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Building a Values-Driven Organization

A Whole System Approach to Cultural Transformation

THE SUMMARY IN BRIEF

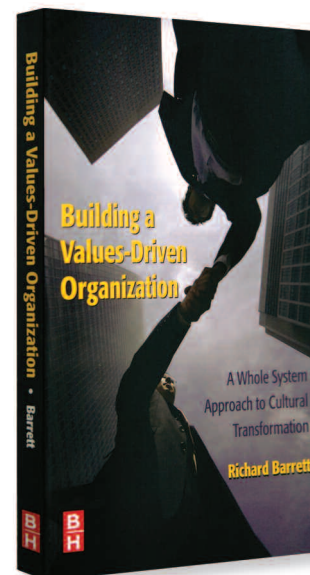
The responsibility of leaders is to enhance, harness and direct the capacity and energy of their people toward virtuous and valuable ends. To achieve long-term success, the organization needs to have a solid foundation built on principles and values that act as a center of gravity. In business, you get what you target, design, measure, provide incentives for and are passionate about. This applies equally to principles and values, which need to be nurtured and directed through an effective whole-system approach and values-management framework. This is exactly what *Building a Values-Driven Organization* provides.

The tools, ideas and framework found in this summary can help any leader who is committed to a values-based approach and long-term sustainable success.

Richard Barrett shows how business is learning to develop a more integral or holistic approach to organizational evolution. In addition, he offers a reminder of the importance of values-based decision making; the need for leadership training programs that build full-spectrum, self-actualized leaders; and the urgent need to create a global cadre of master practitioners of whole-system change to support leaders in creating a values-driven future for business, society and humanity.

IN THIS SUMMARY, YOU WILL LEARN:

- How to build a values-driven organization.
- How the process of values management can be used to support continuous improvements in organizational performance and develop long-term sustainability.
- How new leaders can become new agents of change.
- How leadership can become the key to cultural transformation.
- A blueprint for whole-system change.



by Richard Barrett

CONTENTS

The Seven Levels of Consciousness Model
Page 2

The Cultural Transformation Tools
Page 3

Mapping the Values of Individuals
Page 4

Leadership: The Key to Cultural Transformation
Page 4

The Framework for Whole-System Change
Page 5

Values Management
Page 7

Integrating Resilience
Page 7

THE COMPLETE SUMMARY: BUILDING A VALUES-DRIVEN ORGANIZATION

by Richard Barrett

The author: Richard Barrett is the managing partner of Richard Barrett and Associates. One of the world's leading thinkers on building values-driven organizations, Barrett is the author of the best-selling book *Liberating the Corporate Soul*. He has carried out cultural values assessments for more than 600 organizations in 35 countries in the past eight years and works closely with CEOs of major organizations around the globe.

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Introduction

The concept of whole-system change is based on the work of author Ken Wilber. Whole-system change can best be explained by referring to a modified version of Ken Wilber's Four Quadrant Model. (See chart below.)

	Internal	External
Individual	Personality Personal values and beliefs	Character Personal actions and behaviors
Collective	Culture Group values and beliefs	Social Structures Group actions and behaviors

Figure 1-1 The four quadrants of human systems

As individuals change their values and beliefs, their actions and behaviors change. When a critical mass of individuals changes their values and beliefs in the same direction, their collective actions and behaviors also change. For this to happen, there must be a parallel shift in all four quadrants.

Engineering parallel shifts in the four quadrants within a group structure, such as an organization or any human system, is called "whole-system change." Whole-system change begins with a shift in the personal consciousness of individuals and ends with a shift in a group's actions and behaviors.

Values Management

The purpose of values management is to actively measure and monitor the values and behaviors of an organization so that we can continually adjust the culture to sustain high performance.

As a change agent, it is vital that you understand what levels of consciousness and what worldviews different segments of the executive and employee population are operating from if you are going to successfully design and support the leaders of an organization in managing a whole-system transformation process. ●

The Seven Levels of Consciousness Model

Seven well-defined stages can be distinguished in the development of personal consciousness. Each stage focuses on a particular existential need that is inherent in the human condition. The seven existential needs are the principle motivating forces in all human affairs. Individuals grow in consciousness by learning to master the satisfaction of these needs. Individuals who learn how to master all seven needs without harming or hurting others operate from full-spectrum consciousness. They have the ability to respond appropriately to all of life's challenges.

