

**SOCIAL CHARACTER and PARTICIPATORY SOCIAL RESEARCH:
STRATEGY and METHODS**

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This paper is based on 25 years of research in Mexico, Western Europe, and the United States by Michael Maccoby and the Project on Technology, Work and Character. Two separate research processes are discussed here, social character methodology and participatory social research. They are distinct and need not be used together.

The research which is the basis for this paper has evolved from the social character research in Mexico, through increasing elements of participatory social research in subsequent studies, to a combination of the two methods in recent work at the U.S. State Department. Social Character in a Mexican Village (1970) reports the work in Mexico, The Gamesman (1976) reports the research among corporate executives in high technology firms, while in-depth knowledge of how leadership expresses the social character of the led, as well as that of the leader, was the basis for The Leader (1981). A subsequent paper will report on the findings and applications of the above research. A forthcoming book will discuss research findings from eight years of study of technoservice workers and managers in public and private sector service bureaucracies.

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1. What problems is the research addressing?

We focus on how to combine human and economic development. As a critical theory of people and society, the research requires questioning the costs for individuals of economic success. It seeks the optimal balance between economic and human goals. It is then important to know:

- what motivates people to work productively?
- what do people want from their work?
- how do people differ in their values and goals?
- what kind of organizations do entrepreneurs want to create, and why?
- what dynamic social forces affect people and work today?
- why do some enjoy change, and others resist it?

Who is interested in these questions, who wants to start up the research process, and whose interest does this research serve? We have found an interest in the research questions among many, but not all, employees, managers, and union leaders, at various levels. They often feel, however, they lack the authority to initiate research within their organizations because this is the prerogative of higher leaders. Nonetheless, those lower in the organizations who are interested can often raise the idea with those above them, or even begin small pilot programs at their level. In some large organizations, even where top leaders are initially uninterested, these pilot programs can later become models for the whole organization, when pressures increase the need for change. In most cases, however, it is top leaders of management and union, if there is one, who first see the need for change, and how research can contribute necessary knowledge to best move in new directions.

As much as is feasible, participative involvement of all parties early in the research process is important. It helps insure that the problems and concerns of all parties, and the interplay of forces, are included. The principle here is that the method wishes to avoid one-sided or unidimensional research, such as attempts to increase productivity without considering its effect on workers, or what changes and rewards they want in exchange. Participatory social research, as it has been developed by Michael Maccoby and colleagues, is designed to serve the interests of all parties at the research site. Even where the initial focus is on understanding managers, the goal is that new knowledge, and subsequent training based on it, will contribute to the development and well-being of all those in the organization. The research strategy encourages leaders to see that their personal development, and the success of their organization, requires development of subordinates throughout the structure.



Social character methodology and participatory social research, as developed here, arises therefore from a value orientation which is made explicit early in the process. The commitment is to further both economic and human development. Some believe that economic and human development are contradictory, while others appeal to the humanistic conscience of those with economic power to be more concerned with people. The strategic perspective of the research method being described is that economic development today requires people's fuller involvement in the organization and the development of their creativity, judgement, and activeness.

Therefore, we study motivation, values, and styles of managers and employees. We avoid a priori assumptions about people and organizations based on theory. Theories which divide the world into good/bad, or assume a universal motivational hierarchy, or are based on partial man ideas (e.g., Economic Man or Psychological Man), or are only behavioral do not address or can not answer the basic questions raised because of their presuppositions about man and society. We believe that people must be studied in their particular social/organizational culture to understand their social character. Social character, as delineated by Erich Fromm, is defined below.

Secondly, we study the above questions recognizing that people may not be conscious of their values. And it is often these that are most motivating. It requires training to discover the unconscious factors which help answer the above questions. The social character method, when employed in a participatory process involving all parties, challenges conventional ideology and reveals motivating interests, raising them to consciousness. The findings show the potentials in different social character types to support and contribute to change, given good leadership to bring out their positive contribution.

What is meant by character and social character? In common usage we use the concept 'character' in contradictory ways. When we see someone behaving in an odd, bizarre, or extravagant way or unconventionally dressed, we say, "That fellow is a character". We wish to say he is eccentric, and outside of social norms. On the other hand, if we observe someone who has demonstrated courage, idealism, or high virtue we say, "That person has character." Here we are describing nobility, the quality of exemplifying human ideals. In each use of 'character' we are implying it is an exception, something uncommon to normal people, existing only at the extremes of the human spectrum.

Character, as we use the term, refers to a person's basic structure of drives, values, and emotional attitudes. Everyone has a character. Largely formed in early childhood, character is relatively permanent throughout a person's life, although extreme individual experiences or social changes can alter character within certain limits. It is the relative permanence of character that allows us to recognize the same qualities and traits in someone we have not seen for many years, although their body and appearance may have changed significantly.



We distinguish individual and social character. Obviously, everyone is a unique person. Individual character describes the specific traits, qualities, and talents that make each of us different from everyone else. Actually, the less developed and individuated a person is the more he or she resembles someone else at that point of development. To take an extreme example, most regressed catatonics have highly similar traits. Nonetheless, to describe individual character is to describe a specific person.

Social character, on the other hand, is the system of traits, values, and attitudes of a group, class, or nation. Many individuals, sharing a common social and cultural history, may have the same system of traits, when seen in the aggregate, because they have had similar formative influences as they grew up in society. National character is a type of social character, but further investigation will often show that different groups and classes within a nation have distinctly different social characters. Since people must work, adapt to, and live within a particular society, social character can be understood as those dominant patterns of adaptation required for the survival of a society. Therefore, as society changes, so does social character.

2. What is the best method to study these issues?

Brief, structured, easily-tabulated survey methods are ideal in terms of keeping research costs down and covering a large population. The case study method gives a deeper knowledge of individuals, but is limited by high cost and the problem of generalizing from a small sample. The social character method is designed to be both cost-effective (e.g. surveys) and profound (e.g. interviews).

Survey methods

- may only tap opinions, not values, that may be partly conscious or not socially desirable,
- can't explain underlying motives. They give indications of phenomena, or trends, but not answers. They often lead people to speculate about what the findings mean,
- are based on earlier subjective analysis of cases and the making of hypotheses. Otherwise, where did the researchers get the questions for their 'objective' instruments?

Other methods do not distinguish between opinion and convictions which are often not conscious. This does not mean, however, that convictions are necessarily deeply repressed. They may not be fully in focus, not attended to or taken seriously, or there may be a degree of self-deception, but the person's convictions are not necessarily strongly resisted. For example, Fromm's study (1984) of the German working class in the 1930's found that consciously almost everyone said they would resist Hitler and defend democracy. But in studying the interviews they found unconscious convictions which suggested that only 15% would resist Hitler and defend democracy actively, 75% would be ambivalent and do nothing, and 10% would actively join the Nazi party because unconsciously they were sado-masochistic.



Events proved these insights correct: Hitler rose largely unopposed by the German working class, and the world plunged into the worst war in history. This study distinguished between the conscious opinions supporting democracy and the unconscious authority convictions which won out.

The social character method looks for what people will deeply support and believe in because this knowledge is required to solve social problems. Survey and positivistic methods of research do not see or know how to find unconsciously motivating convictions, and are not interested in affecting people's actions. They idealize a so-called objective, value-free science that can not exist, for reasons we develop later under the section "What are the objections to these methods?"

The social character method is a holistic method combining human, anthropological, and socio-economic knowledge. It fits the way most progressive managers are in fact thinking about how to integrate knowledge of people, socio-technical factors, market, and motivation to create a humanly-satisfying, innovative, and effective organization.

The best of systems theory and structuralism is holistic because it describes the interactions of the various components of a phenomenon. These theories can be limited if they do not account for how change comes about in a supposedly stable system, or reify groups and forces by overlooking dynamic potentials within people and social institutions, or if they do not show how the structure came about historically or where it might be going. The social character method is a type of systems theory which reveals dynamic potentials for change. It complements dynamic theories of history and economics.

Humanistic theories of motivation or management have generalized, a priori assumptions about human nature and what people want. These theories, such as Maslow's or MacGregor's, do not consider how historical forces produce social character; they eliminate the relation between social structures, work and character; and they overlook how people and structures change because of new pressures, demands, and opportunities.

Many theories, often starting with the root 'soc', look at change and society in terms of the interaction of classes, groups, and labor market segments. These are arranged in a hierarchy. The groups contend and one group eventually comes to supercede the other, while one declines. This thinking is limited because it only presents a unidimensional, vertical dialectic which

- does not reveal progressive and regressive forces or potentials within each of its a priori groups,
- seeks to find a good or progressive group (e.g. managers, or the working class), and labels the other groups as not having potential.

