



# Unit 1 Corporate or Organizational Culture

## 企业文化

Corporate culture manifests itself in various ways. From the architecture and decor of the building to what people wear, the overall environment of the company is often readily apparent. Over time, many companies even develop their own language.

### Text A

#### From Factory to Family: The Creation of a Corporate Culture

#### 从工厂到家庭：创建企业文化

Howard R. Stanger

*The Larkin Company of Buffalo<sup>1</sup>, New York, created a unique corporate culture with its attitude towards customers and employees. In 1902, the company asked Frank Lloyd Wright<sup>2</sup> to incorporate this attitude into the architecture of the company's new headquarters, now recognized as a Wright masterpiece.*

### Warm-up Questions

“I did a six-month contract job for Electronic Arts a decade ago; the culture there was like no company for which I had ever worked. The glass-walled office overlooked the picturesque San Francisco Bay, so it was fun just to arrive at the campus. All over the floor, in every hallway, were little sponge basketballs of different colors and sizes that people could throw at each other or shoot into little hoops around the office. Staff members could decorate their own cubicles any way they wanted—creativity was rewarded by a roaming HR manager, who would sometimes leave gifts in particularly interesting personal workplaces.



Employees were allowed to set their own work schedules. As long as they reached their group or department goals, management was happy. I often saw some developers working 12- to 16-hour days on product deadlines, but then they could disappear and catch up on their sleep with no interference.

Every Friday at 4 p.m., the whole company would adjourn to the bottom-floor conference room, where a party would break out. Free beer and soft drinks, munchies, music, and videos were always on the menu.”

—Chris Preimesberger

**Questions:** So are you longing for this kind of working environment? Maybe you can argue that different jobs have different environments. Then guess what Chris Preimesberger’s job is. The concept of “flexitime” is involved here, but do you know what it is?



From its origins in 1875 as a modest soap manufacturer in Buffalo, New York, the J.D. Larkin Company grew dramatically during the 1890s to become a major concern. The company’s annual sales rose from about \$220,000 in 1892 to over \$15 million in 1906.

The story of Larkin’s rapid rise from local soap producer to national mail-order company is enlivened by the involvement of two prominent turn-of-the-century cultural icons and pioneers in their respective fields: Elbert Hubbard and Frank Lloyd Wright. Hubbard was responsible for the company’s advertising and marketing innovations. Wright designed homes for Larkin **executives** and, more notably, the corporate administration building—completed in 1906, this marvelous structure was Wright’s first major commercial commission.

In order to sell its soap and related products through the mail, Larkin came to rely on a dedicated army of small-town and rural women to serve as **de facto** sales agents<sup>3</sup>. The company drew these women, and often their children, into buying clubs by offering a wide array of valuable premium gifts, **contingent upon** sales volume and method of payment. Club organizers, called “secretaries”, recruited families, friends, and neighbors to buy Larkin products and also to share in the premium offerings, which enabled these families of modest financial means to furnish their middle-class homes cheaply.



The company called this strategy “The Larkin Idea” and **touted** it with the motto, “From Factory to Family: Save All Cost Which Adds No Value.” Larkin promoted itself as “the only Great Manufactory in the World Devoted to Cooperation with Consumers”.

The Larkin Company’s success owed much to the development of its unique corporate culture.

### **The Larkin Administration Building: The Physical Representation of the Corporate Culture**

In 1906, employing the skills of Frank Lloyd Wright, the Larkin Company transformed an abstract corporate culture into a tangible physical representation when it opened the Larkin Administration Building. The building was intended to be both practical and yet designed to convey the humane principles Larkin liked to project.

The principal mail-order activities occurred on all floors, except the top, which housed kitchen facilities. Wright, Heath, and Marts collaborated to create a structure that maximized office efficiency, from the layout of the floor plan, to the ordering of the departments, to the arrangement of desks and built-in file cabinets. Larkin executives occupied the main floor. Martin and Heath and their subordinates were housed on an entire floor beneath the skylight and also under the balcony. This unique arrangement left the executives with no privacy and without the status **conferred** by being allotted space on the top floor of an office building. Advertising executives’ offices were located in the same area. John D. Larkin and his sons were located on the other end of the floor, also in semi-private offices and close to the Seneca Street<sup>4</sup> factories, where they felt most at home. The **unorthodox** seating arrangements were consistent with the image Larkin wanted to project of open, **familial** relations.

Because it was located in a noisy, **sooty**, and grimy industrial area of Buffalo, the building was **hermetically** sealed and lighted mostly from skylights. Advanced heating and **ventilation** systems, including one of the earliest forms of air conditioning, provided comfort to the office force<sup>5</sup> and also ensured that correspondence with its customers remained **pristine**, as any **soiling** would be potentially damaging to a soap and pure food company’s reputation.

