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**The Padua Paradigm**  
Assessing Organisational Climate

Roderic Gray

**ANGLIA POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY**

# **The Padua Paradigm**

## **Assessing Organisational Climate**

**Roderic Gray**

**Ashcroft International Business School**

and

**Kumpania Consulting**

### **Abstract**

Previous research has shown strong correlations between organisational climate, as perceived by employees, and successful work outcomes. This paper describes a simple assessment tool which can be used by managers and consultants to determine the current climate in an organisation or department as an input to organisational development or improvement activities.

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## Background

Whatever strategy an organisation chooses to pursue, its prospects of successfully implementing that strategy depend crucially on the performance of its people. Recent research initiatives (eg, Richardson & Thompson, 1999) have demonstrated that the way people are managed can have a very significant influence on organisational performance. Ongoing research by Patterson et al (1998) has found six per cent of variations in profitability to be attributable to R&D, two per cent to strategy and less than one per cent to an emphasis on quality, but up to twenty per cent could be collectively attributed to various human factors.

Unfortunately, there is some evidence that the significance of these findings has not convinced some managers that changes in behaviour are urgently needed. Buckingham (2001) reports a poll by Gallup which found that more than eighty per cent of UK employees are not “*engaged*” at work. Engaged employees, in the Gallup survey’s terms, are “*loyal and productive. They not only get their work done effectively, but they are also less likely to leave and more inclined to recommend their company to friends and family*”. Disengaged employees are “*not psychologically bonded to their organisation*”. They are “*less collaborative than their colleague, less innovative, less tolerant of change and more vocal about their many dissatisfactions*” (Buckingham, 2001). Commenting on other aspects of the Gallup survey, Scase (2001), remarks that despite an “*explosion in management education*” and widespread knowledge of people management theory and models, “*employees and managers still do not trust each other*”.

## Management and climate

The concept of *organisational climate* describes the social context as perceived by organisation members. It may be expressed loosely as ‘what it feels like to work here’. In this sense it is clearly linked to the concept of organisational culture, but viewed from the perspective of an individual ‘insider’ rather than that of an outside observer. The notion that factors in the social context of an organisation may influence individual and collective performance has a venerable history. As early as 1908 Yerkes & Dodson found that there is an optimum level of arousal for any task, which will be lower as the difficulty or complexity of the task increases. Stress, which may be seen to be a product of unresolved arousal or anxiety, has been found to be negatively associated with attributes such as creativity

and commitment (eg in Talbot, Cooper & Barrow, 1992). Further insights in this field are provided by McClelland et al (1976), by Bandura (1977), and by Eysenck's (1983) work on the effects of fear and anxiety on task performance.

The need for a level of personal control over events is a parallel theme which has been explored by Locke (1968) in the context of goal setting, by Lawler (1973) in relation to motivation and commitment and by Karasek & Theorell (1990) and Cox (1993) in the context of personal well-being. Management writers such as McGregor (1960), Likert (1961), Blake & Mouton (1964), Kanter (1979), Adair (1983), Senge (1990) and Handy (1990) have explicitly applied many of these ideas to issues of organisational performance.

In 1950 Douglas McGregor had felt able to write about the *"first clear recognition of an inescapable fact: we cannot successfully force people to work for management's objectives. The ancient conception that people do the work of the world only if they are forced to do so by threats or intimidation, or by the camouflaged authoritarian methods of paternalism, has been suffering from a lingering fatal illness for a quarter of a century. I venture the guess that it will be dead in another decade"*. By 1957 he had begun to recognise that this *"ancient conception"* showed little sign of dying from natural causes and that some intervention from himself would be needed to hasten its demise. His conference paper under the title *"The Human Side of Enterprise"* (McGregor, 1957) outlined the ideas which were later expanded into the book of the same title (McGregor, 1960). Although he does not explicitly refer to McGregor's ideas, the picture which Scase (2001) draws of twenty-first century UK management is a fairly accurate representation of the *"ancient conception"* observed by McGregor in 1950.

Less formal expositions of this *ancient conception* might include the apocryphal managerial comment *"yes, we have an incentive scheme: people who meet their targets get to keep their jobs"*, the remark attributed to Henry Ford 1<sup>st</sup>: *"if they're having fun then they should be paying me"*, the Roman axiom *"let them hate, so long as they fear"*. ~ *oderint, dum metuant* ~ (Accius, 150-c90 BC), and the views of two project managers on the receiving end of this perspective interviewed by Gray (1998): ① *"I think the motive of fear is very relevant, even today, ... perhaps even more so ... the finger is pointed at you if you don't perform"*, and ② *"I don't think the fear caused bad decisions. It kept me on my mettle, I think"*.

