

# BRS



## Quick Facts

### Industry

Management Consulting

### Clients

Infrastructure, Government, Resources

### People

23

### CEO

Kym Williams

### Internal Change Agents

Entire Team

### External Change Agents

Quentin Lawler, Human Synergistics

### Human Synergistics Tools Used

Life Styles Inventory™

Leadership/Impact®

Organisational Culture Inventory® (OCI)  
Preferred and Actual

Organisational Effectiveness Inventory®  
(OEI)

### Outcomes

205% annual growth  
year on year for 3 years

EBIT margin approaching 40%  
year on year

90% repeat work and referrals

Lower role conflict and stress

Higher motivation and satisfaction

### External Recognition

Telstra Australian Business Awards –  
Small Business Award Winner 2013

Human Synergistics Cultural  
Transformation Award 2013

BRW Fast Starters Finalist 2013

In-business fastest growing company in  
South Australia 2012

HTC Start-Up Award Finalist 2012

## The Challenge

Having successfully risen through the ranks in several organisations, a senior manager was tired of the mediocrity, bureaucracy, lack of time to do things properly and the conventional approach to managing people. He wanted to be able to run his own ship, a ship where he had the autonomy and flexibility to be with his young family. The challenge was to build a successful and sustainable business that was not only defined by 'what' was delivered to the client, but one that was sought out by clients because of 'how' the results were delivered. This brought CEO, Kym Williams' attention to the importance of culture.

*“Having built a business on the belief that what gets measured gets improved, the opportunity to measure our culture and leadership effectiveness with Human Synergistics was appealing. The OCI® and OEI tools give us the detail we need to move our business forward by focusing on the cause of what’s happening rather than the symptoms. And gaining insight into my own leadership strategies through the Leadership/Impact was powerful in helping me understand the impact I was having on our effectiveness as a business.”*

## THE GOAL

The immediate goal of BRS (originally Business + Risk Solutions) was to fill a niche in the local market, advising businesses through highlighting the connection between the 'task' and the 'people' approach to doing business. This involved developing a specific offering delivered through a conscious application of Constructive and effective behaviours to achieve success. Success for BRS would be measured on the ability of the business to develop Constructive habits that would deliver exceptional business results.

## THE PROCESS

### Background

In 2009, Kym Williams and his wife Nicole founded BRS during the onset of the Global Financial Crisis. The business was shaped around providing expert knowledge and management advisory services within the Infrastructure, Government and Resource industries. A deliberate part of the business's growth strategy was to schedule diagnostic survey measurements to interrupt day-to-day operations and help the business understand how Constructive habits were being developed and embedded. BRS decided to partner with Human Synergistics to achieve this through their integrated suite of tools. Data from the surveys would act as a lead indicator for the directors as a mechanism to predict sustainable business performance results.

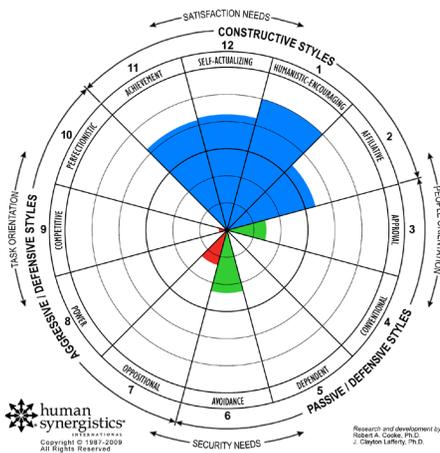


Figure 1.1 - 2010 BRS Culture

Starting with a highly Constructive culture provided the platform for BRS to build a successful business despite external market challenges.

### Measuring Culture

The first opportunity for the business to reflect on their culture came in 2010 (Figure 1.1). BRS staff members were invited to complete the Human Synergetics Organisational Culture Inventory® (OCI®) and Organisational Effectiveness Inventory® (OEI) to ascertain the current operating culture, its causes and outcomes. The results of the survey showed a very high level of Constructive behaviour, however it was also evident that there was a disconnect between members' own desires and the values and direction of BRS. The survey data indicated that the message being given to the market was dependent upon the individual consultant's own value proposition rather than the espoused business proposition. The flow on effect of this was that the experience for clients was inconsistent.

Information obtained from the OEI enabled an analysis of systems and processes across the business helping BRS identify the key areas to focus on in order to bridge this disconnect and continue to build a Constructive workplace aligned to their values. BRS wanted to further their existing culture and continue to create an environment where staff members could work with passion and excitement. Empowerment, Job Design and Customer Service Focus were key focus areas for change to enable members to align their effort towards those things that mattered for them, the client and the business. In some cases, alignment was not achieved, and some members left the business to pursue other opportunities.

