

# TOOLS OF THE TRADE



In a new series, **Carol Wilson** identifies the tools and models frequently used during coaching projects. This month, she looks at Cultural Transformation Tools

**T**he Cultural Transformation Tools (CTT) were developed by Richard Barratt, a cheerful Yorkshire man now based in America, as part of his innovative work in the field of values-based leadership. The foundation of the Tools is Barratt's "Seven Levels of Consciousness" model.

Inspired by Maslow's well-known "Hierarchy of Needs", the Seven Levels of Consciousness model adds an inverted top tier that encourages examination of the complex issues and aspirations in business and life today.

Unlike most other evaluating tools, such as 360o feedback (which requires workers to rate the behaviour and performance of their peers, reports and seniors), CTT measures the *values* of individuals and organisations rather than their performance.

The underlying principle is that the values espoused by an organisation can be meaningful only if they reflect the true values of its workers. "Organisational transformation begins with the personal transformation of the leadership," says Barratt.

The vision and mission statements of an organisation reflect its 'what' and 'why'; it is the values that provide the 'how' – how people think, how they perform and how they behave towards the organisation and its customers.

The Tools consist of online surveys in which people are asked to choose, say, their top ten personal values, then the top ten values that their organisation exhibits at present, then the values they would like to see the organisation espouse.

The list of values is provided by CTT and can be altered to suit the particular organisation carrying out the survey.

The surveys are conducted through a licensed CTT practitioner and can be completed by individuals or up to a staggering 35,000 participants, producing results which are informing for all involved:

- Individuals gain insight and ideas for change
- Senior managers gain insights into what their workforce really thinks about the organisation and where changes might be beneficial.

The values offered in the survey may be positive or otherwise, in which case they are labelled "limiting values". Based on the results, reports are prepared at CTT's head office and these can be custom designed to provide specific information by demographic, such as all employees in one location, or all the female workers, or all those under 40 etc.

Measurement is a key factor in CTT and Barratt often uses the phrase "if you can't measure it, you can't manage it". For example, if the limiting value 'bureaucracy' is frequently returned across a wide number of participants, a further survey can be run asking people to estimate what percentage of profit is lost (or how much absenteeism/staff turnover etc is caused) by this bureaucracy.

Although not technically accurate, the resulting patterns can form a convincing enough trend to make the organisation's

accountants, budget makers and leaders take note and take action.

One of the great advantages of CTT is that the surveys do not ask the participants to point a finger at their colleagues. This is where surveys such as 360o feedback fly in the face of coaching culture values because they do not adhere to the coaching principles of openness and transparency, and they invite judgment and blame.

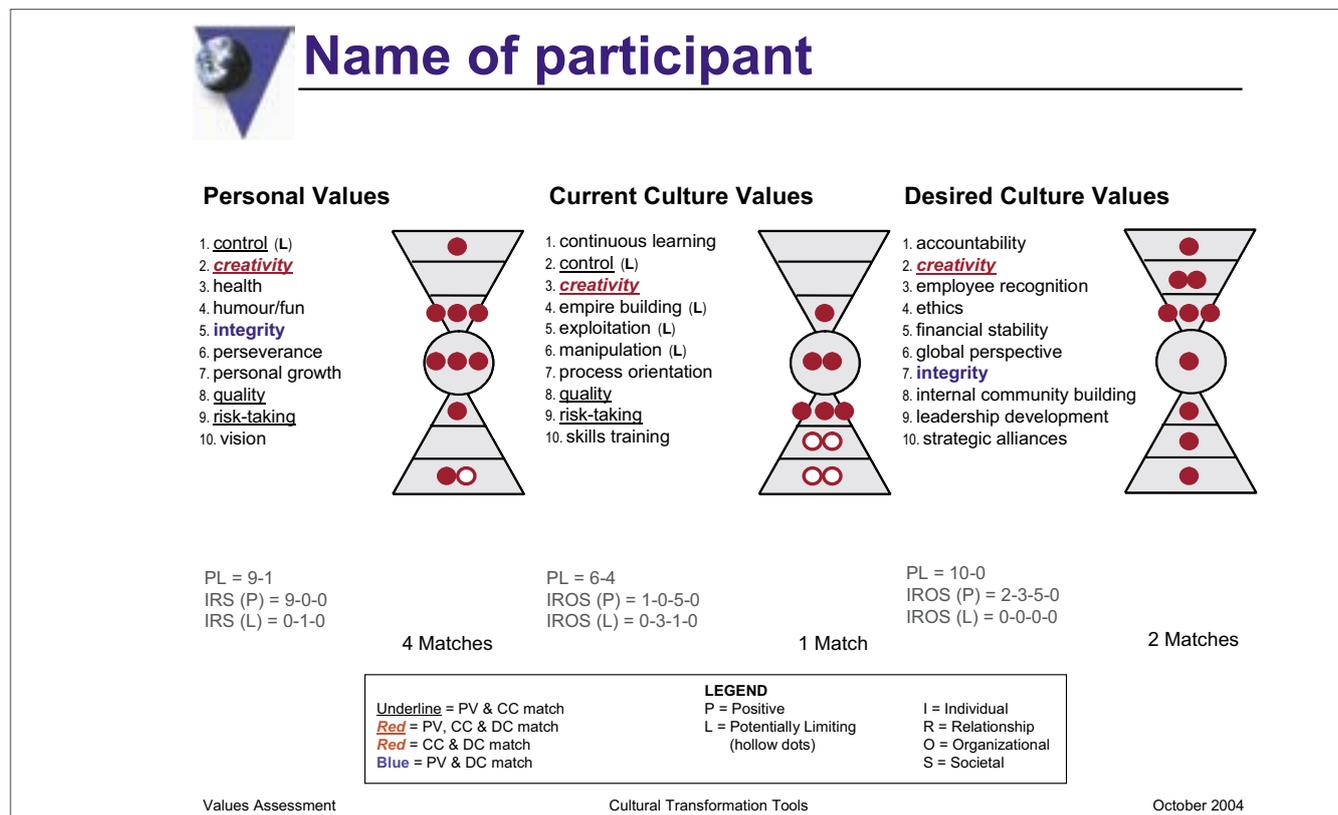
With CTT, participants are firstly asked to look inside and question their own attitudes and behaviours before considering those of their colleagues. There is no place here for 'behind the back' direct criticism of individuals, but if the results from a team reporting to one particular manager regularly show up a specific limiting value, such as 'bullying', the manager is more likely to recognise that he needs to change without the rancour that a specific comment from an