The social character method recognizes the vertical contention of groups in society, but adds another dimension left out by the narrowly vertical dialecticians. There are also horizontal dialectics between different social characters in the same class. In addition, each social character itself has its progressive and regressive trends. Social class and social character are, therefore, not the same thing. A social class, group, or labor market segment can have different social characters within it.



To recognize the contending social character forces within a class, as well as the opposing potentials within each social character, is to see the complexity and richness of these issues. An analysis which sees both the vertical and the horizontal dialectical forces is more realistic, less ideological, and offers knowledge useful for those interested in the progressive potentials of all parties.

3. What is the method of social character and participatory social research?

The method involves

1. Interviews Psychoanalytically-designed interviews of individuals are done. When a critical mass of individuals has been interviewed and studied social character groupings can then be discovered.
2. Projective Tests Rorschachs, TATs, dreams, and early memories may be used selectively to deepen understanding of particular people, such as those who appear to exemplify a human type.
3. Interpretation The interviews require psychoanalytic interpretation, balanced with an understanding of the social, cultural, organizational and economic forces the person must adapt to.
4. Critical principles Researchers always question, or not accept at face value, what people tell them, to the point of paranoia in the service of science. In analyzing cases researchers search for the central organizing principles which give meaning to the large array of statements, values, opinions, attitudes, traits, and behaviors documented in the interview record. This central principle or theme expresses the dominant drive underlying and energizing the various aspects of the person. Most statements, as well as the case as a whole, can generate various hypotheses of deeper structures of meaning. The critical principle here is not to claim to know the underlying meaning of a statement until the whole case is studied.
5. Typologies Social character typologies are created. These relate differences among groups of people to their common socio-cultural history.
6. Surveys Surveys are created, based on hypotheses raised by the early interviews. These are given to a larger population.
7. Data Group surveys and individual interviews are supplemented by relevant available data, such as statistics on unemployment, absenteeism, grievances, turnover, or demographics.



The research method requires testing newly-done interviews and surveys, against the previous categories and knowledge. The researchers evaluate and compare the fresh material to knowledge gained in earlier social character studies. New insights thus emerge from clinical, social psychological, and historical understanding and from new case material.

Steps of the Method

1. Initiating the research. This involves building a relationship of trust with the various parties at the research site, and defining together the purposes and general procedures of the research, and the funding.
2. Establishing the research process. This requires defining who, if anyone, from the research site will participate in the research. The research team, and how they will work together and what they will do, must also be established.
3. Interviewing, surveying, study of work and organization, and data collection. The first interviews might be the leaders who initiated the research process. They are important to understand since they often have a broad view and create new organizational directions, and by going first they legitimize the interview process and set an example for their subordinates.
4. Analysis and interpretation. The research team analyzes cases and works toward an understanding of the organizational problems, environmental forces (e.g., the competitive climate, the business cycle, macroeconomic trends, etc.), and the social character typology.
5. Feedback. Each research site has its requirements about how the findings are to be feedback and diffused. Often, feedback starts early in the process, allowing participants to sharpen or redefine hypotheses. Usually a more complete report or presentation comes at the end of the process.

Initiating the Research

The strategy of initiating the research respects the unique configurations of people and organization at each site, as the researchers seek to gain legitimacy for their proposed investigations. Why were people in these settings interested in allowing outsiders to study them, and how did their interests and resistances affect the strategy of research?

The participatory research method has evolved from the first study. While researchers always have discussed and verified hypotheses with research subjects, the degree of activeness and involvement by the subjects has increased in each study. The Mexican village study used a more traditional method where the subjects were studied by outside researchers, but did not participate in creating the research process. Nonetheless, the Mexican villagers did recognize the problems of alcoholism, violence, and lack of productivity and accepted the research.



The research method evolved with the Bolivar auto parts factory study where leaders of management and union were active in establishing the goals and structure of the research, and the workers voted to participate in an initial study of attitudes toward work. With the high technology firms study (The Gamesmen) there was a greater desire on the part of the research subjects to participate by learning about themselves, and they were active in making the interview process relevant and useful. With the State Department study those being studied also helped in interviewing colleagues, and in formulating the findings, thus representing the fullest level so far of participation in the research process itself.

Below are four different situations of initiating the research.

Case #1: Mexican village

In the study of the Mexican village the researchers, including Americans and Mexicans, gained the approval of the village leaders. Researchers and village leaders agreed the research should attempt to understand the causes of alcoholism and violence, two major problems in the village, as well as help find a better use of land. A natural distrust of outsiders and people from the city was overcome by the researchers' interest in helping the villagers understand, and perhaps solve, their problems. The study led to the researchers aiding the villagers in creating a cooperative for youth as a step toward greater self-reliance and social cohesion.

Case #2: High technology companies (The Gamesmen)

The goal of the research was to study the values and attitudes of those who create new technology, or the assumption that the companies which were creating the new technology and work organizations would become models for social development. The researchers wanted to know what was supported in these companies and why, and what effect did these projects have on the people who created them. The researchers presented their proposed study to many companies, and they were invited in to some of them by top managers who gave approval because they got a seminar in return, something they sought to broaden their knowledge of themselves and their work, and to contribute to their management development. The researchers agreed to this request because they expected the results would contribute to the well-being of everyone in the workplace.

Case #3: Bolivar, Tennessee factory

The goal was to understand workers' goals and aspirations, and how management might respond more creatively to the requirements of production and people. The president of the conglomerate that owned the factory and the leadership of the union actively supported the research. The workers voted in meeting to have the study over 50% yes, none no, although the local plant manager and his staff did not see its potential usefulness. This meant that the legitimacy granted at the top did not completely motivate the in-plant leadership to cooperate fully with the research.



Although the investigation that ensued required considerable cooperation on their part, and it produced valuable findings, the potential to substantially redesign production and factory culture did not develop fully. A change process had begun as a consequence of the research. But since the local leaders did not feel it was their decision to do the research, they did not remain active in carrying on the change process after the researcher-facilitators had left.

Case #4: State Department

The Director General of the Foreign Service, and key people in the Personnel Department, decided that personnel problems could not be solved by new systems alone. This required a better style of leadership and they sought to discover it. They wanted to understand and affirm the organization's positive values and describe the management style that was most productive. The hope was that this could become the basis for management training.

The researchers shared these goals. They recognized the high level of motivation, training, and knowledge of these top managers and involved them in the research process, including joint researcher-manager interviewing and analysis. This is described in more detail below. A similar research process occurred at the ACTION Agency of the U.S. government where legitimacy was granted by both top managers and union officials who wanted to understand who the good managers were, to serve as models for increasing participation.

Establishing the Research Process

Once the researchers have gained legitimacy within the organization and been given authority to begin the research, choices must now be made about organizing the research process. These questions include: where to focus first, who to involve from the organization, what research instruments are needed and appropriate, what kind of feedback to offer and at what point, and what kind of support from the organization and its leaders.

The Mexican Village:

It was decided to make a thorough study of each individual in the village over 16 (417 people), and half the children (about 230 people). The research team consisted of clinical and social psychologists, psychiatrists, anthropologists, sociologists, and physicians. This interdisciplinary team was interested in investigating all aspects of peasant life that might reveal the connections between character, work, technology, family history and dynamics, mental and physical health, and social problems.



Unlike the later studies in advanced economies, in the village the research team did not invite the villagers to be participants in the research process. The exception was Maccoby's work with the youth agricultural group where the boys participated in the group analysis of attitudes of submission and hopelessness. The villagers were interviewed extensively over time, and some of the researchers lived in the village for periods of time observing individuals' behavior and the social process. In addition to interviewing, surveys and tests of mental and physical health were made, including Rorschachs and the collection of dreams. The interpretive core of the research was supplemented by statistical analysis, requiring support from research methodologists specializing in statistics.

The research was supported by the Mexican Department of Public Health and Welfare which aided access and acceptance by the villagers. In addition, nine other scientific and philanthropic organizations supported the research during its thirteen-year span. The first year was used to establish rapport with the villagers so they would be willing to respond to lengthy in-depth interviews.

