

# Organisational Climate Research

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24th October, 2006



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## Table of Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. Literature Review</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>3. The Participating Organisations and the Research Methodology</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>4. Findings from the Research Study</b>	<b>7</b>
4.1. Organisation 1 .....	7
4.2. Organisation 2 .....	11
4.3. Organisation 3 .....	20
<b>5. Conclusions</b>	<b>36</b>

## Table of Figures

Figure 1: Linking Employee Satisfaction, Customer Satisfaction and Positive Financial Outcomes .....	2
Figure 2: Organisation 1: Overall Climate.....	7
Figure 3: Organisation 1: The five key themes .....	8
Figure 4: Organisation 2: Overall Climate.....	11
Figure 5: Organisation 2: Gender .....	12
Figure 6: Organisation 2: Length of Service .....	12
Figure 7: Organisation 2: Managers v Non-Managers .....	13
Figure 8: Organisation 2: The five key themes .....	13
Figure 9: Organisation 2: Comment Analysis .....	17
Figure 10: Organisation 3: Overall Climate.....	20
Figure 11: Organisation 3: Length of Service .....	21
Figure 12: Organisation 3: Patient Care Departments Overall.....	22
Figure 13: Organisation 3: Ward Analysis .....	22
Figure 14: Organisation 3: The five key themes for Patient Care Departments .....	23
Figure 15: Organisation 3: Other Supporting Departments Overall.....	27
Figure 16: Organisation 3: The five key themes for Other Supporting Departments .....	27
Figure 17: Comment Analysis .....	30

## Table of Tables

Table 1: Climate themes and dimensions in high and low customer- retaining banks (adapted from Clark 2002) .....	4
Table 2: Organisation 2: Qualitative Responses.....	18
Table 3: Organisation 3: Qualitative Responses.....	31

## 1. Introduction

This report sets out the findings from a research study of a range of different organisations and compares them to the results from previous research conducted with best practice CRM companies who have been past winners of a *Unisys/Management Today Service Excellence Award*. The study was focused on analysing the organisational climate of these organisations using a previously developed questionnaire. This research builds on the ongoing work of the Henley Centre for Customer Management, which seeks to understand how the climate of an organisation can impact the successful adoption of a customer management approach to managing customers.

Previous research in this area had focused particularly on banking (Clark 2000, 2002) and Service Excellence companies (Clark & Holt, 2005).

- For banking, the research focused on the differences between the organisational climate of high and low performing bank branches. From this study it was established that there were five key climate themes that could affect the levels of customer service given to customers. Supporting each theme are a number of dimensions (see Table 1). However, while the study found significant differences between the high and low performing branches, it did not benchmark either group against what best practice in customer service excellence might be.
- The Service Excellence companies research provided an opportunity to investigate whether best practice customer management companies scored highly in all aspects of the climate model; and to further explore whether there was a link between high scores and excellent levels of customer service and employee satisfaction. It also provided an opportunity to further test the rigour of the climate framework and the robustness of the research questionnaire.

This latest research builds on the previous work and explores the use of the research questionnaire in different types of organisation in both the Public and Private Sectors. The robustness of the analysis process has been enhanced and the use of a variety of criteria for analysis of results has been explored.

## 2. Literature Review

The following review of the literature looks at the origins of some of the key concepts that underpin the research study. The term *organisational climate* has been loosely used for referring to a broad group of organisational and perceptual variables that reflect individual organisational interactions (Howe 1977) and affect individual's behaviour in organisations (Schneider 1975, Jones and James 1979). The basic assumption in much of the literature is that individuals' perceptions of routines and rewards within an organisation influence their behaviour and the way they interact with, for example, their colleagues or their customers.

Organisational climate was described by Schneider et al. (1994) as 'the feeling in the air' that one gets from walking around a company. Employees can create a climate by observing what happens to them and around them (the routines and rewards of a particular setting), and then drawing conclusions about their organisation's priorities and what is valued by the organisation. They then set their own priorities accordingly (Clark 2002). These perceptions

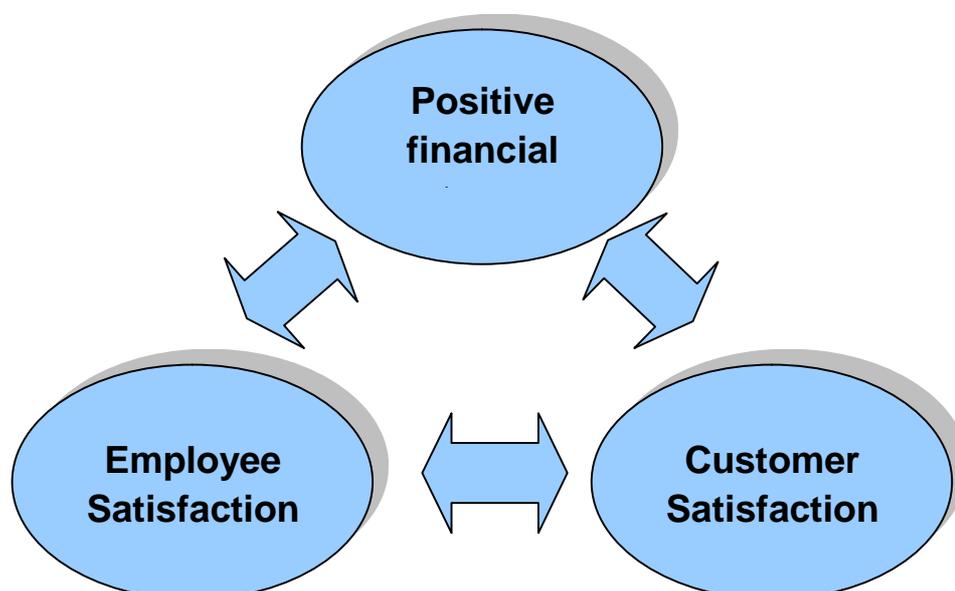
then provide employees with direction and orientation about where they should focus their energies and competencies, which, in turn, becomes a major factor in creating a climate.

As Clark (2002) pointed out, because employees' perceptions of organisational climate can influence behavioural outcomes it is reasonable to assume that, within a service organisation setting, the organisation's climate can be an important antecedent to employee behaviour and accordingly the relationships those service employees have with their customers. One key to enhancing customer satisfaction and thus retention may therefore be the extent to which an appropriate climate can be engendered, in which the employees see their major priority as the satisfaction and retention of customers (Clark 2002).

A number of research studies have also found support for linkages between *employee satisfaction* and *employee retention* and *customer satisfaction* and *customer retention* (Schneider 1973; Schneider et al. 1980; Bitner et al. 1990; Reichheld and Kenny 1990; Schlesinger and Heskett 1991 and Rucci et al. 1991). Some of these studies showed that employee behaviour plays a critical role in determining the level of service quality that is experienced by customers and, hence, their level of satisfaction with the company and their willingness to either remain with the company or defect to a competitor (Clark 2002).

As well as the links between employee satisfaction and customer satisfaction, the links between these two dimensions and actual *financial outcomes* for the company have also been explored by researchers. For example, delivering service quality is considered to be an essential strategy for success and survival in today's ever-increasing competitive environment (Parasuraman et al. 1985; Zeithaml et al. 1990). Zeithaml et al (1996) also offered strong support for the notion that improving service quality to customers can increase favourable customer behavioural intentions to remain with a company and decrease unfavourable intentions to defect from a company. This, in turn, can lead to a positive impact on profitability, thus linking employees, customers and financial outcomes (which can be expressed as shareholder value) as shown in the following diagram (Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Linking Employee Satisfaction, Customer Satisfaction and Positive Financial Outcomes**



Clark (2002) suggested that the links in the literature between employees' perceptions of organisational climate, employee satisfaction and behaviour and customer behaviour and retention provide the foundation for identifying the key aspects of organisational climate that may help to explain for example, the contrasts in service to customers between high customer-retaining branches and low customer-retaining branches. These key aspects should also be evident when researching best practice customer service companies.

Clark's (2002) research described the five key themes of *organisational climate* and they in turn were supported by a number of key dimensions. .

- Structure
- Rewards and Recognition
- Cohesion
- Warmth and Support
- Customer Care

These are shown in more detail in Table 1.

**Table 1: Climate themes and dimensions in high and low customer- retaining banks (adapted from Clark 2002)**

Climate themes and dimensions	High retaining branches	Low retaining branches
<b>Structure</b>		
Communications	Open	Closed
Rules and procedures	Flexible	Rigid
Staff participation	High	Low
Role variety	High	Low
Organisation	Organised	Not organised
Role Clarity	Clear	Unclear
Pressure	Low	High
<b>Rewards and Recognition</b>		
Rewards contingency	More rewards than punishment	More punishment than rewards
Punishment contingency	More rewards than punishment	More punishment than rewards
Escape contingency	Not present	Present
Equity	Not applicable	Inequity
Goals	Effective	Ineffective
<b>Cohesion</b>		
Interaction among staff	High	Low
Socialise	High	Low
Shared perception	Shared perception	Not shared perception
Team	High	Low
<b>Warmth and Support</b>		
Warmth and support among staff	High	Low
Morale	High	Low
Warmth and support by managers	High	Low
Trust management	Not applicable	Low
<b>Customer Care</b>		
Practices and procedures in relation to customer care	High	Low
Impact of practices and procedures on staff attitudes and behaviours	Not applicable	Negative
Sales-service division	Not applicable	Yes
Training	Effective and flexible	Not enough training/no time
Innovative initiatives	Active/effective	Inactive/ineffective
Service quality	High	Low
Customer Care	High	Low
Customers treated equally	Yes	No
Customer retention strategies	Active attempt	No active attempt

Ongoing research is based on the use of a questionnaire developed by Clark (2002) to research the organisational climate of an organisation on these five key themes and their dimensions. For example, the high customer-retaining branches in the 2002 study scored more highly on all five themes than the low customer-retaining branches.