A five-story **annex**, where most of the welfare activities took place, provided employees with privacy and refuge from the **demanding** workday. The first floor had a large semicircular reception desk and a fireplace in the visitor’s waiting area. Metal



lockers, wash basins, showers, and wall-hung toilets were located on the second floor. A cozy fireplace-heated lounge area, outfitted with furniture designed by Wright, could be found on the third floor. On either side of the lounge were emergency rooms with **cots**, an **anteroom**, and a toilet room. The fourth floor, which had the lowest ceilings, was divided into three spaces: a classroom, where personnel were instructed in grammar and writing; a small branch of the Buffalo Public Library; and a YWCA<sup>6</sup> room, where girls would attend activities designed to foster self-improvement. Finally, the top floor housed a spacious dining room with kitchen facilities. All “Larkinites”<sup>7</sup>—employees, executives and guests—dined together in the same open space. Wright deliberately made the annex small and access to it difficult so it would not be overused. The only exception was the dining area, which accommodated 600 people.

Inscribed on the red sandstone walls of the building’s interior and adorning the sculptures displayed outside were inspirational messages, written largely by William Heath, that **extolled** the importance and virtues of work and declared the aspirations and identity of the Larkin Company.

The messages were most evident in the main building’s light court, which provided a setting bathed in diffused light. This **atmospheric** setting highlighted the company’s conflicting **impulses** toward employee welfare on the one hand and workplace efficiency on the other. Inscriptions from the Sermon on the Mount<sup>8</sup> were **juxtaposed** with fourteen **trios** of inspirational words, including “Cooperation, Economy, Industry,”<sup>9</sup> “Generosity, Altruism, Sacrifice,”<sup>10</sup> and “Integrity, Loyalty, Fidelity.”<sup>11</sup>

Wright spoke eloquently about the ideal of **domesticity** he tried to build into the corporate structure: “the family-gathering under conditions ideal for body and mind **counts for** lessened errors, cheerful **alacrity** and quickened and sustained intelligence in duties to be performed...” Larkin executives also commissioned Wright to build their own private residences, workers’ row houses<sup>12</sup> in Buffalo, and the company’s pavilion for the 1907 Jamestown<sup>13</sup> **Tercentennial** Exposition.

The Larkin Administration Building **epitomized** the success of “The Larkin Idea”. Its **inauguration** ushered in the glory years of the Larkin Company. Sales continued to rise until 1920, the year of its greatest success, which also marked the beginning of its downward turn. Yet the company would continue to thrive for only one more decade.



## Epilogue

Sales of Larkin products were **buoyant** through the 1910s, and **tapered off** in 1920 at around \$28 million. Then sales began a permanent decline starting around 1925, though the company earned profits through 1930. But the 1930s ushered in a bleak financial period for the Larkin Company in which it lost money every year, including \$1.4 million in 1932 and over \$1 million in 1937.

## Vocabulary

alacrity	<i>n.</i>	敏捷, 活跃
annex	<i>n.</i>	附属建筑
anteroom	<i>n.</i>	接待室
atmospheric	<i>adj.</i>	有艺术氛围的
buoyant	<i>adj.</i>	有上涨倾向的, 趋向增长的, 销售上升的
confer	<i>v.</i>	授予, 赋予
(be) contingent upon		视……而定
cot	<i>n.</i>	婴儿床; 折叠床
count	<i>v.</i>	有价值, 有重要性 (通常与介词 for 连用)
de facto	<i>adv. &amp; adj.</i>	事实上 (的), 实际上 (的)
demanding	<i>adj.</i>	极具挑战性的, 要求高的
domesticity	<i>n.</i>	家庭生活, 家风
epilogue	<i>n.</i>	结语, 尾声
epitomize	<i>v.</i>	概括, 是……的缩影
executive	<i>n.</i>	企业管理者
extol	<i>v.</i>	赞美
familial	<i>adj.</i>	家庭的, 家庭特有的
hermetically	<i>adv.</i>	密封地
impulse	<i>n.</i>	推动, 动力
inauguration	<i>n.</i>	落成典礼
juxtapose	<i>v.</i>	并置, 并列
pristine	<i>adj.</i>	纯洁的, 干净的
soil	<i>v.</i>	弄脏, 污染
sooty	<i>adj.</i>	煤烟污染的, 乌黑的



6	taper off		逐渐变细, 逐渐停止
	tercentennial	<i>adj.</i>	三百周年纪念的
	tout	<i>v.</i>	鼓吹, 宣传
	trio	<i>n.</i>	三人(物)为一组
	unorthodox	<i>adj.</i>	非正统的
	ventilation	<i>n.</i>	通风

