

Mindsets and Skills as Determinants of Organizational Culture Change

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Abstract

Mindsets are elements of organizational culture. To examine mindsets and skills is necessary to lay the foundation towards a cultural change aiming for adaptability, creativity, intrapreneurship, and being pioneering in the work organization. This study was designed with a Positive Organization Development (POD) perspective, anchored on Appreciative Inquiry (AI) emphasizing discovery of the best qualities in people through in-depth and inspiring methods of inquiry. Findings show that the participants had potentials for change because they were motivated by a societal cultural factor such as strong affect for their families as a primary reason to work, and had clear positive attitudes towards their tasks and institution. Because they scored high in the personal work values of professionalism and efficiency, there was high probability that if the institution required them to gain new knowledge, skills and credentials, they would follow. Adaptability scores were high but creativity, being pioneering and intrapreneurship scores were low, yet the study participants had potentials to raise these. These mostly young employees would be open to innovations at work, especially those who belong to the generation of millennials, whose work environment requires agility and innovativeness.

Keywords: Mindsets, new skills, organizational culture, Positive Organization Development, Appreciative Inquiry, administrative employees

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Introduction

Mindsets are beliefs that strongly affect how we behave and what we want to happen in the future; they guide a large part of our lives. In this paper, mindsets are composed of compelling motivations, attitudes, aspirations, and personal work values. They affect how people perform their work. They form part of internal elements of organizational culture – the unseen yet very powerful, underlying control mechanisms in a work environment (Dweck, 2016; Scholl, 2003).

To examine current mindsets is necessary as determinants to lay the foundation towards a cultural change in the organization, especially in this age of digitization where all types of organizations need to discover how to tap people's capacity to learn new ways of doing work to remain competitive in this volatile, complex and uncertain environment (Senge, 2011; Senge 1990). It is necessary to diagnose the current mindsets to know what interventions are needed to effect the desired change.

Designed with Positive Organization Development (POD) perspective, the research (Tolentino, 2019) is strengthened by the following theories and concepts: Theory U, organizational cultural change, and changing mindsets. POD is anchored on Appreciative Inquiry emphasizing systematic and creative discovery of the best qualities in people and social groups through in-depth and inspiring methods of inquiry (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2001; Kelm, 2005). Hence, this study aimed to begin a journey of enduring change, using a large part of data from employees' personal narratives with some descriptive quantitative data with the intent of aligning the transformation to what the future needs. Selected as participants in the study were administrative employees who had remained in low positions, receiving less compensation and incentives despite many years of service in their organization. Shergold (2018) warns that in this age of digitization, jobs in the public service are threatened – “administrative skills are most under challenge.” Repetitive tasks may be undertaken by machine-based systems, for example, records evaluation, data encoding, utility maintenance, and building security. Such warning all the more becomes a compelling reason to undertake a study about administrative employees and their need for transformation, lest they be displaced by technologies, thus causing unemployment rate to rise.

Study Framework and Data-gathering Procedures

Theory U explains that the change must start within oneself, by examining the deepest part of the self: conscious mind, subconscious mind, and heart. Scharmer (2009) begins his discussion of Theory U with the “blind spot – that part of our seeing that we usually do not see. The inner place or source from which a person or a social system operates” (Scharmer, 2009, p. 22). The blind spot is present but is hidden. It is the intention of the person and where it is coming from. Theory U level one is downloading past experiences as background data. Level two is looking at the present, “seeing reality with a fresh eye.” Level three is sensing, making connections between the self and the social field. Level four is presencing or sensing one’s future possibility, what is wanting to emerge.

To make change happen with a POD perspective, we must understand the concept of organizational culture (Schein, n.d., as cited in Primicias, 2019) with three levels that exist among members of social groups:

1. Artifacts – the visible, tangible, audible results of activities grounded in values and assumptions.
2. Values – the internal elements, the attitudes, social principles, aspirations, goals and standards that are usually written and detected in speech and behaviors.
3. Assumptions – at the core, are the taken-for-granted, deeply-held beliefs about reality and human nature, not easily detected.

Schein (1985, as cited in Luthans 2011) explains the essence of organizational culture as a set of collective assumptions developed by a group as it learns to cope with problems of internal integration and adaptation to the external environment. If these assumptions and behavioral patterns work well for the social group, they can be considered valuable and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems. Scholl (2003) affirms that changing culture requires changing social values or the shared values, identity structure, or mental models, called the “underlying culture control mechanisms.” Lewin (cited in Cummings & Worley, 2009) and Schein (1992) further explain that change requires modifying organizational structure and processes by developing new mindsets, new values, attitudes, and behaviors.

Mindset refers to the set of fixed ideas in our minds that we hold on to; they shape our personality. Mindsets guide a large part of our lives, from personal relationships to world affairs (Naisbitt, 2006; Dweck, 2016). Carrie and Barron (2012) develop the concept “mind shift” to modify the state of mind, by way of a purposeful technique, from a negative to a positive state. Thatchenkery (2006) uses the term “reframing” to re-interpret an object or situations, see what others do not see, and see another view of reality. Barger and Kirby (1995) and Gardner (2004) explain that it is difficult to effect change. Gardner (2004) acknowledges that minds are hard to change but he identifies levers that help the process of mind change: reason, research, and real-world events. With intensive and extensive use of reason, facts, experiences, people’s minds may change.

