

A STUDY IN CORPORATE CULTURES  
DIGITAL EQUIPMENT CORPORATION  
THE MYTH:  
A CULTURAL OPERATING MANUAL

BY

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## INTRODUCTION

I have been exposed to the culture in many ways. I have worked as an employee. I have read official documents and memos, newsletters, and other people's opinions. While I have mostly worked in Engineering, I have made an effort to talk to employees and customers in all areas of the company to broaden my view.

What I have tried to produce is something that can be used over a period of time by all employees to help them work their way through the culture. I expect that some of the material in this work will also provide new meanings to the reader as perspective changes through the course of a career.

My goal is to provide as much INFORMATION to the employee as possible about how to be successful in the Digital culture so informed decisions can be made. This will bring more personal success with less frustration thereby profiting the company through the freeing of energy and time spent worrying about the culture and how to work it. Having the rules of the culture is only one step in the secret to success. Making the rules work for you to the company's advantage is the key.

I cannot say that I have followed all the messages I am presenting here. I have been aware of the messages and my awareness of the culture has made my way within Digital easier. I hope it helps you.

## THE CULTURE

### DEFINITION OF CULTURE

The pattern of basic assumptions that a given group has invented, discovered, or developed in learning to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid, and therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems.

### PURPOSE OF CULTURE STUDIES

The goal of the Digital Culture Research project is to get people to realize that it is their responsibility to understand the culture - to get involved - to work the network - to sign up - to get committed - make Digital work - to make Digital successful.

## THE CULTURE ASSUMPTIONS

The following list are some of the assumptions that support the culture. Remembering these can often make clear why Digital does business a certain way. These are not necessarily all the assumptions about the company. They are limited to beliefs about people, relationships, and business at the operating level. They were adapted from the works of Scorzoni, Dyer, and Schein.

### WE ARE ALL ONE FAMILY

Digital is a company where appropriate sub-cultural differences are encouraged, failure among members is tolerated to some extent, promotions are from within the company, people are encouraged to express their feelings and to give candid feedback when approached, all doors are open, informality and working through people (instead of memos) is encouraged, verbal commitments are to be kept.

### PEOPLE ARE CREATIVE, HARD WORKING, SELF-GOVERNING, AND CAN LEARN

People are encouraged to learn from experience, do-it-yourself career, learn by the sink or swim method with some support, be a self starter, create a job that is greater than a formal job description, push at the system from your position (bottom-up), respect the differences of others, find a way to enjoy work, take ownership, do the right thing.

### THE TRUTH & QUALITY COME FROM MULTIPLE VIEWPOINTS, FREE ENTERPRISE

People are all working at Digital to help the company produce good products and services and thus make money for the company. Individuals in the process of governing themselves have different ideas about how to proceed. Some people view this as conflict. Indeed there is some conflict. The basic idea is that we are all in this business to win, that requires buy-in from key areas, selling ideas to get support, confronting ideas that are not considered good for the final outcome, taking risks, tolerating mistakes (but not big ones), and accepting that this is a political world. Top management feels that they are not smart enough to know every detail. Top management is able to sort out ideas.

### SURVIVAL EQUALS RESPONSIVENESS TO CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

Working at Digital is fast paced, there are constant re-organizations, the matrix is the basis of management, things need to happen if you are to succeed, you will be judged by the results you obtain, you are expected to build and work within teams, proposals are to be clear and brief, there are turf issues to be worked through the management layers, to get success you have to solve cross-functional problems and time to market problems as well as produce.

## VALUES

### DO THE RIGHT THING

This term is a catch-all at Digital. It means to decide what is right for the corporation, the organization you are working in, and for yourself -- to commit to that right thing and to do it. It is possibly the most common phrase used in the corporation.

### INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM

People have the freedom to be themselves and to find out the best way of getting their work done. Sometimes a person's individual freedom conflicts with another's or an organization's needs. These are the places where negotiations take place. Individual freedom implies individuals taking responsibility for themselves.

### ENTREPRENEURS

This is the basic building block of the culture. The individual is an entrepreneur in a free enterprise system. Digital uses individual strengths for the good of the company by running many small businesses producing specific products. It is these products which Digital markets as single business to a free enterprise system, the world marketplace.

### RISK-TAKING

Individuals take risks to try out new ideas or to find solutions to a problem they see. There are ways to minimize risk or to ensure a greater degree of success. Once a commitment is made to risk there are ways to minimize failure.

