

Organisational Climate Report

(sample)



Organisational Climate survey

Executive Summary

Method

A link to an electronic (web-based) survey was sent to all employees at the organisation. The items in the questionnaire were designed to establish how employees perceive the climate of the organisation at present. Responses were scored using the Organisational Climate Measure¹, which is a well-validated and frequently utilised means of establishing climate in a variety of organisations, across multiple sectors. Permission was obtained from the authors to use the measure for the purposes of this study. In total 197 employees responded, allowing sound conclusions to be drawn due to the high proportional representation.

Key findings

Responses indicated disparity in perceptions of climate across certain dimensions, with some significant differences between office and remote staff. In other areas however there was strong agreement, pointing to climate strength. The measure provides information about four domains of an organisation's climate:

- Human Relations Quadrant (internal focus and flexibility in relation to the environment)
- Open Systems Quadrant (external focus and flexible relationships with the environment)
- Rational Goal Quadrant (external focus but with tight control within the organisation)
- Internal Process Quadrant (internal focus and tight control within the organisation)

What is organisational climate?

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Organisational climate is generally accepted as the link between how employees behave within the context of their organisation, as influenced by their perceptions of that organisation.

It is theorised that climate perceptions will enable an orientation toward desired outcomes such as individual and organisational performance, for example.

The Competing Values model provides the context of the climate measure used in this study. It is a theoretical framework which describes four key domains.

¹ Patterson et al 2005

What does this mean?

According to the Competing Values model², an organisation's climate and potential effectiveness is best described across fundamental dimensions- flexibility versus control and internal versus external orientation. These are opposing constructs, and it is theorised that every organisation will place value and emphasis on a mixture of these, to varying extents. It is this variation that reveals an organisation's unique climate. The four dimensions are categorised by the four quadrants described in the previous section.

The Organisational Climate Measure is well proven to distinguish **between** organisations, as well as identify common perceptions **within** organisations. It is proposed that the more strongly employees share common perceptions of their organisation, the more likely it is that certain outcomes will occur. For example, a strong sense of climate in dimensions such as supervisor support and welfare has been shown to have positive outcomes for organisations across areas such as productivity and well-being.

