

# EVERCHANGE<sup>SM</sup>

## Strategic Leadership

### Audit your Organization

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To Students: This workbook is designed to help you complete the analysis, writing and presentation(s) of the assigned cases. It is imperative for both your individual and team performance to complete the audit as a basis for making your final recommendations to the class.

1. Complete the workbook sections (e.g., pages 7,8,9,10,11,12,23).
2. Identify where your organization sits on the Environmental Impact "Creating a Market Focus – The Uncertainty Factors" (e.g., pages 3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10, 11,12) and by plotting a point on "An Organization's External Environment" (page 12).
3. Identify where your organization sits on the "Business as Usual is Not an Option" (e.g., pages 13,14,15) and "Organization's Internal Orientation To Change".
4. Complete the "Organizational Snapshot" (e.g., pages 18,19,20,21, 22 23).
5. Using the information from items # 1-4 above, use this information as a basis for your team report/paper and the development of a point presentation of the organization you have selected speaking how they scored as an ECO (pages 19-22).

## Execution Excellence

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“Over 64% of C-level executives from 250 mid-sized to large companies in the United States and the European Union have said that being able to execute, to react quickly to changing business opportunities and technologies, is critical to their success. Yet nearly 80% of them said that it is nearly impossible to achieve.”

*NewsBlaze, 2006*

### Barriers to Effective Execution

- Strategic Planning is a “Corporate Exercise”
- No link exists between strategic planning and operational implementation
- Appropriate goals and milestones are not established
- Organizations re-invent the plan each year instead of reconciling it with past plans
- Functional/department plans are not synchronized
- People developing the plan are not responsible for executing the plan
- No mechanisms to expeditiously monitor execution success against performance expectations
- Ineffective communication

## The Ever-Changing Organization (ECO)

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An Ever-Changing Organization (ECO) is an organization skilled at creating, acquiring, and transferring knowledge at the individual, team, process, and organizational levels. In an ECO, the organization and all individual members and teams are adept at modifying their behavior to reflect new knowledge and insights and making the learning available for use by others. The ECO executive team provides an integrated or systems approach, dedicated to developing both the organization and individuals to achieve their respective goals.

### Why Build ECO Capability?

Two assumptions that ECI makes is that change will continue and that very few organizations are prepared to deal with its ramifications. Some of the consequences that are inherent in a rapidly changing environment include:

- Performance will likely suffer unless capacity is added.

- The environment will demand more capacity for change than the organization has developed.
- Too much energy will be diverted from critical tasks to reacting to changes that organizations are ill equipped to deal with.
- Current processes will be overwhelmed and become ineffective.

## **ECO Capability Creates an Agile Organization**

Agility is not just about speed of response; rather it's related to rapid adaptation. In other words, it is the capacity to respond to new opportunities, customer changing requirements, new technologies, and changes to industry structures.

The foundation of an agile organization is the processes and structures that facilitate speed and adaptation. They are able to deliver a coordinated effort that is capable of achieving competitive performance in a highly dynamic and unpredictable environment.

To stay competitive, organizations regardless of their business, need to make significant changes quickly and effectively.

- A manufacturer in the automotive industry may need to introduce six models per year rather than two.
- A retailer needs a real-time supply chain to resolve emerging inventory problems.
- A communications company must create a myriad of new, content-rich services to ensure customer loyalty.
- A brokerage firm requires systems that can adapt quickly to a stream of new regulatory requirements.
- An insurance company needs to streamline its claims processes by using digital imaging technologies to quickly capture and store information.
- A bank that just when through an acquisition must consolidate all

## **Creating a Market Focus – The Uncertainty Factors**

### **Macro Forces for Change**

A clear Market Focus is critical to becoming an Ever-Changing Organization (ECO). From the perspective of an ECO organization "Market Focus" means understanding the degree of change and uncertainty that exists in the environment. As uncertainty increases, the need for flexibility increases along with the need to build operating practices, policies and systems that encourage and support change. Working to become an ECO is not an option but a requirement in highly uncertain business environments.

