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# The Application of the Theory of Drive Satisfaction Strategies to Corporate Culture Engineering

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## Abstract

The Theory of Drive Satisfaction Strategies is applied to the improvement of organizational performance. The theory is briefly described, and its implications for corporate culture formation outlined. Recent successes in collaborative corporate behavior are presented to motivate the discussion of corporate culture engineering that follows. Techniques for the management of individuals operating under any of four human Drive Satisfaction Strategies are discussed. The culture building method of “repeatable methods and procedures” is also described and applied to each of the four Drive Satisfaction Strategies.

## Introduction

**IN A PREVIOUS PAPER** (Meylan 2007<sup>1</sup>) we described a Theory of Drive Satisfaction Strategies specifically designed to link the motivations of individuals to participate in two distinct forms of collective behavior in social contexts. These are Competitive Behaviors and Collaborative Behaviors. These studies are motivated by the needs of organizations to improve their abilities to produce greater value for customers in increasingly competitive markets. Further, this greater value of products and services has to be produced with ever greater efficiency to assure the profitability of an organization that often has to operate under thinner and thinner margins.

While any animal species operates under one or possibly two Drive Satisfaction Strategies (DSS), human individuals have four DSSs that are specifically tuned to deal with other human beings as the dominant feature of their natural environment. In other words, instead of making our living by using natural resources directly (like finding our own food, water, and other raw materials for clothing, housing, and tools), we make our living dealing with people (or organizations of people) who provide a variety of services, products, protection, *etc.* “Dealing with people” is inherently competitive, and two DSSs are built upon a basic emotional framework held in common by all mammals. The other two DSSs provide huge

capabilities for self-conscious and pro-active behavior modification. With these two additional DSSs human beings can retrain themselves to deal with their environments, and especially the people in them, with increasing skill. This ability to self-train, self-educate, and self-retrain helps individuals to get better return out of their drive satisfaction efforts. These last two DSSs also open up more powerful forms of collaboration to add to the range of collective behaviors exhibited by human beings.

These two approaches to collective behavior, *i.e.*, Competitive and Collaborative, also affect the type of collective-behavior habits that a group, team, or community is going to form. As we defined in the previous paper –

*Culture is the complete collection of behavioral habits exhibited by a group of human beings.*

From this definition we then expect to find cultures where the interactions among individuals are habitually competitive, and other cultures where the interactions are habitually collaborative.

Experience indicates that the default culture in any group will be competitive, based as it is on the older and more deeply ingrained system of emotions that we inherit from our mammalian past. If people with the right combination of self-training talent find each other in this competitive context, they may be able to form a collaborative sub-culture within, but distinct from, the main group culture.

The strongest groups and organizations exhibit more pockets of collaborative sub-culture than looser or weaker groups. From an organizational effectiveness standpoint, collaborative cultures are vital, even if the best that happens is the achievements of a number of pockets of these sub-culture groups. *Experience also indicates that groups operating with a collaborative culture usually outperform groups operating as internal competitors by factors of two to three. Performance superiority by a factor of ten produced by collaborative culture groups occurs often enough that the strategies to engineer collaborative cultures ought to be taught by business schools and practiced at every managerial level in an organization.*

The rest of this paper describes how behaviors based on each of the four primary human DSSs can be managed and engineered to produce pockets of collaboration within an otherwise internally competitive organization.

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## Synopsis of DSS Theory

The establishment of individual drive priorities and the acting out of behaviors to meet those priorities imply the existence of what we at EvolvingSuccess call Drive Satisfaction Strategies, or DSSs for short. For convenience, here are the three primary drives that allow an individual animal to play the game of natural selection most effectively (see Meylan 2005<sup>2</sup> for the derivation of these drives):

- The drive to eliminate or avoid all forms of pain or discomfort.
- The drive to have sex.
- The drive to nurture offspring to self-sufficiency in the shortest time possible.

The degree to which an animal's behavior complies with these drives (better than some other competitor in the environment) determines its chances of transmitting those relative advantages to the next generation. Social structure in human populations merely constitutes another set of environmental conditions that have to be handled successfully.

In Meylan 2005<sup>2</sup>, we applied evolutionary psychology and the information science technique of reverse engineering to parse out the way human information processing might actually work, from a systems engineering point of view. Of the four subsystems that exercise identified, two of them strongly influence the nature of DSSs in the social contexts we've outlined above. The older of these from a natural history point of view is what we called the system of environmental condition assessments, which we experience most often as our emotions. The more recently developed of the two we called the problem-solving system with its extensive input/output subsystems. Each of these two information processing systems in human beings supports a separate class of DSSs. The system of environmental condition assessments supports Competitive DSSs, while the problem-solving system can support Collaborative DSSs.

