

## CHAPTER 12. ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND SYMBOLS

### CHAPTER 12 OVERVIEW

#### Chapter 12 Summary

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In Chapter 12, the authors introduce the symbolic frame. They outline:

1. *Core assumptions* that underpin symbolic thinking.
2. *Interdisciplinary foundations* (organization theory, sociology, psychology, political science, and anthropology).
3. *Central functions* symbols play in organizations (expressing meaning and emotions; creating order, clarity, and predictability; reconciling contradictions; protecting people from uncertainty; encouraging creative alternatives to existing choices).
4. *Basic elements* of organizational culture (symbols, myths, stories and fairy tales, rituals, ceremonies, metaphor, humor, play).

The authors define *organizational culture* and assert that it is both a product and a process: an embodiment of accumulated wisdom from the past and an ongoing source of innovation and renewal as new members challenge old ways.

The authors explore elements of culture in detail and illustrate them with many examples. From a symbolic perspective, meaning is a basic human need. Managers and leaders can shape meaning by understanding and encouraging symbolic forms and activities in order to create more effective organizations.

#### Chapter 12 Key Terms

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**Organizational culture:** A distinctive pattern of beliefs, values, practices, and artifacts, developed over time, which defines for organizational members who they are and how they do things.

#### Chapter 12 Major Case Examples

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- Harley-Davidson and the Harley Owner's Group (H.O.G.)
- Aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attacks
- Nordstrom Department Stores
- Goren Carstedt and Volvo France
- Continental Airlines
- Southwest Airlines

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- Pierre Omidyar and eBay
- *Business Week's* “good CEOs”
- Home Depot
- U.S. POWs in North Vietnam prisons
- Presentation of Joe B. Wyatt, chancellor of Vanderbilt University
- J. W. Marriott, Sr., and Marriott Hotels
- Thomas Frist, Sr., and Hospital Corporation of America
- Ritz-Carlton Hotels
- Paul Tsongas and his first meeting of the Senate Energy Committee
- Edward Hebert and the female newcomer to Congress
- U.S. Air Force rituals
- Yasujiro Tsutsumi’s vigil
- Mary Kay Cosmetics
- A typical day in Congress and congressional ceremonies
- The rollout of the first Saturn automobile
- Phil Condit and Boeing

## SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING CHAPTER 12

The central ideas in Chapter 12 revolve around the powerful purposes served by symbolism in organizations. Instructors can focus on:

1. Understanding the content of the symbolic frame.
2. Exploring culture and processes of cultural transmission.

Teaching methods appropriate for each approach are described in the sections that follow. Student exercises keyed to the approaches appear in “Student Exercises for Chapter 12,” beginning on page 14.

### **Chapter 12: A Focus on the Content of the Symbolic Frame** \_\_\_\_\_

The symbolic frame is often hard for students to grasp. The idea of a socially constructed world is particularly difficult for those who believe there can be only one correct answer to a question and only one truth about a given situation. (Of course, students who have trouble grasping the symbolic frame will also have difficulty with the idea of reframing.) Some students react cynically to the empty or deceptive role of symbols, finding it hard to appreciate their power and positive functions. Instructors may want to use this chapter to drill the basic concepts and usefulness of the frame.

The chapter is filled with examples of symbolism in action that can form the basis of class discussion. The Volvo France case, for example, provides an opportunity to explore the constructive power of symbols in the hands of a creative leader. Essentially, Carstedt set out to get both his dealers and French car buyers to change their image of

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Volvo's cars. Discussion can center around questions like: (1) In what ways did Carstedt want to change how the French saw Volvo? (2) How did he use symbols to reframe the Volvo image?

The case of the newly elected female member of Congress is guaranteed to be controversial. It can spark lively discussion about socialization, the meaning of symbols, and the costs and benefits of strong cultural norms. Instructors may want to begin here as a way to explore the significance of the example for meaning making and for the connections between gender and culture in society.

## Chapter 12: Films or Videos Focusing on Frame Content

Another way to introduce the symbolic frame is to use a film or movie clip. Films enable students to see symbolic processes in action. They offer both a feel for symbolism and opportunities to practice symbolic diagnoses. Instructors can process any of the suggested film clips by asking students to explore symbols on two levels: (1) what symbols mean for characters in the story; and (2) how the audience reacts to symbols—how symbols help to convey a film's story and define its characters (instrumental functions) and how symbols trigger emotional responses in the audience (expressive functions).

