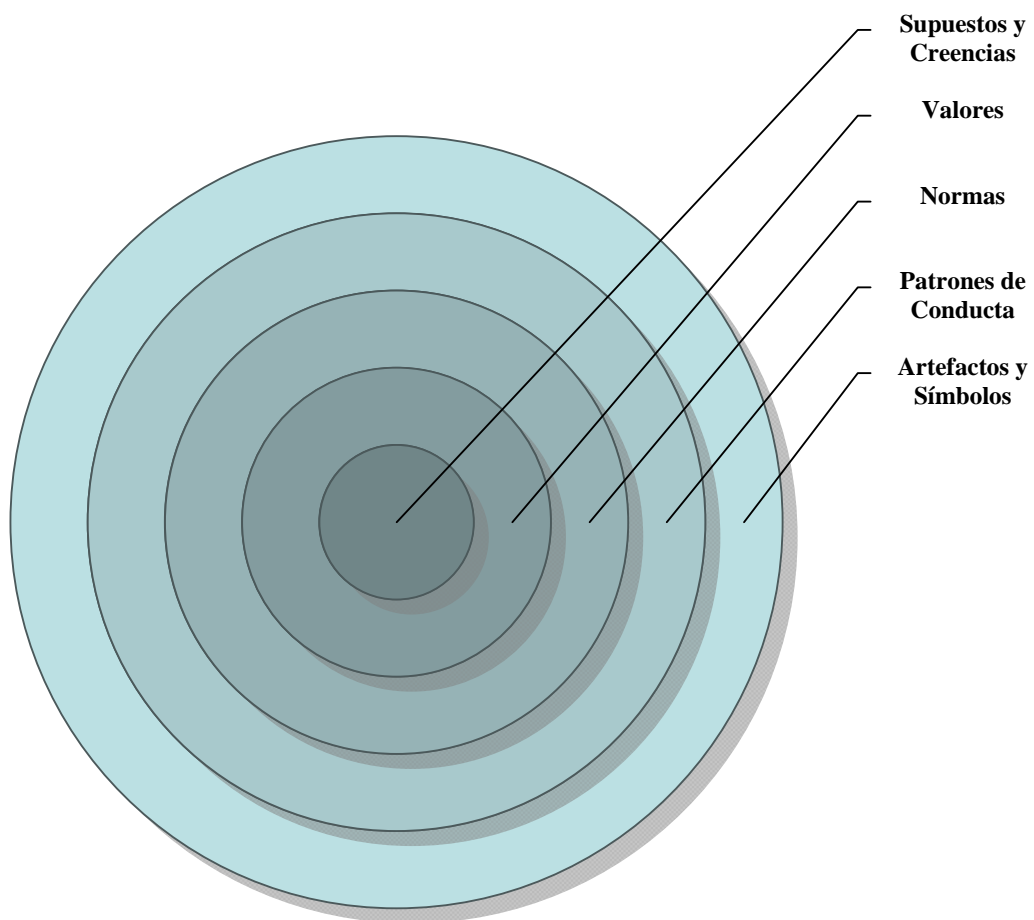
En síntesis, las definiciones anteriores destacan que la cultura organizacional es compartida, o sostenida en común, y por ello puede utilizarse como marco básico para la comprensión y la interpretación de los fenómenos organizacionales. También señalan que la cultura es intangible puesto que consiste de creencias, supuestos, valores, normas y marcos de referencia. Y finalmente, plantean que la cultura influye en el comportamiento de los miembros organizacionales. En este sentido, la cultura determina la construcción de la interacción humana, la cual afecta y es afectada, positiva o negativamente, por el comportamiento de todos los miembros de la organización. Los sistemas culturales organizacionales pueden por un lado, ser considerados productos de la interacción, y por otro lado, influencias condicionantes de la interacción futura.

Esta relación entre cultura, comportamiento e interacción humana es la que mayor pertinencia tiene para los intereses prácticos de los gerentes interesados en promover la innovación y de los investigadores interesados en el análisis sistemático de procesos de innovación en organizaciones particulares. Más

adelante se discutirá en detalle la utilidad de esta relación para el diagnóstico de la cultura y su correlación con resultados de la gestión del desempeño, tales como la innovación tecnológica.

### **Niveles de la Cultura Organizacional**

A partir de Schein, (Schein, 1985) Baker identifica los siguientes niveles en la composición de la cultura organizacional, tal como se muestra en el gráfico 1. (Baker, 2004, p.3)



### **Gráfico 1. Niveles de la Cultura Organizacional.**

Primero aparecen los artefactos observables y los símbolos que incluyen el entorno físico y social, el lenguaje, los procedimientos operativos y las rutinas, las reglas escritas, el diseño y la decoración de las oficinas, los logotipos y las imágenes distintivas, la estructura organizacional, las formas de evaluación, y los códigos de vestido y protocolo. Estos son los resultados concretos de la cultura o la evidencia de su núcleo central.

En segundo lugar, están los patrones de conducta. Los patrones de comportamiento incluyen los eventos ceremoniales, los comentarios escritos y hablados, los comportamientos visibles y audibles de los miembros, y los comportamientos gerenciales típicos.

En tercer lugar se encuentran las normas o prescripciones no escritas que les permiten a los miembros de una organización saber qué se espera de ellos en una amplia variedad de situaciones. De acuerdo con Jones las normas "son estándares de conducta que se consideran aceptables o típicos para un grupo de personas". (Jones, 2004, p.197). Las normas abarcan aspectos tales como el manejo de las emociones y las relaciones sociales y están estrechamente asociadas con los valores. A manera de ejemplos pueden citarse las normas que demandan cortesía en el trato con los compañeros y la limpieza y el orden en las áreas de trabajo asignadas. Mientras los valores especifican qué es lo importante para los miembros, las normas establecen los tipos de comportamientos que pueden esperar unos de otros. Los valores distinguen lo que tiene valor para la organización de lo que no lo tiene, mientras que las normas aclaran qué se considera normal o anormal en el comportamiento cotidiano.

En cuarto lugar aparecen los valores que son principios, o criterios generales, que sirven de base para emitir juicios acerca de lo que es correcto y de lo que no es correcto, acerca de lo deseable y lo indeseable. Hay dos clases de valores: los terminales y los instrumentales. Un valor terminal es "un estado final o un resultado deseado que las personas buscan lograr" (Jones, 2004, p.196) Como ejemplos de valores terminales pueden citarse la calidad, la excelencia, la innovación, el servicio, la solidaridad, el respeto, la confiabilidad, la rentabilidad y la moralidad. Un valor instrumental "es un modo de conducta deseado" (Jones, 2004, p.196). Como ejemplos de valores instrumentales pueden señalarse el trabajo duro, el respeto por las tradiciones y la autoridad, la frugalidad, la creatividad y la honestidad. Los valores instrumentales deben ayudar a una organización a lograr sus valores terminales. Por ejemplo, una compañía de computadores cuya cultura enfatice la innovación como valor terminal, debe obtener este estado deseado a través de los valores instrumentales del trabajo duro, la creatividad, y la toma de riesgos.



Las normas y los valores, guían y canalizan la conducta de las personas. En este sentido, liderar personas depende de la influencia que se ejerza tanto en las normas como en los valores que ellas utilicen como guías de comportamiento.

Finalmente, se encuentran los supuestos tácitos o creencias básicas que se aceptan sin discusión. Como ya se expresó, de acuerdo con la visión de Schein, los supuestos constituyen el aspecto central y más importante de la cultura organizacional. Los supuestos influyen en lo que los miembros perciben y en cómo piensan y sienten. Los supuestos están por fuera de la conciencia ordinaria y son, en gran parte, inaccesibles para ella. Desde la perspectiva de los miembros, el conjunto de supuestos básicos es la verdad, o lo que ellos asumen o creen que es real, y no está en discusión. Los supuestos se refieren a paradigmas o modelos mentales sobre: las relaciones con el entorno; la naturaleza de la realidad, la verdad, el tiempo y el espacio; la naturaleza humana; la naturaleza de la actividad humana; y la naturaleza de las relaciones humanas. Como ejemplos de supuestos básicos se pueden citar los siguientes:

¿Es el ser humano, por naturaleza, malo, bueno o neutro?

¿Son, o no, perfectibles los seres humanos?

¿Es la teoría X o la Y la más apropiada para dirigir personas en las organizaciones?

¿Es la vida un asunto de cooperación o competencia? (Hunt, 1991, p.223)

Para resumir, los presupuestos o creencias básicos influyen en los valores, los cuales a su vez influyen en las normas y patrones de comportamientos y en los artefactos y símbolos, o acciones y productos de las personas y los grupos. (Dessler, 1998, p.368). Esta cadena de influencias se puede diagramar de la siguiente manera:

**Creencias y Presupuestos Básicos > Valores > Normas > Patrones de Comportamiento > Artefactos y Símbolos**

Para la discusión siguiente es conveniente establecer el lugar de las normas y los patrones de comportamiento en la cadena de influencias, ya que son ellos los determinantes prácticos culturales inmediatos del desempeño organizacional y sus resultados críticos, tales como la innovación. Sin embargo, como resultado del interés creciente en la administración de la cultura, las organizaciones han comenzado a reconocer la importancia de destacar, articular y enfatizar sus creencias y presupuestos básicos. (Baker, 2004, p.3)

### **Cultura y Desempeño Organizacional**

En primer lugar, han aparecido numerosas anécdotas sobre los efectos de la cultura organizacional en el desempeño de las empresas. Al respecto, es muy conocido el texto de Peters y Waterman . (Peters y Waterman, 1982). Por otro lado, la literatura especializada ha documentado empíricamente una variedad de resultados de desempeño organizacional que se relacionan con la cultura.

Por ejemplo, se ha encontrado que la cultura organizacional se relaciona con el crecimiento de la firma (Calori y Sarnin, 1991) y el desempeño global de la firma (Denison, 1990; Denison y Mishra, 1995; Kotter y Heskett, 1992). Otros estudios han señalado que su efecto se puede observar directamente al nivel individual, en resultados tales como el compromiso (O'Reilly et al., 1991). Los investigadores organizacionales también han desarrollado tipologías de las culturas organizacionales para describir a las firmas exitosas. (Cheng, 1998; Denison y Mishra, 1995, O'Reilly et al., 1991).

Frente a esos resultados, según Sorensen (Sorensen, 2002), un buen número de académicos han propuesto la hipótesis de que las culturas fuertes, definidas como "un conjunto de normas y valores que se comparten ampliamente y se mantienen fuertemente a través de la organización", mejoran el desempeño de las empresas. (O'Reilly y Chatman, 1996, p.166)

Los teóricos han propuesto tres explicaciones interrelacionadas de los beneficios de las culturas fuertes para el desempeño (Kotter y Heskett, 1992). Primero, el consenso y respaldo amplios alrededor de los valores y normas organizacionales facilitan el control social. Las acciones correctivas pueden venir de distintos lugares en la jerarquía formal. Aun más, el control social informal puede ser así probablemente más efectivo y costar menos que las estructuras formales de control. (O'Reilly y Chatman, 1996). También se supone que el amplio acuerdo acerca de los valores y supuestos básicos en la firma debe aumentar la consistencia comportamental (Gordon y DiTomaso, 1992) y por lo tanto mejorar el desempeño organizacional. En segundo lugar, las culturas corporativas fuertes mejoran la alineación de metas. Si tienen claridad sobre los valores y normas corporativos, los empleados enfrentan menos incertidumbre acerca del curso de acción apropiado cuando confrontan situaciones inesperadas y pueden reaccionar apropiadamente. La alineación de metas también facilita la coordinación (Kreps, 1990; Cremer, 1993; Hermalin, 2001). Finalmente, esta hipótesis se basa en parte en la idea de que las organizaciones se benefician de tener empleados altamente motivados y dedicados a metas comunes. (Peters y Waterman, 1982; Deal y Kennedy, 1982; Kotter y Heskett, 1992). Al respecto, las culturas fuertes pueden mejorar la motivación y el desempeño de los empleados porque estos perciben que pueden escoger libremente sus acciones (O'Reilly, 1989; O'Reilly y Chatman, 1996).

En consecuencia con esa hipótesis de la correlación entre cultura y desempeño, un gran conjunto de esfuerzos investigativos parten del supuesto de que la cultura es una característica medible de las organizaciones (O'Reilly y Chatman, 1996). (O'Reilly, 1989; O'Reilly y Chatman, 1996). En efecto, estudios que han definido la fortaleza cultural en términos del grado de acuerdo y compromiso con los valores y normas organizacionales encontraron evidencia a favor de la conexión entre cultura y desempeño. Por ejemplo, Kotter y Heskett (1992) relacionaron el desempeño promedio en un período de diez años con medidas

de la fortaleza de la cultura corporativa y encontraron que, entre industrias, las firmas percibidas con culturas fuertes generalmente tenían superiores niveles promedio de retorno sobre la inversión, crecimiento del ingreso neto, y cambios en el precio de la acción. Gordon y DiTomaso (1992) hallaron que el desempeño de compañías de seguros aumentó en la medida en que había consenso alrededor de los valores culturales. Denison, por su parte, al usar evidencia cuantitativa y cualitativa, afirmó también que el consenso alrededor de los valores organizacionales aumenta la efectividad organizacional. (Denison, 1990)

En síntesis, la revisión de resultados de investigación que se presentó tiende a ver la cultura organizacional más como un activo competitivo susceptible de ser manipulable y manejable en términos del desempeño, y menos como un fenómeno natural y orgánicamente emergente. (Baker, 2002, p.2)

### **Cultura, Industria y Desempeño Organizacional**

Varios estudios sugieren que las organizaciones pueden compartir valores y prácticas culturales, y que esta semejanza no proviene del azar, sino que se origina en demandas industriales semejantes (Chatman y Jehn 1994; Gordon, 1991; Hofstede et al. 1990; Phillips, 1994; Spender, 1989). Por ejemplo, Spender reporta la existencia de "recetas industriales"- o respuestas compartidas a las incertidumbres industriales existentes en una industria particular. (Spender, 1989). En parte, estas recetas consisten de supuestos ampliamente compartidos que Schein describe como el núcleo fundamental de la cultura organizacional. (Schein, 1985). Gordon, por su parte, plantea que las culturas evolucionan a partir de la adaptación de las compañías a los requerimientos de sus entornos. (Gordon, 1991). Según Christensen y Gordon, dado que las organizaciones en una industria comparten un conjunto de influencias comunes, deben presentarse semejanzas en sus culturas. Por ejemplo, la mayor agresividad que se encuentra entre las firmas de contabilidad y consultoría es consistente con la naturaleza de esas industrias, donde aquellos que suministran servicios profesionales están bajo presión permanente para captar negocios. (Christensen y Gordon, 1999)

Las relaciones entre una organización y su entorno han sido muy estudiadas por los sociólogos en la forma de la teoría institucional (Meyer y Scott 1992). Las organizaciones son sistemas abiertos en los cuales la frontera entre una organización y su entorno es permeable. Para la teoría antes mencionada, el entorno institucional de una organización se refiere a las reglas escritas y no escritas a las cuales las organizaciones deben conformarse para poder mantener su legitimidad, sobrevivir y prosperar. En esencia, esas reglas reflejan las creencias, valores y normas de los miembros de la institución. De esta forma, la cultura de una industria se puede ver como la manifestación organizacional de las creencias y valores institucionales. Se puede concluir entonces que la influencia que una industria tiene sobre la cultura de sus miembros se relaciona con la naturaleza de esa industria. La lógica de este enfoque genera un nivel

adicional de análisis (industria) a la jerarquía de artefactos, patrones de comportamiento, normas, valores y supuestos propuesta por Schein.

