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For the Love of Music: A Story of Organizational Culture and Change

Malii Brown
SIT Graduate Institute

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FOR THE LOVE OF MUSIC: A STORY OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND CHANGE

Malii Brown
PIM 71

A Capstone Paper submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a
Master of Arts in Intercultural Service, Leadership and Management at
SIT Graduate Institute in Brattleboro, Vermont, U.S.A.
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□ Advisor: Dr. Marla Solomon

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Student Name: Malii Brown
Date: 30 September 2013

Dedication

For my Grand Daddy, who teaches me this simple and profound lesson: “To thine own self be true. And let this follow as the night to the day.”¹

For my Gammy, our family matriarch. In my imagination, she is perhaps the best (unwritten) author there could have been.

I love you both with the soul of me.



Making memories with my grandparents at “Orchestra X²,” Dec. 2012

Author’s Notes of Appreciation

This work and process of inquiry would not have been what it is without the ongoing encouragement of a family that I both love—and like! It is especially my honor to make my Ma and my Grandma Brown proud.

I am grateful for the thought partnership of my graduate Advisor, Dr. Marla Solomon, who has been a reassuring and supportive guide in my inquiry. I hold deep respect for the way in which she folds the personal and reflective into her professional practice.

Thanks to my thesis reviewers who allowed themselves to be volunteered. I appreciate you, Isa Ellis and Cara Sawyer.

¹ The precise phrase, as in William Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*, reads, “This above all: to thine own self be true, / And it must follow, as the night the day, / Thou canst not then be false to any man” (1.3.78-80).

² “Orchestra X” is an alias for the U.S.-national orchestra that is administered by “Orchestra, Inc.,” the subject organization of this research.

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ABSTRACT

For the Love of Music: A Story of Organizational Culture and Change is an examination of culture and possibilities for change at an organization that manages one top-tier, U.S. classical music orchestra. The research was carried out for the purpose of making and refining meaning from collective employee experiences at a canon cultural organization whose practices reflect and influence our society beyond the context of music. The inquiry at the heart of the work is, ‘How does the organizational culture of the subject organization, Orchestra, Inc.³, affect its readiness for organizational change?’ The research methodology consisted of organizational culture assessments provided by employees of Orchestra, Inc., and filtered through research and practice in the disciplines of organizational culture and organizational change, among others. Orchestra, Inc. was appraised to be highly hierarchical and marketplace-driven by employees who are inclined towards an ideal work environment where flexibility in the form of innovation, entrepreneurship and creativity drive organizational culture. A series of recommendations is provided in support of an organizational transition and followed by the concluding thought that Orchestra, Inc. is resistant to change because it has not yet adapted to modern-day practices of inclusion in its mission to protect and sustain the history and tradition of old-world musical masterpieces. The research provides transferable knowledge and insights for individuals and organizations around the ideas that drive organizational culture; strengths and liabilities of organizational culture; and, practical pathways to change that fairly represent the people who make up organizations.

For the Love of Music is written for an intended audience of Orchestra, Inc. employees; staff of other orchestral organizations across the U.S.; as well as professionals seeking to rightly understand and manage their organizational contexts, and pathways towards progressive, organizational change. Professional and amateur classical musicians invested in the endurance of classical music/ culture, and students and practitioners of intercultural management, organizational culture and/or organizational change are also included within the anticipated audience for this research.

³ “Orchestra, Inc.” is an alias for the subject organization of this research. Additional information on the organization is provided later in the *Introduction*.

INTRODUCTION

The research question to which I respond in this work is how the organizational culture of Orchestra, Inc.⁴ affects its readiness for organizational change. In other words: What are potential opportunities for change within Orchestra, Inc. given its current organizational culture? In the course of my time as an employee at Orchestra, Inc., I came to learn about and appreciate classical music in a way that I had not done previously. As a reflective and practicing intercultural consultant and a newfound fan of classical music, I have become curious about the ability of Orchestra, Inc. to continue to capture the cultural imaginations of its own employees, and to ensure the livelihood of classical music for generations to come. In my own experience, I was told that my dissimilar background from colleagues was cause for some to question my dedication to the mission of Orchestra, Inc., and withhold respect for me⁵. I was challenged by the question of how an art form that lives less and less in the hearts and minds of popular audiences can afford to remain homogenous in its approach to organizational management. An exploration of organizational culture and readiness for change at Orchestra, Inc. seemed to promise insights hidden under the surface of my experiences.

Overview of U.S. Orchestras

The Big Who?

The Big Five only became a part of my consciousness in October 2012 when I accepted a job offer from Orchestra, Inc., the sister-administrative organization for one of the Five. For reasons that I

⁴ As stated previously in the *Abstract*, “Orchestra, Inc.” is an alias for the subject organization of this research. Additional information on the organization is provided later in this introduction.

⁵ This sentences paraphrases a comment directly shared with me in a one-on-one meeting with my direct supervisor at Orchestra, Inc. Expressed among other related statements in the same conversation, the verbatim statement was: “Some people are having a hard time respecting you because of your background.”

will explain more fully later in this *Introduction*, I have chosen to protect the identity of that organization and refer to it as “Orchestra, Inc.” The name of the organization is less relevant than the way in which its organizational culture lends general insight into the culture of U.S.-national orchestral organizations and their capacity to respond to changing cultural landscapes. Only after conducting my own independent research comparing the orchestras of the Big Five did I discover that the organization that hired me was not as unique as it first seemed.

A Few Facts and Figures

The Big Five—you guessed it—are five orchestras across the nation. Listed in alphabetical order, these include the Boston Symphony Orchestra (est. 1881), the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (est. 1891), the Cleveland Orchestra (est. 1918), the New York Philharmonic (est. 1842) and the Philadelphia Orchestra (est. 1900). I would be remiss to omit mention of the Los Angeles Philharmonic (est. 1919), the San Francisco Symphony (est. 1911), and the St. Louis Symphony (est. 1880), which “grew in budget and artistic stature even as the mighty handful started to suffer setbacks” (Oestreich, 2013, para. 2). Still, as a cultural icon, the Big Five were supposed to draw a line between the crème de la crème and all other U.S. classical music.

“But what,” you may ask, “is ‘classical music’?” In order to define “classical music,” I elicit the help of some experts. Though I somewhat resent the fact that I had much to learn from a book entitled, *Classical Music For Dummies*, it has been among the resources for me to learn the basics about the rich breadth and depth of this prolific art form. According to its authors, “classical music is the music composed in the Western Hemisphere over the past few hundred years (not including recent pop and folk music). It’s the music generally composed for an orchestra or combination of orchestral instruments, keyboards, guitar, or voice” (Pogue & Speck, 1997, p.7). A more scholarly definition is

offered by classical music composer and academic, Julius Johnson: “Musicologists use [the term] to refer only to the music of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven)” (2002, p.6). From around 1600 to the present day, “A more popular use has it denoting music from a wider historical period...now associated with performance in a concert hall or opera house.” Further, even “More recently, commercial classical radio stations have used the term in a still broader way to include almost anything scored for orchestral or acoustical instruments, as opposed to the electrically amplified or generated sounds of popular music...” (Johnson, 2002, p.6). Perhaps the reason for this ever-expanding definition is to help cast the net of what is considered classical music wide so that more rather than less music may be preserved for future audiences under the protections granted to an “endangered” musical genre.

One of the five Music Directors of the Big Five was made in America. Newest to the scene, having been appointed Music Director of the Boston Symphony Orchestra (BSO) on 16 May 2013, Andris Nelsons is the youngest music director to lead the BSO in the last century at the age of 34, and the first Latvian-born conductor to take the post. Philadelphia Orchestra’s eighth conductor, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, is French-Canadian. In a short Philadelphia Orchestra-sponsored video clip signed, “With love [heart] Philadelphia xoxo,” Maestro⁶ Nézet-Séguin recounts: “When I was a child, my parents owned a lot of records. And one of my favorites was [Eugene Ormandy conducting the Philadelphia Orchestra in Tchaikovsky’s 6th Symphony, *Pathétique*](#). In 2008, when I was asked for the first time here as a guest conductor, this is the piece I chose to meet with the orchestra and with the audience. And I believe that this is how we both fell in love” (qtd. in Stockinger, 2013). In the Midwest, Italian-born Riccardo Muti is Music Director at “the world’s best, Chicago’s own,” Chicago

⁶ “Maestro” is from the Italian *maestro*, meaning “teacher” or “master,” and is commonly used in Western classical music and opera as an honorary title for a master musician. The title may be bestowed upon music directors, conductors, performers and select others.

Symphony Orchestra (CSO). Maestro Muti was also Music Director of the Philadelphia Orchestra from 1980-1992. At his 10 April 2013 2013-14 artistic season announcement, Maestro Muti spoke to the transcendent power of music to bring people together and connect communities through the emotion that music awakens. In neighboring Cleveland, Austrian native Franz Welser-Möst is Music Director of the Cleveland Orchestra. According to the orchestra's web site, "Under his direction, the Orchestra is enlarging and enhancing its community programming at home..." in Northeast Ohio (The Cleveland Orchestra and the Musical Arts Association, 2012). Last and not least is Alan Gilbert, Manhattan-born Music Director of the New York Philharmonic, who began his tenure in 2009 as the first native New Yorker to hold the post. Maestro Gilbert received Columbia University's Ditson Conductor's Award for his "exceptional commitment to the performance of works by American composers and to contemporary music" in December 2011 (New York Philharmonic, 2013). A Latvian, French-Canadian, Italian, Austrian and U.S. American all making music to the melody of the "American dream": How quintessentially (U.S.) American!

Though public interest in orchestras may have diminished over the years, private investment remains significant. In a review of 2012 Annual Reports (reporting through 30 June 2012 for all but the New York Philharmonic, which reports through 31 August 2012), all orchestras are earning and spending millions in revenue and expenses, respectively. The average, annual revenue of the Big Five is \$55,666,200⁷ (Boston Symphony Orchestra, Inc., 2013) (Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association, 2013) (The Cleveland Orchestra and the Musical Arts Association, 2012) (New York Philharmonic Communications, 2013) (The Philadelphia Orchestra Association, 2013). Their average, annual operating expenses are \$60,009,600, with the CSO reporting the highest revenue (Chicago Symphony

⁷ All amounts are listed in U.S. dollars.

Orchestra Association, 2013), the BSO reporting the highest operating expenses *and* the lowest revenue (Boston Symphony Orchestra, Inc., 2013), and the Philadelphia Orchestra reporting the lowest operating expenses (The Philadelphia Orchestra Association, 2013). It is necessary to note that the Philadelphia Orchestra filed for bankruptcy on 16 April 2011. Again in a review of 2012 Annual Reports—and from lowest to highest—endowments range from the Cleveland Orchestra’s reported \$130,617,000 (The Cleveland Orchestra and the Musical Arts Association, 2012) to the BSO’s reported \$379,963,000 (Boston Symphony Orchestra, Inc., 2013). Excluding the Philadelphia Orchestra, the average endowment for the Big Five is \$250,362,000 (Boston Symphony Orchestra, Inc., 2013) (Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association, 2013) (The Cleveland Orchestra and the Musical Arts Association, 2012) (New York Philharmonic Communications, 2013). Since the 2012 fiscal reporting period, a May 2013 BSO press release reported that, “The Boston Symphony Orchestra's endowment of \$413 million (March 31, 2013) is the largest endowment of any orchestra in the world.”

Rationale for Research

Logic of the Head and Heart

As mentioned previously, the research question to which I respond in this paper is how the organizational culture of Orchestra, Inc. affects its readiness for organizational change. My rationale for this research emerged from first-hand observations and experiences while employed with Orchestra, Inc. After a series of incidents with my direct supervisor and some professional juniors in which I experienced direct opposition to ideas that I proposed to do my job in expanding community engagement on the part of Orchestra, Inc., I began to question the reasons why my work role had been formed and filled, particularly with a person of my professional credentials at the helm. In interdepartmental meetings, why weren’t we working with new ideas if our accountability—as I

generally understood it—was to again popularize a musical form that had been synonymous with popular music until the 1900s (Pogue & Speck, 1997)? As I saw it, classical music was both the journey and the destination: The music was a medium through which people might come together across a myriad of cultures to share in the joy of music together. My observations, experiences and increasing questions about my work environment and the people that created it challenged me in professional and personal ways as one whose work and ethic it is to bridge cultural differences between people. In my inquiry, I was committed to maintaining an open mind and carrying out methodologically sound and highly ethical research in a process that would bring about transferable, personal and professional learning.

Au Contraire

In the spirit of dialogue with which this research is intended to incite, this sub-section seems a key place to share a counter view to the rationale explained above. One grounding assumption of my inquiry—and indeed, at the core of employees’ work at Orchestra, Inc.—is the value of classical music. But, *how* is the music endowed with value? My and others’ response to this question directly informed the purpose of our work at Orchestra, Inc. Alas, this is a question over which my direct supervisor and I held opposing views.

Otherwise stated: What *animates* music? Some would say that music undoubtedly holds value in and of itself; that by virtue of its creation, music embodies life and meaning. This was the gospel according to the individual who was my direct supervisor, and who oversaw the education wing in which I worked at Orchestra, Inc. (Hereafter, with all respect due, this individual will be referenced as “The Boss.”) In our conversation about this very subject, The Boss summarized the perspective above as “life for music’s sake.” Some others, myself included, would say that the primary value of music and

all other inanimate “objects” is to serve humanity by acting as vehicles to convey meaning; that, as a reflection of our lives, music is made vital. This second point of view may be summarized as “music for life’s sake.” In the same conversation between The Boss and me, I referenced the phrase, “music for life’s sake,” to underscore a point I was making about the way in which music could be utilized to bring people together across cultures. The Boss was quick to state that “life for music’s sake” is not to be forgotten; that classical music does not simply hold value as a vehicle to achieve an end, but represents inborn value.

This exchange between The Boss and me is one example of a disconnect about organizational culture and readiness for change. The argument The Boss espoused is in contradiction to the rationale above, and indeed my understanding of my work role while employed under The Boss’ leadership. The effect, in my case, was an experience of organizational culture—per the interpretation of The Boss—that was neither ready nor willing for organizational change. My presence in a community engagement role—as one of few Black employees, no less—seemed as if it were for naught. My understanding had been that the education wing—and perhaps Orchestra, Inc. overall—had room for improvement in terms of connecting with a diversity of communities, and therefore wanted to do differently in order to achieve different results with those who considered Orchestra X⁸ a highly esteemed—yet out-of-reach (and for some, out-of-touch)—local, cultural leader. The way in which we carried out this work outside of the concert hall would be an instrument to unite neighbors in their discovery of classical music for the purpose of offering them the opportunity to build community for the cost, if any, of a classical music program ticket. My lessons learned from this exchange was that my interpretation of my work role was

⁸ As shared previously on the *Dedication* page, “Orchestra X” is an alias for the U.S.-national orchestra that is administered by Orchestra, Inc., the subject organization of this research.

inconsistent with The Boss' own vision, and that the environment of Orchestra, Inc. was not fertile for the possibility I imagined.

What This Paper Is Not

As an intercultural trainer, I have learned the practice of managing the expectations of my audience. For this same reason, I include this section on what readers are *not* to expect from this paper. I ask that readers accept this section at face value.

This paper is not an initiative of Orchestra, Inc., the subject organization of my research. My research is independently initiated and implemented by me under the guidance of my graduate Advisor, Dr. Marla Solomon, and with the anonymous participation of employees currently working (to date) at Orchestra, Inc. I am grateful for their support of this research.

This paper is not a diatribe against Orchestra, Inc. I both recognize and respect that a number of the organization's employees have dedicated years of their professional lives in their heartfelt belief in Orchestra X. I stand among them. This is not to say that no emotion has motivated my research, though I have made conscious efforts to balance the extent to which my emotional bias influences my research process and product. For me, this experience as a whole served as a reality check on the extent to which intercultural competence is lacking within current-day professional organizations, and the resistance of individual players to change in the direction of intercultural competence.

My research is also motivated by my newfound infatuation with classical music. Sitting in the concert hall listening to music played by Orchestra X, I have undoubtedly felt the grace of God.

([Richard Wagner's *Siegfried Idyll*](#) is one of my favorites.) In response, I've worked from a place of growing passion for classical music and deep-seated commitment to intercultural service, leadership and

management in order to offer a substantive contribution toward the vitality of classical music, Orchestra X and Orchestra, Inc., even beyond the bounds of my employment.

