INDIVIDUAL TRANSITIONS BETWEEN
ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURES

A Synthesis Project Presented

by

GRETCHEN M. HEATH

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Critical and Creative Thinking Program

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Approved as to style and content by:

_____
Arthur Millman, Associate Professor
Chairperson of Committee

_____
Carol Smith, Associate Professor
Member

_____
Peter Taylor, Program Coordinator
Critical and Creative Thinking Program

ABSTRACT

INDIVIDUAL TRANSITIONS BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURES

May 2007

Gretchen M. Heath, B.S., Eastern Connecticut State University
M.A., University of Massachusetts Boston

Directed by Associate Professor Arthur Millman

When transitioning between organizational cultures, an individual can learn to identify

and relate to the new culture by using organizational culture theories, understanding his

or her own rate of adoption (the rate at which members of a social system adopt new

ideas), and identifying with the behaviors of the employees of the new organization. By

identifying the culture and behaviors of the new organization, an individual will know

which behaviors are accepted within the new culture and which are not. A successful

transition requires the letting go of the old, in collaboration with the accepting of the new.

When a person is transitioning, he or she needs to cope with the grieving of his or her

loss (of the past culture and environment) and the accepting of the new culture

simultaneously. A person may realize different phases during his or her transition and

can use these identified phases as guidelines to bring him or her through the transition.

When the culture is finally adopted by the individual and the values and behaviors

become shared with other employees of the organization and its culture, the person has

successfully made the transition.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of my synthesis is to create an in-depth understanding of what a person goes through when in transition between organizations. Though I will be focusing on people in transition within an organizational environment, the readers should allow themselves to interchange the facts of the transitions with their own. This paper is intended to be used as a template for anyone to use with their own lives. However, it is written specifically with individuals and managers in mind to allow for a better understanding of the transitions that they are experiencing or the transitions that a manager's staff are experiencing.

In selecting this project, I found myself engaged by ideas of culture and a desire to explore these ideas further. I wanted to have the opportunity to show how culture encompasses everything and that it affects each and every one of us. I wanted the paper to act as a guide that influences this kind of holistic thinking. When researching the broad topic of "culture," I came across a few definitions. However, the one that fit the idea I am trying to demonstrate is from Kotter and Heskett (1992), in which they quoted from The American Heritage Dictionary: culture is "the totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought characteristics of a community or population" (Kotter and Heskett, 1992, p. 4).

"People and their relationships are the essence of culture" (Hassen and Shea, 2003, p.1), implies that without people, we would not have culture. And perhaps this

thought also suggests that without relationships to be coordinated by these people, the culture is neither complete nor stable.

Culture plays a large role in this paper, as the transition that is taking place is happening between two cultures. An individual will need to learn how to adopt the traits, ideas, values, and beliefs of the new culture. One thing that I've learned with my research is that transition occurs when something new is beginning and something old is in the process of becoming the past.

Keep in mind throughout this paper and as you put the thoughts that arise from this paper into your own life changes, that the key to transition is letting go of the past and accepting where you are in the present. When any change occurs in our lives, we are always sad to see the past go. We often hold onto it, especially if it made us feel safe, secure, or self assured. Finding a comfortable place in a new environment is not always easy. We often are uncomfortable and, in turn, vulnerable when discovering a new place. We are excited, which keeps us motivated, but people often try to make the new situations work by employing old tactics. These tactics may have worked before, but they now need to be manipulated and changed in order to succeed in the new environment. During a transition, people may find that they are idling, meaning that they can not find a place within their past, nor a place in their present or anticipated future. People like to explore and discover, they like to see their options, and they like to move forward and advance from where they were in the past. This is why transition is so hard. First and foremost, it is hard to let go of their past cultures. Second, it is hard to learn and accept the tactics of the new culture, especially if they have not been used in a previous culture. The time of idling is designed to allow oneself time to let go of past tactics and

learn the new ones. It is how humans adapt. After idling for a little while and learning

new survival tactics, a person can finally start putting them to use. In putting them to use,

individuals may find that they are not using the old tactics and not finding them as

important. They do not value the tactics as much as they did before. The new tactics

have made them so busy, that the transition is finally beginning to take shape and their

new culture appears comfortable and rewarding.

The reason that all of this is important to me is because I love the art of change. I

love how a little change can create an entire movement, an era. In the short story, "The

Sound of Thunder", by Ray Bradbury (1952), a man goes back in time. He alters the past

by mistakenly killing a butterfly. When the man gets back to present time, he finds that

the world has suffered slight changes that affect his life. The moral of the story is that

one simple change made the world a different place.

This lesson can be applied when people are going through a job change, whether

the change is occurring in their job duties and responsibilities, job title, or to whom they

are reporting. A change can make a person the next CEO of the company or

unemployed. Perhaps, an acquisition occurs within a company. There are now two sales

departments, with two sets of sales teams and two sets of management working together

as one team. Bob, a salesman, has not transitioned well and is feeling on edge all day at

work because the other salesmen recently joining Bob's team are outperforming him.

He continues to worry about his performance and productivity. He does not sleep well

and has started to feel the effects of this stress. Despite counsel from medical and

psychological professionals, he finds himself dragging at work and at home. His

relationships with his friends and co-workers are diminishing, as he focuses more on the

past than on his adjustment to the new environment. It seems like a small change, to be working with new people. However, it can create a positive or negative chain reaction if people are not careful about how they handle themselves. Understanding the roots of change and how a person transitions, will allow individuals to recognize what is common and what is not while undergoing transition.

As I've said, these ideas can be applied to any place in life. It is a matter of interchanging the facts within the story to fit your own. I have chosen organizational transition because organizations are a great source to use for a template. All people are involved in some sort of organization in their life, whether it is through their jobs, hobbies, clubs to which they belong, or with their families or friends. If I had chosen to talk about individuals going through transition from one societal culture to the next, not everyone would be able to relate. I would have needed to choose a specific culture and not everyone reading this may relate to the specified culture. A work environment is an organization to which everyone can relate. The goal of this paper is to better understand transition and how one can manage oneself and others during a transitioning period.

During my time in the Critical and Creative Thinking program at The University of Massachusetts, Boston, I acquired many skills and tools to enable critical and creative thought through the comprehensive study of such fields as psychology, philosophy, and creativity. Through reading, researching, analyzing, and evaluating I have touched on many other fields such as the arts, anthropology, sociology, business management, healthcare, and statistics.

The skills and tools I have acquired are applicable anywhere. For instance, metacognition or thinking about thinking, can be used in any situation. However, when

this tool is applied to scholarly thought, it can create a new pattern of thinking and allow for new perspective. By applying a new perspective, we may see things in a different light. For example, when in the dark we may make a jacket on a hanger out to be a person or a mark on the wall to be a bug. When the light is on, we see that there is only a jacket and mark on the wall, not a person and a bug. Seeing things in a new light, whether in a cultural or individual perspective, can allow us to reprocess the thought that we were having and critically and creatively come up with a new line of thinking. Here, evaluation and redesign allow us to clarify our thoughts for ourselves and for our audience, which allows us to determine whether there could be a better way to say something or refine a thought to its simplest form. By rethinking the thought process we can gain a different perspective of our own original thoughts. Metacognition and perspective allow us to realize where we are while in transition and can help us go back to our roots and understand how we got to where we are. Using metacognition can help us get out of a downward spiral, by employing it as a coping tool that allows us to step back and evaluate our thoughts. Following the transition, we can use new perspectives to help us realize the viewpoints of others in our new culture. Looking though the eyes of the people who are already where you want to be and see what makes them happy is a great way to envision their situation. Fully immersing yourself in a new environment or culture will allow you to better understand its core fundamentals. Perspective can be used to see why others are fulfilled in the new culture into which you are transitioning.

This brings us to another tool, evaluation and redesign of a theory, thought or idea. Allowing oneself to use past ideas as stepping stones instead of framed pictures can be difficult, especially if it took a lot of time and thought to create that idea. I often find

that it is hard to let go of a thought that I have developed so intensely. In evaluating and redesigning thoughts, ideas, and theories, one must expect from the beginning that everything that we are thinking of is going to be another stepping stone. Laying to rest a once brilliant thought can be tormenting. A lot of work, energy, and effort go into these thoughts and along with these brilliant thoughts comes self congratulation, recognition, and motivation. I've learned in CCT that during the evaluation and redesign process none of my thoughts are wasted, as they are used as a bridge to the next thought. These stepping stones have multiple uses because they serve as history. This shows us what was done wrong in the past and allows us to learn how not to repeat it. These stepping stones are also used as lockboxes for thoughts. We do not only use these thoughts to build upon, we use these thoughts for appreciation of ourselves. We can also use these lockboxes of knowledge to better understand our thought process and patterns. When you look back through your lockboxes of thoughts, ideas, and theories, you may find that two merged thoughts or a simplified thought, may work with the newest thought that you are about to throw into the box. These boxes contain our thoughts, they are a map, they are pieces of a puzzle, and they are stepping stones. They are history, they are the birthing ground for new thoughts and when combined they are very powerful tools in furthering our theories, ideas, and teachings. In this paper, I have used my own self-created stepping stones to design and redesign the thoughts that compose this paper. Throughout all my research and writing, I have used my lockboxes of knowledge as stepping stones to reach these conclusions. For example, in graduating from different levels of school or trades we use each level as a stepping stone to reach the next. Throughout this process, our stepping stones are often reused to help collate new

knowledge that has been attained. While conducting research for this paper, I found a large amount of information that did not fit within my main idea or purpose. While this information was not utilized in this paper it has been put in a lockbox. Perhaps this information will be more relevant at a later date. In the future, this information may re-emerge and I can go back into that lockbox and retrieve the information to collate with my new ideas. In the end, I truly used this insight about stepping stones as a form of motivation. Knowing that the research, thought, and knowledge were not wasted made it easier for me to delete superfluous passages and expand in greater detail on what I felt would be relevant to my audience.