Chatman, Jennifer A., y Karen A. Jehn afirman que, a partir de reconocer que la industria influye en la cultura organizacional, y que existe relación entre la cultura y el desempeño, es factible que se den variaciones en la conexión entre desempeño y cultura a través de diferentes industrias. En realidad, algunos valores culturales y sus prácticas asociadas pueden ser una condición previa para la supervivencia en una industria particular. Por ejemplo, en una industria sujeta a regulaciones gubernamentales estrictas, las organizaciones pueden verse obligadas a concentrarse en la documentación detallada y continua para justificar sus actividades. (Chatman y Jehn, 1994) Sin embargo, dentro de una industria, pueden existir otras prácticas que no son exigidas uniformemente por la industria, y que pueden ser muy útiles para el desempeño. (Barney, 1986). Estas prácticas se pueden articular a diferencias en sus sistemas de valores y reflejarse en diferentes resultados en el desempeño.

### **Cultura, Tecnología y Desempeño Organizacional**

Las empresas en industrias que aplican tecnologías intensivas han de tener culturas que se caractericen por altos niveles de innovación, dado que los proyectos requieren enfoques no rutinarios para la solución de problemas (Pennings y Harianto, 1992). Debido a que se requiere un ritmo de trabajo intenso y duro y hay poca predictibilidad de resultados, estas organizaciones se inclinan a poner un mayor énfasis en los asuntos de recursos humanos. (Saxenian, 1990). Por otra parte, estas firmas se caracterizan por tener una fuerte orientación al trabajo en equipo, dado que las tareas poco estructuradas requieren que los miembros colaboren en la solución de problemas (Kanter, 1988).

De otro lado, las empresas con tecnologías estrechamente vinculadas (long-linked technologies) tienden a poseer altos niveles de estabilidad, dado que las tareas son repetitivas y predecibles (Thompson, 1967). Estas firmas tienen una fuerte orientación al detalle, dado que sólo se requieren refinamientos y ajustes a los procesos. Igualmente, se apoyan en mecanismos de control formales, tales como políticas y procedimientos, en la dirección de los miembros organizacionales. De igual manera, estas organizaciones se caracterizan por altos niveles de estructuración del trabajo (Hofstede et al., 1990). Por lo tanto, se puede esperar que las empresas con tecnologías intensivas tengan culturas que enfatizan más fuertemente la innovación, la flexibilidad, la orientación a la gente, la orientación al trabajo en equipo, y la agresividad que aquellas empresas con tecnologías estrechamente vinculadas. De manera similar, las firmas con estas tecnologías poseerán culturas que enfatizan más fuertemente orientaciones a los resultados y al detalle que aquellas firmas de tecnología intensiva.

Parece razonable esperar que la relación entre la cultura organizacional y los

resultados dependa del tipo de tecnología que predomine en la empresa. O sea que los resultados de negocios serán superiores en aquellas firmas cuyos valores culturales sean consistentes con aquellos propios de la tecnología particular de la industria respectiva.

### **Evolución de la Cultura Organizacional**

De acuerdo con Webster y Sundaram, tal parece que las compañías excelentes no se mantienen así indefinidamente. Lo anterior plantea que la noción tradicional de cultura fuerte necesita ser reemplazada por una comprensión más aguda de los tipos y roles de la cultura y de la necesidad de cambiar la cultura a lo largo del ciclo de vida de la organización. Por ejemplo, tal vez una cultura consistente fuerte es útil en la fase inicial de una organización, mientras que una organización madura puede que demande mayor diferenciación cultural interna y necesite ser más orientada al cambio y al aprendizaje. Al respecto, lo que es importante para el éxito organizacional a largo plazo puede no ser un tipo particular de cultura organizacional por sí mismo sino la habilidad de administrar y cambiar la cultura a lo largo del tiempo para ajustarse a los cambios en la situación y necesidades de la organización. (Webster y Sundaram, 2002), Al respecto, Schein argumenta que el liderazgo hoy en día es esencial para la creación, la administración, y, de vez en cuando, para la destrucción y reconstrucción de la cultura. De hecho, este autor afirma, “la única cosa de importancia que los líderes hacen es crear y administrar la cultura” y “el único talento de los líderes es su habilidad para comprender la cultura y trabajar con ella” (Schein, 1992, p.5). Los líderes deben ser capaces de valorar qué tan bien la cultura se desempeña y cuando necesita ser cambiada. De otro lado, otro reto para el liderazgo es la administración de las diferentes subculturas internas y la generación de sinergias entre ellas. Adicionalmente, los líderes deben trabajar activamente para que la cultura organizacional existente sea relevante para el presente y el futuro mientras mantiene un sentido de continuidad con el pasado.

Baker corrobora lo anterior al plantear que la visión tradicional de la cultura fuerte puede ir en contravía de la capacidad de adaptación y cambio que requieren las organizaciones. Las organizaciones contemporáneas, rodeadas por entornos que cambian rápidamente y caracterizadas por una creciente diversidad interna, necesitan, por supuesto, una cultura organizacional fuerte, pero que sea menos rígida en términos de la prescripción de normas y patrones de conducta particulares que hubieran tenido vigencia en el pasado. (Baker, 2004, p.5) Este punto de vista fue corroborado por Collins y Porras. Estos autores encontraron que las compañías exitosas a largo plazo poseían un conjunto limitado pero fuerte de valores centrales inmodificables que no impedían el cambio organizacional a través del tiempo. Estas organizaciones fueron capaces de preservar su núcleo mientras estimulaban su propio progreso y desarrollo. (Collins y Porras , 1994)

## **Cultura, Innovación y Contexto Interactivo**

En el mundo dinámico y caótico de la competencia global, las organizaciones deben innovar si quieren competir exitosamente (Robbins et al., 2000). En efecto, dada la volatilidad del entorno, el desempeño económico a largo plazo exige que las organizaciones desarrollen una cultura adaptativa en la cual la innovación se destaque especialmente (Smith, 1998). Se asume entonces que la efectividad organizacional y su capacidad innovadora son influidas por la cultura organizacional (Russell, 1988). La cultura, entonces, a través de los sistemas de creencias y las normas de grupo institucionalizados puede ser un medio efectivo para dirigir el comportamiento de los miembros organizacionales hacia actividades innovadoras. Al respecto, Schein afirma que los fundadores de las organizaciones ejercen una influencia mayor en la formación de la cultura organizacional. Los valores, supuestos y creencias del fundador/empresario se transmiten a los miembros organizacionales y llegan a ser características de la cultura del grupo. Por ejemplo, si el fundador valora la creatividad y el cambio y cree en la innovación como una respuesta apropiada a las condiciones externas dinámicas, puede transmitir estos valores y creencias a los miembros organizacionales. (Schein, 1985) Estos valores se pueden transmitir a través de, 1) el entrenamiento y la tutoría a los miembros del grupo; 2), el enfoque de la atención de los miembros en el desarrollo e implementación exitosos de la innovación como una práctica organizacional continua; 3), la creación de un sistema de recompensas que premie tanto a la innovación exitosa como al comportamiento relacionado con la innovación, y 4), el reclutamiento, la contratación y la promoción de personas innovadoras. Por otro lado, las normas relacionadas con la innovación comunican el valor de la innovación a los miembros del grupo y definen los comportamientos esperados o apropiados dentro del contexto del proceso de innovación. Al respecto Russell identificó siete dimensiones normativas asociadas con la innovación: 1) apoyo a las actividades creativas individuales; 2) reconocimiento de la innovación como la solución apropiada a los problemas organizacionales; 3) intercambio de información abierto y libre tanto dentro de la organización como con agentes externos; 4) mente abierta a la consideración de nuevas ideas; 5) compromiso con el desarrollo de nuevas ideas mediante el suministro de apoyo psicológico y recursos; 6) apoyo al riesgo moderado en nuevos proyectos y, 7) y apoyo a la implementación efectiva del cambio. (Russell, 1988)

De acuerdo con Jassawalla y Sashittal (2002), la cultura en escenarios de innovación es la creación colectiva de todos los miembros organizacionales participantes. (Jassawalla y Sashittal, 2002), La cultura emerge tanto de las decisiones que se toman en la base como de las decisiones de los líderes (Floyd y Lane, 2000).

Los líderes desempeñan un papel crítico porque ellos seleccionan cuidadosamente a los miembros- ya que no todos los miembros de la organización funcionarán efectivamente en escenarios de innovación; y además,

superan la influencia asfixiante de las normas existentes y enfocan y canalizan los recursos a procesos de productos nuevos. Los miembros organizacionales tienen menos posibilidades de ganar legitimidad para sus actividades de generación de nuevos productos o de acceder a recursos sin la presencia de un fuerte liderazgo (Dougherty y Heller, T. 1994).

Las culturas que soportan la innovación en alto grado emergen fundamentalmente como resultado de las diversas interacciones que los líderes y los miembros participantes han de manejar cotidianamente en los escenarios organizacionales. En primer lugar, los líderes deben manejar la interacción entre las subculturas organizacionales generadas espontáneamente por los miembros participantes y las creencias, valores, normas y patrones de conducta que los propios líderes tratan de impulsar. (Schein, 1996). Al respecto, las personas traen un conjunto variado de talentos, orientaciones, creencias, valores, lealtades, y aspiraciones a los escenarios organizacionales de innovación. Sin embargo, los líderes les exigen que descarten las viejas y aprendan nuevas maneras de darle sentido a sus entornos, desarrollen valores compartidos, y adopten nuevos comportamientos como un resultado de la interacción con otros. Por todo lo anterior, el éxito en la creación de culturas altamente favorables a la innovación se puede atribuir en gran parte a la habilidad de los líderes para entender la naturaleza específica de las subculturas en relación al contexto y el proceso de elaboración de sentido de los miembros participantes; para comprender cómo las subculturas interactúan y evolucionan hacia nuevos ambientes sociales; y para infundir su propia visión y valores en sus interacciones con los participantes, de tal manera que se elaboren nuevos sentidos, se apropien nuevos valores y normas, y se aprendan nuevos patrones de comportamiento.

En segundo lugar, los líderes han de manejar, en un ambiente de integridad y confianza, las interacciones entre el conocimiento tácito y explícito de los miembros participantes. En este caso la interacción se refiere al proceso por el cual los miembros participantes articulan y explicitan su conocimiento tácito sobre sus áreas de experticia y discuten sus valores fundamentales y aspiraciones, intercambian información explícita de formas tales que expanden sus maneras de pensar, e integran el nuevo y emergente conocimiento explícito con la comprensión tácita de la tarea orientada a nuevos procesos y productos (Saffold, 1988).

En tercer lugar, los líderes han de manejar las interacciones cotidianas entre la cultura, la estrategia emergente de nuevos procesos y productos y el escenario de innovación (participantes, estructura de la toma de decisiones, y flujo de trabajo). La cultura, la estrategia y el escenario emergen juntos de un contexto interactivo y mutuamente adaptativo. El manejo efectivo de esta interacción de tres vías asegura que el cambio en un factor sea acompañado por cambios congruentes en los otros, y que cada factor permanezca lo suficientemente flexible para acomodarse al cambio, lo suficientemente concreto para atraer el compromiso continuo de la alta dirección reflejado en el suministro de recursos,

y lo suficientemente estable de manera que los miembros participantes puedan desarrollar un sentido de continuidad, pertenencia y compromiso emocional con el proceso de innovación .

Chandler, Keller y Lyon, por su parte, afirman que la incertidumbre y la complejidad inherentes en el proceso de innovación sugieren que la confianza de los empleados en la gerencia es un factor crítico para el desarrollo de una cultura que apoye la innovación, dado que la confianza habilita a las personas para asumir riesgos sin temor al castigo por el fracaso (Chandler, Keller y Lyon, (2002; Porter, Lawler y Hackman, 1975). Tal como se expresó anteriormente, se puede afirmar que la innovación es el producto de relaciones sociales y de sistemas complejos de interacción. La confianza, en efecto, es necesaria para que tales sistemas puedan trabajar efectivamente (Thompson, 1967; Granovetter, 1985).

