

# The 2011 Five Domains of High-Performance

White Paper



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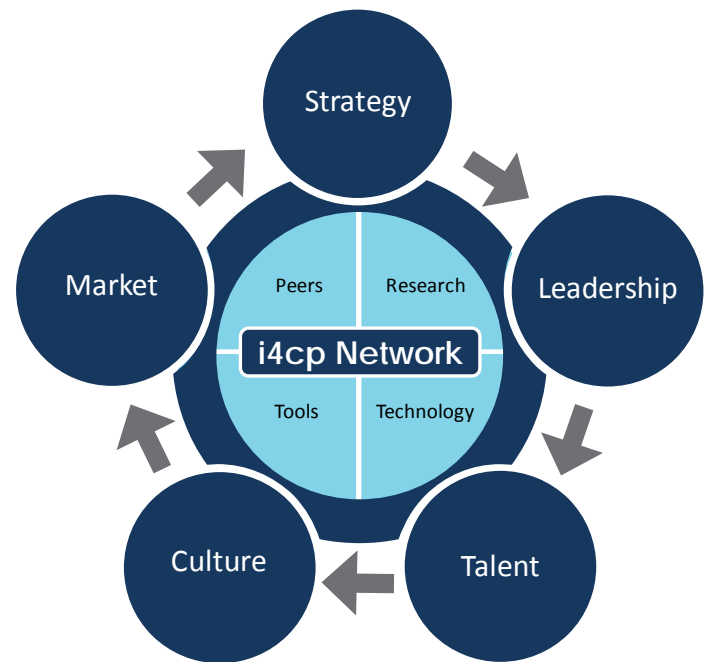
## About i4cp

i4cp enables high-performance in the world's top companies.

i4cp is the fastest-growing and largest corporate network focused on the practices of high-performance organizations. Through a combination of peer networking, human capital research, tools and technology, we enable high-performance by:

- Revealing what high-performance organizations are doing differently
- Identifying best and next practices for all levels of management
- Providing the resources to show how workforce improvements have bottom-line impact

Over the past 40 years, i4cp research has revealed the five key human capital domains that companies leverage to drive performance. Our members – many of the largest and most respected companies in the world across a wide spectrum of industries – use this research, i4cp's expertise, tools, technology and vast peer network to improve productivity and drive business results.



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# Contents

- Introduction .....2
- The five domains of high-performance ..... 3
- What has changed since last year?..... 5
- Strategy .....6
- Leadership.....8
- Talent..... 10
- Culture ..... 13
- Market ..... 15
- The Importance of Alignment ..... 17

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*These materials were developed by Overholt, Granell, Vicere and Jamrog, 2006.*

## Introduction

Over the course of the past few years, i4cp has concentrated its efforts on studying the practices of high-performance organizations. From the research we conduct to the companies with whom we connect, the inner workings of high-performance organizations, especially how they relate to human capital, have been the sole focus of our organization and member network.

High-performance companies are the role models of the organizational world. They represent real-world versions of a modern managerial ideal: that of an organization that achieves excellence in so many areas that it consistently outperforms most of its competitors and sustains that performance for extended periods of time, regardless of industry or economic conditions.

In addition to sharing a keen interest in studying successful leaders, we in the business world are also fascinated by high-performance organizations. What are their cultures like? What do they do differently? How do they navigate rough seas and consistently manage to come out ahead? Is there a secret recipe that enables them to outperform their competition?

In 2011, i4cp partnered with *Human Resource Executive*® to continue our study of the practices of world-class organizations with the goal of identifying the commonalities of what makes them tick as well as what differentiates them from their competitors. Both i4cp and *Human Resource Executive* believe that human capital is the lifeblood of all organizations, and an often overlooked and untapped competitive advantage in many companies.

*To be an effective leader, one must be able to evolve a great strategy into great performance. In short, leaders must be able to execute.*

i4cp's exploration into high-performance seeks to uncover the strategies and approaches that drive the best companies in the world so that others can take advantage of these "next practices" in order to reach a new level of productivity and business success.

