



# TECHNICAL REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2026

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CultureTalk is an assessment and development system designed to make the often-invisible patterns shaping human behavior and organizational culture more visible, understandable, and actionable.

The system is grounded in a 12-Archetype framework influenced by the work of Carl Jung and further developed for contemporary application through the work of Dr. Carol S. Pearson and other Archetype scholars and practitioners.

CultureTalk applies this framework across three levels of human systems:

## **ME | Individuals**

The motivations, priorities, strengths, and behavioral patterns shaping how a person thinks, relates, communicates, and leads.

## **WE | Teams**

The shared patterns and dynamics influencing how a group works together.

## **US | Organizations**

The collective behaviors, values, assumptions, and cultural patterns experienced across an organization.

CultureTalk uses three distinct assessment instruments: **CultureTalk for Individuals™**, **CultureTalk for Teams™**, and **CultureTalk for Organizations™**. Each is designed to measure Archetypal patterns at a different level of the system while creating a consistent language that can be used across coaching, team development, leadership development, and organizational change.

## **AS OF SEPTEMBER 15, 2026**

| Assessment                     | Administrations                        |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| CultureTalk for Individuals™   | 17,555 participants                    |
| CultureTalk for Teams™         | 59 participants / 4 Teams              |
| CultureTalk for Organizations™ | 9,697 participants / 133 Organizations |

Assessment results are not intended to place individuals, teams, or organizations into fixed personality categories. Instead, they identify the relative strength of 12 Archetypal patterns and provide a framework for understanding the motivations, narratives, strengths, tensions, and potential overuse associated with those patterns.

CultureTalk combines quantitative assessment with qualitative inquiry through a methodology of **Measure → Validate → Activate**.

**Measure** identifies the Archetypal patterns most active within an individual, team, or organization.

**Validate** uses stories, dialogue, facilitated reflection, interviews, focus groups, and other qualitative inputs to explore how those patterns are actually experienced and expressed.

**Activate** translates that understanding into intentional behavior, leadership practices, team agreements, communication strategies, and organizational change.

Together, these elements develop **Narrative Intelligence**, the capacity to recognize Archetypal story patterns, understand how those narratives influence behavior, and intentionally expand or reframe them to support more effective outcomes.

CultureTalk is used in applications including individual and executive coaching, leadership development, team effectiveness, conflict and collaboration, culture assessment, organizational transformation, and change leadership.

# 1. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

## Archetypes as Patterns of Human Meaning

The concept of Archetypes has deep roots in philosophy, mythology, psychology, literature, and the study of human storytelling.

Swiss psychiatrist Carl Gustav Jung introduced Archetypes into modern psychology as universal patterns that shape human perception, motivation, behavior, and meaning-making. Jung proposed that recurring characters, themes, and patterns found across cultures and throughout history reflect underlying structures within the human psyche. Archetypes are therefore more than character types or labels. They represent recurring human motivations and ways of interpreting experience.

Patterns such as the Hero's drive to overcome challenges, the Caregiver's impulse to protect and support, the Sage's search for understanding, or the Creator's desire to bring something new into being can appear in individuals, relationships, teams, organizations, brands, and societies.

## From Archetypal Theory to Practical Framework

Later scholars and practitioners extended Jung's work into more accessible frameworks for understanding development, leadership, organizations, and culture.

Among the most influential is Dr. Carol S. Pearson, whose work organized Archetypal patterns into a practical system that could be applied to personal development, leadership, organizational life, and narrative.

CultureTalk builds on this broader Archetypal tradition while applying its own 12-Archetype framework to the measurement and interpretation of individuals, teams, and organizations.

The CultureTalk Archetypes are:



**Innocent, Everyperson, Hero, Caregiver, Explorer, Revolutionary, Lover, Creator, Jester, Sage, Magician, and Ruler.**

## Archetypes as a Shared Language

One of the practical advantages of an Archetypal framework is its ability to make abstract psychological and cultural dynamics easier to discuss.

Organizations frequently struggle to describe concepts such as culture, leadership style, interpersonal tension, identity, motivation, or resistance to change without relying on vague language.

Archetypes provide a common vocabulary for discussing these dynamics.

For example, a team may discover that its strong Hero orientation supports accountability, ambition, and persistence, while also recognizing that the same pattern can contribute to overwork, excessive competition, or difficulty acknowledging vulnerability.

The Archetype itself is not the conclusion. It is a starting point for inquiry.

CultureTalk uses Archetypal data to invite questions such as:

- What motivates us?
- What do we value?
- What behaviors do we reward?
- What stories do we tell about success?
- What happens when we are under pressure?
- Which patterns are highly developed?
- Which patterns may be underused?
- Where might our strengths become liabilities through overuse?

This interpretive approach helps prevent Archetypes from becoming static labels.

## ME, WE, and US

CultureTalk applies Archetypal patterns at three interconnected levels.

**ME represents the individual level.** It explores the motivations and patterns that influence a person's behavior, leadership, communication, decision-making, and relationships.

**WE represents the team level.** It examines the shared patterns that emerge when people work together, including collective strengths, expectations, communication habits, and areas of tension.

**US represents the organizational level.** It explores the broader cultural patterns shaping how an organization behaves, makes decisions, responds to change, and defines what is valued or expected.

These three perspectives are intentionally connected.

Individuals influence teams. Teams reinforce or challenge organizational culture. Organizational culture shapes the environment in which teams and individuals operate.

By examining all three levels through a common framework, CultureTalk creates an integrated view of human and organizational behavior.

## Archetypes and Narrative Intelligence

In the tradition of Carol Pearson's work, CultureTalk views Archetypes as recurring narrative patterns that help people make meaning of experience.

Human beings do not respond only to events themselves. They respond to what those events mean.

Two people may experience the same organizational change very differently. One may interpret it as an opportunity to explore something new. Another may experience it as a threat to stability. A third may see it as a challenge that must be overcome.

Those interpretations influence behavior.

CultureTalk uses **Narrative Intelligence** to describe the ability to recognize Archetypal stories operating within ourselves and our systems, understand how those narratives shape perception and behavior, and work with them more consciously.

The assessments help identify patterns. Story and dialogue help explain them. Application turns that insight into expanded choices.