De otra parte, la teoría motivacional de la expectativa (Vroom, 1964) plantea que el esfuerzo individual exige que la persona crea que el logro de una meta lleva a la obtención de un premio específico. Por lo tanto, en la opinión de Chandler, Keller y Lyon, la percepción de que los sistemas organizacionales apoyan la innovación es un componente importante de la motivación individual hacia la participación en procesos de innovación. (Chandler, Keller y Lyon, 2002),

Amabile et al., afirman por su parte, que los empleados pueden desarrollar creencias acerca del valor intrínseco de proyectos que han emprendido basados en el nivel de recursos que se les asigna. (Amabile et al., 1996) Al respecto, Chandler, Keller y Lyon, también plantean que las percepciones del nivel de asignación de recursos a favor de actividades innovativas pueden afectar, para bien o para mal, el grado hasta el cual los empleados perciban que la cultura organizacional apoya la innovación. (Chandler, Keller y Lyon, 2002),

### **Cultura Organizacional basada en la Innovación Tecnológica**

Según Claver, Llopis, Garcia y Molina, la cultura innovadora es una manera de pensar y comportarse que crea, desarrolla y establece valores y actitudes dentro de una organización, la cual puede a su vez generar, aceptar y apoyar ideas y cambios que involucren un mejoramiento en el funcionamiento y eficiencia de la empresa, aún cuando dichos cambios puedan significar un conflicto con el comportamiento convencional y tradicional. (Claver, Llopis, Garcia y Molina, 1998),

De acuerdo con los autores arriba mencionados, para que una cultura innovadora tenga éxito, deben darse cuatro actitudes básicas: La dirección corporativa tiene la voluntad de asumir riesgos; ha de solicitarse la participación de todos los miembros de la organización; ha de estimularse la creatividad; y debe existir responsabilidad compartida. (Claver, Llopis, Garcia y Molina, 1998),



En síntesis, para lograr la ventaja competitiva a través de la búsqueda de nuevos procesos y productos, es obligatorio poseer previamente una cultura que apoye dicha búsqueda. Al respecto, la percepción cultural es un prerrequisito para que el comportamiento innovador tenga resultados efectivos. (Vracking, p.99)

Se puede plantear entonces que la cultura que se orienta a la innovación tecnológica es aquella que muestra, como su principal valor compartido, primero la innovación, y después la tecnología (Claver, Llopis, Garcia y Molina, 1998), A la luz de lo propuesto, existe una creencia general dentro de la organización de que, a través de la innovación continua (que involucra el uso de tecnologías por parte de la fuerza de trabajo), dicha organización protegerá su posición en el mercado, y podrá inclusive alcanzar y mantener posiciones de ventaja.

Adicionalmente, Schneider, Gunnarson y Niles-Jolly (1994) sostienen que los empleados dentro de esas culturas deben estar de acuerdo con las creencias de la administración en los siguientes puntos:

1. El éxito se deriva de la conciencia del mercado y de las necesidades de los consumidores finales.
2. Lo que importa es la calidad de una idea, no el poder y la autoridad de la persona que la propuso.
3. Para poder obtener resultados, la gente creativa necesita el apoyo y el compromiso de la organización.
4. Las decisiones importantes se deben tomar incrementalmente, ya que usualmente existen grandes riesgos en el proceso innovativo. (Schneider, Gunnarson y Niles-Jolly, 1994)

Por su parte, Claver, Llopis, Garcia y Molina definen así las características de una cultura innovadora:

1. Permite un grado considerable de autonomía e iniciativa a los miembros de la organización y reduce al mínimo el trámite burocrático.
2. Se orienta al cliente y al mercado.
3. Hay una predisposición hacia el aprendizaje constante.
4. El trabajo en equipo es una obligación.
5. Los empleados son razonablemente libres de seguir sus inclinaciones en innovación tecnológica.
6. Se posee la habilidad de actuar rápidamente y flexiblemente en la iniciación de un proceso de innovación tecnológica.
7. Hay un enfoque a largo plazo en función de los resultados.
8. Se tiene el poder de adaptarse a un nuevo producto o mercado por medio de una relativa diversificación.
9. Se aplica la ética propia de la investigación científica.
10. La organización posee una estructura descentralizada.

11. Las relaciones entre los miembros se dan en un ambiente relativamente informal.
12. El pensamiento sistemático prevalece sobre el pensamiento fragmentado y esporádico. (Claver, Llopis, Garcia y Molina, 1998)

Según los mismos autores, la cultura innovadora, por otra parte, considera al cambio como un componente usual, una parte del trabajo cotidiano, y no pone obstáculos a la alteración de las reglas establecidas. En otras palabras, la cultura debe estimular el proceso de generación de nuevas ideas y su aplicación interna y al mercado, con el propósito de cambiar el mercado, adaptar la organización a sus discontinuidades y obtener de esta manera beneficios competitivos. En pocas palabras, si la organización quiere ser tecnológicamente innovadora, debe eliminar las barreras culturales hacia el cambio, ya que ellas le hacen perder su ventaja competitiva. El "hardware" de la innovación tecnológica requiere del "software" de una cultura organizacional orientada a dicha innovación.

### **Un Modelo Teórico, Metodológico e Instrumental sobre Cultura Organizacional y Desempeño**

De acuerdo con Denison, la utilización de la cultura en el análisis y apalancamiento del cambio organizacional demanda una estrategia persuasiva para los administradores. Esta estrategia debe responder a sus preocupaciones legítimas sobre el valor instrumental del cambio cultural. Según este autor, los gerentes han de ser conscientes de la evidencia que conecta la cultura con el desempeño organizacional. También hay que ayudarles a entender los impactos, tanto positivo como negativo, de la cultura en sus propios negocios. Igualmente, es necesario hablar de la cultura en un lenguaje que tenga sentido para los gerentes y que pueda conectarse rápidamente con los comportamientos suyos y de los miembros organizacionales. (Denison, 2000),

Por las razones anteriores, Denison ha desarrollado, en sus propias palabras, un modelo de cultura organizacional basado en el comportamiento; diseñado y creado dentro del entorno de los negocios; expuesto en el lenguaje que se utiliza en el manejo de asuntos de negocios; articulado a los resultados de gestión; rápido y fácil de aplicar; y aplicable a todos los niveles de cualquier organización (Denison, 1990; Denison y Mishra, 1995; Denison, Cho, y Young, 2000). En síntesis, el modelo describe y aplica una teoría de la cultura organizacional que se articula al desempeño de la empresa desde una perspectiva gerencial orientada, naturalmente, a resultados críticos para la supervivencia y viabilidad de las organizaciones.

En desarrollo de lo antes expuesto, el modelo se fundamenta en la tradición investigativa sobre cómo la cultura influye en el desempeño organizacional, y se enfoca en aquellas características culturales que, según los resultados de investigación, tienen un impacto clave en el desempeño de las organizaciones.

El modelo se basa en cuatro características culturales que han mostrado tener una fuerte influencia sobre el desempeño organizacional: compromiso (involvement), consistencia, adaptabilidad, y misión. Denison enfatiza la asociación positiva entre estas características culturales y el desempeño total de las empresas. Según Jaffee, la regulación normativa a través de estas características culturales es la forma más efectiva, en términos de costo beneficio, de control de la conducta humana. (Jaffee, 2004). Cada una de estas características se mide a través de tres índices, y cada uno de estos índices se mide a través de cinco ítems de cuestionario. Este modelo se ha desarrollado a partir de investigaciones realizadas durante más de 15 años en más de 3,000 organizaciones y con más de 100,000 personas encuestadas (Denison, 1990; Denison y Mishra, 1995; Denison y Neale, 1996).

El modelo de Denison primero recoge información de miembros de varios niveles de la organización sobre sus percepciones de la cultura organizacional, tal como se manifiesta a través de sus acciones y actividades. Posteriormente, los datos se describen por medio de un modelo bidimensional que destaca los asuntos cruciales del enfoque interno versus el enfoque externo y de la flexibilidad versus la estabilidad y sus impactos en el desempeño y viabilidad de la organización. De acuerdo con Denison, Lief y Ward, estas dos dimensiones deben verse más como transacciones (tradeoffs) relativas antes que opciones radicales, dado que tanto un enfoque interno como un enfoque externo son necesarios para el éxito de los negocios, al igual que tanto la flexibilidad como la estabilidad. (Denison, Lief y Ward, 2004) Un propósito importante del modelo es suministrar un mecanismo que facilite la generalización en vez de destacar la peculiaridad, y de esta manera se puedan establecer comparaciones entre diversas organizaciones.

Una vez una organización aplica el cuestionario de diagnóstico cultural, puede identificar áreas de mejoramiento y diseñar un curso de acción que le ayude a corregir debilidades y a acentuar sus fortalezas culturales. Dado el caso, por ejemplo, se puede diseñar un plan de acción que fortalezca aquellas características que fomentan la innovación y la respuesta ágil y efectiva a los cambios en el entorno organizacional.

A continuación se describen esas cuatro características culturales:<sup>1</sup>

### **Compromiso.**

Las organizaciones efectivas facultan a su gente, se construyen a sí mismas alrededor de los equipos, y desarrollan la capacidad humana a todos los niveles. Los miembros de la organización están comprometidos con su trabajo y sienten que poseen una parte de la organización. Las personas, a todos los

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<sup>1</sup> La descripción de las características culturales de las organizaciones se basa extensamente en el texto de Daniel Denison: Organizational Culture: Can it be a Key Lever for Driving Organizational Change? June 2000. International Institute for Management Development.

niveles, sienten que tienen al menos alguna influencia en las decisiones que afectan sus trabajos y que estos están directamente conectados con los objetivos de la organización. Esta característica se mide con tres índices:

*Facultamiento (Empowerment).* Los individuos tienen autoridad, iniciativa y habilidad para administrar su propio trabajo. Esto crea un sentido de propiedad y responsabilidad hacia la organización.

*Orientación al Equipo.* Se valora el trabajo cooperativo en función de los objetivos comunes, de los cuales todos los empleados se sienten responsables. La organización confía en el esfuerzo de los equipos para que se haga el trabajo.

*Desarrollo de Capacidades.* La organización invierte continuamente en el desarrollo de las habilidades de los empleados con el propósito de mantener y mejorar la competitividad y satisfacer las necesidades actuales del negocio.

### **Consistencia.**

La investigación ha mostrado que las organizaciones son efectivas en razón de su consistencia e integración interna. El comportamiento de las personas se fundamenta en un conjunto de valores centrales (core values), los líderes y sus seguidores poseen la habilidad de lograr acuerdos (aún cuando existan diversos puntos de vista), y las actividades de la organización están bien coordinadas e integradas. Las organizaciones que poseen esta característica tienen una cultura distintiva y fuerte que influye significativamente en el comportamiento de las personas. Un sistema compartido de creencias y valores funciona como un sistema de control internalizado. La consistencia es entonces una fuente poderosa de estabilidad e integración interna que resulta de un marco mental (mindset) común y de un alto grado de conformidad. Esta característica se mide con los siguientes índices:

*Valores Centrales.* Los miembros de la organización comparten un conjunto de valores que crean un sentido de identidad y un conjunto claro de expectativas.

*Acuerdo.* Los miembros de la organización son capaces de lograr acuerdos en asuntos críticos. Esto incluye tanto el nivel subyacente del acuerdo como la habilidad de reconciliar diferencias cuando ellas ocurran.

*Coordinación e Integración.* Diferentes funciones y unidades de la organización son capaces de trabajar juntos bien para lograr sus objetivos comunes. Las fronteras organizacionales no interfieren con la realización del trabajo.

### **Adaptabilidad.**

Sin embargo, las organizaciones bien integradas son con frecuencia las más difíciles de cambiar. La integración interna y la adaptación externa pueden reñir entre sí. Las organizaciones adaptables son impulsadas por sus clientes, asumen

riesgos y aprenden de sus errores, y tienen capacidad y experiencia en la creación del cambio. Estas organizaciones están continuamente mejorando su capacidad de entregar valor a sus clientes. Las organizaciones fuertes en adaptabilidad generalmente experimentan crecimiento en las ventas y de su porción de mercado. Esta característica se mide con los siguientes tres índices:

*Creación de Cambio.* La organización es capaz de generar estrategias adaptativas que sirvan para enfrentar necesidades cambiantes. También es capaz de “leer” el ambiente de negocios, reaccionar rápidamente a las tendencias actuales y anticipar cambios futuros.

*Enfoque en el cliente.* La organización entiende y responde a sus clientes y anticipa sus futuras necesidades. Esto refleja el grado hasta el cual la organización es impulsada por la preocupación de satisfacer a sus clientes.

*Aprendizaje Organizacional.* La organización recibe, traduce, e interpreta las señales del entorno y las transforma en oportunidades de estímulo a la innovación, ganancia de conocimiento, y desarrollo de capacidades.

## **Misión**

Tal vez la característica cultural más importante sea el sentido de misión. Las organizaciones que no saben para donde se dirigen terminan generalmente en cualquier parte. Las organizaciones exitosas tienen un claro sentido de propósito y una dirección que define las metas organizacionales y los objetivos estratégicos y que expresa la visión de lo que la organización quiere ser en el futuro. Las organizaciones más problemáticas son frecuentemente aquellas que han tenido que cambiar su misión básica. Cuando esto ocurre, se requieren cambios correspondientes en estrategia, estructura, cultura y comportamiento. En esta situación, se requiere un liderazgo fuerte que defina una visión para el futuro y construya una cultura que soporte la visión. Esta característica se mide a través de los siguientes índices:

*Dirección e Intención Estratégicas.* Claras intenciones estratégicas comunican el propósito de la organización y explicitan la contribución de cada miembro y cómo cada quien puede dejar su huella.

*Metas y Objetivos.* Un conjunto claro de metas y objetivos se articula a la misión, la visión, y la estrategia, y le suministra a cada quien una clara dirección para su trabajo.

*Visión.* La organización posee una visión compartida de un estado futuro deseado. Ella incluye los valores centrales y captura los corazones y las mentes de los miembros de la organización, al mismo tiempo que les da guía y dirección.

