



# Introduction to SYMLOG®

SYMLOG is an acronym.

*S*ystem (for the)  
*M*ultiple  
*L*evel  
*O*bservation (of)  
*G*roups



# Introduction to SYMLOG®

It is a theory of social interaction.

It is also a system that can measure the effectiveness of social interaction in an elegantly simple yet comprehensive way.

# SYMLOG®

In a systematic way, the theoretical model allows for the integration of organizational change efforts for organizational culture, team, and individual development efforts.

In addition to providing a model of planned change, SYMLOG has an associated measurement system.

# SYMLOG®

The system measures three dimensions of social interaction important to effective leadership, team work, and organizational culture.

The power of the method is its ability to measure and feedback useful, valid, and reliable results using one comprehensive framework.

# SYMLOG®

The SYMLOG method is used to evaluate the current situation and to compare these results with an assessment of what is needed to be most effective.

This most effective profile has been demonstrated to apply cross-culturally and further shown to be the location where organizational effectiveness is optimum, and employee productivity and satisfaction are maximized.

# SYMLOG®

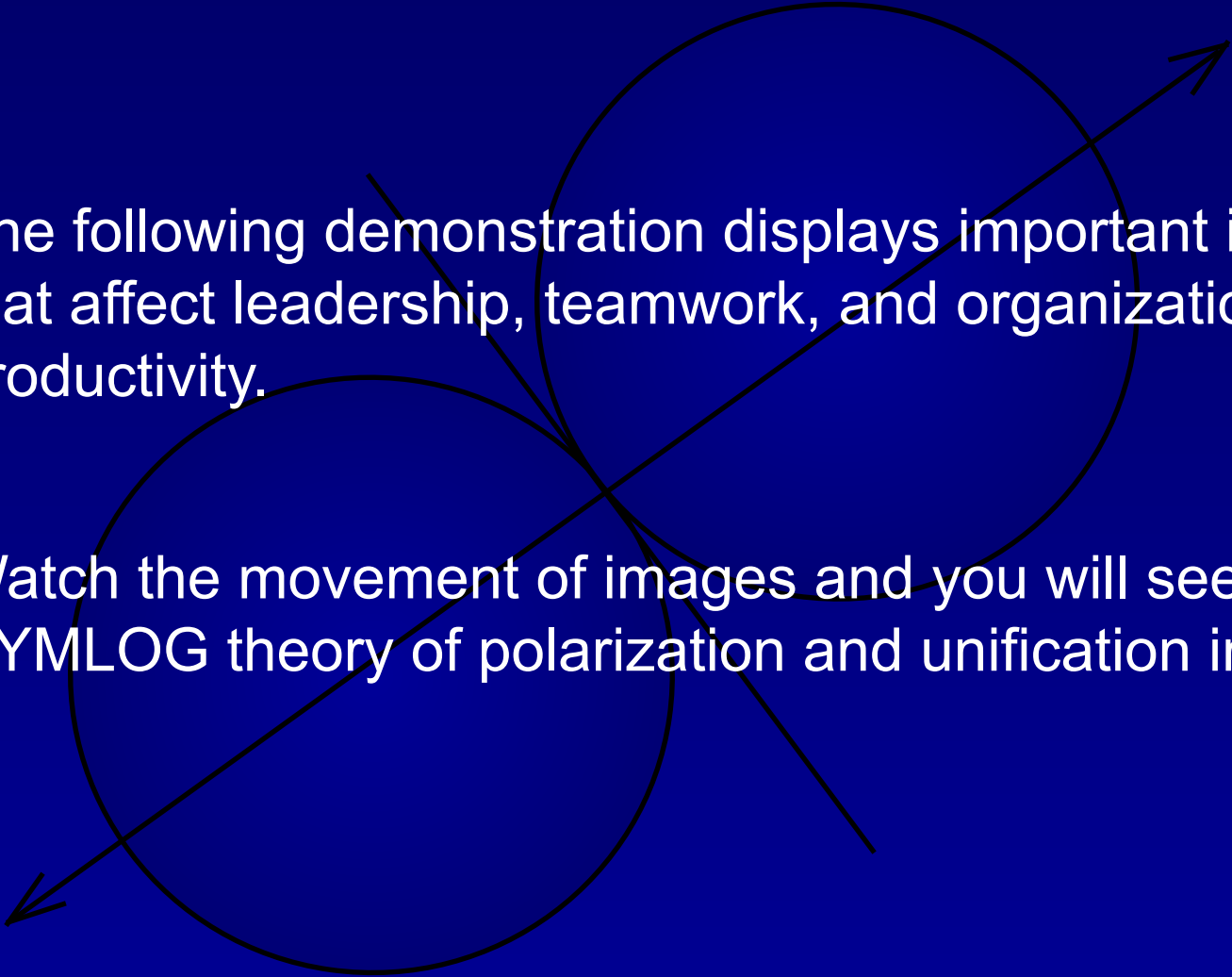
This comparison between current and desired future conditions provides strategic guidance to needed changes in organizational development, team building, and leadership training efforts.

The method is especially powerful because it also encourages the use of repeated measures. These repeated measures provide continuing direction to support development efforts, and allows for ongoing assessment of the effectiveness of change programs.

# SYMLOG®

The SYMLOG Consulting Group has refined over fifty years of continuous research by Robert F. Bales, Professor Emeritus of Harvard University, to make SYMLOG available in twelve languages worldwide.

The displays in this demonstration are based on very large random samples drawn from the SYMLOG Data Bank which contains over 1,000,000 profiles.

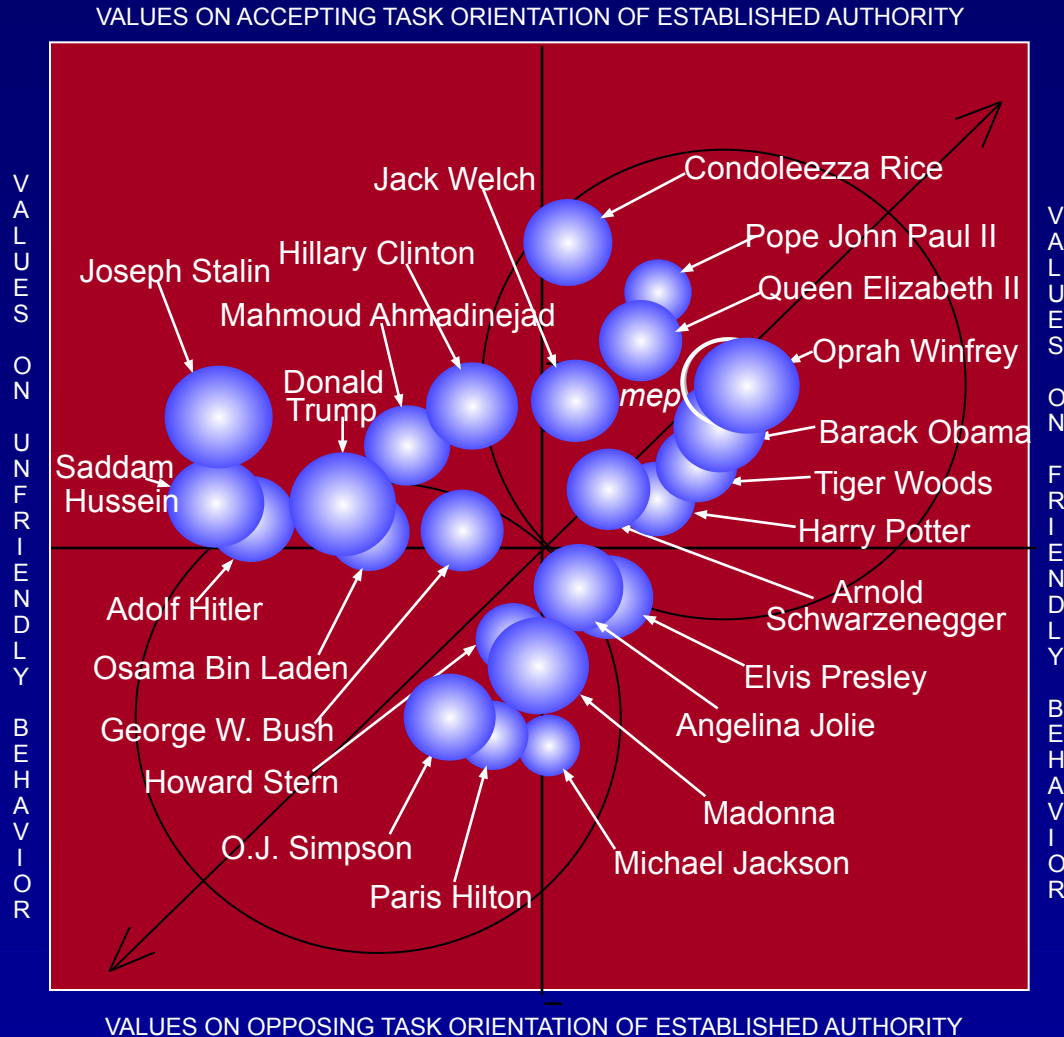


The following demonstration displays important images that affect leadership, teamwork, and organizational productivity.

Watch the movement of images and you will see the SYMLOG theory of polarization and unification in action.



# Famous People

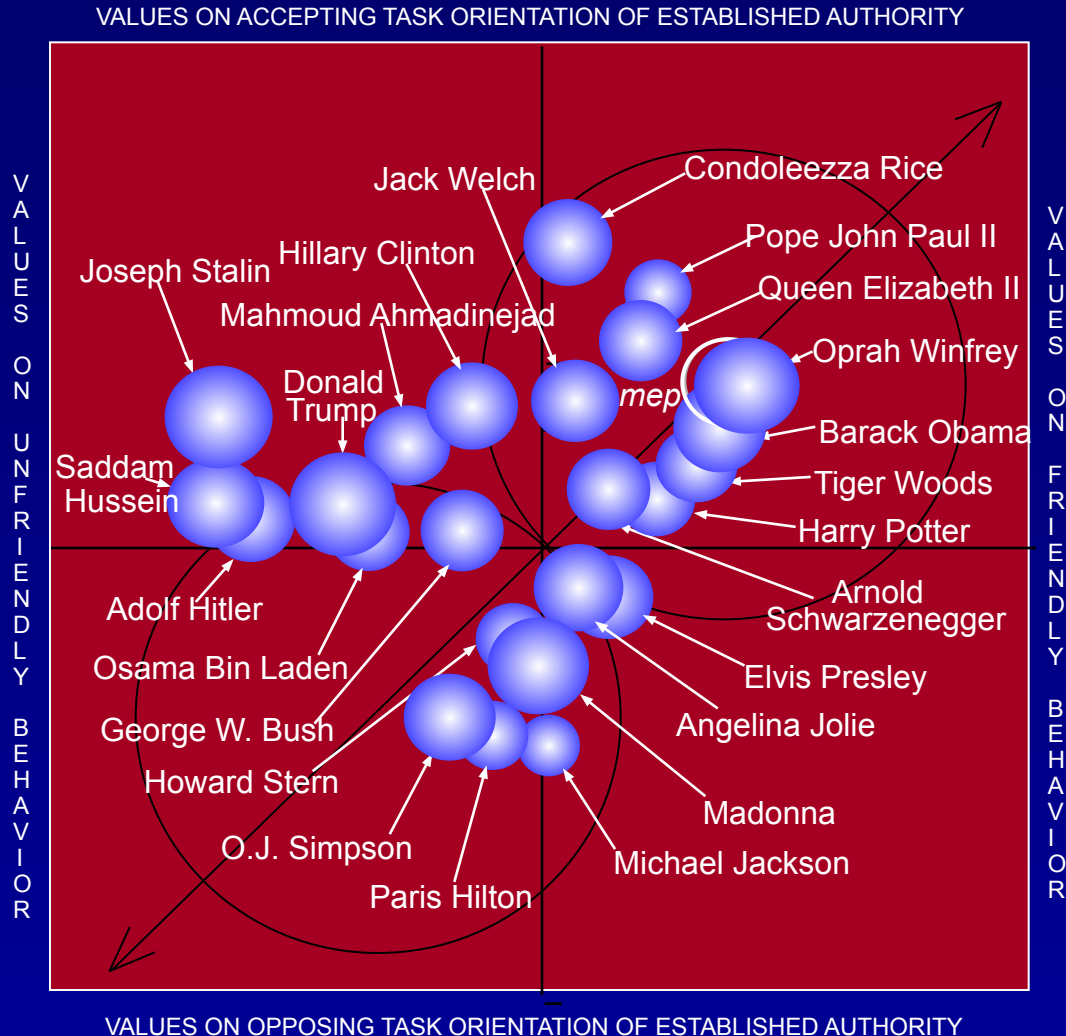


This striking and important picture reflects the perception of values shown by "famous people" as rated by a random selection of adult students in North America.

It illustrates how perceptions of different people vary considerably.

SYMLOG provides a "picture" of how these "images" tend to cluster (unify) and conflict (polarize).

# Famous People



You, of course, have your own perceptions and may not agree with the placement of images from these students' ratings.

***Why is this an important picture?***

These images represent diverse value positions, some of which almost always interfere with teamwork, and others which almost always contribute to effective teamwork and productivity.

# Survey Research

Participants use SYMLOG to answer survey questions associated with key images that influence effective leadership, teamwork, and organizational productivity.

*For example:*

*"In general, what kinds of values does the MOST EFFECTIVE LEADER of a task-oriented group you have known show in behavior?"*

or

*"In general, what kinds of values does your team CURRENTLY show in behavior?"*

# Take a moment to review the DESCRIPTIVE ITEMS

1	U	Individual financial success, personal prominence and power
2	UP	Popularity and social success, being liked and admired
3	UPF	Active teamwork toward common goals, organizational unity
4	UF	Efficiency, strong impartial management
5	UNF	Active reinforcement of authority, rules, and regulations
6	UN	Tough-minded, self-oriented assertiveness
7	UNB	Rugged, self-oriented individualism, resistance to authority
8	UB	Having a good time, releasing tension, relaxing control
9	UPB	Protecting less able members, providing help when needed
10	P	Equality, democratic participation in decision making
11	PF	Responsible idealism, collaborative work
12	F	Conservative, established, "correct" ways of doing things
13	NF	Restraining individual desires for organizational goals
14	N	Self-protection, self-interest first, self-sufficiency
15	NB	Rejection of established procedures, rejection of conformity
16	B	Change to new procedures, different values, creativity
17	PB	Friendship, mutual pleasure, recreation
18	DP	Trust in the goodness of others
19	DPF	Dedication, faithfulness, loyalty to the organization
20	DF	Obedience to the chain of command, complying with authority
21	DNF	Self-sacrifice if necessary to reach organizational goals
22	DN	Passive rejection of popularity, going it alone
23	DNB	Admission of failure, withdrawal of effort
24	DB	Passive non-co-operation with authority
25	DPB	Quiet contentment, taking it easy
26	D	Giving up personal needs and desires, passivity

To answer a question, a respondent considers the question as it relates to each of the 26 descriptive phrases.

# The SYMLOG 26 Descriptive Items

Individual financial success, personal prominence and power  
 Popularity and social success, being liked and admired  
 Active teamwork toward common goals, organizational unity  
 Efficiency, strong impartial management  
 Active reinforcement of authority, rules, and regulations  
 Tough-minded, self-oriented assertiveness  
 Rugged, self-oriented individualism, resistance to authority  
 Having a good time, releasing tension, relaxing control  
 Protecting less able members, providing help when needed  
 Equality, democratic participation in decision making  
 Responsible idealism, collaborative work  
 Conservative, established, "correct" ways of doing things  
 Restraining individual desires for organizational goals  
 Self-protection, self-interest first, self-sufficiency  
 Rejection of established procedures, rejection of conformity  
 Change to new procedures, different values, creativity  
 Friendship, mutual pleasure, recreation  
 Trust in the goodness of others  
 Dedication, faithfulness, loyalty to the organization  
 Obedience to the chain of command, complying with authority  
 Self-sacrifice if necessary to reach organizational goals  
 Passive rejection of popularity, going it alone  
 Admission of failure, withdrawal of effort  
 Passive non-co-operation with authority  
 Quiet contentment, taking it easy  
 Giving up personal needs and desires, passivity

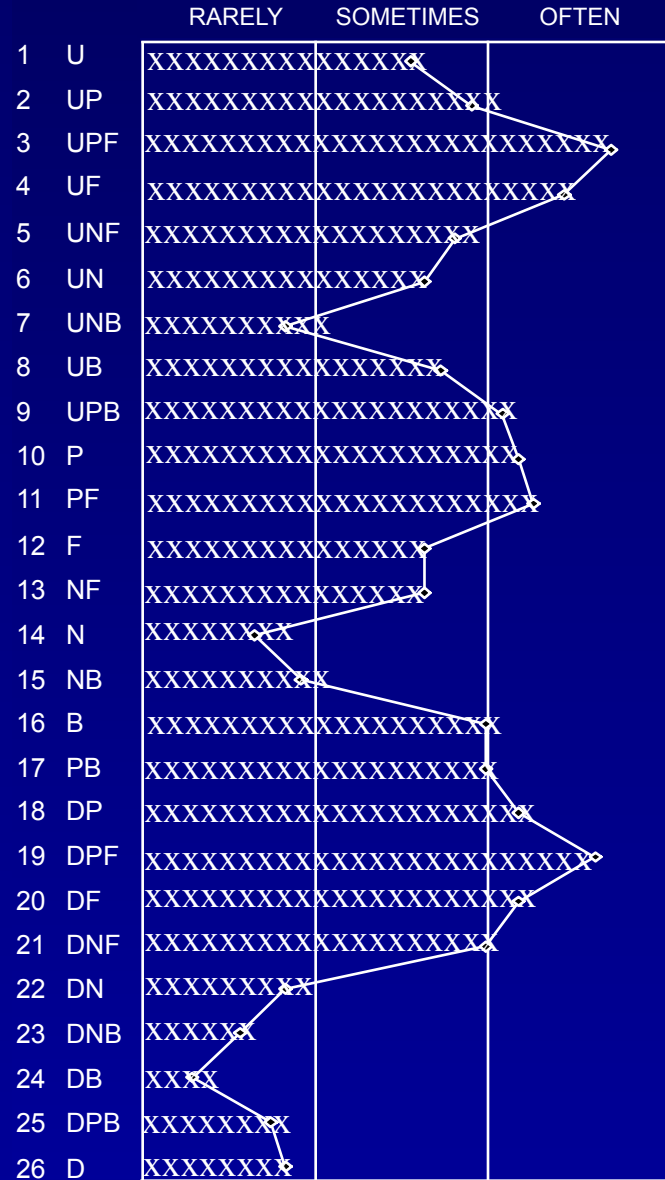
1 U  
 2 UP  
 3 UPF  
 4 UF  
 5 UNF  
 6 UN  
 7 UNB  
 8 UB  
 9 UPB  
 10 P  
 11 PF  
 12 F  
 13 NF  
 14 N  
 15 NB  
 16 B  
 17 PB  
 18 DP  
 19 DPF  
 20 DF  
 21 DNF  
 22 DN  
 23 DNB  
 24 DB  
 25 DPB  
 26 D

