

Perceptions of Organizational Culture by Employee Level:

A Case Study

by

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ABSTRACT

A case study was conducted for this research, with a 35-item employee opinion survey, the *People Centered Culture Survey*, used as the method of data collection.

Management and non-management healthcare employees at Company ABC responded to questions designed to assess their organization's culture. Specifically, the purpose of the research was to identify any discrepancies that might exist between perceptions of organizational cultural held by management and non-management employees. There were a total of 50 respondents, who were predominantly female, non-management employees.

The analysis of results included basic descriptive statistics as well as a z-test of proportions for statistical significance. Mean difference scores between management and non-management employees were not large in magnitude, but nevertheless indicated that

discrepancies were prevalent between the two employee populations, predominantly on issues of trust and ‘walk the talk’ leadership.

A goal of this research was to provide Company ABC with insight as to how the differing levels of employees view their organizational culture. Based on the results of the survey, conclusions were drawn and recommendations were made. Areas in need of action pertain to issues of trust and leadership, specifically management communication and follow-through and valuing employees at all levels.

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Chapter I: Introduction

The concept of organization culture has gained the increasing attention of audiences, both in academia and in the business world. According to Schein, culture can be defined as:

A pattern of basic assumptions – invented, discovered, or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration – that has worked well enough to be considered valid, and therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems. (Schein, 1985, p. 9)

Marcic and Seltzer (1998) take Schein's definition of culture a step further and apply it specifically to the organizational setting. They state that organizational culture is the "collection of relatively uniform and enduring beliefs, values, customs, traditions, and practices shared by the organization's members and transmitted from one generation of employees to another" (p. 254). In turn, the culture helps set the tone, or behavioral norms that are accepted by others in the organization.

A People Process Culture exists within Phillips Plastics and is what sets them apart from so many other organizations. Bob Cervenka, founder and CEO for Phillips Plastics, coined and frequently uses phrases such as "all people are important" and "people working together achieve more" (Carr, 1999, p. 90). The phrases capture the underlying values that are the basis of the company's business structure and strategy (Carr, 1999).

Literature suggests that in order for an organization's culture to be "people-centered," certain values, beliefs, and assumptions must exist throughout the

organization. Dr. Charles Krueger, former People Process Culture Chair at the University of Wisconsin-Stout, conducted extensive research on organizational culture. His research concluded that for an organization to be considered a People Process Culture, five key elements must be in place:

- People-first core values and a clearly articulated vision and mission
- Strong leadership practices that ‘walk the talk’ at all levels within the organization
- High levels of trust and open communication among all stakeholder groups, employees, customers, suppliers, vendors, shareholders, and community members
- Work environments and human/operational practices that reflect and align with the organization’s core values
- Responsiveness, adaptability and a talent for thriving on change (Carr, 1999, p. 13).

Statement of the Problem

Many organizations struggle with getting all employees “on the same page” regarding company values and vision. While it is desirable to have all employees have a thorough understanding of their organization’s culture, it is not easy to achieve. Furthermore, as important as cultures are to an organization, they are difficult to assess (Schein, 1985).

In order for organizational leaders to gain an understanding of how their employees perceive the culture, it is necessary to conduct some form of cultural

assessment. It is imperative that the organizational culture is perceived equally by all members of the organization. Krueger acknowledges, “It has to start at the top. Leaders can create the understanding, belief, and will needed to facilitate change...and hold people – including themselves – accountable to the new values and standards for behaviors” (as cited in Carr, 1999). Dr. Charles Krueger recognized the difficulty of assessing the components of organizational culture and developed the *People Centered Culture Survey* instrument. It was designed to allow organizations to more easily assess the current state of their organizational culture. An assessment such as his can provide insight into issues that may have gone previously undetected, allowing future action to be taken to eliminate those gaps and, ultimately, improve the work environment. It is important for organizational leaders to keep in mind that, “insight without action will have no effect at all” (Pfeffer, 1998, p.104).

This case study investigates employee perceptions of organizational culture, through the use of Dr. Krueger’s survey. Specifically, differences between management and non-management employee perceptions of culture at Company ABC are assessed.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research is to assess and explore the perceptions of the organizational culture at Company ABC. In this specific case study, the survey will allow Company ABC employees to offer their opinions and perceptions of the organization’s culture. Specifically, the objective of this survey will be to determine if there are any discrepancies between the perceptions of the organizational culture held by management employees and those held by non-management employees.