## **La Administración e Interpretación del Modelo de Denison**

Al igual que muchos modelos contemporáneos de liderazgo y efectividad organizacional, este modelo se enfoca sobre un conjunto de tensiones o contradicciones que hay que administrar (Denison, Hooijberg y Quinn, 1996). Algunas de ellas son la tensión entre estabilidad y flexibilidad y entre enfoque interno y enfoque externo. Estas tensiones son las dimensiones básicas que subyacen al modelo. Adicionalmente, se presentan las tensiones diagonales entre consistencia interna y adaptación, y entre la misión definida desde arriba en la jerarquía y el compromiso que se genera desde abajo.

En el núcleo del modelo, de acuerdo con Schein, están las creencias y supuestos subyacentes. (Schein, 1985), Aunque estos niveles más profundos de la cultura organizacional son más difíciles de medir, ellos constituyen la fuente donde se originan el comportamiento y acción de los miembros organizacionales. Las creencias y los supuestos acerca de la organización y su gente, el cliente, el mercado y la industria, y las propuestas de valor básicas de la firma crean una lógica compacta que mantiene a la organización firmemente unida.

El Compromiso y la Consistencia enfrentan la dinámica interna de la organización pero no la interacción de la organización con el ambiente externo. En contraste, la Adaptabilidad y la Misión se enfocan en las relaciones entre la organización y el ambiente externo.

De otro lado el Compromiso y la Adaptabilidad enfatizan la capacidad de la organización para la flexibilidad y el cambio. Por el contrario, la Consistencia y la Misión enfatizan la capacidad para la estabilidad y la dirección. Un sistema organizacional orientado a la adaptabilidad y el compromiso introducirá más variedad, más insumos y más soluciones posibles en una situación dada que un sistema orientado hacia un alto nivel de consistencia y un fuerte sentido de misión. En contraste, un sesgo hacia la consistencia y la misión reducirá la variedad y colocará un mayor énfasis en control y estabilidad.

Durante diez años, Denison estudió la correlación entre las características culturales del modelo (Compromiso, Consistencia, Adaptabilidad y Misión) y un conjunto de medidas de efectividad organizacional. Al respecto, Misión y Consistencia impactan medidas de desempeño financiero tales como Retorno sobre Activos, Retorno sobre Inversión y Retorno sobre Ventas. En cuanto a Compromiso y Adaptabilidad (Flexibilidad), estas características impactan el desarrollo de productos y la innovación. Esto típicamente significa mayores niveles de innovación en productos y servicios y creatividad, al igual que una respuesta rápida a las cambiantes necesidades de clientes y empleados. En referencia a Adaptabilidad y Misión (Enfoque Externo), ellas impactan el ingreso y el crecimiento en las ventas y en la porción de mercado.

Aunque, por lo general, las cuatro características culturales del modelo tienen un impacto positivo en el desempeño organizacional, al menos en la superficie,

algunas de ellas puede parecer que contradicen a otras. Por ejemplo, culturas altamente consistentes pueden llegar a ser muy cerradas y ser muy difíciles de cambiar. En contraste, las culturas muy adaptables pueden tener problemas en el logro de altas metas de eficiencia y de sentido compartido de propósito que se encuentra a menudo en culturas bien integradas. De manera semejante, la misión y el compromiso pueden parecer contradictorias: el sentido y la dirección establecidos por la misión organizacional pueden limitar el compromiso de algunos miembros organizacionales. Tal como muchas organizaciones han descubierto, la simple declaración de una nueva misión organizacional no implica necesariamente el apoyo y el compromiso de los miembros organizacionales. Por la misma razón, el alto compromiso entre los miembros organizacionales no implica necesariamente un sentido claro de dirección y propósito.

No obstante lo anterior, según Denison, la cultura de una organización efectiva debe incluir las cuatro características representadas en el modelo aquí descrito. Así pues, una organización efectiva ha de tener una cultura que sea adaptativa, pero también muy consistente y predecible. De la misma manera, dicha cultura debe estimular un alto compromiso en el contexto de un sentido compartido de misión.

## **Conclusiones**

A partir de los planteamientos expuestos es evidente la importancia crítica de la cultura organizacional como un factor determinante y explicativo, entre otros, del desempeño organizacional en general, y en especial, de los procesos y resultados de los esfuerzos de innovación. Esta posición es compartida por Baker, quien afirma que la literatura sobre cultura organizacional ha demostrado que la cultura es esencial tanto para el cambio organizacional exitoso como para la maximización del valor del capital humano. También es claro que la administración de la cultura se ha convertido en una competencia gerencial crítica. Esta competencia involucra, por supuesto, que el gerente pueda determinar cual es el tipo de cultura más efectiva para su organización, y que cuando se necesite, pueda establecer los cambios que esa cultura requiera. (Baker, 2004, p.1) En estos tiempos en que la globalización demanda mayor competitividad a las empresas colombianas y latinoamericanas, y por ende mayor capacidad innovadora, es necesario impulsar el desarrollo de la competencia de la administración de la cultura. Sobre este punto deben tomar nota las escuelas de administración, los gremios, el estado y la sociedad civil. No obstante, el debate académico está abierto a otros puntos de vista que amplíen y enriquezcan la discusión sobre temas relevantes y actuales para la gestión de organizaciones, tales como la cultura. Al respecto, es un imperativo el abordaje del debate con rigor conceptual y fundamentación empírica. La academia colombiana y latinoamericana ya está preparada para asumir científicamente los tópicos de la organización y la gestión. De esta manera, se podrá superar el pragmatismo paralizante, del que todavía adolecen algunas escuelas de administración en Latinoamérica, y avanzar hacia la comprensión profunda de la realidad fascinante de nuestras organizaciones. El conocimiento genera poder y este, a su vez, facilita el logro de los grandes propósitos sociales. En efecto, a mayor conocimiento científico de la cultura organizacional y de su gestión en función del desempeño innovador de las empresas

tanto privadas como públicas, mayores posibilidades de desarrollo se abrirán para nuestros países en los diversos ámbitos de la acción colectiva.

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# V CONGRESO INTERNACIONAL DE *Análisis Organizacional*

**Guanajuato, México  
8, 9 y 10 de noviembre de 2007**

**Mesa # 2  
Cultura en las Organizaciones**

**Ponencia  
“Cultura Organizacional y Desempeño  
en Empresas Bogotanas”**

**Rafael Ricardo Bray  
Investigador Principal**

**Ignacio Gómez Roldán  
Investigador Asociado**





**Universidad  
de La Sabana**

**Escuela Internacional de Ciencias Económicas  
y Administrativas**

**Grupo de Investigación “Cambio e Innovación  
Tecnológica”**

## **Objetivos del Proyecto de Investigación**

- **Evaluar las características de las culturas existentes en una muestra de organizaciones bogotanas a partir de la aplicación de la encuesta sobre cultura organizacional de Denison (Denison Organizational Culture Survey).**
- **Evaluar la influencia de las características de las culturas de las empresas mencionadas en un conjunto de indicadores críticos del desempeño organizacional.**
- **Proponer y sustentar recomendaciones para la administración de culturas que propicien el mejoramiento del desempeño organizacional.**

## Metodología

- **Se aplicó el Denison Organizational Culture Survey (DOCS) constituido por 60 preguntas cerradas a una muestra de los miembros de cada una de 39 organizaciones radicadas en Bogotá, Colombia.**
- **1655 encuestas individuales conformaron la base de datos.**
- **El DOCS se ha venido utilizando por más de 20 años, y ha sido traducido a más de 30 idiomas.**
- ***La encuesta de Denison genera un análisis directo, sistémico y comprensible de la cultura organizacional por medio de la evaluación de los comportamientos o prácticas que influyen en el desempeño.***
- **La investigación realizada fue de tipo descriptivo ya que se reseñaron las características o rasgos y demás componentes de la cultura.**
- **La investigación tuvo elementos de tipo correlacional ya que tuvo como propósito mostrar asociaciones entre las características de la cultura y un conjunto de indicadores de desempeño.**

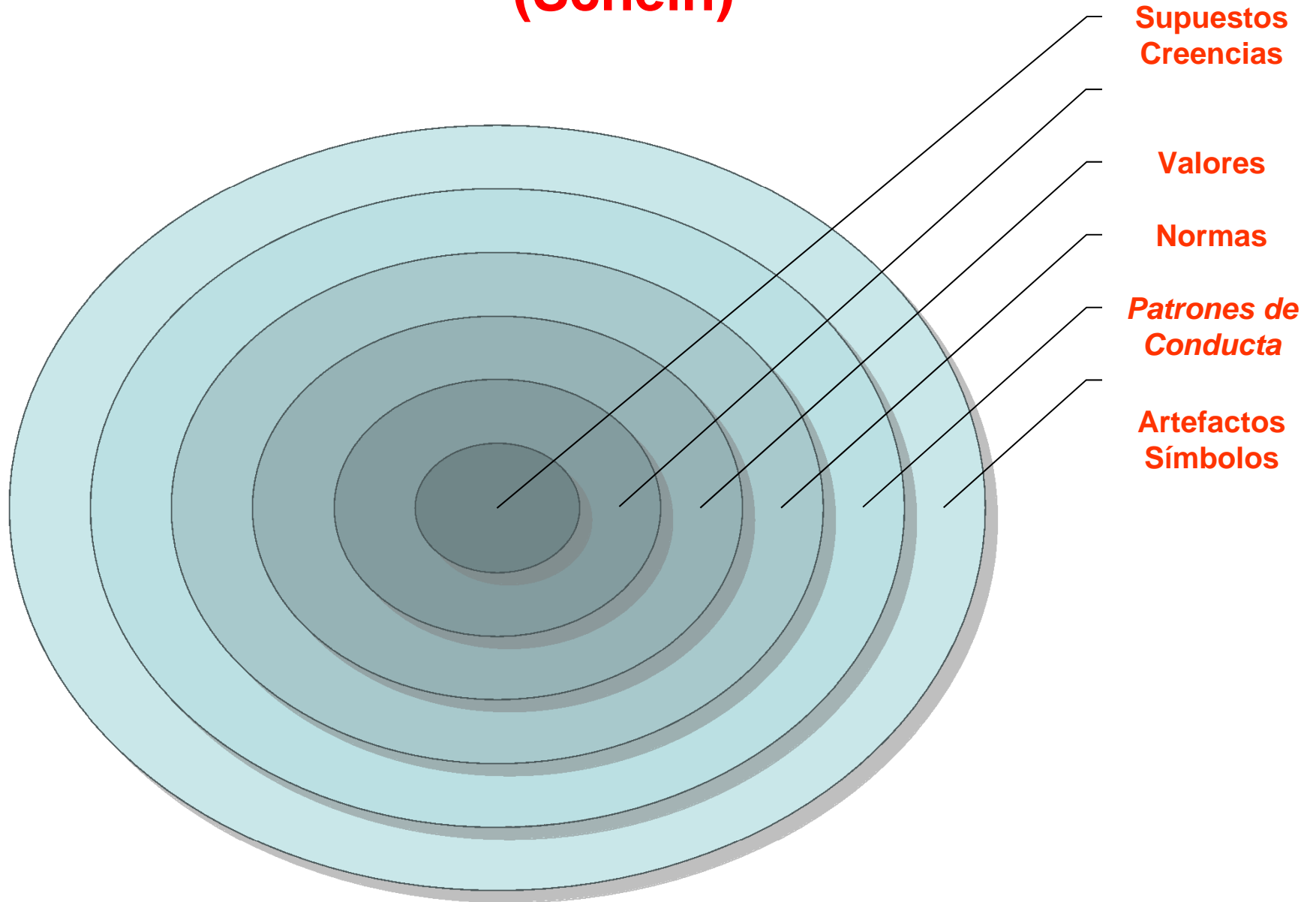
## El Concepto de Cultura

- **Las definiciones de cultura organizacional asocian el concepto con *algo sostenido en común o compartido* entre los miembros.**
- **La cultura aporta los valores, supuestos creencias y principios que fundamentan el sistema gerencial de una organización, como también los comportamientos y prácticas que tanto ejemplifican como refuerzan esos valores, supuestos, creencias y principios básicos.**

(Denison ,1990)