The *ancient conception* was very much the norm in McGregor's time. His extensive reading of the management literature led him to believe that "*the principles of organization which comprise the bulk of the literature of management could only have been derived from assumptions such as [these].*" (McGregor, 1960)

Although McGregor was not the first to offer an alternative perspective, his "*Theory X*" management paradigm which holds that "*because of [the] human characteristic of dislike of work, most people must be coerced, controlled, directed, threatened with punishment to get them to put forth adequate effort toward the achievement of organizational objectives*" (McGregor, 1960), has retained a grip on management thinking throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first. It has not, however, had things all its own way. Two strands of opinion have served to modify the Theory X orientation.

The first alternative view is that reward is a more effective motivator than coercion and fear. This is the basis of McGregor's (1950) "*camouflaged authoritarian methods of paternalism*" and there are attendant problems with it. On one hand, the principle is sound and has been recognised in experimental psychology for many years; Thorndike's (1911) Law of Effect, which states that "*actions which are reinforced [rewarded] tend to be repeated; actions which are not rewarded tend to die out*", has underpinned subsequent work in the fields of conditioning, motivation, learning theory and behavioural therapy. However, the difficulty for management lies in the nature and context of 'reward'. McGregor (1960) pointed out that most of the "*rewards typically provided the worker for satisfying his needs through his employment*" can only be used when the worker is not actually at work: "*wages, for example, cannot be spent at work*", pensions benefits are only enjoyed on retirement, and so on. Because of this, McGregor argues that incentive schemes violate "*natural law*" as a means of controlling behaviour at work, because the rewards they offer can only be enjoyed outside the work environment. Behaviour *at work* is influenced mainly by rewards in the workplace, such as the approval of fellow workers. Herzberg (Herzberg et al, 1959), although widely criticised on methodological ~ and, indeed, logical ~ grounds (see, for example, Robertson, Smith and Cooper, 1992) builds a fairly comprehensive 'job enrichment' schema on the same basic premise.

Other writers have subsequently drawn attention to the difficulties of monetary and other extrinsic forms of reward as an incentive to perform better. Some of these observations may usefully be cited here:

*"Now, what does negative KITA accomplish? If I kick you in the rear [physically or psychologically], who is motivated? I am motivated, you move! Negative KITA does not led to motivation, but to movement."* [Rewards, incentives etc. ~ positive KITA ~ don't constitute motivation. They have to be continually / repeatedly applied. They amount to applying "frontal KITA" or 'pull' as opposed to "negative KITA" or 'push'] *"That is why positive KITA is so popular: it is a tradition; it is the American way. The organization does not have to kick you; you kick yourself"* (Herzberg, 1968).

*"The more we obtain an extrinsic type of reinforcement [eg money] for performing a task, the more likely we are to lose our intrinsic motivation to perform that task. On the other hand, the more we receive verbal reinforcements, the more we come to develop intrinsic motivations to perform the task"* (Deci, 1972).

*"Rewards facilitate performance of overlearned [algorhythmic] tasks but impair performance of heuristic tasks, such as problem solving"* (McGraw, 1978).

*"The undermining effects of extrinsic rewards on task interest and free-choice behavior have been shown in numerous studies"* [but this is not automatic or inevitable] (Kanfer, 1990).

A meta-analysis by R A Guzzo of 98 studies (Guzzo et al, 1985) showed by statistical analysis that financial incentives produced no significant effect overall. Financial incentives were found to be unrelated to absenteeism or turnover. Training and goal-setting programmes were found, however, to have a positive impact on productivity

A series of studies by Freedman & colleagues at the University of Toronto (Freedman et al, 1992) confirmed that the larger the incentive people are offered, the more negatively they will tend to view the activity for which the bonus was received.