The 2005 study (Clark & Holt) selected for research, winners of the Unisys/Management Today *Service Excellence Awards* Scheme.

The study found evidence to support a number of significant conclusions. These were:-

- That the five key themes (and their supporting dimensions) are evident as key measures of a climate that supports best practice customer service
- That best practice customer service organisations would score highly on all five key themes of the climate framework.
- That best practice customer service organisations would score more highly on all five key themes than other organisations
- That a favourable climate requires a close alignment of employee and management views about customer service.

The report further developed the links between employee's perceptions of organisational climate and the levels of customer service achieved by an organisation that were first promulgated by Clark (2002). Through researching what are perceived to be best practice customer management companies it was possible to both further test the climate model and the dimensions which support it. It is evident that best practice customer management companies really do have a customer-centric organisational climate!

### 3. The Participating Organisations and the Research Methodology

During 2006, we have had the opportunity to further test the climate research methodology in three disparate organisations.

- Organisation 1 is the financial services arm of an automotive retailer. The company is striving to further improve its customer service and this pilot project involving a sample group of employees was undertaken to evaluate the use of the methodology as a means of identifying where further improvements to customer service might be made.
- Organisation 2 is the IT department of a local authority. Customers for this department are other departments in the local authority, i.e. 'internal customers', and the project was undertaken to assess the current climate and to identify issues to be addressed as part of an overall change management program targeted at increasing the organisation's customer focus.
- Organisation 3 is a private hospital. The management team were aware that a change in organisational climate in the hospital was necessary and this project was undertaken to assess the current climate and to identify issues that needed to be addressed.

For this research project, members of the organisations were asked to take part by completing the survey questionnaire. The questionnaires were completed on paper or electronically and were analysed using Excel spreadsheets and a number of statistical analysis functions. The results were presented in the form of radar diagrams and commentary as seen in the following sections of this report.

In each of the surveys, additional questions were asked to provide selection criteria for comparison purposes (for example, the survey in Organisation 1 was completed by both managers and employees). The resulting comparisons were found to give additional insights into the prevailing climate in the organisations.

## 4. Findings from the Research Study

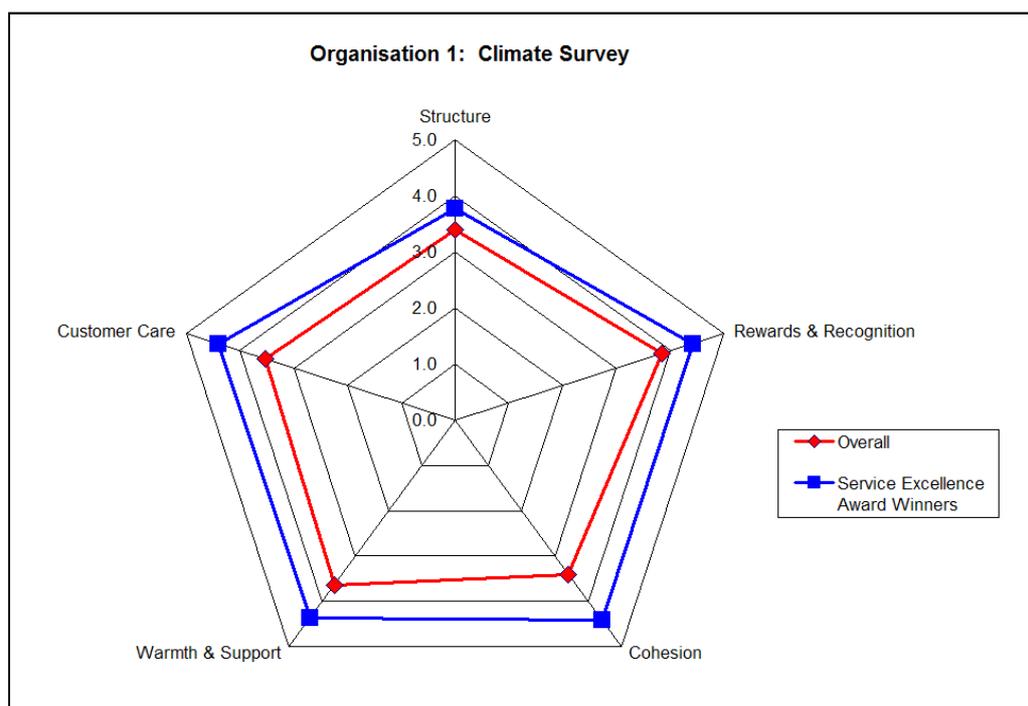
Table 1 in section 2 showed the five key themes of organisational climate and their underpinning dimensions. This report now presents the findings from the study using an overall assessment of the five themes together with more detailed analysis of each theme and its dimensions. Use of the comparison criteria is explored as is the comparison of the overall organisation to Service Excellence companies.

### 4.1. Organisation 1

#### 4.1.1. Findings on the Overall Results for Each Key Theme

The radar diagram below (Figure 2) gives an overall picture of the climate of Organisation 1 across the five key themes and allows comparison with the overall findings from the Service Excellence research study.

Figure 2: Organisation 1: Overall Climate



The results show that the sample surveyed in

Organisation 1 has a well-balanced response to all the themes as do the Service Excellence organisations. While all themes for Organisation 1 score above 3, the mid-point, they still need to improve by approximately 1 point in the 1-5 scale to achieve the same level as that achieved by the Service Excellence organisations. Given that the survey sample is composed of employees involved with customer service improvement, the likelihood is that they are more customer focused than the rest of the organisation.

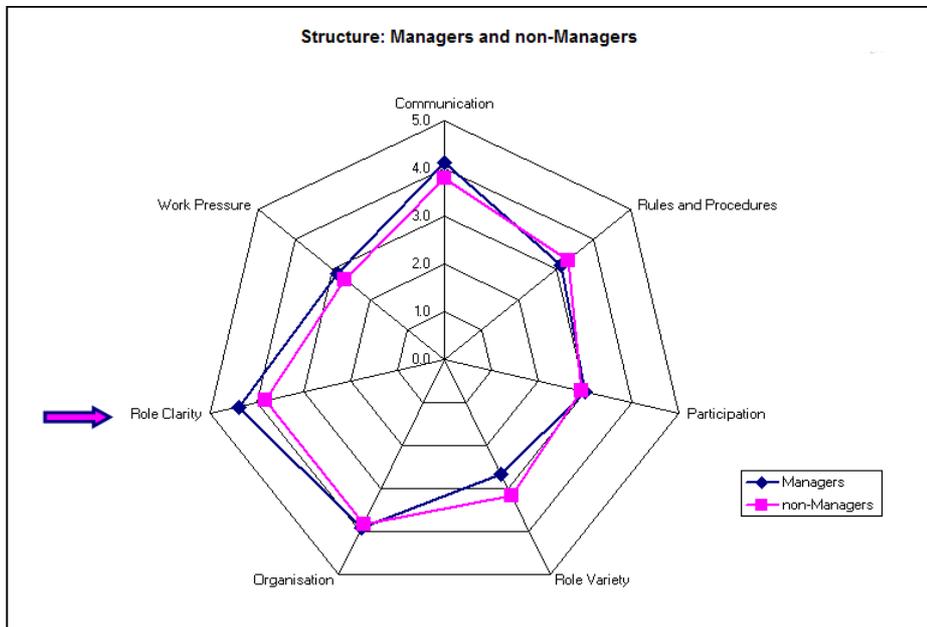
#### 4.1.2. Findings on the five key Themes

The radar diagrams below (Figure 3) show the results of the climate survey for each of the five key themes. The results have been grouped into management and non-management

responses to identify if there are any significant differences in perceptions between these two groups.

