

Johnson and Scholes' Cultural Web

The Cultural Web is a representation of taken-for-granted assumptions of an organisation. It helps management to focus on the key factors of culture and their impact on strategic issues and can identify blockages to and facilitators of change in order to improve performance and competitive advantage.

The model contains 6 inter-related elements:

Stories – The past and present events and people talked about inside and outside the company.

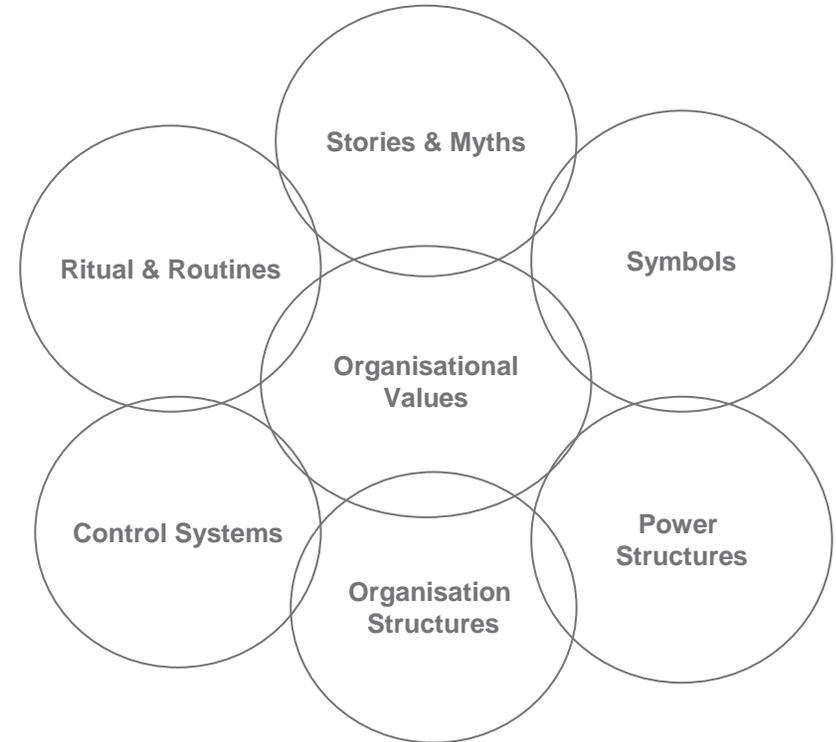
Rituals and routines – The daily behaviour and actions of people that signal acceptable behaviour.

Symbols – The visual representations of the company including logos, offices decor and formal or informal dress codes.

Organisational structure – Includes structures defined by the organisation chart, and the unwritten lines of power and influence that indicate whose contributions are most valued.

Control systems – The ways that the organisation is controlled including financial systems, quality systems, and rewards.

Power structures – Power in the company may lay with one or two executives a group of executives, or a department. These people have the greatest amount of influence on decisions, operations, and strategic direction.



An organisation's strategy is influenced by the culture of the organisation but this can cause problems when the need for change arises. Management can tighten controls and improve operational performance as a means to implement change. If this fails, they might try making strategic changes within the existing ways of doing things. Managers can find themselves trapped in the organisation's routines, assumptions or politics, with the familiar ways of doing things still being done, within a different application.

How can this help me? Identify what the stories, symbols, and routines are that collectively make your organisational culture what it is today. What is the dominant culture? How easy is this to change? Having completed the existing Cultural Web a new one can be created showing your organisation's aspirations.

Find out more - Read *Exploring corporate strategy* by G. Johnson and K. Scholes