This paper is not an expert opinion. I seek to stimulate dialogue. My purpose in conducting this research and in crafting thought-through and thought-provoking recommendations is to discover creative principles of action that will buoy the classical music market. With this vision as my compass, I pray that I make the mark.

Author's Self-Disclosure

This section is included to provide context on the experiences I bring to this research. I have done my best to objectively state the facts around my employment at Orchestra, Inc. In the course of the paper, I will share my subjective perspective related to the series of events outlined below.

From 10 October 2012 until 21 May 2013 I was a full-time, salaried employee of Orchestra, Inc. I held a senior-level position within the education wing of the organization. Per the job description, some of my key responsibilities included “serv[ing] as the [education wing’s] group leader in guiding [access⁹] initiatives and in planning and implementing new initiatives”; “leverage long-standing and new relationships with community partners in order to sustain and enhance [Orchestra X’s] presence throughout” the local metropolitan area; and, “in association with [Orchestra, Inc. and Orchestra X] staff, musicians, creative consultant, teaching artists, and community partners, develop and maintain programs and events that support the mission of [Orchestra, Inc.] and [the education wing] and are relevant to target audiences.” The interview process was thorough; I was invited to a series of five interviews with a total of 13 Orchestra, Inc. employees, Board members and an external consultant.

⁹ By “access,” I mean the porousness of Orchestra, Inc. organizational culture to allow and absorb the participation and influence of people that have been traditionally outside the circle of association. In other words, access is the demonstrated openness to inviting new people to join the culture of Orchestra, Inc. in significant and sustained ways.

Simultaneous to serving as my primary source of employment, my first six months at Orchestra, Inc. also fulfilled a practicum requirement in support of the SIT Graduate Institute program at which I had been enrolled since August 2011.

“Asking Your Advice”

During the time I was being considered for the position at Orchestra, Inc., I reached out to my father, a musician of 50 years, for advice in preparing for my two final interviews. He referred me to Ebony¹⁰, a colleague and friend, and asked her to give me insight on the classical music world. “Dear Ms. Brown,” began Ebony as she shared her experiences in a personal email to me:

As a Black American cellist who on more than one occasion sought to join the ranks of [Orchestra X], I have a decidedly dim view of that orchestra... There has been a long standing resistance to Black involvement at every stage of the orchestral experience in [City X], one I can speak of first hand... These ensembles hide behind their screens, claiming neutrality and impartiality in their choices of applicants, when in fact, Black musicians are not wanted unless they can be hand picked and possess some sort of strange ‘pedigree.’ As far as ‘diversity’ and ‘inclusion’ is concerned, both of these tags are exactly the opposite of what they imply. What these orchestras want is money from communities that they long excluded now that funding from old money and corporations is drying up, yet they still resist hiring from these communities, the claim being that they cannot find anyone with the skills and experience necessary for membership into their hallowed ranks. White musicians walked fresh out of college and into the ranks of [Orchestra X] during my years there [directly affiliated with, though not a member of, Orchestra, X]... What [Orchestra, Inc.] wants in terms of this job offering is a nice, educated Black person to put on a nice face for them and front for them, since they have no real desire to ‘deal’ with people they don’t really want or respect... I say these things not to discourage you Malii, but to let you know what this is really about. If you want this job, then by all means go for it, and don’t let anything stop you. It is important, however, that you know what you are getting into. I will be blunt. [Orchestra, Inc.] is looking for a spook¹¹ to sit by the door. If you want to be that, then you have found your niche. The job you are seeking is

¹⁰ Pseudonym used in order to protect individual’s anonymity.

¹¹ spook \spük\ n : “A derogatory slur for a person of African descent. i.e.: Nigger. “*Dem spooks like to play bones and shoot dice.*” (MistahTom, 2005).

typical of that which [Orchestra, Inc.] deems worthy of Blacks, that of sweet talking ‘ambassador’ to make them look good and benevolent, all the while keeping Blacks out of their ranks except for the ‘acceptable’ one whom you almost never see...[City X], by in large, is still very much a racist town, so don’t expect miracles. I left it in 1989 after I knew I had gone as far as I could ever go (Ebony, personal communication, Sept. 17, 2013).

After reading Ebony’s email, I took a deep breath, put on a good face and continued to prepare for my interviews. (See also Appendix H, *Ebony’s Consent to Cite Email Correspondence*.)

Welcome to Malii Brown

The day prior to my start with Orchestra, Inc., The Boss forwarded an email to members of the organization with the subject, “Welcome to Malii Brown.” In the email, The Boss noted that, “in addition to [my] love for music and activity as a choral musician, [I brought] more than ten years of professional experience in supervision, program management and communications across a wide range of settings in engaging diverse constituent groups.”

My orientation to the job itself was brief. The Boss spoke with me for a half hour or less, highlighting a reference book for classical music and the personal traits of Board members. A high-level overview of my role and responsibilities, week-to-week expectations, or the contents of my inherited paper or electronic files were not discussed.

Review

In January 2013, I was invited by The Boss to a 90-day review. According to The Boss, I showed a number of strengths, though two weaknesses stood out and would be the reason for my dismissal if I did not correct my behavior in two months time. As strengths, The Boss observed and documented that I “...clearly plac[ed] a priority on communicating proactively and professionally...,” “participat[ed] actively in team meetings...,” “project[ed] confidence and act[ed] with it,” had “shown [myself] to be a

conscientious employee and one who is focused on moving work forward.” The Boss wrote that I “met expectations in terms of learning and beginning to deliver on the responsibilities included in [my] job description,” and that I had “made progress toward some, but not all [roughly twelve] priorities...which [The Boss] formalized and shared in paper and electronic copy in early December,” about a month prior. Observed weaknesses included my “management and communication style and process in working with my team,” and “demonstrated lack of curiosity in understanding and supporting the mission of [Orchestra X] and the [education wing].” In all, The Boss assessed that, “with [my] strengths noted at the start of this review, [The Boss’] overall assessment of [my] performance to date is one in which significant improvement is required over the next sixty days.”

Exit Stage Left

On 21 May 2013, I was handed a one-page document by The Boss entitled, “Disciplinary Action Form.” Under the section where a detailed description of an incident(s) was to be reported, The Boss documented two points: “A management and communication style and process causing dissatisfaction, discomfort and demotivation for [my team],” and “A demonstrated lack of curiosity in understanding and supporting [Orchestra X]/ [the education wing’s] mission.” At the bottom of the page were options for next steps: verbal counsel, written warning, suspension or termination. The Boss checked “X” at the last option, adding, “Effective immediately.” No misconduct, oversight, unfulfilled work responsibility or otherwise were cited as a part of my work history at Orchestra, Inc.

The final words of Ebony’s email resounded:

If you get [the position], you be assured of the following:

- If you do a good job, a White person will take credit for it.
- If you do a bad job, everything will be your fault, and you will get fired.
- Once you are fired, a White person will take your place.
(Ebony, personal communication, Sept. 17, 2013).

My Experience of Orchestra, Inc.'s Organizational Culture¹² in Three Anecdotes

These anecdotes are offered to the reader as a first-hand narrative of the internal affairs at Orchestra, Inc. and a frame of reference on the research that follows. Highly symbolic of the organizational culture of Orchestra, Inc. was the tension that The Boss and others experienced between the standard of “artistic excellence” and the emergence of a concept of “access¹³” to classical music and classical music culture on the part of those at or outside the periphery of the music culture. I witnessed explicit conversations about these supposedly juxtaposed ideas several times during my employment. People who were deemed crude to the classical music culture—and (my) new ideas to engage this same constituency—seemed to be interpreted as threats to artistic excellence, the art form of classical music and the organization’s good reputation. Through this research process and reflection, I understand the tension as symptomatic of a highly structured organization inflexible to the prospect of putting artistic leadership in a position of improvising their talent to engage with unfamiliar audiences, and inviting challenge to administrative skill sets to respond in different ways to a diverse audience.

Anecdote No. 1

There were comments written in my 360 Degree Managerial Review that felt personally disconcerting, though which I saw as inextricably and directly related to the creative tension between “artistic excellence” and “access” at Orchestra, Inc. I shared these thoughts when The Boss asked me to lead our one-on-one conversation in response to my review. I added a suggestion that I borrowed from a

¹² In the next section, *Concepts and Context*, “organizational culture” will be more clearly defined. In brief, for the purposes of this paper, organizational culture is defined as a learned and shared set of values, beliefs, assumptions and behaviors shared by the group of people within an organization.

¹³ As previously noted, “access” is defined as the porousness of Orchestra, Inc.’s organizational culture to allow and absorb the participation and influence of people that have been traditionally outside the circle of association. In other words, access is the demonstrated openness to inviting new people to join the culture of Orchestra, Inc. in significant and sustained ways.

senior colleague that had helped frame my professional challenges: Orchestra, Inc. was at a crossroads between excellence and access and experienced it as an either-or choice. The Boss responded that Orchestra, Inc. had “*not yet reached* the crossroads” of change in relation to questions of access and how Orchestra, Inc. would engage in future with local and global communities¹⁴. If The Boss realized the connections between an organizational resistance towards increased access, and negative perception on the part of a select few—including The Boss—toward me in my community access work role, The Boss did not speak to it or bat an eye.

Anecdote No. 2

I was tasked to lead an instrumental training program for middle schoolers. In the course of research, consultation with colleagues and concerted thought, I built a rough architecture for the program. Per the request of The Boss, I presented the program outline to a Board member who had 25 years of experience as a music educator, and who was an influential voice on the Board. Elements of the program included working with a diversity of low-income youth around the city; group lessons; and, peer-to-peer mentorship. (I’d scrapped a documented and underdeveloped original program concept I discovered in my inherited files that the program was to target Black and Latino youth who were poor and whose parents were incarcerated.) The Board member was refreshingly candid and less-than-impressed. She questioned the technical potential of middle school students who would have little-to-no previous exposure to music making, and the investment on the part of Orchestra, Inc. in such a venture. “*Never,*” she said, could such outreach program participants be put on stage to represent Orchestra X!

¹⁴ Comment directly shared with me in a one-on-one meeting with my direct supervisor at Orchestra, Inc. Words in quotes were stated verbatim.

Anecdote No. 3

In the course of a decision about how to build a community chorus, the tension between artistic excellence and access was resolved by choosing the former at the expense of the latter. The one-hour meeting included six colleagues in the artistic and education wing teams, and was scheduled for 4pm on a Friday. In reviewing a list of several possible choirs to invite to make up a community chorus, one colleague swiftly turned discussion to the racial or ethnic representation of each choir and the desire to equitably balance such representation. Ironically, for the first time in five months within a role focused on community engagement with a racially and ethnically diverse metropolis, I was included in a discussion in which explicit reference to race and ethnicity was a factor in decision-making! I made an effort to meet the group where we were. I commented that we might *also* select choirs based on their missions; that a White choir, for instance, may want to know that we cared to invite them beyond the virtue of their being White. All *heartily* agreed. I was an advocate for a visibly multicultural choir, though thought it inauthentic and disingenuous to true community engagement efforts to select choirs by the color of their skin alone. The matter of inviting reliable participants who would attend both the rehearsal and performance events tipped the conversation in a different direction. One colleague proposed that we invite the participation of choir directors associated with Orchestra, Inc. with whom we were familiar and could trust; they would, in turn, invite choir members who were accountable, trained in classical repertoire and skilled. Conversation ended. Access to new, diverse and “browner” choirs was sacrificed because of Orchestra, Inc.’s limited association with non-White choirs, and the perceived risk to Orchestra, Inc.’s sense of trust and comfort by expanding their professional network.

CONCEPTS AND CONTEXT

Literature Review: On Organizational Culture and Organizational Change

Organizational change takes place within the container of organizational culture. Before reporting upon Orchestra, Inc. employees' assessment of the organization's culture, it is important to first understand the general dimensions of organizational culture and change.

What Is Organizational Culture?

"Brace yourself," writes Robert Grossman of *HR Magazine*, "for a proverbial journey down the rabbit hole into Wonderland"! In the February 2009 article, *What Is Culture?*, Grossman, a lawyer and a professor of management studies at Marist College, states, "Although extensive academic literature addresses organizational culture, no generally accepted, shared terminology accurately defines it. The result is a crazy quilt of instruments and language that makes comparisons among companies and their cultures an exercise in inexactitude and squishiness...". Dr. Kim Cameron and Dr. Robert Quinn, co-founders of the Center for Positive Organizational Scholarship at the University of Michigan, agree that organizational culture is difficult to wholly grasp. "...Organizational culture," they say, "is extremely broad and inclusive in scope. It comprises a complex, interrelated, comprehensive, and ambiguous set of factors..." (Cameron & Quinn, 2011, p.32). While a challenge to comprehensively describe, a good deal of knowledge has been collected about the culture of organizations.

Simply put, "organizational culture" is culture within an organizational context. "Like ethnic and religious cultures," states veteran organizational consultant Dr. Howard Stein, organizational culture, "rests upon deeply personal, conflictual, and emotion-laded foundations, most of which drive people unconsciously" (Stein, 1994, p.27). Just as culture is a learned set of values, beliefs, assumptions and behaviors shared by a group of people, organizational culture is a learned set of values, beliefs,

assumptions and behaviors shared by the group of people within an organization. And as with any other culture, subcultures exist. Edgard Schein, organizational culture scholar and developer of the Three Levels of Culture, has defined organizational culture as “the basic tacit assumption about how the world is and ought to be that a group of people share and that determines their perceptions, thoughts, feelings and their overt behavior” (Schein, 1996). As a means through which problems are solved, organizational culture “defines the way of working that solved problems in the past” (Kelleher and McLaren, 1996, p.45). While there is no “right” or “wrong” culture, “organizational culture inhibits or facilitates change” (Kelleher and McLaren, p.44) as a conduit for action or inaction. Finally, “Organizational culture needs to have some compatibility with the demands of their environments” (Cameron & Quinn, 2011, p.71) because culture, after all, is a social construction built to manage human environments. In an organizational context, culture is “the way we do things around here.”

Culture Homogeneity and “Mis-Fit”

One traditional, best practice of Human Resource Management is to hire people who represent a fit with organizational culture. As I understand it, “cultural fit” refers to the match of an employee’s behaviors with those of their mainstream organizational culture. Logan Hill (2013) likens choices about cultural fit to a collision between cultural ideals and reality, and makes an analogy that any moderate Star Trek fan can appreciate. Hill states, “Hiring is the moment when these [U.S.] American ideals about team diversity collide with the reality of building a cohesive, practical staff...We may aspire to model our workplaces after the *Starship Enterprise* but in reality they often look more like the Borg Cube” (Hill, 2013, para. 11). That is to say, cultural homogeneity is an unintended consequence of hiring for cultural fit. Hill adds that working with homogenous others—or, “your pals,” as he calls them—has the distinct competitive *disadvantage* of groupthink (2013). Randy Hains, Managing Partner

of Atlanta's Bell Oaks Executive Search and an interviewee quoted by Hill, shares a similar idea about people's tendencies that has been proven through behavioral research. Hains states, "It's probably human nature to generally like to hire people who look like us, sound like us, act like us. But you get a culture of sameness...People lack an understanding of how to go out and recruit for a diversity of thought—those people who break the rules but are great for the company" (qtd. in Hill, 2013). Until national trends in organizational culture shift, maintaining cultural fit will remain accepted as both a business imperative and a means of acceptable workplace bias.