*"The recipient of the reward assumes, 'if they have to bribe me to do it, it must be something I wouldn't want to do' ... Research suggests that, by and large, rewards succeed at securing one thing only: temporary compliance."* (Kohn, 1993)

Finally on this point, it should be noted that in some circumstances incentives, particularly financial incentives, may themselves be perceived negatively. Performance-related pay [PRP] enhancements, such as bonus payments, are typically offered either for performance above defined standards or for achievement of difficult objectives. Gray (2000) found that some informants regarded such bonuses as part of their anticipated remuneration, which could be withheld as a penalty for failure to achieve targets. In short, reward mechanisms which were intended to be an incentive came to be regarded effectively as a form of threat.

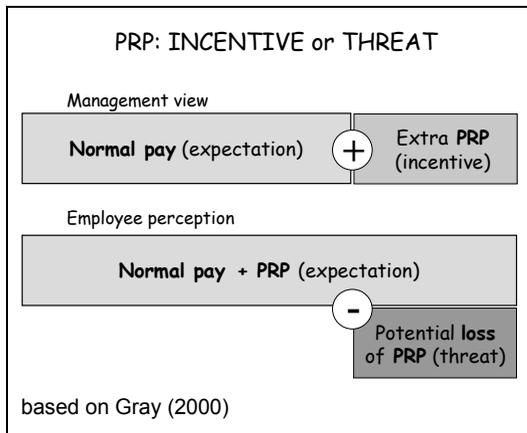


Figure 1

If financial incentives are, at best, dubious motivators to enhanced performance, then another alternative to the *ancient conception* must be sought. This alternative is to be found in the cultivation of a social context which is optimally conducive to intrinsic, rather than extrinsic, motivation and thereby to enhanced organisational effectiveness.

### Organisational climate and work outcomes

An extensive study of the relationships between organisational climate and outcomes of the work being done (Gray, 2000) identified a number of specific factors which correlated significantly, either positively or negatively, with successful work outcomes. The research methodology used in that study was, briefly, as follows:

Semi-structured interviews lasting between forty minutes and one hour, were held, in private, with forty-four informants from a total of seventeen organisations, all of them major, nationally-recognised companies, institutions or government bodies from a range of industry sectors. Informants were asked to discuss the last completed project in which they were involved. A 'project' for this purpose is defined as "*a unique, finite undertaking with clearly-defined objectives, involving many inter-related tasks or activities and the contribution of a number of people working co-operatively under centralised control to produce a specified outcome or product within clearly-defined parameters of time, cost and quality*". Clearly, most of the elements of this definition could be applied to other kinds of organisational activity, although *unique* and *finite* might be exceptions to this. These latter two characteristics make projects attractive as a research focus, whilst the commonality of the other characteristics to both project and non-project work gives confidence that appropriate aspects of the findings may reasonably be generalised beyond the boundaries of project work.

Researcher intervention in the conversations was kept to a minimum and was restricted to general topic guidance so as to allow the informants to describe their experiences as freely as possible. Over twelve hundred verbatim extracts from the tape recorded interviews were entered onto a database and classified according to their specific subject matter. This material was then used to inform assessments concerning a number of analysis factors, including:

- The informant's assessment of the project outcome, both overall and in respect of the individual success factors of schedule, budget, specification and stakeholder views, and what, if any, corroborating evidence could be provided to support this opinion.
- The perceived management style both in the immediate environment and at the wider organisational level within which the work was done, with particular attention to the levels of threat or insecurity.
- The informant's perceptions of the social interactions affecting him/herself and others.
- What perceptions the informant had of any kind of threat directed at him/herself, or others, or affecting him/herself, or others, and the informant's behavioural reactions to perceived threat.

In most cases, assessments of identified factors were reduced to a simple ordinal scale of *Very High* → *High* → *Moderate* → *Low* → *Very Low*, or *Not Found*, although the richness of the descriptive material supporting such a judgement was carefully retained in the database records.

Clearly, the research design described above involved a level of resource demand which would be prohibitive in most commercial settings, and in any case the purpose of the research was to identify and generalise those factors which might significantly affect performance, rather than to assess climate factors in any individual organisation. However, having established that certain characteristics of organisational climate can be reliably linked with improved performance there is evidently a requirement for an assessment tool which can be used easily and economically by managers and consultants in specific organisations in order to indicate where improvement initiatives should be focused. This paper sets out to provide a practical tool for this purpose.

### **Factors in organisational climate**

In Gray's (2000) study a broad package of attributes of organisations' perceived social environments, or *climate*, was initially compiled from a review of an eclectic body of literature, including work on systems, project management and evaluation, the psychological processes of fear, stress, motivation, group interactions, authority and hierarchy, organisational and work structures, and organisational culture. Some factors were found during field research to have little or no significance and were discarded from the package. The remaining, validated, attributes were compared with a similarly wide-ranging package of project success factors, including performance against budget, schedule and specification, end-user satisfaction, and resource utilisation.