There is a myriad of components in the environment that are likely to generate forces for change. Included are areas such as changing technology, customer expectations, competitors, suppliers, regulatory agencies, and so on. Organizations will have to address the forces that come from these areas whether or not they are aware of or prepared for the changes required.

## **Environmental Factors**

Developing capabilities of an ECO organization requires a fundamental awareness of environmental factors that impact the marketplace. This includes understanding the trends of those factors as they relate to the organization's business and the probability of change in the future. Recognize that the environment is dynamic and will continue to change.

Everyone has experienced the ongoing explosion of technology and its application in nearly all aspects of an organization's business. Consider areas of computer hardware and software and the incredible growth of the Internet and World Wide Web.

Below are the key environmental factors for determining the ECO needs of the organization.

### **Rate of Technological Change**

As the rate of technological change in an organization's environment increases, so must the rate at which the organization is capable of anticipating and adapting to new technology.

### **Product/Service Life Cycles**

The life cycle of products or services is another major factor influencing environmental uncertainty and the need to become an ECO. Life cycle refers to the period of time from the introduction of a product or service to the point at which it becomes obsolete for use in new applications by customers. As life cycles decrease uncertainty increases and the need for creating increased ECO capacity goes up.

A number of forces in the environment can influence the overall life cycle of new products in a business. For example, customer demands for new products to meet their strategic needs. Product and service life cycles increase uncertainty and increase the need for ECO capabilities.

### **Rate of Market Growth**

Dealing with rapid growth, either of the company or the company's markets, adds substantially to the uncertainty of the environment. With rapid market growth also come a number of testy financial issues that add uncertainty. For example, make or buy decisions involve a number of key strategic questions as well as issues related to cash flow, availability of financing, and so on.

Another uncertainty added by rapid market growth is deciding which parts of the market to serve. For example, whether to compete in all of segments of the broader market or focus on more limited, niche markets.

Rapid growth demands answers to some tough questions...

- When and how should we add capacity or people or facilities?
- Will the growth continue and for how long?

- What share of market can we expect to have or gain?

## **Changing Customer Requirements and Expectations**

In the period of rapid industrial growth that followed World War II, organizations were able to sell virtually everything they could make. If costs increased, prices were raised. If quality was poor, customers ordered more inventory and returned faulty product. Customers had learned to expect little from their suppliers. Although they were never happy with this situation, there were generally no alternatives available.

This environment changed for most businesses. International competitors invaded markets previously owned almost exclusively by American businesses. The Japanese, for example, were forced to rebuild most of their industry from the ground up. They realized that the option to compete with Americans on the basis of productivity was not viable. The direction they selected was to rebuild their businesses with a focus on quality and meeting customer requirements.

Defects that had been presumed to be “natural” were shown to be excessive and unnecessary. Customers began to realize that it costs less, not more, to produce quality products and services. The expectations of customers and consumers were raised and continue to grow today.

Failure to meet customer’s higher expectations means loss of business to competitors who do. And meeting higher expectations is not a one-time thing. This is not just a blip about which one can say, “This too shall pass”. It has become a permanent part of virtually all business environments.

## **Competitive Situation**

A number of factors in the competitive situation an organization faces contribute to the level of uncertainty of the environment. In general, the number, size, market share, and product leadership position of competitors influence uncertainty. Larger numbers of competitors all scramble to grow and increase market share.

Larger competitors have more resources with which to compete. Smaller competitors face more uncertainty and may find it necessary to focus on narrower, niche markets. Product leadership can be a significant advantage. It provides leverage to lead further as followers’ rush to catch up, only to find the leader moving further ahead again. Intel and Microsoft offer great examples of this leverage in recent history.

