

Unless we did some other form of deciphering first, we would not know which dimensions are salient for the organization and part of their deep cultural "DNA" and which dimensions are basically irrelevant. If we used one of the existing surveys, we would not know whether or not we had picked the right one in terms of what was important in that organization. Each survey would claim to analyze "the culture" or important "dimensions of the culture," but there would be no *a priori* way of knowing how to evaluate those claims.

- **Employees may not be motivated to be honest.** Employees are always encouraged to be frank and honest in their answers, usually supplemented by the assurance that their answers will be kept completely confidential. The fact that such assurances need to be given in the first place implies that our original assumption is that employees would not be open if their answers were known. Because culture is a living reality, we ought to use a method that allows people to be open. Too many questions in the surveys require evaluations and judgments that cause employees to be careful in how they answer.
- **Employees may not understand the questions or interpret them differently.** "There is a clear strategy for the future" presumes that the employees have similar definitions of the word "strategy." If we cannot make this assumption, then amalgamating their answers does not make sense. It is therefore very difficult to infer a "shared" concept from individual responses.
- **What is measured may be accurate but superficial.** It is difficult to get at the deeper levels of a culture from paper and pencil perceptions. Culture is an intrinsically shared phenomenon that only manifests itself in interaction, so whatever dimensions are measured by the survey are bound to be superficial.
- **The sample of employees surveyed may not be representative of the key culture carriers.** Most survey administrators assume that if they have done a careful job of sampling and testing their sample against total organizational demographics, that they can validly describe the whole based on the sample. This logic may not work for culture because the driving forces in a culture can be the executive subculture, and, as Martin has pointed out, the culture may be fragmented and