OUR APPROACH TO ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE SURVEYS and TRANSFORMATION USING THE BARRETT SURVEY METHODOLOGY[1]

1. Our Approach

Our approach is informed by a set of propositions about organisational culture transformation:

The first proposition is that culture transformation is about enabling the human behaviours necessary to ensure the execution of strategy within any organisation. No strategy, however brilliant, is of any use unless the people implementing the strategy exhibit behaviours conducive to that implementation. Culture transformation is not a "soft", "nice to have" dimension of organisational life – it is the key to strategy execution.

The second proposition is that the positive transformation of an organisation should be driven by the top leadership of the organisation but must be based on the real perceptions and inputs of the people within the organisation. In this way the expectations of the people within the organisation provide direction to the leadership about the kind of workplace desired by employees. Research shows that the greater the alignment between the personal values of the people in the organisation and those chosen by the organisation the higher the impact on engagement, productivity and organisational effectiveness. Simply put, when people perceive the values of the organisation to be more aligned with their own values they are able to bring more of their effort and energy to the workplace. A culture values survey provides the leadership with an indication of the kind of organisation the employees would like to have. This provides a sound foundation for leadership decisions about the culture and values of the organisation.

The third proposition is that the transformation of any organisation begins with the transformation of its leadership. The importance of effective and coherent leadership cannot be underestimated. Whilst culture and values should be defined with input from the employees within an organisation the leadership is accountable for culture transformation. Consequently special attention should be paid to ensuring that the leadership is both equipped to lead the culture transformation process and is on the transformation journey

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[1] StratAlign Consultants are certified users of the Cultural Transformation Tools of the Barrett Values Centre.

itself. The Barrett Values Centre has developed Leadership Values Assessments and Leadership Development Reports for this purpose.

The fourth proposition to which we subscribe with regard to culture and values transformation is that it is all about the quality of relationships and the conversations that happen within those relationships. Values have to do with the way people treat each other and how that treatment affects their ability to communicate with one another and achieve things together. In the workplace transforming values has to do with assessing and, if necessary, changing the way in which people lead and manage, the way in which they work together, and the way in which they regard and treat each other. This often begins with deep self reflection and assessment. Organisational culture can only change if the people within it choose to behave differently!

The fifth proposition to which we adhere is that culture transformation can be measured. Using the tools developed by the Barrett Values Centre culture can be measured both positively and negatively. Positively through obtaining data about the alignment of values between people and the organisation and the degree to which values are improving in the desired direction, and negatively through measuring the degree of wasted energy in the organisational system using the concept of entropy. The intention is that the survey be completed annually.

The sixth and final proposition is that an effective process to enable culture transformation requires a systems approach. The fundamental assumption here is that every organisation or part of an organisation operates as a system which requires the clarification of the following characteristics:

- A clear vision of what the entire system is trying to achieve
- An understanding of what has to be done to achieve this vision, and
- Clarity on the roles and responsibilities of individuals and teams within the system.

With this understanding as a basis it is possible to ask the following two key questions:

- What culture, values and behaviours will best enable the organisation's system to function optimally as a high performance organisation and hence achieve its objectives and vision?

- What interventions will best enable the desired culture, values and behaviour?

In this way we emphasise the fact that the survey is merely a tool to measure progress towards the desired culture in the workplace. Actually achieving the desire culture may require a range of interventions specific to each workplace. Such interventions may include:
- The introduction and facilitation of culture and values conversations in the workplace
- Leadership development
- Training
- Coaching and mentoring
- Internal media and communication campaigns
- Etc...

2. The Barrett Survey Methodology

The Barrett Survey Methodology is based upon the assessment of the degree to which human needs are met in the workplace. Based upon Maslow's hierarchy of needs it seeks to assess the meeting of needs at seven levels within an organisation. Each of these levels provides insights into the employee perceptions of whether the needs at that level are being addressed at that level. Employee engagement is determined by the degree to which employees perceive their needs to be met within a workplace. This is illustrated in the diagram below:

