



# Organizational Culture

## Chapter 9

Leadership for Health Professionals: Theory, Skills, and Applications  
Third Edition

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### Title: Organizational Culture Exercise

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**Task:** Complete the exercise below focused on organizational culture.

**Basic:** Follow the steps below.

#### Organizational Culture Exercise

**Task 0:** Do not consider any of your personal experiences in this analysis through Task 4, only use “things” you observe, review, or analyze. Do not read Task 5 until Tasks 1 through 4 are completed. You must write (pick a recorder) down your analysis on the following pages starting on page 3. You have 80 minutes to complete the Tasks below. We will discuss when you are finished.

**Task 1:** What “things” would you observe, analyze, study, or review to try and understand an organization’s culture? List them under Task 1. What “things” are available to you in the next 80 minutes (since you can only use what is readily available for this exercise)? List what is available to you under Task 1.

**Task 2:** Determine what type of culture the organization has by A) determining what model to use to categorize the culture with the culture’s distinguishing characteristics and B) determine the organization’s culture. List the categorization of culture under Task 2.

**Task 3:** Write up a short half to full page organizational culture description under Task 3. Include what noted differences to the categorized culture may exist in the analyzed culture.

**Task 4:** What recommendations can you make to strengthen organizational culture of the analyzed culture? Write 3 to 5 recommendations, and why you made those recommendations, under Task 4.

You have 60 minutes as a group to perform all the tasks and present your findings.

#### Remember the following:

##### Levels of Culture and Their Interaction

**Level 1. Artifacts and Creations**—most visible, its constructed social and physical environment. Includes technology, art, visible and audible behavior patterns (visible but often not decipherable) e.g. written and spoken language, overt behaviors, and how members demonstrate status.

**Level 2. Values**—Testable in the physical environment; testable only by social consensus (such as taking care of patients). Central values that provide the day-to-day operating principles by which the members of the culture guide their behavior. As values are taken for granted, they gradually become beliefs and assumptions and drop out of consciousness, just as habits become unconscious and automatic.

**Level 3. Basic Underlying Assumptions**—Relationship to environment; nature of reality, time and space; nature of human nature; nature of human activity; nature of human relationships (taken for granted, invisible, preconscious) the implicit assumptions that tell group members how to perceive, think about, and feel about things. These assumptions are taken for granted; members would find behavior based on any other premise inconceivable.

### Organizational Mission Statements, Vision Statements and Values state the intent of organizational culture.

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#### Categorization of Culture

[http://www.managementhelp.org/org\\_thry/culture/culture.htm](http://www.managementhelp.org/org_thry/culture/culture.htm)

## Some Types of Culture

There are different types of culture just like there are different types of personality. Researcher Jeffrey Sonnenfeld identified the following four types of cultures.

### Academy Culture

Employees are highly skilled and tend to stay in the organization, while working their way up the ranks. The organization provides a stable environment in which employees can development and exercise their skills. Examples are universities, hospitals, large corporations, etc.

### Baseball Team Culture

Employees are “free agents” who have highly prized skills. They are in high demand and can rather easily get jobs elsewhere. This type of culture exists in fast-paced, high-risk organizations, such as investment banking, advertising, etc.

### Club Culture

The most important requirement for employees in this culture is to fit into the group. Usually employees start at the bottom and stay with the organization. The organization promotes from within and highly values seniority. Examples are the military, some law firms, etc.

### Fortress Culture

Employees don't know if they'll be laid off or not. These organizations often undergo massive reorganization. There are many opportunities for those with timely, specialized skills. Examples are savings and loans, large car companies, etc.

<http://www.entarga.com/stratplan/culture.htm>

## Interpersonal Interaction Model

- **Power Culture:** Strong leaders are needed to distribute resources. Leaders are firm, but fair and generous to loyal followers. If badly managed there is rule by fear, abuse of power for personal gain, and political intrigue.
- **Achievement culture:** Rewards results, not unproductive efforts. Work teams are self-directed. Rules and structure serve the system, not an end by themselves. A possible downside is sustaining energy and enthusiasm over time.
- **Support Culture:** Employee is valued as a person, as well as a worker. Employee harmony is important. Weakness is a possible internal commitment without an external task focus.
- **Role Culture:** Rule of law with clear responsibility and reward system. Provides stability, justice, and efficiency. Weakness is impersonal operating procedures and a stifling of creativity and innovation.

## Risk & Feedback Model

- **Macho, Tough-guy Culture:** High risks, quick feedback of results. (Advertising, entertainment)
- **Work-hard & Play-hard Culture:** Few risks, quick feedback. (Sales driven)
- **Bet-the-Company Culture:** High risk, slow feedback. (Aerospace)
- **Process Culture:** Little to no feedback. Concentration is on “how” work is done. (Highly regulated, government)

<http://fds.oup.com/www.oup.co.uk/pdf/bt/fincham/Chapter15.pdf>

## Point 6 – Classifying cultures?

One way of exploring cultures is to classify them into types.

1. **Role Cultures** – are highly formalized, bound with regulations and paperwork and authority and hierarchy dominate relations.
2. **Task Cultures** – are the opposite, they preserve a strong sense of the basic mission of the organization and teamwork is the basis on which jobs are designed.
3. **Power Cultures** – have a single power source, which may be an individual or a corporate group. Control of rewards is a major source of power.





## TASK 4 Recommendations:

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2) \_\_\_\_\_  
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Why?

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3) \_\_\_\_\_  
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Why?

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4) \_\_\_\_\_  
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Why?

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5) \_\_\_\_\_  
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Why?

Task 5: Now, bring your experiences and personal affect into the analysis. Are your experiences and emotional responses to what you have determined in Task 3 and 4 congruent with your experience and emotional connection to the organization? Write a half to a full page to discuss this under Task 5.