For the conceptual framework, this study examined the employees’ state (with a brief background about their childhood dreams and past experiences) and how their state could be transformed into the desired state. It delved into motivations, attitudes, personal values, and aspirations related to work.

Data collection consisted mainly of focus interviews and observations of body language during interviews to find consistency between verbal and non-verbal responses. In designing the research instrument, the following Appreciative Inquiry protocols were followed:

- Asking positive questions, especially in focus interviews.
- Seeking in-depth responses through: (a) discovery question about beautiful past experiences, best thoughts or moments; and (b) dream question about their aspirations.

Emergent categories (Crabtree & Miller, 1992 as cited in Creswell & Poth, 2018), based on words that repeatedly were drawn out from the interviews, were used to code and cluster the responses into themes.

In the quantitative part, demographic characteristics, such as age, civil status, educational background, and employment status were numerically described. An instrument with a Likert Scale was used to determine the behavioral manifestations of their personal work values.

Discussion of Findings

With POD as framework, this study examined the responses of 17 tenured and agency hired employees of College X, a degree-granting unit of a state university in Quezon City. These employees were selected as they had the greatest need for transformation among all categories of employees.¹ In terms of educational attainment, only one finished a master's degree while three obtained college degrees. The rest reached college level, vocational, or high school. Their positions were highly varied and distinct, but several were designated with generic terms: four administrative assistants, four utility workers, and three security guards. The rest had the following designations: students records evaluator, administrative officer, supply officer, audio-visual technician, reproduction machine operator, and administrative aide.

Four respondents were newly hired while three had spent a few years in the institution. Majority had spent long years in the institution, ranging from six to 35 years. On employment status, nine were regular while eight were contractual/part-time. Majority were married, heads of the family, or working mothers. Mean age of respondents was 43 years old but standard deviation was 13.18, indicating that ages of respondents were highly dispersed from the mean age of 43. The mean age indicated middle age, with several aged 22 and above. The youngest, a working student, was 19 years old while the oldest was 63. Three were in the retiring ages of 60 and above.

Administrative employees were chosen as study participants because they had lagged behind in terms of human resource development. Although they had desired for promotions and more incentives and that the institution had offered opportunities for new learnings, many had remained in low positions. Pillinger (2001, as cited in Gaster & Squires 2003, p. 48) writes that recognizing and valuing frontline staff, that is, administrative staff, is important. They need to be regarded and listened to in conjunction with other key groups within and outside the organization.

¹Data-gathering was done in 2018-2019. Names were concealed for purposes of confidentiality using codes, based on protocols approved by the dissertation panel at SAIDI.

Background data: Childhood dreams of respondents

With Level one of Theory U, this section discusses past experiences extracted from interviews. In general, administrative employees were willing to sit down for conversations. When asked if I could record the interview, some were initially reluctant. They became comfortable when I assured them that all interviews would be confidential and there would be no name identification in the questionnaire.

When asked about their childhood memories, their faces lit up, showing enthusiasm in giving answers. All wanted to become a professional. Most common answer among the males was to be a soldier or policeman. Others mentioned the following: manager, teacher, dentist, architect, seaman, pilot, nurse and politician. Their dreams were influenced by achievements and talents manifested in their early years.

Unfortunately, they were not able to fulfil their dreams, except for one who became an administrative officer. For most of them, the common reason was lack of finances to continue their education. They narrated their humble lives, parents who lacked education, mothers who were plain housewives, fathers who were low-income earners. Many were born and raised in the countryside. They took up courses based on available opportunities. Most finished vocational or some units in college. Getting a college education, even in a public school, was costly; it was not possible especially if there were many children in the family.

Did they still want to pursue their dreams? Two answered in the positive. One was a 22-year-old utility worker who wanted to become a soldier. To pursue his dream, he was thinking of applying at the Philippine Military Academy. The other was a 37-year-old administrative assistant. Despite a working mother with a sickly husband, she would like to give herself a chance to teach later in her career. She was the only respondent who spoke about getting honors in school and love for knowledge. Most were resigned to their jobs and wished to improve their lot in the institution they had been working for.

Delving into their current states of mind

This part brings us to the current states of mind of respondents by understanding their motivations, attitudes, personal work values, and aspirations. Mindsets affect how we behave and what we want to happen in the future. Understanding mindsets refers to Levels two

and three of Theory U. Level two is looking at the present, “seeing reality with a fresh eye.” Level three is sensing, making connections between the self and the social field (Scharmer, 2009). It is important to diagnose mindsets to lay down the foundation for mindshift or reframing minds before proceeding towards optimal development of human resources (Barron & Barron, 2012; Thatchenkery, 2006).

Compelling motivations

Motivation is the desire to do things, the reason for working, the crucial element in setting goals and achieving productivity. By understanding a person’s motivations, there is a possibility that a person will enter into, continue, and adhere to a specific change strategy (Battaglio Jr., 2015; Miller & Rollnick, 1991). It becomes clear in the mind of the person why there is a need to move towards change. The respondents mentioned several motivations but this study looked for their strongest reasons for working.