	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN
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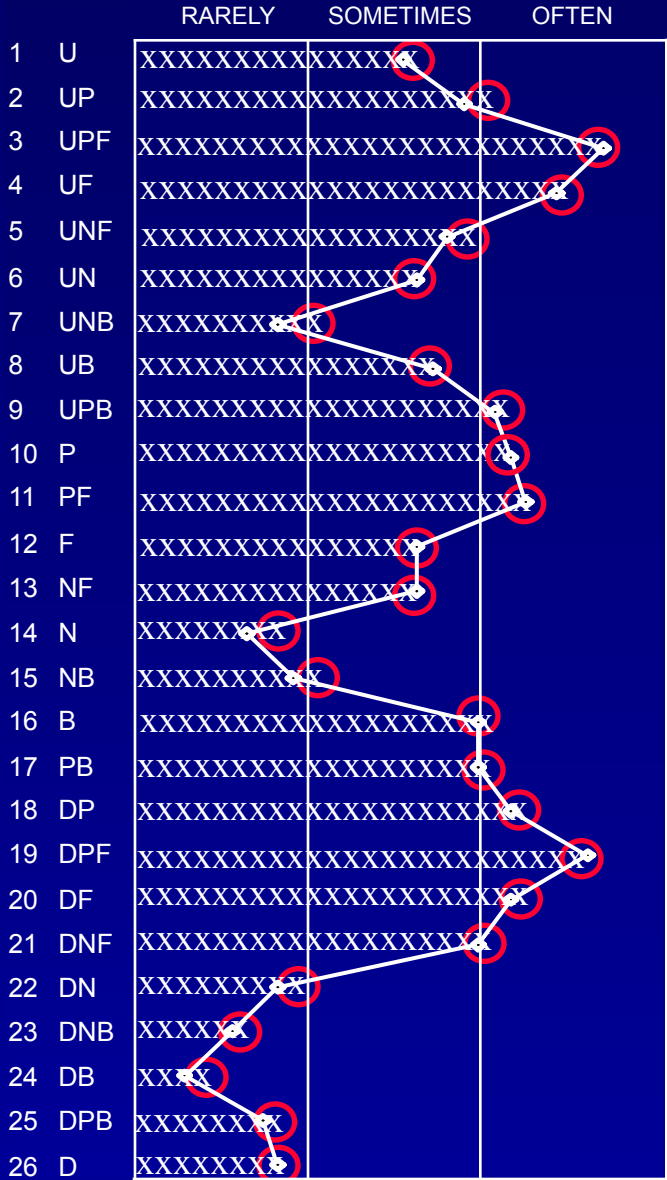
*They mark their answers using Rarely, Sometimes, or Often.*

A profile is produced which displays the average ratings for a particular image from all respondents.

SYMNET software processes the ratings to produce a bargraph profile.



# Comparing the average profile for an image against the SYMLOG research profile for "most effective."

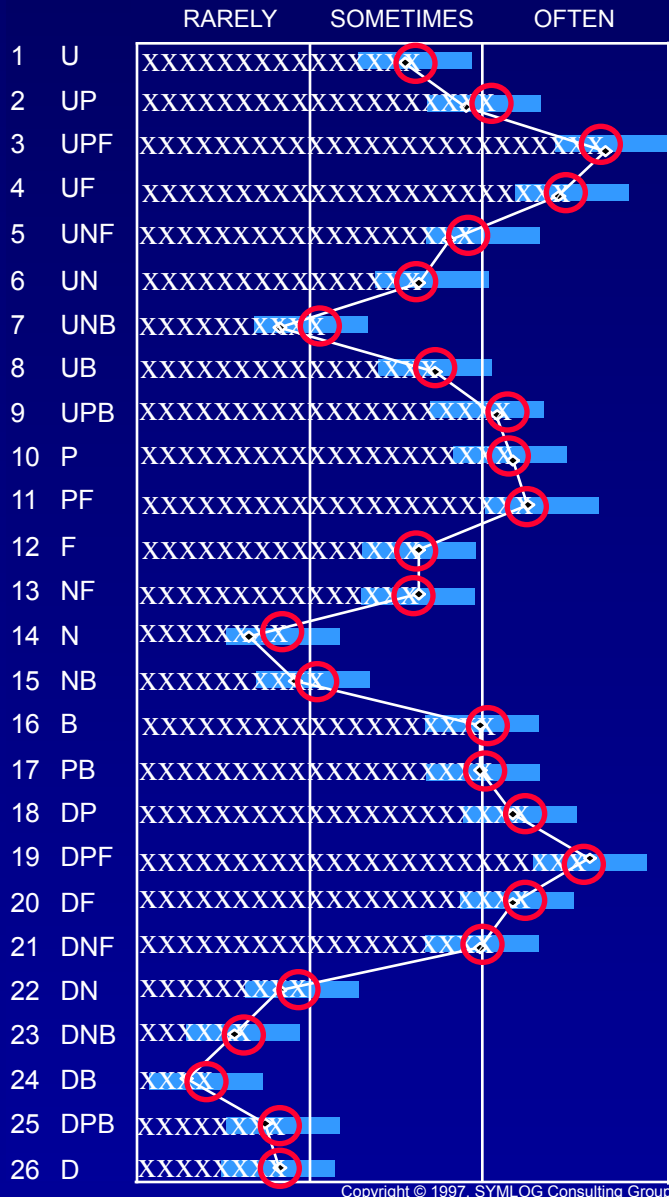


This bargraph displays the average result on a particular image.

The area highlighted with the (red) circle designates the average frequency for each item from all raters combined.

The average profile for any given image can be compared to a SYMLOG research norm that estimates the range for "most effective."

# Comparing the average profile for an image against the SYMLOG research profile for "most effective."



The (blue) bands on this bargraph represent the estimated effective range for any particular value item.

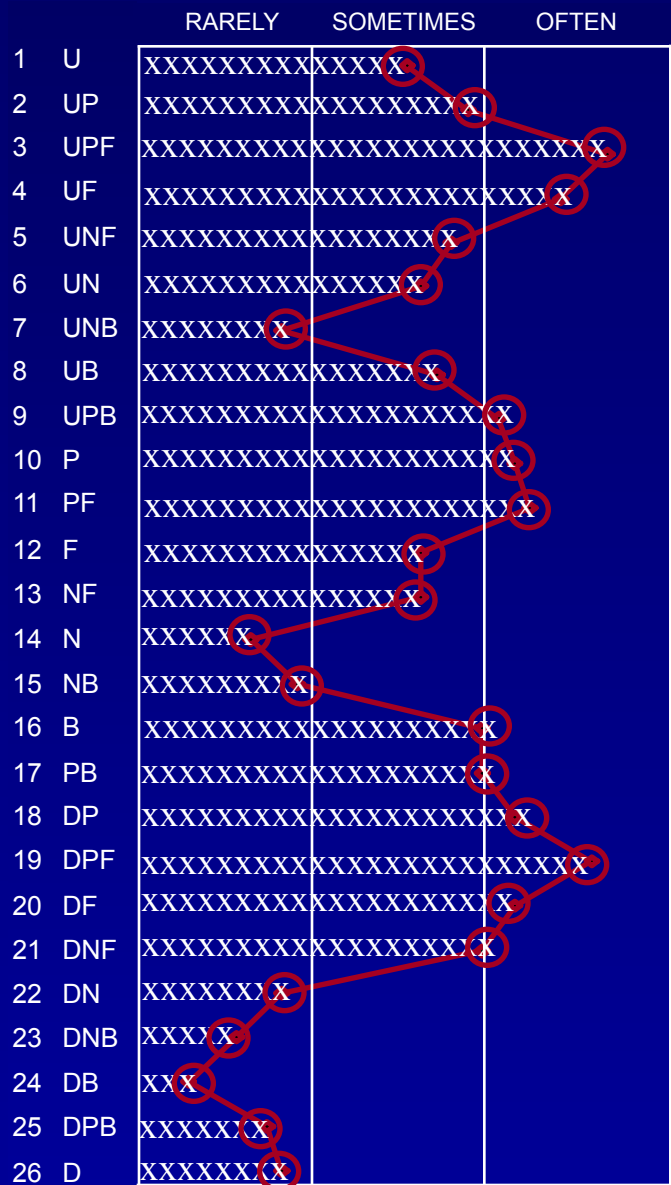
It is possible for the average frequency to be inside or outside of this range.

In this particular case the average frequency on each item is within the effective bandwidth.

Potential problems exist when the average response is outside of the effective range.



# Plotting the location of the "most effective profile" onto the field diagram ...

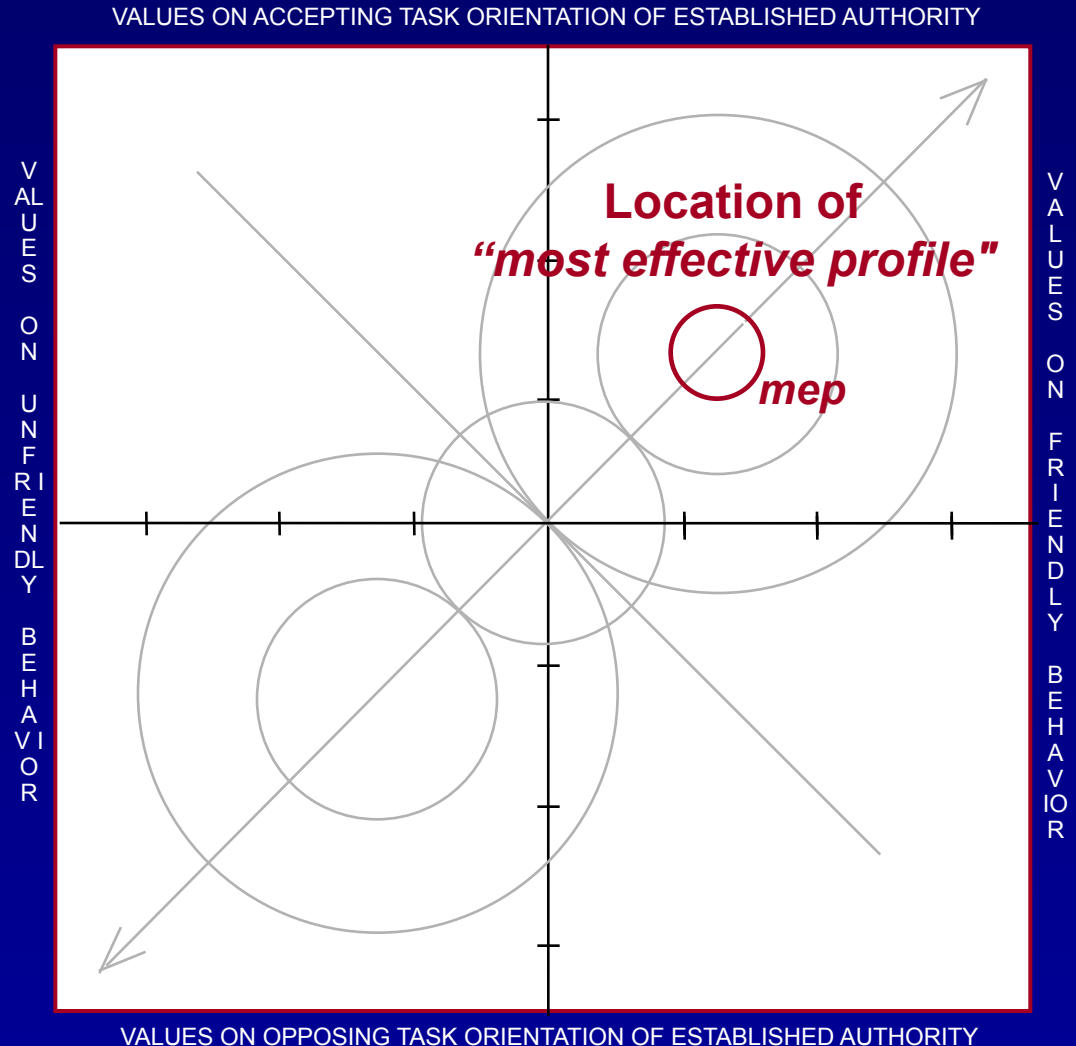
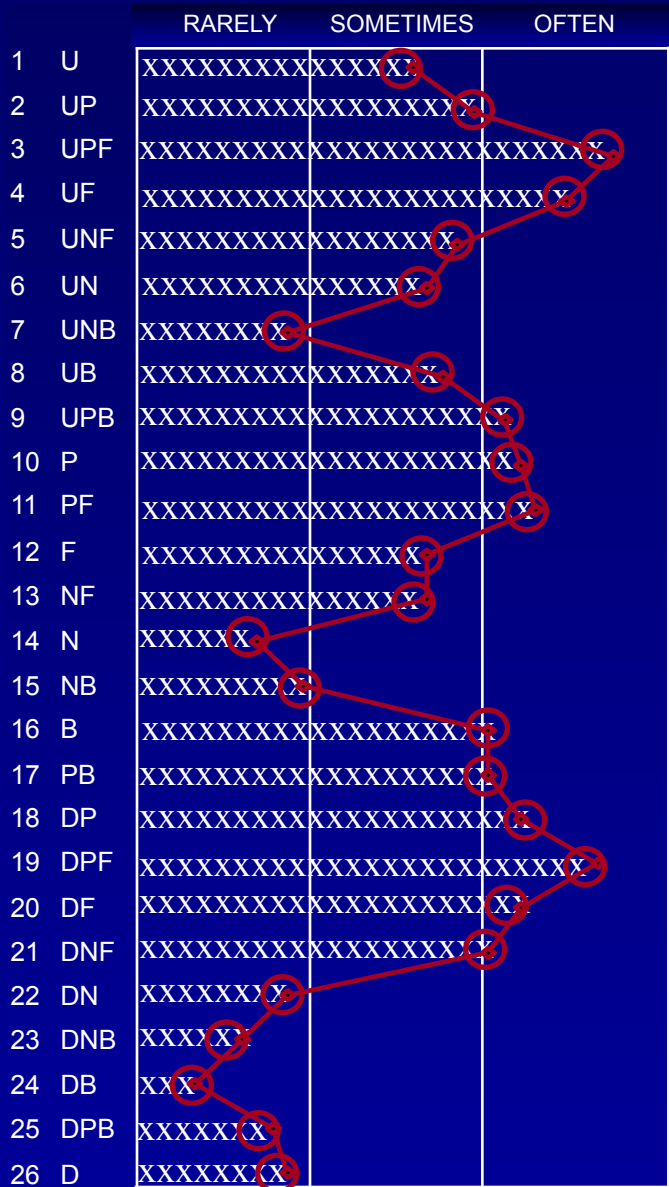


This particular profile has been demonstrated and researched to be "most effective."

When this profile is plotted on a field diagram, it is located in a very strategic position.

In fact, research indicates it is indeed the "most effective profile" (*mep*), over time and across situations and cultures, to unify diverse groups, resulting in high quality outcomes.

# Plotting onto the SYMLOG Field Diagram... the location of the "most effective profile".



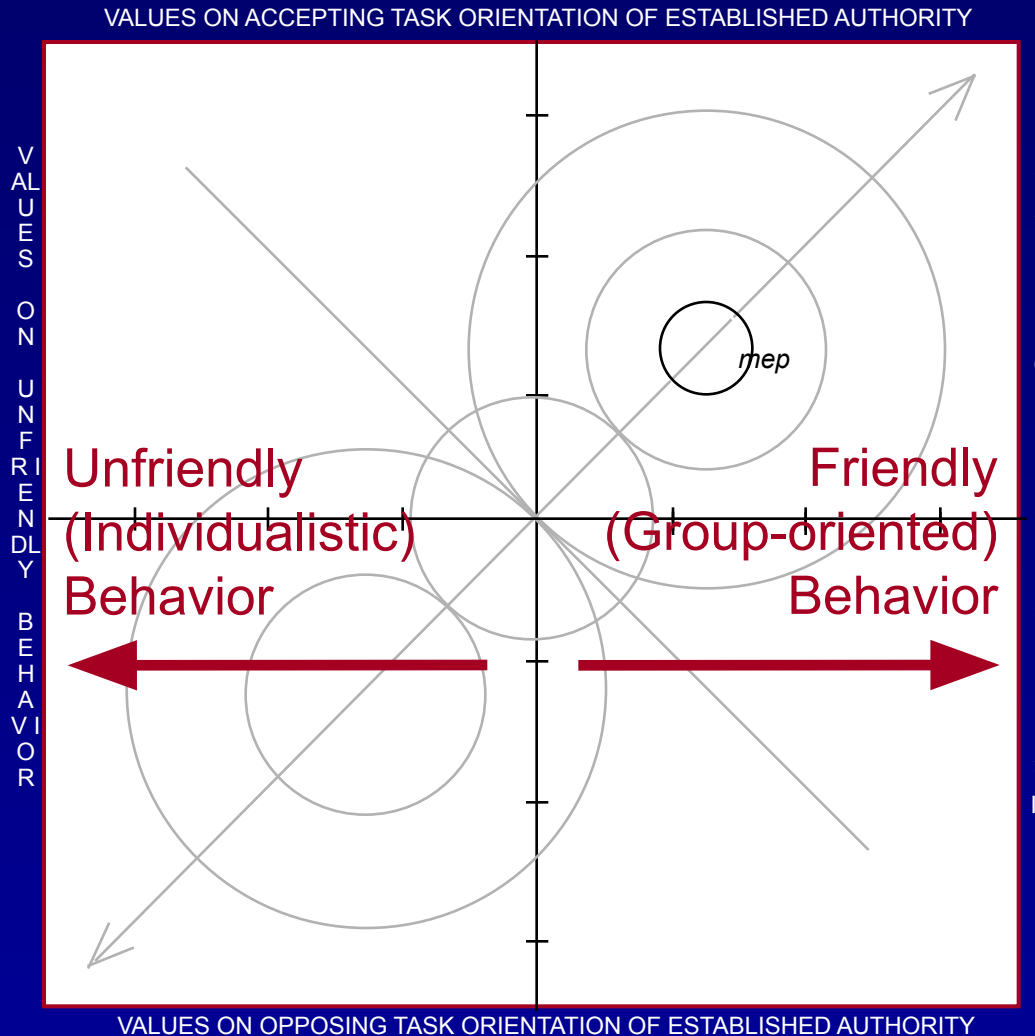
## Introducing the SYMLOG Field Diagram

In order to understand the scenarios you are about to view, let us take a brief tour of the ways in which the values are displayed.