## Notes

1. Buffalo: 布法罗 (美国纽约州西部港市)
2. Frank Lloyd Wright: 弗兰克·劳埃德·赖特 (1867—1959)。一代建筑宗师, 他在建筑界的贡献卓越, 与 Le Corbusier、Ludwig Mies van der Rohe 及 Walter Gropius 并称“现代建筑四大师”。其他三位均出生于欧洲, 赖特则是土生土长的美国人。他一生设计了两万多件作品, 著名的建筑作品有“落水山庄”(Falling Water)、“古根汉美术馆”(Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum) 和“橡树园”(Oak Park) 等。他认为: “住宅不是陈列品, 也不是地位的象征, 而是审美和功能统一的环境。”
3. sales agents: 销售人员, 销售代理
4. Seneca Street: 赛内加街 (美国著名街道)
5. office force: 办公室的员工
6. YWCA: 基督教女青年会 (Young Women's Christian Association)。文中特指女士。
7. Larkinites: 公司成员。这里不仅包括公司雇员、管理人员, 还包括来公司的客人。
8. Sermon on the Mount: 山顶布道 (又译“登山训众”、“山边宝训”)。它是《新约》“马太福音”中十分精彩的一段文字, 集中表述了耶稣的教义和基督教的根本精神。
9. Cooperation, Economy, Industry: 合作, 节约, 勤奋
10. Generosity, Altruism, Sacrifice: 慷慨, 无私, 奉献
11. Integrity, Loyalty, Fidelity: 正直, 忠诚, 诚实
12. workers' row houses: 成排的公司员工住房
13. Jamestown: 詹姆斯敦 (美国弗吉尼亚州东部一村庄)

## Terms

1. **Corporate Culture** 企业文化: 企业文化理念发源于日本, 形成于美国。1982年7月, 美国哈佛大学教授泰伦斯·迪尔 (Terrence Deal) 和麦肯锡咨询公司顾问艾伦·肯尼迪 (Allan Kennedy) 合著的《企业文化》一书正式出版, 标志着企业文化这一新的管理理论诞生。企业文化是在西方市场经济条件下兴起的管理学说, 是管理科学发展到一定历



史阶段的产物,它强调了以人为本,重视企业的群体意识和人在管理中的作用,在运用现代管理技术和手段中特别突出了精神和文化的力量。企业文化是社会文化与组织管理实践相融合的产物。企业文化是西方管理理论在经历了“经济人”、“社会人”、“自我实现人”与“复杂人”的假设之后,对组织的管理理念、管理过程与组织长期业绩的关系的又一次重新审视。企业文化是企业中的人们以共有的价值观为核心形成的一系列特有的认识事物、处理问题的思维方式、行为方式、制度、规范、传统和习惯。它从人的头脑深处影响人对事物的认识与判断,决定了人在企业中特有的处理事物的方式,内在约束和影响了企业中人的行为。

2. **Mail-order** 邮购: 作为一个分销渠道,邮购用来加强制造商、批发商、零售商与顾客间的联系。以前,邮购以商品目录为基础,给目标客户邮寄商品目录,取得客户订购电话或汇款后,直接向客户邮寄商品。如英国的利特伍德,美国的西尔斯·罗巴克(Sears Robucks)已经建立起长期的邮购业务。邮购业在德国也很盛行,许多邮购业务都是通过盖勒以及奥特渥森德公司开展的。现在,邮购业务的开展更多地借助专业杂志、电视直销、专业网站等媒体力量。过去邮购一直被看作是销售低档商品的手段,但美国“香蕉共和”和英国“来年指南”两家公司的发展表明,此项业务还可以成为吸引更多高档消费者的渠道。很多卡片公司(“美国特快”以及“万能信用卡”公司)也经营邮购业务,发送小型目录时附上账单说明。这种营销的特点是:在任何情况下,公司都必须承担发送大量邮件的费用,当然,信封中还可以附带其他材料。

## Exercises

### I. Reading Comprehension

Choose the best answer to each of the following questions.

- In the first sentence of Paragraph 1, the word “concern” means \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. attraction      B. worry      C. rival      D. company
- The Larkin’s corporate culture is best embodied in the following EXCEPT \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. employees      B. consumers  
C. The Larkin Administration Building      D. employers
- Which of the following was NOT shown in the structure Wright, Heath and Marts collaborated to create that maximized office efficiency?  
A. The ordering of the departments.  
B. The small branch of the Buffalo Public Library.  
C. The arrangement of desks and built-in file cabinets.