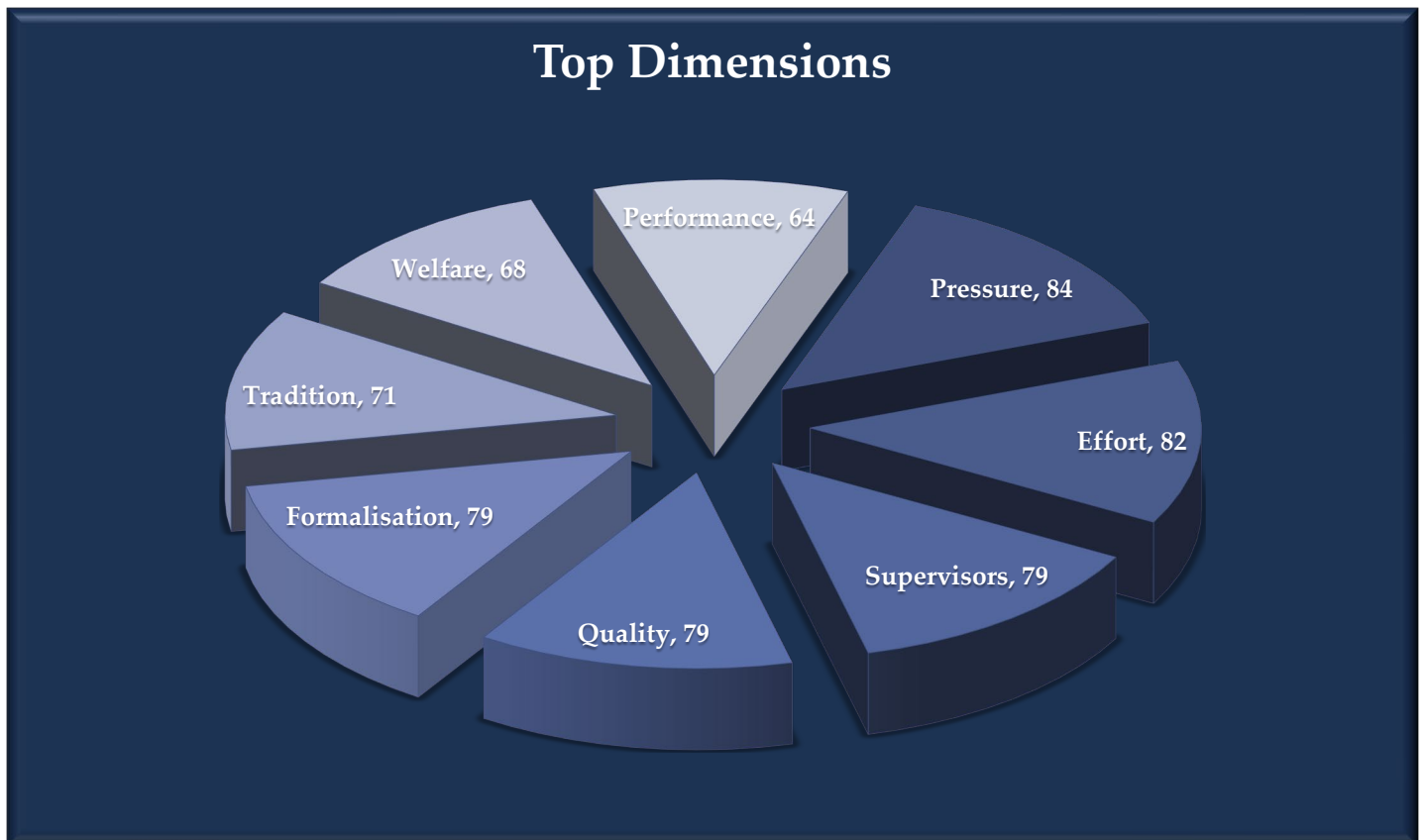


Figure 1: The 8 strongest climate areas as identified by employees

The results obtained from the employees indicate a strong sense of climate in some dimensions, with certain areas of disparity between office and remote staff.

² Quinn & Rohrbaugh, 1983

The following report describes findings for each domain, interprets what this means for the organisation; and where relevant, indicates areas for consideration and possible action. Findings are reported as frequencies of response to each dimension within the four quadrants, to the nearest whole percent.

Despite some employees suggesting in the comments section that the measure used was too simplistic to accurately reflect the complexity of the organisation, it is interesting to note that this was not the case. The Organisational Climate Measure has been used successfully in a vast number of organisations across many industries, and is robust at finding similarities **within** the individual organisation and differences **between** organisations.

However, there are some distinct areas of difference within the company, suggesting that employees have some varying perceptions of the organisation's climate. Statistically significant differences between groups of employees are reported where relevant, most frequently between office and remote staff. In some areas, length of service and management responsibility had an effect on perception scores, and where significant, these are reported. (Statistical significance was computed by statistical software, SPSS, determined through analysis of variance which adjusts for different group sizes)

The report is organised by quadrant:

Summary of findings:

1. Human Relations: strengths identified as positive direct line management and the organisation's focus on the welfare of its employees. Communication, integration and training were not perceived positively.
2. Open Systems: some indications of customer focus, but very little climate for innovation.
3. Rational Goal: employees identified the organisation as having a high focus on quality, perceived the climate being one of positive effort, but felt clarity of goals and efficient working were less effective. The perception of high pressure is cause for concern.
4. Internal Process: the organisation is seen as highly formalised and traditional.

A brief explanation of the impact the quadrant has on organisational effectiveness is provided in each section.

The final section summarises comments made by employees at the end of the survey. 129 respondents chose to make a comment, and further analysis will be necessary beyond the summary provided.

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Sample TOC from full report

Snapshot of overall climate perception

Who took part?

In total 196 employees completed the survey. Of these, 25% have worked for the company for 0-5 years; with the remainder ranging from 6 to over 20 years of service. 27% of respondents have line management responsibility. 60% of those who responded work from home offices (remote staff) and 40% are based in offices or centres.

Work location			Management responsibility		
Value	Count	Percent	Value	Count	Percent
Remote	118	60.2%	Yes	52	26.5%
Office	78	39.8%	No	144	73.5%