The SYMLOG Individual and Organizational Values Field is characterized by three bipolar dimensions:

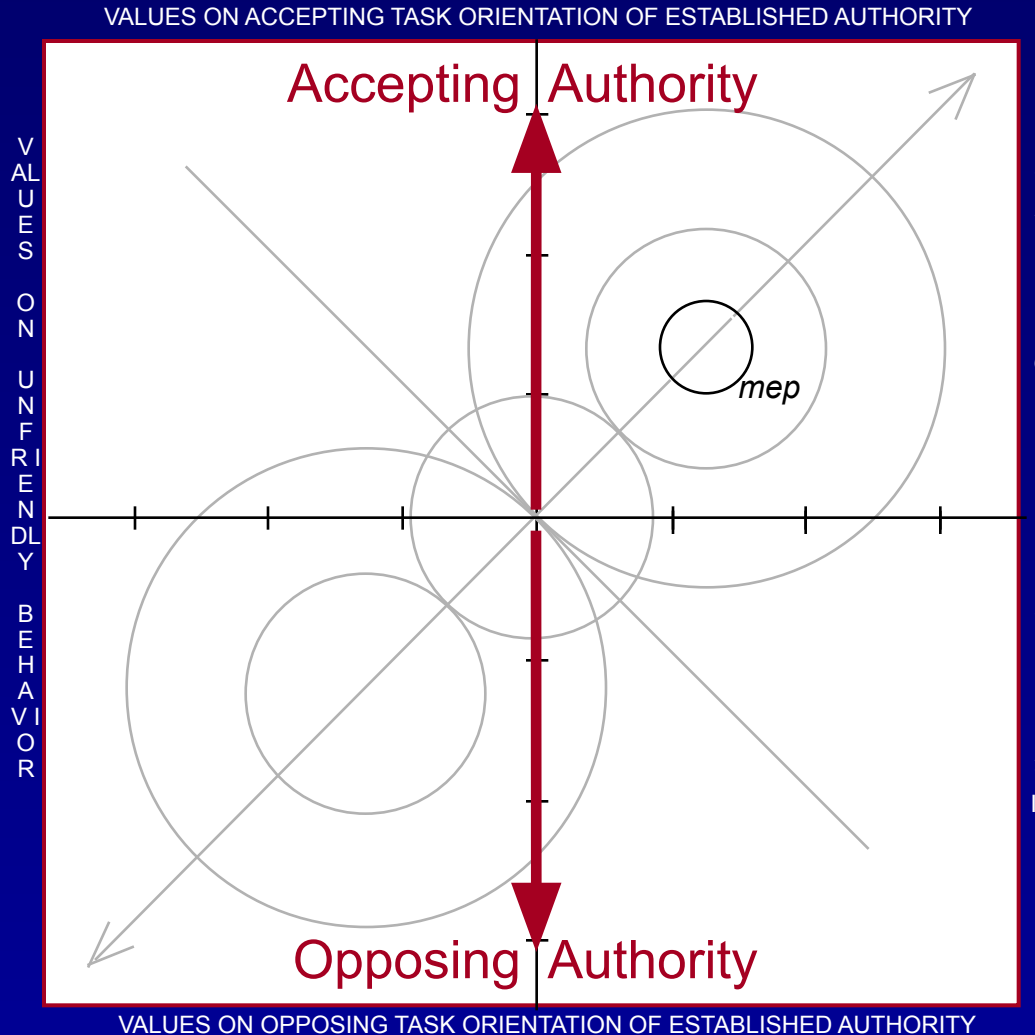
1. Values on Individualistic vs. Group-oriented Behavior
2. Values on Accepting vs. Opposing Authority
3. Values on Dominance vs. Submissiveness

# The three-dimensional field



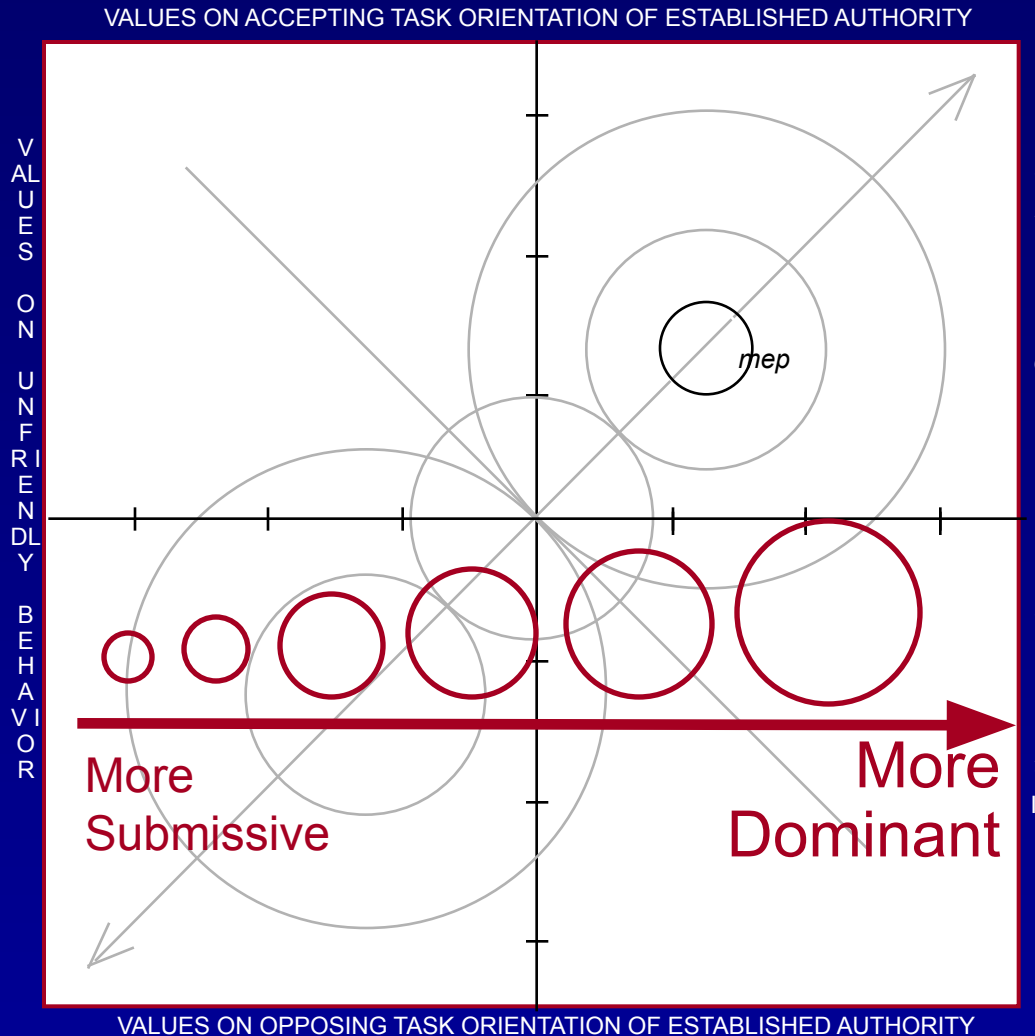
The horizontal axis represents Values on Unfriendly (Individualistic) Behavior vs. Friendly (Group-oriented) Behavior.

# The three-dimensional field



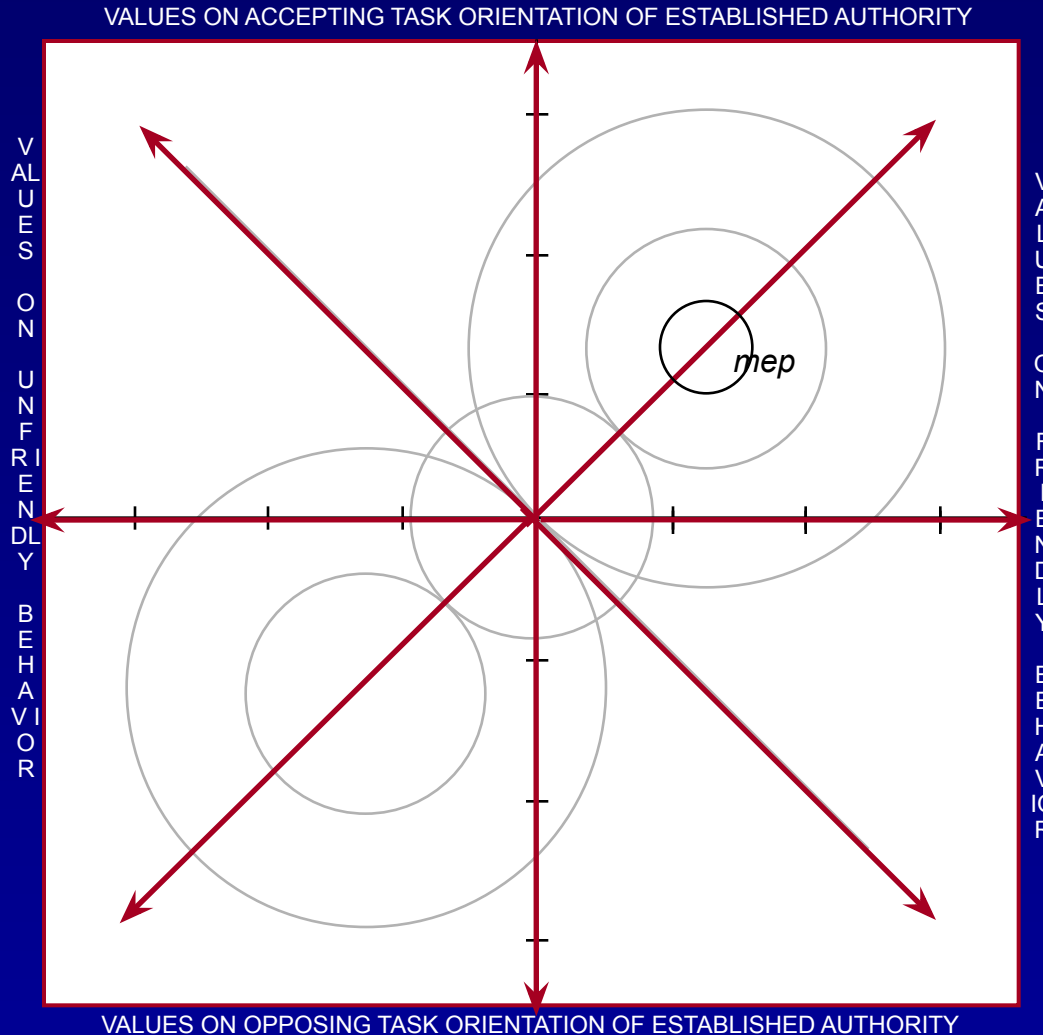
The vertical axis represents Values on Accepting vs. Opposing the Task Orientation of Established Authority.

# The three-dimensional field



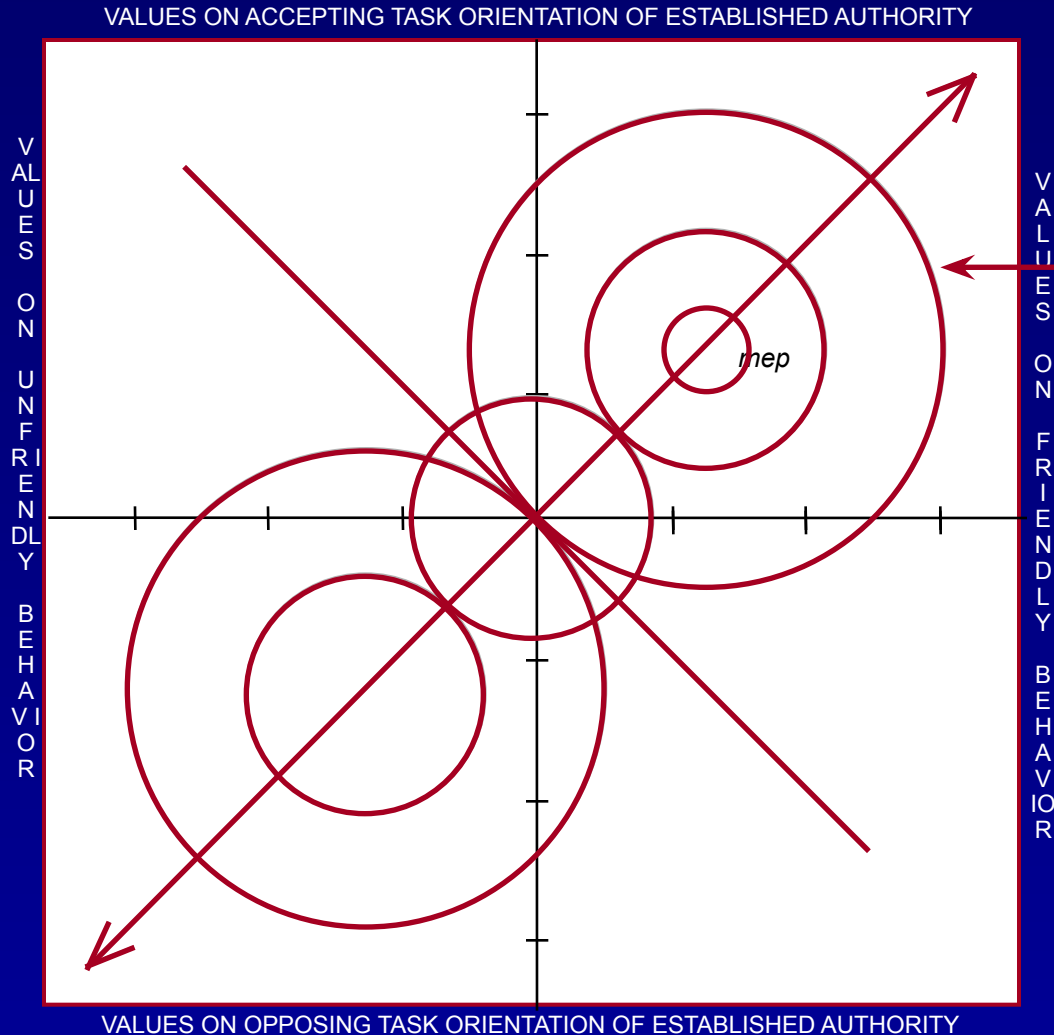
The third dimension of Values on Dominance vs. Submissiveness is represented by **circle size**, where large circles indicate greater dominance.

# The three-dimensional field



There are  
36 units  
for each dimension,  
18 out  
from the center in  
any direction.

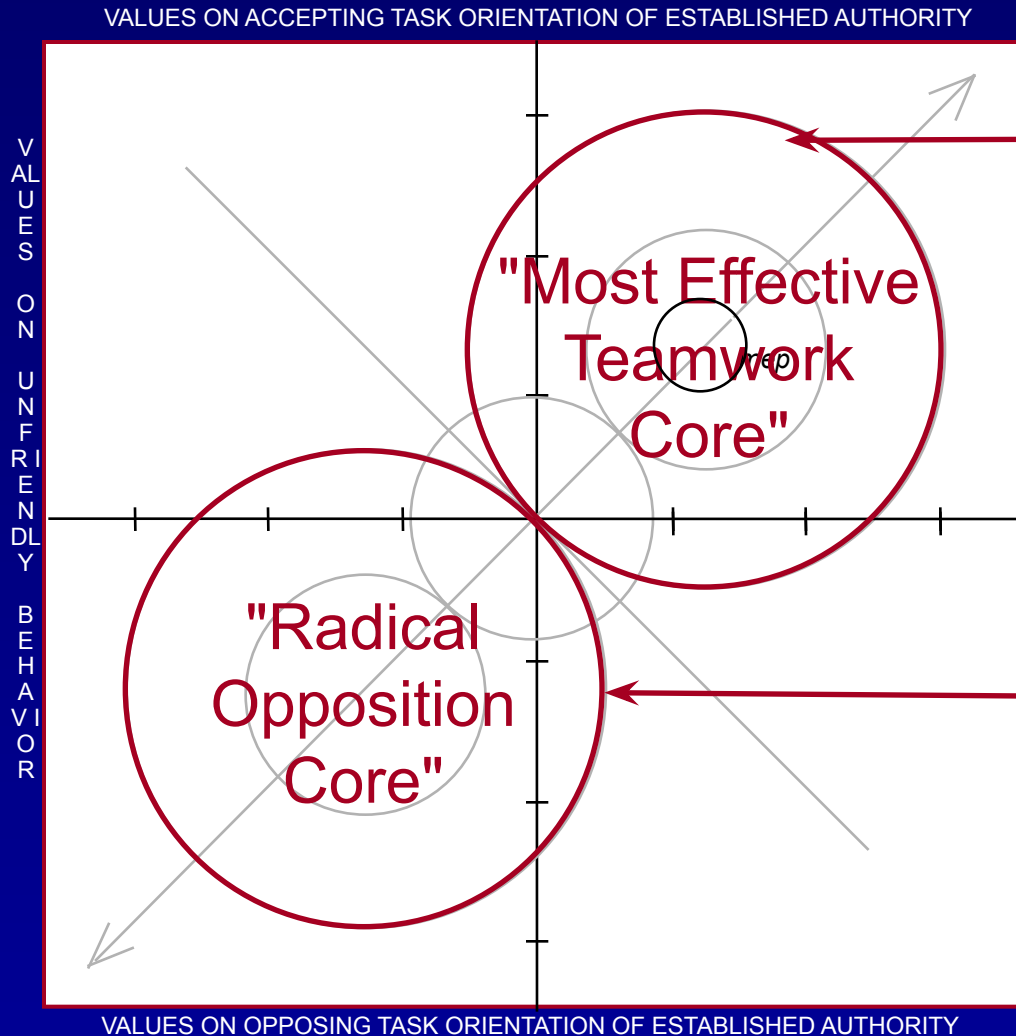
# The Overlay Design



The design that sits diagonally over the field shows the most common value polarization.



