

Applied Leadership and Management in the Workplace

Module Assignment Submission

Student Name:	Kirsty Rees
Student Number:	1917792
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Introduction

The objective of this assignment is to investigate organisational culture. It will examine various theories and frameworks which apply to organisational culture and the potential impact they may have on the culture within. It will investigate the manner in which cultures are perceived both internally and externally. It will examine the effects of Corporate Social Responsibility on organisations.

What is Culture, and how is it formulated?

The shared values, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours that define an organisation are collectively referred to as workplace culture or organisational culture. It has significant effects on the manner in which employees interact with one another, approach their work and engage with the objectives of the company. In addition to influencing employee behaviour, a robust workplace culture also affects the overall performance of the organisation and the overall happiness of its employees.

Cohen (2009) suggests that culture can be defined as a group of individuals who share common beliefs, attitudes and values. Personal morals, language, religious beliefs, dress code, and decorum are examples of shared values. An individual's cultural norms can be influenced by factors such as their upbringing and society.

Cooke & Rousseau (1988) suggests that organisational culture has various factors, including beliefs, expectations and practices. It fosters desirable staff behaviours and attitudes by aligning organisational values with those of the employees and clarifying the expectations. Davies, Nutley and Mannion (2000) describe corporate culture as the 'way things are done around here' this is embedded deep within an organisation. Organisational culture encourages staff alignment with shared ideals, promoting a cohesive approach. Paais & Pattiruhu (2020) argues that organisational culture can directly influence employee motivation and loyalty by creating healthy competition. Alignment between corporate culture and employees views and values enhances performance and job satisfaction, therefore influencing organisational culture.

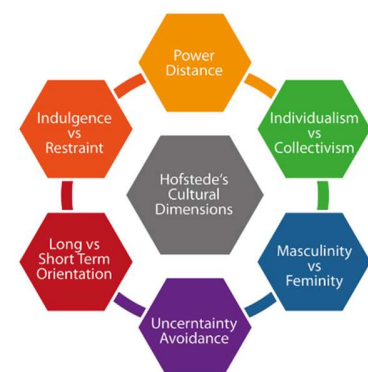
The long-term effect of leadership practices, employee behaviours, workplace amenities, and organisational policies on internal stakeholders is referred to as workplace culture (Schein, 2010). This culture can be identified in a variety of ways, such as the overall atmosphere of the workplace, communication patterns and decision-making processes. An environment in which employees feel valued and motivated is fostered by a positive workplace culture, which can result in increased productivity and reduced staff turnover (Kotter & Heskett, 1992).

There are several key components which contribute to workplace culture, fundamental values and a clear vision are the foundation of any effective workplace culture. The vision of the organisation defines its long-term objectives and aspirations, whilst core values are the fundamental principles that influence employee behaviour and decision-making. Collectively, they establish a sense of direction and purpose, ensuring that employees are guided towards shared goals. Organisations that effectively communicate their values and vision encourage unity and commitment among team members, thereby improving overall morale and motivation (Applauz, 2023). The culture of the workplace is significantly influenced by leadership. To be effective, leaders must exhibit the behaviours they desire to see in their employees, such as accountability, transparency and integrity. Building trust necessitates open communication, employees experience empowerment and recognition when leaders seek feedback and provide updates. This method not only strengthens relationships but also fosters a culture of innovation and collaboration (Burke et al., 2007). Employees that are engaged exhibit higher productivity and more commitment to their organisation. A dynamic workplace culture fosters engagement by facilitating professional development, delivering consistent feedback and acknowledging individual contributions. Recognising achievements enhances morale and promotes a sense of belonging among employees (Diederik Coetzee & Hoch, 2024; Pariani, 2024; Randel et al., 2018). Investing in staff education and development is a characteristic of a constructive workplace culture. Organisations that prioritise training programs, mentorship opportunities and continuous learning initiatives boost individual competencies and contribute to overall organisational performance. A growth-oriented culture encourages employee accountability for their professional development (Purwanto, 2023; Kemelgor & Meek, 2008).

