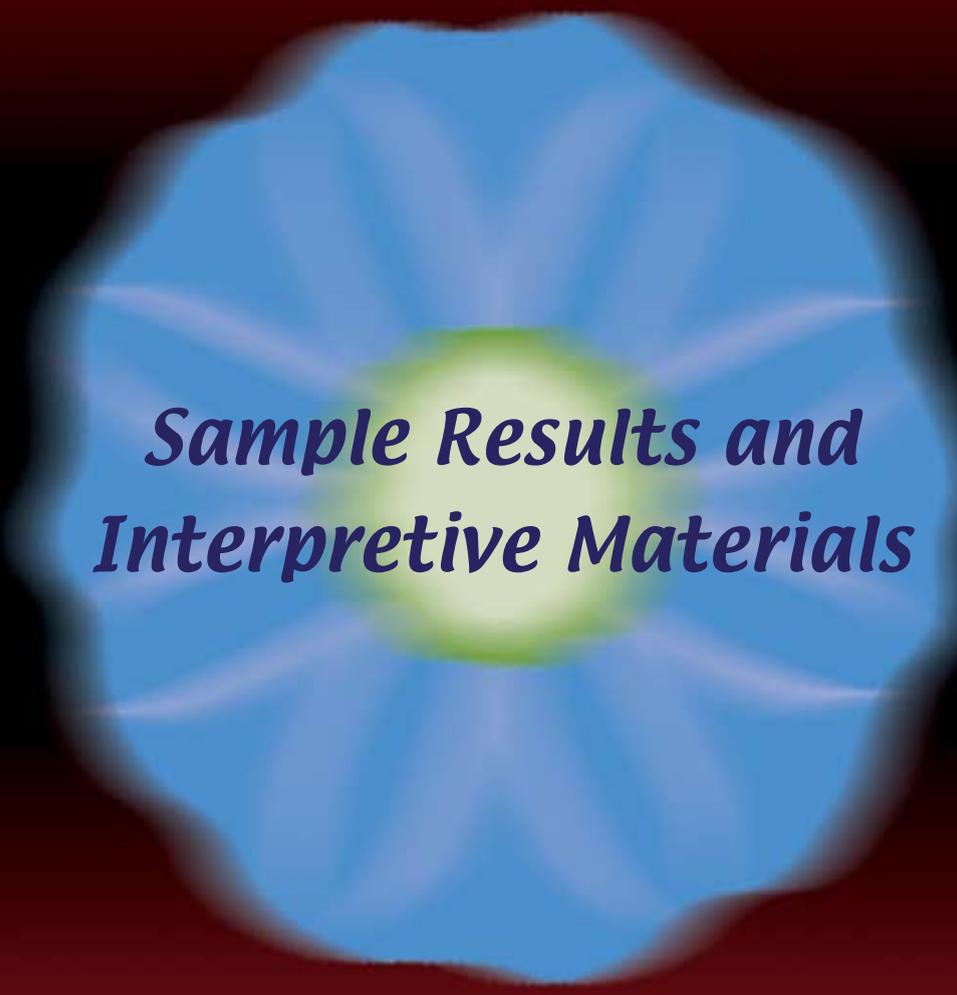


**Kilmann-Saxton  
Culture-Gap<sup>®</sup>  
Survey**



*Sample Results and  
Interpretive Materials*

**RALPH H. KILMANN  
MARY J. SAXTON**

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## **CULTURE-GAP® SURVEY**

### **Defining Four Culture-Gaps**

As shown on the opposite page, the four Culture-Gap scores are defined by two independent distinctions: (1) technical versus human concerns, as functioning (2) short term versus long term.

