



CHANGE READINESS REVIEW

Ensure your organisation's culture is ready for change

The programme that ensures that your organisation is ready for change and aligned to deliver your strategy.

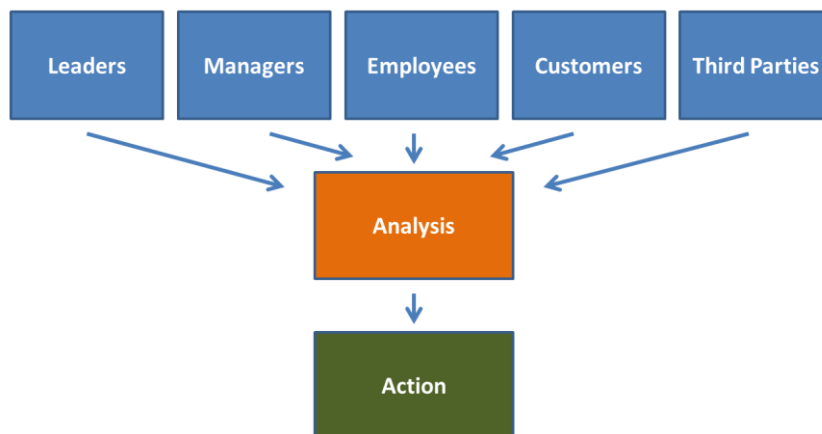
It is simply impossible to transform an organisation unless its culture is ready for change. The ever-increasing pace of change in the modern business world means that today's leaders must be able to take their organisations in new directions swiftly and decisively when the need arises.

As Louis Gerstner, CEO of IBM, proclaimed, "Culture is everything".

Culture is behaviours – how your people behave as individuals and as teams. How they interact with one another, with partners and with customers. Your culture drives your customer experience, your approach to innovation, your ability to adapt and your financial performance.

Your culture may not be what you think it is. An organisation's actual corporate culture is rarely the culture described in its annual report. To uncover your actual corporate culture, you need to ask your people – and this must be done in a way that is genuine, anonymous, interactive and consequence-free. Genuine engagement includes listening – and without genuine engagement with your people, nothing can be achieved. You also need to ask your customers and third parties, as inevitably they will have a different perspective of your organisational culture – and the consequences of this behaviour.

A review of the organisation's culture from the perspective of all key stakeholders



Step 1: Identify your 'Aspirational' Culture. The first step in any change or strategy is to identify what you are trying to achieve: what success looks like. So the first step in our Culture Review is to obtain a picture of the corporate culture you are seeking to develop. This is done via interviews with the leadership and analysis of corporate communications such as annual reports, internet, intranet and appraisal systems.

Step 2: Identify today's culture. Then we discover the actual culture in your organisation through interaction with every key stakeholder:

- **Leadership Interviews.** Board members and executive team members are interviewed on a one-to-one basis to obtain their perspective of the organisation's culture – how the leaders behave, how other people behave, why and the consequences of these behaviours. How does this differ from the desired behaviours? Do people look for improvements in the way things are done? Are they allowed to question the status quo? Are they encouraged to learn from failure? Are they open to new ways of working? Examples are explored during the completely confidential conversation.
- **HR Department interviews.** HR is the secret weapon here. They know more about how your people feel than anyone else, so we pay special attention to this department. The HR Director and key HR people are interviewed to obtain an understanding of the key cultural drivers of the organisation including leadership behaviours, people management practices, appraisal process, incentive programmes and the like.
- **Manager Interviews.** Key people managers are also interviewed on a one-to-one basis.
- **Pre-survey focus groups.** Groups of employees are invited to attend focus groups to explore the same issues. The focus groups are conducted under 'Chatham House Rules' where the content discussed is never attributed to any individuals – or any particular focus group.
- **Anonymous culture survey.** All employees complete an anonymous survey, designed by organisational psychologists and tailored to the explicit needs of the organisation. The results of the survey are aggregated so that no-one can attribute any response to any individual. The results are benchmarked against an appropriate group of external organisations.
- **The view from outside.** To complete the picture, we recommend conducting interviews with key customers, partners and third parties to obtain their impression of the organisation's culture – and how that manifests itself in terms of customer experience.

Step 3: Transform information into insight. The next phase is to work with the leadership to analyse all of the information obtained and transform it into insight - and ultimately into action:

- **Initial analysis of the survey.** The results of the survey are compared to the pre-survey findings and expectations. The initial analysis is shared with the leadership for discussion and then with the wider organisation.
- **Post-survey focus groups.** Groups of managers and groups of employees are invited to attend focus groups to discuss and explore the findings of the survey – to better understand the results. This step is crucial in any culture survey for the simple reason that it engages your people in the improvement and development of your culture.
- **Improvement suggestions.** Suggestions to improve the organisation's change-readiness are documented and approved by the leadership.

