

# Organizational Health

## A unique 12 Factor, 4-Tier research based model

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**Organizational Health** encompasses all the psychological, physiological and social components of the organizational system – all the distinctly human parts and culture elements that contribute to organizational function and capacity.

Biology provides a good analogy: while **Organizational Structure** describes the skeleton, **Organizational Health** describes the muscle and soft tissues that animate that skeleton and allow it to function.

Organizations face many complex challenges to their effectiveness, capacity and sustainability. One common factor contributes to an organization's capacity to meet these challenges – the human element – the focus of an Organizational Health approach. Dr. Fisher's research-based model identifies 12 critical factors, which fall into a base set of **Foundation Elements** and three layers of **Outcome Elements**.

Even with the most comprehensive and advanced organizational structure, poor levels of organizational health critically undermines the effectiveness and productive capacity of an organization. Conversely, with high levels of organizational health, systems are enormously resilient and may often transcend and transform the apparent limitations of their structure.

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### Our Organizational Health approach

- Takes a social-ecological perspective
- Understands that human organizations are complex and dynamic systems
- Recognizes that organizations are continuously effecting, and being effected by, the wider environment (social, cultural, economic, physical, environmental, etc)
- Knows that complexity plays out differently for the various subgroups (e.g., age groups/generations, genders, job descriptions, professions, cultural backgrounds, etc.)
- Is grounded in the need to clearly identify the areas of strength and challenge in a detailed and accurate way
- Provides a detailed, unique and quantifiable profile of an organization at a point in time
- Believes that we build on our strengths to address our challenges
- Guides strategic and effective interventions to address identified challenges
- Is designed for repeated measures to track changes
- Is embedded in a best practices model with demonstrated, measurable program efficacy

## The Organizational Health Model

Based on research and best-practice, Dr. Fisher's 4-tier Model of Organizational Health incorporates 12 critical factors, which fall into a base set of **Foundation Elements** and three layers of **Outcome Elements**. Consider how critical each of these elements is to the culture and functioning of your organization

### Tier 1: The Foundation

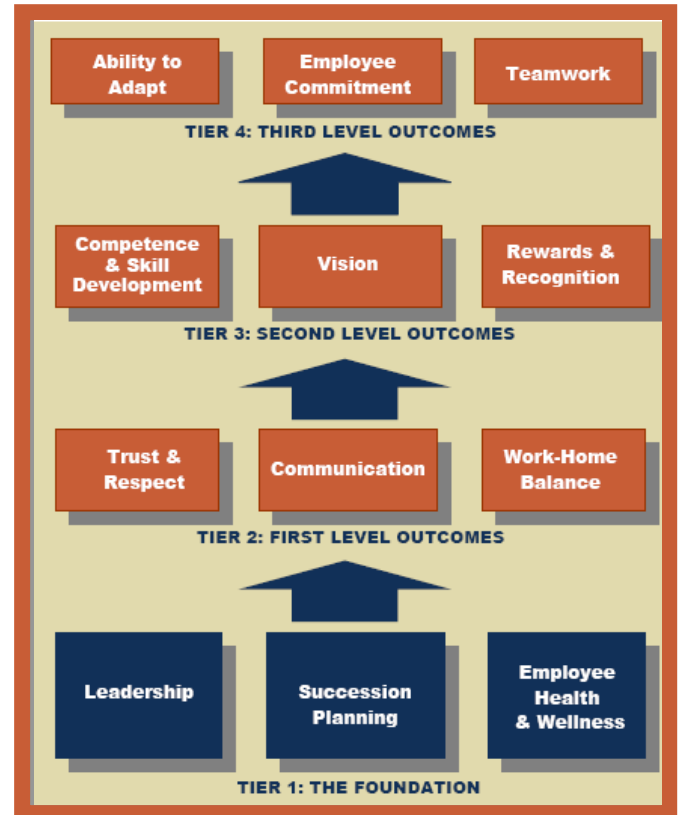
The model rests on three fundamental elements – **leadership, succession planning and employee health and wellness**. These three provide the foundation for all the other elements of the organizational health model. The importance of high quality, effective leadership has been demonstrated repeatedly as crucial to virtually every outcome factor<sup>1,2,3</sup>. The mental and physical well-being of both staff and managers is also a central determinant of all other organizational health elements<sup>4,5,6,7</sup>. Succession planning is particularly important at this point, given the unprecedented rate of employee turnover precipitated by baby-boomer retirement, a general scarcity of younger skilled workers and increased job mobility options for the new workers. These factors all combine to challenge organizational sustainability and capacity<sup>8,9,10</sup>.