Insights gained through this study will be beneficial not only to the participating organization, but to other organizations who want to gain a better understanding of their culture. By knowing how employees at all levels perceive the organization's culture, leaders may be better able to communicate in a manner that is perceived equally by all members of the organization. With that knowledge, organizations might achieve consistency across all groups of employees, departments, branches, and locations.

A healthy organizational culture is vital to any organization; however, given that Company ABC is in the healthcare industry, it seems logical that their culture should most definitely be healthy. Since the mission of Company ABC is to provide quality healthcare to its patients, families, and communities, it is imperative that the people who work here feel they are treated well, so that in return they treat their clients in a like manner.

Assumptions of the Study

The basic underlying assumption of this study is that employees at Company ABC perceive their organization's culture in some manner.

Definition of Terms

People Process Culture: an organization environment that creates a strong, positive belief in people and sustains a high level of performance and profit over an extended period of time (People Process Culture, 2007).

Perception: awareness of the elements of environment through physical sensation (Merriam-Webster, 2008).

Management: employees at Company ABC in a position with a title of ‘director’ or ‘supervisor.’

Non-management: employees at Company ABC in a position without a title of ‘director’ or ‘supervisor.’

Favorable/Favorability: responses on the *People Centered Culture Survey* of ‘4’ (usually true) or ‘5’ (always true) are considered favorable responses

Limitations of the Study

One limitation to this study is that the sample surveyed was not as representative of the organization as possible. The population was comprised mostly of non-management employees (n=36). Additionally, the majority of the population was female (n=47). Another limitation was that the time allowed for data collection was not adequate to gain a higher survey response rate. Furthermore, another employee opinion survey was in preparation during the administration of the *People Centered Culture Survey*. Finally, although this study was designed to be a single case study, administering the survey to multiple organizations would have provided comparison samples, thus potentially offering more robust results.

Methodology

After approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) was received and a thorough literature review conducted, the *People Centered Culture Survey* was sent out to 100 hospital employees, including management and non-management staff. The survey was accompanied by a cover letter, which explained the intent and purpose of the study and asked for the employees' participation. Once all completed surveys were collected, results were analyzed, conclusions were drawn, and recommendations were made.

Chapter II: Literature Review

This chapter further addresses the definitions and components of high performing organizational culture. Organizational cultures from several of today's leading organizations are also explored. The various constructs assessed in the *People Centered Culture Survey* are explored and this chapter outlines the primary components that are deemed necessary to a high performing people process organizational culture.

An organization's culture plays an influential and crucial role in its performance and profitability. Fleming, Coffman, and Harter (2005) summarize this effect, simplifying it down to this basic linear relationship: "employee attitudes affect customer attitudes, and customer attitudes affect financial performance" (p. 111). Keeping this relationship at the forefront of the organizational culture will benefit the company performance and profitability, as "an organization that puts its people first will find that its people put the organization first" (Pfeffer, 1998, p.121).

In his book, *The Human Equation*, Jeffrey Pfeffer asserts that there are "seven dimensions that seem to characterize most if not all of the systems producing profits through people" (Pfeffer, 1998, p. 64). Pfeffer's original list consisted of sixteen dimensions, however he felt some had multiple components that could be combined. The dimensions that Pfeffer (1998) identifies as necessary to an effective organizational culture are:

1. Employment security
2. Selective hiring of new personnel
3. Self-managed teams and decentralization of decision making as the basic principles of organizational design

4. Comparatively high compensation contingent on organizational performance
5. Extensive training
6. Reduced status distinctions and barriers, including dress, language, office arrangements, and wage differences across levels
7. Extensive sharing of financial and performance information throughout the organization (p. 64-65).

As previously noted, Dr. Charles Krueger has conducted extensive research on organizational cultures. His research denoted several key elements that comprise a high performing people process culture: core values, leadership, trust, support systems, and managing change (Krueger, 1998).

Core Values

People-first core values are the basis of a people process culture and “influence corporate structure, decision making, and behavior” (Carr, 1999, p. 14). According to Collins and Porras (1994) “visionary companies” generally have three to six core values and can be understood in simple terms (p. 74). Phillips Plastics created their dominant values to state “all people are important” and “all people working together will achieve more” (Krueger, 1998). Having a strong set of core values in place is necessary to having a successful business.