Frequently there is confusion about the relative moral distinctions between competition and collaboration. It is often said that people who compete are usually nasty, while people who collaborate are usually nice. This distinction must be discarded. While it may be true from a certain point of view, the fact is that a DSS is always a self-serving approach to daily existence. Everyone wants to avoid or eliminate all forms of pain or discomfort in their lives. Everyone at times competes to accomplish this;

at other times people will collaborate. The context (including personal history) guides the choice.

Within these two classes of DSSs we have identified two additional DSSs per class. Each class has a DSS which can move people toward positions at the top, and each class has a DSS that allows a person to maintain a stable and suitable location lower in the social structure. That's a total of only four DSSs we've uncovered for functioning in environments where social interaction is required for survival. Figure 1 below provides a schematic relationship among these four DSSs with scales that may be useful in quantifying their significance for a given individual in a given place and time.

### **Culture Optimization and Productivity Expansion**

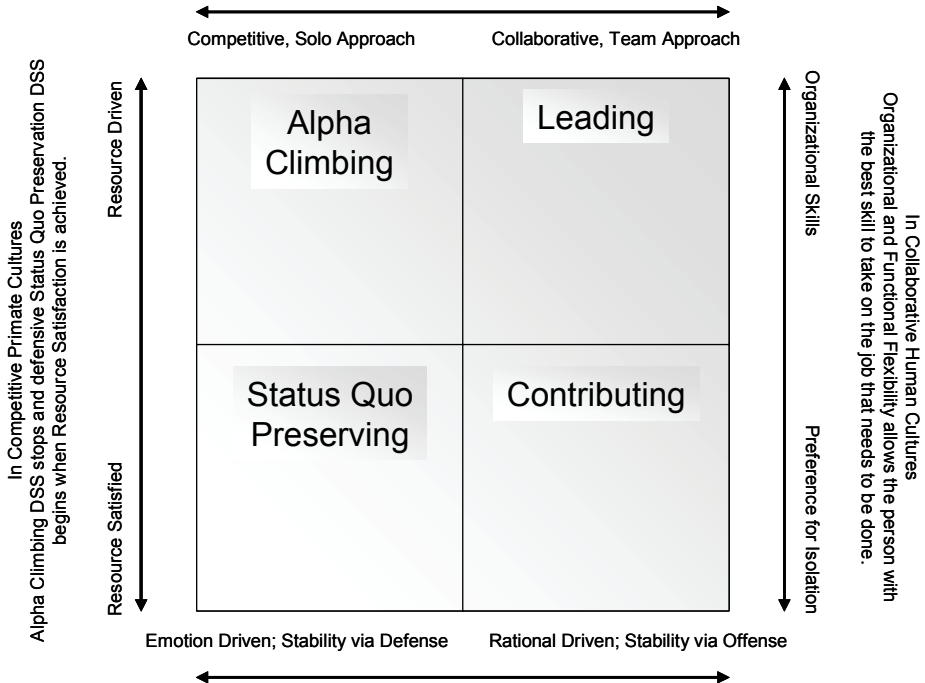
We understand that the cultural backdrop of every human group is competitive. We see that collaborative cultures are usually transient and always fragile even under good circumstances. What we want to attempt in any given organization is to optimize productivity or the value of the products and services we deliver to a market. To do this we propose that an organization needs to build habits that encourage the formation of collaborative groups, and helps them endure from project to project. In other words, if we are lucky enough to pull a great, collaborative team together, other corporate culture habits should be in place that either fills a queue with new work to keep them busy, or that can migrate them to different parts of the organization where their collaborative habits can raise the value of those business activities.

Why build more collaborative groups? Why raise collaboration to the level of a corporate culture habit? We noted in the Introduction that experience indicates that *collaborative groups outperform non-collaborative groups by multiplicative factors, not by mere percentages.*

Gene Allen (Allen 2006<sup>3</sup>, co-author of *Collaborative R&D*<sup>4</sup>) reports achieving a factor of ten reduction in design time in the automotive and aeronautics industries when multiple large companies got together to work out problems they had in common. Alan Croll reports the time reduction of decision making processes as well as the execution of many well-defined business processes by up to a factor of ten through the application specially designed information flow technologies (Croll 2006<sup>5</sup>). They achieve this by enforcing accountability from each member

of the process. In other words, they can artificially force Contributing behavior out of Status Quo Preservers by applying electronically delivered peer pressure.

