



BOOK REVIEW

The Culture Engine
John Wiley & Sons, Inc.; Hoboken, New Jersey; 2014
Author: S. Chris Edmonds

The book *The Culture Engine* by Chris Edmonds teaches leaders about implementing positive change in company culture and is useful to leaders at every level in all types of organizations. Leaders must make their organizations stand out as great places to work in the same manner as potential employees need to stand out as strong candidates, especially in today's highly competitive employment market. Hiring managers often focus on a candidate's ability to perform duties and do not thoroughly consider a candidate's fit within the culture of the organization. Staff who can perform at high levels but cannot uphold the values of an organization can cause turnover and other negative results. Leaders can also perpetuate a less than desirable culture by setting minimum standards, thereby resulting in a culture in which staff works to meet only those low standards. On the other hand, if leaders

speak of the organization's values, provide subordinates with specific objectives, and demonstrate organizational values in daily interactions, the staff will put forth the effort to reach those higher goals. Hence, leaders would be positively impacting the bottom line with measurable results.

Many qualities exist that make up an effective leader: intelligence, comfort with authority, people skills, self-confidence, and creativity are just a few. The Culture Engine provides a roadmap to help leaders create and sustain a healthy culture. Leaders can inspire their teams by communicating the organization's purpose, vision and mission and by demonstrating support for those values, strategies and goals. It is critical to the overall success of the organization that employees feel their work has purpose and meaning beyond the tasks themselves.

FEATURED PRODUCT: NOT ALL ASSESSMENTS ARE ALIKE

Measuring work traits and preferences is essential to whether an employee will succeed and stay with your organization. The Harrison Assessment predicts performance and retention. It also enables organizations to show their employees that they care about their work satisfaction by using the Retention and Engagement Report.

Harrison Assessments has over 20 years of research supporting their Enjoyment Performance Theory – that is, an employee's level of enjoyment while performing a particular activity is directly related to the level of their performance relative to that activity. More simply put, when a person enjoys a task, he or she tends to do it more often and continually improve at it.

The Harrison Assessment considers three issues related to work satisfaction, measuring the degree to which a person's:

1. Preferred tasks fit the job
2. Interests fit the job
3. Work environment preferences fit the job

Organizations often fail to hire the best candidates because they don't have a systematic approach to measure all of the qualifications and behavioral competencies needed to predict

job success. Although most employers desire predictability, few of them have the time or expertise to achieve that goal. **Harrison Assessments** solves this costly problem by providing hundreds of proven and pre-configured Job Success Formulas to help an organization easily and accurately assess the eligibility and suitability factors that lead to job success. Once a participant has completed the **Harrison SmartQuestionnaire**, his or her results are run against a Job Success Formula that matches their role. The resulting report provides insight into the participant's work preferences and mutually beneficial information to both employees and employers.

Unlike other assessments, the Harrison is a behavioral assessment that does not examine personality "styles" but rather personality traits that are highly predictive regarding the likelihood of success in a specific job. To find success with our new generation workforce, organizations will need to adjust their policies on how they recruit and retain talent, which will ultimately strengthen their workforce and their bottom line.

For more information about how **Harrison Assessments** can help your organization, call us at 440-546-0008.

Strategies:SHOP TALK

Newsletter of Organizational Effectiveness Strategies

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Organizational Effectiveness
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ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Suzanne M. Miklos, Ph.D.

Company culture needs to fit the purpose and the strategic journey of the organization, as well as define how people think, behave and respond to both opportunity and adversity. Shared values, stories and traditions reflect how the culture supported the past success of the organization. Are the stories about quality, deadlines or entrepreneurial feats? Recognizing the historical value of the culture leverages the positives. Paddling with the current, rather than against it, is an effective way to move a culture.

Organizations such as healthcare, that have high consequences for mistakes, are risk adverse, hierarchical and process oriented. These attributes ensure survival of the organization and also translate to individual career survival. However, these same attributes make change difficult. When it is necessary to become nimble and innovative, these elements block change.

Stories can be more powerful than fact. I have observed a perceived, punitive culture in which employees believe that those who do not keep their heads down are fired. The same employees are unable to provide a single example of who was punished for being creative or taking a risk. Unfortunately, employees' negative perceptions are their reality, even though the managers see a different reality. The myths in the minds of the employees are as powerful as the truth. This example illustrates why leaders must understand the stories to shift the culture.

The first step in considering the culture you want to build is to understand the key stories that drive behavior. Identification of the elements in the current culture that support and fit with the new strategy is a key. It is also important that the stories that managers tell

and those that employees tell are aligned. Highlighting shared beliefs is a powerful path to engagement.

The second step in considering culture is to identify one or two shifts in behavior that can bridge the current culture to the desired culture. For many healthcare organizations, data driven decision making or change orientation are keys to operating in new models. Linking behavioral shifts to both strategy and culture is the bedrock of a clear, forward-looking plan. There are always jobs roles that are the most critical to implementing strategy. These strategic positions deserve the most time and attention for both formal and informal efforts.

The final step in considering culture is to build new stories that move toward the new behaviors. The strengths of the current culture and the pride that staff takes in the vision and mission of the organization create a platform. We know that "not to do" change is not inspiring. For example, saying we have a strong historical value on the individual and we make decisions based on data is more powerful than saying we have to quit making decisions on a case by case basis. What are the stories of pride, hope and success that inspire?

Culture shifting is one of the most challenging and rewarding endeavors that leaders under take. However, when we start with the current culture, rather than a clean sheet of paper, we multiply the impact that we can have.

