

# The iWAM and Organizations

“Organizational culture eats strategy for breakfast.”

Thomas A. McLaughlin

There are several ways that the iWAM can be used at the organization level. One application—screening applicants for job openings or promotions—is discussed in a later section. Here the focus is on the use of the iWAM for analyzing an organization’s culture.

## Defining the Organization’s Culture

The literature abounds with works on the culture of organizations. In addition, over the past decade the number of instruments designed to assess organizational culture has increased dramatically.

The iWAM provides a unique approach to culture definition in terms of what it measures. Other culture assessment tools do not address directly MAPs, but will often identify behaviors associated with them. Although the iWAM does not measure all the important dimensions of organization culture, the aspects of an organization’s culture it measures are critical to interactions, communication, alignment, and engagement.

That seems to justify the time and effort to understand what the iWAM does and how it does it.

## The iWAM Culture Analysis

Using the analysis tools built into the jobEQ system, it is possible to statistically compare the patterns for an organization and the standard group for the country in which the organization is located. This is what is referred to as “culture analysis.”

The culture analysis can be useful for (a) understanding how the organization’s culture may be different than the mainstream culture of the country (that is, unique) and (b) for HR activities such as recruiting, screening, hiring, and promotion/succession processes. In addition, the culture analysis can provide critical information for internal communication strategies or for designing change strategies for the organization. Essentially, the culture analysis will provide a great deal of information about why the organization behaves as it does and what kinds of motivational patterns are likely to fit in with the culture’s organization.

Be assured, this application of the iWAM is not advocating a monolithic, one-size-fits-all culture. Instead, it is an assessment tool which facilitates *understanding* of current organizational culture and *knowing how that culture impacts individual and institutional behavior*. One organization in a research project conducted by The Institute was judged to be successful, in part, because the owner had chosen one key executive who was “outside the box” of the dominant culture and who contributed a world view and ideas which helped the organization continue to get better while the dominant culture helped it be good at what they did as a business.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The study, in draft form at the time this publication went to press, is about a successful restaurant business. Check The Institute web site ([www.iwaminstitute.com](http://www.iwaminstitute.com)) in the Research section for an abstract or copy of the write up for the study.

A culture analysis can help an organization assess the alignment of candidates with the requirement of a specific role as well as with the organization's culture. In terms of the culture analysis or comparison, the information can be used to find individuals who are like the culture or those who are different from it, depending upon the goal the organization wants to achieve.

## Culture and Organizational Effectiveness

The Institute of Work Attitude and Motivation's study of organizational effectiveness and culture led to the conclusion that the culture of an organization is one of the "Big Three" at the heart of the enterprise: Strategy, Culture, and Leadership.

In addition to being important, culture is also related to the organization's stage in the life cycle. Different phases of the organization's life or evolution have different requirements in terms of strategy, culture, and leadership.

Following, is a table containing the result of the culture of a major unit within a large U.S. Government agency. The table contains the results of two separate analyses of the data.

- The first compares the scores of the government agency top leadership to the U.S. Standard Group. This portion of the report (the four right-hand columns that contain percentages) presents the results of the comparison in terms of descriptive statistics.
- The second part of the report (shading and asterisks of the numbers in the "Relative Distance" column) is analytical. It contains the results of analyzing the differences between the means of the agency and the standard group. Here is the interpretive guide for the significance ratings.

***	Statistically Significant at $p < .01$
**	Statistically Significant at $p < .05$
*	Statistically Significant at $p < .10$
	Not Statistically Significant

# Government Agency Leadership Culture Analysis

The following table allows you to determine the cultural similarities and differences between the top leadership of one unit within a U.S. Government Agency and the U.S. Standard Group. The patterns in the report are sorted by relative distance between the Agency Leadership's score and the U.S. Standard Group. In the fourth column – Relative Distance – there is an indication whether the agency leadership's average iWAM pattern score is statistically significantly different from that of the U.S. Standard Group (2007).

Pattern Scale Code and Title		Agency Average (Absolute)	Relative Average	Absolute Distance	Relative Distance
IF7	Focus on Time	52%	91%	16%	41%***
OF2P	Goal Orientation	81%	88%	15%	38%***
OF7M	Individual Environment	13%	17%	17%	33%***
N4	Tolerance	36%	18%	11%	32%***
OF5P	Breadth	74%	74%	12%	24%***
N3	Compliance	77%	73%	7%	23%***
N2	Indifference	7%	27%	6%	23%***
IF3	Focus on Systems	47%	28%	7%	22%***
IF4	Focus on Information	68%	28%	6%	22%***
IF5	Focus on Money	22%	30%	8%	20%***
N1	Assertiveness	65%	69%	6%	19%***
Co1	Convinced by Seeing	86%	69%	5%	19%***
Co6	Convinced Automatically	39%	32%	10%	18%***
IF6	Focus on Place	35%	34%	5%	16%***
So1	Sameness	13%	34%	5%	16%***
Co7	Convinced by Consistency	65%	65%	6%	15%***
OF5M	Depth Orientation	17%	35%	6%	15%***
OF6M	Neutral Communication	40%	36%	6%	14%***
TP3	Future	45%	37%	5%	13%***
OF2M	Problem Solving	27%	37%	5%	13%***
OF3M	External Reference	43%	63%	4%	13%**
Co3	Convinced by Reading	22%	62%	4%	12%**
Co8	Convinced after a Period of Time	34%	61%	5%	11%**
Mo3	Achievement	74%	61%	4%	11%**
IF1	Focus on People	60%	61%	4%	11%**
TP1	Past	47%	61%	3%	11%**
OF6P	Affective Communication	39%	40%	5%	10%**

OF4M	Follow Procedures	39%	60%	5%	10%**
Co4	Convinced by Doing	54%	40%	3%	10%**
WA3	Structure	58%	58%	3%	8%*
WA2	Concept	82%	58%	3%	8%*
Mo2	Affiliation	37%	42%	3%	8%*
Co5	Convinced by a Number of Examples	67%	57%	2%	7%
Co2	Convinced by Hearing	33%	43%	3%	7%
OF7P	Group Environment	56%	56%	3%	6%
WA1	Use	44%	44%	2%	6%
OF8M	Shared Responsibility	44%	56%	2%	6%
So3	Difference	59%	55%	2%	5%
OF8P	Sole Responsibility	56%	55%	2%	5%
So2	Evolution	78%	55%	1%	5%
OF1M	Reflecting & Patience	50%	54%	1%	4%
IF2	Focus on Tools	51%	46%	2%	4%
OF4P	Alternatives	73%	54%	1%	4%
IF8	Focus on Activity	59%	53%	1%	3%
OF3P	Individual Motives	65%	47%	1%	3%
TP2	Present	73%	47%	1%	3%
OF1P	Initiation	54%	52%	1%	2%
Mo1	Power	42%	48%	1%	2%
<b>Averages for all patterns (Including combination patterns)</b>		<b>52%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>13%</b>

**Note: The interpretation of these results will be in the remainder of a chapter in an upcoming book:**

***Decoding Performance:***

***Using the iWAM to Unlock Motivational and Attitudinal Patterns***

by Carl L. Harshman, Ph.D.

Available from The Institute for Work Attitude & Motivation ([www.iWAMinstitute.com](http://www.iWAMinstitute.com))