Comparison of these two aggregations produced a very strong positive correlation [the most pessimistic figure, making no allowance for known special factors affecting project outcomes, was approximately +0.7] between low-threat, high voluntarism operating climates and successful work outcomes. Illustrated graphically in figure 2:

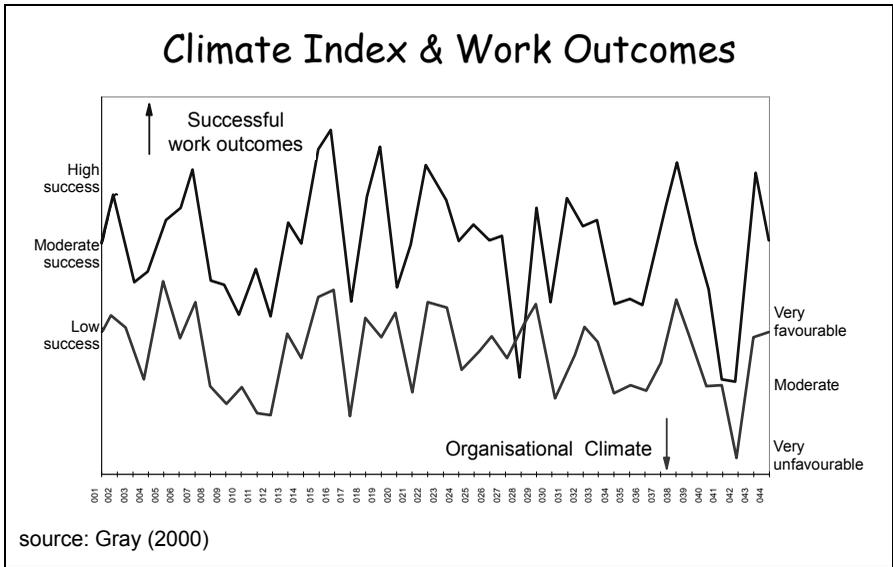


Figure 2

The climate index used here was derived from the validated grouping of positive attributes, moderated by the negative influence of perceptions of threat. The positive factors were collectively labelled *Voluntarism*; a term derived from two widely-quoted pieces of management wisdom: E E Lawler's (1973) observation that "*those individual behaviors that are crucial in determining the effectiveness of organizations are, almost without exception, voluntary motivated behaviors*" and Peter Drucker's (1954) advice to managers to treat their staff as though they were all volunteers.

The positive attributes were identified as:

- the free expression of ideas
- the free expression of concerns
- freedom to question (especially decisions and policies determined by more senior people)
- genuine participation in defining goals and objectives
- intrinsic satisfactions derived from the work itself
- innovation (freedom to try new concepts and approaches)

*Threat*, in a general sense, is taken to mean *the anticipation of impending change to a state less favourable than the status quo*. Within this broad definition two forms of threat are identified and assessed separately.

*Environmental threat* refers to threats arising from natural events, from societal forces which, for practical purposes are undirected by intelligence, or from macro-political causes or policies determined so remotely from the affected individuals that they may be regarded, again for practical purposes, as being undirected. This kind of perceived threat produces feelings of personal insecurity and uncertainty. It may also, significantly, lead to doubts about the *continuance of context*: enthusiasm for a current task or project is undermined if there seems a real possibility that it will be stopped before completion by management decision or external forces.

*Purposive threat* refers to consciously-applied threats which are directed at individuals to coerce their behaviour, or from malice. A significant number of Gray's informants, including the two sources quoted earlier, expressed the view that some level of [purposive] threat was a legitimate form of inducement to apply effort or attention; a necessary incentive to performance. This view was refuted by the evidence of work outcomes, a result which is fully consistent with the work on anxiety and arousal mentioned above. In more colloquial terms it might be argued that someone who threatens us is, by definition, an enemy; and one would not expect to work willingly and enthusiastically to further an enemy's goals or objectives.