Of course, many books have been dedicated to this subject. From Tom Peters' and Bob Waterman's early 1980's best-seller *In Search of Excellence* to Jim Collins' *Built to Last* and *Good to Great*, there has been a succession of books published on organizational excellence that leaders and managers across the globe have devoured. Programs such as GE's Six Sigma have trained countless people to achieve top performance, and consultants have built entire practices around the elements of high-performing companies.

While business professionals want to learn more about high-performance organizations in the hope that they can apply some of the strategies to their own firms, many of the companies profiled within the pages of the aforementioned books were unable to sustain levels of high-performance. In fact, the number that actually achieve and sustain this vaunted goal is about half. While much has been

written on the subject, the truth is that the elements that combine to effectuate high-performance remain somewhat of a mystery.

Part of the reason for this is the definition – what do we mean exactly by high-performance? Is there a difference between “surviving” (which has been the criticism of companies profiled in *Built to Last* for example) and “performing?” Do we mean companies that outperform others in their own industry or across industries? How long of a time period constitutes “high-performance?” And which measures, financial or otherwise, are the best ones to use?

Over the last four decades, i4cp researchers have examined various ways to both define high-performance and the traits that separate the consistently top-performing organizations from the rest. Over time, we have come to recognize high-performing organizations as those that consistently outperform most of their competitors in four primary areas:

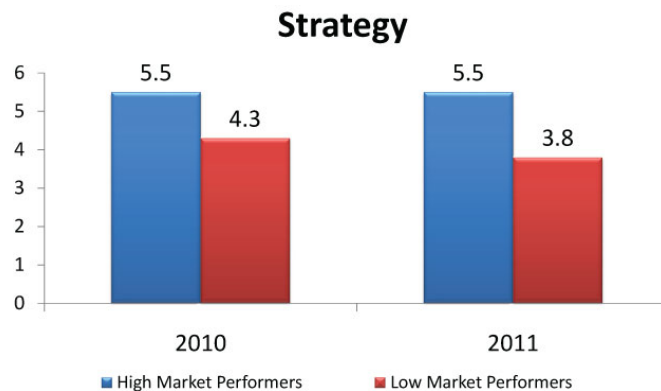
- Revenue growth
- Market share
- Profitability
- Customer satisfaction

In addition, our research team has examined well over 100 different core human capital areas in order to determine the differences that distinguish high-performing organizations from low-performing organizations. The research has quite clearly shown that no single element guarantees organizational success. Rather, high-performance is like a delicate entrée based on a confluence of core ingredients, any one of which, if left out or of inferior quality, will ruin the entire dish.

## The five domains of high-performance

i4cp’s research, conducted with thousands of organizations over the years has consistently shown that there are five core elements that separate high-performers from their lower-performing counterparts:

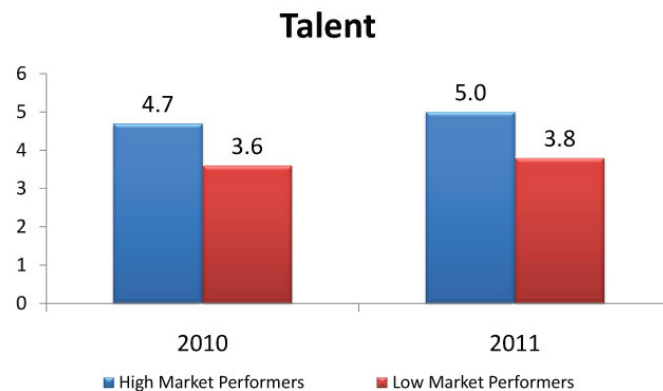
1. **Strategies** are more consistent, clearly communicated and well thought out in high-performing organizations. They are more likely than other companies to say that their philosophies are consistent with their strategies, and their performance measurements mirror their strategies.