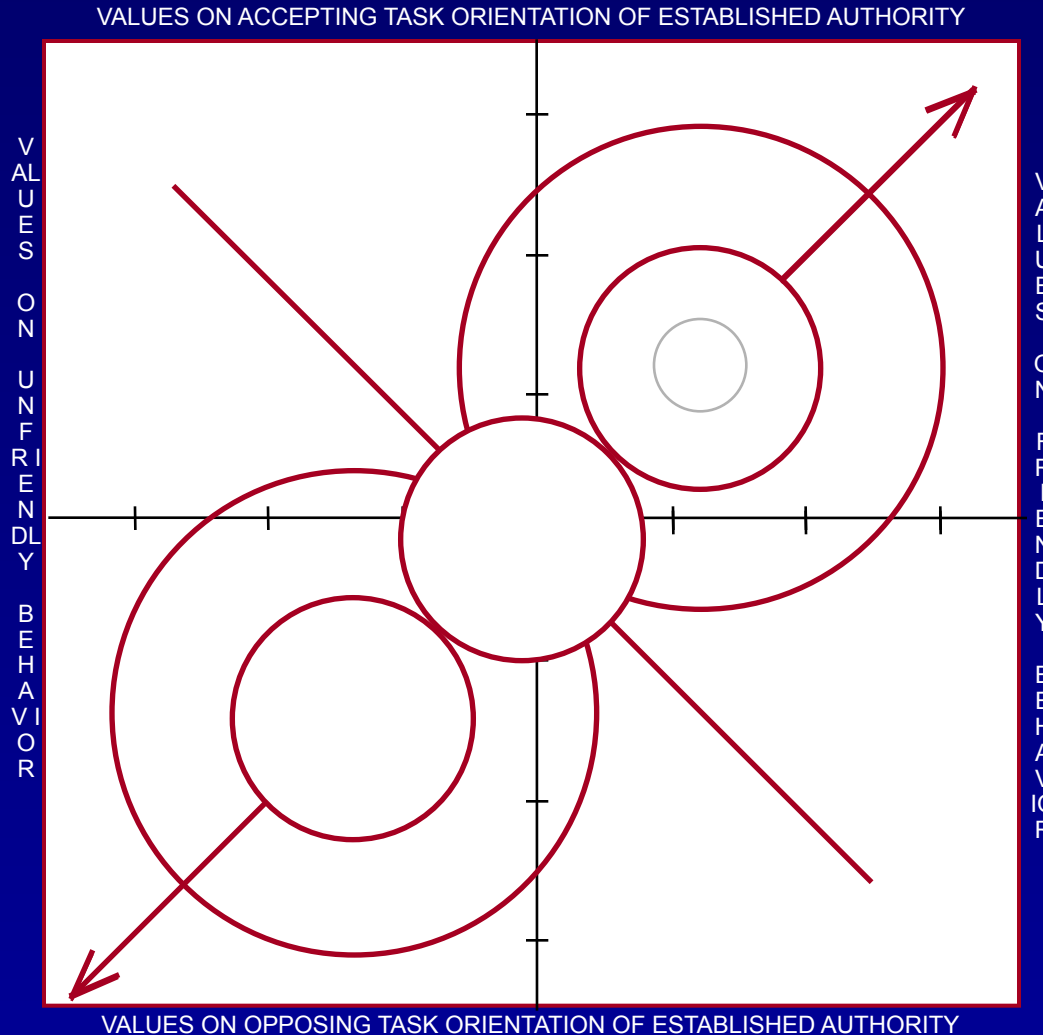
# The Overlay Design



The large circle in the upper right surrounds the position of "Most Effective Teamwork Core"

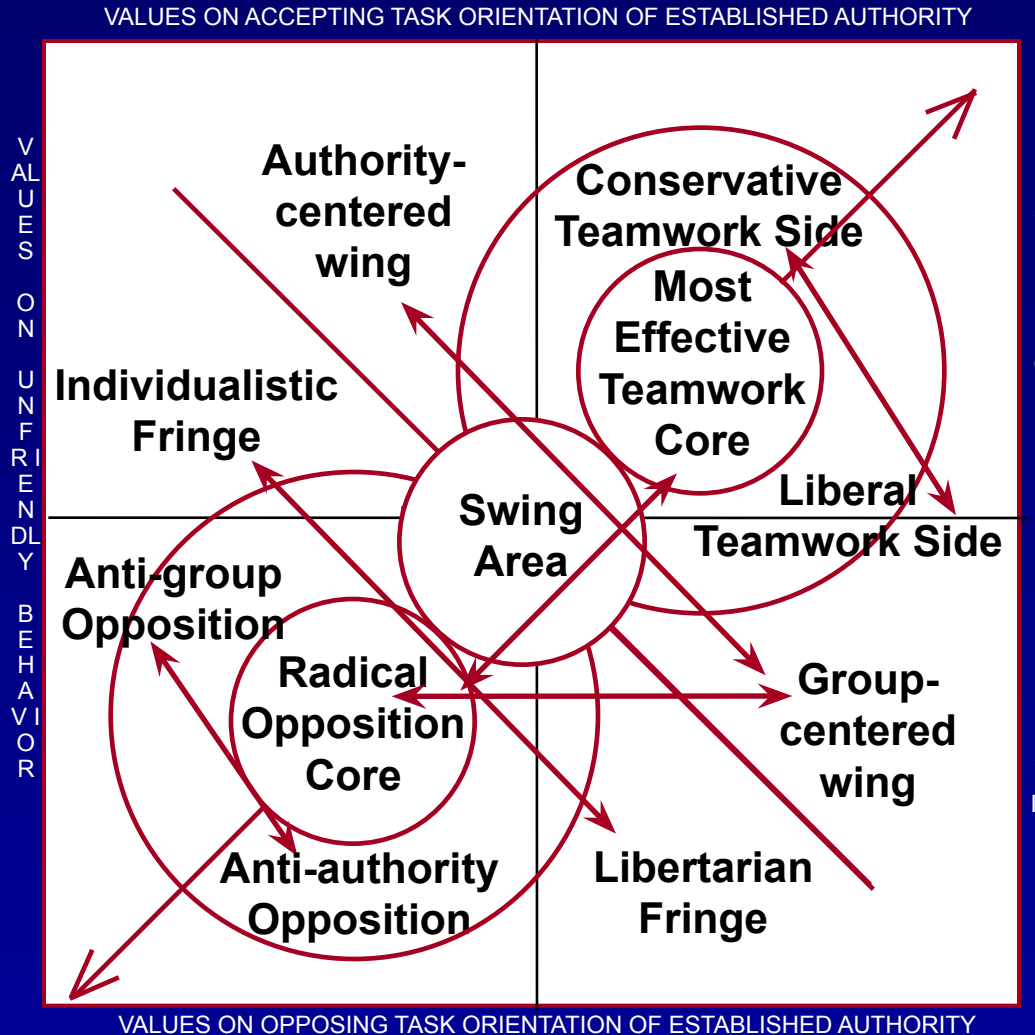
which is in opposition to the lower left circle surrounding the position of "Radical Opposition Core."

# The Values Orientation Overlay



The Values Orientation Overlay displays the potential for conflicts and chronic polarizations almost always found in families, teams, and organizations.

# The Values Orientation Overlay



It also indicates the "most effective" method for resolving conflict and collapsing polarization.

Some Potential Polarizations

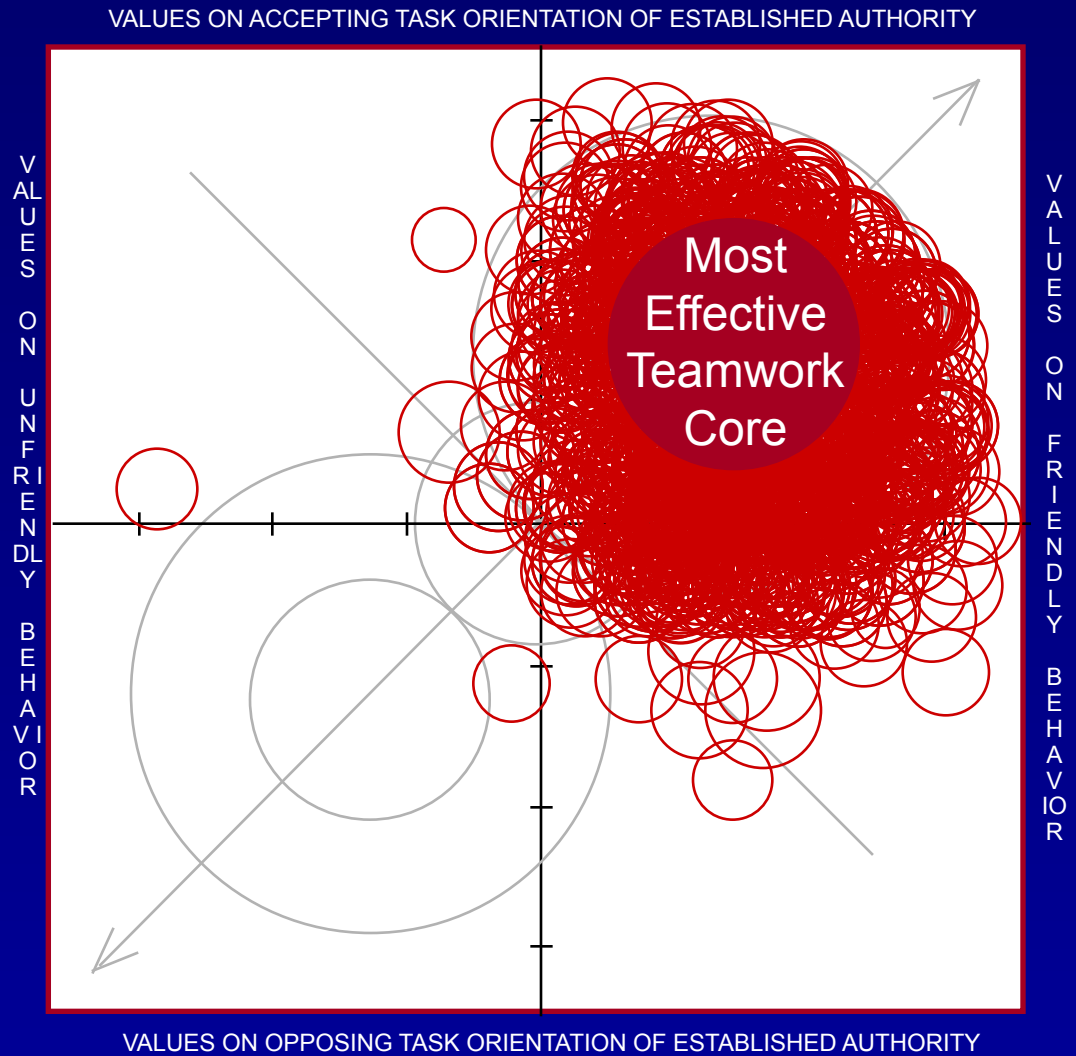
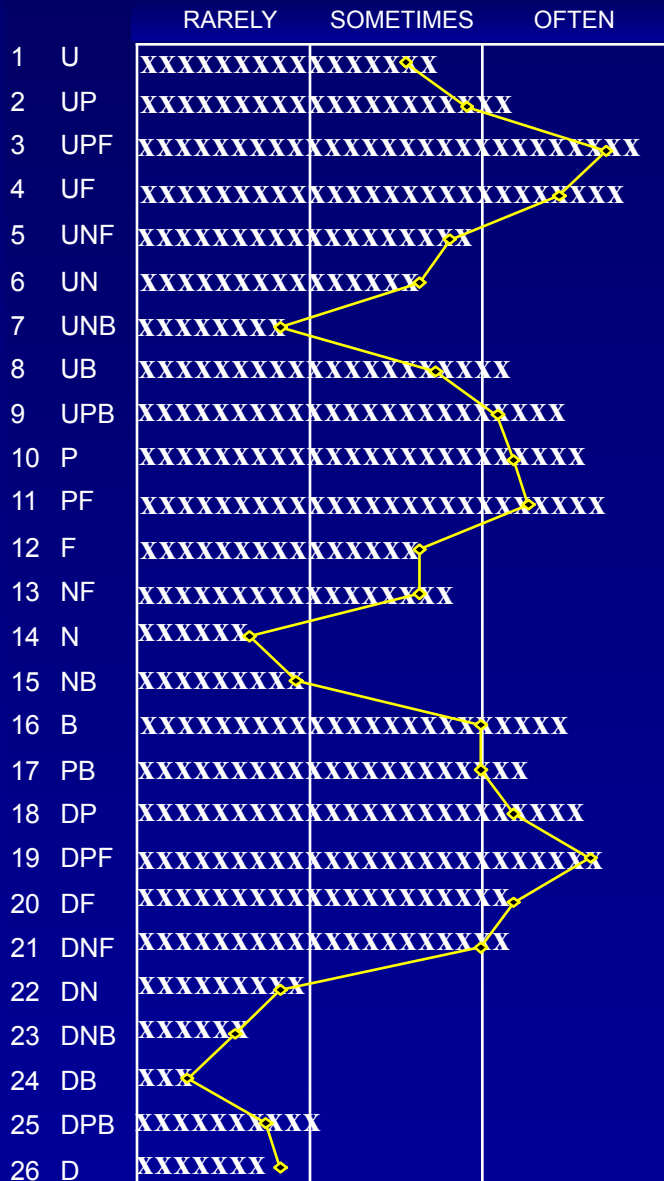


Behavior is strongly influenced by values, especially those behaviors individuals “wish to show”. When participants in leadership training are asked about their own value preferences, they use the 26 SYMLOG items to answer the question:

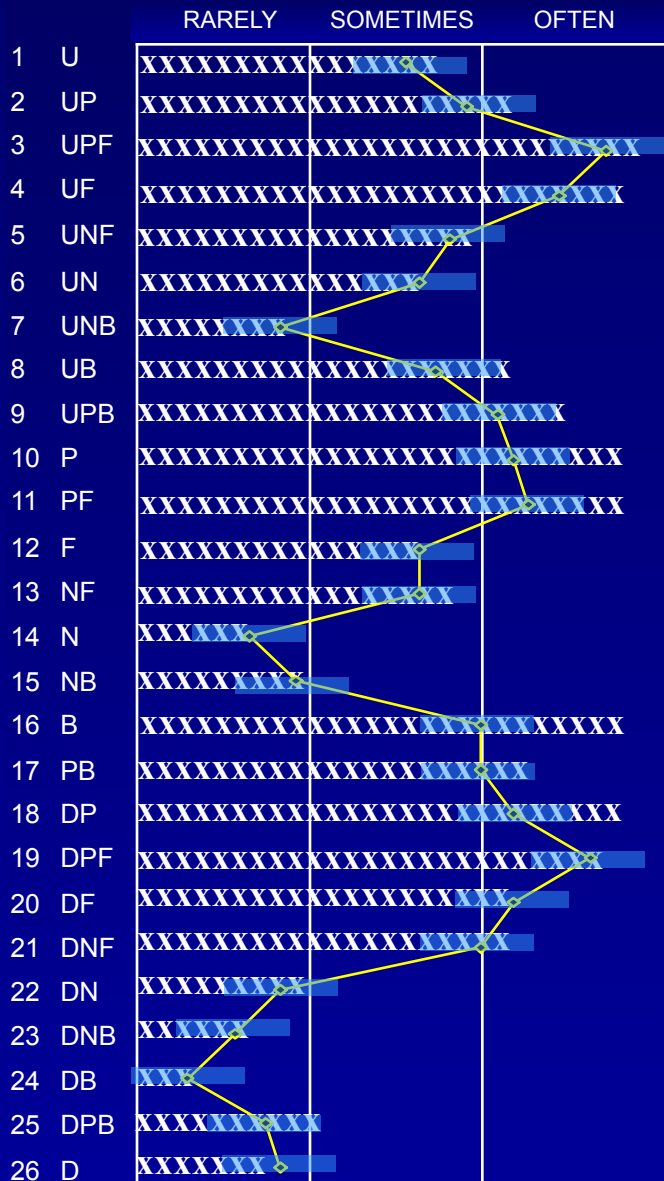
*“In general, what kinds of values do you WISH to show in your own behavior, whether or not you are actually able to do so?” (WSH)*

All survey results shown are from random samples drawn from over 1,000,000 ratings worldwide.