# Niveles de la Cultura Organizacional (Schein)



## Estudios sobre Cultura y Desempeño

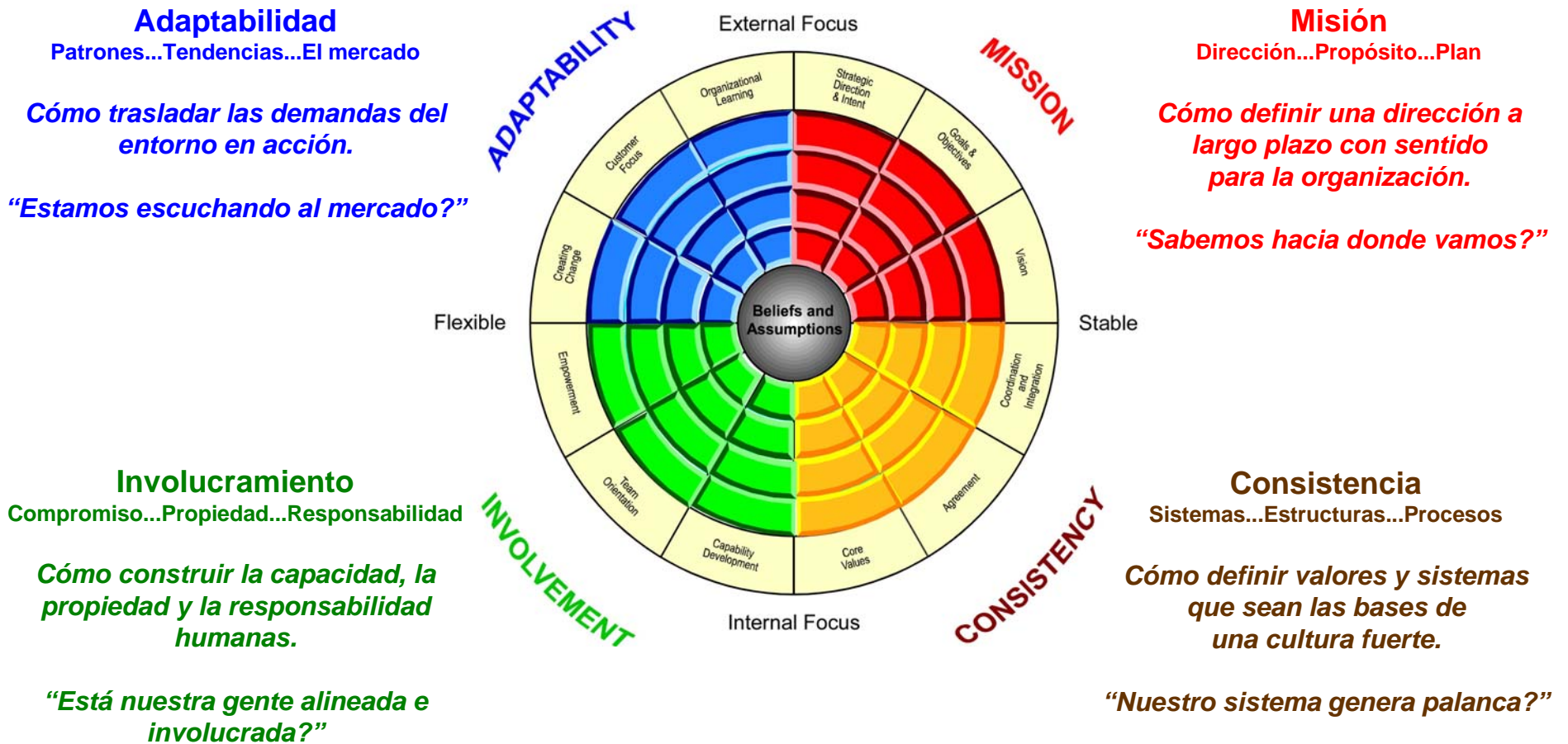
- Por ser compartida la cultura guía los patrones cotidianos de comportamiento de los individuos y de los grupos.
- Por dirigir el comportamiento, y por lo tanto el desempeño, la cultura determina en gran medida el éxito o el fracaso frente al logro de resultados buscados.
- La cultura puede aumentar la efectividad si sus creencias y supuestos fundamentales motivan patrones de comportamiento favorables a los indicadores críticos de desempeño.
- La literatura especializada ha documentado una variedad de resultados de desempeño que se relacionan con la cultura.
- Los estudios revisados ven la cultura más como un activo competitivo susceptible de ser intervenido y administrable en términos del desempeño, y menos como un fenómeno natural y orgánicamente emergente. (Baker, 2002, p.2)
- Para Schein el liderazgo es esencial para la creación, la administración, y para la destrucción y reconstrucción de la cultura. “La única cosa de importancia que los líderes hacen es crear y administrar la cultura” y “el único talento de los líderes es su habilidad para comprender la cultura y trabajar con ella” (Schein, 1992, p.5).

## El Modelo de Denison para la Evaluación de la Cultura y el Desempeño

- Supuestos y creencias se manifiestan en comportamientos o prácticas visibles.
- Los comportamientos pueden ser medidos, cuantificados y correlacionados con variables críticas para el desempeño.
- Los comportamientos o prácticas refuerzan las creencias y supuestos fundamentales que los originan.
- El comportamiento de las personas termina por generar la cultura que ellas mismas y otros experimentan.
- Las creencias y supuestos dirigen el comportamiento y el comportamiento dirige el desempeño.
- El modelo describe y aplica una teoría de la cultura que se articula al desempeño desde una perspectiva gerencial orientada a resultados críticos para la supervivencia y viabilidad de las organizaciones.

# Visión General del Modelo de Cultura de Denison

## Los cuatro conceptos básicos:



## Adaptabilidad

Patrones...Tendencias...El mercado  
*Cómo trasladar las demandas del entorno en acción.*

*“Estamos escuchando al mercado?”*

Indices:

- Creación del Cambio
- Enfoque en el Cliente
- Aprendizaje Organizacional

## Misión

Dirección...Propósito...Plan  
*Cómo definir una dirección a largo plazo con sentido para la organización.*

*“Sabemos hacia donde vamos?”*

Indices:

- Dirección e Intención Estratégica
- Metas y Objetivos
- Visión

## Involucramiento

Compromiso...Propiedad...  
Responsabilidad

*Cómo construir la capacidad, la propiedad y la responsabilidad humanas.*

*“Está nuestra gente alineada e involucrada?”*

Indices:

- Facultamiento
- Orientación al Equipo
- Desarrollo de Capacidades

## Consistencia

Sistemas...Estructuras...Procesos  
*Cómo definir valores y sistemas que sean las bases de una cultura fuerte.*

*“Nuestro sistema genera palanca?”*

Indices:

- Valores Centrales
- Acuerdo
- Coordinación e Integración

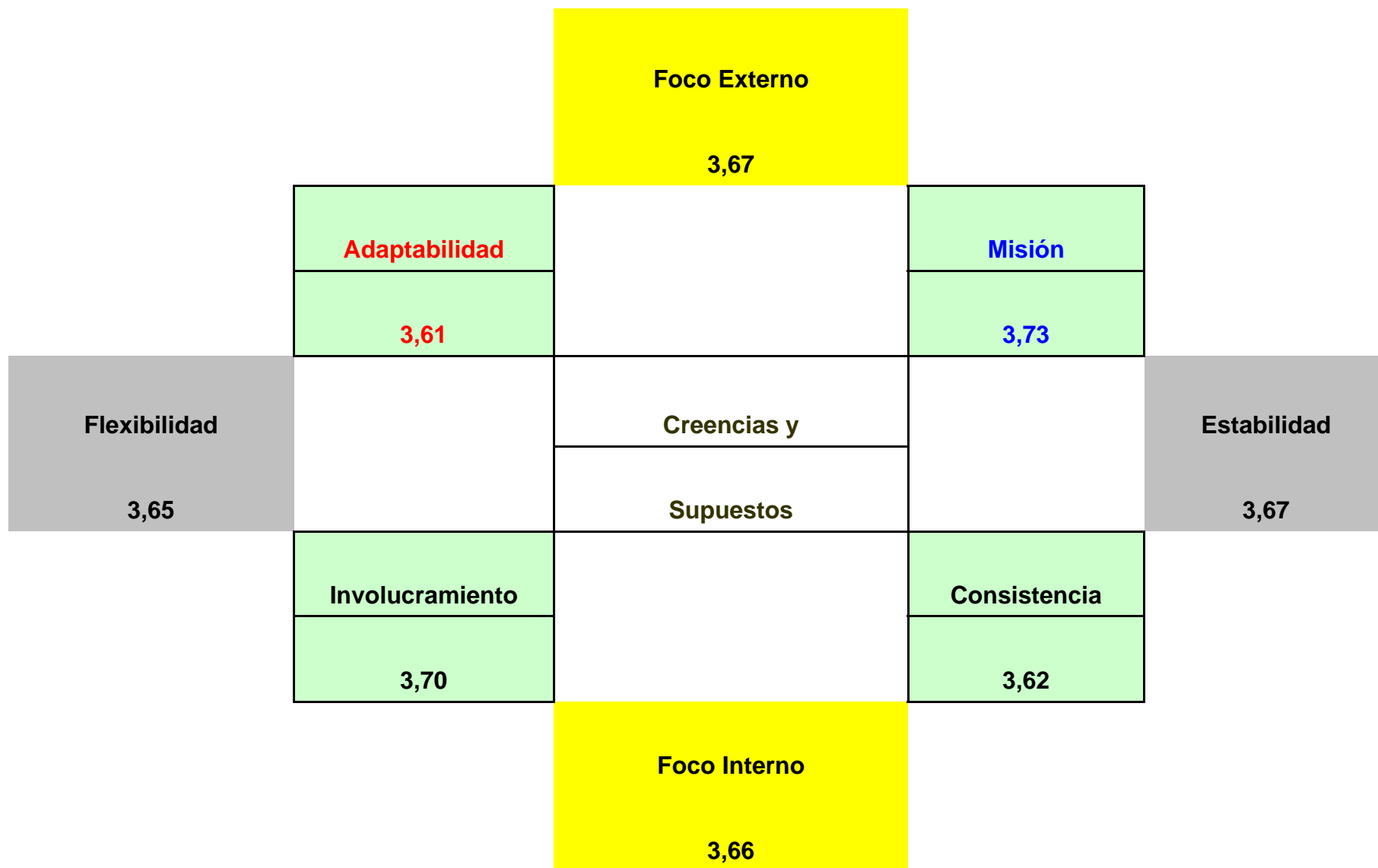


## Impacto de la Cultura en las Variables Críticas del Desempeño

<b>Rentabilidad/ Retorno sobre Activos</b>	<b>Crecimiento en Ingresos/ Crecimiento en ventas</b>	<b>Participación de Mercado</b>	<b>Innovación</b>	<b>Calidad de Productos &amp; Servicios</b>	<b>Satisfacción de los Empleados</b>
<i>Soportados por</i>	<i>Soportados por</i>	<i>Soportados por</i>	<i>Soportados por</i>	<i>Soportados por</i>	<i>Soportados por</i>
<b>Misión</b>	<b>Misión</b>	<b>Misión</b>			<b>[Misión]</b>
<b>Involucramiento</b>			<b>Involucramiento</b>	<b>Involucramiento</b>	<b>Involucramiento</b>
<b>Adaptabilidad</b>	<b>Adaptabilidad</b>	<b>Adaptabilidad</b>	<b>Adaptabilidad</b>		<b>[Adaptabilidad]</b>
<b>Consistencia</b>				<b>Consistencia</b>	<b>Consistencia</b>

# Las Organizaciones del Estudio

## Características Básicas y Sesgos Culturales



## Características Culturales e Índices

<b>1. Involucramiento</b>	<b>3,70</b>
<b>Facultamiento</b>	<b>3,79</b>
<b>Orientación al Equipo</b>	<b>3,77</b>
<b>Desarrollo de Capacidades</b>	<b>3,54</b>
<b>2. Consistencia</b>	<b>3,62</b>
<b>Valores Centrales o Fundamentales</b>	<b>3,78</b>
<b>Acuerdo</b>	<b>3,53</b>
<b>Coordinación e Integración</b>	<b>3,54</b>
<b>3. Adaptabilidad</b>	<b>3,61</b>
<b>Creación del Cambio</b>	<b>3,51</b>
<b>Enfoque en el Cliente</b>	<b>3,67</b>
<b>Aprendizaje Organizacional</b>	<b>3,65</b>
<b>4. Misión</b>	<b>3,73</b>
<b>Dirección e Intención Estratégicas</b>	<b>3,77</b>
<b>Objetivos y Metas</b>	<b>3,83</b>
<b>Visión</b>	<b>3,59</b>



## Adaptabilidad: Índices e Ítems

	3,61
<b>CREACIÓN DEL CAMBIO</b>	3,51
31. La forma de hacer las cosas es muy flexible y se puede cambiar fácilmente.	3,36
32. Respondemos bien a la competencia y a otros cambios en el entorno comercial.	3,82
33. Continuamente se adoptan métodos nuevos y mejorados para realizar el trabajo.	3,74
34. Generalmente hay resistencia a las iniciativas que surgen para realizar cambios.	3,04
35. Las diferentes partes de la organización generalmente cooperan entre sí para realizar cambios.	3,58
<b>ENFOQUE EN EL CLIENTE</b>	3,67
36. Los comentarios y recomendaciones de los clientes a menudo producen cambios.	3,76
37. Las sugerencias de los clientes influyen nuestras decisiones.	3,74
38. Todos los miembros comprenden a fondo los deseos y las necesidades de los clientes.	3,53
39. Nuestras decisiones generalmente ignoran los intereses de los clientes.	3,68
40. Alentamos el contacto directo entre nuestra gente y los clientes.	3,62
<b>APRENDIZAJE ORGANIZACIONAL</b>	3,65
41. Vemos nuestras fallas como una oportunidad para aprender y mejorar.	3,97
42. Se alienta y recompensa el innovar y tomar riesgos.	3,45
43. Muchos detalles importantes pasan desapercibidos.	3,17
44. El aprendizaje es un objetivo importante en nuestras labores cotidianas.	3,95
45. Nos aseguramos de que "la mano derecha sepa lo que hace la izquierda".	3,71

## Indicadores Agregados de Desempeño

	PROMEDIO
1.Crecimiento en ventas e ingresos	3,72
2. Participación de mercado	3,62
3. Rentabilidad y rendimiento del activo	3,67
4. Calidad de productos y servicios	3,89
5. Desarrollo de nuevos productos y/o servicios	3,64
6. Satisfacción de los empleados	3,62
7. Desempeño general de la empresa	3,88

## Correlaciones entre Indicadores Agregados de Desempeño y Características Culturales Agregadas

INDICADORES AGREGADOS DE DESEMPEÑO/ CARACTERÍSTICAS CULTURALES AGREGADAS	INVOLUCRAMIENTO	CONSISTENCIA	ADAPTABILIDAD	MISIÓN
61. Crecimiento en ventas e ingresos	0,19	0,18	0,23	0,23
62. Participación de mercado	0,19	0,21	0,19	0,24
63. Rentabilidad y rendimiento del activo	0,17	0,16	0,20	0,18
64. Calidad de productos y servicios	0,31	0,31	0,35	0,34
65. Desarrollo de nuevos productos y/o servicios	0,31	0,32	0,33	0,33
66. Satisfacción de los empleados	0,36	0,41	0,37	0,32
67. Desempeño general de la empresa	0,35	0,33	0,37	0,34

# Conclusiones

- El DOCS facilitó la medición de los comportamientos o prácticas que constituyen los índices, las características y los sesgos culturales en una muestra de empresas bogotanas.
- Fue posible medir la asociación de las características culturales básicas con una serie de indicadores críticos para el desempeño organizacional.
- La intención del proyecto es ampliar gradualmente la muestra de empresas. Para el final del año 2007 se aspira a tener una base de datos conformada por 100 organizaciones.
- Se espera tener una visión más exhaustiva de las semejanzas y diferencias en perfiles culturales y de sus asociaciones con los indicadores críticos del desempeño organizacional.
- Será factible realizar comparaciones intersectoriales e involucrar variables como tamaño de empresa, años de funcionamiento, participación de inversión extranjera, etc.