Leadership

It is not enough to simply have the core values defined. Once they are in place, it is important that they are communicated to and practiced by all levels of the organization. Pfeffer (1998) notes that the “difference is not in the talk but in the ability to actually implement practices that accomplish these high-sounding goals” (Pfeffer, 1998, p. 102). That is, not only do employees – at all levels – need to believe in the mission and values set forth by the culture of the organization, but they must actively put them into practice on a daily basis. It is especially important for employees to witness leadership “walking the talk.” In doing so, “People Process Culture leaders at all levels create environments that foster communication, build trust, and facilitate teamwork” (Carr, 1999, p. 15).

Trust

It seems obvious that trust should be present in order for an organization to be high performing, but why is it so important? High levels of trust and open communication among all stakeholder groups encourage openness toward change and reduce fear (Carr, 1999). Simply put, “people who trust each other work together more efficiently” (Carr, 1999, p. 16).

Support Systems

Work environments and human and/or operational practices designed to reflect the organization’s core values help sustain the organization. Support systems help shape employee behavior and include systems such as: communication, policies and procedures, symbols, and training (Krueger, 1998). With a People Process Culture, there

aren't any hidden agendas, nor are there secrets. Symbols of status and hierarchy are virtually almost always absent (Carr, 1999).

Managing Change

In order to be successful, an organization needs the ability to anticipate and adapt to change (Krueger, 1998). While an organization's core ideologies may rarely change, "visionary companies display a powerful drive for progress that enables them to change and adapt without compromising their cherished core ideals (Collins & Porras, 1994, p. 9). Change is inevitable, especially in high performing organizations, but with people and processes that can adapt to change, a People Process Culture is "able to galvanize its customers, suppliers, employees and other key stakeholders to reduce threats and capitalize better on opportunities" (Krueger, 1998).

Case Examples

The following examples showcase several organizations that each exemplify components of high performing People Process Cultures.

The supermarket chain, Wegmans, has 71 stores in operation, employs over 37,000 people, and reports annual sales of \$4.5 billion. They care about their people – and it shows. Wegmans offers a competitive benefit program, namely evident through their employee scholarship program, "which provides nearly \$4.5 million in tuition assistance to employees each year" (www.wegmans.com). It is apparent by statements made on the organization's website that Wegmans values its people. They summarize their employee culture in five simple statements:

- We care about and listen to our people.
- High standards are a way of life. We pursue excellence in everything we do.
- We make a difference in every community we serve.
- We respect our people.
- We empower our people to make decisions that improve their work and benefit our customers and our company (www.wegmans.com).

Mayo Clinic is the “first and largest integrated, not-for-profit group practice in the world” (www.mayoclinic.org). With three clinic sites – in Rochester, Minn., Jacksonville, Fla., and Scottsdale/Phoenix, Ariz. – and over 46,000 healthcare staff, Mayo Clinic still maintains the philosophy that patients come first – and rightfully so. However, the culture at Mayo Clinic is one of “teamwork, personal responsibility, integrity, innovation, trust, and communication” (www.mayoclinic.org). Their organizational culture encompasses some of the key elements in a People Process Culture.

The essence of the five key elements of a high performing People Process Culture was captured by Krueger when he developed the *People Centered Culture Survey*. Each of the 35 questions on the instrument is aimed at assessing the organization’s culture, focusing on one of the following seven category areas:

- Trust
- Core Values – People/Vision
- Core Values – Quality & Service
- Managing Change

- 'Walk the Talk' Leadership
- Support Systems – Human Resources
- Support Systems – Operations

Each of the above survey categories consists of five items, which allowed each category to have equal representation by survey items.

Chapter III: Methodology

This chapter will include information regarding the selection and description of the study participants, the survey instrument, data collection and analysis, and limitations of the study.

Subject Selection and Description

A computer-generated list of possible subjects was provided by a Company ABC Human Resource staff member. This sample population of 100 employees represented a majority of the departments at the hospital, which had a total of 550 employees at the time of the study. The survey was accompanied by a cover letter, which explained that receipt of the survey did not mandate participation and that any responses given would remain confidential. There was no compensation provided for choosing to participate in the study.

The *People Centered Culture Survey* was sent to 100 hospital employees, with positions at both management and non-management levels. Of the 100 employees, 50 were completed and returned to the researcher, resulting in a 50% response rate.