Starting with transition, Chapter 2 will leave the reader with a broad understanding of what people go through while transitioning from one organizational culture to another, including the symptoms of culture shock and how the rate of adoption of new ideas affects their willingness to change. Motivation will also play a role in this chapter, as through my research and writing I discovered that motivation is the key to successful transition. In Chapter 3, organizational culture will be addressed along with its ties to transition and systems theory (which shows us that each piece of an organization is part of a larger whole) will help the reader better investigate his or her situation in its entirety. Chapter 4, the conclusion, will show both individuals and leaders how the overall thoughts and theories in the paper apply to themselves. It will explain future research that is warranted after the efforts of this paper.

My intentions for this paper are for the audience to walk away with their own lockbox of information to apply and manipulate as they please. A successful transition

begins with learning about transitions and the corporate cultures to which one is

transitioning.

CHAPTER 2

UNDERSTANDING TRANSITIONS

Transitions

During the implementation of a change within an organization, a transition must occur in order for the intended change to happen. My most influential reading about transitions came from William Bridges. Bridges (1991) explains that, "transition is the psychological process people go through to come to terms with a new situation" (Bridges, 1991, p. 3). Coming to terms with a new situation can be challenging because we are hanging onto the past situation. Bridges also states that "transition starts with an ending" (Bridges, 1991, p. 3). He explains in his writings that a transition is not the outcome and that a person must create an ending to the situation in order to leave it behind. Creating the ending is very difficult, especially if you haven't done it before or if you are well rooted in the old situation.

To better understand the transition process, I've identified distinct phases that a person may experience. Just as with most phase related processes, the amount of time it takes to go through each phase and eventually through the entire process will vary with each individual. It will vary based on an individual's national culture, rate of adoption (acceptance of the new), motivation for the transition and change, cultural distance (how different the old culture was from the new), experience with transitioning, as well as emotional and mental stability to cope with the transition. I will first discuss national culture, rate of adoption, and motivation, as these are dynamics of a transition that are central to understand when going through a transition that has emerged from a change.

National Culture and How it Affects Transitions

Cultural values, traditions, and practices can be recognized and observed at different levels and for different size groups (nations, ethnic groups, corporations, etc.). When a group shares a history together, they have a culture. Cultures consist mainly of shared values, beliefs, and traditions. In organizational cultures people especially share common behaviors. In this section, I will discuss descriptions of national culture, which is culture at a national level. Later in Chapter 3, I will reflect on corporate cultures.

In considering the effects of national culture, keep in mind that there are three ways in which it affects transition. The first is when people come from a specific geographic region and they bring to the organization the characteristics of that culture. The second way that national culture affects transition is through the organization's culture. People in transition from one organization to the next, may be transitioning into a different larger culture that has different national culture dimensions than the previous organization, especially when migrating from one country to another. The third way that national culture affects transition is through the national culture of the leaders of the organization. As we will see in Chapter 3, an organization's culture often begins with the leaders. They decide which behaviors and acts are acceptable and which are not. They have a large effect on the culture of the organization. Corporate culture is different from national culture in that national culture is something that we adopt from inhabiting a certain region or country. It is a product of our society, upbringing, and our demographic location, making it extremely difficult to change. Corporate culture exists only inside the workplace and is therefore more flexible and able to change than a national culture. Though change may occur, culture of any fashion can be complicated, deeply ingrained,

and difficult to change. Resistance from individuals and groups is usually expected in corporate culture.

Through extensive access to a great deal of research and studying of individuals and their national culture in the workplace, Geert Hofstede (2005) identified five dimensions for describing variations of national culture. The results of his research span seventy-four countries. From the data collected, common "phenomena in a society" were grouped together to create these dimensions, regardless of the logic that may explain them differently. Hostede is currently professor emeritus of Organizational Anthropology and International Management at Maastricht University in The Netherlands. His son, Gert Jan Hofstede, a professor of Information Systems at Wageningen University in The Netherlands, followed in his footsteps and continued to study cross-cultural management with his father.

Since this paper is geared more toward the individual in transition and not the leadership creating the change, I will focus the definitions of national culture on the individual. Individuals reading this paper should envision their own national culture and decide for themselves where they lie within each dimension. Defining your cultural attributes will help you find a better understanding of your differences and similarities with the new organization and its employees. When we as individuals learn about our differences and similarities we can use them to adapt to our new environment. We don't need to "get rid" of our attributes; however, we need to understand those of the others and of the organization so that we can work together without becoming offended or confused by the actions of others. A question that Nancy Adler (2002) offers us is "How does your personal cultural background affect your values, attitudes, thinking, and

behavior?" (Adler, 2002, pg. 70). Answering this question will help when reconciling differences between yourself and others in the organization. This information has been directed toward management to enable better understanding of the individuals and groups they are managing. In transition, these dimensions can allow individuals to assess their cultural behavior and how it may create advantages or disadvantages to their specific transitioning situations.

Hofstede's *Five Dimensions of National Culture* are as follows:

1. *Power Distance* (unequal vs. equal) – "The extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed equally" (Hofstede, 1992, pg. 46). Emphasizing human equality, this dimension finds that a smaller power distance on the scale shows more equal members in the society regardless of gender, religion, sexual orientation, or age. Some cultures expect an equal amount of power and respect for each person, whereas other cultures may expect certain figures of the society to have more power than others. A larger power distance is often found with specific values of other dimensions such as collectivism and masculinity. Individuals at the bottom of the hierarchy may look up to their superiors for tasks and ideas in the workplace. When transitioning, individuals from a larger power distance society may find that they are in a new culture that supports equality. It may be difficult for people of power to surrender this power equally to all. On the other hand, people coming from a smaller power distance society

may find that they are in a new culture that demands high respect for only certain individuals.

2. *Individualism versus Collectivism* (alone vs. together) – This dimension focuses on how much the interest of a group overcomes the interest of the individual. It shows how people feel about their relationship with the group. If individuals are doing something in their best interest, as opposed to doing the best thing for the group, they are considered individualists. If the situation is opposite and the individuals feel that they should do what is in the best interest of the group, then they are collectivists. Neither direction is right or wrong; rather this dimension allows us to understand a person's actions. If, through their culture, people are more collectivist, then they may enter their new workplace culture wanting to learn about how their role is important in the company and how they can do their part. If people are from an individualistic background, they may want to learn about their responsibilities and how they can achieve them successfully.

Hofstede mentions Bond's Chinese Value Survey Study, in which students of twenty-three countries were questioned on the importance they place on certain values. Rated highly in individualistic societies were tolerance of others, having a close intimate friend, trustworthiness, and being conservative. Students from collectivist societies ranked filial piety (parental obedience and respect), chastity of women, and patriotism as very important. I realize through this study that trustworthiness is important to individualists (and according to Hofstede Americans more so than any other nationality) because they live in a society where you can not trust others in your

group. When you can't trust everyone and especially when your peers have not been pre-chosen for you, such as in a collectivist society, finding a close friend is a treasure. I also realized that collectivists transitioning into a new company, especially one which has not been chosen for them, will have difficulty as they are used to pre-chosen paths. Sons in collectivist countries are more likely to follow their fathers' careers than choose another field. Individualism and collectivism show how national culture dimensions can really affect a person's transition.

3. *Masculinity versus Femininity* (tough vs. tender) – Some have argued that masculinity and femininity should be separate dimensions. However, Hofstede disagrees because they are so closely related. If a country has many masculine values, then it will also have few feminine values. A masculine society is found where men are expected to be tough, assertive and possess material success and women are expected to be tender, modest, and put their energy into quality of life. In a feminine society, both men and women are expected to be tender, modest, and sensitive to quality of life.
The power distance in a feminine society is generally smaller, where equality is more probable. I picture a feminine society as more reserved, while I see a masculine society as more blunt and outspoken.

4. *Uncertainty Avoidance* (rigid vs. flexible) – Hofstede lets us know that ambiguity creates anxiety. This dimension is the extent to which ambiguous and unknown situations are tolerable, and therefore, whether the future is predictable or not. Hofstede states, "the essence of uncertainty is that it is a subjective experience, a

feeling…. Feelings of uncertainty not only are just personal but may also be partly shared with other members of one's society" (Hofstede, 2005, pg. 165). He suggests that uncertainty is a learned behavior and behaviors are learned through our caregivers, society, and culture. Here, our coping skills are determined. When people are leaving their past and moving toward their future they must employ coping skills. When people experience violent change, such as the loss of someone close to them, they recognize the need to employ their coping skills. However, very often, when people are involved in a work related transition, they may not recognize the dramatic loss they are experiencing and, in turn, not apply the appropriate coping skills. I see uncertainty avoidance as a very important dimension for a person in transition to discover. If I ask myself how much ambiguity is tolerable for me, I may be able to recognize that my new ambiguous situation may take a little extra work, patience, and coping. However, when I know how much work to expect, I may find it easier to cope.

5. *Long-term Orientation versus Short-term Orientation (aka Confucian Dynamism)* – This fifth dimension was actually identified and added to Hofstede's list of national dimensions after the initial four were already formed. When people are from a short-term oriented society, they may find themselves respectful toward traditions and preservation of the past and present. In a long-term oriented society, people may find themselves looking forward to the rewards that are to follow.

National Cultures in the United States

Identifying your own national culture dimensions and how your society ranks may help you understand what to expect from your culture and the cultures of others. I have found learning of the advantages and disadvantages to each of these dimensions and how they apply to people in transition, to be extremely beneficial. Such knowledge could help them discover strengths and weaknesses and utilize these to their advantage. For example, if an individual is transitioning into a masculine organization with a large power distance and long-term orientation, and is coming from another masculine organization with a small power distance and short-term orientation, she may find that she needs to show greater respect of power toward all employees, if she is a person of power. She will also need to let go of her will to be in control, respect toward traditions, and her expectation of rewards as motivators. If she were a person of lower status in her society/workplace, she may need to learn to take initiative and manage herself efficiently without delegation of work from others.

According to Hoftsede, Individualism is the most prominent dimension found in the United States with a score of 91 of 100, ranking 1st in the world for most individualistic attributes and values. Individuals coming from an individualistic society may find that transitioning into a collectivist-run organization will be difficult in regards to the individual's acceptance of and acceptance by their peers. A person from the United States transitioning to another organization within his own country or another individualistic society may find that he is more easily accepted, because he values the same traits and shares the same work ethics.