Leading theorists such as Geert Hofstede, Charles Hampden-Turner, and Fons Trompenaars have produced frameworks that examine cultural components and their effects in the workplace.

Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

Geert Hofstede's model, established in the 1970s, identifies six cultural characteristics that affect workplace conduct. The dimensions encompass power distance, which suggests the regard of less powerful individuals to authority figures; individualism versus collectivism, where individuals prioritise personal objectives and collectivist cultures emphasise communal goals; and masculinity versus femininity, which evaluates the allocation of roles between genders. Hofstede addresses uncertainty avoidance, which pertains to how cultures handle ambiguity; long-term versus short-term orientation, reflecting an emphasis on future rewards versus tradition; and indulgence versus restraint, evaluating the extent to

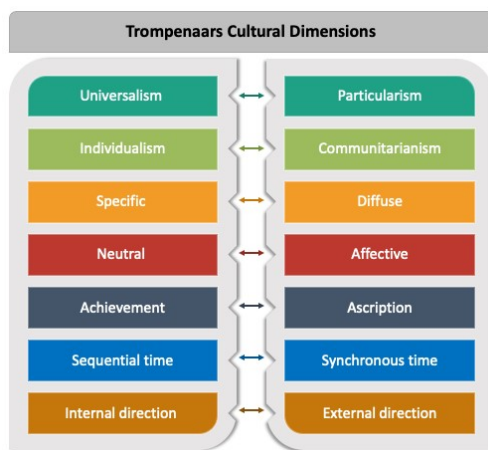


which societies permit the fulfilment of desires.

Hofstede's framework illustrates the influence of cultural values on workplace dynamics, communication styles and decision-making processes. In high power distance cultures, hierarchical structures typically dominate in interactions, whereas low power distance cultures promote more equal relationships amongst employees. Eylon and Au (1999) advise that employees in a power distance organisation frequently experience lower levels of job satisfaction and a general sense of empowerment in comparison to those in lower-power organisations. It implies that employees with a high level of power may struggle to adjust to change when they are expected to take on additional responsibilities, as they will lack the necessary knowledge due to their absence of involvement in decision-making. Hofstede's (2001) cultural dimensions theory appears to support multicultural beliefs by highlighting different cultures, however some scholars claim this theory is outdated (McSweeney, 2002; Eringa et al., 2015). Studies undertaken by Eringa and others (2015) supports McSweeney's outdated claims, the data proved to be not an accurate representation of the cultural difference in the modern world.

Trompenaars' Cultural Dimensions

Fons Trompenaars and Charles Hampden-Turner expanded on cultural analysis with their model of seven dimensions. This includes universalism against particularism,



wherein universal cultures equally apply standards across all situations, whereas particularist cultures modify rules according to individual circumstances. They examine individualism in contrast to communitarianism, specific vs diffuse cultures—where specific cultures uphold a distinct division between professional and personal life—and neutral versus emotional expression.

Trompenaars' model underscores the significance of comprehending these cultural factors for efficient communication and collaboration in

different work environments. In neutral cultures, emotional expression is regulated in professional environments, whereas emotional cultures promote overt displays of feelings. This comprehension can assist teams in managing conflicts and improving collaboration across cultural divides.

Handy's Cultural Types

Classifying organisational culture into four types—power culture, role culture, task culture and person culture—Charles Handy provides an alternative viewpoint. Centralised power that allows rapid decision-making but could result in autocratic behaviour defines

Charles Handy's Model of Organizational Culture
Handy's four types of organizational cultures



power culture. Clear systems and accepted processes that govern employee behaviour and define role culture.

On the other hand, task culture encourages cooperation to reach specific objectives and is flexible when overcoming challenges. Person culture centres around people working independently within the company. Handy's categories demonstrate how distinct cultural forms affect employee interactions and organisational behaviour.

Collectively, these models offer an extensive comprehension of workplace culture by emphasising elements such as hierarchical systems, individual responsibilities and interpersonal interactions. Organisations can enhance their understanding of cultural differences and cultivate cultures that encourage effective cooperation and employee happiness by incorporating concepts from Hofstede, Handy and Trompenaars.