What strongly motivated employees to work eight hours a day, five days a week or sometimes even more including holidays when there are important events in the institution?

With or without overtime pay, employees fulfilled their obligations in the workplace. “For the family” was the most commonly cited compelling motivation among the respondents regardless their civil status or sex. To raise a good family and to help the family were the reasons in keeping their jobs no matter the amount of compensation or whether or not they were satisfied with their salaries. “For my family. Since I started raising a family, I have not thought of myself anymore,” emphasized a father with two small children. “To help at home, help my parents and my sibling who is still studying,”² shared an unmarried respondent, a contractual and minimum wage earner. To have source of income and to meet basic needs were the answers from the utility workers. These responses were also connected to supporting their families. It must be noted that among the respondents, 10 were married and three were separated.

Giving importance to family reflects a fundamental cultural characteristic of the respondents. Filipinos put their family above all else. The family is the basic building block of Philippine society. Perez

²Interview responses were translated from Filipino to English

(1995) explains that the family's significance is revealed by the pervasiveness of familial influence in the conduct of an individual's daily affairs. In particular, providing education is a prime responsibility within the family.

Non-material work conditions were cited as secondary motivations. These include appreciation by the superiors, feeling of belongingness, having self-worth, pleasant treatment by co-workers, and experiential learning. These findings validate Abraham Maslow hierarchy of needs that motivate people toward certain behaviors, beginning with physiological needs, followed by security, belongingness, esteem, and self-actualization. They are consistent with the findings of an earlier research on public employees motivated not only by salaries but also by some intrinsic or non-material factors (Crewson, 1995, as cited in Battaglio, 2015). Furthermore, people employed in state agencies regard public service as meaningful due to good relationships formed at work and service given to the public (Rainey, 1983, as cited in Battaglio Jr, 2015).

Should employees change their mindsets about their reasons for working? This study posits while family is the most compelling reason for working, the family must serve as an inspiration, not a motivation. Inspiration is a special feeling that arouses or influences a person to do something. In direct relation to work, administrative employees must develop notions about personal development and career growth as motivations for working, as well.

Attitudes towards tasks, co-workers, and the institution

Attitudes, referring to the expressed thoughts and feelings of like or dislike, of satisfaction or dissatisfaction, were extracted from the respondents through interviews. Attitude and job satisfaction are closely related. Attitude can be positive or negative: like or dislike, favoring or not favoring. Attitude is a predisposition to behavior. Job satisfaction is also a feeling that veers towards the more positive direction, measured in terms of the degree of happiness in the job. This study looked into the attitude variable in three dimensions: tasks, co-workers and institution.

Administrative tasks involve routine activities, such as monitoring, filing, recording, encoding, and receiving calls. A few are technical, such as evaluating student records. Some are mechanical, such as

photocopying and driving. On attitudes towards tasks, everyone gave quick, short, direct and positive answers. They cited the challenges, decency of the work, learning opportunity, and contentment in doing their everyday tasks. Some responded with certainty, including the night shift security guard as he shared: "Yes, I like the night shift. It's part of my job to stay awake the whole night to ensure the safety of the building." Others, particularly those relatively new in the organization, reacted with politeness; they initially sounded unsure but gave a positive response in the end.

On attitude towards co-workers, most answers were indirect. Nevertheless, they described their co-workers as good-natured. Again, thoughts and feelings of belongingness as family re-surfaced; they bordered on social comfort resulting from feelings of familiarity with long-time co-workers.

Those who had stayed longer in the institution had mixed feelings of like and resentment due to their difficult experiences, including change of administration, competition for tenureship or promotions, resignation of some personnel, or unpaid debts. It must be noted that seven employees had spent 11 - 32 years in College X. This explains why some had mixed feelings about being part of the institution.

Gibson and Klein (1970) did a quantitative study on the correlation between employees' attitudes and job satisfaction and relationships with co-workers. Buljubasic and Naus (2008) note that relationship with peers on its own cannot lead to job satisfaction. Relationship with peers (as a hygiene factor) is dependent on motivators to achieve job satisfaction. Motivators give an employee a sense of being valued. Most important motivators are achievement and recognition, not relationship with peers.

On their attitude towards their institution, study participants responded in the affirmative, indicating various feelings of happiness, appreciation, gratitude, and pride despite slow advancement in their career and low salaries. They believed that working in government could be a lifelong job because of the chance to be regularized. They cited non-material gains for their positive attitude, such as learning from the professors' conversations, proximity to their residences, and opportunities for free quality education. A respondent shared: "Yes, I love the institution I've spent 21 years here. Even if promotion is slow, it is a nurturing institution. I owe this institution..."

Their attitudes could be connected to their reasons for working. They were motivated to work, because they had positive thoughts and feelings towards their tasks and institution. These are consistent with a related study done on the Indian public sector with managers and workers' representatives as respondents (Kumar, 1998). The study shows that the nature of the job can be a satisfier at work. In contrast to Buljubasic and Naus (2008), Kumar (1998) notes that relationship with co-workers is another satisfier. In College X data, attitudes about relationships with co-workers varied: some with appreciation, others with affection, and still others with resentment. Long years of interactions among co-employees gave them these mixed feelings towards one another.