The United States also tends to be more short-term oriented, ranking number 31 of 39 countries and regions, with a score of 29. Pakistan scores a 0, being the most short-term oriented country, while China scores 118 as the most long-term oriented country. (Note: though the original research scores were based on a scale of 0-100, Hofstede expanded the scope of the study, requiring a larger scoring system). Short-term oriented societies are inclined to produce quick results, are concerned with personal stability, and have respect for tradition, while long-term oriented societies are inclined toward perseverance, are concerned with personal adaptiveness, and have respect for circumstances. Individuals transitioning from a short-term oriented society may find that they need to give the results rapidly in an "appropriate manner" (whatever that may be in their prospective cultures). When in transition, people from short-term oriented societies may find it harder to let go of their past situations, while people from long-term oriented societies may find it easier to let go and find motivation toward their future position. However, members of short-term oriented societies may find it easier to just "be" in the present and embrace the traditions and culture of the new situation. I think that this all depends on the person's personality and the situation from which he or she is transitioning. Here, by "situation", I'm implying corporate culture. Whether short-term or long-term oriented, people can use the aspects of that dimension to their advantage or disadvantage.

The United States has relatively weak Uncertainty Avoidance, scoring a 46 and coming in 62nd in the ranks. Greece has the highest score of 112, where Singapore ranks 74th with a score of 8. In the workplace, an individual may be more apt to tolerate ambiguity and chaos, have more changes of employers with shorter service periods, and

focus on decision processes. I find this information very useful for individuals in transition from the United States, as weaker uncertainty avoidance will allow people to accept the changes going on around them because they are more tolerant of ambiguous situations and are used to changes of employers. Hofstede also shows that ethnic tolerance and philosophic tendencies of relativism and empiricism are attributes of weak uncertainty avoidance societies. This may further help individuals in transition with their acceptance of new situations and others' values, beliefs, traditions, and ideas.

The power distance in the United States scored a 40, tying with Luxembourg and Estonia. Austria scores the lowest with an 11 and Malaysia scores the highest with 104. The United States has a fairly small power distance in comparison to many of the other countries and regions surveyed. A small power distance promotes decentralization, a hierarchy established for convenience, and has less supervisory staff, while a larger power distance promotes centralization, establishes hierarchy as inequality between levels, and has more supervisory staff. Individuals in transition from a small power distance society may find themselves more self-sufficient and able to work alone, while feeling equal to their superiors. Transitioning into an organization with the attributes and values of a large power distance society, individuals may find that they are less motivated because they have lost their own power and the control over their duties that they had in their past positions.

On the Masculinity index, the United States scored a 62, making it 19th in the world for Masculine values. In a Masculine society, people live to work, find management aggressive and decisive, and the strongest wins during conflict. On the

opposite side, in a Feminine society, people work to live, are managed through intuition and consensus, and compromise and negotiate for resolution of conflicts.

Each individual places differently on the scale of these dimensions and each individual that is transitioning is learning to adopt and accept new spectrums of each dimension. This section is meant for individuals to interpret based on their own experiences. Chapter 3 will help determine the corporate culture that the individuals are transitioning into, as well as the culture that they are leaving.

Culture Shock

When moving from one culture to another, people may find themselves confused and overwhelmed by the changes. They are experiencing *culture shock*. These same feelings can occur even if one remains in the same culture, but aspects of the culture are changed. In Chapter 3, I'll discuss how leadership actually helps create and mold the culture of organizations. Leadership has the power to change a culture from its roots, usually to help the organization reform itself for one reason or another. When a change in the culture is implemented in an organization, the employees will go through a transition in order to adapt to the change and help it be successful for the sake of the organization. When this transition occurs, whether the employee is moving to a new organization or experiencing change within his existing organization, he may find himself confused and overwhelmed by the changes. Culture shock is important to understand for individuals going through transition so they can prepare themselves for the symptoms which may overpower their psyche.

According to Adrian Furnham and Stephen Bochner in their 1986 book *Culture Shock: Psychological Reactions to Unfamiliar Environments*, grief and fatalism are two traditional aspects of culture shock. They describe grief as "a ubiquitous, extremely stressful reaction to the real or imagined loss of a significant object or role…." (Furnham and Bochner, 1986, pg. 163). This suggests to me that grief can apply anywhere, even in an imaginary situation, so there is no wrong reason to grieve. In fact, I find it very acceptable to grieve over the loss of an old environment. A past environment had friends, teams, and responsibilities that provided purpose, security, and a predictable outcome. Now that we have lost that security and the feeling of belonging we need to start over and collect and maintain all of this in our new environment. Furnham and Bochner also explain that culture determines many of our reactions to grief, our bereavement behavior.

Fatalism, also known as 'locus of control', is "the generalized expectation that outcomes are determined by forces such as powerful others, luck or fate…." (Furnham and Bochner, 1986, pg. 166) When individuals are in transition, they are not only grieving their loss of a secure environment but feel they are losing control of their lives to their new situation. They do not know the power that others may hold over other employees or themselves in the new environment. They can only wait to see the results and understand that the control is out of their hands until they have become immersed in the new environment to regain some of the control that they used to find comforting.

Elisabeth Marx, author of *Breaking through Culture Shock: What You Need to Succeed in International Business* (1999), lists reactions that may occur when working in a new culture. Though this piece is about relocating and working internationally, this can

still be applied to transitions within the workplace of our existing national culture. The reactions are as follows:

- Confusion about what to do

- Anxiety

- Frustration

- Exhilaration

- Inappropriate social behavior

- Inability to get close to your business partner and clinch the deal

- Feeling isolated

- Becoming depressed

Marx goes on to explain anthropologist Orberg's (1960) six main aspects of culture shock: strain, sense of loss and feelings of deprivation, feeling rejected, confusion, anxiety and even disgust/anger, and feelings of helplessness. Though slightly repetitive from Marx's own list of reactions, together these reactions and aspects help create an understanding of what an individual goes through during culture shock.

During transition, a person must identify these abnormal behaviors as short-term and temporary. These reactions are needed in order to adapt to new environments. These reactions to an entirely new or changing environment are all part of the adaptation process. Though culture shock is seemingly inevitable, it is temporary and if aware of the consequences and reactions of culture shock, individuals may better prepare themselves mentally, emotionally, physically, and spiritually.

Rate of Adoption and How it Affects Transitions

"Rate of adoption is the relative speed with which an innovation is adopted by members of a social system" (Rogers, 2000, p. 221). I would like to replace the word "innovation" with "organizational culture," as culture is not only a factor in the rate of adoption, but is adopted in the same way as an innovation. Everett Rogers, author of *Diffusion of Innovations* (2000), is a diffusion researcher who found his initial interest in the field as an undergraduate by watching farmers use obsolete tools, when they could be using new innovations to be more efficient. Years later, while doing graduate work in agricultural innovations, Rogers was given the opportunity to join Professor George Beal of Iowa State University in a project where he interviewed farmers regarding their use of innovations. In developing his theory on rate of adoption, Rogers has made himself known as a diffusion scholar. His theory applies to transitions, by showing that members of a social system (individuals) adopt ideas and innovations at different rates. Because it is a subset of a social system we can note that a corporate culture will behave in the same manner. Depending on their national culture as well as the corporate culture from which they are coming, individuals may adopt the new culture slowly or rapidly compared to others in transition. The rate of adoption will be slower when an organization is adopting a new idea. However when an individual is adopting an idea (or corporate culture), the rate of adoption increases in speed as there is only one person that needs to decide the preferred idea (or corporate culture). Rogers distinguishes five main attributes of an innovation, which we can also apply to an organization's culture. *Relative advantage* is how the culture is favorably compared to the last. *Compatibility* is how consistent the old culture's values, past experiences, and needs are with the new one. An interesting note

about compatibility is that it has the ability to block the person's acceptance of the culture if the values and beliefs of the person's national culture do not agree. *Complexity* is the level of difficulty for understanding and utilizing the culture. *Trialability* is the degree to which the culture can be experimented with before joining (which is very limited in the workplace). The final attribute is *observability*, which is the degree to which the results of transitioning into the new culture are viewable. Observing the results is a stretch, as a person can only base the results on past transitioners into the position, and this is still weakened by the observed persons' compatibility with the culture in the transition.

Determining the rate of adoption attributes of the new culture may support people in learning about their differences. Identifying differences between cultures can offer individuals preparedness for upcoming changes. For example, if individuals find that their values are not *compatible* with those of the organization, they are one step ahead as they have already recognized the differences. They are not confused when the differences arise in situations, and they may work through them instead.

I believe that there are other attributes not mentioned in the works I consulted that could also contribute to someone's ability to adopt a new culture. These attributes are one's education level, length of time in the past work environment, and the need for or motivation to transition and accept the change being implemented. If individuals have a higher education level, they may find that they have more common cultural experiences to refer to during the transition. If individuals have been in the same workplace for 10 years, they may find that they resist the new changes and that it may take longer to adopt the new culture. When there is a need or motivation that helps people transition, they

may be more apt to accept the new changes as they have found a reason and purpose to do so.

In conclusion, a person's rate of adoption for an innovation can be adapted to fit a culture. Using the attributes of an adoption, people can determine where they may have or are having difficulties with the cultural adaptation. Determining the level of relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability and observability can help individuals in transition understand where to concentrate their energy and time to successfully and more rapidly adopt the new culture.

Five Phases to a Successful Transition

I've created some distinct phases of transition, based on my readings of William Bridges (1991), along with some of my own experiences in transition. Bridges authored *Managing Transitions* (1991) and brought logical writing to readers curious about managing their own, as well as others' transitions. He is one of the only authors who speaks directly of transitions and not just of the effects of transitions and change. The following phases were adapted from his writings on transitions:

Phase 1: *Identifying and accepting that a change needs to occur.* In this phase, learning about the change is important, along with gaining a solid understanding of why the change is necessary. This will facilitate the acceptance of the change. One should note that when a change is small, we may not identify that a change has occurred and that we are in transition. When a large change occurs, we are apt to prepare ourselves for the transition, while during small change we may not be prepared. Recognizing a small

change is just as important as recognizing a large. It is important to be prepared for the transition and to accept that the transition is going to occur as opposed to being shocked by the feelings and effects of the transition.