### HONESTY

A person's word is all it takes to make a commitment for work in this company. A person's word is taken seriously. You are assumed to be honest until you prove otherwise. This value is a hiring criteria.

### QUALITY

Digital has always believed that the quality of its products have been its great strength. There are customer audits which substantiate this. Belief in quality is a hiring criteria.

### PROFIT

Digital is in the business of making money. It has always made money. Profit leads to growth but growth is not a value in itself. Profit leads to a variety of interesting jobs. Profit leads to company security and success.

### PERSONAL EXCELLENCE

Excellent work is what makes heroes. It is valued in people, in products, and in services. People want to produce excellent work and be praised by their peers for it.

## EXPRESSIONS

The following is a list of terms used at Digital. They are a clue to the nature of the way the culture works and the skills needed to operate within it. I assume that you already know the dictionary definition so I will provide the Digital viewpoint.

### APPRENTICESHIP

An informal process that occurs at all stages of people's careers when they try to do something new. They are encouraged to walk around and see what others are doing and what needs to be done. They develop relationships with people they contact and learn from them. Eventually they find how they can contribute. By this time they should have developed enough personal relationships to help if they get stuck. Everyone is expected to contribute to that process. People will even tell you who is and is not helpful.

Management jobs use the same process. This is the way planning, budgeting, and other administrative information is passed on. The development of the necessary political skills to survive is a part of this process.

You have succeeded in your apprenticeship when you usually get what you want. You have failed in your apprenticeship if you find that people start ignoring you, resources get harder and harder to obtain, and no one likes your ideas. Most people fall somewhere in the middle of the continuum.

### BEAT-UP

A person gets beat-up when they are overpowered by the person with whom they are interacting. It is not a pleasant experience.

### BUY-IN

The process of talking with interested parties to gather support for a project. When a party expresses interest in the job, buy-in can be achieved. Buy-in can be more powerful if the interested party provides 'real' support by being a part of a committee, providing resources or working difficult political situations. Sometimes buy-in requires horse-trading. Once buy-in is achieved periodic check-in with the interested party should be done to insure continued support.

### BURNOUT

A person is considered burned out when they are unable to contribute. Working too hard, worrying too much, stress, frustration, etc. cause burnout. Many times the manifestations are serious to the person involved. This person might also be called one of the 'walking- wounded'. Burnout will damage a personal reputation as people want to be sure they can rely on an individual.

## COALITION

An alliance of a group of people who are motivated with the same objective.

## COMMITTEES

Committees support a person in the performance of their task - they consist of interest parties from any organization. A committee is made up by invitation of the person who is responsible for the work. There is a belief that sitting on the right committee is important for buy-in and horsetrading in future projects as well as the one that is the subject of the committee. The work done by a committee can be of many kinds; brainstorming new ideas for a product, a dry run of a presentation, the writing of a document, testing out a new idea, designing the requirements of a product, etc. There is a belief that your product is as good as the committee you pick or who will sit on your committee. Committees only exist as long as they are needed and then they are disbanded. Other corporations would call this a task force.

## COST CENTER

Where your budgeted funds reside to support tasks to be done.

## CUSTOMER BASE

Your customer base can mean two things. First there is the external customer base for a given product or service. There are, however, some people, like the internal technical consultants, who maintain an internal customer base for their consulting relationships.

## DEC

A slang name of the company.

'digital'

Official slang name of the company.

## DO-IT-YOURSELF CAREER

An employee at Digital is expected to make their own career plans and to pursue them. The company is not responsible for creating your career path for you. Careers are made by having your ticket stamped. A service manager once told me that he and Ken Olsen had one basic thing in common, they both had gone as far in the company as they wanted to go and were happy with the job they each had.

## DOTTED-LINE

In matrix management the dotted-line is an expression for defining all the indirect people an individual reports to in the process of doing their job. The dotted-line reports are often people who require buy-in because they have some related responsibility to the product being developed.

## DOWNLOADING

Delegating.

## EMPIRE

See turf.

## FALLING INTO THE VALLEY

Feeling bad.

## FIRST NAME

Digital is an informal company. People are referred to by their first name. Informality is a support of self-direction. In Digital, people are more equal than in most companies.

## FIT

This is the term used to describe how well a person and a task or organization match skills. A good fit is when a person is happy in their organization and likes their task and produces.

