



SELF-TESTS TO ASSESS YOUR CULTURE'S CAPACITY FOR TRANSFORMATION

Leaders who want to make their organizations more adaptable to change must be aware of both the advantages their culture affords and the barriers it raises. These questionnaires will give you insight into whether effecting change is likely to be easy or difficult.

YOUR READINESS FOR CHANGE

The answers to these self-reflection questions will help leaders and their teams see where their culture's weaknesses and strengths lie.

1. How strongly are you committed to achieving an adaptive culture? Do you expect to attain it?
2. How well developed is the vision for your organization? How well has this vision been communicated to all stakeholders? How strong is the commitment to this vision?
3. Do you have the mix of leadership necessary for the transition? Who is the "champion" for change, and what is his/her authority level? Who is the visionary/innovator for change? Who will oversee the necessary meetings and processes?
4. Have you anticipated other activities/strategies that will require major commitments from senior management?
5. Who within the management structure has experience with fundamental change?
6. Are all members of the leadership team willing to fundamentally change the organizational structures if needed?

YOUR PERCEIVED NEED TO CHANGE YOUR CULTURE: A TEST OF URGENCY

Change is difficult to bring about in the absence of a crisis. The following questions assess the urgency you and your organization are currently feeling. Lower scores indicate little pressure and suggest that a significant effort will be needed to make a change in culture. If scores reveal that different groups have different perceptions, management may need to devote considerable time to communicating and resolving the differences.

Individuals can take this test to assess their own views or, by filling in all the columns, their perceptions of the views of senior management and employees. The test may also be used by groups to gauge their agreement on the need for change.

Record your perceptions of your environment as 1, 2, or 3, with 1 indicating little or no significant change has occurred; 2, moderate change has occurred; and 3, significant change has occurred.

	Your view	Senior management view	Employees' view
External Pressures (requiring institutional role changes)			
Managed care growing in your market	_____	_____	_____
Network development occurring in your area	_____	_____	_____
New players entering the scene	_____	_____	_____
Physicians forming separate organizations	_____	_____	_____
Internal Pressures			
Financial performance declining	_____	_____	_____
Volumes (census) decreasing	_____	_____	_____
Staffing levels decreasing (right-sizing)	_____	_____	_____
Organization's major strategy or focus changing	_____	_____	_____
Total	=====	=====	=====

Scoring < 8 = You probably are not being forced to change by your environment.
8-16 = You sense the pressure is building.
> 16 = You are already deeply involved in a changing culture.



YOUR ORGANIZATION'S CAPACITY TO ADAPT

Organizations vary greatly in their ability to adapt to change. The statements below characterize cultures that are adaptive and will help you assess specific areas of adaptability, as well as your culture's current capacity to change. Rate your per-

ceptions from 1 to 5, with 1 indicating you strongly disagree and 5 indicating you strongly agree with the statement. This test may be taken by an individual, senior management, or employees.

	Your view	Senior management view	Employees' view
Your organization can demonstrate its support for innovations. (Would you describe your organization as always experimenting? Do your review processes recognize new ideas and approaches? Does the organization publicly recognize innovation and change?)	_____	_____	_____
Employees are open to change but feel comfortable in the workplace. (Have recent employee surveys revealed willingness to change current behaviors?)	_____	_____	_____
Decisions are made quickly and at the lowest appropriate level of the organization. (How long does it take to make a decision on some new process or approach? Who makes that decision?)	_____	_____	_____
The organization is flexible, allowing for significant differences among employees. (Is your organization rigid, requiring employers to do things as prescribed, or does it encourage individual innovation?)	_____	_____	_____
Communications do not always come from the managers; the flow of information has few restrictions. (Who is allowed to write memos? How much is communicated in writing, through group meetings, or through one-on-one meetings?)	_____	_____	_____
Decisions are made by employees as needed; leaders set the organization's direction and empower employees to carry it out. (Is your organization's decision-making process centralized or decentralized?)	_____	_____	_____
The current organizational chart was developed less than 2 years ago. (Was the change significant reorganization or just a redraw? What was the motivation for the change—a new environment, a new CEO, other?)	_____	_____	_____
This organization is significantly involved in CQI (continuous quality improvement), which indicates the organization is questioning how it does things and is looking for positive changes. (How much time has the organization spent developing CQI processes? How many employees are now involved in CQI?)	_____	_____	_____
Benchmarking has been occurring within this organization, showing that the organization is aware of its external environment. (Does your organization routinely compare itself with other leading healthcare organizations? Does it benchmark organizations other than healthcare?)	_____	_____	_____
Your organization is customer driven, by both internal and external customers. (Related to CQI, do all staff know their customer, work with their customer to address needs, and have in place a rapid customer response system?)	_____	_____	_____
Your organization focuses on key processes needed to accomplish its goals. (Do you organize resources around your key processes, rather than departments, skills, etc.? Do you address process improvement with teams? And who is selected to lead teams?)	_____	_____	_____
Your administrative team is strong on "personal" issues; managers make employees feel a part of the solution and encourage informal, face-to-face information sharing. (Do leaders meet with employees often and openly? Do they conduct regular employee surveys that they act upon? Do all staff celebrate together often?)	_____	_____	_____
Your organization strives to carry on the mission of the founders, and employees feel ownership and responsibility for the mission. (Does the organization work with employees to develop a contemporary expression of the organization's mission? Does the organization have a strong vision that employees have developed?)	_____	_____	_____
Total	=====	=====	=====

Scoring

You can use the following suggested scoring scheme, along with your personal judgment, to help you get an approximate idea of how ready your organization is for change.

52-65 = Your organization is already highly adaptable, and change is likely to proceed fairly smoothly with careful planning and continued attention to cultural issues.

39-51 = Successful change will require significant effort, but the organization is partially prepared.

13-38 = The culture of your organization is currently not adaptable, and attempts to make rapid change will probably fail at this point.