The Cultural Web Framework

The Cultural Web Model, created by Gerry Johnson and Kevan Scholes in 1992, functions as a framework for analysing and comprehending organisational culture. It offers an extensive perspective on the diverse components that form organisational culture and their interactions which impact behaviour, decision-making and overall efficiency in the workplace.

The Cultural Web consists of six interrelated components that according to Johnson and Scholes (1992) together define an organisation's culture:



The primary objective of the Cultural Web Model is to assist organisations in recognising their existing cultural environment and comprehending its alignment with

their strategic objectives. Through the analysis of these components, executives can acquire insights into the strengths and shortcomings of their organisational culture. This comprehension is essential for executing effective change programs designed to cultivate a more favourable work environment or to align culture with strategic goals. The Cultural Web might serve as a diagnostic instrument during times of change or transformation. Organisations can identify gaps that must be addressed to attain a high-performance culture by comparing the current cultural framework with a desired future state. This technique promotes contemplation on how established cultural factors can help or hinder advancement towards strategic objectives.

The model offers a significant framework for understanding organisational culture through its six interrelated components. Organisations can cultivate a comprehensive understanding of their cultural environment by analysing narratives, rituals, symbols, power dynamics, organisational frameworks and management systems. This approach assists in assessing current cultural problems and acts as a framework for creating a culture that corresponds with strategic goals and improves the overall effectiveness.

Whilst working in an elected representatives office, understanding cultural theories can significantly enhance the effectiveness of communication, collaboration and decision making processes. Three prominent cultural theories, Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions, Handy's Organisational Culture Model and Trompenaars' Cultural Dimensions, provide valuable frameworks for analysing the dynamics within such environments. The conduct of elected representatives and their staff can be impacted by six key elements of culture, as stated in Hofstede's model. For example, the perception of hierarchical relationships within the office may be influenced by power distance. In a culture with a high power distance, staff may be constrained to answer to elected officials without questioning, which could potentially stifle open dialogue and innovative ideas. In contrast, a more inclusive approach can foster collaboration and inclusivity in decision making in a low power distance environment. The manner in which representatives interact with their constituents can be influenced by the dimension of individualism versus collectivism. Representatives in individualistic cultures may prioritise personal accomplishments over collective objectives, whereas collectivist cultures may emphasise collaborative initiatives and community welfare. Speaking from experience the current office exhibits a 'Power Culture' environment, the elected representative makes all final decisions, this can sometimes lead to delays in decision making due to diary commitments.

Elements that can affect Organisational Culture

The idea of workplace culture is complex; many factors impact it. Organisations trying to create a good and efficient workplace must first understand these components. Here are the main factors that might greatly influence workplace culture.

Leadership Style - Leadership is crucial in influencing organisational culture. Various leadership styles, including transformative, transactional and relaxed, may promote unique cultural settings. Transformational CEOs typically inspire and motivate people, cultivating a culture of creativity and collaboration. However, transactional leaders may emphasise structure and incentives, potentially resulting in a more restrictive workplace culture (Smith, 2020; Johnson & Lee, 2021)

Communication - Effective communication is essential for a robust corporate culture. Organisations that encourage open communication enhance transparency and trust among employees. Poor communication may result in misconceptions and low morale (Brown, 2019; Williams, 2022).

Values & Principles- The core principles and mission of an organisation establish its identity. Employees that connect with these values are more likely to exhibit engagement and job satisfaction (Cameron, 2006; Fox & Madura, 2017).

Diversity & Inclusion - A diverse workforce contributes to the enrichment of workplace culture by offering a variety of perspectives. Organisations that promote diversity and inclusion tend to establish environments in which all employees feel respected and appreciated, which results in enhanced creativity and problem-solving capabilities (Robbins, 2020; Achieng & Malatji, 2022).