- D. The layout of the floor plan.
4. In Paragraph 3, “families of modest financial means” means \_\_\_\_\_.
- A. families of high income  
B. families of middle-range income  
C. families of humble income  
D. families in need of the government’s financial support
5. Which of the following terms does NOT show the Larkin image?
- A. Open and familial.                      B. Unorthodox.  
C. Pure and clean.                          D. Hierarchical.
6. According to the text, which of the following statements is NOT true?
- A. The Larkin employees are left with no privacy at all.  
B. The annex was made small but with an exception.  
C. The Larkin company shows a conflicting atmosphere of employee welfare and workplace efficiency.  
D. The Larkin Administration Building was a tangible physical representation of the Larkin corporate culture.
7. Which of the following groups does NOT belong to “Larkinites”?
- A. Executives.    B. Competitors.    C. Guests.    D. Employees.
8. Which of the following does NOT belong to the Larkin corporate culture?
- A. Luxury and freedom.                      B. Humane principles.  
C. Importance of work.                      D. Work efficiency.
9. Which of the following buildings was NOT built by the Larkin company?
- A. The Larkin Administration Building.  
B. The company’s pavilion for the 1907 Jamestown Tercentennial Exposition.  
C. The Larkin employees’ private residents.  
D. The Larkin company’s factories.
10. What is the author’s tone according to the Epilogue of this text?
- A. Objective.    B. Sarcastic.    C. Sympathetic.    D. Subjective.





## II. Using the Right Word

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Unit 1

Fill in the blanks with the words below. Change the form when necessary.

demeanor	crave	found	biology	dictate
responsive	embed	profitability	dynamics	all-pervasive
weakness	citizen	discounted	tune	unconsciously

1. Though business people like to think of themselves as realists, the fact is that wishful thinking, denial, and other forms of avoiding reality are deeply \_\_\_\_\_ in most corporate cultures.
2. The culture of the organization is typically created \_\_\_\_\_, based on the values of the top management or the founders of an organization.
3. Sometimes we tend to lose sight of the fact that \_\_\_\_\_—the way you appear and the way you act—is a form of communication.
4. The deepest principle in human nature is the \_\_\_\_\_ to be appreciated.
5. Microsoft is \_\_\_\_\_ upon the idea that if you give people the right tools, they will do new and exciting things.
6. Creativity, by itself, is not enough. There must be mechanisms within the company for setting in motion the \_\_\_\_\_ needed to spark off winning ideas.
7. The right corporate \_\_\_\_\_—the optimal balance of people and culture—can mean the difference between success and failure.
8. The organizational culture, as perceived by the employees, \_\_\_\_\_ how they think about their jobs, perform their functions and plan for the future.
9. Depending on the company, corporate culture may influence choice of suit color for meetings with management, overall \_\_\_\_\_ to change in the marketplace, how customers and colleagues are treated and whether or not an expensive new shower curtain is submitted as a business expense.
10. If increased \_\_\_\_\_ is an organizational goal, one of the best places to start improvements is with an examination of the organization's work culture.
11. An organization's cultural norms are so \_\_\_\_\_ that they are almost invisible, but if you would like to improve performance and profitability, norms are one of the first places to look.



12. Employees all share the basic human needs for belonging, connectedness, trust, meaning and purpose, and they also share the same human \_\_\_\_\_, such as selfishness and greed.
13. Citizenship in the United States comes in two forms: individual citizenship (referred to at the outset of the U.S. Constitution as “We the people”) and corporate citizenship which has existed since 1886 when the Supreme Court decided corporations were entitled to constitutional protection as if they were \_\_\_\_\_.
14. Managers need to realize that issues involving pay, benefits, and perks aren’t usually the central reasons why good employees fly the corporate coop—although those factors certainly are not to be \_\_\_\_\_.
15. Smart companies \_\_\_\_\_ their overall culture toward their employees if they can, making the work environment as pleasant and as supportive as possible.

### III. Translating

**Translate the following passage into Chinese. The translation of the first paragraph is given.**

SOFTTO believes: corporate culture is a “human-oriented” management system with corporate management philosophy and corporate spirit as its core to inspire the staff’s sense of belonging, initiative and creativity. Every staff will receive a birthday gift from the Board Chairman in the month of his/her birthday. The company will organize various kinds of activities for celebration of Christmas and New Year’s Day.

Cooperation with Zhongshan University: In May 2000, Zhongshan University—SOFTTO Development Research Institute was founded with a view to establish a market-oriented scientific and creative system with the university as the support and the enterprise as the main body so as to achieve the ultimate win-win goal of the development for both the University and the Enterprise.