Another issue in the environment that impacts uncertainty is the vulnerability of attack from others. For example, the threat of attack by competitors using different materials or new design or development processes or technology can significantly increase environmental uncertainty.

## **Globalization of Businesses**

Businesses that operate in local or geographically limited arenas generally are functioning in an environment of less uncertainty. As a business’s territory expands, many things change.

- Direct customer contact is limited.

- Customer expectations are more varied and requirements for products and services also tend to be more variable.
- Selling in different cultures requires understanding and adapting to the ways of doing business in the foreign environment. Simply transplanting native operating systems and management practices to foreign environments is a formula for disaster.
- Consideration for increasing uncertainty in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: *“At the heart of the current crises of political leadership with a liberal democratic model is the tension that defines the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: the tension between the economic benefits of international cooperation and integration, on the one hand, and the political urge for sovereignty, on the other.”* (WSJ, 12.9.18)

## **Application Base of Products or Services**

In environments with a widely varied set of customers and applications, environmental uncertainty increases. Implications for flexibility in design for ease of application vs. customization for specific applications vs. creation of a range of products or services must be considered in product strategies.

Understanding the specific demands of various market segments may lead to the need for specialists oriented both to the product and to the market segment. Along with the addition of specialists come additional costs, not only for the people but also for their travel and the ongoing training required to keep them current on the products and their applications.

## **Access to Information**

In more certain environments it is much easier to gather market intelligence or to assess the likely response to a decision or strategic direction. As the size and geographic dispersion of the customer base increases, uncertainty increases. As the number of competitors and the variety of options available to customers increases uncertainty increases even further.

In more uncertain environments, much more effort is required to gather market intelligence regarding competitive direction or the overall needs of the customer base. Feedback is more difficult to obtain and more time consuming to evaluate.

As additional mechanisms are created to collect data and feedback, the organization must also add resources to process and interpret the data. Without such capabilities the organization accumulates data but very little intelligence and their ability to cope with the additional uncertainty is diminished.

## **Environmental Impact of Business**

Uncertainty has been added to the external environment of many businesses by the growing concerns for our overall environment, both physical and social. Advocacy groups such as those associated with Greenpeace or the Sierra Club are visible and powerful forces pressuring organizations to change their behavior.

## Assessing Environmental Impact

Part 1: **CEO up at night**

Determine which factors have the greatest impact on your organization and then answer the following questions for each factor.

### Rate of Technological Change

What evidence do you have that this factor is, or is not influencing your business?

60% of sales was online

INTERCAFIS

How will this factor impact your business in the future?

DECREASE THE NUMBER TRAVEL AGENTS / INCREASE CUSTOMER SERVICE

### Product/Service Life Cycles

What evidence do you have that this factor is, or is not influencing your business?

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How will this factor impact your business in the future?

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### Rate of Market Growth

What evidence do you have that this factor is, or is not influencing your business?

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How will this factor impact your business in the future?

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**Changing Customer Requirements and Expectations**

What evidence do you have that this factor is, or is not influencing your business?

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How will this factor impact your business in the future?

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**Competitive Situation**

What evidence do you have that this factor is, or is not influencing your business?

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How will this factor impact your business in the future?

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**Globalization of Business and Markets**

What evidence do you have that this factor is, or is not influencing your business?

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How will this factor impact your business in the future?

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**Application Base of Products or Services**

What evidence do you have that this factor is, or is not influencing your business?

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How will this factor impact your business in the future?

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Use this page for further notes:

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**Access to Information**

What evidence do you have that this factor is, or is not influencing your business?

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How will this factor impact your business in the future?

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**Environmental Impact of Business**

What evidence do you have that this factor is, or is not influencing your business?

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How will this factor impact your business in the future?

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**Part 2:**

Determine which factor has the greatest impact on your organization and how you can address its potential impact.

Which factor has the greatest impact on your business?

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What two recommendations would you make to turn this factor from a potential liability to an opportunity?

