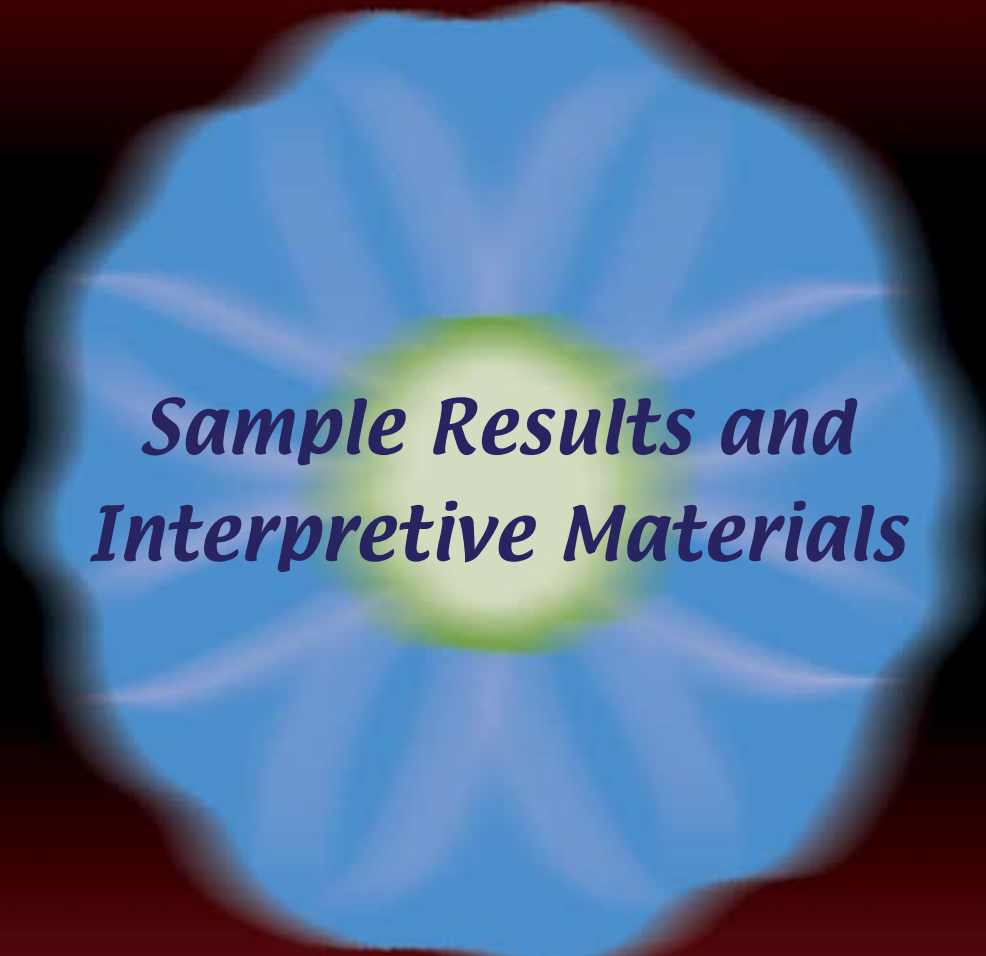


Kilmanns Organizational Belief Survey



*Sample Results and
Interpretive Materials*

**RALPH H. KILMANN
AND ASSOCIATES**

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**Kilmanns
Organizational Belief
Survey**

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ORGANIZATIONAL BELIEF SURVEY

Defining Three Organizational Beliefs

This survey assesses whether you believe you can control the key aspects of your organization that affect your performance. For convenience sake, your score can be sorted into one of three categories: External Control, Internal Control, and Mixed Control (which match the three circles in the Organizational Belief Profiles).

Individual scores (and organizational averages) can range between -60 and +60. Recall: The rule of thumb for categorizing the results of this survey is as follows:

External Control -60 to -11	Mixed Control -10 to +10	Internal Control +11 to +60
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External Control means you believe that most of what goes on in your organization is determined by *outside* forces: your coworkers, your boss, your work group, your department, your organization, or people outside your organization (such as customers and suppliers). **Internal Control** means you believe that most of what goes on in your organization is determined by *inside* forces: your own attitudes, decisions, actions, and efforts to influence your surroundings. **Mixed Control**, in between these two extremes, means you believe that sometimes you can control what goes on, while at other times you cannot influence much at all.

ORGANIZATIONAL BELIEF SURVEY

In some situations, people's beliefs are—exactly—in line with reality: They believe they cannot influence what goes on and, indeed, they can't. Any of their attempts at change or improvement are continuously stymied by insurmountable barriers. In other situations, however, people's beliefs are considerably out of line with reality. For example, it may indeed be possible for organizational members to influence what goes on—but because they do not believe they can succeed, they do not even test their beliefs and give it a chance. Worse still is the case in which an organization gives its members an opportunity to improve performance and morale: Yet members do not *want* to believe they could make a real difference, so they *refuse* to try.