The e-MIS paperless Office System greatly facilitates the workflow from marketing management, information collection to logistics control, thus helping our sales representatives around the nation to become an efficient work force.

SOFTTO offers various regular training programs to different staff based on their personal potentials and expectations towards the company. Training programs include:



New staff position training: introducing the history and corporate culture of SOFTTO and the operation of each business and functional department, helping and leading the staff to be involved into the company at shortest time.

Professional skill training: offering professional skill training to staff in the Sales Department, Marketing & Planning Department, and Financial Department for them to keep knowledge updated and improve their competitiveness.

Management technique training: offering personnel with great potential opportunities to attend to MBA course for incumbent staff, and training courses on how to form high efficiency team spirit and other professional management techniques; working out long-term career development plans for young middle-class management for them to adapt themselves to the internationalized strategic development of the company and develop into the future senior management in SOFTTO.

索芙特认为: 企业文化是以企业管理学说和企业精神为核心, 激发企业员工归属感、积极性和创造性的“人本”管理系统。在索芙特这个大家庭里, 每月过生日的员工都会收到由董事长送出的一份礼品, 公司在每年的圣诞节和元旦都会组织各种联谊活动。

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#### IV. Questions for Discussion

1. In our era with the development of information and communication technology and the so-called “new economy”, with so many people traveling on business kept in touch by cell phones and laptop computers, is it still necessary to stress the importance of corporate culture? Is it still necessary to build such a luxury home out of factory?
2. When goods are delivered to homes through e-commerce, it seems such a fancy factory also loses its attractiveness to consumers. Or otherwise, this kind of luxury “home factory” can act as a place for consumers to “touch”, to get a true feeling for a company whose main activities are practiced on net and with whom consumers usually grow a feeling that such a company seems not very real. So what is your comment on the above message?

#### **Text B**

### **Corporate Culture Matters! 企业文化至关重要!**

Paul T. P. Wong

#### Warm-up Questions

1. Which do you prefer, to “live to work” or to “work to live”? What is your favorite job? What is your favorite boss like, authoritarian, paternalistic, laissez faire, or participative?
2. Maybe it does not matter at all what kind of person your boss is because you seldom



have a face-to-face contact with him. Which would you like, to belong to a company or just to be yourself?



Culture typically includes the totality of socially transmitted behaviors, beliefs, attitudes, human thoughts and creations. It affects every aspect of our lives—the way we look at things, the way we act and react and how we express our feelings.

Culture also has a pervasive impact on business practices and organizational behaviors. Harrison and Huntington (2000) have provided **compelling** evidence that national cultures and values shape human progress and influence economic prosperity. For example, Asian values of personal relationships and family ties served East and Southeast Asia well for over three decades but hindered their economic development in the last few years.

In spite of the pervasive influence of national culture, within each nation exist different types of organizational cultures, because the personality and philosophy of the founder/leader may also shape the culture of each corporation.

According to Reh (2002), “It is the leader’s job to provide the vision for the group. A good executive must have a dream and the ability to get the company to support that dream. But it is not enough to merely have the dream. The leader must also provide the framework by which the people in that organization can help achieve the dream. This is called company culture.”

Generally, corporate culture refers to the prevailing **implicit** values, attitudes and ways of doing things in a company. It often reflects the personality, philosophy and the ethnic-cultural background of the founder or the leader. Corporate culture **dictates** how the company is run and how people are promoted.

Leaders and managers need to understand how different types of corporate cultures may either facilitate or inhibit organizational efforts to improve performance and increase productivity. They also need to have the necessary **competency** to foster corporate cultural change. Cameron and Quinn (1998) pointed out the importance of transforming organizational culture in order to adapt to changing times. They have developed an assessment instrument to identify four types of cultures, namely, market culture, advocacy culture, **clan** culture, and **hierarchy** culture.



## Toxic Corporate Cultures

The following corporate cultures are described as toxic because they are **dysfunctioning** in terms of relationships and adjustment to changing times. They undermine the social/spiritual capital, poison the work climate and contribute to organizational decline.

(1) **Authoritarian-hierarchical culture**<sup>1</sup>—The big boss alone makes all the major decisions behind closed doors. Even when the decisions are harmful to the company, no one dares to challenge the boss. The standard mode of operandum is command and control, with no regard to the well-being of employees or the future of the company.

In this kind of culture, employees are to be controlled, **manipulated** and occasionally pacified like little children. Workers are motivated by fear rather than love for the company or passion for the work. They are expected to do what they are told without questioning. The main criterion for promotion is loyalty to the boss, rather than competence and commitment. As a result, star performers who dare to question some of the administration's decisions are **sidelined** or let go, while those who obey the boss blindly and who are willing to be hatchet men get the nod for promotion.

