

Course 05: **Shein's Model of Culture**

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Lectures for first-year Master's students in Business Management.

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Schein's model of organizational culture:

Many definitions of organizational culture exist, however, organizational culture generally refers to the organizational values communicated through norms, artifacts, and observed in behavioral patterns). The intrinsic worth of values is to act as social principles or philosophies that guide behaviors and set a broad framework for organizational routines and practices.

For example, values communicated by senior management assist the innovation process by embedding expected behaviors within an organization's culture.

Source: Organizational culture, innovation, and performance: A test of Schein's model

Suellen J. Hogan , Leonard V. Coote

Journal of Business Research 67 (2014) 1609–1621

- Values therefore provide a subtle mechanism through which senior management can exercise influence. By emphasizing certain values and by building corresponding norms for expected behaviors, managers can begin to build an organizational culture that has a powerful and compelling influence on employee behavior. Values and norms can in turn manifest in artifacts (e.g., organizational rituals, language and stories, and physical configurations) and lead to desired behaviors such as innovation. While most prior research considers organizational culture as a single construct, Schein (1992) considers the importance of analyzing and distinguishing between several layers of culture (see Fig. 1). Further, Schein (1992) attributes the confusion in definitions of culture to failure in differentiating the levels at which organizational culture manifests correctly.

As Figure. 1 illustrates, values underlie norms and artifacts and determine observed patterns of behavior. Norms are expectations of acceptable behaviors held by members of an organization and have the force of social obligation or pressure. For instance, innovative behaviors can result from norms that support information exchange about new ways of doing things within an organization. Organizational norms derive from values and are manifest in artifacts. Whereas values are the least visible, artifacts represent the most visible layer of organizational culture and are manifestly evident in organizational symbols, rituals, language, and physical workspace arrangements (Schein, 1992).