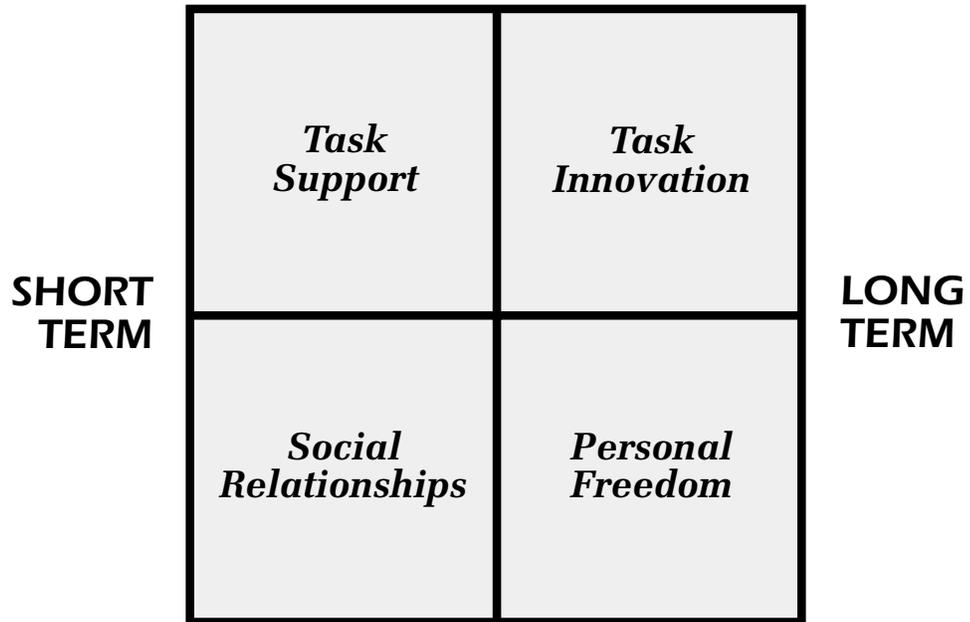
The technical/human distinction examines cultural norms that influence the technical aspects of work with norms that influence the social and personal aspects. This fundamental distinction has appeared in virtually all discussions of behavior in organizations—as task orientation versus people orientation.

The short-term/long-term distinction examines those cultural norms that function on a day-to-day basis versus norms that focus on the future of the organization. The latter type includes norms that emphasize work improvements (rather than just getting today's work done), and norms that define the relationship between individuals and their organization (rather than focusing on daily social interactions).

Since these two basic distinctions cover such a wide spectrum of life in an organization, the resulting four types of Culture-Gaps are expected to capture the variety of cultural norms that affect organizational success as well as job satisfaction.

# CULTURE-GAP® SURVEY

## TECHNICAL CONCERNS



## HUMAN CONCERNS

## CULTURE-GAP® SURVEY

**Task Support** includes norms that are technical in nature with a short time frame. An unfilled bar in this quadrant (a Culture-Gap score with a minus sign) indicates that performance and morale would be improved by a change toward *less* Task Support. A filled bar (a Culture-Gap score with a plus sign) indicates improvement can be accomplished by a change toward *more* Task Support. For example, the first norm in each of the following norm pairs represents a change toward less Task Support while the second norm shows a change toward more Task Support: “Share information with other groups only when it benefits your own work group” versus “Share information to help other groups.” “Concentrate only on your own tasks” versus “Help others complete their tasks.”

**Task Innovation** includes norms that are technical in nature with a long time frame. An unfilled bar in this quadrant (a Culture-Gap score with a minus sign) indicates that performance and morale would be improved by a change toward *less* Task Innovation. A filled bar (a Culture-Gap score with a plus sign) indicates improvement can be accomplished by a change toward *more* Task Innovation. For example, a change toward less or more Task Innovation, respectively, is demonstrated in each of these norm pairs: “Keep things the same” versus “Make changes.” “Discourage creativity” versus “Encourage creativity.”

## CULTURE-GAP® SURVEY

***Social Relationships*** includes norms that have a people orientation with a short time frame. An unfilled bar in this quadrant (a Culture-Gap with a minus sign) indicates that performance and morale would be improved by a change toward *less* Social Relationships. A filled bar (a Culture-Gap with a plus sign) indicates improvement can be accomplished by a change toward *more* Social Relationships. For example, a change toward less or more Social Relationships, respectively, is demonstrated in each of these norm pairs: “Don’t participate in social activities with others in your organization” versus “Participate in social activities with others in your organization.” “Don’t bother getting to know the people in your work group” versus “Get to know the people in your work group.”

***Personal Freedom*** includes norms that have a people orientation with a long time frame. An unfilled bar in this quadrant (a Culture-Gap score with a minus sign) indicates that performance and morale would be improved by a change toward *less* Personal Freedom. A filled bar (a Culture-Gap score with a plus sign) indicates that improvement can be accomplished by a change toward *more* Personal Freedom. For example, a change toward less or more Personal Freedom, respectively, is demonstrated in each of these norm pairs: “Live for your job or career” versus “Live for yourself or your family.” “Believe in the organization’s values” versus “Believe in your own values.”