Instrumentation

The various components of organizational culture at Company ABC were measured using the *People Centered Culture Survey*, first developed by Charles Krueger in 1998. The instrument was well-established and has been validated by Sharon Hansen, a former University of Wisconsin-Stout master's student. Hansen (1999) concluded that

“the survey instrument is consistent” and “the survey items are characteristic of a people centered organization culture” (p. 33).

A few alterations were made to the version of the survey used in this particular study, to better suit the specific needs of this research. These alterations included a reduction in the number of demographic questions asked of the participants, as not all the original information was needed. Additionally, and most importantly, the number of scale points for the survey items was reduced from a ten-point to a six-point scale. This was done with hopes that providing fewer response options would help better distinguish between favorable and unfavorable responses. Both the original and revised scales included a response option of “do not know.” For the purpose of this research, all items on the *People Centered Culture Survey* were placed a six-point Likert scale, where 1=not true, 2=rarely true, 3=sometimes true, 4=usually true, 5=always true, 0=do not know.

Data Collection Procedures

A 35-question survey was mailed to employees in September 2006. Participants were instructed to seal the completed survey in a prepaid, addressed envelope (provided by the researcher) and place it in the mail. Completed surveys were mailed to the People Process Culture Center at the University of Wisconsin-Stout in Menomonie, Wisconsin.

Data Analysis

Basic descriptive statistics were used as the primary tool of analysis in this study. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 15.0 was used to analyze the quantitative data. A z-test for proportions was conducted to determine if statistically

significant differences existed between management and non-management employee responses. This test compares percent favorable scores, as opposed to the independent sample t-test, which compares mean scores between groups. Percent favorable scores were calculated with responses of 4 (usually true) or 5 (always true) as *favorable*, and responses of 1 (not true), 2 (rarely true) or 3 (sometimes true) as *unfavorable*. Responses of 0 (do not know) were coded as neither favorable nor unfavorable. There was an insufficient amount of comments made to conduct any qualitative analyses.

Limitations

One limitation to this study is that the sample surveyed was not as representative of the organization as possible. The population was comprised mostly of non-management employees (n=36). Additionally, the majority of the population was female (n=47). Another limitation was that the time allowed for data collection was not adequate to gain a higher survey response rate. Additionally, another employee opinion survey was in preparation during the same time of the administration of the *People Centered Culture Survey*. Finally, although this study was designed to be a single case study, administering the survey to multiple organizations would have provided comparison samples, thus potentially offering more robust results.

Chapter IV: Results

A 35-item survey was administered with the specific purpose of determining if any discrepancies exist between the perceptions of the organizational culture held by management employees and those held by non-management employees at Company ABC. An assessment such as this can provide the organization with insight into issues that may have gone previously undetected, allowing future action to be taken to eliminate those gaps and improve the work environment. This section will address the quantitative results of the questionnaire.

Demographics

Of the 100 hospital employees who received a survey, 50 completed and returned the questionnaire to the researcher. There were greater proportions of female, non-management respondents. More than half (94%, n=47) were female, while just 4% (n=2) were male. Additionally, 72% (n=36) of the respondents were non-management employees, with only 24% (n=12) being management employees. One participant did not provide his/her gender, while two participants did not code themselves as either management or non-management employees.

Statistical Analyses

Descriptive statistics were the primary analytic technique used to review the *People Centered Culture Survey* results. All items were on a six-point Likert scale, where 1=not true, 2=rarely true, 3=sometimes true, 4=usually true, 5=always true, 0=do not

know. Each item was reviewed in terms of average response rating, based on the six-point Likert scale, with the highest possible mean score being 5.0.

Item Analysis

Through basic descriptive frequency statistics, it was determined that in general, management employees (n=12) reported higher mean scores on various aspects of their organizational culture, compared to non-management employees. Specifically, management employees responded on average 0.3 points higher than their non-management counterparts (based on 27 of the 35 total items). As a group, the management employees tended to be more favorable on the majority of survey themes such as: Trust, “Walk the Talk” Leadership, Support – Human Resources, Support – Operations, Core Values – People/Vision, and Core Values – Quality & Service. Specific topic areas where management employees were more favorable include the following items:

- Management follows through on its commitments.
- Our managers demonstrate integrity.
- People in our organization receive above average wages and benefits, as well as bonuses or a share of the profits.
- Our organization shares all important business information, including profit and loss statements, with all employees.
- Most people in our organization believe that all people who work here are important.

- All people readily help others get their work done, so everyone can achieve more.

