

Organizational Energy

Quality Forum Graduate Workshop

Credits:

Heike Bruch and Bernd Vogel (2011) *Fully charged: how great leaders boost their organization's energy and ignite high performance*. Harvard Business Review Press.

What is Organizational Energy?

The extent to which an organization has mobilized its emotional, cognitive and behavioural potential to pursue its goals.

Dimensions

- **Intensity** – the degree to which the organization has activated its emotional, cognitive and behavioural potential.
- **Quality** – extent to which emotional, cognitive and behavioural forces align with organizational goals.

Energy Matrix

High	Corrosive Energy	Productive Energy
Low	Resigned Inertia	Comfortable energy

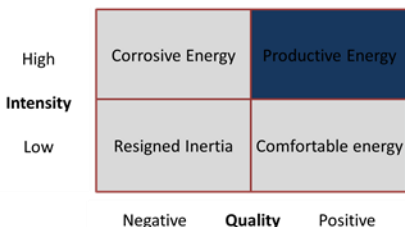
Negative

Quality

Positive

Productive Energy

- High emotional involvement
- High activity, speed, stamina, productivity
 - Regularly challenge the status quo?
 - Healthy passion?
 - Org. regularly pushes its limits to ensure success?
 - People giving their discretionary effort?
 - Surprised how quickly, effectively things are accomplished?



Comfortable Energy

- High shared satisfaction
- Low activity, reduced alertness, complacency
 - Dominated by satisfaction with status quo?
 - Long decision making processes?
 - Culture of slowing/stopping innovation?
 - People strongly identify with the current situation?

High	Corrosive Energy	Productive Energy
Low	Resigned Inertia	Comfortable energy
	Negative	Positive

Resigned Inertia

- High frustration, mental withdrawal, cynicism, low engagement
 - Do people appear not to care?
 - Expressed negativity about new initiatives?
 - Expressed frustration, disappointment, sorrow?
 - Open signs of fatigue/burnout?
 - Only communicate when necessary?

High	Corrosive Energy	Productive Energy
Low	Resigned Inertia	Comfortable energy
Intensity	Negative	Positive

Corrosive Energy

- High aggression, destructive behaviour (internal politics, resource competition, maximizing individual benefits)
 - Prevalent silo thinking?
 - Groups annoy, dis-trust, or even hate one another?
 - Decline in mutual support?
 - Questions about management integrity, not “walking the talk”?

High Intensity	Corrosive Energy	Productive Energy
Low Intensity	Resigned Inertia	Comfortable energy

Negative Quality Positive

Measuring Organizational Energy

- OEQ12 questionnaire.
- A variety of ways to use the tool
- 3 questions about each type of energy

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	Negative	Positive

Intensity

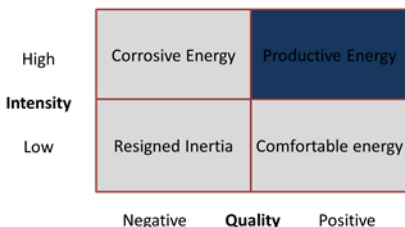
Quality

People in my _____

5) ...feel enthusiastic in their jobs.

8) ...really care about the fate of this company.

11) ... go out of their way to ensure that the company succeeds.



People in my _____

1) ...like what they are doing.

3) ...feel relaxed in their jobs.

9) ...are efficient in how they conduct their work.

High	Corrosive Energy	Productive Energy
Low	Resigned Inertia	Comfortable energy
Intensity	Negative	Positive

People in my _____

2) ...do not have much drive.

6) ...have no desire to make something happen.

12) ...feel discouraged in their jobs.

High	Corrosive Energy	Productive Energy
Low	Resigned Inertia	Comfortable energy
Intensity	Negative	Positive

People in my _____

4) ...are angry in their jobs.

7) ...often speculate about the real intentions of our management.

10) ..often behave in a destructive manner.

High	Corrosive Energy	Productive Energy
Low	Resigned Inertia	Comfortable energy
Intensity	Negative	Positive

Calculating the results

Average the scores for each of the groups of 3 questions using the following point values:

- Strongly disagree – 0
- Disagree – 25
- Neutral – 50
- Agree – 75
- Strongly Agree – 100

High	Corrosive Energy	Productive Energy
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	Negative	Positive

Intensity

Quality

From the Research

- Companies with high productive energy outperform those with low productive energy in a number of metrics.
- This is matched with poor performance when corrosive energy is high.