### Tier 2: First Level Outcomes

Within the model, **communication, trust and respect** and **work-life balance** are first level culture outcomes of the foundation elements and set the stage for the remaining elements. The functional capacity of a work culture founded on mutual trust and respect<sup>11,12</sup>, with effective communication<sup>13</sup>, is very different from one characterized by suspicion, distrust and communication failures. Equally important is the ability of employees to balance their personal and professional lives. Work-family conflict is a serious contributor to employee stress and represents a confounding influence on employee engagement<sup>14</sup>. Family-friendly employment practices provide important dividends<sup>15,16</sup>.

### Tier 3: Second Level Outcomes

This level contains **vision, competence and skill development** and **rewards and recognition**. These three elements depend upon the previous two levels and inform the top tier of outcomes. Staff and managers need a clear and congruent vision of the organization's purpose<sup>17,18</sup> within a framework that recognizes and rewards their contributions<sup>19,20</sup>. Equally, in successful organizations the development of employee skills and competencies are valued and willingly embraced via formal training, coaching and mentoring<sup>21,22,23</sup>.



The 12 Factor, 4-Tier Model of Organizational Health

### Tier 4: Third Level Outcomes

This is the functional level that organizations typically pay the most attention to, and it includes **ability to adapt, teamwork** and **employee commitment**. However, performance at this level is largely dependent on the elements contained within the lower three tiers. Certainly, it is generally recognized that successful organizations are adaptive and creative<sup>24</sup>, teamwork is effective and productive<sup>25,26</sup>, and employees are committed to their future with the organization<sup>27,28,29</sup>.

Please see references on final page

## Organizational Health Assessment

The Organizational Health Assessment provides a unique and detailed diagnostic which guides specific and targeted recommendations. The assessment is designed to support and enhance the strengths in the system and effectively address the challenges.

### Assessment Process

The assessment includes two components:

1. The online test battery which takes 10-12 minutes to complete This includes:
  - The 72-item assessment tool identifies organizational areas of strength, risk and challenge in each of the 12 Organizational Health Factors
  - The 16 item Brief Self-Care Survey
  - The 16 item Brief Stress Symptom Screen
  - Background demographic information including job type, age, gender, years with the organization, turnover intentions, retirement plans, and family factors
2. 90 minute structured interviews with key individuals within the organization and representatives of important demographic subgroups.

### Report & Recommendations

Based on the structured interviews and survey results, a user-friendly report profiles:

- The 12 Organizational Health factors
- Self Care measures
- Clinical Stress Symptoms

These are all examined in terms of the full group and each of the 10 demographic analyses (e.g., age groups, job description, years with organization, etc.). This level of detail alerts us to the very specific dynamics present for different groups.

Based on the detailed results, the report provides a set of practical and specific strength-based recommendations designed to address the challenges facing the organization. While the results support targeted recommendations for action and intervention, they also provide a benchmark against which to measure gains in later surveys.

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A comprehensive Organizational Health Assessment

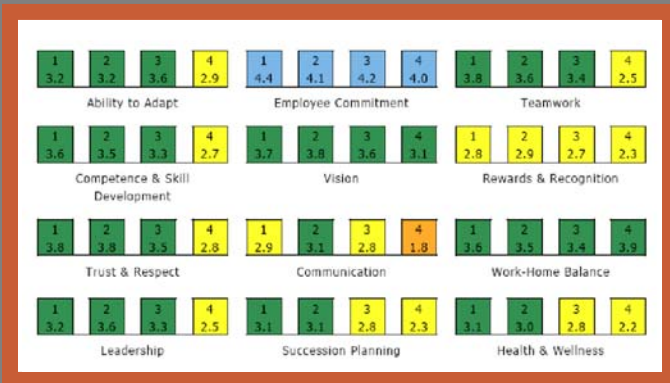
### Results are analyzed in terms of

- Age groups
- Gender
- Child care status
- Parent care status
- Job description
- Years with organization
- Years in current job.
- Job department
- Employment status (e.g., full time, part-time)
- Leaving Intentions