In the case of my employment at Orchestra, Inc., I was a cultural "mis-fit" with the organization. At Orchestra, Inc., the learned and shared set of behaviors that I observed—especially among the education wing within which I worked—included speaking without criticism about Maestro; in meetings, averting eyes and infrequently expressing a preference for any one opinion before The Boss or other top leadership shared their opinion or invited the opinions of others; and, exclaiming in excitement when a group-favorite piece of classical music was mentioned. In these ways, among others, I was a cultural mis-fit because my workplace behaviors did not match the vanilla of the organizational culture. I once questioned why Maestro had not yet been recorded (as far as I knew) speaking about a prized education initiative in its third year; I shared my professional views at meetings with direct eye contact, and often spoke proactively to get my ideas in front of my superiors; and, I didn't express elation about upcoming musical programming simply because I was unfamiliar with the music. From the outset, I felt an implicit prerequisite as an employee at Orchestra, Inc. to dress right, act right, speak right, be ~~White~~ right. Who I was *not* and who I was differentiated me in ways that were, in fact, my best advantage at Orchestra, Inc.—and, which I also experienced to negatively distinguish me to select others. I was not a musician (and my volunteer choir singing barely counted); I had not earned degrees or professional

experience in music or arts administration; and, unlike a good number of other employees, I was hired with no affiliation to anyone at Orchestra, Inc. At the same time, my professional experience and certifications were focused in the area of intercultural relations; I was one of a handful of Black people within the organization; and, as far as I knew—at the age of 32—I was the sole person of color that was both a people manager and at my advanced level within the organizational hierarchy. In the weeks after my hire, I was pulled aside by a number of colleagues who had reviewed my resume and remarked on my intriguing and much-needed professional competencies at Orchestra, Inc. Yet, I stood alone with my “bad” behavior at meetings when advocating for change at Orchestra, Inc. If “Culture is the organization’s immune system,” meaning that culture, “...prevents ‘wrong thinking’ and ‘wrong people’ from entering the organization in the first place” (qtd. in Watkins, 2013), the elimination of my employment was necessary to maintaining a “healthy” homogeneity.

What Is Organizational Change?

For organizations, the bottom line of change is to maintain and/or augment market value. In the case of nonprofits like Orchestra, Inc., its mission is the mouthpiece of its value to the marketplace. With the flux of the market, proactive organizations ask themselves: “...[H]ow to best organize the activity of employees to ensure that the goods or services produced by the company have a value in the market place” (Dawson, 2003, p.12). Organizations decide, in turn, that they will respond to the flux by reorganizing how they work in ways that are market-sensitive and mission-critical. This reorganization, as defined by Dr. Patrick Dawson in *Understanding Organizational Change: The Contemporary Experience of People at Work*, is the crux of organizational change. “At its simplest,” the University of Aberdeen Business School professor writes, “organizational change can be defined as new ways of organizing and working...” (2003, p.11). At Orchestra, Inc. those who seek to be(come) organizational

change agents must find ways to re-vision current behavioral interpretations of organizational values, beliefs and assumptions so that different behaviors are carried out by employees with the original purpose. Following their experiments on how to create organizational change, organizational change practitioners David Kelleher and Kate McLaren reported their discovery that, “The ‘culture’ has to change” (1996, p. 43). For change initiatives to be successful, *culture* must be the conduit through which change takes place.

A strong and direct correlation has been established between organizational culture and organizational success. In their book, *Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture*, management and organization scholars Kim Cameron and Robert Quinn (2011), share their opinions on the subject, and cite others’ research, as well. They state, “In fact, it is difficult to name even a single highly successful company, one that is a recognized leader in its industry, that does not have a distinctive, readily identifiable organizational culture” (2011, p.4). As an example, the authors also share the research of “Most organizational scholars and observers [who] now recognize that organizational culture has a powerful effect on the performance and long-term effectiveness of organizations. Empirical research has produced an impressive array of findings demonstrating the importance of culture to enhancing organizational performance (for reviews, see Cameron and Ettington, 1988; and Trice and Beyer, 1993)” (Cameron & Quinn, 2011, p.5). Further, “Several studies reported that the most frequently cited reason given for failure was a neglect of the organization’s culture. In other words, failure to change the organization’s culture doomed the other kinds of organizational change that were initiated (Caldwell, 1994; CSC Index, 1994; Gross, Pascale, and Athos, 1993; Kotter and Heskett, 1992)” (Cameron & Quinn, 2011, pp.1-2). Does the culture of Orchestra, Inc. have a powerful and favorable effect on its performance and long-term effectiveness? To the extent that the organizational

culture has a positive and productive effect on organizational performance and effectiveness and a means for decision-making and problem solving, the need for organizational change minimizes. When organizational culture is experienced as an obstacle course to be masterfully navigated in order to accomplish a desired result—complete with uncertainties about what success looks like to the group and who can help achieve it—culture change may be necessary to re-establish a pattern of work that *solves* problems in the way that culture is intended to do.

By which leadership philosophy then, are people to be managed in the spirit of an organizational culture that enhances performance? One approach that appeals to employees' mores and has seemed to gain momentum from new developments of management thinking out of the last couple of decades is what Dawson refers to as the cultural approach. "Instead of management being concerned with establishing systems of bureaucratic administration or political accommodation," writes Dawson, "managers of culture are involved in the construction of moral systems of meaning and value (as encompassed by [Lee G.] Bolman and [Terrence G.] Deal's [1991] symbolic frame of reference). During the 1990s, prescriptions for managing or changing organizational culture became a major feature of management thinking (Brown, 1995a). These prescriptions emphasize the importance of creating supportive, positive cultures that underscore organizational...goals (Kanter, 1985, 1990; Peters and Waterman, 1982)" (Dawson, 2003, p.13). This thinking suggests an exchange of a nurturing work environment on the part of organizational leadership for goal achievement on the part of employees. During my time with Orchestra, Inc., it seemed that employees' paychecks were richly supplemented by the currency of the worth they placed on their work. Though, the results of employees' organizational assessment reported later in the *Data Presentation* portion of this paper may voice latent opinions about ways in which employees are deprived at Orchestra, Inc.

Organizational Change in Three Easy-Bake Steps!

Though change itself may be a universal truth, there can be no universal theory of organizational change. University Management professor, Patrick Dawson, agrees, explaining that, "... change involves a movement to some future state that comprises a context and time that remain unknown" (2003, p.11). Still, theorists have made their attempts.

One three-step theory of change is that of Kurt Lewin, a founding figure of what is known as the Organizational Development (OD) model of change, whose work on inter-group dynamics and planned change has been influential. Successful change, according to Lewin, comes in three, general and intuitive steps: 1.) Unfreezing, 2.) Changing, and 3.) Re-freezing. Dawson writes that,

In the management of organizational change, the focus of OD specialists has been on providing data that would unfreeze the system through reducing the retraining forces rather than increasing the driving forces (Gray and Starke, 1988: 596-629; Weisbord, 1988: 94). Once an imbalance has been created, the system can be altered and a new set of driving and retraining forces put into place...only when the desired state has been achieved will the change agent set about 'refreezing' the organization. The new state of balance is then appraised and, where appropriate, methods of positive reinforcement are used to ensure that employees 'internalize' attitudes and behaviors consistent with new work regimes (2003, pp. 30-31).

Practically, I find it hard to imagine a natural stopping place at which organizations "put on the brakes" of organizational evolution and refreeze.

Regarded by many as the authority on organizational leadership and change, John Kotter's theory includes 8 key and simply-stated steps for organizational change, including:

- 1) Establish a sense of urgency;
- 2) Form a powerful guiding coalition;
- 3) Create a vision;
- 4) Communicate that vision;
- 5) Empower others to act on the vision;
- 6) Plan and create short-term wins;

- 7) Consolidate change improvements; and,
- 8) Institutionalize new approaches.

Warning: Kotter “suggests that failure to be proactive in these areas is likely to result in business failure” (Dawson, 2003, p.38). The implementation of change led by this model, of course, will not be as “cookie-cutter” as its presentation.

Different from Lewin and Kotter’s recipes for organizational change explained above, this paper reviews organizational characteristics that influence fruitful change initiatives. “It is not a recipe,” confirm David Kelleher and Kate McLaren in *Grabbing the Tiger by the Tail*. They continue:

...[T]here are no simple recipes. What works at one time for one agency may not work later for another. What is important is to develop processes for each situation, based on a firm grasp of the fundamentals: a good understanding of the immediate context in which you are working, a realistic assessment of the human and financial resources of your organization, and a good hunch about what might work or not. An organization open to learning, to asking tough questions, and living with the answers has an increased likelihood of survival (1996, p.xi).

Fundamentals will be elaborated upon in the *Analysis* portion of this paper.

Don’t Change, You’re Perfect As You Are

It is, of course, valid to question a call for organizational change. Several years ago, when first making the professional leap from nonprofit to for-profit (and back to mission-driven organizations since then), I learned the importance of asking, “Why now?” As a consultant, this question helped me understand the motivation behind a client’s invitation for change. As Dawson writes, “It is as important to recognize when not to change as it is to identify when there is a need for change. This is perhaps one of the major myths that pervades the literature on change management—that, as changes are inevitable, change initiatives should not be questioned but embraced...as they are ultimately vital to the success of an organization” (2003, p.20). Or, as my Ma says, “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.” According to the

results of the data collection for this paper, some parts of the Orchestra, Inc. machine are in need of alignment.

Still, the question remains: “Why act now?” As I experienced resistance to the changes I advocated in my role at Orchestra, Inc., I began to actively question why my work role—which was to change (read: grow) the nature of the organization’s engagement with local communities—had been created. I both inquired about, and speculated that, a.) the role was funded by, and set up to, appease a vital donor; b.) resistance to change was not anticipated by the wishful thinkers that had drafted the job description; c.) the sexiness of change was intended to be represented at a superficial level by a brown-skinned/ minority filling the role; d.) all of the above—or, e.) otherwise. Despite diplomatic efforts, I did not learn the motivation behind the change initiative I managed.

Another valid perception is that those who question change fear change. According to Kotter (1996), “Sometimes complacency is the problem...Sometimes they [people within organizations] have no clear vision...But often fear is a key issue. They see jobs seeming to disappear all around them. They hear horror stories about people who have been downsized or reengineered out of work...they cling defensively to what they currently have. In effect, they embrace the past, not the future” (Dawson, 2003, p.38). It is unfair when those who may not embrace incremental or radical organizational change are considered professionally or personally deficient. According to organizational management author David Collins (1998):

[T]here is a tendency for writers on change management to view employee resistance as a negative individual problem rather than a positive response to changing conditions that might require further consideration. As he states: ‘Workers who “resist” change tend to be cast as lacking the psychological make-up to deal with change, and are said to be weak and fearful of change, whereas, those who support or manage change are regarded as “go-ahead” chaps who have the “right-stuff” for career success (1998: 92)’ (qtd. in Dawson, 2003, p.20).

Ironically, it may require a culture shift within an organization to move from a place of readily accepting change as a matter of groupthink, to becoming collectively courageous enough to reflect upon the possibility of change.

Encouragement on the part of typical organizational management for employees to reflect upon possible organizational change would represent change itself. This approach could be referred to as “democratic” leadership, as studied by Roethlisberger and Dickson (1950). Roethlisberger and Dickson’s “studies [of the Western Electric Company in Chicago] were used to show the benefits of ‘democratic’ leadership which encouraged employee participation in decision-making” (Dawson, 2003, p.29). This brand of leadership holds space for consulting with, and listening to, employees while organizational change remains a consideration—in part, to gauge possible employee resistance to such change. Such listening initiatives would create processes of organizational learning and deepen the knowledge with which organizational change, if implemented, moves forward. The process of true hearing and dialogue among people within organizations will always be a step in the right direction, with or without the term “organizational change” neatly fit around it.

METHODOLOGY

The inquiry that has resulted in this research paper included the following basic methods:

- 1) Read through relevant resources, starting with those listed in the preliminary bibliography included in my thesis proposal;
- 2) Researched and decided upon an organizational culture assessment tool;
- 3) Invited potential respondents to participate as research respondents through a simple, snowball sampling technique, and coordinated respondent participation;
- 4) Began to write portions of the paper that were not reliant upon the organizational culture assessment tool data;
- 5) Reviewed and analyzed organizational culture assessment tool data on its own merit, and in relation to my experiences as an employee of Orchestra, Inc.;

- 6) Further researched and incorporated narrative on gaps in knowledge identified by graduate Advisor, peer and self-reviews of research paper.

The full process took place over approximately three-and-a-half consecutive months time.

While continuing to read and listen through resources identified prior to the launch of my research, I began to scout organizational culture assessment tools. The next two sections outline my short list of tools appraised, and ultimate selection of the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument. Research on assessment tools was conducted online, and through the recommendations and input of professionals within the LinkedIn-based network, *Organizational Culture Change Agents*, of which I am a member. (See Appendix A, *LinkedIn Organizational Culture Change Agents Discussion Thread*.)

After choosing an organizational culture assessment tool, I commenced the primary research portion of my research. This phase involved inviting employees of Orchestra, Inc. to participate in a survey in which they would assess the current organizational culture of, and indicate their preferred organizational culture for, Orchestra, Inc. LinkedIn was my method to contact potential survey respondents. My sampling strategy was a simple snowball technique: Invite the participation of Orchestra, Inc. employees with whom I was already connected on LinkedIn, request connections with additional Orchestra, Inc. employees, and once connected, invite them to participate in my research, as well. (See Appendix B, *Invitation to Participate in Research Study*.) Of the 34 Orchestra, Inc. employees invited to participate in my research, 16 responded; 12 individuals responded in the affirmative. I communicated proposed research details, and received signed Informed Consent Forms and respondent demographical information via email correspondence. (See Appendix C, *Informed Consent Form*.) All invitations, responses and interactions were recorded on a spreadsheet for easy reference and personal record.

Over the 26 days in which respondents were recruited and completed their research participation, I began to write with the guidance of a rough paper outline. These portions of the paper did not rely upon the results of the organizational culture assessment tool for completeness. Sections were written in random order. Due to submission guideline limitations, approximately twenty pages of writing were consolidated or discarded.

Data generated through Orchestra, Inc. respondents' organizational culture assessment tool responses was first carefully reviewed for understanding before analysis was made. Objective review of data included study of the data diagrams and supplemental narrative information provided by the online tool administrator; re-creation of the visual representation of overall data results with paper and marker; and, the production of a series of calculations that aptly summarized the numerical values of the data. Grounded in a detailed understanding of the data, I expanded my scope to understand the larger story that the data set told. I leveraged the value of my first-hand, internal observations and experiences as an Orchestra, Inc. employee in order to interpret and analyze in words what the data articulated in numbers. The process took several sittings in order to process my thoughts, reassess their merit, and check my biases.

Review of early drafts of my research paper by my graduate Advisor, select peers and myself yielded insights on areas of the inquiry that required further research, clarity or reorganization. In these instances, I returned to my resources—or identified new resources—to close conceptual gaps. Peer reviewers were asked to share feedback regarding, a.) how the content responded to the research question; b.) clarity of ideas; c.) organic “building” of ideas; d.) appropriate balance between more formal and vernacular text; and, e.) any other items they thought important to share. I accepted the majority of suggested revisions, and improved the text accordingly.

Overview of Organizational Culture Assessment Tools

The following overview outlines various tools I examined that assess organizational culture in my pursuit to discover how the organizational culture of Orchestra, Inc. affects its readiness for organizational change.

Three Levels of Culture

Edgard Schein's Three Levels of Culture was introduced to me by OCAI-Online co-founder and organizational change consultant, Marcella Bremer. According to Bremer (M. Bremer, personal communication, July 8, 2013)—and as I learned through my own research—though the Three Levels of Culture is certainly a model by which to analyze organizational culture, it is not an operational tool. Schein's model—reminiscent of the Cultural Iceberg Model¹⁵ used often within intercultural trainings—asserts that organizational culture includes, 1.) artifacts, 2.) espoused values and, 3.) basic underlying assumptions. At the surface, artifacts are visual characteristics of an organization; their meaning is often difficult to correctly decipher without insider knowledge. Going deeper into the culture of the organization, espoused values are the consciously-crafted strategies, goals and philosophies that represent organizational ideals. Finally, at the core of the organization are basic underlying assumptions, implicit and subconscious beliefs, perceptions, thoughts and feelings of employees. Organizational assumptions are the “truth” from which employees act. Similarly, the cultural iceberg model draws a vivid analogy between culture and a natural iceberg—the deeper you dive under the waterline, the more obscure the matter.

¹⁵ The Culture Iceberg Model was developed by anthropologist and cross-cultural researcher, Edward T. Hall in 1976. The analogy is in no way intended to insinuate that culture is a “problem” as meant by the expression, “tip of the iceberg.”

The Denison Organizational Culture Model

The Denison Organizational Culture Model (DOCS) was developed by Denison Consulting, an Ann Arbor, Stockholm, and Zurich-based consultancy in the business of supporting their clients in building stronger business cultures. According to Denison's web site, DOCS provides a guide for organizational change through a model that illustrates four essential traits of all organizations: adaptability, mission, consistency and involvement. Additionally, "DOCS is designed to assess an organization's strengths and weaknesses as they apply to organizational performance" (Denison Consulting, n.d.). These results can then be benchmarked against nearly 1,000 other organizations from various industries, regions and sectors whose DOCS results are stored within Denison's global database. In the 20 years since the tool was made available, it is reported to have been used by more than 5,000 companies worldwide.

