

# Elements of Social Systems/Organizational Culture

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1. Structure/Organization
  - Physical characteristics--location(s), design of space
  - Formal vs. informal structure--public, private, government
  - Hierarchical vs. flat organization
  - Boundaries: rigid vs. flexible
2. Membership
  - ASA Cycle: attraction, selection, attrition (modal personalities & values)
  - Monolithic culture--“psychic prisons”
  - Diversity: homogeneity vs. heterogeneity
  - Psychosocial boundaries: ingroup vs. outgroup
  - Exclusivity
  - Size
3. Norms – shared expectations about appropriate behavior; “normal,” “shoulds,” “oughts,”
  - Descriptive and injunctive (if violated, “unusual” vs. “bad”)
  - Formal (written rules, policies, manuals, constitutions, bylaws; rituals) vs. informal (unwritten, tacit)
  - Congruence of formal and informal
  - Functional vs. dysfunctional
4. Roles – expectations of others about appropriate behavior in a position
  - Formal vs. informal
  - Role episode– mechanism for learning roles
  - Role differentiation– different roles performed in group (task, socioemotional, individualistic)
  - Role ambiguity – confusion about behavior expected in position
  - Intra-role conflict – incompatible behavioral expectations in single role
  - Interrole conflict– incompatible behavioral expectations among two or more roles
5. Communication
  - Centralized vs. decentralized
  - Formal (upward, downward, horizontal) vs. Informal (grapevine/rumor)
  - Written vs. oral
  - Amount/frequency
  - Control of information– secrets
  - Internal vs. external
  - Public relations: recruitment literature, public documents
  - Level of technology used
6. Leadership
  - Status hierarchies: nonverbal and verbal cues to claiming status (specific and diffuse)
  - Task vs. socioemotional
  - Basis of Power: official (legitimate) vs. informal vs. formal (official + informal)
  - Use of Power: rewards, punishments, modeling, inspiration

7. Productivity (Output)
  - Product vs. service
  - High performing vs. low performing
8. Beliefs, Attitudes
  - Political/social/religious
  - Citizenship behavior (contextual performance)--being “good soldier”
  - Psychological contracts
9. Values
  - Mission, goals, strategies
  - Codes of conduct--personal, organizational, professional
  - Organizational justice: (distributive (outcomes: equity, equality)) vs. procedural (process)
10. Emotional Climate/Atmosphere
  - Formal vs. informal
  - Competitive vs. cooperative
  - Hostile vs. supportive
  - High stress vs. low stress (frustration, conflict, pressure)
  - Friendly vs. cold
11. Development/Change/History
  - Life cycle/Business cycle
  - Group development: a) forming; b) storming c) norming; d) performing, e) adjourning
  - Organizational legends (founders, famous/infamous CEO’s)
  - Rites of passage: hiring, performance appraisals, training, firing
  - Critical incidents: layoffs, deaths, reorganization, downsizing, legal disputes, violence, strikes
12. Group Processes
  - Cohesion
  - Conflict
  - Task-oriented vs. defense oriented vs. social oriented
  - Social cognitions/biases: group-serving bias, ingroup bias, outgroup homogeneity effect, groupthink
  - Social forces: obedience (response to authority), conformity (group pressure), compliance (conform in behavior only), group sanctions (praise, punishment, exclusion, isolation)
13. Socio-economic Status
  - Well-capitalized vs. poorly-capitalized
  - High tech vs. low tech

**CULTURE– characteristic ways in which system functions (includes all of above)**