**Figure 3: Organisation 1: The five key themes**

**Figure 3.1: Structure**



**Figure 3.2: Rewards and Recognition**

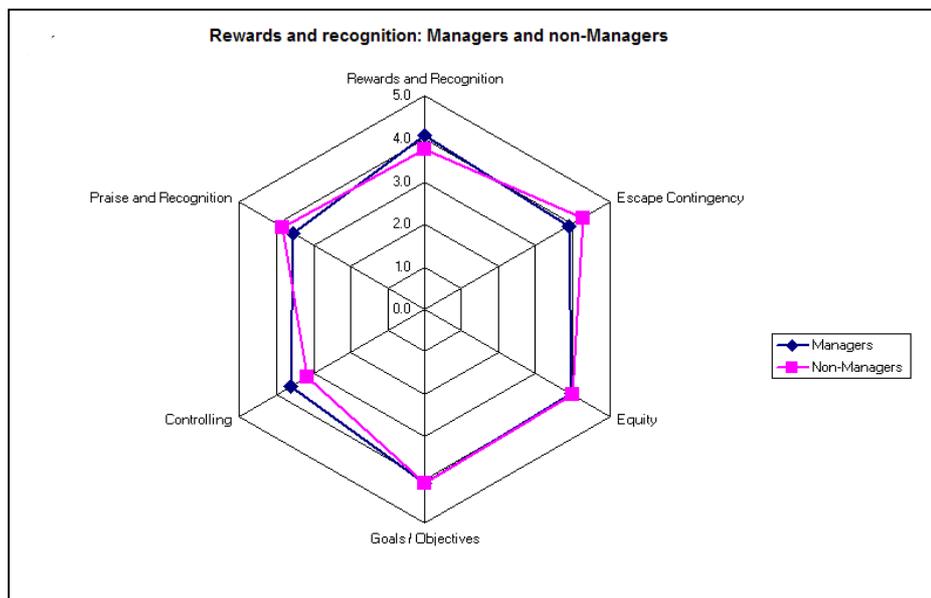


Figure 3.3: Cohesion

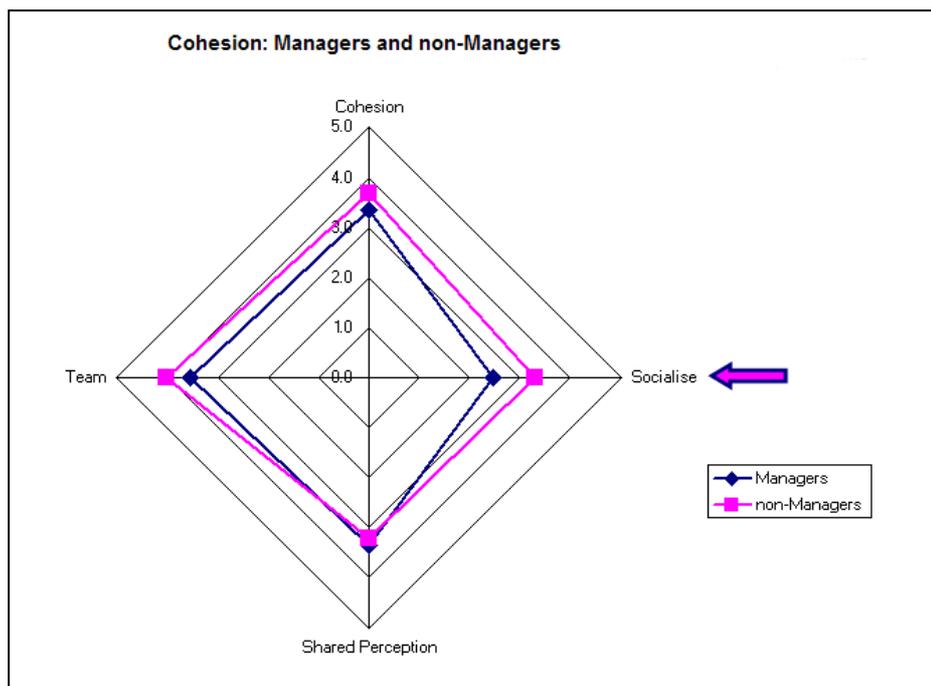


Figure 3.4: Warmth and Support

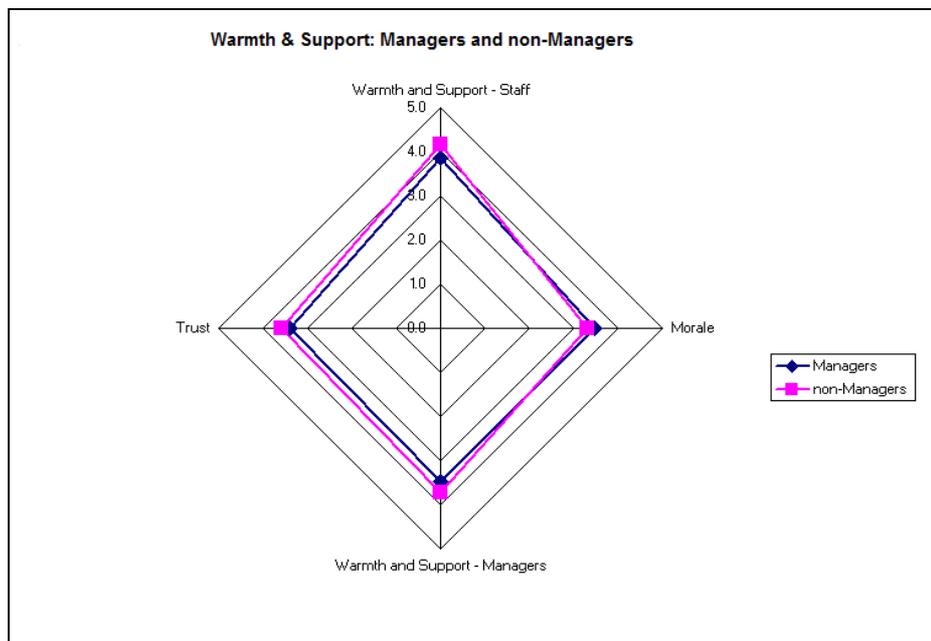
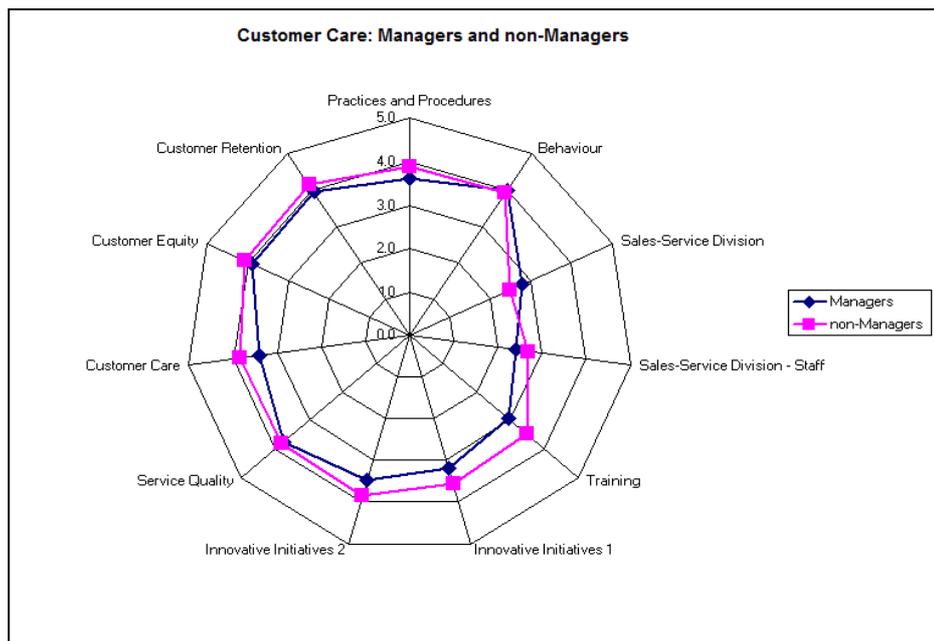


Figure 3.5: Customer Care



For the analysis of survey responses we introduced two additional statistical tests.

- We performed a 'Cronbach's Alpha' calculation for the complete set of responses to confirm the validity of the questionnaire in this survey. In this case, alpha was found to be >0.7 for four of the five themes and 0.64 for the fifth theme and the results are therefore considered to be sound.
  - Cronbach's Alpha is derived from the equation  $\alpha = N.r / (1 + (N-1).r)$   
Here N is equal to the number of items and r is the average inter-item correlation among the items. Note that a reliability coefficient of .70 or higher is considered "acceptable" in most Social Science research situations.  
The higher the score, the more reliable the generated scale is. Nunnally (1978) has indicated 0.7 to be an acceptable reliability coefficient but lower thresholds are sometimes used in the literature. In a recent example, McKinley et al devised a questionnaire to measure patient satisfaction with calls made by general practitioners out of hours. This included eight separate scores, which they interpreted as measuring constructs such as satisfaction with communication and management, satisfaction with doctor's attitude, etc. They quoted alpha for each score, ranging from 0.61 to 0.88. They conclude that the questionnaire has satisfactory internal validity, as five of the eight scores had >0.7. In this issue Bosma et al report similar values, from 0.67 to 0.84, for assessments of three characteristics of the work environment.
- When comparing the responses of managers and non-managers we used the 'Ttest' statistical function to determine those points where the difference was statistically significant. In the resulting radar diagrams, an arrow points to the theme dimension where this test showed a significant difference.
  - The Ttest function returns a value that is considered significant if Ttest result is LEQ 0.05.