Figure 1  
Two-Dimensional Drive Satisfaction Strategy Continuum  
NOTE: All DSSs are Self-serving



People's DSSs continuously shift on the basis of opportunity, threat, and need.  
All people work toward stability in their living and working conditions.

In their book *Built to Last* Collins and Porras (1997<sup>6</sup>) provide numerous large-company examples where Alpha Climbing was sublimated into true Leading, which also often led to highly collaborative cultures. When surveying companies with an average age of roughly 100 years, Collins and Porras found that the intention to build a great company delivering great products and services led to companies that not only lasted a long time, but consistently delivered greater shareholder value over that century as well. This was contrasted to organizations built strictly to “make a buck,” or with flamboyant personalities running the show where the trends for shareholders ran lower.

Building an organization with an ever increasing proportion of collaborative activity is analogous to investing in the stock market. You don't move your portfolio forward by "hitting home-run" investments. It moves forward because you've found a way to keep from losing ground. The same is true for elevating collaboration to the status of a corporate culture habit. A few exceptional performances by one-shot wonders do not form a strategy. It's probably dumb luck. Dumb luck is vital for much success, but you have to find a way of capturing those dumb luck discoveries and building them into repeatable, enterprise-wide performances. Collaboration helps you do that. The more broadly collaboration is active in an organization; the better able it is to capture accidental discoveries.

This means that organizational leadership needs to be in the business of engineering the culture of the organization in an explicitly planned way. This will often include running numerous experiments with task definition and rewards to gain increasingly high levels of collaboration as a collective behavior aimed at organizational success.

### **Leadership and Corporate Culture Engineering**

Whenever a group of people persists as a group, a culture forms. Its basis will be emotional, and its behavioral characteristics will evolve more or less spontaneously as Climbers compete offensively and Status Quo Preservers compete defensively. However, this initial spontaneity can give way to more directed forms of cultural development if the right combination of DSS types is part of the group's mix.

#### *Positions "at the top"*

Let's crudely characterize the drive satisfaction goals of people "at the top," with the following statements:

1. Alpha Climbers aim for the top to gain access to all the products of the rest of the group's drive satisfaction activities.
2. Leaders attempt to use and/or coordinate the drive satisfaction activities of the group to achieve greater levels of drive satisfaction per capita than working alone (or of course, acting competitively against one another) would. Special note: This is not to say that Leaders are primarily interested in the welfare of

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the group. Leaders are expecting a handsome payoff. But in addition to that, Leaders act in ways that build sustainable social environments. *Long term stability of contexts that facilitate successful drive satisfaction activities is often a Leadership goal.*

Depending on their personal capabilities, both Alpha Climbers and Leaders will attempt to establish culture-level habits in the group that facilitate their respective drive satisfaction goals. This activity is what we call **corporate culture engineering** when referring to business contexts.

From the standpoint of individual success it may be difficult to say which top position DSS is most effective most often. Further, it seems to be the case that “super-successful” or “hyper-successful” people are those who actually blend the two DSSs into a single, personal strategy for success. They know how to compete at the inter-personal level, they know how to build a team to support their inter-personal successes, and they know how to build a team that can beat everybody else’s team.

But for simplicity, let’s consider only the cases of true type DSS behavior. And further, let’s focus our attention on the Leading DSS by reassigning the Alpha Climbing approach to corporate culture engineering to garden tending – keeping the group ripe for picking at will as a trove of personal resources. Leaders, somewhat by contrast, frequently demonstrate the ability to recognize the DSSs of others in their environments (as opposed to simply presuming everyone around them is competing against them). Further, they are often able to map their perceptions of individual skill sets very accurately to their perceptions of tasks that opportunities or threats demand. This gives Leaders strong abilities to manage the outcomes of events by managing the applications of talents to the execution of team-based solutions. How do they do this?

### *Recognition of DSSs in Individuals*

At a gut level it’s not extremely difficult to identify someone who is “wearing their DSS on their sleeve.” We’ve all seen the flaming Alpha Climbers, and we’ve seen the people who don’t want to be noticed. We’ve worked with people who seem to be able to pull a group together at will, and we’ve known people who are more than happy to lend their skills to a group that looks like it’s moving in the right direction.

However, that doesn’t explain what happens when a person operates with the Leading DSS. What are they looking for? At the top

level, all DSSs are about resource acquisition and utilization. In social environments other human beings are also often dealt with as resources (other politically correct compunctions aside). Those making use of the Leading DSS are often watching others to determine attitudes and practices concerning resources.

Table 1 lays out a matrix of ideas that relate some primary DSS characteristics to the way relationships are structured to implement the DSS.