Conversely, non-management employees (n=36) reported slightly higher mean scores (0.1 points higher on average) primarily on issues related to the Managing Change survey theme. More specifically non-management employees responded more favorably on the topic of people in the organization having a sense of urgency about the need to deliver quality and service.

The overall results of the survey highlighted four key items, or areas of interest, that employees gave the highest ratings to. Regardless of which employee group was most favorable, these items had the largest favorability discrepancy between management and non-management employees. The key items were related to organizational culture topics such as all people are important, management follow-through on commitments, wages and benefits, and the need to deliver quality and service. Table 1 below displays the overall survey category results.

Table 1

Survey category mean by position level

Category	Management	Non-Management	Absolute Difference
Trust	3.88	3.49	0.40
Walk/Talk Leadership	4.15	3.81	0.34
Support - HR	3.65	3.37	0.27
Support - Operations	4.18	3.92	0.26
Core Values - People/Vision	4.11	3.94	0.17
Core Values - Quality Svc	3.98	3.97	0.01
Managing Change	3.47	3.60	0.14

The category mean scores are relatively high, considering the six-point Likert scale, as all are 3.30 or greater. This indicates an amount of relatively high amount of favorability, or agreement toward survey categories, among both populations, given that favorability was calculated as responses of either 4 (usually true) or 5 (always true).

Although the average discrepancies (mean score differences) between management and non-management employees were not large, the two employee populations differed in their overall perceptions of their organization's culture, especially on issues of trust and 'walk the talk' leadership. Table 2 below shows the top five favorable items for both management and non-management employees. While management employees are more favorable on issues surrounding leadership and support, non-management employees goals and values. Both sets of employees feel the need to deliver quality services is important.

Table 2

Top five favorable survey items by position level

Position Level	Mean Score	Item Text
Management	4.50	17. Some values or beliefs in our workplace emphasize serving the customer.
	4.42	12. Our managers demonstrate integrity.
	4.33	14. The maintenance of our facility helps us deliver quality products and service to our external customers.
	4.33	19. Management believes that our people can compete with anyone.
	4.33	34. Our organization provides significant resources that allow our people to continuously learn.
Non-Management	4.50	17. Some values or beliefs in our workplace emphasize serving the customer.
	4.28	11. People in our organization have a sense of urgency about the need to deliver quality and service.
	4.23	9. Our organization has 1-5 clear people-based values or principles.
	4.22	34. Our organization provides significant resources that allow our people to continuously learn.
	4.14	23. We have some “big” and straightforward goals about the future state of our organization.

A z-test for proportions was conducted to determine if statistically significant differences existed between management and non-management employee responses. This test compares percent favorable scores, which were calculated with responses of 4 (usually true) or 5 (always true) as *favorable*. The test concluded that only five of the survey items were significant. Those five items are:

- Management follows through on its commitments.
- Our organization has 1-5 clear people-based values or principles.
- People understand the key business goals of our company.
- People in our organization have a sense of urgency about the need to deliver quality and service.
- Our managers demonstrate integrity.

This chapter described the results from the *People Centered Culture Survey*. For this particular research, there were a total of 50 respondents, who were predominantly female, non-management employees. A test of statistical significance was performed and concluded that only five of the 35 total survey items yielded significant differences.

Chapter V: Discussion

This final chapter discusses conclusions made from the *People Process Culture Survey*. The review of literature discussed characteristics of high performing People Process Cultures. The intent of the survey, which consisted of 35 items, was to determine if discrepancies existed between perceptions of organizational culture held by management and non-management employees. Ultimately, the goal of this assessment was to provide Company ABC with insight into issues that may have gone previously undetected, which would allow future action to be taken to eliminate any gaps and improve the work environment.

Limitations

There were several limitations to this study. First, the sample surveyed was not as representative of the organization as possible, as the population was comprised mostly of non-management (n=36), female (n=47) employees. Another limitation was that the time allowed for data collection was not adequate to gain a higher survey response rate. In addition, another employee opinion survey was in preparation during the same time of administration of the *People Centered Culture Survey*. One final limitation was that although this study was designed to be a single case study, administering the survey to multiple organizations would have provided comparison samples, thus potentially offering more robust results.

Conclusions

To draw conclusions from this research, one must first refer back to the underlying goal of this study, which was two-fold. First, this research aimed at determining if – and where – discrepancies existed in perceptions of organizational culture between management and non-management employees. The second goal of the cultural assessment was to provide Company ABC with insight into issues that the organization may not be aware of.