The workplace continues to play a significant function in the lives of numerous individuals. It is essential that individuals within any organisation feel connected and supported by colleagues and leaders, as many individuals spend more time at work than on any other daily activity. Workplace stress is significantly influenced by psychosocial hazards associated with the culture of an organisation, including inadequate interpersonal relationships and a lack of policies and procedures regarding worker respect (Stoewen, 2016).

Gable and Gosnell (2011) suggested that humans possess distinct reflexive brain networks that are specifically designed for social thinking. Health is associated with close relationships, as they facilitate the development of specific biological systems that may mitigate the detrimental effects of stress. Oxytocin, an effective hormone associated with trustworthiness and motivation to assist others in the workplace, is released by the brain in response to social contact, according to their research. Dunbar and Dunbar (1998) argued that the region of the brain that is activated when individuals experience social pain in the workplace due to feelings of isolation is equivalent to that of actual physical pain. Whereas, the reward centre of the brain is activated when relationships in the workplace are characterised by cooperation, trust and fairness. This stimulation encourages future interactions that promote employee trust, respect and confidence, leading to employees believing the best in each other and inspiring each other (Geue, 2017). With this in mind it highlights the importance of informal and formal relationships and their impacts on workplace culture. It can impact the interactions and exchanges among staff members. Ali (2016) states informal and formal relationships define and help shape company culture. It can inspire and support participation and common values (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010). Informal relationships are spontaneous relationships that are created between work

colleagues who often have common interests and outlooks. They encourage social communications between individuals between different teams (Cantos Galindo, 2016).

Formal relationships frequently develop between leadership and employees, encouraging clarity in communication and directness among colleagues. This type of interaction involves a degree of professionalism and respect. It fosters a sense of worth in individuals and establishes their position within the company.

By encouraging a feeling of purpose and belonging among staff members, shared values significantly help to shape workplace culture. People who connect with the central values of the company usually feel more involved and driven, which increases their job satisfaction and loyalty. When everyone strives towards shared objectives, this alignment not only improves employee retention but also fosters teamwork and cooperation. Spencer Oatey & Franklin (2012) states there are several layers of culture that an individual will hold, and it is important to recognise and understand as it can have a bearing on the beliefs and values.

The writer conducted a PESTLE Analysis based on the external threats currently faced within their current employment within an elected representative office.

P	Political Instability: Changes in governmental leadership or transitions in party dominance may result in uncertainty and possible job losses for elected officials. Elections can provide considerable turnover, particularly in competitive constituencies. Legislative Modifications: Changes to policies can cause uncertainty and upset within the constituency Public Sentiment: Elected officials are highly susceptible to public opinion. A decline in public support due to scandals or unpopular policies can threaten their re-election prospects
E	Economic Downturns: Recessions or economic instability can lead to reduced government budgets and funding cuts, which may result in layoffs or reduced roles for elected official
S	Changing Demographics: Shifts in population demographics can alter voting patterns and preferences Social Movements: The rise of social movements advocating for change (e.g., climate action, racial justice) Voter Engagement: Increased voter awareness and participation through grassroots movements can lead to challenges against incumbents who may not align with the evolving concerns of their electorate .
T	Digital Campaigning: The growth of social media and digital platforms has transformed the management of campaigns. Representatives must acclimatise to emerging technology or jeopardise their position against competitors who proficiently interact with voters online
L	Regulatory Changes: New laws regarding campaign finance, lobbying, and

	electoral processes can create challenges for elected officials if they do not comply with evolving legal standards Litigation Risks: Increased litigation related to electoral processes or governance issues can distract representatives and potentially damage their reputations and positions
E	Sustainability Initiatives: Growing public demand for sustainability may threaten representatives who do not advocate for environmentally friendly policies or who are tied to industries seen as harmful to the environment Natural Disasters: Events such as hurricanes or wildfires may shift political priorities and funding

With this in mind, a SWOT analysis was conducted based on internal factors which can affect the same workplace.

