

## Case Study: Culture, Customer Service and the Bottom Line

### **It has been said that when it is measured it can be managed!**

In the last newsletter our case study showed how measuring the behaviour of Company X at the individual, team and organisational level – the behaviour became tangible, it became something that could be described, and made specific. The measurement allowed the abstract to become concrete and gave us a direction for intervention.

This article covers the case of Company Y, a large manufacturing company, who were losing their competitive advantage because of poor customer service.

There are studies that prove unless critical aspects of human behaviour can be defined and described precisely, the odds are they can't be changed. In this respect, we have found the Human Synergistics diagnostic tools offer impressive and very real advantages.

Organisational Culture is a key determinant of staff satisfaction, intention to stay and whether staff recommend their organisation to others as good place to work. Research from over 130,000 Australian and New Zealand staff ,which included measurement of bottom line, staff retention and customer service surveys, shows Constructive cultures high in *Achievement*, *Self Actualising*, *Humanistic-Encouraging* and *Affiliative* behaviours lead to positive staff, organisational and customer outcomes.

The same research shows that cultures high in Passive/Defensive and Aggressive/Defensive behaviours promote staff dissatisfaction, high staff turnover and reduced customer outcomes.

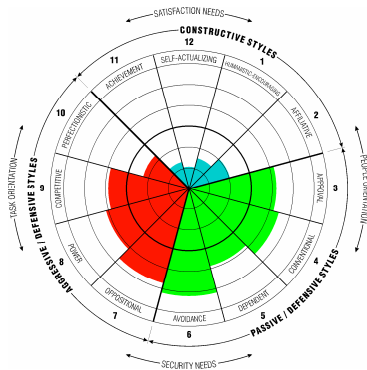
Company Y was experiencing customer service difficulties in the areas of customer satisfaction, loyalty and advocacy. Not surprisingly, the bottom line was being eroded.

We conducted an Organisational Culture Inventory on Company Y with different results from those of Company X. This time as well as high avoidance (as outlined in previous newsletter) the culture showed up as being quite 'red'. The Avoidance extension

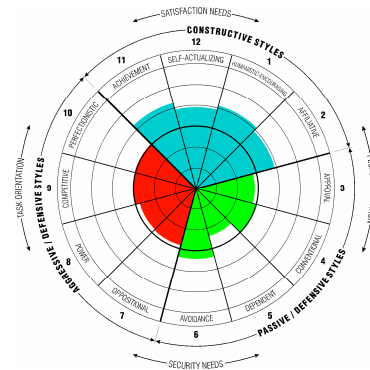
(Green) was high, displaying a culture that was ‘risk averse’ insecure; apprehensive and uneasy.

The high Oppositional extension, (Red) exposed a culture that was critical, fault finding and untrusting of others. There was also an indication that control and force (Power) were strong tactics used. The Competitive extension indicated that staff were constantly comparing and vying for position. Company Y filled in separate inventories to uncover how they wanted their culture to be.

The much higher blue indicated that they desired a culture that was focused on self set goals; allowed people to take risks; had high personal integrity; was encouraging and mentoring and was interactive and responsive.



**Actual**



**Preferred**

Now we had data to work with, and the gap analysis proved very effective. We were able to collaboratively design strategies to take Company Y toward their preferred culture. It took a little time before there was any measurable result but within 12 months there was a significant increase in customers returning. Advocacy will take a little time to build up the reputation of this company that had once held such a high profile.

Human Synergistics has now developed a new tool that accurately measures the causal factors of customer service difficulties. This is going to be extremely useful in matching the culture of organisations to customer service strategies.

**Future articles will discuss and outline the specific terms used here....**

Constructive; Passive/Defensive ; Aggressive/Defensive