Although the mean difference scores between management and non-management employees were not large in magnitude, discrepancies *do* exist between the two employee populations. This intuitively indicates that the organization would benefit from follow-up action to attempt to minimize, and hopefully, eliminate those gaps.

After reflecting upon the literature and previous research, and given that the discrepancies between management and non-management employee perceptions of culture are relatively quite small, Company ABC can be considered on its way toward becoming a People Process Culture. Areas in need of action pertain to issues of trust and leadership, specifically management communication and follow-through and valuing employees at all levels.

Recommendations

Based on the results of this research case study, several recommendations can be made for Company ABC. First, a follow-up study, utilizing the same *People Centered Culture Survey* instrument would be beneficial. It would be interesting to track how management and non-management employee perceptions shift, if at all, given the results

of this current research. Additionally, more robust results could be obtained through the administration of the same survey instrument to a much larger sample size, and one that was more representative of both employee populations (management and non-management).

On a more general note, Company ABC – or other organizations for that matter – might find it of interest to conduct a linkage study, in which the differing perceptions of culture are linked to business outcomes measures (profitability, turnover, etc.).

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Appendix A: Survey Instrument

People Centered Culture Survey

Developed by Charles Krueger, Ph.D.
People Process Chair, University of Wisconsin - Stout
Menomonie, Wisconsin

Description:

The *People Centered Culture Survey* is designed to help you assess your organization's culture.

Directions:

- **Please read each of the items carefully.** Decide to which extent you believe each statement is true of your organization today. Rate each statement on a scale of 1 - 5, according to the scale below.
- Circle the number that best describes your organization as it exists today.
 - 1 = not true
 - 2 = rarely true
 - 3 = sometimes true
 - 4 = usually true
 - 5 = always true
 - 0 = do not know

Definitions:

Please note that the word **management** in the statements below refers to any position with a title of *supervisor* or *director*.

1 = not true, 2 = rarely true, 3 = sometimes true, 4 = usually true, 5 = always true, 0 = do not know
--

- | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. There is a high level of trust among everyone. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| 2. People in our organization mutually respect each other. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| 3. All people readily help others get their work done, so everyone can achieve more. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| 4. People in our organization are proactive and quickly adapt to change. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| 5. Leadership at all levels consistently "walks the talk" (practices what it preaches). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| 6. People here believe that they have long-term job security. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| 7. Our facilities are comfortable and promote open communication. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| 8. Management follows through on its commitments. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| 9. Our organization has 1-5 clear people-based values or principles. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| 10. People understand the key business goals of our company. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| 11. People in our organization have a sense of urgency about the need to deliver quality and service. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| 12. Our managers demonstrate integrity. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| 13. In our organization, there is a small difference in status between the top position and an entry-level position. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| 14. The maintenance of our facility helps us deliver quality products and service to our external customers. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| 15. The values or beliefs in our workplace promote trust. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| 16. Most people in our organization believe that all people who work here are important. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| 17. Some values or beliefs in our workplace emphasize serving the customer. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| 18. People in our organization learn rapidly and share key learnings. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |

1 = not true, 2 = rarely true, 3 = sometimes true, 4 = usually true, 5 = always true, 0 = do not know
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19. Management believes that our people can compete with anyone.	1	2	3	4	5	0
20. Our organization has an outstanding selection process for new hires.	1	2	3	4	5	0
21. Our work environment promotes teamwork and cooperation with the external customer.	1	2	3	4	5	0
22. People are not afraid to share their ideas, fears, and concerns.	1	2	3	4	5	0
23. We have some "big" and straightforward goals about the future state of our organization.	1	2	3	4	5	0
24. The values or beliefs in our workplace promote quality work.	1	2	3	4	5	0
25. People at all levels are encouraged to take risks.	1	2	3	4	5	0
26. Our managers know the names of many employees.	1	2	3	4	5	0
27. People in our organization receive above average wages and benefits, as well as bonuses or a share of the profits.	1	2	3	4	5	0
28. Our organization shares all important business information, including profit and loss statements, with all employees.	1	2	3	4	5	0
29. People are not afraid to disagree with anyone.	1	2	3	4	5	0
30. Most people in our organization understand and believe in our core values, principles, or beliefs.	1	2	3	4	5	0
31. People have a good understanding about their future role in the organization.	1	2	3	4	5	0
32. The rewards for trying to solve problems are greater than the risks of doing so.	1	2	3	4	5	0
33. Leaders consistently hold themselves and others accountable to the core values.	1	2	3	4	5	0
34. Our organization provides significant resources that allow our people to continuously learn.	1	2	3	4	5	0
35. The way our organization is structured promotes teamwork.	1	2	3	4	5	0

Additional Information:

This information will be used for research purposes only. The answers will remain confidential and will not be used to identify any individuals.