Another cultural element is reflected in the response about "owing the institution" or *utang na loob* in Filipino. This means a lifetime of debt of gratitude to the institution without monetary equivalent. This is a distinct characteristic in a Filipino workplace.

We can also relate College X data with a research done in the US showing that federal employees indicated that serving social causes and making a difference in public affairs - much more than pay and job security- were their primary motivators for entering government employment (Crewson, 1995, as cited in Battaglio 2015). Rainey (2009, as cited in Battaglio 2015) suggests that these findings identify a type of public servant who values work that assists others and benefits society. This type of work involves self-sacrifice and promotes responsibility and integrity.

Aspirations

Aspirations were articulated in the respondents' hopes, wishes, and goals – what they wished and hoped for in the future. They expressed these in terms of position, salary grade, income, and business ventures. They, however, did not cite timelines or career pathing. Aspirations varied according to status (either regular or contractual) and length of service (either new or retiring). Overall, their aspirations were still connected to family concerns. A father with two growing children shared: "*Sana* (I hope) I could have a position that could give me enough salary for my family." *Sana* is a word connoting a wish or hope that many times preceded the responses of employees. Many times, too, the responses ended with wishes with no clear ideas on how to put them into action.

Aspirations of regular employees were to improve skills or a chance to do further schooling. Two said they preferred challenging jobs, such as research or teaching. The relatively new ones aimed for promotions. They acknowledged that they needed to acquire new competencies or credentials.

Agency-hired employees mainly aspired to become regular employees of the institution, even as they would be given low positions. Security of tenure is normally the primary goal among employees amid the prevalence of contractual employment in the country.

Personal work values

This section discusses about personal work values. Human behavior is guided by a set of values, a specific type of beliefs that are most important to the individual, are central in the human system, and act as one’s life compass. Filipinos with a wide kinship network possess personal values shaped from childhood, influenced by parents and other elders, and applied into the workplace. When converted into personal work values, they become the principles that help employees make decisions on the right and wrong ways of working. Because they are personal, they may contrast with the beliefs of other employees at the start of their work interactions. In the long-term, it is necessary to align one’s personal work values with the institution’s core values to achieve common goals and not damage relationships. This research gathered and analyzed quantitative data using a Likert scale with behavioral indicators per personal work value to determine the personal work values of the respondents. Table 1 shows that professionalism scored the highest with a mean of 11.65 and strong behavioral manifestation, followed by efficiency, conservatism, prosperity and continuous learning.

Table 1. Statistics for personal work values and degree of behavioral manifestation

Statistical run	Prosperity	Efficiency	Professionalism	Conservatism	Continuous learning
Valid	17	17	17	17	17
Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	6.41	10.29	11.65	8.29	5.94
Descriptive degree	Moderate	Moderate	Strong	Moderate	Weak
Std. Deviation	3.411	2.687	2.548	2.469	3.051
Minimum	1	5	5	3	1
Maximum	12	15	15	13	12

Tolentino (2019)

Professionalism

Professionalism is the individual's conduct or style of behavior at work. Despite its root word alluding to careers, such as medicine, law, or accountancy, it is not confined to this set of occupations. Rather, this conduct of behavior also applies to the rank-and-file (McKay, 2019; Campbell et al., n.d.). Professionalism aims to uphold public trust and the highest level of quality service, because the delivery of services is in accordance with recognized standards. One enterprise, Alberta Business, provides well-studied comprehensive guidelines entitled "Working with pride and dignity" in the Alberta public service to ensure consistency in the employees' professional behaviors.

College X quantitative dataset shows professionalism is at the top. Administrative employees had strong belief in professionalism as indicated in the following behaviors: compliance with standards and rules, coming to meetings on time, conducting activities agreed upon during meetings, choosing the right words when speaking, and submitting reports on due dates. Professionalism is the top value, because regular employees are covered by civil service rules. They receive memos from the civil service commission, office of the chancellor, office of the vice chancellor for administration, human resource development office, and other related offices. Even as the agency-hired are not covered by civil service rules, they are made aware of the rules because they work within the confines of a government institution. Violations of these mean a warning or sanction. Moreover, there are control mechanisms that keep employees on their toes: maintaining 201 files, filing daily time records, filing leaves, and using biometrics.

Efficiency

Efficiency refers to achieving targets within the desired time frame and conditionalities, such as budgetary restrictions and limited number of personnel assigned to do the tasks. Such is expected in governments of developing countries where there should be no waste of resources and every single centavo is accounted for. Efficiency is often correlated with productivity in industry such as manufacturing. In the public service, efficiency and accountability are twin work values.

In College X, efficiency ranked second but was moderate in manifestation. When purchasing or requested to purchase materials,

they did it always within the budget because of the multi-step procedures that must be complied with: submission of documents showing available funds, justification for the purchase, and canvassing or bidding processes subjected to committee evaluation. In government, rules on accounting and auditing set by the Commission on Audit must be followed. Acts of graft and corruption are being guarded. Any suspicious act is reported to the authorities.