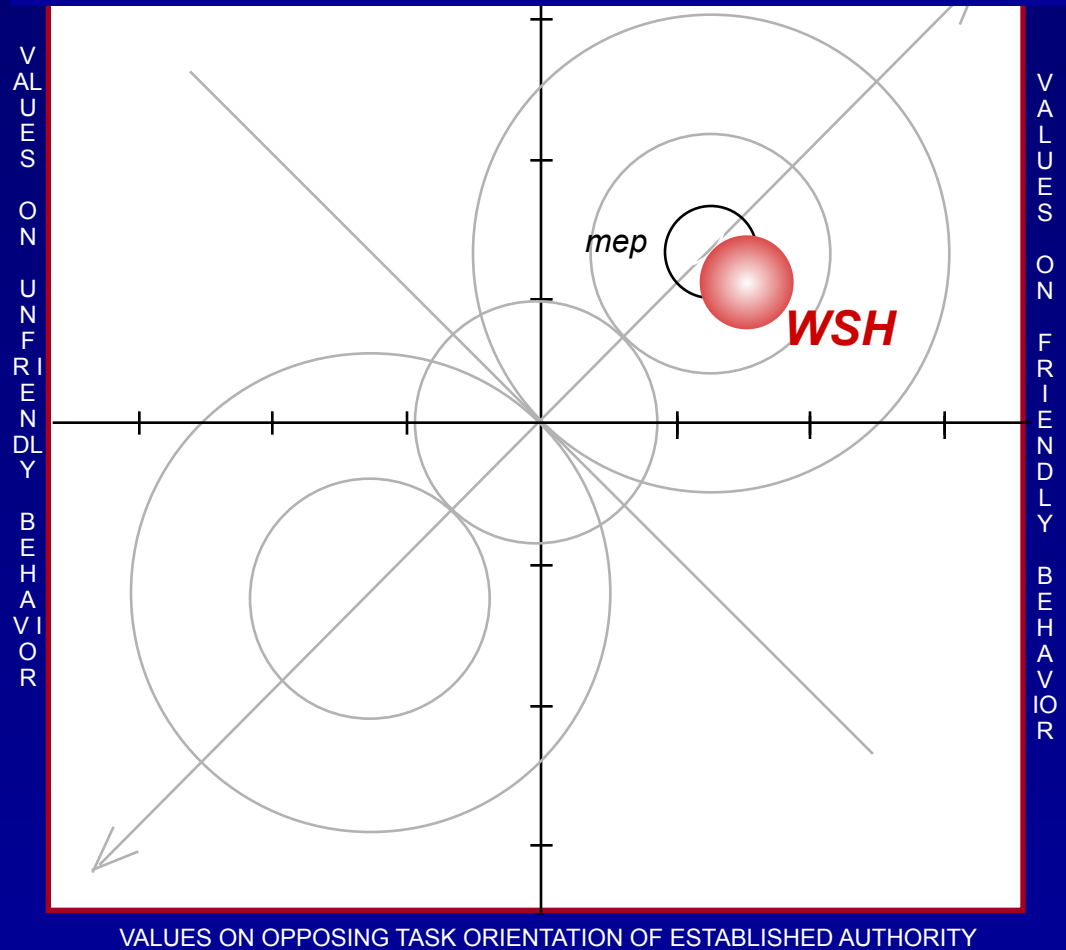
*“In general, what kinds of values do you WISH to show in your own behavior, whether or not you are actually able to do so?” (WSH)*



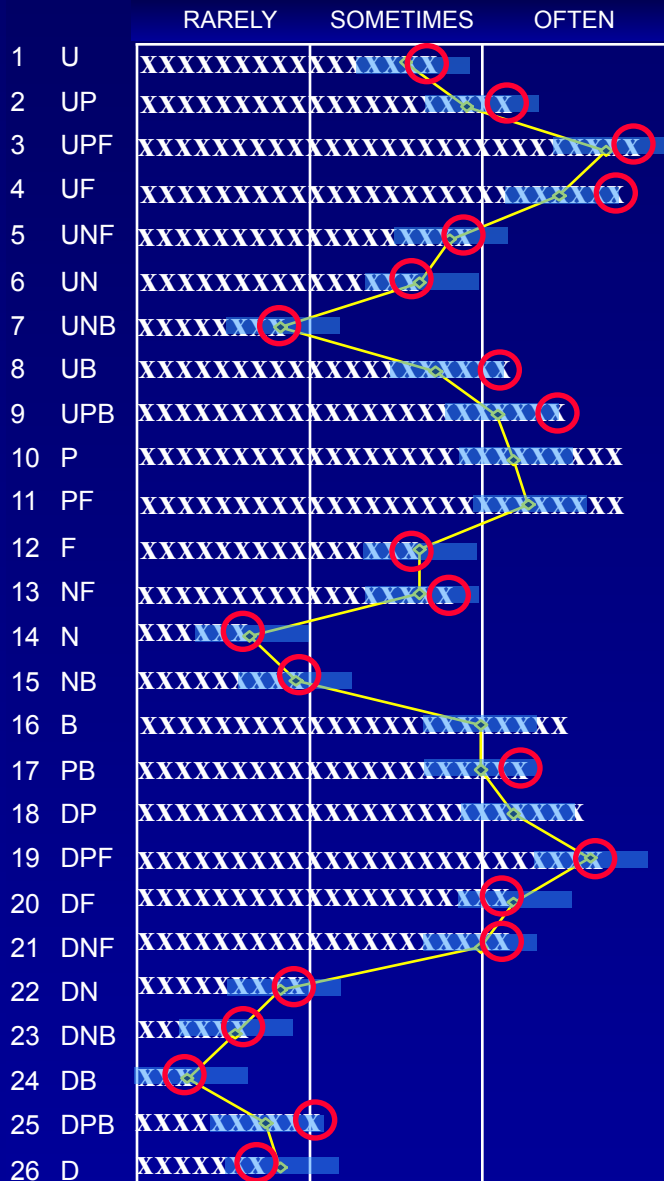
*“In general, what kinds of values do you WISH to show in your own behavior, whether or not you are actually able to do so?” (WSH)*



*The group average of these responses indicate a final location of ...*

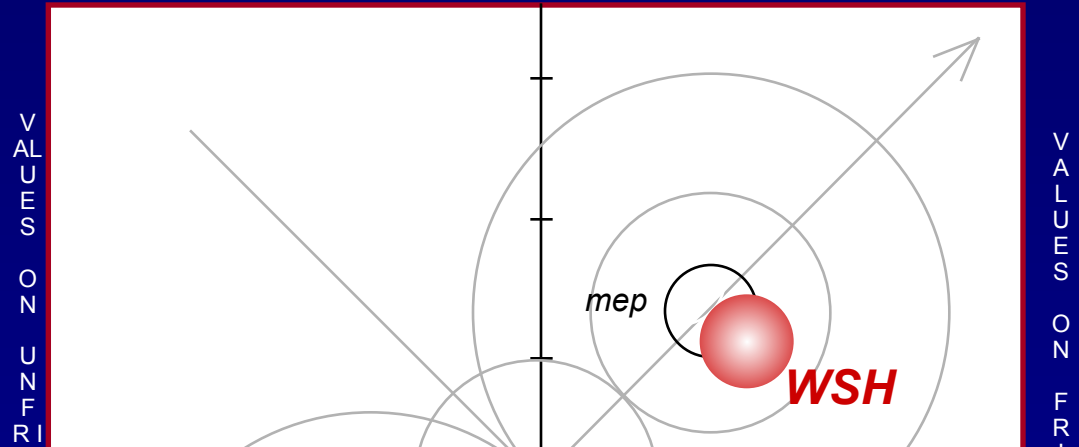


*“In general, what kinds of values do you WISH to show in your own behavior, whether or not you are actually able to do so?” (WSH)*



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VALUES ON ACCEPTING TASK ORIENTATION OF ESTABLISHED AUTHORITY



The general characteristics of this location in the field are:

*Active teamwork toward common goals, organizational unity.*

Notice that almost every average on the bargraph is within the (blue) *most effective* bandwidth.

Given the opportunity, most people WISH to be effective.

At the team level, for a measure of demonstrated effectiveness, team members answer the question:

*“In general, what kinds of values does the MOST EFFECTIVE MEMBER of a task-oriented work team you have known show in behavior?” (MEM)*

To assess ideal conditions, members answer the question:

*“In general, what kinds of values need to be shown by your team in the future in order to be most effective?” (FTM)*

At the organizational level, to assess ideal conditions, members of the organization are asked:

*“In general, what kinds of values need to be shown in the culture of your organization in the FUTURE in order to be most effective?”  
(FUT)*



The responses to these team and organizational questions closely resemble the response to the values individuals personally wish to show

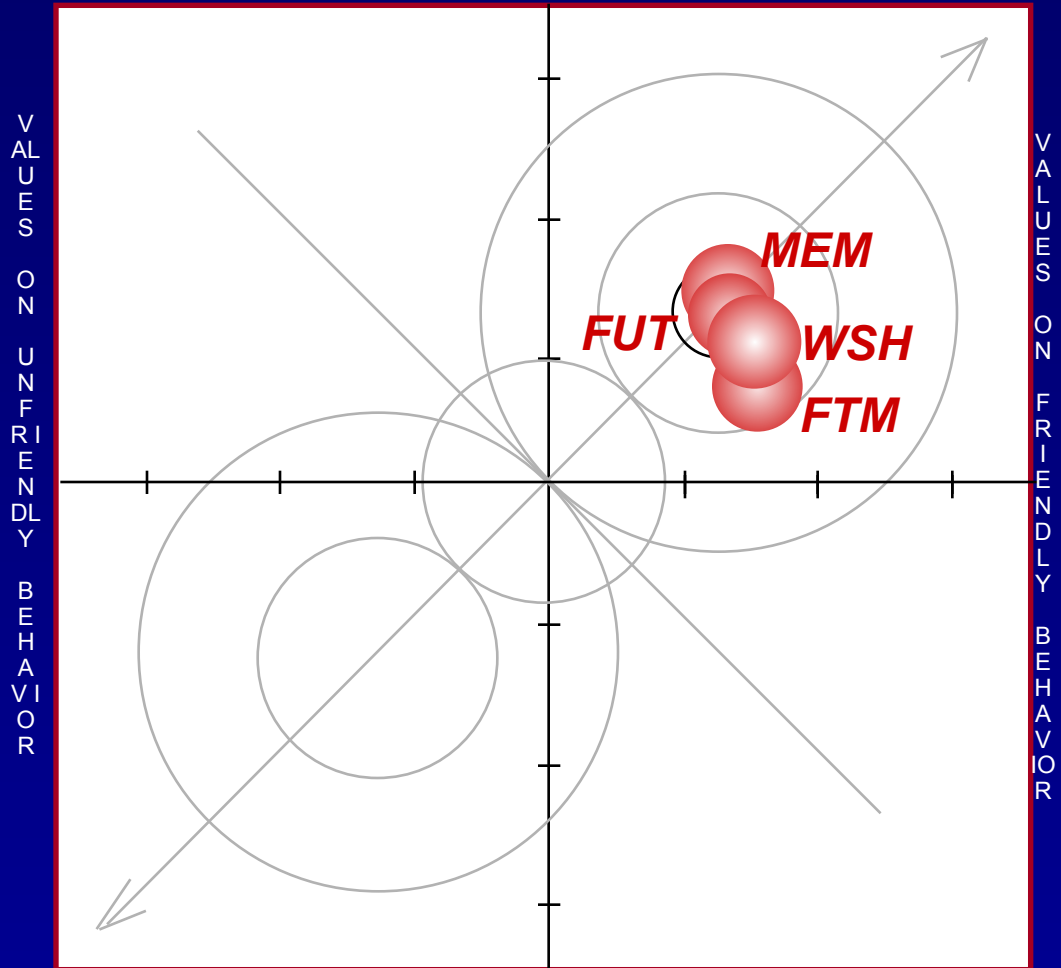
WSH = wish to show

MEM = most effective member of a team

FTM = future team in order to be most effective

FUT = future culture in order to be most effective

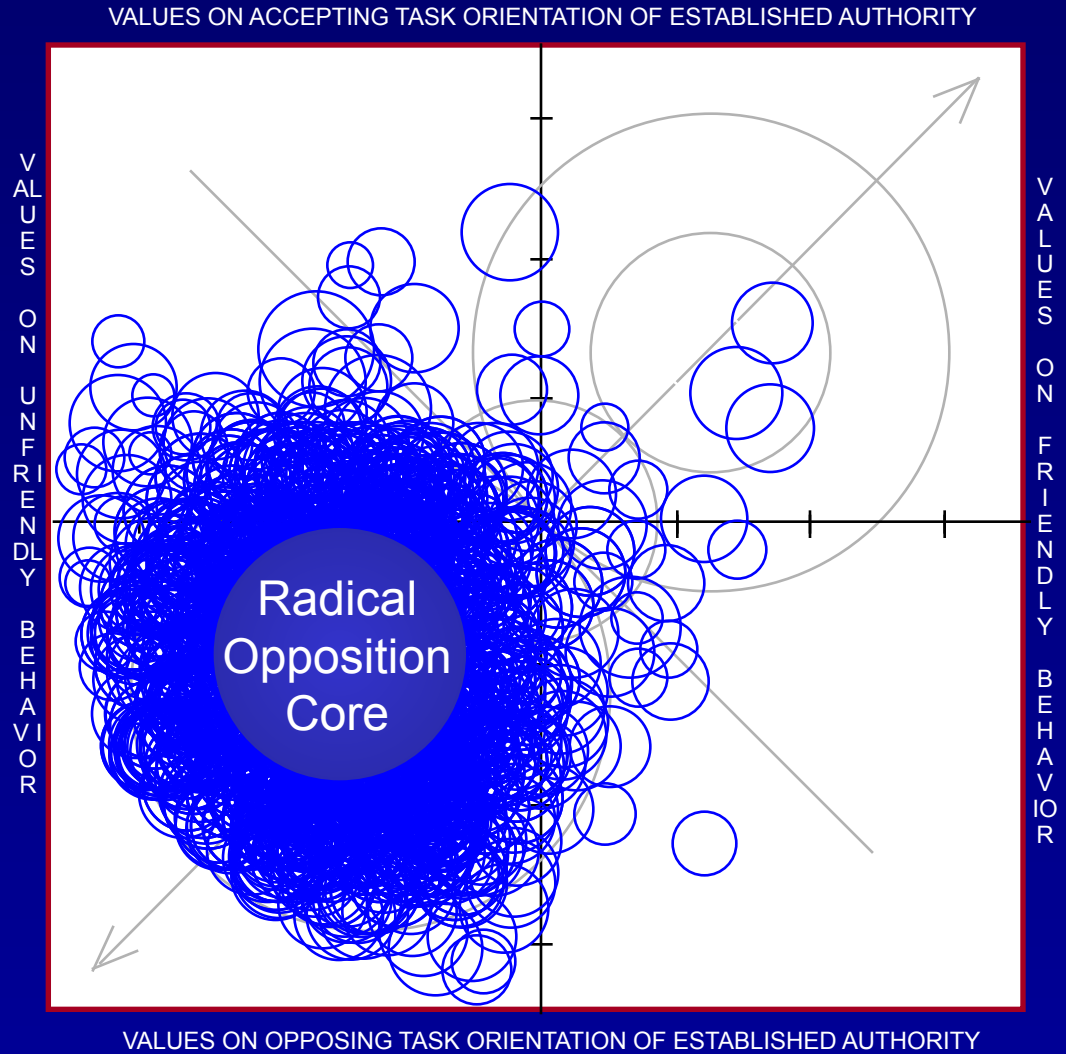
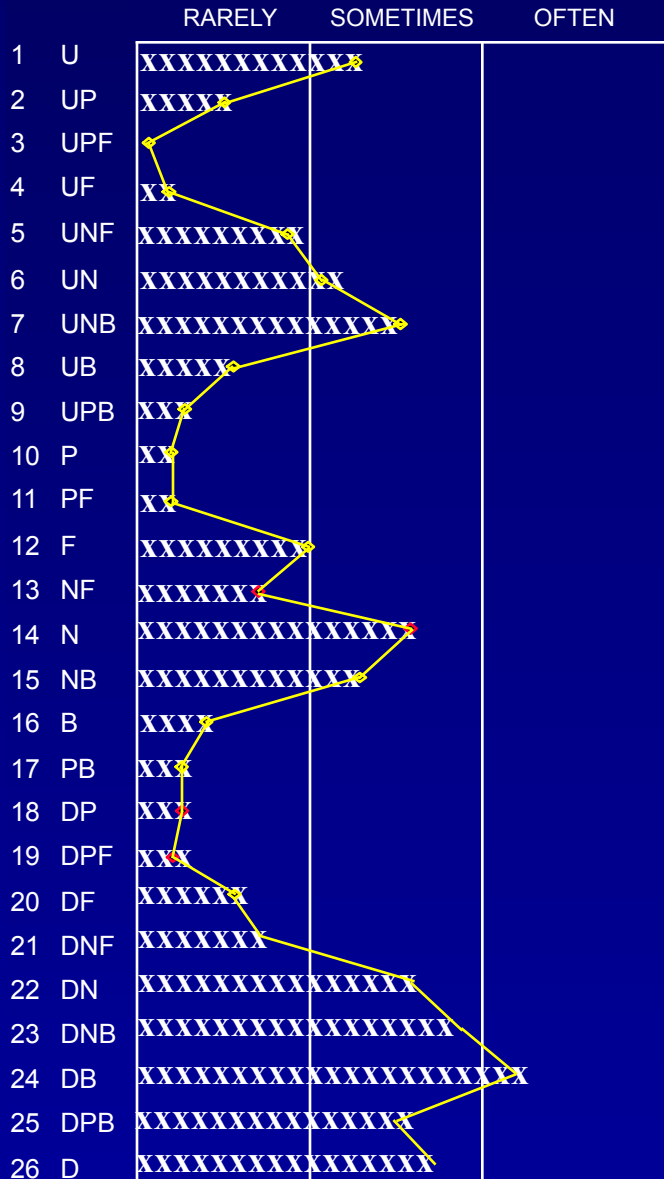
VALUES ON ACCEPTING TASK ORIENTATION OF ESTABLISHED AUTHORITY



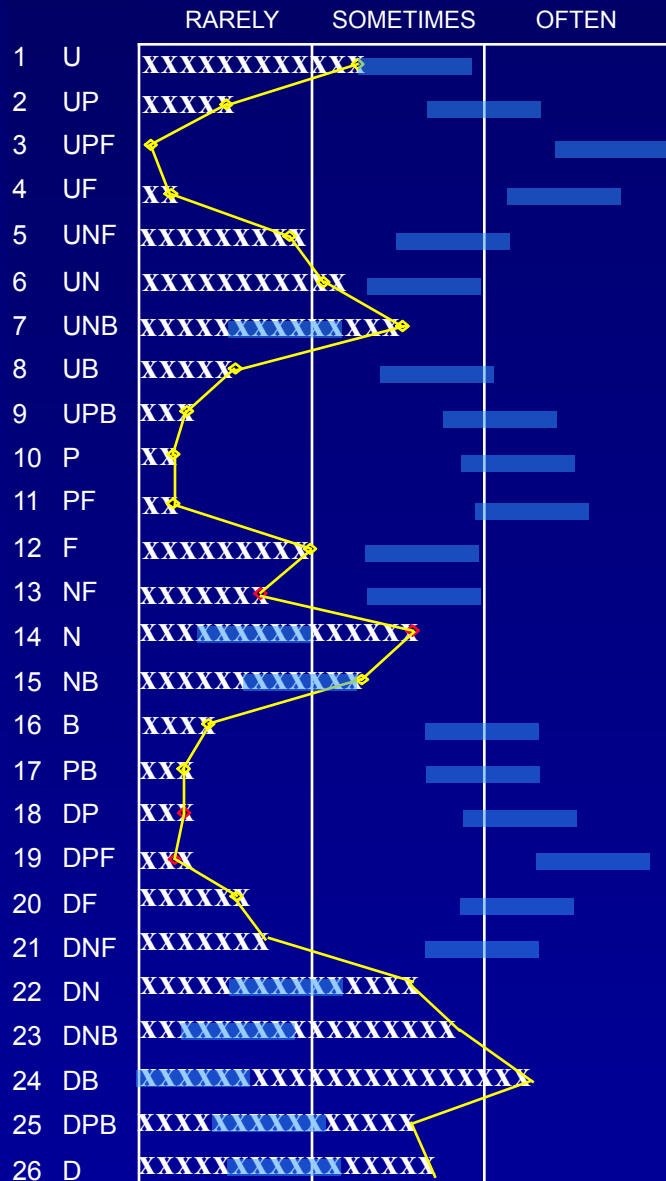
VALUES ON OPPOSING TASK ORIENTATION OF ESTABLISHED AUTHORITY

In contrast, when individuals are asked about the values they tend to oppose they use the same 26 SYMLOG items to answer the question,