- Instructors who have not already done so may want to use Kurosawa's classic *Rashomon* or Malle's *My Dinner with Andre* to explore individual meaning-making processes and the power of private beliefs. (See the teaching notes for Chapter 1, "Films or Videos Focusing on Reframing," for additional film suggestions.)
- Attenborough's *Cry Freedom* explores many of the same issues as it probes the relationship between journalist Donald Woods and black activist Stephen Biko in South Africa; the evolution of Woods's thinking; and its implications for his career, personal style, newspaper, family, and the larger issue of apartheid.
- *Austin Powers: International Man of Mystery* (the first of the series) is a good choice if your students are struggling to understand ideas about symbols and culture. There's nothing subtle about the film's spoof of the 1960s, which makes it easier for students to see culture and begin to "get" the symbolic frame.
- *The Tuskegee Airmen*, the story of a heroic group of African American pilots in World War II, deals with culture at multiple levels: national, military, and differences between blacks and whites.

Clips from films also can be used to capture features of the symbolic frame.

- Possible film clips from *Dead Poets Society* for teaching purposes include the scenes in which:

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- Students are asked to stand on their desks, symbolizing Professor Keating's desire for them to take a fresh, new perspective on their experiences.
  - Keating holds class in an outdoor courtyard, creating visible symbols of nonconformity for the students through their assignment and through his own use of experiential learning.
  - Students gather in the cave to discuss the meaning of the name *Dead Poets Society* (and, of course, the name's foreshadowing of the student-poet's suicide later in the film).
  - Keating requests students to tear the page from their poetry book to symbolize the need to think for themselves and appreciate the beauty of poetry in a more personal way.
  - After Keating's dismissal, the headmaster asks students to read aloud this same passage Keating had asked students to remove because, for the headmaster, the passage is the essential prescription for understanding poetry.
  - The students and faculty gather for the opening ceremony at the beginning of the school year.
- In *Glory*, multiple examples of Colonel Shaw's actions serve as important symbols of his commitment to his troops and that contribute to the success of his leadership. Possible scenes for classroom use include the following:
    - Members of Shaw's black regiment refuse their paychecks to protest low pay because of their race. Colonel Shaw, who had responded to his troops until this time with strict adherence to military rules and regulations, rips up his own paycheck in support of the troops and in protest of the army's racist pay policy. Shaw then refuses to accept his paycheck until his troops are fairly compensated too.
    - Shaw decides to lead his troops into their final battle by getting off his horse (Shaw has always ridden while the men walked), sending the saddled but now riderless horse away and walking among the men as they charge forward to attack the enemy fort.
  - In *Born on the Fourth of July*, there are two scenes that depict changes in American culture and Americans' response to traditional symbols of patriotism, the military, and national pride—and that are perfect for introducing the symbolic frame. Early in the film, young Ron Kovic attends the Fourth of July parade in his hometown. The scene is set in 1956. Later in the film, Kovic, back from Vietnam, again attends the Fourth of July parade. But now it is 1969. Showing these two scenes back to back is powerful and leads to good discussion of cultural shifts, changes in the meaning of key symbols, and the evocative nature of symbolic expression. The discussion could then be extended further to talk about the impact of more recent events—the terrorist attacks on September 11 and the invasion of Iraq, for example—on the same patriotic symbols.

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Scenes from classic films can also be illustrative.

- A brief but powerful look at the power of symbols as embodiments of two competing cultures appears in the Bogart classic *Casablanca*. In the tavern where much of the film's action takes place, a group of German soldiers begin to sing a German patriotic song; the band and most of the patrons respond with a spirited rendition of the *Marseillaise*. The emotional responses on both sides are palpable.
- The vintage film *Miracle on 34th Street* highlights the battle between rationality and mythology, as Kris Kringle is put on trial for believing that he is Santa Claus. The dialogue in the trial and after explores the power of symbols in our lives.

Many films offer opportunities to capture the cynical side of symbols as well.