Seven Levels of Consciousness©

Barrett Values Centre

	Personal	Organisational
7 Service	**Selfless service** — Being your purpose. Compassion, humility, forgiveness. Caring for humanity and the planet.	**Service to humanity and societal contribution** — Social responsibility, long-term perspective, ethics, compassion and humility.
6 Making a difference	**Making a positive difference in the world** — Living your purpose. Empathy, alliances, intuition, mentoring, and focus on wellbeing (physical, emotional, mental, spiritual).	**Internal/External collaboration, community involvement** — Environmental awareness, employee fulfilment, coaching/mentoring and caring for the local community.
5 Internal Cohesion	**Finding meaning in existence** — Finding your purpose. Integrity, honesty, authenticity, passion, enthusiasm, creativity, and humour & fun.	**Sense of purpose and strong internal community** — Shared vision and values. Commitment, creativity, enthusiasm, integrity, honesty, generosity, fairness, openness, transparency and trust.
4 Transformation	**Letting go of fears** — Finding the courage to grow and develop. Adaptability, life long learning, continuous renewal and personal growth.	**On-going improvement and employee participation** — Adaptability, accountability, empowerment, teamwork, goals orientation and continuous improvement.
3 Self-esteem	**Feeling a sense of self-worth** — Confidence, competence, self-reliance. *Fear: I am not enough.* Leads to need for power, authority or status seeking.	**High performance systems and processes** — Reliability, quality, efficiency, productivity and excellence. Bureaucracy, hierarchy, confusion, and complacency.
2 Relationship	**Feeling protected and loved** — Family, friendship, loyalty, respect. *Fear: I am not loved enough.* Leads to jealousy, blame and discrimination.	**Positive relationships that support organisation needs** — Loyalty, open communication, customer satisfaction. Manipulation, blame, favouritism, internal competition
1 Survival	**Satisfying physiological and survival needs** — Health, security, financial stability. *Fear: I do not have enough.* Leads to control, domination and caution.	**Financial viability and people safety** — Financial performance, organisational growth, and employee health and safety. Control, greed, exploitation and micro-management.

Common Good / Self interest

www.valuescentre.com

Positive Focus/ **Excessive Focus**

2.1 The Survey

The survey is conducted online through a web based secure portal and asks only three questions:

- Choose Ten Values that represent who you are as a person
- Choose Ten values that represent the current culture of the organisation
- Choose Ten values that represent the culture you desire within the organisation

The ten words are chosen from a list of 80-100 words agreed with the process owners within the organisation before the survey commences.

The words chosen by the participants in the survey results will give clear indications of all of the following:

LEVEL	INDICATORS
1. Survival	The degree to which employees feel their survival needs are being met in the workplace (remuneration, health and safety, job security etc...)
2. Relationships	The degree to which workplace relationships are positive and support a high performance culture

		(Communication, openness, employee satisfaction, customer satisfaction etc...)
3.	Self Esteem	The degree to which employees perceive the organisation to have high performance systems and processes (Reliability, quality, efficiency, productivity, excellence etc...)
4.	Transformation	The degree to which there is continuous improvement and employee participation in the workplace (Adaptability, accountability, empowerment, teamwork, continuous improvement etc...)
5.	Internal Cohesion	The degree to which there is a shared sense of purpose and strong internal community in the workplace (Shared vision and values, commitment, creativity, enthusiasm, integrity, fairness, trust etc...)
6.	Making a Difference	The degree to which employees perceive themselves to be making a positive difference though their work (Employee fulfilment, coaching and mentoring, caring etc...)
7.	Service	The degree to which the organisation offers a long term and sustainable service to humanity (ethics, compassion, social responsibility etc...)

At levels 1 to 3 there are also "limiting values" or negative words that people may choose. The degree to which people choose negative words will give an indication of the degree of organisational dysfunction. This is measured in the concept of "entropy" which indicates how much possible wasted energy there is within the organisational system.

2.2 The Feedback

The results of the survey are then presented firstly to the leadership and then to the employees of the organisation and a discussion facilitated to understand the specifics of the challenges facing the organisation. This is also an important dimension of the culture change process in that it begins the conversation about culture and values which is critical to successful culture transformation.

The feedback also serves the very important function of getting all employees engaged in the culture change process. Our view is that the

more people are involved in the early stages of a change process the more likely they are to own and implement the desired changes.

2.3 The Interventions

As indicated above, it is not enough to simply measure culture and values transformation in the workplace. Interventions may be necessary to actively influence the culture in the desired direction. We are able to assist organisation design and deliver such interventions when deemed necessary. The elements of the interventions may include any of the options outlined above.

CONTACT

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