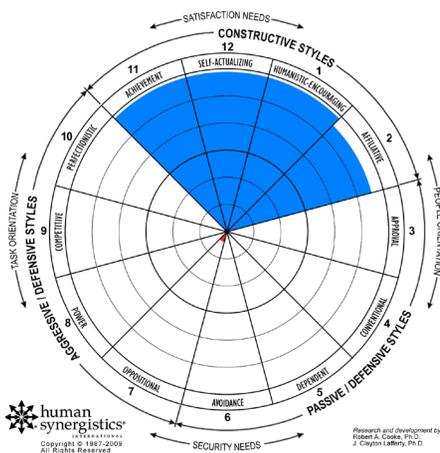


Figure 1.2 - 2012 BRS Culture

Outstanding improvements were made as a result of the team's commitment to the areas of focus agreed after the first culture measure. Today BRS describes its culture as one that is built on honest feedback, openness to change and passion to deliver quality results.

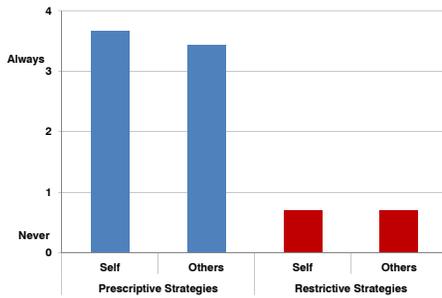
A critical action that followed was a program of work to look at alternative ways of accomplishing job elements that were evaluated as 'low' in terms of adding value to the client. As the directors reviewed the roles in the business, it became clear that many administrative tasks were clogging up the consultants' time. There was scope for these transactional tasks to be outsourced, freeing up time for consultants to spend their time on higher value tasks and deliver on those projects that they were passionate about. Consultants now feel a new level of empowerment and accountability which translates into more innovative deliverables enhancing the client experience.

Having re-established the foundation for all members to connect their work to high quality outcomes for the client, the business measured their culture for the second time to ascertain if their hard work was making a difference to business outcomes.

### The Impact of the Leader

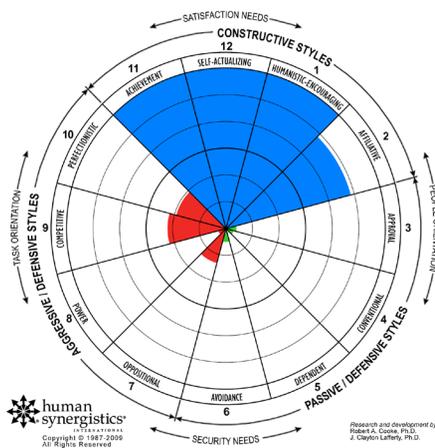
Realising that leaders impact culture through both direct and indirect means, Kym was mindful that to be effective in leading a Constructive business he needed to gain insight into not only what he was doing, but how he was doing it. The Leadership/Impact® (L/I) diagnostic tool provided this insight, bringing to light the relationship between how the leader leads, and how this impacts on the behaviours and effectiveness of others. Based on research that shows leaders use both guiding methods (Prescriptive Strategies) and limiting methods (Restrictive Strategies), it is proven that a highly effective leader employs more Prescriptive than Restrictive methods (3:1 ratio being the benchmark).

The data from Kym's personal L/I results (Figure 2.1) show that others rated him stronger than the aforementioned benchmark for organisational level strategies. He was also rated 6.2 for organisational effectiveness on a 7 point scale, where 7 is most effective, and scores above 5.5 are desirable. Consequently, his approaches to leading were encouraging others to use Constructive behaviour (Figure 2.2) that resulted in successful outcomes for the business. This impact is mirrored in the culture results.



**Figure 2.1 - Leadership Strategies**  
Kym Williams

The above graph shows how Kym has rated himself and how others have rated his use of Prescriptive vs. Restrictive organisational level leadership strategies. Research shows the most Constructive leaders use 3:1 ratio of Prescriptive to Restrictive methods.



**Figure 2.2 - Leadership Impact**  
Kym Williams

Kym’s strong use of Prescriptive methods translates to him having a highly constructive impact on others. This means that his input as a leader creates a context where individuals are expected to behave in Constructive ways contributing strongly to the overall organisational culture.

**THE OUTCOME**

The courageous decision of the directors to stay true to the tenet of why they established BRS paid off emotionally and financially. The results from the 2012 re-measure (Figure 1.2) showed a performance improvement in outcomes. There was a 31% reduction in role conflict, where members felt that they weren't receiving conflicting messages regarding what was expected of them, a 20% decrease in stress levels and a 5% increase in motivation, satisfaction and role clarity. Comparatively, Articulation of Mission improved by 5%, Customer Service Focus improved by 10% and Task Identity improved by 4%.