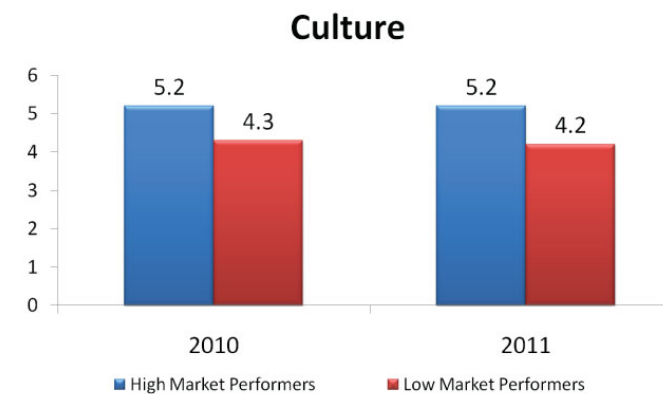
- Leadership** is clear, fair and talent-oriented. Leaders in higher-performing organizations are committed to developing their people, are more likely to promote the best people for the job, and ensure that performance expectations are well-known and consistent with the strategy.



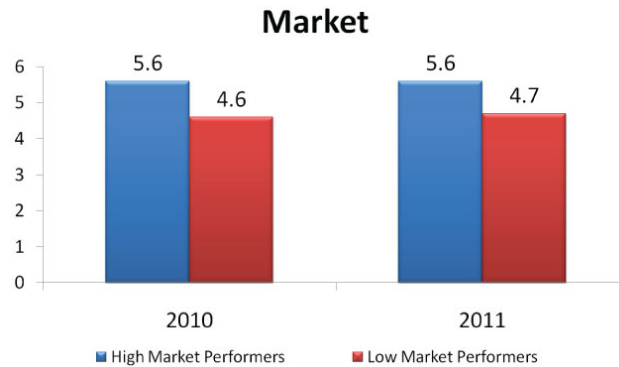
- There is a commitment to the right **talent** within high-performing organizations. And while employees are treated as unique individuals, the organization takes a holistic approach to managing and making decisions based on data-driven information. This begins with a strategic approach to workforce planning and entails looking at the organization from an outside-in perspective that identifies the business-model components and areas that drive value and then determines what the organization needs.



- The **culture** is strong in all the right ways and employees are more likely to think the organization is a good place to work. Employees not only adapt well to change, they embrace it. High-performing organizations emphasize a readiness to meet new challenges and are committed to innovation.



5. High-performing organizations are more likely to have a strong **market** focus and to go above and beyond for their customers. They are organized internally around what's best for the customer, they think hard about their customers' future and long-term needs, and their strategy is based on customer data. They are also more likely to view customer information as the most important factor for developing new products and services.



### What has changed since last year?

While these five domains – *strategy, leadership, talent, culture* and *market* focus – may seem a bit broad or even obvious, the degree of distinction our research has shown between higher and lower-performers within these five elements is startling and consistent.

In fact, when looking at each domain as a whole, and as depicted by the preceding graphs that compare the 2010 study findings to those of 2011, the responses remain almost completely flat.

That doesn't mean nothing has changed, however. On the contrary, high-performance organizations continue to show a willingness to adapt and evolve to changing environments and economic conditions. While these five core domains are critical and the characteristics of the domains have remained stable over the years, the ways in which those characteristics manifest within organizations continues to evolve.

## Strategy

The most daunting challenge to most business leaders has consistently been execution of the strategy. It is not lack of a strategy that causes senior executives to lose sleep, rather, their organizations' inability to execute against a strategy. For high-performing companies, having a great strategy is not enough to gain and sustain a competitive advantage – even low-performing organizations can develop great strategies. To be an effective leader, one must be able to evolve a great strategy into great performance. In short, they must be able to execute.

*To be an effective leader, one must be able to evolve a great strategy into great performance. In short, they must be able to execute.*

i4cp's 2011 survey on high-performance found that the ability to execute relies heavily on consistency. High-performing organizations recognize the power that derives from achieving consistency between their publicly stated philosophy and their business strategy. In other words, they walk the talk – they operate in ways that achieve internal agreement with their public image.