## GROUP

The primary operating unit the people are formed in to get the basics of administration accomplished. This is usually the center of secretarial support, budget, paychecks, and appraisals. This is a person's primary committee. Most groups perform one basic function.

## HORSE-TRADING

When someone needs a resource or requires buy-in they may strike a deal with a person who they think is important to their project in terms of support or to obtain resources. Horse-trading means providing resources or support to someone in exchange for something (resources or support) that is needed for the success of the project. For example, you may provide a person to consult to a group in exchange for that group adding a feature to their project required to interface with your product.

## INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTOR

An individual contributor is a person who uses only their skills to produce for the good of the system.

## LATERAL

A horizontal job transfer.

## LOSING

Being unsuccessful, failure. A sure way to lose is not to sign-up.

## LOW BADGE NUMBERS

Badge numbers are assigned upon the day of employment in ascending sequential order. Those people with low badge numbers have been around for a long time and are given some respect for survival and accumulated knowledge.

## MATRIX

Digital is a matrix organization. This matrix organization is supported by committees and networking. An individual may find that they report to one person for one thing and to another for another product. Managing ambiguity is often necessary when dealing with more than one manager.

## MILL

Corporate headquarters, an old woolen mill in Maynard, Massachusetts.

## NETWORKING

A person creates individual support networks both in person and over the established automated networks for a variety of reasons. They are a way that gossip is spread throughout the company. They provide personal friendship support. They provide political safety and support. They are the way that understanding of the culture is spread. Networks are also a way to find out who requires buy-in on your project and to keep political associations current.

## NOP

This term actually means no operation. It is used to refer to people or teams who are perceived as not producing as well as they could or who are not considered to be producing a product that is for the good of the company.

## OPEN-DOOR

The door of anyone in this company is open to anyone who wants to discuss anything about the company or its products. The key to using the open-door is in making sure that you need the person behind the door and that they will need to hear what you are discussing.

## ORGANIZATION

Organizations are made up of groups. This is the way one refers to generic areas of the company; ex., sales organization, marketing organization, engineering organization.

## ORIGINAL EQUIPMENT MANUFACTURER (OEM)

OEMs take the products that Digital produces and make them a part of their own system and sell it to a customer. Sometimes these OEM systems are in competition with Digital systems. That is accepted by the company. OEMs were the first major customer base Digital had and still comprise a large customer base.

## OUTPLACEMENT

When you find that your job has disappeared seemingly overnight and you have to find a new one immediately. This is usually done to someone who has a bad reputation within a group. Sometimes the person finds that they have been given to another group without their consent. This is most frequently resorted to after extensive attempts have been made to place the person in a good fit without success.

## OWNERSHIP

You own the piece of work for which you are responsible. This applies to every job, no matter how small. It is your responsibility to decide how to get the information you need and how to satisfy your objectives and produce. You are also responsible for letting those who depend upon your work know in reasonable time what problems you encounter and how they can be solved. There is a lot of latitude given (individual freedom) to you to support you in your responsibility. You own your own success or failure. A Digital manager once said, "If you learn nothing else at this company, learn that you can do a competent job. No one does that for you. No one can keep you from doing your job."

## OVERLOAD

When a person takes on too much responsibility. Continuing in this state for long will bring burnout. One way out of this state is downloading. Sometimes perspective is all that is needed to redefine the load.

## PERSONAL REPUTATION

In Digital your personal reputation opens the doors you need to obtain the resources and support you need to accomplish your task. Your personal reputation can get bad marks when you are associated with a project that failed or when you burn out. Some other causes of a bad reputation are lack of honesty, not being supportive, only being a taker, failure to produce, and being negative. Some causes of a good reputation are consistently producing, quality, honesty, being supportive, good people skills, and reliability. It is a good idea to make sure that you produce something tangible often to assure that your personal reputation is kept clean.

## PRE-SELL

Getting support for an important idea through informal meetings before the formal presentation of the idea to assure it will be well received and that all the problems have been worked out. This is a way of reducing risk.

## PROMOTION

A vertical job transfer.

## PROPOSAL

The way to get your ideas presented to someone for buy-in. These can be formal or informal depending upon the situation. They are expected to be simple and clear.

## PUSH BACK

When a person is presenting their ideas and another person reacts with their response, the reacting person is pushing back. Another meaning is when an idea is presented to a superior and given no support, the proposer might push back by going around the superior using the open door to continue selling the plan hoping to get support at a higher level. Pushing back means to get a communication and to react to it through action.