Among the more detailed findings were the following correlations:

- A clear positive correlation [+ 0.37] between voluntarism in the project teams and the successful outcomes of their projects. This correlation became much more pronounced [+ 0.64] when an assessment of the overall, organisation-wide voluntarism was used, which suggests that the climate of the wider organisation is crucial in determining performance, and in facilitating or restraining the impact of more localised [or team level] climate.
- A strong negative correlation [- 0.56] between overall environmental threat levels and assessments of project success.
- A clear negative correlation [- 0.40] between purposive threat and successful project outcomes.

Of course, performance may be affected by factors other than organisational climate, for example, *clarity of objectives*, individual *ability* to carry out the required functions [which may in turn be affected by training], individual and group *motivation*, availability of *resources*, quality of *supervision*, organisational *structures and processes* may all help or hinder the individual in contributing to the employing organisation's goals. It may be seen, however, that climate may be a secondary influencing factor moderating the influence of many of these factors to a greater or lesser extent.

We can derive a basic premise underlying these findings; that the full engagement of employees within a secure [low-threat] environment is a vital element in high performance. This may be expressed far more elegantly as The Padua Paradigm:

*No profit grows, where is no pleasure ta'en* \*

\* Tranio to Lucentio, in Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew* [which is set in Padua].

### **The assessment instrument**

The organisational climate assessment (OCA) instrument suggested here consists of twenty-four simple statements couched in informal language intended to reflect everyday organisational experience. It is suggested that everyone who works in an identifiable department or section should be asked to complete an OCA instrument and the results collated both by department and across the whole organisation.

Subjects are asked to indicate whether they strongly agree, tend to agree, tend to disagree or strongly disagree with each statement. In some cases agreement with the statement would reflect a positive contribution to a favourable climate, whilst in others disagreement with the statement would be positive. This alternating polarity is rectified through the use of a look-up table [Table 1] to convert each answer to a numerical score of 0, 1, 2 or 3. Simple addition of the scores produces an overall OCA index which provides an indication of the general state of the organisational climate in the perceptions of the employees surveyed, as described below.

In the OCA instrument, there are three statements relating to each of the eight defined climatic elements: ie, six factors in voluntarism and two kinds of threat. Each statement has the same potential maximum score. The apparent implication that all elements have equal impact, in all

organisations and at all times, is clearly false. However, the interactions between the elements are comprehensive, as illustrated in figure 3:

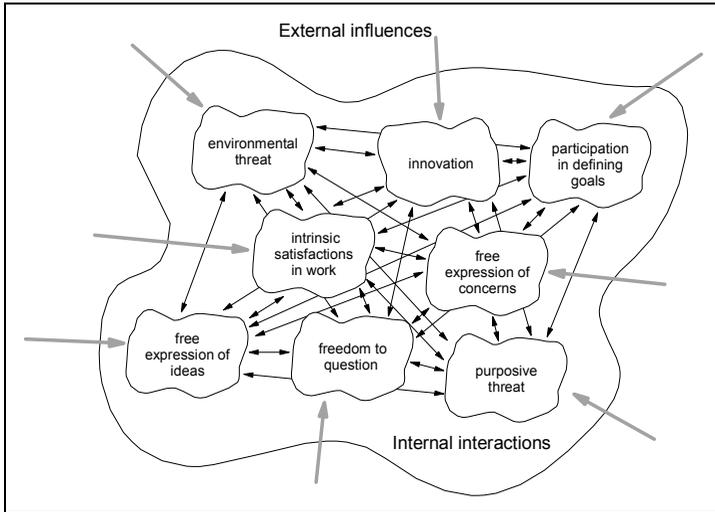


Figure 3

Each element is in full communication with every other element and with undefined and/or unrecognised factors in the external environment, providing information about current and anticipated status which promotes self-adjustment (Checkland, 1981). These interactions may act to enhance or restrain the impact of each element to an unassessable and unpredictable degree (Stacey, 1992). For this reason, differences in the levels of influence on the overall climate exerted by individual elements may be regarded as being, in practice, self-compensating.

These considerations place limits on the value to be derived from detailed analysis of the levels of each contributing element of climate. However, it may be useful to identify and examine any element that seems to be 'out of step' with the overall pattern. This would, for reasons described above, be unusual and therefore potentially significant. It may indicate a new or developing situation which requires attention. To facilitate this a second table sorts the scores into eight columns, each representing one of the identified climate elements. The use of this table is described later.