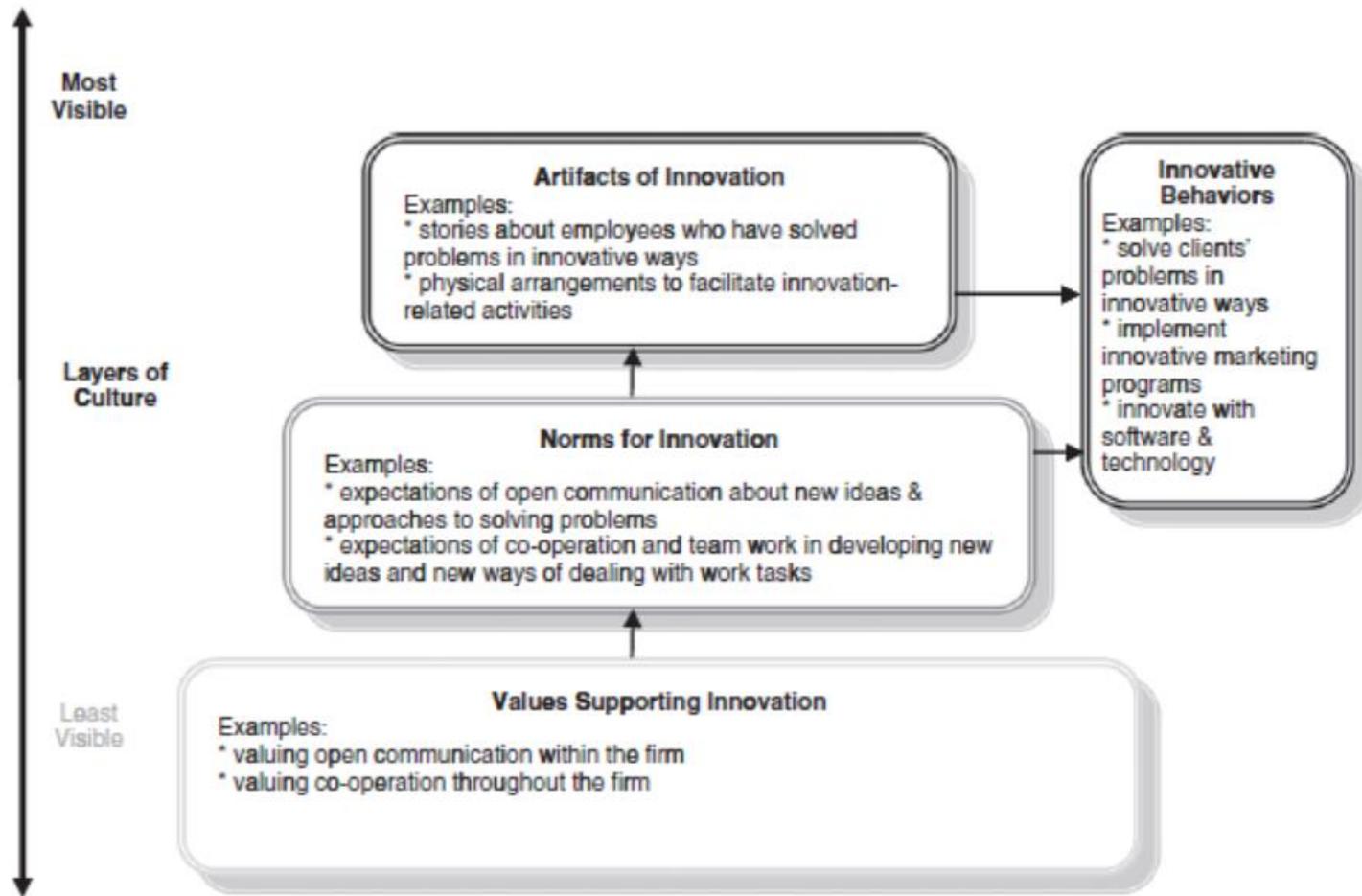
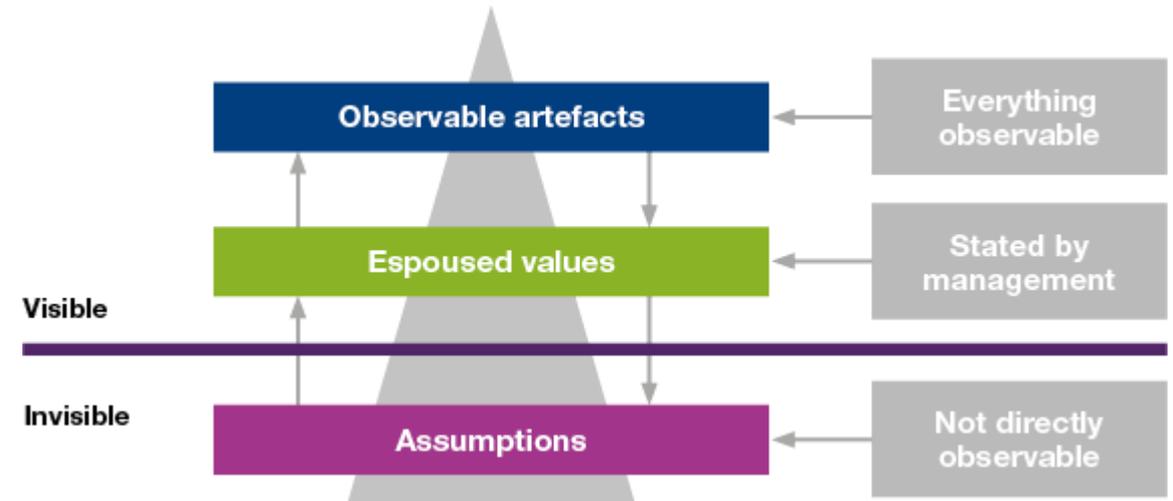