Conservatism

A number of studies refer to the value of conservatism as an ideology, a preference for the historically inherited rather than the abstract or ideal, derived from epistemology. Conservatism connotes bias for certain political beliefs. Separate studies of O'Hara (2016) and Dougherty, Neubert and Park (2019) cite religion as a correlate to personal values in the work environment. Literature from the European Liberal Youth frowns on conservatism, because it becomes a defense of institutions and old rituals even if they are irrational; an idea that supposes changing the traditions may lead to chaos.

This study includes conservatism as a work value, because it presumes that Philippine society is predominantly religious, even as Filipinos belong to various religions and sects. The other reason is the setting – a government institution. Hence, the presumptions may be validated or disproven. College X data shows that conservatism or essentially being traditional was moderately manifested. Data indicates the use of formal language during discussions or meetings. Respondents engaged in tried and tested activities in the workplace rather than being experimental. As Catholics, they said prayers silently during difficult moments. They also prayed before meals during celebrations.

Prosperity

Garn (2020) defines prosperity as consisting of three elements: money, happiness, and sustainability which must be in alignment and not one dominating the others. An exploratory research of working adults (Dougherty et al., 2019) tests the interplay of religious beliefs, prosperity, and entrepreneurship, noting that previous research failed to explore adequately the connections among religious beliefs, human values, and entrepreneurial outcomes. Findings point to the association among religious beliefs (e.g., God rewards the faithful with material prosperity), self-enhancement, and entrepreneurial attitudes. But the

belief in prosperity shows little direct impact on actual entrepreneurial actions.

College X data shows although respondents said they believed in prosperity, such belief was hardly put into action. If any, working beyond office hours was the top indicator with or without overtime pay. Such is more an indicator of dedication for the job rather than belief in prosperity. A few maintained a savings account. Still a few stated they had second jobs or additional assignments within the college. For second jobs or additional assignments, they received honoraria on top of their basic salaries. Investing in real properties scored zero. With low salaries, respondents did not have surplus income to invest in real estate.

Continuous learning

Continuous learning is the process of gaining new knowledge and skills on an ongoing basis with modes ranging from taking formal courses to casual social learning regardless of age and position in the organization. Learning brings about change by creating new capabilities and opportunities, empowers the person to influence the future, and provides choices that would not be available otherwise. It is risky, because it shakes the status quo and the person's comfort zone.

College X data shows that continuous learning is at the bottom of the list of values. Nevertheless, a few respondents said they attended seminars to acquire new skills. Some seminars were held within the building, many were outside the school. Employees were encouraged to attend these seminars on official time but few attended. Very few read books or newspapers. Nobody enrolled in higher studies while working. We can relate these findings on continuous learning to their aspirations. Administrative employees aspired for better things in their work conditions, yet they scored low in this aspect. This is the notable incongruence in this study. When exposed to this research, only then did they realize that they needed to learn continually to reach their goals.

Analysis of level of skills

Given the set of data about mindsets, it can be inferred that a new set of mindsets, specifically personal work values, is necessary to transition towards optimizing the development of administrative employees. Scholl (2003) explains that attempting to reform the organization is

dealing with important symbols of values and norms. To change social values, Scholl prescribes symbolic practices, for example, giving reward for what is important. If this fails, the organization can resort to selective hiring or choosing new members that hold the new values.

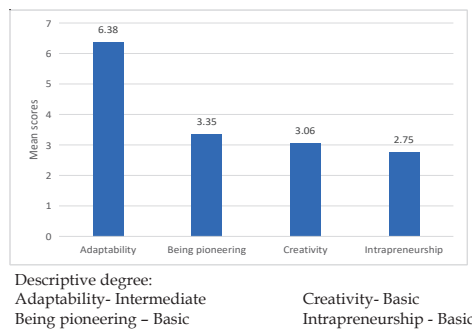
To move towards the direction of change, Scholl affirmed that this will require changing social values or shared values, identifying structure or mental models called the “underlying culture control mechanisms.” In the same way, Lewin (cited in Cummings & Worley, 2009) and Schein (2016) explain that change requires modifying organizational structure and processes by developing new values, attitudes, and behaviors.

Current level of skills: Adaptability, being pioneering, creativity, and intrapreneurship

This section discusses the respondents’ current level of work skills as influenced by their mindsets. Current level of skills pertains to adaptability, being pioneering, creativity, and intrapreneurship measured by way of survey. Survey data were computed based on the mean scores (See Figure 1). Only adaptability skill reached intermediate level with a mean of 6.38.

For the three other skills, mean scores corresponded to basic. There were approximately 40 percent of responses corresponding to zero skills for pioneering, creativity, and intrapreneurship. These skills are what experts refer to as part of whole brain thinking and connectedness, tapping both left brain and right brain (Shelton, 1999; Scharmer, 1999). To deepen the survey data, focus interviews were done about peak moments and the value of the act. Thereafter, we determined the next levels that must be reached, either intermediate or advance, and design interventions to bridge the gaps.