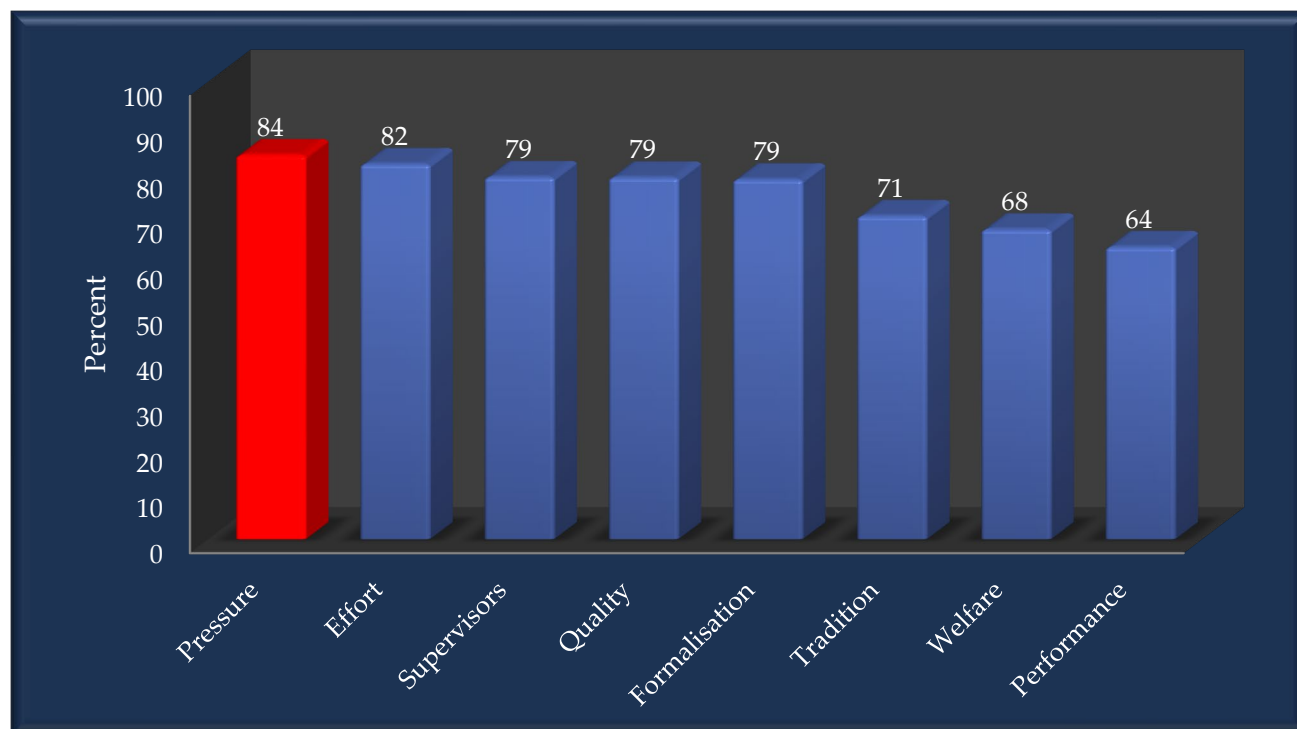
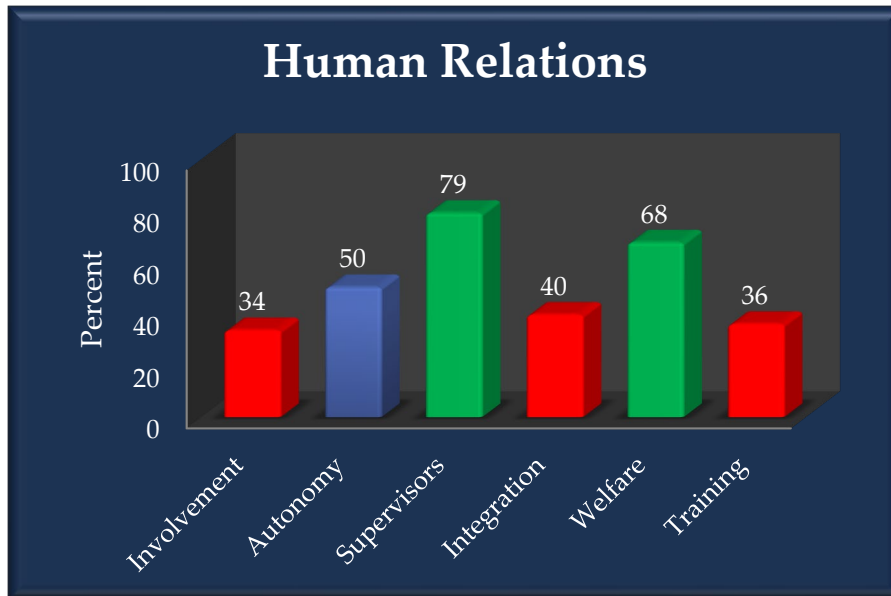


Figure 2: Strongest climate dimensions, in percentage order

1. Human Relations Quadrant

Focal Areas and results



Communication and Involvement in decisions

The low score of 34% in this area indicates that the climate for involvement is strongly negatively perceived, with responses mostly uniform across office and remote staff.

55% of employees felt that information is not shared and 75% agreed that there are often breakdowns in communication. This figure was marginally higher for office staff, and a significant number of managers recorded more negative perceptions of communication than non-managers did.