Phase 2: *Letting go of the old.* Bridges states that "change causes transition, and transition starts with an ending." (Bridges, 1991, p. 19) For this phase, I've researched coping with grief and stress, as our environment and identity as we know it is about to change. Here is where our coping skills and ability to grieve come in. In order to let go, an individual must recognize the death of that person, opportunity, era, etc. In a situation of organization change, it is important that a person let go of the old behaviors and values that applied to the old organization and the goals that were being aimed at. People *are* changing their values, beliefs, and goals and engaging in new behaviors; however, this is only applicable to their work culture.

Phase 3: *Moving into the new.* Here we learn what has changed. In this phase, we must identify what is new.   We often compare this with our old environment. The next phase is about accepting the new environment as our own. In Phase 3, we are able to be excited about the new things. We are still applying our old tactics to the new situations, but we are interested in our new environment. We see the differences between our environments, but it excites us to see what the new environment will bring. New faces, new responsibilities, and new space all bring us to the apex of our change.

Phase 4: *Accepting the new.* We no longer look at the environment as something new and exciting, rather we look at it as something different than we had before. We compare it with our old environment and "the way things were". Learning to use perspective (my favorite CCT skill) can help us learn why the natives of the new environment feel comfortable in their culture. Here, we may begin to go into an idle. This is important as we are in the process of carefully learning our new environment. At this point we have begun to assess the change, but have yet to fully immerse ourselves in our adopted environment. We manage our everyday activities on a day to day basis and we have leveled out our feelings of excitement and fear since our original arrival and our plateau of Phase 3.

During the transition stage it is important not to lose one's sense of self. A person may feel that her old culture is being attacked by the new culture. This is because the new culture is going about its business, while the new person is trying to apply her old cultural skills to her new environment. Individuals in transition are vulnerable. They are not rooted and are usually motivated simply by their need to fit in and become accepted. In order to be accepted, individuals need not lose themselves while moving on from the "way things were done" in their last culture. It is important that people learn to identify, accept, and appreciate the differences between themselves and the new culture. People expect others to do as they do because they don't understand why people do as they don't. In other words, people are anticipating the members of their adopted culture to act in a manner befitting the transitioner's old culture because the transitioner has not yet gained a full understanding of the expectations of the new environment. A full appreciation of the new culture enables a successful transition.

Phase 5: *Making the new the now*. In this phase, we begin to find our niche. We are no longer managing ourselves on a day to day basis or wondering what may happen next. We know what will happen next, and can begin to anticipate or plan our actions. We have performed our day to day activities enough times to be able to predict what the next part of our day will look like. We know how to commute between places (to and from work, to and from other offices, where to have lunch, etc.). We have learned when it is appropriate to discuss company matters with our new boss. We know which behaviors are accepted and which are not, as we have developed an understanding of the consequences and rewards of our behavior and actions. We have not only become sensitive to and appreciative of our new environment, we have become equal, accepted members.

We can use these stages to help guide us through a transition and understand what we may be up against or what to look forward to next. Each individual person will handle these stages differently. Some may stay in Phase 1 longer than others, while the others find Phase 3 comforting because they adapt easily or have a higher rate of adoption of the new culture. Some may bounce around phases or revisit phases. Eventually, the transition will come to an end and the individual will have completed the transition into the new culture. In order for individuals to successfully complete the transition, they must stay motivated to do so. The next section outlines the dynamics of human motivation.

Individual Motivation in Transitions

People often find themselves motivated simply by a need to belong. Though motivation is often found when a person discovers a purpose, according to Abraham Maslow (1954) there are more needs that motivate humans and their behavior than a simple need to belong. The American psychologist, widely considered the father of humanism, has been commonly acknowledged for his proposal of a hierarchy of human needs. Maslow's theory has made appearances in many of my undergraduate and graduate courses as well as my research. I use his hierarchy of needs on a personal basis and in my own thinking to help me better understand other people's motives.

Let's keep in mind that motivation is crucial to transitioning. It allows us to physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually prepare for the transition and the underlying change that is in progress. Through my research and thinking for this paper, I discovered that motivation is the mode of transportation that gets us through a transition, as a ship would guide us through a body of water. As a founding father of motivation theories, Maslow helps us understand what motivates people in their day to day lives.
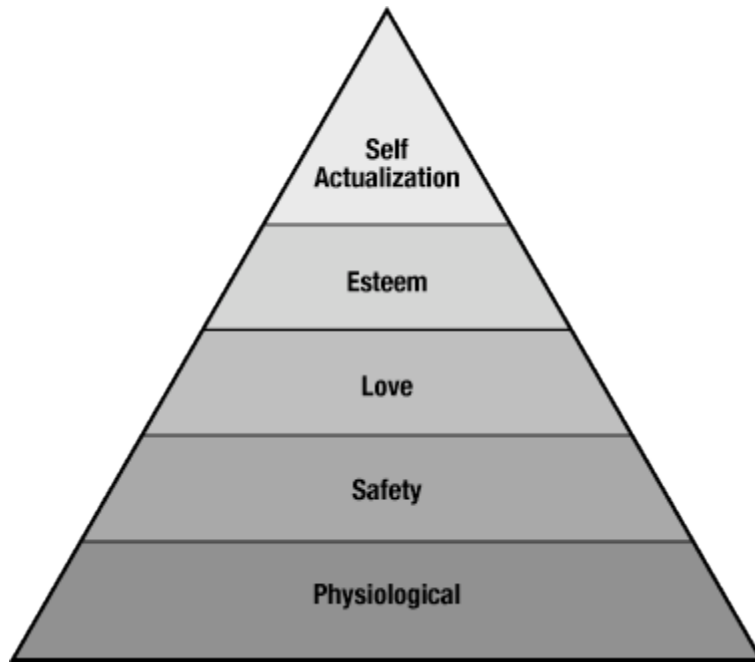
Figure 1. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Chart

Maslow calls his theory a "holistic-dynamic theory". It was designed to be

positive and purposeful. His theory is based on the basic needs of life that motivate

humans. There is a hierarchy of needs that a human encounters and Maslow uses these

needs to describe how humans are motivated (see Figure 1). The first and most basic

needs are physiological. Our need to physically stay alive (our need for oxygen, food,

water, physical movement, etc.) is our most important need/responsibility. Our bodies

are naturally and instinctually motivated by self preservation. If hungry, we find

motivation to seek food. This need must be fulfilled in order to move on to the next basic

need of life, our safety. After all, without breathing and nourishment, we would have no

reason to keep ourselves safe and secure. Maslow explains that the first level of needs

must be "well gratified" before we consider the next level of needs. Safety needs include

security and stability in our lives, such as protection, shelter, and freedom from fear. The

safety needs can be just as motivating as the physiological needs. The next need to arise

is the desire for belongingness and love. Here, a person feels the need to belong to a group or be able to feel and give affection. This is followed by the need for self-esteem which is how we feel about ourselves. Self-esteem is also a motivator used during transition. The final need described by Maslow, for which he has garnered the most attention, is self-actualization. According to Maslow, after all of the needs described are met we are motivated by the need to self-actualize. The point of this need is to feed our urge to be what we are, to do that at which we are good, and to naturally create what we feel we are destined and able to do. Only after all of our needs are met to stay alive and to understand ourselves, we can then focus on our need of self-actualization. This is where we develop our creativity and the human motivation to "be".

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is explained in this paper to show the roots of motivation and where it lies in individuals. Since motivation is needed for transitions, it is important to learn where motivation comes from and how it fits into our priorities. While there are other types of motivation which have been studied, Maslow's theory puts into perspective basic human needs. The next section explains intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and how they apply to transitions.

Intrinsic vs. Extrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic motivation is the internal drive to complete a desired task, while extrinsic motivation is through rewards that are given to us by those that would like to see us complete the desired task. It is argued that intrinsic motivation can be undermined by extrinsic rewards because the extrinsic reward gives the person a separate motivation of receiving the reward. Stephen Ray Flora, author of *The Power of Reinforcement* (2004)

calls this a myth. According to his examination of the research, it cannot be proved that a person's intrinsic motivation is undermined by extrinsic reward. As a young child, Flora was placed into a systematic positive reinforcement program to address his poor spelling. The program was successful in motivating young Flora to become a better speller. He started his work in reinforcement during his undergraduate work at The University of North Carolina, where he studied basic learning and reinforcement processes. In his graduate work he concentrated on systematic reinforcement and became involved with individuals with developmental disorders and dangerous behaviors. He hypothesized that such systematic reinforcement programs have improved the quality of life in those individuals.

According to Flora, "the findings that do support the view that rewards may have detrimental effects generally come from highly contrived, very artificial laboratory situations" (Flora, 2004, pg. 41). He explains that there were limitations in these studies that promoted the results. The tasks and rewards more than likely did not have meaning, and the reward was given only once, or promised but not delivered, just to receive results. Also, the tasks were usually only done for a short period of time. Flora argues against the validity of the studies, because these limitations prevented the full possibility of human response.

I would suggest that individuals in transition find their motivation from within and not rely on that which comes from the outside. I feel that intrinsic motivation is most reliable, as we can not count on others to tell us when we are doing a good job or give us rewards based on our performance. While we can use extrinsic rewards to motivate ourselves, I feel that we should not depend on them as a sole source of motivation.

Although some studies have found that extrinsic rewards can undermine intrinsic motivation, I believe that motivations are based on the individual and how the prospective reward is perceived. It is up to the person in transition to decide how to utilize these two types of motivation, to stay motivated and continue forward throughout the transition. My best form of motivation is gained through the understanding that a transition is a temporary process which we must go through in order to create a successful change.