Figure 1. Ranking of skills based on mean scores



Adaptability. This is the first skill studied and is described as a competitive advantage in the world of work. Adaptability is being receptive to changes, willingness to learn ideas and skills. Adaptability is observing the new trends, learning or participating in the new trends, and applying the learnings in the workplace. If employees wish to hold on and grow in their organization, they must be willing to adjust to changes.

Among the four skills studied, adaptability ranked first. Survey and interview responses about peak experiences show that employees were most adaptable in using information and communication technology (ICT) for official purposes: mobile phone, social media, and internet. Using ICT was a team effort wherein experts helped the staff upgrade their skills. From school admission period until graduation, ICT became a vital infrastructure. The institution provided desktops and laptops but all of them used their personal mobile phones, including for official purposes without charging the office. Even the gardener had learned to search the internet with his mobile phone for gardening techniques.

Among the respondents, AR4, an administrative assistant, was the most reluctant to adapt. Several times he refused to enroll in seminars, use a computer, or activate his email. He felt he did not need such to perform his daily tasks of photocopying, driving, and delivering documents. He reasoned: "*Kuntento na ko* [I am satisfied]." Only this year did he enroll in a seminar to qualify for promotion upon insistence of college officials who commended his dedication to the office and his pleasant disposition: "*Nag -attend ng seminar, natutong mag search sa internet ng mga bibilhing gamit sa van o auditorium, mga seminar tables. Anak kong lalaki ang nagturo nung 2015. 3rd year high school lang* (I attended the seminar. I learned how to search the internet for items to purchase for the van or auditorium, such as seminar tables. My son taught me how to do it in 2015 when he was in third year high school). He eventually got his promotion after attending trainings and applying what he had learned.

Studying new software posed a challenge to the staff. They complied with their duties to learn the skills and thought they could do the work better. They recognized that these were new ways of doing work and could facilitate and expedite work. Lifelong learning is the new norm for professionals to survive in a competitive work environment by enrolling in either formal or non-formal education. Such is a must to

advance in one's career, to qualify for promotion. Employees were very much aware that the institution and its people must be abreast with new developments.

Being pioneering. This refers to leading the way in the development of new and better practices despite risks and obstacles. To be pioneering is "to open up a new area or to prepare a way, to take the initiative, or to participate in the development of something new" (Fox 2016, pp. 48-49). It is taking the challenge of entering an uncharted territory, exploring through uncertainty and doubt. It is not waiting for perfect plans before acting. Common stories about peak pioneering experiences pertain to improving materials and services they rendered.

A most pioneering story came from the student records evaluator and staff in -charge of graduation ceremonies. She introduced innovations even without additional budgetary allocation. She upgraded the paper used for college certificates, distributed university pins, and made the purchase of pins and medals more cost-efficient. She outsourced the refurbishing of the auditorium to give the staff breathing space and enjoy the ceremony. She also heard discouraging words from fellow employees, yet went on to market and find more participants in the summer certificate course using social media. Using Facebook to advertise the academic programs had not been done in the past, because the faculty thought it was not an appropriate platform. Yet it proved to be effective and cost-efficient. ARI, an administrative officer (AO), considered pioneering was her systematic way of advancing cash from her own pocket to purchase supplies and materials to accomplish activities. She was able to reimburse some expenses; others she was not able to. Nevertheless, she went on with the activity.

Various office operations needed a huge budget. However, some employees were able to initiate activities despite lack of budget or overtime pay. The narrated stories validate what Fox (2016, pp. 48-49) says about the necessity of being pioneering: "People must explore opportunities that are beyond the boundaries of existing conventional playing fields through thorough thinking..." To be pioneering is "to open up a new area or to prepare a way, to take the initiative or to participate in the development of something new." It is taking the challenge of entering an uncharted territory, exploring through uncertainty and doubt. It is not waiting for perfect plans before acting. It is progressing with risk-mastery, learning along the way. In various ways, employees showed initiative, courage, and risk-taking.

On the value of being pioneering, employees talked about dedication to their jobs and fulfillment of duties despite lack of funds and direction from their supervisors. Faculty with administrative posts variably have a minimum term of one year and a maximum of six years. Administrative personnel are not co-terminus with the faculty-administrator. They remain in their positions regardless of the administrator. Thus, they tend to know the ins and outs of the office more than the administrator.

For the AO, she looked at the bigger picture of generating resources for the institution. She anticipated the problems of delay in the implementation of the program, so she tended to spend her own money. She shared: *"Pag hindi in-address ang problema, maraming magreklamo. Yung pinamimiryenda sa workers para mabilis kumilos, to build PR. Hindi naman bribery dahil miryenda lang... Minsan, umiinit ang ulo ko pag gipit sa pera (If problems are not addressed, many complain. Snacks for workers, so they can work faster, to build PR. It is not bribery, because it's just snacks... Sometimes, I get irritated when there are no funds)."* Despite lack of budget, AR8 upgraded the computers because for him, the speed, the ease in using computers and resolving compatibility issues mattered. AR7 valued the additional skills she learned from attending seminar despite lack of funding support.