# Organizational Health: A unique 12 Factor, 4-Tier research based model

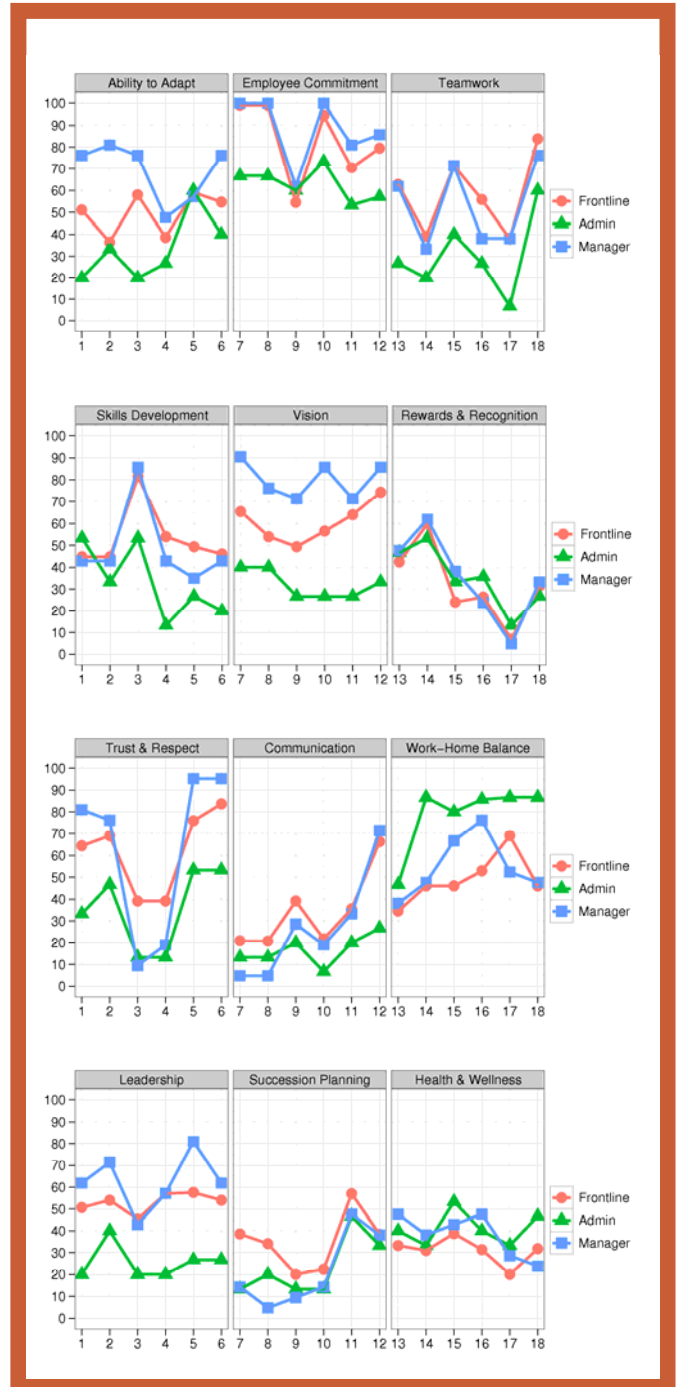
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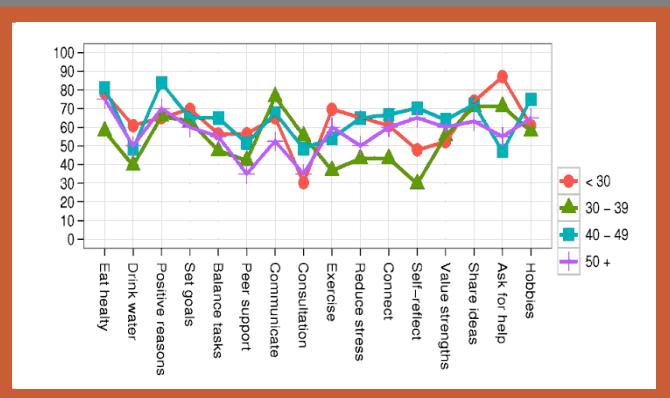