<b>Table 1: Matrix of DSS Characteristics</b>				
	<b>Alpha Climbing</b>	<b>Status Quo Preserving</b>	<b>Leading</b>	<b>Contributing</b>
<b>DSS Characteristic</b>				
<b>Resource Philosophy</b>	Climbs to acquire more	Preservation of resource availability	Resources are leverageable	Resources are shared commodities
<b>“People are...”</b>	opponents	potential threats	partners in a mutual venture	potential team mates
<b>“Rules are...”</b>	controlled to create advantage	viewed as preserving the good	discovered for each context	helpful guides
<b>“Communication...”</b>	is mistrusted... especially if between third parties	is avoided	requires extensive networks	is freely utilized
<b>“Agreements are...”</b>	kept when convenient	avoided	renegotiated as needed	expected to be kept as they keep them

Leaders, as part of their DSS, are constantly assessing their environment and the human players in it to determine what is available for use, and who *else* is able to make the most out of what’s available. To do this they have to understand more about an individual than their range of skills. They also have to understand how an individual interacts with other human beings in tasks that require groups or teams. As solution-driven people, Leaders promote the movement of large volumes of information among the members of the team or group. This assures that the team is

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coordinated, and also assures that the best information on the environment and how to use the resources in it are engaged for top results.

*The Management of Individuals with Specific DSSs*

First let it be said that while every individual will have a preferred DSS that they normally use, there are probably no people operating with a true type pure DSS. Personal observations as well as large bodies of anecdotal evidence suggest that people will switch DSSs as context requires. Thus, the lack-luster buck-private becomes a heroic leader when his entire chain of command is killed, and he rallies his comrades successfully to “take the hill.”

Further, while our culture places various prejudicial value judgments on these four DSSs, they all can be managed to great constructive effect. Alpha Climbers are typically thought of as power hungry and abusive. But the fact is every human being climbs as far as the level of effort delivers an acceptable return. In other words, we ALL operate in the climbing mode. Many of us simply quit before we get to the top. But when we do quit, or when a Climber does get to the top, then what do we do? We dig in to defend our access to the resources we wish to continue to enjoy.

Everybody’s doin’ it (climbing and preserving their status quo, that is)!

What everybody ISN’T doing is leading or contributing, or in other words, few people operate in the collaborative strategic modes. Few people have made the conversion from the competitive DSSs to the collaborative ones. As people using the Leading DSS, do we have to move people into collaborative behaviors?

Yes, we want to move them into collaborative behaviors, but, no, we don’t necessarily need to re-wire the habits that produce their primary DSSs. We can get collaborative behaviors as needed so long as we can cater judiciously to their habitual DSS.

A seminar attendee at the Space Telescope Science Institute recently asked about managing Alpha Climbers in their group. “Seems to me that you can channel that ambition and get some important work done,” the attendee said. Exactly! People operating out of the Leading DSS succeed not because they change the way people operate. They are usually effective because they can link successfully what the worker wants

to what the Leader wants. Now, often the linkages aren't that hard for the Leader to demonstrate because what they both want is very similar. However, it is also often the case that a Leader has to make appeals to some greater good and make it stick to people who otherwise wouldn't care to collaborate.

### *Managing Climbers*

The first thing to understand about *anyone* is that:

1. they are probably operating out of a DSS strategy that is largely emotion driven, and
2. there is a solution-oriented DSS that they *could* employ that has numerous advantages over emotion-driven strategies.

Like all other great apes, people use as their default class of DSSs the emotion-driven competitive class. Without an awareness of alternatives, people come to groups with this default approach active. Many people are Climbers simply because that's all they know.

This means that the first approach a manager can try on Climbers is to make them aware about the options to lead or to contribute as a way of defining their place in the group. Obviously this manager has to be aware of the nature of Leading or Contributing as a DSS to coach an individual in this direction.

If this individual is a Climber and that's that, then there are three sets of circumstances that the manager may wish to control:

1. The Climber's energies may still be managed into activities that are good for the group's goals and objectives.
2. The Climber cannot be allowed to disrupt group activities without a reason that contributes to the entire group's success.
3. The Climber may eventually pose a threat to the manager, depending on various factors like general corporate culture, other capabilities of the Climber, and the political clout of the manager.

The Climber will be taking things on as personal challenges in resource acquisition. Financial rewards and promotions are going to be his or her objective in most of the things they undertake. These are obvious. However, here is a general "play" for managing hard-core Climbers.

