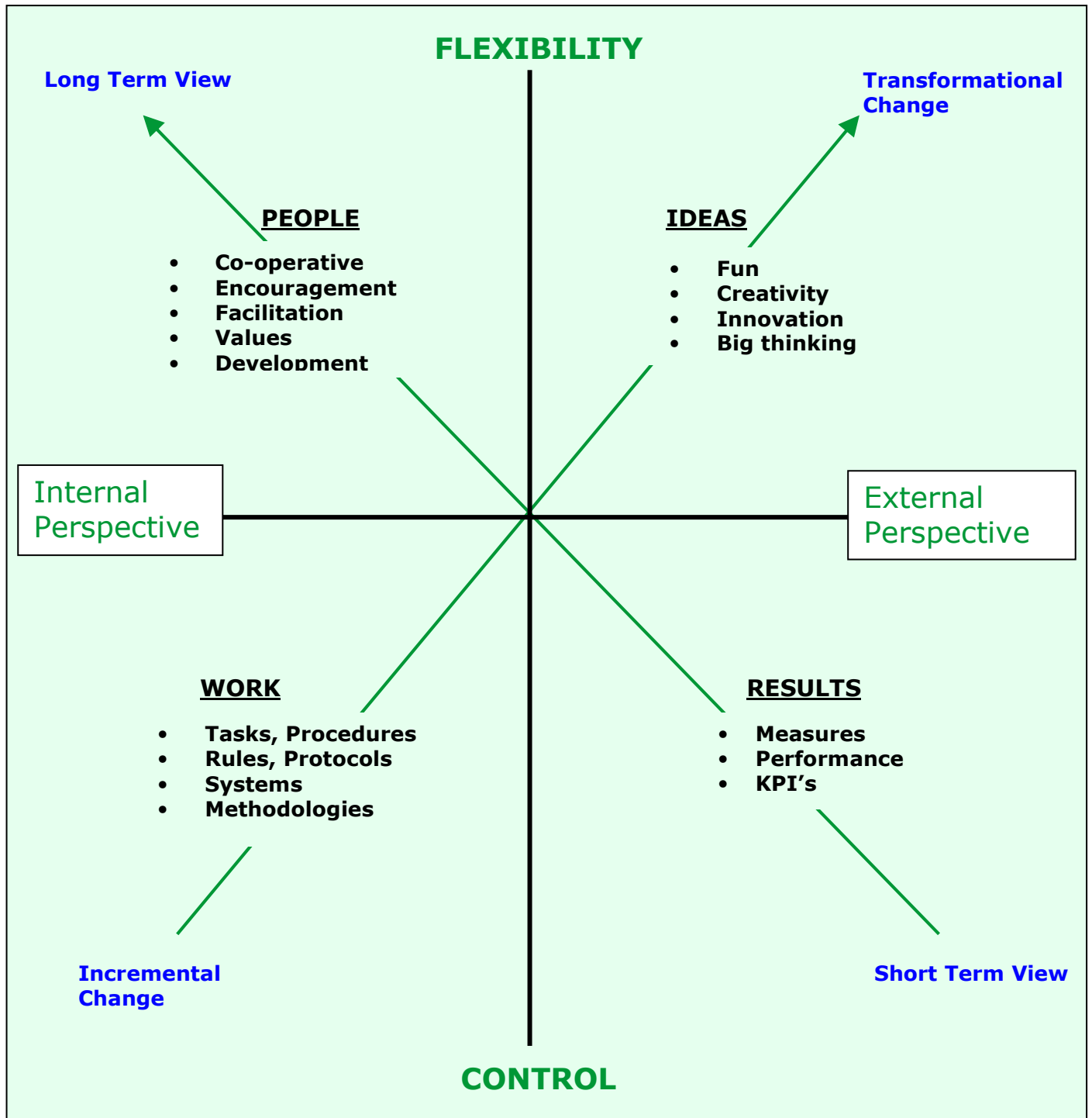


A Competing Values Framework

(Quinn and Rohrbaugh, 1983)



The Competing Values Framework

(Adapted from an article by DeGraff and Lawrence, www.competingvalues.com)

The essence of the competing values framework is for an organisation to determine which of the competing or opposing elements of the model drive their culture. Relating to the capability of the organisation to change and demonstrate flexibility whilst maintaining both long term and short term views, this encourages reflection, and points out that all of the quadrants have a significant role to play in long term organisational success.