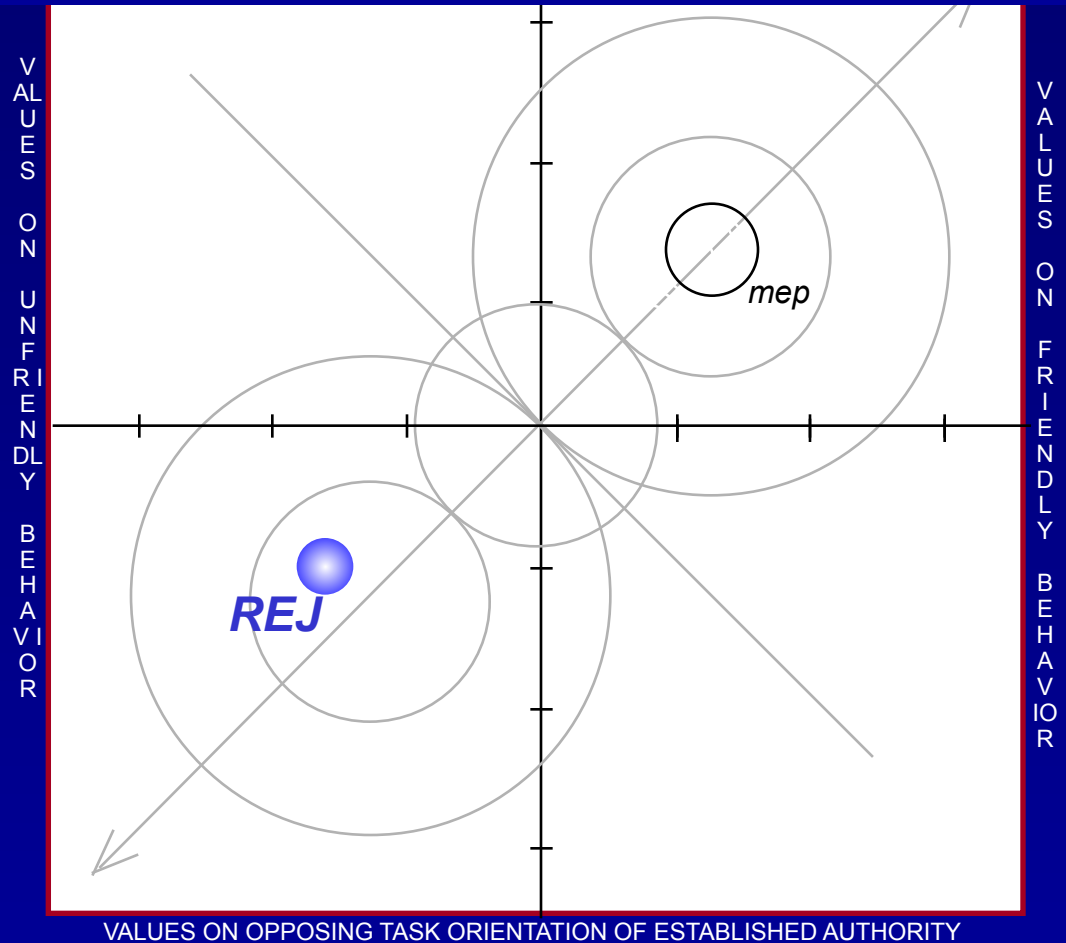
*“In general, what kinds of values do you tend to REJECT, either in yourself or in others?” (REJ)*



*“In general, what kinds of values do you tend to REJECT, either in yourself or in others?” (REJ)*

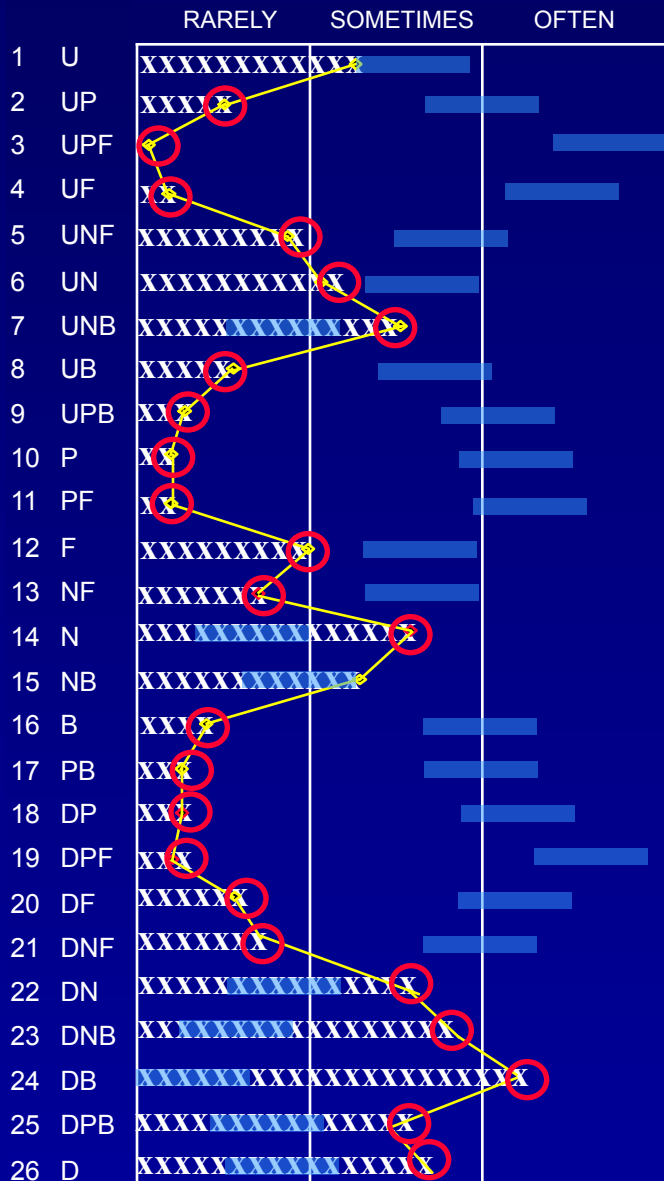


*The group average of these responses indicate a final location of ...*



VALUES ON OPPOSING TASK ORIENTATION OF ESTABLISHED AUTHORITY

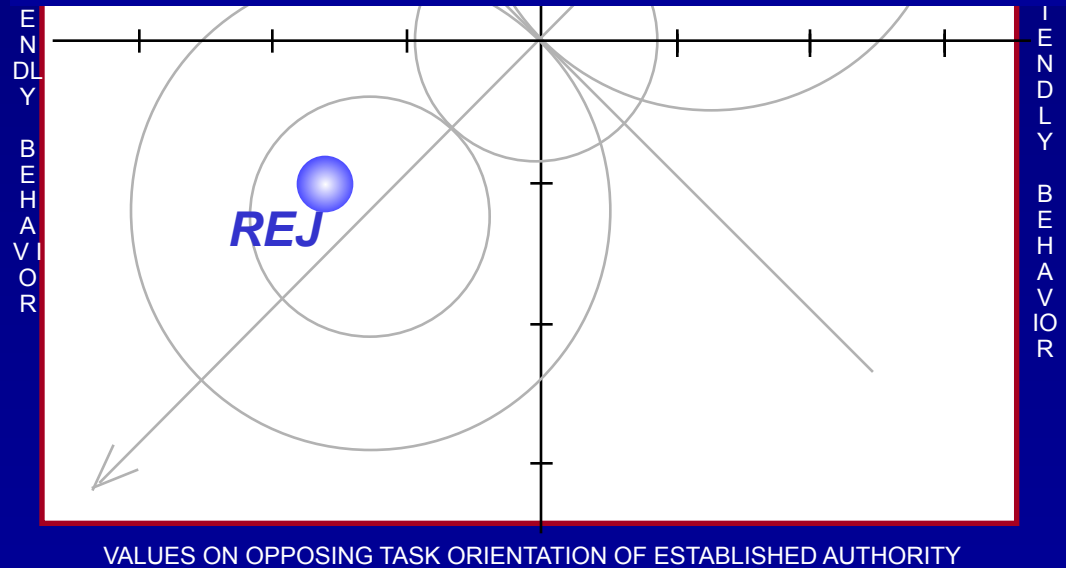
*“In general, what kinds of values do you tend to REJECT, either in yourself or in others?” (REJ)*



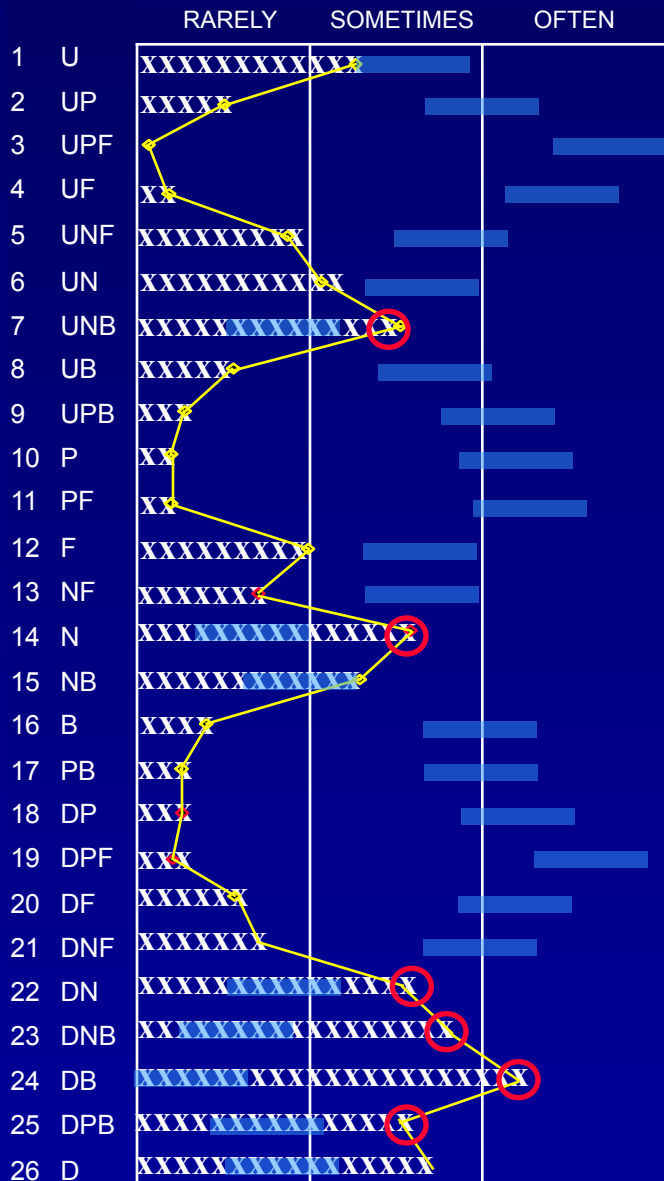
The general characteristics of this location in the field are:

*Admission of failure, withdrawal of effort.*

Notice that almost every average on the bargraph is outside (opposite) of the (blue) *most effective bandwidth*. This profile leads to conflict and polarization.



*“In general, what kinds of values do you tend to REJECT, either in yourself or in others?” (REJ)*



In essence, people tend to *reject* and avoid others who demonstrate values associated with:

- 7. Rugged, self-oriented individualism, resistance to authority
- 14. Self-protection, self-interest first, self sufficiency
- 22. Passive rejection of popularity, going it alone
- 23. Admission of failure, withdrawal of effort
- 24. Passive, non-cooperation with authority
- 25. Quiet contentment, taking it easy

Additionally, when asked about values which inhibit effective teamwork and lower productivity, team members answer the questions:

*“In general, what kinds of values do members of your team show in behavior when the team is LEAST PRODUCTIVE? (LEP)*

*and*

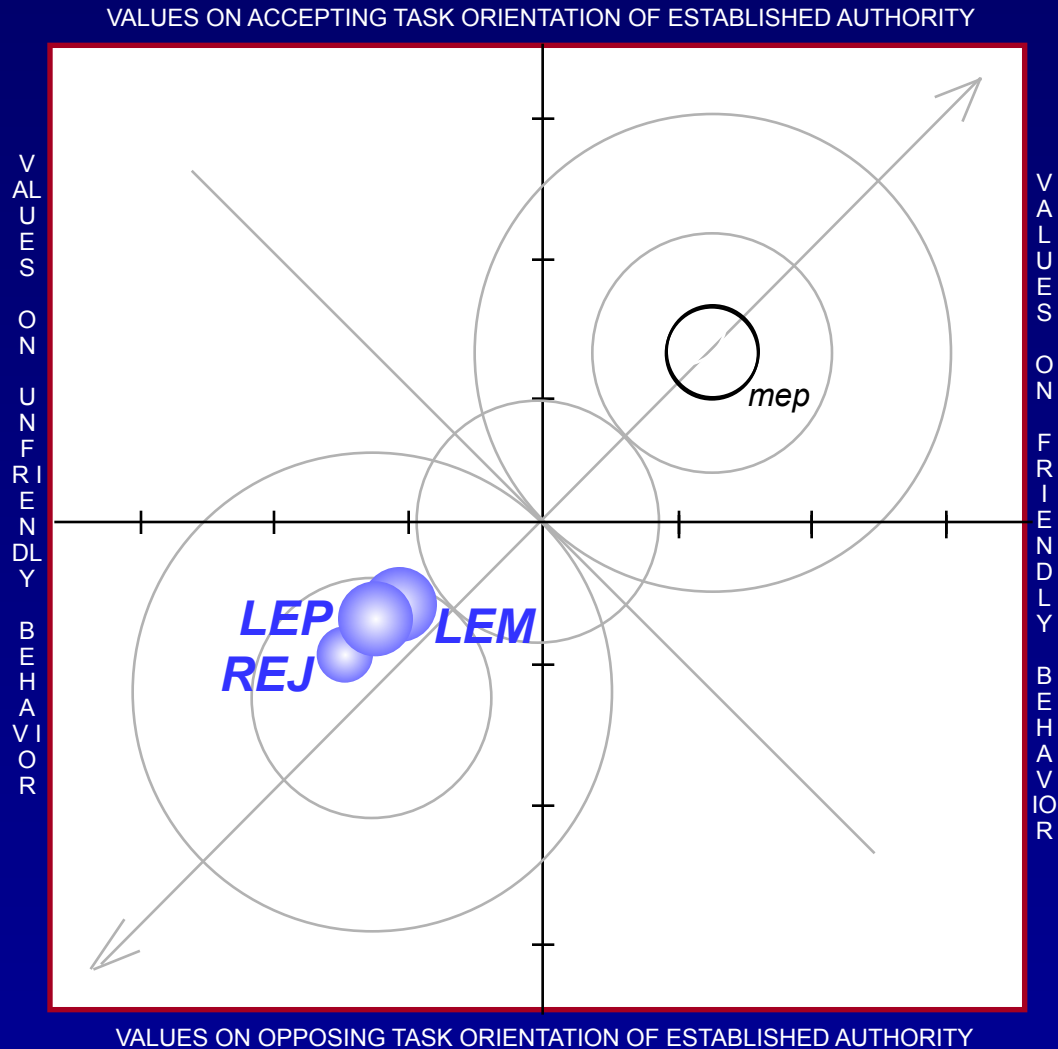
*“In general, what kinds of values does the LEAST EFFECTIVE MEMBER of a task-oriented team you have known show in behavior?” (LEM)*

Once again, the results are strikingly similar to what individuals *reject*

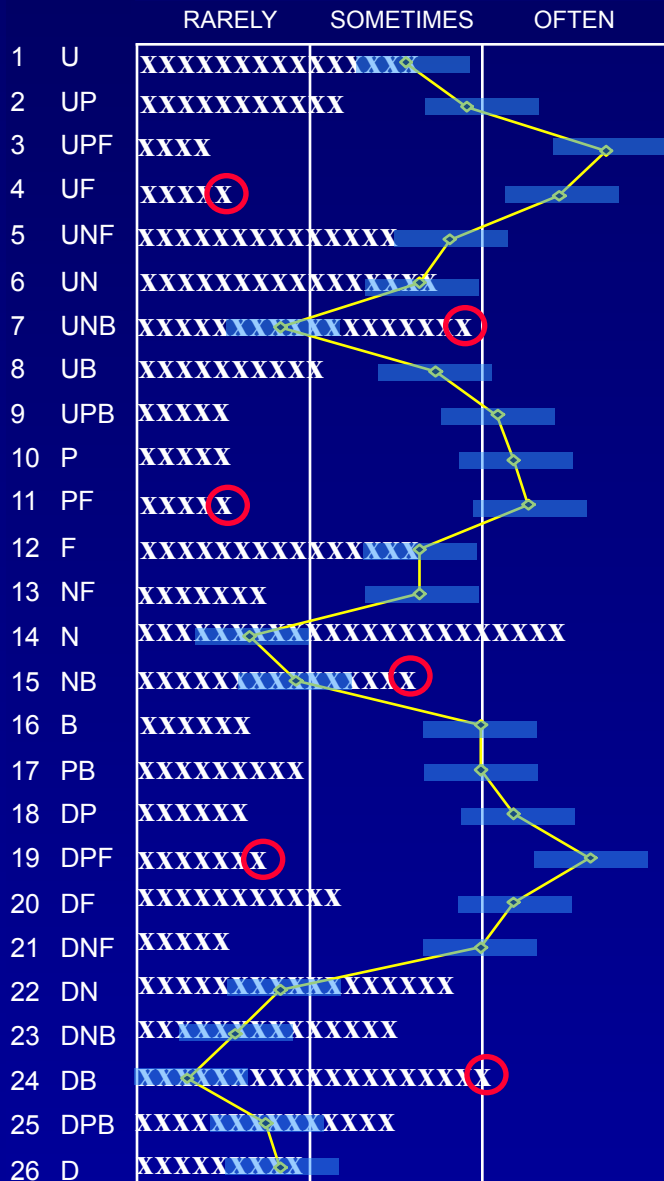
REJ = reject in self or others

LEP = least productive

LEM = least effective member known



*“In general, what kinds of values does the LEAST EFFECTIVE MEMBER of a task-oriented team you have known show in behavior?” (LEM)*