It is very difficult to know for sure which of these three scenarios is true in an organization: whether (1) beliefs are in line with reality—because members cannot improve their performance no matter how hard they try, (2) beliefs are *unknowingly* out of line—because they have not been tested recently, or (3) beliefs are *knowingly* out of line—because people *prefer*, quite intentionally, not to be responsible or accountable for their own behavior.

If an organization showed little interest in attempting to improve itself, perhaps the first scenario would be plausible. But when an organization is proceeding to implement a systemwide program of planned change, it is hard to argue that real improvement cannot take place. In this case, ironically, *the one thing that can hold the organization back is its own members' outdated and self-serving beliefs.*

ORGANIZATIONAL BELIEF SURVEY

Interpreting Organizational Belief Profiles

When work group, department, and organizational averages have been calculated and graphed, it is interesting to examine the similarities and differences among the beliefs about control across these work units—as compared to individual scores.

The example on the opposite page illustrates a situation in which the individual and, to a lesser extent, the work group are both somewhat pessimistic about the prospects for influencing job performance—while, at the same time, the larger department and the organization as a whole are much more optimistic. These relative profiles might suggest that the individual and his or her work group are not seeing, believing, and thus taking advantage of what most others in the organization are able to influence—and achieve—in their working environment.

By examining these results and then discussing their many implications, however, the particular individuals will be able to rethink whether their *perceptions* of various constraints, limitations, and restrictions in the situation are actually real or largely imagined. An open, candid, and thoughtful discussion along these lines might help to align individual beliefs with reality—which is more likely to foster constructive action than continued resignation.

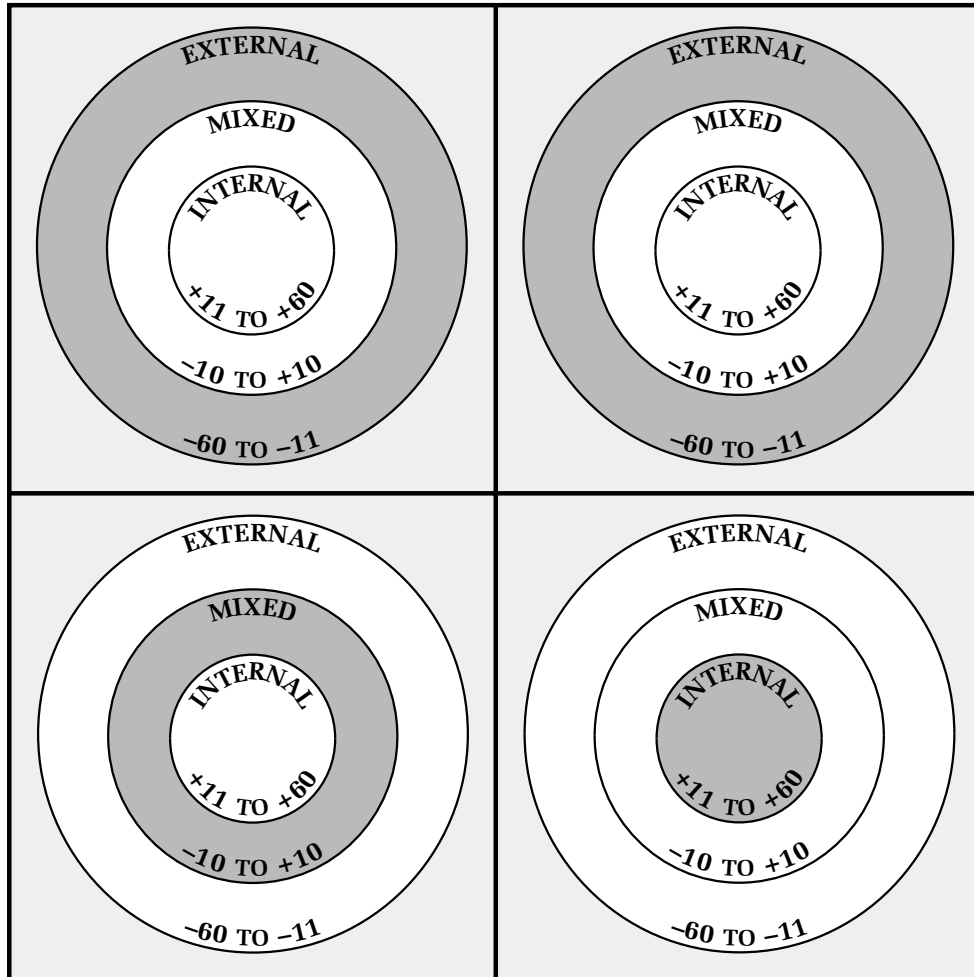
ORGANIZATIONAL BELIEF SURVEY

Individual Profile

-28

Work Group Profile

-20



Department Profile

+7

Organization Profile

+24

ORGANIZATIONAL BELIEF SURVEY

Interpreting Profiles: Another Example

Now consider the four Organizational Belief Profiles shown on the next page. In this case, the individual and the work group apparently believe they *can* influence much of what determines job performance—but the department and their organization as a whole do not! Somehow, these employees have not allowed themselves to be negatively affected by the constraints and obstacles that others seem to experience (or imagine). In this case, it is not unusual for other members of the organization to say: “Hasn’t anyone told them they can’t do that? Don’t they realize that the system will beat them down? They’re acting as if they can really make a difference here and get something done!”

