



PEAK EXPERIENCES

The Learning Company



In Great Company

Unlocking the Secrets of Cultural Transformation

Building Effective Leaders in Atlantic Canada since 1992.

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“For the past three and a half years, Frank Gallant at Peak Experiences worked closely with the Bell Aliant CE Operational Leadership team.

I was amazed at how quickly and accurately Frank depicted our culture and his ability to ‘zero-in’ on our strengths and deficiencies. The change was apparent to all very early on in the process and I’m pleased to say it has carried over into both our professional and personal lives.

Frank’s guidance had a profound positive effect on me — namely giving me more energy and the tools to be a better leader.

I would highly recommend Frank and his company to any organization looking to positively change their culture or shape their leaders!”

*Peter Henderson
Senior Specialist - Bell Aliant CE*

Unlocking the Secrets of Cultural Transformation

Culture: A Unifying Force

In today's world, it is a fact that organizations and corporations are faced with constant change and challenges in dynamic business environments.

In order to maintain their competitive edge, organizations need to have vision and direction. These cornerstones must align with the organization's culture and core values.

Culture is the unifying force that ensures effectiveness and holds organizations together. Managing organizational culture is a vital role and an important challenge for any senior leader and the management team.

Our time tested culture change process has provided success for leading organizations, businesses and municipalities in Atlantic Canada. Our success comes from long term and collaborative partnerships with our clients, allowing us to provide guidance, timely advice and support to their culture change plans and leadership development processes.

Research has shown that while many organizations know how to affect change, precious few actually do.

Our processes will help you understand the initiatives, strategies and personal actions needed to create lasting culture change, and improve the overall performance of an organization.

Contrary to Conventional Wisdom, Cultures can be Transformed

Senior leadership teams can and do evolve new mindsets. Individuals, teams and entire organizations adapt, grow, and prepare for future opportunities and challenges. They learn to change what they do and how they do it. As a result, they have grown "larger minds" for solving more complex problems.

Organizations seeking to adapt during turbulent times — like now — cannot force change through purely technical approaches such as restructuring and reengineering. Organizations need a new kind of leadership capability to reframe dilemmas, reinterpret options, and reform operations — and to do so continuously.

Organizational culture change is not for the quick-change artist. Serious change demands a serious commitment. The benefits are worth the effort.



What is Culture?

At Peak Experiences, we define “culture” as being the shared norms and expectations that govern the way people approach their work and interact with each other. Such norms and expectations shape how individuals believe they are expected to behave in order to fit in and get things done.

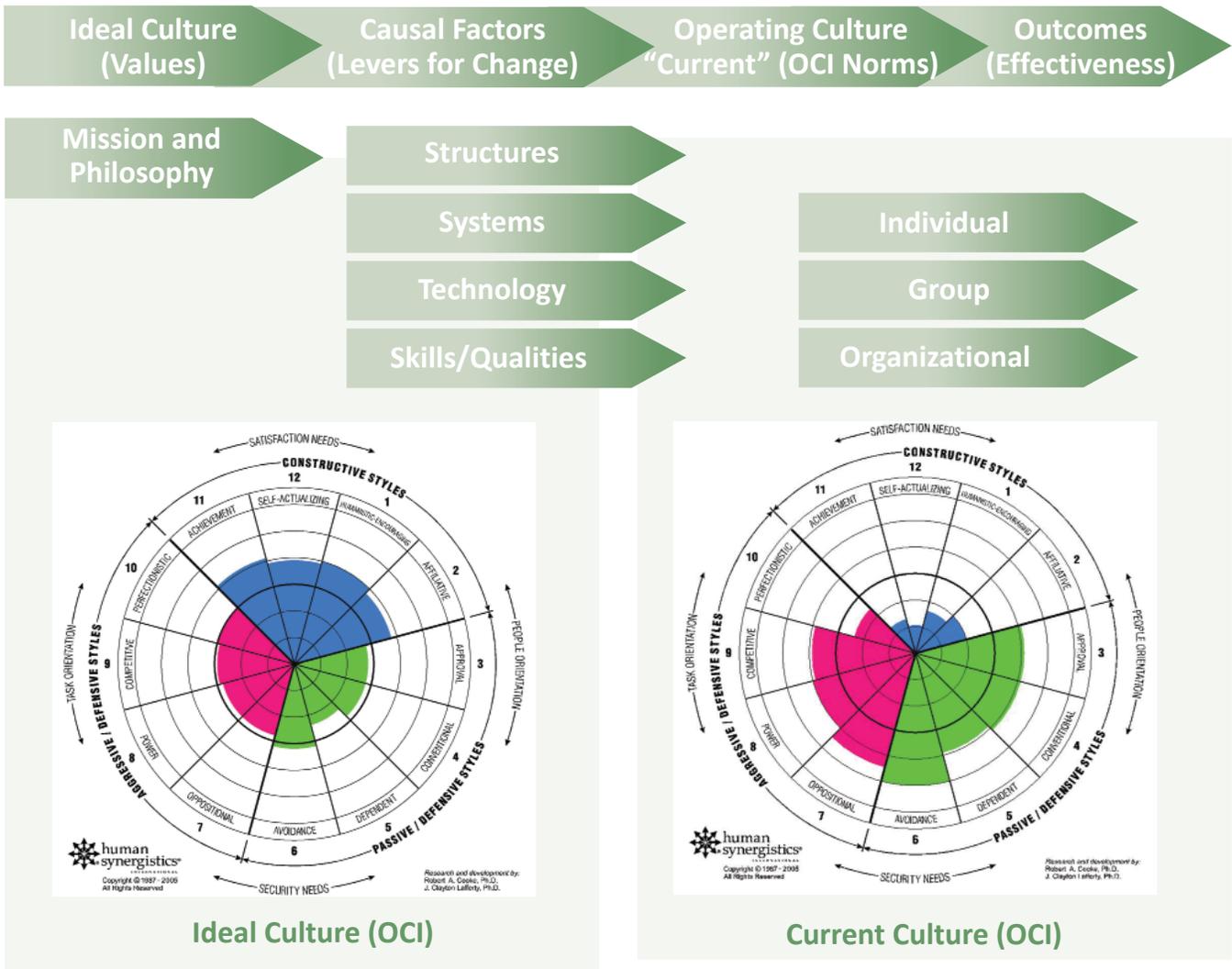
Choosing the right leadership culture is the difference between success and failure. Organizational culture is influenced by a variety of factors, not least the behaviour of the organization’s leaders. Insufficient leadership is part of the problem.