56% felt that management does not involve employees in decisions that affect them, with 63% stating that they are not consulted about changes and 54% that they do not have a say in decisions that affect their work. 82% perceive those decisions are made over their heads, with many managers indicating that they do not feel involved in the decision-making process.

It can thus be concluded that employees do not feel encouraged to participate and that the vast majority perceive communication as very poor.

Defining the Human Relations Quadrant

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This quadrant places emphasis on the well-being, growth and commitment of employees within an organisation. A strong climate in this quadrant is associated with belonging, trust and cohesion. These outcomes are achieved through training and people development, for example.

An organisation which values human relations will be characterised by supportive, trusting and cooperative work relationships, where employees are empowered and encouraged to participate.

Autonomy- significantly different perceptions between office and remote staff

The overall percentage score for autonomy is 50%, revealing that half of respondents feel that they have control over their work and how they perform this, but half don't. As may be expected, there are significant differences in how much autonomy remote staff perceive they have as compared to those who work in an office environment.

67% of remote staff identified that management let people make their own decisions much of the time, with 64% perceiving that management trust them to make work-related decisions. By contrast, these percentages are 47% and 54% for office staff. 78% of office staff felt it important to check before making a decision, with this dropping to 74% for remote staff. Just over half of all employees felt that their actual work is tightly controlled by managers, with 44% stating that management keep too tight a reign on the way things are done.

Supervisory support

This is an area of strength, with 79% of respondents perceiving line management/supervision very positively and few differences between office and remote staff. Line managers are perceived as understanding the people who work for them (75%) and their problems (71%); having confidence in those they manage (83%); and friendly and easy to approach (89%). 85% of remote staff felt that their line managers can be relied on to give good guidance, but this drops to 69% for office staff.

Integration

40% of respondents reported positive integration with other departments, indicating that the majority do not feel that relationships are cooperative. The weakest areas are a lack of trust for other departments (just 30% felt there was trust), and low levels of collaboration (only 33% rated this as effective). 50% perceived that there is respect between departments, with both managers and office staff less positive about this. 54% of all employees felt that there was some conflict between departments, with only 30% of office staff agreeing that different departments are prepared to share information. This rose to 45% for remote staff.

Welfare

Employee perceptions of well-being and organisational care are a fairly strong area, with an overall positive score of 68%. Highest at 74% is the perception that the organisation tries to look after its employees; followed by fairness and care at 71% and 67%. Lower at 59% is the perception that the organisation pays attention to the interests of employees.

Training

Only 36% of respondents report positively on training, with encouragement to develop skills rated highest at 56%; but training for using new equipment/procedures ranked very low by comparison, with *proper* training for new equipment/procedures achieving 28% and *enough* training for new equipment weighing in at 27%. 42% of office staff agreed that the organisation provides more than the minimum amount of training required to do their jobs, with only 29% of remote staff feeling the same.

2. Open Systems Quadrant

Focal Areas and results

The organisation:	Office staff	Remote staff
Observes what is happening in the market place	72%	56%
Gives thought to how to improve customer service	65%	54%
Makes customer needs a priority	75%	59%
Is proactive/fast to respond to customer needs	55%	33%
Is continually looking for new opportunities	69%	63%

The low results in the Open Systems Quadrant are indicative of a perception by employees that the organisation is not innovative, responsive or ready to meet external challenges. This could have implications on an individual and company level, as a strong climate in this quadrant would provide opportunities for growth and ensure stability in the market.

Interpreting the open comments section

What led to how you feel about working at the organisation? Please type into the box below. Describe an event at work and how it affected your thoughts and feelings.

The comments were analysed for frequency of occurrence, and then clustered. Common themes with extracts from individual comments are detailed below.

In addition to those documented here, another key theme was accountability and quality across both core and commercial activities. Requiring further analysis is fairly frequent reference to inequity in how staff are treated, recognised and rewarded.