The above findings are consistent with studies by Holzer and Callahan (1998). Holzer and Callahan explain that many public servants are responding to the call to serve others, to solve challenging problems, and to improve public welfare. They put in long hours and work under difficult conditions. In their studies about selected public servants and their best practices, they describe public servants as dedicated to serving "their fellow citizens and are motivated by the desire in some small way to make this world a better place to live in. Public servants often make less money than their private sector counterparts, and many work in environments that challenge even the most optimistic, creative and industrious personalities" (Holzer and Callahan, 1998 p. 4).

Creativity. This is the ability to conceptualize, initiate new ways of doing tasks, and design alternatives. On peak creative moments, most common stories were on writing (Tolentino, 2019). In the case of AR5, an administrative assistant, the faculty allowed him to write the faculty minutes of meetings in a mix of English and Filipino, even as the minutes were supposed to be formal reports of meetings. His ability to

provide complete information and his efforts to synthesize the discussions earned him the respect of the faculty. Initially, his reports needed many corrections. As years went by, corrections became less. In the case of AR2, a student records evaluator, simple English enabled her to communicate with a Japanese student and got the message across.

For AR7 and AR9, creative moments were results of urgent situations. AR7 had to write a resignation letter to the employment agency, so that she could move on to apply for a regular position in the university. AR9, wanting to ventilate his feelings of disgust to a fellow worker in order to feel comfortable to continue working, used Facebook, a popular platform for such purpose. He exercised ethical behavior by not using cuss words and not identifying the person he alluded to.

Administrative employees are not writers by designation. Normally, the faculty supervisor takes charge of writing communications and reports. But data shows that administrative staff had writing potentials. When required to write communications or minutes of meetings, they were able to show their writing skill. Not proficient in English, they wrote in a mix of English and Filipino. After all, the essence of writing is to relay a message and be understood. Their writing experiences gave them feelings of struggle, accomplishment, and thrill.

These findings point to the fact that creativity is discovering new ways of being and doing (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996). Creative persons love what they do, what drives them to perform the work, or the opportunity to do what they enjoy. Neither money nor fame drives them from doing what they love. What matters most is how they do it. They like to compose, design, discover something new, create alternatives (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996; Barron & Barron, 2012). These stories are aligned with the ideas of Scharmer (2009) – creativity involves autonomy and flexibility. Creative people want freedom to think and execute their ideas. They do not like to be bound by people's dictates or controls from the environment.

On the value of creativity, top answers are: a sense of accomplishment and as a form of relaxation. Other answers are: discovered more information, released pent-up emotions, and appreciated by co-workers.

Writing a one-page application letter for the first time gave AR7 a sense of accomplishment. It enabled her to help co-workers to compose their

resumes. AR2 felt the same sense of accomplishment in checking university policies and guidelines on admission without the usual help from supervisor and composing an email response to an inquiring Japanese student. She laughed as she recalled the experience.

AR5 was insightful when he explained the value of writing the minutes of faculty meetings: *“Nakikilala ko mabuti ang mga faculty. Marami akong nadi-diskubreng mga first-hand information. Pakiramdam ko nagiging close ako sa mga faculty. Alam ko kung paano sila i- approach (I got to know the faculty quite well. I learned a lot of first-hand information. I feel like I am getting close to the faculty. I know how to approach them).”* For AR3 and AR4 engaging in creative activities were ways to relax and de-stress. For AR9, it was releasing pent-up emotions. Being new in the job, AR9 sensed it would not be in his favor to confront or file a complaint against a bullying senior utility worker. For him, using the trendy emoticon messages on social media was the way to do it. Barron and Barron (2012) explain creative efforts can clean up feelings of anxiety and dissatisfaction. To enhance creativity, people must be allowed to live according to their nature, to discover, and accept their true selves.

Intrapreneurship. This is a relatively new term. It is not synonymous to entrepreneurship, because entrepreneurship connotes designing a new business to make a profit. Intrapreneurship is finding ways to generate resources within the internal environment, either to augment individual employee’s incomes, raise funds, or add to the resources of the institution. Being intrapreneurial is necessary in a government institution where many administrative employees have low-salary grades. Administrators give additional assignments with corresponding honoraria to capable employees as long as the work is within the parameters of official duties. Selling items, such as scrap materials or snacks, is considered informal income. Such is tolerated if done occasionally, with the knowledge of administrators, and do not interfere with official duties.

Top answer in being intrapreneurial was recycling and selling scrap materials. Library personnel and utility workers did such things. They segregated and sold scrap papers, napkin cartons, soda tin cans, and plastic water bottles. Earnings from these were used to buy coffee and snacks. Earning minimum wage, utility workers sometimes divided their earnings among themselves for transportation fare. Other responses pertain to augmenting income of the institution. AR5 was

persistent in soliciting course designs from the faculty to add to the line-up of trainings. AR2's experience was about the renovation and marketing of the dilapidated dormitory to attract more clients and generate additional income.