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**Part 3:**

1. Determine the uncertainty in your organization's environment. How would you characterize your overall external business environment or marketplace? In other words, does your organization's position relative to competitors in the marketplace exist with high uncertainty OR low uncertainty?

Responses towards the left end of the scale suggest that your organization and its competitors exist in an environment that is relatively more certain and stable than many others. More traditional ways of organizing and managing are generally adequate for success in these environments. However, as you move to the right you are describing an environment that is, or will become, more unstable and uncertain.

2. Please write down, as factually as possible, things you know or have experienced, that contribute to your rating of the level of uncertainty in your organization's environment.

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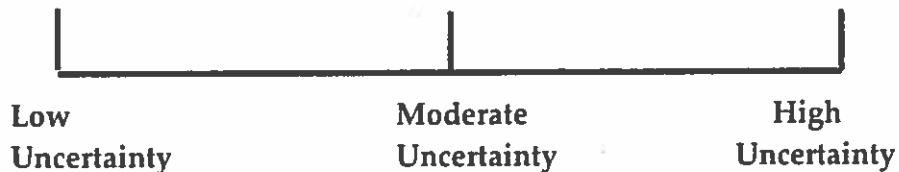
## **Business as Usual is Not an Option**

### **Implication of External Environment**

*"As environmental uncertainty increases, the need to develop the capabilities of an Ever-Changing Organization also increases!"*

A primary implication of this statement is that it is important to examine the level of uncertainty in the business environment. This means understanding not only the current pressures for change but also the extent to which these pressures have changed and will continue to change in the future. It is difficult to see the level of capability needed as an ECO without a clear picture of the environment and its trends.

### **An Organization's External Environment**



### **An Organization's Internal Orientation**



On the orientation to change scale, assessments locate the organization at some position on the scale. Where the organization needs to be is primarily influenced by the uncertainty of the business environment. "Business as usual" means the absence of change—things today are much as they were yesterday, last week, or last year. However, if leaders are honest, they know the opposite is true. To be successful they need to operate in a dynamic environment where change is the norm not the exception.

**The rate of change is accelerating.** Product lines that once could be expected to last 20 years may see their lifespan shrink to less than seven. And it's not uncommon for individual products to last less than one year.

**The scope of change has increased.** For example, an organization in the entertainment industry must now plan for film distribution around the globe, and at the same time consider DVD, cable, satellite, and internet streaming distribution channels.

**The technology of change has exploded.** There is a continuous stream of new technologies designed to improve processes; foster new relationships with suppliers and customers and open up new ways of delivering goods and services.

The organization that can respond rapidly to new opportunities and threats, that can introduce goods and services at a pace that changing markets demand, and that can move quickly to take advantage of global opportunities will outperform the business that cannot adapt as quickly.

Organizations that cannot adapt face significant penalties: In some industries, a six-month delay in product introduction might reduce revenue by 30 percent or more. In more severe cases a six-month delay means the window of opportunity is lost forever.

## **Definitions - Organization's Internal Orientation**

### **Change Averse**

- ✓ Change perceived as disruptive
- ✓ Energy devoted to keep things the same
- ✓ Management reluctant to initiative change
- ✓ Continuous improvement and learning processes not developed
- ✓ Employees not empowered to make change
- ✓ Top down decision-making and control
- ✓ Customers are necessary evil
- ✓ "If it ain't broke, don't fix it"

### **Change Resistant**

- ✓ Decisions to change are delayed
- ✓ Employees are not expected to propose change
- ✓ Employees jobs are viewed as "doing"
- ✓ Issues with customers/suppliers are addressed under duress from top management
- ✓ Learning is left to the individual
- ✓ Change is imposed from the top
- ✓ Top down decisions implemented through complex approvals and processes