## PUSH/PULL

A term used to describe the interactions which take place between people at Digital in the process of exchanging ideas about the work.

## RESPONSIBILITY

Individuals at Digital are responsible for their own actions and for the production of the work they committed to do. See ownership.

## RIDING THE WAVE

At Digital when you do something that is perceived by people as successful they will approach you for your support of their work or ideas. This could come in the form of an offer to work in their group. Often it comes in the form of internal consultation, networking, or committee requests. Since individuals are responsible for deciding how they will spend their time, you will be encouraged to support some of these requests to expand your sphere of influence. As you are more successful and well known you get more and more requests. Hence the term riding the wave. The secret to riding the wave is to find a way to say no gracefully when you need to and to take the opportunities that will further your ends as well as the company's. The volume can be overwhelming. This is one of the causes of burnout. It is a good idea to manage this area closely.

## RISK-TAKING

There are two kinds of risk in this company. First is the risk that individuals take when they see something that they want to work on and they sign-up to work on it. If their work is successful, then they may be given more and more resources and the risk becomes greater. There are people now below them who are betting you will be successful and they with you. Also as you grow the stake that the company places in your work is greater so there is risk involved there. There are ways to minimize risk. You can use buy-in to assure that there is a large base supporting you. You can use your networks for review to assure that what you are producing is going to be well received. Some people perceive a situation as risky where others do not. Risk seems to be a state of mind. As one gets higher up the ladder the risks are greater. Overload may be an important factor to consider.

## SAFETY-NET

This is a concept that if you make a mistake or find yourself in a job that is a bad fit that you will be taken care of. This net is real. I have seen it used to support an employee who burned out and one who made a bad political mistake. I have also seen it work to get someone out of a bad job fit. People in one's network seem to be the basic element of the safety net. But it fans out from there into the secondary relationships of the networks of the people in the person's primary network.

## SELF-DIRECTION

Digital believes that people should propose what they are going to produce and have the responsibility for seeing that the product is produced. The person is given quite a lot of latitude in the process of production of the product -- from getting the resources, obtaining buy-in, developing the correct organization, and organizational structure to support the product, etc. This is self-direction.

## SELLING

The primary activity an employee is engaged in when they are trying to get buy-in.

## SIGN-UP

This is the process a person goes through individually when they commit to a project and give more than the standard work energy to it. Sign-up means that they are committed to their work emotionally and will work that extra bit to make their contribution the right thing. Managers try to get sign-up from their people because they believe it makes the final outcome more successful with higher quality.

## SINK OR SWIM SURVIVAL

A new employee is left to their own devices often for months and

is expected to sink or swim, i.e., find something that is the right thing to do. It is considered a compliment in some areas of the company if your boss leaves you alone. It may mean you are swimming fine and are being left to your own devices.

#### SLOT

Job position, used when there is an opening that needs to be filled.

#### SOLID LINE

The manager to whom you report directly and the people who report directly to you. This is usually your group.

#### SPACE

To give individuals the necessary freedom and support to work out their own problems their own way.

#### SPEAR THROWING

Attacking the ideas of another employee through criticism or negative comments made behind their back.

#### STOCK OPTION

The ultimate reward for success. These are unpublished and much sought after. They are considered to be a good indicator of an individual's value to the corporation over time. Discussion of who gets what is a taboo subject. Receiving an option for the first time can be seen as a sign of acceptance of the value of the individual's worth.

#### TASK FORCES

See committees.

#### TEAM CONTRIBUTOR/MEMBER

A person who works with others to produce a product. Cooperation and good people skills are required as part of the job to keep the team producing quality products in a timely manner for the company.

#### TICKET STAMPING

One way of building your personal reputation is to get your ticket stamped. That means to work in a variety of areas to learn what function they have to the company and to be able to speak authoritatively about what their needs are so that you will reduce the risk of producing a product or service that no one wants. Each new area in which you work is worth one stamp on your ticket. The actual ticket is mythological. It can be thought of as an internal resume of your work at Digital. The value of a ticket varies with the quality of the experience behind the stamps.

#### TIN CUPPING

Asking for funds to support your project.

#### TRANSITION

A state of employment when the employee has no formal job but to look for another job within the company. The outgoing group manager the employees in this state separately until a new job is found. This often includes retraining.

#### TURF

A person's sphere of direct influence. This can be people, resources or a technical area.

#### UNFUNDING

Your resources are taken away from you.