During the whole study Erich Fromm conducted a permanent seminar for the researchers on psychoanalytic characterology, social character, and methods of interpretation. While the interviewing and data collection were largely concluded in the first five years, conflicting schedules, as well as the necessarily time-consuming analysis, interpretations, and writing consumed another seven years. The research spawned several action projects to aid cultural development based on the findings: a course on literature, a village library, and the creation of a producers' cooperative for young people.

The Bolivar, Tennessee factory:

Sidney Harner of Harner International Industries and Irving Bluestone, international vice-president of the United Auto Workers, jointly sponsored the research and change process. Their letter of sponsorship spelled out common goals, areas for research and possible change, and timetables. This served as a notice to all levels of both parties that cooperation with the researchers was legitimate and encouraged.

A joint labor-management working committee was established to act as the in-house body to oversee the research and any proposed changes that might be suggested. This committee did not participate in creating the research instruments or doing the interviews. The committee consisted of a slice through the factory hierarchy, drawing from the various levels of management and union leaders, and rank and file employees. The committee met weekly.

The research was largely carried out by two on-site psychologists who were in the factory every working day for several years. They also participated in and observed life in the community, and interviewed workers and managers at home, as well as in the workplace. Other researchers came to participate in the study for brief periods of time. No projective tests were used in this setting.



The research began with a massive survey of employees and managers concerning their satisfactions and dissatisfactions at work, traits and skills required by their work, emotional and physical symptoms, and some limited personality/values questions. This baseline study allowed the later comparison to reveal possible changes resulting from the change process. The survey was followed by in-depth interviewing of a smaller sample of volunteers. Objective statistics such as number and content of grievances, turnover, absenteeism, and the economics of the factory were also collected. After several years an independent evaluator, the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan, studied the Bolivar factory to assess the effect of the research-change process.

Michael Maccoby and associates at the Project on Technology, Work and Character did all the interviewing of the 250 corporate leaders, and some wives, children, and secretaries. Rorschachs and collection of dreams were also used. There were numerous sites and organizations, restricting the researchers to visit each for limited amounts of time. The interviews were supplemented with some researcher observation of corporate meetings, and extensive study of the organization of work and management within these firms. While the research subjects did not interview any others in their organizations, they did offer advice on constructing some of the research instruments. Later, some of the managers made constructive comments and suggestions on drafts of the research for publication, including those featured as case examples.

This research was exploratory and interested in discovering new knowledge about the values and character of those who create technology, and how they manage. There was no change process accompanying the research, although many of the managers consented to the research because they wanted to learn from the promised seminar based on the findings.

The State Department and ACTION Agency:

These research settings allowed a more advanced form of social character research involving considerable participation of the research subjects. More than in the earlier studies, the subjects helped shape the content and direction of the research strategy, the instruments, as well as sharing some of the interviewing with Michael Maccoby and his professional colleagues. The higher level of subject participation was possible because the subjects were more motivated and more knowledgeable and sophisticated about character, management, and policy issues than subjects in earlier studies. This was more true of the State Department than the ACTION Agency.

In both agencies there was an interest in understanding the best managers, who then might serve as models for management development. The participative social character method proceeded by forming a research committee within the organization being studied. Similar to Bolivar, these committees consisted of a vertical slice through the organization, involving managers at various levels (the State Department) and managers and employees (the Action Agency), as well as the researchers.



At State previous research on management had increased resistance to new study. The social character researchers decided to begin by trying to understand this resistance. The research committee found dissatisfaction in the Department because previous researchers did all the interviewing themselves, kept the data, did not explain the process of interpreting data, and the results were reported to only a small group. The research committee wanted the new research to help them gain knowledge to solve their problems and educate them in research methods.

The research committee thus started by investigating problems relating to employee grievances, distrust of the evaluation system, job classifications, and the placement system. As the committee proceeded they realized they had to broaden the study to include qualities of management necessary to deal with the problems effectively, the goals of the Department, and its role in creating foreign policy. In the process of studying these questions they found different views of the goals of foreign policy and the Department's role.

The research committee found new resistances as they moved to investigate these differences. One resistance was that this would carry the group beyond its initial goal of dealing with personnel problems, would require leadership and legitimation from the top. Another resistance was the fear of endangering peoples' careers by telling the truth. The necessary support and guidance from the top was forthcoming and the research included understanding the resistances as an expression of the character of the managers and the Department.

As the principal researcher, Michael Maccoby's role was analytic, didactic, and anthropological. He helped formulate the basic questions, facilitated the research process, and helped analyze resistances as they arose and transform them into new questions. He also helped design the questionnaire with the research committee, lectured on social character, and in response to the subjects' request studied the relationship between management style, values and character of the most effective managers, using the Rorschach test.

The research at the ACTION Agency was a consequence of a jointly-sponsored commitment by the new head of the agency and the union president to increase employee participation and morale. They invited Michael Maccoby to aid them in moving in this direction. He suggested an agency-wide committee consisting of equal numbers from management and union to develop a program. This body formulated the goals and wrote principles to guide the committee in working toward the goals.

Six months later, a higher level Advisory Committee was formed, consisting of the agency Director, union President, and Michael Maccoby. They were to evaluate progress, resolve issues that the working committee didn't have the authority to resolve, consultation on major policy decisions affecting the workforce, and consultation on actions that each side might take that could affect the other. Two professional researchers conducted in-depth interviews, participated in the union-management working committee meetings, were on-site observers several days a week for two years, and contributed to several work-redesign workshops.



The process encountered significant resistance and was unable to achieve its initial goals. After this failure of the participatory program, and recognition that top management was not substantially supporting it, the committee searched for a new strategy. It was decided to study what management styles worked best in the agency at that time. The goal was to focus attention on and learn from the 'good' managers, make that information broadly available, and to counter the impression that the working committee and the participatory program were advocating a particular solution to problems.

The working committee appointed a small number of managers and employees to work with the professional researchers to help design and carry out the study. By creating a voluntary and confidential nomination process over a hundred managers were nominated as good managers, and reasons given. The study committee, a subgroup of the larger working committee, selected six managers for intensive study, including the manager's supervisor, and members of the staff. In addition, considerable time was devoted to observing and discussing issues of work with the staff.

Clearly, there is no set pattern or step-by-step formula for developing social character research and participatory social research. Each site or organization has its unique interests, requirements, and resistances. These both set the framework for the research and become objects of study. Where possible the participation of the research subjects in the design and carrying out of the study process is desirable, as we said above, since it helps focus the research on the most important issues, and elicits trust. This leads to the possibility that those researched will gain insights that are usually not possible when outside researchers attempt to study people without involving them in a dialogue.

With the goal of creating a dialogue, the research committees serve multiple purposes. These committees study, educate, and think in terms of social character as it relates to work. The researchers attempt to facilitate group processes that encourage those involved to study themselves and their work problems. The goal is to phase out the researchers so that people can independently develop themselves and their organizations. The social character method aims to create knowledge, as well as resources in people and organizations.

Care is taken in constituting these research committees. For example, who should be on the research committee, and what criteria should be used to select them? Who should select them? Several principles are observed. First, people should be included because of personal interest or motivation; they voluntarily participate and are not coerced to join. Secondly, some people on the committee should have sufficient authority and knowledge to change things, otherwise the committee would have no latitude to act and would be in the dark about what to do. This means that management and union leaders with some authority to affect others and the organization should be included.



Thirdly, non-unionized, non-management employees, or a non-union person chosen to represent people in a unionized workplace, should not be included because these people would treat it as an enhancement of authority without any guarantee that their views would be other than their own. Since unions are political organizations, if the views do not represent the employees there is a likelihood that the representative will be voted out of office.

The choice of who sits on the research committee is usually made by top management and union leaders who are sponsoring the research, in conjunction with the researchers. Once the committee is constituted, and has established the goals and principles for the research, interviewing can begin. The interview process is always updated as findings raise new questions and affect the research objectives.

Interviewing, surveying, study of work and organization, and data collection

Depth interviewing is a discipline which improves with practice. Our social character interviewing follows several guidelines.

1. We write down exactly what the person says. If they speak quickly, we point out that we are trying to write down everything and ask them to speak slower. This disciplines both of you, focuses them on what they want to say, and helps avoid repetitions. If they ramble and we believe we have gotten what they are trying to say we quietly say, 'Let's move on now' or 'I think I understand, I'd like to ask you the next question'. It is helpful to develop abbreviations to facilitate note-taking, because the person's exact words are needed, not the interviewer's summary.
2. We do not tape-record. It produces interviews which are 3-4 times as long as necessary, and less interesting. With tape-recording the interviewer and interviewee are less motivated to develop a focused dialogue. Tape-recorded interviews tend to be dull and repetitive.
3. It is essential to probe with additional questions when the person is unclear, intellectualized (a lot of abstract language), or there are key phrases or ideas which are unexplained. An example of the latter is when a person repeatedly speaks of fairness, the interviewer asks, 'What does fairness mean to you?'