# Similarities and Differences Existing in Cultural Profiles of Colombian Organisations of Higher and Lower Performance

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## ABSTRACT

*Organisational culture influences members' behaviour and therefore organisational performance. The specialised literature has documented a variety of performance outcomes related to specific characteristics of organisational culture profiles. This paper reviews the similarities and differences existing among organisations of higher and lower performance profiles as they relate to specific characteristics of their cultural profiles. The organisations examined belong to a sample of 66 organisations located in Bogotá, Colombia. In order to present the European perspective, the implications of results on organisational culture and performance found in Colombia will be discussed in relation to results on the same subject found in foreign-owned firms operating in Russia. The study is founded on the Organisational Culture Model of Daniel Denison. This model describes and applies a theory of culture related to behaviour and performance from a managerial perspective oriented to the attainment of results which are critical for the survival and viability of organisations.*

**Keywords:** Organisational culture; behaviour; organisational performance; cultural profile; performance profile; cultural traits; cultural indexes; cultural items; cultural dimensions.

## INTRODUCTION

The research project that sustains this paper pursued the following objectives: to evaluate the characteristics of the cultures existing in a sample of 66 Colombian organisations located in Bogotá by means of the application of the Denison Organisational Culture Survey; and to evaluate the influence of those cultural characteristics in a set of critical organisational performance indicators.

This paper focuses especially on the examination of the similarities and differences existing among organisations of higher performance (10 organisations and 568 individual surveys) and lower performance (10 organisations and 496 individual surveys) profiles chosen from the above mentioned sample as they relate to specific characteristics of their cultural profiles. Furthermore, in order to present the European perspective, the implications of results on organisational culture and performance found in Colombia are discussed in relation to results on the same subject found in a sample of European and American-owned firms operating in Russia. At the beginning, the theoretical foundations on culture and performance and the Denison culture model are explained. Afterwards, the methodology is described, and the research results are exposed, analysed and discussed. Finally, a set of conclusions is presented.

## **CULTURE AND ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE**

### **The Concept of Culture**

According to Baker, the organisational effectiveness literature has been increasingly emphasising the importance of culture in motivating and maximising the value of its intellectual assets, particularly its human capital. Although the concept of organisational culture was popularised in the early 1980s, its roots can be traced back to the early human relations view of organisations that originated in the 1940s. Human relations theorists viewed the informal, nonmaterial, interpersonal, and moral bases of cooperation and commitment as perhaps more important than the formal, material, and instrumental controls stressed by the rational system theorists. (Baker, 2004, p. 1).

A critical examination of the diverse definitions of organisational culture is beyond the limits of this paper. According to Baker, many definitions stress the cognitive elements of culture, such as assumptions, beliefs and values, whereas other definitions extend the concept of culture to include pattern behaviours and artifacts. Therefore, the distinction between the tangible and the intangible levels of culture has arisen. (Baker, 2004, p. 3)

The definitions of organisational culture usually associate the concept to something supported in common or shared among the members: beliefs, assumptions, values and norms. (Jacques, 1952, p. 25; Pettigrew, 1979, p.574; Siehl and Martin, 1984, p. 227; Trice and Beyer, 1993, p. 2; Smircich and Stubbart, 1985, p. 727; Walsh and Ungson, 1991, p. 60). For the purposes of this paper, the definition of culture suggested by Schein seems more appropriate. This author defines culture:

“As the pattern of basic beliefs and assumptions that a group has invented, discovered or developed while it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, and that has functioned so well to be considered valid, and consequently is taught to new members as the correct way of perceiving, thinking and feeling regarding those problems”. (Schein, 1985, p. 6).

Denison agrees with Schein in affirming that at the core of the model are underlying beliefs and assumptions from which behaviour and action spring. (Denison, 2000) In fact, Denison affirms that culture also includes the behaviour patterns and practises that exemplify and reinforce those basic beliefs and assumptions. The combined contribution of these two authors to the comprehension of what culture means seems to be the best suited for laying the foundations of a managerial perspective of it. Consequently, this paper incorporates the proposal of Denison because it theoretically and operationally integrates the tangible and intangible levels of organisational culture and therefore facilitates the articulation among culture, behaviour and organisational performance. This articulation fits properly with the assumption that organisational culture is now viewed less as a natural, organically emergent phenomenon and more as a manipulable and manageable competitive asset (Baker, 2004, p. 2)

### **Research on Culture and Performance**

Because it is shared, culture drives behaviour of people and therefore organisational performance and capacity of response to the challenges of the business environment. Actually, the behaviour patterns or practises in a given cultural context can establish the difference between a successful organisation and another one bound to failure. In this sense, organisational culture can drive or hinder the achievement of a real competitive advantage. Following Schein, organisational culture can augment the effectiveness of people if their beliefs and assumptions motivate behaviours patterns favorable to the attainment of critical indicators of organisational performance.

In support of the preceding exposition, the specialised literature has documented empirically a variety of research findings on culture and organisational performance. In the first place, a relation between organisational culture and business growth (Calori and Sarnin, 1991) and the business global performance was found (Denison, 1990; Denison and Mishra, 1995; Kotter and Heskett, 1992). Other studies have pointed that the cultural effect is observed at the individual level in results such as commitment (O'Reilly et al., 1991). Moreover, organisational researchers have developed cultural typologies to describe the successful firms (Cheng, 1998; Denison and Mishra, 1995, O'Reilly et al., 1991). Along the same *vein*, Kotter and Heskett (1992) related the business performance average during a ten year period with strength measurements of organisational culture and found that, among industries, the enterprises perceived as possessing strong cultures usually had superior average levels of return on investment, net income growth and positive change in stock price. Similarly, Gordon and DiTomaso (1992) discovered that the performance of insurance companies increased to the extent of the internal consensus existing about cultural values. Denison, from qualitative and quantitative evidence, also affirmed that the consensus around cultural values augmented the organisational effectiveness (Denison, 1990).

As it was clear, the above mentioned studies tend to understand culture as a competitive asset susceptible to be measured, intervened and managed in terms of performance rather than a natural and organically emergent phenomenon. (Baker, 2004, p.2) On this matter, Schein contends that leadership is essential nowadays for the creation, management, and once in a while, for the destruction and reconstruction of organisational culture. In fact, this author stresses that:

“The only matter of concern for leaders to do is to create and manage culture and... the unique talent of leaders is their ability to understand culture and work with it” (Schein, 1992, p. 5).

The Denison culture model is placed within the described theoretical vein that sees culture as a competitive asset susceptible of measurement, intervention and management in front of organisational performance. This theoretical and practical bias obviously defines and limits the scope of the analysis and interpretation of the research results examined in this paper.

#### **THE DENISON MODEL FOR THE DIAGNOSIS OF ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE <sup>1</sup>**

According to Denison, to provide leverage for organisational change the concepts and analytic strategies of culture research must be relevant to the narrow range of priorities of managers and must be presented in a style and form that are as instrumental and oriented to results as managers are. Denison also proposes that in order to convince managers about the instrumental value of culture they should be aware of the evidence that links culture and performance, understand the impacts, both positive and negative, that culture has on their own business, and quickly link culture to their own behaviour.

As stressed by Denison, cultural assumptions and beliefs expressed themselves in a series of observable and measurable behaviour patterns or practises. Those behaviour patterns in turn drive performance and its results. Because they are quantifiable; those behaviour patterns can be correlated with critical organisational performance indicators. In this regard, Fisher affirms:

“So when your interest is in the realm of results, Denison argued, it is both practical and appropriate to approach culture via its most obvious dimension ... the way people act!” (Fisher, 2000, p. 45)

The model is based on four cultural traits that have been shown to have a strong influence on organisational performance: Involvement, Consistency, Adaptability, and Mission. The underlying beliefs and assumptions of any organisational culture result in organisational practises (or behavioural patterns) that are observable and that are represented by the four key traits. According to Denison, the ideas about the four cultural traits came from executives interviewed during the research process and are widely reflected in the academic and popular management literature. What *is* unique about

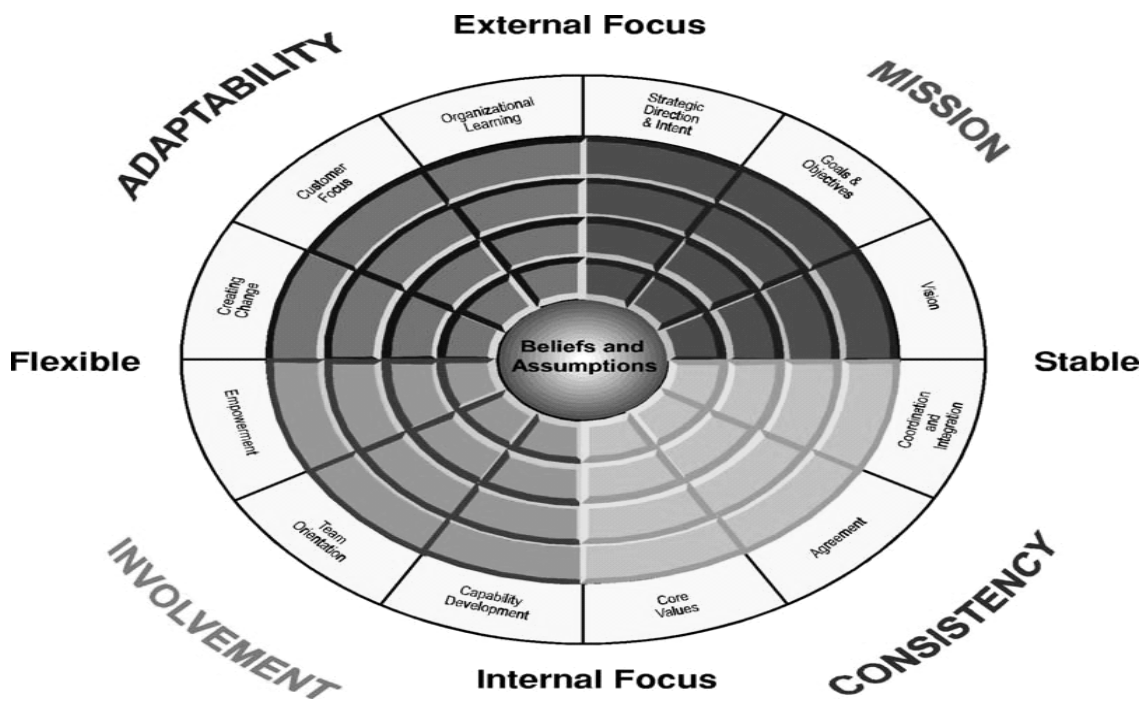


the model is that it brings these concepts together, and presents them in a form that links managerial actions, cultural traits, and underlying assumptions into a framework based on research about what impacts performance. (Denison, 1984, 1990, 1996; Denison and Mishra, 1995, 1998; Denison and Neale, 1996; Denison et al. 2002).

The quadrants of the model depicted in graphic 1 represent the four basic traits of any organisational culture. In turn, each quadrant includes three indexes of behaviour patterns or practises connected with each one of the traits. Traits and indexes are shown in terms of the underlying dimensions of flexibility versus stability on the horizontal axis and of the external focus and the internal focus on the vertical axis. Each index is measured through five survey items. Denison's research shows that the highest performing companies are those that show strength in all four areas.<sup>2</sup> In Fisher's opinion:

“They have developed cultures that fully address the paradoxical demands facing them.”(Fisher, 2000, p. 47)

This model has been developed from a series of research efforts undertaken during more than twenty years in more than 3,000 organisations and with more than 100,000 individuals surveyed. (Denison, 1990; Denison y Mishra, 1995; Denison y Neale, 1996)



Graphic -1: The Denison Organisational Culture Model<sup>3</sup>

**Graphic 1. The Denison Organizational Culture Model** The four cultural traits of effective organizations are briefly described below with references to their foundations in the organizational studies literature.

### **Involvement**

Effective organisations empower people, organise around teams, and develop human capability (Becker, 1964; Lawler, 1996; Likert, 1961). Organisational members are committed and feel a strong sense of ownership. People at all levels feel that they have input into decisions that will affect their work and see a direct connection to the goals of the organisation (Spreitzer, 1995). This trait is measured with three indexes: Empowerment, Team Orientation, and Capability Development.

### **Consistency**

Effective organisations tend to have “strong” cultures that are highly consistent, well coordinated, and well integrated (Davenport, 1993; Saffold, 1988). Behavioural norms are rooted in core values, and leaders and followers are able to reach agreement even with diverse points of view (Block, 1991). Consistency is a source of stability and internal integration resulting from a common mindset (Senge, 1990). This trait is measured with three indexes: Core Values, Agreement, and Coordination and Integration.

### **Adaptability**

Adaptable organisations are driven by their customers, take risks and learn from their mistakes, and have capability and experience at creating change (Nadler, 1998; Senge, 1990; Stalk, 1988). This trait is measured with three indexes: Creating Change, Customer Focus, and Organisational Learning.

### **Mission**

Effective organisations have a clear sense of purpose and direction, defining goals and strategic objectives, and expressing a vision of the future (Mintzberg, 1987, 1994; Ohmae, 1982; Hamel and Prahalad, 1994). This trait is measured by three indexes: Strategic Direction and Intent, Goals and Objectives, and Vision.