## 2. THE CULTURETALK ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

CultureTalk uses three distinct assessment instruments to examine Archetypal patterns at the individual, team, and organizational levels.

Together, the assessments create a shared framework across **ME, WE, and US**, while each instrument is designed for a different unit of analysis.

**CultureTalk for Individuals™ | ME**

CultureTalk for Individuals identifies the Archetypal patterns most active in an individual's motivations, priorities, strengths, and behavioral tendencies.

The assessment includes 72 statements, with six items associated with each of the 12 CultureTalk Archetypes. Respondents rate each statement using a five-point Likert scale. Additional forced-choice questions may be presented in the event of tied Archetype scores.

Responses are aggregated to produce a score for each Archetype. The resulting profile shows the relative strength of all 12 Archetypal patterns rather than assigning the respondent to a single type.

The assessment is designed to support reflection and development rather than diagnosis or selection.

Results may be used to explore areas including:

- personal motivations and values
- leadership tendencies
- communication style
- decision-making patterns
- sources of energy and engagement
- interpersonal dynamics
- potential overuse of strengths
- opportunities to develop less-active Archetypal patterns

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## Interpreting an Individual Profile

A CultureTalk profile is not intended to define a person or suggest that behavior is fixed. Individuals have access to all 12 Archetypal patterns and may draw on different patterns in different situations. Higher scores indicate Archetypes that are likely to be more readily available, familiar, or influential in a person's current way of approaching the world.

Lower-scoring Archetypes should not automatically be interpreted as weaknesses. They may represent patterns that are less frequently used, less consciously developed, or simply less central to the individual's current motivations.

Interpretation therefore focuses on the relationship among the Archetypes, not merely rank order.

The profile serves as a framework for reflection, dialogue, and intentional development.

### CultureTalk for Teams™ | WE

CultureTalk for Teams examines the Archetypal patterns associated with a team as a collective system.

Rather than simply combining the individual profiles of team members, the Team assessment is designed to capture how participants experience the team itself.

This distinction matters.

A group of individuals with one set of personal Archetypal patterns may create a team culture that expresses a different set of patterns. Shared expectations, leadership, history, operating norms, incentives, and the nature of the team's work can all influence the culture that emerges between team members.

The Team assessment therefore provides a collective view of the narratives, priorities, and behavioral patterns shaping how the group works together.

### What the Team Assessment Can Reveal

CultureTalk for Teams examines the Team results can help surface patterns related to:

- how work gets accomplished
- decision-making and accountability
- communication and collaboration
- trust and interpersonal connection
- innovation and experimentation
- attitudes toward risk and change
- conflict patterns
- leadership expectations
- belonging and inclusion
- strengths that may become overused
- Archetypal perspectives that may be comparatively underrepresented

The goal is not to define a team with a single label.

Instead, the profile provides a common language for exploring the team's collective identity and the patterns that may be helping or hindering performance.

The assessment provides the data. Team dialogue provides the context.

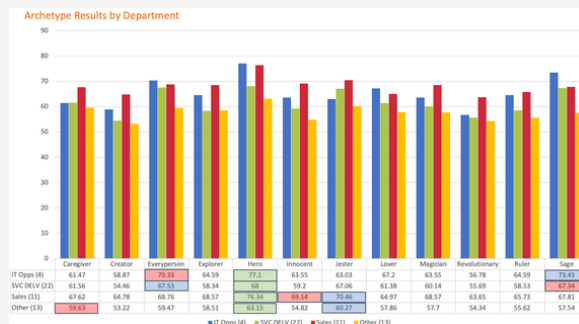
## CultureTalk for Organizations™ | US

CultureTalk for Organizations measures the Archetypal patterns participants perceive in the organization's current culture.

The resulting profile provides a collective view of the narratives, priorities, and behavioral patterns shaping how the organization operates.

Results can be viewed for the organization as a whole and, where sufficient participation allows, segmented by relevant demographic or organizational variables, such as:

- business unit
- function
- geography
- tenure
- management level
- other organizational groups



## Understanding Organizational Culture Through Archetypes

CultureTalk defines organizational culture as the shared patterns of behavior, meaning, assumptions, and expectations that influence how people operate within a system.

The Organizational assessment helps make those patterns more visible.

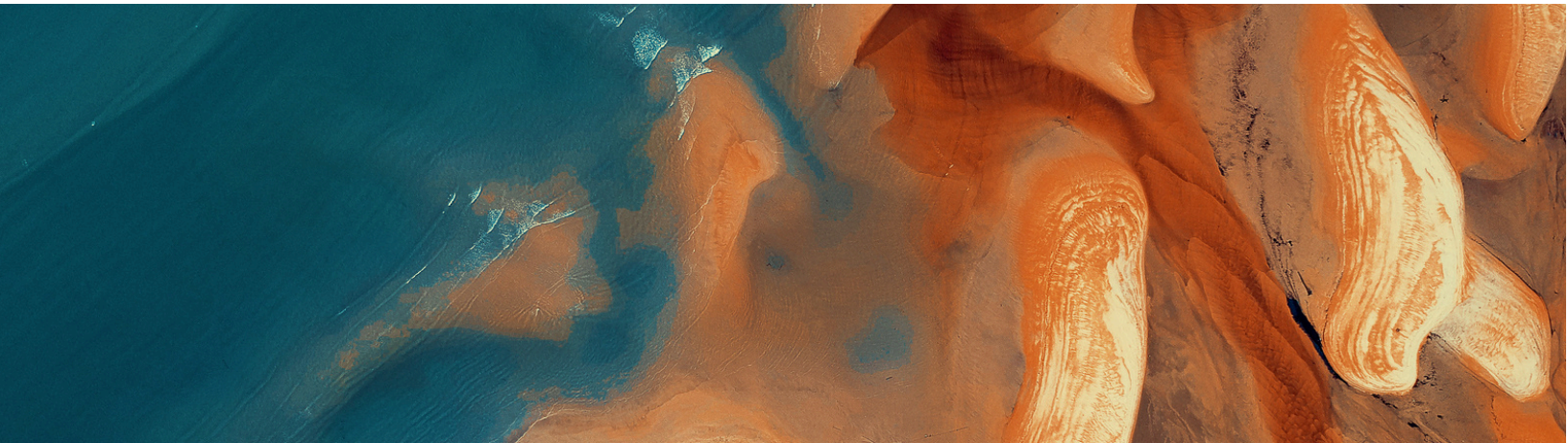
A culture profile may reveal Archetypal qualities associated with achievement, stability, innovation, belonging, service, expertise, exploration, control, or transformation.