Probing is necessary to arrive at the heart of the matter. Descriptive terms like satisfaction, productive, meaningful, or ambition only are interesting when we know what it means for the person. What is meaningful or satisfying for me may not be so for you. One's ability to probe increases with practice, since the skill of going deeper while not threatening the interviewee is learned by discovering what to say and not say.



A guide for when to probe is: has the interviewee really expressed him/herself or am I just getting conventional and abstract phrases? (It may also be the case that the person is conventional and has little more to say.) Do I feel I understand what he or she is saying? For example, if a person says, "I like my work, and feel satisfied doing it," what has really been learned? We ask as many questions as necessary to disaggregate this generality and learn the subjective meaning. What does the person like about the work? What makes it satisfying? It is important to pick up on any content or word in an answer to ask further probing questions. We are, of course, sensitive to when these questions begin to threaten or are intrusive. The goal is to find the living meaning under the dead words. This is usually exciting and stimulating for the interviewee, just like effective questioning in therapy. People feel new energy because they have gained a clearer self-understanding.

4. In writing down what the person says we note also emotional expressions like smiling, laughter, grimaces, frowns, sudden changes of mood, like becoming anxious or sad. We are especially interested in understanding the emotion in words. If the emotional content is unclear we ask about it, for example, 'Why does that make you smile?' Emotional expressions are noted in parentheses () in the text as they occur in the person's speaking. One develops the ability to write down while still glancing occasionally at the person. We also note in parentheses when we ask questions. If we can not write the question down we place the empty () there so the reader will know when the person is responding to a question. The question might also be filled in later.
5. After the interview we write a few paragraphs describing the person and what it was like being with him or her. We usually include in these observations: physical size, features, and conditions; dress, mannerisms, emotional state; how they greeted the interviewer and departed from us; what their workplace or home looked like; any personal decorations, sayings, or items about their person or workplace that might be revealing; what was their attitude to the interviewer, guarded, responsive, seductive, evasive, dutiful, etc. We are descriptive only, this is not the place for the researcher's interpretations, since others will study what you write and need to come up with their own fresh impressions. Consider that you are painting here a concise, psychological and anthropological portrait of this unique person, which at this point is descriptive only.
6. The interview is given a cover page with the date and place of the interview, the name of the interviewer, and demographic information about the interviewee: place of employment, age, marital status, ever divorced, number of children, etc. To insure confidentiality it may be necessary to use code names when the case is studied, if so, this guarantee is given to the interviewee before the interview.



Interviewing of research subjects focuses on both understanding motivations, and the social/technical aspects of work and organization. Once the interviewing has progressed, preliminary typologies are created by studying the early interviews. These typologies are hypotheses of the differences between people. In light of findings, and perspectives posed by these hypotheses, interview schedules are revised, new questions added, the same people are reinterviewed, or others are interviewed for the first time. These new interviews attempt to understand further the themes, and verify or discard hypotheses from the early interviews. In fact, the interview schedules can be revised numerous times as interviewing progresses, in order to refine, refocus, and expand findings about character and values in the organization.

Eventually a sufficient number of interviews are completed and analyzed to allow drafting a short survey containing the hypothetical social character types. (See the Appendix for an example). Each type is described in a few sentences and spaces allotted so that people can indicate whether the statement applies Very Well, Somewhat, A Little, Not At All. People also indicate which statement describe them most accurately (their first choice), and their second choice. This survey is then pretested numerous times, and rewritten and revised for accuracy and clarity. The survey can then be administered to a larger population. Since people can indicate the extent to which the statements apply to them, the survey tests the hypotheses concerning the existence of the stated social character types. In addition, the surveys yield a picture of the distribution of types among the larger population.

The researchers and those engaged in the process seek an understanding of how peoples' values, motivations, and emotional attitudes relate to organizational and work dynamics. If there is a change project component to the research, the knowledge gained can lead to the development of interventions and education to achieve personal and social goals.

Analysis and Interpretation

Above we have described the development of the research process from formulating the questions to the empirical data collection (e.g., interviewing, etc.). Analysis of interviews requires understanding people, organization, and social forces. This raises the question, 'How do we know, or what are our ways of knowing?' In order to organize and understand the large array of data and stimuli coming into our brains we create categories, or mental schema as Piaget calls them. These categories can be groupings of facts, or models of how the world works, paradigms of causes and relationships. Some categories are socially validated, for example, the color of a room. Other categories are subjectively known, such as our feelings. Then there are larger categories of what is knowable or not knowable, and here ideology plays an important role. People are often systematically educated by schooling and media to believe that some things are not knowable, for example, why there are poor people in a rich society.



Social science also creates categories and tries to convince people of their validity (for example, statistical proofs, public polls, etc.), but this usually does not get beyond positivism. Positivism, a theory of how to discover knowledge, believes that only phenomena which can be statistically measured with the five senses can be known. Positivistic categories are created a priori, before going to the field to study the scope and nature of a phenomenon. Positivism focuses attention on isolated facts and part processes, and excludes holistic knowledge of people and social forces. See Don Schon's (1983) excellent analysis and case descriptions of how competent professionals use categories and models in solving problems.

Holistic knowledge, for example knowledge of social character, requires the five senses plus a disciplined use of experience, imagination, intuition, and feelings to arrive at interpretations which integrate and give meaning to facts which may appear unrelated. These interpretations must be tested with new data and by comparison to alternative explanations. This 'disciplined subjectivity' is acquired like any other discipline, through the study of existing knowledge and examples, and through experience supervised by master practitioners. Participatory social research, unlike positivistic empiricism, starts by asking people to define their problems, thereby letting them contribute actively to the definition and creation of categories.

In analyzing an interview we must create categories to structure and focus attention on what is meaningful to answering the research questions, since we are not abstractly or randomly studying character. Below we will describe how the study of case material (interviews) is approached, including how we create categories. Social character research differs from the traditional psychoanalytic study of individual case material which has been distorted toward pathology.

Therefore,

1. We study normal people, looking at their drives and adaptive strengths and values, as well as disabilities, in relation to work.
2. Our interview schedules and analytic categories are open to revision.
3. We recognize differences between cultures, countries, and social classes.
4. Since there are unlimited subcategories, one must decide what are the patterns of meaning. This requires decision based on knowledge, and experience which is responsive to the findings and seeks to express them in appropriate new categories.



5. There is no static way to interpret cases, it is not a matter of adding up traits. Researchers must consider the whole case, understand hidden meaning in a subject's language, and arrive at a parsimonious statement of the underlying values and emotions which organize and give meaning to the whole person. People's lives are best seen as a story in which their experiences and drives are given meaning, as they develop their aims, attitudes, and values. For example, some believe that the only distinction among people is weakness and strength, which suggests that the person who believes this is concerned about strength and weakness. The researcher would look for evidence, often implicit or veiled in statements throughout the person's interview, of the importance of this attitude - a process different from adding up explicit responses.

Creating Analytic Categories and Hypotheses

In social science research categories from earlier studies, or a priori categories from the research discipline, are applied to the current study. This is inevitable, since each study can not create sui generis categories. Character, social character, and drives are examples of a priori categories employed in social character research. In addition to these, however, there are new categories which emerge from fresh research, and which aid the analysis and understanding of the material. In order to create categories which allow the current research material to be accurately described we follow certain principles:

- a. We attempt to avoid abstract hierarchies which force people into categories that do not describe both their positive and negative potentials.
- b. we attempt to create categories which appear to fit the findings most closely.
- c. We attempt to avoid distinctions based on philosophical ideals or ideology,
- d. We use the common language of the people being studied to describe them, avoiding abstract, technical, or intellectualized words which are difficult to understand, or inhibit use of the new self-knowledge.
- e. We test our categories and refine them by interviewing further people we have studied, or by interviewing new people. This permits us also to broaden and deepen categories. This back and forth process between category hypothesis and interview testing goes on several times. Then a short survey based on the categories is created, permitting a larger population to test the categories (for example, social character typologies are categories tested in this way).