Here are the seven existential needs that constitute the seven stages in the development of *personal* consciousness (from most developed to most basic):

- Level 7: Service.** Leading a life of selfless service.
- Level 6: Making a difference.** Making a positive difference in the world.
- Level 5: Internal cohesion.** Finding personal meaning in existence.
- Level 4: Transformation.** Finding freedom by letting go of our fears about survival, feeling loved and being respected by our peers.
- Level 3: Self-esteem.** Feeling a sense of personal self-worth.



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service@summary.com

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Summary: BUILDING A VALUES-DRIVEN ORGANIZATION

Level 2: Relationship. Feeling safe, respected and loved.

Level 1: Survival. Satisfying our physical needs.

The “lower” or basic needs, levels 1 to 3, focus on our need for physical safety and survival as well as our need for emotional safety and self-esteem. The “higher” needs, levels 5 to 7, focus on our “spiritual” needs — the need to find meaning in our lives, the need to make a difference in the world and the need to be of service.

Individuals who focus *exclusively* on the satisfaction of the lower needs tend to live self-centered, shallow lives, subconsciously or consciously dominated by the fears of the ego.

Individuals who focus *exclusively* on the satisfaction of the higher needs tend to lack the skills necessary to operate effectively in the physical world. They can be ineffectual and impractical when it comes to taking care of their basic needs. We say they are not “grounded.”

To be successful in the world we need to learn how to master the satisfaction of all our needs so we can operate from full-spectrum consciousness.

The Seven Levels of Group Consciousness

The seven stages in the development of personal consciousness also apply to the development of group consciousness, where “group” is defined as a collection of individuals who share a common physical heritage or a common purpose (culture of meaning).

Groups grow and develop in the same ways as individuals — by successfully mastering the satisfaction of their needs. The most successful groups are those that develop full-spectrum consciousness — mastery of the needs associated with every level of consciousness. They are able to respond appropriately to all of life’s challenges.

Here are the seven stages in the development of group consciousness:

Level 7: Service. Caring for humanity, future generations and the planet.

Level 6: Making a difference. Cooperating with and forming alliances with other groups.

Level 5: Internal cohesion. Aligning group members around a shared vision, mission and values.

Level 4: Transformation. Involving group members and giving them a voice in decision making.

Level 3: Self-esteem. Creating order, performance and effectiveness that engenders respect and group pride.

Level 2: Relationship. Building harmonious internal relationships that create a sense of belonging.

Three Key Insights

Here are three key insights on building a values-driven organization:

1. A cookie-cutter approach to the design of cultural transformation programs in organizations, where one size fits all, does not work.
2. Cultural transformation will work only if it is part of a whole-system change process.
3. Cultural transformation will succeed only if the leadership team is committed to this work.

Level 1: Survival. Establishing conditions of financial stability and safety for group members. ●

The Cultural Transformation Tools

Cultural transformation tools (CTT) have been used in corporations, government agencies and nongovernmental organizations since 1997. They have also been used in schools, classrooms, religious institutions and communities.

The success of CTT is due to their ability to provide a detailed road map for the evolution of consciousness of an organization or any group of individuals that share a common heritage or purpose. In some instances, the objective of using the tools is cultural transformation, and in other instances the purpose is to build a values-driven organization.

Cultural Values Assessment

The CTT cultural values assessment (CVA) is used to identify and measure the *personal values* of the individuals who make up the organization, the *values of the current culture* of the organization as perceived by the members of the organization and the *desired culture values* of the organization as expressed by the members of the organization.

At the heart of the CTT technology is the concept that all values and behaviors can be assigned to one of the seven levels of consciousness. If you can identify the values and behaviors of a group of individuals, you can measure the consciousness of the group by mapping their values to the seven levels of consciousness model. ●

Mapping the Values of Organizations

When mapping the values of organizations, researchers have learned four things:

1. Organizational culture is the new frontier of competitive advantage, particularly in circumstances where talent is in short supply.