Example: Organizational Health Scores -Years With Organization [Average (range 1-5); 1<2yrs, 2=2-4yrs, 3=5-9yrs, 4=10+yrs]

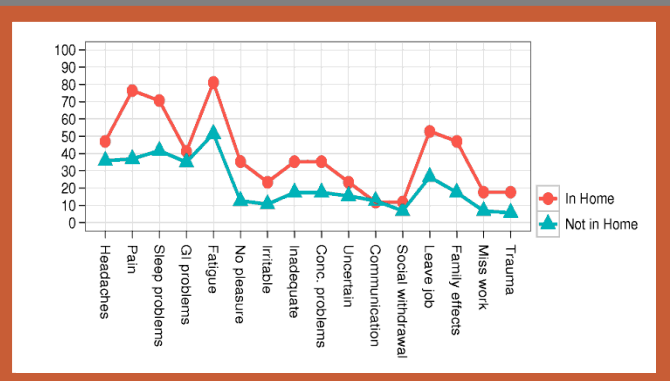
## Detailed analyses provide a comprehensive understanding of the strengths & challenges



Example: 12-Factor Organizational Health Results for Job Description [Percent High Positives (4 &5), (range 1-5)]



Example: Self-Care Results for Age Groups [Percent High Positives (4 &5), (range 1-5)]



Example: Stress Symptom Results for Child Care Status [Percent High Positives (4 &5), (range 1-5)]

## Applications of the Model

In addition to the Organizational Health Assessment, Dr. Fisher's Organizational Health Model supports a range of training and consultation services which are also provided by the company. We invite you to visit the website for a more detailed description of the range of resources offered: [www.fisherandassociates.org](http://www.fisherandassociates.org).

The following briefly describes our leadership training and development resources.

### Leadership Training

Understanding and applying our practical and comprehensive Organizational Health Model helps managers to effectively approach the complex human challenges that effect every aspect of organizational functioning.

This intensive workshop presents principles and practical skills for organizational development in the areas of communication, trust-building and effective management practices – integrated within a positive long-term vision for the organization. We will explore commitment to this, with a clear link to performance enhancement, recruitment, retention, employee wellness, teamwork and sustainability.

The goals and objectives of our intensive 2-day program ***The Critical Role of Leadership in Organizational Health*** are:

- To introduce and apply the Organizational Health Model, and to discuss the risk and resiliency factors driving the participant's Organizational Health profile
- To explore the vital role of managers in Organizational Health
- To provide self-assessment tools that allow managers to discover their areas of strength and challenge
- To explore areas that are most challenging for managers: e.g., recruitment and retention, change management, staff turnover, building trust, transitioning into the manager's role, communicating up and down, mentoring/coaching staff, generational differences, etc.
- To teach skills addressing the most prominent concerns, and explore strategies for managing challenging situations with staff
- Facilitate dialogue to enhance development of a community of practice for managers.
- To identify areas for further training needs

### Consultation Services for Organizations

As specialists in high stress workplaces such as health care, social services, justice sector, and corrections, we are often contacted for consultation and assistance by organizations who are experiencing acute difficulties or who are undergoing critical changes and restructuring.

We approach each client with an awareness of their unique circumstances and work with their management team to identify the most effective use of our services.

### Consultation Services for Individual Managers

We understand that while leadership roles provide many personal and professional rewards, they can also be extremely stressful and challenging. This is particularly true in today's work environment which often features funding constraints, increased accountability, workforce instability, cross-generational challenges, and information management demands – and the list goes on. We are also going through a massive demographic change as the wave of baby boomers retire and new generations of managers assume responsibility in an increasingly turbulent environment.

All these elements often leave managers feeling isolated, overwhelmed and unsupported. This takes a personal toll and affects our ability to do our jobs.

We believe it is vital to support and develop managers as a fundamental determinant of Organizational Health and Organizational Capacity.

Over the past 2 years, so many managers have told us that they need individualized direct personal and professional support.

We have heard these voices and are now launching a program of Individual Consultation Services for Managers. This new program joins our suite of established and effective Organizational Health and Workplace Wellness training, assessment and consultation services.

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We are Organizational Health and Workplace Wellness specialists who work with high stress occupational sectors such as health care, social services, and the justice sector. Please contact us to discuss how we may assist your organization.

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