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International Center for Studies in Creativity
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*Collaborative Creative Climate Study:
Using Creative Systems to Improve Organizational Performance*

A Project in Creative Studies
by
James H. Wardlaw

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of
Master of Science

March 2015

ABSTRACT

*Collaborative Creative Climate Study:
Using Creative Systems to Improve Organizational Performance*

In response to an increasingly complex and fast-moving competitive landscape, organizational creativity is more frequently being identified as an area of potential strategic advantage. Leadership often lacks the knowledge, tools and access necessary to effectively incorporate creativity in a manner that meets the strategic and tactical demands of businesses. The Collaborative Creative Climate Study explores this challenge and proposes a systemic approach to creativity in organizational performance that provides leadership with a comprehensive view of creativity at all levels within the organizational framework that identifies weak dimensions in the creative climate, enhances teamwork and increases employee engagement.

Key words: climate, collaboration, organization, environment, creative thinking, innovation, systems, leadership, FourSight, Situational Outlook Questionnaire, creative problem solving

Date

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I would be remiss without recognizing the people at CPSB, Wiley and FourSight for their assistance in this study. Your generosity and professional support was top-drawer.

And lastly, I must thank my old boss, who once told me "I was too creative for the job." Boy was he wrong. Creativity IS the job!

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Introduction

Creative Systems Thinking

The concept of creative problem solving as a system isn't new. From its beginnings in Osborn's *Applied Imagination* (1953), the notion that elements within the creative process work together toward an outcome has been demonstrated to be fundamental in the productive generation of ideas (Mansfield, Busse & Krepelka; Parnes & Brunelle a & b, 1967; Taylor, C.W., 1959; Torrance, E.P. 1972).

From the time that Rhodes (1961) first advanced the notion that creativity could be defined as the four distinct categories of person, process, press and product, many have recognized that the deliberate application of process (really a systemic approach) has provided higher levels of quality and fluency in idea generation (Puccio, Firestien, Coyle & Masucci, 2006; Rose & Lin, 1984; Scott, Leritz & Mumford, 2004). This systemic context is consistent with contemporary creativity research that supports a similar view (Harrington, 1990; Isaksen, Puccio & Treffinger, 1993).

Most recently Puccio, Mance and Murdock (2011), in their break-through text *Creative Leadership* (p. 26), crystalized this idea in an expanded expression of systemic thinking. Their Creative Change Model includes the components of leadership, press (environment), person and process to demonstrate the dynamic nature of these relationships within a system designed to generate an outcome (product) that effects change (social change, personal change, innovation).

This particular "systems model" inspired the work outlined herein and further demonstrates the potential impact that adopting a systemic approach to creativity can have within an organization. More specifically, the value that a systemic approach offers in providing a

comprehensive diagnostic view of organizational creativity to those charged with cultivating a more collaborative, creative and competitive workforce.

The Need for Systemic Creativity

The need for creativity, as a critical element of future success, is gaining favor within the business community. In the IBM report, *Capitalizing on Complexity, Insights from the Global Chief Executive Study* (2010), one of the top issues on the minds of 1500 CEOs around the world was, in fact, creativity:

“Facing a world becoming dramatically more complex, it is interesting that CEOs selected creativity as the most important leadership attribute. Creative leaders invite disruptive innovation, encourage others to drop outdated approaches and take balanced risks. They are open-minded and inventive in expanding their management and communication styles, particularly to engage with a new generation of employees, partners and customers” (p. 10).

Forrester Consulting, in a recent study contracted by Adobe, explored this need more deeply. Following interviews with executives to determine what defined a creative organization, a quantitative instrument was developed and administered to 324 decision-makers in large enterprise companies in eight countries (US, UK, France, Australia/New Zealand, Korea, Japan and Germany). While eighty-two percent of participants believed in a strong connection between creativity and desired business results, only 11 percent of these same people saw their companies as creative and 61 percent rated themselves unfavorably when it came to judging creative capacity.

Conversely, companies that saw themselves as more creative outperformed those seen as less creative by nearly 3.5 to 1 in revenue growth, held greater market share, stronger market positions and were better places to work (Forrester Consulting, 2014).

While the Creative Dividend, as Forrester describes it, appears to be a powerful advantage for some, it appears equally elusive for many.

The Creativity of Business

Creativity (as a trait, characteristic or process) is something that too often leaves those in business uncomfortable. Leaders want innovation, but “creativity” can sound too soft for many. In fact, Augsdorfer (2008) goes so far as to suggest that it’s more effective to “bootleg” the creative process, leaving it to a “hidden life of the corporate underground” where innovation will emerge naturally in line with strategic interests. Leadership seems to struggle with characteristics often stereotyped as being at odds with getting things done (Levitt, 1963/2002). For some, business and creativity appear in conflict, the former defined by its controls, manageability, measurability, repeatability, execution and outcomes, the latter by insights, uncertainty, intuition, freedom, divergence, exploration and self-expression.

Put simply, you can have creativity without innovation, but you can’t have innovation without creativity – creativity is the root source of ideas, innovations and advancement. More importantly, you can’t have business growth without creativity. In a world increasing in both its complexity and its velocity of change, where new and novel challenges often emerge without warning, the ability respond with equally novel and useful solutions may, in fact, be one of the most important and under-utilized skills available to companies today.

In the work that follows, the author explores how a systemic approach to organizational creativity can bridge the gap between these two worlds, one rooted in execution and other in

ideas. He goes further to suggest a systemic approach to creativity and collaboration that, when appropriately applied to business climate, shows great potential for diagnosing areas of weakness, increasing employee collaboration and engagement while improving organizational performance in a wide range of metrics.

The Elements of a Systemic Approach

When Rhodes defined creativity (1961) with his now classic construct of people, process, press and product, he could not have foreseen its potential impact as a framework in which to address organizational creativity, nor could he have foreseen the important relationships that would emerge between complexity, change, creativity and organizational health.

The individual elements of the creative system that follows have been explored, tested and validated extensively over decades of practical field application, each in their own right, a viable tool for improving individual and organizational performance. It is, however, a systemic approach that leverages the individual strengths of these proven elements in a new way – an approach that promises to provide leadership with the insight and tools to impact performance deeply within the organization.

If one of leadership's responsibilities is to cultivate and support a productive work environment and it is desirable, within this role, to cultivate higher levels of engagement among the employees (Fleming & Asplund, 2007), then certain efficiencies might be gained if one could achieve this goal in a single system – one that provides leadership with a keener sense of focus and priority regarding the foundational issues of organizational health and productivity while providing employees with an opportunity to create a work environment of their own making, thereby generating a higher degree of buy-in, ownership and self-fulfillment. It follows that this approach would not only provide the many benefits demonstrated by the individual elements of

the system but may, in fact, contribute in a broader way across the organization – the system multiplying the impact of its elements for greater potential effect.

A methodological model was developed using the Creative Change Model referenced above as a guide to provide a structure of inquiry (Figure 1).

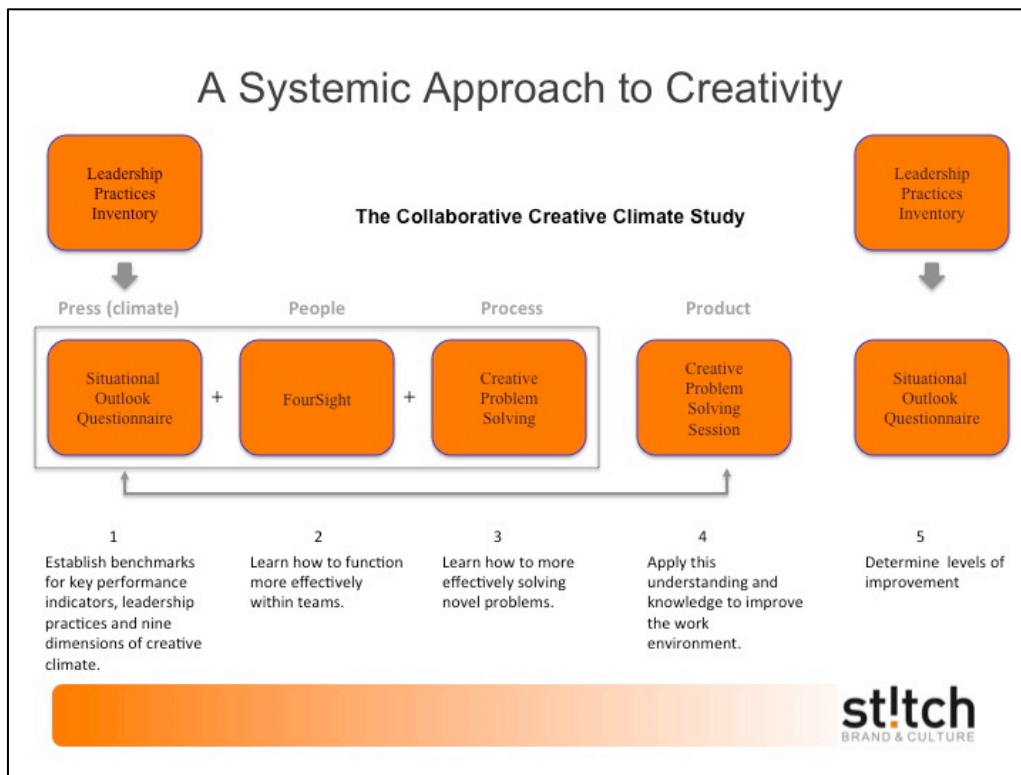


Figure 1 – Collaborative Creative Climate Model

The model includes a selection of proven techniques and tools assembled for their ability to provide a deeper understanding of creative climate while:

- 1) Providing a comprehensive representation of the most influential variables.
- 2) Leveraging complementary instruments of assessment.
- 3) Engaging both leadership and employees at a high level within the process.

The model represents five areas of focus that, together, are known to impact organizational creativity. They include:

Leadership: A systemic approach to creativity begins with a deeper understanding of leadership behavior. Without effective leadership, it is difficult to gain traction within the organization. Ekvall (1991) has suggested that leadership is as much as 80 percent responsible for setting a favorable organizational climate (thoughts, feelings, attitudes and behaviors) for creativity. In the book *Creative Leadership*, Puccio, Mance and Murdock (2007) reinforce the relationship between creativity, change and leadership with five tenets on which the book was founded:

- Creativity is a process that leads to change; you don't get deliberate change without it.
- Leaders help the individuals and organizations they influence grow by deliberately facilitating productive change.
- Because leaders bring about change, creativity is a core leadership competence.
- An individual's ability to think creatively and to facilitate creative thinking in others can be enhanced.
- As individuals develop their creative thinking and master those factors that promote creativity, they enhance their leadership effectiveness (p. XIV).

For forty years, the impact of perceived leadership support of creativity has been widely explored (Mumford et al 2002). Teams have been shown to believe that leadership support of their endeavors has a favorable impact (Amabile & Conti, 1999; Amabile et al., 1996).

Individual levels of creativity have been shown to be impacted by the perceived support of their leaders (Andrews, 1967; Tierney, Farmer, & Graen, 1999).

Climate: The creative climate (press) is the fertile soil within which ideas take root. If the soil is bad, no growth will happen. Fewer ideas will be formed. More than 50 years of research has been conducted in the area of creative climate, a relatively untapped area of organizational creativity. Climate represents the thoughts, feelings, behaviors and attitudes of the organization every day, on the floor, among its employees (Ekvall, 1991) and is fast becoming a powerful proxy for things like employee well-being, job satisfaction and employee engagement (Harter, Schmidt & Keyes, 2002).

When thinking about creativity in the context of problem solving this really begins to make sense. If change introduces a “problem” and the solution requires something novel (more likely as the velocity of change increases), then a system that supports creativity would deal with change more effectively and, more importantly, have happier, more engaged employees – something leadership is keen on cultivating (Pink, 2009). So creativity – or more accurately, a creativity system – presents a potentially important framework for leadership to embrace and understand.

People: The creative engine that powers organizational advancement is fueled by the minds of its people. How creative are they? How prepared are they to work together – to embrace the change and take on the uncertainty of business? Do they know how they prefer to contribute to the problem solving process and the preferences of the members within their team? Understanding these issues are key to working effectively as a team. Tuckman (1965) reinforces the importance of team development in his classic structure “forming, storming, norming, performing.” When team members don’t understand or relate to one another effectively they have more difficulty clarifying problems, generating ideas, developing appropriate solutions and implementing action plans.

Process: There are many options for approaching the problem solving process: from de Bono's *Lateral Thinking* (1970) to Synectics (Gordon, 1961), from Triz (Artshuller, 1996) to classic Osborn-Parnes style Creative Problem Solving (Osborn, 1963). Any or all of these methodologies have the potential for contributing to a creativity system. For purposes of this study, the author employed the Osborn-Parnes style of Creative Problem Solving which typically involves four basic stages: 1) Clarifying, 2) Ideation, 3) Development, 4) Implementation (Puccio, 2012).

Product: The product, or result of the creative effort. It's the output or outcome that is desired. This can range from a new marketing initiative to a merger with a new company, from a new product line to a breakthrough organizational structure. It is a "change in state," from where you are, to where you would like to be.

Putting it all together

While each component of the system has the ability to provide a deeper understanding of the individual and organization, by combining these components in a complementary manner we hypothesize that impact will be enhanced:

- Leadership will gain a deeper understanding of the behaviors required to be more effective;
- An assessment of creative climate will illuminate areas of weakness, thus providing leadership with a sense of strategic focus and priority;
- Teams will gain a deeper understanding of individual thinking style combined with specific training in creative problem solving process;

- Leadership and employee teams will generate useful and novel solutions to improve the creative climate of the organization, thereby enhancing the quality of the work environment, generating higher levels of buy-in and engagement with employees;
- And, as initiatives are deployed, the work environment will improve, thus increasing levels of performance, job satisfaction, productivity and collaboration.

The Organizational Benefits of Creativity Systems Thinking

The individual elements within the Collaborative Creative Climate Model have been correlated with a range of individual and organizational benefits, including:

- Improved job satisfaction
- Increased creative productivity
- Better implementation of new systems
- Successful transformation efforts
- Efficient use of resources
- Employee health and well-being
- High performing teams and divisions
- Positive work attitudes
- Values that promote organizational learning
- Leadership behaviors promoting change
- Improved understanding of organization culture
- Identifying differences in sub-climates (divisions)
- Successful development of new products
- Effective rewards and recognition programs
- Improved acceptance and management of diversity

- Decreasing work stress

(Isaksen & Akkermans, 2007, p. 16)

The Financial Impact of Creativity Systems Thinking

In addition to the Forrester research already mentioned, a study of 500 companies by Davis (2000) showed that three things separate the top performers in business from those at the bottom. Top performers practice inclusive leadership (they get their people involved), they are very deliberate about their process (how they do what they do) and they do not leave the climate of their organization to chance. They actively manage what goes on. These top performers generate more ideas, more innovations and make greater contributions to company performance.

Kotter and Heskett (1992) found a similar impact on top line and bottom line performance. They showed that those companies who actively manage their work environment significantly outperformed those that did not – a four to one increase in revenue, a 12 to one increase in stock valuation and whopping 756 to one increase in net income. These are numbers not easily ignored.

Methodology and Purpose

The first component deployed in the Collaborative Creative Climate Study was the LPI (Leadership Practices Inventory). The LPI – developed by Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner (1987) – is a widely respected and proven measure of leadership behavior. Drawing on more than 30 years of research and millions of users worldwide, the LPI utilizes a thirty-question online assessment to identify levels of behavioral frequency in five discrete areas of leadership practice:

1. Modeling the way – Sharing values and setting an example
2. Inspiring a shared vision – Enlisting others in a common vision.
3. Challenging the process – Search for opportunities to innovate, grow and improve.
4. Enabling others to act – Foster collaboration and build trust.
5. Encouraging the heart – Celebrate values and victories.

Each practice area is comprised of six behaviors that, when practiced more frequently, have been shown to enhance leadership effectiveness.

One of the underlying principles of the LPI that makes it so powerful is the concept that leadership effectiveness can be defined as a set of learned behaviors. When these behaviors are practiced more frequently leaders demonstrate more influence and persuasion – they gain followership. The LPI comes in two versions, the Self and the 360.

The LPI Self was administered at the beginning and at the end of the study (approximately six months between administrations) to provide pre- and post-study data on a self-assessment of leadership behavior. While the LPI Self provides a limited perspective based on the participating leader's sole point of view (future efforts will likely utilize an LPI 360 which engages supervisors, direct reports and colleagues in the assessment, thus providing a richer dataset), as a preliminary measure there is value in identifying any changes in self-perceived leadership practice.

The second element of the system leverages a proven measure of creative climate called the Situational Outlook Questionnaire (SOQ). This assessment was used to establish baseline measures in nine established dimensions that define creative climate:

- Challenge/Involvement – The degree to which people are involved in daily operations, long-term goals and visions.
- Freedom – The independence in behavior exerted by the people in the organization.

- Trust/Openness – The emotional safety in relationships.
- Idea-Time – The amount of time people can and do use for elaborating new ideas.
- Playfulness/Humor – The spontaneity and ease displayed within the workplace.
- Conflict – the presence of personal and emotional tensions (in contrast to the debate dimension).
- Idea-Support – The ways new ideas are treated.
- Debate – The occurrence of encounters and disagreements between viewpoints, ideas and differing experiences and knowledge.
- Risk-Taking – The tolerance of uncertainty and ambiguity exposed in the workplace.