#### WALKING WOUNDED

This is an alternate term for burnout. It is used more often when the reference is that the system is the cause of the burnout rather than the individual.

#### WINDOW-IN-THE-DOOR POLICY

There is a myth that a couple was found engaging in activities that are frowned upon by the corporation behind closed doors, thus there is now a policy that all doors will have windows.

#### WINNING

Being successful.

#### WOODS MEETINGS

This is the term for meetings held off site so a group of people can discuss an important issue without being disturbed. They are not necessarily held in the woods.

#### WORKING AT HOME

Many employees have some equipment in their home so they can work at home when they need to. Reasons for working at home include: needing a quiet place to be uninterrupted, the ability to work at night without having to go to a facility, the ability to continue contributing when you are unable to come to work for some reason, personal preference, trying out a system as if you are a customer.

#### WORKING THE SYSTEM

A person works the Digital system when they engage in trying to get their idea sold. It is especially interesting is when customers work the system better than the employees.

## THE DIGITAL DANCE

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Every person within Digital can be thought of as a customer to everyone else. Every person within Digital can be thought of as an entrepreneur to everyone else selling their product or service to everyone else.

Employees trade technical skills and form teams, hence the terms buy-in, tin-cupping, horse-trading, etc. Outside customers are a part of the system and they have their own networks, getting the employees to sign-up to work their issues. The reverse is also true. Employees get customers to sign-up to work issues.

### THE CORPORATION PROVIDES

MATRIX

DIVERSE STRUCTURES

DIVERSE PROCESSES

FIRST NAME

OPEN DOOR

SELF DIRECTION

CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

### CULTURE PROVIDES

NETWORKS

COMMITTEES

DO IT YOURSELF CAREER

SAFETY NETS

BUY IN



## NINE POINTS TO YOUR JOB

1. Do you know the goal of your work?
2. Are there actions defined which will lead to obtaining that goal in the required timeframe within resource limitations?  
Do these actions indeed lead to the goal?
3. Are there measurements in place which will use to measure progress? Are there milestone time periods set up which you will use to apply these measurements? Do the milestones and measures correlate to concrete deliverables so management will be able to see that you are producing what you committed to produce with progress within bounds?
4. Do you have an intact network of others in the company who are also working in the same and related technical areas: of others in the outside community to stay current with the state of possible art, and of supporters for work or personal crises?
5. Do you have a strategy in place to help your manager and group be successful? Do you know your role in your group and are you playing it to everyone's best advantage?
6. Do you know what you are getting out of your job for you?
7. Do you effectively let your organization know that you do good work and are a good team player?
8. Do you know how to accept, give and process both negative and positive feedback? Do your actions match your knowledge level?
9. Do you know what you will get if you are successful?

## PERSONAL ISSUES

### VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DIGITAL

I have seen, experienced, and heard many references to the scenario called the 'valley of the shadow of Digital'. Figure 1 provides an illustration of this cultural myth. This experience seems to happen not just to new hires, but to anyone who tries out a new idea. The scenario works as follows:

Individuals enter at point A. They have just been hired into a group or are going to try out a new task. They receive a lot of encouragement. This is called the 'walk on water' point of entry.

For a while they vacillate in area AB while learning the environment, deciding exactly what they will do and what they will propose first. Finally they reach point B, 'decision'. They have decided what they will do and have presented a proposal.

Feedback is given to the employee. Not all the feedback is positive. The employee may even be beat-up.

Some people did the right homework before their proposal and do not fare too badly. They go on, selecting the feedback that is relevant to them and proceed to begin their task without falling into the valley.

For others, however, the experience was not so good. They may have been inexperienced in the Digital system and made a proposal that was not well received. Others may have made their presentation too soon or did not do the right homework. This can happen easily in a do-it-yourself atmosphere. For whatever reason, the meeting was not fun and the employee falls into 'the valley', point C.