Internal/external consistency can be important for several reasons. It signals an organization that has a strong sense of its own identity and strongly forged infrastructure to carry through on that idea. For instance, in order to align strategy with philosophy, internal communication about that philosophy must be clear, effective, and ongoing. High-performers confirm that their philosophy is discussed frequently and that their employees understand the strategies. This sort of communication supports a culture that enables performance.

### The Top Five Strategy Attributes

		High-performers		Low-performers		Correlation with market performance
		2010	2011	2010	2011	
1	Our organization's publicly stated philosophy is consistent with its strategy	5.8	6.0	4.4	4.4	.39
2	People in our organization understand the strategy	5.3	5.5	3.8	3.9	.35
3	The behavior of our executives is consistent with the behavior needed to successfully execute the strategy	5.6	5.5	3.9	4.0	.34
4	Our organizations stated philosophy is frequently discussed	5.5	5.4	4.0	4.1	.33
5	Our organizational structure is aligned with our strategic goals	5.8	5.4	3.7	3.9	.33

Scores range from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 7 ("strongly agree").  
Results shown from organizations with 1,000 or more employees

Another strategic element that has a demonstrated effect on performance is consistency in the behavior of executives. Executives in high-performing organizations tend to establish consistency by developing clearly articulated philosophies that set standards for everyone's behavior. And their leaders, managers, and employees behave consistently with the strategic plan and the company's philosophy. The result is that in high-performing organizations, people understand and buy into the strategy, the importance of the strategy, and what it means for their job. It is interesting to note that the results of another i4cp study on strategy alignment and execution found that the actions that were correlated with successful execution and market performance were very similar to the results in the 2011 high-performance study. Among those actions:

- Consistency of strategic approach.
- Clearly articulated philosophies that set standards for everyone's behavior.
- Leaders, managers and employees who behave consistently in line with the strategic plan and the company's philosophy.

While the importance of “walking the talk” is inarguable and albeit cliché, it is a notion taken seriously by high-performance organizations, and one that is supported by research. i4cp's recent study of leadership competencies found that one of the few competencies that were a predictor of leadership success and market performance was that of being a “role model for organizational values.”

Additionally, i4cp research has found that leaders whose behavior is consistent with the organization's strategy and values create environments that allow high-performance organizations to outstrip low-performers. Another important key is the degree to which employees understand the strategy and how the strategy affects their individual roles – the more that people understand how their day-to-day performance impacts the organization's strategy, the more likely the organization is to be a high-performing one that executes the strategy faster than low-performers.

Research shows that there is one other important variable that has an extremely strong positive correlation with high-performance: Along with having a publicly stated philosophy that is consistent with the strategy, the organization's structure is aligned with the strategic goals.” Leaders come and go, but philosophy and structure tend to be more stable. Strategy needs to be aligned with these philosophies and supported with a structure that is aligned.

## Leadership

As in the *Strategy* domain, the essence of high-performing organizations' ability to excel derives significant power and momentum from the actions of its leaders at every organizational level. When i4cp looked at survey participants' responses regarding leadership practices in their organizations, three strategies emerged as the factors exerting greatest positive influence on performance: communication, supporting the culture, and adopting innovative practices that increase employee efficacy.

Having already demonstrated its importance with regard to strategy, communication surged to the forefront again in 2011, topping the list of leadership actions that move the needle. Indeed, the leadership behavior with the strongest correlation to market performance involves leaders' making it a point to clearly communicate company goals.

*The leadership behavior with the strongest correlation to market performance involves leaders' making it a point to clearly communicate company goals.*

Although internal communication rarely garners nods as an exciting or compelling strategy for business success, its visibility in the *2011 High-Performance Organizations Survey* demonstrates that communication remains a vital ingredient in multiple aspects of organizational effectiveness. When executives pair an understanding of the power communication affords with a willingness to put that power to work to clarify the organization's objectives, higher levels of performance result.