- In a scene in *Disclosure*, the firm's CEO uses opportunities for women as a justification for promoting a non-obvious candidate to a senior management role.
- *Bob Roberts* depicts a political campaign in which cynical use of symbols is the main event.
- Oliver Stone's *Nixon* also provides many opportunities to observe cynical use of symbols by someone in high office.

A variety of film segments can be shown to introduce more specific aspects of the symbolic frame:

- *Individual meaning making:*
  - *The Karate Kid* (Part 1) provides a classic example of individual meaning making (and reframing in action) in the scene where Mr. Miyagi teaches Daniel karate by assigning him ordinary household tasks. Daniel waxes cars, sands a deck, paints the fence and house. He confronts Mr. Miyagi about "being a slave." Miyagi shows him the "real" meaning of the activities—each makes a special contribution to the development of karate skills and strength.
  - *Hoosiers* has a terrific scene in which the coach brings the small-town basketball team, accustomed to playing in tiny high school gyms, into the huge sports arena in the state capital for the state basketball finals. He sees that the kids are overwhelmed. He has the team measure the height of the hoop and the distance from the line to illustrate that this gym and their tasks are exactly the same as back at home.
  - *Born on the Fourth of July* shows a Marine recruiter visiting a local high school in the early 1960s and then engaging a group of high school boys at a diner after school, discussing the meaning of manhood and war.

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- The films *Imitation of Life*, *Easy Rider*, and *Tracks* all explore individuals' search for meaning in the midst of shifting cultural norms and mores. The films can be used alone to explore individual meaning-making processes or in combination. Together, the three films offer a portrait of the social factors and cultural forces that affected individuals in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s.
- *Myths, stories, and fairy tales:*
  - *Miracle on 34th Street* underscores the power of the Santa Claus myth and works especially well with undergraduates.
  - *Field of Dreams* includes a wonderful speech by Thomas Mann (the reclusive writer who has broken his self-imposed isolation to come and see "shoeless" Joe Jackson and his teammates play again). It spotlights the meaning of baseball in American culture. The whole movie explores the meaning of individual hopes and fantasies, of acting nonrationally in a highly rational world, of baseball history and myths about "the greats," of boyhood dreams to "be in the major leagues," and of the role of baseball in father-and-son relationships. *Pride of the Yankees* and *The Babe Ruth Story* carry a similar message about the power of baseball in American culture and family life.
  - *The Breakfast Club* is powerful for undergraduates. In the Saturday morning detention scene, the students in the film discuss the power of myths and stories in perpetuating stereotypes and alienating kids in the teen years. In a scene where students sit down and open their lunches, the great variations in family rituals and culture can be seen in what and how each individual eats.
- *Rituals and ceremonies:*
  - The opening scene from *Patton* is a classic "trooping" of military colors and rank.
  - Many scenes from *The Last Emperor* and *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors* offer opportunities to explore the connections between culture and ceremony.
  - In both *Working Girl* and *Baby Boom*, there is a scene that captures the ritualistic nature of high-level, high-stakes corporate negotiations.
  - *School Daze* provides a light-hearted look at courtship and relationships rituals during a homecoming weekend.
  - The graduation scene from *An Officer and a Gentleman* is very effective in showing the emotional role of ceremony in transitions.
- *Stories:* Almost any Garrison Keillor monologue from his weekly *Prairie Home Companion* radio program is a beautiful way to illustrate the power of stories. These are available on tape through your local PBS station.
- *Heroes and heroines:*
  - The scene of the three women capturing their boss and revolutionizing office policies and practices in *9 to 5* is a classic.
  - *Patton* guarantees lively discussion about heroes, heroism, and war.

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- *Cry Freedom* looks at the “quiet” heroism of Stephen Biko and his efforts for social change in South Africa.
- *Gandhi* and the classic movie *St. Joan* are other possibilities.
- *Metaphors:*
  - In *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, the title of the film becomes a metaphor for the complex relationship that develops between an imprisoned revolutionary and his homosexual cellmate, an informant to the warden. In one scene, the revolutionary dreams about a kiss from a woman who, like a spider, catches him in a complex and tangling web. The metaphor is visually played out as he tells his cellmate about the dream.
  - The classic film *The Red Balloon* explores the meaning of the balloon for the little boy and for the audience without a word being spoken.
- *Play and humor: M\*A\*S\*H* is a hands-down winner for exploring the positive functions of play and humor in organizations.