These patterns can then be considered in relation to the organization's strategy and operating environment.

The central question is not simply: **What is our culture?**

It is: **How well does the culture we have support the organization we need to be?**

That distinction moves culture assessment from description to application.



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## Shared Assessment Structure for Teams and Organizations

CultureTalk for Teams™ and CultureTalk for Organizations™ use the same underlying 96-item assessment structure, with wording adapted to focus participants either on a specific team or on the organization as a whole.

Both assessments:

- Include 96 statements, with eight items associated with each of the 12 Archetypes
- Use a seven-point Likert scale
- Ask respondents to evaluate behaviors and priorities within the context being assessed
- Aggregate individual responses to create a collective Archetype profile
- Can include demographic questions where appropriate to support segmentation and comparison

## Three Assessments, One Language

The three CultureTalk assessments are distinct instruments, but they are intentionally connected through the same 12-Archetype framework.

This makes it possible to examine alignment and tension across levels. For example, an individual leader may strongly value experimentation while operating within a team that prioritizes predictability.

A team may have a highly collaborative identity within an organization whose broader culture rewards individual achievement. An organization undergoing transformation may require Archetypal patterns that are not yet strongly expressed in its current culture.

Using the same underlying language across ME, WE, and US makes these dynamics easier to identify and discuss.

The result is not simply three sets of assessment scores. It is a way to examine the relationship between the individual, the group, and the larger system.

## 3. HOW SCORES ARE CALCULATED & INTERPRETED

CultureTalk assessment results are designed to show the relative strength of 12 Archetypal patterns within an individual, team, or organization.

The scores are not intended to function as diagnostic labels, clinical measures, or fixed personality classifications. Instead, they provide a structured way to identify patterns that may be more or less active within a particular person or system.

### Raw Scores and Relative Patterns

Each CultureTalk assessment includes multiple items associated with each of the 12 Archetypes.

Responses to those items are aggregated to create an Archetype score. The resulting profile allows respondents and practitioners to compare the relative strength of the 12 patterns within that assessment.

CultureTalk uses raw scores reflecting differences within the specific individual or group assessed. Scores are not normalized against a database of test-takers.

The purpose is therefore not to determine whether someone or something is “high” or “low” compared with a universal population norm.

Instead, interpretation focuses on **the pattern within the profile itself**.

### Higher Scores

Higher-scoring Archetypes generally represent patterns that are more strongly recognized, expressed, or experienced by the respondent or group.

Depending on the level of assessment, they may point to:

- motivations that strongly influence behavior
- qualities people readily identify with
- behaviors that are frequently reinforced
- shared expectations or norms
- strengths that are regularly called upon
- narratives that shape how situations are interpreted

Higher scores do not automatically indicate that a pattern is positive or desirable. Every Archetype contains both productive and potentially limiting expressions.

## Strength and Overuse

One of the central principles of CultureTalk interpretation is that a strength can become counterproductive when it is overused.

For example:

- **Hero** energy may support courage, persistence, and achievement, but become excessive competition, overwork, or a constant need to prove.
- **Caregiver** energy may support generosity, service, and empathy, but become overextension, avoidance of boundaries, or reluctance to hold others accountable.
- **Sage** energy may support insight, expertise, and thoughtful decision-making, but become overanalysis, detachment, or difficulty moving to action.
- **Ruler** energy may support structure, responsibility, and stewardship, but become rigidity, control, or excessive hierarchy.
- **Creator** energy may support imagination and innovation, but become perfectionism, continual reinvention, or difficulty finishing.

**For this reason, assessment interpretation asks not only ‘What are our strongest Archetypes?’ but also, ‘How are those strengths showing up?’**

## Lower Scoring or Latent Archetypes

Lower-scoring Archetypes should not automatically be interpreted as weaknesses, deficiencies, or traits that are absent.

They may instead represent:

- patterns that are less central to current identity
- behaviors that are used less frequently
- perspectives that are less rewarded by the surrounding environment
- capabilities that have not yet been consciously developed
- approaches that may become valuable under different circumstances

CultureTalk treats all 12 Archetypes as potentially available.

Development therefore does not necessarily mean strengthening an already dominant pattern. In some situations, growth may involve expanding access to less-active Archetypes.

## Archetypes Operate in Combination

CultureTalk profiles are also interpreted as systems rather than collections of isolated scores.

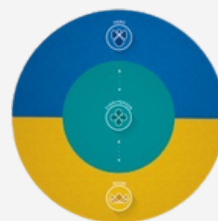
Archetypes can reinforce, balance, or create tension with one another.

For example:

- **Hero + Sage** may produce a strong orientation toward competence, expertise, and high performance.
- **Caregiver + Everyperson** may emphasize support, belonging, accessibility, and community.
- **Explorer + Creator** may encourage independence, experimentation, and innovation.
- **Ruler + Innocent** may create a strong preference for stability, order, clarity, and predictability.

The same combination can express itself differently depending on the person, team, organization, and situation.

Assessment interpretation therefore avoids formulas suggesting that any particular combination always produces a specific outcome.



## Context Matters

Archetypal expression is influenced by context.

An individual may behave differently across roles and environments. A team may develop norms that differ significantly from the personal preferences of its members. An organization may express different cultural patterns during rapid growth than during a period of consolidation.

Assessment results should therefore be understood alongside relevant information including:

- organizational strategy
- leadership expectations
- team history
- significant changes or disruptions
- participant stories and examples
- qualitative interviews or focus groups
- observed behaviors
- business outcomes

CultureTalk intentionally combines quantitative results with qualitative sources to deepen interpretation.