The SOQ also includes three qualitative (open) questions regarding organizational climate needs:

1. What aspect of your working environment is most helpful in supporting your creativity?
2. What aspect of our working environment most hinders your creativity?
3. What is the most important action you would take to improve the climate for creativity in your working environment?

The instrument was fielded with an eye toward identifying weaknesses within the creative climate that might become potential priorities for creative problem solving later in the study.

The third element of the study applied a measure of creative problem solving style or “thinking” style, called FourSight. FourSight combines an online assessment with tools and training in creative problem solving process. FourSight identifies individual preferences, or a combination of preferences, in four areas of the creative problem solving process:

1. Clarifying – Assembling information required to solve the problem.
2. Ideation – Generating ideas.

3. Developing – Refining ideas into potential solutions.
4. Implementing – Putting solutions into action.

An understanding of thinking style helps team members to contribute in areas of preference while enhancing opportunities for growth using tools designed to complement the creative problem solving process in areas of lesser preference.

The final element of the effort is that of Creative Problem Solving (CPS) process training. From its beginnings in Buffalo, New York, CPS has been used around the world to generate workable solutions to some of the toughest problems. Even at its lowest levels of impact, learning the CPS process has shown favorable influence on organizational communication, creativity and innovation (Rose et al).

Background

Four Western New York companies were approached for participation (Appendix A). Two were selected: The first, a thirty-person, privately-held telecommunication company which, for purposes of confidentiality, will be referred to as ABC Company, the second a fifty-four-person, privately-held manufacturing company which, for purposes of confidentiality, will be referred to as XYZ Company.

ABC Company is a ten-year-old provider of telecommunication equipment. The company has experienced rapid growth and been widely recognized within its industry as a leading provider and progressive employer.

XYZ Company is a twenty-seven-year-old metal fabricator. The family-owned business provides a wide-range of customers with high-tolerance metal parts used in a wide range of assembly applications.

Implementation

The Buffalo State SUNY-sanctioned study was led by Jim Wardlaw, Chief Change Agent, Stitch Brand & Culture (Stitch) and International Center Studies in Creativity graduate student. The effort was guided by a company-specific steering committee that assisted in engaging the organization across all functional areas.

The study was undertaken in two phases, each including multiple steps:

1. Benchmark Data Collection
2. Team Training and Collaboration

In July 2014 a series of meetings were held with leadership teams at both organizations. In each case, the leadership teams concluded that they would support moving forward in participation.

Following the formation of a steering committee within each company, a series of company-wide, employee-focused question and answer sessions were held.

ABC Company's steering committee consisted of six members of the leadership team. XYZ Company's steering committee include six members of the leadership team and the addition of two line staff known to have favorable influence within the organization.

A brief presentation outlining the methodology of the study, expected outcomes and projected workload was presented at multiple times (employee work shifts) and locations convenient for both participating companies. While the study was presented as "optional," all employees were strongly encouraged by leadership to participate by signing and submitting an Informed Consent (Appendix B) within a week of the presentations.

ABC Company submitted 30 signed consents and obtained 100 percent participation. Unfortunately, of the 54 XYZ Company employees, only 13 were willing to participate in the

study. After repeated attempts to increase participation, it was determined that this low level of engagement would not provide an adequate reflection of the organization and XYZ Company was asked to withdraw from participation.

A follow-up meeting was held with the CEO of XYZ Company to discuss the implications of such low participation.

Benchmark Data Collection

Phase one: administering the LPI and SOQ. The first phase of the effort focused on establishing benchmark performance data for leadership, the company and its organizational climate. This began with the identification and collection of key baseline performance metrics inside the organization. Preliminary, proposed metrics included:

- Gross Revenue (year over year growth; 3 years)
- Cost saving measures (number and revenue)
- Profitability (year over year % change; 3 years)
- Productivity (year over year; specific to company)
- Job Satisfaction (question on the SOQ)

The Individual Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI Self assessment) and Situational Outlook Questionnaire (SOQ) were then administered within the leadership team and employee base respectively.

The purpose of the LPI was to establish a self-perceived baseline inventory of leadership practice to determine how behavior might change over the course of the study.

The purpose of the SOQ was to establish a baseline assessment of the climate for creativity, innovation and collaboration. Following the assessment, meetings were held with leadership (CEO and President) and then with the steering committee to present preliminary results of the

assessments and discuss the potential impact across functional units. In particular, this phase focused on “gaps” that might exist between leadership and employees perceptions regarding organizational climate, thus setting the stage for future feedback and coaching.

The SOQ provides those within the organization who have key roles in managing and leading with critical information regarding what is working well, what needs to change, and what specific actions will help to nurture a work environment that fosters creativity, innovation and collaboration.

Phase one deployed as follows:

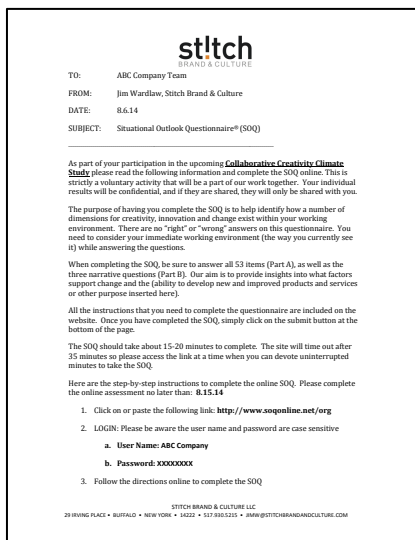
Step 1: Scoping the Application – A meeting with executive leadership inside the ABC Company was conducted to discuss the scope and application of the study, begin data collection and to establish a steering committee for the effort (Appendix C).

stltch STRENGTH CULTURE	
Agenda Collaborative Creativity Climate Study ABC Company	
1.	Study Overview
a.	New Steering Committee Members?
b.	Q & A
i.	SOQ
ii.	LPI
iii.	VIEW/FourSight
2.	Steering Committee Duties
a.	Internal Employee Contact
i.	Determine primary contact
b.	Internal Monitoring/Q&A
c.	Table Leadership during CPS
3.	Pre- and Post-SQs
a.	Gross Revenue (year over year growth; 3 years)
b.	Cost saving measures (number and revenue)
c.	Profitability (year over year % change; 3 years)
d.	Productivity (year over year; specific to company)
e.	Job Satisfaction (question on the SOQ)
f.	Others?
4.	Steering Committee Meeting Schedule
5.	Participation
a.	Confirm email access for all participants
b.	Determine number of participants
c.	Acquire distribution list of participants
d.	Distribute release
i.	Email or hardcopy
e.	Collection date for release
6.	Study Announcement
a.	Date
b.	Method: email, meeting, etc.
7.	Internal Communication
a.	Lunch and learn
b.	Webinar
c.	Overview article and bio

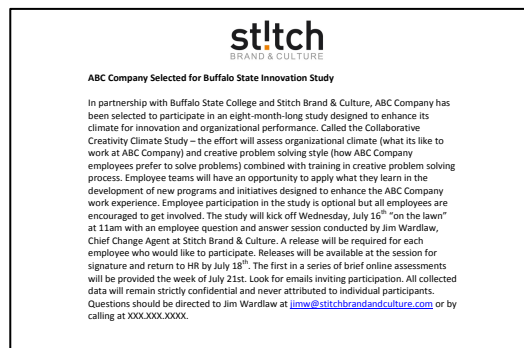
Appendix C – Sample Agenda

Outcome: The team gained a clear and agreed upon plan to acquire benchmark data, LPI and SOQ feedback from the targeted groups and a list of participants, along with key location or function (or other factors upon which we would split the results) and understand how the results will be used.

Step 2: Preparing to administer the SOQ – Inviting Participants: Participants were then invited to take the LPI and SOQ. When possible this was done during a meeting. When a face-to-face meeting was not feasible, participants received the invitation through e-mail. A memo was provided to participants that included a “hot link,” a user name and a password to access the measure online (Appendix D).



Appendix D – SOQ Invitation



Appendix E – Newsletter Announcement

A brief announcement was prepared for the ABC Company newsletter to announce the study launch as well (Appendix E).

Obtaining Approval: Before launching the assessment, approval was obtained from executive leadership.

Outcome: Participants demonstrated a clear understanding as to why they were taking the LPI and SOQ and have instructions regarding access.

Step 3: Completing the LPI and SOQ Online – Participants were given 5-10 business days to complete the LPI and SOQ online. After the first 5 days, an audit was conducted of the number of completed LPIs and SOQs and a generic email was sent to everyone reminding them of the deadline and encouraging them to complete the assessment if they had not done so already. Technical support was provided in the event that participants had any questions.

Note: Since confidentiality was key to obtaining accurate data, individuals who had not yet completed the LPI and SOQ were not identified.

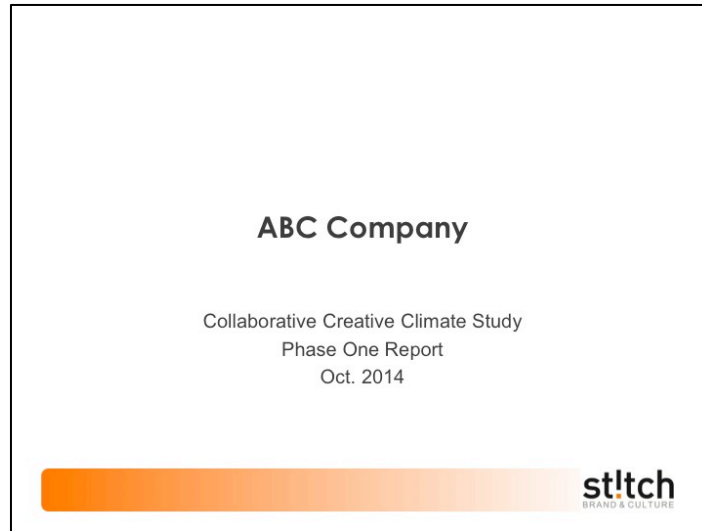
Outcome: 100 percent of invited participants completed the LPI and SOQ.

Step 4: Compiling and Analyzing the Data – After the participants completed the LPI and SOQ online, data was assembled and scored to prepare averages, ranges and standard deviations for each of the main target areas, as well as aggregated results.

The narrative data derived from the open-ended questions from Part II of the SOQ were compiled and the results edited to remove all proper names. The narrative data provided context (depth and breadth) for the quantitative results because they are not limited to the nine dimensions. Comments were read and reviewed to identify high-level themes as well as the complete narrative summary.

Outcome: The quantitative and qualitative data were prepared for presentation.

Step 5: Presenting the Results – Once the data was collected and analysis completed, preliminary results were prepared for review by leadership to identify key areas of focus organizational focus (Appendix F).



Appendix F – Oct. Leadership Team Presentation

There were a number of key deliverables as a result of Phase One.

1. Executive briefing – a PowerPoint presentation that provided an executive briefing of the results for leadership and key stakeholders.
2. All quantitative results by department, division and overall roll-up
3. Complete narrative results by department, division and overall roll-up.
4. Creation of themes across all survey respondents.
5. Creation of narrative key, so themes by department could be pulled out and put in the documentation by a designated team member.
6. Analysis by department of SOQ quantitative results.

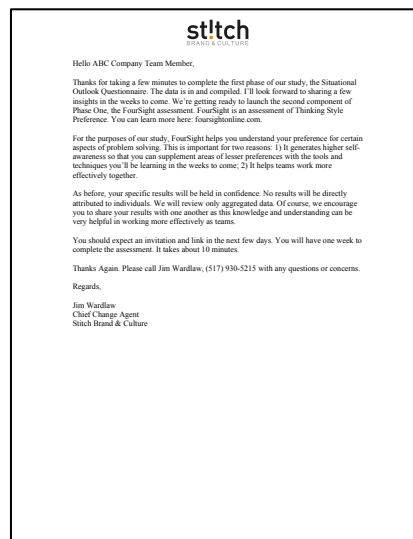
Phase two: team training (FourSight and CPS). Phase Two of the study included the application of a FourSight assessment to each employee of ABC Company and an introduction to Creative Problem Solving (CPS) process within the organizational teams. The work was structured using a “train the trainer” methodology where a selected group of staff were “trained”

as CPS Table Leaders and supported in session by the study leader. This is an effective and affordable approach to engaging in CPS when dealing with a large, inexperienced group.

Phase two deployed as follows:

Step 1: Scoping the Application – A meeting with the ABC Company executive leadership and steering committee was conducted to discuss the scope and application of Phase Two.

Outcome: A clear and agreed upon plan to acquire FourSight feedback from the targeted groups and a list of participants, along with their key location or function was prepared and an invitation was sent to participants.



Appendix G – FourSight Invitation

Step 2: Administering FourSight – Inviting Participants: An invitation was prepared for the participants to take the FourSight assessment. Participants received the invitation through e-mail (Appendix G). The memo included a “hot link” to take the FourSight assessment online, a user name and a password to access the measure.

Obtaining Approval: Before launching, executive leadership provided approval and received background information regarding the measure.

Outcome: Participants demonstrated an understanding of why they were taking the FourSight assessment and were given instructions regarding access.

Step 3: FourSight Online – Participants were given 5-10 business days to complete the FourSight assessment online. After the first 5 days, an audit of the number of completed assessments was conducted. A generic email was sent to everyone involved, reminding them of the deadline and encouraging them to complete the assessment if they had not done so already.

Note: Since confidentiality was key to obtaining accurate data, we did not identify specific individuals who had not yet completed the FourSight assessment.

Outcome: Participants completed the FourSight assessment and the data was prepared for compiling and analysis.

Step 4: Compiling and Analyzing the Data – After the participants completed FourSight online, the data was scored with averages, ranges and standard deviations for each of the main target areas, as well as overall aggregated results. The data was made available for cross tabulation at the individual, departmental and organizational level.

Outcome: The quantitative data was prepared for presentation.

Step 5: Presenting the Results – Once data collection and analysis were completed, the preliminary results were shared with executive leadership to identify key comparisons within the organization (Appendix H).



Appendix H – FourSight Leadership Presentation

Step 6: CPS Introduction and Training – With SOQ themes identified and FourSight results shared, the staff was engaged in the CPS process. The program was structured to represent all functional areas within the organization with CPS workgroups selected randomly across the organization. This provided an opportunity for communication and collaboration within the context of a structured process, thus setting the stage for greater collaboration. Five groups of six randomly selected employees formed the groups.

CPS Staff Facilitator Training: Eight ABC Company staff members were identified with FourSight results suggesting an Integrator profile (Figure 2). Integrators do not show a strong preference for any of the four steps in the creative problem solving process and are thus flexible and adaptable. They can relate easily to all stages of CPS therefore making them good candidates for assisting in facilitating the process.

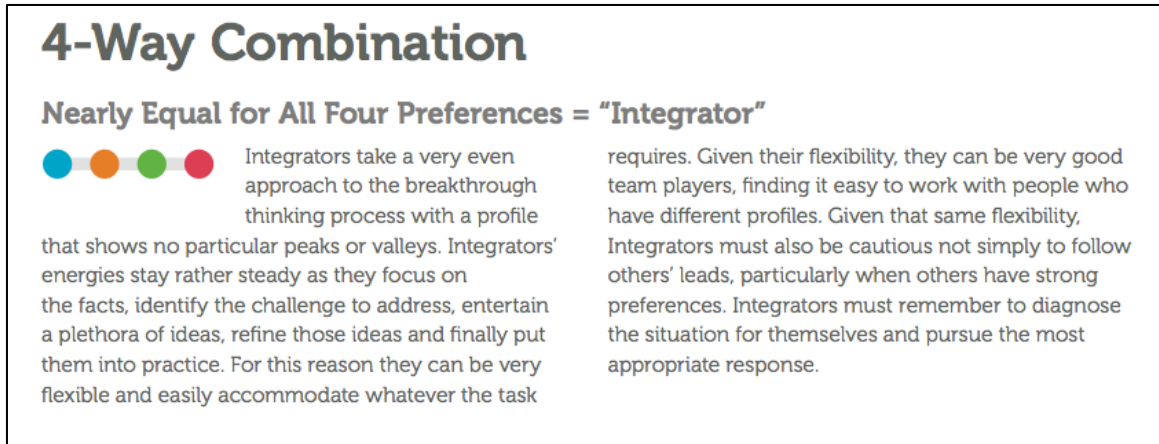
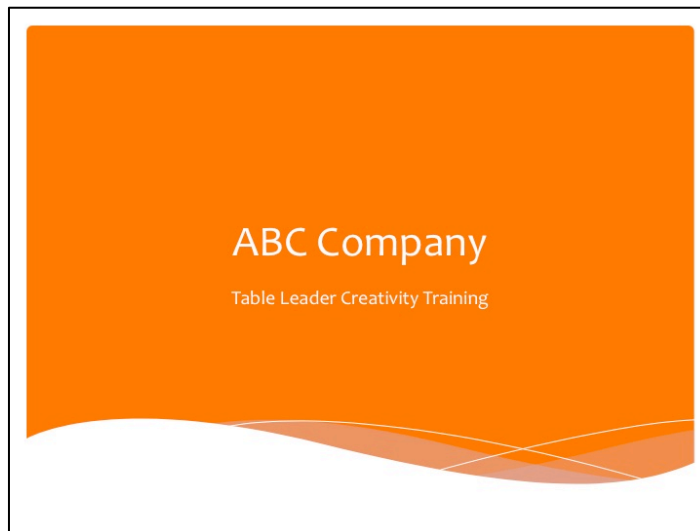


Figure 2 – FourSight Integrator Profile
Source: FourSight LLC

A half-day training session (Appendix I) was conducted with six Integrators (Of the eight originally identified, one left the company and one was on vacation).

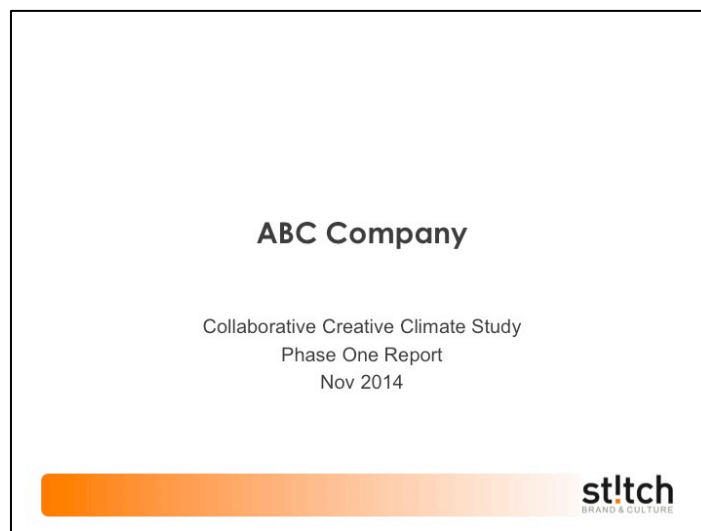


Appendix I – Table Leader Training

The goal of the session was to have table leaders familiar enough with the CPS process that they became comfortable leading a discussion that adhered to CPS guidelines. It was not

necessary that staff achieve mastery of the CPS process as support would be provided during the CPS session to coach and facilitate active learning and instruction. Additionally, the training was administered with the intent that table leaders would become “Process Champions” inside ABC Company to perpetually support the CPS process.

CPS Sessions – Following Table Leader training, two half-day sessions were conducted with ABC Company employees (Appendix J & K). The first half-day session provided an overview of assessment findings and a brief introduction to the CPS process. The second half-day session engaged the groups in the CPS process focusing on areas of weakness within the creative climate.



Appendix J – Nov. Company Presentation



Appendix K – CPS Training

Work teams were divided into “themed” areas of focus as identified from the SOQ results (Figure 3) and engaged in a process of identifying strategies and tactics to enhance the organizational climate. Teams were asked to present their results at the end of the CPS sessions.





Figure 3 – Group Challenge Statements

Note: Executive leadership was made aware that the effort might result in a variety of employee-suggested strategic and tactical initiatives that should be carefully considered and, where possible and practical, supported in future implementation.

Key Deliverables

There are a number of key deliverables as a result of Phase Two:

- Executive briefing – a PowerPoint presentation that provided an executive briefing of the results for leadership and key stakeholders.
- All quantitative results by department and overall roll-up.
- Analysis of FourSight quantitative results.

- Introduction and practical training in the application of the CPS process.
- A venue for communication and collaboration.
- Workable, staff-designed recommendations for improving the creative, innovative and collaborative culture.

Results, Analysis and Outcomes

LPI: Results and Analysis

Results of the Leadership Practices Inventory Self Assessment (LPI Self) for six members of the Leadership Team were prepared. An aggregated line chart is displayed below (Figure 4) showing the how results compared across the team. Note: As the LPI Self was administered this data reflects only individual self-perception and does not include the perceptions of supervisors, direct reports or colleagues. While this data is useful in showing a change in self-perception over time, it may or may not reflect actual effectiveness of the leader within the organization.

A number of observations can be made that suggest a few perceived challenges within the ranks of the leadership team.

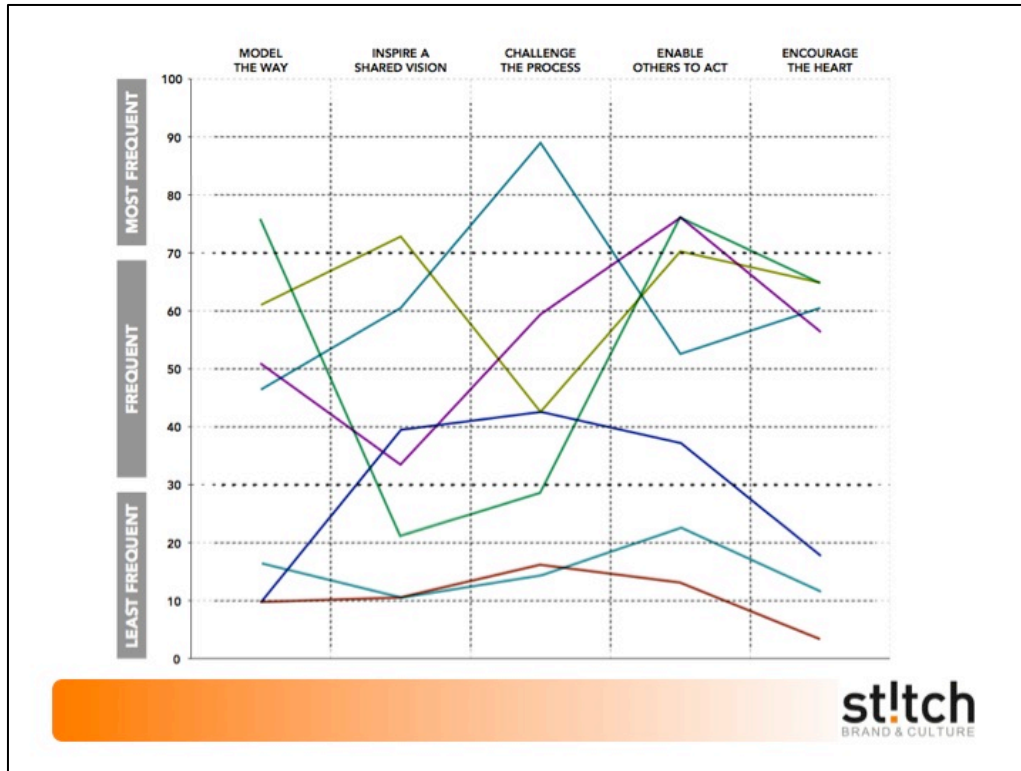


Figure 4 – ABC Company leadership, aggregated LPI Self results

LPI Self Observations and Outcomes

Observation One: The self-perceived frequency of key leadership behaviors are below 50 percent across all five areas of practice for three of the six leadership team members when compared with the LPI Self’s national database. This suggests an area of weakness within the ABC Company leadership team.

Observation Two: Two key leaders (CEO and CFO) within the team have nearly polar opposite levels of perceived frequency. While, at first blush, this may appear complementary in nature, this level of opposition (particularly when considering plans to transition of the CFO into the role of President) can be challenging. The primary concern being how dramatic differences in leadership behavior and style can impact staff during the transition.

Observation Three: Four of the six leadership team members showed self-perceived frequency below 50 percent of the national LPI database in the areas of Inspiring a Shared Vision and Challenge the Process. This suggests that the leadership may not be actively engaging employees in the broader direction of the company and/or their role within it.

Observation Four: Only half of the leadership team actively engages in Encouragement from the Heart. This may suggest that a significant number of employees in ABC Company feel undervalued by leadership.

Observation Five: A single leader (CEO) shows a high level a willingness to Challenge the Process, seeking new and different ways to approach work. Four of the remaining five members of the leadership team demonstrate a lower level of tolerance for the ambiguity and risk taking associated with this sort of change. This can lead to “social loafing” within the team where new ideas and direction is relied upon from a single person.

Overall: From the LPI Self we can see that, while there are a number of bright spots within the assessment, overall, the ABC Company leadership team perceives themselves to perform well below national levels in key areas of leadership behavior.

SOQ: Results and Analysis

The Situational Outlook Questionnaire was administered to ABC Company employees over a two-week period in August of 2014. One hundred percent participation was achieved, with 30 total employees completing the instrument.

Initial results were very favorable, with the organization meeting or exceeding seven of the nine dimensions measured against the standard benchmark of Innovative Organization vs. Stagnated Organization (Figure 5).

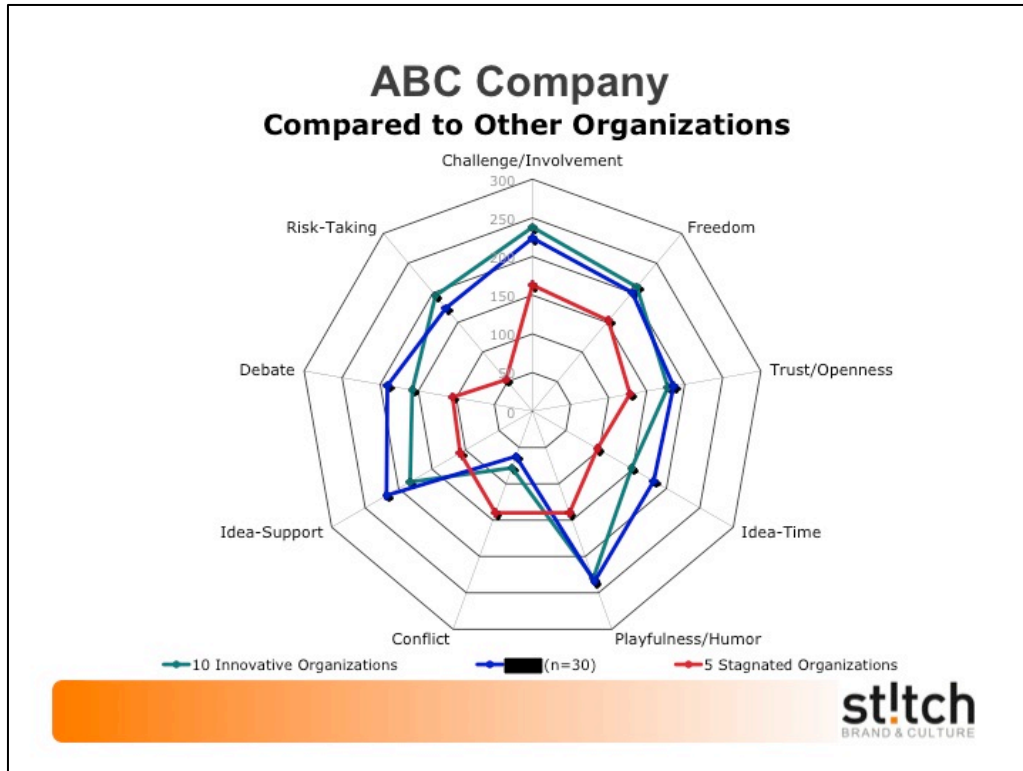


Figure 5 – ABC Company Innovative vs. Stagnated Benchmark

Note: Similar data was prepared and reported for each of six teams within the organization. While included in the report to ABC Company’s leadership team and staff, this information was not deemed germane to the conclusions within.

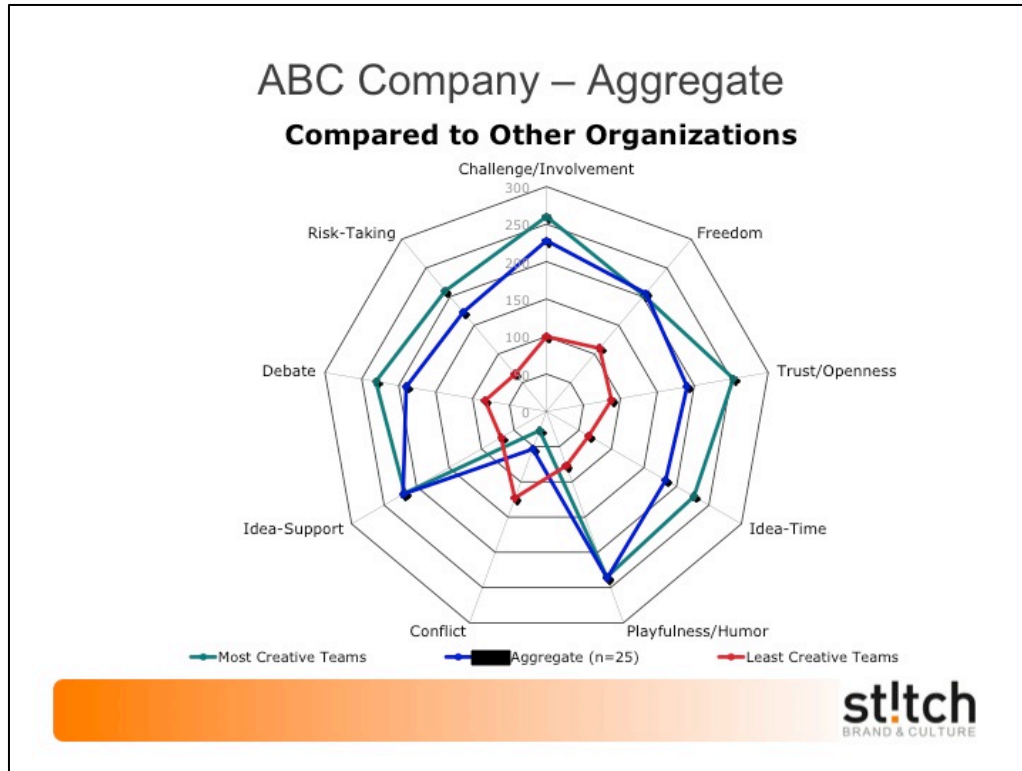


Figure 6 – ABC Company Most Creative Teams Benchmark

In fact, results were so exceptional that concern was raised regarding an ability to favorably impact organizational performance as such a rich climate for creativity may have little room for the improvement hoped for in a systemic approach to creativity. A more strenuous benchmark was required to clarify the dimensions of ABC Company's creative climate. Further investigation suggested that the data be re-cut using the Most Creative Teams benchmark. This benchmark provides a more aggressive lens through which to evaluate the data, thereby illuminating those dimensions within the SOQ that may require further exploration.

A brief visual inspection (Figure 6) reveals five distinct dimensions worthy further study. They include:

- Challenge/Involvement

- Trust/Openness
- Idea-Time
- Debate
- Risk Taking

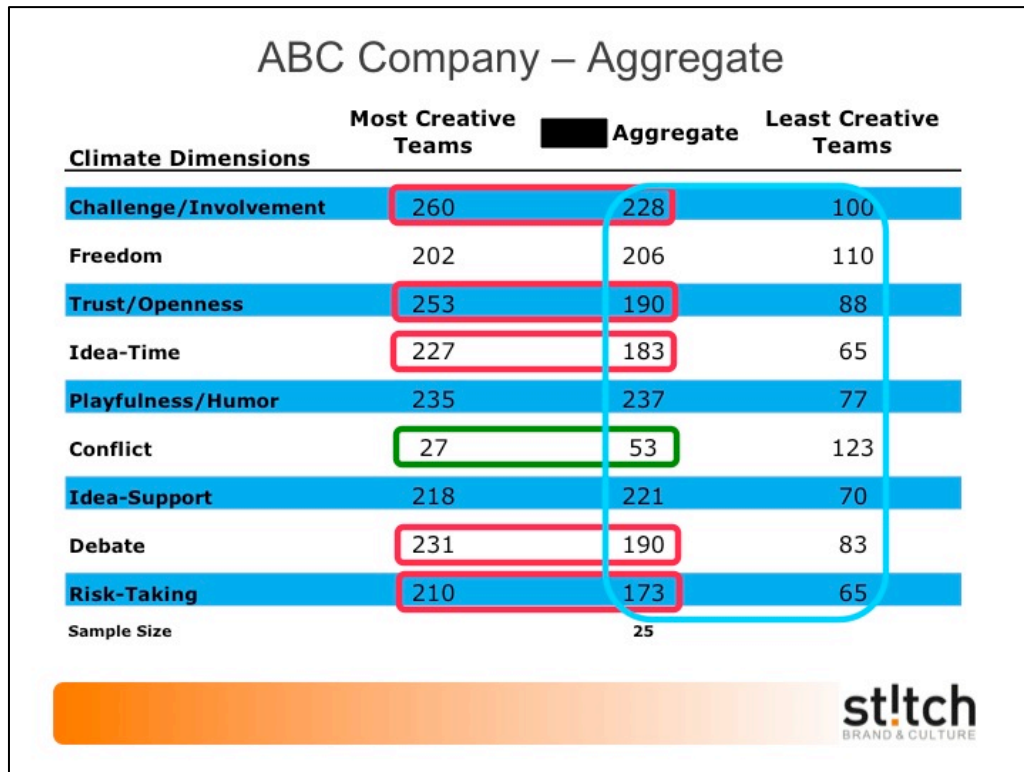


Figure 7 – ABC Company aggregate raw scores Most Creative Teams

In each case, ABC Company fell below the benchmark for the Most Creative Teams. A review of the data (Figure 7) reinforces this observation, with each of the identified benchmarks falling more than 25 points below (a standard recommended in the literature) the Most Creative Teams benchmark.

ABC Company – Aggregate			
Climate Dimensions	Aggregate	SD	Range
Challenge/Involvement	228	51	86 - 300
Freedom	206	57	100 - 300
Trust/Openness	190	53	120 - 300
Idea-Time	183	60	100 - 300
Playfulness/Humor	237	44	167 - 300
Conflict	53	55	0 - 167
Idea-Support	221	55	120 - 300
Debate	190	55	67 - 300
Risk-Taking	173	38	80 - 240
Sample Size	25		




Figure 8 – ABC Company aggregate standard deviations

Additionally, we can see that see in Figure 8, that the standard deviation for each of the dimensions is well below a ceiling of 70 (Note: A stand deviation of greater than 70 would indicate a wide range of experiences/opinions within the group). While Idea-Time has not exceeded a stand deviation of 70, a standard deviation of 60 it is approaching a level worth greater review.

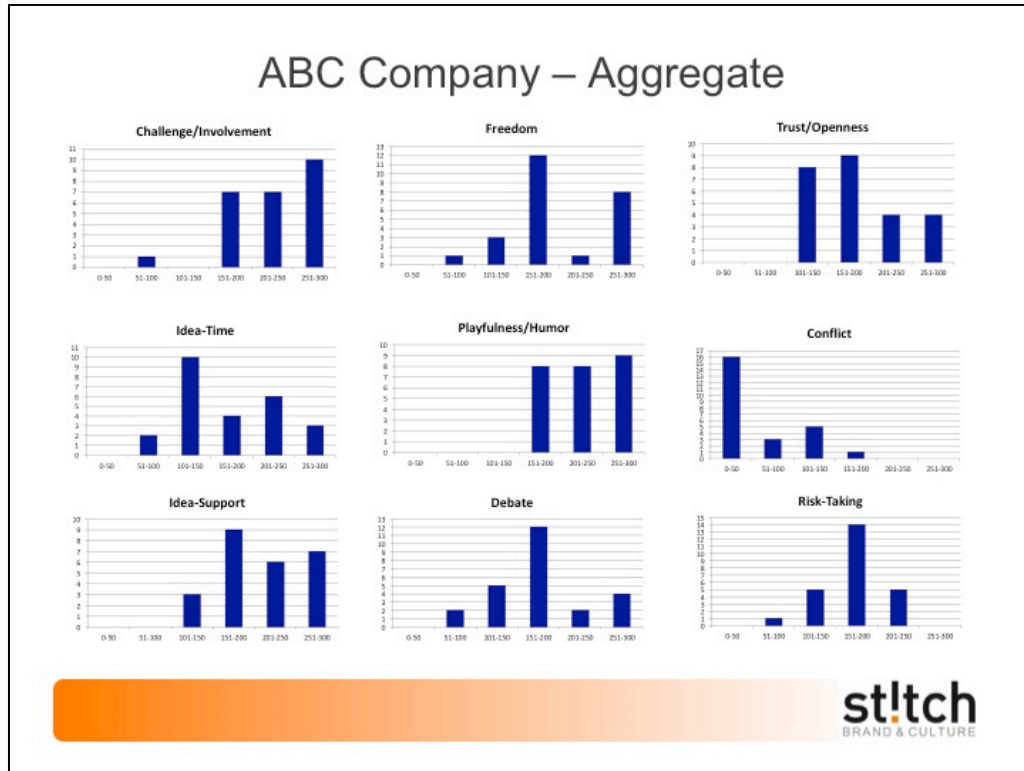


Figure 9 – ABC Company distributed scores

A distributed view of the data across all nine dimensions reinforces this observation. In Figure 9 we can see a greater distribution of experience/opinions among ABC Company staff for the dimension of Idea Time.

SOQ: Qualitative

Responses to three qualitative questions were analyzed and categorized in relationship to the nine quantitative dimensions of the SOQ as follows:

1. What aspect of your working environment is most HELPFUL in supporting your creativity?

Idea Support

- “but ideas that I may have are listened to for sure.”

- “we are supported do try whatever we feel would be helpful”
- “huge amount of engagement in just about every aspect of the business in sales”.
- “Open door policy...”
- “Weekly Meetings with the entire company. Weekly Meetings with my Manager.
- Freedom to express my views.”
- “open mind to new ideas Weekly Meeting with my sales team. “
- “try new ideas “
- “managers having an and showing support of them.”
- “very open minded to new ideas and thoughts.”
- “the ability to brainstorm with others”

Freedom

- “Work flexibility.”
- “Being able to work from home when needed.”
- “freedom to create my own agenda”
- “My independence and not being micro managed.”
- “Flexibility and freedom of time allocation.”
- “schedule own productivity flow.”
- “general absence of micro-management. Though that has increased slightly with a change in management.”
- “Autonomy”
- “My manager does not micromanage.”

- “freedom to test in a lab”
- “I am my own boss and make decisions on my own.”
“Have a little time here and there to read about”
- “own test lab setup”
- “it's up to me how I go about implementing the solution,”

Trust and Openness

- “Teamwork.”
- “team work....reliable peers”
- “Teamwork. Most employees are willing to help you especially if the need is urgent.”
- “co-workers are very experienced in their fields and are very supportive”
- “working as a team”

2. What aspect of your working environment most HINDERS your creativity?

Idea Time

- “Time”
- “Time”
- “Working part-time”
- “completed in a timely manner, reasonable time frame”
- “Workload balance”
- “Balance of workloads. Lack of knowledge of how some things work.”
- “slow downs with notes and other documents”
- “there’s always a million things going on”
- “Vendors some time take longer”

- “Distraction”
- “Pace and distractions of the open work space “
- “lack of progress and change that truly occurs.”
- “Almost constant interruption”
- “brainstorming/innovation is not very efficient”
- “product I need to work on/with isn't available”
- “Day to day customer interactions that require time to handle their immediate needs.”
- “I tend to get overly busy.”
- “Not enough time in the day”
- “Transactional work. Entering orders and working on customer service solutions.”
- “Some departments seem to have more free time for creativity than others.”

Challenge and Involvement

- “lack of direction”
- “enough buy-in from other employees”
- “no potential for higher earnings or promotions”

Idea Support

- “XXX is a very stoic individual, and it's very difficult to "read" wait to hear what XXX's opinion is rather than pursue their own line of creative thought.”
- “Lack of cohesiveness between departments”
- “The feeling that my ideas aren't good enough and will eventually be changed or scrapped”

- “Having no autonomy”
3. What is the most important action YOU would take to IMPROVE the climate for creativity in your working environment?

Idea-Time

- “weekly/bi-weekly meeting for brainstorming ideas.”
- “Smaller focus groups”
- “time weekly to work on new ideas”
- “Giving myself more time in my job”
- “more of my own goals in a more reasonable time frame.”
- “just setting aside a chunk of time to work”
- “Time, more of it.”
- “offload some responsibility”
- “Scheduled time”

Playfulness/Humor

- “Discuss how each department can help to make the other's day a little bit easier.”
- “Allow or initiatives and offload work to execute on them.”
- “improving the climate for creativity would likely just require seeking out that interaction.”
- “interdepartmental gatherings”
- “little more open conversation”
- “Keep sharing ideas, thoughts, new strategy/tactics, etc.”

- “Although I sincerely believe this is a truly enjoyable, and social work environment, I do not spend enough time conversing with my colleagues”

Idea-Support

- “lab environment with EVERYTHING”
- “Balance and fairness to each department and employee”
- “Possibly more outside teachings.”
- “working together to solve a solution and to execute to put in place”
- “Acknowledge all ideas - discuss their merit - be enthusiastic about ideas that have worked out very well and celebrate those successes.”

Challenge and Involvement

- “Some projects we hear about under way are mainly decided on by management and we don't have time nor ability to be part of that process in many instances.”
- “Continue refining our team to make sure we have the doing work they love for the right reasons.”
- “eliminate the fear of making changes that could cause any type of perceived backlash”
- “right people in the right places”
- “Everyone driving towards a specific goal.”
- “sales people the autonomy”
- “VoIP Supply has a strategic plan that has been shared with employees. How do we achieve those goals though?”

SOQ: Outcomes

While initial results of the SOQ using the standard benchmark of Innovative vs. Stagnated organizations raised concerns regarding the identification of areas of weakness within the creative climate, employing the benchmark of the Most Creative Teams revealed areas for potential improvement in five dimensions of the creative climate. Analysis of standard deviation suggests an acceptable level of consistency across functional areas within the organization. Qualitative feedback suggests a strong emphasis on time constraints (Idea Time), support for new ideas (Idea Support) and lack of understanding/direction related to the strategic intent of the company (Challenge & Involvement) as a limiting factors.

FourSight: Results and Analysis

The FourSight Assessment of thinking style was administered to the employees of ABC Company. One hundred percent participation was achieved with 27 employees completing the online assessment. Note: Differences in participation level between the SOQ and FourSight can be attributed to employee turnover.

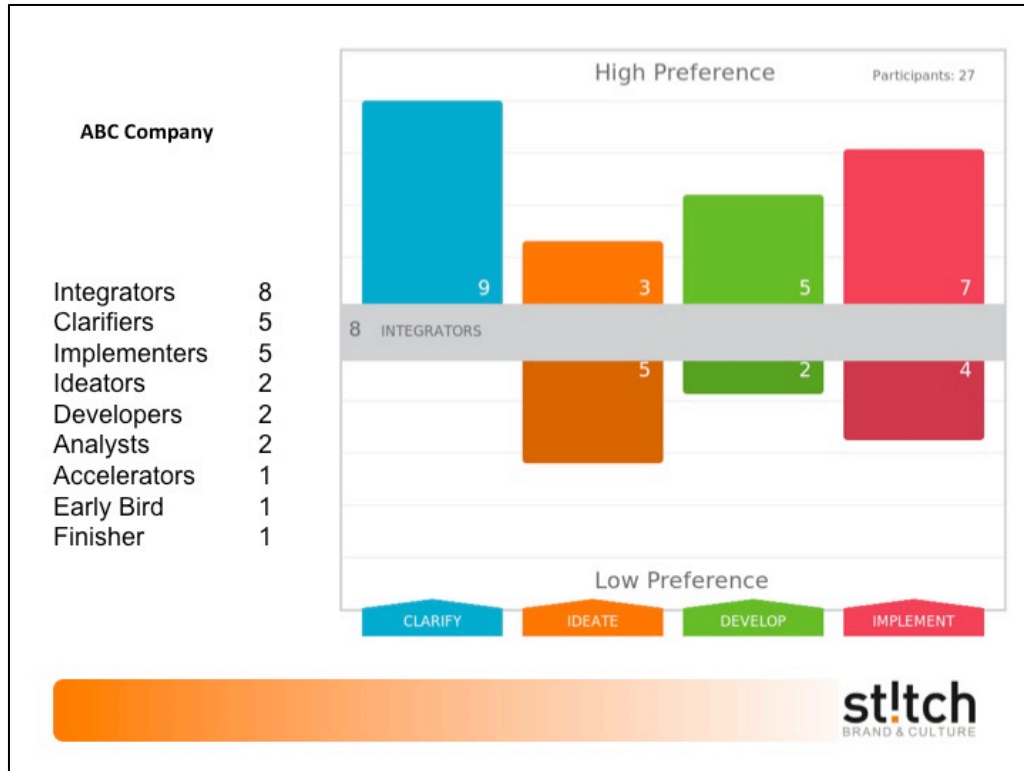


Figure 10 – ABC Company aggregate FourSight Scores

An aggregated profile using the FourSight assessment data (Figure 10) shows strong preference within the organization for activities related to Clarifying (9) – seeking answers and understanding of the problem; then Implementing (7) – executing a plan for application of the solution; followed by Developing (3) – refining and honing ideas into elegant solutions; and Ideating (3) – generating many a varied ideas. Eight employees selected a preference for integrating. This profile suggests a low preference for any particular dimension of the FourSight assessment.

A broader view of the data implies a combined profile described in the FourSight Users Guide as an “Accelerator.” (Figure 11) Accelerator organizations are known for their rapid and direct movement. They are quick to identify opportunities and equally quick to act up upon them.

When considering the implications of this profile with ABC Company we must take into account the extremely strong Clarifying preference in the aggregate profile (9). This may suggest that, while the organization is quick to act upon the opportunities they identify, they may become easily mired in the clarifying process. This can slow things down in an effort to understand every piece of information, angle and implication before moving forward.



Figure 11 – Accelerator Profile
Source: FourSight LLC

Of additional note in the aggregate profile is both the scarcity of "Ideators" (2) and the low preference for Ideating (5). This may suggest that the organization lacks the motivation necessary when faced with the need to generate novel solutions and new thinking.

FourSight: Observations and Outcomes

Where initial insights generated by the SOQ raised concern about the ability to impact organizational performance, the deeper understanding of thinking style preference provided by FourSight offered an additional lens through which to view the organization.

While the SOQ results suggested that leadership had done an excellent job creating an environment conducive to creativity – a rich creative climate – it was an understanding of how

thinking style preference was distributed within the organization that was most illuminating. With such a low preference for the generation of ideas and high preference for clarifying and implementing, we can infer that ABC Company had assembled a group of people who may lack motivation or interest in the generation novel ideas and/or their development into elegant solutions. The “people” component in this methodological approach (surprisingly) appeared to be the weaker link in the systemic chain.

This is an important strategic consideration in a company hoping to bolster its market position around the idea of “thought leadership” – a potential challenge for an organization with little interest in the visionary, breakthrough thinking required to support such position.

This insight has even broader implications in understanding the value of approaching organizational creativity from a systemic vantage point. A systemic approach provides a wider diagnostic view of the organization, thus allowing for more comprehensive assessment and a deeper understanding of the blocks and obstacles faced by leadership when working to enhance the climate for creativity and collaboration.

CPS: Results and Analysis

The Collaborative Creative Climate model methodology is designed to follow an assessment of creative climate and thinking style with training in Creative Problem Solving (CPS). In this phase, table leaders are selected and trained, weaker dimensions of creative climate are identified, the organization is trained in the CPS process and put to work generating possible solutions (tactical initiatives/improvements designed to address weaker areas of creative climate).

ABC Company held two, facilitated, half-day sessions (Figure 12) with 27 employees to review the SOQ and FourSight assessment results (Appendix L), introduce the Creative Problem

Solving process and conduct a series of facilitated brainstorming sessions around five weaker dimensions of creative climate that had been identified by the SOQ and supported by leadership as areas of for improvement. All pre-selected Table Leaders received a set of tools (FourSight cards, booklets, Post-it Notes and markers) and a copy of *An Introduction to Climate* by Scott G. Isaksen and Hans J. Akkermans (2007). These resources were used during the creative problem solving process to support the Table Leaders in their work and remain at ABC Company for future use in the creative problem solving process.

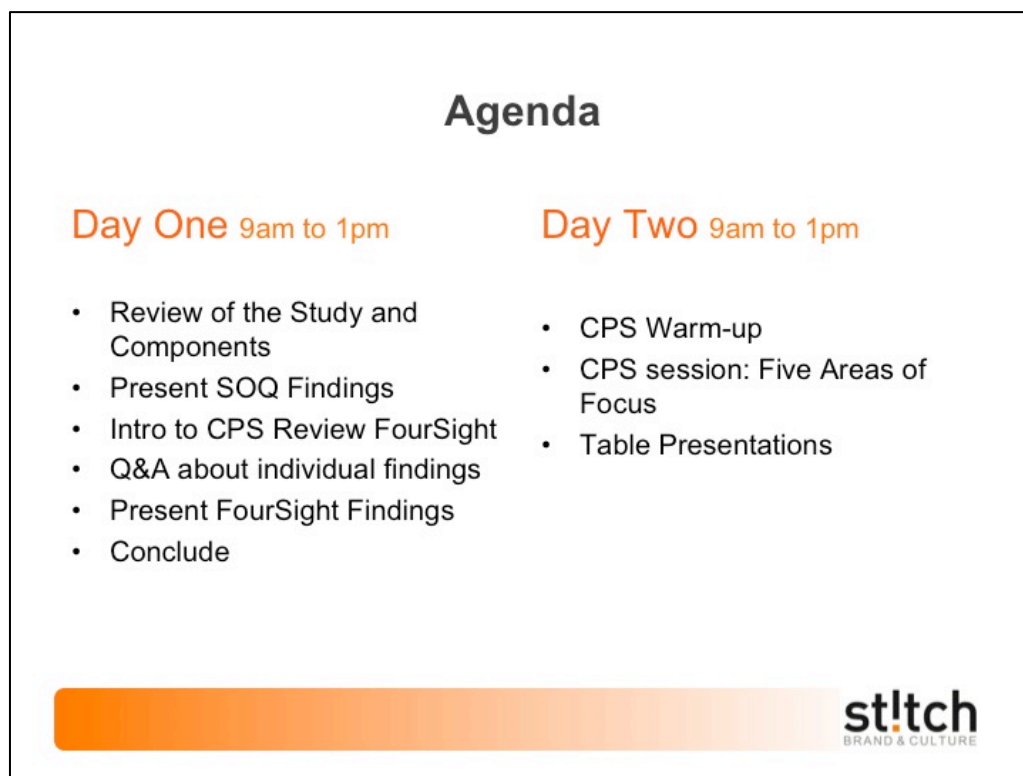


Figure 12 – CPS Training

During the session, Table Leaders were asked to come forward. The remaining employees counted off randomly by five. Each of the five groups was then assigned one of the five

dimensions that had been identified earlier. Each dimension was phrased as a challenge statement in the following manner:

- Group One: In what ways might we create an increased atmosphere of trust and openness inside ABC Company?
- Group Two: In what ways might we create an atmosphere that allows for more idea time inside ABC Company?
- Group Three: In what ways might we create an atmosphere that allows for more productive debate inside ABC Company?
- Group Four: In what ways might we create an increased atmosphere of risk taking inside ABC Company?
- Group Five: In what ways might we create a greater level of challenge and involvement inside ABC Company?

Each group was instructed to find a comfortable place within the ABC Company offices where an adequate space for brainstorming was available. Groups were given 20 minutes to generate possible solutions in response to their challenge question and provided additional instruction to “hit and cluster” the ideas into like-minded groupings and label them with an action phrase.

Following the ideation phase of CPS, each group administered a POINT evaluation (Pluses, Opportunities, Issues and New Thinking) of their ideas to further develop and refine them by completing the statement beginning with “What I see myself doing is ...”. The groups then gathered to report on their ideas.

CPS: Outcomes

Sixty-seven ideas for improving creative climate were generated by the five groups with each Table Leader summarizing the group's recommendations for consideration by the ABC Company Leadership. (See Appendix M)

A meeting with leadership was held to review the suggestions and a number of themes emerged from the employees efforts revolving around finding more time to be creative; job shadowing and cross training; gaining more familiarity across functional areas within ABC Company; and increasing opportunity for more social time among the employees. Three initiatives were selected for implementation. (Additional initiatives are planned for future dates.) They include:

Climate Committee – The formation of a small committee of volunteers to help coordinate and develop ABC Company efforts.

Personal History Lunches – Randomly selected employees will be paired for a company-sponsored lunch. At the lunch participants will be asked to interview one another using a list of questions designed to increase familiarity and trust. When employees return to the office, answers will be posted on a common wall along with a “selfie” photo commemorating event.

Job Shadowing – employees will spend two hours a month job shadowing across functional areas within ABC Company. This will help employees generate a greater sense of empathy, familiarity and understanding.

Clarity Breaks – Time will be specifically set aside each week for brainstorming new ideas, initiatives and industry insights.

CPS Champions – Five Table Leaders will remain in place as CPS Champions inside the organization to assist with brainstorming and problem solving inside groups.

Changes Over Time

In order to gain even greater understanding of impact a variety of data points were examined over a period of time. They included:

- The LPI Self –Administered in September 2014 and March 2015
- The SOQ – Administered in August 2014 and March 2015
- Company Metrics – Pre and Post Administration

LPI Self Changes Over Time

Examining the individual perceptions of leadership behavior over time provided some interesting results. Of the seven original members of the Leadership Team two resigned and one was excluded from consideration due to the part-time, contract nature of her role.

While the LPI Self is very limited in its assessment value, we can see substantial changes in self-perception among the participants. When comparing Figures 13 & 14, we can see an overall increase in the perceived frequency of LPI leadership behaviors by individual participants, with dramatic changes in participants 2 and 4. While this may or may not be a reflection of the actual levels of individual performance, it does demonstrate a greater awareness of the behaviors necessary to improve leadership behavior.

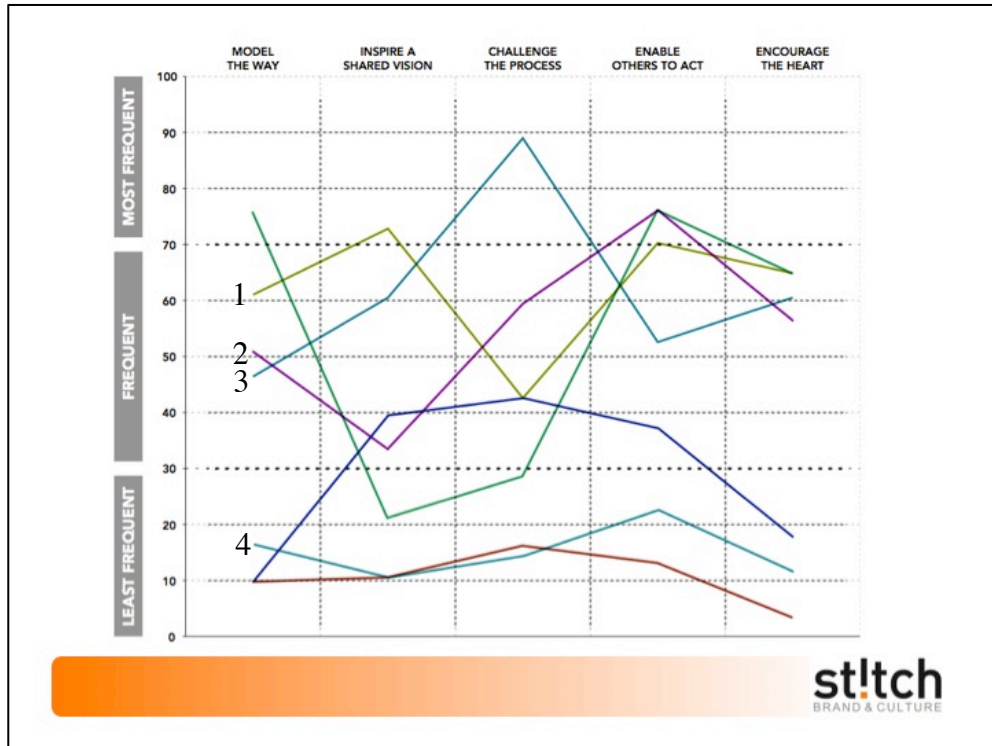


Figure 13 – LPI Sept 2104

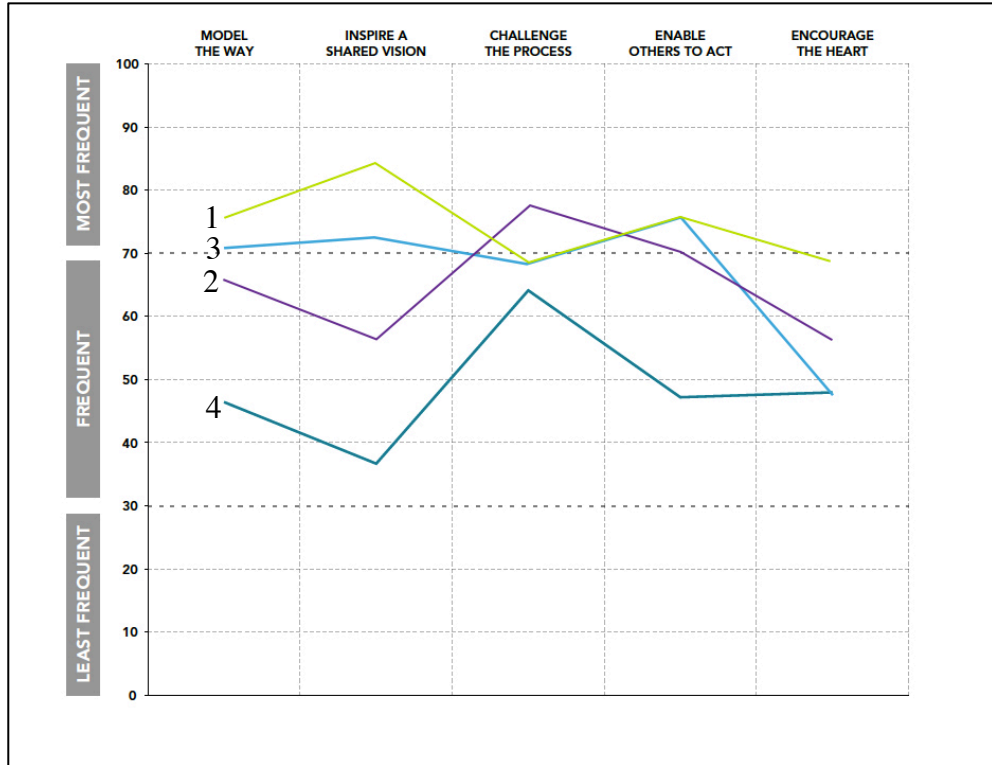


Figure 14 – LPI March 2015

SOQ: Changes Over Time

To gauge any changes in perceived creative climate a second application of the SOQ was administered to ABC Company employees in March of 2015. Twenty-two employees who had completed the first assessment were asked to complete the second assessment. Employee turnover accounting for a reduction of five employees in the second assessment participation.

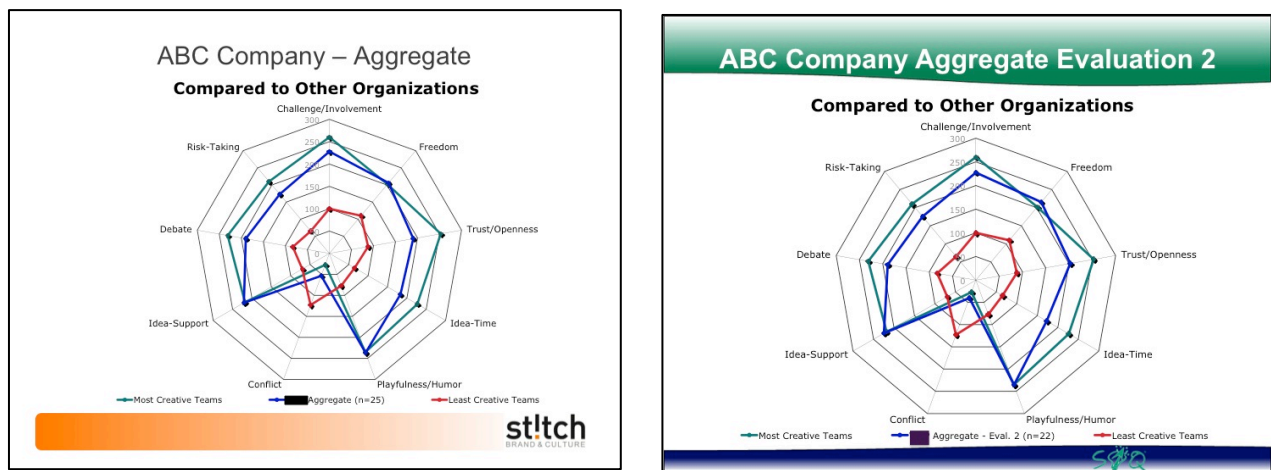


Figure 15 – Comparing First and Second Applications of the SOQ

A visual comparison of the aggregate results of the first and second SOQ spider graphs (Figure 15) shows a small, but favorable trend toward an improved creative climate.

Improvement can be seen in five dimensions of climate:

- Conflict – a reduction (improvement) of 7.5 percent
- Trust & Openness – an increase of 7 percent
- Freedom – an increase of 4 percent
- Idea Support – an increase of 2 percent

- Risk-Taking – an increase of 1 percent

This improvement becomes more apparent in bar chart form below (Figure 16 & 17).

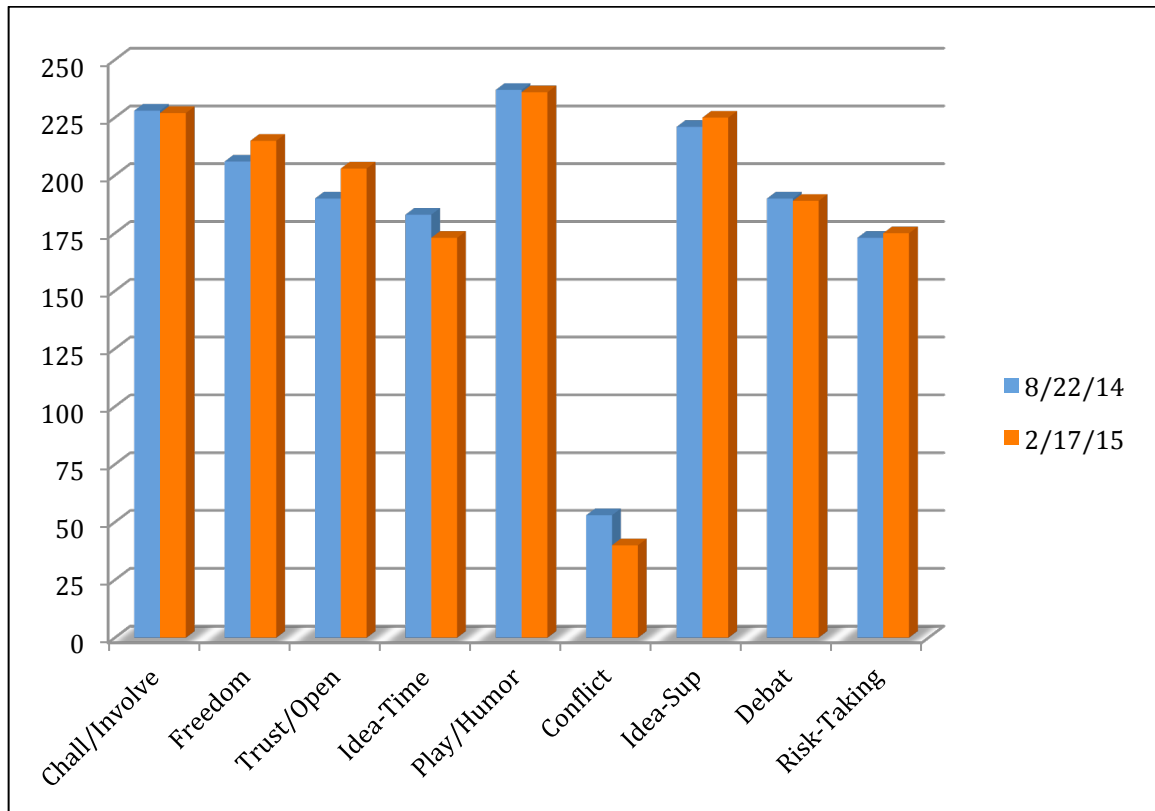


Figure 16 – Comparing SOQ Results Over Time

Of five dimensions showing improvement, one dimension aligned with those identified as focus areas for ABC Company (Trust & Openness). Of particular note is the increase in Trust & Openness and reduction in the dimension of Conflict as these dimensions are fundamental to improved organizational performance. Organizations with low levels of trust and high levels of conflict are more likely to have difficulty favorably impacting other dimensions within the creative climate.

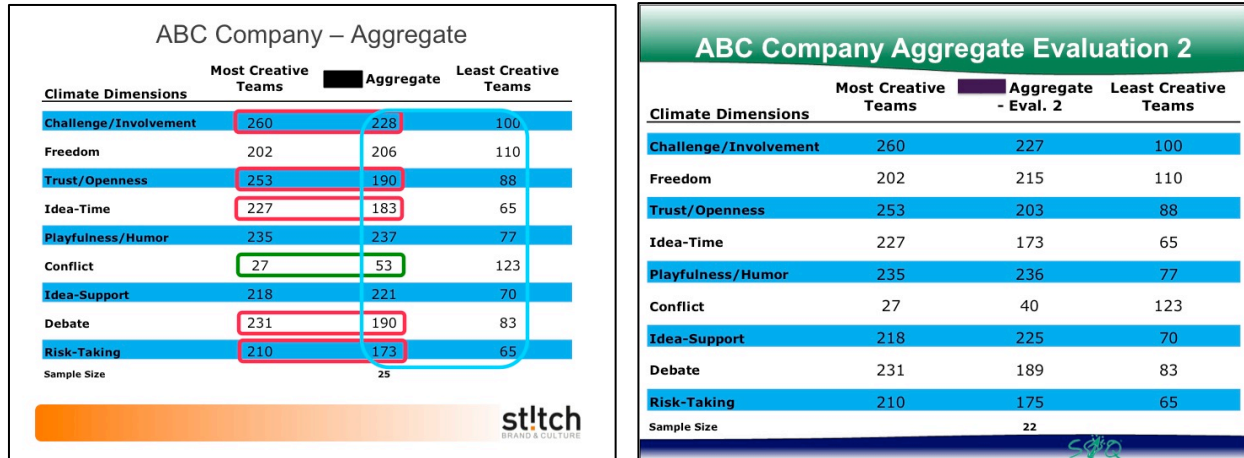


Figure 17 – Comparing SOQ Results Over Time

While initial gains are smaller than desired, the results can be considered significant for a number of reasons:

- 1) The results reflect the more challenging benchmark of Most Creative Teams. Gains against this benchmark are more difficult to achieve as incremental improvement becomes increasingly more difficult as one moves up the dimensional scale.
- 2) ABC Company has yet to implement the resulting recommendations of the CPS sessions. Once implemented, these efforts will likely contribute to continuing improvement of the creative climate.
- 3) As tactical recommendations have yet to be implemented, the resulting favorable trend may be a result of simply engaging the employees in greater dialogue (across functional areas and with leadership) and involvement in the CPS process. The notion that dialogue and the CPS process alone can favorably influence climate (even before tactical implementation can be achieved) is very promising.

- 4) Of particular note in this regard are the dimensions of Trust & Openness and Conflict, experiencing a 7 and 7.5 percent gains respectively. This suggests a favorable trend toward more productive relationships within the organization.

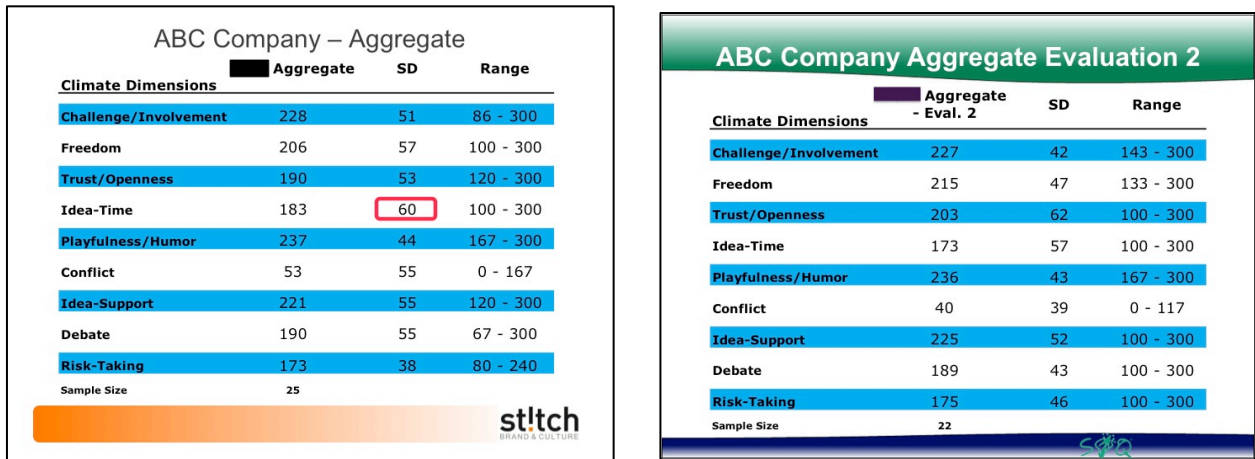


Figure 18 – Comparing SOQ Standard Deviation Over Time

With a single exception, an evaluation of Standard Deviation reinforces the favorable trend we see in the raw data, with all scores below the undesirable threshold of 70 (Figure 18). This suggests that opinions with ABC Company are trending similarly across functional areas. Of note is an increase in Standard Deviation from 53 to 62 in the area of Trust and Openness. This suggests a trend toward some inconsistency of opinion with ABC Company regarding this dimension.

SOQ: Qualitative Changes Over Time

While the first administration of the SOQ reflected a range of issues in the qualitative section of the assessment related to “hindering creativity,” the second administration showed a clear narrowing of focus around the dimension of Idea Time. Of 22 qualitative comments, 16 reflected concern with time constraints limiting the participant’s ability to be more creative.

While lack of time was certainly an issue in the first administration of the SOQ, comments related to idea support and challenge/involvement were also mentioned.

SOQ March 2015 – Qualitative Comments,

2. What aspect of your working environment most HINDERS your creativity?

- “The work is non-stop. It's difficult to come up with the time to work on new projects when there is a backlog of existing ones.”
- “Time or allotting time to have brainstorming sessions / innovation time, is not there. Resources are very thin, we lost some players recently. Often times we are so bogged down with work and are held accountable on how fast we get requests done - there is no time for this type of activity nor can I justify dropping our workload to have it. For every 1 request we finish another 5 pop up. Always feel like I am just holding myself above water. I believe the team that I am a part of could be the most creative team in the building, given our backgrounds, but rarely get the opportunity to do so.”
- “Too much always going on, no time to be creative”
- “Schedule”
- “Lack of risk taking.”
- “Lots of daily duties needed to be done each day as early as possible.”
- “Lack of time”
- “Other people's issues and having to take time to resolve them first, for the sake of the whole.”
- “Routine work”

- “Not enough time”
- “Time.”
- “Reactive atmosphere due to time and inbound action”
- “Too many repetitive and unsatisfying tasks take up too much time on most days, in spite of a flexible schedule”
- “Workload and current metrics.”
- “Not having enough time to talk meet with management.”
- “In my current role the day is quite full, and perhaps my own mindset and approach to it leaves me little time to be creative.”
- “Daily aspects of the job require that those be addressed first which leaves little time for creativity.”
- “Pressure to get products turned-around as quickly as possible (typically near the end of month, to ensure the sales team is credited for orders).”
- “poor communication orders not specified and not clearly marked bad account numbers wrong ship method”
- “Time. When work flow is heavy and only 2 people doing shipping and receiving. Example: This survey I planned on having done but was off Friday and busy last week. My apologies but we have to prioritize shipping 1st, and put out fires or reply to emails ASAP for sales/customer service.”

Company Performance Measures: Changes over Time.

Unlike many small companies, ABC Company maintains a comprehensive set of metrics used in monitoring and guiding company performance. A total of 40 measures are scored to provide daily, weekly, quarterly and annual reporting on performance targets. In addition, the

company utilizes a variety of “soft measures” to evaluate employee satisfaction and participation.

For purposes of this effort the following measures were identified as pre- and post-study datasets.

- Happiness Score – A weekly measure of employee satisfaction.
- Average Revenue
- Average Gross Profit

Note: It should be noted that the resulting tactical recommendations from the CPS sessions have yet to be deployed by the client. While we can’t be sure at this juncture, we expect that these additional measures will have a favorable impact on the overall performance.

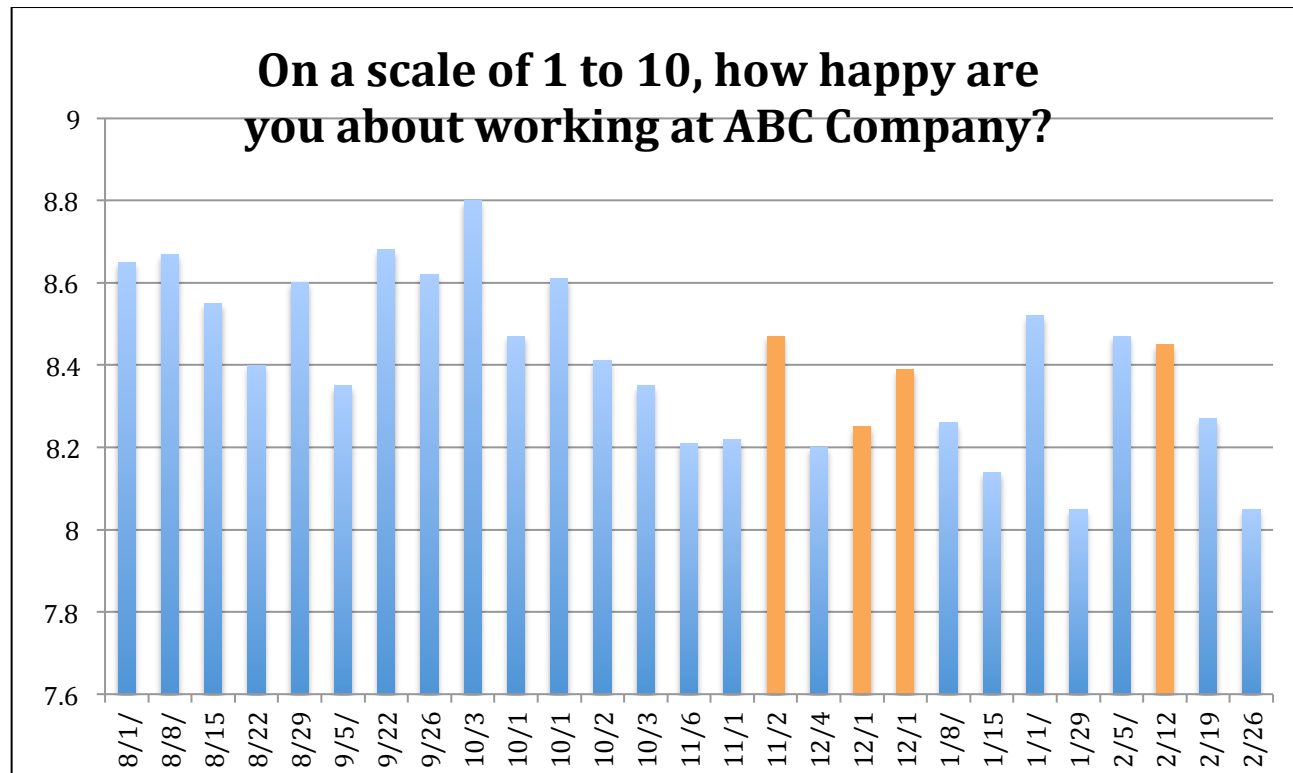


Figure 19 – ABC Company Happiness Scale 8/1/14 to 2/26/15

Happiness score – That Happiness Score at ABC Company utilizes a 1-10 scale, with one being strongly dissatisfied and 10 being strongly satisfied (Figure 19). The measure is administered weekly as part of the company’s employee suggestion and feedback program. Historically, ABC Company has maintained a consistently high level of average employee satisfaction; above 8.0 from 8/1/14 to 2/26/15. This suggests that employees at ABC Company are generally satisfied in their work. As we have seen, this was supported by the results of the SOQ which suggest that ABC Company cultivates an exceptional work environment for its employees.

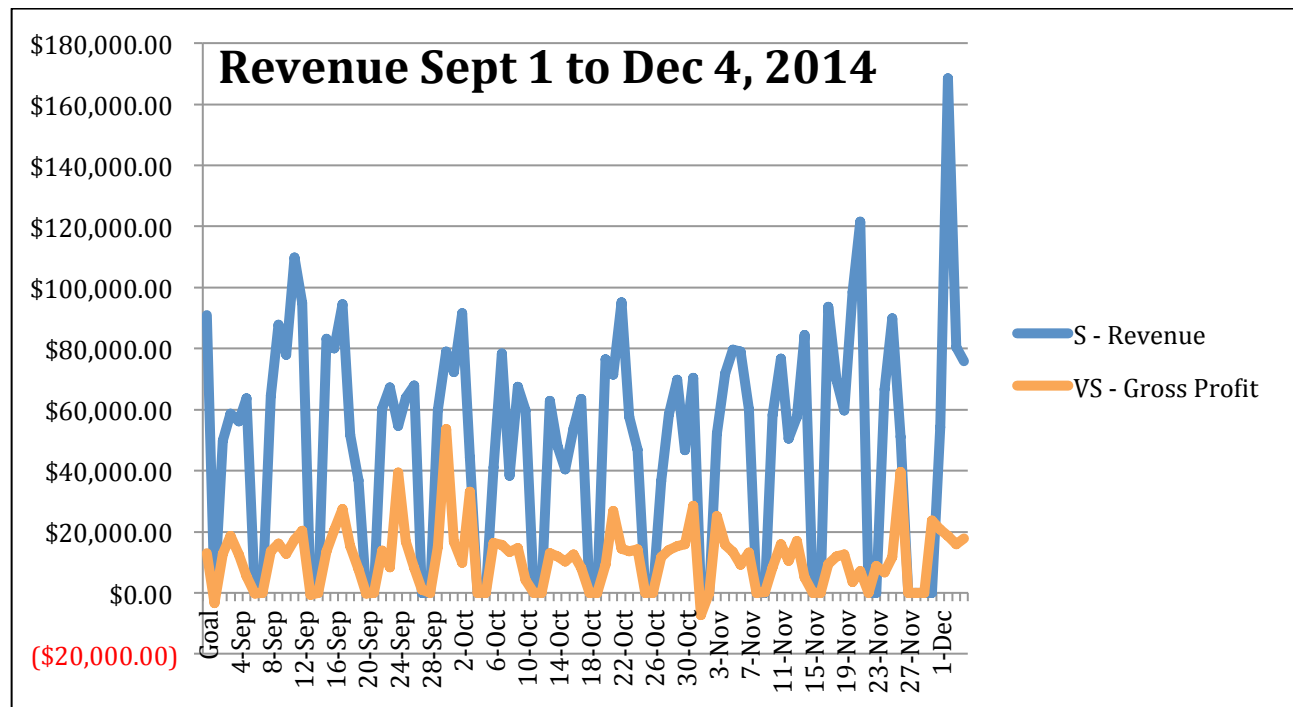


Figure 20 – ABC Company Revenue and Gross Profit 9/1/14 to 12/4/14

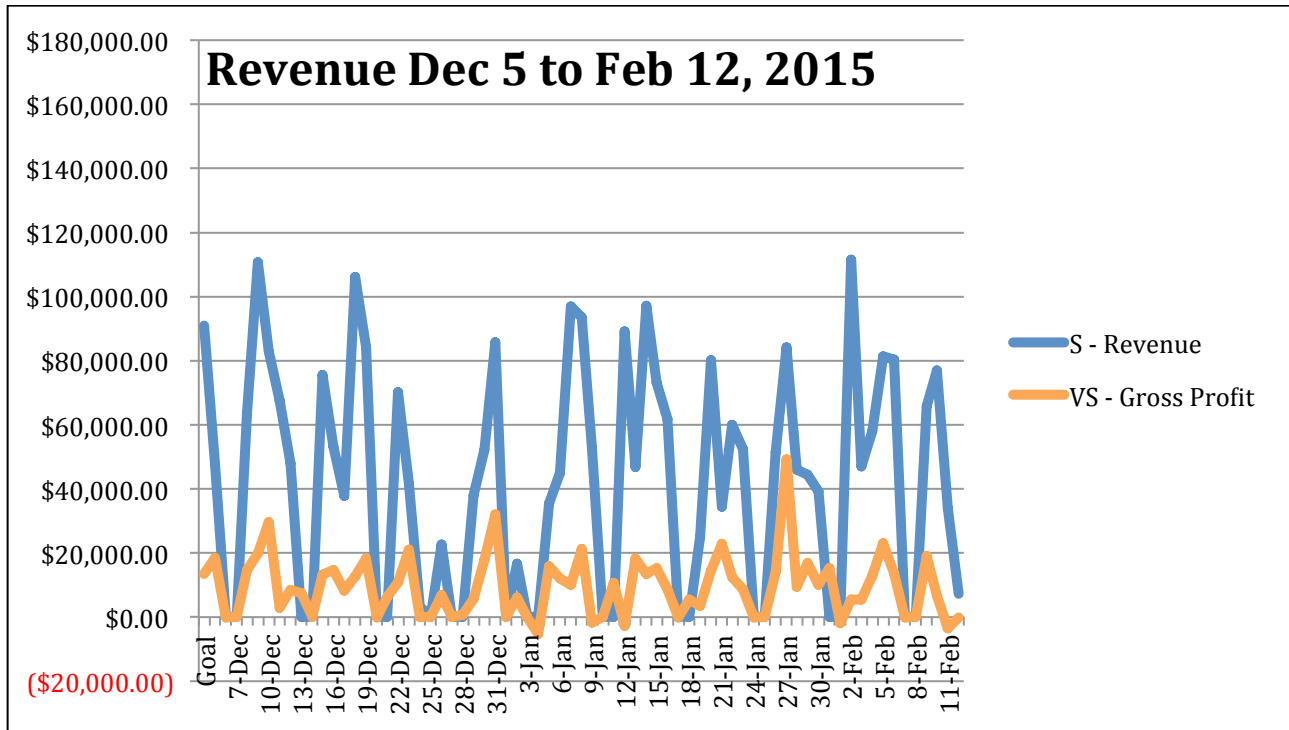


Figure 21, ABC Company Revenue and Gross Profit 12/5/14 to 2/12/15

Average Revenue and Gross Profit – An analysis of revenue and gross profit for ABC Company was also conducted between the period of September 1, 2014 and December 4, 2014 (Figure 20) and December 5, 2014 and February 12, 2015 (Figure 21). These two date ranges were selected as they reflect when the study first engaged the organization overall.

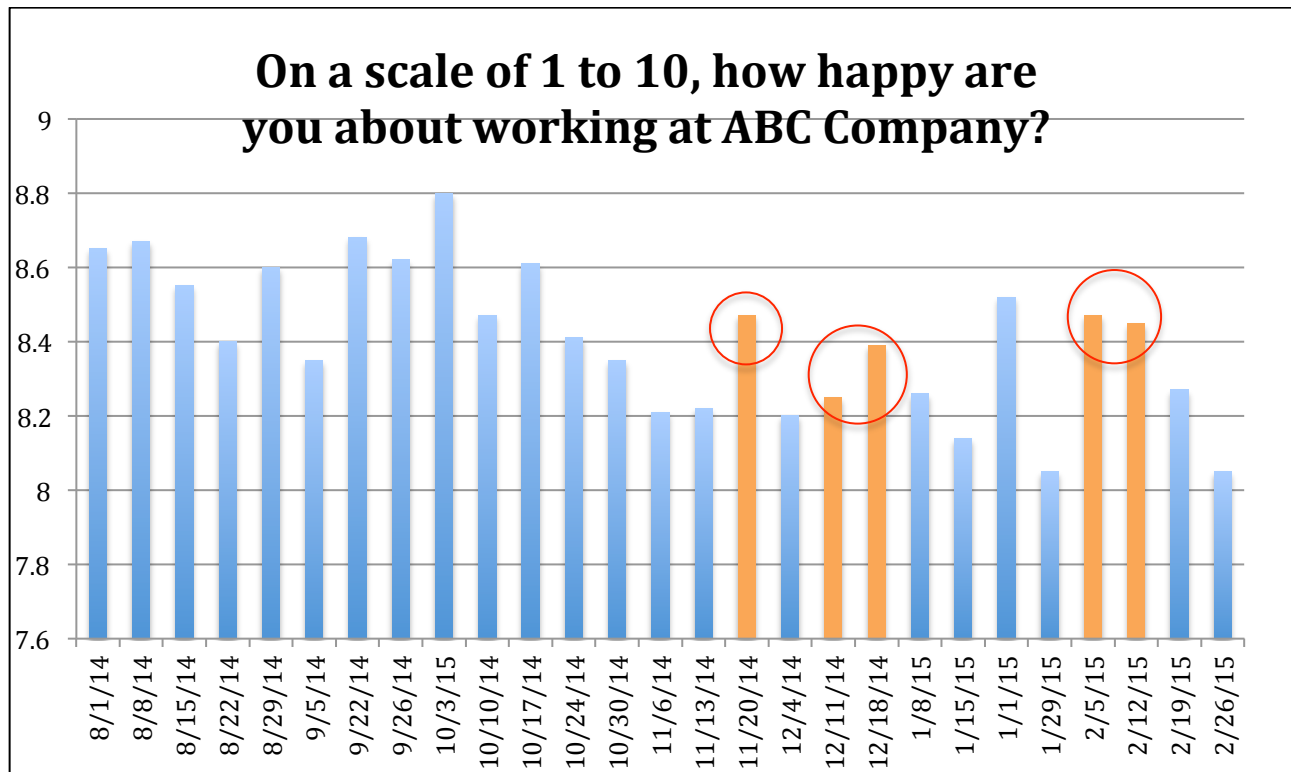


Figure 22, ABC Company Happiness Scale 8/1/14 to 2/26/15

Happiness Score Over Time: When looking more closely at ABC Company Happiness Scores over time a number of interesting inferences can be made. In particular, the apparent increase in employee satisfaction around the time that the study results were shared with ABC Company’s employees and then again following the announcement of CPS initiative results and implementation (Figure 22). While ABC Company has shown reliably high scores in employee satisfaction, there has been a declining trend in recent months (from scores above 8.4 to score hovering around 8). Of note are four periods that seem to buck the trend. While it is difficult to directly correlate these improvements to this work, the timing of the increase is curious:

- 11/20/14 – (8.47) Two days following the first half-day session of the CPS process. SOQ and FourSight results were shared and employees participated in a CPS introduction and warm-up session.
- 12/11/14 & 12/18/14 – (8.25/8.39) Two-week periods following the CPS workshop.
- 1/21/15 – Unknown
- 2/5/15 & 2/12/15 – (8.47/8.49) Two-week period following the announcement of leadership's selection of CPS tactical recommendations and the intent to move forward with implementation of the employee recommendations.

There may be more, in fact, to these increases than a simple “Hawthorne Effect” (Landsberger, 1950), as the increases appear to be supported by related results in the SOQ that show a favorable creative climate overall, a reduction in “Conflict” and an increase in “Trust & Openness” and “Freedom,” all known to be closely tied to employee satisfaction.

This is further reinforced with a review of employee feedback in the ABC Company weekly suggestion box that shows favorable responses shortly following the engagement:

- “The Collaborative Creative Climate Study was great - We need to continue to improve our company with tools like this.”
- “Keep - brainstorming or ways on how to innovate (Wardlaw stuff). Not only are we building our strengths of our staff but this includes a lot of team building stuff that we should continue to do and strengthen.”
- “I really enjoyed the foresight training; it forced me to think a bit differently about how I react to information and how I interact with others who may think differently.”
- “START: In light of our first FourSight meeting, I'd like to see us focus on those "weak" areas and seek to create a better balance of types (eg: more accelerators, ...)

KEEP: Looking at our culture. It's building relationships internally, and that will make us stronger. Now I won't go into what the Roman soldiers did for comradery, except to say that they went to great lengths to "bond" so that, when in battle, the fight for each other was much stronger. I don't want to "bond" like they did (!), but I want us to continue to seek out ways for learning about each other so that we can figure out how to be united in our work.”

- “for taking a look at ways to change the company with the FourSight surveys.”

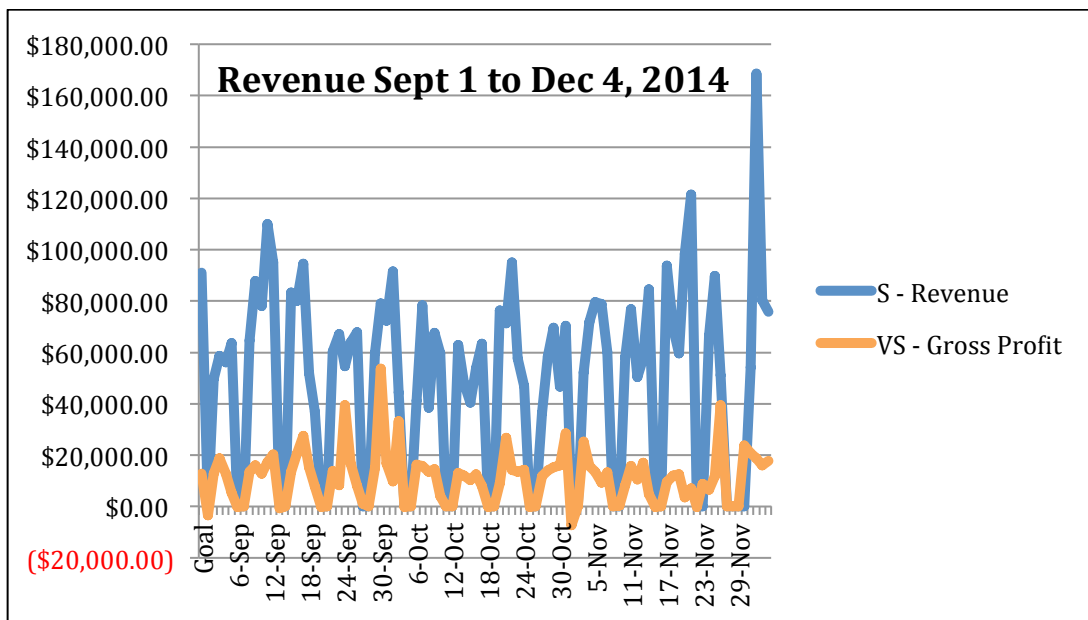


Figure 23 – ABC Company Revenue and Gross Profit 9/1/14 to 12/4/14

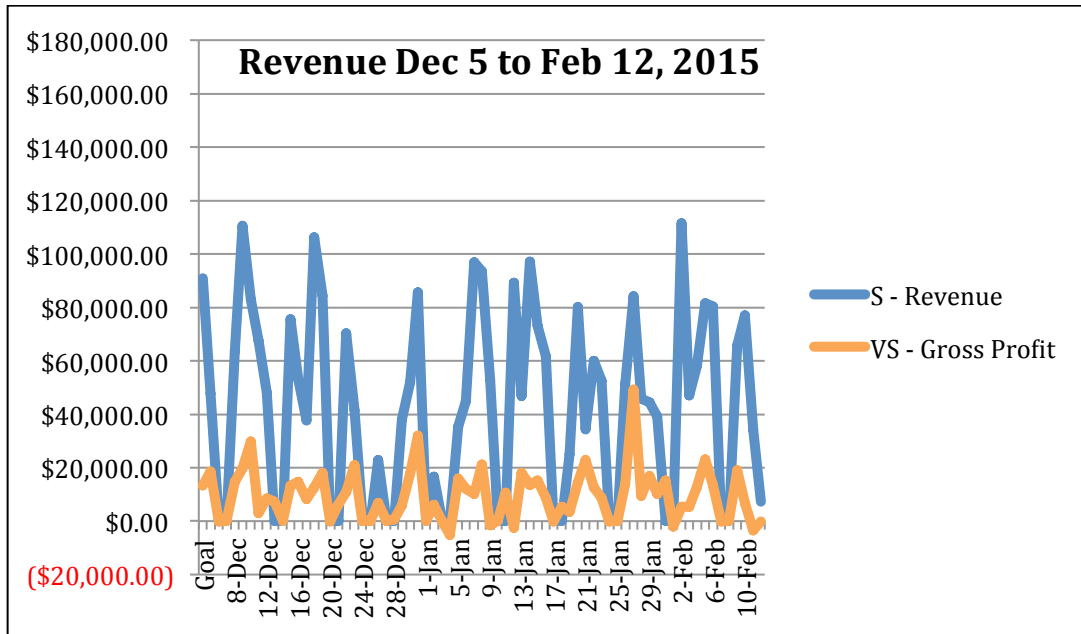


Figure 24 – ABC Company Revenue and Gross Profit 12/5/14 to 2/12/15

Average Revenue and Gross Profit: While results seem to be trending in a favorable direction, measures of revenue and gross margin (as lagging indicators) may require additional time before the full extent of organizational impact can be demonstrated. It is the intent of the author to administer the SOQ again in late 2015 in combination with an additional assessment of average revenue and gross margin to assess the full impact of the effort on organizational performance.

When comparing revenue and gross margin over time, we see a reduction of average revenue and average gross margin of 15 and 18.5 percent respectively (Figures 23 & 24).

Discussion

This effort set out to demonstrate the interrelated nature of organizational creativity as addressed through a system that employs proven instruments, tools and techniques in a new way.

The Rhodes construct has been demonstrated to be a viable framework for evaluating and addressing organizational creativity that, when applied, provides a wide variety of benefits for both leadership and employees.

While the results of this effort leave questions as to the ultimate return on investment, it is the hope of the author that additional research will be conducted once recommendations have had an opportunity to fully deploy within ABC Company. Measures such as revenue and gross profit are lagging indicators of performance that often take an extended period of time to show results.

It is clear from the data that improvement in areas fundamental to future growth like Trust & Openness and Conflict are important steps in the right direction. Increased awareness of Thinking Style, Leadership Behavior and the Creative Problem Solving process are known to improve performance over time and there is no reason to believe this will not be a factor here.

Most importantly, ABC Company now has a clear understanding of areas of weakness within its creative climate and has developed a variety of employee-generated tactics that, when deployed, should help to elevate engagement and creative output.

For the author, the experience of deploying this study has been equally beneficial. A number of insights stand out:

The Collaborative Creative Climate model was developed with an eye toward understanding creativity in its widest and deepest expressions within any organization. When

results from the initial SOQ suggested that ABC Company had exceeded the standard benchmarks for creative climate making it more difficult to favorably impact the organization – that a strong creative climate would leave little room for improvement – results from the FourSight assessment shed a different light. While the climate was strong, the thinking style preferences of its people were not in alignment. The model, as promised, had illuminated a weakness. There was work to be done.

Another realization came regarding the time and effort required for change. There is no shortage of tactics and strategies promising quick fixes for poor organizational performance. In reality, change takes time and concerted effort. The Collaborative Creative Climate model, once deployed, provides a rich, strategic backdrop for prioritization, improvement and measured progress.

Lastly, the author continues to be impressed with the sheer impact and influence of engaging employees in the process of creative problem solving can have on morale and motivation. The CPS process is inherently collaborative, literally freeing people to open their minds – and their mouths – to new possibilities and new ideas. CPS is a powerful process that, when paired with an objective understanding of climate and people, provides real value toward enhancing organizational performance.

Conclusion

One of the first questions raised by this work is whether a deeper understanding of organizational creativity, in any context, is worthy of pursuit within an organization looking for performance improvement. The evidence seems to support a favorable conclusion. CEOs around the world are calling for more creative leadership; organizations that support creative work environments generate more ideas, have happier employees and higher financial returns; the increasing velocity of change is recasting old challenges that demand novel ideas and new thinking. Creativity has become a defining characteristic of some of the most successful companies and the brands they promote (Google, Apple, Tesla, Virgin) and some of their most profound people (Steve Jobs, Richard Branson, Mark Zuckerberg). It would appear that creativity is deeply woven into the fabric of contemporary success, whether organizational or personal.

If organizational creativity is, in fact, worthy of pursuit, then the ability to evaluate it in a manner that allows an unpacking of the complex and many faceted elements of its influences would seem logical. The Rhodes construct implies the interrelated nature of creativity and work by Osborn and many others has demonstrated the dynamic balance of its process – that creativity often works within a system of elements. To understand the elements is to understand their respective influence, and therefore their strategic value. A systemic approach to understanding organizational creativity offers the potential of providing leadership with an understanding that is both strategic and tactical, bridging the gap between the perceived unmanageable and the real power that comes from leveraging its impact – like capturing lightning in a bottle.

The proposed system herein provides a view of creativity within the organization – a comprehensive landscape of creativity at its greatest depth and width. Through such a system leadership has the ability to identify the opportunities and insights that support these assets at their highest level to enhance creative work, increase levels of collaboration and improve organizational performance.

There is no doubt that creativity is a contributing foundational factor to organizational growth and performance. Approaching organizational creativity through a system of assessment has the potential to provide leadership with rare glimpse into the inner workings of this very important contributor.

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Appendix A – Invitation & Application

Mr. Smith
President
ABC Company
Main Street USA
Buffalo, New York 14219

Re: Invitation to Participate in the Collective Creative Climate System Study (C³S)

Dear Mr. Smith:

You may recall my arrival in Western New York early last year. I'm happy to say that the business community has truly welcomed me with open arms. The introduction of the Entrepreneurial Operating System (eosworldwide.com) through my consultancy, Stitch Brand & Culture, is beginning to help business owners get more out of their businesses and my Master's work in creativity and change leadership at Buffalo State College is generating valuable insight into improving organizational performance.

This last point, insights into improving organizational performance, is why I am contacting you. As part of a Master's project, I am recruiting businesses that may be interested in participating in an eight-month-long, landmark study designed to improve organization's performance through an initiative called the Collective Creative Climate System study (C³S). While the elements of C³S are well proven, their combined impact on organizational performance has never been closely examined. In short, for the first time we will be evaluating the total contribution an assessment of leadership, creative climate (organizational actions, attitudes and behaviors), creative problem solving style preference (team interaction) and creative problem solving training can make in managing key measures of operational performance such as employee engagement, gross revenue, profitability, organic growth, employee job satisfaction and innovation.

You may be thinking, "Well, I've never considered creativity as an important part of our business model?" I'd ask you to consider this: The ability to generate novel solutions has been identified as a foundational skill in any organization. Without it, challenges are more difficult to overcome and new ideas are more difficult to generate. Creativity is the engine that gives birth to this new thinking. More importantly, in today's fast moving business world, where the velocity of change is ever increasing, organizations that embrace these foundational skills are more resilient, better at dealing with uncertainty, more profitable and, frankly, better places to work.

Participants in the study will receive the following:

1. Leadership Team evaluation and coaching.
2. Collaboration, innovation and creativity assessment describing areas of strength and weakness within the organizational climate.

3. Creative problem solving style assessment describing the problems solving preferences within teams.
4. Executive overview reviewing related data and implications.
5. Facilitated creative Problem Solving team training for organizational teams.
6. Executive leadership coaching and gap analysis in areas of climate requiring improvement.

The potential benefits of your participation may include:

1. Increased topline performance
2. Increased profitability
3. Increased focus and collaboration
4. Improved employee job satisfaction
5. Increased creative productivity
6. Better implementation of new systems
7. Successful transformation efforts
8. Efficient use of resources
9. Improved employee health and well-being
10. Higher performing teams and divisions
11. More positive work attitudes
12. Improved organizational learning
13. Enhanced leadership behaviors promoting change
14. Improved understanding of organization culture
15. Successful development of new products
16. More effective rewards and recognition programs
17. Improved acceptance and management of diversity
18. Decreased work stress

Third-party assessments (LPI, SOQ, VIEW and FourSight) will be made available free or at a substantially discounted costs and all study-related facilitation/coaching will be provided at no charge. Typically a study of this scope and the associated facilitating/coaching would cost more than \$100,000. Total cost for companies participating in the C³S will be determined by the number of participating employees (i.e. total cost for a 25-person organization can be as little as \$XXXX). Participating companies are required to provide access to company performance data however this data will be held unattributed to the participating company. Final data will be used in the completion of a Master's Project or thesis at Buffalo State College and may be used for further publication (again unattributed) in the future. I hope you'll take a few minutes to review the attached document and consider participating in the C³S. If you would like to be considered for participation, please fill out the attached application (**Attachment B**), mail or scan and email jimw@stitchbrandandculture.com. Application acceptance will close by midnight, 8/7/14. If you are interested in learning more please contact me at: 517.930.5215 or the email above.

Regards,
Jim Wardlaw
Chief Change Agent

Collaborative Creative Climate Study (C³S) Engagement

Budget

LPI/SOQ/FourSight Assessment Fees, Analysis and Reporting including:

- Assistance in the creation of the invitation memo to participants
- Setting up the links and access to the web-based SOQ
- Processing the CSV files
- Tabulating the data
- Creating Spider Graphs and Tables
- Creating a Full Narrative Summary Document
- Preparing Feedback Forms and Handouts
- Creating Comparison Norms (where appropriate)
- Diagnostic handouts and materials
- Up to five data cuts (additional cuts \$100 each)

LPI (Leadership Team Only; X2)

No Charge

Estimate of costs for SOQ assessments (X2)

\$XX.00 per participant

(Total costs will be adjusted for number of actual users)

Estimate of costs for FourSight assessments

\$XX.00 per participant

(Total costs will be adjusted for number of actual users)

SOQ Analysis and Report Preparation

No Charge

Professional Fees (onsite facilitations)

Scoping and Benchmarking	2 Hours	No Charge
Data collection	2 weeks	No Charge
SOQ Leadership Debrief	Half Day	No Charge
VIEW Leadership Debrief	Half Day	No Charge
SOQ Staff Debrief	Half Day	No Charge
CPS Staff Facilitation Training	Full Day	No Charge
Group Facilitation	1.5 Days	No Charge
Steering Committee Meetings	Ongoing	No Charge
Executive Debrief	Ongoing	No Charge
Leadership Coaching	Ongoing	No Charge
Qtrly Employee Sessions	Ongoing	No Charge

Optional Materials

<i>Introduction to Climate</i> booklet	\$XX.00 each
FourSight Tool Cards	\$XX.00 each
Foursight Learner's Kit	\$XX.00 each

Expectations

As a participating company in this study you will be expected to support the study in the following manner:

- 1) Assemble a steering committee.
- 2) Provide needed internal administrative support (CSV file, email distribution, etc.)
- 3) Attend meetings as outlined in work plan.
- 4) Share company performance data as described above.
- 5) Set aside time for employee participation as described above.
- 6) Support reasonable and appropriate actions, strategies and tactics that emerge from the process.
- 7) Support the study process within and among your leadership team (C-suite).
- 8) Pay associated and approved discounted fees associated with all third-party assessment.
- 9) Maintain confidentiality.

Research and Data Handling Policy

Note: The information we are collecting via the C³S will benefit your organization. Due to the sensitive nature of this data the rights, privacy, and dignity of every person who participates in this activity must be protected. To ensure the rights of those involved in this project, Stitch adheres to the following guidelines for research.