The Process of Studying Interviews

The research team is multidisciplinary. It includes experts in work organization, economics and business administration, management, and psychology, and may include other social sciences such as sociology and anthropology. Each discipline contributes, and has its limits. The team must learn to cooperate and affirm the contribution of each discipline. This cooperation is a parallel to the increasing need in modern organizations for teams of people who are involved, helpful to clients, and cooperative with coworkers and supervisors.

The research is intended to be useful. The researchers, though from different disciplines, function as a team. It is often this cooperative teamwork which those accustomed to working alone, as experts in their disciplines, find uncomfortable. Participatory social character research challenges many to expand their skills and develop as researchers beyond the confines of their specializations. Just as workers and managers must become more helpful and service-oriented in the new high-technology competitive world, so research experts need to become more interested in useful knowledge, which requires holistic, not specialized research.

There are several reasons why a group analysis is better than that of an individual researcher. Greater objectivity, depth of analysis, and richness of interpretation is usually achieved when interviews are studied by a group of researchers meeting regularly. The group tries to create an atmosphere of curiosity, non-defensiveness, and open-mindedness. This requires that interpretations be based on evidence from the interview, and members ask each other how they arrived at a particular interpretation. It is a centered, scientific inquiry.

The group process develops discipline, focus, and awareness of members' strengths of insight, as well as blindspots. While a gifted analyst can analyze a case him or herself, most of us have blindspots. Prejudices and bias are more easily eliminated when a group of researchers, who come to know each other, seek an accurate analysis. An individual is more likely to be biased. However, if one learns the method completely and has much supervised experience in using it, an individual may be able to arrive at an unbiased, accurate analysis. But it is always advisable to work in a team.

If the research team includes members who are still learning social character methodology experience has shown that a scoring guide is helpful. The scoring guide directs attention to the various important aspects of social character and aids learners in thinking of the whole person in relation to his or her environment and personal history.

The use of a scoring guide is not without problems. For didactic reasons it is thorough, but this also increases the time, and therefore the expense, of studying each case. This can become tedious. Learners, particularly those with the character of experts, delight in scoring each and every nuance of character and lose sight of the basic drives and structure of the whole person. Where scoring is numerical, and the person is ranked on a scale, the use of the scoring guide can lead to arguments about minute and insignificant distinctions. The scoring guide can lead to mechanical analyses by discouraging creative insights and unconventional connections.



The use of the scoring guide requires a teacher who can make its use educational, while keeping the analytic discussion moving, alive, and focused on the larger issues. We have found that sometimes it is helpful to use a scoring guide, and at other times it is better to put it aside, depending on the character and skill of the researchers. It might be helpful to use a scoring guide for some of the early interviews, but unnecessary for the remainder. Where all researchers are fully trained in the method it may be better to proceed without a scoring guide at all.

The appendix contains the scoring guide used in some of our current research in Sweden and the U.S. It is presented as an example not as a universal guide, since each research project needs to create a guide appropriate to its subject. Nonetheless, many of the sections of this guide will be applicable to other research projects. We describe below several of these sections, as an example of what questions are involved and how the sections contribute to the analysis.

The scoring guide includes ranking the degree of strength, or level of development, of some traits so that everyone can be scored along these dimensions, even though, as we have said, we seek to understand the deepest motivating factors of the whole person and not add up scores mechanically. Other categories in the scoring guide are open-ended and ask for descriptive statements by the researchers rather than scores or rankings. The scoring guide encourages the researchers to analyze all the necessary factors in order to arrive at an understanding. The creation of the ranking scales follow certain principles:

- a. Degrees of strength of the categories should have positive and negative poles of each dimension. The extremes are the most productive and unproductive development of that human trait. Productive in this sense means humanly positive and contributing to individual and social development, not the short-range economic meaning of efficient and profitable. Unproductive means humanly unattractive, destructive, regressive or negative. For example, experts can express the productive trait of being thorough and diligent but there is also the unproductive expression of this trait which is that experts can be obsessive, exhausting, and uncreative. On the productive side experts seek and uphold standards, but the unproductive expression of this is they can have a narrow focus. Aristotle observed that every virtue has its vice.
- b. It should feel easy and appropriate to locate people on the scales, not forced or controlling.
- c. The traits, and scales that gauge their strength, are grouped by social character types, each one being a system of traits. They are designed so that they apply primarily to one character type. For example, the trait of enjoying risk-taking is primarily found in the social character type Maccoby has called 'the gamesman'.



The group starts with a holistic analysis of the case, according to theory. The goal is to arrive at a brief picture of the whole person. This occurs before the scoring, if the scoring guide is being used. Each response is seen in relation to the whole. The group begins with hypotheses or alternatives which are tested by further responses, looking not only at content but also at the person's language and emotion. For example, is the person out for power, etc.? The hypotheses are discussed by the group until there is consensus, if this can't be reached the researchers decide to disagree, but go on with the analysis, looking for verification or rejection of the different interpretations. The goal is to arrive at an integrative interpretation, which reveals the central drives and organizing principles of the person (the character), and describes it at the deepest motivating level. The group arrives at the final interpretation after rejecting alternative interpretations found lacking in verification.

When analyzing character one looks for the cluster of traits making a dynamic system. These emotional attitudes and values energize the life themes underlying a person's behavior. Character traits, as distinct from behavior traits, are motivating and often unconscious. Unlike behavior, which can change dramatically in reaction to events, character is relatively permanent over the person's life. Therefore, in reading responses to questions we look for the pattern of emotions, values, and relationships expressed throughout the interview. We do not draw conclusions from individual statements or answers, except as they confirm, revise, or refine our evolving understanding as we read the whole case. We look for the deep structure of motivations which runs through the person's whole life, from childhood memories to the present.

The process of analyzing interviews can not be rushed. If an interview can not be covered in one meeting of the group, it is taken up again at the next meeting. Nonetheless, it might be possible to cover one or even two cases per meeting, especially if the interpretation is clear. Comparisons between cases are made after ten or more cases have been studied.

Below are the steps the group follows in analyzing an interview. Included in this description is the use of the Scoring Guide, this is eliminated however, if all members of the group are experienced at case analysis.

- 1) Each group member receives a photocopy of the interview and scores it privately on the Scoring Guide. It is best to read the case through first, underlying important statements and making notes in the margins, before scoring it on the Guide. This is because early impressions may be altered by later material in the interview. Once the case is read in its entirety, the researcher goes back and scores it on the Guide. It is important to note page numbers of quotes and important passages so that this evidence can be presented in the group discussion.



2) The group meets. Members state briefly their holistic view of the person (e.g., type, level of productiveness) before the discussion begins. If there is general agreement, discussion proceeds. If there is disagreement do not try to name what it is about. Rather, it is best to discuss it until a consensus on the wholistic view of the person is achieved. The group is open to widening the types, creating subtypes, or new types.

3) After consensus about type is achieved, discussion proceeds section by section of the Guide. Going around the room, each person reads one section of the Guide at a time until everyone has given their response to that section. It is not necessary to repeat points already made. Instead, only new contributions are added. Discussion then attempts to understand differences, aspects that someone feels might have been overlooked, or common misinterpretations, etc. How did one experience the person from the interview (e.g., you might ask yourself what it would be like to work for this person, how you would feel, etc.)? Are there new questions which might be asked of the interviewee, if possible, or of future interviewees? Hypotheses are generated during these discussions.

Discussion continues in this manner until consensus is achieved on all scoring dimensions. Points of disagreement about scoring that cannot be resolved are noted and the group tries to resolve them when later material from the interview, or other interviews, throws additional light on the issue. On some scores, the group may agree to disagree and not score the item.

4) After all sections of the Guide are discussed in this manner, the group asks a member to fill out a new Guide with the group consensus interpretation. Where a Guide is not used, someone can write a short summary statement. The group might select this person before the discussion begins so that he or she can fill in the group interpretation on the Guide as the discussion proceeds.

5) After the group has analyzed a sufficient number of cases in this manner, patterns may begin to emerge, suggesting a new typology of character types in the population being studied. The discovery of this typology may be facilitated by creating a matrix with the case names on one axis and the dimensions of character being studied on the other. Filling in the matrix can make visible the similarities and differences. Another method is for each member to summarize briefly the major findings which occurred to them during the discussion of the cases.

The typology might call for revising the interview schedule by omitting or adding questions, in order to deepen the research in subsequent interviews. Or it may highlight areas that need further probing. In the current study of service bureaucracies early interviews highlighted the importance of helping and self-development as themes that needed further study. Subsequent interviews had additional questions in these areas.