## What CultureTalk Assessments Can Tell Us

CultureTalk assessments can help identify:

- which Archetypal patterns appear most influential
- potential sources of strength and differentiation
- patterns that may be overused
- perspectives that may be less developed or less visible
- potential sources of interpersonal or cultural tension
- areas of alignment across individuals, teams, and organizations
- patterns that may support or inhibit a strategic objective
- productive questions for coaching, team dialogue, and organizational inquiry

## What CultureTalk Assessments Do Not Tell Us

CultureTalk assessments should not be used to:

- diagnose psychological or mental health conditions
- determine intelligence or aptitude
- predict individual job performance with certainty
- determine whether one person, team, or culture is inherently better than another
- make employment decisions based solely on Archetype scores
- assume behavior is fixed
- substitute quantitative scores for professional judgment, dialogue, or context

The assessments are designed to support awareness, conversation, and development.

## From Score to Story

A score identifies a pattern.

It does not, by itself, explain the story behind that pattern.

Two organizations could receive similarly high Hero scores and express that Archetype very differently. In one organization, Hero may appear as disciplined execution and courageous problem-solving. In another, it might appear as burnout, constant urgency, and an expectation that employees continually “save the day.”

The quantitative result tells us **where to look**.

The next step is to understand how that Archetype is being lived.

## 4. ASSESSMENT DEVELOPMENT

CultureTalk's assessments were developed to translate Archetypal theory into practical instruments that could be used to examine patterns at the individual, team, and organizational levels.

The development process focused on identifying statements that reflected the motivations, priorities, values, and behavioral tendencies associated with each of the 12 Archetypes.

### Item Development

Assessment items were written to represent the defining characteristics of each Archetype in language respondents could recognize and evaluate.

- **For CultureTalk for Individuals™**, items are written from the perspective of the individual and ask respondents to rate statements about themselves.
- **For CultureTalk for Teams™**, items are written to capture participants' perceptions of how the team functions as a collective.
- **For CultureTalk for Organizations™**, items are designed to capture participants' perceptions of organizational behavior and priorities.

This distinction is important because the three instruments assess different units of analysis even though they share the same 12-Archetype framework.

### Research Advisor Overview

CultureTalk's assessments were developed with input from experts in survey research, psychometrics, organizational assessment, and Archetype theory.

For the Team and Organization assessments, CultureTalk worked with the Siena Research Institute (SRI) on survey development, pilot testing, statistical analysis, and refinement of the question set.

For the Individual assessment, CultureTalk worked with Katherine Thweatt, Ed.D., whose expertise includes psychometrics, survey development, and organizational assessment.

CultureTalk also worked with Cindy Atlee, an Archetype expert, author, consultant, and longtime student of Carol S. Pearson. Atlee brought deep experience applying Archetypes in leadership, organizations, branding, and culture change, helping ensure the assessments remained grounded in the practical application of the 12-Archetype framework.

## Face Validity and Construct Alignment

An early focus of development was whether the assessment statements accurately and credibly represented their intended Archetypes.

The original Individual and Organizational question sets were reviewed and approved by CultureTalk's research advisors for face validity.

Items were evaluated for alignment with their intended Archetype, differentiation from other Archetypes, clarity of wording, and practical relevance to respondents.

This process established a foundation for connecting the theoretical Archetype constructs with observable statements that could be used in assessment.

## Testing and Refinement

Assessment development included review and refinement of items based on how effectively they represented the intended Archetypal patterns and functioned in practical application.

Items may be evaluated according to factors including:

- clarity of wording
- consistency with the intended Archetype
- differentiation among Archetype constructs
- respondent interpretation
- internal consistency
- usefulness in facilitated application

As the assessment database grows, additional psychometric research can continue to strengthen the evidence base for the instruments.

## Evolution of the Assessment System

The original CultureTalk Technical Report described a two-assessment system consisting of CultureTalk for Individuals and CultureTalk for Organizations.

CultureTalk has since expanded to three assessments:

- **CultureTalk for Individuals™ | ME**
- **CultureTalk for Teams™ | WE**
- **CultureTalk for Organizations™ | US**

The Team assessment adds the collective level between individual patterns and broader organizational culture, allowing CultureTalk to examine human systems more completely through a common framework.

## 5. VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

The usefulness of an assessment depends in part on two fundamental psychometric questions:

- **Does the instrument measure what it is intended to measure?**
- **Does it do so with sufficient consistency?**

These questions are generally addressed through evidence of validity and reliability.

### Validity

Validity concerns the degree to which evidence supports the interpretation and intended use of assessment scores.

CultureTalk's original Individual and Organizational assessments were reviewed for face validity by its research advisors. The quantitative assessments are also paired with qualitative methods such as stakeholder interviews and focus groups to validate findings and identify stories that support or clarify the patterns measured.

CultureTalk does not currently claim that every possible form of psychometric validation has been established for all three instruments.

Additional research may strengthen the evidence base through analyses such as:

- factor analysis
- convergent validity
- discriminant validity
- test-retest reliability
- predictive or criterion-related studies
- longitudinal analysis

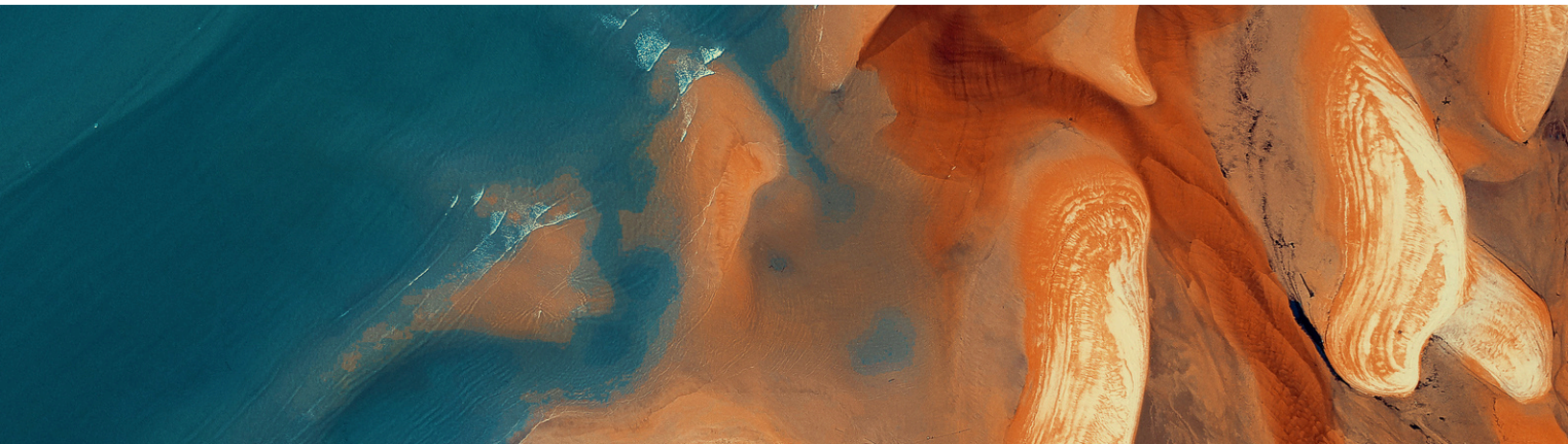
### Reliability

Reliability refers to the consistency of measurement.