Summary: BUILDING A VALUES-DRIVEN ORGANIZATION

2. **Organizational cultures can be changed either by changing the leader and/or through whole-system change.**
3. **The intangible assets of an organization, such as culture, have a significant impact on the share price of a company.**
4. **Whatever you focus on and measure gets done.**

Ultimately the culture of an organization is a reflection of the personality of the leader or the personalities of the leadership group. Therefore, organizational transformation always begins with the personal transformation of the leaders. Individual values assessments and leadership values assessments play a significant role in helping leaders to change their behaviors.

Full-spectrum consciousness is the natural pathway to long-term success. Research shows that full-spectrum organizations are the most successful. ●

Mapping the Values of Individuals

One of the best ways of raising the awareness of the members of the leadership group to the importance of values alignment is to provide them with their own personal profiles from the cultural values assessment. They are able to see, firsthand, their own top personal values, the values they see in the organization and the values they would like to see in the organization. They are also able to compare their results with the overall results of the leadership group.

Individual Values Assessment

The individual profile when used on its own for coaching purposes is called an individual values assessment (IVA). An individual goes online and picks 10 values/behaviors that represent who they are, 10 values/behaviors that describe how their organization operates and 10 values/behaviors that describe how they would like the organization to operate.

The IVA is an invaluable coaching instrument. It helps people understand with clarity what is working and what is not working for them in the culture of their organization and clarifies individuals' feelings about the organization.

The gap between the current and desired culture values enables people to see what is working and what is not working for them and what they would like to do about it. The gap between personal values and current culture tells an individual to what degree he or she can bring his or her whole self to work. ●

Merging Cultures and the Importance of the Values of the Leadership Group

Mergers that occur between companies with similar values and levels of organizational consciousness have the greatest chance of success. The least successful takeovers are those that involve companies that operate from lower levels of consciousness taking over companies that operate from higher levels of consciousness.

Here are three hard-and-fast rules about organizational cultures and leadership groups:

Rule 1: An organization cannot operate at a level of consciousness higher than that of the personal consciousness of the leadership group.

Rule 2: The culture of an organization either is a reflection of the personal consciousness of the leadership group (conscious and subconscious) or is inherited from previous leadership groups.

Rule 3: In general, most organizations operate with a “default” culture because it arises unconsciously; the culture is not managed, the culture is not monitored and the culture is simply recognized as “the way things are done around here.” ●

Leadership: The Key to Cultural Transformation

In his book *Good to Great* Jim Collins states that the first job of a new leader is to get the right people in the right seats on the bus and that this is absolutely fundamental to building a long-lasting successful company. The right people are those who display what he refers to as level 5 leadership. Collins' level 5 leaders are those who display full-spectrum consciousness.

The Seven Levels of Leadership Consciousness

There are seven well-defined levels of leadership that correspond to the seven levels of organizational consciousness. Each level is presented with the leadership focus point:

Level 7. *Wisdom/Visionary*: Service to humanity and the planet.

Level 6. *Mentor/Partner*: Strategic alliances and partnerships, mentoring and coaching.

Level 5. *Integrator/Inspirer*: Developing a strong cohesive culture.

Level 4. *Facilitator/Influencer*: Adaptability, continuous renewal and learning.

Summary: BUILDING A VALUES-DRIVEN ORGANIZATION

Level 3. Manager/Organizer: High-performance systems and processes.

Level 2. Relationship Manager/Communicator: Relationships that support the organization.

Level 1. Crisis Director/Accountant: Pursuit of profit and shareholder value.

Each level of leadership corresponds to the satisfaction of the needs of the organization at the corresponding level of consciousness. Leaders who learn to master the needs of every level of organizational consciousness operate from full-spectrum consciousness. Research shows that these are the most resilient and successful leaders because they have the ability to respond appropriately to all internal challenges and external threats while taking full advantage of opportunities to grow and develop.

Focus

The principle focus of the lower levels of leadership consciousness is on creating a financially stable organization with a strong customer base that has efficient systems and processes.

The principle focus of the transformation level of leadership consciousness is to promote a climate of continuous learning and employee empowerment so that the organization can be responsive and adaptable to changes in its internal and external environment and continuously develop new products and services.

The principle focus of upper levels of leadership consciousness is to create a vision, mission and values for the organization that builds internal and external connectivity through strategic alliances and makes a contribution to society. ●

Whole-System Change: The Context for Cultural Transformation

Values alignment and mission alignment together create group cohesion.