In order to show how the Scoring Guide is used we have explained two of its sections below as examples. These examples will show how we look at character in relation to the social structures and forces to which people must adapt. Refer to the Appendix for the complete Guide.

Scoring Guide, examples:

1. Working Environment and Organizational Strategy

The first section seeks to understand the conditions to which this person must adapt. People can only be fully understood by studying their everyday world of work and how they adapt to reality demands. Here we are looking for the objective descriptions of the firm or agency that employes the person, its position in the market, etc.

It is important for researchers to start with a solid understanding of the person's working environment so as not to slip into psychologizing. There is always the danger when analyzing character to think only of needs, motives, problems, etc., of the individual and overlook the extent to which these traits are called for or demanded by the environment. Researchers must always ask whether traits are rooted in character or a consequence of immediate social demands, such as their social role or job. This is especially germane when trying to understand a person's problems. Researchers with psychological training are particularly vulnerable to overlooking the influence of work when studying a person.

The descriptions of the working environment are derived largely from the person's statements, even though their knowledge or observations may not be fully adequate. If the researchers have more complete knowledge of the person's workplace, this should be added to the Guide, but noted that the information was not supplied by the interviewee. If the researchers also know that information supplied by the interviewee is not correct, it is important to note this because of its potential value to the final interpretation. For example, is the person uninterested in knowing the fuller picture, or is he/she resisting the truth, or even trying to impress or mislead the interviewer?

To describe the firm or agency, we want to know what is its size? Is it a division of a larger entity? What is its product or service (be specific)? In which department does the person work? If the person just gives a job title, the researchers should find out what the person actually does at work. (One hopes the interviewer has probed on this point.)



To describe the position of the organization in its environment, we are looking for how successful it has been in achieving its mission, and why. How is the organization situated in its environment, when its market, competitors, government, and the public are considered? What are the organization's advantages and disadvantages based on its internal qualities and its environment? If the person is a leader, how does he or she see the strategic implications of the various factors covered in this section and below: market, competitors, government, public, personnel, and technology?

Advanced industrial countries have developed in recent years from a bureaucratic/industrial to a technoservice economy, a largely service work economy increasingly using advanced technology. Because of the significance of this historical shift it is important to understand to what extent the person's organization has been moving toward technoservice. Does it understand what this change requires in terms of strategy, systems, and people?

If the research is part of an organizational change process the analysis of the cases may require specialized knowledge of the work and organization. Such specialized research permits a focus on how issues, such as the following, affect the person being studied. How does the organization serve its clients? How many employees are there, and what is known of their age, sex, ethnicity, length of service, etc.? Are there personnel problems, such as absenteeism, turnover, lateness, substance abuse, motivation, demands for higher wages or career advancement that are difficult to satisfy? Are labor relations harmonious, conflictual, adversarial but within reason, or how would they be described by the interviewee?

An organizational change project may also require specialized research on issues of technology, such as the following. What technology does the organization use? Are there plans to install new technology? Will employees be involved in this planning? What is the organization's attitude to new technology? Does the impact of new technology on employees concern the organization? How is it planning to deal with this impact?

In all research of the kind being described here there is a need to know how the organization's success is defined. What makes the firm profitable or the agency necessary and viable? For example, must a firm be constantly innovating or expanding in order to stay in the market? Is an agency's budget being reduced requiring greater service output from fewer resources? Are there unique or unexpected criteria for success? What role does the interviewee have in the success of the organization?

What are the strategic goals of the organization? Are these clear and explicit, or poorly developed? How realistic are they, given the organization's position in its environment? Do people in the organization understand the goals, and their role in achieving them? Does this organization have a different strategy than others in the same situation and environment?



Scoring Guide, example #2:

2. Social Background

Character is formed as the person drives to explore, learn, develop, and be related to others. They find opportunities for their drives or they encounter limits. Not everyone has the same opportunities for growth, or limits which stifle their potential. In this section of the Scoring Guide we are interested in the person's social class, which is deduced from the parents' occupations, and its effect. What has the person achieved in light of the advantages or disadvantages of their social origins? Formative factors derived from the interview might include:

- the quality of the relationship between the parents;
- the relationship between the parents and child;
- educational opportunities in school, community and home;
- illness or disability of the parents or the interviewee when the person was young;
- did the person grow up in a time of war, depression, civil strife, affluence, rapid social change, etc.;
- is the family culturally or ethnically in a subculture;
- the role of religion;
- did the child get support or rejection from peers;
- did the parents create a stimulating home environment;
- did the child receive encouragement from parents, teachers, or authority figures; etc.

Testing Hypotheses

We have described above how the analytic categories emerge from the case material, how the interviews are analyzed, and how hypotheses concerning social character are developed. We then test these categories and hypotheses by:

1. Surveys: do people find themselves in the types? Recent research in the United States has found that about 95% found themselves in the types either Very Well or Somewhat. In other words, 95% found themselves in the types which emerged from the early interviews.
2. Do people find this new knowledge useful to free them to work for the development of themselves and their organization? If our hypotheses about what motivates people, etc. were wrong or off the mark then people would not respond to it and find it helpful for their development, and for the change process in the organization. The participative nature of our method requires constant revision of findings until hypotheses accurately reflect people's realities. Our hypotheses are tested by the subjects in their daily work, if we are on target they find the knowledge freeing and useful.

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3. If the hypotheses are correct we expect a correlation between character and socio-economic variables. This will show the fit between possibilities for productive activity allowed in work and what is most personally motivating. For example, is there a relationship between the person's work, family history, and current conscious and unconscious attitudes and motivations? The character-work correlations were major findings of Fromm's and Maccoby's Social Character in a Mexican Village, (1970).
4. Another test of hypotheses is whether findings explain resistance to change and aid motivation for change. This is a major concern of social character research, as here described. The participatory research method, when combined with social character research, goes beyond action research (which lacks an understanding of character and which is presented as being value-free) and sectarian politics (which apply ideological solutions, often without studying conditions that could support alternate solutions).

Feedback and Change Process

People often do not see the difference between themselves and others. They believe their character is identical with human nature. After research findings are made available, researchers can be invited to help educate about the aggregate findings, not about individuals. Through this education people can learn to see themselves and others in the general types being described, which can help build respect for differences. This new trust can be the basis for new forms of cooperation and innovation.

Feedback of preliminary findings often begins early in the research process, since this improves and broadens hypotheses as research subjects further educate the researchers about their world. As the research progresses and the hypotheses are validated seminars and training can be developed, if the organization is interested. If the organization is to change, and benefit from the research, leaders will have to provide legitimation and direction, as well as committing resources to the education and change process.

The particular form and pace of change varies as to the organization's situation, resources, and leadership. In each case however, the education and change process provides a further opportunity to deepen understanding of people and organization. In this sense, the research never stops, even though the researcher becomes more of an organizational facilitator-educator.



4. What are the objections to the social character method?

It is, of course, better to be objective than subjective. Every method has its problems and limitations. The methods described above combine traditional social science with a disciplined subjectivity, similar to a psychoanalyst's method, for the study of character in relation to work and organization.

There is no value-free research method for studying human problems, since inevitably certain questions are asked and others not asked. The researchers' values inevitably come in. It is therefore important to make values explicit. Recent social character researchers have found that the common value base of researcher and those studied most attracts participants, namely, how to combine their own human development with economic development. The choice of problems to be addressed by the method, and the type of instruments and questions used, involve such value choices. It is therefore important to ask:

What is the method's concept of human nature? Every method has a theory of human nature, which is often unstated and implicit.

What problems is the method trying to solve?

Why are certain instruments and methods used, and others avoided?

Social character research and participatory social research combine social science with a degree of art in working with people. To speak of art, or intuition, may offend some who desire the same precision and control as natural science when studying inanimate objects. Experience has taught, however, that to investigate the questions that social character and participatory social research are designed for requires science, art, tact, and intuition.

Most social science is not hermeneutical, it does not analyze like social history, and does not appear to be seeking deep understanding of basic human problems. Social scientists' traditional methods are based on counting, measuring observable behavior, and making predictions by extrapolating from what they see of present trends. Positivistic social scientists build careers articulating fragmented part processes and offering mechanical solutions to problems seen in isolation. They believe themselves above or separate from social processes they are studying. One wonders how long society can continue to finance fragmented social research which has put such a distance between itself and practical problems.



