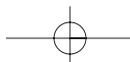
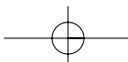




# INTRODUCTION





## ① Every Company Has a Personality

**D**o you know what makes your company tick? People answer that question in different ways. Most talk in terms of products produced, services provided, numbers of employees, locations of offices, or annual revenues. Others attempt to describe the organization's culture. But what is it really? What is it about your company that people intuitively sense and feel? And why is it so difficult to articulate who you are as an organization?

Prepare to open your mind to a new way of understanding your company, department, or nonprofit institution. The key is personality—a familiar concept when applied to human beings, adapted here to serve as a tool for business management.

The purpose of this book is twofold. First, we'll give you the means to discover, understand, and articulate what makes your organization or company tick. Second, we'll show you how to put this new self-awareness to work. *Companies Are People, Too* provides useful insights for strategic planning, branding, human relations, and change management. More important, we'll show you how to use the information you gain as an in-the-moment decision-making framework appropriate for employees at every level in your organization.

You will see that once a company knows who it really is, the answers to questions such as, "Where are we going?" and "How do we get there?" become clearer and the path to success is more easily navigated.

The Companies Are People, Too concept helps you:

- Define and live according to your core values
- Develop and implement business strategy
- Make informed, proactive decisions
- Align marketing with company values and strengths

## 4 INTRODUCTION

- Serve as a catalyst for change
- Differentiate your organization from competitors'
- Set performance standards for increased productivity and efficiency

It gives you:

- A strong sense of identity
- A common language for communication purposes
- Continuity in messages and behavior
- Ability to consistently deliver on expectations
- Ability to identify and retain ideal customers and staff
- A framework for decision making
- Consistency, clarity, and alignment

Can the contents of this book change your mind about what makes your company tick? Absolutely, if your mind is open to change.

### YOUR COMPANY HAS PERSONALITY, TOO

Mention the statement, “Every company has personality,” and many people intuitively nod in agreement. Why? Is it because, as human beings, we recognize the human characteristics of an intimate environment? All of us have an idea of what personality is and of the sometimes profound differences among individuals. This awareness provides a ready frame of reference about people that we can adapt for organizations.

For individuals, personality shapes values, behavior, daily routines, likes, and dislikes. The same is true for companies. Just like

#### ***From the Fekete Files***

*Sometimes the truth is hard to face. The CEO of a successful gourmet food manufacturing company wasn't prepared to hear that the strengths of his company were quality, delivery, and customer satisfaction. He wanted innovation to be what made his company tick. His wife was dismayed to learn that the company was very bottom line-oriented in making decisions about the family-owned business—she wanted to be more focused on the happiness of the people who worked there. We recommended that the CEO allow his management team to focus on making the most of the company's personality (i.e., as a reliable, high-quality company) while he worked on setting up a think tank, “borrowing” employees and using consultants to form rotating innovation teams.*

people, companies have definite preferences for taking in information, processing it, making decisions, and getting things done. Just as awareness of personality preferences might help you predict the way you or a friend will react under certain circumstances, you can use your understanding of your company's personality to plan, guide, or make business decisions. And just as understanding personality helps you understand yourself, your family, and your friends, the concepts developed in this book help you develop a new level of familiarity with your company.

What influences a company's personality? The founding principles, the founders' preferences and values, the industry, the company's or institution's maturity, and the unpredictable results all seem to play a part. There are no hard-and-fast rules. Just as we can't explain why siblings (even twins) have different personalities despite similarities of environment and heredity, we can't pinpoint reasons why company personalities can be so distinct. But we believe that, for companies and human beings alike, diversity can be a source of strength. We are also convinced beyond the shadow of a doubt that every personality has a power, purpose, and place of its own.

When you discover and embrace your company's personality using the techniques described in this book, you can tap into the power of its hidden dimensions. The best part is that you already have everything you need to realize the full promise of that personality.

## ORGANIZATIONS ARE ALIVE

A company is more than the sum of its assets. Organizations have *soul*—a vibrant, dynamic energy that transcends the material reality. Yes, organizations are made up of individuals, inventories, infrastructures, products, and markets. These physical components combine to form a pattern of aspiration and achievement that stretches back to the past (in all but the most fledgling start-ups) and reaches for the future. Businesses have a reason for being. We can recognize the extent to which they exercise an independent will. They are certainly vulnerable to hurt, and while all institutions have a life span, very few survive as long as the people who create them. Companies that exploit their inherent strengths, though, live for decades or centuries.

An important business book published recently asks its readers to conceive of companies as living beings with the will and the

## 6 INTRODUCTION

potential to survive. The Dutch scholar and analyst Arie de Geus based his observations of the life of corporations on the oldest and most successful companies in the world, including 100-year-old Royal Dutch Shell, where de Geus made his distinguished career. de Geus observed that the corporations most likely to thrive and grow old were the ones that nurtured their awareness of the company as a living entity. Among the four characteristics of long-lived companies—sensitivity to the environment, a strong sense of identity, tolerance for experimentation, and conservative financing—readers of de Geus's book may have recognized a handful of traits typical of successful human individuals.<sup>1</sup> Living companies and their leaders kept the long-term viability of the enterprise close to the heart and first on the list of priorities. This sense of participation in something larger than themselves cultivated the capacities of managers for stewardship and vision.

Another recent study of long-lived businesses, *Built to Last—Successful Habits of Visionary Companies*, emphasizes the importance of knowing how and why the living company exists. Authors James Collins and Jerry Porras found that leaders of the most successful companies could summarize the core ideology and purpose of their business in very few words.<sup>2</sup> The ideas were so familiar—so close to the surface of daily operations—that employees at every level could articulate them. Understanding personality provides a means for identifying the purpose and values that are most important to your organization. What's more, the values associated with your company's personality are easy to convey to employees, customers, investors, and business partners.