### The Top Five Leadership Attributes

		High-performers		Low-performers		Correlation with market performance
		2010	2011	2010	2011	
1	Our leaders clearly communicate the organizations goals	5.3	5.3	3.8	4.0	.30
2	Our leaders make sure programs support the desired culture	5.1	5.3	3.6	3.9	.30
3	Our leaders are continually adopting innovative approaches to increase employee effectiveness	4.8	4.7	3.3	3.5	.30
4	Our leaders are excellent decision makers	5.0	5.1	3.7	3.9	.29
5	Our leaders have in-depth knowledge of the customers	5.5	5.6	4.4	4.4	.28

*Scores range from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 7 ("strongly agree").  
Results shown from organizations with 1,000 or more employees*

It comes as no surprise that leadership is frequently cited as the key ingredient in creating a successful organization. In today's superstar-focused culture, executives and leaders are often portrayed as heroes, and rightly or wrongly, people are acculturated to worship or blame the superstar for the successes and failures of an entire organization.

However, recent research suggests this can be overstated. Nitin Nohria and his colleagues at Harvard Business School found, for example, that on average only 14% of a firm's performance is dependent on its leaders. The other 86% is dependent on the "followers" (e.g., employees who are following the leader). Clearly leaders can't do their jobs alone, so it is not surprising that among the leadership characteristics highly correlated with market performance is leaders' willingness to adopt innovative practices to make employees more effective.

i4cp's research shows that leadership is one of five key components of organizational systems that must operate in harmony to be effective. Great leaders create environments in which talented people can be successful. They are clear and consistent in the area of performance expectations, and they also tend to be more consistent in the ways they reward workers. They set clear performance expectations, reward employees who have the best ability, and reward those employees who strive to best meet customer needs. When leaders do this well and often, it tends to create and sustain an environment in which employees are clear about the organization's performance expectations and understand how their behaviors impact the organization.

## Talent

It is common wisdom that effectively managing an organization's talent is critical for developing a high-performance organization. Yet in some ways, managing talent seems like the last frontier of organizational effectiveness. Although i4cp research finds that business leaders consistently rank talent management among their top-five human capital issues (as was the case in i4cp's 2010 and 2011 *Critical Issues Survey*), companies remain dismally uniform and uniformly dismal in rating their effectiveness in handling talent issues.

Both high and lower-performers rank talent lowest among the five domains of performance in this study. In addition, a recent i4cp study on talent management found that only one in four organizations are managing talent effectively to a high or very high extent. Even most high-performing organizations believe they do not do it well – less than one-third of high-performers reported that they manage talent effectively.

The cost of ineffective talent management can be staggering. High turnover, a disengaged workforce, poor workforce planning (which leads to reactive rather than proactive management), compromised succession planning and constantly having to hire from outside because talent has not been developed internally are just a few of the problems companies face when they don't manage their talent well.

*Organizations that manage talent effectively have a huge competitive advantage ... the right practices have a very high positive correlation with market performance.*

### The Top Five Talent Attributes

		High-performers		Low-performers		Correlation with market performance
		2010	2011	2010	2011	
1	Our employees are highly engaged	5.0	5.2	3.6	3.6	.33
2	We are able to retain our most talented employees	5.1	5.3	3.5	3.9	.32
3	Our compensation and rewards system support employee performance	5.0	5.1	3.7	3.6	.32
4	Our organizations processes and policies support talent management	4.4	4.7	3.3	3.3	.31
5	We have a well integrated talent management system	4.2	4.5	3.2	3.1	.31

Scores range from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 7 ("strongly agree").  
Results shown from organizations with 1,000 or more employees

That's the bad news. The good news is that organizations that do manage talent effectively seem to have a huge competitive advantage because the right talent management practices have a very high positive correlation with market performance.

i4cp's research shows that organizations that excel at talent management usually move beyond a focus on HR practices, processes and systems to a strategic view that is linked to leadership behavior and business outcomes. This typically begins by stepping outside of HR and looking at the organization from an "outside-in" perspective which entails identifying the business model components and areas that drive value and then determining what the organization needs from a human capital perspective. This enables organizations to take a holistic approach to people; still treating employees as individuals but managing and making workforce planning decisions based on data-driven information.