The shift in focus from the development of the individual heroic leader, to the realization of leadership as a collective activity is intentional — and very important.

As companies face change, they need to invest in a leadership culture that will match their unfolding challenges.

We have identified a total of 31 causal factors that are responsible for shaping culture and helping an organization move from its current culture to its ideal culture. The Organizational Cultural Inventory (OCI) ensures we accurately address the most important leverage points.

The model below illustrates the relationships between these causal factors and the organization’s actual operating culture, along with the outcomes of culture at the individual, group, and organizational levels.



How is Culture Created?

To understand how to transform corporate culture it is vital to know how corporate culture is formed in the first place, and how it evolves over time.

We believe that corporate culture cannot be mandated from the top of organizations, but rather emerges from the shared experiences of those involved in the unfolding experience of organizational life.

Culture is most strongly influenced by collective experiences of success and failure that take place as people at all levels grapple with the exigencies of life at work.

Why Transform?

Leaders who understand that the journey of personal transformation is an evolutionary process are most comfortable with this commitment and have the “stick-ability” when the resolve is needed.

We believe in order to be successful, organizations have no choice but to change. The world is moving and shifting fast and executives know it. Increasingly, CEOs are questioning the incessant reorganizing, reengineering, and restructuring in the name of efficiency.

Conventional wisdom says that the right business structures will provide organizations what they need to succeed and sustain. Strategies and plans that should work instead fall apart, yielding less-than expected results. Worse, many top managers and teams struggle

to agree on outcomes, or even common ground for moving forward. Skilled individual leaders with impressive track records fail to collaborate. Instead, they continue to be constrained, operating in silos and defaulting to traditional boundaries and turf battles.

In short, many organizations are stuck. Frustrated executives work harder and longer. People at every level are overwhelmed, guarded and cynical.

Key Findings In Great Company Research

The more constructive the culture, the greater the financial integrity and other performance measures.

- The leader and the leadership team have the greatest impact on culture.
- Constructive cultures are directly proportional to the constructive attitudes and behaviours from leadership.
- The more constructive the leader, the more constructive the culture.
- The more constructive the culture, the fewer fears exist within it. A “fear-less” organization ignites and unleashes greater innovation, creativity, collaboration and productivity.
- A constructive culture is directly proportional to the ability of an organization to keep its promises, financial integrity, brand, loyalty, quality, employees and customer satisfaction.
- Highly constructive cultures transcend typical organizations to a level we identify as “inspiring.”

‘Culture’ is a term that has become an important part of any organization’s vocabulary.

What it really means, how it works, and the impact it has on performance are often misunderstood.



Assessment-based Change in Leadership Style

By measuring human behavior at the individual, manager, leader, team, or organizational level, it becomes tangible; it becomes something that can be described and made specific.

Measurement of behavior gives organizations:

1. A way to capture and quantify the invisible forces that drive performance.
2. A language to discuss key leadership terminology.
3. The ability to track individual, team, and organizational progress.
4. A process through which individuals and teams take responsibility for their own behaviors and focus on constructive improvement.

