

SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF UNHEALTHY AND HEALTHY ORGANIZATIONS

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| 1. General membership has little investment in organizational goals | 1. Goals are widely shared by the members; there is a consistent focus on the goals. |
| 2. Members see what is wrong but do not offer constructive actions to assist organization; members discuss issues outside of the group | 2. Members are free to voice their concerns and observations; members expect that problems will be addressed and are optimistic about the outcome. |
| 3. Members operate on a superficial level – look to leaders to solve the problems rather than working together. | 3. Problem-solving is highly pragmatic; members work together informally; leaders are frequently challenged. |
| 4. Leaders try to control as many decisions as possible; decisions are made with inadequate information. | 4. The points of decision-making are determined by such factors as ability, sense of responsibility and availability of information. |
| 5. Leaders feel alone; delegated tasks are not completed as intended. | 5. There is a noticeable sense of team play in planning and in performance – responsibilities are shared. |
| 6. The thoughts and opinions of the general membership are not respected by the leadership. | 6. The thoughts and opinions of the general membership are sought and valued by the leadership. |
| 7. Personal needs and feelings are secondary to organizational concerns. | 7. Personal needs and relationships are valued by and matter to the leadership. |
| 8. Members compete when they need to collaborate. Seeking or accepting help is seen as a sign of weakness. Distrust and mean-spiritedness reigns. | 8. Collaboration is the model; members readily ask for or offer assistance. |
| 9. Members withdraw or cast blame upon others when there is a crisis. Conflict is mostly covert and managed by group politics/norms; there are endless arguments. | 9. The membership comes together in a crisis and works together until a resolution is reached. Conflicts are seen as part of the development of the organization; with conflict comes growth. |
| 10. Learning is difficult. Members learn from own mistakes rather than learning from their experienced peers; very little feedback is offered. Feedback is avoided or not helpful. | 10. On-the-job learning; feedback and advice are freely sought and given; each member has potential and something to contribute. |
| 11. Relationships are jeopardized by self-interests; members feel alone and have a lack of concern for one another. There is an undercurrent of uncertainty and fear. | 11. Relationships are honest; members care about each other; sense of community exists. |
| 12. Members feel locked into their roles in the | 12. Members are excited about the |

<p>organization. Members are bored and tired but stay with the organization for a sense of security; often do not participate in meetings or formal work of the organization; meetings and events are painful; poor membership retention.</p>	<p>organization and are there by choice; members are optimistic; organizational meetings and events are productive and enjoyable.</p>
<p>13. The adviser is the parent figure to the organization.</p>	<p>13. Leadership is flexible and shared; situation and context are considered; adviser serves appropriate role,</p>
<p>14. The leadership tightly controls expenditures and group process, demand excessive justification, allow little freedom to make mistakes.</p>	<p>14. High degree of trust exists among membership; sense of freedom and mutual responsibility;</p>
<p>15. Minimizing risk has a very high value. "One mistake and you are out!"</p>	<p>15. Risk is accepted as a condition of growth and change for the organization and the members. "What can we learn from each mistake?"</p>
<p>16. Poor performance is glossed over or handle arbitrarily.</p>	<p>16. Poor performance is confronted appropriately – through a feedback process with participation of all parties.</p>
<p>17. Organizational structure, policies, and procedures hinder the advancement and development of the organization; members use to own advantage instead of using them as they were designed.</p>	<p>17. Organizational structure, policies and procedures are designed to assist members complete the task and to protect the long-term health of the organization.</p>
<p>18. Tradition – "We've always done it that way ...we have always had these events...."</p>	<p>18. There is a sense of order, yet a high rate of innovation; practices are evaluated and revised.</p>
<p>19. Innovation is not widespread or encouraged.</p>	<p>19. Organization adapts to opportunities; awareness of environment and changes; anticipating the future.</p>
<p>20. Members swallow their frustrations or refuse to play an active part in rescuing the organization.</p>	<p>20. Frustrations are the call to action. Membership takes the responsibility to save the organization.</p>

Source: J.K. Fordyce and R. Weil, Managing with People. Reading, MA.: Addison-Wesley, 1971. pp 11-14. Edited by J. Gagnon, 5/90; revised by M. Wiseman, 8/06.