Organizational Change Agent¹⁶ Chad¹⁷ in Cleveland, owner and president of his own support desk and remote management services company, has used both DOCS and the OCAI, and reported that, "I'll have to choose the Denison as the better instrument...The Denison is validated to business results such as ROI, ROS, Innovation, Service, Sales and other business metrics reflective of performance" (Chad, personal communication, Aug. 2013). Chad's review of DOCS prompted me to consider whether the tool was better suited for corporate environments that tend to measure performance differently than those of nonprofits.

¹⁶ The "Organizational Culture Change Agents" is a LinkedIn based, professional network of nearly 4,000 individuals, globally dispersed and virtually connected in a pursuit to understand and rightly manage organizational culture. I asked the Change Agents about their experience with the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument and other organizational culture assessment tools. See also Appendix A, *LinkedIn Organizational Culture Change Agents Discussion Thread*.

¹⁷ Surnames of Organizational Culture Change Agents group members have been removed to protect their anonymity.

The Organizational Culture Inventory® & the Organizational Effectiveness Inventory®

This set of inventories work in concert and are owned by Human Synergistics International, a consultancy that facilitates “behavior change that leads to increased individual, team, and organizational effectiveness” (Human Synergistics International, 2012). Also based in The Great Lakes State, Michigan, the firm has 18 international affiliates on every continent with the exceptions of Africa, Antarctica and South America. Tandem use of the inventories is suggested, with the Organizational Culture Inventory® (OCI®) designed to measure current and ideal organizational cultures, and the Organizational Effectiveness Inventory® (OEI®) designed to assess key organizational factors that shape culture and cultural outcomes at organizational, group and individual levels. According to Human Synergistics International, the OEI® meets academic and psychometric standards.

Change Agents also advocated the OCI® and the OEI®. Cathleen in Chicago, who works as the Director of Marketing at Human Synergistics (and shares the same family name as the organization’s Director), wrote in to share that, “the Organizational Culture Inventory®...is the most thoroughly-researched culture survey” (Cathleen, personal communication, Jul. 2013). Sending me “all the best” from Canada, Mickey, a director of country operations for a training and consultancy services company, raved that the set is “Another excellent tool” (Mickey, personal communication, Jul. 2013). Mickey spoke to the prominence of decision makers in the process, noting that decision makers’ ideal organizational culture is compared against subordinates’ assessment of current organizational culture.

The Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument

Outside of the management consulting arena, professors Kim S. Cameron and Robert E. Quinn developed the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI) from research conducted on major indicators of organizational effectiveness. In a three-decade relay of research development, Cameron

and Quinn's definitive book on the OCAI, *Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture: Based on the Competing Values Framework* (1996), was informed by the study of Quinn's earlier work with John Rohrbaugh (1983) in which they distilled John Collins and colleagues' 39 indicators of organizational effectiveness (1974). Collins' comprehensive list was consolidated by Quinn and Rohrbaugh who submitted the indicators of organizational effectiveness to statistical analysis. What resulted were two, diametrically opposed dimensions which formed four quadrants. It became known as the Competing Values Framework. From top to bottom, one band of the quadrant represented Flexibility/ discretion at one end, and Stability/ control at the other. Either of these two value orientations at different ends of the y-axis could be considered to be the mark of an effective organization. From left to right, one end of the other band of the quadrant represented Internal Focus/ integration, while the other end represented an External Focus/ differentiation. Again, either value orientation at different ends of this x-axis could be considered a more appropriate balance of inward and outward relationships and focus. Cameron and Quinn made further meaning of the quadrants developed by these two opposing dimensions, which they developed into what is known as the OCAI. Eventually, they granted online distribution rights of the tool to a management consultancy in the Netherlands. To date, the OCAI has been utilized by over 10,000 organizations worldwide for which industry-specific OCAI data are available for review.

The OCAI and the Competing Values Framework have been proven valid and reliable through thorough empirical research within numerous national and industry-specific contexts. Select studies on the OCAI include those carried out by Quinn and Spreitzer with public utility firms (1991); Yeung, Brockbank, and Ulrich with Fortune 500 corporations (1991); Zammuto and Krakower with higher education institutions (1991); and Peterson, Cameron, Spencer, and White (1991) (Cameron & Quinn, 2011, pp.153-154). Select studies on the Competing Values Framework include those of Howard

(1998), Lamond (2003), and Denison and Mishra (1995) (Yu, 2009). Cameron and Quinn write, “the most appropriate frameworks should be based on empirical evidence, should capture accurately the reality being described...That is the purpose of using the Competing Values Framework to diagnose and facilitate change in organizational culture. It is a framework that was empirically derived, has been found to have both face and empirical validity, and helps integrate many of the dimensions proposed by various authors” (2011, pp.32-33). Overall, the Competing Values Framework has become a foundational knowledge resource for researchers and a widely used tool for practitioners.

The OCAI is an instrument of choice among some of the Organizational Culture Change Agents I polled. Wishing me good luck on my research from Ukraine, Alexei, who works in corporate culture at an energy company, shared that his organization utilized the OCAI to study companies that would be consolidated through merger and acquisitions, and find contradictions between them. Lien in Singapore, who works as a project manager at a power and automation technologies company, said that she selected the OCAI because she agrees with its underlying assumption that there is no best culture, and she can use the tool to compare present and expected cultures (or “current” and “preferred” cultures, as termed by the OCAI). Finally, Pat in Philadelphia, founding principle at a talent organization, shared that the OCAI is a “well-researched and valuable tool for articulating culture in behavioral terms,” and that the tool “allows us to discover precisely where the culture is breaking down—how it’s trumping organization’s business strategy—and what can be done to fix it” (Pat, personal communication, Aug. 2013). Though my purposes for the OCAI were different than those of these Change Agents, the first-hand experiences that these field practitioners shared guided me to the assessment tool that would capture the most pertinent data for scope of my particular inquiry.

Rationale For Using Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument

My decision to select the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI) was ultimately guided by my aspiration to become a more people-centered and reflective practitioner. True, there were other, more cerebral reasons why I made my selection, though I acknowledge that the objectivity of OCAI survey results can be criticized. I agree with, and accept that reality. Objectively speaking, the OCAI is a tool that has been developed from valid and reliable research, and that produces subjective data; data that is subjective in that it's produced by respondents who use quantitative designations to represent qualitative assessments of their organizations. One of my new favorite books since beginning this research inquiry, Howard Stein's *Listening Deeply: An Approach to Understanding and Consulting in Organizational Culture*, speaks to the way I seek to carry out my professional practice. Stein writes, "While listening to the group, the consultant also hears and attends carefully to the music that stirs from within. This activity violates the most revered wisdom in modern science, which holds that the observer is always the worst, to-be-mistrusted instrument. But the observer is potentially the finest instrument because objectivity is gained not in spite of our subjectivity, but through the intersubjective dialogue of conscious with unconscious, soul to soul" (Stein, 1994, p.2). Organizations, after all, are made up of *people* who live *subjective* realities. Organizational change, then, is truly change within the people of organizations. Thus, I found it most relevant to solicit and work from the truth of Orchestra, Inc. from the perspective of those that make it what it is and through a tool that did not require inordinate analysis. The OCAI simply includes 24 questions, six functional dimensions of organizational culture, and four overall organizational culture types.

While the OCAI may be used as a starting place toward organizational change, my use of the tool was for the purpose of reflecting upon and improving my understanding of organizational culture,

particularly at Orchestra, Inc. The OCAI provides raw and basic data that is valuable itself, and does not have to be acted upon—though the data is *actionable*—in order to be useful. Alexi in Ukraine, one of the LinkedIn network Change Agents, commented that the OCAI “gives little real tools to move forward” (Alexi, personal communication, Jul. 2013). However, my intention was not to move forward in formally consulting with Orchestra, Inc. Further, as my research was not commissioned or otherwise requested by my subject organization, my decision about a research tool was independent from the influence of decision-makers at Orchestra, Inc.

First-Hand Account of Using the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument

In practice, I found the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument to be straightforward and simple to set up and collect data. After purchasing access to the tool online (at a student research rate) and logging into my OCAI-Online account, it took minutes to set up the tool with my choice of survey title and language specifications, and activate the survey link to prepare for survey dissemination. OCAI-Online administered respondents’ participation in the online survey; I was not required to be involved in this process, and was disallowed access to survey administration and individual survey results as the researcher, which suited me well. Closing the survey took a simple click of the mouse, which automatically and immediately generated data results and supplemental data information in a convenient pdf format.

In my experience, insufficient guidance and support were provided by the OCAI-Online tool and administrators during my use of the tool for data review and analysis. After reviewing what seemed to be a moderately-customized, generic template of supplemental information provided regarding final data results, I forwarded a couple of questions regarding the interpretation of the data to my OCAI-Online contact. The response I received seemed basic and perhaps a reiteration of the information about which

I was unclear; responses to my follow up questions were met with inconsistent turn-around times.

Further, I discovered that a diagram of OCAI results for the Arts, Entertainment and Recreation U.S. industry (the umbrella industry under which Orchestra, Inc. best fit), was not offered with the OCAI package that I purchased. My OCAI-Online administrator contact was kind enough to share a diagram with me nonetheless.

While the tool generally served my purposes for this inquiry, I might not opt to use the OCAI when conducting a real-time intervention as a consultant with a client-partner. For organizational change processes carried out in interaction with others, my opinion is that the OCAI-Online offers minimal guidance for next steps. The appendix of Cameron and Quinn's book, *Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture*, provides far more practical and insightful next steps straight from the OCAI co-creators in that they present a series of specific questions that help lead the organizational change process forward. However, this text is only available as a separate and non-integrated purchase that I happened upon when navigating the OCAI-Online site. Also available for separate purchase as an aide to interpret OCAI data and direct next steps forward is a book that is authored by the OCAI-Online administrators. Still, these resources do not include guidance on how to incorporate the real-world dimension of race politics into OCAI data interpretation and application, which would have been interesting and useful for the inquiry at hand.

DATA PRESENTATION

Overview of Survey Respondents

This research would not have been possible without the participation of 12 employees representing seven different departments of Orchestra, Inc. As promised when inviting them to participate, respondents' identities will be kept anonymous. In order to provide some context on those

who influenced this research, demographical information was requested of respondents and is summarized below.

The 12 survey participants represented diverse demographics. All were asked to share their age, race and/or ethnicity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, educational background and number of years of employment with Orchestra, Inc. One respondent did not provide demographic details. The eleven respondents that did share demographic details ranged in age from 26 to 53 years of age, with a median of 37 years of age. Eight respondents identified their gender as female; the one respondent that did not submit her demographical details presented as a woman¹⁸. Two respondents identified their gender as male; one respondent who responded to all other demographic questions with the exception of gender presented as a man. All respondents identified themselves within modern racial categorizations typical of the U.S. Seven respondents identified as Caucasian and/or White (including one respondent who identified as Caucasian/Jewish); the remaining exclusively identified themselves within racial categories that are non-White¹⁹. All respondents identified their sexual orientation as “heterosexual” or “straight.” Eight respondents identified as solidly Middle class, and three others identified as lower or higher on the Middle class “spectrum.” Representing opposite ends of the socio-economic spectrum, one respondent identified as Middle Upper class, and one other identified as “poor (lower class),” noting that they work for a non-profit organization. The eleventh respondent was not sure how to answer the question about their socio-economic status; he was not alone, as multiple respondents asked how they

¹⁸ The difference between gender and sex is recognized, though limited information was asked of, and shared by, respondents.

¹⁹ Given the racial homogeneity of Orchestra, Inc., I have decided to withhold the racial and/or ethnic identities of these remaining respondents such that they cannot be easily identified. While it’s my opinion that generalizing respondents’ racial and/or ethnic identities in this way represents a sacrifice to their full identities and reduces their identities to a negative value (i.e., a “non-White” person) in contrast to a numerically and culturally dominant (White) class, I make this difficult decision in honor of my commitment to protect respondents’ identities to the extent possible.

were to respond to this question. Ten of the 11 respondents that provided demographical information hold a minimum of a Bachelors degree; five of these ten respondents have also earned a Masters degree. Finally, respondents ranged in years of employment at Orchestra, Inc. from less than a year to 22 years; the mean and median being 7 years of employment at Orchestra, Inc. A quarter of respondents (including the respondent who did not provide demographic details) have invested over ten years of their career at Orchestra, Inc.

Report of OCAI Survey Results

OCAI 101

The OCAI assesses six key dimensions of organizational culture. As explained by co-developers Cameron and Quinn, “The purpose of the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument is to assess six key dimensions of organizational culture...In completing the instrument, you will be providing a picture of the fundamental assumptions on which your organization operates and the values that characterize it. There are no right or wrong answers for these items, just as there is not right or wrong culture” (Cameron & Quinn, 2011, p.24). By assigning numerical values to self-reported assessment questions that relate to these key dimensions of the OCAI, the tool is designed to offer the user a visual representation of the subject organization’s cultural profile. These six foundational dimensions of organizational culture upon which the tool is built include:

- 1) Dominant Characteristics;
- 2) Organizational Leadership;
- 3) Management of Employees;
- 4) Organizational “Glue”;
- 5) Strategic Emphases; and,
- 6) Criteria of Success.

Users respond to a series of four questions per dimension listed above. An algorithm translates these responses and plots them onto a quadrant of four organizational culture types. The four culture types are

“Clan,” “Adhocracy,” “Hierarchy,” and “Market.” (See Appendix G, *The Organizational Culture*

Assessment Instrument (Survey Questions).)

OCAI CULTURE TYPE	GENERAL DESCRIPTION (From OCAI-Online)
<i>Clan</i>	A very pleasant place to work where people share a lot of personal information, much like an extended family. The leaders or heads of the organization are seen as mentors and perhaps even parent figures. The organization is held together by loyalty or tradition. Commitment is high...Success is defined in terms of sensitivity to customers and concern for people. The organization places a premium on teamwork, participation, and consensus.
<i>Adhocracy</i>	A dynamic, entrepreneurial and creative place to work. People stick out their necks and take risks. The leaders are considered innovators and risk takers. The glue that holds the organization together is commitment to experimentation and innovation...The organization's long-term emphasis is on growth and acquiring new resources...The organization encourages individual initiative and freedom.
<i>Market</i>	A result-oriented organization whose major concern is getting the job done. People are competitive and goal-oriented. The leaders are hard drivers, producers, and competitors. They are tough and demanding. The glue that holds the organization together is an emphasis on winning. Reputation and success are common concerns. The long-term focus is on competitive actions and achievement of measurable goals and targets. Success is defined in terms of market share and penetration.
<i>Hierarchy</i>	A very formalized and structured place to work. Procedures govern what people do. The leaders pride themselves on being good coordinators and organizers who are efficiency-minded. Maintaining a smooth-running organization is most critical. Formal rules and policies hold the organization together...Success is defined in terms of dependable delivery, smooth scheduling and low cost. The management of employees is concerned with secure employment and predictability.

Exhibit A: Description of OCAI Cultures

User responses to a series of four questions per dimension were tallied and distributed across four organizational culture types. As shown in Exhibit B to the right, Clan culture is represented in the upper left quadrant; Adhocracy culture is represented in the upper right quadrant; Hierarchy culture is represented in the lower left quadrant; and, Market culture is represented in the lower right quadrant.

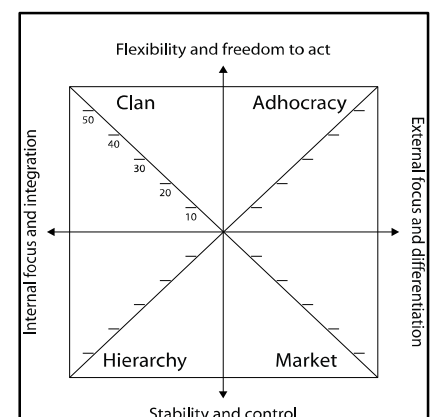


Exhibit B: OCAI Chart Template

Results

Exhibit C below shows a visual representation of Orchestra, Inc.'s current and preferred organizational culture as assessed by 12 Orchestra, Inc. employees through the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI). The red-colored contour (positioned further to the Stability end of the y-Axis) represents the *current* organizational culture; the blue-colored contour (positioned further to the Flexibility end of the y-Axis) represents the *preferred* organizational culture. The two diametrically opposed dimensions of the Competing Values Framework are also represented within Exhibit C: The balance between Flexibility and Stability runs along the y-Axis, and the balance between Internal and External runs along the x-Axis. It is visually apparent that the current and preferred organizational cultures as shown in Exhibit C are in tension along the dimension of Flexibility/ Stability. The current culture charting pulls downward along the y-Axis towards Stability while the preferred culture charting pulls upward along the y-Axis towards Flexibility.