In summary, the model measures four basic organisational culture traits:

1. “Mission—the degree to which the company knows why it exists and what its direction is;
2. Involvement—the degree to which individuals at all levels of the company are engaged in and hold that direction as their own;

3. Adaptability—the ability of the company to know what customers want, and the degree to which it can respond to external forces and demands;
4. Consistency—the company’s systems and processes that support efficiency and effectiveness in reaching goals.” (Fisher, 2000, p. 46)

### CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS AND ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Denison and Mishra (1995) showed that four different cultural traits were related to several criteria of effectiveness. Revenue growth and market share (both externally oriented performance measures) are supported by the externally oriented cultural traits of *mission* and *adaptability*. Quality and employee satisfaction (internally oriented performance measures) are supported by the internally oriented culture traits of *involvement* and *consistency*. Innovation (a performance measure related to flexibility) is supported by the flexibility-enhancing culture traits of *involvement* and *adaptability*. The performance measure of profitability is supported by strength in all four cultural areas. (Fisher, 2000, p. 47, 48). Table 1 summarises the impact of culture in the critical variables of organisational performance.

Table1: Impact of Culture in the Critical Variables of Organisational Performance.<sup>4</sup>

<i>Profitability/ Return on Assets</i>	<i>Revenue Growth/Sales Growth</i>	<i>Market Share</i>	<i>Innovation</i>	<i>Quality of Products and Services</i>	<i>Employee Satisfaction</i>
Supported by	Supported by	Supported by	Supported by	Supported by	Supported by
Mission	Mission	Mission			[Mission]
Involvement			Involvement	Involvement	Involvement
Adaptability	Adaptability	Adaptability	Adaptability		[Adaptability]
Consistency				Consistency	Consistency

### METHODOLOGY

In the research project that sustains this paper the Denison Organisational Culture Survey (DOCS) made by 73 closed questions was applied in 66 organisations from a variety of economic sectors located in Bogotá, Colombia. 3338 individual surveys constituted the data base.<sup>5</sup> The participant organisations accepted voluntarily to be included in the sample. The only selection criteria were to be located in Bogotá and the legal incorporation. The Denison Organisational Culture Survey was chosen for the study because of its instrumental capacity to generate a systemic description and a direct, comprehensible analysis of the organisational culture by means of the assessment of behaviour patterns associated with performance.<sup>6</sup> The DOCS measured 12 indices of organisational culture using 5 questions each for a total of 60 questions. All item

assessments used a five-point Likert scale with response categories ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. These 12 indices were used to measure the four main cultural traits defined by the model—involvement, consistency, adaptability, and mission. The survey also assessed employees' perceptions of organisational performance on variables including: sales growth, market share, profitability, quality of products and services, employee satisfaction, and overall performance. All perception assessments used a five-point Likert scale with response categories ranging from low performer to high performer. All measures were aggregated to the organisational level for this analysis. Once the data were tabulated, the mean scores for characteristics, indexes, items and performance indicators were obtained. Afterwards, the correlations between the aggregated traits and indexes mean scores and the aggregated performance indicators mean scores were calculated.

## EXPOSITION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH RESULTS

### Performance Profiles of the Organisations Studied

Table-2: Performance Profiles for the Organisations Studied

<i>Performance Mean Scores</i>	<i>Lower Performance Organisations (10)</i>	<i>Higher Performance Organisations (10)</i>	<i>Total Sample (66)</i>
1. Sales / Revenue Growth	3,08	3,93	3,72
2. Market Share	3,02	3,90	3,62
3. Profitability / ROA	3,05	3,92	3,67
4. Quality of Products or Services	3,45	4,11	3,89
5. New Product Development (Innovation)	3,16	3,96	3,64
6. Employee Satisfaction	3,25	3,79	3,62
7. Overall Organisation Performance	3,17	4,20	3,88

The mean scores of all indicators for organisations of higher performance were significantly higher than those for organisations of lower performance. Quality of products or services appeared to be the strongest performance indicator for both higher and lower performance organisations. New product development (innovation) obtained the second position for organisations of higher performance, whereas employee satisfaction was second for organisations of lower performance. Both types of organisations seemed to have undertaken great efforts for improving quality, obviously with different results. In the case of higher performance organisations, the mean score of new product development (innovation) was an especially critical indicator of

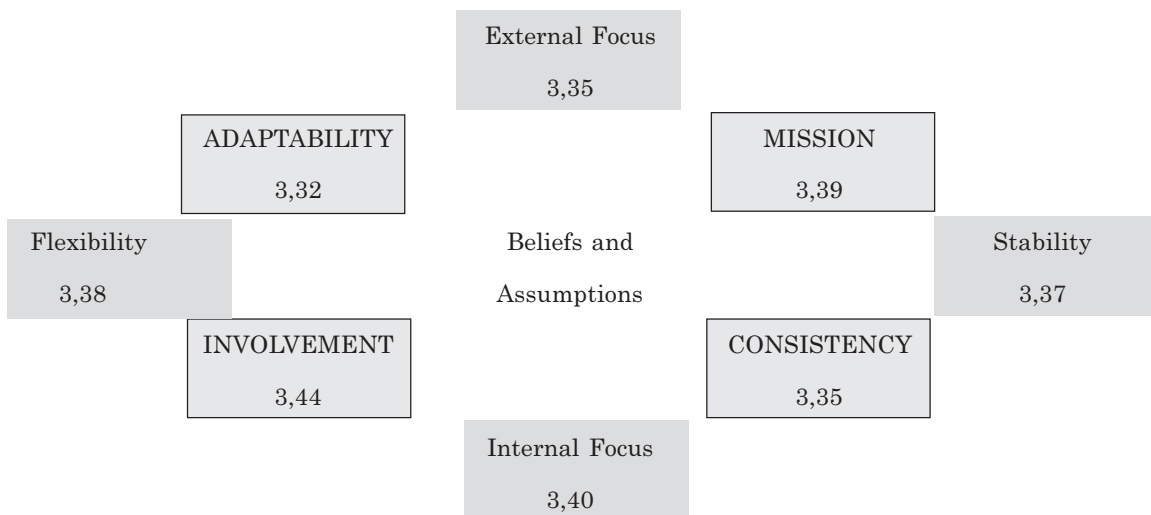
appreciable readiness for competitiveness in the context of globalisation. Employee satisfaction was the weakest indicator for higher performance organisations. Although the mean score is acceptable, this indicator should be improved because of its equal importance for organisational competitiveness.

## Cultural Profiles of the Organisations of Lower Performance

### Cultural Characteristics and Dimensions

The next graphic summarizes the aggregated mean scores of the four cultural characteristics and the four dimensions for the 10 organisations of lower performance. The mean score for each characteristic was built from the mean scores of its respective indexes. In the case of dimensions, the mean scores were built from the two respective characteristics that support each one of them.

Graphic 2. Cultural Traits and Dimensions of the 10 Organisations of Lower Performance



Involvement appears to be the strongest cultural trait followed by mission. In general, there is a balance between the four cultural dimensions of flexibility, stability, external focus and internal focus.

### Cultural Characteristics and Indexes

The table below summarizes the aggregated mean scores of the four cultural traits and their respective indexes for the 10 organisations of lower performance. For this level of analysis, the two indexes of higher mean score and the two indexes of lower mean score were calculated for each one of the four cultural traits. The mean score for each index was built from the mean scores of its respective items.

**Table 2. Cultural Traits and Indexes of the 10 Organisations of Lower Performance**

The indexes core values and empowerment obtained the highest aggregated mean scores. On the contrary, the indexes coordination and integration, creating change and customer focus obtained the lowest aggregated mean scores.

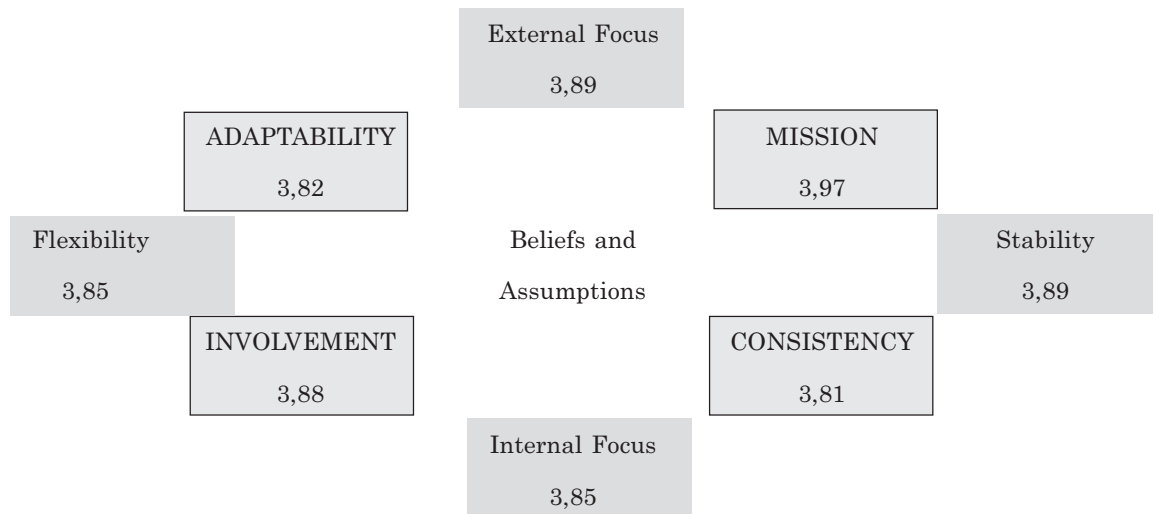
<b>CULTURAL TRAIT MEAN SCORES</b>		
INVOLVEMENT	3,44	Higher
CONSISTENCY	3,35	
ADAPTABILITY	3,32	Lower
MISSION	3,39	
<b>INDEX MEAN SCORES</b>		
<b>INVOLVEMENT</b>		
1. EMPOWERMENT	3,51	Higher
2. TEAM ORIENTATION	3,46	
3. CAPABILITY DEVELOPMENT	3,35	Lower
<b>CONSISTENCY</b>		
4. CORE VALUES	3,56	Higher
5. AGREEMENT	3,28	
6. COORDINATION AND INTEGRATION	3,22	Lower
<b>ADAPTABILITY</b>		
7. CREATING CHANGE	3,26	Lower
8. CUSTOMER FOCUS	3,26	Lower
9. ORGANISATIONAL LEARNING	3,45	Higher
<b>MISSION</b>		
10. STRATEGIG DIRECTION AND INTENT	3,35	
11. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES	3,47	Higher
12. VISION	3,34	Lower

## Cultural Profiles of the Organisations of Higher Performance

### *Cultural Traits and Dimensions*

The following graphic summarizes the aggregated mean scores of the four cultural traits and the four dimensions for the 10 organisations of higher performance. The mean score for each trait was built from the mean scores of its respective indexes. In the case of dimensions, the mean scores were built from the two respective traits that support each one of them.

Graphic 3. Cultural Traits and Dimensions of the 10 Organisations of Higher Performance



Mission appears to be the strongest cultural characteristic followed by involvement. In general, there is a balance between the four cultural dimensions of flexibility, stability, external focus and internal focus.

### *Cultural Traits s and Indexes*

The next table summarises the aggregated mean scores of the four cultural traits and their respective indexes for the 10 organisations of higher performance. For this level of analysis, the two indexes of higher mean score and the two indexes of lower mean score were calculated for each one of the four cultural traits. The mean score for each index was built from the mean scores of its respective items.

Table 3: Cultural Traits and Indexes of the 10 Organisations of Higher Performance

CULTURAL TRAIT MEAN SCORES	
INVOLVEMENT	3,88
CONSISTENCY	3,81
ADAPTABILITY	3,82
MISSION	3,97
INDEX MEAN SCORES	
INVOLVEMENT	
1. EMPOWERMENT	3,94
2. TEAM ORIENTATION	3,91
3. CAPABILITY DEVELOPMENT	3,78
CONSISTENCY	
4. CORE VALUES	3,94
5. AGREEMENT	3,72
6. COORDINATION AND INTEGRATION	3,78
ADAPTABILITY	
7. CREATING CHANGE	3,76
8. CUSTOMER FOCUS	3,82
9. ORGANISATIONAL LEARNING	3,88
MISSION	
10. STRATEGIG DIRECTION AND INTENT	4,05
11. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES	4,04
12. VISION	3,82

The indexes strategic direction and intent and goals and objectives obtained the highest aggregated mean scores. On the contrary, strategic direction and intent and goals and objectives obtained the lowest aggregated mean scores.

In summary, the mean scores of all the cultural dimensions and traits for organisations of higher performance were significantly higher than those of the organisations of lower performance. It was clear that organisations of higher scores in performance indicators had also higher scores in the items, indexes, traits and dimensions



of their cultural profiles. On the other hand, the mean scores and their ranking showed the differences existing between the cultural profiles. The following table summarizes the score ranking of the cultural dimensions and traits:

Table 4. Score ranking of the Cultural Dimensions and Traits

Cultural Traits	Lower Performance Organisations	Higher Performance Organisations
Involvement	4	3
Consistency	2	1
Adaptability	1	2
Mission	3	4
<b>Dimensions</b>		
Flexibility	3	1
Stability	2	2
External Focus	1	1
Internal Focus	4	2

## INTERNATIONAL COMPARISONS AROUND CULTURE AND ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Carl F. Fey y Daniel R. Denison took an American model of organisation culture and effectiveness and applied it to understand the performance of a set of foreign-owned firms operating in Russia. They used Denison organisational culture survey data on 179 foreign-owned firms. The population for this study included all foreign firms operating in Russia in October 1997, with a parent firm headquartered in Canada, Germany, Finland, France, Sweden, or the United States. (Fey and Denison, 2003)

### Correlations between Overall Organisation Performance and Traits and Indexes

The next table shows the international comparison of correlations between the indicator of overall organisation performance and cultural traits and indexes for the results presented in the study done in Russia and the findings obtained for the total sample of 66 Colombian organisations.