Please check the answer that best describes you.

Years Employment

- Less than 6 months
- 6 months - 1 year
- 1 - 2 years
- 2 - 5 years
- 5 - 10 years
- 10 - 15 years
- 15+ years

Gender

- Male
- Female

Position

- Management
- Non-management

Compared to organizations similar to yours, how would you assess the overall performance of your organization?

- Below average
- Average
- Above Average
- Do not know

Please write any additional comments below pertaining to the culture of your organization or any of the items on this survey.

Thank you for participating in this survey. All responses will be kept confidential.

Appendix B: Cover Letter

Dear Red Cedar Medical Center Staff Member:

In an effort to assess how the staff members view various aspects of the culture of your organization, UW-Stout graduate student, Kayla Schnacky, is administering this organizational culture survey. The survey was developed by Dr. Charles Krueger of UW-Stout, through his research. I sincerely apologize for the short turnaround, however the deadline to mail completed surveys is **Monday, September 18**. Your assistance in this research is greatly appreciated.

Attached is a copy of the *People Centered Culture Survey*. The results of this survey will not only diagnose strengths and areas for improvement in the culture of your organization, but it will also determine if there are differences in the perceptions of the organizational culture between “management” and “non-management” employees.

Since the mission of Red Cedar Medical center is to “provide quality integrated healthcare to our patients, families, and communities,” it is imperative that the people who work here feel they are treated well, so that in return they treat their clients in a like manner. Research has shown that the productivity of organizations that are people-centered is 30-40 percent higher than comparable organizations that do not treat their people as well. However, an organization can only be considered people-centered if the organizational culture is viewed in the same way by all employees, from top management on down.

Please answer the statements on this survey as honestly as you can. No one in your organization will see the completed surveys. When you have finished, please seal the survey in the envelope, and place it in the mail. Completed surveys will be mailed to the People Process Culture Center at UW-Stout. Again, I apologize for the short timeline; however, your timely response by **Monday, September 18** would greatly benefit this research. The results are compiled in such a way that no one individual's answers can be identified. Confidentiality is guaranteed.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact either myself or my research advisor at the information below. Thank you for your assistance. Your time and effort is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Kayla Schnacky

M.S. Applied Psychology Graduate Student
UW-Stout – Menomonie, WI
(218) 310-6695
schnackyk@uwstout.edu

Kari Dahl (Research Advisor)

Chair, People Process Culture
UW-Stout – Menomonie, WI
(715) 232-1145
dahlkar@uwstout.edu

Appendix C: Consent Form

Consent to Participate in UW-Stout Approved Research

Title: Perceptions of Organizational Culture: A Case Study

Investigator: Kayla Schnacky
M.S. Applied Psychology
Culture

Graduate Student, UW-Stout
(218) 310-6695
schnackyk@uwstout.edu

dahlkar@uwstout.edu

Research Sponsor: Kari Dahl, Chair
People Process

UW-Stout
(715) 232-1145

Description:

This research will assess and explore the perceptions of the organizational culture at Red Cedar Medical Center. In this specific case study, the *People Centered Culture Survey* will allow you, as a Red Cedar Medical Center employee, to offer your opinions and perceptions of the organization's culture. Specifically, the objective of this survey is to determine if there are any discrepancies between the perceptions of the organizational culture held by "management" employees (those in a position with a title of director or supervisor) and those held by "non-management" employees.

The significance of this research will be in learning about the way in which companies can spread their values and culture throughout their organization, to ensure that it is being perceived equally by all members of the organization. An assessment such as this will provide insight to issues that may have gone previously undetected. If any discrepancies between the way management and non-management employees perceive the culture at Red Cedar Medical Center are found, future action may be taken to eliminate those gaps, and improve the work environment.

