

High-Performance Culture Scan™

In any organization, senior executive teams make constant choices about the array of possible strategies and change initiatives available. Having the right kind of data available is crucial for choosing wisely. The High-Performance Culture Scan™ equips senior leaders with powerful insights into their organization... and themselves.

VALUABLE INFORMATION TO CONFRONT KEY CHALLENGES

High-performance culture initiatives need a baseline to define progress. Through examination of current behavior and leadership practices, the High-Performance Culture Scan provides a sanity check about current alignment with espoused mission and helps executives prioritize gaps and opportunities.

Efforts to drive strategic direction depend on understanding varying perspectives about the organization's mission and direction. The High-Performance Culture Scan gathers meaningful examples of current practices that illustrate core organizational drivers and hindrances to the success of new strategies or direction.

Assessments of overall organizational success are both richer and more nuanced when the organization's top leaders can take an objective perspective. Examining both the organization's focus on results and its focus on culture, the High-Performance Culture Scan identifies critical gaps and issues.

Improving senior team effectiveness can be a complex undertaking. The High-Performance Culture Scan improves clarity by illustrating the impact of senior team behavior on the larger organization, illuminating points of disunity or suboptimal senior team function and inspiring top leaders to focus on their individual and team effectiveness.

A UNIQUELY COMPELLING POINT OF VIEW

The 4th Quadrant integrates an organization's focus on performance and results with a purposeful focus on its culture. We developed the High-Performance Culture Scan to yield a deep, multi-perspective organizational assessment

and to provide senior executives and HR sponsors with actionable ways to become a 4th Quadrant organization.

A COMPREHENSIVE AND CUSTOMIZABLE PROCESS

The High-Performance Culture Scan uses three methods for gathering data about your organization:

- On-line employee surveys to collect a broad range of perspectives
- Focus groups to gather stories and examples
- One-on-one interviews to gather the most specific and candid information

The High-Performance Culture Scan begins when the senior leader invites employees to complete a 10- to 15- minute on-line survey. Survey items measure:

- Overall employee commitment
- How well leaders and employees "walk the talk" of the organization
- Which business practices align with the organization's core drivers (mission, values)

The next step is to conduct three types of focus groups.

- New employees make up one group because they have the freshest perspective on how the organization operates.
- Middle managers make up a second group. They are often squeezed between the organization's need for bottom-line results and need to retain and leverage top talent, so they have a valuable perspective on the integration of results and culture.

- As employees affected by management’s decisions in integrating performance and culture, individual contributors and support staff make up the third group. Each focus group runs about 90 minutes and is designed to gather stories and “themes.” We have successfully used video- or teleconferencing to accommodate geographically dispersed organizations.

Focus group observations illustrate and support the quantitative data collected in the on-line survey. Typical areas of questioning include:

- What is it like to work here? We use specific trigger questions tied to business practices such as decision making, conflict resolution, hiring and promotions.
- What are your points of pride and points of frustration?
- What examples of behaviors have you experienced that support or contradict core values?

The third step is to conduct eight to ten face-to-face or telephone interviews to supplement the focus group sessions and obtain greater candor and specificity about:

- Whether there is an identifiable culture
- What the culture is like
- Examples of values in action

Whenever possible, interviewees are chosen to represent each major level and functional group in the organization. In addition, we recommend interviewing at least two customers (internal or external, depending on our client’s needs) to confirm what values appear to be most practiced in the organization.

Interviews are generally 45 minutes long but may be longer. These interviews are distinct from the rapport-building interviews our consultants typically conduct with members of the senior team to build buy-in and ensure the working session will meet their needs. During our data gathering, we listen for key themes, stories, examples, contradictions and metaphors.

The culmination of our efforts is a detailed report that summarizes:

- Overall perceptions including the major themes we heard.

- Strengths and weaknesses – the “story” we heard and supporting data about commitment, values and business practices.
- Recommendations that leverage the organization’s strengths, address deeper challenges and move the organization to sustainable high performance.

Our consultants analyze the data, creating a report that presents our findings in three sections:

- Executive Summary: Overall perceptions of the organization’s strengths/weaknesses and our key recommendations
- Detailed report: The story of the organization in detail, including illustrations from supporting survey data and employee comments. We customize this section heavily to reflect the needs and goals of our client, but we typically include:
 - Employee Commitment – what’s the current state of overall employee satisfaction and pride
 - Values and Business Practices – how well are the values applied to the organization’s business practices; can people see and experience
 - Competing Dynamics – does the organization lean more toward business performance or toward culture
- Appendix: Key themes/areas as well as all survey data with respondents’ anonymity preserved

Typically, our consultants share the headlines of our findings with the HR sponsor and senior leader before the working session.

We then present the Culture Scan Report in the working session. The specific timing and methods used to review the Culture Scan Report depend on our client’s objectives. In short, the High-Performance Culture Scan is a structured, comprehensive process that gives your organization and your leaders relevant, specific data that provides the basis for decision making and action to create and sustain high performance.

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