

MANAGING CULTURES

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В данной статье кратко освещается такая отрасль менеджмента как управление культурой организаций; показаны наиболее насущные проблемы отрасли, описаны возможные перспективы их решения, а также приведены частные примеры осуществления управления культурой.

Integration and differentiation perspectives. Not everyone in organizations or in the management and organization literature was entirely happy with this enthusiasm for strong cultures. Organizationally, if, for whatever reasons, you felt unable to bond with the cultural values being stressed, you were likely to feel some degree of unease. For instance, many women in organizations felt excluded from strong cultures that were implicitly masculinist. If work was to become even more of a boy's club as a result of it having a strong culture, these women were not going to be happy with this outcome. Linda Smircich and Joanne Martin, both major American feminist organization theorists, know a thing or two about dominant cultures – and about how to resist them. And what they saw in the strong culture literature raised their feminist hackles; they thought that it seemed to privilege an exclusive club to which leaders could aspire – but the implicit message was that they could succeed only if they were male. Knowing what it was like to be a female in a world dominated by men, they tried to create a theoretical space within which to make sense of why resistance to dominant masculine culture projects might occur – and not just as a result of poor socialization. They argued that if resistance was an attribute of insufficient socialization, the culture literature was ideological in the extreme. If you opposed the dominant culture, you were automatically a deviant and needed more socialization and training. There was no space from which it might be legitimate and justified to resist. There was no space from which it might be legitimate and justified to resist. It sounded like Mayo for moderns.

Of course, much the same could be said – and was – about the differentiation perspective. The integration theorists argued that if you went looking long enough and hard enough for subcultures, you would be sure to find them. This was especially the case, the critics continued, if the research consisted of “ignoring evidence of values shared on an organization-wide basis”.

Predictably, with such disagreement between researchers surfacing in the public arena, the idea that culture might be a quick fix for corporate ills became harder to market. The committed ethnographic researchers were never very interested in the market, anyway.

Although functionalists argued for the values of strong cultures, their critics saw those dominant cultures as unitarist because they privileged the views of managers of the organization to subordinate and incorporate other members. Without such privileging, one would instead see that these other members, if not totally

disorganized by the ruling culture, would usually share a subculture or even subcultures.

Fragmentation perspective. Chan suggests that culture should be thought of as a verb rather than a noun, as a way of accounting for what has been done in and around an organization, as a way of making sense of what has been experienced. Thought of in this way, culture is far harder to engineer than the strong-culture perspective suggests. Rather than being just a matter of replacing one set of normative assumptions with an alternate set, producing yet another mission and vision statement, culture consists of loosely negotiated, tacit ways of making sense that are embedded in specific situations in the organization rather than an all-enveloping structure that somehow contains all who are members. Being a member doesn't necessarily mean accepting the formal rhetoric of an organization. Taking a salary doesn't mean a suspension of judgment or critical faculties. Possessing a business card doesn't mean subscribing to everything done in the organization's name.

Fragmentation studies report a world in which ambiguity provides a protective shroud from the meaninglessness of everyday organizational life. Some authors discovered in her study of social workers that "ambiguity pervaded an occupation whose practitioners had to operate in a world where the objectives of social work were unclear, the means to these goals were not specified, and sometimes it wasn't even clear when an intervention had been successful or even what success in this context might have meant". Cynics might say that this is not surprising, given that the example is social work, an area that is usually under-resourced and that is one in which people have to deal with the many complex problems of often severely dysfunctional clients.

Strong cultures, homogeneity and disaster. When a foggy met a fragmented culture in the airspace of the Tenerife airport, a disastrous impact occurred. But it would be mistaken to assume that a strong, unambiguous culture is necessarily a safe place, with no disaster lurking. The idea of a strong, coherent culture can be potentially just as dangerous and unethical in organizational practice.

Culture's history in practice

In the earliest days of the new factory organizations of the nineteenth century, contemporary observers observed that the "manufacturing population ... new in its habits of thoughts and action" was "formed by the circumstances of its condition? With little instruction, and less guidance from external sources".

Sometimes, as one scientist recounts, the moral machinery was supported by a social organization of the built environment that facilitated its surveillance, much as the Panopticon provided. However, by at least the early twentieth century, other forms of instruction were superseding, the supports of the external moral machinery lodged in Protestantism.