



Mainstreaming Evaluation into an Organization's 'Learning Culture'

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Overview

- What are learning organizations?
- The three levels of 'learning culture'
 - Formal policies, systems, & practices
 - Informal practices & symbolic actions
 - Evaluative beliefs, values, & attitudes
- Strategies for mainstreaming evaluation
 - Lessons from best practice in organizational culture change

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What are learning organizations?

Learning organizations ...

- Create useful knowledge
- Disseminate it effectively
- Use this knowledge to improve organizational effectiveness

As a result, they ...

- Are better able to anticipate change
- Respond/adapt more quickly to change
- Perform better and survive longer than organizations that do not learn so well

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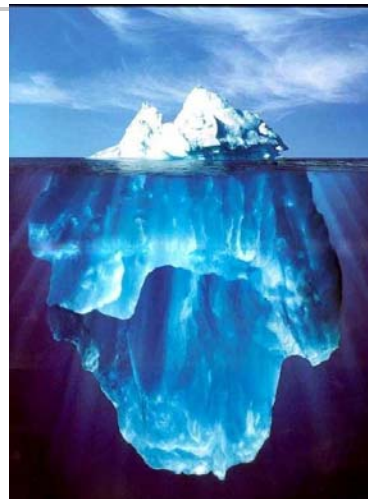


The 'Learning Culture' Iceberg

Formal policies, systems,
& practices

Informal practices &
symbolic actions

Evaluative beliefs, values,
& attitudes




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Formal policies, systems, & practices

Policies & Systems	Formal Practices
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Tough evaluation of successes & failures■ Performance appraisal systems identify & reward 'A players'■ Effective knowledge management systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Experimentation with new methods/programs■ Regular benchmarking & competitive analysis■ Ongoing self-evaluation, plus external critiques

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Informal practices & symbolic actions

Informal Practices	Symbolic Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Flexibility/fluidity allows continual evaluation & streamlining■ Diversity of practice & methods; deliberate use of diverse teams■ Assumptions & status quo regularly challenged	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Risk-takers, experimenters, & tough critics of ideas are promoted/rewarded■ Near misses on high goals rewarded more than easily clearing easy targets■ Top management actively seeks out tough criticism

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Evaluative beliefs, values, & attitudes

Beliefs

- It is valuable to distinguish good from poor performance
- Without tough feedback & criticism, excellence is impossible – especially at the top!
- No 'sacred cows'

Values & Attitudes

- The evaluative attitude: "the relentless pursuit of the truth about quality"
- Openness to change & continual improvement
- Diverse perspectives and 'outside-the-box' thinking are highly valued

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Strategies for mainstreaming evaluation

1. Get top management commitment
2. Identify "evaluation evangelists"
3. Communicate the evaluation imperative
4. Train people in evaluation skills
5. Model the importance of external criticism (senior management)
6. Hire a critical mass of outsiders with the "evaluative attitude"
7. Listen to skeptics & cynics; allow powerful change blockers the chance to move on
8. Recognize and reward new behaviors & mindset, including 'mistake of the month'

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Concluding comments

- Important to clarify targets of change:
 - Behaviorshift only → sham compliance
 - Mindshift only → great intentions, no action
- Real culture change must target both
- Behaviorshift needs:
 - Know-how/skills
 - Role models/coaches
 - Extrinsic motivators
- Mindshift needs:
 - Persuasion/buy-in
 - Symbolic action: 'walk the talk'
 - Intrinsic motivation