## CULTURE-GAP® SURVEY

### Interpreting Your Scores

Since each Culture-Gap score is derived from individual responses to seven norm pairs, each score can range from 0 to +7 or -7 (scores can be plus or minus). The following diagnostic guidelines suggest what Culture-Gap scores need special attention:

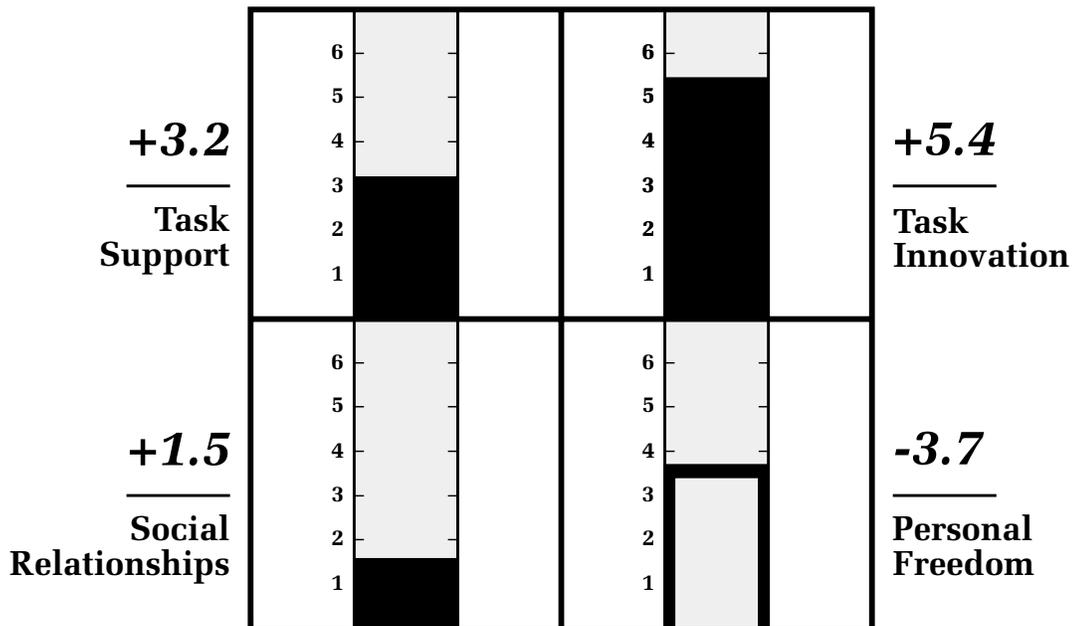
A score of +3 or higher (a filled bar) in any quadrant represents, very possibly, a significant Culture-Gap. It reveals a desire for more Task Support, more Task Innovation, more Social Relationships, or more Personal Freedom—depending on the quadrant in question. A score of +1 suggests an insignificant Culture-Gap. A score of +2 is borderline.

Any minus score (an unfilled bar) represents, potentially, a significant Culture-Gap. Such a score indicates a desire for less Task Support, less Task Innovation, less Social Relationships, or less Personal Freedom—depending on the quadrant in question. Since unfilled bars tend to occur infrequently as compared to filled bars, any unfilled bar should thus be considered as a possible cultural barrier to organizational success.

If as many as three or four scores in any Culture-Gap Profile are found to be significant according to these diagnostic guidelines, a rather broad-based cultural problem is evident. Here a variety of Culture-Gaps are collectively hindering the performance, job satisfaction, and morale of the work unit.

# CULTURE-GAP® SURVEY

**An Example: My Work Group (N = 10)**



## Culture-Gap® Profile

## CULTURE-GAP® SURVEY

As revealed by the example Culture-Gap Profile on the previous page, the technical norms of this work group do not seem to encourage the necessary information sharing and support for getting the day-to-day work done (Task Support = +3.2). Even more pronounced, the actual norms do not encourage the necessary creative and innovative behavior that is required (Task Innovation = +5.4). Taken together, the technical norms are most likely interfering with performance and morale—both short term and long term.