Business performance indicators showed:

- 205% annual growth on growth for last three years
- Strong EBIT margin approaching 40% year-on-year
- 90% repeat work and referrals
- Average of 2 days sick leave per annum per employee for last three years

Externally, BRS has achieved:

- Telstra Australian Business Awards – Small Business Award Winner 2013
- BRW Fast Starters Finalist 2013
- Telstra Australian Business Awards – HTC Start-Up Award Finalist 2012
- Human Synergistics Cultural Transformation Award 2012

On a personal level:

- Able to pick children up after school,
- Be together as a family at the children's extra-curricular activities,
- Recognising and utilising the strengths of the directors to develop our additional business interests, and
- Appreciation of being a husband and wife partnership through a focus on building a business around our lives rather than the opposite.

**WHERE TO NEXT**

In developing a Constructive culture to drive a sustainable and high performing business model, one of the key lessons learnt was the importance of shifting leadership mentality from just paying people for their time, to rewarding their effort and passion. The approach for BRS was to better understand how people were using their time, in order to drive greater productivity gains that came with people being empowered to work on those things they were passionate about.

The focus on culture will remain at the forefront for BRS as a key driver of its success. BRS has launched two new business ventures in easyconsult and easygovernment that provide online consulting services providing an avenue for one-to-many consulting that is affordable for businesses. These now contribute 35% of BRS' business. There are plans to launch more businesses in the future.

*“I have no doubt that if we didn't have the constructive culture we have then our team could not have moved from a traditional consulting focus to an entrepreneurial focus.”*  
- Kym Williams, CEO

At BRS culture is recognised as a lead indicator that BRS holds in high regard as a predictor of future success for the business.

**BRS**

**HUMAN SYNERGISTICS INTEGRATED MODEL**

Through the common language of the circumplex the Human Synergistics Integrated Model links culture and leadership in a way that allows individual managers and leaders to understand how they are perpetuating the current state through their thinking and behaviour. This level of insight empowers and motivates individuals to make changes that directly increase performance.

BUSINESS NEED	Increased personal effectiveness	More effective teams	High performing leaders and managers	Increased organizational performance	Improved customer relationships
INSIGHT REQUIRED	How I see myself (self-concept) How others see me behave	How we work together	How I impact performance	How our Culture helps and hinders performance	How our customers and clients experience us
DIAGNOSTIC TOOLS	<b>Life Styles Inventory™ (LSI1 / LSI2)</b>	<b>Group Style Inventory™ (GSI)</b>	<b>Leadership / Impact® (L/I)</b>  <b>Management / Impact® (M/I)</b>	<b>Organizational Culture Inventory® (OCI®)</b>  <b>Organizational Effectiveness Inventory® (OEI)</b>	<b>Customer ServiceStyles™ (CSS)</b>
EFFECTIVENESS LEVEL	Individual thinking and behavioural styles	Group behaviours	Leadership and management approaches and behaviours	Organizational behaviours and performance	Customer relationships

**Leadership/Impact®**

Designed specifically for senior executives and high level leaders, L/I measures 10 critical functions a leader performs and the impact of their actions on others.

**Organisational Culture Inventory®**

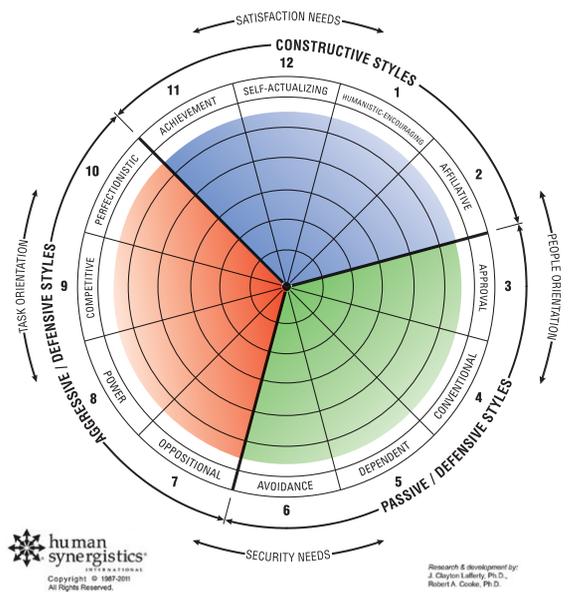
The OCI® is designed to measure an organisation’s ideal culture and the actual operating culture. It specifically examines culture from the perspective of behavioural norms – how people believe they are expected to behave in order to fit in and get ahead.

**Organisational Effectiveness Inventory®**

The OEI is designed to measure the practices used throughout the organisation that impact on its culture. It also measures a number of research-based outcomes of culture at the individual, group and organisational level.

**Culture measurement is most effective when the OCI® and OEI are coupled together.**

Common Metrics



One Language



**Changing the World —  
One Organisation at a Time®**

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