## **Change Managing**

- ✓ Acknowledges the ongoing nature of change
- ✓ Prepared to adapt to the forces of change
- ✓ When inside/outside forces push change, organization works to manage change
- ✓ Little anticipation for change; reacting to need
- ✓ Recognize the process of change can be managed and be more productive
- ✓ Some decision-making at middle management
- ✓ People informed about change plans
- ✓ Continuous improvement and learning included
- ✓ Customers/suppliers included for input and feedback

## **Change Friendly**

- ✓ Implement or redesign processes to facilitate change
- ✓ Barriers to change/improvement removed
- ✓ Employees provided time, tools for continuous improvement
- ✓ Mapping key business processes part of change
- ✓ Employees empowered to identify problems and facilitate change/improvements
- ✓ Customer's future needs incorporated in products/services
- ✓ Future direction shared with customers/suppliers
- ✓ Each employee knows they have a customer for their work and are a supplier.  
Manage horizontal relationships.

## **Change Seeking**

- ✓ Value change and fear the failure to change
- ✓ Continuous improvement/learning integrated in the culture/processes
- ✓ Lifelong learning for individuals and organizations supported financially and in policies, procedures
- ✓ Customer focus is an obsession
- ✓ Competitive intelligence pursued aggressively
- ✓ Technology changes assessed continuously
- ✓ Proactively defines the competitive agenda and strives to define customer needs ahead of competition
- ✓ Employees viewed as most important asset
- ✓ Vision and values well understood, embraced, followed
- ✓ Self-management and control integrated in decision-making throughout the organization

On the orientation to change scale, assessments locate the organization at some position on the scale. Where the organization needs to be is primarily influenced by the uncertainty of the business environment. Now, based on your review above, plot or pick a point below where your organization sites relative to its orientation to change.

# The ECO Change Model

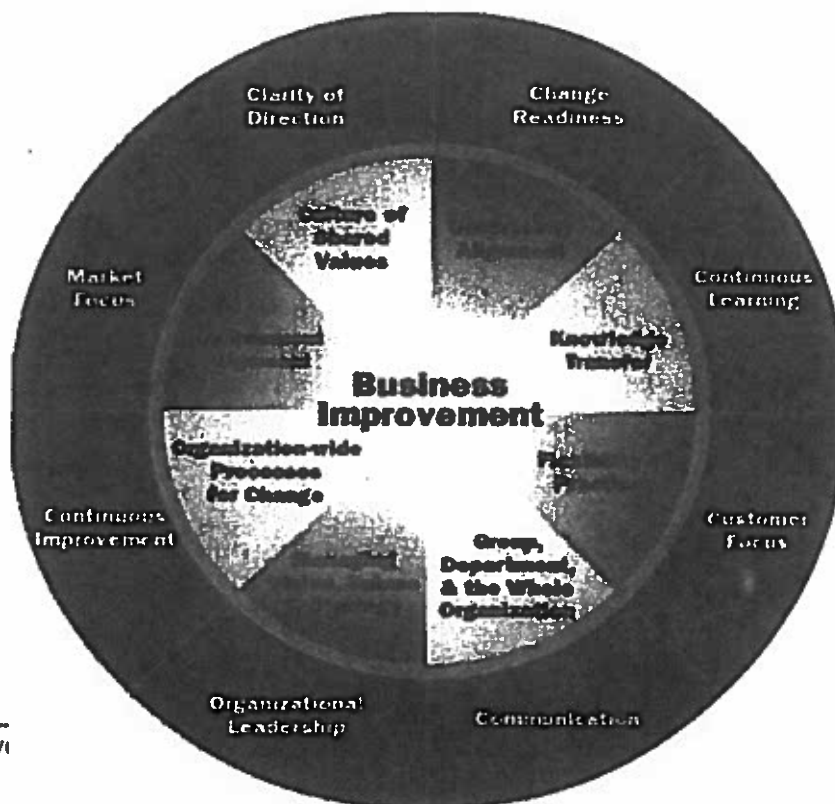
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The ECO Change Model provides a systematic framework to help organizations operate more efficiently. It includes eight performance dimensions used to calibrate how effective an organization is at coping with change, as well as their ability to thrive and execute strategies in a changing environment.