In the same example, the norms concerned with the human aspects of organizational life uncover an insignificant Culture-Gap for day-to-day social interactions (Social Relationships = +1.5). Examining the long-term relationship between individuals and their organization, however, an unfilled bar (a minus Culture-Gap score) reveals a significant culture problem. (Personal Freedom = -3.7). The culture might encourage too much choice in following standard operating procedures, yet members realize that a closer adherence to organizational guidelines is necessary for success.

Since three of the four Culture-Gaps achieve a significant result, a rather broad-based cultural problem seems apparent. The work group's culture is holding back performance, satisfaction, and morale in several ways.

## CULTURE-GAP® SURVEY

Continuing with this example, the identified Culture-Gaps suggest the following directions for change and improvement: The technical norms should be changed in the direction of more Task Innovation and more Task Support. Furthermore, it would be helpful to examine behavior in the work group to see if personal needs were taking priority over group goals. If this were evident, a change toward *less* Personal Freedom would be recommended. Specifically, norms could be encouraged that stressed more discipline, more compliance with rules and regulations, and more loyalty to the organization. Such a change might also serve to encourage a movement toward more Task Innovation and more Task Support.

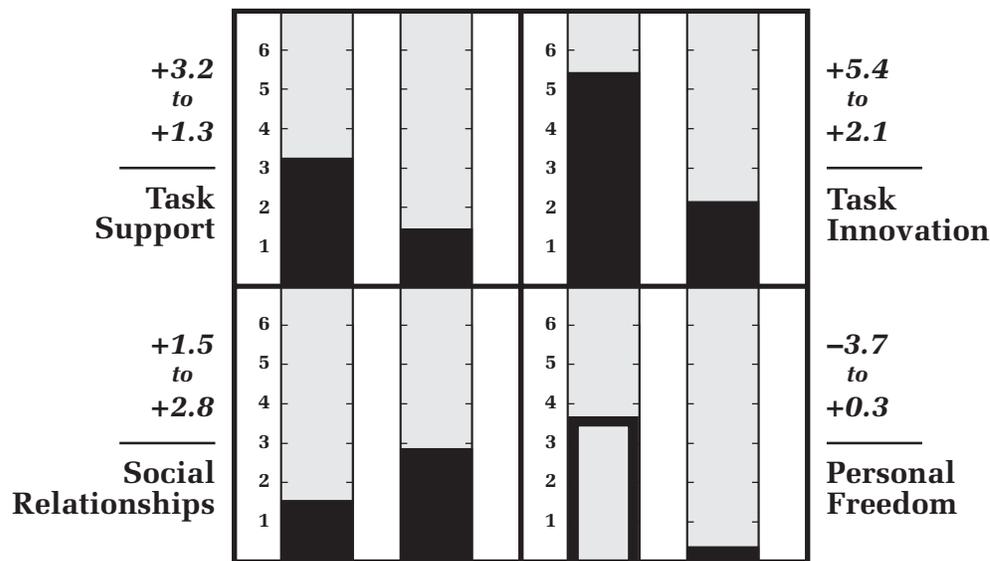
Naturally, making a transition from actual to desired norms cannot be done by simply being aware—intellectually—of what change is needed. Nor will cultural change occur by making public speeches or distributing literature on the subject. Changing a work group's (or department's or organization's) culture takes a systematic and orchestrated effort over an extended period of time. Furthermore, it is difficult—if not impossible—to create lasting cultural change by concentrating only on culture. All the other key features of an organization must be examined and, perhaps, adjusted as well—including skills, teams, strategy-structures, and even the reward system.

See R. H. Kilmann's book, *Quantum Organizations* (Newport Coast, CA: Kilmann Diagnostics, 2011), to learn more about a completely integrated program for systemwide transformation—with managing cultural norms at center stage.

## CULTURE-GAP® SURVEY

### Making Culture-Gap® Comparisons

About six months to one year after an effort to change cultural norms has been initiated, it is worthwhile to assess if the identified Culture-Gaps have, in fact, been reduced. Retaking the survey provides a convenient before-and-after comparison for revealing where cultural improvements have occurred and where additional effort is needed.



### Culture-Gap® Comparison

For a systematic process for managing culture-gaps for both the first and second assessment, see: R. H. Kilmann: *Work Sheets for Identifying and Closing Culture-Gaps* (Newport Coast, CA: Kilmann Diagnostics, 2011).