The higher the numerical value assessed for each of the four organizational culture types, the stronger the culture type. Visually, as represented in Exhibit C, the higher the numerical value, the further the corresponding point is plotted toward the periphery of the graph; the lower the numerical

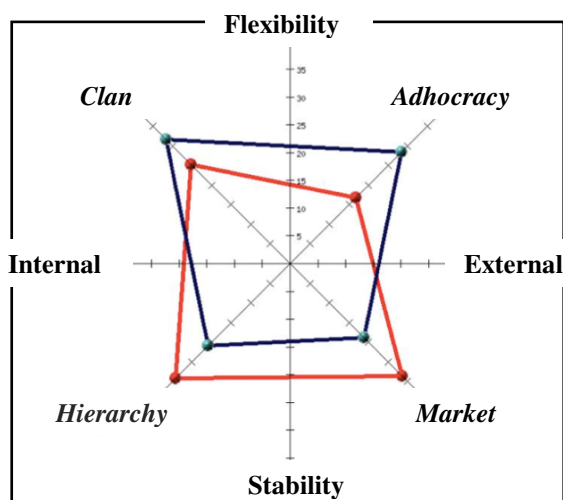


Exhibit C: Orchestra, Inc. OCAI Results

value, the closer the corresponding point is plotted toward the origin (0,0) of the graph. Respondents assessed the *current* balance of Orchestra, Inc. culture as being Hierarchy to a value of 29.32; Clan to a value of 25.25; Market to a value of 28.72; and, Adhocracy to a value of 16.71. In sum, all values add up to 100.

Respondents assessed their *preferred* balance of Orchestra, Inc. culture to be Clan to a value of 31.67; Adhocracy to a value of 28.47; Hierarchy to a value of 20.96; and, Market to a value of 18.9. Again, in sum, all points add up to 100. The OCAI collects qualitative data from respondents to which they assign numerical values; no additional narrative data is collected.

I also reviewed the extent of difference and alignment between the current and preferred organizational cultures. (See Exhibit D below.) Calculating the delta—or, difference—between current and preferred cultures gave me a numerical way in which to understand the discrepancy between the two. In calculating the overlap—or, alignment—between current and preferred cultures, I was able to numerically weigh the misalignment between cultures with the alignment that was also reported to exist.


<i>Culture:</i>	Hierarchy	Clan	Market	Adhocracy	Total
<i>Description:</i>	Structured, Process-oriented & Predictable	Pleasant, Sharing & Committed	Targets, Production & Competition	Dynamic, Entrepreneurial & Innovative	-
<i>Current culture:</i>	29.32	25.25	28.72	16.71	100
<i>Preferred culture:</i>	20.96	31.67	18.9	28.47	100
<i>Delta btwn. cultures:</i>	8.36	6.42	9.82	11.76 	36.36
<i>Alignment btwn. cultures:</i>	20.96	25.25	18.9	16.71	81.82

Exhibit D: Summary of Orchestra, Inc. OCAI Numerical Results

As seen in Exhibit D above, the smaller of the two values between the current and preferred cultures represents the extent of the alignment or overlap between the two cultures.

According to Cameron and Quinn, a difference of over 10 value increments between current and preferred cultures requires immediate attention and (incremental or radical) organizational change (See arrow on Exhibit D). This is not to imply that other differences between current and preferred culture

may not also prompt needed organizational change. During a July 2013 Skype video-conversation that I shared with OCAI-Online co-founder and organizational change consultant, Marcella Bremer, I was advised that the “stronger the current culture, the harder it is to change” (M. Bremer, personal communication, July 8, 2013). (See also Appendix D, *Six OCAI Sub-Diagrams*.)

ANALYSIS

Analysis of OCAI Results (Current Culture)

In the course of analysis, I studied six sub-diagrams provided by OCAI-Online that break down the overall OCAI diagram (Exhibit C, shown above). The overall diagram presents the end-sum of respondents’ assessments of Orchestra, Inc. against all six OCAI cultural dimensions; the six sub-diagrams present respondents’ assessments of Orchestra, Inc. against each cultural dimension, one by one. The chart below lists what I identify as key “take away” lessons from the final OCAI report that I received after having closed the survey.

OCAI CULTURAL DIMENSION	KEY TAKE-AWAY (Extracted from OCAI-Online provided data)
<i>Dominant Characteristic</i>	Market culture scores highest at a value of 39.17. The dominant characteristics are results oriented where a major concern is getting the job done.
<i>Organizational Leadership</i>	Leaders are least considered to be innovators and risk takers (adhocracy culture: 16.67 points). The leaders are considered to be coordinators and organizers (hierarchy culture: 32.92 points). And, they have more qualities: hard drivers, producers and competitors (market culture: 29.17 points). They are also considered to be mentors and parent figures (clan culture: 21.25 points).
<i>Management of Employees</i>	Teamwork, consensus and participation are important: management of employees matches the clan culture with 38.17 points.
<i>Organizational Glue</i>	The glue that holds the organization together is an emphasis on achievement and goal accomplishment. Aggressiveness and winning are common themes.
<i>Strategic Emphasis</i>	The organization emphasizes permanence and stability. Efficiency, control and smooth operations are important. These are strategic emphases

	according to hierarchy culture that was assessed at a value of 32.92.
<i>Criteria of Success</i>	The organization defines success on the basis of efficiency. Dependable delivery, smooth scheduling and low-cost production are critical (indicated by the assessed value of hierarchy culture at 33.75). Additionally, success is determined based on winning in the marketplace and outpacing the competition. Competitive market leadership is key (indicated by the assessed value of market culture at 22.33).

Exhibit E: Summary of Key Take-Aways From Six OCAI Sub-Diagrams

At Orchestra, Inc.—and perhaps at the offices of its national colleagues—there may be such an emphasis on Market in response to the declining cultural and financial value of classical music to general audiences (Rosen, 2011). Even among classical music lovers, there are a declining number of individuals who publically participate in classical music culture, including the sacred rite of attending concerts in concert halls. In summarizing research conducted by Alan Brown et al among concert hall ticket-buyers—*Classical Music Consumer Segmentation Study: How Americans Relate to Classical Music and Their Local Orchestras* (commissioned by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation and 15 U.S. American orchestras)—Brown stated in a public radio interview that, “...orchestras are adrift in a sea of classical music lovers that they haven’t found a way to serve” (Audience Insight, LLC., 2002). In such a competitive market, perhaps the flexibility of an adhocracy is considered a luxury. In my review of the Big Five, for instance, there were close similarities in several aspects of the organizations, including their espoused mission (i.e., to bring people together to share in music); educational approaches in establishing community-based programming, especially for the benefit of economically underserved (young) people; the establishment of summer residencies outside of the concert hall; use of technology to saturate the senses of audiences, and more. At least by following status quo targets and modes of competition, orchestras can keep to a general blueprint that seems to work, instead of

venturing off into “arts deserts”²⁰ and “arts forests”²¹ on their lonesome. It would have been an interesting study to conduct the OCAI survey with employees at different times in the economic history of Orchestra, Inc. in order to seek out the relationship, if any, between booming business and a goal-driven organizational culture.

The emphasis on maintaining an erect hierarchy, stability and monopoly on the marketplace may be decisions made from a place of fear. If classical music is losing ground as a cultural force and its cultural currency is becoming more and more devalued, perhaps these aspects of organizational culture reflect a sense of being threatened, a show of force and overcompensation on the part of Orchestra, Inc. If the logic of international relations theory applies here, sovereign entities must demonstrate their strength at all costs. Even if it means holding steadfast onto old habits, and dying hard.

I acknowledge that the non-participation of Orchestra, Inc. top leadership may have affected OCAI results, especially in the overall assessed employee preference for a lower value on Hierarchy culture. The non-participation of top leadership may represent a weak link in my sampling strategy. As more fully outlined in the *Methodology* section of this paper, of the 34 individuals invited to participate as respondents via LinkedIn, 16 responded; of two top leaders invited to participate, one declined and one did not respond. It is my sense that participation in this study may have been perceived by some—including Orchestra, Inc. top leadership—as disobedient to the status quo.

Orchestra, Inc. respondents clearly voiced a desire for an increase in Adhocracy culture. Though the

²⁰ An “arts desert” is a term used to describe a geographic area of a community, socioeconomic strata of society, educational system, artistic industry, etc. in which the arts are significantly under-subsidized, and in which populations generally do not have local access to the arts. This includes visual and performing arts, drama, and music.

²¹ An “arts forest” is a term used to describe a geographic area of a community, socioeconomic strata of society, educational system, artistic industry, etc. in which the arts are significantly subsidized through public or private monies, and in which populations generally have local access to, and participate in, the arts. This again, includes visual and performing arts, drama, and music.

data also articulated that respondents would prefer less of an emphasis on Hierarchy and Market culture at Orchestra, Inc., I considered it more prudent to center on the creation of (Adhocracy) culture at Orchestra, Inc. rather than the destruction of (Hierarchy and Market) cultures. The practice of appreciative inquiry, in which energy is given to proliferating aspects of the workplace that are appreciated, lends itself to this perspective. To some extent, Adhocracy culture *already* exists at Orchestra, Inc. Organizational change then, may simply be doing *more* of what works well for employees.

If Adhocracy is to increase as a characteristic of Orchestra, Inc. culture, a paradigm shift must occur around the practices of leadership and marketplace competition. Imagine the effect of Adhocracy culture growing in value by 10 or 15 increments (to more equal value with all other cultures assessed by employees) in order to create a diagram that presents a more perfect square. Hierarchy might remain the dominant culture while leadership expands their skill set to become practiced managers of innovation in the workplace—if not venturing to demonstrate innovation themselves. Market might remain a close second-runner-up in terms of its influence upon Orchestra, Inc. culture while staff are allowed space to experiment with creative entrepreneurialism as a cutting edge means of sustaining and achieving higher quantitative and qualitative goals. In this way, the current organizational cultures (particularly, Hierarchy and Market) are leveraged to achieve a simultaneous shift towards the preferred culture (Adhocracy). As a result, culture is the *solution* to organizational change. To be clear, never was culture the culprit; Hierarchy and Market are not to be considered a cultural conundrum. The current culture of any organization is simply the reality of the way things are done. Organizational change must be resonant with current culture in order for an expanded vision to be understood, adopted, and realized.

In order to help animate new idea generation at Orchestra, Inc., it is **critical** that organizational leadership become receptive to inviting, engaging and acting with others as thought-partners—both internally and externally. Such thought-partnerships may include current or new, local partner organizations with which Orchestra, Inc. sponsors programming and could very well be low-cost/ high-impact initiatives. What distinguishes this recommendation from external partnerships that I observed and participated in while employed at Orchestra, Inc. is a relaxed power dynamic on the part of Orchestra, Inc. in which the organization joins the collaboration table with the assumption and explicit demonstration that different orientations and ideas are equal in validity to its own, and allows for equitable engagement and dialogue, despite a clear imbalance in private budget and public prestige. As different ideas and different people increasingly represent less threat to the static hierarchy or the priority of monopolizing the marketplace, Orchestra, Inc. will find that its stability and marketplace presence augment as a result of a salient shift towards a professional practice of inclusion.

Audiences also desire a more accessible relationship with Orchestra, Inc. and Orchestra X. The same was confirmed during a February 2013 in-person report on key findings and implications by a national arts research firm hired by Orchestra, Inc.'s Marketing team to organize and survey focus groups of patrons around the idea of a six or seven-figure-funded community engagement initiative. The firm, whose consulting services had been hired by Orchestra, Inc. over the span of at least ten years, reported that, focus group "Respondents love classical music and are routinely blown away by the caliber of [Orchestra X]." In addition to wanting a relationship of reciprocity, respect and connection with Orchestra, Inc., "respondents said [they] would feel more valued by [Orchestra, Inc.] if they simply had a chance to voice their preferences for how they engage with the organization." The firm recommended that, Orchestra, Inc. "create opportunities to foster dialogue and interaction between the

audience and [Orchestra X and Orchestra, Inc.] musicians and representatives [respectively]”. At this meeting, one colleague spoke the words waiting upon my impatient lips when she commented that, over its history, Orchestra, Inc. has built strong cultural capital by positioning itself as an exclusive organization; and, that the approach to increasing market value has changed in modern times with organizations positioning themselves as *excellent in their inclusivity* in order to win consumer respect and patronage. After that day, I heard only silence in regards to the firm’s report; my own attempts to discuss and apply the findings fell on deaf ears. With all of its real and perceived advantages, Hierarchy and Market cultures at Orchestra, Inc. also narrow its receptiveness towards critique and subsequent response.

As a Black (U.S.) American woman at Orchestra, Inc.—together with the educational, professional, generational and other demographics I represented—increased advancement of Adhocracy culture *may* have cultivated a work environment that was more accessible to the whole of who I was. Yet, we all remain subject to a society of our own and our foreparents’ making that perpetuates bias on the basis of racial difference. It is naive to think that in 2013 we are post-bias; that racism cannot be real unless it can be proven; or, that organizations are immune from such bias, especially when they are as visibly racially homogenous as organizations like Orchestra, Inc. Because some bias-based actions may be unintentional, it is imperative that people within modern and more diverse workplaces remain conscientious of their thoughts, words and actions—even if they are among the dominant (White) culture who work hard themselves to fit into the proverbial silver slippers of Orchestra, Inc.’s unspoken codes of behavior. For all Orchestra, Inc. employees, benefit would be gained from increased inclusion practices as a means to both attract and retain employees diverse in their racial, professional or other backgrounds—*while also* allowing space for the diversity of thought that comes with a more diverse

employee base. By opening itself to different ways of thinking and succeeding that are discovered through a culture of Adhocracy, Orchestra, Inc. may make a more powerful and favorable effect on its performance and long-term effectiveness.

Such incremental changes require learning that can only occur when people are exposed to new information. Per Orchestra, Inc. employees' OCAI data—and in my firsthand experiences at Orchestra, Inc.—the organization currently manages for the status quo. This is understandable as the dominant organizational culture—Hierarchy—emphasizes predictability, structure and process. “Managing for the status quo,” according to Kelleher and McLaren, “means striving for predictability, stability, individual accountability, decisiveness, and consistency. Status-quo organizations value people who know what they are doing, who have the ‘right answer’” (Kelleher and McLaren, p.25). In such an environment, learning moments are fewer because new experiences and new information are tempered by the predominant culture. In other words, Orchestra, Inc. “needs to relinquish some control in order to learn...” (Kelleher and McLaren, p.3). Further, “Managing for learning requires that we admit that we don’t really know the answer—indeed, that there is no certainty” (Kelleher and McLaren, p.25). Admittedly, a learning orientation introduces risk.

However, here is an opportunity for Orchestra, Inc. to apply its strengths in managing process and results towards building an organizational learning orientation. If such process and procedures, goals and learning outcomes are institutionalized, Orchestra, Inc. may even become a *learning organization*. The process of becoming a learning organization “is frightening as well as energizing, for managing the learning organization demands much more of leaders and staff, of members and partner organizations. It demands thinking and learning together, with compassion, humility, and genuine empathetic understanding” (Kelleher and McLaren, p.20). Here again, Orchestra, Inc. has opportunity

to lean on its strength as a Clan culture organization, having built relationships between people that can now be relied upon to support the process of collective learning.

Implications for Organizational Readiness For Change

During a time of personal struggle, a woman named Mihaela taught me that, like gardens, people only grow when we struggle out of the shadows and towards the sunshine; that growth happens through struggle. Admittedly, we all perceive struggle differently. In *Corporate Tribalism*, for instance, well-established intercultural consultants Thomas Kochman and Jean Mavrelis offer the insight that, “A key issue between the two groups [“Corporate White Men” (CWM) and African Americans] in the context of truth seeking is the value of struggle. CWM see such struggle as polarizing. African Americans see it as unifying” (Kochman and Mavrelis, p.73). This section, *Implications*, assumes that theoretically, struggle has merit in that it can produce positive organizational change.