This survey includes 35 statements, to which you will be asked to respond, based upon the extent to which you believe each statement is true of your organization today. Also included in the survey are four additional demographic questions and a space to write comments. Once you have completed the survey, you may seal it in the envelope provided and place it in the mail. Each envelope is prepaid and addressed for your convenience. It will be mailed to the Investigator at the People Process Culture Center at the University of Wisconsin - Stout.

Risks and Benefits:

It is not estimated that there will be any severe risks to you by participating in this research. It is possible, however, that the results of the survey may uncover potential areas of concern for the organization to consider improving. You may find that completion of this survey causes boredom and/or is time-consuming.

Although participation in this research may not appear to have any direct benefits to you, completion of the survey will provide you, as an employee, with a voice to express any opinions and/or concerns you may have about your organization's culture. Should it be determined that a discrepancy exists between the way management and non-management employees perceive the culture at Red Cedar Medical Center, future action may be taken to eliminate those gaps. As a result, you may see improvements in your work environment. Participation in this research may also make it easier to bring up issues of concern in the future.

Time Commitment and Payment:

This particular survey is estimated to take approximately 30 minutes to complete. There will be no financial compensation provided for employees who choose to participate in the study.

Confidentiality:

Confidentiality will be guaranteed throughout the entirety of this research. The results will be compiled in such a way that no one subject's individual responses can be identified. The only identifying factor will be a demographic question that asks participants to select whether they are a management or a non-management employee. However, no one person will be able to be identified out of the total population. When each individual is completed with the survey, he/she will seal it in the provided (addressed and stamped) envelope and mail it to the People Process Culture Center at the University of Wisconsin-Stout.

Your name will not be included on any documents. We do not believe that you can be identified from any of this information. This informed consent will not be kept with the survey document completed with this project.

Right to Withdraw:

You have been selected at random to receive this survey. Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You may choose not to participate without any adverse consequences to you. Should you choose to participate, you may choose to withdraw from the study at any time, again without any penalty.

IRB Approval:

This study has been reviewed and approved by The University of Wisconsin-Stout's Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB has determined that this study meets the ethical obligations required by federal law and University policies. If you have questions or concerns regarding this study please contact the Investigator or Advisor. If you have any questions, concerns, or reports regarding your rights as a research subject, please contact the IRB Administrator.

Investigator: Kayla Schnacky
(218) 310-6695
Services
schnackyk@uwstout.edu

Advisor: Kari Dahl, PPC Chair
(715) 232-1145
dahlkar@uwstout.edu

IRB Administrator
Sue Foxwell, Director, Research
152 Vocational Rehabilitation Bldg.
UW-Stout
Menomonie, WI 54751
(715) 232-2477
foxwells@uwstout.edu

Statement of Consent:

By signing this consent form, you agree to participate in the project entitled, *Perceptions of Organizational Culture: A Case Study*.

Signature

Date

Appendix D: IRB Approval



Stout Solutions • Research Services
112 Voc Rehab Building

University of Wisconsin-Stout
P.O. Box 790
Menomonie, WI 54751 0790

715/232-1126
715/232-1749 (fax)
<http://www.uwstout.edu/rps/>

Date: September 13, 2006

To: Kayla Schnacky

Cc: Kari Dahl

From: Sue Foxwell, Research Administrator and Human Protections Administrator, UW-Stout Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research (IRB)

Subject: **Protection of Human Subjects**

Your project, “*Perceptions of Organizational Culture: A Case Study*,” has been approved by the IRB through the expedited review process. This protocol has been approved provided the following items are addressed. Then the measures you have taken to protect human subjects are adequate to protect everyone involved, including subjects and researchers.

In reference to:

- 1) When some or all of the subjects are likely to be vulnerable to coercion or undue influence, such as children, prisoners, pregnant women, persons with disabilities, or economically or educationally disadvantaged persons, additional safeguards have been included in the study to protect the rights and welfare of these subjects.

Reviewer comment: Within the survey, be sure to insert “optional” in bold letters next to years of employment. This way no one can be singled out.

Please send revisions to Research Services - 152 Voc Rehab.

Please copy and paste the following message to the top of your survey form before dissemination:

This research has been approved by the UW-Stout IRB as required by the Code of Federal Regulations Title 45 Part 46.

This project is approved through September 12, 2007. Research not completed by this date must be submitted again outlining changes, expansions, etc. Annual review and approval by the IRB is required.

Thank you for your cooperation with the IRB and best wishes with your project.

NOTE: This is the only notice you will receive – no paper copy will be sent.

SF:dd