



**Survive or Thrive Session 8**  
**Tim Jeffery**

# **The Flexible Organisation**

**Making Change a Core Competence**

# Purpose of the Session

- to explore what kind of organisations we need to become in order to thrive in a new paradigm of global mission
- to make the case for developing flexible organisations and explore how we might do this

# Characteristics of our 'shift'

- slow and drawn out
- the destination is unknown
- fundamental shift of underlying worldview



*In the nineties the heroes, the winners, will be entire companies that have developed cultures that instead of fearing the pace of change, relish it.*

Jack Welch, CEO of GE

# Culture: historically based

- accumulation of beliefs, attitudes and behaviours that have led to success
- powerful force for control based on the past
- rearview mirror rather than forward looking
- source of inertia and resistance to change

**To change culture we need to show that the old culture will lead to disaster in the future.**

### **Culture: learned**

- new employees work out how to 'fit in' and succeed - they are learning the culture
- they learn culture from the stories they hear about the organisations heroes and successes

**To change culture we can introduce new stories, new reward systems etc.**



## **Culture: subconscious**

- culture exists 'below the radar screen'
- people don't tend to think in terms of the organisational culture controlling behaviour

**To change culture we have to bring it to the surface, to understand and evaluate it**

## **Culture: held in common**

- culture is not the 'property' of any one group within the organisation

**No one group in the organisation has the 'right' to change the culture. Everyone has to buy in to the change**



# Culture: dynamic but slow

- culture can be influenced and changed by events - it is dynamic not static
- culture change tends to be slow and incremental

**To change culture normally requires a series of small steps - culture development**

## Thinking Culturally

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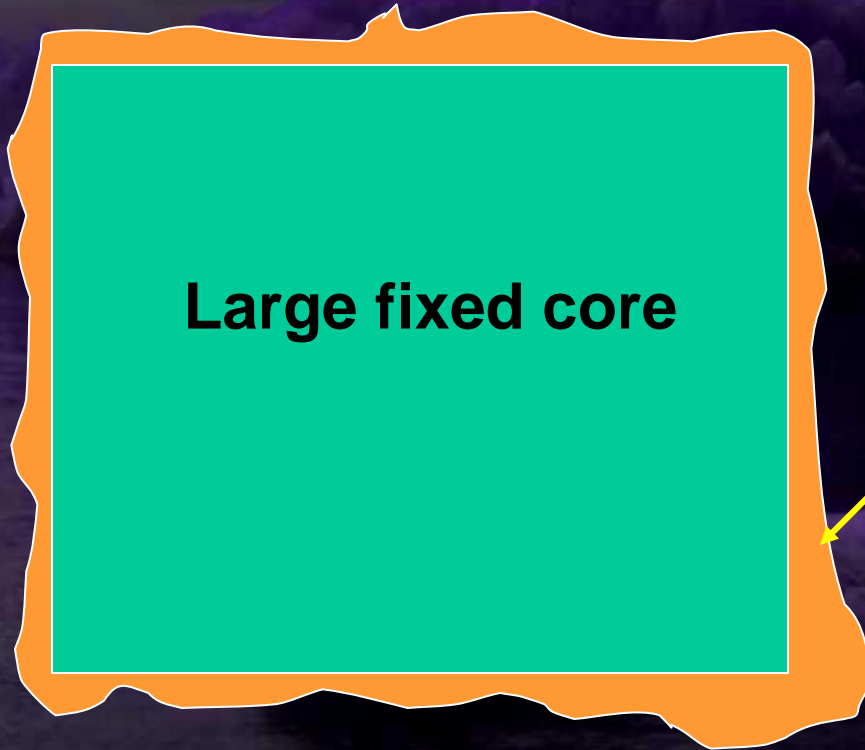
**To change culture normally requires a series of small steps - culture development**

# Flexible structures

Older/traditional organisation

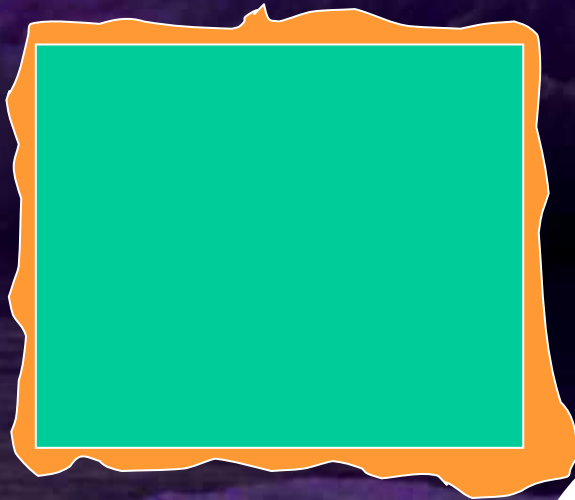
Large fixed core

Small flexible periphery





# Flexible structures



# Flexible structures

