

# AN ASSESSMENT BREAKTHROUGH THAT WILL CHANGE THE WAY YOU THINK ABOUT YOUR WORKFORCE

**A**lmost everyone, at some point or another, has taken a personal assessment. The moments that follow the results of a personal assessment are eye-opening, insightful and help explain personal behaviors. Many times the results make us nod in agreement and comment to ourselves, “That’s why I do that.”

What if you could give your organization, as a whole, a personal assessment that made you nod in agreement and comment, “That’s why retention is low,” or “That’s why our top performers excel.”

What if your organization could gain the same insight into its culture that any one of us can gain from a personal assessment? It can, with the Kenexa Cultural Indicator™.

Kenexa, an IBM Company, is pleased to unveil the newest in its extensive array of survey and assessment tools. The Kenexa Cultural Indicator assesses an organization’s internal culture—helping leadership drive performance and align employees, managers, departments and locations with the overall company strategy. It is a means to uncover the insights behind an organization’s identity—allowing it to transform values and strengths into specific strategies that drive overall performance.

## THE KENEXA CULTURAL INDICATOR

The purpose of the Kenexa Cultural Indicator is to assess and analyze an organization’s culture and express that culture in a way that provides a deep understanding and simple communication around its complexity. When used with existing sources of data, it gives context and understanding to the culture. Existing company data might include sourcing

data, new hire information, employee engagement surveys and any recently conducted one-on-one interviews and focus groups conducted with top performers, stakeholders and the executive team.

The Kenexa Cultural Indicator uses archetypes to express the organization’s culture. Carl Jung first derived the psychology of archetypes and Dr. Carol Pearson initially applied these archetypes to organizations. The theory of archetypes asserts that organizations, like people, have a set of archetypes that influence actions, motivations and personalities. Achieving an understanding and balance of these archetypes is important for continued growth and well-being. The archetypal wheel parallels this premise, focusing on how the alignment and business development can support and help organizations achieve this balance.

A well-balanced organization focuses on all four orientations: Stability/Structure, People/Belonging, Results/Mastery and Learning/Freedom. First, organizations must build and maintain structures that make them stable and secure. Second, they must offer an atmosphere where people feel they belong, are loyal to the organization and truly care about each other. Third, they must produce a product or a service that they feel good about and can sell in a cost-effective, timely manner. Finally, they need to learn from the industry, from themselves and from the mistakes they have made to grow into their own, unique organization.

A balanced organization not only achieves great results, but it also empowers and aligns its workers to show innovation and pride in the work they do—driving the company forward.

### A UNIQUE APPROACH

The Kenexa Cultural Indicator is a cutting-edge tool used to define a culture and fill a growing need within human capital management that advances strategic recruitment and retention practices. This approach both complements and differs from other common approaches that merely define the characteristics or traits a person must embody at the organization to be successful. An assessment might ensure that a candidate is a self-starter, can work well under pressure and is deadline oriented—in effect, explaining what a candidate should possess to be successful. By defining the culture with the Kenexa Cultural Indicator, an organization can understand why these characteristics are important in their culture—bringing the assessment full circle.

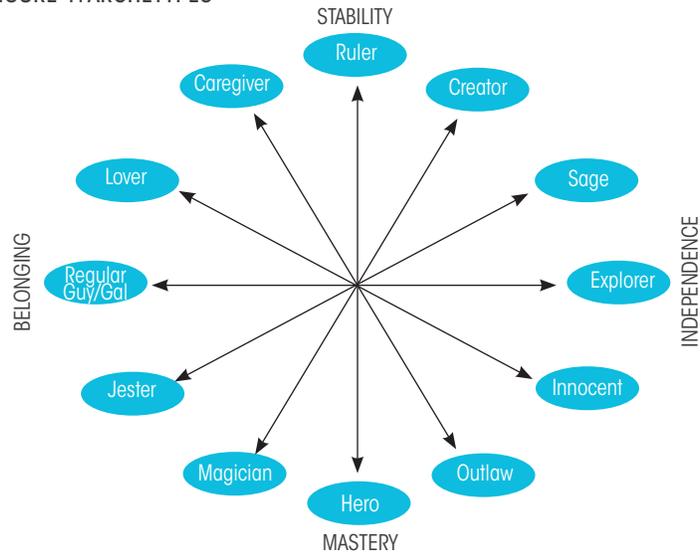
For example, we might assess a poorly designed chair, pointing out that it lacks the needed traits of a successful chair, including four even legs that are solid and upright. The Kenexa Cultural Indicator would then explain that the chair is a rocking chair used by a young mother late at night to comfort a crying child. The story behind the assessment fills in needed information and inspires action based on the archetypes involved.