CHAPTER 3

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

When individuals are in transition from one organization to another, they will find themselves needing to understand a different set of values, beliefs, rituals, and ideas. Along with these, they will need to understand the purpose of their new peers and their new organization. Understanding the new culture of the organization and its attributes will help individuals better understand the process that they are going through during the transition, and allow them to concentrate on the appropriate attributes and dynamics of the culture that may be more difficult to understand and accept. In this chapter, I will discuss organizational culture. I will address systems theory as it is relevant to individuals and discuss where such cultures lie within a system and how they are affected. I will discuss three organizational theories, which were chosen specifically for their versatility to be used together or separately. The CCT programs' culture will be diagnosed and discussed according to the theories presented, along with Hofstede's dimensions of national culture. This chapter is intended to help the reader develop a well-rounded understanding of organizational culture.

Understanding Organizational Culture

Organizational culture is the way of life in an organization. It influences how the members act and their purpose and motives behind those actions. When the environment changes around them, they must transition to the environment in order to survive in their

culture. Because people are seeking acceptance they tend to do what is considered "the norm".

The culture of organizations can change around a person or a person can enter a new yet pre-existing culture. Either way, an individual will need to go through some type of transition. In order for us to understand what we are going through during a transition, we must understand what a transition is and what we are transitioning into and from. Understanding the basic dynamics of culture will help us see the differences between the new and old domains.

The first issue which must be address is what is culture and how does it apply to organizations? One definition of culture is "The predominating attitudes and behavior that characterize the functioning of a group or organization" (American Heritage Dictionary, 2006). When a change of culture occurs, a person moves into a place where their set of values are no longer valid to all of those around them and they must learn the new set of values and behaviors to be successful. In society when people move into a new culture, they still hold onto their old values while learning to adopt the values of their new environment. Often, their culture may not be understood by others in the new society. However, holding on to their old values is more commonly accepted after transitioning to a new society. In an organization, people are working together as a team with a shared purpose. They all need to be on the same value level and work together to accomplish their goals, by using the values that have been set in place by the entire culture of the organization. Desmond Graves, author of *Corporate Culture: Diagnosis and Change*, quoted B.F. Skinner (1971) as describing culture as a "constantly adaptive mechanism". A culture is in a constant state of transition within itself and its system.

The individuals are the atoms that make up a culture and are the affected element when a change occurs.

Systems Theory

These organizational cultures are all part of a larger system. Understanding the theory which governs these systems can help us understand the entirety of the organization and how it is affected by various elements, such as its employees and resident products.

In discussing system theory, it is important to understand where people and cultures fit into the larger dynamic. A system contains subsystems, subsystems contain cultures, cultures are made up of people, and people are the mechanics that make the system work. An organization is a subsystem; the larger culture to which the organization belongs is the system. The larger culture actually lies within yet another larger system, its environment.

I discovered a great deal of well organized material on systems through Carter McNamara (1997). His writings on systems thinking and how they apply to organizations helped me learn to identify a system. A simple way to make this determination is if you can remove a piece and change the dynamics of the item, then it is a system. If you take away a piece and the functionality is different, or a change occurs, then it is a system (McNamara, 1997). Breaking up the various pieces of a whole could create a non-functioning system. McNamara uses an elephant as an example: "if you break up an elephant, you don't have a bunch of little elephants" (McNamara, 1997, pg. 3). He also explains that trying to make a system larger than it is can result in the system

itself breaking up to compensate for lost stability. When a problem arises the entire system is affected by it. McNamara states that "a circular relationship exists between the overall system and its parts." (McNamara, 1997, pg. 3)

Understanding systems during the situational event of a change will help individual employees (or the facilitator of the change) incorporate the right tactics into the change thereby improving the chances for success. Understanding that a change must occur within a system, will help people see the benefits and consequences of the implemented change. Systems theory teaches us that when we push on one end of a system, we will see reactions and results from the other side (Kurtyka, 2005). The antithesis of the systems theory view is the "reductionist" view. Here, the problems or situations are looked at in isolation rather than as a piece of a system or as a whole. When identifying a problem or situation, we must understand that it is a piece of a whole. For example, when a person takes a step forward, a piece of their system (the leg) will extend forward in front of the rest of the body. Further, Kurtyka's theory would follow that the remainder of the body must follow the leg as the resulting reaction of the step itself. It is not a step if only the leg is being extended. It is a leg extension. And even then, those muscles can not work without the brain sending a signal to tell them to move. Whether the system is the human body or an organization, we must understand that making a change or manipulating one part will affect the rest.

When a stimulus is given, a reaction occurs, especially with human beings. Though an organization is not a living breathing being, we must treat it as so because it is made of up living breathing people.

Along with the idea that the organization is made up of people and that the organization is a system, we need to understand that this system exists within a larger system, its "environment". When the environment around the organization is changed, the effects will reverberate through the organization.

When change occurs within an organization made up of people, the people feel the effects of the change. When the people feel the effects of the change, they are going through a "transition". Transitions can affect people in many ways. They can create or destroy motivation. They can cause people to quit or cause them to excel. Either way, a cognitive preparation, of both the organization and the person, need to be implemented throughout the system to create a successful transition.

To summarize, a transition occurs with a change, a change occurs within a culture, a culture is located within a system, and as a system is effected by reactions that occur within each of its parts. In order to make a change, an organization must first look at its system and the larger culture in which it is located. Then the change itself can be organized and understood in order to produce the proper reactions necessary to create a successful change. Because the "change" is actually situational, it is only when the actions are implemented that the change is complete. After the change is initiated, the transition can begin. A transition cannot occur without the initiation of a change and a change can not be complete until the transition has run its course. So, understanding the root of a transition (the root being the system) can make or break the change being transitioned toward.

Theories of Organizational Culture

When transitioning between organizational cultures, individuals may find that they are motivated by new factors that are found in the new culture. Understanding the culture that the person has moved into can help for a better understanding of the challenges of transitioning. The following theories of organizational culture may help break down the organization's cultural structure. This will in turn allow a better appreciation of a new culture and anticipate what is to come.

The theorists used in this section were chosen not just by their popularity in the field of corporate cultures and leadership, but also because of the diversity between their theories. Edgar Schein, Geert Hofstede, and Charles Handy are known worldwide for their work in organizational behavior, culture, and leadership. Their theories complement each other and can all be considered when gathering information about a corporate culture.

Edgar Schein's Three Levels of Culture

According to Edgar Schein, professor of management at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's famous Sloan School of Management, culture is "customs and rights", it's a "phenomenon that surrounds us all", and "the accumulated shared learning from shared history". With an M.A. degree in social psychology from Stanford and a Ph.D. in social psychology from Harvard, Schein is well known in the social psychology field for his work in leadership and organizational development, primarily organizational socialization and management development. Schein says to understand an organization one must understand its culture. Understanding an organization's culture will allow us to

see what is really going on and how to adapt and take in the ways of the culture as newcomers.

In his book entitled *Organizational Leadership*, Schein explains that "Cultures begin with leaders who impose their own values and assumptions on a group." (Schein, 1992, pg. 1) Since the culture is created by its leadership, the leadership can be defined by the culture. If the culture of an organization is untamed it can grow like a rainforest, in any given direction. Leadership must take control to maintain a clear culture with the desired direction. Perhaps this can be done by maintaining cultural behaviors expected within the organization, even by firing those that will not behaviorally perform as desired. Schein believes that understanding the dynamics of culture is the best way to learn why it is so hard to change the cultures ways. It seems obvious to me that when we learn the obstacles of a situation, we can initiate and create ways to pass them and make the change. Schein believes that the best leaders are those that have the talents to work with and understand culture. He says that "leaders create and change cultures, while management and administrators live within them." (Schein, 1992, pg. 5)

Schein diagnoses organizational cultures by breaking the culture down into three levels of culture. Perhaps this theory is most beneficial to those that are consultants in business development or change, as this theory is most organized to break down an organization and show its culture in a formal report. To learn to create a picture of what is really going on in the organization, seeing its true identity will help us make changes in a more strategic, safe, and purposeful manner.

Edgar Schein's *Three Levels of Culture* are:

1. *The "artifacts".* These are the tangible products that can be observed to form an understanding of the organization's culture. They include the physical environment, language, technology, product produced, the expected professional mannerism that is shown publicly by its members, stories told of the organization, written values, and conducted ceremonies. Schein says that this level of the culture is easy to observe, yet difficult to decipher. Schein also comes to a great assumption/theory of the researcher involved in diagnosing the organization's culture. If the culture that is being researched is in the same larger culture as the researchers, then it is easier for them to decipher what the artifacts mean. Since they came from the same culture and share similar symbols, rituals, and values, they understand the basic assumptions of the culture. When the researchers are coming from a different larger culture than the organization, they may perceive the symbols and values in the way that they learned from their own culture. Therefore, the actual point of the culture is misconstrued. In CCT, perspective is a major tool to learn to become a critical and creative thinker. Using many perspectives in a situation is what helps us solve a problem. The artifacts level of culture is the initial culture that a transitioner sees when arriving.

2. *The espoused values*. The second level of culture is the "espoused values". These are the perceived values of the members of the organization. The shared values and assumptions that are part of the artifacts' level are made by leadership and molded by the enforced rules of behavior that evolved over time. The espoused values are the

values and beliefs that the individuals and groups have of the organization. These espoused values can be found through social gatherings, making the values testable through social validation (i.e. focus groups for consultant research). At an organizational level, these espoused values will not present themselves, even when the behaviors found at the artifacts level are being shown in a professional manner. The espoused values of a culture can be determined and used by the transitioner after the person has made social bonds.

3. *The basic assumptions.* The third and deepest level of culture lies in the "basic assumptions". They are the hardest values of a culture to change, as they are not seen, nor recognized by the group or outsiders. Schein writes, "Culture as a set of basic assumptions defines for us what to pay attention to, what things mean, how to react emotionally to what is going on, and what actions to take in various kinds of situations." (Schein, 1992, pg. 22) When individuals transition to a new culture, organizational or not, they may find themselves misinterpreting the behaviors and actions of others. Humans tend to be very quick to judge, but when entering a new culture, it is wise to step back and learn the behaviors before we react to them. We may feel we are releasing extra anxiety or become very defensive, because we are out of our comfort zone and without "cognitive stability". We have not only brought over our expectations from our last culture, but also those of our families and personal experiences. Basic assumptions are made over time by individuals and groups and serve as motivation for our behaviors. For example, we may be under the assumption that two executives whispering in the hallway are talking about someone within the

organization due to past experience and learned behaviors from our previous culture.