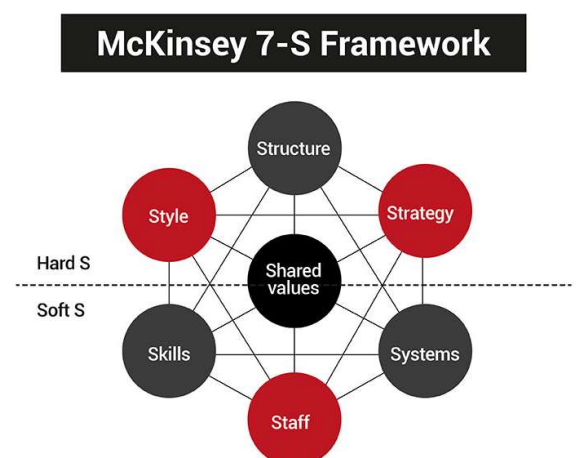
STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Established networks High level of job satisfaction Good reputation within electorate	Limited resources Negative shifts in electorate Reliance on party opinion
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Competitive salary Community engagement Highly regarded within other offices – could lead to further job opportunities Technology advancements	Election outcome impacts job security Changing demographics

Based on the above findings and the importance of shared values when discussing workplace culture the author applied McKinsey's 7S framework.

The McKinsey 7S Framework for a political job entails examining how the seven components—Structure, Strategy, Systems, Shared Values, Skills, Style, and Staff—interact and determine the efficacy of political operations. It is a management model created by consultants Tom Peters and Robert Waterman in the early 1980s. It is used to analyse and align an organization's internal elements in order to improve its performance and adaptability. The framework identifies seven fundamental elements, which are classified as "hard" and "soft" factors.

Structure

In politics, structure refers to the hierarchy and organisation of a political office or party. This comprises the line of command, as well as team members' roles and responsibilities. A clear



structure is required for delegating responsibility and maintaining accountability. For example, a well-defined structure can help streamline communication among elected officials, their employees and constituents, allowing for more effective decision-making and responsiveness to public requirements.

Strategy

A political strategy is the approach followed to achieve election goals, policy objectives and public service outcomes. A connected plan unifies all team members' efforts towards common objectives, ensuring that resources are properly allocated and actions are coordinated to maximise impact.

Systems

Systems refer to the methods and procedures that regulate everyday operations in a political office. This includes communication protocols, data management tools, and ways to track constituent input. Effective systems are critical for maintaining organisation and ensuring that all team members have quick access to necessary information, which is especially important in fast-paced political contexts.

Shared Values

Shared values are crucial to workplace culture in a political setting. They represent the beliefs and ideals that govern behaviour in the workplace or party. For example, values like integrity, transparency and serving the public can build a culture of trust and collaboration within employees. When employees share these values, they are more committed to their roles and better aligned with the overall mission of their political leader or organisation.

Skills

Skill refers to the skills required for effective political performance. This encompasses not just technical skills such as policy analysis and campaign management, but also the interpersonal skills required to engage constituents and stakeholders. Investing in skill development through training programs can help teams respond more effectively and adapt to changing political situations.

Style

Style refers to the leadership approach in a political office. The leadership style has a considerable impact on workplace culture; for example, a participative leadership style may stimulate open dialogue and innovation among employees, whereas a dictatorial style may suppress creativity and initiative. Leaders that exhibit positive cultural characteristics can motivate their staff to achieve at their peak.

Staff

Staff include all human resources in a political organisation, including recruitment, diversity efforts and leadership development techniques. A diversified team adds different viewpoints to policy debates and improves problem-solving ability. Ensuring that recruitment is aligned with shared values can result in a more cohesive staff dedicated to providing effective constituent service.

How and why, do different organisations have different cultures?

Conclusion

workplace culture is a critical element that shapes employee experiences and organizational effectiveness. Understanding its components and impact can help organizations cultivate a high-performance culture that promotes collaboration, enhances job satisfaction, and drives overall success.

prioritizing a positive workplace culture will be essential for attracting and retaining top talent.

The fundamental elements of workplace culture—core values, effective leadership, employee engagement, collaboration, learning opportunities and inclusivity—are interconnected factors that collectively shape the work environment. By cultivating these elements, organisations can promote a vibrant culture which improves employee satisfaction and enhances company success.

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Appendix