On the upside you want to get behaviors from Alphas that contribute to your team's responsibilities. On the downside you want to keep Alphas from becoming a disruption. As a manager you operate on

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the assumption that the Alpha is a Contributor, and you reward or punish according to your standard pattern as a Leader. One of two things will happen. The individual may evolve into a Contributor by reason of the pattern of rewards and punishments you apply to their behavior. In other words, they may find a way within your regular operations to satisfy their drive for more personal resources. If that doesn't happen, the other likely outcome is that the Climber leaves your group to find a place where they can accomplish greater levels of resource acquisition at a faster rate than working for you.

### *Managing Status Quo Preservers*

The work force is dominated by these types of individuals. They've found a satisfactory place to get what they want from work and they want to keep it. They'll take more if they can get it, but conversely they don't want to lose any ground with respect to the level of resources they can acquire in their present position. They won't risk much to gain more. Usually, they would rather put in a decent day's work, draw their day's pay, and otherwise not interact more with others than they have to.

Ordinarily, if these people are performing as needed and the organization's methods and procedures aren't under any pressure to change, there is little to manage. The difficulties usually appear when methods and procedures have to change to meet the changing demands of the organization's customer base. For the most part, this is where the so-called "change management" industry makes its money.

On the assumption that there is a meaningful sense of trust between the manager and Status Quo Preservers, managing these changes is reasonably straight forward. Time is the primary issue, with job security and proper training the secondary issues. When time permits (and this isn't always possible), you develop a change plan with the needed lead time to get this group used to the idea of the change, show them the benefits TO THEM that comes with the change, show them how you are going to help them succeed in making the change, and then train them in the new needed skills with plenty of time left over for them to get comfortable before the organization "has to go live" with the changes.

The big demand this places on the manager is being much more aware of the evolution of their business conditions so that greater lead times can be "earned." Mediocre managers might not have the savvy to read changing conditions to create an accurate forecast far enough into the

future. Better managers will make more aggressive attempts to capture trends of the future to build better change management plans.

Better change management plans help to keep this large segment of the workforce satisfied that their access to resources will be preserved.

### *Managing Leaders*

Once we get into the class of DSSs that are based in symbol-driven solutions, a very different range of opportunities emerges. We get different levels of creativity and adaptability specifically because we are able to discern manageable characteristics in the environment and *actively* seek tactics and strategies to exploit them to full effect.

By contrast, pre-wired emotional responses are not able to deliver these capabilities. Either pre-wired emotional responses fit the situation, or they don't. And for most human beings in modern settings, they don't.

So, what is there to managing Leaders? Basically, in a solution-seeking group leadership is based on the tasks that need to be done in the moment. Even in situations where there is an individual clearly identified as holding the office of leader, the person actually leading the team's actions will be the person who is best capable of coordinating the group's resources and personnel to complete the task in the shortest time with the highest payoff.

The group, then, needs a mechanism to discern who best understands the way to accomplish specific goals and who can also spell out the steps to the rest of the group for execution. If the group has a permanent Leader operating by the Leading DSS, then that person's job is to identify the individual who will take the lead on specific, temporary tasks. That can often create a situation where the permanent leader takes orders from the temporary leader where specific coordinated efforts are concerned.

This is one point where adaptability becomes important. Each individual in a group might have enough enlightened self-interest to participate in a solution-based, collaborative group, but they will still be emotion-driven, competitive animals at heart. Taking orders from a subordinate is not an emotionally natural thing for anyone to do. However, if the assignment is legitimate and the payoff high, everyone pitches in to apply their best abilities exactly when needed to accomplish the goal. The permanent leader acknowledges his or her emotional discomfort, but

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rationally chooses to contribute to the execution of the solution to obtain the better payoff for efforts exerted. *This is the essence of a fully functional collaborative culture.*

### *Managing Contributors*

Contributors find security where their creativity is frequently folded into the group's solutions, plans, and execution of plans. If there is no use for their creativity they will either fall back into the Status Quo Preserving DSS, or move on to find a place where new solutions are considered an important resource to the group.

In extreme cases they may opt to exercise the Leading DSS as a last-ditch experiment in creating a place where their talents can be put to best use.

Managers who do not understand the application of creative processes to business solutions, or other goal-oriented activities, will have a hard time understanding the whole value of this type of human resource. Command and control types of managers will, of course, want to command and control, leaving little room for creative contributions to group efforts. Likewise, managers who believe that they already know everything that their group needs to succeed will not seek out other approaches to resolve issues facing the group.

By contrast, managers who want to accelerate positive change in their group's productivity will be actively seeking out new solutions to old problems. They need inventiveness and innovation. Contributors use creativity as their primary strategy for resource acquisition. This makes Contributors natural team members for progressive and innovative managers. You give a team of Contributors a problem to solve and just stand back for the results.