For whole-system change to occur, there must be a parallel shift in personal alignment, structural alignment, values alignment and mission alignment. All four relationships must change in the same direction for the group to experience a shift in consciousness. When all four relationships change in the same direction, the group finds a new level of internal stability and external equilibrium at a higher level of consciousness.

Cultural Entropy

Cultural entropy, which is the proportion of energy in

an organization consumed by nonproductive activities, occurs when there is a lack of alignment between the four quadrants. Cultural entropy is inversely related to resilience. When cultural entropy is high, resilience is low. When cultural entropy is low, resilience is high.

There are four causes of cultural entropy:

- *Lack of personal alignment* occurs when there is a lack of alignment between the stated values of individuals and their behaviors, particularly among the leadership group.
- *Lack of structural alignment* occurs when there is a lack of alignment between the stated values of the group and the behaviors of the group as reflected in the rules, regulations, structures and systems of governance.
- *Lack of values alignment* occurs when there is a lack of alignment between the personal values of individuals and the collective values of the group and a lack of alignment between the values expressed in the current culture and the desired culture.
- *Lack of mission alignment* occurs when there is a lack of alignment between the sense of purpose or mission of employees or their prime motivational drivers and the collective sense of purpose and mission of the group. ●

The Framework for Whole-System Change

The framework for whole-system change can be divided into two phases: preparation and implementation.

The Preparation Phase

There are eight steps in the preparation phase:

Step 1(a): Cultural transformation tools values assessment. The first step is to carry out a company-wide values assessment to identify employees' personal values, perception of the current values and their desired culture values. This is known as the baseline assessment.

Step 1(b): Business assessment. In developing the compelling reasons for change, it will be important to include the business case for change as well as the cultural case for change. Usually, the business case for change is blatantly obvious from the financial results of the organization or key performance indicators such as employee retention, market share and customer satisfaction.

Step 2: Create vision and mission. The vision and mission statements should be concise, inclusive and easily memorized.

Step 3: Choose values and select behaviors. The results of the cultural values assessment provide

Summary: BUILDING A VALUES-DRIVEN ORGANIZATION

significant insights as to what values leaders, managers and employees consider important.

Step 4: Evaluate organizational resilience.

Examine the long-term sustainability of the organization by carrying out a baseline evaluation of the organization's resilience. Find ways to enhance the organization's ability to withstand shocks and anticipate risks — find ways to build its adaptive capacity.

Step 5: Develop compelling reasons for change.

There must be a clear understanding among the executive population, managers and staff why the organization is embarking on a whole-system change process.

Step 6: Survey of worldviews and drivers.

Identify the worldviews and key drivers of the employee population.

Step 7: Develop an Implementation Strategy.

Make the vision, mission, values and behaviors pervasive throughout the culture. There are three major components to the change process: personal alignment, group cohesion and structural alignment.

Step 8: Develop objectives and key performance indicators. Measurement matters.

The Implementation Phase

Here are the steps of the implementation phase:

Step 9: Structural alignment. Reconfigure the systems and processes of the organization so that they align with the vision, mission, values and behaviors of the organization.

Step 10: Leadership values and behaviors assessment of the senior executive group, coaching and action plans. People with deeply ingrained limiting beliefs should be assigned a personal coach. Those who cannot adjust will leave, often under their own volition.

Steps 11,12,13: Personal alignment programs with the executive population, group-cohesion programs in intact teams of business or functional units and subunits and leadership values and behaviors coaching with the executive population. These three programs (personal alignment, group cohesion and individual coaching) reinforce each other in bringing about a shift in the individual and collective behaviors of the executive population.

Step 14: Values awareness program. At whatever level we stop the cascade of the personal alignment and group-cohesion programs, we replace it with a “values awareness” program and cascade it through the rest of the organization. ●

The Importance of Values-Based Decision Making

Over time, the human species has developed five modes of decision making. The difference between each mode of decision making is the source and emphasis we give to meaning making. There are five sources of meaning making: instincts, subconscious beliefs, conscious beliefs, values and intuition.

Instinct-based decision making takes place at the cellular level and is founded on learned DNA responses, principally associated with issues of survival.