Hierarchies are not necessarily bad in and of themselves. Some sort of hierarchy in terms of decision-making and responsibility is always inevitable. However, when hierarchies are used to control and abuse workers, problems inevitably occur. Hierarchies without accountability tend to have a corrupting influence on ambitious, autocratic leaders. When the boss is dysfunctional and has the power to impose his selfish, irrational decisions on others, the entire company suffers.

(2) **Competing-conflictive culture**<sup>2</sup>—There is always some sort of power struggle going on. Leaders are plotting against each other and stabbing each other on the back. Different units and even different individuals within a unit are undercutting, backstabbing each other to gain some competitive advantage. There is a lack of trust and cooperation. People often hide important information from each other and even **sabotage** each other's efforts to ensure that only they will come up on top.

There is no regard for the larger picture and the overall goal of the company. It is everyman for himself. Both management and workers **are obsessed with** their own survival and self-interests. As a consequence, the organization is fragmented and there is a lot of waste of valuable resources because of duplications and sabotage. Such intense competition within the company creates a climate of divisiveness, conflict and



mistrust. A house divided cannot survive long in a highly competitive global economy.

(3) **Laissez faire culture**<sup>3</sup>—There is a vacuum at the top, either because the leader is incompetent and ignorant, or because he is too preoccupied with his personal affairs to pay much attention to the company. Consequently, there is an absence of directions, standards and expectations. When there is an absence of effective leadership, each department, in fact, each individual does whatever they want. The leadership void will also tempt ambitious individuals to seize power to benefit themselves. Chaos and confusion are the order of the day. No one has a clear sense where the company is going. Often, employees receive conflicting directions and signals. Often, decisions are made in the morning only to be nullified in the afternoon. Given the lack of direction, oversight and accountability all across-the-board, productivity declines. In this kind of culture, the company either disintegrates or becomes an easy target for a hostile takeover.

(4) **Dishonest-corrupt culture**<sup>4</sup>—In this culture, greed is good and money is God. There is little regard for ethics or the law. Such attitudes permeate the whole company from the top down to individual workers. Bribery, cheating, and **fraudulent** practices are widespread. Creative accounting and misleading profit reports are a matter of routine. Denial, rationalization and reputation management enable them to carry on their **un-ethical** and often illegal activities until they are caught red-handed or exposed by correcting forces of the market. When management are blinded by greed and ambition, their judgment becomes distorted and their decisions become seriously flawed; as a result, they often cross the line without being aware of it.

(5) **Rigid-traditional culture**<sup>5</sup>—There is a strong resistance to any kind of change. The leadership clings to out-dated methods and traditions, unwilling to adapt to the changes in the market place. They live in past glory and any change poses a threat to their deeply **entrenched** values and their sense of security. Workers are discouraged or even **reprimanded** for suggesting innovative ideas. Their accounting, marketing and delivery systems are no longer competitive with the fast-paced technology-driven market place. Their products and services have not responded to changing market demands. Their **mantra** is “We have always done things this way.” As a result, the world passes them by and eventually they are left with an empty shell of the former self.

The above five types of toxic cultures are not mutually exclusive. For an example, a corporation may be both authoritarian and traditional. Similarly, a corporation can be both authoritarian and corrupt. When a company suffers from a multiple of diseases,



drastic operations are needed to save it from **demise**. Unfortunately, not many managers are competent in the diagnosis and treatment of toxic corporate cultures.

### Healthy Corporate Cultures

**(1) Progressive-adaptive culture**<sup>6</sup>—There is openness to new ideas and a willingness to take risk and adopt innovations. It is a culture that adjusts quickly to shifting market conditions. It does not value the certainty of remaining the same; the only certainty it values is that the company is future-oriented and innovative. It is confident in catching and riding the waves of change.

It is a culture compatible with the entrepreneurial spirit of creativity, boldness and taking ownership. The management strives to be on the cutting edge, and encourages continuous development of workers. There is a **pervasive**, restless creative energy, constantly seeking and creating new ideas and new markets. The company celebrates every innovation, and every discovery. Excitement is in the air. Employees are all caught up in the adventure. This culture is the opposite of the rigid-traditional culture.

**(2) Purpose-driven culture**<sup>7</sup>—The leadership articulates and **crystallizes** the purpose of the company effectively, so that there is a common purpose, a shared vision for all the workers. Everyone knows what the core values and priorities are, and everyone knows where the company is going. Workers are highly motivated, because they are committed to the same set of core values. More importantly, the overarching purpose tends to go beyond the bottom line. All great companies endure because they serve a higher purpose.