### *There's More...*

These last few pages provide little more than broad brush strokes and impressions on the management of people based on the DSS that dominates their approaches to successful living and working. Not only that, but within these four basic DSSs are all of the individual permutations of mixing and swapping out of DSSs to meet specific conditions. Good managers and leaders spend large amounts of time

watching their people to understand their motivations as well as their best talents and skills.

And in addition to the management of individuals, the DSSs also allow a leader to craft behaviors and habits of success at a higher organization level. This is what we call *corporate culture engineering*.

### **The Systematic Approach to Group Habit Formation: Corporate Culture Engineering**

In our book<sup>7</sup> Meylan and Teays describe in detail a systems approach to successful management. The scientists-turned-managers of a highly successful NASA astronomy project attributed their success, by and large, to luck. But when pressed further, it was clear that, as a group, they had *a large number of habits in common that pertained well to management and leadership*. Most of these habits could be traced back directly to their scientific training. Many of those research behaviors, in turn, map very well to the kinds of behaviors any successful animal in the world would use to get the most out of their Drive Satisfaction Strategies under constantly changing conditions. This is especially so where the strategies are built on observational skills and the ability to create new, and necessarily successful, responses to changing situations.

The italicized phrase “large number of habits in common” in the last paragraph is, of course, a practical definition for **corporate culture**.

By whatever process, these mission managers were able to adapt research skills to leadership responsibilities. Science in general is an information-rich enterprise. Leadership functions best within information-rich environments. However, when dealing with changing events and the unknown of the future, adequate information is rarely available. This is where other research skills come to play, such as model building, data projection and extrapolation, and other practices allowing the practitioner to visualize, compare, and evaluate a range of possibilities.

The business culture that will usually form out of such habits is a collaborative, solutions-based culture. When compared to a business culture dominated by emotion-driven competition, the people generating a collaborative culture will construct methods and procedures that help them repeat their successes on a reliable basis. In other words, it is frequently the case that collaborative groups self-consciously design their behavioral

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habits to optimize their chances of success in anything they undertake. This is another facet of *corporate culture engineering*.

The collaborative DSSs lend themselves quite well to corporate culture engineering. The competitive DSSs do not, as a rule. The collaborative DSSs facilitate adaptability, up to and including real-time flexibility in approaches to new and/or changing conditions. The competitive DSSs are emotionally tuned to a given set of environmental conditions, and many of those conditions are infrequently experienced by post-industrial people. From an emotion-based DSS standpoint, new or unknown conditions are to be feared, while from a solution-based DSS a person or group often creates *new conditions* in order to gain control over changing environments.

One of the environment components that can be changed is the basic social structure of a group and the rules that direct its operations. The Constitution of the United States is an exercise in proactively designed corporate culture, which includes adjustable features. It attempts to foster a level of social collaboration that facilitates each person's attempts to create a successful livelihood while at the same time prevents greedy, power-hungry climbers (individuals, the Federal Government, and outside powers) from infringing on a person's attempts to create a successful livelihood.

A business has the option of taking this approach toward culture engineering one or more steps further. Why? Because the company in question doesn't have to cater to all the possible desires of a country's entire population. They can direct the evolution of their social structure and the rules to operate it toward the service of their business objectives if they so choose. By reason of this focus, a business organization can design methods and procedures that *help people develop habits of repeatable success*. The culture can even include habits of innovation and creativity if the business organization is led by the right kind of people. How would this work in practice?

There are four DSSs to consider when engineering a corporate culture. We've described them at great length above and in work previously cited. The corporate culture engineering objective, then, is to provide channels of drive satisfaction activity that suit these four groups while at the same time channel those activities to the meeting of business objectives. These channels should take the form of well designed and documented methods and procedures that help everyone replicate efficient

work place behaviors aimed at task completion or innovation applied to the organization's success.

### *Engineering Alpha Climbing Behavior*

The first thing to keep in mind about Climbers is that their climb doesn't necessarily mean they're climbing for the top. These people are on a climb to find out how much they're willing to work for a certain level of payoff. Once they hit that level they'll usually opt out of Climbing and switch to Status Quo Preserving behaviors.

Money and/or power (since power is often a practical channel to get to more money) are the objectives of the Climbers. How can these personal Climber objectives map into the success of the business organization? Even more to the point, what are the repeatable successes you want to facilitate for these people that don't turn them into culture-injuring problems?