In addition, our research shows that high-performing organizations excel because they have well-integrated talent management processes and policies and practices that support talent management. This usually manifests in the following areas:

- They have created a meaningful definition of talent management for their organization that supports the business strategy and is understood by all stakeholders.
- They have integrated the various components of talent management – recruiting, onboarding, training and development, performance management, succession planning, rewards, etc. – in both their processes and technology
- High-performing organizations have assigned clear accountability for talent management internally and they also make the business case for talent management clear in order to gain senior-level support. While often an individual in HR is responsible for developing and maintaining the tools and processes to enable successful talent management, the organization has enabled individual managers to carry out and execute talent management through training and clear communication.
- They have determined the metrics they want to capture to measure the success of their talent management initiatives and assign clear ownership of those metrics while reporting on them frequently.
- The executive team has created organizational incentives and monitors the progress and rewards behaviors that are in line with the talent management objectives.

In the final analysis, the research shows that successfully managing talent will lead to higher engagement and retention of talent. Much has been written about the importance of engagement of the workforce, and our research shows that high-performance organizations typically have highly engaged workforces. However, most conversations about engagement can quickly turn into a debate about what comes first – a highly engaged workforce or a successful organization? The answer to

that question is elusive because regardless of opinion about the engagement controversy, i4cp’s research finds that high-performance organizations with highly engaged employees do several things differently than low-performing organizations with less engaged employees. These practices start with the kind of talent they search for:

## Engagement Questions

(What organization’s look for as predictors of engaged employees - top three traits.)

	High-performing organizations with highly engaged employees	Low-performing organizations with disengaged employees
1	Has a passion for work	Intelligent
2	Has a positive attitude towards peers and customers	Confident in work abilities
3	Has a desire to set and achieve goals	Has excellent job skills

The philosophy of many high-performance organizations can be summed up as “hire for attitude (vs. aptitude) and train for skills.” Hiring smart people is the hallmark of low-performing organizations, vs. hiring individuals for their passion, positive outlook and work ethic.

i4cp’s research into engagement also finds that high-performing organizations work harder at creating and maintaining highly engaged workforces in four significant areas:

1. They make engagement a priority for leaders at all levels in the organization, especially for supervisors.
2. They actively promote and communicate the importance of engagement.
3. They recognize and reward engagement and build it into other practices.
4. They build a learning and development culture – they invest in their employees.

Talent management is growing increasingly integrated and valued as a strong component of organizations' responses to uncertain economic times. As the field matures, talent management's effectiveness as a constituent of overall business strategy is imminent.

## Culture

The pace of global change is accelerating at an exponential rate. With entire economies shifting almost overnight, the ability to adjust quickly and well can mean the difference between an organization that is thriving or dying. Given this agility imperative, culture has become a controversial domain. That’s because culture constitutes the shared values and beliefs that help individuals understand organizational functioning and that provide them with guides for their behavior within the organization. And unless the organization’s culture is aligned with its strategy, culture will override all else.

*The cultural attributes that are guiding employee behavior in high-performing organizations all have to do with change and becoming more agile and resilient.*

As a result, an interesting phenomenon emerged in the 2011 results. The cultural attributes that are guiding employee behavior in high-performing organizations all have to do with change and becoming more agile and resilient – three of the top-five culture items have to do with the capacity to be more agile and resilient. Having an agile culture means it can move quickly, decisively and effectively in anticipating, initiating and taking advantage of change. And resiliency refers to the ability to “bounce back,” to first absorb the impact of change and then effectively react to it.