In *subconscious belief-based decision making* we also react to what is happening in our world without reflection, but on the basis of personal memories rather than cellular (DNA) memories. In this mode of decision making, action also precedes thought. The action is often accompanied by the release of an emotional charge.

If we want to make rational decisions, we have to leave behind subconscious belief-based decision making and shift to conscious belief-based decision making. What allows us to make rational decisions is the pause we insert between meaning making and decision making. We are using beliefs based on our past experiences to design our future experiences.

To create the future we want to experience, we have to shift from conscious belief-based decision making to *values-based decision making*. The question we need to ask when making a decision is the following: “Is this decision rational, and is it in alignment with our values?” A decision that is not in alignment with your personal values lacks authenticity. You cannot create personal or group cohesion by making decisions that lack authority and integrity.

The shift from values-based decision making to *intuition-based decision making* is for many a bridge too far. However, it is not a bridge too far for the more evolved leaders in an organization — those who have developed full-spectrum personal consciousness. Intuition allows us to create a future based on the emergence of being. When we create the conditions that allow our minds to tap into the collective mind-space, our intuition informs us of what wants or needs to emerge.

It is important for individuals and organizations to shift from belief-based decision making to values-based decision making. They should try to eliminate subconscious fear-based decision making. To create a values-driven organization requires us to constantly focus on our individual and collective values. One way to do this is to practice values management. ●

Values Management

Values management is the process by which an organization actively measures, monitors and responds to its causal indicators of performance in such a way that it adjusts its culture and way of being to sustain high performance (outputs) and meet its objectives (outcomes).

To continually sustain high performance, four conditions must be met:

- **Personal alignment:** The alignment of an individual's values and beliefs with their actions and behaviors.
- **Values alignment:** The alignment of an individual's values with the group's values.
- **Mission alignment:** The alignment of an individual's sense of purpose, mission or drivers with the group's stated purpose or mission.
- **Structural alignment:** The alignment of a group's values and beliefs with their actions and behaviors as codified in the collective rules, laws and processes of governance.

The process of values management enables us to measure the degree to which the four conditions are being met and how close they are to prime. Prime represents the healthiest possible state of the causal performance indicators commensurate with sustained mission assurance taking into account the levels of consciousness of the executive and employee populations.

When the four quadrants are in alignment, the organization is as close as it can get to prime and cultural entropy is minimized. ●

Integrating Appreciative Inquiry

Transformation is seen to happen when people have new, meaningful conversations they have never had before, either one-on-one or in small groups.

The process of whole-system change creates a number of opportunities for transformational conversations: when the leadership group revisits or develops a new vision, mission and values for the organization; when the individual and collective values assessment results are debriefed with the leadership group; during the leadership group's discussion on their core motivations; and during the leadership group's discussion on core business.

These types of conversations clarify and align the intentions of the leadership group. Another important conversation that needs to occur is translating the espoused values of the organization into specific behaviors that reflect the organizational context. *Appreciative inquiry* is one of the best technologies available for this task.

Future Evolution

Appreciative inquiry structures and focuses the conversation, and just like the cultural assessment, it gives employees and other stakeholders a voice in defining the parameters that will guide the future evolution of the organization. It focuses on enhancing what is working rather than dwelling on what needs to be fixed. It affirms and builds on what is positive and strong about an organizational culture — what gives it life. ●

Integrating Resilience

The seven levels of consciousness model, with the insights it provides on values alignment, cultural entropy and full-spectrum sustainability, is an essential framework for evaluating the cultural resilience of our organizations and institutions. Blending cultural transformation tools (CTT) and a whole-system approach to cultural transformation with resilience and adaptive-capacity-building techniques is essential for creating long-term resilience.

What has become clear is that the emergent systemic risks that organizations face cannot be reliably identified within the current silo mentalities that exist in our organizations, nor are silos suitable for managing resilience programs.

Organizations of all types are migrating mission-critical business processes to information technology platforms that can be accessed from anywhere in the organization. Managing and maintaining these systems require a culture of cooperation, coordination and collaboration across all parts of the organization.

The Role of Culture

The concept of values management is a timely innovation that allows organizations and institutions to monitor their cultural resilience by regularly monitoring their operating values and identifying high levels of cultural entropy. Wherever cultural entropy is high, resilience is low.