But people don’t always proactively choose change. And often, it must be instigated. In fact, “Conscious and deliberate evolution begins when people in the organization realize they are confronted with a problem that challenges their core assumptions” (Kelleher and McLaren, pp. 45-46). In an organization assessed to be so significantly weighted toward Stability in the OCAI diagram, Orchestra, Inc. may be so focused on its priority to maintain a sense of strength that it unconsciously acts out behavioral interpretations of its dyed-in-the-wool values that are contradictory to the very fiber of its legacy. In other words, Orchestra, Inc. has strayed from its roots.

Open the history of classical music and you will find that it is a tradition of *verve*. In the past year of my concerted learning about the history of classical music, what a pleasant and true surprise it has been to discover that a good part of classical music is rooted in a tradition of bending and breaking expectations; that the art form and the celebrated composers that produce it have routinely demonstrated

flexibility in ideas and practices that have (re)shaped the music beyond return. Authors Pogue and Speck attest that, “Classical music isn’t about snobbery, or history textbooks, or dressing up; it’s about saturating your senses, soaring melodies, and exploring your inner emotions” (2011). The examples listed below are drawn from their text, and are a sampling of the ways that classical music culture has been characteristically contrarian, innovative, emotive and fun-spirited. Common stereotypes of classical music are included in italics before each example.

- *Stereotype: Classical music is boring. Snore.*
In its day, Baroque music was considered highly emotional. “Today, it sounds relatively well-behaved. But at the time, all those florid melodies, noodling up and down all over the place, were considered music gone wild. Composers experimented with all different kinds of music structure, breaking the rules of how music was supposed to move from one section to another (p.18). (Click [here](#) for a sampling of Baroque’s finest in Antonio Lucio Vivaldi’s *Concerto in G for Oboe, Bassoon, and Orchestra*.)
- *Stereotype: Classical music is predictable and extraneous to real life.*
Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) was a master improviser. “He could take almost any tune and make up new music based on it, on the spot, just as jazz musicians do today” (p.25). In Bach’s day, music was also more immediate and relevant to the day. “[C]ompositions in those days weren’t made to last. A composer would write a piece for a specific occasion, never expecting to hear it a second time. Some of Bach’s immortal sonatas were rescued for posterity only moments before being used to wrap fish or butter...” (pp.24-25).
- *Stereotype: Classical music lacks originality and generally acquiesces to the status quo.*
Lugwig van Beethoven’s (1770-1827) nine symphonies “challenged and expanded all the symphonic forms that existed up to that point. With each work, he tried to make his music do more, to say more, to boldly go where no music had gone before. One of the simplest melodies ever to enter Beethoven’s sketchbooks eventually became one of the most profound themes in history...[I]n his [Ninth Symphony](#)...Beethoven added four solo singers and a huge chorus to sing the words of [Friedrich] Schiller’s poem [“Ode to Joy”]. For music critics of the time, adding the singers was an act of treason. Debate raged in musical circles for decades” (p. 36-37).
- *Stereotype: Classical music is all about rules and propriety.*
Hector Berlioz (1803-1869) “became famous by ignoring the rules...Rebel Berlioz wanted to create a new kind of music...During his career, every aspect of music went under his microscope—the rules of harmony, the structure of a symphony, the way to write a melody, the number of players in an orchestra, and so on. If he felt that these deviations helped him express what he wanted to express, he kept them. If not, he broke them” (pp. 45-46).

- *Stereotype: There's no sense of humor in classical music!*
 There's a story behind [Haydn's Surprise Symphony no.94](#): "Haydn, working in London, had noticed that his after-dinner audiences tended to fall asleep when the music was slow or quiet. For revenge, he wrote a movement that was slow and quiet and grew more so as the piece went on. Sure enough, many in his audience nodded off—just in time for the deafening, full-orchestra crash. Exactly as he had mischievously hoped, the huge chord woke (and embarrassed) everyone in the room" (p.29).

Another set of implications for organizational change at Orchestra, Inc. relate to basic assumptions around organizational change. Taking guidance again from organizational change experts Kelleher and McLaren, select items from their list of eight assumptions about organizational change are listed in the chart below. I have matched these assumptions with relevant OCAI Orchestra, Inc. data and my thoughts on implications for organizational change. (See Exhibit F, below.)

ASSUMPTION ABOUT ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE	RELEVANT OCAI ORCHESTRA, INC. ASSESSMENT DATA	IMPLICATION FOR ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE
Managing change is not solely a "management" issue. Change involves everyone in the organization, not just leaders.	Of a possible value of 40, Orchestra, Inc. is assessed at 29.32 as a Hierarchy culture.	Respondents' most desire a Clan culture at Orchestra, Inc. and assessed the organization at 25.25 as a Clan culture. This indicates willingness on the part of employees to band together in their commitment to the classical music community and the mission of Orchestra, Inc. The status quo of Hierarchy culture may provide a creative tension against banding together for change because this cross-pay grade collaboration would challenge segmented roles and responsibilities at Orchestra, Inc.
Involvement and participation is not enough, however; direction, guidance, planning, clear decision making—a measure of "control" are also essential. Finding the balance between being flexible and open while staying	Of a possible value of 40, Orchestra, Inc. is assessed at 16.71 as an Adhocracy culture and 29.32 as a	The experience that Orchestra, Inc. has as an organization that maintains control through hierarchy would serve it well in supplying direction, guidance,

focused and in control is essential.	Hierarchy culture.	planning and decision-making in a change process. Orchestra, Inc. is assessed to be 57% more of a Hierarchy than Adhocracy culture, representing an imbalance between stability and flexibility. Assuming that change is also about power (such that change and restructuring shift the balance of power within organizations), change initiatives must be sensitive to the real or perceived feeling that organizational leaders are losing status.
As open systems, organizations are permeable to external influence. Managing change involves paying attention to the organizational environment...	Though the OCAI does allow the user to assess Market culture, organizational initiatives at Orchestra, Inc. were not observed to be informed by consumer input.	As an organization generally inexperienced in opening dialogue with audiences (with the exception of top-dollar donors or celebrity friends of the organization), Orchestra, Inc. would have to climb a learning curve in terms of how to best solicit, process and respond to current and potential consumer input.

Exhibit F: Implications for Organizational Change at Orchestra, Inc.

Process is not to be undervalued in the course of organizational change. Working habitually in response to the organizational environment is the mark of a sustainable organization. This is not the golden nugget offered by Jim Collins in his book, *How the Mighty Fall: And Why Some Companies Never Give In*. The book reads like the familiar, achievement-oriented, quantitative, male-gendered standard measure of organizational success in which end product is king. Just like change for change's sake, change implemented reactively and exclusively to keep an organization's doors open is shortsighted. Instead, the research that you are reading assumes that, "The goal of change is not

organizational survival for its own sake...The purpose of change is to deal with changing circumstances, to ensure relevance, and to renew the commitment to the mission of the organization” (Kelleher and McLaren, p.xiv). Indeed, change is ideally proactive. At Orchestra, Inc., change could be responsive to a cultural landscape that since the inception of classical music was thrilled by change. The culture of Orchestra, Inc. must also deal with the changing circumstances of what generations of employees currently working at the organization want from their workplace such that the work itself remains relevant to employees and they are regularly renewed in commitment to the mission of Orchestra, Inc.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Build Learning Communities Among Orchestra, Inc. Employees

Engaging, planned, structured and regular community building activities grow professional and/or personal relationships that employees have already established with one another. Community building networks different—and even unexpected—groups of people together around common interests or purpose—with the primary objective of producing learning that supports the goals and outcomes of a Market culture. For example, associate network groups might meet about how to better reach out to the generational or ethnic and/or racial cultures with which they identify; a learning group might task themselves with studying why one-time subscribers have not since renewed their membership; or, a task force might meet about how to increase operational efficiency and decrease costs. Learning communities may meet over a short or longer period of time. Community building around issues relevant to the Market culture of the organization allows employees a leadership-approved and safer container within which to exercise innovation—and then experiment in carrying out their ideas.

Rationale: This recommendation relates to the Dominant Characteristic dimension²² of Orchestra, Inc. culture. While the dominant culture of Orchestra, Inc. was assessed to be Hierarchy, the dominant characteristic of the organization was assessed to be Market. OCAI respondents, a.) indicated that their preferences are misaligned with Market as the Dominant Characteristic, b.) assessed Adhocracy to hold the least dominant characteristic of the organization, and c.) expressed a desire for Adhocracy to become the dominant characteristic of Orchestra, Inc.

2. Craft Standard Operating Procedures for Change at Orchestra, Inc.

As experienced planners and followers of procedure, leadership at Orchestra, Inc. can use these skill sets to design and deliver a set of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for employees around how change will typically take place at the organization. For instance, leadership might roll out decision-making

²² For this and subsequent recommendations, see Appendix D, *Six OCAI Sub-Diagrams*.

protocols for major decisions that promote “democratic” leadership. As mentioned previously, democratic decision-making encourages (increased) employee participation in decision-making. The protocol may include a clearly defined, few-step process in which leadership, 1.) communicates the major decision on the table to relevant employees, 2.) actively listens to subordinates’ perspectives, and 3.) consults with the same group of stakeholders prior to making a final decision.

Rationale: This recommendation relates to the Organizational Leadership dimension of Orchestra, Inc. culture. OCAI respondents indicated that, a.) they are aligned with Hierarchy here, and b.) they prefer a decrease in Market culture as a priority for leadership. By establishing a process where leader’s decisions are necessarily informed by the added perspective of their professional subordinates, employees may influence decision-makers to consider relevant factors beyond Market drivers.

3. Institutionalize Mentor-Mentee Relationships at Orchestra, Inc.

For those within the Orchestra Inc. Family, formal mentor-mentee relationships may feel like a natural progression from what OCAI respondents assessed to be an organization where loyalty and high commitment to the work and to one another are evident. Such mentor-mentee relationships may run for one-year increments; be mentee-initiated; match peers or professional seniors/ juniors, etc. Through these relationships, greater acceptance of different ideas and “mis-fit” behavior on the part of employees may be built. Additionally, both mentors and (newly hired) mentees could increase their understanding of the organization, its possibilities and constraints, strategies to manage people and problems, etc.

Rationale: This recommendation relates to the Management of Employees dimension of Orchestra, Inc. culture. Clan culture was most prominent for this dimension. Institutionalized coaching relationships will build upon the relationship with leadership/ management that employees reported they preferred.

4. Make Co-opitition²³ of Learning at Orchestra, Inc.

Again working within the cultural reality of Orchestra, Inc., this recommendation suggests a transition in how competition plays out at the organization. In an environment where achievement and accomplishment are highly valued, a goal can be made of learning about anything that will promote the work of the organization. Small groups of employees might study organizational employee engagement surveys, attend external trainings or launch independent research together to collect knowledge—and then independently share lessons learned as they apply to the organization. Employees whose shared lessons are folded into organizational practice could be rewarded with acknowledgement, earn merit for annual performance appraisals, a bonus and/or otherwise.

Rationale: This recommendation relates to the Organizational Glue dimension of Orchestra, Inc. culture. According to the OCAI Report, “The glue that holds the [Orchestra, Inc.] organization together is [Market,] an emphasis on achievement and goal accomplishment.”

5. Initiate An Orchestra, Inc. 90/10 “Innovation Friday” Model

Inspired by Google’s 80/20 Innovation Time Off model in which employees are encouraged to spend 80% of their time on core projects and 20% of their time on activities that speak to their passions and

²³ Co-opitition is a commonly known, coined term meaning cooperative competition. It is based on the principle that people (and organizations) can achieve higher value creation together, opposed to independently.

interests. At Orchestra, Inc., Friday afternoons could be offered as independent—or collective—innovation time to be taken either on or off-site. At Google, management encourages the 80/20 model as part of their strategic plan to innovate efficiently while continuing to run smooth operations. Given Google's success, dedicated time for innovation may be a lesson very much worth adopting.

Rationale: This recommendation relates to the Strategic Emphasis dimension of Orchestra, Inc. culture. According to the OCAI Report, "The [Orchestra, Inc.] organization emphasizes permanence and stability. Efficiency, control and smooth operations are important. These are strategic emphases according to Hierarchy culture...". OCAI respondents indicated that they are misaligned with the strong Hierarchy orientation for this dimension, and prefer increased Clan and Adhocracy cultures.

6. Solicit Input from Orchestra, Inc. Audiences—Current and Potential

This recommendation assumes a service orientation on the part of Orchestra, Inc., and a criterion of success centered on its mission to offer an experience of classical music and classical music culture that resonates with local, national and global audiences. League of American Orchestras President and CEO, Jesse Rosen, emboldened this approach having said, "Getting community engagement right will involve orchestras rethinking themselves from top to bottom as cultural service agencies rather than high-end entertainment companies" (Rosen, *Symphony*, 2011). Differently phrased, Orchestra, Inc. is challenged here to "increase the 'porosity' of the [organization] to feedback from people most directly affected by the programs" (Kelleher and McLaren, p.22). Input can be solicited regularly, on a semi-formal or formal basis, and shared at Orchestra, Inc. internal meetings, office kitchen bulletin boards, with donors, etc. Fresh concepts from key stakeholders external to the organization will provide employees with leverage to act on resounding ideas. Beyond collecting the data, the objective is to conscientiously *respond* to it, and to explicitly and publicly communicate that audience input is the motivation behind organizational change at Orchestra, Inc.²⁴.

Rationale: This recommendation relates to the Criteria for Success dimension of Orchestra, Inc. culture. This is another dimension where Hierarchy predominates, OCAI respondents are misaligned with this current emphasis, and prefer increased Clan and Adhocracy cultures for Orchestra, Inc. in future.

CONCLUSION

In presenting this work, I seek to stimulate conversation that leads people to act in the interest of progressive, people-centered change. At its root, cultural change is about being alive to the potential of our own selves within the context of society and its myriad organizations. The praxis is dialectic and reflective; collective and individual; theoretical and practical. And mostly, personal. Individual

²⁴ The crux of this recommendation is borrowed from a Feb. 2013 document that I drafted as an audit of the extent to which the education wing of Orchestra, Inc. practiced community access and inclusion. Corresponding recommendations were the focus of the document. This work was requested of me by The Boss, who ultimately decided to indefinitely pause our conversation and implementation of any of the recommendations at the time.

ownership of change is key. The responses I witnessed and experienced while working to change attitudes and practices in the direction of increased access at Orchestra, Inc. taught me clear lessons on the very personal nature of change.

Why didn't Orchestra, Inc. want the kind of change I advocated? Orchestra, Inc. has been—and by a number of indicators, continues to be—a quality, accomplished and functional organization of which the Orchestra, Inc. family is rightly proud. Its values, beliefs, assumptions and behaviors are modes through which the organization has achieved its status to date; success, as defined by Orchestra, Inc., is a result of its culture and related practices. As yet, there may be no pain point felt tenderly enough—and for a sufficient number of key stakeholders—that galvanizes Orchestra, Inc. to invest in a healthy heterogeneity of ideas that reimagine how organizational success is defined. In lunching with a major donor during my time at Orchestra, Inc., we resolved that the work of pushing forward the education initiative about which we met was truly a bigger issue of organizational culture change. This business savvy donor represented much of what Orchestra, Inc. is or aspires to be—White, monied, influential, enamored with classical music. However, even his pioneering financial and time investment with Orchestra, Inc. could not cultivate the organizational change necessary to grow his pet initiative. Surely, this donor chose Orchestra X and Orchestra, Inc. for the cultural power that they represented; yet, that same organizational culture enfeebled his efforts to advance the culture of the organization. This is because organizational culture and change are a group effort motivated by a palpable and shared understanding that the core culture no longer fulfills its promise. I am not convinced that Orchestra, Inc. did not *want* the kind of change I advocated. As I have learned in the course of this inquiry, Orchestra, Inc. was not yet *able* to absorb such change.

Sustainable organizational change must be culturally relevant. If we are to start from a place of understanding in change endeavors, the culture created by the people that make up an organization must first be examined and interpreted. In this inquiry, my participant-observation at Orchestra, Inc., the voice of Orchestra, Inc. employees as heard through their Organizational Cultural Assessment Instrument data, and a related examination of context and concepts guided me towards a place of better understanding. It is my intention that the information and insights in this work serve others in their pursuit to understand the organizational culture of Orchestra, Inc. or other organizations. Only when the prospect of change resonates with the culture of whom people are, can it be cultivated and sustained.