## Chapter 12: Reading Focusing on Frame Content

An alternative way to offer students the feel and experience of the symbolic frame is through literature. Fiction gives students opportunities to explore the beauty and functions of metaphor, myth, symbolic language, and imagery in storytelling and the ways in which these symbolic devices communicate to both the mind and the heart. Possibilities include:

- Amy Tan, *Joy Luck Club* (New York: Ivy Books, 1989).
- Maxine Hong Kingston, *The Woman Warrior* (New York: Vintage Books, 1975) and *Chinamen* (New York: Knopf, 1980).
- Kazuo Ishiguro, *An Artist of the Floating World* (New York: Vintage International, 1989).
- Alice Walker, *Temple of My Familiar* (New York: Pocket Books, 1989).

## Chapter 12: A Focus on Culture and Socialization

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An alternative focus for Chapter 12 is organizational culture and the ways in which culture is transmitted. *Corporate culture* is an expression that has made its way into everyday management lingo. Students and managers may be confused, however, about what the term actually means and how (or whether) culture can be managed or shaped. Many films, videos, books, and cases are helpful in clarifying these matters. Also see Exercises 12.1, 12.2, 12.3, and 12.4 for related activities.

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## Chapter 12: Films or Videos Focusing on Culture and Socialization

Again, popular films can be helpful in introducing the idea of culture, its evolution and its power.

- *Hoosiers* includes a number of scenes that illustrate the process of socialization and the ongoing evolution of culture. The scene in which the men in town invite the new coach to the barbershop to explain the community's feelings about basketball and acceptable coaching behavior is perfect for exploring how key members of a culture attempt to teach newcomers its central values, practices, and beliefs. The coach's response to this "barbershop socialization" is to fight back. In subsequent scenes, he seeks to establish new norms by forbidding parents to watch his team practice and by putting his players through puzzling new drills and practice routines.
- *Boiler Room* provides a darker example of socialization: the acculturation of a young man into the intense and cynical world of selling investments by telephone. Watch Ben Affleck's initiation pitch early in the film: "Anybody who tells you that money is the root of all evil doesn't have it."
- *The Godfather* and *The Godfather Part II* are both powerful films at the intersection of politics and symbols. Both play the distinctive culture of the mob against the larger culture of American society. Students can easily become engaged in searching for and analyzing the many symbolic forms that appear in these films.

Films or film clips that illustrate more specific themes can also be used effectively.

- *Contrast of different cultures:*
  - *Dead Poets' Society* and *Stand and Deliver* both contain brief, but compelling, first-day-of-school sequences. Students can be asked to view each clip and look for clues about cultural elements like beliefs, values, and practices ("how we do things"). (In *Dead Poets*, start the clip with bells chiming and geese flying, and end as the students in Keating's class slowly follow him out the door. In *Stand and Deliver*, begin with Escalante approaching the front desk to report to work, and end when the bell rings about five minutes into his first class.)
  - An amusing look at cultural clashes occurs in *Gung Ho*, when the new Japanese managers at an American auto plant try to lead their work force in morning calisthenics.
- *The power of highly traditional U.S. corporate cultures: Wall Street, Baby Boom, Working Girl, 9 to 5, Roger and Me, and Broadcast News.*
- *American culture and its implications for organizational life: Stoszek, A Place in the Sun, Black Rain, The Crucible, and Death of a Salesman.*

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- *The impact of larger cultural issues on individual lives, interpersonal interactions, and organizational and national policies: Driving Miss Daisy, Born on the Fourth of July, Cry Freedom, Yentl, Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors, and The Last Emperor.*
- *The power of norms, norm violations, and social expectations: Good Morning Vietnam, The Gods Must Be Crazy, Rude Awakening, Sleeper, and Bananas.*

Training and development films offer additional ways to explore culture in organizations. Possibilities include:

- *The Corporation* (Carousel)—an exploration of work and corporate culture at Phillips Petroleum.
- *Satisfaction: A Job Well Done* (Salenger)—a master shipbuilder discusses the organizational environment and culture that he finds essential to fine craftsmanship.
- *Managing in China* (Workvideos)—Part I shows an interview with a young woman who has returned to work in China after studying in the United States. Changes in China and differences between China and the United States are both themes in the interview.
- *Day after Day* (NFBC)—an exploration of life and work in a Canadian paper mill and its “company town.”
- *Participative Management: We Learn from the Japanese* (EBEC)—a behind-the-scenes look at Japanese management philosophy and its cultural prescriptions (also available on videocassette).
- *The Kyocera Experiment* (LCA)—an examination of the clash between two cultures when Japanese management comes to a plant in San Diego.
- *Tokyo in Tennessee* (Carousel)—a *60 Minutes* feature about the Smyra, Tennessee, Nissan plant, which employs American workers trained in Japan.
- *The Royal Treatment* (CBS)—another *60 Minutes* feature. The title refers to the treatment of employees at SAS software. The video can be used here as an example of a distinctive organizational culture. It can also be used with Chapter 8, because SAS exemplifies many of the progressive HRM practices discussed there.
- *Humanizing Work: They Want to Make Work Human Again* (NBC)—Volvo’s colorful president explores the corporate culture, policies, and work practices that have made Volvo famous.

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## Chapter 12: Reading Focusing on Culture and Socialization

Instructors can again use popular fiction as a way of digging deeply into the concept of culture. Works such as the following can be used to offer students opportunities to explore how culture informs rituals and ceremonies and affects individual as well as organizational interpretations of words, choices, decisions, symbols, and events.

- Anne Fadiman's *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors, and the Collision of Two Cultures* is a moving, ultimately tragic story of cultural barriers and misunderstandings that result from very different views of what illness is and how to treat it.
- Amy Tan, *Joy Luck Club*.
- Maxine Hong Kingston, *The Woman Warrior and Chinamen*.
- Alice Walker, *Temple of My Familiar*.
- Kazuo Ishiguro, *An Artist of the Floating World*.
- Tom Wolfe, *The Bonfire of the Vanities* and *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*.

See C. Harris and W. Brown's "Career in Context: Multiple Perspectives on Working Lives," *Organizational Behavior Teaching Review*, 1989–90, 14 (2), for additional suggestions of popular and classical literature to explore organizational culture and the impact of organizational context on individual lives and careers.

Other reading materials provide background:

- T. E. Deal and A. Kennedy's *Corporate Culture: The Rites and Rituals of Corporate Life* (Perseus Publishing, 2000) makes useful supplemental reading. Undergraduates and those with limited corporate experience find the examples and case illustrations especially helpful in grounding the abstract nature of culture and symbolism.
- L. Mainiero and C. Tromley, in *Developing Managerial Skills in Organizational Behavior: Exercises, Cases and Readings*, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1993), stress the connections between organizational culture and planned change efforts. Corporate trainers or instructors in skills-oriented or OD courses may want to focus on those links. Chapter 8 ("Organizational Design, Evolution, and Culture") in Mainiero and Trombley offers a teaching unit with readings, activities, and minicases for working on skills in diagnosing culture and managing organizational change.

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## Chapter 12: Cases Focusing on Culture and Socialization

Cases offer a third way to focus on culture and socialization.

- West Point: The Cheating Incident ([A] [HBS 9-481-117] and [C] [HBS 9-482-006]) can be reintroduced here (if it was previously used for the political frame) as a vehicle for examining the rich symbolic dimensions of the situation and providing students opportunities to reframe their diagnoses. West Point offers opportunities for exploring the nature of strong cultures; the symbolic nature of the honor code, West Point, West Point barracks, and the cheating incident itself; the interaction between West Point's unique history and traditions and the realities of American culture in the post-Watergate and post-My Lai era; and the "logic of confidence" created by the Borman commission. The following are some suggested study and discussion questions for the case:
  1. Symbolically, what was happening at West Point?
  2. It is May 19, 1976. From the perspective of the symbolic frame, what should General Berry do? Why?

Additional cases and alternative ways of framing the study of culture and socialization processes include the following.

### *A Focus on the Fit between Individual and Corporate Culture*

Several cases show individuals who have been successful in matching their own needs, values, and working preferences with the cultural expectations of their organizations.