One commonly used indicator is **Cronbach's alpha**, which evaluates the degree to which items intended to measure the same construct produce internally consistent responses.

**For CultureTalk for Organizations™**, the 12 Archetype scales achieved Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranging from **.78 to .89**.

These results provide evidence of internal consistency within the Organizational assessment's Archetype scales.



## What the Reliability Findings Mean

**Internal consistency indicates whether items within an Archetype scale tend to operate together.**

It does not, by itself, demonstrate every aspect of an assessment's validity. Reliability statistics should therefore be interpreted as one component of a broader body of evidence rather than proof that an assessment is appropriate for every population, purpose, or application.

The documented Cronbach's alpha findings above apply to the shared group-assessment framework used for both **CultureTalk for Organizations™** and **CultureTalk for Teams™**. The two assessments use the same underlying 96-item structure and Archetype scales, with minor wording adjustments to direct respondents to reflect either on the organization as a whole or on a specific team.

Equivalent reliability analysis has not yet been conducted for **CultureTalk for Individuals™**. The Individual assessment was developed and tested separately and should therefore not be assumed to share the same reliability statistics as the Team and Organization assessments.

## Responsible Use of the Term “Validated”

CultureTalk's assessments have undergone structured development, expert review, and, where documented, statistical evaluation.

Where CultureTalk describes its assessments as validated, the term should be understood in the context of the evidence established for each instrument rather than as a claim that every possible form of psychometric validation has been completed.

Continued research can further strengthen the evidence supporting the system and its applications.

# 6. THE CULTURETALK METHODOLOGY

CultureTalk is not designed as an assessment-only system.

The assessments provide a structured starting point, but the broader methodology is built around three stages:

## Measure → Validate → Activate

This process combines quantitative data with qualitative inquiry and practical application.

### Step 1: Measure

The first stage uses one or more CultureTalk assessments to identify the Archetypal patterns most active at the individual, team, or organizational level.

Depending on the engagement, this may include:

- CultureTalk for Individuals™
- CultureTalk for Teams™
- CultureTalk for Organizations™
- a combination of the three

The assessment results help identify patterns that warrant further exploration. They can highlight potential strengths, tensions, areas of alignment, patterns that may be overused, and perspectives that may be less visible or less developed.

Measurement creates the initial map.

It does not provide the whole story.

### Step 2: Validate

The second stage is qualitative.

CultureTalk uses stories, conversations, interviews, focus groups, facilitated reflection, examples, and other forms of inquiry to test and deepen the meaning of the assessment results.

This stage asks questions such as:

- Do these Archetypal patterns resonate with participants' lived experience?
- Where do people see these patterns showing up?
- What stories illustrate them?
- Where do the quantitative results and qualitative experience align?
- Where do they diverge?
- How do different groups experience the same culture differently?
- What historical events or leadership patterns may have shaped the current profile?

This process helps prevent overinterpretation of scores.

A high score may signal that an Archetype is present, but dialogue is needed to understand whether that pattern is experienced as a strength, a tension, or both.

## Story Points

CultureTalk refers to qualitative evidence gathered during this stage as story points.

Story points may include:

- examples from interviews
- recurring themes in focus groups
- stories shared during workshops
- observations from leaders and employees
- language used repeatedly across groups
- examples of decisions, rituals, policies, or behaviors that reinforce a pattern

These story points help explain how Archetypal patterns are expressed in lived experience.

CultureTalk's earlier methodology likewise paired assessment data with interviews and focus groups designed to validate findings and identify stories supporting the measured patterns.

## Step 3: Activate

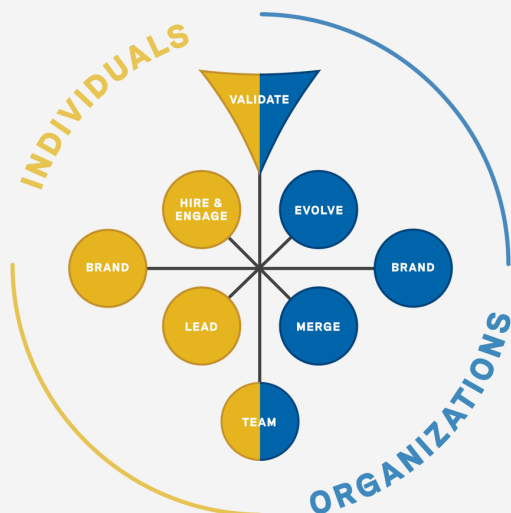
The third stage translates insight into action.