High	Corrosive Energy	Productive Energy
Low	Resigned Inertia	Comfortable energy
	Negative	Positive

Intensity

Quality

Benchmark

	Productive	Comfortable	Resigned	Corrosive
Benchmark	81%	75%	12%	18%

Taken from top 10% of companies –
24,000 responses in 187 companies.

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	Negative	Positive

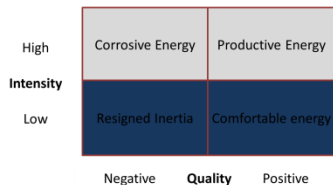
Quality

But we measure as a basis for action

High	Corrosive Energy	Productive Energy
Low	Resigned Inertia	Comfortable energy
	Negative	Positive

Complacency trap

- Characterized by low energy and acceptance of status quo
- Often the result of past success, lack of vision or empowerment



Corrosion Trap

- Easy to ignore; or at least challenging to face
- Characterized by a lack of trust and confidence between colleagues
- Often a lack of alignment or competing interests

High	Corrosive Energy	Productive Energy
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	Negative	Positive

Intensity

Quality

Acceleration Trap

- Overloading – too many activities of the same kind
- Multiloading – too many different activities without focus.
- Perpetual loading – constant push to edge of demand with uniform/uninteresting work

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	Negative	Positive

Intensity

Quality

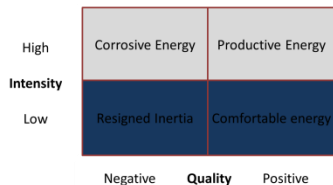
Group work

For your assigned energy trap, discuss as a group some of the strategies you could use to address it.

Complacency Strategies

- Key to overcome complacency is to mobilize.
- Main strategies
 - Slaying the dragon – using outside dangers or threats to generate a common purpose.
 - Winning the princess – inciting the organization to pursue a challenging opportunity

People must believe both are realistic and achievable.



Corrosion Strategies

- Turn down negativity, then mobilize
- Main strategies:
 - Create release valves
 - Confront candidly about the impacts
 - Use destructive brainstorming (Triz)
 - Support toxic handlers

High	Corrosive Energy	Productive Energy	
Intensity			
Low	Resigned Inertia	Comfortable energy	
	Negative	Quality	Positive

Over-Acceleration Strategies

- Maintain focus
- Main strategies:
 - Stopping the action
 - “spring cleaning”
 - Ask what can be stopped
 - Change the culture of acceleration
 - Change goal setting
 - Cycle the acceleration/build pit-stops
 - Make stopping activities ok

High	Corrosive Energy	Productive Energy
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Quality

Let's look at the data we generated

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Intensity

Quality

Maintaining our Energy

- Role modeling is vital to managing the energy of an organization.
- Failure to manage our own energy first will undermine all efforts.

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	Negative	Positive

Intensity

Quality

Common energy profiles

- Clearly productive
- Productive and comfortable
- Corrosive with some productive
- Mostly resigned and comfortable
- No energy

Clearly productive

- High (>75%) productive
- Comfortable lower than productive
- Both negative energy low (<25%)

Clearly productive

- High (>75%) productive
- Comfortable lower than productive
- Both negative energy low (<25%)

- Avoid acceleration and complacency!

Productive and Comfortable

- Good productive, but comfortable same or higher
- Negative energy still relatively low

Productive and Comfortable

- Good productive, but comfortable same or higher
- Negative energy still relatively low
- Focus on mobilizing energy!

Corrosive with Productive

- Corrosive energy dominates profile (much > 25%)

Corrosive with Productive

- Corrosive energy dominates profile (much > 25%)
- Drop corrosive, then mobilize – sequential not concurrent.

Mostly Resigned or Comfortable

- Predominantly low energy; generally more comfortable than resigned.

Mostly Resigned or Comfortable

- Predominantly low energy; generally more comfortable than resigned.
- Must mobilize!
- If resigned, often must diffuse over-acceleration first.