One example is Anita Roddick, founder of the Body Shop<sup>8</sup>. She has a clear vision, a higher purpose for her company: The Body Shop will be an ethical, caring company, that will care about the environment, human rights, animal protection and the community. This vision is incorporated into all aspects of her corporate goals and practices.

**(3) Community-oriented culture**<sup>9</sup>—There is a strong emphasis on collectivity and cooperation. The leadership attempts to build a community, in which people respect, support each other, and enjoy working together.

A community-oriented culture goes beyond team building and **aspires** to create an authentic community in which every worker is treated as a valuable member. Community building is more extensive than team building. It requires that members from different work groups treat one another in a positive, supportive way in order to boost morale.





Such a community requires collaboration and communication throughout the organization. Management involves and empowers all staff members in a combined effort to improve efficiency and productivity, such as required by Total Quality Management.

For teamwork to be effective, team building training becomes an important part of personnel development. Typically in team building, groups are created in each work area and group members interact and work together to identify and resolve issues that affect individual and group performance. Guidelines are provided for interactions among team members. Team members work together in a mutually supportive atmosphere. Team members know the role they play in the achievement of the end goal.

To create a sense of community, management need to provide a trusting and safe environment, in which workers are free to express their ideas rather than try to “fit in” and please the managers.<sup>10</sup> The emphasis on community building also creates a climate of cooperative problem solving and a willingness to share information and **expertise**. In such a company, there is a healthy acceptance of diversity and a willingness to listen and to learn from others. A community-oriented culture is just the opposite of a competing-conflictive culture.

**(4) People-centred culture<sup>11</sup>**—There is a genuine caring for each worker in the organization. Everyone is valued and **validated**, regardless of their positions in the company. The organization cares for the whole person—body, soul and mind in terms of recognizing workers’ basic needs for learning and growth, for belonging and being connected, as well as the need for meaning and spirituality. Each worker is encouraged to develop his or her full potentials, personally and professionally. Such a culture will create a climate of mutual respect and genuine **civility**.

Organizational care for employees is based on organizations’ deep-seated core values and practices. The focus is on meeting workers’ needs, promoting their best interests, and valuing their contributions (Liedtka, 1996, 1999). It involves setting up the necessary **infrastructure** to **facilitate** care-giving, such as providing support systems, and employee assistance and development programs.

People-centred organizations which embrace the core ideology of caring may have different ways of expressing its core values (Collins and Porras, 1994; O’Reilly & Pfeffer, 2000), nevertheless, caring needs to be implemented on a consistent basis. For example, HP’s core ideology of “Respect and concern for individual employees” and 3M’s core



value of “Respect for individual **initiative**” are incorporated in all aspects of organizational practices. Herb Kelleher of Southwest Airlines is another example. He treats every employee as a valuable member of the team. As Chairman and CEO, he has created a positive climate of safety, trust, and respect.

The above four cultures are positive, because they create a positive work climate, which is conducive to productivity and job satisfaction. They contribute to high performance without explicitly linking reward to performance. The ideal company should possess the attributes of all four types of healthy corporate cultures.

### Vocabulary

aspire	v.	热望, 渴望
civility	n.	礼貌, 端庄
clan	n.	部落, 种族
compelling	adj.	令人信服 (不得不接受) 的
competency	n.	资格, 能力
crystallize	v.	使成形, 使具体化
demise	n.	死亡, 灭亡
dictate	v.	指示, 规定
dysfunction	v.	功能紊乱
entrenched	adj.	确立的, 不容易改变的
expertise	n.	专门技术
facilitate	v.	推动, 促进
fraudulent	adj.	欺骗性的
hierarchy	n.	层次, 层级
implicit	adj.	含蓄的, 固有的
infrastructure	n.	基础设施
initiative	n.	自主决断行事的能力; 主动能力
manipulate	v.	操纵
mantra	n.	曼特罗 (印度教和佛教中的符咒)
(be) obsessed with		沉溺于
pervasive	adj.	普遍深入的
reprimand	v.	申斥



sabotage	<i>v. &amp; n.</i>	妨害, 故意破坏
sideline	<i>v.</i>	迫使退出
unethical	<i>adj.</i>	不道德的, 缺乏职业道德的
validate	<i>v.</i>	使有效确认, 证实