Because an organisation is made up of individuals, this model can be applied to individuals who control or contribute to organisational strategy, as well as to the wider organisational culture itself. Consideration of this can then lead to the generation of a plan to develop a more effective balance between the quadrants.

The Ideas Quadrant / Create Profile

The Ideas quadrant encompasses the kinds of purposes and practices that many people think of first when they hear the word 'creativity'. This is the profile of radical breaks with the past and breakthrough ideas that can change the wider organisational environment.

Individuals with the 'Create' profile tend to be generalists or 'artists' who enjoy exploring and easily change direction when solving a problem. The culture that supports their work is characterised by experimentation and speculation; the focus is on generating ideas. This group is often in research and development units or entrepreneurial activities. 'Create' organisations seek to create something new that has been previously thought impossible. The driving purposes are innovation or growth. They strive to orient their products, services and ideas to the future. Leaders build the organisation by developing a compelling vision and emphasising new ideas and technologies, flexibility and adaptability. 'Create' organisations capitalise on turbulent environments. Taken to an extreme, such an organisation could become chaotic.

The Results Quadrant / Compete Profile

The Results quadrant encompasses the kinds of people and practices that many people associate with the financial institutions of the City. This is a profile that shows the intensity of competition and achievement – everyone is either a winner or a loser.

Individuals with the 'Compete' profile are focused on performance and goals. Their culture emphasises these results and the discipline necessary to create them. People with the Compete profile are competitive and love a good challenge, which motivates them towards a speedy and profitable outcome. Commercial Compete organisations seek to create quickly before competitors can. The driving purposes are profit, market share, speed of response or position in comparison to similar organisations (within league tables or media listings etc). Leaders build the organisation by clarifying objectives and improving competitive positioning through hard work and productivity. These organisations seek to deliver results to the stakeholders as quickly as possible. Beating the competition is not only a matter of strategy, but also pride. The Compete profile taken to an extreme becomes a sweatshop.

The Work Quadrant / Control Profile

The Work quadrant represents incremental activity – taking something that exists and modifying it to make it better. This is the profile of large complex organisations that create products and services that must not fail.

People in the 'Control' profile are systematic, careful and practical. Their culture focuses on planning, creating systems and processes and enforcing compliance. Control people seek to keep things running and efficient. Control organisations seek to create something better so that they can build upon the present. The driving purposes are quality, efficiency and predictability. Leaders build the organisation by optimising processes, cutting costs and establishing rules and procedures. Role definition is important here. These organisations tend to elaborate or extend existing products or services with minor variations. When taken to an extreme, they can become a bureaucracy.

The People Quadrant / Collaborative Profile

The People quadrant encompasses the kinds of individuals who believe in something greater than the organisation itself and run it to reflect those values. This is the profile associated with having a great place to work and learn.

People in the 'Collaborate' profile are committed to their community, focusing on shared values and communication. Their culture strives to learn over time, and once these competencies are established, the amount of time required to understand a situation and act appropriately is shortened. They are likely to feel that creativity should be timeless. Collaborate organisations seek to create something sound that is appreciated by the community. The driving purposes are community and knowledge, achieved by drawing on communication, co-operation, and learning-oriented partnerships. Leaders build the organisation by encouraging trust, commitment and relationships, and by nurturing a community of empowered individuals. Their unified behaviour produces a strong external organisational image. Customers may be considered partners in an extended community. The collaborative profile taken to an extreme becomes a party.