- Jack Fitzpatrick ([A] [HBS 9-482-065]).
- Neill Hance ([A] [HBS 9-483-086]). This case adds possibilities for focusing on Hance's skills in negotiating a smooth entrance into a complex corporate culture and work situation.
- Vicki Beekhuis ([A] [HBS 9-484-057], [B] [HBS 9-484-058], [C] [HBS 9-484-059], and [D] [HBS 9-484-060]).
- Jeff Bradley ([A] [HBS 9-484-066], [B] [HBS 9-484-067], [C] [HBS 9-484-068], and [D] [HBS 9-484-069]).

Other cases focus on individuals who were unsuccessful in recognizing the importance of individual-corporate fit and/or in managing their job searches to avoid mismatches for themselves.

- Eric Weiss ([A] [HBS 9-482-059] and [B] [HBS 9-482-060]).

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- Kirk Stone ([A] [HBS 9-482-067] and [B] [HBS 9-482-068]).
- Mike Miller ([A] [HBS 9-482-061] and [B] [HBS 9-482-062]).
- Jennifer Bent ([A] [HBS 9-483-096] and [B] [HBS 9-483-097]).
- Frank Mason ([A] [HBS 9-476-019] and [B] [HBS 9-476-020]).
- Lisa Benton ([A] [HBS 9-483-044] and [B] [HBS 9-483-045]) gives a different twist on the issue of fit. Lisa had a good fit with the overall corporate culture but was a cultural mismatch with her coworkers in a “renegade” unit.

Each of these cases offers opportunities for students to diagnose organizational cultures, explore the job-search process in light of new understandings about corporate culture, and examine successful strategies for negotiating successful entry.

Instructors might want to assign Vijay Sathe, “Implications of Corporate Culture: A Manager’s Guide to Action,” *Organizational Dynamics*, Autumn 1983, and/or “Socialization: A Checklist of Questions” (HBS 9-482-106) in conjunction with any of these cases. The article and the checklist (a comprehensive set of questions to diagnose individual preferences, organizational culture, and individual-organizational fit) assist students in clarifying the kinds and amount of information needed to make informed choices about individual-culture fit.

### ***A Focus on Diagnosing Unique Corporate Cultures***

- WestJet Airlines: The Culture That Breeds a Passion to Succeed (Ivey 901C24, teaching note 801C24; also available from HBS) describes a young, very successful Canadian airline that must grapple with how to grow without losing the special culture that has fueled its success.
- Recall 2000: Bridgestone Corp. ([A] [HBS 9-302-013] and [B] [HBS 9-302-014]) probes Bridgestone’s struggle to respond to the fallout from problems with tires made by its Firestone subsidiary, which were implicated in hundreds of accidents. Cultural differences between Japanese parent and American affiliate added to the challenges.
- Charlotte Beers at Ogilvy and Mather ([A] [HBS 9-495-031]) is a multiframe case in which issues of corporate culture are particularly salient: Beers was hired from the outside to become CEO of a large, successful international advertising agency with strong traditions and culture. A teaching note (HBS 5-495-033) and video (HBS 9-497-501) are also available.

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- Jan Carlzon: CEO at SAS ([A] [HBS 9-392-149]) is a fascinating case depicting the leadership approach of a creative, charismatic chief executive highly attuned to symbols. (HBS has an accompanying video.)
- The Chantel Corp ([A] [HBS 9-484-073]) case focuses on a highly entrepreneurial startup culture.
- Johnson & Johnson ([A] [HBS 9-384-053]) explores the connections between strong culture, corporate systems and structures, and management practices. Two videos of Johnson & Johnson CEO and chair James Burke discussing company philosophy and culture are available: a twenty-seven-minute piece (HBS 9-384-053) and an abridged fourteen-minute version of the same interview (HBS 9-884-526). The Sathe article mentioned above (Vijay Sathe, “Implications of Corporate Culture: A Manager’s Guide to Action,” *Organizational Dynamics*, Autumn 1983) is useful as a supplemental reading.