By making these profiles explicit, however, all members throughout the organization can be encouraged to rethink whether they are as helpless and out of control as they envision themselves to be. In particular, to discover that members and work groups *in the very same organization* have not succumbed to External Control may very well stimulate a fresh look at such beliefs—especially when the organization is making a real effort to change and improve.

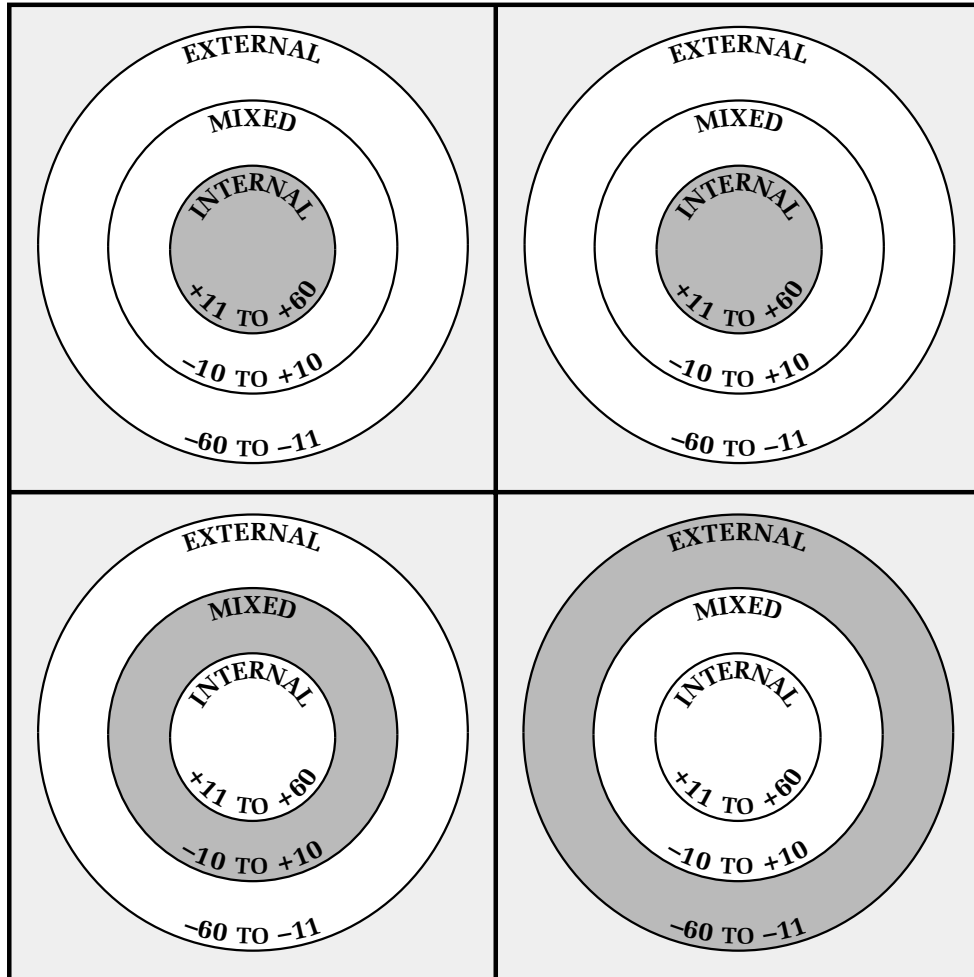
ORGANIZATIONAL BELIEF SURVEY

Individual Profile

+22

Work Group Profile

+14



Department Profile

-5

Organization Profile

-18

ORGANIZATIONAL BELIEF SURVEY

The Critical Path to Internal Control

Ultimately, the challenge is to question any individual's, work group's, or department's beliefs about External Control—especially during those times when the organization is trying to improve its functioning. Even more important, a belief in Internal Control must be fostered actively in order to overcome the debilitating effects of Mixed Control—let alone External Control. Employees need to test their reality explicitly, rather than assuming—unknowingly—that they cannot control what goes on in their organization even when they are being given a sincere opportunity to do so.

To foster Internal Control, therefore, you must do the following: **See** the connection between what you do and what happens—all around you. **Think** as though you can influence what goes on in your organization—at all times. **Act** as though you can make a difference—on everything that affects you. And encourage others to believe in their ability—and will—to determine their destiny. One thing is certain: Without developing a collective belief in Internal Control, an organization cannot change and improve its performance—even with the best of intentions. You must cultivate the organizational belief that people can indeed control their surroundings!