INTRODUCING CASEY ONDER, M.S. Consultant



O.E. Strategies is excited to introduce our new Consultant, Casey Onder, M.S. Casey has dual degrees in counseling and organizational psychology and a passion for creating insights, facilitating change and driving innovative solutions to challenges facing individuals and organizations. She has served organizations in both internal and external roles in diverse capacities including competency modeling, administration of global engagement surveys, 360 surveys, leadership assessments, group facilitation and career counseling. Clients appreciate her ability to connect at their level, ask the right questions, and think outside the box. Casey is the co-author of 11 articles and conference presentations and has several years of experience conducting and applying research to support individuals and organizations in reaching their full potential. She will earn her Ph.D. in Industrial/Organizational Psychology from Colorado State University in May 2016.

SUPERVISOR'S CORNER

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT: ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL

Diane Govern, Ph.D.

A multitude of literature exists, both academic and business oriented, on the topic of employee engagement. There is also an array of employee engagement measures on the market. The connection between employee engagement and performance is well researched and documented. The underlying implication for much of the interest in employee engagement is that once we measure it, the organization must do something to enhance it. Most often this is done as part of an organization or department-wide employee survey in which individual responses are anonymous. While leaders' intentions are good, a chance exists that any changes the organization makes as a result will appeal to only a subset of employees. An assumption of employee passivity pervades the popular approach; that is, an employee is simply waiting to be engaged. Some literature suggests various external dimensions such as rewards, workplace environment and communication practices that an organization can leverage to drive the engagement of its employees. Our coaching and assessment experiences at O.E. Strategies suggest a more personal approach to employee engagement is needed to maximize engagement.

Organizations hire employees hoping to leverage their unique, job related talents for the good of the organization. But do people leave their non-work related interests, behaviors, values and hopes at home each morning before coming to work and settling in for their work day? Absolutely not! How often have you, as a supervisor, been derailed from progress toward a team goal due to interpersonal or motivational issues? My guess is that if you lead people, you have had a chance to observe people at their best, occasionally at their worst and a lot of the time at their average. In trying to increase individual and team performance, it often takes a coaching conversation to uncover what makes subordinates tick, what gets in the way of their success and what gets them energized and motivated to go above and beyond. These factors are often rooted in strong personal preferences based on a lifetime of experience. What O.E. Strategies has found is that even the best intentioned and skillful boss may not have an effective conversation if the boss and employee do not have a common framework to talk about engagement or lack of it.



We have been excited the past few years to incorporate a tool into our coaching and assessments that helps leaders have more productive conversations with their employees. The Harrison Assessment measures factors that lead to personal work engagement. Imagine, for example, a conversation with a subordinate in which you both have data about his or her personal preference for wanting recognition, career advancement and social opportunities. Armed with this type of data, you could facilitate a rich dialogue filled with shared understanding around preferences that would allow you to craft a tailored approach to driving the engagement for this particular individual. This data driven, yet personal approach to understanding engagement, has been an eye opener for many leaders we work with, both when considering who to hire or promote and when needing to have crucial conversations. This approach to thinking about engagement is a win-win-win situation. The employee wins because his or her personal preferences are being taken into account. The boss wins because he or she feels empowered to tailor leadership of the specific employee. The organization wins because both leaders and subordinates are taking a proactive approach to increasing engagement.

See our Featured Product on page 4 to learn more about Harrison Assessments.

RESEARCH ARTICLE

ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH: CREATING CONDITIONS FOR LONG-TERM SUCCESS

How does your organization define success? Profit? Market share? Growth? For years, organizations have equated performance with the bottom line. They expect to be successful as long as they stake a market claim and are profitable. But recent research suggests we need to look beyond today's performance to support sustainable success. Organizations that are successful in the long run aren't just high performing – they are healthy.

What makes an organization healthy?

Organizational health is the ability to align, execute and renew faster than competitors to sustain performance long-term (Keller & Price, 2011). Healthy organizations are characterized by a number of factors. Their talent pools are strong. Also, their employees are aware of, aligned with and motivated by the organization's goals. Healthy organizations embrace learning, innovation and change. Leaders inspire employees to action, recognize and reward strong performance and hold poor performers accountable. There is a strong culture shared across the organization characterized by collaboration, fairness and respect.

How can organizations measure health?

It is not difficult to see why organizational health would predict sustained high performance. Yet, comprehensive assessments of organizational health are currently lacking. One notable exception is McKinsey & Company's Organizational Health Index (OHI). McKinsey identified 9 elements of organizational

health: direction, leadership, culture and climate, accountability, coordination and control, capabilities, motivation, external orientation and innovation/learning. The OHI has been used to assess the organizational health of over 500 organizations worldwide. Others have attempted to measure organizational health by combining related measures of related concepts, including employee stress, employee performance, and organizational climate (Miller et al., 1999).

Does organizational health impact the bottom line?

McKinsey & Company demonstrated that organizational health-focused approaches improved profit per person and reduced turnover beyond traditional performance-based approaches. At one oil company, organizational health accounted for 54% of the variance in performance (Keller & Price, June 2011). Companies in the top quartile of organizational health are more than twice as likely to have an above median EBITDA (Earnings Before Interest Taxes Depreciation and Amortization) than lower quartile companies.

How can we create healthier organizations?

Change may be difficult, but it is doable. If you believe you may have an unhealthy organization or department, we recommend you take steps to diagnose and address the problem at its roots. Perhaps employees do not feel recognized or there are communication gaps. A high quality organizational health survey will provide a clear path to action by illuminating trends in the data. Leaders in healthy organizations should continue to promote and maintain supporting practices. Organizational health emerges from continuous care, just as a plant requires a certain amount of sunlight, water, a favorable climate and fertile soil to thrive (Kotter, 1996). Health in turn creates conditions for survival and long-term growth.

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