## Notes

1. authoritarian-hierarchical culture: 权威—阶层文化
2. competing-conflictive culture: 竞争—冲突文化
3. laissez faire culture: 放任式文化
4. dishonest-corrupt culture: 欺骗—腐败文化
5. rigid-traditional culture: 顽固—传统文化
6. progressive-adaptive culture: 进步—适应性文化
7. purpose-driven culture: 目标驱动文化
8. the Body Shop: 英国著名的健康及美容品连锁店, 于 1976 年创始于英国布赖顿 (Brighton) 小镇。它的创始人阿妮塔·罗迪克 (Anita Roddick) 在当今的英国商界已享有“先锋人物”之称。自创业以来它就坚持 5 个信念: 反对动物实验、支持社区公平交易、唤醒自觉意识、捍卫人权和保护地球。
9. community-oriented culture: 社区式文化
10. ... workers are free to express their ideas rather than try to “fit in” and please the managers: 公司员工能够自由表达自己的观点, 而不必去“迁就”或者取悦管理者。
11. people-centred culture: 以人为本的文化

## Terms

1. **Hostile Takeover** 敌意收购/ 恶意收购: 善意收购 (Friendly Acquisition) 和敌意收购是依据收购方与被收购公司的合作态度来区分的。所谓善意收购, 是指收购方与被收购公司之间通过双方协议, 达成一致后, 以此作为基础, 由被收购公司主动出让或者配合出售公司股份给收购方, 或者由收购方通过其他途径收购股份而被收购公司不提出任何反对意见。所谓敌意收购, 是指收购方不顾及被收购公司董事会和经理层的利益和苦衷, 既无事先沟通, 也鲜有警示, 直接在市场上展开标购, 诱引被收购公司股东出让股份。所以, 敌意收购的价格经常超出市价很多, 而且结果具有很大的不确定性。
2. **Total Quality Management** 全面质量管理: 全面质量管理理论是由费根堡姆于 1961 年提出的, 指组织内每个人都持续努力以改善产品质量, 达到使顾客满意。这一理论是将质量控制扩展到产品寿命循环的全过程, 强调全体员工都参与质量控制。它将质量的原



则应用到企业满足顾客需要的所有努力中去。全面质量管理的核心思想是,企业的一切活动都围绕着质量来进行。它不仅要求质量管理部门进行质量管理,还要求从企业最高决策者到一般员工均应参加到质量管理过程中。全面质量管理还强调,质量控制活动应包括从市场调研、产品规划、产品开发、制造、检测到售后服务等产品寿命循环的全过程。可以看出,全面质量管理的基本特点是全员参加、全过程、全面运用一切有效的方法、全面控制质量因素、力求全面提高经济效益的质量管理模式。

3. **Motivation Theory / Need Hierarchy Theory** 动机理论 / 需要层次理论: 美国著名社会心理学家亚伯拉罕·马斯洛认为,人类动机的发展和需要的满足有密切的关系,需要的层次有高低的不同,低层次的需要是生理需要,向上依次是安全、爱与归属、尊重和自我实现的需要。现代新的管理科学的宗旨,不是像传统管理学那样,把人作为物和机器来看待,而是要把人作为人来管理。人不同于物的根本之处,就在于人有自己内在的精神世界,有物质需要之上的主观需要。马斯洛的动机理论使人们认识到,人除了低层次的基础需要,如生理需要、安全需要之外,还有高层次的需要,包括自我实现以及对真、善、美的追求。正如马斯洛所说:“人生活在稳定的价值观的体系中,而不是生活在毫无价值观的机器人世界里。”

## Exercises

### I. Reading Comprehension

**Try to understand the following sentences from the text and exchange your ideas with your classmates.**

1. Corporate culture dictates how the company is run and how people are promoted.
2. It is everyman for himself.
3. A house divided cannot survive long in a highly competitive global economy.
4. Chaos and confusion are the order of the day.
5. Often, decisions are made in the morning only to be nullified in the afternoon.
6. In this culture, greed is good and money is God.
7. Creative accounting and misleading profit reports are a matter of routine.
8. Their mantra is “We have always done things this way.” As a result, the world passes them by and eventually they are left with an empty shell of the former self.
9. Excitement is in the air.
10. The overarching purpose tends to go beyond the bottom line. All great companies endure because they serve a higher purpose.



## II. Questions for Discussion

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Unit 1

1. Again in today's business world, with IT and communication developments, with more and more employees traveling on business around the globe or working at home or wherever but not necessarily to be always in company or office, is it still necessary to talk much about the role of a corporate culture? In what way can you, as a manager, urge or encourage your employees, not employees in traditional sense staying with you in your company buildings, to "carry" your corporate culture with them wherever they are?
2. Is it possible someday in the future that a company has no fixed employees and an employee does not necessarily belong to one company? If yes, is it still necessary to talk about "corporate cultures"? Is it possible that at that time we just talk about a uniform and globally practical business culture?