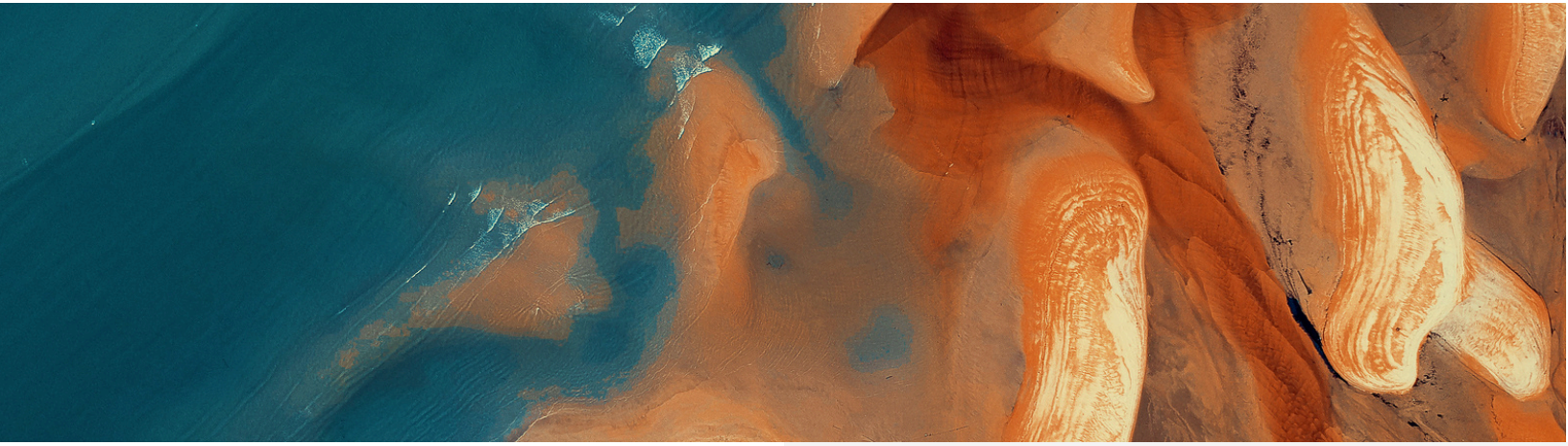
Once Archetypal patterns have been measured and validated, CultureTalk helps individuals, teams, and organizations determine what to reinforce, shift, expand, or change.

Activation may include:

- leadership development
- individual coaching
- team agreements
- communication practices
- conflict-resolution strategies
- change and resilience work
- culture codes
- leadership commitments
- employee experiences
- team workshops
- internal facilitator development
- change activation initiatives

The objective is to move beyond awareness. Insight becomes useful when it influences behavior.





## From Current State to Desired State

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The methodology can also be used to examine the relationship between the culture that exists today and the culture required for future success.

At the organizational level, this may involve exploring questions such as:

- What Archetypal patterns define the current culture?
- Which patterns support the organization's strategy?
- Which patterns may be limiting progress and how?
- What additional qualities may be needed for the future?
- What behaviors would demonstrate those qualities in practice?

Rather than asking organizations to abandon their existing culture, CultureTalk helps them understand which strengths should be preserved and which additional patterns may need to be developed.

## Archetypes as Behavioral Choices

Activation is based on the idea that Archetypes can function as a vocabulary for intentional behavior.

An individual, team, or organization may have familiar patterns, but those patterns do not have to determine every response.

**A Sage-oriented team** may draw more intentionally on Hero when decisive action is required.

**A Ruler-oriented organization** may activate more Explorer energy when experimentation becomes strategically important.

**A Creator leader** may draw on Caregiver when a team needs greater connection and support.

**A Hero-oriented culture** may strengthen Everyperson behaviors to increase inclusion and shared ownership.

In this sense, Archetypes can become more than descriptors.

## 7. NARRATIVE INTELLIGENCE

CultureTalk uses **Narrative Intelligence** in the tradition of Carol S. Pearson's work with Archetypal patterns and story.

Narrative Intelligence is the capacity to recognize the stories shaping perception and behavior, understand the Archetypal patterns operating within those stories, and intentionally work with them to expand possible responses and outcomes.

### Archetypes as Narrative Patterns

Archetypes offer recognizable storylines through which people interpret experience.

- **A Hero narrative** may interpret a difficult situation as a challenge to overcome.
- **An Innocent narrative** may focus on preserving trust, stability, or optimism.
- **A Revolutionary narrative** may see the same situation as evidence that an existing system needs to change.
- **A Caregiver narrative** may focus first on who needs protection or support.

The external circumstances may be identical. The interpretation, and therefore the response, may differ substantially.

### Archetypes as Narrative Patterns

Narrative Intelligence begins with the ability to notice these underlying patterns.

CultureTalk helps participants explore questions such as:

- What story am I telling about this situation?
- What assumptions sit underneath that story?
- What story might another person be telling?
- What narrative is shaping this team's behavior?
- What shared story does this organization reinforce?
- Is that story still useful?
- What other Archetypal perspective might expand our choices?

The goal is not to replace one story with a supposedly correct story.

It is to increase awareness and flexibility.

## Narrative Intelligence at the ME Level

At the individual level, Narrative Intelligence helps people recognize patterns shaping their reactions, strengths, blind spots, and choices.

A leader may recognize, for example, that a strong Hero narrative causes them to interpret every challenge as something they personally need to solve.

Awareness creates room for another response.

## Narrative Intelligence at the WE Level

At the team level, competing narratives often sit underneath conflict.

- One person may interpret caution as wisdom.
- Another may interpret the same caution as resistance.
- One person may see rapid action as leadership.
- Another may see it as recklessness.

Archetypes can make those differences visible without reducing them to right and wrong.

This supports more productive conversations about communication, trust, decision-making, collaboration, and conflict.

## Narrative Intelligence at the US Level

Organizations also develop shared narratives.

These may include stories about:

- what success looks like
- who gets rewarded
- how decisions are made
- whether risk is encouraged
- what leadership means
- how failure is treated
- whether change is safe
- who belongs
- what the organization believes about itself

These shared stories help create culture.

They can also become difficult to see because they are repeated so consistently that they begin to feel like objective reality.

CultureTalk uses Archetypal patterns to surface and examine these narratives.

## Reframing and Expanding the Story

Narrative Intelligence also includes the ability to work intentionally with a narrative once it has been recognized.

Sometimes that means reframing an existing story.

Sometimes it means adding another Archetypal perspective.

A team experiencing transformation primarily through a Hero narrative of endurance might benefit from an Explorer narrative of possibility or a Caregiver narrative focused on the human experience of change.

The objective is not to eliminate familiar Archetypes.

It is to expand the range of stories available.

That expanded range creates greater behavioral flexibility.