Step 4: Action. An action plan is formulated and approved by the leadership. It is then communicated widely with the entire organisation – and progress is monitored.

Keys to success in any culture review:

Over the years, I have seen organisations that do this very well. I have also seen others that make a complete hash of it - treating culture/employee surveys as a 'tick the box' exercise. Needless to say, the latter approach is a complete waste of time.

If you genuinely wish to transform your organisation's culture and ensure it is indeed ready for change, here are my top tips for success:

Genuine anonymity. The culture survey must not only be anonymous but everyone in the company must also believe it is anonymous. This is critical. I have seen surveys that have failed this most basic of tests – and the resultant responses are not worth the paper they are written on.

Genuinely independent survey provider. The survey provider must be credible and genuinely independent. Every person within the company must trust the integrity of the people conducting the review. They must provide all employees with the confidence that the questions have been designed by organisational psychologists, are well-tested and that their responses will be completely anonymous and consequence-free. Don't do it yourself; use a professional survey provider. I have scoured the world and found the best culture survey provider on the planet.

Trusted external facilitator. The people conducting the focus groups, interviews and workshops need to be trusted by everyone in the business – high in empathy and EQ, not just IQ. Fundamentally, you need an external Change Catalyst to lead this.

Transparency of results. All results must be shared with all employees – no matter what story they tell. This may sound obvious but I have seen instances where this most basic of tenets has not been followed.

Action. The actions arising need to be material, genuine and followed through to delivery. Again, sounds like another Blinding Glimpse of the Obvious but I have seen instances where the review stops at the questionnaire and others where the actions are regarded by employees as superficial and meaningless.

Realism. There is no such thing as the perfect company. The analysis, discussions and recommendations need to be realistic and achievable. The purpose is to improve the organisation's change-readiness, not to lament the fact it isn't perfect.

Campbell Macpherson

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Campbell Macpherson

Author of the 2018 Business Book of the Year – ‘The Change Catalyst’.



A multi-disciplined, international, senior business advisor with more than 25 years of experience in enabling the design and successful delivery of strategic change, especially within financial services.

- International business improvement expert
- Strategic change business advisor and change leader
- Strategy execution specialist
- Accomplished transformation facilitator
- Entertaining and thought-provoking public speaker

Campbell advises organisations worldwide via his consultancy Change & Strategy International (www.changeandstrategy.com)

Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (April 2014 – April 2017)

Senior Advisor, Evaluation & Follow-up Division, MD’s Office. 3 year exclusive contract with one of the world’s largest Sovereign Wealth Funds:

1. Improvement of the clarity, impact and value that this pivotal ‘checks and balances’ division added to the Investment Committee. EFD reviewed every investment that went before ADIA’s IC.
2. Leading IC advisory projects including ‘peer review’ missions to the leaders of over 20 of the world’s largest asset owners and managers.
3. Reviewing ADIAs investment governance structure and processes.

Other career highlights:

- James Hay: Leadership team alignment - Leading Change Workshop. Strategy clarification and documentation.
- Sesame: Merged five companies into one, creating the UK’s largest IFA Network. Joined board responsible for Change, HR and Sesame Learning. Conducted national roadshows for 5000 IFAs. Winner HR Leadership award.
- IFDS: Enabled the establishment of two new market-leading businesses – platform solutions and pension solutions. Aligned the new leadership teams and led business development as an ad-hoc executive.
- iPipeline: UK market entry through acquisition and assisted with the development of the newly acquired business.
- Cofunds: Worked with CEO to clarify new strategy and align leadership, management and organisation to deliver.
- Zurich Life: Strategy Director for Zurich Global Life across ME, Asia, CEE and Latam. Led expansion and commercial teams.
- BP Northbound: Director of this family business, doubling revenue and tripling profit in four years, resulting in successful sale.

Campbell Macpherson

**Business Advisor,
Facilitator, Speaker,
Author and Change
Catalyst.**



IFSWF, M&A Advisor,
Bibby Group, FS Forum,
Sovereign Investor
Institute, Henley Business
School, ILM.

Senior Adviser, Abu Dhabi
Investment Authority

Strategic change advisor
& executive: IFDS, Aviva,
James Hay, IPF, Friends
Life, iPipeline, Cofunds,
Gocompare, Centaur, ...

Director, BP Northbound

Strategy Director,
Zurich Global Life EM

Board & HR Director,
Sesame (IFA Network)

Strategic Change & OD:
Misys, BBC, Capital Radio,
Telewest, Sesame

Marketing Director,
Virgin Wines, Smartlogik,
BrightStation

Head of eBusiness, AMP

Snr Mgr, Change,
Andersen Consulting

CEO & Founder,
InterMark Multimedia

Sales Manager, Ultimate
Computers & NCR

Mgt Trainee,
Hawker Pacific

Officer & Pilot Trainee,
RAAF Academy