Perhaps the executives are confidentially discussing changes to employee benefits and

cannot risk the information being overheard. We use our basic assumptions without

even recognizing them and our basic assumptions come from our own experience and

the learned experience of interacting within a specific group or culture. This is why

basic assumptions are the hardest part of an organizational culture to change. We do

not recognize that they are even there, by isolating them and attempting to change these

assumptions we can cause chaos in a smooth operation.

Geert Hofstede's Six Cross-Organizational Dimension

Earlier in the Chapter 2, I described Hofstede's *Five Dimensions of National*

Culture. His ideas have influenced many researchers to create their own theories and

ideas of dimensions, allowing us to better understand the complexity and diversity of

culture.

Hofstede also shows us that a person's national culture and the national culture

which dominates the organization will affect the organization's "corporate culture".

When Hofstede's five dimensions of national culture were put to use in corporate culture,

he discovered *Six Cross-Organizational Dimensions*. Though these two theories are very

distinct in their core, they can be used together to better understand corporate cultures

and the individuals that comprise them. Each dimension is rated on a scale of 1-100. So,

a company could have qualities of the opposing dimension. However, most organizations

will score more toward one side of the scale than the other. These six dimensions can

alter how a person transitions.

Geert Hofstede's *Six-Cross Organizational Dimensions* are as follows:

1. *Process-oriented vs. results oriented cultures.* In a process-oriented culture the staff tend to not take risks and only put small efforts into their job, while in the results-oriented culture the staff put in a large amount of effort, are comfortable with new situations, and feel a challenge each day at work.

 People moving from a process-oriented culture to a result-oriented culture may feel overwhelmed by the new challenges and will need to learn how to put in a most concerted effort to rise to these challenges. Whereas, people moving in the opposite direction may find themselves bored or without a drive, as they haven't any challenges of which to rise.

2. *Employee-oriented vs. job-oriented cultures.* An employee-oriented culture is concerned with employee welfare. The staff feel as if their personal lives are taken into account with the work that they do. Whereas, in a job-oriented culture, the staff feel pressured to get the job done, regardless of what they may be going through.

 People moving from an employee-oriented culture to a job-oriented culture may feel major pressure to complete their tasks, even if they have something going on in their personal lives that hinders there ability to do so. In the reverse situation, people from a job-oriented culture may feel that they are putting more effort into the tasks than others, as their previous experience have taught them to leave their personal lives at home.

3. *Parochial vs. professional cultures*. This dimension is similar to the last described in regards to the influence of the employees' personal lives. In a parochial culture, the staff of the organization tend to use the same behaviors at work as in the home. The employees also feel that their personal lives were taken into account upon their hire. In a professional culture, the employees feel that their personal lives are solely their own business and that their hiring was a direct result of their competence and job skills.

Individuals moving from a parochial culture to a professional culture may feel that their comments or their "way of doing things" are inappropriate. People moving in the opposite direction may feel similar consequences, where they may not fit in because of the "way they do things". Moving in either direction, individuals may feel that their skills are not appreciated as they were before.

4. *Open systems vs. closed systems in organizational cultures.* An open-system in an organization is when the culture welcomes newcomers and outsiders as if they were their own. A person feels at home within a few days. Of course, in a closed system, new employees and outsiders do not feel as if they "fit in" and can take up to a year to feel accepted, and in some cases even longer. During Hofstede's research, in a closed-system organization "one member of the managing board confessed that he still felt like an outsider after twenty-two years" (Hofstede and Hofstede, 2005 , p. 295). Employees in a closed-system tend to be very secretive even among fellow employees; they tend to believe that only "special people" fit into the organization.

Individuals moving from an open-system to a closed-system may find it extremely hard to adapt as they are used to feeling accepted. When people do not feel

accepted in their environment they may actually not survive the transition. Especially if those people have already reached Maslow's proclaimed "need for belonging" and "need of self-esteem". They may find themselves needing to start all over again as they are shown that they do not belong. Unless they have the self-esteem to endure until they are accepted, they have a stronger chance of failing. Though Maslow's "need of belonging" comes before the "need for self-esteem", I feel that if people have already experienced what it feels like to have self-esteem, they can use that to protect themselves from feeling overwhelmed by the fact that they are not yet accepted. When people move in the opposite direction, from a closed-system to an open-system, they may feel slightly overwhelmed. Yet, they may still enjoy the attention and gratitude they receive. However, they may find it hard to believe that they are so accepted by this open-system community. Perhaps this person finds that she want to protect herself from this overbearing kindness or use caution when allowing people near, with her guard down. Moving in either direction can be difficult to adjust to. Personally, I feel that moving into a closed-system when people are used to being accepted regardless of their "status", is a more difficult transition.

5. *Loose control vs. tight control cultures.* A loose-control culture is very flexible when it comes to such issues as costs to the organization or meeting times. Jokes about the job and the organization are acceptable and frequent. The tight-control culture doesn't allow leeway on costs or for tardiness. Jokes are not acceptable and formal dress codes and dignified behavior is often expected though they may not be written.

Here, the transition for people moving from a loose-control culture to a tight-control culture may find that they are using unacceptable behavior in their new place of work. They may need to sit back and observe the behavior of others in order to learn how to act in an acceptable manor in this organization. The same applies to the opposite transition, however they may initially feel surprised that people are tardy to meetings or go over budget without approval. They may look down upon this and feel offended by other staff members' improper behavior.

6. *Normative vs. pragmatic cultures*. A normative culture follows rules and procedures carefully, even if it hinders their results. Business ethics and honesty are well valued in the normative cultures. In a pragmatic culture the customers' needs are highly valued and prioritized above following proper procedures.

Individuals moving from a normative culture may find themselves too structured for their new pragmatic culture. They will need to learn to look ahead to the results and be sure that they can achieve those results for their customers. They are used to a specified order of operations even if it achieves better results. Learning to think creatively to achieve results is a skill that is learned from experience and observation. When people are moving from a pragmatic culture to a normative culture, they may find themselves frustrated with their end result, especially if the result of the process and procedures that they feel forced to implement is failure. People transitioning into a pragmatic culture should use caution, as their order of operations may cost them their competence rating or their success in the organization.

As described earlier in the transition phases, a person must learn to let go of the old and accept the new to allow the transition to be successful and complete. Regardless of direction, each person in transition must take into account the ways of the new organization. The good news is that humans are an adaptable species. When we move from one climate to the next, our bodies adjust according to the temperature. Of course, it does take time to adapt long term but it seemingly works every time. When we move from one culture to the next, we adapt to our new environment and behaviors. When our old behavior is less important than our new behavior we have successfully made a transition.

We can actually apply Geert Hofstede's six cross-organizational dimensions to ourselves, while in transition. Perhaps you are transitioning to a new organization in which only one of the six dimensions is different from your previous organization. Or perhaps, you are doing a "total" transition, where you need to learn to adopt all six dimensions of the new organization. Either way, if you can diagnose your new organization's culture and compare it to the one which you are currently trying to let go, perhaps you could prepare yourself to adapt and learn to lean toward the new direction. The most efficient way to adapt to a new culture is to learn about it and become familiar with it without judging it. Comparing it to your past culture is unavoidable. You can't ignore where you just came from, but you can learn and accept the differences of the two cultures. Educating yourself on the differences brings you one step closer to a successful transition.

Charles Handy's Theory of Propriety

Charles Handy, a Fellow of the London Business School, developed a Theory of Propriety that breaks down organizational cultures into four categories. In his 1978 book, *Gods of Management: The changing work of organizations*, Handy assigns each culture a Greek god and a picture symbol to help better understand the dimensions of each culture. Handy developed this work from a chapter of one of his published books *Understanding Organizations*. Handy is recognized for his work in organizational cultures and has authored several books dedicated to his research and ideas.

Charles Handy's *Four Organizational Cultures* are:

1. *The Club Culture*. The Greek god, Zeus, and spider web are chosen to represent this culture. This culture is found in smaller organizations or organizations that rely on seniority (usually the president/owner) to facilitate the expected behaviors and values of the organization. "Selection" (of employees and clients) and "succession" are very important to its survival. Its main attribute is its "speed of decision". This organization is organized by verbal agreements, quick decisions, minimal documentation, and most importantly trust. Business is handled very pragmatically and in a personal manner. The individuals of these organizations are trusted to do what is best for their company. If trust is misplaced the person is no longer an asset to the company and is usually terminated. Since there aren't any procedures used to achieve results, empathy and trust are the main resources for doing business. Organizations with a club culture are run fairly inexpensively. The advantage here

being speed, this organization thrives when time is of the essence. The staff here are usually paid very well and taken care of when traveling on business or attending to clients.

2. *The Role Culture*. The God of order and rules, Apollo, and the symbol of the Greek temple were chosen to represent the role culture. The pillars of the temple represent "functions and dimensions". This is the most commonly found culture in organizations, where an organizational flow chart are usually employed and roles and tasks are taken seriously. The staff join the organization and climb their chosen or given pillar to gain authority, managerial duties, and sometimes senior roles. Rules and procedures are most important in this culture. Everything that achieves results has been carefully and logically analyzed. Critical thinking skills are well suited here. The organization that carries this culture is stable and predictable. Most days are repetitive and procedures are constantly being improved for efficiency. A major sense of job security is felt by the employees of these organizational cultures, as they are usually viewed as indispensable. It is a very closed-system, as individuals are solely expected to act in their assigned role and not let their personalities prevail in their duties. Individuals that work here tend to stay for the life of their career as it is safe and stable. Change in these cultures is not welcome. Because of the organization's predictability, creative thinking is not needed and may actually go against the grain of efficiency and be seen as a threat. Many measures are taken in a critical thinking manner to ensure and protect the stability of the organization against major environmental changes. The first example of a role culture that comes to mind

is The Walt Disney Company. It is ironic because The Walt Disney Company is a large part of the creative business world. However, the structure of the organization is very role oriented. Each person has a role and each role must follow the rules and procedures to produce results. The organization even goes as far as calling their employees "cast members" to illustrate that they all have a role in the operations. This is important, as The Walt Disney Company must provide safety for its theme park guests and predictability for the company's future. Role cultures are safe and usually very successful.