First, if money is of greater interest than power, then Climbers don't necessarily need to be strongly integrated into group activities. They can be given important assignments that advance the competitive needs of the organization in the external market place, and paid according to their competitive successes. Some of the simpler assignments include sales and certain types of negotiations where the other parties are also inherently competitive. When a certain set of business conditions requires winning performance from competitive people, you want to set up a system that supports the Climber's ability to win in contexts external to the organization. This system could include a team tuned to the specific objectives assigned to the Climber.

Second, if a Climber is out to collect power and subjugate a number of people under their control, then the issues can become much more complex. Depending on their interpersonal skills (are they facilitative as opposed to abusive, for example), this type of Climber might be channeled into the operation of a group with fairly stable output requirements, such as a group that always produces more or less the same services or products. If the size of the group is adequate and the sense of power achieved acceptable, this Climber will then switch over to Status Quo Preserving to retain ownership of the group. In this status quo mode, the manager of this operational group will work to maintain output levels to preserve his or her job, which is what you want out of a Climber-turn-Preserver.

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In this second case, the “top bosses” need to provide methods and procedures that allow this Climber to keep his or her group repeating the behaviors the company needs to keep that business activity profitable. You want to make it easier for the Climber-turn Preserver to succeed at “turning that operational crank” and keep him or her happy.

### *Engineering Status Quo Preserving Behavior*

This is perhaps the simplest of the DSSs to steer into repeatable behaviors, because they really want each day to operate like the day before. If you give Preservers a solid method or procedure to use to get through the day and pay them what they need or want, they’ll usually come back each day and hack out another day’s worth of output.

Here again, however, you want to build *increasingly better* repeatable behaviors from a business standpoint. The source for some of these improvements will *necessarily* come from the Preservers themselves. Why? Because if they understand issues pertaining to their company’s chances to succeed in a tough market, they understand that preserving their jobs may entail occasional improvements in the way they do things. The changes simply have to make sense, and if possible, make repeated successes on the job *easier* to achieve.

### *Engineering Leading Behavior*

In order to think through the issues pertaining to the engineering of leadership behavior, it is important to remember that we are talking about a Drive Satisfaction Strategy. Leadership often looks magical, and some Leaders project a certain charisma, but those are observations that could get in our way of understanding what Leading individuals usually attempt to do. For instance, as a DSS, Leading behaviors are still aimed at fulfilling the needs of the Leading individual. What makes Leading behaviors work is that the Leader understands drive satisfaction opportunities from a much broader, and longer-term viewpoint than an Alpha Climber typically does.

To clarify one contrast between the two, a Leader takes care of the individuals around him or her so that the team or community can get increasingly better at accomplishing their mutual drive satisfaction goals. “Taking care of” means distributing the rewards of efforts from team or community activities back to team members. An Alpha Climber usually won’t see the value in distributing resources to team or community

members because these members are viewed as either expendable or as competitive threats.

What are the Leading behaviors that an organization wants to have repeated often, and how does an organization help Leaders at all levels repeat behaviors that promote group success?

- Leaders are perpetually observant. Leading requires large amounts of data, either collected by the Leader outright, or collected for the Leader by the team members (or collected as a primary function of the entire community – a culture-level habit greatly to be encouraged).
- Leaders succeed on the basis of the solutions they can create or draw out of their team or community. The team or community must be able to deliver enough resources that judicious experiments can be run by the Leader to test new solutions for their effectiveness in satisfying drives.
- Leaders require a large network of relationships. Access to key people is vital. Superior communication channels and technologies facilitate the formation and strengthening of this network. These channels and technologies also facilitate the (more) rapid formation of new solutions to drive-satisfaction problems.
- Leading requires the ability to think critically, even when under fire. The team or community can provide potential Leaders training in critical thinking, as well as training in the use of other people to examine all the strengths and weaknesses in a given solution or plan of action.

Whereas an Alpha can become quite adept at building tactical solutions in the specific service of their climb, the Leader can build models of drive satisfaction where coordinated group behavior provides a broader, strategic advantage when it comes to creating the highest drive satisfaction value. In other words, Leaders often have the ability to build the DSSs of a large group of individuals into a “Team DSS,” or “Community DSS.” If this Community DSS also contains features that produce repeatable behaviors promoting drive satisfaction success, then those features and repeatable behaviors would be called the Corporate Culture of that team or community.

### *Engineering Contributing Behavior*

While Contributors will often function like Status Quo Preservers, they are in fact much more like Leaders in that they have their eyes on what's going on around them, and they're often experimenting with new approaches to the opportunities and challenges that they see, or that are brought to their attention. From a drive satisfaction standpoint, what they want is an environment where they can trade their innovations for better drive satisfaction rewards.

