



**A SUSTAINABLE IMPROVEMENT
CULTURE STARTS WITH
THE HIGH PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS**

ALLIED FORCES
CONSULTANCY

WHEN AN ORGANISATION NEEDS TO CHANGE –AND THIS WILL BECOME MORE AND MORE A CONSTANT FACTOR– CULTURE IS IMPORTANT. RESEARCH FROM BOONSTRA (2013) SHOWS THAT 70% OF THE CHANGE PROCESSES FAIL BECAUSE OF INSUFFICIENT ATTENTION FOR ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE. YOU CAN FACE ANYTHING WITH A BROAD-BASED IMPROVEMENT CULTURE. MAYBE THERE IS A NEED FOR A MORE EFFICIENT WORK PROCESS, MAYBE THE MARKET CHANGES, MAYBE THERE ARE TENSIONS, OR MAYBE THE PROFITABILITY NEEDS TO BE OPTIMISED. TO BE ABLE TO DEVELOP CULTURE, YOU WILL FIRST NEED TO ANALYSE IT. ALLIED FORCES PARTNER ANTON VAN DEN BERG HAS DEVELOPED A UNIQUE, SCIENTIFICALLY VALIDATED TOOL FOR THIS.


The seed of the High Performance Analysis, which is the name of the tool, lies in Curaçao. Anton was Head of Training at the Dutch Marine Corps. In 2014, after Curaçao became independent, a cultural change had to be established. Anton led this project.

“When people from different cultural backgrounds work together, misunderstandings and tensions can arise easily. All beautiful cultures come together in one organisation and create -consciously or subconsciously- the organisational culture. The organisation on Curaçao switched from a system with more or less automated promotions to a competence oriented structure. The potential and the working behaviour of the individuals were observed quicker and were rewarded, which was an example for the new way of working. Not only did the amount of service years count, but also the competences and working behaviour. That naturally caused resistance, which can actually be very useful when the process is guided well.”

From his years of leadership experience at the Dutch Marine Corps Anton discovered an important insight: “It’s not about the uniform, the medals or the amount of training programmes. It’s about the unique personality behind it. This personality and the potential determine the performance and the culture.”

ALLIED FORCES
CONSULTANCY






By analysing the current (and desired!) culture Anton used the 'Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument' (OCAI, see diagram) and the personality model Big5. "It involves employees personally and intensively in mapping out the organisational culture and in drawing up and implementing the implementation plan. The Marine Corps management explicitly supported the project. A project team was put together with representatives from all groups. The members shared experiences and results within their own basisteam and by doing so, created the basis for a broad-based cultural change."

The analysis made clear differences visible: "The Dutch marines had a strong hierarchical culture (high task orientation), whereas the Curaçao employees had a family culture (high relationship orientation). During discussions employees have investigated which characteristics shape the culture: what are our communal strong points and which points do we need to improve? What is needed to get to a cultural change and how can we make a concrete integral change plan together?"

COMPETENCES

By getting a good insight in the necessary competences and by intensive monitoring, the groups have come closer connected and mutual understanding and appreciation has been created. Transparency is very important. All efforts truly have created a multicultural team and a strong new organisational culture. All team members are really involved in their work and are proud of what they have achieved.

In retrospect Anton says: "A culture is shaped by people, who are unique and valuable. A change can therefore feel like a personal threat, which can cause people to (consciously or subconsciously) oppose change. This is a common reaction to development. Growth hurts and you will feel that pain. OCAI is a perfect method and an accessible resource to invite people to direct their focus inwards and to positively involve them in the changing process."



Culture is the chore of every organisation, the DNA. Once you peel of all the layers, the chance is there to change sustainably. Processes are easily adapted, but people will need to implement them. They are valuable, unique, vulnerable. The art of change hides in intrinsic motivation and working behaviour. Wanting to fight for each other to come out stronger together! Do what is good for you, your team and the whole organisation.

An organisational culture is no more or no less than a set of shared norms and values. These are expressed in basic assumptions, procedures, rituals and habits. The culture therefore has an explicit effect on the functioning of the person and the organisation. A well-known example is the cleaner at NASA, in the '60s. When you asked him what he was doing while he was working, he would say: I am putting a man on the moon. That is strategic aligned behaviour.

ORGANISATIONAL CULTURES

After the project on Curaçao Anton immersed himself further in organisational cultures. He matched the complex statistics of the analysis with qualitative questionnaires for employees. With this he was able to formulate a decent answer to the question: Which personalities and organisational characteristics contribute to a current and a desired culture? Anton sensed that this might be valuable to companies. When he left the Dutch Marine Corps and found alignment with Allied Forces, things really started to move.

The match of statistical data with personal insights resulted in the High Performance Analysis. Anton: "A unique tool, which provides integral insight in the levels on which you can build on effective development. Mostly the focus is on only one dimension, like processes or leadership. Questions about the current and the desired culture and their personal work style force people to think about what they really find important. Once you know what people want, you can put that next to the strategy. Structure and culture always are secondary to the strategy. They have to be aligned, like at NASA.

ALLIED FORCES
CONSULTANCY

Be aware, the results of the High Performing Analysis can be explosive. Anton: “We have experienced management members being moved to tears, because we manage to put the finger exactly on the right, and sometimes sensitive spot. You receive valuable and in-depth insight above and below the waterline of your company. Above the waterline you can see 20%, like mission, vision, strategy and processes. Below the waterline is 80% invisible, the part that provides insight in for example norms, values, trust and solidarity to the team and the organisation.


You need to have the confidence to face this vulnerability. The analysis has proved to be a winner. It has been made business proof: pragmatic and no nonsense. People are inclined to immediately choose a solution, but this eventually costs more time and money. Start with an analysis, momentarily slow down the process, to then decide on a future state. In the long term this will be cost efficient and will get you to a sustainable result.”

In Allied Forces’ daily practice the High Performance Analyse can no longer be missed. “We see that it works brilliantly, with scale-ups, at SMEs, but meanwhile also in large companies, where Allied Forces recently has done a cultural research under 3500 employees. We base a tailored programme on this analysis, with which we can serve teams and individuals. Meanwhile concrete interest has developed to deploy the analysis with acquisitions and takeovers, as part of the due diligence. You clearly want to have a good idea of the human capital and to optimise the return on investment with it? Or even: Which organisation doesn’t want to develop its human potential optimally and sustainably?”

WHAT IS THE OCAI?

Anton is associated with the Quinn Association. A select group of specialists, who use the Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI)-model. The model that has been developed by Cameron and Quinn is a validated instrument to measure an organisational culture. Robert Quinn’s work has been acknowledged worldwide as one of the most important contributions in the area of change management.

ALLIED FORCES
CONSULTANCY



The OCAI is based on the Competitive Values Model, one of the most frequently used frameworks by more than 10,000 organisations. It recognises six factors which represent an organisational structure reliably. It is a quick measurement where participants divide 100 points between four competing values.

An organisation with an internal orientation is focused on development, cooperation, integration of activities and coordination. With an external orientation an organisation observes the market, what is possible with the newest technology, what the competition does, what clients really want. Organisations and people have to choose where to put their focus on. This way you get insight in what is really needed for the individual, the team and the organisation. This way it will be easier to detect the social desirability in giving answers.

The second deciding dimension is stability-flexibility. Organisations that value stability care for clear structures, planning, budgets and reliability. The underlying assumption is that the reality can be acknowledged, predicted and if necessary controlled. Organisations which have a tendency towards flexibility assume that there is very little you can really forecast and control. They have a flexible attitude and adapt themselves quickly.

ALLIED FORCES
CONSULTANCY