The radar diagrams show that, in general for this sample, managers and non-managers have similar views about the organisational climate. The only significant differences are:-

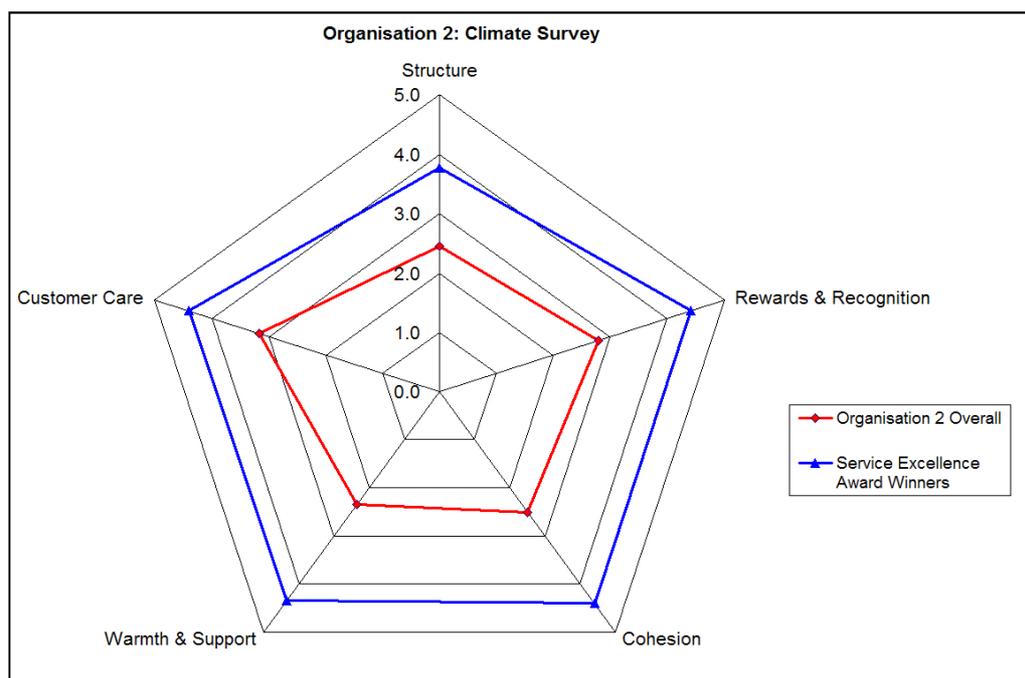
- In the Structure theme, where managers see their roles more clearly than do non-managers.
- In the Cohesion theme where non-managers believe that they socialise more with their colleagues than do managers.

## 4.2. Organisation 2

### 4.2.1. Findings on the Overall Results for Each Key Theme

The radar diagram below (Figure 4) gives an overall picture of the climate of Organisation 2 across the five key themes and allows comparison with the overall findings from the Service Excellence research study. In this study, Cronbach's Alpha was found to be  $>0.8$  for four of the five themes and 0.67 for the fifth theme and the results are therefore considered to be sound.

Figure 4: Organisation 2: Overall Climate



These results show

immediately that this organisation has a climate that suggests that significant issues exist in the minds of their employees. The only theme which has a better than mid-point score is that of Customer Care. Of the other themes, Structure and Warmth and Support appear to be particularly weak.

Clearly there is a gulf between the climate of this organisation and that of the service excellence organisations so further analysis might give more useful insights.

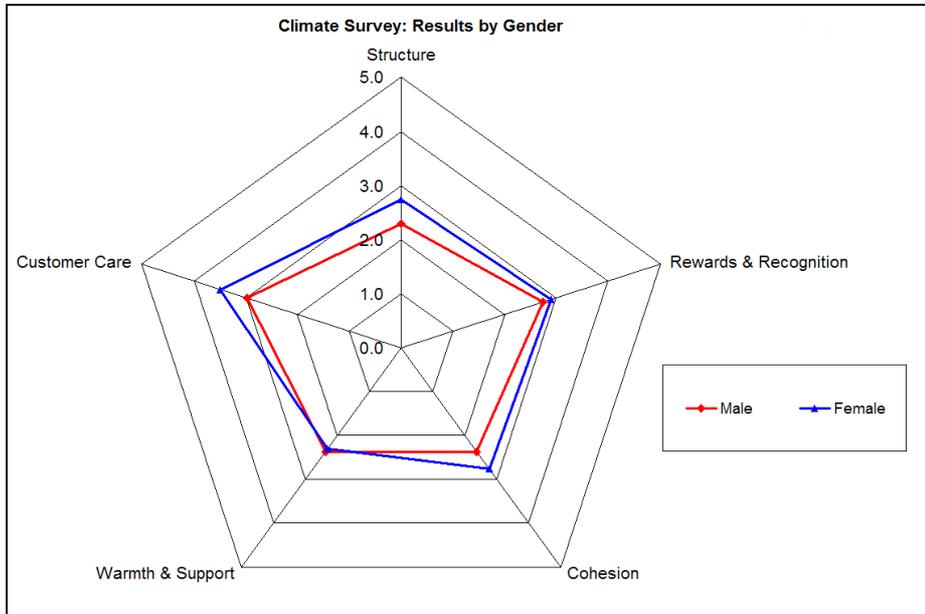
To pursue this goal, a variety of analyses were performed looking at different groups of employees. Where appropriate, the selected group was compared to the organisation overall and the Ttest was used to determine differences of view that had statistical significance. Where these differences were found to occur, large circles on the theme axes show where a Ttest value of  $<0.05$  was derived.

Groupings used included:-

**Gender**

The result of comparing results by gender showed no major difference between the views of males and females. If anything, the males had a slightly less positive view in all areas when compared to the female employees.

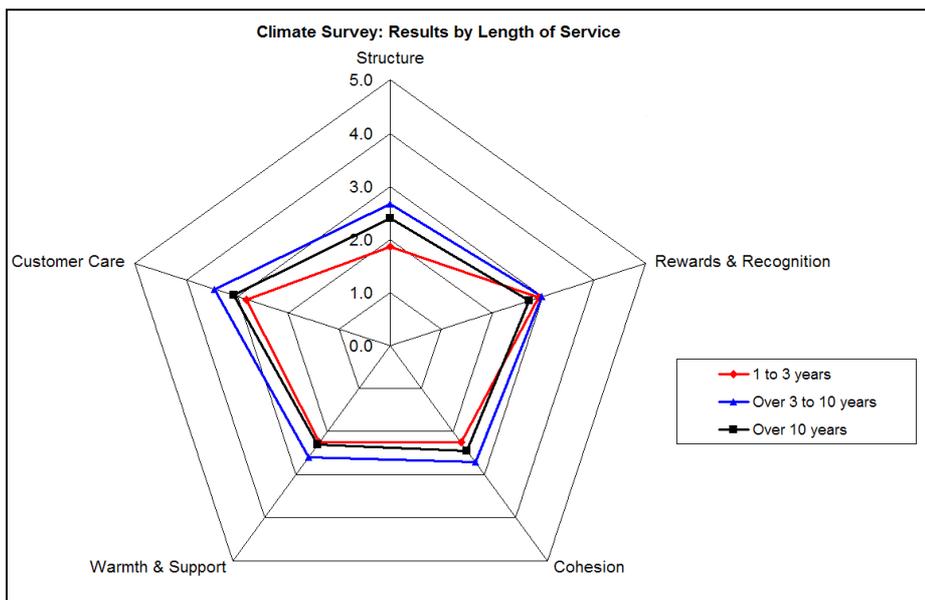
**Figure 5: Organisation 2: Gender**



**Length of Service**

Looking at results by length of service gives an unexpected result.

**Figure 6: Organisation 2: Length of Service**



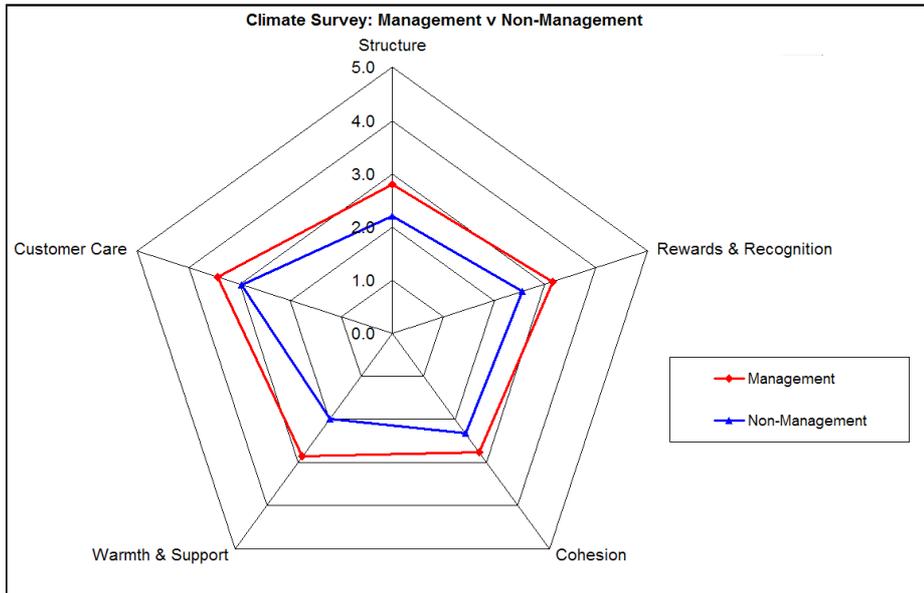
Recent employees (1 to 3 years) have the most negative view of the organisation

As time goes by, the employees become a little more positive (though still overall below mid-point) before cynicism seems to set in again when the over 10 years mark is passed.