Many social scientists are not asking basic questions of practical value to those involved, focused on relationships or systems of issues and values. Instead they isolate themselves in segregated disciplines, and teach their students lifeless and rigid procedures. How many teach how to raise vital questions and think independently? Too often by the end of graduate training students have become 'professionals' inculcated with the hopeless belief that it is not possible to really understand a phenomenon or group of people and thus contribute to social and individual developments that involve people in change.

In one sense social scientists are not really scientists because much of what they study can not be reduced to numbers and positivistic categories and narrow empiricism. From this perspective, only natural scientists, particularly the hard sciences of chemistry and mechanical physics are true scientists. But in reality, social scientists, particle and theoretical physicists, biologists, and historians are scientists too. The understanding that they arrive at requires a disciplined subjectivity, and an understanding of the history and dynamics of phenomena. From this perspective, social science is both a science and an art, which requires self-knowledge, discipline, intuition, and the awareness of the subjectivity of motivations and ideas, as well as an ability to integrate parts into a whole.

The concept of disciplined subjectivity has been discussed above. Since findings are easily abused or misinterpreted, measures must be taken to insure objectivity. These include: group analysis to check individual distortions and to broaden ideas; a tough and critical attitude; and supervision by experienced researchers.

The analysis and resolution of social problems requires today a method which is interdisciplinary, drawing on knowledge of people, history, social processes and organizations, economics, and technology. Too often, however, researchers seek an unattainable pure knowledge abstracted from the complexities and the richness of life. They attempt to achieve this reduced picture of reality by controlling the field of study and the subjects of the research, much as a lepidopterist pins a butterfly to a board to study it under a microscope. The idea of creating a dialogue with the subjects of the research and posing basic questions to focus them on actively trying to solve their own problems conjures up a feeling of losing control, as well as contaminating the research. Such researchers do not realize that the most enlivening results arise when the subjects discover their often hidden values and motivations. Such vital knowledge can not come from pinning subjects to abstract, a priori categories, testing them with hypothetical situations, or silently observing them in a vacuum.



A concern is to not mix consulting and research. Offering advice on how the research subjects might improve their situation would confuse the research. How then is participative social character research different from consulting? By creating a dialogue with the people involved in the research their real interests and drives, often hidden or only partly in awareness, are brought out. Too much research makes people passive because the purpose of the research is determined by the researcher's priorities and assumptions. Asking critical questions which bring out real interests and resistances focuses the research, helps it yield useful results, and stimulates the activeness of those being studied.

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Appendix

The Appendix contains three instruments developed for the current research on technoservice employees and managers, and the changing psychology of work.

1. The revised interview schedule, with the added questions on helping and self-development.
2. The survey based on the initial interviews.
3. The Scoring Guide used didactically. Note that the list of traits and emotional attitudes on page 5 of the Scoring Guide is a tentative, working list. The later analysis of cases led to a revised list.



PROJECT ON TECHNOLOGY, WORK, AND CHARACTER

1710 CONNECTICUT AVENUE, N.W.
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202/462-3003

QUESTIONNAIRE

Date and place of interview:

Name:

Age:

Marital status and children:

Please describe where you grew up (city, suburb, rural - probe to understand the social background):

Education:

Parents education and occupations:

Please describe your family and parents when you were growing up:

Job History: (Explore to understand any changes in interests or motivations.)

The Job

1. What is your work? (Include: How does your work relate to technology and management? How does your work relate to the goals of your office or department?)
2. What do you most like about your work?
3. What do you most dislike about your work?
4. How would you like your work to be changed?
5. How would you like to be managed?
6. What rewards do you get from your work besides money? (Career development, personal development, friendships/ sociability, sense of service)
7. What is your definition of service to the public? How do you serve the public?
8. Does your work require helping? Do you help clients? The public? The organization? Is there anyone at work who needs your help?



9. Describe an example of when you have helped someone. If not at work, where?
10. Do you need help from anyone at work?
11. Describe yourself. What are you like?
12. What are your main satisfactions in life outside of work?
13. Name three people, living or dead, you most admire and state why.
14. Can you remember a dream related to work?
15. What does self-development mean to you?
16. What have you done to develop yourself?
17. Do you get any help in developing yourself? Explain.
18. Can you recall how you got interested in self-development?
19. How would you like to develop yourself at work and outside of work? Do you believe your present work could further your goals of self-development? Please explain.
20. What is your vision of the kind of person you would like to become?



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THE QUESTIONS ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES CONCERN YOUR APPROACH TO WORK, YOUR IDEAS ABOUT YOUR WORK, AND HOW YOU SEE THE WORK YOU ARE NOW DOING. PLEASE ANSWER ALL THE QUESTIONS THOUGHTFULLY. THERE ARE NO RIGHT OR WRONG ANSWERS. ALL ANSWERS ARE VALID AND NECESSARY FOR AN ACCURATE STUDY.

THE QUESTIONS ON THIS PAGE WILL NOT BE USED TO IDENTIFY YOU PERSONALLY. THEY WILL BE USED TO STUDY HOW DIFFERENT GROUPS OF PEOPLE RESPOND TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS.

A. SEX

1. Male
2. Female

B. AGE

1. Under 29
2. 30-39
3. 40-49
4. 50+

C. JOB TITLE _____

1. Top manager
2. Mid manager
3. Professional
4. Skilled worker
5. Clerical
6. Manual

D. LENGTH OF SERVICE (tenure)

1. 0 - 1 1/2 years
2. 1 1/2 - 5 years
3. 6 - 14 years
4. 15+ years

HOW WELL DOES EACH STATEMENT DESCRIBE YOUR APPROACH TO WORK?

	Very well	Somewhat	A little	Not at all
A. You approach your work as an expert. Whatever your job, you want to provide high quality work and to exercise your skill and competence.	1	2	3	4
B. You approach your work as a helper. You want to help people.	1	2	3	4
C. You approach your work as a defender. You want to defend against those who do not respect the law, who do harm, or who undermine the values essential to good government.	1	2	3	4
D. You approach your work as a helper to those in positions of leadership. You want to strengthen your organization by serving well those who have the authority to make decisions.	1	2	3	4
E. You approach your work as an innovator who knows how to play the bureaucratic game. You want to win by making the organization more successful.	1	2	3	4
F. You approach your work as a means to a self-fulfilling life. You want your work to further your own development.	1	2	3	4

Which of the above approaches to work are most important to you. Please put the letter of those items in these boxes.

1st choice 2nd choice

	Very much	Somewhat	A little	Not at all
What extent does your current job permit you to take this positive approach?				
First choice	1	2	3	4
Second choice	1	2	3	4

To what extent does the following statement apply to you?

You came to your job with a positive approach but have found that the system and its leaders keep you from working in this way.	1	2	3	4
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HOW WELL DOES EACH STATEMENT DESCRIBE YOUR APPROACH TO MANAGEMENT?

	Very well	Somewhat	A little	Not at all
1. As a manager, you are a defender. (You build a team of those who share your values and whom you can trust. Your people perform for you because they know you will defend them.)	1	2	3	4
2. As a manager you are helpful and care about developing subordinates. (You manage by emphasizing openness and participation in decision-making. You believe that people are motivated by stimulating work.)	1	2	3	4
As a manager, you are instrumental. (You look for subordinates who are sharp, motivated and ambitious and you give them opportunities.)	1	2	3	4
As a manager, you are a monitor. (You see management as essentially making sure that your subordinates follow the rules and do the work in a way you consider most appropriate.)	1	2	3	4
As a manager, you are a coordinator of self-motivated experts. (You like to be a resource for a team building something of high quality or implementing policy professionally.)	1	2	3	4
As a manager, you are a gamesman. (You want to win at the bureaucratic game and you tailor your management style to get results.)	1	2	3	4
Which of the above approaches to Management are most important to you.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	1st choice	2nd choice		
Do you feel that the organization rewards you for <u>your</u> most preferred approach to management?	1	2	3	4

IDENTIFY YOUR SUPERVISOR AND ORGANIZATION BASED ON 1 - 6 ABOVE: Please write the number of the best description for each one

9. Which of the above approaches to management is the predominant style of your Supervisor?

10. Which of the above approaches to management is most commonly found in your Organization?

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11. Considering everything, how would you rate your overall satisfaction with the Department at the present time?

Very dissatisfied
 1 2 Dissatisfied
 3 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
 4 Satisfied

12. Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your job?