Change is about power. When organizations change, people necessarily gain or lose influence. Though truly, power lies in the *ideas* that drive change; in our *thoughts around how* cultural values and beliefs practically play out in our behavior and workplace practices; in the understanding of what we produce at work; and, in the choices we choose against. If organizations are to change along with us, we must be advocates within the workplace for the ideas in which we believe.

For the Love of Music is the story of one organization grappling with its culture and the way towards a change that fits. The experience of Orchestra, Inc. employees is neither considerably unique nor unimportant. It is through the example of Orchestra, Inc. that we can learn more about who we are professionally and personally; what and who we value; and, how we prefer for our organizations to become more true symbols of ourselves.

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Malii Brown
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APPENDIX

A: LinkedIn Organizational Culture Change Agents Discussion Thread

[Discussion thread prompt, July 2013] *What's your experience with the OCAI (Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument) or other tools that assess organizational culture?*

Greetings to the group from [City X]! I am writing to request your insight. As a graduate student earning a degree in Intercultural Management from SIT Graduate Institute, I'm researching organizational culture and how it affects an organization's capacity for change. At the moment, I am considering utilizing the OCAI to gather research data. What's your experience with the OCAI (Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument) or other tools that assess organizational culture? How would you describe the organizations and circumstances within which the tool was used? How was a correlation drawn between OCAI results and your organization's capacity for change? Thank you in advance for your response to these questions or other info you have to share.

[Discussion thread responses by LinkedIn members] **Alexi**²⁵ • We have had experience with OCAI. We have used this tools in the study of culture of new businesses (deals M&A). We compared the culture of the parent and new businesses, we are looking for contradictions and general. OCAI is an interesting tool, but it gives little real tools to move forward. OCAI has a positive side - it gives a vision of the desired culture of the employees. It's a good thing. □□ Denison Organizational Culture Model is an interesting tool. This provides more opportunities for the development of culture. Look at that, too. □□ Good luck!

Mickey • Another excellent tool is Human Synergistic's OCI/OEI (Organizational Culture Inventory/Effectiveness Inventory). □□ DECISION MAKERS are asked to identify the IDEAL organizational culture. This IDEAL is then compared to the CURRENT organizational culture as identified by a statistical representation of current employees including the DECISION MAKERS. In addition to providing the CURRENT culture, the audit identifies the causal factors contributing to both the CURRENT organizational culture and ultimately the company's organizational effectiveness. The findings of the organizational culture audit provides the basis for continued development interventions and provides credence to current ongoing organizational development programs. □□ All the best!

Cathleen • Hi there! The Organizational Culture Inventory (OCI) by Human Synergistics is the most thoroughly-researched culture survey. For a partial list of research, please scroll down to the OCI on this page: <http://humansynergistics.com/ResourceCenter/ResearchandPublications> □□ This list will give you a nice idea of how researchers have used the OCI. Typically, correlations are run between the 12 culture styles measured by the OCI and the outcomes that the researcher is studying. Let me know if you want me to dig up any of the research articles for you so that you can read them in detail. I'm also happy to put you in touch with our Senior Researcher who specifically works with students on research projects.

²⁵ Individuals' surnames have been removed to protect their anonymity.

Stephen • Hi @Malii ... there are tools = instruments that quantitatively measure and compare organizational culture and there are techniques = processes that qualitatively map, manage, measure and monitor organization culture. ☐☐My work is of the second intention with leaning into the measurement aspects of the first tool to calculate the Return on Shift, Return of Education, Return on Learning and Return on Investment. ☐☐All are helpful ... yet, does "your organization paradigm" prefer a destination or journey outcome? Your staff and clients will appreciate your management-leadership implementation from their view of an iconic work-client experience. ☐☐))smiles

Chad • Having used both the OCAI and the Denison Culture Survey, I'll have to choose the Denison as the better instrument. The Denison is validated to business results such as ROI, ROS, Innovation, Service, Sales and other business metrics reflective of performance. As a consequence, it is much easier to explain and work with to justify specific topics for focus when coaching a client on changing their culture. ☐☐There's nothing wrong or negative about the OCAI, it's just not as user friendly.

Michael • Using Cultural Survey methodology where there are a limited number of preordained dimensions as espoused above is a like asking a gold fish "How is the water?" Is it warm?, Is it cold ? or Is it just right?. A better method of;ogy is to conduct a Cultural Due Diligence where the individual and collective behavior and other culture shaping practices are interrogated and assessed..

Jeroen • Hello Mālii, ☐☐I guess i can't give you an advise wether to use OCAI or not. But maybe i can help you by asking some questions that might give you a better underlayment for choosing the right 'research tool'. ☐1. How do you define 'organizational culture? And how does this relate to the tool tou wish to use? ☐2. Which peer-group is your research-object? Will you make conclusion about the whole organization or only a few businessunits and compare them? ☐3. How do you define organizational change? And what are the CSF for organizational change? Where is the relation between these CSF and the defined organizational culture? ☐☐Well, maybe you already have the answers for these questions...if not, then i hope they might be usefull. And if needed, i have a lot of literature about organizational culture, organizational change and about organizational learning. If you wish, i can mail them to you. ☐☐Greets from Holland

Lien • I have considered btw OCAI and Dennison to apply to my working Division and in the end I chose OCAI because (1) I agree with their basic assumptions: there's no "always the best" type of culture and you need to trade off btw 4 types of culture to create a momentum that makes a company move forward (2) I can compare btw present and expectation (3) The methodology has been mentioned clearly in their book so I can avoid any misleading, (4) There're only 6 questions in the survey that convenient for a large sample, I conducted a survey to > 100 colleagues and sure they're very busy. A short survey will be a better choice.

Pat • When we decided several years ago to develop a technology for diagnosing organizational culture we chose to base it on OCAI. It's a well-researched and valuable tool for articulating culture in behavioral terms, something that most organizations don't do very effectively. ☐☐Our online diagnostic focuses on the OCAI's organization effectiveness factors rather than its culture factors. This allows us to discover precisely where the culture is breaking down...and what can be done to fix it...

B: Invitation to Participate in Research Study

Dear X,

This message is sent to request your support of research that I am conducting to complete a Master of Arts degree in Intercultural Service, Leadership and Management through SIT Graduate Institute (School for International Training). In the 2011/12 school year, I finished on-campus coursework requirements in Vermont; since returning to [City X] last year, I have been working to satisfy all off-campus requirements and am scheduled to graduate this year. Upon my hire at [Orchestra, Inc.], I was clear that my thesis research would focus on some aspect of [Orchestra, Inc.] as it related to intercultural management; this research study fulfills that promise.

I request your participation in an ANONYMOUS, one-time, 15-minute online survey focused on the organizational culture of [Orchestra, Inc.]. I would ask that you complete the survey by/before XXX. [Orchestra, Inc.] will NOT be named in my thesis paper as the subject organization of this research. Below, I am including a few details about the research for your information. If you choose to participate, please respond to this message, and I will send an Informed Consent form and a live link to the online survey to your preferred email address.

WHAT: The working title of my thesis paper is, “For the Love of Music: A Story of Organizational Culture and Readiness for Change.” My work will focus on the relationship between the organizational culture of [Orchestra, Inc.] and the organization’s readiness for change. [Orchestra, Inc.] will not be named in my thesis paper as the subject organization of this research; instead, the organization will be identified by other, discrete characteristics.

HOW: You will be asked to complete an anonymous, one-time, 15-minute online survey. For the purpose of this study, I have purchased access to a validated research tool that examines organizational culture. The responses that you provide will be analyzed in aggregate along with others’ responses for trends that the data reveal.

WHEN: If you choose to participate, I ask that you complete the survey by/before XXX. The survey is completed individually at a time and space convenient to you.

Self-disclosure: Know that I was employed as a full-time employee with the [education wing] at [Orchestra, Inc.] from Oct. 2012- May 2013. My employment was terminated because of lack of cultural fit. This research is carried out independently.

Please let me know if you have any questions, comments or concerns.

Be well,
Malii Brown
Candidate, M.A. in Intercultural Service, Leadership and Management
SIT Graduate Institute

C: Informed Consent Form

Informed Consent to Participate in a Research Study
SIT Graduate Institute
(School for International Training)
One Kipling Road
Brattleboro, VT 05301

Title of Research: “For the Love of Music: A Story of Organizational Culture and Readiness for Change”

Name of Researcher: Malii Brown

A. PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

Under the supervision of Dr. Marla Solomon, Professor of Intercultural Service, Leadership and Management at SIT Graduate Institute, Malii Brown, a graduate student working to complete her thesis paper in support of earning a Master of Arts degree in Intercultural Service, Leadership and Management, is conducting research on organizational culture and readiness for organizational change. While the subject organization will be [Orchestra, Inc.], [Orchestra, Inc.] will **not** be named in the thesis paper as the subject organization of this research; instead, the organization will be identified by other, discrete characteristics. The purpose of my participation is to help the Researcher study this subject.

B. PROCEDURES

If I agree to participate in this research study, the following will occur:

1. I will be asked to complete an anonymous, one-time, online survey that will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. A link to the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI) survey will be sent to me via email. My responses will focus on my perspectives of [Orchestra, Inc.]. The responses that I and other respondents provide will be analyzed in aggregate for trends that the data reveal.
2. The anonymous, online OCAI survey will ask for my responses to questions relating to the organizational culture of [Orchestra, Inc.]. Specifically, I will respond to questions around the following six topics to provide my assessment of how they characterize [Orchestra, Inc.]:
 - Dominant characteristics;
 - Organizational leadership;
 - Management of employees;
 - Organizational “glue”;
 - Strategic emphases;
 - Criteria of success.
3. Upon agreeing to participate in this research study, I will also be asked via email to share my name, age, gender, race and/or ethnicity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, educational background, and years of experience as [an Orchestra, Inc.] employee.

C. RISKS

1. Risks:

I will be asked to respond to survey questions with my honest assessments. I may stop my participation at any time without penalty prior to completing the online survey. Once I have completed the survey, the Researcher will be unable to identify and remove my responses from the aggregate data set.

2. Confidentiality:

The anonymous records from this study will be stored within the Researcher's purchased, personal and password-protected OCAI (Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument) online account, and kept as confidential as possible. The third party OCAI survey administrator system will ask for my name and email address to ensure that I participate only once and that my results are stored correctly; this information will **not** be available to the Researcher. The privacy of my email address is guaranteed by the OCAI survey administrator, and my email address will only be used once by OCAI: to send me a profile of [Orchestra, Inc.] organizational culture generated from the responses that I provide. It will not be possible to use any individual identities in any reports or publications resulting from the study because my and all other respondents' survey responses will be received anonymously by the Researcher.

D. DIRECT BENEFITS

The anticipated benefit of these procedures is a better understanding of how the organizational culture of [Orchestra, Inc.] affects readiness for organizational change. The third party OCAI survey administrator system will send me a profile of the current and preferred organizational culture profile of [Orchestra, Inc.] from the responses that I provide.

E. ALTERNATIVES

I am free to choose not to participate in this research study.

F. COSTS

There will be no costs to me as a result of taking part in this research study.

G. COMPENSATION

No compensation will be awarded for my participation in this study.

H. QUESTIONS

I have spoken with Malii Brown about this study and have had my questions answered. If I have any further questions about the study, I can contact Dr. Marla Solomon ([Phone number]; [Email address]) or Malii Brown ([Phone number]; [Email addresses]).

I. CONSENT

I have been given a copy of this consent form to keep. **PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH STUDY IS VOLUNTARY. I am free to decline to participate in this research study, or I may withdraw my participation at any point without penalty prior to completing the online survey. My decision whether or not to participate in this research study will have no influence on my present or future status at SIT Graduate Institute. My typed name may be accepted as my signature.**

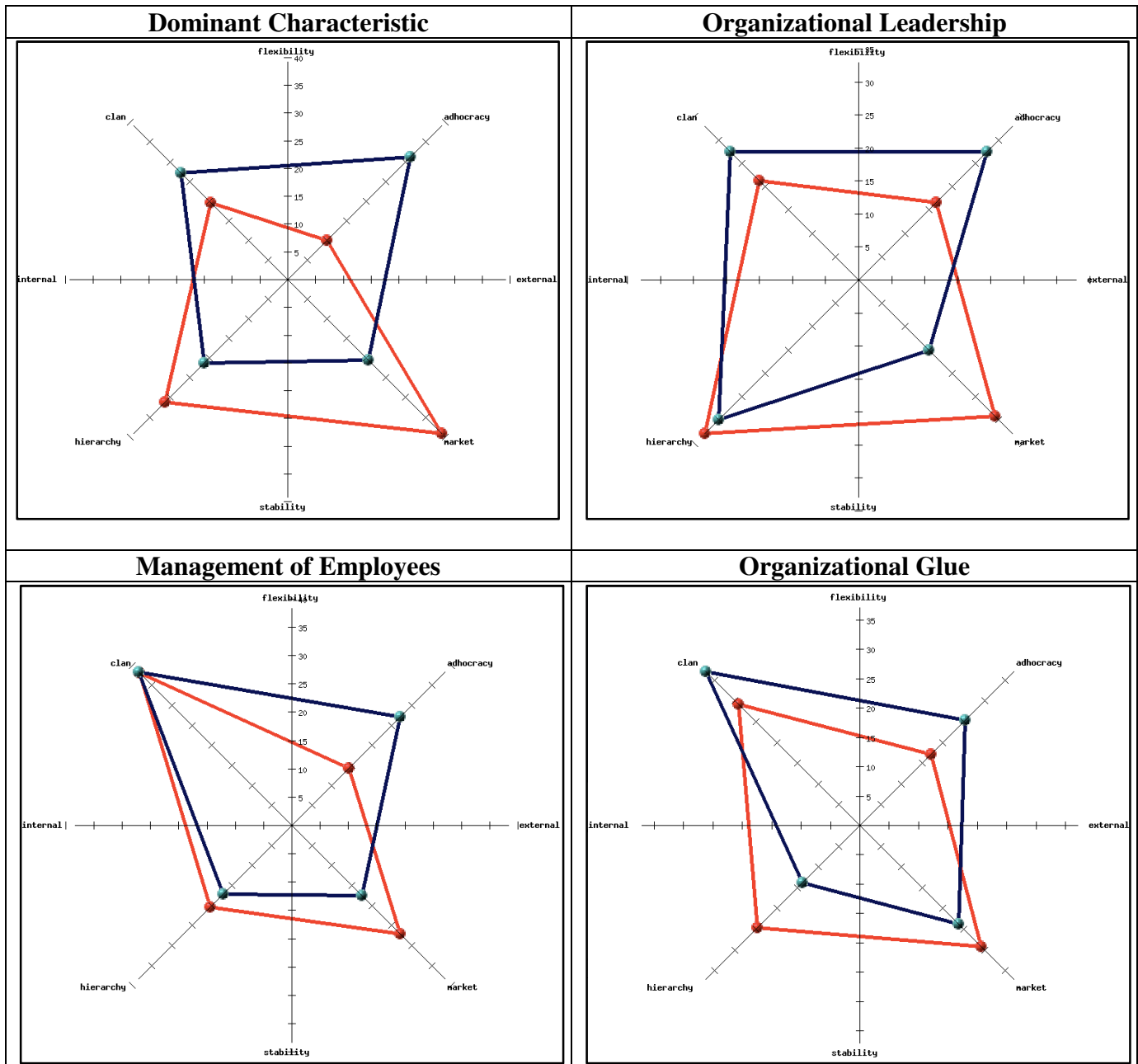
Malii Brown
For the Love of Music: A Story of Organizational Culture and Change
SIT Graduate Institute
FINAL Graduate Thesis, Oct. 2013