We believe that in measuring behaviors, it's not enough to simply provide a measure of the current state. Measurements must also provide guidance in what must be done to make progress.

Our associates have been using the world class assessment tools by Human Synergistics International since 1997 to assist with our dynamics and effective culture change process.

Measuring cultural behaviour allows companies to implement emerging, successive business strategies with the following results:

- Greater speed and flexibility, allowing the organization to move faster in response to change and challenge.
- New, stronger core organizational capabilities.
- Achievement of bottom-line results.
- Improved ability to create shared direction and commitment throughout the organization.
- Growth of not only individual capabilities, but growing capabilities in a leadership collective.
- The development of leadership while implementing the business strategy and cultural change plans.
- Organizational innovation for products/services and the systems required to sustain innovation.
- Effective cross-departmental work and the collaboration required for dealing with complexity and change.
- Increased engagement within the leadership team that links employees throughout the organization.
- A humanized workplace, balancing technical and operational expertise with beliefs and experience.
- Leadership and organizational transformation that can be developed, sustained and applied to future situations.

Options for Organizational Development

Organization Development (OD) is about improving performance at the individual, group, and organization levels. It is about increasing internal capabilities by ensuring the organizational structures, human resources systems, job designs, communication systems, and leadership/managerial processes help people function to their full potential.

Such improvement can be transformational — producing fundamental changes in the way individuals, groups, and organizations function.

Human Synergetics International is a world leader in the field of data-driven change — measuring and quantifying organizational behavior at the individual, group, and organization levels. Survey feedback is an integral part of the OD process as it provides leaders and managers with information on what is happening within the organization. Cultural norms, organizational systems, organizational climate, leadership, managerial approaches and behaviors of key people throughout the organization are revealed. Such measurements must be based on solid, academically-respected research to help guide the process of change respectfully and effectively.

Helpful feedback tools not only measure the current state, but also identify what needs to be focused on to improve effectiveness in terms of building strengths and overcoming stumbling blocks.

Peak Experiences associates have been using the Human Synergetics assessment tools since 1997 and we have seen — first hand — the power of honest, confidential and supportive feedback.

When change agents truly commit to creating safe and supportive space there is a significantly greater opportunity to advance change within the individual and the organization at large.

Feedback that highlights what is helping and hindering effectiveness allows organizations to build strategies for improvement. The process is quite simple. It's built on a test — action — re-test approach. The process measures what is currently happening, change strategies are developed and changes are implemented. Once this cycle is complete, re-testing is used evaluate the effectiveness of the change strategies.

Action, based on feedback, cannot be effective unless awareness and acceptance are first achieved. The feedback process follows these steps:



Within this process, there is a set of key steps or phases that are essential to effective feedback and change:



The leader and the leadership team have the greatest impact on organizational culture.



Lessons From Our Experience

The history of change management reminds us that a simple recipe or quick fixes do not work.

Our experience with clients has helped us identify themes and patterns, tools and models that help leaders and organizations transform their current to their ideal culture.

Change is difficult. But the fact remains that there are key things that make the process easier, more inspiring and more constructive.

Successful change leadership requires the following:

- 1. New mindsets; a new shared language.**
Understanding the attitudes, values and beliefs of individual and organizational effectiveness is essential to ensuring the alignment of your people. By embedding a shared language and vocabulary into your day to day experiences, the required change in behavior becomes more transparent and individuals are in a better position to provide necessary support and feedback. This shared leadership approach throughout the organization advances both individual behavior and collective leadership mindsets.
- 2. Culture follows the leader.** Organizational change requires leaders to personally transform and change. Individuals must understand the focus of energy and clarity of a vision for the future. This supports the interplay between individual development of personal mastery and the development of organizational mastery; deepening the sense of identity that is helpful in the new culture.
- 3. Hidden assumptions regarding attitudes, values and beliefs must be examined and talked about.** Understanding the deeply ingrained assumptions and beliefs that underscore how we view the world and act within it need to be examined to create meaningful change. Results can only be achieved through team action and by understanding how behavioral norms exist within old hierarchy, status, authority and control mechanisms.
- 4. Tapping the wisdom of the crowd — collaboratively exploring systems change.** The opportunities to release more productivity, innovation and successful change multiply when we begin to address and explore the systems framework. Targeting change that will make the most difference can be best uncovered by listening and working closely with those who work within these systems everyday.
- 5. Empowering a coalition of change agents is needed to keep pace with rapidly changing realities.** Empowering a culture change committee to align the leadership development and culture change initiatives ensures consistent and transparent communications. This creates a safe space for asking the hard questions and having constructive dialogue that is essential for helping transform culture.

Leadership Impact

Advancing Personal Mindsets: The Impact of Leaders on Performance and Culture.