If a comprehensive resilience baseline diagnostic is not performed initially as part of a whole-system change effort, the cultural diagnostic needs to include some form of risk and resilience survey.

This survey, together with the cultural values assessment, should be used to identify areas where cultural entropy and significant risks combine to create resilience “hot spots.” Scenario-based tabletop simulations that explore these hot spots can be used to help organizations test existing decision-support and collaboration processes under complex event consequences. ●

Integrating the EFQM Excellence Model

An example of a whole-system approach to organizational transformation was developed by the Centre for Integral Excellence at Sheffield Hallam University in the United Kingdom. The approach brings together the European Foundation for Quality Management Excellence model (EFQM) and the seven levels of consciousness model in an integral, whole-system, evaluation process. The model incorporates a continuous learning feedback loop that promotes innovation and continuous improvement.

The basic principle of the EFQM excellence model is that there are many approaches to achieving sustainable excellence but that in general: *Excellence Results with respect to Performance, Customers, People and Society are achieved through Leadership driving Policy and Strategy, People, Partnerships and Resources, and Processes.*

Integrating EFQM and CTT

A key learning from recent research is the significance of the relationship between improving processes and a whole-system approach to cultural transformation.

There are significant similarities between the areas for improvement identified by the EFQM assessment and CTT assessment — employee issues: employee commitment, employee recognition; and employee fulfillment and performance issues regarding information sharing and accountability (empowerment). ●

New Leaders, New Change Agents

To move into the mind space of values-based decision making, we must be willing to let go of some of our beliefs. This process is called *self-actualization*. In this process, the “self” that is actualized represents the soul-self; the self that is able to transcend the conditioning of the enculturation process; the self that frees us from the beliefs of the past that we accepted without thinking because we wanted to belong, and be respected by our peers; the self that is a composite blend of the positive beliefs held by the ego and the values held by the soul.

Self-actualization leads to freedom because it loosens the bonds of enculturation. We become free to choose our own path, our own way of being — a way of being that may be different from that of our parents and our peers. We can only do this in a democracy or a governance structure that respects individual differences; a structure that accepts and is comfortable with diversity; a structure where everyone has a voice and where differ-

Social Constructionism

The theoretical basis for appreciative inquiry rests on the concept of social constructionism. The underlying beliefs of social constructionism are that reality is formed through conversation and story-telling, that language and communication facilitate meaning making and that knowledge is generated and passed on through social interaction. In its basic form, appreciative inquiry is a formalized process for designing powerful conversations.

ent beliefs are celebrated as long as they do not undermine the stability of the whole.

During the process of self-actualization our minds change. The ego-based drivers that dominate the lower levels of consciousness evolve into the soul-based drivers that dominate the upper levels of consciousness. Instead of focusing on our ego-based personal survival, relationships and self-esteem needs, we focus on our personal soul-based needs — finding meaning in existence, actualizing that meaning by making a difference in our world and, finally, when making a difference becomes a way of life, entering into the realm of selfless service.

Master Practitioners of Whole-System Change

For those who are leaders, your challenge is to recognize that the impact you have on the world depends on your ability to grow in consciousness — to become a full-spectrum leader. You will need to seek out master practitioners of whole-system change who can support your endeavors.

For those who are practitioners, your challenge is not only to grow in consciousness, but also to equip yourselves with an understanding of the models and tools that allow you to design and customize integral approaches to whole-system change to support the leaders you work with in creating a positive future for their organizations and the communities that they serve. ●

RECOMMENDED READING LIST

If you liked *Building a Values-Driven Organization*, you'll also like:

1. ***The Soul of the Corporation* by Hamid Bouchikhi and John R. Kimberly.** Learn how to manage the unconscious shared beliefs that give your organization coherence.
2. ***Firms of Endearment* by Rajendra Sisodia, David B. Wolfe and Jagdish Sheth.** Today's best companies generate every form of value that matters: emotional, experiential, social and financial. This book tells you how.
3. ***Leading at a Higher Level* by Ken Blanchard.** Blanchard has spent more than 25 years helping leaders and organizations become and remain great. In this book, he distills the knowledge of his years of experience.