**Role (Management v Non-Management)**

The survey results were analysed by role and showed a marked difference of opinion between managers and non-managers.

**Figure 7: Organisation 2: Managers v Non-Managers**

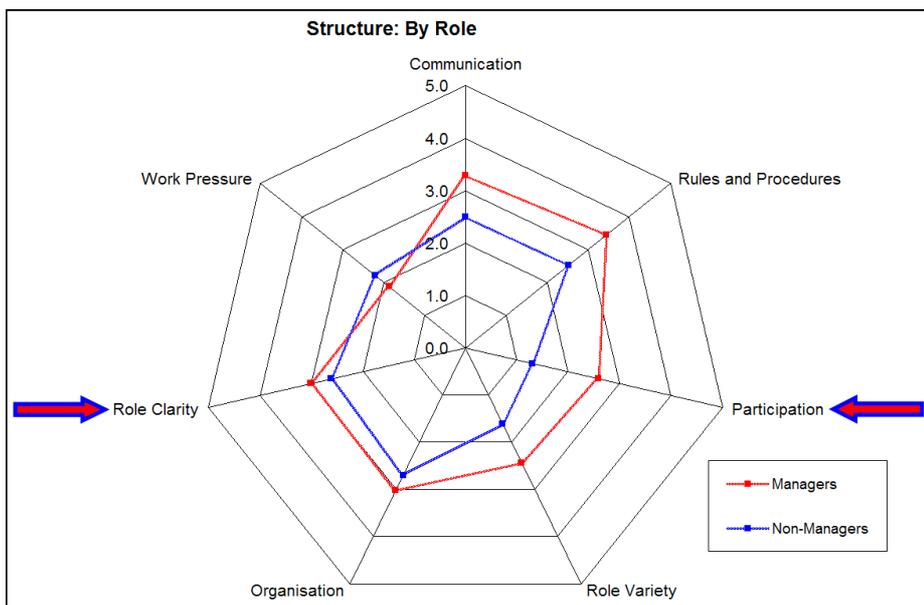


Managers would seem to have a reasonably balanced view with neither a negative nor a positive slant. In contrast, non-managers are much more negative, particularly in the areas of Warmth & Support and Structure.

To gain additional insight, the Managers v Non-Managers analysis was taken down to the level of the five key themes as shown in Figure 8.

**Figure 8: Organisation 2: The five key themes**

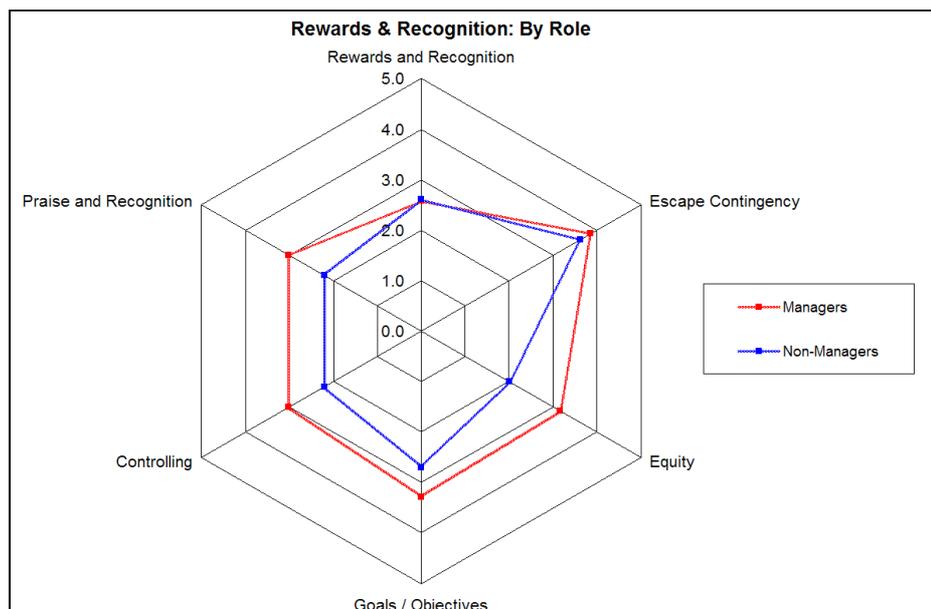
**Figure 8.1: Structure**



Structure looks at the organisation of a business. For example, how roles and procedures are defined and communicated to individuals.

In this analysis then, Work Pressure is clearly a major contributor to the negative climate. Of particular note are the polarisation of views on Role Clarity and Participation, seeming to indicate a top down management approach.

**Figure 8.2: Rewards and Recognition**

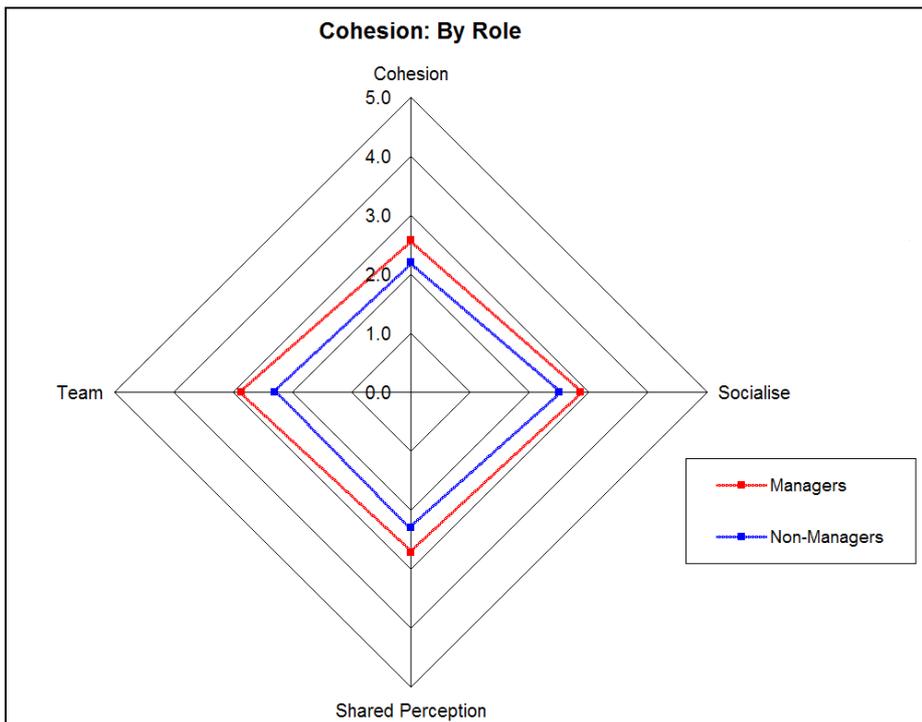


Rewards and Recognition looks at the use of praise and recognition as well as criticism and punishment; goals and objectives; and equality of treatment in the group.

The analysis supports the view that management uses a top-down approach with Non-Managers feeling more negative in all areas.

Non-Managers feel that they are not treated fairly and do not receive recognition for their efforts. Managers do not effectively monitor performance and do not use clear goals and objectives.

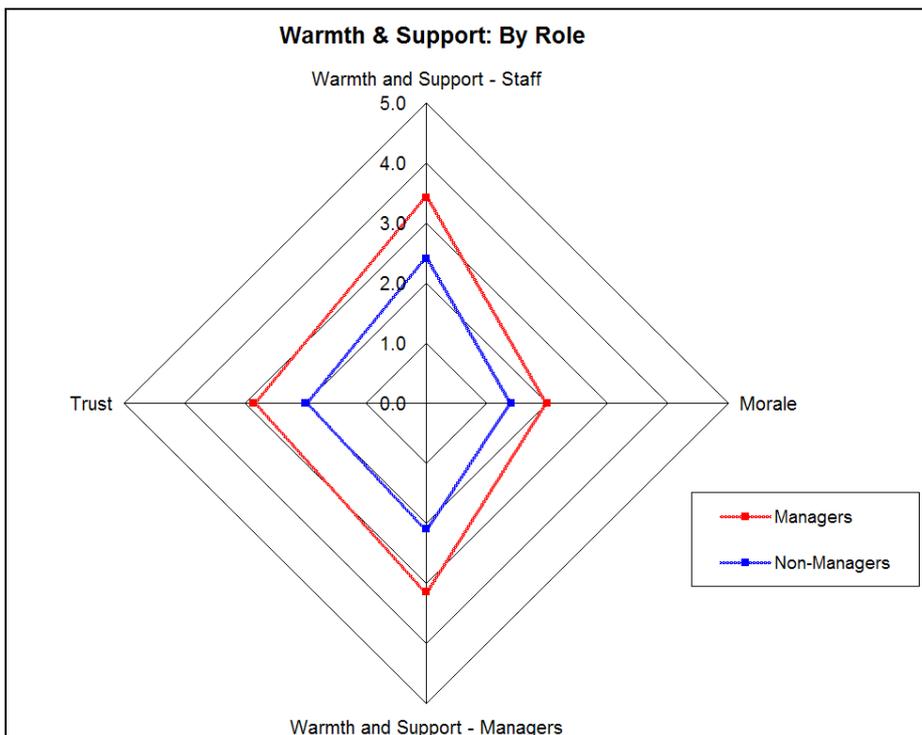
Figure 8.3: Cohesion



Cohesion looks at a number of aspects of teamwork and togetherness as perceived by the staff.