### The Top Five Culture Attributes

		High-performers		Low-performers		Correlation with market performance
		2010	2011	2010	2011	
1	Our organization responds well to changes in the market or elsewhere	5.3	5.4	3.8	3.9	.38
2	Our organization emphasizes a readiness to meet new challenges	5.4	5.4	4.0	4.1	.33
3	Our culture supports talent management	5.5	5.1	4.3	3.5	.33
4	Most employees think this is a good place to work	5.7	5.7	4.5	4.6	.31
5	A shared value that keeps our organization together is a commitment to innovation	5.1	5.3	3.7	3.6	.31

*Scores range from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 7 (“strongly agree”).  
Results shown from organizations with 1,000 or more employees*

Because change is indeed the only reliable constant, companies are cultivating the ability to respond to it effectively. Getting there – hitting the desired markers for organizational performance – is just the beginning. Staying on point requires a constant balancing act to anticipate and adjust to the

multitudes of shifts that can occur every day and that pack the potential to affect any number of company functions, from the smallest to the largest.

Responding well to changes in today's business world demands an organizational culture in which change is expected and embraced as an opportunity for growth and innovation when it occurs. Viewing change in the context of potential for opportunity and instilling change capabilities in employees are the ways in which high-performers shape agile and resilient cultures. Crafting new visions for the organizational future, infusing them with compelling emotion, and ushering workers onboard to share those visions are skills high-performing leaders wield confidently.

Organizations will need to be even more adept at becoming "talent magnets" in the future, and they'll probably need to adopt stronger values related to sustainability, diversity, resiliency and agility. In addition, they'll need to represent and express their cultures via virtual, online worlds where geographically dispersed employees can get a greater sense of belonging and understanding.

Being viewed as a "good place to work" is a solid indicator that an organization is a high-performer, as is the ability to support talent management. Not only is this cultural characteristic widely cited by high-performing organizations, it is also one of the areas in which those organizations furthest outstrip low-performers.

None of these shifts will be easy. Even organizations that currently have effective corporate cultures today will be challenged to maintain such cultures amidst the changing and tumultuous environment of the coming decade. The good news is that positive cultures are linked to greater adaptability. Therefore, leaders should view the topic of corporate culture as an important element in high-performance today as potentially critical to their organization's ability to not only survive and thrive in the future.

## Market

Having an external focus is extremely important. To paraphrase Peter Drucker, no great change comes from looking internally – change only comes from having an external focus. i4cp’s research shows that great organizations intimately understand both the markets they operate within and their customers – to the extent that even those employees who do not have the opportunity to interact face-to-face with customers understand their needs.

*Better customer service is a priority among high-performing organizations.*

### The Top Five Market Attributes

		High-performers		Low-performers		Correlation with market performance
		2010	2011	2010	2011	
1	We try to exceed our customers’ expectations	6.0	6.1	5.0	5.0	.34
2	We do a good job at assessing out customers’ future needs	5.6	5.5	4.5	4.1	.33
3	Our internal processes are designed to best meet the needs of the customer	5.3	5.3	4.1	3.9	.33
4	Our functions and departments are organized in order to maximize customer value	5.2	5.1	3.8	3.7	.33
5	We strive to be the best in the world in providing value for our best customer	6.1	6.0	5.0	4.9	.31

*Scores range from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 7 (“strongly agree”).  
Results shown from organizations with 1,000 or more employees*

Of all the research i4cp conducts in the five domains of high-performance, understanding and acting on the future needs of the market and customers is one critical element in which the gap between high-performers and low performers is the narrowest. There are, however, significant differences, as the results above clearly point out. These differences revolve around how to ensure that operations bear out the company brand, how organizations learn about customer needs and preferences, and how processes and procedures can be adjusted to facilitate better customer service.

Better customer service is the underlying aim of high-performing organizations. The single greatest effect derives from an organization’s constant drive to exceed customer expectations. What consumer wouldn’t gravitate toward a company that works to create and nurture ongoing relationships with its customers for the purpose of better understanding and not just meeting, but surpassing customer needs? In a technologically driven world that is increasingly characterized by

the impersonal, organizations that balance high-tech with high-touch approaches to customer relationships stand to differentiate themselves favorably among attention-starved consumers.