As a government institution, College X's funds come from subsidy from the national government, tuition fee collections, sales from published books and journals, and donations from alumni. College X has several trust accounts. Each trust account has a specific purpose. To use the funds entails a long procedure, starting from writing a justification letter to the payment to the acquisition of the item or service. Because of the bureaucratic process, people in the institution learned to become intrapreneurial. Fox (2016) writes that intrapreneurship is a new concept that is attracting business leaders, because it is an opportunity to improve their financial resources. An intrapreneur is a person who seeks to create new value within a larger organization. Therefore, the organization needs to provide support for the exploration of meaningful projects, empowering people to improve the business. Just like the private sector, the government academic institution needs to expand its financial resources, too.

On the value of intrapreneurship, most important to two respondents was to render extra service and earn extra income within office hours, because the trainings are institutional after all. For the utility workers, it was about the necessity of recycling, of taking care of the environment aside from having funds for snacks.

Being intrapreneurial can spare employees from the bureaucratic process of using government funds. But for respondents, their main concern was to address the financial needs of the office and the individuals. Intrapreneurs recognize the value and importance of money. They understand the economic drivers that allow the organization to succeed and are able to support this fundamental truth rather than fight it. Although intrapreneurial people are described as confident and courageous, they must also possess humility and integrity, because they work with resources of the organization.

Potential for higher level of skills

Since adaptability scored high, we will look only at potential to raise the level of skills for being pioneering, creativity and intrapreneurship. Potential for higher level of skills was determined through interview

responses to miracle questions pertaining to activities they were envisioning. What future plans would create impact and display their skills? Concrete ideas were extracted to find out how intent they were in conceptualizing future activities. Overall, a few responses were obtained. However, under the Appreciative Inquiry philosophy, the few responses must be dwelt on and reinforced.

Responses to questions about pioneering miracles are to continue their peak experiences about improving services extended to clients. Most did not give any answer. It can be inferred that being pioneering is a great challenge to administrative respondents. Since the institution is a bureaucratic institution, it takes a long process to pioneer a project. Also, it requires a collective decision to implement an idea. Relevant literature explains that being pioneering is a leadership quality and emphasizes that pioneering leaders are driven to develop better products and services. Data shows that pioneering skill must be improved, so that people in the institution can develop passion to grow, expand, and explore; that these administrative employees will become future leaders sooner or later in their years of service.

On creativity, four respondents cited activities to improve office environment, health, and relationships, such as monthly open forum, Zumba, sports activities, and wellness program. The findings may be explained by the fact that some respondents were concerned about strained relationships brought about by office politics. Other answers were insignificant or none at all. It can be deduced that several respondents had no clear ideas about future creative undertakings despite having potential to enhance their creativity, as they were preoccupied with their current workload.

Miracle intrapreneurial activities mentioned also go back to their peak experiences: assistance to implement more training courses and do more recycling. Overall, administrative employees preferred training activities, because they received honoraria in preparing the venue and doing clerical and maintenance tasks. Intrapreneurial skills are at the basic level, not so pronounced in the institution under study. The policy is more of tolerance and income augmentation rather than building of the skill. The related skill of being entrepreneurial is developed among those nearing retirement to learn how to invest their retirement funds wisely.

Conclusions and Implications on Organizational Change

Indeed, culture in the organization is manifested in the central tendencies of how members think and feel. The most commonly cited compelling motivation to work was for the family. Responses to questions on attitudes towards tasks and the institution were positive. Several employees expressed their aspirations in terms of higher positions and salaries. Overall, their aspirations were still connected to family concerns. Among the five values, professionalism was at the top, followed by efficiency, conservatism, prosperity and continuous learning.

Findings show that administrative employees had the potential for change. Because they scored high in professionalism, there is high probability that if the institution would require them to gain new knowledge, skills and credentials, they would follow. They stated their aspirations though not yet actionable. It can be ingrained in their minds that to get promotions, higher income, and regular status, they need to comply with the conditions attendant to getting such (Tolentino, 2019). This is related to upscaling the value of continuous learning. Because they loved their tasks and the institution, they would learn to love acquiring more knowledge and skills. The mean age of 43 indicates middle age, with several aged 22 and above. Those whose belong to the generation of millennials need agility and innovativeness in terms of not only using technology but also designing work processes and relating with co-workers. They must cease being linear, conventional and conservative in their ways of thinking and behaving. Intrapreneurship is not a pronounced policy in the institution, thus may not have as much priority as creativity and being pioneering in skills development.

As a way of reforming the work values in order to fulfill the aspirations, more elements of the organizational culture, for example: vision, mission, and goals of College X and the individual employee's focal systems with the organization macro and mega systems must be revisited or crafted, patterned after the Blondin Organization Planning System. The Appreciative Inquiry 4D model (i.e., Discover, Dream, Design and Destiny) may be further utilized to deepen the current data about the formation of new mindsets and skills required for the future work environment. The 4D model has been proven effective in many organizations that went through the process of change.

Change is most possible with support of top management, because it entails time and resources of the institution in accordance with the traditional parameters of OD. However, emerging models of POD and Quantum OD advocate that change can begin at any level of organization, at any sector of the organization using positive, inspiring and in-depth methods of inquiry. This paper asserts that whatever philosophy and model of change that will be adopted by the organization, the diagnosis must begin with the most important elements of organizational culture – the mindsets.

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