### A CULTURAL DIAGNOSIS

Knowing which archetypes are present in an organization, as well as those that are lacking, helps define an organization and helps leaders identify with the unwritten and unspoken values of the culture. The hard data about a company, the rational facts, give the basic information—facts that one could find in an annual report or on a website, facts that make up the bare bones of a culture. The emotional truths of an organization, those unspoken or even unknown values, beliefs and customs held by the members, add flesh to those bones, but still do not give the whole picture. The Kenexa Cultural Indicator adds the skin, the eyes and the hair, providing the rest of the picture and giving an identity or personality to the entity.

Each archetype encompasses certain values and strengths, weaknesses and traps. For example, the Explorer organization values individuality, independence, self-actualization, new experiences, growth and change. Its strengths consist of being on the forefront of theory, being proactive and staying current in regards to customer and client needs, and providing a good environment for self-starters. Explorer weaknesses include being chaotic, anarchistic and abandoning employees who do not take initiative (see Figure 2 for complete descriptions).

FIGURE 1: ARCHETYPES



The archetypal wheel portrays the components of a perfectly balanced organization.

FIGURE 2: ARCHETYPE DEFINITIONS

<p><b>CAREGIVER</b> A Caregiver organisation provides service to humanity, takes care of people and provides products and services that help others.</p>	<p><b>REVOLUTIONARY</b> The Revolutionary organisation dedicates itself to doing things differently, and breaking common tradition and practices. This type of organisation will do things its own way just to be unique.</p>
<p><b>RULER</b> The Ruler organisation believes in power, and works to establish processes and tools that give it the support it needs to govern. The ultimate goal of the Ruler is to create the perfect system.</p>	<p><b>MAGICIAN</b> The Magician organisation works to help people change attitudes or trains of thought; it typically produces products that are transformational and will allow them to be more successful.</p>
<p><b>CREATOR</b> The Creator organisation thrives on creative expression, imagination and art. Creator organisations can appreciate the beauty of a well-designed process as easily as the aesthetic beauty of a modern building or new luxury car.</p>	<p><b>HERO</b> The Hero organisation admires courageous and confident people who consistently produce results. It needs a cause to champion, a challenge to overcome or a burden to shoulder.</p>
<p><b>INNOCENT</b> The Innocent organisation focuses on keeping workers safe and respecting tradition. An idealist often has a vision for creating a better world. The organisation typically offers products or services in a cheerful way and consistently strives to protect its customers.</p>	<p><b>LOVER</b> The Lover organisation wants people to have more love or intimate friendships in their lives. The focus of this organisation is inward and centers on keeping each other happy and engaged.</p>
<p><b>SAGE</b> The Sage organisation focuses on the pursuit or spread of knowledge, often from the inside out. These organisations are typically research labs, universities and planning arms of organisations.</p>	<p><b>JESTER</b> The Jester organisation has a playful attitude, and believes in always enjoying itself. It thinks that better results are produced when the work is fun.</p>
<p><b>EXPLORER</b> The Explorer organisation is outwardly focused and constantly looking for new ideas, new products and places to expand. It achieves growth most often through acquisition, either of new business, new products or from external thought leaders.</p>	<p><b>EVERYPERSON</b> The Everyperson organisation believes that the value of work comes from not letting one another down and finds that an environment where everyone feels they belong is most productive. Consensus building, fairness and equality are the hallmarks of an Everyperson organisation.</p>

The Kenexa Cultural Indicator reveals the hidden truths about an organization, defining not only the culture, but also the strengths and weaknesses of the organization, internal values, archetypes of the leadership and executive level teams, and strengths and weaknesses of departments within the organization. Knowing this, an organization's leadership can make the decision to align appropriately. For instance, the leadership team's values might be misaligned with the organization's values, or the organization's values might be misaligned with the organizational strengths. By uncovering the hidden truths, decisions can be made that will help executive management move the organization in the appropriate direction.