The worksheet is titled "My Personal Change Plan" and features a header with a butterfly illustration. It includes a section for "Things I can do" with a prompt: "How can you use your strengths to support others, improve outcomes and mitigate challenging situations?" and a section for "Things I need" with a prompt: "How can the team support you, what special circumstances do you have, what tools or resources do you need?" Both sections have numbered lines for notes.

| Change & Resilience with Archetypes |                             |                          |                                                                                                                                 |                                     |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
|                                     | TRIGGER                     | REACTION                 | MOTIVATION                                                                                                                      | RESILIENCE                          |
| 1                                   | Unmet needs                 | Exhausted by need        | Inspired by helping others<br>Driven to support and mentor others by meeting a need                                             | Building networks of support        |
| 2                                   | Pressure to create fast     | Worst collaborator       | Inspired by a blank slate<br>Driven to make beautiful & meaningful by creation and the creative process                         | Facilitate new ideas                |
| 3                                   | Uncertainty                 | Blame and complain       | Inspired by shared struggles<br>Driven to level the playing field<br>Fulfilled by a sense of fairness and camaraderie           | Share the struggle                  |
| 4                                   | Lack of freedom             | Become more disconnected | Inspired by the horizon<br>Driven to cross boundaries, fulfilled by reaching a destination                                      | Open paths to explore               |
| 5                                   | Indecision                  | Bully or defend          | Inspired by challenge<br>Driven to compare<br>Fulfilled by winning                                                              | Taking action                       |
| 6                                   | Change will ruin things     | Fear about who to trust  | Inspired by the single path in life<br>Driven to face the path as everything, fulfilled by great things and shared happiness    | Raise optimism, hope                |
| 7                                   | Things that are too serious | Being impatient          | Inspired by the moment<br>Driven to share joy<br>Fulfilled by laughter                                                          | Helping others accept hard truths   |
| 8                                   | Lack of connection          | Drama, neediness         | Inspired by service & missions<br>Driven to protect one's design<br>Seen fulfilled by true beauty and meaningful relationships  | Find ways to express love           |
| 9                                   | Vision is clouded           | Impossible expectations  | Inspired by potential<br>Driven to take small steps to uniform situations, fulfilled when vision becomes reality                | Help others see potential           |
| 10                                  | Status quo                  | Destructive              | Inspired by breaking edges about<br>Driven to break through to fulfill no longer frustrated or fulfilled by creating a new path | Overhaul, lead revolution           |
| 11                                  | Chaos, lack of order        | Demanding                | Inspired to establish order<br>Driven to create structure<br>Fulfilled by shared accomplishment and the right plan              | Step up and take charge             |
| 12                                  | Lack of facts               | Nagging and slow doubt   | Inspired by evidence<br>Driven to discover the truth<br>Fulfilled by sharing knowledge                                          | Ask good questions, guide decisions |

## From Narrative Awareness to Change

Narrative Intelligence sits at the center of the CultureTalk methodology.

The assessments help identify the patterns.

The validation process uncovers the stories behind them.

Activation gives people the opportunity to choose what story they want to reinforce next.

In this way, CultureTalk connects Archetypal assessment with individual growth, team development, leadership, and organizational change.

# 8. ASSESSMENT USE AND INTERPRETATION

## Appropriate Applications

CultureTalk assessments are designed for developmental, team, and organizational applications.

They are most useful when results are interpreted in context and combined with reflection, dialogue, and professional judgment.

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CultureTalk assessments may be used to support:

- individual coaching and development
- executive and leadership development
- team effectiveness
- communication and collaboration
- conflict resolution
- culture assessment
- organizational change
- leadership transition
- employee experience
- strategic alignment
- facilitated workshops / team experiences
- internal capability-building for coaches and facilitators

**The assessments can be used independently or in combination, depending on the scope of an engagement.**

## Interpretation in Context

Assessment scores should not be interpreted in isolation.

CultureTalk practitioners are encouraged to consider:

- current goals
- operating environment
- history
- leadership context
- team dynamics
- strategic priorities
- recent changes or disruptions
- qualitative stories and examples

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## Developmental, not Deterministic

CultureTalk assessments are intended to support reflection and development.

They do not suggest that individuals, teams, or organizations are permanently defined by a fixed Archetypal profile.

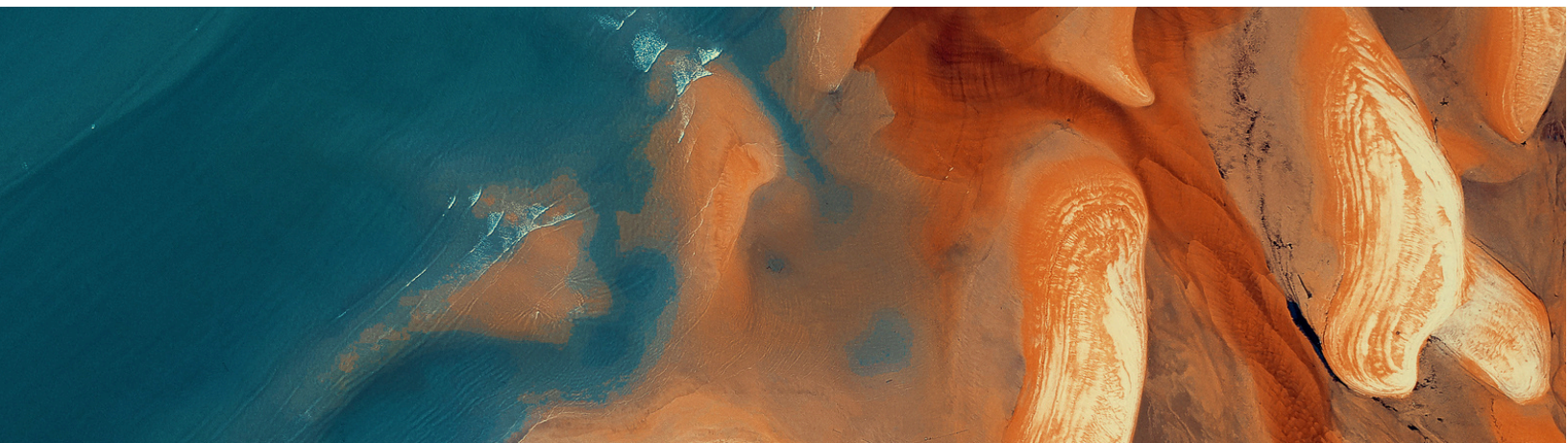
Patterns can evolve as people gain experience, roles change, teams develop, leadership shifts, and organizations respond to new demands.