The influence leaders and managers have on the performance of their teams, and, ultimately, their organizations cannot be overstated. Leaders shape the way people think and behave and are viewed as role models. Leaders set the agenda and influence the organization's culture and the long-term effectiveness of the organization.

Human Synergistics research, particularly that of Robert A. Cooke, Ph.D. (HSI CEO and distinguished academic), clearly highlights the relationship between leadership strategies, the impact leaders have on others, and effectiveness in the leadership role.

We help those in leadership roles identify the relationship between behavior strategies, styles and leadership effectiveness. Human Synergistics offers a range of assessment tools designed to enable leaders and managers to initiate change while being practical and relevant to the real world.

Peak Experiences provides these tools as part of your individual, leadership, group, or organization development program. Our workshops provide hands-on learning, giving you knowledge and confidence in interpreting, debriefing, and developing action plans around Human Synergistics International assessment feedback.

Slow Down for Collective Engagement

If a more collaborative, engaged and interdependent culture is required, how does the senior leadership team start to change culture?

In a counterintuitive move, they need to slow down. Slowing down for collective engagement is a key principle for leading change. By giving time and attention to the attitudes, values and beliefs that underlie behavior and decisions, senior and middle managers help the organization to be efficient and more flexible in the future.

Everyone involved is able to reflect on assumptions, understand problems more clearly, and integrate the perspectives of others. This creates accurate, focused and valuable decisions. Time lost on the front end translates into speed further along in the process.

Slowing down is also a cultural stance embedded within the mindset and leadership style of self-actualization. It is a behavior that is, in itself, a big change, and, at the same time, it fosters desired leadership culture change.

Organizational culture change is not for the faint of heart or the quick change artist.

Serious change demands a coordinated plan and a serious commitment from all.



A Call to Action: Next Steps

The Integrated Diagnostic System uses the highly-visual circumplex to display feedback for individuals, teams, leaders, and organizations, enabling you to use a common language and visual model for developing more constructive styles across all levels.

Phase One: Provide individuals with metrics and actionable insights

Quantify individual contributors' thinking and behavioral styles and the — ideal and current — impact of leaders at all levels of the organization.

Phase Two: Build team synergy and effectiveness

Quantify team dynamics and demonstrate relationships of group styles to the quality and acceptance of solutions.

Phase Three: Decide how an organization could and should work

Quantify an organizations ideal culture, its current culture, and the levers for change that bridge the gap.

Phase Four: Develop organizational and divisional culture change plans

Setting up quarterly accountability meetings and support check-ins on divisional culture change plans. This puts the responsibility right where it belongs — with the leader managing a specific section of the organization.

Phase Five: Support the change process with a collaborative team-based approach

Supporting culture change by engaging and collaborating with people at all levels of the organization is essential for getting the change down to the front lines — where it most often has the biggest impact on the customers' experience.

Once the senior management team is committed, they can select influential leaders to form a culture change committee.

A Collaborative Approach: Our Model of Culture Change

To understand how to transform corporate culture, it is vital to know how corporate culture is formed in the first place, and how it evolves over time.

Our own view is that corporate culture cannot be mandated from the top of organizations, but rather emerges from the shared experiences of those involved in the unfolding drama of organizational life.

In our experience, most in-depth culture change processes take two to seven years pending the size of the organization and the depth of the change and commitment required.

Who Needs to be on Board?

One member from each of the following:

Leg 1: Senior Leadership Team

Leg 2: Human Resources and/or Learning and Development

Leg 3: Internal Culture Change Committee (Guiding Coalition of Change Agents)*

Leg 4: External Third Party Consultation Support (Peak Experiences)

**A culture change committee is often made up of senior leaders, middle managers, representatives from learning and development/human resources, staff and a member of the Peak Experiences culture change team.*

Contact us to discuss a customized approach to culture change within your organization.

“We have used Peak Experiences for many years for leadership development, team building and culture change (organizational development). The tools and content of the workshops are exceptional. Peak Experiences has helped my organization develop and achieve and, as well, kept the journey interesting and fun.

Frank Gallant and his team of associates are some of the best in the business.”

*Margo Beckworth-Burn, Sr. Vice President
Wyndham Worldwide*



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Learn it. Apply it.

About Peak Experiences

Peak Experiences is a top-ranked, Canadian provider of training services that unlocks individual and organizational potential through its exclusive focus on team building, leadership development and culture change.

Founded in 1992, Peak Experiences associates help clients from across the country cultivate effective leadership — the capacity to achieve more than imagined by thinking and acting with an effective mindset — through an array of programs and services.

We invite you to take a journey with us as we move into a future full of promise, potential and possibility.

We look forward to having a conversation with you about how our leadership development and culture change process can bring value to your organization.

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