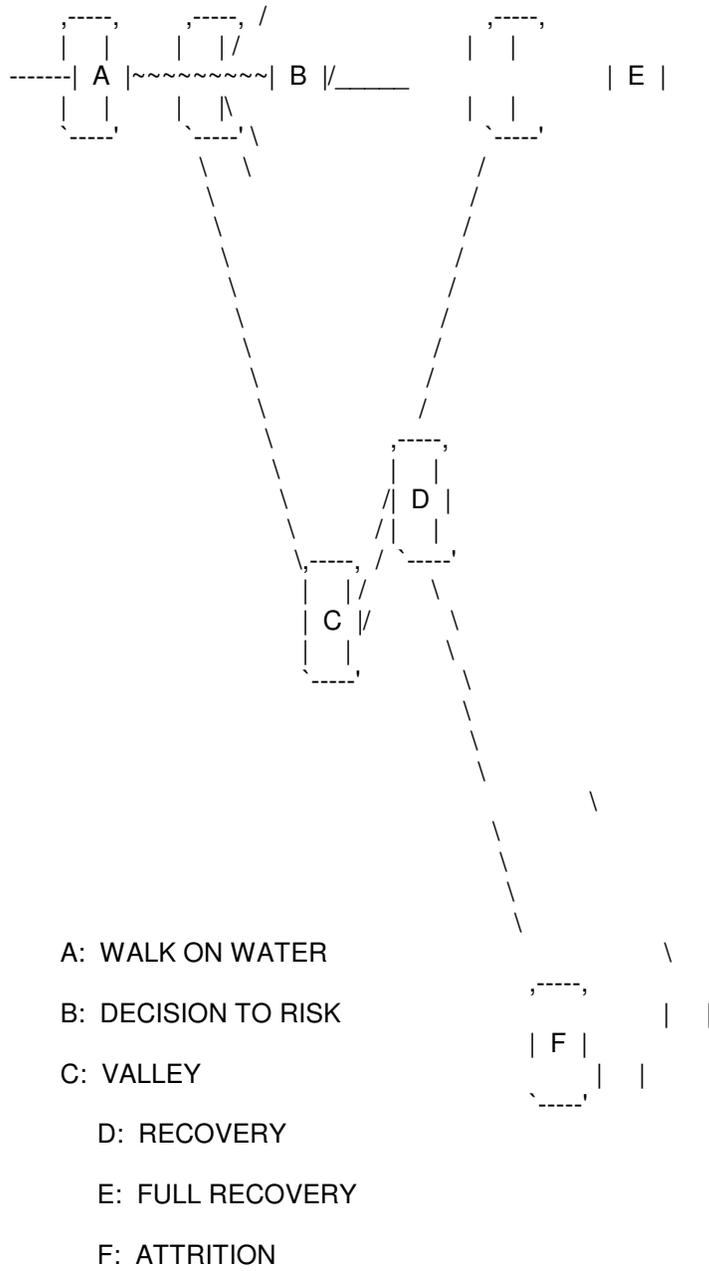
Time passes. Perspective is gained. The employee is beginning to think about what they could have done to avoid making the same mistakes. Point D, 'initial recovery', is gained. The employee does not have to do much to get to this point. Just the passage of time will cause some better feelings. Usually, other employees will console the injured person telling their own experiences which serve to let the employee know they are not alone.

What is crucial at this time are the decisions that the employee is making about the company and their role in the future. Some people do not risk again. Some people choose to update their resume and leave the company, point F. The attrition rate is low. Most people get to point E, 'full recovery', and find better ways to interact with the system, a wiser employee.

I personally have experienced the valley. I am aware of how my assumptions about business caused me to misread the Digital system. I have since done more homework about buy-in and other forms of support within the Digital culture. This has helped me avoid extreme negative experiences. All negative experiences do not go away. However, they can be tempered with wisdom making recovery easier.

FIGURE 1

VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEC



## WHERE THE CREATIVE ENERGY FLOWS

In looking at the Digital culture I found recurring patterns of effective and ineffective behavior. Describing each pattern by stating its extremes made each one clear. The various patterns interact with each other.

The flow of energy and interactions are constantly changing. Most people show responses from both sides of the list -- they fall somewhere in the middle ranges. The secret to success is to keep most of your energy positive and directed toward whatever it takes to produce quality work. I have also found that I can use my peaks and valleys to direct myself to improved performance within the culture.

It is important to understand that these are not necessarily the energy patterns that a person would experience in interacting with another culture.