3. *The Task Culture*. Athena, the warrior goddess, holds power in this organizational culture, as does the symbol of a net. This culture lives for solving problems. It does this through self-contained groups that are only slightly linked in their effort to complete the task for the organization as a whole. Here, creativity is praised and talents and fresh approaches enable you to contribute to the overall assigned task. Young, energetic employees are usually found here and their rate of adoption for innovations and new ideas is high. People must work well together as they are all moving toward the same goal. They tend to feed off one another's enthusiasm and mutual respect is often found in this culture. For me this paints the picture of an open-system. People here are willing to help those who have fallen behind. Handy compares the task and role cultures as "teams" vs. "committees". The teams of a task culture are fully equipped with experts that must experiment to solve these problems; therefore these cultures are usually expensive. They can only thrive during times of

expansion or launching of innovations. To survive the down time, these

organizations tend to be short lived or grow into a role culture when expanding.

4. *The Existential Culture*. What sounds more exciting than to be in an organizational

culture that is run by Dionysus, the Greek god of wine and song, with the symbol of

an artist's palette? The organizations in these cultures are actually run for the

individuals. The organization works for the people who merge their common needs

and duties such as customer service documentation, scheduling, and filing with others

in their area of expertise. These cultures do not suffer from a missing piece of

organization because when and individual must leave that person is not an

indispensable part of the organization. This is because it is run for individual

members and not for members as a group.   Examples of an Existential Culture would

be a university or an artist studio.   When an organization like this must be managed,

the manager is not at the top of the chart delegating to the staff. Handy has a great

way of explaining the individuals of this organizational culture. He writes,

"Professionals do not willingly take orders, fill in forms, or compromise on their own

plans. Every teacher likes to be the uninterrupted king in his own classroom, just as

every doctor is the god of his consulting room". Though the existential culture is a

haven for self-motivated and self-indulgent experts, there is a certain risk that is

involved. Relying on the behaviors and values of this culture are intriguing and

exciting, yet risky.

Synthesizing Theories

Culture is not tangible nor a product that can be glanced at and defined. It is a way of life whether in a society or in an organization. Since culture is not visible, people can use these theories to help identify attributes of a new corporate culture that will help them to observe what they are adopting and accepting as their new culture. These organizational culture theories can be used by individuals to define the culture they are in or a new culture that they are transitioning into. Each theory uses a different approach and can be implemented separately or together.

It is possible to combine all three theories when creating, working, or coping with the responses of change. When trying to choose a specific theory to work with, one should keep in mind that these theories do not overlap each other. In fact, I find that the theories build upon each other. Since they are unique from one another, they can all be used to help determine the culture of an organization by using multiple perspectives. In CCT, the more perspectives that are used to solve a problem, the more thorough and predictable the outcome will be.

"Cultural understanding and cultural learning start with self-insight." (Ott, et al, 2003, p. 95, quoted by Edgar Schein) Schein teaches us that perception and insight play a large role in understanding culture. Being able to step outside the culture that we are in and open our minds enough to allow new information from other cultures to enter, will allow us to better understand what motivates and creates the flow into other cultures. Though Schein's theory was written about leadership and creating learning environments, it can also be applied to transitions. We, the individuals of an organization, can learn to understand a new culture by simply stepping back from our own and looking through the

eyes of others in the new culture. When we are physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually making the transition from one organization to another, we can learn to implement the new culture easier (in other words, transition easier), because we have allowed ourselves to understand its purpose, what motivates it and the individuals which comprise it in order to continue moving forward and conducting their day to day activities.

Schein's theory can assist in identifying an intangible product. Hofstede's dimensions can assist in identifying behavior of individual co-workers within the organization. Handy's Theory of Propriety can assist in identifying the behavior of the organization as a whole. Schein's theory differs from Hofstede's and Handy's in that it only shows the three levels of an organizations culture that draw a picture of the organization, as opposed to classifying and naming certain acts and behaviors that the culture and its members perform.

One may find while interrelating theories that Hofstede's dimensions may mix well with Handy's categorization of cultures. For example, a club culture may be more of an open-system that is results-oriented, parochial, loose, and pragmatic. A role culture may be a closed-system that is results-oriented, job-oriented, professional, tight, and normative. A task culture may be an open-system that is results-oriented, parochial, loose, and pragmatic. However, an existential culture could actually lean toward either side of the dimensions' scale. According to Schein, a leader is responsible for a portion of the culture and why it is the way it "is". Since an existential culture is usually led by one person, it could swing to either direction of the scale.

Not only are we moving to a new culture in our workplace, which may affect our way of life in our homes and in our personal lives. We now have a new purpose of being at work. It may be one that works well with our purpose and goals at home, or it may be very different in that we need to go through a mini transition daily to move back and forth between our home culture and our work culture. Perhaps it takes longer for us to relax after work, if our new organization is task-oriented and we have been moving non-stop all day. Or maybe we have moved into a power culture and we have learned to take charge of any situation that is thrown at us at work and when we come home we need to go back to sharing the power with our loved ones. It is possible that the person had always had power at home and moved into a more relaxed atmosphere at work, where they must learn to share the power with other coworkers. I am confident that understanding the culture of organizations will help us better understand that learning about our culture and habitat will teach us to anticipate what is next. When we learn to know and expect what is coming next in our new culture, we will be able to make easier transitions. A successful transition creates a successful change. A successful change creates a successful business. A successful transition requires motivation. Learning about the different types of organizational cultures and the theories as they related to the structure of an environment, allows one to prepare for what is coming up next within new culture.

In conclusion, these theories may help us better understand the culture we are transitioning to, when joining a new organization. During transition, the social culture that the individual is familiar with changes. Being equipped with the knowledge to identify and define the new culture gives individuals the ability to successfully follow

through with the transition and successfully create a change for the organization and themselves.

Defining a new culture

Recognizing the culture of a new organization takes time. It takes consultants months to achieve an in-depth understanding of each level of a corporate culture. As an employee, it may be easier to identify the espoused values of the culture from the "inside". Though a consultant has professional experience with identifying behaviors that constitute specific types of cultures or the dimensions that may be found within that culture, an "insider" may be a step ahead of the consultant because they already posses an intimate understanding of the culture.

As an employee, it is possible to discover the dimensions of a culture within the first few weeks. Existing employees may need a little time to accept and adopt the new employee. They need to develop trust, in order to welcome them in as a peer and not just a co-worker. After this short incubation period, the new employee can take note of the behaviors of the staff and how they react to the behaviors of the new employee. Taking all that was learned throughout this paper, people can identify behaviors that may be unfamiliar to them from their own experiences.

For example, if the staff behave in an open and engaging manner, talking freely about personal situations or inviting the new employee to join in on a conversation, it is most likely that the new employee has transitioned into an open-system as opposed to a closed-system. If the new employee is coming from a closed-system, he may find it awkward to talk to co-workers in such a relaxed fashion. However, engaging in the

behaviors of the new culture can help the person transition more smoothly and more successfully. The new employee may find that these same behaviors are transferable to situations with his co-workers outside of the workplace. This would suggest that the organization embraces the parochial side of the "parochial vs. professional" dimension. If the new employee finds that these same employees, while at work, are skipping over standard procedures in order to satisfy clients or customers, the person may identify that he is in a results-oriented culture as opposed to a process-oriented culture. In this culture, the new employee will want to learn which procedures will reduce time and increase effectiveness in achieving the results of his final product. Not only will this give the employee the opportunity to produce work valued by the organization, he will be sharing the same values with his new peers and co-workers. In this example, after identifying the dimensions commonly found in the new culture and where he may lie on the rating scale, the employee could categorize the patterns of the workplace using one of Handy's cultures. This example of a corporate culture would most likely fall into the Task culture. This understanding of the culture may help individuals with their expectations as well as their acceptance of behaviors of the new culture. One other thought to keep in mind, is that in a large organization with more than one department it is possible to find more than one culture within the company. Each department may form their own values, behaviors, and 'way of doing things'. For example, the accounting department of an organization may be a more normative, tightly-controlled, and an employee-oriented culture which would allow for critical thinking and minimal mistakes. While the marketing department may be more of an open-system, with a loose-control culture that allows for creativity.

Identifying behaviors in a new corporate culture takes time and patience during this observation process. When the new employee has finally identified some of these categorized behaviors, he can learn which are acceptable behaviors within the culture and can adopt these new behaviors using his own rate of adoption. I imagine that the rate of adoption for an individual, regardless of culture, would increase in speed with knowledge of the culture at hand.

A Culture Called CCT

Though we think of an organization as solely a corporate workplace, organizations can be found anywhere. An organization can be defined as "something that has been organized and functions as a whole", or as "a group united by common interest or goal" (The American Heritage Dictionary, 1983, pg. 484). The Critical and Creative Thinking Program (CCT) at the University of Massachusetts Boston, where I have spent the last two years becoming educated on the importance, depth, and strength of critical and creative thought is an organization as well. I have identified the dimensions and key attributes of the program based on my research for this paper.

In regards to national culture dimensions, CCT shares many dimensions with the US (considering its location). I found the power distance to be small, as everyone in the program is equal, regardless of age, seniority, or gender. This explains how I also found that the environment was very feminine (and that the power distance and masculinity vs. femininity dimensions interrelate), as both male and female members shared the same sensitivity to the quality of life of the other members. There is weak uncertainty avoidance when members are challenged with new situations or thought, as each member

has been taught to use ambiguity to increase their thought processes. Though weak uncertainty avoidance is typical in the United States, I feel that CCT members are less apt than the average American to be fearful of ambiguous situations. Instead, these situations are welcomed. When looking at the attributes of the members and the program, I discovered that both individualism and collectivism created a healthy balance in this culture. On an individual level, members have joined the program for themselves, though a collectivist approach is often taken in class and with members as the community is tightly bonded. The final national culture dimension, short-term vs. long-term oriented, is shared by the program as well. Pushed by the time constraints, the culture is short-term oriented as members must move quickly in order to complete the tasks at hand before the deadlines. The CCT community is also very keen on the tradition of eating to promote learning. The long-term orientation can be found as members have a certain respect toward perseverance. Members have joined the program to not only learn but to invest in and maintain the knowledge attained.