All respondents have a negative view about this theme so the organisation needs to stimulate and encourage a more sharing approach.

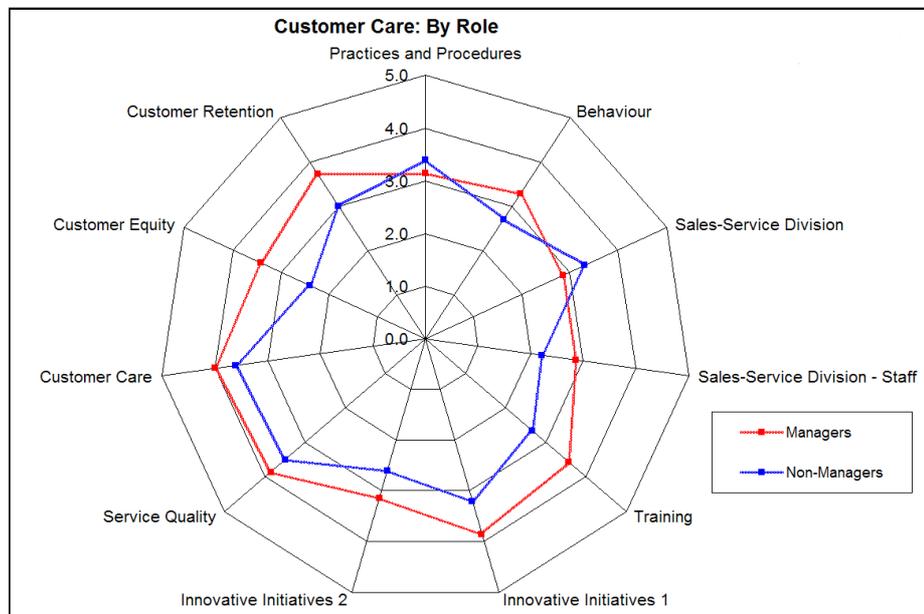
Figure 8.4: Warmth and Support



Warmth and Support is an indicator of the way that staff feel about each other and of how well the manager/staff relationship works.

Again, this is an area of weakness for the organisation, particularly in the context of Morale, which both Managers and Non-Managers perceive to be low.

**Figure 8.5: Customer Care**



Customer Care looks at a range of factors to assess the organisations attitudes towards serving customers.

In the context of this organisation, customers are other departments of the local authority. This is the most positive of all of the climate themes for both sets of employees.

Overall, this organisation clearly wants to provide a good service to its customers, but is hampered by work pressure, low morale and a general feeling that things are not right and there is too much of a gulf between Managers and Non-Managers.

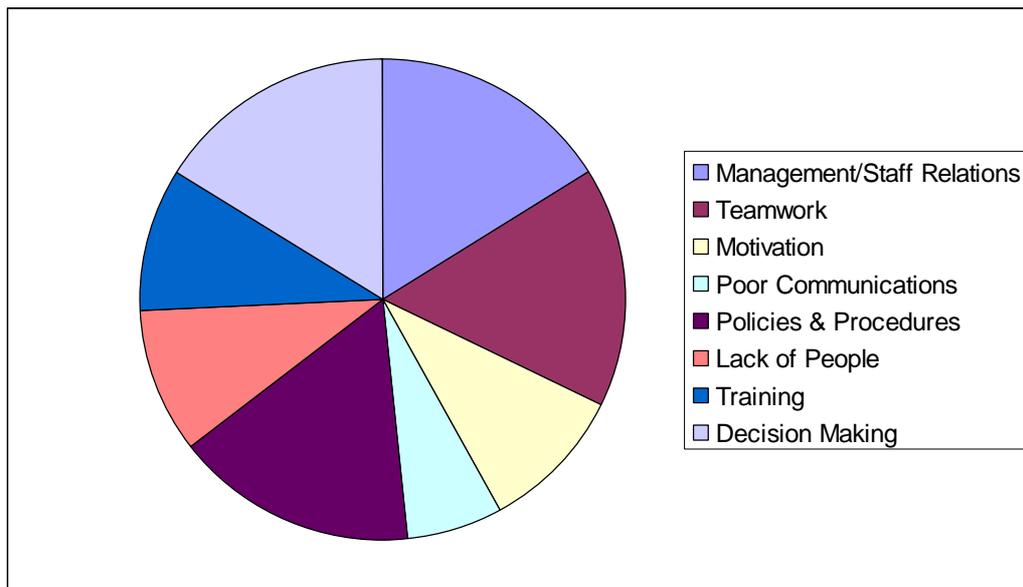
#### 4.2.2. Analysis of free-form comments made in answer to the three open questions

At the end of the questionnaire there are three open questions that the respondents in the research can comment on. These are:

- What key barriers are there in your organisation to implementing a customer focused approach?
- How do you think these could be overcome?
- What could organisations do in the longer term to maintain customer focus?

The results from the numerical analysis already discussed are also supported by the suggestions and comments made by respondents. A simple analysis of the area of concern dealt with by the comment is shown here and illustrates that the four most mentioned issues are concerned with Manager/Staff relations, Teamwork, Policies & Procedures and Decision Making.

Figure 9: Organisation 2: Comment Analysis



A selection of specific comments is listed in Table 2 to illustrate the value of this non-numerical element to the survey vehicle. It is very clear that the qualitative

data supports the conclusions from the survey response analysis and provides a number of suggestions for improvement.

Table 2: Organisation 2: Qualitative Responses

What key barriers are there in your organisation to implementing a customer focused approach?	How do you think these could be overcome?	What could the organisation do in the longer term to maintain a customer focus?
Decision making, getting agreement from the Senior Management.	Senior Management making a decision and sticking to it if necessary. Not changing their minds without thinking about the consequences. Forward planning and not leaving it to the last minute.	Engage with the staff more, more communication, listen to the feedback when given. make sure the flow of information is not just one way.
Poor downward communication. Decisions are made at a senior level which are not communicated to staff who have to action these decisions. The more senior the manager the more they separate their Strategic Role in the Organisation from practical issues that arise as a result of their Strategic Decisions therefore abrogating all responsibility when things do not happen as envisaged. There is no effective performance management of contract staff which in turn leads to poor handover to permanent staff who then get blamed for the failures which were made by Contract staff!	Improved two way communication. Views of Staff on initiatives should be genuinely sought and listened to as there is a wealth of experience from both the Public Sector and the Private Sector and rather than take the best of both, the worst is taken. Effective Performance Management of Contract Staff would help to overcome some of the problems.	In the longer term the organisation has to realise that ICT is no longer a Support Service but a front line one. The introduction of Web based services and reliance on ICT means that ICT are integral to an organisation's ability to function in the 21st Century and this should be reflected in the organisations aims and core values.
There seems to be a greater emphasis on achieving performance targets rather than what the client actually wants. Some managers seem to be fearful of losing their position rather than question some of the practices.	In our team's current management style we have little contact with the client-side and only discover their true concerns in a haphazard way. We had previously been given a longer leash and had been able to identify and resolve issues in a relevant manner directly rather than having to go through a rigid work plan where a two day job can now take three months waiting for approval and ratification.	Generally I feel that there have been some strong achievements with regards to customer service within the ICT team as a whole but this is being weakened by the perceived threat through an imminent restructuring, although personally I see any restructuring as a possibility for improvement. However, the longer it goes on the more despondent staff will become.