1 2 3 4 5

13. How satisfied are you with the amount of recognition you receive for doing your job?

1 2 3 4 5

14. How satisfied are you with the information you receive from management on what's going on in the Department?

1 2 3 4 5

15. How satisfied are you with your opportunity to get a better job within the Department?

1 2 3 4 5

16. How satisfied are you with the amount of pay you get on your job?

1 2 3 4 5

17. I like the kind of work I do.

Strongly agree
 Agree
 Neither agree nor disagree
 Disagree
 Disagree strongly

1 2 3 4 5

18. My job makes good use of my skills and abilities.

1 2 3 4 5

19. My work gives me a feeling of personal accomplishment.

1 2 3 4 5

Sufficient effort is made to get the opinions and thinking of people who work here.

1 2 3 4 5

There is too much paperwork on my job.

1 2 3 4 5

22. I am given a real opportunity to improve my skills in this company.

1 2 3 4 5

GUIDE for CHARACTER ANALYSIS

11/23/8

Name _____
Workplace _____

Date _____

Analysis by _____
Type _____

1. Working Environment and Organizational Strategy (If a leader, how does he or she see the strategic implications of technology, market position, etc)

Describe the firm/agency, department, and the person's type of work and responsibilities:

Describe the position and advantages/disadvantages of the organization in its environment in relation to its market, competitors, government, and public:

Describe the organization's clients or customers, and how it serves them:

Describe the types of employees, and personnel problems:

Describe the organization's use of technology:

How is the organization's success defined? What is the person's role in that success? (What keeps it profitable; necessary and viable?)

Strategic goals of the organization:

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2. Social Background

Advantages, deprivations, obstacles, achievements:

Person's experience of this background:

3. Goals and Values

The personal meaning of work, including goals, values, and rewards:

(If a leader) Person's organizational philosophy:

**Describe key relationships that motivate the person at work
(with superiors, subordinates, peers, customers, and family):**

Goal(s) in life:

Socio-political values & hopeful vision for society:

View of human nature and what motivates people:



Orientation to work (social character):

(Indicate the required & actual orientations which are primary & secondary):

Orientation Required by Work

Actual Orientation

Craft/Farmer

independent
high quality standards

Enterprise

entrepreneurial, innovative
strategic thinking
organizing
responsible/paternal

Bureaucratic/Industrial

authoritative
bureaucratic
commodating
hierarchical

Techno-service

problem-oriented
flexible, experimental
tolerant
participative
team player
non-hierarchical
communicative

Organizational Leadership

Leadership type (indicate primary and secondary type):

administrator strongman paternal/maternal gamesman developer

Leadership traits:

	<u>Not present</u>	<u>Moderately present</u>	<u>Strongly present</u>
energy	-	-	-
stamina, tirelessness	-	-	-
command presence	-	-	-
strategic thinking	-	-	-
sense of mission	-	-	-
star quality	-	-	-
optimism	-	-	-
courage	-	-	-

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?referred management style:

Doesn't employ:

<input type="checkbox"/>	directive	1	2	3	4	5	controlling
<input type="checkbox"/>	coordinating	1	2	3	4	5	monitoring
<input type="checkbox"/>	consulting	1	2	3	4	5	indecisive
<input type="checkbox"/>	participative	1	2	3	4	5	avoids responsibilit
<input type="checkbox"/>	delegating	1	2	3	4	5	laissez faire
<input type="checkbox"/>	decisive, action- oriented	1	2	3	4	5	impatient

Quality of leadership this person seeks:

The Self

Conscious self-concept:

Quality and content of desire to develop self:

Qualitative description of self (locate person on scale and add comments):

- 1) Developing self (openness to both male and female qualities in self, awareness of others as different)
- 2) Self limited by role, restrictive sense of reciprocity
- 3) Self identified with organization, family, authority; ego-centric
- 4) Grandiose self; others as extensions of the self; possible expressions of weakness, self as vulnerable, or `nothing`

Quality of conscience

- 1) Responsible - responsive - humanistic conscience
- 2) Dutiful, ethical imperative
- 3) Reciprocal, conscience as rules of the game
- 4) Authoritarian, punishing conscience
- 5) Lack of conscience, amoral



Emotional Relatedness & Character Traits

(score traits not present/none, once, or more than once):

Type: Dominant _____
 Secondary _____

Experts

none:

0	concern for quality, technical excellence	1	2	3	4	5	rigid standards, nitpicki
0	respectful	1	2	3	4	5	authoritarian
0	accountable	1	2	3	4	5	controlling
0	methodical	1	2	3	4	5	inflexible
0	thorough	1	2	3	4	5	narrow focus
0	economical	1	2	3	4	5	stingy, hoarding
0	persistent	1	2	3	4	5	stubborn
0	just, honest	1	2	3	4	5	ungenerous
0	hard working	1	2	3	4	5	driven
0	convictions	1	2	3	4	5	unbending
0	ambition for improve- ment, recognition	1	2	3	4	5	perfectionism, impossible standards for self

Peers

0	caring, developmental	1	2	3	4	5	indulgent, soft, indiscriminat
0	loyal	1	2	3	4	5	servile, masochistic
0	participative	1	2	3	4	5	indecisive, flees responsibilit
0	institution loyalist	1	2	3	4	5	institution worshiper
0	cooperative	1	2	3	4	5	avoids necessary conflict
0	public spirited	1	2	3	4	5	sentimental
0	realism about ideals	1	2	3	4	5	full of illusions (vulner able to disillusionmen and cynicism)
0	active receptive, open to learn	1	2	3	4	5	passive receptive, dependen

Defenders

0	protective	1	2	3	4	5	dominating, turf-oriented
0	brave	1	2	3	4	5	fierce, threatening, ruthless
0	resourceful	1	2	3	4	5	exploitative, tricky
0	wary, alert	1	2	3	4	5	suspicious, paranoid
0	self-confident	1	2	3	4	5	self-righteous
0	knight, trouble-shooter	1	2	3	4	5	hatchet-man
0	institution builder	1	2	3	4	5	self deifier
0	tough	1	2	3	4	5	intimidating

Gamesmen

0	daring, innovative, risk-taker	1	2	3	4	5	rash gambler
0	strategic	1	2	3	4	5	manipulative
0	fair	1	2	3	4	5	detached
0	flexible	1	2	3	4	5	unprincipled
0	inspiring	1	2	3	4	5	seductive
0	need to compete	1	2	3	4	5	need to win, glory-seeker

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Parental attachments:

dependency:
strong moderate

independence:
identification individualistic

mother
father

mother/father balance mother-oriented father-oriented balanced relation

rebelliousness to: not apparent present dominant
mother
father

In the person's own language, describe the conscious or unconscious dramatic plot of his or her life, including hidden goals:

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7. Productiveness

Work Scale (locate person on scale and add comments):

- 1) deep scientific interest in understanding, dynamic sense of the world animated
- 2) centered, enlivening, craftsmanlike, but lacks deeper scientific interest in the nature of things
- 3) the work itself stimulates interest, but it is not self-sustained
- 4) moderately productive, but not centered; interest in work is essentially instrumental, to ensure security, income
- 5) passive and unproductive, diffused
- 6) rejecting of work, rejects the real world

Love Scale (locate person on scale and add comments):

- 1) loving, affirmative, creatively stimulating
- 2) responsible, warm, affectionate, but not deeply loving
- 3) moderate interest in another person with more loving possibilities
- 4) conventional concern, decent, role-oriented
- 5) passive, unloving, uninterested
- 6) rejecting of life, hardened heart

Does a fear of intimacy limit more productive love? Yes _____ No _____

Power scale (locate person on scale and add comments):

- 1) conscious and creative use of power, or drive to attain power, integrated with values helpful to society. Power provides an opportunity to develop resources, including people, and serve the broader community.
- 2) conscious and creative use of, or drive for, power integrated with values that serve or improve one's primary interest group. Power permits developing and defending a select group of people. Broader social issues considered superfluous or ignored.
- 3) need to attain power to protect self (to meet expectations, gain respect, avoid being pushed around). Use of power determined by role.
- 4) drive to elevate oneself over others, to be admired, to enjoy being a winner. Power used to maintain sense of glory, but not destructive.
- 5) power used aggressively against people, or a need for power in which people are objects of exploitation.
- 6) unconscious use of power to destroy, or desire to destroy, rooted in hatred or revenge (may be rationalized as #1, 2, 3).



Any element of person's character not covered anywhere above, describe here

8. Fit Between Character and Work

Describe the relationship between person's character and work:

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Consequences (costs/benefits to person & his/her family, firm, subordinate department's effectiveness, innovation, etc

Person's negative potential and what brings it out:

Person's positive potential and what is required to stimulate it: