BASIC ASSUMPTIONS AND THE INTERNAL INTEGRATIVE PROCESS AS DEFINED BY COMMUNICATION CHOICES: AN INQUIRY INTO ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

by
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ABSTRACT

An investigation of organizational culture based upon the work of Edgar Schein, this paper explores the components of both basic assumptions and internal integration, with communication choices being used as the basis for internal integration. Research questions focus on consistency of choice in both areas, basic assumptions and communication choices. High levels of consistent choice lend support to the idea that culture is transmitted through internal integrative processes defined by communication choices. Subjects are drawn from a well-known corporation in the Newark, Delaware area. Data collection is accomplished through the administration of a questionnaire.
INTRODUCTION

Organizational culture is a relatively new field of study which, broadly speaking, explores various aspects of socialization, communication styles as well as values and beliefs of organizations. It has opened up a wide range of ideas and has generated many topics for discussion and research. While the study of organizational culture itself is new, the roots of this field of study can be traced back to the early work of researchers in the fields of anthropology and sociology.

Researchers currently engaged in the study of organizational culture represent a number of different academic areas such as cultural anthropology, business administration, communication, and psychology. Given the varied backgrounds and experiences of the individual researchers, there are many different approaches to the subject and each has its strong proponents.

This divergence of thought is both a strength and a weakness. It is a strength because the field is open to innovative thought and exciting research possibilities. Yet this very divergence of approach and thought is a weakness because there appears to be very little...
agreement on even the most basic of definitions. Despite these differences, researchers are drawn to the study of this phenomenon because it provides another means by which they can explore and better understand organizations.

The issue of communication within organizations as a conveyor of its culture is very important to any research effort in this field. Just as anthropological study has reported on the importance of communication through rituals, songs, and myths and stories to keep alive the norms, beliefs, and values of preliterate societies, the same need for explanation of what is expected of individuals is an important component of literate societies as well. Unlike the preliterate groups, our groups have access to a greater number of communication media. The messages are still important, but the choice of how to communicate the message has multiplied, given the advances of technology.

By taking the position that organizations develop unique cultures, then one must also acknowledge that communication of some type is taking place. Through communication, the cultural expectations, i.e. "socializations," are passed along. This research is
grounded in the idea that organizations do create unique cultures and that in order for the culture to be understood by those within it, there should be some consistent means of communicating what is held to be important for membership. Consistency is key to this research effort; consistency in overall understanding of basic assumptions and consistency in communication choices as manifestations of appropriate (to the organization) behavior.

This study is designed to assess the presence and degree of this consistency, as well as whether it can be measured by traditional paper and pencil instrumentation. Toward these ends, a questionnaire has been designed for data collection within an organizational setting. The purpose of this instrument is two-fold: (1) to ask respondents what they believe the basic assumptions of their organization to be; and, (2) to ask respondents what types of communication media choices they make during the work day.

The first set of questions is an inquiry into cultural beliefs. For a culture to exist, there must be some basic understanding of what the culture is. The second set of questions explores what communication styles are used. If there are consistent beliefs about the culture, there
should be an understanding of how one is to behave and what behaviors are deemed appropriate. Communication media choices should generate consistent responses as they can be considered a manifestation of what is culturally appropriate. Whether such consistency exists is the main inquiry of this study.
Chapter 1

OVERVIEW OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Introduction

The term "corporate culture" has become very popular in the past decade. According to ABI-Inform, the computerized index of business journals and periodicals, in the time span between January, 1987, and January, 1990, there have been a total of 1,677 articles in which the term corporate culture appears. Scanning of the abstracts, however, quickly shows that the term is used to define many different aspects of an organization.

Business Week (January 20, 1986) lists corporate culture as one of the fads of the 1980's. From this perspective, corporate culture may be held as a "quick fix" for organizations perceived to be in need of help. Despite warnings to the contrary, in such well received books as Deal and Kennedy's Corporate Culture and Peters and Waterman's In Search of Excellence, there appears to exist the misunderstanding that corporate culture is something that can be easily redefined and manipulated.
From the academic perspective, however, the study of culture within an organization is built upon a body of work that has ties back to the anthropological and sociological studies of the 1950s. Rather than adopting the term corporate culture, the term "organizational culture" introduced by Pettigrew (1979) will be used. It is inclusive rather than exclusive in that any organization may be the focus of study, not only corporations.

Hofstede, Neuijen, Ohayv and Sanders (1990) indicate that while they find no consensus about the definition of organizational/corporate culture, there do appear to be six characteristics most authors of organizational/corporate culture will agree upon. Culture is (1) holistic, (2) historically determined, (3) related to anthropological concepts, (4) socially constructed, (5) soft, and (6) difficult to change. They posit that, in the past, each of the above have been "separately recognized" in the literature; but, only recently have all six characteristics been integrated into one construct. They believe that the integration is what is new about the study of organizational culture.
Different Perspectives of Organizational Culture

The academic literature on the subject of organizational culture is varied; and, indeed, there appears to be no universally accepted definition of organizational culture. For some, the various areas of research on the topic can be envisioned as falling on a continuum that encompasses a functionalist perspective which, at one extreme, treats organizational culture as a tool for management (Kilmann & Saxton, 1983; Wilkins and Ouchi, 1983). At the other extreme, an interpretive perspective views organizations as cultures and values the symbolic interpretation of what occurs in organizational life (Smith and Eisenberg, 1987; Trice and Beyer, 1984; Zalesny and Farace, 1987).

As discussed in Jablin, Putnam, Roberts, & Porter (1987), one can explore culture as: (1) an external variable (Hofstede 1980); (2) an internal variable (Deal and Kennedy, 1982; Peters and Waterman, 1982; Smircich, 1983; Schein, 1985); (3) knowledge structures; (4) patterns of discourse (Donnellon, Gray, and Bougon, 1986); and/or (5) a reflection of the mind's unconscious operations (Smith and Simmons 1983; Morgan, 1986).
The functionalist perspective would lean toward some type of quantification in order to judge results brought about by change, as well as enabling replication of the process (Kilmann and Saxton, 1983). The interpretive perspective lends itself to research that allows for the careful reporting of observations (Morgan and Smircich, 1980). As participant/observer, or observer only, the researcher is responsible for gathering information which will lead to a better understanding of the unique aspects which form the culture of the organization.

In their book, *Reframing Organizational Culture*, Frost, Moore, Louis, Lundberg, and Martin (1991) discuss three perspectives which offer yet other ways of thinking about organizational culture. They are: (1) the integration perspective in which organization-wide consensus and consistency are the definitive aspects to understanding culture; (2) the differentiation perspective in which subcultures have come to consensus, and that their consensus is inconsistent with the organization as a whole; and, (3) the fragmentation perspective which holds that there is no consensus and that ambiguity exists and must be acknowledged. As can be expected with such diverse interests, each has its proponents; and, given the richness of these diverse
perspectives, there are many different and conflicting ideas as to how one should approach research (Martin, 1992).

With the functionalist and interpretive perspectives representing the polar ends of a continuum; and integrative, differentiation, and fragmentation perspectives representing yet another aspect of defining organizational culture, the focus of this research is based on an approach that falls somewhere midpoint between functionalist and interpretive perspective and is very much within the integrative school of thought. Edgar Schein's work (1985) provides the theoretical foundation upon which this research is developed.

Schein views culture as:

a pattern of basic assumptions—invented, discovered, or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptations and internal integration—that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems. (1985, p. 9)
Organizational Culture and Communication

From the functionalist perspective, communication is viewed as movement and fidelity of the message which takes precedence over content and meaning. Communication can be viewed as a "tangible substance" that flows within the organization (Putnam, 1983).

The interpretive perspective will look to interactions of individuals within the organization to try to find meaning not only in the content of a message, but also in the context of the message. What is said is certainly important, but the power of the context in which the message is sent is also taken as extremely important to the interaction (Putnam, 1983; Wood, 1982; Watzlawick, Bavelas, & Jackson, 1967; McCall & Simmons, 1978).

The integrative perspective develops the idea that consensus should be organization wide and that there should be consistency "across the various manifestations of culture" (Frost, et al., p. 8). Simply put, there should be an understanding of how to do things in an appropriate manner. How to communicate information within the organization in the appropriate manner most certainly falls into this perspective.
Schein's (1985) term "internal integration" embraces the concepts of how the message is sent, the context in which it is sent, and the need for consistency. To have a viable organization, according to Schein, there must be strong internal integration, i.e., an understanding of what makes the organization work based on the cultural expectations of that organization. In order for communication to be understood, both implicitly and explicitly, there must be a shared understanding of the assumptions by which the organization works (Bartlett and Ghoshal, 1990), which is a key concept in the integration perspective.

Just as there is no agreement on a definitive definition of organizational culture, there is also no definitive definition that captures the concept of what an organization is. Like culture, however, there are some characteristics that organizations may share. These characteristics include the idea that an organization is a group of groups, whose membership shares, to some degree, an understanding about such things as: membership requirements; the hierarchy of authority; some type of specialization of labor; the goals, procedures and norms which find their basis in shared values; as well
as a shared identification with and affiliation to the organization. There are boundaries which help to delineate what is part of the organization and what is not. In order to exist, an organization must have developed a system by which all involved have some understanding of the above characteristics, i.e., internal integration.

In addition, organizations generally have two different levels of communication: the formal or public level, and the informal level. The former is embodied in documents that can be open to public scrutiny, such as yearly financial reports, the chart of the organizational hierarchy, and procedural handbooks. Formalized rituals such as end-of-year reports given by the chief executive officer, or programs or awards dinners also fall into this realm. This type of communication is generally explicit in nature.

Informal communication, on the other hand, allows participants in the organization to "learn the ropes" by becoming aware of the informal rites and rituals of the organization (Deal & Kennedy, 1982). This learning process is not written in any employee handbook. Rather, it is learned through observation, by acknowledging who has what type of power (Bacharach & Lawler,
1980; French & Raven, 1959; Blau, 1963; Gouldner, 1954), and by finding out who "knows" how to get things done. This type of communication can be either implicit or explicit. Formally articulating the philosophy of an organization is an example of explicit communication that is helpful in defining how things should work (Hatvany & Pucik, 1981). An example of informal, implicit communication concerning "how things work" could be the understanding that dress is formal in an organization that is conservative.

In understanding organizational values, an individual has the opportunity to "try to determine whether there are irreconcilable mismatches between the prospective corporate culture and one's personal beliefs and values" (Sathe, 1983; O'Reilly, Chatman & Caldwell, 1991). By acknowledging achievements of individuals through rituals or rites, the organization's culture is subtly reinforcing behavior which is valued (Kantor, 1988; Deal & Kennedy, 1982; Peters & Waterman, 1982).

Understanding "how things work" is made possible through communication; but developing a more complete understanding of
what is being communicated is made possible through a shared culture--the two are inextricably wound.

What is being addressed is not whether organizational culture can be changed or should be changed; but rather: (1) whether organizational members make consistent choices concerning basic assumptions about their organization; and, (2) whether communication media choices are consistently chosen within the organization. Since the need for a common language and shared conceptual categories is an important aspect of organizational culture (see page 19), communication choices will provide an important means of exploring the issue of internal integration which, according to Schein, is a necessary condition for the accomplishments of organizational goals. Simply stated, has the culture, based on shared assumptions, effectively communicated what is valued; and, do the means through which information is communicated reflect those values?
Chapter 2

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS: A NEW APPROACH

Background

Edgar Schein's work, *Organizational Culture and Leadership* (1985), will be used as the foundation for this research. In his book's preface, Schein gives credit and thanks to the early scholars in the fields of anthropology, sociology, social psychology, and clinical psychology for the theoretical foundations upon which he has since developed his own theoretical perspective. Schein has proposed a number of different levels of culture, as well as identifying variables that must be integrated within an organization if that organization is to survive. Just as early anthropologists attempted to make sense of exotic cultures by observation and ethnographic study, Schein suggests that to understand the organizational culture, one must understand all of its levels.
Rationale for Theoretical Choice

Schein is one of the few academic researchers in the area of organizational culture to present a well-developed theoretical framework that is based on observation and ethnographic study. As a result, he is one of the most respected scholars in the area of organizational culture. His methodology is rigorous and allows for in-depth study of the group under scrutiny (an approach supported by Morgan and Smircich, 1980, p. 498).

His assertion that culture is "a learned product of group experience which is found only where there is a definable group with a significant history" (Schein, p. 7) allows the researcher to look at the organization as a holistic cultural entity, and/or to investigate subcultures that may be a significant part of the overall organizational culture.
Schein's Perspective:

The Manifestations of Culture

Schein sees culture as a dynamic process that provides meaning to situations a group encounters. People immersed in the culture of an organization will pattern their responses to situations based upon the core beliefs of the culture (Stoner, 1991). Consequently, culture provides an integrated perspective for the present, a method of coping with the future, and an explanation of the past. A strong organizational culture defines organizational members as who and what they are; where they came from, as well as what they hope to become.

In trying to understand and illuminate the culture of a particular organization, Schein cautions that there are no magic questions that can be asked. There are no simple ways of discerning what the underlying assumptions are that create a particular culture. He cautions against confusing parts of observed culture with the whole of the culture. By that he means that individuals can observe an organization, and based on their own perceptions and biases, report differently on any one aspect of the organizational culture.
For example, depending upon the perceptions and biases of the observer, an organization that values openness and frankness in communication could be correctly described either as a place where being straightforward is valued or, alternatively, as a place where confrontational behavior is the norm. To overcome that potential pitfall, Schein states that the researcher must dig below the easily observable; that a greater depth of knowledge about the organization and its beliefs is a dimension of organizational culture that demands attention. He states,

We must be careful not to assume that culture reveals itself easily, partly because we rarely know exactly what we are looking for, partly because underlying patterns are hard to discern, and partly because underlying patterns are so taken for granted that they are likely to be invisible to the insiders as well. (Schein, p. 47)

Schein's own background and preference focus on being a clinician. As a hired consultant, he not only observes, but participates in the organization. Through his involvement with various organizations, he has developed a classification of the types of
questions that he believes to be vital when investigating basic underlying assumptions of an organization's culture. He proposes three levels of culture that must be investigated to understand better the culture being observed.

Artifacts refer to those things that are seen and heard. Artifacts encompass all the visible elements of an organization, from artwork on the walls to the use of space and color, to the visible and audible behaviors of those involved in the organization.

Values are less easily discerned. This level deals with how well a value system is applied to the everyday working of an organization. Values are tested in the organization. Schein points out that some organizations will give lip service to a certain value, but not adhere to the behavior implied by the value. However, those values that work well for the organization are passed along and often become part of the third level.

Basic Underlying Assumptions are the most difficult of the three levels to discern. Often, the basic underlying assumptions are the guiding force in how an organization will run, but they are hard to pinpoint because they are a hidden, tacit part of organizational life.
In addition to these three levels of culture, organizations must develop communication styles and strategies which are consistent with its culture. These two areas of concern are: (1) external adaptations, which consist of strategies that allow the organization to deal with the external environment; and (2) internal integration, the means by which culture is communicated within the organization.

Schein further asserts that organizational culture is influenced by other significant factors: e.g., the culture-at-large and the business environment. Each of these factors will have an impact on how the organization develops, how it is run, how it promotes and utilizes communication processes, and how it perceives itself in its environment.

In what follows, an explanation of Schein's methodology is given, beginning with the culture-at-large.
Overview of Schein's Model

Influence of the Culture-at-Large

Culture is so much a part of life that it is almost a hidden component, difficult to see and subtle in its influence. However, cultures share universal concerns. These pertain to life cycles, bodily care, relationship with others, relationship to the supernatural, and beliefs about human nature (Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck 1961; Geertz, 1973; Condon and Yousef, 1976). Every culture creates its own method of dealing with these universals and these methods are manifested in two distinct ways:

1. **Concrete culture**, which encompasses the everyday behaviors which are visible and observable; and
2. **Cognitive culture**, those values and thoughts people share that characterize the unique cultural beliefs of the group (Sarbaugh, 1979).

Falling within the realm of cognitive culture is the art of communication, with language being the most significant symbol of cognitive culture. Communication provides a primary vehicle for the transmission of information from generation to generation (Prosser, 1978).
The culture-at-large influences, both concretely and cognitively, the behaviors, values, and beliefs of a society. Similarly, the organizational culture provides a framework based on basic assumptions and values that will maintain the culture within the organization. As all organizations exist within a context, those who would investigate an organization's culture, must recognize the potential for influence of the culture-at-large. In Japan, for example, there is the cultural belief that harmony of the group, be it family or community, is more important than the needs of the individual. This cultural norm has been absorbed into Japanese organizations. The larger culture is pervasive, yet we rarely consider its influence in our day-to-day activities. Like a fish out of water, the only time the impact of culture is noticed is when we find ourselves out of our familiar element. Then our assumptions of "how to do things" comes under scrutiny.

Given this influence, the researcher adds to this conundrum by being a member of the culture at large. The researcher has almost certainly absorbed cultural assumptions and beliefs. Because of this cultural bias, the fine eye of the researcher will be forced to observe
the organization through a veil. The observer may not be able to "see" the basic assumptions so pivotal to the organization's culture, because those assumptions are part of the observer's basic assumptions. They may not stand out and can be in danger of being overlooked.

**Influence of the Business Environment**

While the culture-at-large provides subtle influences on the organization, pressures of the prevailing economic environment can also influence the manner in which an organization is run. Schein's term "external adaptation" encompasses the idea that the external business environment will have an impact on the organization, and the organization must have adaptive strategies. For example, companies that perceived of themselves as "paternalistic," "one big happy family," or "teammates" might rethink their strategies for survival during economic downturns.

Current economic conditions have been cited as reason for many organizations to turn to "downsizing" as a response strategy. Organizations that were once considered places of lifetime employment have made choices that include the cutting of entire levels of corporate hierarchies as a means of becoming "lean and mean." Similarly,
encouraging of early retirement throughout the organization is another strategy that has been employed. Whatever strategy is chosen, a company may be forced to redefine what is valued, given their economic health, and such a redefinition may influence the prevailing culture.

Schein's Five Dimensions for External Adaptation

In order to respond effectively to the business environment, which is prone to cyclical swings due to a variety of factors (e.g., economic, social, political), Schein asserts there must be consensus on the following five dimensions which are critical for an organization to survive.

Consensus on Mission and Strategy. Every organization must develop a core mission, i.e., its reason to be. In this area there are two important issues: (1) how the organization proposes to survive given the opportunities and constraints of its environment, and (2) how those within the organization create an identity for themselves as a group. In order to survive, an organization must have consensus on this core issue.
Consensus on Goals. Once consensus on the core mission is achieved, there must be further consensus on how that mission is to be realized. Often the core mission is defined in terms that are ambiguous and can lead to multiple interpretations. There must be a shared understanding via shared language that will move the organization from the abstraction of a mission statement to the reality of how to go about the actual business of producing and successfully selling a product or service. Not only must there be consensus on goals, but also an understanding and consensus on how the goals will be met.

Consensus on Means. The means by which goals will be met encompass such concerns as financing, allocation of resources, design of tasks, division of labor, and systems of communication. On a deeper level, these means also encompasses how an organization will go about achieving goals based on its "identity." Even when producing similar goods, the means for achieving goals will have a different orientation in a company that identifies itself as being technologically innovative, as opposed to one that defines itself in terms of superior customer service.
Consensus on Measuring Results. The organization must develop consensus on how to judge its own performance. This can range from "going with one's gut feelings" to the gathering and study of "hard data" such as market research or volume of actual sales. In organizations with different levels of hierarchy or different functional areas, tensions can develop on how to measure successes or failures. Consensus on how to evaluate information in complex situations is necessary for an organization if it is to develop the means to remedy problems.

Consensus on Remedial Strategies. Simply stated, consensus must be reached when an organization is faced with a changing situation. Two crucial questions must be addressed: (1) What must we do? and (2) how do we do it? Simple questions, to ask but ones not easily answered in times of change.

The purpose of external adaptations is to move from the abstract to the concrete--from the statement of a core mission to the implementation of strategies which will allow the core mission to be realized. As Schein points out, appropriate external adaptations are part of a healthy organizational culture.
The accomplishment of the organization's goals, even though they are directed toward the outside, requires the creation of a structure inside the group to make that accomplishment possible. The kind of internal structure that evolves, the way in which roles, resources, and tasks are allocated, will ultimately reflect both the externally oriented intentions of the founders and the internal dynamics of the members (Schein, p. 57).

Not only must an organization have strategies that deal with external adaptation, "it's reason for being," but there must also exist strategies for what Schein calls internal integration. These strategies help to create the "togetherness" that is necessary for the accomplishment of goals. They provide for the transmission of explicit and implicit information. According to Schein, six areas of concern must be met in order for an organization to achieve internal integration.
Schein's Dimensions of Internal Integration

Common Language and Conceptual Categories. In order to function within the organization, there must be an established system of communication that allows for shared interpretation of what is being said and what is going on. Semantic agreement on abstract terms such as "high quality" or "conflict" fall into this category. This concept covers such variables as a common language which is mutually understood, behavioral norms, and common agreement on what issues are facing the organization. Schein notes that there must be agreement as to these goals, even though there might well be disagreement as to how the goals are to be met.

For example, an organization might inculcate the cultural norm that expects intense competition between employees. Not only must one watch out for one's competitors on the outside, one must also beware of competitors on the inside. This cultural norm might be defined as a realistic way of becoming the best competitor in a highly competitive environment. In this scenario, competition is not only a part of the environment, it is a part of the organization as well.
Conversely, the intensity of competition from the environment may create an internal belief that everyone pulls together so that the organization prospers and the individual will be justly rewarded for being a good team member. As long as the cultural belief is internally integrated, either norm may prove to be extremely successful. Problems develop when an individual from one cultural norm moves into an organization espousing the other. Unless the individual is able to discern the underlying belief of the organization, there is every likelihood that the match between individual and organization will not be satisfactory.

**Group Boundaries and Criteria for Inclusion and Exclusion.**

Internal integration encompasses membership criteria, that is, who will make a good organizational member. Once in an organization, members will find that there are criteria for inclusion in groups, as well as exclusion from groups. One's educational background may be used as a criterion for advancement in one organization, while in another, one's experience in the field is held to be of greater importance. When boundaries become rigidly set, there is the danger
of developing a "them" and "us" mentality, where internal groups fight over resources and strive for power.

**Power and Status.** Internal integration includes networks, cliques, and coalitions. It encompasses the concept of power and status in the organization, that is, who gets it, how it is maintained, and how it is delegated. All of these variables play a role in the culture of the organization. While there is the formal and publicly acknowledged means of indicating who has power and status via organizational charts, in-house publications, or other formally sanctioned means of communication, there also are the informal means of communicating who has power and status within the organization. Asking one of the long-time employees how to go about getting supplies, or referring to one of the secretaries who is considered very knowledgeable about how things are done are examples of the informal nature of internal integration.

Based on the hierarchical breakdown of the organization, neither the "old-timer" nor the secretary may have a great deal of status. However, informally, they are perceived as having a combination of legitimate, information, and/or expert power. They are
perceived as having superior knowledge, that is, they know how to get things done, they know who to go to for help, and, by virtue of their expertise, they have the affirmation of others that allow them to stay in these positions of power. They can be the personifications of internal integration and, as such, these organizational members play an important role. By socializing newcomers with stories about the history of the organization and its heroes, as well as job-related information, they are contributing to the integrative process so necessary for a strong organizational culture.

Intimacy, Friendship and Love. Within the day-to-day realities of a working organization, there must be an understanding of what comprises acceptable behavior. While the appropriateness of office romances certainly falls into this area, there are the more important and subtle questions of how individuals are expected to react to others within the organization. The values of the founder can often have an impact in this area. Choices concerning formality, openness, frankness, competitiveness, individual work as opposed to team work are some of the many issues in this area. The manner in which people are expected to respond to one another will
create a communication system that is unique to the organization; e.g., an organization where internal confrontation between individuals is the norm, but presenting a united front to an outsider is also a norm.

**Rewards and Punishments.** According to Schein, each group must know what constitutes "heroic" or "sinful" behavior in order to reward someone with resources, power, or status, or to remove previous rewards. For those who refuse to "repent," the ultimate punishment is "excommunication."

Understanding is crucial for the organizational member. For example, even though an organization may formally laud the "whistle-blower," the person who actually blows the whistle may find an informal, but potent, censuring of the action. In such a case, the organization's publicly acknowledged value is not a true representation of the working cultural norms that are a part of its internal integration. Additionally, the functioning of the internal integration process in such a case will make clear to organization members the consequences of one's actions, regardless of formal statements to the contrary.
Ideology and "Religion." In order to survive unexplainable events, an organization must have an ideology to see it through hard times. Because an organization cannot control all aspects of its external environment, it must deal with unpredictable forces. Like religious beliefs that help to explain the unexplainable, an organization's ideology will help make sense of change or unpredictable markets. Often this will take the form of storytelling; that is, how the organization survived past challenges, whether positive or negative in nature.

The use of stories or myths often indicates how challenges to the organization forced an examination of basic assumptions and values. The ideology of an organization often helps to create the core mission, as well as the means by which the organization tries to accomplish those goals. Stories provide a means of explaining what is expected of an employee. They exemplify what is valued and what is not. While the ideology of an organization is often stated in a formal core mission statement, it is only when the actions of the organization support the articulated values that one can state there is consistency between what is held to be important and what is actually important.
Schein asserts that stories and myths do more than present a framework within which one may work. They also serve to prevent the anxiety that individuals feel when confronted with "cognitive uncertainty." Just as the culture-at-large helps individuals to know how to go about their daily lives in an appropriate manner, the ideology of the organization fulfills a similar need. The individual uses this ideology to filter out the unnecessary and focus on those things that are relevant.

Implied in the above is the need for consistency between what is said and what is done. For example, to say that a particular attribute, such as openness, is valued, but then to curtail the implementation of that attribute is an example of inconsistency. For a strong culture to develop, there must first exist an understanding of what the term "openness" means in the particular organization. Subsequently, there must exist a consistency between what is said to be valued and how it is implemented; that is, between what is formally espoused and what actually occurs. Internal integration is the reflection of such consistency.
The process by which information is internally integrated is via communication. Each of Schein's six dimensions for internal integration rely on implicit and/or explicit communication; what is being communicated and how is it being communicated. The use of common symbols within the culture is basic to communication. Sarbaugh uses the term "code" and posits "the code, both verbal and nonverbal, which each participant uses to elicit meanings in the other(s), is undoubtedly one of the most critical variables in all communication situations" (p. 34 1979). Through communication, one comes to understand such concepts as: group boundaries with their attendant inclusive and exclusive features; power and status, who has it and how it works; appropriate behavior in terms of intimacy, friendship, and love within the culture; the conviction of the culture's ideology. Through communication, rewards are allocated. Put succinctly, communication is the means through which culture exists.
The Three Levels of Schein's Model

Taking all the above into consideration, as well as acknowledging the real possibility of researcher bias, it is obvious that defining an organization's culture is not simply a matter of taking a look around and reporting what is observed.

To overcome this potential myopia, Schein's model provides the means that allow the researcher to move from the obvious to the more difficult task of identifying the shared underlying basic assumptions which form the foundation for an organization's culture. These consist of three distinct levels.

Level one: Artifact

This is the most obvious and easily observed level, encompassing all things seen and heard. The physical surroundings, style of dress, and manner of addressing colleagues are a few of the aspects inherent to this level. Because it is so easy to form impressions when confronted with this level, Schein cautions the researcher to avoid assigning either too much or too little value to what is being perceived. Rather, the researcher should take note of
what is being observed, but try to avoid making assumptions about the organization's culture based only on these first impressions.

Level two: Values

Organizational values "reflects someone's original values" (Schein, p. 15, 1985), often those of the founder of the organization. They are the verbalization of what "ought" to be done in the organization. In dealing with tasks or a new issue, those in the organization must decide how to approach the situation. At this point, the values of the organization come into play. What has worked before, and what valued actions might we employ, are questions that provide for two tests necessary of organizational values: (1) are they testable in the physical environment, and (2) are they testable by social consensus?

Schein explains that there is a difference between values and basic assumptions. If the founder of an organization values a certain problem-solving technique, and it proves to be successful, others in the organization will value that same technique. When, however, the technique fails because of some change in the environment, that value may come under scrutiny. The group must then come to some type of
social consensus and decide whether the technique really is a value to be embraced by the organization. The potential for debate and change exist at this level. If a value consistently proves to be the correct course of action, it may undergo a process of "cognitive transformation" (Schein, 1985, p. 16) and become part of the basic assumptions of the organization. Once a value is accepted as a basic, core assumption, it moves beyond debate, it becomes an integral part of the organizational culture. So much so, that it might be hard to verbalize because everyone simply "knows" that certain expectations exist.

A difficulty that arises in investigating values in an organizational context is that of contradiction, which exists when a value is expressed, but not enacted. Values espoused should be consistent with actions taken on a daily basis in order for a culture to remain viable. If there are perceived inconsistencies, the researcher must attempt to make sense of what is being observed and why the inconsistency exists. Statements of how the organization wishes to be perceived or hopes to become in the future may be made despite the inconsistency between what is being said and what is actually being done.
Level three: Basic Assumptions

The need to understand the basic assumptions is the next logical level of inquiry. This level is the most difficult to discern because the assumptions basic to the organization's culture are deeply embedded, taken for granted and thus are often invisible. Acknowledging what Argyris (1975) identifies as "theories-in-use," Schein goes on to develop and identify the term basic assumptions as "the implicit assumptions that actually guide behavior, that tell group members how to perceive, think about and feel about things" (Schein, 1985, p. 18). They guide actions and create perceptions. The person who is seen gazing out the window instead of working diligently at a desk, depending upon the cultural orientation of the organization, maybe perceived as either wasting valuable company time or using valuable company time in a creative manner. One assumption is that no work is being accomplished; the other is that a great deal of work is in process. How one is supposed to "do work" is influenced by the organization's culture, which is shaped by its basic assumptions.
Investigating the Three Levels

Schein proposes that the researcher investigate basic assumptions through a series of questions based on the following dimensions:

1. Humanity's relationship to nature
2. The nature of reality and truth
   a. Assumptions about time
   b. Assumptions about space
3. The nature of human nature
4. The nature of human activity
5. The nature of human relationships.

These dimensions, similar to those concerning the culture-at-large, provide the framework within which one can begin to understand the foundation of an organization's culture.

Schein believes that an organization's culture cannot be understood unless these dimensions of basic assumptions are explored. Like a puzzle, each dimension adds a little something to the whole.

Humanity's Relationship to Nature

The first, humanity's relationship to nature, deals with the concepts of dominance, submission, or harmonizing. In every culture there are transmitted beliefs which indicate how one should view
oneself with nature. The same is true with organizations. Not only does the culture-at-large have an impact upon this set of beliefs, but so does the perception of the environment in which the organization exists. Schein describes the options open to organizations as being the dominance of, coexistence with, or subjugation to the environment within the host culture.

For example, an abiding belief of our culture in the positive attributes of technology has altered the way in which we perceive time and distance. With a personal computer and a networking system, or a facsimile system, we can send messages to multiple locations within minutes. After a fashion, we have transcended time and space.

The Nature of Reality and Truth

The second, the nature of reality and truth, deals with how truth is discovered. Within the organization, there must be consensus on how information is to be passed along before action can be taken. Schein proposes six dimensions for discovering truth. They are:

1. pure dogma, based on tradition and/or religion,
2. revealed dogma, wisdom by those in positions of power,
(3) truth that is developed through legal or rational modes of thought,

(4) truth that becomes evident because it survives conflict or debate,

(5) truth that works because of purely pragmatic reasons, and

(6) truth that is the outcome of scientific method.

If a truth derived from scientific method becomes deeply entrenched, it can eventually become dogma, which allows the process to come full circle. Schein also posits that unless there is group consensus in this area of inquiry, it is doubtful that the organization shares a culture, as this dimension "underlies communication and consensus on all the other issues described" (p.93).

Assumptions about Time. Is time perceived as being linear or cyclical? Within the organization is there consensus concerning how long an activity will take? The time needed for research and development of a product is far different than the time needed to produce the product. Depending upon the responsibility of the individual, different "time cycles" may be used. There must be an understanding of these different assumptions concerning time or problems will develop.
Assumptions about Space. How space is used will also indicate certain beliefs that are held to be important aspects of the organization. Open spaces where everyone can easily see and/or talk with coworkers may be indicative of a less formal atmosphere and give the impression that group effort is an important factor in how the work is accomplished. Private offices indicate another type of belief about space, that one is entitled to a private place. Formalities such as whether office doors are to be open or shut will give cues about how space is used. Schein does not make any judgments, he only stresses that there should be an understanding and agreement concerning space allocation.

The Nature of Human Nature

The third area deals with beliefs about good and evil in human nature. As it applies to the organization, this dimension will influence beliefs concerning the motivation of individuals. Assumptions concerning how individuals will perform in the organization will influence how those people will be treated. Assumptions about human nature encompass a wide range: from good, industrious, responsible, and smart to bad, lazy, irresponsible, and dumb. McGregor's (1960)
work, Theory X (negative/pessimistic) and Theory Y (positive/optimistic), discusses not only these opposites, but also the impact the belief in one or the other will have on the basic assumptions of a manager. In much the same manner, Schein argues that the reaction people have to others is based on their basic assumptions of good and evil.

The Nature of Human Activity

The nature of human activity develops by virtue of beliefs of the first three areas. This area deals with the ideas of active, passive, or harmonizing aspects of human nature as a function of their relationship to their environment. While the culture-at-large has an impact on this dimension, the culture of the organization will be influenced by the founder's view of how human activity should be defined.

This dimension will have an impact on how the organization approaches issues of external adaptation with its business environment. For example, the Japanese cultural norm which embraces the importance of harmony and face-saving is a product of the culture-at-large. This norm has influenced the way in which
Japanese businesses are run. This concept of harmony, stressed through consensual agreement, is a strong internal integrative procedure that has an impact on how a Japanese organization will approach problems and/or opportunities and will have an impact on their choice of strategies for external adaptation.

The Nature of Human Relationships.

The final area, the nature of human relationships, explores how individuals perceive the working atmosphere of their organization. This dimension explores the relationship between power, influence, and hierarchy. While in the culture-at-large, depending upon which culture is being examined, there are three broad areas of human relationships:

(1) Lineality, that which is based on tradition, hierarchy and family.

(2) Collaterality, that which is based on the group, its consensus and welfare.

(3) Individuality, that which is based on competition as well as the rights and welfare of the individual.
Schein has taken those three broad areas and refined them into six classifications that underscore the power component within organizational settings.

1. **Autocracy**—based on the assumption that leaders, founders, owners, or those who have power have the right and duty to exercise it.

2. **Paternalism**—based on the assumption of autocracy and on assumption that those in power are obligated to take care of those not in power.

3. **Consultation**—based on the assumption that all levels have relevant information to contribute but power remains in the hands of the leaders or owners.

4. **Participation**—based on the assumption that information and skill at all levels are relevant to organizational performance; hence, power must be shared as appropriate.

5. **Delegation**—based on the assumption that power must be placed where information and skill reside but that accountability remains in managerial roles.

6. **Collegiality**—based on the assumption that organization members are partners who share full responsibility for total organization (Schein, p. 134).
Schein has developed this bulk of information throughout his long career as both a scholar and an organizational consultant, a position that has allowed him access to organizations for varying lengths of time. By virtue of his experience, he cautions against any easy, quick method of trying to understand an organization's culture. There are no right ways to develop a culture. They emerge over long periods of time and are shaped by a myriad of influencing factors. What works for one organization may not work for another, yet each may have a strong viable culture that works within their specific host environment.

Through the embedded and often invisible shared basic assumptions, organizational values are developed and maintained both explicitly and implicitly, as are the artifacts that make up the highly visual parts of the organization. Culture is the product of these three dimensions which will determine the organizational practices of internal integration and external adaptation. In order for a culture to exist in an organization, there must be shared internal agreement.
which allows for shared internal understanding of what goals are and how they are to be achieved.

The Communication Link

Central to Schein's theoretical perspective is the idea of consistency. Basic assumptions, internal integration, and external adaptations are basic building blocks of an organization's culture. In order to work, they must fit together in a meaningful fashion; and the means by which they are shared is communication, in all of its manifestations. Both explicit and implicit communication conveys to organizational members all the information needed in order to get along, to do one's job, and to succeed in being a viable member of the organization (Papa, 1989; Siehl & Martin, 1984; Weick, 1987).

A question to be asked is whether the means by which information is communicated is consistent with the shared beliefs and basic assumptions of the organization. Again, it is one thing to say an organizational belief is manifested in behaviors such as openness and informality, or hierarchical and formal, but another to put into practice. Communication choices are manifestations of internal integration, that is they exemplify "how things work" in the
An organization that adheres to the belief that technological change is healthy may manifest that belief by providing employees with personal computers and a reliable networking system. In such an organization, the communication of choice might be electronic mail. The choice of communication, in this example, reflects the basic assumption.

Work done by Daft and Lengel (1984; Daft & Lengel, 1986, Daft, Lengel & Trevino, 1987) explores the relationship between what is said and what is done. They propose "new theoretical models that explain how organizations cope with the environment, coordinate activities, and solve problems through information processing." They further argue that "organizational success is based on the organization's ability to process information of appropriate richness to reduce uncertainty and clarify ambiguity" (Daft & Lengel, 1984 pp. 194-5). Although this body of work is focused on the idea of levels of richness in communication choices, the above concerns are similar to the idea of internal integration that Schein developed.
Information richness refers to the way a message is transmitted and the potential it has for the "information-carrying capacity of data," that is, the number of information cues present in the communication medium. For example, information that allows for nonverbal communication such as facial display, vocalic nonverbal display (e.g., sighs, laughter), or physical display (e.g., conservative suit, corner office) is considered to be the richest information medium in that more than just the content of the message is being communicated (supported by Weick, 1987). The relationship of those involved, the atmosphere, the physical setting and the immediacy of feedback are part of the context and provide a great deal of "rich" information. At the other end of the scale, tables of figures, such as computer printouts, are considered to be the least rich medium. While they impart a great deal of data, they do not impart the same richness of communicative information as a face-to-face interaction.

Each medium has its place in the organization, depending upon the type of message to be sent, the situation at hand, and the rank of the personnel involved (Rice, 1993). Not all tasks require a face-to-face interaction. In the interest of both efficiency and
effectiveness, choices must be made concerning how information is to be transmitted. However, there should be consistency between the complexity of the task at hand with the richness of media choice. It is not necessary to speak with individual members of an organization to remind participants of a scheduled meeting. In such a situation, a memo circulated, a voice-mail or E-mail message sent to the proper individuals would be both efficient and effective. The complexity of the organization requires a variety of media that allows for appropriate richness.

Daft & Lengel’s 1984 scale provides the following choices:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information Medium</th>
<th>Information Richness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Face-to-Face</td>
<td>Highest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written, Personal</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written, Formal</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeric, Formal (computer output)</td>
<td>Lowest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Complex organizations must deal with the coordination of tasks and goals, as well as the complexities involved with both external environmental concerns and internal integrative concerns. Communication is one of the most important aspects of how an
organization is run. Communication encompasses more than systems for communicating, it is the wide range of who communicates with whom, about what, and in what manner. Communication is the means by which data and information are distributed. In delving into an organization's culture, communication must be considered, because it is the way in which the values of the organization are passed along.

One must be aware not only of what is being said, but how it is being said. Exploring the culture of an organization without paying attention to its communication processes would result in an incomplete understanding of both the organization and its culture. Because communication is the means by which a message is sent, as well as the content of the message, the process by which information is sent is an important area to explore. That process provides a means by which the researcher can chart whether internal integrative practices are shared across a variety of communication situations.

A modified version of the Daft & Lengel Information Richness Scale will be used in this research effort. While it closely follows Daft & Lengle's scale, there are several additions added for purposes of clarification. The two face-to-face choices include formal, which is
defined as going through proper channels, i.e., making an appointment; and informal, which can be construed as an interaction occurring without prior commitment, i.e., a chance meeting in the hallways. Additionally, there is the choice of communicating informally in a small group. Some organizations, encourage informal interaction between employees as a means of problem-solving as well as transmission of information. The highly successful corporation, Hewlett-Packard, is a proponent of this type of communication. The remaining choices are self-explanatory. By enlarging the scale, an attempt is being made to include as many types of communication choices as possible without becoming cumbersome. The focus is on consistency of choice rather than richness of choice. The modified scale appears in the questionnaire as follows:

- Face-to-face, formal communication
- Face-to-face, informal communication
- Communicating through a third party
- Communicating informally in a small group
- Communicating in planned staff meeting
- Using the telephone for a direct call
- Using E-mail
- Using voice-mail
- Formal letter
- Memorandum
In this work, there is no particular medium of communication that is held as superior. What is being explored is whether communication choices are made which reflect basic assumptions as they are understood by organizational members. If openness is valued, then there should be some consistently chosen ways of communicating information that share the element of openness as it is defined by the organization. If efficiency is valued, then communication choices should reflect that concern. Whatever is considered to be appropriate should be communicated to those working in the organization as part of the internal integrative processes. It is through communication that internal integrative procedures are transmitted.

Statement of Purpose and Research Questions

Throughout his book, Schein discusses the importance of knowing "how things work around here." He consistently gives examples of the use of organizational communication processes to transmit the content of a culture, and the culture influences the specific communication media chosen. The purpose of this research is to study these two key concepts in Schein's work. I will explore his specific assertions that shared basic assumptions must exist in order
for an organizational culture to exist; and, I will explore his implication that internal integration processes which transmit that culture are made manifest through choices of communication media in the organization.

This effort is important in that an instrument has been developed to measure organization culture as conceptualized by Schein. It specifically examines linkages between communication media choices and shared basic assumptions. If Schein is correct in his assertions, there should not only be consistent responses concerning basic assumptions, there should be in place well defined internal integrative processes that can be identified through communication choices. In a personal conversation with Dr. Schein at the National Academy of Management meetings (Las Vegas, August 10, 1992), he stated that he knew of no research which explored these linkages in this manner.

The first question to be explored is that of shared basic assumptions, which form the foundation of any organization's culture. Among the dimensions being investigated, Schein's dimension of Nature of Reality and Truth is particularly important. Without
consensus along this dimension, Schein posits that no culture can exist, because this dimension "underlies communication and consensus on all the other issues described" (1985, p. 93).

**Research Question 1:** What are the shared basic assumptions of the sample organization, as they are understood by the respondents?

The second question concerns communication choices. If there are shared basic assumptions, then an understanding of what is considered appropriate behavior within the organization should also exist. *How* information is communicated is an activity basic to what Schein defines as "internal integration." In investigating how information is communicated, I am attempting to find out whether common patterns of communication exist.

**Research Question 2:** Is there consistency of choice in methods of communication being used in day-to-day organizational events?

Of particular interest is whether communication choices are consistent throughout the organization, or whether they vary depending on hierarchy or job function. Consistent choices throughout indicate internal integrative procedures common to the organization, regardless of position or function.
Although stated earlier, it bears repeating that in this work there is no particular medium of communication that is considered superior. What is being explored is whether consistent communication choices are made. Since the need for a common language and shared conceptual categories is an important component of internal integration, communication choices would provide a means for exploring the issue of internal integration.

By examining both Schein's model of basic shared assumptions, and choices of communication methods, I expect to achieve a better understanding of organizational culture and the role communication plays as a medium for internal integration.

Rationale for Research Questions

Communication plays both an explicit and implicit role in the formation and continuation of an organization's culture. In his book, Schein (1985) uses numerous examples of the Action- and Multi-organizations (his terms to protect confidentiality of consulting clients) in order to depict how communication reflects the organization's culture. Deal and Kennedy (1982) discuss four general categories or types of cultures: (1) the tough-guy, macho culture, (2)
the work hard/play hard culture, (3) the bet-your-company culture, and (4) the process culture. Each culture has its own type of rituals and storytelling, as well as the survivors/heroes who play an important role in the formation and continuation of culture. Similarly, Weick (1987) discusses "cultures of reliability" and how the study of organizational culture has "redistributed the amount of attention that is given to issues of meaning and deciding." How information is communicated is presented, but communication choices are rarely explored in any depth.

If an organization shares the fundamental assumptions that are the building blocks of its culture, there should also be an understanding of how information is to be communicated, a key component of internal integration. There should be consistency in the communication choices that make up the day-to-day experiences within the organization, as a reflection of the shared basic assumptions, i.e., the cultural beliefs and values. While not used for its indication of communication richness, the Daft and Lengel Information Richness Scale provides an established scale of communication choices that can be applied to this work.
Members of an organization sharing similar basic assumptions will also share an understanding of how to communicate in the manner that is expected of them. Moreover, this communication will be consistent with the cultural norms and values of their organization. Within the organization, there may be differences of communication styles between groups or hierarchical levels, but there should be consistency within each group or level. The question is whether there is a shared perception of what is an appropriate means for communicating information within the organization. Consistency is the focus of this inquiry, for shared basic assumptions, communication, and the use of each to strengthen the other.
Chapter 3

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Subjects

The Test Site. An electrical supply company, headquartered in New Castle, Delaware, agreed to allow data to be collected for this research effort. The organization includes administrative offices, a warehouse facility, and four retail stores. The organization currently employees one hundred and ten full-time employees. Respondents have identified their positions as: administrative; clerical; accounting; auditing; credit; systems; data processing; operations; customer service; sales (retail and wholesale); warehouse; shipping; and driver (sales delivery).

Questionnaire

In order to investigate the research questions, development of a questionnaire was necessary. Section 1 of the questionnaire measures Schein's concept of shared basic assumptions and Section 2 focuses on
the modified Daft and Lengel scale, which is designed to assess communication choices.

Although Schein cautions that one cannot make too many attributions about an organization's culture based solely on the use of questionnaires, there are many other research efforts that have successfully used such methods. Among them are The Kilmann-Saxton Culture-Gap Survey (1983), and the Sashkin and Jones Organizational Beliefs Questionnaire (Sashkin and Morris, 1984). The latter was stimulated by Peters and Waterman's widely recognized In Search of Excellence (1982). Hofstede, et al., suggest that "there is a dearth of ordinary research as taught by standard behavioral research methodology textbooks" in the study of organizational culture. They suggest the "student start with a qualitative orientation and follow up with quantitative verification" (1990, p. 287). Siehl and Martin (1984) first had in-depth interviews and then developed the questionnaire used for their subsequent data collection. In their discussion of the various models of communication research, Bowers and Courtright (1984) discuss aspects of the pragmatic perspective, which includes the communication context as
well as patterns of interactions

The departure this study makes from previous research is that instead of gathering information through personal interviews, I propose to use Schein's well-developed body of work, based upon his in-depth analysis of organizations, as the basis for questions in Section 1 of the questionnaire. Dension and Mishra (1991, p. 169) commented that "any research design has inherent limitations." The approach proposed for this inquiry is limited to paper and pencil responses that will provide breadth of information rather than depth of information that might be expected in extensive one-on-one interviews. Its strength, however, is that it provides for (1) the possibility of replication of inquiry in other organizations and (2) a baseline of information which can serve as a foundation for longitudinal study within the same organization.

The primary focus of the questionnaire is to investigate whether shared basic assumptions exist within the organization, and whether there is consistency in communication choices. I expect that a pattern of responses should emerge that will provide some insights into the characteristics of the organization's culture.
Consistency in shared basic assumptions would support Schein's thesis that such are necessary for culture to be viable. Consistency in communication choices would be indicative of well-developed internal integration processes, which are a necessary component of shared culture, according to Schein.

The following pages provide an explanation of question choices and how they correspond to the proposed research questions. The complete questionnaire is found in Appendix A.

**Explanation of the Questionnaire.** The following offers a breakdown of the different categories of questions used for data collection, the section in which they are located, and the reasons for including them in this survey.

**Section 1**

Section 1 is devoted to questions that focus exclusively on the different classifications of basic assumptions, as proposed by Schein. Of particular interest is the first dimension, the Nature of Reality and Truth. Schein suggests that unless there is consensus on this dimension, "it is questionable whether the group has any culture at all, inasmuch as this dimension underlies communication and
consensus on all the other issues described" (1985, p. 93). The following set of dimensions form the foundation for all other organizational values.

The Nature of Reality and Truth

Questions 1 through 7 deal with the idea that there are certain ways in which an organization will approach problem-solving, or simply approach the day-to-day activities that keep it running. The following questions deal with the concept of organizational reality, as a basis for decision-making. How does the organization determine what is "real"? How does the organization decide how to proceed? As previously indicated, the six dimensions developed by Schein are:

(1) pure dogma, based on tradition and/or religion,
(2) revealed dogma, wisdom by those in positions of power,
(3) truth that is developed through legal or rational modes of thought,
(4) truth that becomes evident because it survives conflict or debate,
(5) truth that works because of purely pragmatic reasons, and
(6) truth that is the outcome of scientific method (1985, p.129).
The basic assumptions that are being questioned appear in bold type.

The following scale is used to score this section of questions:

(1) Strongly Agree
(2) Agree
(3) Neither Agree or Disagree
(4) Disagree
(5) Strongly Disagree

As an employee here, I've found that:

1. Things are "always done this way." (Traditional Orientation)
2. This is the right way to do it. (Religious and/or Moral dogma)
3. Our senior management wants to do it this way, so that's what we do. (Revelation by authority)
4. When I have a specific problem, it is best that I go to my unit manager and do whatever she or he decides. (Rational/Legal process)
5. Our units get together, we discuss the problem and its possible solutions and pick out the best solution the problem. Everyone is involved. (Conflict Resolution...Open Debate)
6. If there is a problem, we say "Let's try this and let's see what happens." (Trial and Error...Pragmatic)
7. We will research the problem and then do a trial run on a promising solution. If it works, we will use this particular solution. (Scientific testing)
The Nature of Human Relationships

Questions 8 through 14 deal with the nature of human relationships. Using the dimensions that were explained in detail in Chapter 2, the following questions will gauge whether there are shared beliefs concerning "how things work around here." Within the organization, one of the factors that will decide which kind of relationship will develop is that of power distribution. Thus the following questions deal with the idea that power distribution will influence the kind of working relationships found in the organization.

Using the same scale, the choices are as follows:

In this organization, this is the way things work around here:

8. The people at the top have the most power, and they use it in ways to let us know they are firmly in charge. (Autocracy)

9. The people with the most power take care of the rest of their employees. (Paternalism)

10. When there is a problem, all the units here have the opportunity to share information. We try to consult with each other, but the final decision rests with the people at the top. (Consultation)

11. People at every level have something to offer in the running of this organization. We share our skills and information. That is what makes this organization work so well. (Participation)
12. Whoever has the information and/or the skills gets the job done. Their immediate supervisor, however, is the person who must account for actions coming out of the unit. (Delegation)

13. We all share in the responsibility for making this organization work. (Collegiality)

14. People tend to look after themselves, and no one else. (Check for Internal Consistency)

Questions 8 through 13 address each of these dimensions in the order they are presented above.

The Nature of Human Activity

Questions 15 through 17 deal with the nature of human activity vis-a-vis their environment. Schein (1985, p. 133) presents three potential orientations of activity:

1. **Proactive:** act, fight, nothing is impossible.
2. **Reactive:** Fate, some things are inevitable.
3. **Harmonizing:** development of talent, trying to perfect oneself in harmony with nature.

These orientations are assessed through the following choices:

**When I think about how things get done around here, I feel that:**

15. We try to "nip" problems in the bud. We share a "can do" attitude. (Proactive)
16. Things happen. We respond as best as we can. (Reactive)

17. Sometimes we catch a small problem and are able to prevent it from becoming big; other times we must deal with big problems. We must learn to deal with all manner of things because the world changes quickly and we are a part of it. (Harmonizing)

Subset of the Nature of Truth and Reality: Assumptions about Time

Is the organization one that is future-oriented, past-oriented, or focused on the present? Is there an awareness of linear versus cyclical responses to the use of time? Questions 18 through 22 deal with assumptions about time in the following manner.

I believe this company:

18. Has developed certain steps and procedures and expects that they be followed without question. (Linear)

19. Tries to take into consideration the demands made on different departments. For example, Sales and Research & Development just don't function in the same way, they work on different time cycles. (Cyclical)

20. Tends to do things the way they have always been done. (Past)

21. Tries to look ahead so that future developments won't take us by surprise. (Future)

22. Takes things as they come. We deal with problems and/or opportunities as they arise. (Present)
The Nature of Human Nature

Schein offers three dimensions of human nature (1985, p. 132):

Bad: they are lazy, self-seeking, against the organization.
Good: they are hard working, committed, for the organization.
Neutral: they are capable of either set of behaviors depending upon the situation.

Questions 23 through 26 focus upon human nature in the following manner.

Most of the people around here are:

23. Trustworthy. They can be believed. (Good)
24. Hardworking. They do their jobs well and take pride in their efforts. (Good)
25. Able to do an adequate job. They don't goof off, but they don't get excited about their work, either. (Neutral)
26. Here for a ride. They do as little as possible. (Bad)

Section 2

Section 2 is devoted to the investigation of communication choices made by those in the sample. The choices are those that are most likely to be used in a variety of work scenarios.

In asking these questions, a modified version of Daft & Lengel's (1984) media richness scale is used. The purpose of using the scale is
to chart what methods of communication are likely to be employed in a variety of work situations, and whether there is shared perception throughout the sample of what constitutes appropriate communication choices. Existence of shared perceptions would support Schein's assertion of the necessity of a high level of internal integration in order for an organization to share a culture.

Additionally, goals and aims of the organization are communicated in a variety of ways. Whether the transmission of this information is understood is of interest because Schein's assertions concerning internal integration express the idea that people must feel a part of the organization. Questions 27 through 30 try to ascertain whether those in the sample share perceptions concerning overall organizational goals and aims and the part they play in those goals and aims.

Questions 31 through 39 deal with accessibility of superiors in the workplace. Again, the concept of internal integration is important as there exists the need for personnel to know what appropriate behavior is within the organization. Central to this concept is communication. For example, if there exists a cultural belief that
encourages exchange of thought and information between all members of the organization, regardless of status, then whether organization members are able to easily gain access to others within the organization is important information. Moreover, whether there is consistency concerning how one can communicate in an upward manner is also important information. Strong consistency would lend support to the concept of a viable process of internal integration.

Questions 40 through 44 deal with communication choices used in a variety of work situations. Questions 45 through 54 investigates how people routinely communicate to the respondent, and questions 55 through 65 investigates how the respondent routinely communicates to others. Note that communication is important on two different levels: the message; and the process by which the information is transmitted. Therefore, when attempting to discern whether shared perceptions concerning communication exist, the "how" of communication should be considered. Understanding what is considered appropriate means of communication is as important for internal integration as is the information being communicated. The culture of the organization is
transmitted through communication, and unless appropriate communication methods are defined, internal integration will suffer.

Daft & Lengel (1984) refer to the quality of communication as media richness and present it as a continuum, with face-to-face being the richest medium of communication while formal, numeric communication is considered the least rich. While I am not investigating communication richness per se, I hope that the use of a modified version of their continuum will provide respondents with a set of realistic communication choices applicable to the various work-day situations presented in the questionnaire.

If the culture values collegiality, there may be more face-to-face communication than if the culture values efficiency. In the latter case, a less personal, but more efficient means of communication might be used because it is considered effective. In either case, as long as the type of communication preference is known and accepted by those within the organization, each lends support to the idea of internal integration.

Consistency of responses to this final block of questions would lend strength to the idea that there are appropriate means by which
information is passed along which, in turn, helps in understanding "how things work around here," a concern fundamental to internal integration.

Procedure

Permission was given to survey all employees at the research site. To assure that a copy of the questionnaire would be received by all possible participants, a copy of the questionnaire, a cover letter explaining the research (Appendix A) and a stamped, self-addressed envelope were included in the pay vouchers of all employees. The letter assured respondents that their participation was voluntary and confidential, and suggested a response date. Immediately after the response date, a reminder was sent to all participants in an effort to reach those who had not yet responded to the questionnaire. Again, the reminder was included in a pay voucher. Extra copies of the questionnaire were delivered to the administrative offices in the event an potential respondent had misplaced their original set. Completed questionnaires were mailed by the individual respondents to the Department of Communication at the University of Delaware. No one
but the individual respondents and the investigator had access to the completed forms.

**Analysis of Data**

As this study is based on research questions that are tentative and exploratory in nature, some designation must be proposed in order to make sense of the data collected through questionnaire responses. While these values are arbitrary, they must be reasonable and make sense. Accordingly, I propose a range of values, ordinal in nature, based on a Likert-type scale:

- 80 - 100% = Very High level of consistency
- 60 - 79% = High level of consistency
- 40 - 59% = Adequate level of consistency
- 20 - 39% = Low level of consistency
- Below 20% = Poor level of consistency

The pool of respondents will reflect different levels within the organization as well as different job responsibilities. It is reasonable to expect significant variation in their responses. Taking these differences into consideration, the above scale should provide a realistic measure of their responses.

Within each set of questions, there should be a choice that clearly stands out from the rest. In an organization with a
well-developed internal integrative processes, there should be answer choices that are clearly dominant to all other choices. If such is not the case, there would be a real question whether there is a shared culture. Therefore, responses at the upper end of the scale would indicate higher levels of consistency than those at the lower end of the scale.

Section 1--Basic Assumptions/Research Question 1:

By using descriptive statistics for Section 1, the above scale will provide some preliminary designations. Specifically, this effort is looking for central tendencies as defined by modes. What do most respondents say? Is there wide variability in response or is there minimal variability? Greater variability would be indicative of less consistency while lesser variability would indicate greater consistency. Spearman Rank-Order Correlations will be calculated on the responses in Section 1. By examining rank-order correlations between these items, an estimate of the strength of shared assumptions can be calculated.

Section 2--Issues of communication/Research question 2:

Issues of internal integration are the focus of Section 2. As an inquiry into communication from the top of the organization down
through the ranks, correlations among items 27 - 30 should provide an indication of how respondents perceive the clarity of goals throughout the organization and how their section/department fits into the "big picture."

The remainder of Section 2 is an examination of communication behavior, and as such, is an exploratory analysis to see if there are any regularities in the way people communicate, given that there may or may not be consistency on Schein's dimensions found in Section 1. The modified Daft and Lengel Media Richness Scale is used in this section. A dominant media choice would be indicative of a well-understood means of communicating information, which would lend strength to the idea of internal integration.

Again, by using descriptive statistics which investigate response modes and degrees of variability, and by applying the designated numerical scale, there should be some indication of how well internal integrative procedures are understood. If they are not clearly understood, I could expect a greater variation in methods of communication. This may be because respondents are trying to use whatever method they feel might work in order to get their jobs done.
Well defined, clear choices would indicate a clearer understanding of what is to be done and how to do it which is a tenet of internal integration. Again, the issue is one of overall consistency rather than richness of media choice.

**Conclusion**

Overall consistency of choices in all sections would lend support to Schein's assertions concerning both shared basic assumptions and internal integration through communication. Consistency in richness of media chosen would lend strength to Schein's construct of internal integration. Consistency of responses in Section 1, but not in Section 2, would lend support to Schein's belief in shared basic assumptions but would question whether integrative procedures have been developed. Consistency of responses Section 2 but not in Section 1 would be an interesting turn of events in that it would indicate that agreement exists on how to do things, but not on shared basic assumptions. Lack of consistent responses in both Sections 1 and 2 would be a dilemma as this would be, at least at first glance, an indication that no culture exists, as Schein would define it. Apart from Schein's views, such an outcome might indicate that organizations can
function with high variability of both basic beliefs and using different media.
Chapter 4

RESULTS OF DATA COLLECTION

Results

Of the 110 questionnaires distributed, 55 were returned. Respondents represented all of the functional areas of the organization; however, with reference to job designation, 12 respondents preferred anonymity. Of those indicating their functional departments, the following break-down occurs: 24 work in Sales; 5 work in Administrative positions; 3 work in the combined areas of Accounting/Auditing/Credit; 2 each from the following departments--Customer Service, Systems, Warehouse and Shipping, Drivers; and, 1 each from Data Processing, Operations, and Clerical. There were 41 male respondents and 11 female respondents with, three respondents declining to indicate gender. Ages of respondents ranged from 22 to 68 years of age, with 13 respondents declining to indicate their age. The number of years as an organizational member ranged from 1 to 23 years, with seven respondents declining to indicate number of years.
they had been with the organization. Five of the questionnaires were partially completed. In all, the respondents represent an acceptable cross-section of the organization.

The questions in Section I are concerned with the issue of basic assumptions, which underlie an organization's culture. Analysis of the data is descriptive, and relies on frequency of response, as well as the cumulative percentage of responses. In addition, Spearman rank-order correlations are examined with the expectation that most variables in this section will be uncorrelated with each other. For informational purposes, statistical significance levels are reported with Spearman rank order correlations when appropriate; however, since this research is not testing hypotheses the significance levels are not germane to the discussion.

Section 1 has been sub-divided into sections, each of which represents a basic assumption as proposed by Schein. They are:

- Questions 1 - 7: The Nature of Reality and Truth
- Questions 8 - 14: The Nature of Human Relationships
- Questions 15 - 17: The Nature of Human Activity
- Questions 18 - 22: Assumptions about Time
- Questions 23 - 26: The Nature of Human Nature
Each of these basic assumptions has been discussed in full in Chapter 2. It bears repeating, however, that Schein believes there can be no culture without agreement on the first dimension, The Nature of Reality and Truth, "as this dimension underlies communication and consensus on all other issues described" (1985, p. 93). Given this assertion, the results of this particular dimension will be of great interest.

By using the scale proposed in Chapter 3, an ordering of choices can be discerned:

- 80 - 100% = Very High level of consistency
- 60 - 79% = High level of consistency
- 40 - 59% = Adequate level of consistency
- 20 - 39% = Low level of consistency
- Below 20% = Poor level of consistency

Additionally, the concept of consistency will be operationalized by the formula:

\[ \text{Consistency} = |\% \text{ Agree} - \% \text{ Disagree}|. \]

Because the issue of consistency of response is pivotal to this research, the above formula should provide a clear indication of whether consistent choices are being made by respondents, as well as
provide an accurate percentage that will be assigned a value on the above scale.

Consistency of response refers to the level of respondent agreement or disagreement upon individual items. Within each set of questions in Section 1, there are choices that are mutually exclusive. Based on respondent choices, a pattern should emerge that will indicate whether there are shared basic assumptions. For example, it is unlikely that respondents would give the same level of agreement to both Autocracy i.e., "The people at the top have the most power, and they use it in ways to let us know they are firmly in charge," and, Collegiality i.e., "We all share in the responsibility for making this organization work." According to Schein, if a well-developed culture exists, aspects of that culture should be understood. Within this research effort, respondents have had the opportunity to identify what they perceive to be important aspects of their organization's culture (i.e., the basic assumptions) through the administration of a questionnaire. In an ideal situation, one choice within each area of basic assumptions would show a very high level of consistent agreement while other choices would clearly show disagreement.
Although not as clear cut as an ideal situation, the respondents in this research effort did indicate clear choices on the subject of basic assumptions.

The specific question under investigation is: Research question 1: What are the shared basic assumptions of the sample organization, as they are understood by the respondents?

Results: Section 1

Each basic assumption will be discussed in the following manner: the identification of the basic assumption; a list of the questions presented in the questionnaire followed by the identification of the specific basic assumption choice in bold print; a brief explanation of the most frequently chosen responses; a table indicating percentage of responses to each question. These tables show absolute values of differences in percentages of agreement and disagreement, i.e., Consistency = |% Agree - % Disagree|.

To facilitate the understanding of these responses, Strongly Agree and Agree responses will be combined and labeled Agree, and Strongly Disagree and Disagree responses will be combined and labeled Disagree (Tables with all five response categories appear in
Appendix B). Additionally, a graph showing percentage of consistency of responses to each set of questions and a table of Spearman rank-order correlations are provided.

**Basic Assumption 1: The Nature of Reality and Truth:**

As an employee, I've found that in this organization:

1. Things are "always done this way." *(Traditional Orientation)*
2. This is the right way to do it. *(Religious and/or Moral dogma)*
3. Our senior management wants to do it this way, so that's what we do. *(Revelation by authority)*
4. When I have a specific problem, it is best that I go to my unit manager and do whatever she or he decides. *(Rational/Legal process)*
5. Our units get together, we discuss the problem and its possible solutions and pick out the best solution the problem. Everyone is involved. *(Conflict Resolution...Open Debate)*
6. If there is a problem, we say "Let's try this and let's see what happens." *(Trial and Error...Pragmatic)*
7. We will research the problem and then do a trial run on a promising solution. If it works, we will use this particular solution. *(Scientific testing)*

In this set of questions, respondents were more likely to agree or take a neutral stance on a choice than to disagree. As Table 4.1
indicates, choice #2 was clearly the most frequently chosen statement in that 19 respondents strongly agreed, 22 respondents agreed, 7 respondents took the neutral position and 2 respondents disagreed. Next in overall agreement was choice #3 in that 16 respondents strongly agreed, 22 respondents agreed, 12 respondents chose the neutral position and 4 respondents disagreed with that statement. Choice #4 was chosen by 27 respondents who agreed; but had only 9 respondents who strongly agreed. In each case, respondent choices were oriented toward a specific way to do things indicating a deference to those in charge.
Table 4.1  Percent of Responses to the Basic Assumption
The Nature of Reality and Truth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response #</th>
<th>Agree %</th>
<th>Neutral %</th>
<th>Disagree %</th>
<th>Consistency %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Always done</td>
<td>49.1</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>23.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The right way</td>
<td>83.6</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>80.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sr. Mgt.</td>
<td>70.3</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>62.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mgr. decides</td>
<td>65.5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>50.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All involved</td>
<td>52.7</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>23.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trial &amp; error</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientific testing</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 55
Consistency = |% Agree - % Disagree|

As indicated in Figure 4.1, percentage of consistency of response for choices 1 through 7 show that Choice #2 has a 80% consistency, followed by Choice #3, with a 62.9% level of consistency.
Nature of Reality and Truth

Percent of Consistency

Figure 4.1 Nature of Reality and Truth
Percent of Consistency
In this section, the Spearman rank-order correlations analysis show that there is a correlation between items 2 and 1 (.34); a strong correlation between items 3 and 1 (.59); a correlation between items 3 and 2 (.31); a correlation between items 4 and 3 (.28); a correlation between items 7 and 5 (.43); and, a correlation between items 7 and 6 (.30). The relationships that appear between items 1 and 2; 1 and 3; 2 and 3; and 3 and 4 support the idea that within this organization, there are specific ways to do things that are well understood by the respondents. For the most part they support the notion that those in charge must be given deference. The relationship between items 5 and 7, and 6 and 7 seem to indicate that problem-solving is a shared activity.
### Table 4.2 Spearman Rank-Order Correlations
The Nature of Reality and Truth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>1 right way</th>
<th>2 always done</th>
<th>3 Sr. Mgt.</th>
<th>4 Mgr. decides</th>
<th>5 all involved</th>
<th>6 trial &amp; error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 always done</td>
<td>.34*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Sr. Mgt.</td>
<td>.59***</td>
<td>.31*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Mgr. decides</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>.28*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 all involved</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 trial &amp; error</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 sci. testing</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
<td>.43**</td>
<td>.30*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** p < .001; ** p < .01; * p < .05

**Basic Assumption 2: The Nature of Human Relationships:**

**In this organization, this is the way things work around here:**

8. The people at the top have the most power, and they use it in ways to let us know they are firmly in charge. *(Autocracy)*

9. The people with the most power take care of the rest of their employees. *(Paternalism)*

10. When there is a problem, all the units here have the opportunity to share information. We try to consult with each other, but the final decision rests with the people at the top. *(Consultation)*
11. People at every level have something to offer in the running of this organization. We share our skills and information. That is what makes this organization work so well. (Participation)

12. Whoever has the information and/or the skills gets the job done. Their immediate supervisor, however, is the person who must account for actions coming out of the unit. (Delegation)

13. We all share in the responsibility for making this organization work. (Collegiality)

14. People tend to look after themselves, and no one else. (Internal Check for questions 8 - 13)

Percentage of response for this basic assumption was clearly choice #13, Collegiality. This was followed by choice #1, Participation. For overall percent of response rates, please refer to Appendix B.
Table 4.3  Percent of Responses to the Basic Assumption
The Nature of Human Relationships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response #</th>
<th>Agree %</th>
<th>Neutral %</th>
<th>Disagree %</th>
<th>Consistency %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 autocracy</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>38.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 paternal</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 consult</td>
<td>61.2</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>46.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 participate</td>
<td>64.8</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>53.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 delegate</td>
<td>63.0</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>53.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 collegiality</td>
<td>90.8</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>88.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 internal check</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>12.9*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 55
Consistency = |% Agree - % Disagree|

*As an internal check for questions 8 through 13, this low level of consistency supports the notion that respondents consistently agree that there is a certain way in which things work around their organization.

As Figure 4.2 indicates, Choice #13 was the most frequently chosen response in this set of questions with a consistency of 88.9%.

Choice #11 was second highest, with a consistency of 53.7%.
The Nature of Human Relationships
Percent of Consistency

Response Choices

Consistency

Figure 4.2 The Nature of Human Relationships
Percent of Consistency
In this section, the Spearman rank-order correlation analysis shows that items 8 and 11 are inversely related (-.44); items 8 and 14 are directly correlated (.33); items 13 and 11 are directly correlated (.36); items 14 and 11 are strongly inversely correlated (-.57); and items 14 and 13 also show an inverse correlation (-.23). The first two correlations seem to imply a tension that exists between some respondents and those who are in charge. The third correlation seems to imply that respondents feel a responsibility for making the organization work and sharing their skills. However, the last two correlations show inverse relationships which appears to confirm, by way of internal check, that shared skills are important, that each shares responsibility for "making this organization work" and that people, in this organization, do not look out only for themselves.
Table 4.4  Spearman Rank-Order Correlations
The Nature of Human Relationships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>8  autocracy</th>
<th>9  paternal</th>
<th>10 consult</th>
<th>11 particip.</th>
<th>12 delegate</th>
<th>13 collegial.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9 paternal</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 consult</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 particip.</td>
<td>-.44**</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 delegate</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 collegial.</td>
<td>-.17</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.36**</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 internal check</td>
<td>.33*</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.57***</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.23*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** p < .001; ** p < .01; * p < .05

Basic Assumption 3: The Nature of Human Activity:

When I think about how things get done around here, I feel that:

15. We try to "nip" problems in the bud. We share a "can do" attitude. (Proactive)

16. Things happen. We respond as best as we can. (Reactive)

17. Sometimes we catch a small problem and are able to prevent it from becoming big; other times we must deal with big problems.
We must learn to deal with all manner of things because the world changes quickly and we are a part of it. *(Harmonizing)*

This basic assumption deals explores the issues of human activity vis-a-vis their environment. As indicated in Table 4.5, 85.2% of the respondents agreed most frequently with choice #17, that of *Harmonizing*.

Table 4.5 Percent of Responses to the Basic Assumption

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Nature of Human Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N = 55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response #</th>
<th>Agree %</th>
<th>Neutral %</th>
<th>Disagree %</th>
<th>Consistency %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 Proactive</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>40.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Reactive</td>
<td>74.1</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>66.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Harmony</td>
<td>85.2</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>85.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4.3 indicates that respondents consistently chose Choice #17, with a consistency of 85.2% and that Choice #16, was the second most often chosen, with consistency of 66.6%. *Harmonizing* and *Reactive* behaviors are perceived as being ways of responding to the environment.
Figure 4.3 The Nature of Human Activity
Percent of Consistency
In this section, the Spearman rank-order correlations analysis shows a direct correlation between items 17 and 16 (.35). Response to these items seems to indicate that there is a relationship between Reactive and Harmonizing strategies.

Table 4.6 Spearman Rank-Order Correlations
The Nature of Human Activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>15 Proactive</th>
<th>16 Reactive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16 Reactive</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Harmony</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>.35**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** p < .001; ** p < .01; * p < .05

Basic Assumption 4: Assumptions about Time:

I believe this company:

18. Has developed certain steps and procedures and expects that they be followed without question. (Linear)

19. Tries to take into consideration the demands made on different departments. For example, Sales and Research & Development just don't function in the same way, they work on different time cycles. (Cyclical)

20. Tends to do things the way they have always been done. (Past)

21. Tries to look ahead so that future developments won't take us by surprise. (Future)
22. Takes things as they come. We deal with problems and/or opportunities as they arise. (Present)

This basic assumption explores the notion of time orientation

As Table 4.7 indicates, in making choices between orientations of the Past, Present and Future, the highest percent of response was choice #21, the Future orientation, with a 72.2% level of consistency. In choosing between Linear and Cyclical orientations, there was a 64.7% rate of consistency for choice #18, the Linear orientation.

Table 4.7 Percent of Response to the Basic Assumption Assumptions About Time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response #</th>
<th>Agree %</th>
<th>Neutral %</th>
<th>Disagree %</th>
<th>Consistency %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18 Linear</td>
<td>70.3</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>64.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Cyclical</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>42.6</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>42.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Past</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Future</td>
<td>79.6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>72.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 Present</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 55
Consistency = |% Agree - % Disagree|
As Figure 4.4 indicates, respondents consistently chose Choice #21, by 72.2%, to be the most frequently chosen statement. Choice #18 followed, with a consistency rating of 64.7%.

Figure 4.4 Assumptions About Time
In this section, the Spearman rank-order correlations analysis show a direct correlation between items 20 and 18 (.28); and, a direct correlation between items 22 and 20 (.40). The first correlation indicates that steps and procedures are in place, and are not to be questioned; that what worked in the past will also work well in the present. The second correlation indicates that while problems and/or opportunities are dealt with as they arise, there are certain, time-tested, ways that are used in approaching these situations.

Table 4.8 Spearman Rank-Order Correlations
Assumptions About Time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>18 Linear</th>
<th>19 Cyclical</th>
<th>20 Past</th>
<th>21 Future</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19 Cyclical</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Past</td>
<td>.28*</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Future</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>-.14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 Present</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.40**</td>
<td>-.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** p < .001; ** p < .01; * p < .05
Basic Assumption 5: Nature of Human Nature:

Most of the people around here are:

23. Trustworthy. They can be believed. (Good)

24. Hardworking. They do their jobs well and take pride in their efforts. (Good)

25. Able to do an adequate job. They don't goof off, but they don't get excited about their work, either. (Neither Good nor Bad)

26. Here for a ride. They do as little as possible. (Bad)

This basic assumption explores whether respondents perceive others to be Good or Bad. As Table 4.4.9 indicates, choice #23, Good, was the most frequently chosen statement. Response to Choice #26, Bad, indicates high levels of disagreement with the assumption that people do as little as possible.
Table 4.9  Percent of Responses to the Basic Assumption  
The Nature of Human Nature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response #</th>
<th>Agree %</th>
<th>Neutral %</th>
<th>Disagree %</th>
<th>Consistency %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23 Good</td>
<td>77.8</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>72.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Good</td>
<td>72.2</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>68.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Neither</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>46.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 Bad</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>77.8</td>
<td>74.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 55
Consistency = |% Agree - % Disagree|

Figure 4.5 indicates that of the choices #23, Good, #24, Good, #25, Neither, and #26, Bad, respondents consistently chose the assumption that people were Good. Choice #23 is clearly the most frequently chosen statement, with a consistency rating of 72.2%. Choice #24, also indicative of the Good dynamic showed a consistency rating of 68.4%. To further support the notion that people, within this organization, are perceived as being Good, choice #26 was given a consistency rating of 74.1% indicating disagreement with notion that people are "here for a ride," or Bad.
Figure 4.5 The Nature of Human Nature
Percent of Consistency
In this section, the Spearman rank-order correlations analysis show a strong direct correlation between items 24 and 23 (.71); a strong inverse correlation between items 26 and 23 (.58); and, another strong inverse correlation between items 26 and 24 (.70).

Respondents seem to indicate that they believe their co-workers to be both hardworking and trustworthy. Given the agreement between items 23 and 24, the inverse correlations between items 23 and 26, and items 24 and 26 would seem to indicate that as long as people are perceived as being trustworthy and hardworking, they are not perceived as being "here for a ride."

Table 4.10 Spearman Rank-Order Correlation
The Nature of Human Nature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>23 Good</th>
<th>24 Good</th>
<th>25 Neither</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24 Good</td>
<td>.71***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Neither</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 Bad</td>
<td>-.58***</td>
<td>-.70***</td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** p < .001; ** p < .01; * p < .05
Results: Section II

The questions in Section II explore issues of internal integration (discussed in Chapter 2) and choice of communication media, which are being used as an indicator of internal integration. In a well-developed culture, the approved way of "getting the job done" will have been communicated throughout the organization. In order to explore this idea, respondents were asked which means of communication were considered to be appropriate, given their experience within the organization. This section focuses upon research question 2: Is there consistency of choice in methods of communication being used in day-to-day organizational events?

Questions 27 through 30 ask respondents to consider four specific areas that are important to internal integration (issues of "fitting in"): (1) fitting into the "Big Organizational Picture"; (2) alignment of goals and aims; (3) awareness of departmental contributions; and (4) whether those contributions are valued. Spearman rank-order correlations will be examined on these four questions. These items should be strongly related to each other. Questions 31 through 39 focus on how individuals are likely to
communicate with their managers. Questions 40 through 44 ask the respondent to choose from a set of communication media—the "best way" to get the job done. The last two sets of questions, 45 through 54, and 55 through 64, focus specifically on communication media—how people choose to communicate to the respondent and how the respondent chooses to communicate to others, respectively.

**Issues of Internal Integration: Communication Choices**

**Question 27:**

While your section/department is only a part of this organization, to what extent is it clear to you how your unit fits into the "big organizational picture"?

As indicated in Table 4.11, there was a clear pattern of response to this question; 64.8% of the respondents chose very clear; 33.3% of the respondents chose clear; and 1.9% of the respondents was not sure.
Table 4.11: Issues of Internal Integration
Fitting into the "Big Organizational Picture"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response #</th>
<th>Very Clear %</th>
<th>Somewhat Clear %</th>
<th>Not Sure %</th>
<th>Somewhat Unclear %</th>
<th>Not at All Clear %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27 Big Picture</td>
<td>64.8</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 55

Question 28:
As you see it, to what extent are the goals and aims of your section/department aligned with the overall goals and aims of the organization?

Table 4.12 indicates 53.7% of the respondents chose Almost Always: 29.6% of the respondents chose Sometimes; 16.7% of the respondents chose Half of the time. There were no negative responses to this question. For the most part, goals and aims appear to be aligned.

Table 4.12: Issues of Internal Integration
Goals and Aims

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response #</th>
<th>Almost Always %</th>
<th>Sometime %</th>
<th>Half the Time %</th>
<th>Less than Half %</th>
<th>Rarely %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28 Goals &amp; Aims</td>
<td>53.7</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 55
Question 29:

As you see it, to what extent do the people at corporate headquarters seem to be aware of your section/department's contributions?

As Table 4.13 indicates, 38.9% of the respondents chose Very Aware, 40.7% of the respondents chose Aware, 7.4% of the respondents were Not Sure, 5.6% of the respondents chose Somewhat Aware and 7.4% of the respondents chose Not At All Aware. Overall, respondents tended to agree that individuals at the corporate level have an awareness of departmental contributions to the organization.

Table 4.13 Issues of Internal Integration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Awareness of Contributions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Response #</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 Contribute</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 55
Question 30:

As you see it, to what extent do the people at corporate headquarters seem to value your section/department's contributions? A response pattern, similar to question #29, occurs in that 29.6% of the respondents chose Highly Valued, 48.1% of the respondents chose Valued, 11.1% of the respondents were Not Sure, 3.7% of the respondents chose Sometimes Valued and 7.4% of the respondents chose Not at All Valued. Again, as Table 4.14 indicates, the vast majority of respondents agree that their contributions are valued.

Table 4.14 Issues of Internal Integration
Value of Contributions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response #</th>
<th>Highly Valued %</th>
<th>Valued %</th>
<th>Not Sure %</th>
<th>Sometimes Valued %</th>
<th>Not at All Valued %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30 Corp. HQ</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>48.1</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 55

To present the responses of the last four questions in table format that allows for consistency of agreement, substitutions for the different values have been made. The first two choices of the four areas have been combined and labeled Agree. Likewise, the last two
choices have been combined and are labeled Disagree. This format permits the use of the formula $\text{Consistency} = |\% \text{ Agree} - \% \text{ Disagree}|$, and will provide an overview of the percentage of respondent choices.

Table 4.15 Percent of Responses for Combined Questions 27 Through 30 Issues of Internal Integration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response #</th>
<th>Agree %</th>
<th>Neutral %</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Consistency %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27 Big Picture</td>
<td>98.1</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>98.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 Goals &amp; Aims</td>
<td>83.3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>83.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 Contribute</td>
<td>79.6</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>66.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 Corp. HQ.</td>
<td>77.7</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>66.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$N = 55$

$\text{Consistency} = |\% \text{ Agree} - \% \text{ Disagree}|$

By using the consistency percentage, graphic representation of the four areas are presented in the following figure. As Figure 4.6 indicates, within all four areas of inquiry, respondents showed either a high or very high percentage of consistency of agreement.
Figure 4.6 Issues of Internal Integration
Percent of Consistency
In this section, the Spearman rank-order correlations analysis show strong correlations between items across the table—items 28 and 27 (.45); items 29 and 27 (.38); items 30 and 27 (.55); 29 and 28 (.42); items 30 and 28 (.45); and items 30 and 29 (.73).

Strong positive correlations between these four items is indicative of strong internal integrative processes within this organization.

Table 4.16 Spearman Rank-Order Correlations
Issues of Internal Integration
Combined Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>27 Big Picture</th>
<th>28 Goals &amp; Aims</th>
<th>29 Contribute</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28 Goals &amp; Aims</td>
<td>.45***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 Contribute</td>
<td>.38**</td>
<td>.42***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 Corp. HQ</td>
<td>.55***</td>
<td>.45***</td>
<td>.73***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

***p < .001; ** p < .01; * p < .05

Issues of Internal Integration through Communication Choices:

The issue of internal integration was explored further by asking respondents to indicate how they actually communicate throughout the day. Respondents were given a series of choices and
asked to rate them. The statement and choices are:

Given the way things work around here, to communicate with my manager:

31. I can walk into his or her office and see if she or he can talk with me.
32. I make an appointment through his or her secretary.
33. I try to catch him or her "on the fly," for example, when walking down the corridor.
34. I take my turn during regularly scheduled staff meetings.
35. I send E-mail.
36. I use voice-mail
37. I use a direct telephone call.
38. I communicate my information through a third party.
39. I rely on written memorandums and letters.

By using the formula for consistency, with Most Likely and Likely combined and labeled Agree; and Less Likely and Least Likely combined and labeled Disagree, Table 4.17 indicates the percentage of respondent choices for the above inquiry.
Table 4.17 Percent of Responses

Internal Integration and Communication Choices
Communicating with My Manager

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response #</th>
<th>Agree %</th>
<th>Half the Time %</th>
<th>Disagree %</th>
<th>Consistency %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>31 Walk in</td>
<td>92.6</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>90.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32 Appoint.</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>83.4</td>
<td>72.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 On the Fly</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>48.2</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34 Sched. Mtg.</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>72.3</td>
<td>53.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 E-mail</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>98.2</td>
<td>96.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 v-mail</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>96.2</td>
<td>92.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37 Telephone</td>
<td>38.9</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>40.8</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38 3rd Party</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>96.3</td>
<td>94.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39 Written</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>83.3</td>
<td>75.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 55
Consistency = |% Agree - % Disagree|

Overwhelmingly, respondents chose #31, walking into his or her office, as the communication of choice when communicating with their manager. By combining the two Likely choices and the two Unlikely choices to Agree and Disagree, the percent of consistency is 90.7%. In terms of overall percentages (see Appendix B), Most Likely
was chosen by 74.1% of the respondents, and 18.5% of the respondents chose Likely. The following figure graphically shows which communication choices are favored by the respondents. The impact of this particular graph is best presented with both negative and positive numbers. While the formula for consistency is presented in terms of absolute numbers, for clarity of interpretation, figure 4.7 shows a range of +100 to -100.
Figure 4.7 Internal Integration
Communicating with My Manager
The "best way" to get the job done:

This section of questions 40 through 44 specifically investigates how the respondent would communicate information to another person or group of people within the organization. The communication choices are:

- Face-to-Face, formal communication
- Face-to-Face, informal communication
- Communicate through a third party
- Communicate informally in a small group
- Communicate in planned staff meetings
- Use the telephone for a direct call
- Use E-mail
- Use voice-mail
- Personal Letter
- Memorandum

The following questions were posed to the respondents:

40. Someone you work with has done a great job. How would you communicate your congratulations?

41. Someone you work with has done a poor job. How would you communicate your displeasure?

42. There is a problem between your unit and another unit. The problem must be resolved. How would you communicate to try to solve the problem?

43. You must pass along some important information to your immediate supervisor. How do you communicate this information?
44. You must pass along some information to one of the organization's officers. How do you pass along this information?

Of the ten communication media choices, respondents indicated that, in most cases, the "best way" to get the job done was to communicate informally, face-to-face. Their second choice was formal, face-to-face communication. When solving a problem with another unit, respondents chose a variety of communication media; number one being the face-to-face choices, with informal face-to-face communication being the most popular. Other choices for this question included communication through a third party, informally with a small group, through a planned staff meeting and using a direct telephone call. The following table indicates the percentage of response to each communication media choice for the questions 40 through 44. Please note that E-mail and voice-mail were not chosen as appropriate means of communication in any of the scenarios. They are not listed in the table.
Table 4.18 Percent of Responses to
The "Best Way" to Get the Job Done

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response #</th>
<th>F-to-F formal</th>
<th>F-to-F inform</th>
<th>3rd Party</th>
<th>Small Group</th>
<th>Staff Mtg.</th>
<th>Phone Call</th>
<th>Letter</th>
<th>Memo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>40 Great Job</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>81.1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 Poor Job</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>71.7</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42 Problem</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43 Info to Sup.</td>
<td>31.4</td>
<td>51.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44 Info Org Off.</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 55

Figure 4.8 graphically represents the percentage of agreement for the above questions. Face-to-Face formal and informal have been combined into the single category F-to-F."
Figure 4.8 Communication Choices
"Best Way" to Get The Job Done
Issues of Internal Integration through Communication Choices:

Respondents were asked to indicate how often they received information through various communication media. Again, what is being explored is whether there is a specific choice of communication media throughout the organization that is considered to be most appropriate. The ranking choices, scenario and communication media choices are:

- All of the time
- Frequently
- Some of the Time
- Rarely
- Never

During a "normal" day, people communicate to me through:

45. Face-to-Face, formal communication
46. Face-to-Face, informal communication
47. Communicating through a third party
48. Communicating informally in a small group
49. Communicating in planned staff meetings
50. Using the telephone for a direct call
51. Using E-mail
52. Using voice-mail
53. Formal Letter
54. Memorandum

How people communicate to the respondent during a "normal" day:

The most frequently chosen communication media in this block of choices was face-to-face, informal, 42% of the respondents chose All
the Time and 40% of the respondents chose Frequently. The next communication media choice was the direct telephone call, 21.2% of the respondents indicated they used it All the Time and 44.2% of the respondents indicating they used it Frequently. The data shows that all of the communication media choices were used to convey information Some of the Time, and that two of the communication choices were Rarely or Never used. The following table shows the percent of responses to each of the communication media choices.
Table 4.19 Percentage of Response to How People Communicate to the Respondent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response #</th>
<th>All of the Time %</th>
<th>Frequently %</th>
<th>Some of the Time %</th>
<th>Rarely %</th>
<th>Never %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>f-to-f formal</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f-to-f informal</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>third party</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>46.0</td>
<td>34.0</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>small group</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>staff mtg.</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>22.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phone call</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>44.2</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>83.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>voice-mail</td>
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<td>4.3</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>85.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>letter</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>36.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>memo</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>46.0</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 55

Given the number of communication media choices, an additional table follows which will provide also the data for Figure 4.9. For the sake of clarity, the choices of All of the Time and Frequently will be combined and labeled as Most Likely; Some of the Time will be labeled as Occasionally; and Rarely and Never will be combined and labeled as Unlikely. This combined table, Table 4.20, indicates 82% of
the respondents use face-to-face, informal communication as their preferred media choice; and 65.4% of the respondents choosing direct telephone calls as their second preferred media choice.

Table 4.20 Combined Percentage of Response to How People Communicate to the Respondent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response #</th>
<th>Most Likely %</th>
<th>Occasionally %</th>
<th>Least Likely %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>f-to-f formal</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f-to-f informal</td>
<td>82.0</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>third party</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>46.0</td>
<td>42.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>small group</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>staff mtg.</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>44.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phone call</td>
<td>65.4</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>87.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>voice-mail</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>95.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>letter</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>73.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>memo.</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>46.0</td>
<td>46.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 55
Figure 4.9 Communication Choices
Respondent Receives Communication
Issues of Internal Integration through Communication Choices:

In this last set of choices, 55 through 64, respondents were asked to choose the most appropriate communication medium they use to transmit information during a "normal" day. The ranking scale and communication media choices are the same as the previous block of choices. They are:

All of the time
Frequently
Some of the Time
Rarely
Never

During a "normal" day, I am likely to communicate in the following manner:

55. Face-to-Face, formal communication
56. Face-to-Face, informal communication
57. Communicating through a third party
58. Communicating informally in a small group
59. Communicating in planned staff meetings
60. Using the telephone for a direct call
61. Using E-mail
62. Using voice-mail
63. Formal Letter
64. Memorandum

How the respondent communicates to others during a "normal" day:

Again, respondents chose Face-to-Face informal communication as the most frequent means of communicating to others. For this
communication media choice, frequency of response indicates that 48% of the respondents chose All the Time and 44% of the respondents chose Frequently. The second communication media choice was the use of the telephone for a direct call, with 30.8% of the respondents indicating that it is used All the Time, and 46.2% of the respondents indicated they used it Frequently. Both E-mail and voice-mail are Rarely or Never used. As the following table indicates, all the communication media choices are used at some time or another, but the most frequently used media is Face-to-Face informal communication.
Table 4.21 Percent of Responses to How Respondent Communicates to Others

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response #</th>
<th>All of the Time %</th>
<th>Frequently %</th>
<th>Some of the Time %</th>
<th>Rarely %</th>
<th>Never %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>f-to-f formal</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f-to-f informal</td>
<td>48.0</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>third party</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>small group</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>staff mtg.</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phone call</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>91.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>voice-mail</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>76.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>letter</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>30.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>memo.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>24.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 55

As before, in order to clearly present the percent of agreement in both table and graphic form, the choices All of the Time and Frequently have been combined and labeled as Likely; Some of the Time labeled as Occasionally; and Rarely and Never have been combined and labeled as Unlikely. The combined categories are found in Table 4.22. The table indicates that 92% of the respondents are
likely to use face-to-face, informal communication when communicating with others. Again, the use of the telephone as the second likeliest communication media choice is made by 77% of the respondents.

Table 4.22 Combined Percent of Responses to How Respondent Communicates to Others

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response #</th>
<th>Likely %</th>
<th>Occasionally %</th>
<th>Unlikely %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>f-to-f formal</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>32.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f-to-f informal</td>
<td>92.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>third party</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>small group</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>38.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>staff mtg.</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>51.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phone call</td>
<td>77.0</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>97.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>voice-mail</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>89.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>letter</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>67.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>memo.</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>54.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 55
Figure 4.10 Communication Choices
Respondent Communicates to Others
The last two sections of inquiry indicate that there are preferred communication media within this particular organization. Respondents were in agreement on a number of choices. They prefer to communicate face-to-face in an informal manner, and they will use the telephone as a second choice. They are in agreement that E-mail and voice-mail are unlikely to be used during their day-to-day work interaction. While they prefer informal face-to-face communication overall, they will use other communication media as necessary.

In summary, this organization has effectively communicated to the respondents what means of communication is most appropriate during the day's work. On a deeper level, the issues of internal integration or "fitting in" are well developed within this organization. Respondents agree (in some cases strongly agree) that they understand where they fit into the "Big Organizational Picture"; that there is an alignment of goals and aims; that there is an awareness on the part of those on corporate levels of departmental contributions; and, that those contributions are valued. Each of these areas point to a well-developed internal integration that is key to a viable organizational culture.
Chapter 5

DISCUSSION

Summary of Findings

The purpose of this research effort was to explore aspects of organizational culture from the standpoint of shared Basic Assumptions and Communication Media Choices. The need for shared basic assumptions is central to the theoretical perspective that is the foundation of this effort. The exploration into the organization's communication media choices is key to the concept of internal integration which, according to the theoretical perspective, is a necessary condition for the viability of the culture and the organization.

Pivotal to this effort was the investigation of whether respondents would make consistent choices along these two dimensions (1) Shared Basic Assumptions; and, (2) Communication Media. Additionally, there was interest in exploring whether a
questionnaire could provide a "broad brush" picture of the organization's shared beliefs and communication practices, as there is a difference of opinion within this field concerning appropriate procedures for data collection. Results from this particular organization were especially useful because (1) respondents were willing to respond to these two areas through a specially developed questionnaire; and, (2) did select choices that indicate a sharing of basic assumptions as well as an understanding of what comprises appropriate communication choices. The analysis of their responses has provided the desired "broad brush" picture.

Research Question 1: What are the shared basic assumptions of the sample organization, as they are understood by the respondents?

With respect to research question 1, results from the questionnaire show respondents share consistent choices concerning basic assumptions. Along some of the dimensions, respondents indicated a number of choices; but, even with these splits, one choice predominated over all other choices. Overall, what was found was a respondent group that did indicate consistently shared basic assumptions along each of the dimensions explored. They are:
1. The Nature of Reality and Truth: 80% level of consistency for the right way or Religious and/or Moral dogma.

2. The Nature of Human Relationships: 88.9% level of consistency for sharing responsibility or Collegiality.

3. The Nature of Human Activity: 85.2% level of consistency for trying to be flexible or (Harmonizing).

4. Assumptions About Time: This dimension actually has two parts; (1) does the organization work in a Linear or Cyclical fashion; and, (2) does this organization have an orientation towards the Past, the Present, or the Future? There was a 64.7% level of consistency for the Linear choice; while for the second set of assumptions about time, there was a 72.2% level of consistency for the Future orientation.

5. The Nature of Human Nature: 72.2% consistency level for "the people around here are trustworthy. (Good) To underscore this choice; a 74.1% level of disagreement was indicated "people around here are here for a ride." (Bad).

Spearman Rank-Order Correlations for the dimensions that make up Basic Assumptions have been discussed throughout Chapter 4. For the dimension of Reality and Truth, responses indicate that there are relationships between the Traditional and Religious/Moral dogma orientations, as well as the Traditional and Revelation by authority orientations. These point to well established procedures and deference to those in authority.
The remainder of the relevant relationships for this section indicate a process that depends upon the opinion of those in supervisory positions, but also allows for information sharing between groups. This might be interpreted as a way of problem-solving that is given the blessing of those in charge, but once that blessing has been given, the individuals involved have the freedom to confer with others.

For the second dimension, that of Human Relationships, the inverse relationship between the Autocracy and Participation orientation coupled with the positive relationship between People looking after themselves and Autocracy might be interpreted as a tension between those in power and those who would like to offer more in the running of the organization. Interestingly, within this same set, Collegiality and Participation are positively correlated and, as the internal check for the questions in this section, shows inverse correlations between People looking after themselves and both Participation and Collegiality. People within this organization seem to feel that they can, indeed, work with others in a collegial manner; and, that sharing of skills and information is an accepted method of doing things.
The remainder of the Spearman Rank-Order Correlations are supportive of the consistency ratings for the Basic Assumptions of the Nature of Human Activity, Harmonizing and Reactive; Assumptions about Time, Linear and Past orientations, as well as Present and Past orientations; the Nature of Human Nature has a strong positive relationship between Good "Trustworthy" and Good "Hardworking," and also indicates two strong inverse relationships between Good "Trustworthy and Bad "Here for a ride" as well as Good "Hardworking" and Bad "Here for a ride."

Research Question 2: Is there consistency of choice in methods of communication being used in day-to-day organizational events?

With respect to the second research question, the issue of internal integration as it is manifested through communication media choice is the central concern. As was discussed in Chapter 3, the Daft and Lengel Communication Richness Scale was expanded to provide the various communication media choices. For a culture to exist, there must be a means of transmitting not only relevant day-to-day information, but also the values and beliefs of the organization. This
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A group of respondents had some very clear communication choices that were shared in a highly consistent manner.

With reference to the issue of "fitting into" the organization as part of internal integration, respondents indicated that (1) they knew where their group fit into the organization (98.1%); and, (2) they indicated that goals and aims are in alignment with the goals and aims of the organization (83.3%). Respondents did not feel as strongly in the choice of (3) HQ's awareness of their department's contributions (66.6%) or that (4) these contributions were valued (66.6%) by HQ.

With reference to the issue of "how things work around here," respondents indicated that when they need to communicate with their manager they chose being able to walk into the individual's office to talk (90.7%).

For the dimension of the "best way" to get the job done, as a part of internal integration, four scenarios were presented each of which required communication of information. In three of the four scenarios, the clear communication choice was that of informal, face-to-face communication. In only one scenario were responses clearly split
across multiple choices, but even then the preference for face-to-face communication is clear.

To congratulate someone on a job well done, face-to-face informal (81.1%).

To indicate a job was poorly done face-to-face formal (22.6%) and informal (71.7%)

Problem solving between units, face-to-face, both formal (13.5%) and informal (26.9%) ; small group, informal (25%); and a direct telephone call (17.3%).

To pass along important information to a supervisor, face-to-face, informal (51%) followed by face-to-face, formal(31.4%).

Passing along information to one of the organization's officers, face-to-face, informal (40%); face-to-face, formal (18%); and, telephone (22%).

The last of the questions asked respondents to indicate how they are likely to receive information and how they are likely to give information during a normal day at work. For both questions, the response was the same: Respondents are likely to receive communication through two main media choices: face-to-face, informal communication (82%) and telephone calls (65.4%). Respondents are likely to communicate to others through the same two media: face-to-face, informal communication (92%) followed by telephone calls (77%).
Interpretation of Findings

By using Schein's theoretical perspective, it was possible to explore his concepts of Basic Assumptions and issues of communication by investigating Internal Integrative procedures. Schein takes the position that an organization's culture cannot be easily discerned. His work was developed after years of consultative work in various organizations, and his perspective is that of the researcher as participant. Accordingly he strongly adheres to the belief that one must be in the organization in order to learn about the beliefs and values that give clues to the underlying basic assumptions. Clearly, if one has both unlimited access and time, this approach can yield extraordinarily rich information about an organization. The reality, however, is that unless there is a compelling reason to bring in an "outsider," a researcher will seldom be given the kind access that Schein has experienced.

The alternative method that this research employed was to develop a questionnaire that endeavored to remain true to Schein's ideas. The result of this effort yielded an instrument that appears to provide enough information about an organization's basic assumptions
and internal integrative procedures as displayed through communication media choices to create a revealing picture of the organization. The instrument provides the beginning or baseline of information about an organization. It can be the springboard for more involved interaction on the part of the researcher.

As was indicated in the above section, as they are understood by the respondents, there do appear to be shared basic assumptions within the target organization. Not only are there High and Very High levels of consistency of choices between the different sets of Basic Assumptions, but in the matter of the Nature of Reality and Truth, which Schein believes is the most important of all Basic Assumptions, respondents did have a clear and consistent choice.

Schein has posited that without agreement along this particular dimension, he does not believe that a culture can exist. As discussed in Chapter 3, a scale that made sense and was reasonable was developed to aid in the interpretation of data. Along each of the dimensions that make up the Basic Assumptions, respondents indicated clear choices which when subjected to the formula:

\[ \text{Consistency} = |\% \text{ Agree} - \% \text{ Disagree}| \]
enabled the researcher to quantify the concept of consistency. The response to this dimension, The Nature of Reality and Truth, was a Very High rating along the consistency scale.

Along each of the dimensions of Basic Assumptions, respondents were able to indicate those aspects they believed to be most descriptive of their workplace. In each case, these values fell along the Very High or High end of the scale. Further, the use of the Spearman Rank-Order correlations provided more information concerning the relationships within each set of choices for the different Basic Assumptions.

The second part of the questionnaire focused on the role communication plays in internal integrative procedures. Part of the issue of internal integrations is the need for a common language and an understanding of how things are to be done in an appropriate manner. People must feel a part of the organization. All of these aspects rely on communication, both what is transmitted and how it is transmitted. Without understanding and agreement along this dimension of internal integration, it would be difficult to imagine how
the organization would exist. Again, respondents were able to indicate their choices in a consistent manner.

Consistency of choice along the dimensions of Basic Assumptions and communication media choice was the underlying focus of this research. The point of the effort was to determine if people could identify similar choices as being descriptive of their organization. The overall response of this particular group to the questionnaire supports this manner of data collection.

The picture which emerges is one of an organization that has implemented certain procedures or the "right way" to accomplish both long and short-term goals; that those working in the organization should understand what those procedures are and adhere to them; and that there is a need to defer to those with authority, as it is that group that can direct others. Within the work group, people are viewed as being hardworking and trustworthy. There is a strong orientation toward participation or sharing of information and collegiality.

This is a group that is trying to harmonize with its environment and be flexible because a lot is happening outside of the organization.
that will have to be dealt with because "things happen." The responses are indicative of an organization in which employees have an understanding of where their group fits into the overall picture; and, that there are shared goals and aims. But, there is some concern that while HQ is aware of contributions and values those contributions, they might be valued a bit more.

Based on the responses, this organization has clearly incorporated certain expectations for employee behavior, and has also incorporated appropriate procedures within the workplace that are understood and implemented by those who work there. This is a relatively small organization (110 employees) and it is likely that everyone recognizes and quite possibly knows everyone else. The informal aspect of communication has been integrated on all levels of this organization. Again, the picture is one of an informal setting, with easy access to all employees coupled with the clear expectation that information will be passed along within a face-to-face context.

As an aside, when delivering a summary report of the research findings to a contact within this organization, the comment was made that it was no surprise to him that informal face-to-face
communication was the clear choice of respondents. He indicated that this was a comfortable place in which to work and access to individuals was quite easy. He did indicate, however, that there was a growing need to "put things on paper," because too many details were being discussed but not recorded. His concern that there would have to be more formalized procedures for saving information and follow-up of information than was currently being employed. He saw this as a real challenge to the informality that appears to be ingrained in this organization. Thus, while the informal aspect of communication may be comfortable and seemingly effective, it may not be efficient.

Schein would argue that the previous information is exactly what is missing from data collection that relies solely on a paper and pencil instrument, and he is correct in making that argument. Often, those little comments are the fine details that help to create a more complete picture of the organization. I would argue that while his approach, if done correctly, gives depth of information from a small group of people; while the paper and pencil approach, if done correctly, gives a baseline of information that spans a much larger group and provides breadth of information.
Pivotal is the phrase "if done correctly." Each approach takes a great deal of time and energy and if done incorrectly, will result in sloppy, and potentially unusable information. I would posit that the strength of the questionnaire format is that (1) one has the opportunity to fine-tune each question; (2) one's presence is not an issue, the respondent will not be influenced by the researcher's enthusiasm or lack thereof; (3) responses can be drawn from all levels of the organization and potentially from all employees; and (4) data can be collected in a relatively short span of time with little disruption to the participants.

While Schein deserves respect for his ability to work within the organizational setting and extract pertinent information from individuals through that process, I do believe that the method employed in this effort to understand an organization's culture has its place as a viable research tool.

Shortcomings and Pitfalls

At the start of any large-scale effort, one tries to think ahead and hopes that all contingencies will be met. At its conclusion, one
looks back and realizes how things might have been done differently. Such is true for this endeavor.

First, if it were possible, I would have liked to have had a greater response rate. Out of 110 employees, 55 responded to the questionnaire. The means of disseminating the questionnaire was thorough, they were included in pay envelopes with a letter requesting cooperation. Several weeks later, a follow-up reminder letter was sent through the same means. While this method guaranteed a questionnaire to everyone, there was no guarantee that the request would be honored. There was some thought given to having small groups of employees meet with the researcher and be given the questionnaire within that format, but it was decided that such meetings would be difficult to schedule. Apart from the logistics, there is the concern that an inappropriate bias might be introduced into that particular information-gathering format. The presence of the researcher might influence the respondent in unintended ways. The desire for large response numbers is in constant conflict with the reality of the workplace and its attendant distractions.
Second, because the questionnaire is one that was specifically developed for this research, it has not been used in any other data collecting situations. Respondents, however, were not given a comment section. While the questionnaire was carefully scrutinized and considered by all the committee members and was also read by a number of individuals on an informal basis, there might well have been some pertinent comments on the part of the actual respondents that would help clarify question phrasing or scale choices. Had the opportunity existed, a pilot study involving a small group of employees from the target organization would have been included as part of the research effort.

Third, being allowed to do a before and after collection of data. Some organizations that were potential sites for data collection were considering changes to the organization. Had the opportunity developed, there would have been the potential to investigate whether change in the organization would have an effect on shared basic assumptions and communication media choices. The selected organization was interested in the "overview" aspect of this work, but no plans for longitudinal work are being discussed.
Fourth, being able to administer the instrument to two separate organizations for data collection. This situation would have allowed for comparison or contrast between two organizations. Unfortunately, getting permission to gather data in a single organization was very difficult. In most cases, there was an interest in this effort on the part of one or more individuals, which was over-ruled by individual(s) in a higher position. Some individuals simply did not want an outsider asking questions—there was an attitude that clearly communicated the folk wisdom of "if it ain't broke, don't fix it." Others were concerned that the potential respondent pool would misinterpret the reason for the questionnaire. Another concern was that the potential respondent pool was already overworked, and asking them to take on one more task was unreasonable. So, while the idea of a comparison study using two sites is certainly intriguing, I found it to be difficult to achieve.

Directions for Future Research

This effort is a first step in exploring a topic based on work that has been participative. As has been stated before, the current empirical approach allows a picture to be developed, but not a finely detailed picture. I would like to see the questionnaire used in different
organizations to see whether similar results can be obtained. I would also like to be able to spend some time as an observer within the organization. Information that comes from casual discussion, as well as impressions that are formed when visiting an organization, can provide some additional information. I agree with Schein when he comments that one should not make too much of casual observation. It is all too easy to embellish and/or infer from such observations. I am suggesting that the bulk of information be derived from the questionnaire, and bits and pieces be filled in through the casual observation.

I believe that this work can be useful in helping to determine whether basic assumptions change when the organization undergoes change. This would require a long-term commitment to gather data over a period of time. Every organization is longitudinally influenced by the external environment. How an organization responds to those external changes may well include changes within the organization. How those changes are enacted might create a change in values and beliefs that would influence shared basic assumptions. Unless there is
the opportunity to chart an organization over time, we can only speculate on such matters.

Not only is there the opportunity to expand the overall knowledge base within the academic community given this type of research, there is the opportunity to build a worthwhile relationship with those groups of individuals who are involved in both the creation and maintenance of organizations. We each have a great deal to share with the other.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A

Letter and Questionnaire
September 21, 1993

Tecot Electric Supply Co., Inc.
55 Lukens Drive
New Castle, Delaware 19720

Dear Tecot Respondent:

Enclosed is a copy of a questionnaire I have prepared as part of my Master's Thesis for the Department of Communication at the University of Delaware. My work centers around organizational culture and communication and the questions asked are concerned with those two areas of interest. After reviewing my questionnaire and giving careful consideration to my request, Mr. Tecot, Mr. Cannon and Mr. Sanzone have agreed to allow me to collect data within your company.

I have enclosed a self-addressed, stamped envelope for your convenience, and request that you mail in your responses by September 30. The questionnaire should take approximately 20 minutes of your time to complete. In responding to the questions, please keep in mind that your own experiences within Tecot should guide your responses. In keeping with the guidelines set by the Research Office of the University of Delaware, your participation is voluntary and your responses will be kept in the strictest of confidence.

Your cooperation in completing and returning my questionnaire will be greatly appreciated. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jo Kmetz

Enclosure
Sample of Questionnaire

SURVEY OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Prepared by
Jo-Mary Kmetz
Department of Communication
Respondents are requested to fill in the following demographic information. Please note that all responses will be anonymous, and that respondents are free to refuse to answer any specific question or refuse to answer any section of the questionnaire at any time. Your cooperation in responding to the following questions will, however, be greatly appreciated.

Please fill in the appropriate information.

Male _____    Female _____    Age _____

Number of years with company ______

Department ______________________
Section I

General Instructions:

Please choose the response you feel most appropriately answers the following questions. Keep in mind that your answers should be drawn from your personal experiences in this organization.

For questions 1 to 26, please use the following scale:

(1) Strongly agree
(2) Agree
(3) Neither agree or disagree
(4) Disagree
(5) Strongly disagree

As an employee, I've found that in this organization:

____ 1. Things are "always done this way."

____ 2. There is the right way to do things.

____ 3. Our senior management wants to do things this way, so that's what we do.

____ 4. When I have a specific problem, it is best that I go to my unit manager and do whatever she or he decides.

____ 5. When a problem occurs, our units get together, we discuss the problem and its possible solutions and pick out the best solution. Everyone is involved.

____ 6. If there is a problem, we say "Let's try this and let's see what happens."

____ 7. When a problem occurs, we will research the problem and then do a trial run on a promising solution. If it works, we will use this particular solution.
In this organization, this is the way things work around here:

8. The people at the top have the most power; and they use it in ways to let us know they are firmly in charge.

9. The people with the most power take care of the rest of their employees.

10. When there is a problem, all the units here have the opportunity to share information. We try to consult with each other, but the final decision rests with the people at the top.

11. People at every level have something to offer in the running of this organization. We share our skills and information. That is what makes this organization work so well.

12. Whoever has the information and/or the skills gets the job done. Their immediate supervisor, however, is the person who must account for actions coming out of the unit.

13. We all share in the responsibility for making this organization work.

14. People tend to look after themselves, and no one else.

When I think about how things get done around here, I feel that:

15. We try to "nip" problems in the bud. We share a "can do" attitude.

16. Things happen. We respond as best as we can.

17. Sometimes we catch a small problem and are able to prevent it from becoming big; other times we must deal with big problems. We must learn to deal with all manner of things because the world changes quickly and we are a part of it.

I believe this company:

18. Has developed certain steps and procedures and expects that they be followed without question.

19. Tries to take into consideration the demands made on different departments. For example, Sales and Research & Development just don't function in the same way, they work on different time cycles.

20. Tends to do things the way they have always been done.
21. Tries to look ahead so that future developments won't take us by surprise.

22. Takes things as they come. We deal with problems and/or opportunities as they arise.

Most of the people around here are:

23. Trustworthy. They can be believed.

24. Hardworking. They do their jobs well and take pride in their efforts.

25. Able to do an adequate job. They don't goof off, but they don't get excited about their work, either.

26. Here for a ride. They do as little as possible.
Section II

Drawing from your personal experience in this organization, please choose the most appropriate response for questions 27 to 30 using the scales following each question.

27. While your section/department is only a part of this organization, to what extent is it clear to you how your unit fits into the "big organizational picture"?

(1) Very clear
(2) Somewhat clear
(3) Not sure
(4) Somewhat unclear
(5) Not at all clear

28. As you see it, to what extent are the goals and aims of your section/department aligned with the overall goals and aims of the organization?

(1) We almost always share the same goals and aims.
(2) We sometimes share the same goals and aims.
(3) We share the same goals and aims half of the time.
(4) We share the same goals and aims less than half of the time.
(5) We rarely share the same goals and aims.

29. As you see it, to what extent do the people at corporate headquarters seem to be aware of your section/department's contributions?

(1) Very aware
(2) Aware
(3) Not sure
(4) Somewhat aware
(5) Not at all aware
30. As you see it, to what extent do the people at corporate headquarters seem to value your section/department's contributions?

(1) Highly valued
(2) Valued
(3) Not sure
(4) Sometimes valued
(5) Not at all valued

For questions 31 to 38 please use the following scale:

(5) Most likely
(4) Likely
(3) Half the time
(2) Less likely
(1) Least likely

Given the way things work around here, to communicate with my manager:

31. I can walk into his or her office and see if she or he can talk with me.

32. I make an appointment through his or her secretary.

33. I try to catch him or her "on the fly," for example, when walking down the corridor.

34. I take my turn during regularly scheduled staff meetings.

35. I send E-mail.

36. I use voice-mail.

37. I use a direct telephone call.

38. I communicate my information through a third party.

39. I rely on written memorandums and letters.
Questions 40 to 44 deal with communication choices. Drawing from your personal experience in this organization, which of the following choices would be the best way to get the job done in this organization. Please pick the single most appropriate choice from the scale below:

(0) Face-to-face, formal communication
(1) Face-to-face, informal communication
(2) Communicate through a third party
(3) Communicate informally in a small group
(4) Communicate in planned staff meetings
(5) Use the telephone for a direct call
(6) Use E-mail
(7) Use voice-mail
(8) Personal letter
(9) Memorandum

40. Someone you work with has done a great job. How would you communicate your congratulations?

41. Someone you work with has done a poor job. How would you communicate your displeasure?

42. There is a problem between your unit and another unit. The problem must be resolved. How would you communicate to try to solve the problem?

43. You must pass along some important information to your immediate supervisor. How do you communicate this information?

44. You must pass along some information to one of the organization's officers. How do you pass along this information?
Using the scale below, for items 45 through 64, estimate how often you use the listed communication choices.

(1) All of the time
(2) Frequently
(3) Some of the time
(4) Rarely
(5) Never

During a "normal" day, people communicate to me through:

___ 45. Face-to-face, formal communication
___ 46. Face-to-face, informal communication
___ 47. Communicating through a third party
___ 48. Communicating informally in a small group
___ 49. Communicating in planned staff meeting
___ 50. Using the telephone for a direct call
___ 51. Using E-mail
___ 52. Using voice-mail
___ 53. Formal letter
___ 54. Memorandum

During a "normal" day, I am likely to communicate in the following manner:

___ 55. Face-to-face, formal communication
___ 56. Face-to-face, informal communication
___ 57. Communicating through a third party
___ 58. Communicating informally in a small group
___ 59. Communicating in a planned staff meeting
___ 60. Use the telephone for a direct call
___ 61. Use E-mail
___ 62. Use voice-mail
___ 63. Formal letter
___ 64. Memorandum

Thank you for your time and cooperation
APPENDIX B

Supplementary Tables
Overall Percent of Responses
Table B.1 Overall Percent of Responses to the Basic Assumption
The Nature of Reality and Truth

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Table B.2 Overall Percent of Responses to the Basic Assumption
The Nature of Human Relationships

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Table B.4 Overall Percent of Response to the Basic Assumption
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Table B.5 Overall Percent of Responses to the Basic Assumption

The Nature of Human Nature

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Table B.6 Overall Percent of Responses for Combined Questions 27 Through 30

Issues of Internal Integration

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Table B.7 Overall Percentage of Responses  
Internal Integration and Communication Choices  
Communicating with my Manager

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Rationale for Theoretical Choice

Schein is one of the few academic researchers in the area of organizational culture to present a well-developed theoretical framework that is based on observation and ethnographic study. As a result, he is one of the most respected scholars in the area of organizational culture. His methodology is rigorous and allows for in-depth study of the group under scrutiny (an approach supported by Morgan and Smircich, 1980, p. 498).

His assertion that culture is "a learned product of group experience which is found only where there is a definable group with a significant history" (Schein, p. 7) allows the researcher to look at the organization as a holistic cultural entity, and/or to investigate subcultures that may be a significant part of the overall organizational culture.