In essence, least effective members **UNDEREMPHASIZE** values that contribute to teamwork such as:

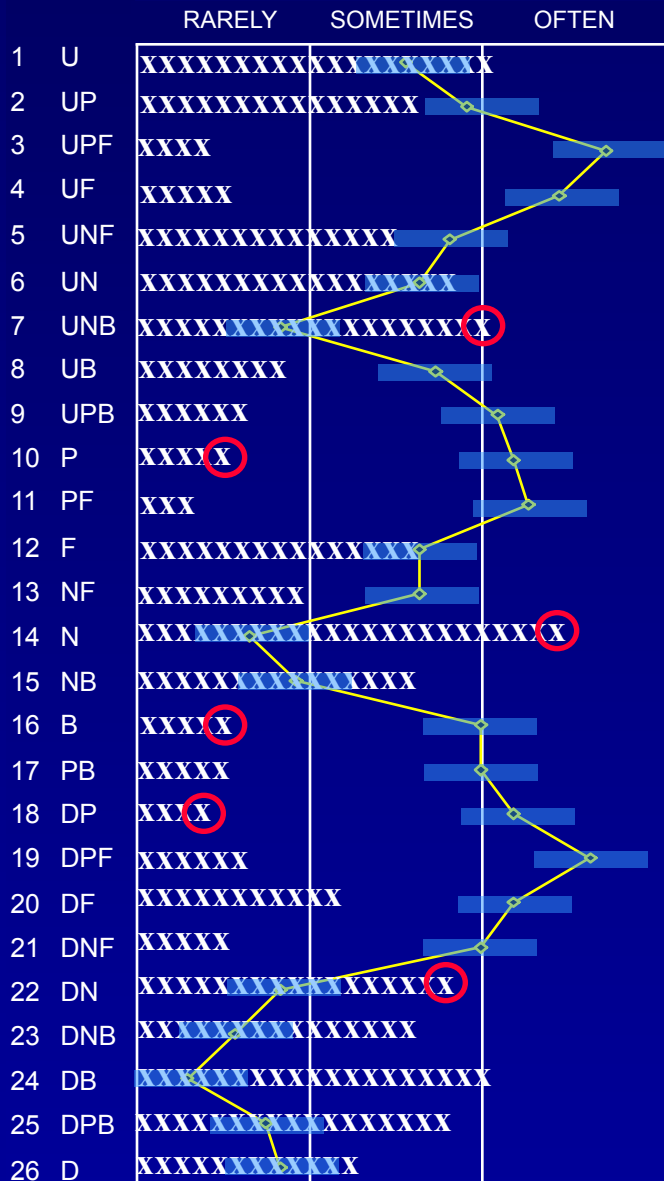
- 4. Efficiency, strong impartial management
- 11. Responsible idealism, collaborative work
- 19. Dedication, faithfulness, loyalty to the organization

and **OVEREMPHASIZE** values that almost always interfere with teamwork such as:

- 7. Rugged, self-oriented individualism, resistance to authority
- 15. Rejection of established procedures, rejection of conformity
- 24. Passive non-cooperation with authority



# “In general, what kinds of values do members of your team show in behavior when the team is *LEAST PRODUCTIVE*?” (LEP)



In essence, a group is least productive when members **UNDEREMPHASIZE** values that contribute to teamwork such as:

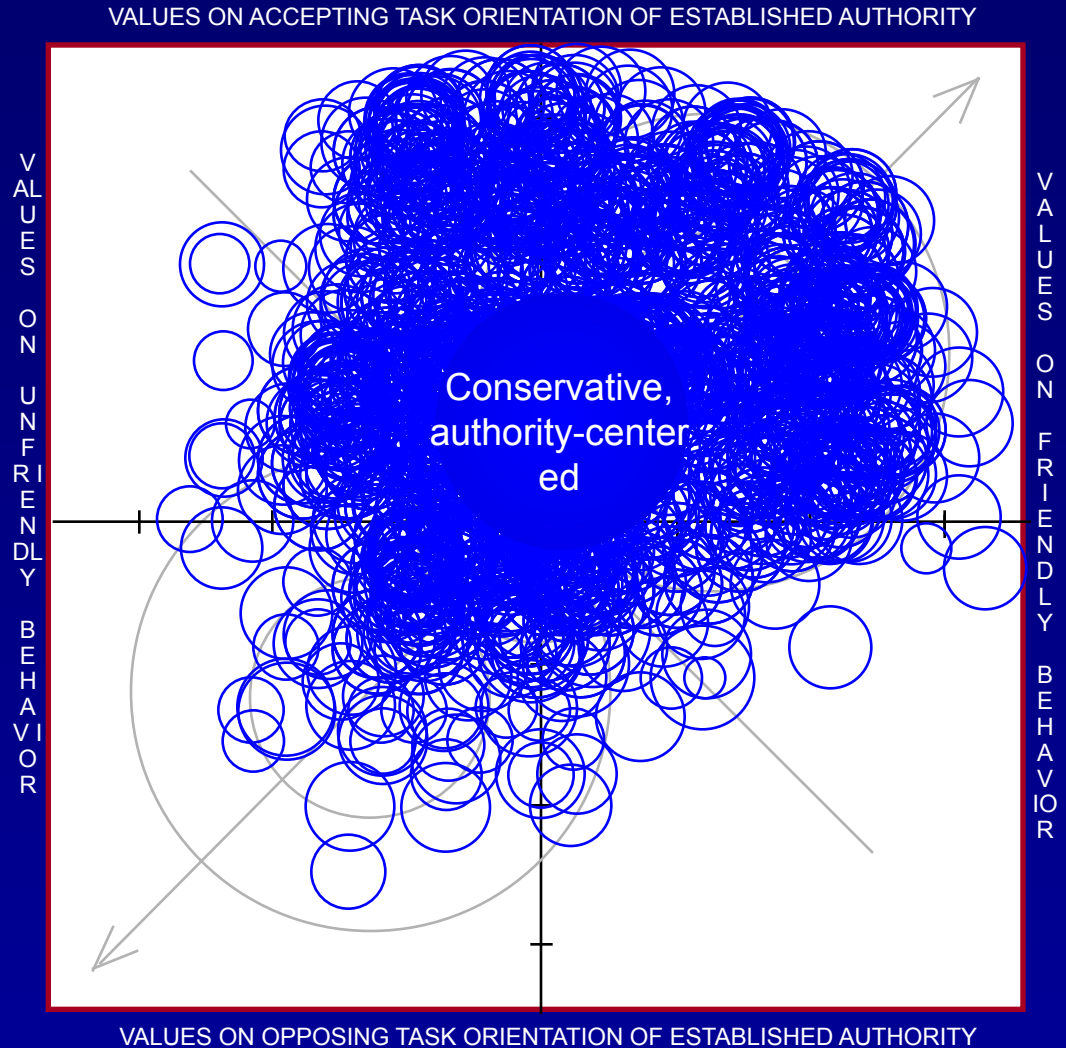
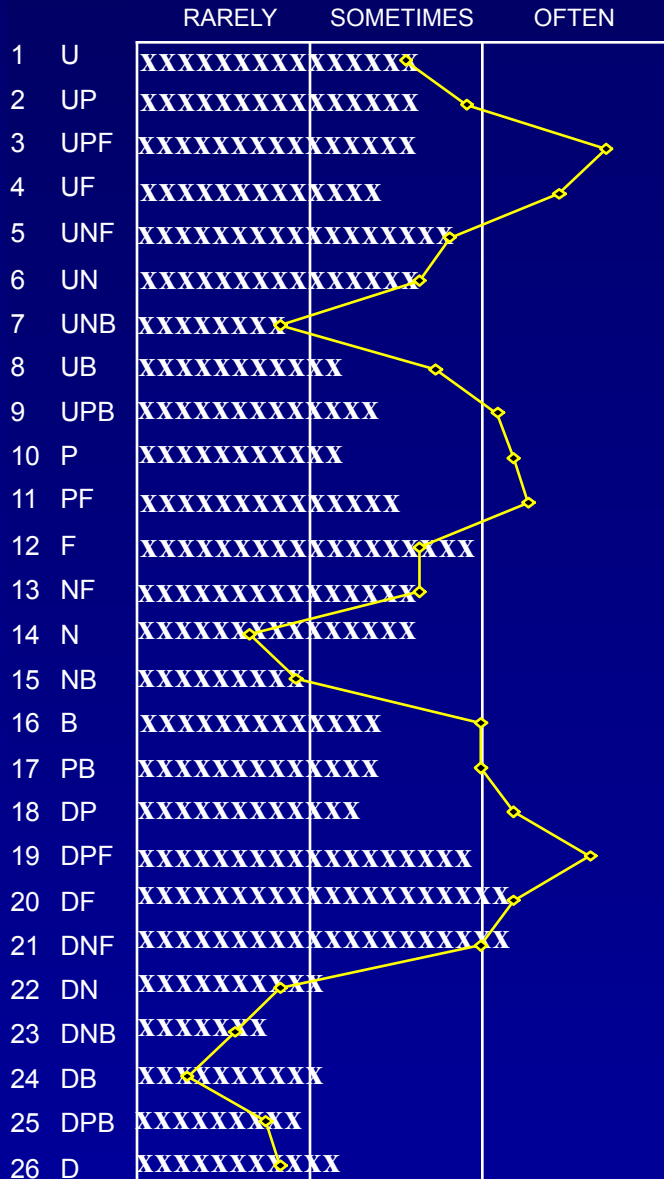
- 10. Equality, democratic participation in decision making
- 16. Change to new procedures, creativity
- 18. Trust in the goodness of others

and **OVEREMPHASIZE** values that almost always interfere with teamwork such as:

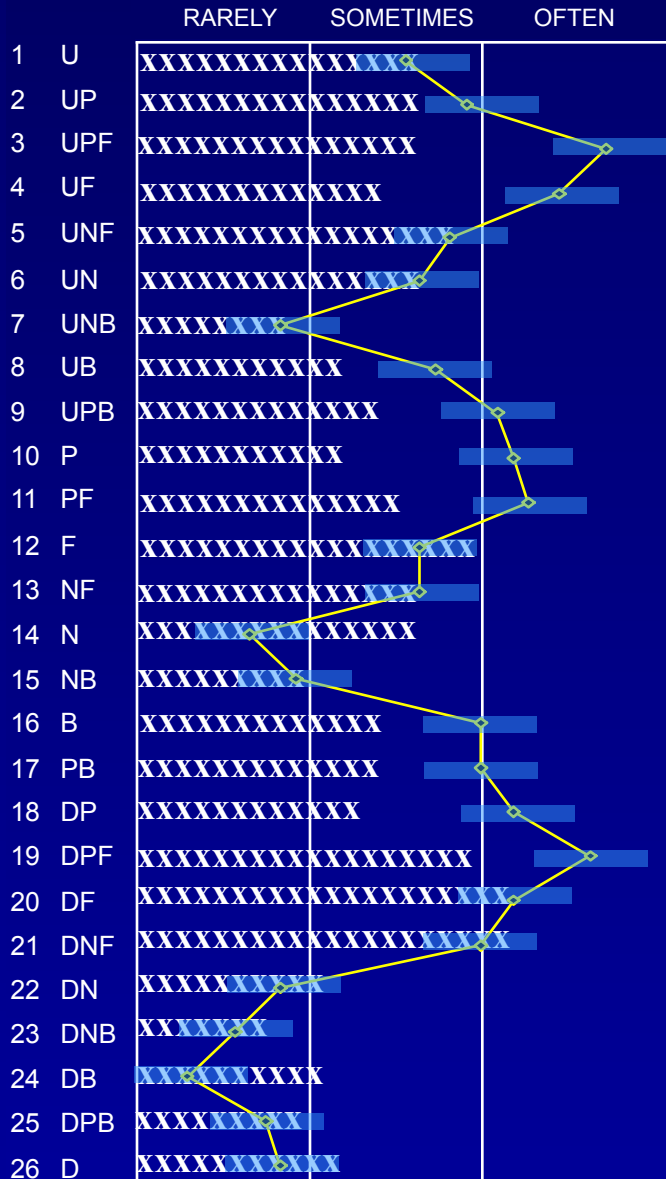
- 7. Rugged, self-oriented individualism, resistance to authority
- 14. Self protection, self-interest first, self-sufficiency
- 22. Passive rejection of popularity, going it alone

In contrast, when asked about the actual situation in their own organization, respondents answer the question:

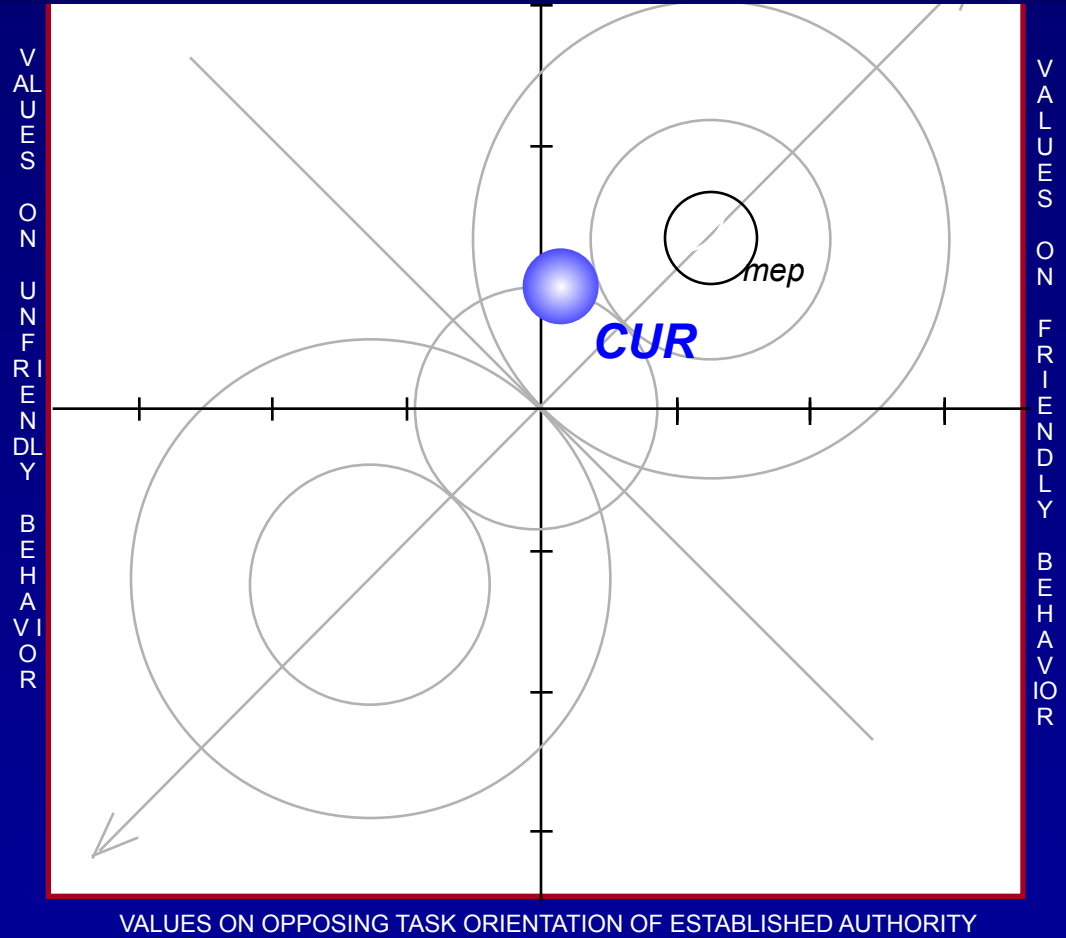
# *“In general, what kinds of values are CURRENTLY shown in the culture of your organization?” (CUR)*