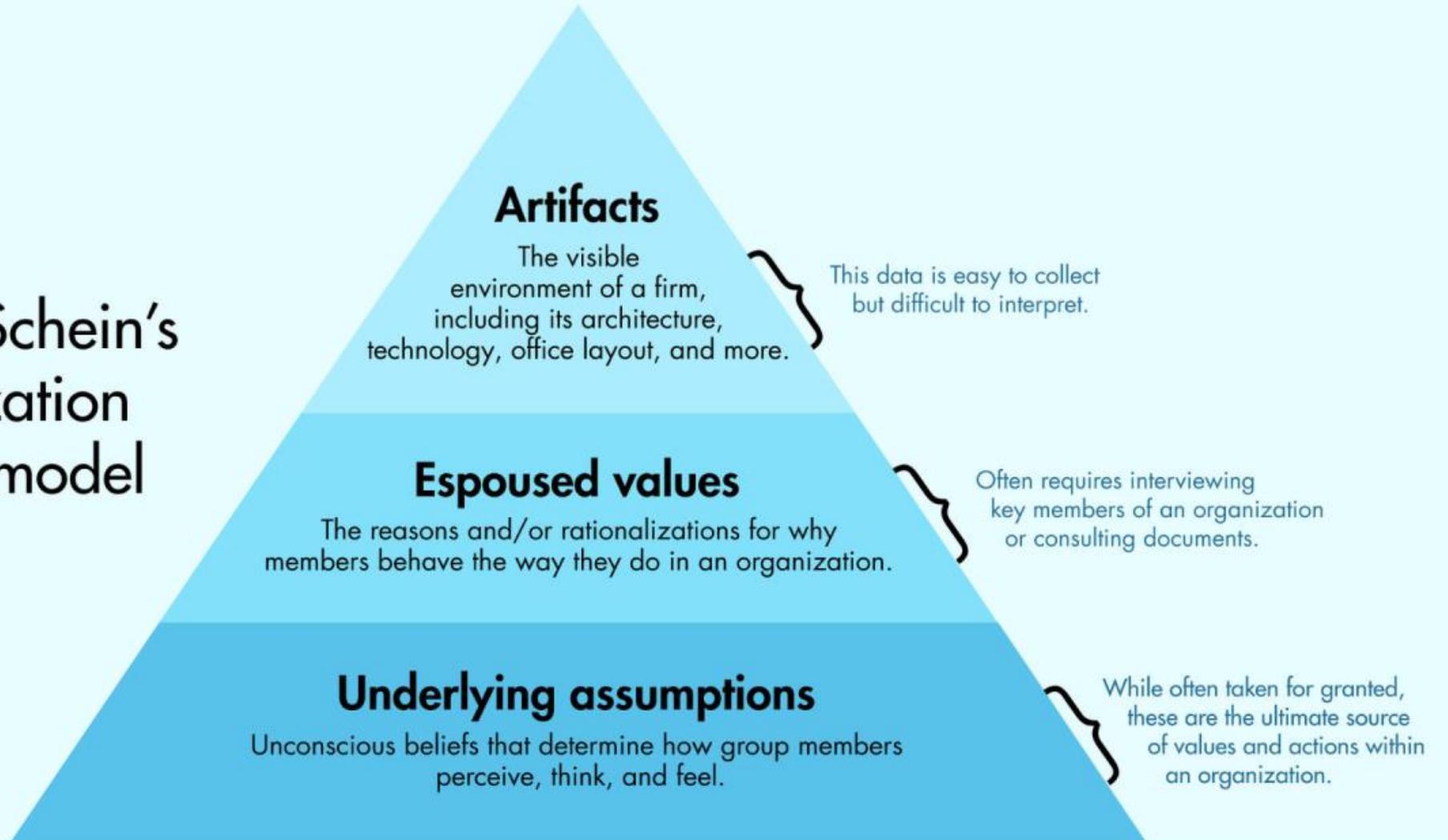
Fig. 1. Layers of an organizational culture that supports innovation.

Levels of Culture (Schein's Model) or Layers of organizational culture or Schein's culture triangle

- **Artifacts (visible level)** – visible structures, symbols, language.
- **Espoused values** (Declared beliefs and principles)– strategies, goals, philosophies.
- **Basic underlying assumptions (invisible Core)** – unconscious beliefs, taken-for-granted truths.
- (Look to the diagram for clarity.)
- **When we go up is visible (shallow factors) and when we go down is invisible (deeper factors)**



Edgar Schein's organization culture model



- Source: internet