The OCA instrument is as follows:

This is true of my organisation	A Strongly agree	B Tend to agree	C Tend to disagree	D Strongly disagree
1 The organisation is going through a lot of changes at the moment				
2 Lots of good ideas come from quite junior people				
3 If the top people disagreed between themselves about anything the rest of the staff probably wouldn't know about it				
4 Your boss decides what your targets should be				
5 Most people get a lot of satisfaction from their work, quite apart from the pay				
6 People who don't meet their targets are in trouble				
7 It's quite OK to tell your boss you think s/he's got it wrong				
8 If people aren't performing too well we look for their strengths and help them to find a more suitable job placement				
9 Junior people know that their concerns are taken seriously at senior management level				
10 Our industry is quite volatile				
11 If it wasn't for the money a lot of people here would find something more interesting to do				

12	You need the broader perspective of seniority to formulate practical suggestions				
13	People know what they have to do, but how they do it is largely up to them				
14	People have a big say in fixing their own objectives				
15	People get paid for solving problems, not for sharing them around				
16	There's a right way to do everything: it's in the manual				
17	If you disagree with policy decisions it's best to keep it to yourself				
18	If something's bothering anyone here there's always someone they can talk to about it				
19	People seem to like working here				
20	We keep up with the latest developments in best practice				
21	Rewards are linked directly to objectives				
22	Managers like you to point out the down-side of their decisions: it helps to avoid costly mistakes				
23	Working practices are based on inputs from people at all levels				
24	People can negotiate changes to their objectives at any time to take account of changing circumstances				

### **Analysing the results**

In Table 1 the answer A, B, C or D to each statement is converted to a numerical value of 0 — 3. For convenience, the value may be transferred to the empty box in the right-hand column.

The twenty-four individual values are added up to produce an overall climate index with a maximum of 72. This provides a broad indication of the perceived climate in the organisation or department surveyed. The higher the index, the more favourable the climate.

In very general terms, a score in the upper quartile suggests a climate which is conducive to operational success. Scores below this level suggest that some attention is required to climatic factors, and a very low score indicates that urgent and serious effort is needed.

Although all the elements which contribute to the perception of climate are inter-related and interactive, it can be helpful to identify any elements which seem anomalous, or particularly influential. To facilitate this Table 2 allows the value for each individual statement to be placed in one of eight columns, according to the climate element it addresses. The appropriate column for each statement has a clear box, the other boxes being obscured.

The values in each column are added up to produce a total of 0 —9 in each case.

In Table 2 the columns represent the following climatic elements:

- i. the free expression of ideas
- ii. the free expression of concerns
- iii. freedom to question (especially decisions and policies determined by more senior people)
- iv. genuine participation in defining goals and objectives
- v. intrinsic satisfactions derived from the work itself
- vi. innovation (freedom to try new concepts and approaches)
- vii. environmental threat
- viii. purposive threat



Table 2

	i	ii	iii	iv	v	vi	vii	viii
Statement	Value							
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Totals:								

## Management action

Clearly, there is little point in collecting information unless there is some intention to act on the messages it conveys. In fact, the process of collecting information ~ in this case by asking people to complete questionnaires ~ is never neutral. It promotes inferences of intention and may raise expectations of change which, if not met, can lead to disappointment and suspicion of bad faith.

Management action following an OCA assessment should normally seek to improve all eight factors shown in Table 2. Firstly, though, any factor which seems to be out of step with the others should be noted. For the reasons described above, this would be unusual, and the most likely explanation is that something has changed recently. There are two main areas for investigation. First, the personal style of senior people has a major influence over most of the climate factors, and some examples will be considered here. However, environmental threat can have a deleterious effect across the whole range, and an increase in this area is an alarm signal which should not be ignored.

Whether an individual factor demands attention, or whether a general increase in ratings is sought, practical action must always address specifics rather than generalities.

### Environmental threat

Examples of environmental threat must, of course, include economic, competitive, political or technological problems affecting the future success of the organisation. Anything which causes people to have concerns about their future is likely to impact negatively on their work. It may not be possible to reassure people on these matters ~ and such reassurances may in any case not be believed ~ but ways of shielding staff from external threats should, at the very least, be on the agenda for senior management attention. More controllable forms of environmental threat include reorganisations, which can feel very threatening to employees who have little or no say in what is proposed or implemented. The effects of proposed change on climate should be an explicit part of the planning process and positive action taken to minimise the uncertainty and powerlessness felt by many at such times. The negative effects on *continuance of context* should be realistically included in all cost-benefit analyses of change proposals.