unidentifiable source may give rise to.

Equally, when completing 360o surveys, participants tend to either be too lenient, for fear of being identified, or over-critical, and they may have a personal axe to grind against the subject of the appraisal. It is hard to take feedback seriously when you don't know who it has come from.

For the individuals undertaking the surveys, great insight can be obtained in terms of which values they have to leave at home when they come to work in the morning. Organisational cultures are no more than habits acquired over a period of years, and the first step in changing the way people treat each other at work is by recognising those habits that are detrimental and instituting new, more positive ones.

The chart below is an example of a survey result, which would be sent to the licensed CTT practitioner accompanied by



### Values Questionnaire

Select values from the following list and mark them in the margins. Add more values if you wish.:

- 10 personal values (mark with a P). These are not the values you aspire to, but those you currently live by.
- 10 values that represent the current culture of your organisation (mark with a C)
- 10 values that represent the desired culture of your organisation (mark with a D)

	Accountability	D	Diversity		Hierarchy		Personal fulfilment
	Achievement		Ease with uncertainty		Human rights	CD	Profit
PD	Balance (home/work)		Efficiency		Humility	PD	Respect
	Bureaucracy		Empathy	PD	Humour/fun	PCD	Risk-taking
C	Bullying	C	Empire building		Making a difference		Strategic alliances

[Continues for 60 more values]

How many matching values do you have?

P-C  P-D  C-D  P-C-D

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an explanatory report. This is a survey completed by an individual and the practitioner will coach the participant through the results, identifying insights and actions along the way.

If the survey was commissioned by an organisation's leaders for whole sections of its workforce to complete, the diagram would show the collective results and the practitioner would coach the leaders through what might be some unexpected and startling information, towards identifying ways of changing habits and culture.

Notice the pleasing symmetry formed by the participant's desired organisational values on the right. These results show that the individual's own values are sadly not reflected in those of the organisation for which she works.

Some other key pointers that emerge are that she regards herself as too controlling at times, and that control, empire building, manipulation and exploitation are rife in the organisation where she has to spend her working hours.

Contrasting this with the desired values, which include ethics, integrity and internal community building, it seems that there is a

## “Organisational transformation begins with the personal transformation of the leadership”

great deal of work to be done by the organisation if this individual is to be retained.

Also reproduced here (above) is a part of a paper survey that I devised from the Cultural Transformation Tools. This is useful for coaching clients and groups to stimulate reflection on their place and attitudes in life; it can be used as an alternative to the “wheel of life” tools, which ask people direct questions about their work, life, health etc.

The full A4 sized version is reproduced in my book *Best Practice in Performance Coaching* (referenced right) or can be obtained by sending an email to [info@performancecoachtraining.com](mailto:info@performancecoachtraining.com).

In recent years, Richard Barratt's focus has turned towards the greater global picture, and he has used the CTT surveys on entire countries to work towards bringing about whole system

change in business and the way the world works. ■

#### References

- 1 Barratt R *Building a Values-Driven Organization: A Whole-System Approach to Cultural Transformation* (2006) Butterworth-Heinemann Boston
- 2 Barratt R *Liberating the Corporate Soul: Building a Visionary Organisation* (1998) Butterworth-Heinemann Boston
- 3 Wilson C *Best Practice in Performance Coaching: A Handbook for Leaders, Coaches, HR Professionals and Organizations* (2007) Kogan Page

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