The assumption is that most organizations, no matter how they are currently structured, must increase their capacity for change to avoid getting out of sync with the accelerating change in the outside world. Specifically, the ECO Change Model will:

- Provide a systematic framework to help organizations operate more efficiently.
- Help leaders to clearly understand organizational performance and to pinpoint elements that significantly affect performance.
- Build a framework and climate that that supports an organizational diagnosis.
- Support and clarify the principle that organizations need to constantly satisfy competing performance expectations.
- Help leaders verify and define the organizations long term future position as well as design and execute strategies that will take successful organization there.
- Provide trend analysis on an e-platform to document improvements in company performance on eight dimensions through assessing baseline performance and measuring trend analysis.

Below is a graphical representation of the ECO Change Model with a description of each of the eight dimensions.





External

## **Market Focus**

A market focus means that leaders in an organization have a keen sense of environmental forces that shape and impact the organization. As the environment changes uncertainty increases, this increases the need for flexible systems and operating practices.

## **Customer Focus**

Organizations high in customer focus put significant effort into understanding the current needs of customers, as well as their business strategies and product direction. Important information about competitors and their strategies is often a by-product. This effort allows proactive, timely, and focused development of products and services that meet customers' needs. Organizations with this focus are influenced by their customers and, in turn gain influence with the customer.

## **Clarity of Direction**

The accelerating and ever-changing nature of today's environment creates an unending set of destabilizing forces and wide range of pressures for change. There is a need to create counter forces that provide an organization and its people with a degree of stability as they negotiate the turbulence in the environment. These include such things as a living vision and purpose that inspires people, a set of shared values, and a core group of employees who are committed to the organization's success.

## **Communication**

Communication is key, not only to involve and engage everyone in critical priorities and initiatives, but it is critical to quickly solving problems, encouraging innovation, and satisfying the customer. Consider how important it is to have good communication channels across business units or departments and problems that develop if these channels are disrupted or non-existent?

## **Organization Leadership**

Leadership sets the tone and direction for an organization. Most organizations have a strategic plan, but has leadership shared clear priorities and attempted align what people do to the goals of the company? Leaders also ensure that company resources are allocated or reallocated to best meet changes in the marketplace.

## Change Readiness

The current business environment has compelled organizations to examine whether their business practices allow them to adapt and quickly adjust to changes in the marketplace. If you were to do a change readiness assessment you would want to determine if current policies and procedures facilitate change or create barriers to change. For example, are there any business practices that create barriers to getting the work done or restrict your responsiveness to customers?

## Continuous Improvement

No organization with intentions to increase ECO capacity can hope to do so without a well-designed and managed continuous improvement process. And, the process must be organization-wide and actively managed from the top. It cannot be simply an annual approach to setting targets for lower costs and more inventory turns. Nor can it be a limited set of projects that involves a small percentage of people and still be considered a continuous improvement effort associated with becoming an ECO.

## Continuous Learning

A continuous learning organization is one that has processes in place to enhance the acquisition of knowledge or skills by individuals, whether this is via study and instruction or work experiences. Some organizations go further by creating processes whereby individual or group learning is extracted from the organization's experience and becomes part of the organization's collective memory.

## Organizational Snapshot

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Below you'll find three statements for each of the eight performance dimensions in the ECO model. With your organization in mind, indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement by circling the most appropriate rating.