**Table 5: International Comparison of Correlations between Overall Organisation Performance and Traits and Indexes<sup>7</sup>**

TRAIT/INDEX	RUSSIA	COLOMBIA
<b>INVOLVEMENT</b>	0,44	0,35
Empowerment	0,35	0,29
Team orientation	0,42	0,30
Capability development	0,38	0,31
<b>CONSISTENCY</b>	0,31	0,33
Core values	0,30	0,27
Agreement	0,24	0,24
Coordination and integration	0,29	0,31
<b>ADAPTABILITY</b>	0,46	0,37
Creating change	0,35	0,30
Customer focus	0,39	0,29
Organisational learning	0,40	0,31
<b>MISSION</b>	0,20	0,34
Strategic direction and intent	0,26	0,30
Goals and objectives	0,19	0,30
Vision	0,07	0,27

To what extent are involvement, consistency, adaptability, and mission associated with the effectiveness of firms in Russia? This was one of the main research questions guiding the investigation about the applicability of the Denison model in Russia. (Fey and Denison, 2003; p. 690) According to table 5, all four of the model's cultural traits are associated with perceptions of organisational effectiveness in the 179-firm Russian sample. However, adaptability and involvement are the strongest correlates of overall performance. Overall, adaptability and involvement seem to be the most important cultural determinants of effectiveness in Russia's transition economy from communism to capitalism.<sup>8</sup> (Fey and Denison, 2003; p. 692). Consequently, flexibility, determined by both adaptability and involvement, appears to be the most important cultural dimension for organisations in Russia. In regard to adaptability, this finding also makes good intuitive sense given Russia's turbulent and unpredictable environment. Involvement also appears to be important to effectiveness in Russia. Under Communism, competition among groups was encouraged, but competition among individuals was discouraged.

(Fey and Denison, 2003; p. 701) As a result, Russians like working in groups and are good at it (Vlachoutsicos, 2001). In fact, Elenkov (1997) compared Russia to the United States on Hofstede's (1980) four dimensions of national culture:

	Russia	United States
Individualism	40	91
Uncertainty avoidance	87	46
Masculinity	50	62
Power distance	89	40

Russians are group oriented and prefer to avoid uncertainty. (Vlachoutsicos, 2001) Both might be expected, given the social security imprinted by the Communist system. Russians report medium masculinity and appear to have a fairly high power distance, reflecting the large social gap that exists between workers and managers in Russia. (Fey and Denison, 2003; p. 687) As Vlachoutsicos and Lawrence (1990) have affirmed, Russian organisations often have good vertical flow of information, but poor horizontal flow from department to department. Information is typically seen as power, creating barriers to coordination and integration (Fey and Denison, 2003; p. 687). These facts could explain consistency as a weaker correlate of overall performance, especially in regard to the indexes agreement, and coordination and integration.

For the sample of Colombian organisations, all four of the model's cultural traits are also associated with perceptions of organisational effectiveness. Along the same vein, adaptability and involvement are also the strongest correlates of overall organisational performance for Colombia's evolution from a closed to a fully open economy<sup>9</sup>. Nevertheless, the correlations for those two traits are weaker for Colombian organisations. However, mission is stronger for Colombian organisations than for Russian firms. Historically from the communist era, Russian decision making has been very centralized, with little empowerment for the individual firms (Fey and Denison, 2003; p. 687). This fact could explain the lesser autonomous strategic development of Russian firms, as expressed by the minor correlate of mission with overall performance. Instead, the major correlate of mission could be explained by the impulse given to the strategic planning and management processes within Colombian organisations during the eighties of the last century. Those processes originated, on one hand, from the inclusion of strategy formulation in the curricula of management schools, and on the other hand, from the work of consulting firms devoted to accompanying organisations along the formulation and implementation of their strategic platforms.

## CONCLUSIONS

The precedent exposition, analysis and discussion demonstrated how the Denison Organisational Culture Survey facilitated the measurement and evaluation of the behaviour patterns that expressed the cultural traits present in a sample of 66 organisations located in Bogotá, Colombia. Additionally, the survey allowed the comparison of the cultural profiles of organisations of higher and lower performance profiles chosen from that sample. In this regard, the research results clearly signaled how the robustness of cultural profiles was associated with better perceptions of performance by the organisational members. More balanced organisational culture profiles were articulated with higher organisational performance.

From the international perspective, the comparison of correlations helped to recognize cross-cultural similarities in organisations. For both Russia and Colombia, adaptability and involvement, determinants of organisational flexibility, were the strongest correlates of overall performance. Transition economies and economies evolving from closed to open might present similar cultural demands for organisations. Business environments are turbulent in both economies and might force organisations to be flexible in order to survive and grow. In this regard, a model of organisational culture and performance developed in the United States of America could be applied in Colombian and Russian firms and be useful for identifying and interpreting similarities and differences in effectiveness related to culture. For Russian, as well as for Colombian organisations, cultural traits did have a real positive association with performance perceptions of organisational members.

Finally, as proposed by the Denison model, the research results showed how culture could have a valuable impact on the organisational bottom line. Culture could be a controllable aspect of any organisation that can improve profitability, sales growth, market share, product quality, and innovation and employee satisfaction. In managerial terms, the development of culture today can improve performance tomorrow for organisations in America, Europe and elsewhere. Organisational culture can a key lever for driving organisational change aimed to the betterment of performance.

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**NOTES**

- <sup>1</sup> The description of the model draws extensively on the text: Denison D. (2000.) “Organisational Culture: Can it be a Key Lever for Driving Organisational Change?”. Cartwright and C. Cooper I. (eds). *The Handbook of Organisational Culture*. London. John Wiley & Sons.
- <sup>2</sup> Mobley, William H., Wang, Lena and Fang, Kate. (2005). “Organisational culture: measuring and developing it in your organisation”. *Harvard Business Review China*. March: 6.
- <sup>4</sup> Source: Denison, D.R., & Neale, W.S. (1996). *Denison organisational culture survey: Facilitators guide*. Ann Arbor, MI: Aviat.
- <sup>5</sup> The sample size assumes a 95% confidence level and an n error margin of 5 points. Teams of students applied the survey and tabulated the data. Afterwards, student research assistants prepared the aggregated data base for the total sample of organisations.
- <sup>6</sup> A set of different language versions of DOCS (Denison Organisational Culture Survey) can be found in the respective link (online demos) in [www.denisonconsulting.com](http://www.denisonconsulting.com). For this study the official Spanish version posted in that web page was used.
- <sup>7</sup> The Russian data was taken from Table 2 Culture and Effectiveness Correlations ( Fey and Denison, 2003; p. 693)
- <sup>8</sup> A transition economy or transitional economy is an economy which is changing from a centrally planned economy to a free market. Transition process is usually characterised by the changing and creating of institutions, particularly private enterprises; changes in the role of the state, thereby, the creation of fundamentally different governmental institutions and the promotion of private-owned enterprises, markets and independent financial institutions. ([http://in.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transition\\_economy](http://in.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transition_economy))
- <sup>9</sup> An open economy is an economy in which people, including businesses, can trade in goods and services with other people and businesses in the international community at large. This contrasts with a closed economy in which international trade cannot take place. One primary advantage is that the citizen consumers have a much larger variety of goods and services from which to choose from. As well consumers have an opportunity to invest their savings outside of the country. ([http://in.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open\\_economy](http://in.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open_economy))

UNIVERSIDAD DE LA SABANA  
INSTITUTO DE POSTGRADOS-FORUM  
RESUMEN ANALÍTICO DE INVESTIGACIÓN (R.A.I)

No.	VARIABLES	DESCRIPCIÓN DE LA VARIABLE
1	NOMBRE DEL POSTGRADO	Especialización en Gerencia Comercial
2	TÍTULO DEL PROYECTO	Cultura Organizacional, desempeño e Innovación en la Empresa Sistemas Fourgen S.A.
3	AUTOR(es)	Carolina Acosta Bermúdez y Paola Andrea Delgado Charry
4	AÑO Y MES	2011 - Octubre
5	NOMBRE DEL ASESOR(a)	Rafael Guillermo Ricardo Bray
6	DESCRIPCIÓN O ABSTRACT	<p>Investigación en una empresa privada del sector tecnología en Bogotá, utilizando el Modelo de Cultura Organizacional de Denison, basado en la aplicación de una encuesta a los colaboradores para medir el impacto que tiene la cultura en el desempeño e innovación de la organización mediante el análisis de cuatro características culturales básicas (Involucramiento, Adaptabilidad, Consistencia y Misión), los sesgos culturales que generan (Flexibilidad, Estabilidad, Enfoque Externo y Enfoque Interno) y la correlación que existe entre ellas y los indicadores de desempeño definidos en la metodología. Como resultado del estudio se formularon recomendaciones para la administración de la cultura corporativa, que aporten al mejoramiento del desempeño organizacional y particularmente a los procesos de innovación a los que se enfrenta esta organización.</p> <p>Research developed in a private technology company in Bogotá city, using the Organizational Culture Denison Model, based on the application of a survey to all the employees to measure the impact of culture on performance an innovation of the organization by analyzing four basic cultural characteristics (Involvement, Adaptability, Consistency and Mission), the cultural biases that they generate (Flexibility, Stability, Internal Focus and External Focus) and the correlation between them and the performance indicators established in the methodology. As a result of the study, some recommendations were formulated in order to manage the corporate culture improving the organizational performance and particularly the innovation processes that company faces.</p>
7	PALABRAS CLAVES	1. Cultura 2. Innovación 3. Desempeño, 4. Organización 5. Denison
8	SECTOR ECONOMICO AL QUE PERTENECE EL PROYECTO	SERVICIOS DE PROGRAMAS DE COMPUTO ESPECIALIZADOS
9	TIPO DE ESTUDIO	Proyecto de Investigación Institucional
10	OBJETIVO GENERAL	Estudiar la cultura Sistemas Fourgen S.A., identificar su impacto en el desempeño y la innovación en la organización, y formular recomendaciones para la administración de la cultura en la compañía.
11	OBJETIVOS ESPECIFICOS	<p>1. Verificar de acuerdo al Modelo de Cultura Organizacional de Daniel Denison, la existencia de las características críticas de la cultura organizacional en la empresa Sistemas Fourgen S.A.</p> <p>2. Identificar el perfil cultural existente en Sistemas Fourgen S.A., a partir de la aplicación de encuesta sobre cultura organizacional de Daniel Denison (Organization Culture Survey).</p> <p>3. Evaluar el impacto de las características de la cultura en un conjunto de variables críticas para el desempeño organizacional.</p> <p>4. Proponer y sustentar principios para la administración de la cultura corporativa en Sistemas Fourgen S.A., que propicien el mejoramiento del desempeño organizacional, y en especial de los procesos de innovación.</p>
12	RESUMEN GENERAL	<p>En los últimos años, ha surgido un interés mundial por entender los rasgos culturales de las organizaciones y sus colaboradores, entendiendo que éste es un factor definitivo para establecer la forma como se desenvuelven las empresas y el modo en que reaccionan a los cambios de su entorno. Dada esta inquietud la Universidad de la Sabana inició hace algunos años una investigación a través de la cual busca entender el patrón cultural de las empresas bogotanas y la relación que éste tiene con los cambios que se generan al interior de las mismas, con la forma como interactúan con los demás actores del mercado y aun más importante, con la manera en que buscan ser agentes de innovación, teniendo en cuenta aspectos como el involucramiento de los empleados, la adaptabilidad y consistencia de cada organización, en general, y el direccionamiento establecido por las directrices. Todos estos aspectos se miden y relacionan a través de una herramienta denominada METODO DENISON, con base en el cual se realizó la presente investigación.</p>
13	CONCLUSIONES.	<p>Los resultados de la encuesta muestran que Sistemas Fourgen tiene un alto sentido de misión y que posee facilidad para ejecutar las labores que la conduzcan al logro de su misión. Sin embargo, los ojos de la organización están aun enfocados en los logros de corto plazo.</p> <p>Sistemas Fourgen S.A. posee una gran capacidad para captar y aprender las mejores prácticas en la industria y debe aprovechar esta capacidad para generar rápidamente los cambios y hacerlos evidentes para sus clientes, en aras de mejorar sus resultados.</p> <p>La organización posee una fuerte estructura de valores y una capacidad suficiente para alcanzar acuerdos en caso de presentarse conflictos, pero debe trabajar en el logro de una consistencia sostenible y permanente, pues la integración es clave para la estabilidad de la empresa.</p> <p>Sistemas Fourgen posee un conveniente equilibrio entre su enfoque de misión y el involucramiento de sus colaboradores, lo cual le permite garantizar que la gente esté comprometida con un objetivo común.</p> <p>La empresa debería presentar mayor interés en desarrollar nuevos productos y servicios aprovechando su fortaleza en cuanto a la calidad del producto que ofrece y la creciente incorporación de tecnología en el mercado que atiende.</p>
14	FUENTES BIBLIOGRÁFICAS	<p>1. RICARDO BRAY, Rafael. Artículo: Similarities and Differences Existing in Cultural Profiles of Colombian Organizations of Higher and Lower Performance.</p> <p>2. RICARDO BRAY, Rafael. Artículo: Debate teórico sobre la interrelación entre la cultura, el desempeño organizacional y la innovación. / Publicado en la revista The Anshuac Journal-Volumen 6, Número 1. Universidad Anshuac: México Sur-ISSN 1405-8448, Oxford University Press.</p> <p>3. Denison, D.R., &amp; Neale, W.S. Denison organizational culture survey. Facilitator guide. / 1996. Denison Consulting. Ann Arbor, Michigan.</p> <p>4. DENISON, Daniel R. Organizational Culture: ¿Can it be a key lever for driving organizational change? / Junio 2000. International Institute for Management Development.</p> <p>5. Denison, Daniel R. Corporate culture and organizational effectiveness. /1990. New York. John Wiley and Sons.</p> <p>6. Fisher, Caroline J. Like it or not... Culture matters. En Employment relations today / 2000. New York. John Wiley &amp; Sons Inc.</p> <p>7. Mobley, William H., Wang, Lena, and Fang, Kate. ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE: Measuring and Developing It in Your Organization. En Harvard Business Review China. / Marzo 2005. Pág. 128-139.</p>

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