The Kenexa team recently worked with a Fortune 500 insurance company. The company had a severe financial crisis that came to a head in 2001. New leadership, which exhibited a strong Hero archetype, joined the organization. Just as every Hero needs a cause to champion or challenge to conquer, this company adopted a cause to turn around the failing company. "The Turnaround" succeeded within five years and had become a rallying cry and a great source of pride for the company employees. However, evidence of trouble began to creep into the company's annual engagement survey and other communication channels. "The Turnaround" was becoming ancient history and employees were reverting to their previous Ruler culture—and falling into all its traps. A Ruler is about creating the perfect system, or kingdom, often focusing on rules and processes more than results.

After the engagement survey explained the what for the company, the Kenexa Cultural Indicator helped the insurance company explain the why. The company had a decision to make for itself, "should we find a cause to reinvigorate our Hero culture, or become the best Ruler culture possible, addressing the weaknesses and traps involved?"

Knowing the hidden truths that make up an organization's culture gives executives the opportunity to weave these values into processes, structures and business practices. Recognizing these archetypes also empowers employees, maximizes communication to stakeholders regarding the

company's values and mission, leverages the strengths within to achieve optimal performance and provides the opportunity to overcome any apparent weaknesses.

A defined culture can be used to leverage large initiatives, analyze mergers and acquisitions, engage current employees, recruit top performers that fit the culture, minimize expenses associated with recruitment and retention, and provide direction for future growth and success.

### **THE KENEXA CULTURAL INDICATOR EXECUTIVE REPORT**

The Kenexa Cultural Indicator online survey consists of approximately 96 questions and takes respondents between 10 and 15 minutes to complete. The number of respondents for sampling varies depending on the organization's needs.

Once the survey portion is complete, the Kenexa team presents the organization with a comprehensive report and recommendations for moving forward. The report helps define the values, strengths and weaknesses of the organization, but it also helps analyze the organization's cultural balance and provides complete insight into the culture, allowing for educated recommendations on preservation or transformation.

There is no common set of outcomes of the Kenexa Cultural Indicator. Results, actions and recommendations vary depending on where the organization currently sits, where it wants to be and what the Kenexa Cultural Indicator reveals about the hidden truths and stories that lie within its walls.

Recently, a biotech firm discovered its culture still reflected the founding values and personality when it utilized the Kenexa Cultural Indicator, aligning with the Sage and Hero archetypes. From there, it was all about preserving the culture through awareness, internal communication, targeted messaging and unique design.

A Kenexa healthcare client discovered that the financial hardships it had encountered in the previous years had forced the Rulers and Heroes within the organization to dominate the Caregivers that were so vital to its success. The results of the Kenexa Cultural Indicator that diagnosed this issue became a great topic of discussion for executives and line management. Instead of forcing Caregivers into a Rulers role, the company needed to achieve an organizational balance between the three archetypes (Rulers, Heroes and Caregivers), letting the caregivers worry most about what they do best—caring for the patients. This organization is developing a strategy and messaging campaign based on the Kenexa Cultural Indicator recommendations as it tries to transform its culture into one that breeds engagement, success and longevity.

The Kenexa Cultural Indicator is the starting point and foundation upon which employment branding and cultural management is built. It is critical to the success of an internal campaign; it adds the complete picture to widely used assessment and survey practices and provides an organization with not only a

complete analysis of its culture, but allows it to move forward with a strategic, well-grounded plan that will ensure success from the inside out. ■

[www.kenexa.com](http://www.kenexa.com)  
[contactus@kenexa.com](mailto:contactus@kenexa.com)

## REFERENCE

Pearson, C., & Hammer, A. (2004). OTCI™ manual. A guide for interpreting the organizational and team culture indicator™ instrument. Gainesville, FL: Center for Applications of Psychological Type, Inc.

## ABOUT KENEXA, AN IBM COMPANY

To us, business has always been personal—and it's always been about making the workforce smarter, which is why we're proud to be the platform for a Smarter Workforce. We look at it from two angles—empowering people and transforming business. Our tools enable businesses to attract and keep the best people, develop their skills, cultivate new leaders and capitalize on their collective intelligence by applying human insights, social tools and workforce analytics to transform the way they work. We provide deep insight and experience in employee engagement, talent management and leadership development mixed with the world's best technology and social platforms, giving us the unique ability to build a Smarter Workforce.