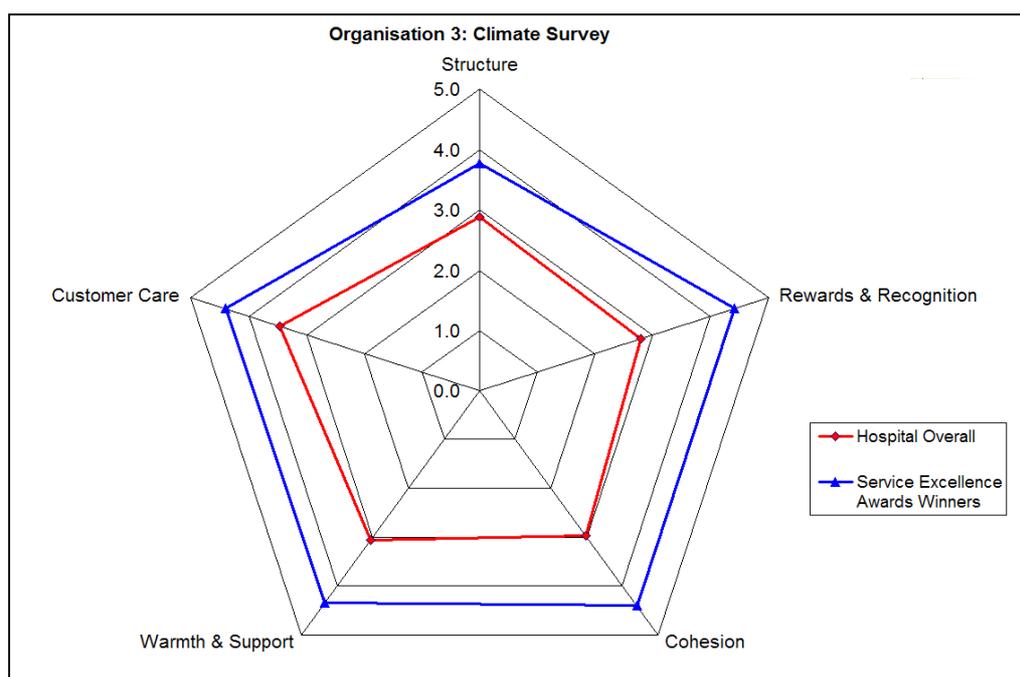
<p><b>What key barriers are there in your organisation to implementing a customer focused approach?</b></p>	<p><b>How do you think these could be overcome?</b></p>	<p><b>What could the organisation do in the longer term to maintain a customer focus?</b></p>
<p>Over reliance on outside consultants. Internal permanent and contract staff's ideas are not always acted upon although they may be proposing exactly the same solution as outside consultants.</p>	<p>Trust staff more. Internal staff have exactly the same knowledge and skills as outside consultants but are not given the opportunity to show what they can do.</p>	<p>Make sure that all teams are pulling together and singing from the same hymn sheet. We are one ICT department and not several independent teams so we need to all work closer together, looking at the bigger picture and working towards a common goal.</p>
<p>A more rigid pattern of work - ie. inflexible work program - sometimes works against customer care where a customer never gets a job done when s/he needs it. More control to managers to make decisions means staff are unable to work as effectively as they could be - managers have the final decision of why, when and how the work is carried out.</p>	<p>Give staff more flexibility to carry out work that is requested by users but still keep the team/management aware and updated. Staff to have more responsibility to make decisions within the team instead of a single manager making all decisions would make staff more valued in their role.</p>	<p>Invest in staff - training and recognition Improve staff morale - make staff feel valued and respected Consult with staff regarding any new initiatives - changes to structure/staff Managers to share decision making with other senior team members</p>
<p>Insufficient resourcing, poor structure, lack of cooperation amongst sections, some teams led by poor managers lacking technical skills, obsession with staff having 'business skills' rather than technical skills, wasted training due to poor, and ever-changing, direction of staff, continual change i.e. of management, policy, approach, platforms, systems etc, over-use of contractors brought in as teams with 'apparent' authority over in-house staff, steam-rolling 'initiatives' over our customers, help-desk has room for improvement.</p>	<p>Better management, better organisation and procedures to deal with customer issues promptly, better internal resourcing to avoid use of contractors, improved structure (this would take some time to design so don't ask me), progression on merit rather than 'face-fits' or 'cliques', design a strategy - train to it and stick to it for more than 2 years, better rewards for the able, break down the 'them and us' feeling between higher management and staff</p>	<p>Cultivate a team of very bright, able, technically-skilled and well-motivated staff. Organise and maintain efficient procedures for responding effectively to customers with sufficient technical resources to fix their problems promptly.</p>
<p>Staff are not being motivated and lack of team cohesion, policy and procedure.</p>	<p>By motivating staff and focusing on the team cohesion, policy and procedure.</p>	<p>Could improve on managers leadership skills and continue to focus on staff performance and achievement.</p>

### 4.3. Organisation 3

#### 4.3.1. Findings on the Overall Results for Each Key Theme

The radar diagram below (Figure 10) gives an overall picture of the climate of Organisation 3 across the five key themes and allows comparison with the overall findings from the Service Excellence research study. In this study, Cronbach's Alpha was found to be well in excess of 0.7 thus confirming the validity of the survey questionnaire.

Figure 10: Organisation 3: Overall Climate



This chart shows the result of averaging the responses from all 173 completed

questionnaires. A result that is close to 1.0 on the scale shows an organisation that has a 'poor' climate and is very unlikely to generate a high quality of service to its customers. Results close to 5.0 would show an organisation with a very 'healthy' climate that is likely to provide excellent customer service.

As the chart illustrates, for all but one of the themes, the average response is at or below the mid-point in the scale and all themes show results well below those of the service excellence companies. Individual responses to the survey vary widely (std dev of around 1.0) so this chart represents a consensus opinion from all returns.

Customer Care (Patient Care in the context of this Hospital) is the strongest area and Rewards & Recognition the weakest.

Clearly, this organisation has a real challenge in terms of its climate.

The challenge for the analysis was to try to identify departments or other groupings that would give additional insight into the problems in the organisation.

A variety of analyses were performed looking at different groups of employees. Where appropriate, the selected group was compared to the hospital overall and the Ttest was used

to determine differences of view that had statistical significance. Large circles on the theme axes show where a Ttest value of  $<0.05$  was derived. Groupings used included:-

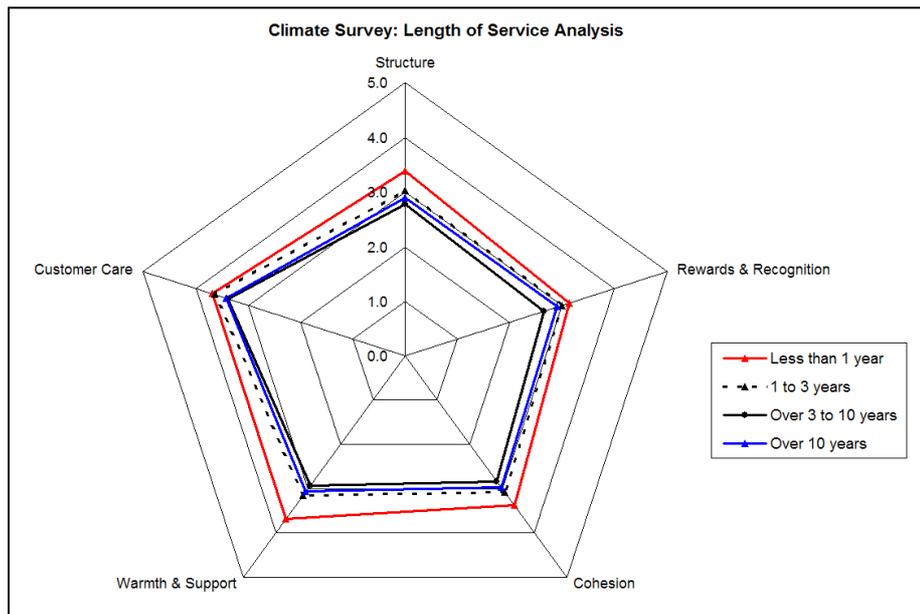
### **Gender**

The result of comparing results by gender showed no appreciable difference between the views of males and females.

### **Length of Service**

Looking at results by length of service gives a result in line with what might be expected.

**Figure 11: Organisation 3: Length of Service**



New employees have a more positive and 'rosier' view of the organisation.

As time goes by, employees become a little more cynical about the organisation. This trend is clearly identified through the 'Less than 1 year', '1 to 3 years' and 'Over 3 to 10 years' results. However, the 'Over 10 years' result seems to indicate that those who stay for this length of time are the ones who feel more positively about the organisation.

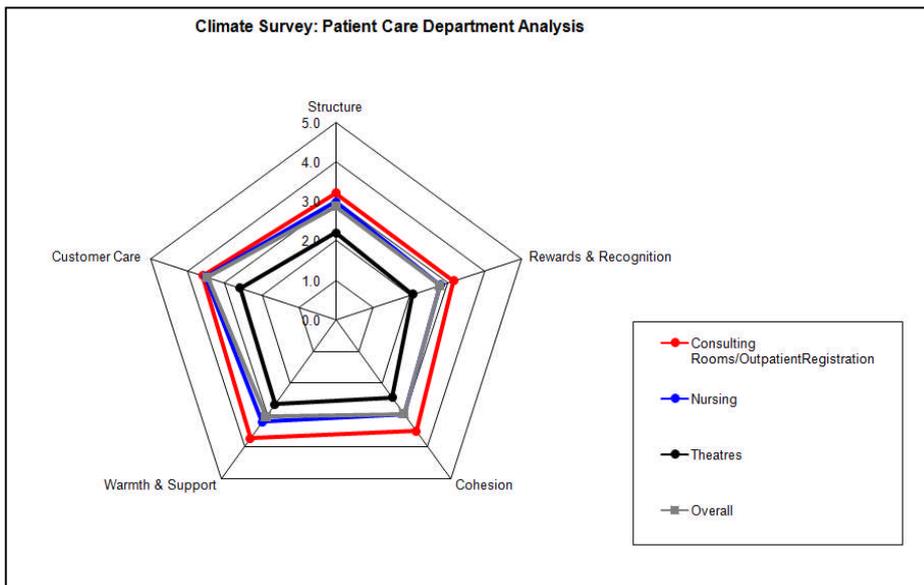
### **Departmental Analysis**

The survey results were analysed by department and some interesting observations emerged. We started by analysing those departments that provide direct patient care as a group and then looked at the other supporting departments.

#### **Patient Care Departments**

Looking at the overall picture for a selection of patient care departments shows a wide range of different views. The employees from the Consulting and Outpatient areas have the most positive views and those from the Theatres have the most negative views with the nursing group reflecting a very similar view to the hospital overall.