## Appropriate Boundaries

CultureTalk assessments are not designed to serve as:

- clinical or diagnostic instruments
- measures of intelligence
- measures of mental health
- stand-alone predictors of job performance
- stand-alone hiring or selection tools
- substitutes for legal, medical, or psychological evaluation
- deterministic classifications of people or organizations

Assessment results should not be used as the sole basis for consequential employment decisions.



## Practitioner Role

The quality of interpretation is influenced by the skill of the practitioner using the assessment.

CultureTalk trains certified practitioners to understand the 12-Archetype framework, interpret profiles in context, facilitate constructive dialogue, and translate insights into practical developmental or organizational applications.

The role of the practitioner is not to tell participants who they are.

It is to help them explore what the data may be revealing, test those insights against lived experience, and determine what actions may be useful.

## 9. USAGE AND REACH

CultureTalk assessments have been used across a range of coaching, team, leadership, and organizational settings.

**AS OF SEPTEMBER 15, 2026**

| Assessment                     | Administrations                        |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| CultureTalk for Individuals™   | 17,555 participants                    |
| CultureTalk for Teams™         | 59 participants / 4 Teams              |
| CultureTalk for Organizations™ | 9,697 participants / 133 Organizations |

### Current Geographic Reach

[INSERT CURRENT COUNTRIES / NUMBER OF COUNTRIES]

### Available Languages

[INSERT CURRENT LANGUAGES]

### Practitioner Reach

[INSERT CURRENT NUMBER OF CERTIFIED PRACTITIONERS,]

### Industries and Settings

CultureTalk has been applied in settings including:

- corporate organizations
- government agencies
- nonprofit organizations
- educational institutions
- professional services
- leadership and executive coaching
- team development
- organizational culture and change initiatives

## 10. ONGOING RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

CultureTalk views its assessment system as an evolving body of work.

As the assessment database grows and the instruments are used across additional populations and applications, new opportunities emerge for continued evaluation.

Future research priorities may include:

- additional internal-consistency studies
- factor analysis
- test-retest reliability
- convergent and discriminant validity
- comparison across populations and settings
- analysis of relationships among Archetype scales
- longitudinal assessment of culture change
- relationships between Archetypal patterns and individual, team, or organizational outcomes

CultureTalk's approach is to distinguish between findings already supported by available evidence and questions that remain opportunities for future study.

## 11. REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

### **Jung, C. G.**

Works addressing Archetypes, the collective unconscious, psychological development, and recurring patterns of human meaning.

### **Pearson, C. S.**

Works applying Archetypal patterns to personal development, leadership, organizations, and narrative.

### **Pearson, C. S., & Mark, M.**

*The Hero and the Outlaw: Building Extraordinary Brands Through the Power of Archetypes.*

### **Atlee, C., et al.**

*Narrative Intelligence: A Practical Guide to Working with Archetypes.*

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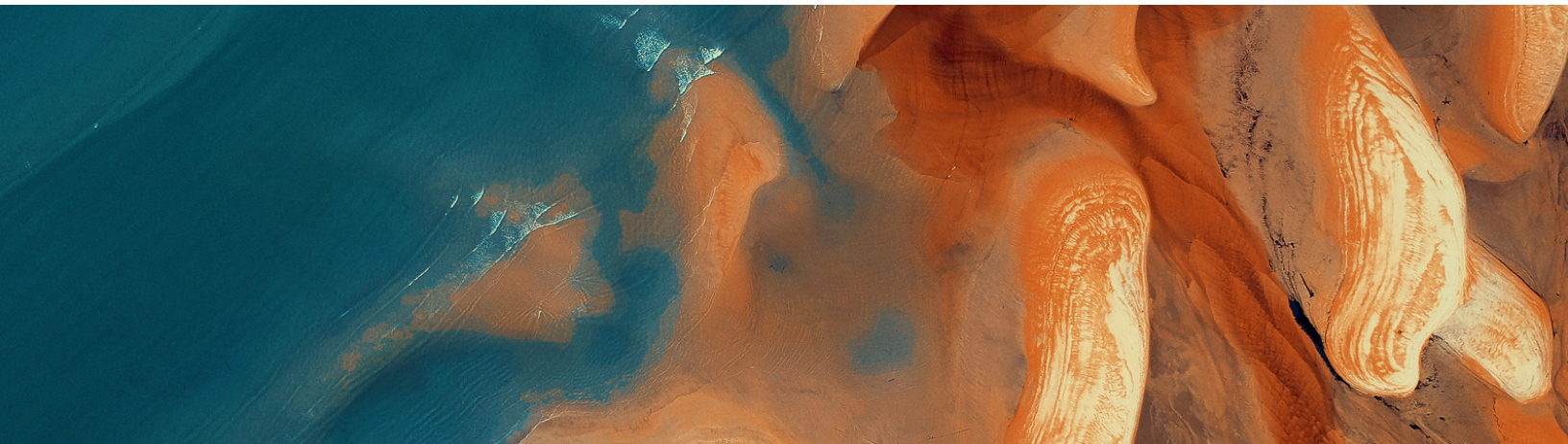
### **Cronbach, L. J.**

Foundational research on coefficient alpha and internal consistency reliability.

### **American Educational Research, Association, American Psychological, Association, & National Council on Measurement in Education.**

*Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing.*

# CONCLUSION



CultureTalk provides a structured way to examine patterns of meaning and behavior operating across individuals, teams, and organizations. Its 12-Archetype framework creates a shared language across three interconnected levels:

- **ME | Individual**
- **WE | Team**
- **US | Organization**

The three CultureTalk assessments provide quantitative insight into the Archetypal patterns operating at each level.

The broader **Measure → Validate → Activate** methodology moves beyond assessment by combining data with story, dialogue, and practical application.

Through this process, individuals and organizations develop **Narrative Intelligence**, the capacity to recognize the Archetypal stories shaping behavior, understand how those narratives influence choices, and expand the stories available for what comes next.

CultureTalk therefore treats assessment not as an endpoint, but as the beginning of a developmental process:

**Measure the pattern.**  
**Understand the story.**  
**Choose what happens next.**