*Companies Are People, Too* offers a comprehensive guide to focusing your company's energy on what's important. Self-awareness can be the wellspring of success in defining mission and values, energizing the staff, articulating brand identity, and planning and executing business strategy. With the insights developed in this book, you can achieve clarity, consistency, and alignment in your company's operations. Equipped with a sense of who it is, you can proceed to care for your living organization and to help it achieve the full potential of its personality.

### THE IDEA OF PERSONALITY TYPE

Many of the insights of business management are derived from the study of the human psyche. Human psychology and the science of business management emerged as academic disciplines

and therapeutic methods at roughly the same time, early in the twentieth century. Like psychology, theories of business management encompass a broad range of convictions, practices, and (sometimes contending) schools of thought.

For almost 100 years, business managers and professional management consultants have adapted psychological concepts to the demands of the workplace. Some strategies have focused on businesses as assemblies of human beings, emphasizing the psychology of individual behavior. Other psychological approaches to businesses and institutions, including the one developed in this book, have explored the psychology of the organization as a whole, attributing the characteristics of human beings to the collective enterprises of corporations.

*Companies Are People, Too* draws on the school of thought established by the Swiss psychologist Carl Gustav Jung in the 1940s and 1950s and refined by the mother-daughter team of Katherine Cook Briggs and Isabel Briggs Myers. Carl Jung's observations have provided the foundation for a wide variety of theories of personality type. The best-known school of thought is associated with the mother-daughter team of Katherine Cook Briggs and Isabel Briggs Myers, who applied Jungian psychology to their profiles of bank employees, schoolchildren, and medical students in their local community during and after World War II. Briggs and Myers developed a diagnostic tool, the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI®), to help individuals assess their personality preferences. In addition to Jung's scales for measuring sensation versus intuition, thinking versus feeling, and extraversion versus introversion, Myers and Briggs evaluated tendencies in a fourth category, the preferred way of dealing with the outside world. An individual's external expression, in Jungian fashion, reflects either a tendency to judge, structure, and formalize routines or a tendency toward perception, flexibility, and spontaneity. The dynamic interaction of the four categories of preference generates yet more complexity, and thus the 16 MBTI personality types can claim to represent the full range of human diversity. CAP2 is based on the conclusion that companies, like people, have preferred ways of focusing energy, gathering information, making decisions, and structuring work. Within each of the four dimensions there are two preferences. Every person favors either one of the two preferences in each dimension. Sixteen possible personality types result from combinations of the dimensions and preferences. (See Figure 1.1.)

## 8 INTRODUCTION

<b>Focusing Energy</b> <i>Extroverted:</i> Energized by the outer world of people and things	<i>Introverted:</i> Turns to the inner world of ideas and images for energy
<b>Gathering Information</b> <i>Sensing:</i> Trusts information that comes in through the five senses (tangibles)	<i>Intuitive:</i> Gives more weight to information received by way of insight and imagination
<b>Making Decisions</b> <i>Thinking:</i> Bases decisions on objective principles and facts	<i>Feeling:</i> Weighs decisions against people issues and concerns
<b>Structuring Work</b> <i>Judging:</i> Prefers a structured, decided life where things get done in an organized fashion	<i>Perceiving:</i> Prefers a flexible and adaptable lifestyle and open-ended deadlines

**FIGURE 1.1** Personality indicators.

In CAP2 workshops, we illustrate the impact of preferences on productivity with a simple exercise, which we invite you to try. (See Figure 1.2.)

Few people are truly ambidextrous; however, most of us can complete this exercise. Signing our names with our nonpreferred hand takes more energy. It's less productive. But we can do it. Imagine being asked to work outside of your natural preferences day in and day out (i.e., doing all your writing with your nonpreferred hand). You could do it, but you wouldn't be very efficient, and you would be very miserable. Are the people in your company expected to perform within guidelines that don't honor their natural preferences? How much productivity are you losing? Is your company being asked to operate outside of its inborn preferences? How is that impacting its success and longevity?

Many businesses and MBA programs administer personality type indicators to applicants, employees, and students. Perhaps you are already familiar with your own personality profile. If so,

Sign your name as you normally do: \_\_\_\_\_

Now sign with your nonpreferred hand: \_\_\_\_\_

**FIGURE 1.2** Preferences exercise.

***From the Fekete Files***

*To develop CAP2, we first imagined our company, Fekete + Company, as a person. We answered a personality type questionnaire as we each thought the “person” Fekete + Company would. We were then able to substitute business and organizational language for human descriptions. The resulting profile described our company—what it was like to work with us, what we loved to do, and what we didn’t—to a tee. Yet, none of us shared the personality preferences of Fekete + Company. It truly had its own way of being.*

you know that many programs give you a four-letter code to serve as shorthand for your personality type. A person for whom Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) results indicate a tendency to be extroverted, sensing, thinking, and judging might call him- or herself an ESTJ, while somebody with opposite preferences would be an INFP—introverted, intuitive, feeling, perceiving. Taking into account the dynamic interaction of the four dimensions, this shorthand designation suggests a wide range of habits and tastes to people familiar with the idea of personality type. The titles of CAP2 leadership profiles (described in more detail in Chapter 8) are designed to take some of the mystery and memorization out of the idea of type by assigning memorable names to the different personalities. Rather than a four-letter code, the CAP2 self-study helps you identify a leadership persona that matches your personality preferences at work.