### ***A Focus on Culture Change Processes***

- Peter Browning ([A] [HBS 9-486-090], [B] [HBS 9-486-091], and [C] [HBS 9-486-092]) tells the story of a new manager brought in to “change [an organization] without breaking it.” He faces the delicate challenge of honoring and preserving a very strong culture while promoting change in the face of new threats from the environment.
- Transformation at the IRS (HBS 9-603-010) chronicles an attempt at a major overhaul in service standards in a huge federal agency. The agency’s strong but insular culture is a major change target.
- Tailhook, the Navy Response ([A] [KSG 1279.0], [B] [KSG 1280.0], [Epilogue] [KSG 1280.1]) describes the Navy’s efforts to deal with the cultural factors in a notorious case of harassment of female officers by drunken airmen.
- General Electric and the National Broadcasting Company: A Clash of Cultures (KSG 939.0) examines the tensions between GE’s historic culture of innovation coupled with fiscal discipline and NBC’s emphasis on public service. When GE pressures the news division to cut costs, is GE insensitive to its public responsibilities? Or is it simply that the news division is poorly managed?
- Jeff Bradley ([A] [HBS 9-484-066], [B] [HBS 9-484-067], [C] [HBS 9-484-068], and [D] [HBS 9-484-069]) shows Jeff working well within the prevailing culture and influencing cultural change from a relatively powerless and unfavorable position.

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- Buddy March ([A] [HBS 9-482-080], [B] [HBS 9-482-081], and [C] [HBS 9-482-082]) is useful for exploring Buddy's succeeding while bucking the prevailing corporate culture. Buddy March can be used alone or with Mat MacGregor ([A] [HBS 9-483-098], [B] [HBS 9-483-099], and [C] [HBS 9-483-100]) to contrast Buddy's success with Matt's inability to work the culture and turn around his failing project. The Diagnostic Imaging Division (HBS 9-482-079) case provides background for the Buddy March and Mat MacGregor series.
- Bill Hudson ([A] [HBS 9-484-061]) describes Hudson's twenty-six years of experience in both deviating from the prevailing corporate culture at ABC Electronics and successfully changing the culture in the various units that he has managed.
- Johnson & Johnson ([B] [HBS 9-384-054]) explores the decision to establish the hospital services unit, which runs counter to strong company culture. A video of CEO James Burke discussing the cultural dilemmas that Johnson & Johnson faces in this situation (HBS 9-884-527) is also available.

## STUDENT EXERCISES FOR CHAPTER 12

### EXERCISE 12.1

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**Focus:** Culture and Socialization

Ask students to draw on their own experiences by writing and analyzing personal cases. In these cases, students should describe the culture of an organization or institution that they have been part of; their assessment of the culture's ability to accomplish its goals; and the implications of the culture for the student case writer's own satisfaction and abilities to succeed. Personal cases help students apply abstract ideas to their own experiences, and small groups provide a forum for sharing and discussing learning.

### EXERCISE 12.2

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**Focus:** Culture and Socialization

Have students conduct a cultural analysis. Students can analyze their own OB classroom and compare it with courses in other disciplines or with the culture of the school or the institution. The analysis can be an individual or group activity. Students can be assigned multiple sites, assigned one site, or left to choose their own setting. When the analyses are completed, students can compare and contrast their observations in small groups and

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report their findings and conclusions to the full class. A variation asks students to meet in pairs or small groups to discuss their cultural descriptions before writing their analyses.

### **EXERCISE 12.3**

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**Focus:** Culture and Socialization

*Barnaga: A Simulation Game on Cultural Clashes* starts with individuals playing a simple card game in small groups. Things get complicated when they begin to move from group to group, because they have different ideas about the rules of the game. Players undergo a form of mini-culture shock and struggle to understand how to play the game when they don't agree on how it should be played. The game can be played with either small or large groups and can be run and debriefed within the constraints of a sixty-minute class period. A manual is available from Intercultural Press:

<http://www.interculturalpress.com/shop/barngatext.html>.

### **EXERCISE 12.4**

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**Focus:** Culture and Socialization

Peter Vaill has developed a simple exercise, *A Name Game*, that can be used in an introductory class or as an introduction to the symbolic frame, particularly with culturally diverse groups. Students meet in small groups and respond to a series of questions about the cultural significance of their first and last names: What does the name mean? Is it common in their culture? Does it have religious or gender associations? And so forth. More information about the activity can be found on the Organizational Behavior Teaching Society listserv at <http://www.listproc.bucknell.edu/archives/obts-1/200201/msg00023.html>.

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