In Gray's (2000) study disagreements or disputes among senior managers, either on a personal basis or about policy or support for specific initiatives,

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were found to be a significant form of environmental threat which negatively impacted organisational climate. Senior people do not have to involve subordinates in these disagreements and are strongly advised to avoid doing so [but actively seeking the views of all stakeholders before deciding on policy is generally a positive benefit].

Perhaps a new manager with a different style has recently been appointed and his/her impact has lowered [or of course, raised] the rating in a particular area. It is likely that the other factors will follow this trend over time, so a negative change is an advance warning and an opportunity to take gentle, supportive corrective action. If the anomaly is positive, the opportunity should be taken to draw attention to the systemic nature of climate ratings, and to encourage attention to the other factors.

### Purposive threat

Purposive threats are defined as consciously-applied threats which are directed at individuals to coerce their behaviour, or from malice. The idea that threats of various kinds are justified on the grounds that they promote enhanced performance can be found reflected in the opinions of some of those who are themselves subject to such threats, but this opinion was not supported by the evidence of work outcomes provided by the informants in Gray's (2000) research. On the contrary, the fact that clear negative correlations were found between levels of purposive threat and successful work outcomes shows that threat should be abandoned as a management technique. This means, of course, that bullying, coercion and all forms of hostility and aggression are quite unacceptable. It also means, perhaps counter-intuitively, that inducements such as bonus payments and PRP should not be close-coupled to specific objectives [see figure 1 and the associated discussion of *reward*]. Overall, rewards should be perceived as fair in relation to overall contribution ~ not by any means an easy outcome to achieve but certainly worthy of management effort.

### Voluntarism

The remaining climate factors: free expression of ideas, free expression of concerns, freedom to question [especially decisions and policies determined by more senior people], participation in defining goals and objectives, intrinsic satisfactions derived from the work itself and innovation [freedom to try new concepts and approaches] are grouped together under the collective title *voluntarism*.

There is hard organisational benefit to be derived from active promotion of an organisational climate in which participants have maximum involvement in defining their own targets and goals, in which they feel free to question, challenge and contribute to the decisions of more senior people, in which their suggestions and ideas are actively sought and, once elicited, are valued and treated with respect, and in which intrinsic satisfactions are to be found.

Promoting these characteristics requires continual and sustained effort, and is primarily a matter of individual management style. Senior management have a vital role to play in improving the climate of their organisation because they have the power to demonstrate the behaviours that they require from their subordinates. If the middle manager who demonstrates the Accius orientation [*let them hate, so long as they fear*] is seen to win promotion whilst another who favours the Padua Paradigm is sidelined, then an unmistakable message is sent out across the organisation ~ actions speak very much louder than words.

In summary, the key messages are:

- Never use purposive threats
  - Be very cautious in the use of rewards
  - Plan change carefully - be aware of the effects on people at all levels
  - Work to minimise uncertainty and insecurity
  - Seek consensus among senior people - don't involve staff in management disputes and conflict
  - Empower people - don't steal their decisions
  - Promote maximum participation in goal-setting
  - Actively seek feedback - even if you don't much like what it tells you
- ❖ *Recognise and reinforce these behaviours in your subordinates and never reward contrary behaviours – the damage will be very hard to repair.*

## **Conclusion**

Organisational climate is known to be strongly correlated with operational success. Good information about the current state of an organisation's or department's climate is an important, if not vital, input to any organisational development or improvement initiative.

The Organisational Climate Assessment (OCA) instrument described in this paper provides managers and consultants with a simple but effective means of assessing organisational climate for work groups of any size, and allows for a detailed focus on individual climate elements where this is appropriate.

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## **Author profile**

Dr Roderic Gray is a consultant working in the fields of organisational change and development and primarily concerned with the relationships between individuals and their organisations. His work extends to the applied fields of project management and new product development, where the ability of people with a diversity of skills and backgrounds to work effectively together is a vital success criterion. He has published numerous journal articles on organisational behaviour and project management topics, and is a visiting tutor and Research Adviser at Ashcroft International Business School.

Roderic Gray can be contacted at:

*Kumpania Consulting*

127 Manchester Drive

Leigh-On-Sea

Essex SS9 3EY UK

[www.kumpania.co.uk](http://www.kumpania.co.uk)

e-mail [rodgray@kumpania.co.uk](mailto:rodgray@kumpania.co.uk)