PRODUCTIVE RESPONSES -----	NON-PRODUCTIVE RESPONSES -----
Produces good quality work	May or may not produce with questionable quality
Teamwork - working to positive ends	Conflict - work faltering
Supporting people through constructive criticism	Beating up people
Gets paid to play and call it work	Works for a living
Acceptance of differences - Individuals doing what they need to succeed	Judgment of differences- My way is the only way
Being responsible - do the right thing	Being a victim -"not knowing what is the right thing"
Takes care of self	Something always seems to wrong with self
Takes initiative	Doesn't act - might consume the time of others negatively
Development of systems of integrated quality products	Development of products that are not compatible with systems
Development of systems that are appropriate to the customer base	Development of systems that are inappropriate to the customer base

Chooses which waves to ride and how far	Rides all (burnout) or no waves (NOP)
Lets safety net keep valleys shallow - learns from mistakes	Falls deep into valleys - keeps making the same mistakes
Can work the matrix - manages ambiguity	Gets stuck in contradictions among managers and peers

## DILEMMAS

The following dilemmas are real to an employee within Digital. These dilemmas are complicated by the fact that old responses from other experiences in more structured environments (work, school, etc.) may not be appropriate here. There are no right answers. These dilemmas do occur. Expect to deal with them.

You see a task you would like to do. You have the time. How do you go about getting the assignment?

You have been working very long hours for some time, and yet feel you are only able to keep your head above water. You know you cannot carry on like this for much longer. What do you do?

You feel strongly that some process or philosophy in your group is not appropriate. Your supervisor and manager disagree with you. What do you do?

You are given a task but no resources or authority to handle work as you see it. How do you succeed?

You have an idea but no one listens to you. You're convinced it is good. What do you do?

You see a task you would like to do. You are working to the max. now. You do not like what you are doing as much as the other task. What do you do?

You are working on your task and find a problem in an associated area. How do you deal with your knowledge?

You do not believe in the assignment you are given. You think it is basically wrong. You are told it is important. How do you handle this?

You've been on the job a few weeks and still do not know what you are supposed to do. Punting has gotten you nowhere. You are told to make a proposal. How do you get the information you need to make it successful? How do you get the support you need to get it accepted?

Your manager moves on to another job. You felt that many doors were open to you as a result of this person's credibility. You feel that now the success of your work may be in jeopardy. How do you go about reopening the doors you require to keep your task moving in a positive direction?

There's been a reorganization again. How do you go about finding out what will mean to you in your task?

## RESOURCES

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### WHAT IF YOUR CULTURAL EXPERIENCE DOES NOT MATCH THIS DESCRIPTION AND YOU WISH IT WOULD?

The following advice has been given to me by a number of Digital managers. There are many subcultures within Digital. The experience a person has with one may not be the same in another part of the company. If you are feeling that you have missed the essence of the cultural advantages to your creativity in your group then you should begin by asking yourself the following questions:

What would you like to have that you do not have now?

Can it come from the area where you currently work?

What do your peers think?

What do your managers think?

What's the roadblock?

Is it a 'fit' problem?

What actions can you be responsible for to make the changes you desire?

Interacting with the environment is the best way to gain knowledge on how to make it work for you. Give it a try.

WHO CAN INITIATE CHANGE IF IT IS NEEDED?

You can.

WHO CAN PROPOSE NEW PRODUCTS, PROCESSES, OR SERVICES?

You can.

MESSAGES TO DIGITAL EMPLOYEES  
FROM DIGITAL HEROES

In November, 1981 a memo called 'talking values' was prepared from some published speeches and interviews of early architects. It gives a clear description of what is valued in a Digital employee. This section contains excerpts from this paper.

"A DEC type is someone who is innovative, somebody who is enthusiastic, someone who is willing to work here, somebody who isn't hung up on structure, somebody who has absolutely no concern with educational background."

"We demand an awful lot of our people and they demand an awful lot of themselves."

"A core of the environment is individual commitment to whatever you are doing and a lot of integrity to achieve a very high level of expectations for yourself."

"We are all learning, we are all going to make mistakes and the only important thing is to know you made a mistake, know what you did wrong so you can go on."

"He who plans executes. You propose a plan and when you fail, you know you fail; but at least it was your plan and you don't fail against somebody else's plan."

"You should always be selling your plans and programs as opposed to saying: Do it! People should always be allowed to ask why."

"We want people to feel free to go and openly challenge a decision without feeling that they will be fired."

"Hassle is the price of an organizational structure as we have it. For those people who don't like it, it's very frustrating. It depends where you want your frustration: upfront where you get people to agree with you, so that you have support, or later because you've got so many people upset with you."

"If you wrap those 3 or 4 things together (openness, honesty, success, fairness) you can sum it up in one word and it is caring. Caring about your job. Caring about the people that work for you. Caring about yourself."