After you're done, add up your total score and enter it on the last page of the assessment.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
<b>Market Focus</b>					
1. Changes in customer expectations and requirement are clearly understood.	1	2	3	4	5
2. We measure the strengths of competitors in the marketplace.	1	2	3	4	5
3. There is information available to make sound judgments about market dynamics.	1	2	3	4	5

### Customer Focus

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4. Our leaders are adaptive to new situations.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. Customer focus and satisfaction are the most important factors when initiating change.                           | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. The organization uses "environmental sensing" to measure performance and direction against the market realities? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

### Clarity of Direction

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7. Our organization has a living vision, a set of shared values, and an overarching purpose that inspires people.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. We have a stable employee base, in other words, a core group of employees who are respected for their competence and commitment to the organization's success. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

### Communication

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9. The leadership in our organization communicates regularly with employees about issues that may impact the business or the work that is being done. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. There is good communication across departments and organizational units.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. When priorities change everyone is notified in a timely manner.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

### Organizational Leadership

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 12. There is a link between what people do and the company goals. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

13. Priorities of each work unit are clearly defined.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Resources are reallocated as needed to best meet changes in the marketplace.	1	2	3	4	5
	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
<b>Change Readiness</b>					
15. Policies and procedures within the organization are oriented toward responding to change.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Barriers are continually being removed that may restrict responsiveness to customers?	1	2	3	4	5
17. Business practices are designed so that we can adapt and quickly adjust to changes in the marketplace.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Continuous Improvement</b>					
18. We have a systematic process improvement problem-solving process that is oriented toward prevention.	1	2	3	4	5
19. There are clear goals and direction for continuous improvement that includes strategies for innovation and creativity.	1	2	3	4	5
20. There is a clear understanding of customer-supplier relationships, both external and internal to the organization.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Continuous Learning</b>					
21. There is a real commitment to change, learning, and improvement.	1	2	3	4	5
22. Resources are available to identify development opportunities and plan career paths.	1	2	3	4	5
23. Successes and failures are analyzed to maximize strengths and identify improvement opportunities.	1	2	3	4	5

**Total Points** \_\_\_\_\_

## Scoring

**96 to 120:** Congratulations you are more than likely working for an ECO organization. You are probably equipped and prepared to meet most challenges that come with continuous changes. You still might want to look at the individual items to see if there is any where you scored your organization low.

**72 to 95:** You are working for an organization that is an ECO in waiting. Although there may be some areas where your organization performs spectacularly, there are probably areas where you are ill equipped to deal with change and its ramifications.

**Below 72:** Unless your organization is immune to change, as very few are, you're likely to find it increasingly more difficult to thrive in an environment of increased complexity and uncertainty. Be encouraged though, many organizations are in your position. And internal change in response to external changes is not only possible, it's been successfully done by many organizations

## Changes and Challenges

Based on your answers to the assessment, identify the most significant changes that your business is confronting and the challenges that those changes create.

Brainstorm a list of changes that your business is experiencing?

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Reach a consensus on the three most significant changes.

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What challenges do these three changes pose to you as a leader and/or to your organization?

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## **Final Comments**

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In an ECO people are responsible for the continuous improvement of their job performance and work processes and for learning and using the tools and skills necessary to do so. The leadership of the organization is responsible to provide training in the tools and skills people need, to provide the time and structure within which improvement efforts can occur, and to modify the organization's infrastructure to support the continuous improvement effort.

People are also responsible to manage their own continuous learning and growth, both in terms of skills and competencies for current tasks and for desired future assignments. They must also support the ongoing learning of the organization through analysis of experiences, extraction of learning, and sharing of the learning with others. The organization's leadership must make available mechanisms for helping people understand their existing skills and competencies and how these compare with both current and future needs. They must also provide people with methods for learning from the organization's experience and how to capture, archive and retrieve the learning. Access to a wide range of educational and learning processes, delivered in a way that supports each person's responsibility for their own learning, must be provided by management.

Everyone in an Ever-Changing Organization needs to value and view change as positive. The greatest challenges in this area begin with management. Most organizations are designed for stability and permanence, not change. Modifying the organization's systems and infrastructure and management's own behavior is critical to creating conditions that will allow others to become "change seeking" or, at least, "change-friendly".