In regards to the cross-organizational dimensions, I found that the CCT program is a more results-oriented culture, as I have learned that procedures and processes can often hinder creative thought. However, the culture welcomes the processes needed to prepare individuals for creativity, therefore having process-oriented attributes as well. The members of the program are both parochial and professional, as the environment thrives on members' natural personalities, yet the scholastic tones of academia are still held. Of course, newcomers are welcomed into this open-system organization, as they are an asset in the collectivist portion of its culture. Finally, the CCT program is a loose-

controlled culture. Though always tight on time, there is great flexibility given to help

members maintain an environment conducive to critical and creative thought.

The culture of CCT was grown and designed to promote critical and creative thought.

This can also apply to any organization. Often, when we look at the purpose of the

organization (on all levels of the culture) we will see why certain attributes and

dimensions define that culture. It is important to recognize that most cultures are not one

extreme of a dimension; rather they tend to weigh toward one side of the spectrum more

than the other. For example, a company may have the attributes of both an employee-

oriented or results-oriented culture however, they may be stronger on one side than the

other. I believe that for a successful culture to exist, considerations from both sides of

each dimension must be made to create a balance that works for each culture

Effects of National Cultures in Organizational Cultures

Each national culture dimension promotes different values which, in the

workplace, can help or hinder an individual's progress and productivity. In her book

International Dimensions of Organizational Behavior, Nancy Adler (2002) explains that

organizational culture does not diminish national culture. People actually tend to employ

their cultural background and ethnicity at work. She notes a study done by Hofstede in a

multinational organization where fifty percent of the employees' differences in attitudes

and behaviors were due to national culture. The study concluded that organizational

cultures actually enhance national differences in multinational environments. Though

Adler does not give a solid explanation for this (she feels it is an ambiguous conclusion),

I would imagine that people notice their differences and enhance them as a result. I

believe that people like to enhance their differences, as it is a special attribute that they are either proud of and/or can use to gain attention. Perhaps it is because the person feels she must stay true to her culture of origin, or perhaps this person is receiving the attention desired by the other members of the organization. Either way, Alder believes that organizations cannot "operate beyond nationality".

For the individual in transition, cultural differences can be used as advantages or disadvantages. Adler points out that Hofstede says cultural differences can motivate or demotivate. I feel that it is important for individuals to identify their cultural differences in order to enhance the differences that can be advantageous and expect the differences that could be a hindrance.

National culture is clearly separate from organizational culture. National culture values will remain unchanged throughout organizational culture transitions, while organizational culture values will change with each transition into a new organization.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

Individuals transitioning from one organizational culture to another can enhance their success rate of transition by educating themselves on the many dynamics of culture. Understanding the process of transition allows for individuals to identify the phase they are currently facing and how to cope with the stresses they may be feeling.

I used many stepping stones during the process of this project. I originally had the idea that individuals going through transitions could learn about organizational culture and an organization's structure to improve the experience of their transition. This idea rang true throughout my research. However, I identified more pieces of the phenomena of culture than expected. I learned that cultures exist within systems, which allow the cultures to succeed (McNamara, 1997). I also learned that cultures have different levels (Schein, 1992) and that the dynamics of a culture arise from the members who assemble it. I also discovered that motivation is the key to transition and transition is the key to change. I think this is important to keep in mind in order to help individuals make successful transitions. Understanding the factors (including values) that motivate individuals to live their day-to-day lives, along with the theories of what an organizational culture is like, can help individuals cope with change. Though this paper was written for the individual, leaders can use the information presented to better understand their employees and how they can be better leaders. The following two sections are my concluding notes for the individual and for the leader.

For the Individual

In order to transition successfully, it is important that individuals explore their motivation, old workplace culture, new workplace culture, and national culture to understand how they will fit into their new organization and its purposes. The purpose of this paper was to allow a person to step inside the many dynamics of a successful transition. First and foremost, a person must have the desire and the motivation to want to go through a transition in order for it to be successful. The person must also learn about the transition process. Diagnosing the new culture, along with one's national culture, may allow for an individual to have a smoother transition. There are many different phases in a transition each of which we will handle differently depending on our personality, national culture, and rate of adoption. Some may be filled with joy to leave the old ways behind, while others will hold on to the old ways a little longer. Some may find that the new ways that need to be adapted to are not how they would do it. However they will eventually become accustomed to the "new way." Taking the time to learn about the new culture that the person is moving into will not only give the person an understanding of why things are done the way they are, but it will also allow the person time to get used to a culture and become acclimated. We can use metacognition to process these thoughts and learn about our new culture. When we learn about the ways of the new individuals and of the new organization, we may find that we are less apt to be offended or say something offensive to members of our new culture. This is just like researching before establishing a theory. We must first learn about the new environment in order to appreciate it and become part of it.

For the Leader

Leadership can gain a great deal of useful information from this paper. Though it is geared toward the individual, it may present managers and senior level executives a better understanding of the factors at work within a corporate transition. When leading a group of individuals, it is best to understand the culture in which the leader is operating. Learning what the individuals are going through and how a culture of an organization can be diagnosed and used are significant resources for leadership. Understanding the organization's culture can enhance the leader's ability to see what affects the individuals and how they may react to it. Understanding how a transition can affect the behavior of an individual new to the company, may help leaders evaluate individuals and their progress within the organization.

A Dimensional Activity

During the presentation of my findings for this paper, I was able to have the audience participate in an activity that I designed to consider how the dimensions of national and organizational cultures can be applied. The activity was to break up the room into two organizations. The culture of each organization was defined (by using Hofstede's national culture and cross-organizational culture dimensions) on a handout and given to both groups. Organization A followed the United States national culture as individualistic with a small power distance. In terms of cross-organizational dimensions, the organization was employee-oriented, parochial, and normative. It had a loosely-controlled environment and was an open-system. Organization B had a large power distance and was of collectivist. The cross-organizational dimensions of this organization

were results-oriented, professional, and pragmatic, with a tightly-controlled environment

in a closed system (see Figure 2).

Organization A:
Dimension   *Attribute*

Small power distance	Equality
Individualistic	Independent, task over relationship
Employee-oriented	Concern for employee welfare
Parochial	Same behaviors used at work and home
Loose control	Flexible w/ costs, time, dress code, jokes
Normative	Follows rules and procedures
Open system	Newcomers are welcomed and encouraged

Organization B:
Dimension   *Attribute*

Large power distance	Inequality
Collectivist	Interdependent, relationship over task
Results-oriented	big efforts into work
Professional	Personal life is separate, hired on skills
Tight control	Formal dress codes
Pragmatic	Customers' needs valued more than procedures
Closed system	Secretive, "special people" fit in

Figure 2. Activity handout

A member of the audience suggested breaking each organization into two groups

to help simplify the dialogue. The groups had approximately five minutes to discuss how

they would successfully transition into the opposing organization and to think about

which dimensions may be easier to transition into than others. When the entire audience

began to discuss the activity, they quickly came to the conclusion that transitioning to

Organization B from Organization A was easier. This finding may reflect that

Organization A fits more with the United States' national culture. However, one gentleman in Organization B said that he thrived in a "B" environment and that he would prefer to stay there considering its cultural dimensions. The group also found that the fluidity and ease of the transition would depend on the position of the transitioner. For instance, if the transitioner was a female CEO of Organization B, with its large power distance, she may find that moving into Organization A, with a smaller power distance society may be difficult. This is because she would be accustomed to her power and would need to forfeit this power in order to accept and appreciate the values of her new culture. However, if the transitioner was a male worker in this same large power distance and was moving to Organization A, he may need to learn how to use the new power that was given to him and begin to take initiative on tasks that were delegated and explained to him before.

In conclusion, the activity illustrated that each dimension has its own pros and cons, which depend on individuals' national culture and the organizational culture from which they are coming. During transition, an individual should be aware of these pros and cons to understand how they may differ in national and organizational culture values from others who are transitioning.

Future Warranted Research

In future research, I would love to be involved in some first-hand research, such as focus groups and identification of cultures through guided surveys and interviews, delving deeper into systems theory, coping, managing change, organizational change and development, corporate culture, cognitive psychology, and communication. This

research could broaden the ideas of this paper, and enhance the quality of the results of a more in-depth research project.

A next step in this research would be to compose a study of individuals in transition. I might well do this by gathering individuals from a job placement firm who are currently in transition between organizations. The qualifications for the individuals to be involved in the study would be that they have at least 10 years of organizational experience at any level in their lifetime and that they are the selected candidate for an open position. The individual will also need to be starting the position in the near future so as to observe success from start to finish. I would give one half of the transitioners a seminar on this paper's definitions, findings, and conclusions, and track the success rate of all individuals in the study. The success rate can be measured through focus groups, individual interviews, and surveys distributed before the study and then given after the completion of the transition. The purpose of this study would be to learn how individuals would use the information provided to them about their national and organizational culture during transition.

This study could lead to wonderful programs for individuals in transition and organizations with members in transition. For example, a workshop on managing transitions for the individual, or another workshop for managing individuals in transition, could help organizations and individuals maintain and gain productivity, reduce turnover and improve retention.

My two years in the CCT program at the University of Massachusetts Boston have helped me research and recognize these conclusions and design further research plans. The CCT skills that I found most useful in this paper mainly consisted of

metacognition, evaluation and design, free writing, and the use of multiple perspectives. Each tool helped me look deeper into my research and emerging thoughts to help enhance the quality of the final product. Though CCT has given me many tools for critical and creative thought, the guidance of my professors and peers is the main contributor to the quality of my final product and degree.

Closing Thoughts

This paper focuses on the complexity of an individual's culture, along with the complexity of an organization's culture, concluding that individuals must research and define their own national and cross-organizational dimensions to prepare for their new culture. I feel that my findings and conclusions promise to have a great deal of value for individuals in transition between organizational cultures, as they provide a framework for the exploration of one's culture and identity.

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