1. We conform to the Code of Ethics established by the American Psychological Association regarding the use of humans for research as well as the guidelines, policies and procedures of cooperating or sponsoring agencies relating to research.
2. Completing the LPI, SOQ and FourSight is voluntary. All data collected on any person are explained to them unless the data collection was specifically exempted from this provision (i.e., for research purposes only).
3. All information and data collected are confidential. Information about participants is not released to any other person, group or organization without expressed written consent.
1. We will use the data collected to create norms and to explore certain research questions. If the data is to be used for a published research study, no individual will be identified unless prior written approval is obtained.

Informed Consent

All employees will be required to sign an informed consent prior to participating in the study (Attachment A).

Application

Please fill out the study application with this document (Attachment B) and return to:

Please return the application to:

Jim Wardlaw

Stitch Brand & Culture

29 Irving Place

Buffalo, New York 14201

or by email:

jimw@stitchbrandandculture.com

Before August 7, 2104.

Study Application

Name of Company:

Address:

Name of CEO/President:

Name of primary contact (PC):

PC Phone _____ PC Email _____

Type of company (manufacturing, service, etc.)

Description

Gross revenue _____ No. of employees _____

No. of departments _____ No. of divisions _____

Why you would like to participate:

_____ **I approve the study** described above and will move forward on approving the researcher to conduct it within my company.

_____ **I do not approve the study** described above and will not move forward on approving the researcher to conduct it within my company.

CEO/President

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

**If you are unable to reach a member of the research team and have general questions or you have concerns or complaints about the research study, research team, or questions about your rights as a research subject, please contact Gina Game, IRB Administrator, Sponsored Programs Office/SUNY Buffalo State at gameg@buffalostate.edu or (716) 878-6700

Appendix B – Informed Consent**INFORMED CONSENT**
*Collaborative Creative Climate System Study***NAME AND TITLE OF RESEARCHER:**

Name/Title: Jim Wardlaw, Chief Change Agent, Stitch Brand & Culture
Department/Room Number: International Center for Studies in Creativity
Telephone Number: 517.930.5251
Email: jimw@stitchbrandandculture.com

STUDY LOCATION(S): XXXXX**PURPOSE OF STUDY**

The purpose of this research study is to evaluate the total contribution an understanding of leadership competency, creative climate (organizational actions, attitudes and behaviors), creative problem solving style preference (team interaction) and creative problem solving training can have on key measures of operational performance such as employee engagement, gross revenue, profitability, organic growth, employee job satisfaction and innovation.

SUBJECTS***Inclusion Requirements***

You are eligible to participate in this study if you are between 18-65 years of age and an employee of a for profit, privately held company with 25 to 100 employees in Western, New York.

PROCEDURES

The following procedures will occur: You may be asked to complete four assessments over the course of 8 months: 360 review of leadership (x2); an evaluation of organizational climate (x2); an evaluation of creative problem solving style and participate in a series of workshops (1 or 2 days) on creative problem solving process. Leadership team members will receive one-on-one coaching and feedback related to assessment results. Assessments will be available online through the Internet and available for 5 business days to complete.

RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

Risks are very minimal and no greater than those encountered in everyday life. No information will be directly attributed to an individual and held in confidence.

BENEFITS

You will gain a better understanding of the organizational climate and your own creative problem solving style, those of your colleagues and participate in efforts designed to improve your work climate, while learn new skills and techniques for problem solving.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Data Storage

- Data will be recorded confidentially, which means no one outside the research team, can identify you from the study data.
- Identifiable information about you will be kept with the study data.

All data will be retained for at least three years in compliance with federal regulations.

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS

If you have any comments, concerns, or questions regarding the conduct of this research, please contact the researcher at the top of this form.

If you are unable to contact the researcher and have general questions about your rights as a participant, please contact Gina Game, IRB Administrator, Sponsored Programs Office/SUNY Buffalo State at gameg@buffalostate.edu.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION STATEMENT

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to answer any question or discontinue your involvement at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you might otherwise be entitled. Your decision will not affect your future relationship with Buffalo State. Your signature below indicates that you have read the information in this informed consent and have had a chance to ask any questions that you have about the study.

SIGNATURES

Participant's Signature

Date

Researcher's Signature

Date

Appendix C – Sample Agenda

Agenda

Collaborative Creative Climate Study ABC Company

1. Study Overview
 - a. New Steering Committee Members?
 - b. Q & A
 - i. SOQ
 - ii. LPI
 - iii. VIEW/FourSight
2. Steering Committee Duties
 - a. Internal Employee Contact
 - i. Determine primary contact
 - b. Internal Monitoring/Q&A
 - c. Table Leadership during CPS
3. Pre- and Post-KPIs
 - a. Gross Revenue (year over year growth; 3 years)
 - b. Cost saving measures (number and revenue)
 - c. Profitability (year over year % change; 3 years)
 - d. Productivity (year over year; specific to company)
 - e. Job Satisfaction (question on the SOQ)
 - f. Others?
4. Steering Committee Meeting Schedule
5. Participation
 - a. Confirm email access for all participants
 - b. Determine number of participants
 - c. Acquire distribution list of participants
 - d. Distribute release
 - i. Email or hardcopy
 - e. Collection date for release
6. Study Announcement
 - a. Date
 - b. Method: email, meeting, etc.
7. Internal Communication
 - a. Lunch and learn
 - b. Webinar
 - c. Overview article and bio

Appendix D – SOQ Invitation

TO: ABC Company
FROM: Jim Wardlaw, Stitch Brand & Culture
DATE: 8.6.14
SUBJECT: Situational Outlook Questionnaire® (SOQ)

As part of your participation in the upcoming **Collaborative Creative Climate Study** please read the following information and complete the SOQ online. This is strictly a voluntary activity that will be a part of our work together. Your individual results will be confidential, and if they are shared, they will only be shared with you.

The purpose of having you complete the SOQ is to help identify how a number of dimensions for creativity, innovation and change exist within your working environment. There are no “right” or “wrong” answers on this questionnaire. You need to consider your immediate working environment (the way you currently see it) while answering the questions.

When completing the SOQ, be sure to answer all 53 items (Part A), as well as the three narrative questions (Part B). Our aim is to provide insights into what factors support change and the (ability to develop new and improved products and services or other purpose inserted here).

All the instructions that you need to complete the questionnaire are included on the website. Once you have completed the SOQ, simply click on the submit button at the bottom of the page.

The SOQ should take about 15-20 minutes to complete. The site will time out after 35 minutes so please access the link at a time when you can devote uninterrupted minutes to take the SOQ.

Here are the step-by-step instructions to complete the online SOQ. Please complete the online assessment no later than: **8.15.14**

1. Click on or paste the following link: **<http://www.soqonline.net/org>**
2. LOGIN: Please be aware the user name and password are case sensitive
 - a. **User Name: XXX**
 - b. **Password: XXXXXXXX**
3. Follow the directions online to complete the SOQ

If you have any questions or need technical assistance please contact info@soqonline.net or call 716-667-1324.

Please remember, your individual responses to this assessment will be confidential and will not be shared with anyone, as your individual responses go directly to CPSB, Inc.

Desired Outcome

By completing the SOQ, we hope to identify what factors are working well in your immediate working environment, what factors need some attention, and how we might improve the climate within your workplace. Please consider yourself an observer of your working environment, and answer the questions accordingly.

Appendix E – Newsletter Announcement

ABC Company Selected for Buffalo State Innovation Study

In partnership with Buffalo State College and Stitch Brand & Culture, ABC Company has been selected to participate in an eight-month-long study designed to enhance its climate for innovation and organizational performance. Called the Collaborative Creative Climate Study – the effort will assess organizational climate (what its like to work at ABC Company) and creative problem solving style (how ABC Company employees prefer to solve problems) combined with training in creative problem solving process. Employee teams will have an opportunity to apply what they learn in the development of new programs and initiatives designed to enhance the VoIP Supply work experience. Employee participation in the study is optional but all employees are encouraged to get involved. The study will kick off Wednesday, July 16th “on the lawn” at 11am with an employee question and answer session conducted by Jim Wardlaw, Chief Change Agent at Stitch Brand & Culture. A release will be required for each employee who would like to participate. Releases will be available at the session for signature and return to HR by July 18th. The first in a series of brief online assessments will be provided the week of July 21st. Look for emails inviting participation. All collected data will remain strictly confidential and never attributed to individual participants. Questions should be directed to Jim Wardlaw at jimw@stitchbrandandculture.com or by calling at XXX.XXX.XXXX.

Appendix F – Phase One Report

Appendix G – FourSight Invitation

Hello ABC Company Member,

Thanks for taking a few minutes to complete the first phase of our study, the Situational Outlook Questionnaire. The data is in and compiled. I'll look forward to sharing a few insights in the weeks to come. We're getting ready to launch the second component of Phase One, the FourSight assessment. FourSight is an assessment of Thinking Style Preference. You can learn more here: foursightonline.com.

For the purposes of our study, FourSight helps you understand your preference for certain aspects of problem solving. This is important for two reasons: 1) It generates higher self-awareness so that you can supplement areas of lesser preferences with the tools and techniques you'll be learning in the weeks to come; 2) It helps teams work more effectively together.

As before, your specific results will be held in confidence. No results will be directly attributed to individuals. We will review only aggregated data. Of course, we encourage you to share your results with one another as this knowledge and understanding can be very helpful in working more effectively as teams.

You should expect an invitation and link in the next few days. You will have one week to complete the assessment. It takes about 10 minutes.

Thanks Again. Please call Jim Wardlaw, (517) 930-5215 with any questions or concerns.

Regards,

Jim Wardlaw
Chief Change Agent
Stitch Brand & Culture

Appendix H – Foursight Leadership Presentation

Appendix I – Table Leader Training

Appendix J – Nov. Company Presentation

Appendix K – CPS Training

Appendix L – FourSight Assessment

Appendix M – CPS Outcome Summaries

Group 1: Trust and Openness

***In their shoes with nothing to lose...**

More personal communications with no email days, shadowing and role reversals. Breaking from the mold of cliques.

- Create 12 month schedule for ‘no email days’, shadowing, group lunches, onsite/offsite events, assessments, interpretation and reviews, and morning kickoff.
- Evaluate if we can balance day to day and remain effective.
- Explain the benefits of doing these to gain buy-in, generate/maintain engagement
- Research how-to eliminate cliques and forget the past.

***Together with booze.....**

Planning group lunches, on site events w/ or w/o booze, offsite team building and personal interactions, events, group meetings w/o executives.

- Determine budget, obtain approval, allocate cash (event assessments & guru).
- Event committee/owner - make sure all can participate.
- Mandatory participation.
- Determine how to measure success & timeline of evaluation period.

Profiles and Reviews....

Hire a guru with a clue to implement and interpret assessments related to the person in and away from office. Create schedule of group and individual reviews (peer & management).

- Who owns this?
- Ask network/contacts for experience with finding the right guru.
- Decide on format of the peer reviews and group reviews.
-

Star a new....

Daily fresh start with exercise and working individually to let go of the past.

- Research best practices

Post it inspired thoughts.....

Respect-talk to someone person, public/group peer review, superior & peer review, morning calisthenics (cleanse the mind), share meal times, planned group lunches, having a beer(s) with teammate, fresh start daily, let things go, eliminate cliques, thorough understanding of others job/shadowing/understanding, love language, profile reviews, hire expert, off site events, group/silus w/o execs, company wide gatherings

Group 2: Idea Time

Creating an environment that encourages creative thoughts.

The atmosphere is *not* static. A dynamic environment that includes but is not bound to:

- Rooms of different colors
- Varying mood lighting
- Listening to music
- Tasting different foods
- Internet Access
- Happy Hours
- Alternative Environments

Our team felt that Dynamic Environments will enable collaboration, spirited conversations, and more creative thoughts.

Participation can be encouraged by rewards such as

Collaborative Lunches

Monetary Rewards for After Hours Participation

Off Site Retreats

Pluses

- Team Chemistry
- Increased Involvement/ Participation
- Increased Awareness
- Building Relationships
- Increasing Employee Comfort/Confidence in Ideas
- Larger amount of ideas

Outcome Opportunity

- Increased GP
- Improved Processes
- Happier Customers
- Remove Barriers
- More Customer
- Bigger Paychecks
- Employee Retention
- Bonuses

Issues

- Time Constraints - Fixed by compensation for after hours participation
- Financial Concerns - low Cost vs outcome, utilize existing assets
- Insurance Related Issues - Off Hours, Off Location
- Participation - Incentives, Compensation
- Authority - Ask Nicely, Formulate a Plan, Be Entrepreneurial

The Landscape and Rewards that differ from "The Norm" environment will stimulate creative idea times.

Group Three: Debate

IWWMW create an atmosphere that allows for more productive debate?

What I now see myself doing:

Communication more face to face versus electronic methods.

Coming out of your comfort zone to be able to listen to other peoples ideas

- * More adaptable
- * Open-minded

Getting involved in cross-training to be more seasoned within the company.

- * Well rounded
- * Tolerant
- * Better teamwork (Better debates)
- * Start to finish

Lead by example to get more onboard with ideas

- * Encourage debate
- * Creating a wish list
- * Suggestion Box

Exploring alternative communication methods

- * Face to Face
- * Discussion
- * Human Interaction

Participation Sign up sheet

- * Concepts of Debate
- * Best Practices
- * Methods Of Communication

Group Four: Risk-taking

IWMMW create an atmosphere of risk-taking?

Trust is the first building block to risk-taking. In order to trust someone you need to build a personal relationship. To reach this goal, we will do:

- 1) One on One informal meetings
- 2) Group lunches
- 3) Team building exercises

These processes might lead to a greater feeling of family in the office, discovering of common likes and dislikes, and build long lasting relationships. For this to work, there would be a need of flexibility by company and individual. Coverage would need to put in place for essential job activities for the team building. For the One on One and Group lunch, individuals would need to disrupt their normal lunch routines to be available.

From a business perspective, we would build trust through better understanding what our counterparts do on a day to day basis. To reach this goal, we will do:

- 1) Department Days
 - A) Present to the entire company what your company function is and how it impacts how we do business
 - B) View into the day to day working of each position within the department
 - C) Receive feedback from the non presenting departments

By learning and understanding what each department's expectations and thought processes are, it will allow for greater risk taking. Like the team building exercises, appropriate coverage or appropriate customer expectations would need to be put in place.

Group 5: Challenge and Involvement

How might we create a greater level of challenge and involvement?

- - Knowing our role, learning our priorities based on the companies priorities
- -Having a designated back up, learning the duties of others so if someone is out then they will have someone to cover a few daily tasks while they are out. (there should be guidelines implanted so that the back-up will do only what is necessary and does not exceed tasks or duties)
- - Top 5 cards, setting daily/weekly goals to accomplish
- -Setting up job shadowing to better understand the roles of others in the company to better understand why they received certain incentives and just to better understand the company as a whole
- - Quarterly reviews to help each employee see where they sit within the company, maybe they realize they are taking on too much, not enough, etc.

Once the goals are met, then incentives and rewards could be established.

- -Off-site work days or ½ days, have departments be able to meet at a central location and have goals set up for that day to accomplish and report back with.
- -Incentive programs for all departments
- -Bring back “freaky Friday” just to keep us moving and thinking

CPS Follow-Up Memo

Dear ABC Company Team Members,

Things are going great with the Buffalo State Study that Jim Wardlaw is conducting here at ABC Company. As you know, we just completed the Creative Problem Solving section of the study. Your participation was incredibly valuable and productive.

If you recall, we focused our efforts in five areas (dimensions) of climate:

- Idea Time – Finding more time to for generating ideas.
- Challenge and Involvement – Being more inclusive in our decision making.
- Trust and Openness – Emotionally safe in relationships.
- Debate – Managing differing opinions.
- Risk Taking – Handling uncertainty and ambiguity.

We generated 67 ideas for improving our creative climate. Jim tells me that he was really impressed with our effort and I couldn't be prouder. Really great work everyone. I look forward to implementing many of your suggestions. In fact, I had a chance to meet with Jim last week and we have selected a few of your ideas to get things rolling. In the next few weeks I'd like to start:

Climate Committee – First and foremost, we need to form a small committee of volunteers to help coordinate and develop our efforts. Please email me if you'd like to help.

Personal History Lunches – We'd like to randomly pair people up for a company-sponsored lunch. At the lunch you'll be asked to interview each other using a list of questions designed to get to know you a little better. When you return to the office, we'll post your answers on the wall along with a "selfie" photo commemorating event.

Job Shadowing – We're going to start having each of you spend a couple hours a month job shadowing in various departments around the office. This should help everyone get a better sense of what each of us does day-to-day.

Clarity Breaks – We'd like to find a way to carve out time for generating new ideas. Starting in March we're going to schedule "An Hour of Power" each week were we put some time into new ideas.

These are just a few of the things we have in store. And of course, we're open to more ideas, so keep them coming.

Also, don't forget that we have folks with tools and training in Creative Problem Solving available to help you. If you need to brainstorm some new ideas, please make sure to call on them to assist.

- Team Leader One

- Team Leader Two
- Team Leader Three
- Team Leader Four
- Team Leader Five

Lastly, as part of the study, we'll be taking the first assessment (the SOQ) once more. You'll be receiving notification in the coming week. Look for an email from Jim Wardlaw and HR with instructions.

Thanks for all your support. We have a great company filled with great people. Looking forward to an even greater year.

Thanks

President