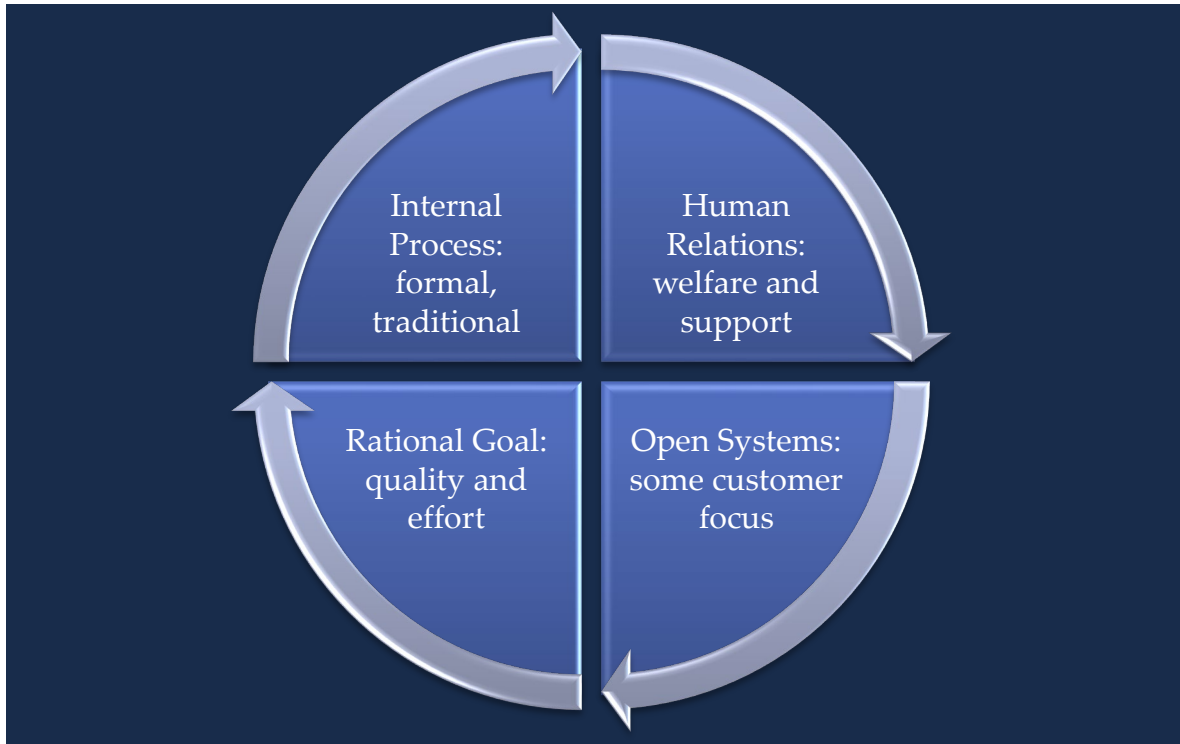
Communication

- a one way process
- general apathy especially when it comes to communication
- "they don't need to know" attitude or "they are asking but we won't tell them" and even "can't be bothered to reply"
- a huge issue with that nobody can be bothered (apathetic approach again) to sort out.
- mis-communication between departments, (the I thought someone else was doing that scenario)
- a lack of communication between departments
- very poor in the last 4 to 5 years
- More communication from the managers above would be more helpful
- major communication problem where staff works in isolation not knowing what goes on in other areas.
- general lack of transparency and communication has resulted in a shocking drop in morale throughout the office and the business
- Lack of internal communication makes it very difficult to understand what each department is trying to achieve
- More trust and communication is necessary.



Integration

- multiple companies in existence and despite the problems this causes and the issues that arise because of this disjointed approach, it persists
- By working as a Team using all the resources available to you including the knowledge & understanding of other members of staff we can make things happen
- team Face to Face meetings are important, & we don't have enough of them
- team spirit has been lost in the last few months with everyone watching his own back and worried about losing his job so they are looking for other jobs before they are pushed
- The appraisal and team system sets the company up to be naturally competitive with its self. This results in teams competing with each other for work, starts and standing within the company
- actively discouraged from taking a team player attitude towards our colleagues in other departments and encouraged to find fault with them and assign blame for problems, in order to solidify our position in the business.
- Lack of consultation leaves a lack of trust



Conclusion

Overall, the majority of staff are experiencing difficulty with perceptions of high pressure and unmanageable workloads. **This is a real cause for concern.**

Most do not feel that they are being recognised or fairly rewarded for the extra effort they are putting in. A lack of opportunity and structured training were a frequent theme, as were pay, recognition and performance management.

Communication is seen as very poor, as is integration between departments and teams. In general, most express good relationships with their direct line managers; but upper levels of management are not perceived positively. A lack of direction and accountability are the most frequent reasons provided for this.

There is frustration with the slowness of the organisation to respond to outside markets, with many feeling opportunities have been missed. Technology and systems are also seen as slow or outdated, and many felt that training on new systems/technology is inadequate.

Where employees were positive, this was usually attributed to a sense of purpose; and to the strength of relationships with peers. As may be expected, newer members of staff were less negative, although many of these commented on the frustrations with outdated technology and systems.