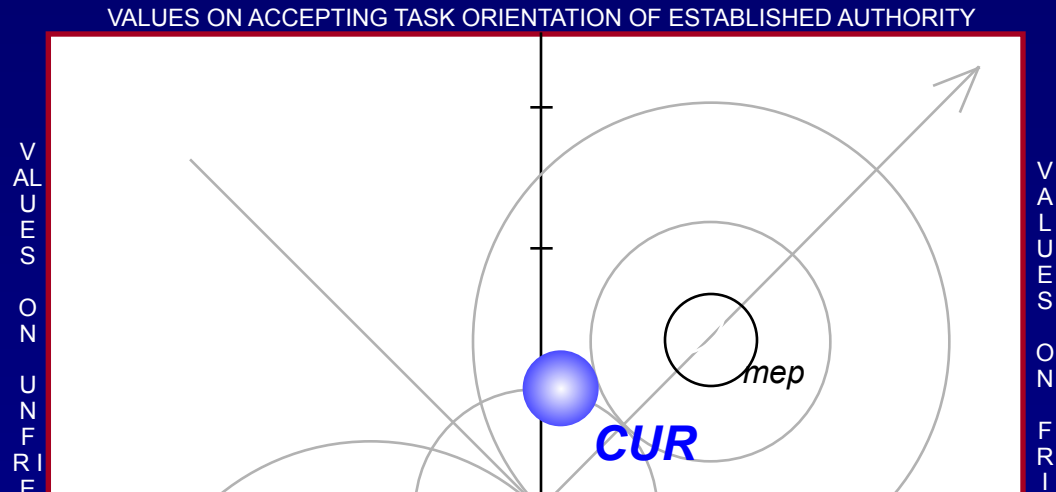
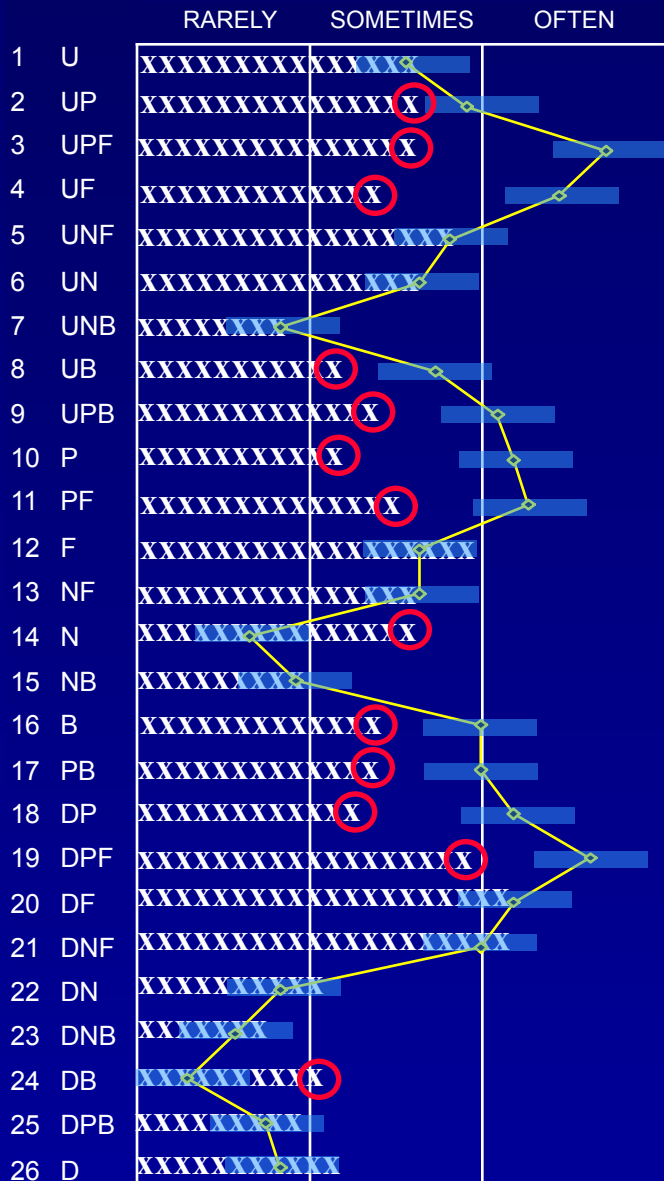
# *“In general, what kinds of values are CURRENTLY shown in the culture of your organization?” (CUR)*



*The group average of these responses indicate a final location of ...*



# *“In general, what kinds of values are CURRENTLY shown in the culture of your organization?” (CUR)*

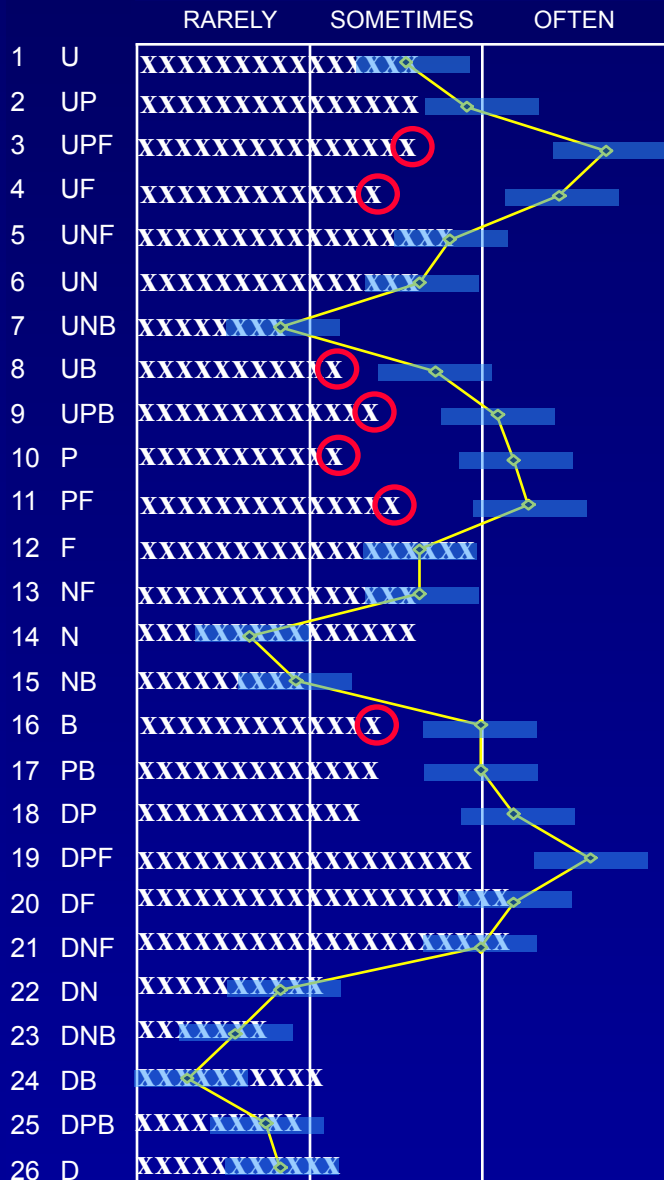


The general characteristics of this location in the field are:

*An emphasis on rules, conformity, and conservative, established, "correct" ways of doing things.*

Notice that many of the frequencies on the bargraph are outside of the (blue) *most effective* bandwidth. These are crucial areas for improvement.

# “In general, what kinds of values are CURRENTLY shown in the culture of your organization?” (CUR)



In essence, the current culture in these "average" organizations tend to reflect values that **UNDEREMPHASIZE:**

3. Active teamwork toward common goals, organizational unity
4. Efficiency, strong, impartial management
8. Having a good time, releasing tension, relaxing control
9. Protecting less able members, providing help when needed
10. Equality, democratic participation in decision-making
11. Responsible idealism, collaborative work
16. Change to new procedures, different values, creativity

Similarly, teams are asked:

*“In general, what kinds of values does your team  
CURRENTLY show in behavior?” (CTM)*

And when asked in particular about the reward structures in their organization, respondents answer the question:

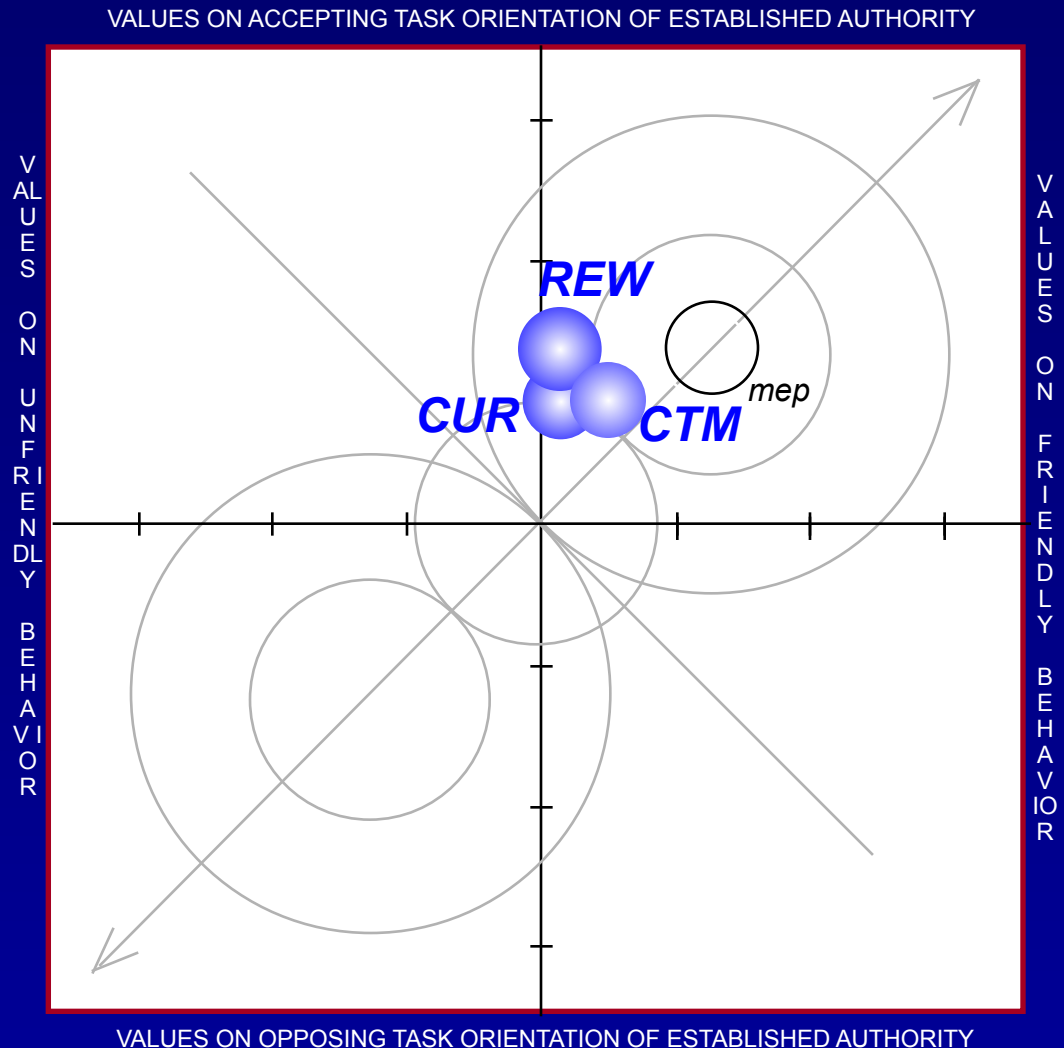
*“In general, what kinds of values are members of  
your organization actually REWARDED for showing  
in behavior now?” (REW)*

The perceptions of values shown in the current team are more “positive” than in the organizational culture, but the reward structure mirrors the perceptions of the current culture. In general, organizations get what they reward.

CUR = current culture

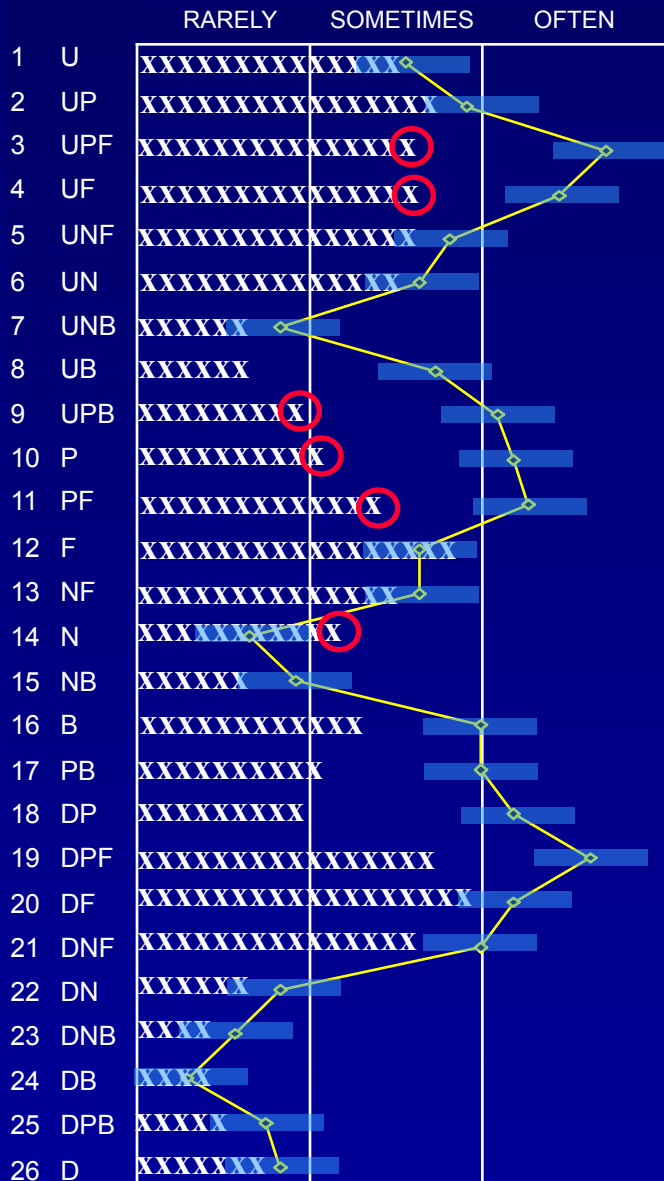
CTM = current team

REW = rewarded in the organization





*“In general, what kinds of values are members of your organization actually REWARDED for showing in behavior now?” (REW)*



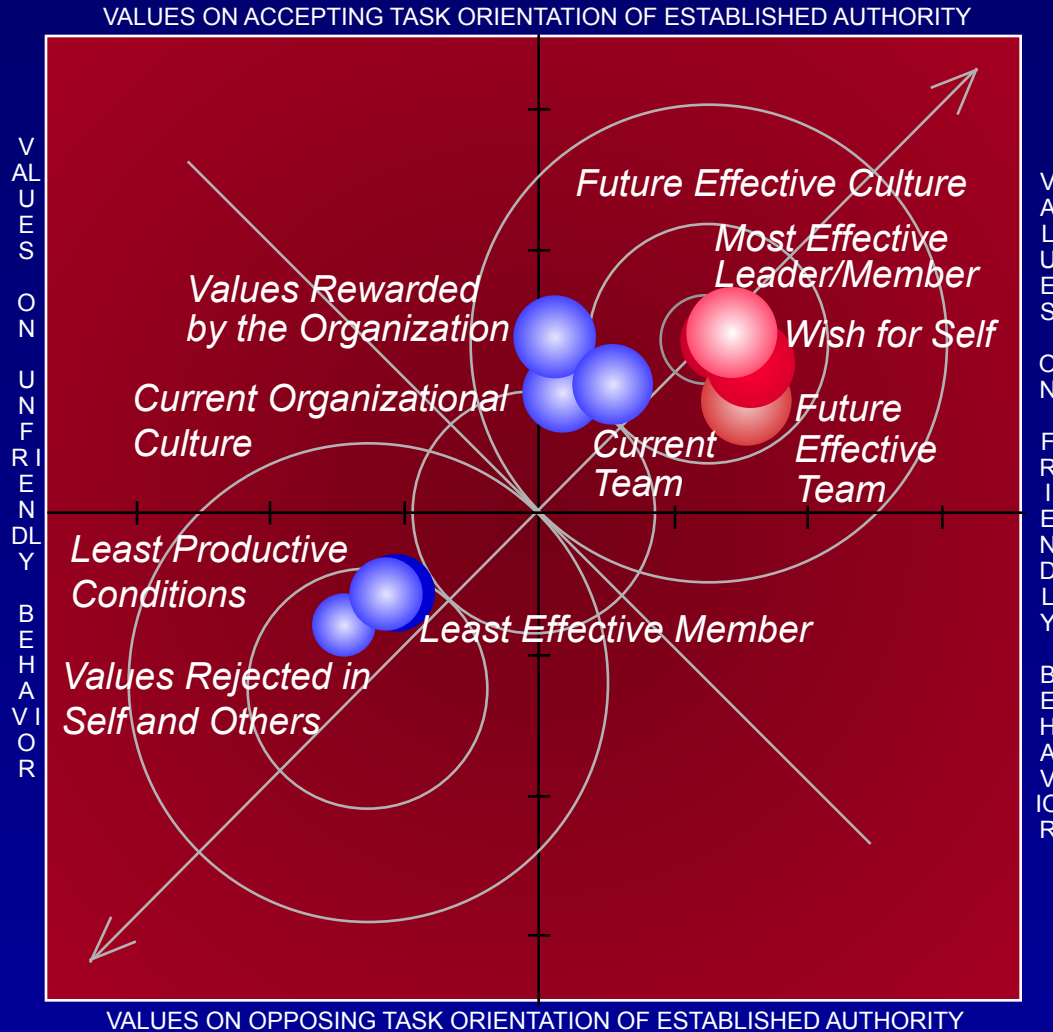
In order for organizations to motivate and improve productivity, the reward system may need to be re-aligned to **REINFORCE:**

- 3. Active teamwork toward common goals, organizational unity
- 4. Efficiency, strong impartial management
- 9. Protecting less able members, providing help when needed
- 10. Equality, democratic participation in decision making
- 11. Responsible idealism, collaborative work

and **REDUCE THE EMPHASIS ON:**

- 14. Self-protection, self-interest first, self-sufficiency

# A summary view of common polarizations and unified clusters



# What are some of the implications in these displays?

*People have powerful images of themselves and others.*

These images dramatically influence the way people behave and whether they will unify or polarize with others as they work together. SYMLOG helps leaders and members to clarify and understand these images and to guide strategic changes towards more effective behavior.

# Implications

*Teamwork will never take the place of technical competence.*

However, competent individuals working within groups that are in constant conflict find it very difficult to produce superior results. Chronic polarization is corrosive and undermines both work quality and personal satisfaction. SYMLOG feedback helps groups to understand and appreciate their diversity, point out areas of common values, and implement ways to work more effectively together.

# Implications

*Most organizations have serious design flaws.*

The vision and mission call for creative teamwork but the system actually rewards individual turf-building and self-sufficiency. Few organizations are able to promote, much less reward, effective teamwork. Simply "restructuring" and focusing on technical quality does not necessarily motivate people to perform effectively. Teams, as well as individuals, need ongoing feedback that is valid and reliable as well as rewards for superior performance.

# Implications

*Organizations need and thrive on feedback.*

Most organizations cannot live without regular status reports from finance, yet very few have an ongoing feedback system in place to tell them how their espoused values are, or are not, being lived out. SYMLOG provides such a system, on a regular and repeated basis, to strengthen individual leadership, support productive teamwork, and develop organizational competence.

Thank you for viewing this demonstration,

Robert J. Koenigs, Ph.D.  
President, SYMLOG Consulting Group

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*SYMLOG - "Improving Performance Through Effective Feedback"*



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