YOU CAN SUCCEED BY

TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOURSELF

MEET PERSONAL GOALS WITHIN ORGANIZATION GOALS

PICK TASKS THAT MEET LONG-RANGE PERSONAL GOALS

KNOW WHO YOU ARE CONSCIOUSLY

TAKE CARE OF YOUR PERSONAL SYSTEM

GROW CONTINUALLY - PERSONALLY AND TECHNICALLY

MAKE SURE YOU PRODUCE - FIND A WAY

MAKE SURE YOUR PERSONAL PRODUCT IS THE "RIGHT THING"

KEEP YOUR ENERGY POSITIVE

BE YOUR OWN HERO

This data was obtained by asking alot of old timers and correlating the results.

## TEAMS CAN SUCCEED BY

ESTABLISHING A COMMON VISION

HAVING A PLAN

UNDERSTANDING & VALUING THE:  
STRENGTHS  
WEAKNESSES  
STYLES OF MEMBERS

ESTABLISHING COMMUNICATION PATTERNS & USING THEM

KNOWING WHEN TO SAY YES & NO

CHECKING IN WITH EACH OTHER FROM TIME TO TIME

KNOWING WHEN TO STOP COMPROMISING

BRINGING ON BOARD ALL MEMBERS YOU NEED INCLUDING REPS FROM  
INTERFACING TEAMS

SETTING APPROPRIATE GOALS

MANAGEMENT IS WORKING MEMBERS OF THE TEAM

TAKING ADVANTAGE OF TEAM'S COLLECTIVE NETWORK

EACH PERSON TAKES RESPONSIBILITY FOR OWN SELF

EACH PERSON DOES WHAT IT TAKES RESPECTING THE BOUNDRIES OF EACH  
OTHER

ESTABLISHING MOTIVATING MEASURES & KEEPING THEM - REWARD

TAKING RISKS

KNOWING WHEN TO FOCUS IN & PRODUCE

MAKE SURE YOU SHIP ON TIME WITHIN SPEC

This data was obtained by asking alot of successful Digital managers and correlating the results.

MANAGERS CAN SUCCEED BY  
UNDERSATANDING THAT

NEEDS -- ARE THE BASIS FOR MARKET REWARDS FOR ADDING VALUE

GOALS -- DRIVE THE ORGANIZATION AND THE PROCESS

STRATEGY -- OFTEN DETERMINES DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SUCCESS AND FAILURE

ORGANIZATION -- JUST A TOOL

PLANS AND BUDGETS -- DRIVE ACTION AND INTEGRATE THE ORGANIZATION

IMPLEMENTATION AND CONTROL -- MAKING IT HAPPEN BY INSPECTION RATHER  
THAN EXPECTATION

ACCOUNTING, MEASURING AND REPORTING -- COMPARING ACTUAL PERFORMANCE TO  
PLAN(i.e., FEEDBACK)

REVIEW -- DECIDING WHAT HAPPENED, WHAT IT MEANS, AND WHAT SHOULD BE DONE

GOALS -- CONFIRM BY THE CYCLE OR REDEFINED

This data was provided by John Fisher from his Professional Controllership Program.

## TOMORROW

### OBSERVATIONS ABOUT DIGITAL'S FUTURE, CULTURE, AND CHALLENGES

This section includes comments from employees who see a vision of Digital as it grows and evolves into its second 30 years.

"Digital's work force has been changing rapidly due to the company's continuing growth and evolving business and shifts in society as a whole. These changes call for increased emphasis on our traditional values, greater flexibility in the ways we attract and retain employees, and more management focus on international, cross-cultural and cross-organizational issues."

"Digital's business is becoming more service-oriented. At one time a large segment of Digital's employee population consisted of hourly employees in manufacturing. Now, the manufacturing business is much less labor-intensive, and its service business is expanding."

"Digital's business is becoming more international. Next year, revenues from outside the U.S. may exceed U.S. revenues for the first time in the company's history.... International concerns will be more important not just to senior managers, but to middle managers as well."

"In the company's first 30 years. only 1000 people retired. It may take less than five years to reach 2000 retirees."

"We have gone from being a matrix organization to a networking/networked organization."

"The lines between our employees, suppliers, and customers are blurring. The lines between regular and temporary employees and contractors/consultants are blurring. The distinctions between technologies are blurring, as are those between workspaces: office, conference room, classroom are becoming metamorphic, and thus interchangeable."

"Information is no longer hoarded, it is shared. Knowledge is not exclusive, it is inclusive. Expertise is not concentrated, it is dispersed."

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