

Organizational Behavior

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Lecture 12:

Culture in Organizations

What is Organization Culture?

- ✓ The basic pattern of **values and assumptions** shared within the organization
- ✓ Defines what is **important** and **unimportant**
- ✓ Company's **DNA**-Invisible, yet powerful template that shapes employee behaviour

Organizational Culture Profile

Organization culture dimensions	Dimension Characteristics
1. Innovation	Experimenting, Opportunity seeking, risk taking, few rules, low cautiousness
2. Stability	Predictability, security, rule-oriented
3. Respect for people	Fairness, Tolerance
4. Outcome orientation	Action oriented, High expectations, Results oriented
5. Attention to detail	Precise, analytic
6. Team orientation	Collaboration, People-oriented
7. Aggressiveness	Competitive, low emphasis on social responsibility

Artifacts of Organizational Culture

- Aspects of the culture you can **see, hear, touch** or **feel**.
- Observable **symbols** and **signs** of culture
- **Physical structures, ceremonies, language and stories.**

Artifacts :Stories and Legends

- Tell tales about **founders, previous employees, successes, failures**
- Describe real people
- Anchor the present in the past and provide explanations and legitimacy for current practices

Artifacts: Rituals and Ceremonies

- **Rituals** : Programmed routines (eg: how visitors are greeted)
- **Ceremonies** : Planned activities for an audience (eg: award ceremonies)

Artifacts: Organizational Language

- Words used to **address people, describe customers, etc.**
- Leaders use phrases and special **vocabulary** as cultural symbols
- Language also found in subcultures

Artifacts: Physical Structures and Symbols

- **Building structure:** May shape and reflect culture
- **Office design conveys cultural meaning:**
(Furniture, Office size, Wall hangings)
- Dress code, convey to employees,...

Cultures and Subcultures

- Large organizations **not** only possess culture but can also exhibit subcultures
- **Dominant Culture** : expresses the core values that are shared by a majority of the Organization's members, giving it a distinct personality

Cultures and Subcultures

- Subcultures : Tend to develop to reflect common problems, situations or experiences by a subgroup
- Subcultures appear in **geographically** dispersed organizations, or where **departments** are large enough to have their own life force outside the organization's.

Birth and Life of a Culture

- Culture are born based on **the personality and philosophy of the founder and earliest employees**
- Often, stories of the early company when it had only a few employees are the foundation for the culture
- These early stories influence the thoughts and behaviours of the employees

Attraction-Selection-Attrition Theory

- Organizations become more homogeneous (stronger culture) through:
- **Attraction**: applicants self-selected and weed out companies based on compatible values
- **Selection**: applicants selected based on values congruent with organization's culture
- **Attrition** : employees quit or are forced out when their values oppose company values

Organizational Socialization

- The process by which individuals learn values, expected behaviour and social knowledge necessary to assume their roles in the organization.

Organizational Socialization

- Organizations have **several options** when it comes to “**assimilating**” an employee:
- **Formal vs. informal**: training vs. learn it yourself
- **Individual vs. collective**: one on one vs. group activities
- **Fixed time vs. variable**: a fixed training period such as apprenticeship, articling, probation period

Stages of Socialization

- **Pre-employment** (outsider): learn about organization and job, form employment relationship expectations
- **Encounter** (newcomers) :test expectations against perceived realities
- **Role management**(insider): strengthen work relationship, practice new behaviour
- **Socialization outcomes:** high motivation, higher loyalty, high satisfaction, lower stress, lower turnover

Culture as a liability

- Culture helps new employees **orient** themselves, this will :
- Help organization to maintain an identity
- Increase organizational commitment and reduce ambiguity for employees
- Culture also **can be a barrier** as it may reduce diversity since founders and hiring managers seek to hire people who have the same perspective as they do.

Matching People to Culture

- **Hiring practices** in many high-tech companies today call for an organizational **“fit”**
- Job candidates also endeavor to find a good organizational match

Matching People to Culture

- **Goffe and Jones** identified four cultural types to help employees select prospective employers:
- **Networked** :family, friendly, sociable, group oriented
- **Mercenary** : fiercely goal oriented, less politicking, lone wolfs
- **Fragmented**: individualists, quality of work and productivity are key success criteria
- **Communal**: values friendship and performance, feelings of belonging with a strong focus on goals

Changing an Organization Culture

- Can this be done, if culture is a long lasting and stable concept?
- Is a culture manageable?
- How would you go about changing a culture?

In the end, changing culture is very very **difficult** and very **expensive**(in terms of \$, people, stress, confusion,.....)

You can **only** create a culture by coaching people in what they are already committed to!.

Reference

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Thank you!

END.

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