Tailoring internal processes to best meet customer needs is another hallmark of high-performers. The willingness to take this tack toward organizing and adjusting work processes also suggests the kind of agility that allows for frequent changes to accommodate shifts in customer preferences. Further, an organization that tweaks its internal landscape on the basis of changes in customer feedback implies a steadfast commitment to continuous improvement. At the same time, it speaks to dedication to fluid internal communication that is capable of getting customer intelligence to the right departments and people to make responsive change possible. Finally, the high-performing organization has a culture that empowers employees who are best positioned to make any adjustments necessary in order to exceed customers' expectations.

An interesting revelation of high-performers' practices is that they are forward focused; top companies don't just settle for knowing what their customers want now. They're all about looking ahead to assess customers' future needs, maybe even defining what those needs are before the customers themselves can articulate them. High-performers who participated in the survey confirmed that they are far more likely than their lower-performing counterparts to have refined strategies designed to help them ferret out customers' needs, and to take the long-term view over the short-term one.

The customer-focused practices of higher-performers echo the consistency that characterized top organizations' efforts within the strategy domain: "Our brand accurately reflects how we operate as an organization." Customers have to know a brand if they are to develop loyalty. That comes from a basic understanding of what to expect in a product's performance or in the quality of a service. A company in which internal operations and external branding agree is far more likely to engage in customer-facing behaviors that reinforce the customer's brand understanding. In effect, employees and customers approach interactions with each other from a common ground that enables them to speak the same language – the very essence of rapport and a strong foundation for long-term, satisfying relationships.

## The Importance of Alignment

While i4cp research has identified five domains of high-performance organizations, truly improved performance won't happen without alignment and execution. It's important for a company's culture to align with its strategies – which then must align with focus on the market as well as talent programs and leadership approaches. These five domains must work together as an integrated system. Once alignment occurs, execution in these areas is paramount.

i4cp research in this area also suggests that, while the five domains of high-performance organizations are likely to remain stable over the next 10 years, the ways in which companies demonstrate those characteristics will evolve. There will no doubt continue to be innovations in leadership competencies, talent-management programs, technology usage, customer service, performance metrics and other areas affecting an organization's human capital. Achieving and maintaining high-performance will require that companies adapt to a changing marketplace and shifting social attitudes.

The results of i4cp's 2011 study of high-performing organizations illustrates this point: As with previous studies over the years it is very apparent that there is tremendous interplay across the five domains. The domains don't exist as rigid and unyielding silos; they are a fluid framework within which practices and strategies flow and interconnect. The data strongly suggest that this greater interplay results in better performance.

Today, in the face of continuous, turbulent change, high-performing organizations are building more agile and resilient companies. They need to move faster, bounce back quickly and healthier, and value innovation. But at the same time, the overriding factor that cuts across all five domains is "consistency." For example, consistency is important in the strategy domain as it connects publicly stated philosophy with the strategies that drive operations. In the leadership domain, consistency is embodied in the ways in which leaders communicate and act to encourage effectiveness. When organizations strive to integrate talent management, what they seek are consistent and effective ways to engage, motivate, and leverage the workforce. In the culture domain, consistency in leadership and organizational operations is vital in the face of change because it gives employees an anchor in the midst of constantly shifting tides. For companies to excel in the market domain, consistency enables long-term customer relationships and is the stuff of which enduring brands are made.

Just as agility sets the stage for a culture that supports high-performance, the ability to fluidly interweave practices such as consistency across domains and to achieve an equilibrium that, itself,

*The domains don't exist as rigid and unyielding silos; they are a fluid framework within which practices and strategies flow and interconnect.*



relies on continuous refinement may well be among the most constructive core capabilities of high-performing organizations. Anticipating and proactively meeting change across all the domains can only position companies for success in their journeys toward higher-performance.

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the world's top organizations.

Contact us at:  
1-866-375-i4cp (4427)  
or at [www.i4cp.com](http://www.i4cp.com)

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