Further, just as many people shift from the Alpha Climbing DSS to Status Quo Preserving, people who make frequent use of Contributing and Leading often shift between the two. There are some differences in this shift of modes, however.

First, shifting between Leading and Contributing can be a common event in a person's life, and will go in both directions.

Second, this shift of DSSs is often the result of a communal decision process. The permanent leader of a collaborative group might ascertain for a specific task or objective that someone else will get the job done more quickly and cheaply, and with higher quality, than he or she could. So, for this specific task or goal, "leading" gets delegated to a subordinate on a temporary basis. The permanent leader might even become a subordinate where issues pertaining to this one-time task or objective are concerned. Then, when the task is completed or objective met, the temporary authority is dissolved.

Contributors are not doormats. They understand themselves to be creators of new solutions, and innovators where drive satisfaction is concerned. They do NOT want to GIVE away their valuable improvements to drive satisfaction activities. What they want is an environment where those who contribute to the improvements of the team's productivity also obtain an improvement in their lifestyles.

An organization should work towards creating an environment, then, that facilitates the creative activity of these individuals, and rewards creativity appropriately to preserve the resource that Contributors represent. This means that an organization's leaders need to establish the habit of watching for creative activity, and channeling it into a nurturing part of the organization. This is an important element of a strong corporate culture. The organization should demonstrate an active desire for innovation from all its members.

Oddly enough, this desire for innovation can be facilitated with various forms of friendly *competition*. There are always business problems in a company, for example. Contests could be established that take aim at some of these. Real rewards are provided for innovations that can be converted into working solutions, and no rewards are given if no one succeeds.

One last point. It takes Leaders to tap the potential of Contributors. In an Alpha-dominated organization there may be numerous potential Contributors, but by reason of a lack of improved rewards there is no incentive to shift from Status Quo Preserving to Contributing at the creative level. Leaders and Contributors share a point of view. They are solution-driven *in addition to* being emotion-driven. They understand the power of group creativity and of highly coordinated group effort when compared to acting alone, or when the only effective drive satisfaction strategy is a defensive one.

Leaders and Contributors are quicker to understand the upside of “What’s in it for me?” when they collaborate than those who do not have an appreciation for collaboration.

## **Conclusions**

The Theory of Drive Satisfaction Strategies provides a way to link the animal motivations of people in organizations to collective behaviors. Social contexts are now the normal environment within which human beings have to act out their drive-satisfaction behaviors. Human DSSs are being shaped by natural selection to optimize drive-satisfaction success by dealing with people competitively and collaboratively.

The organizational advantages of collaborative collective behavior over competitive collective behavior were outlined, and demonstrated by various experiences in industry. These suggest that there are methods to generate collaborative behavior in increasingly large segments of an organization’s population.

We worked through effective methods of managing people working under the four DSSs to optimize their individual performance. This entailed using the strength that each DSS delivers for an organization’s benefit while reducing the potential negative impacts associated with each.

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Lastly, we worked through the DSSs again, emphasizing the corporate culture engineering technique of repeatable successes. This is where methods and procedures are designed to help everyone do their jobs with increasing success, and increasing ease. This means that the library of methods and procedures needs to draw out group strength and group creativity as a regular, consistent result. Leaders need repeatable methods and procedures to build collaborative teams, and team members need methods and procedures to guide them to the successful completion of their tasks.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup>Thomas Meylan, “A Theory of Personal Drive Satisfaction Strategies and the Cultures They Generate,” Summer, 2007, *Quarterly Journal of the Washington Academy of Sciences*.

<sup>2</sup>Thomas Meylan, “Using Evolutionary Psychology and Information Systems Engineering to Understand Workplace Patterns of Thought and Behavior: An Empirical Model of Human Information Processing,” Autumn, 2005, *Quarterly Journal of the Washington Academy of Sciences*.

<sup>3</sup>Gene Allen, private communication, April 6, 2006.

<sup>4</sup>Gene Allen and Rick Jarman, *Collaborative R&D: Manufacturing's New Tool* (National Association of Manufacturers), Wiley, February 1, 2001.

<sup>5</sup>Alan Croll, e-Know technology demonstration, e-Know Headquarters, Arlington, VA, October 10, 2006.

<sup>6</sup>James C. Collins and Jerry I. Porras, *Built to Last: Successful Habits of Visionary Companies*, HarperCollins Publishers, Norfolk, VA, 1997.

<sup>7</sup>Thomas Meylan and Terry Teays, *Optimizing Luck: What the Passion to Succeed in Space Can Teach Business Leaders on Earth*, Davies-Black, Mountain View, CA 2007.