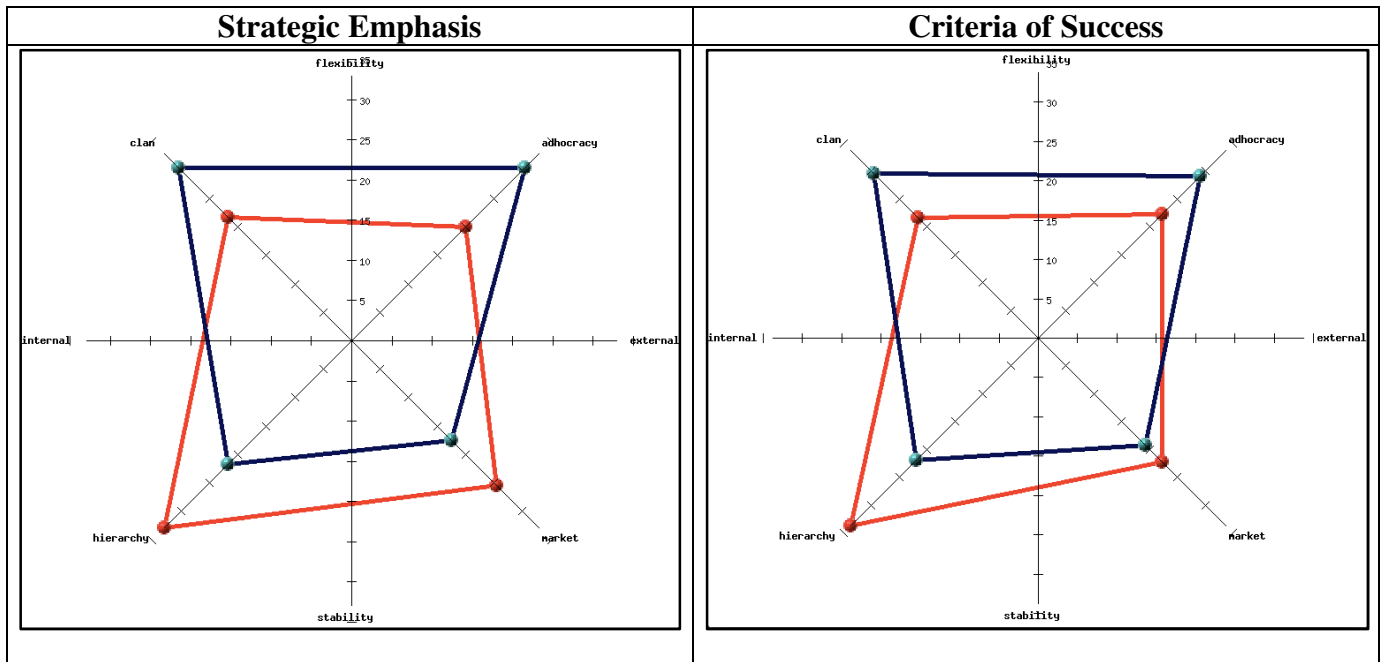
Signature _____ Date _____
Research Participant

Signature _____ Date _____
Researcher

D: Six Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI) Sub-Diagrams

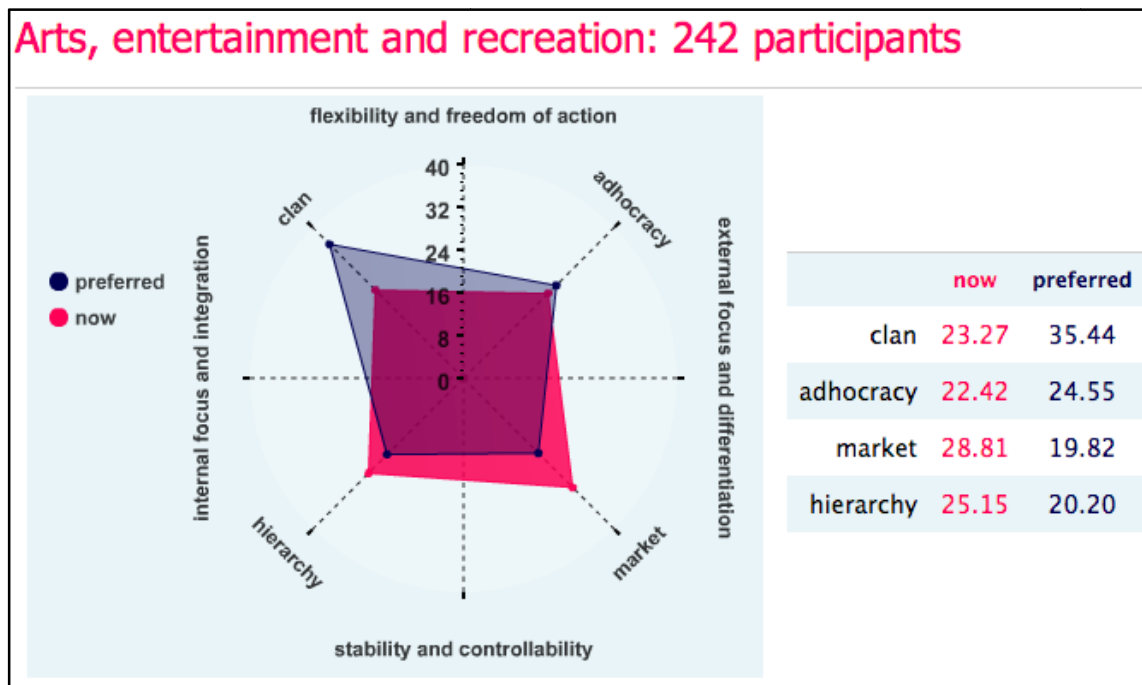
The following sub-diagrams break down the six OCAI cultures as assessed by Orchestra, Inc. employees. In sum, they create the overall OCAI diagram cited previously. The red dimensions indicate the current culture of Orchestra, Inc.; the blue dimensions indicate the organizational culture preferred.





E: National OCAI Results for Arts, Entertainment and Recreation Industries

The following diagram of OCAI results are drawn from 242 U.S.-based arts, entertainment and recreation employees/ respondents in regards to their respective organizations.

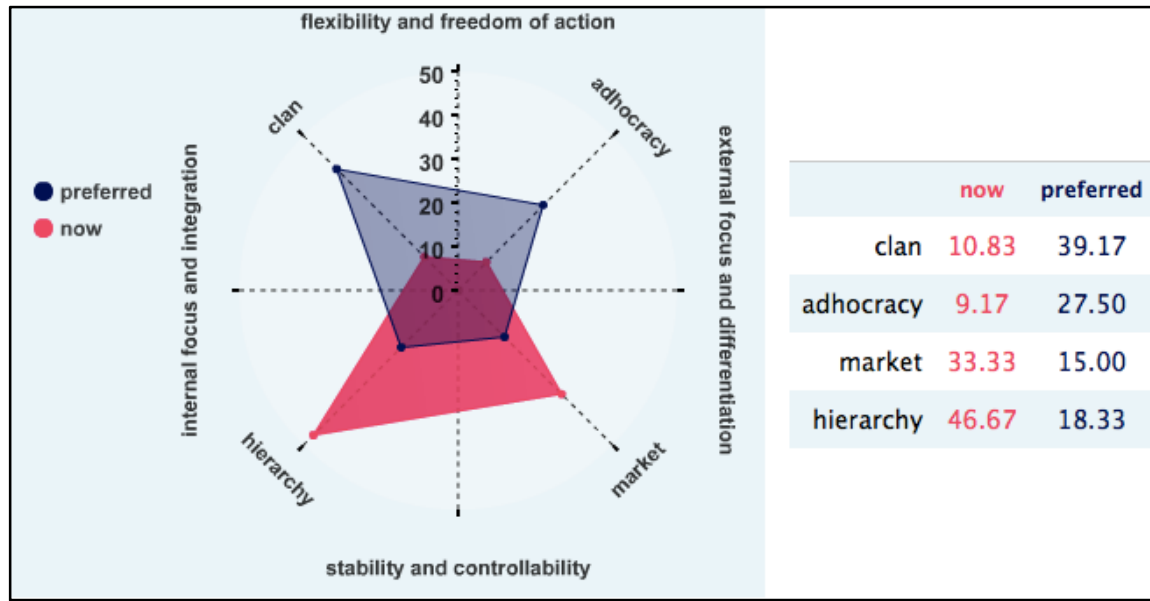


Arts, Entertainment and Recreation (Last updated: 19 Aug. 2013)

In discussing how cultural plots compare to those OCAI plots of other industries, “...ask yourself questions such as these: Does our culture adequately map out environmental demands? What changes are needed to bring our culture into alignment with our environmental demands? Are we emphasizing what our customers expect? In what areas are we underdeveloped? In what areas do we have a unique advantage? Where does our core competency lie? Comparing your own organization’s profile with your industry’s profile and with the average industry profiles for each OCAI items may help stimulate additional insights for changing your culture in a way that enhances organizational effectiveness” (Cameron & Quinn, 2011, p.79).

F: Personal OCAI Results for Orchestra, Inc.

The following diagram of OCAI results are drawn from my personal responses in assessing the organizational culture of Orchestra, Inc.



Personal OCAI Assessment of Orchestra, Inc. (Completed: June 2013)

G: Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (Survey Questions)

This OCAI survey questionnaire includes personal responses. See also Appendix F, Personal OCAI Results for Orchestra, Inc.

1. Dominant Characteristics		Now	Preferred
A	The organization is a very personal place. It is like an extended family. People seem to share a lot of themselves.	20	40
B	The organization is a very dynamic entrepreneurial place. People are willing to stick their necks out and take risks.	5	30
C	The organization is very results oriented. A major concern is with getting the job done. People are very competitive and achievement oriented.	15	20
D	The organization is a very controlled and structured place. Formal procedures generally govern what people do.	60	10
Total		100	100
2. Organizational Leadership		Now	Preferred
A	The leadership in the organization is generally considered to exemplify mentoring, facilitating, or nurturing.	5	35
B	The leadership in the organization is generally considered to exemplify entrepreneurship, innovating, or risk taking.	15	35
C	The leadership in the organization is generally considered to exemplify a no-nonsense, aggressive, results-oriented focus.	30	20
D	The leadership in the organization is generally considered to exemplify coordinating, organizing, or smooth-running efficiency.	50	10
Total		100	100
3. Management of Employees		Now	Preferred
A	The management style in the organization is characterized by teamwork, consensus, and participation.	10	40
B	The management style in the organization is characterized by individual risk-taking, innovation, freedom, and uniqueness.	5	25
C	The management style in the organization is characterized by hard-driving competitiveness, high demands, and achievement.	40	15

D	The management style in the organization is characterized by security of employment, conformity, predictability, and stability in relationships.	45	20
	Total	100	100

4. Organization Glue		Now	Preferred
A	The glue that holds the organization together is loyalty and mutual trust. Commitment to this organization runs high.	20	35
B	The glue that holds the organization together is commitment to innovation and development. There is an emphasis on being on the cutting edge.	5	35
C	The glue that holds the organization together is the emphasis on achievement and goal accomplishment. Aggressiveness and winning are common themes.	20	15
D	The glue that holds the organization together is formal rules and policies. Maintaining a smooth-running organization is important.	55	15
	Total	100	100
5. Strategic Emphases		Now	Preferred
A	The organization emphasizes human development. High trust, openness, and participation persist.	5	45
B	The organization emphasizes acquiring new resources and creating new challenges. Trying new things and prospecting for opportunities are valued.	5	15
C	The organization emphasizes competitive actions and achievement. Hitting stretch targets and winning in the marketplace are dominant.	45	10
D	The organization emphasizes permanence and stability. Efficiency, control and smooth operations are important.	45	30
	Total	100	100
6. Criteria of Success		Now	Preferred
A	The organization defines success on the basis of the development of human resources, teamwork, employee commitment, and concern for people.	5	40

B	The organization defines success on the basis of having the most unique or newest products. It is a product leader and innovator.	20	25
C	The organization defines success on the basis of winning in the marketplace and outpacing the competition. Competitive market leadership is key.	50	10
D	The organization defines success on the basis of efficiency. Dependable delivery, smooth scheduling and low-cost production are critical.	25	25
	Total	100	100

A Worksheet for Scoring the OCAI

NOW Scores

20	1A
5	2A
10	3A
25	4A
5	5A
5	6A
70	Sum (total of A responses)
11.67	Average (sum divided by 6)

5	1B
15	2B
5	3B
5	4B
5	5B
30	6B
65	Sum (total of B responses)
10.83	Average (sum divided by 6)

15	1C
30	2C
35	3C
10	4C
45	5C
45	6C
180	Sum (total of C responses)
30	Average (sum divided by 6)

60	1D
50	2D
40	3D
60	4D
45	5D
10	6D
265	Sum (total of D responses)
44.17	Average (sum divided by 6)

PREFERRED Scores

40	1A	30	1B
30	2A	40	2B
40	3A	25	3B

35	4A
45	5A
40	6A
230	Sum (total of A responses)
38.33	<i>Average (sum divided by 6)</i>

40	4B
15	5B
25	6B
175	Sum (total of B responses)
29.17	<i>Average (sum divided by 6)</i>

20	1C
20	2C
15	3C
10	4C
10	5C
10	6C
85	Sum (total of C responses)
14.17	<i>Average (sum divided by 6)</i>

10	1D
10	2D
20	3D
15	4D
30	5D
25	6D
110	Sum (total of D responses)
18.33	<i>Average (sum divided by 6)</i>

H: Ebony's Consent to Cite Email Correspondence

Date: Mon, 2 Sep 2013 18:33:57
From: Malii
Subject: Request for your permission
To: Ebony

Hello to you, Ebony,

I hope this message finds you well wherever you may be. This is Malii...writing you once again.

After eight months of employment with [Orchestra, Inc.], I was fired in May. My supervisor told me that it was simply not a good fit. Judging by the content of your email in Sept. of last year, and the thoughts you shared on the culture of the organization, my guess is that you may not be too surprised!

Since then, I have concerted my efforts on completing my graduate thesis, the final requirement to complete my M.A. in Intercultural Management. The subject of my paper is the organizational culture of [Orchestra, Inc.] and the organization's readiness for change. I would like your permission to use an excerpt from the email you sent me prior to my employment. Your identity, and the identity of the organization would be anonymous. Your perspective would serve as an important "voice" in my paper and provide context, as well. Please respond at your earliest convenience as I will submit an in-progress draft of my paper to my graduate advisor this week.

Be well, and thank you for your consideration,
Malii ☐

From: Ebony
To: Malii
Sent: Tuesday, September 3, 2013 1:05 PM
Subject: RE: Request for your permission

Hello Malii

DAMMIT! Those racist assholes! I'm really sorry about this Malii.

I was afraid this might happen, and through no fault of your own. You must have done TOO good of a job. You were probably too much of several things and not enough of others: too intelligent, too observant, too straightforward. At the same time not *gaga* enough, not grateful enough, and certainly not subservient enough to suit someone. Naturally they cannot give you a definition of what a "good fit" is, but we know what that means. That said, I am sorry that you were ousted because I know that you were qualified for that job.

What also bothers me is that the Black musical circles of [City X] - very nice, polite, well meaning, but

weak Negroes were of no help to you in your quest; a sad testament to the ineffectuality of [City X's] Black musical establishment. When I left in 1989 I had no allies, and I knew it, that's why I left to take my chances in a city where no one knew me or my background. Granted I did not get into the orchestra here either for much the same reasons most of us don't, but I got a lot out of being here - a long story for another time.

Yes. You ***absolutely*** may use any or all of my response to you for your graduate thesis. I am flattered that you wish to use any of what I wrote. My opinions are strong ones, but I hope they will ultimately suit your purpose well. Congratulations in advance for following through and staying on your own real and true path. I can tell you this. Most of the minions at [Orchestra, Inc.] don't have the background, education, will, or desire that you have. Most of them are probably the buddies and bed partners of whomever in in charge. You probably got a sense of that or perhaps even saw it first hand. Had you been willing to go that route perhaps you would still have a job, but at what price? Your topic will be interesting to a lot of readers. How many Black Americans have the contact that you had with [Orchestra, Inc.] and had the means and/or ability to write about it intelligently. Their racism will come back to haunt them, and from a person they would never suspect would reveal the truth. Bravo to you!!

When you are finished with your dissertation, start looking at opportunities abroad. This country has little to offer intelligent citizens of color unless you are seeking a career as a mammy, slave, punching bag, clown, weirdo, or professional loser that people can "help" and feel superior to, no matter what kind of job you hold.

By the way, I am back in [City Y] where I am hoping to settle. I like the city, have some friends here, and it is close to my book contacts.

Please say hello to your Dad...for me. I haven't seen him in years. I would love to meet you when I am in [City X] again, though I don't know when that will be.

Keep me posted, and keep on steppin'! Forget about [Orchestra, Inc.].

Ebony

Malii Brown
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SIT Graduate Institute
FINAL Graduate Thesis, Oct. 2013

- *Fin* -