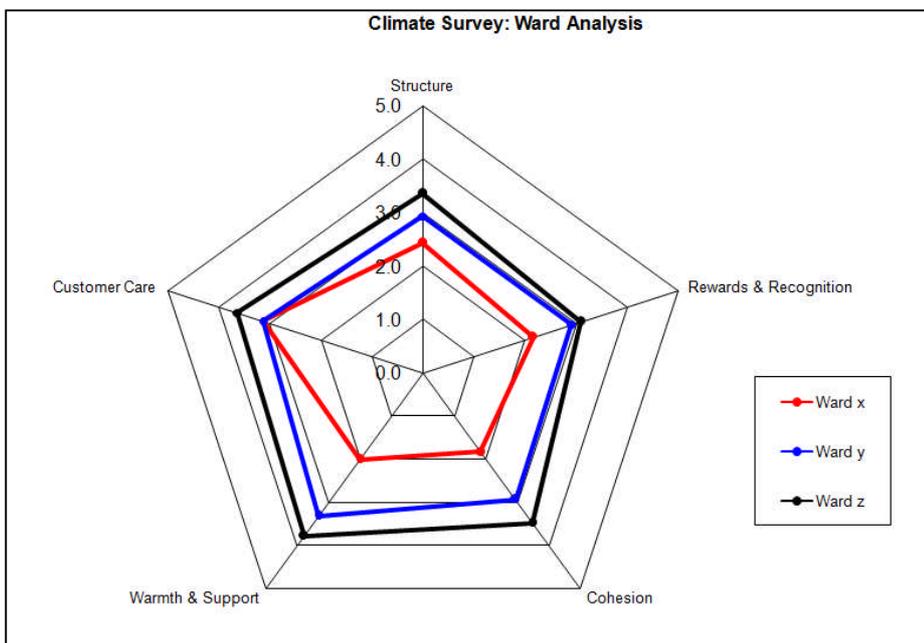
Figure 12: Organisation 3: Patient Care Departments Overall



Clearly, stress in the workplace could be a strong contributory factor here with the most stress appearing to be felt in the Operating Theatre environment.

As an illustration, we also plotted the results for Nursing when further broken down by Ward.

Figure 13: Organisation 3: Ward Analysis



This

diagram shows the

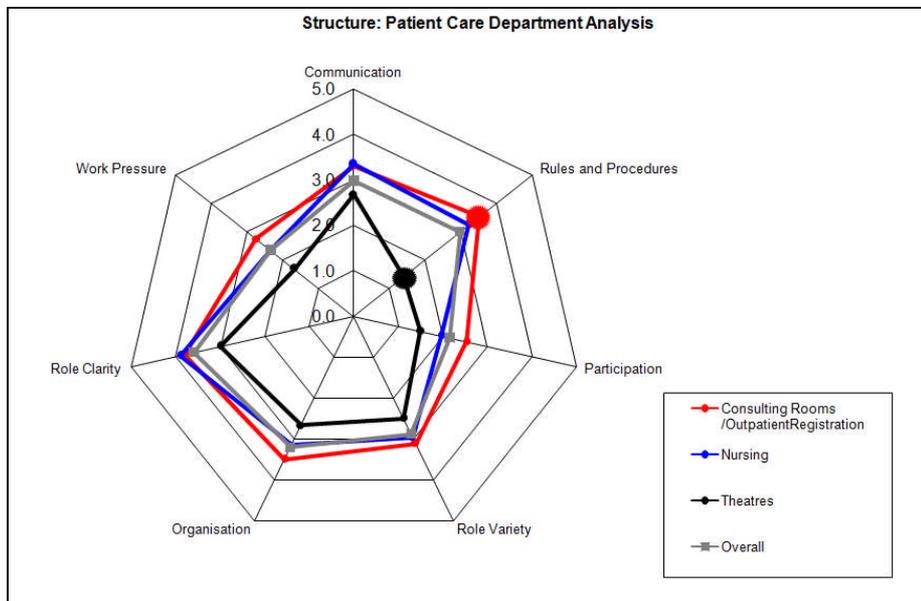
considerable difference in views between Ward x and Ward z. Ward y represents the remaining wards in the hospital, all of similar views. Clearly, if all wards had the same views as are represented for Ward z, the overall result would be significantly better.

However, the number of responses for some of these wards is lower than needed to draw firm conclusions so this result must be treated with caution. Even so, further analysis into the reasons behind these results should prove fruitful.

Analysing the themes and their dimensions further provides support for the observation about stress in the Hospital.

**Figure 14: Organisation 3: The five key themes for Patient Care Departments**

**Figure 14.1: Structure**

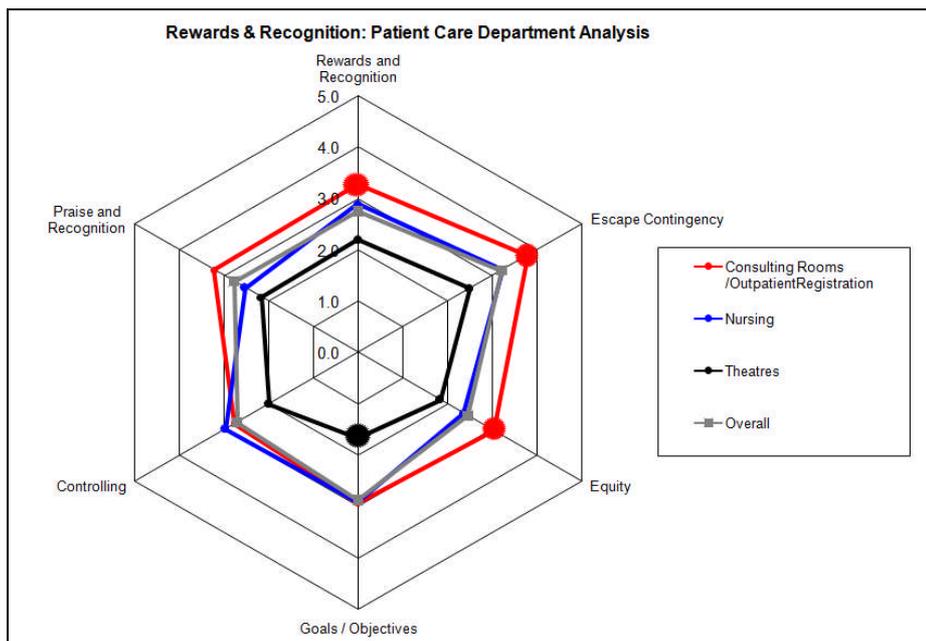


In this analysis then, while it can be seen that action to improve perception in all areas for all departments should be taken, particular note should be taken of:-

Work Pressure is clearly felt by all departments but is viewed as particularly high in the Theatre.

Rules and Procedures are perceived to be most rigid in the Theatre, perhaps of necessity. However, they are seen to more flexible in the Consulting Rooms/Outpatient Registration department.

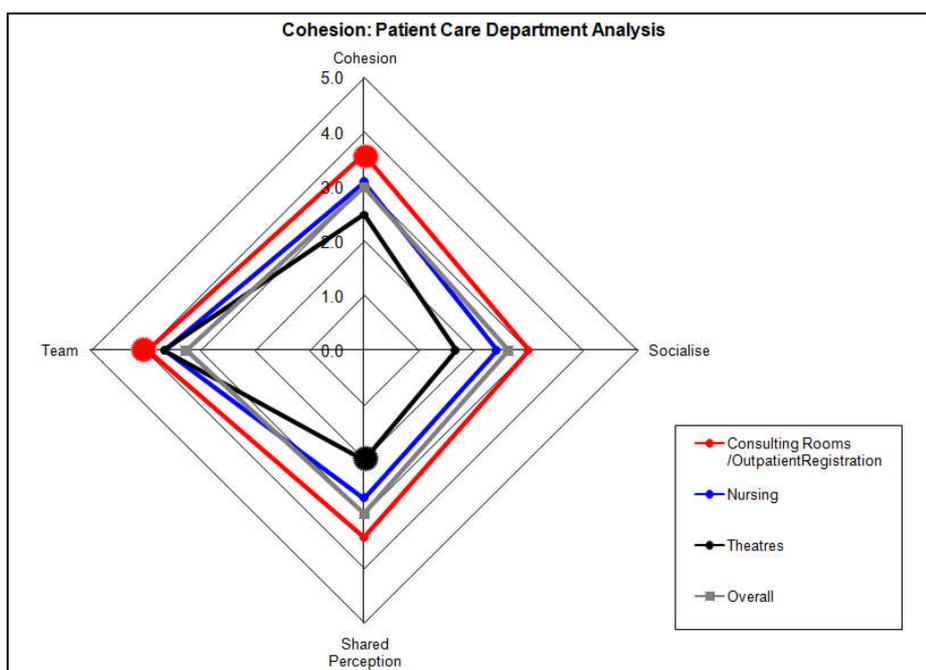
Figure 14.2: Rewards and Recognition



Particular note should be taken of:-

1. The Consulting Rooms/Outpatient Registration department have a fairly positive view of these factors, in particular Rewards & Recognition, Escape Contingency and Equity.
2. The Theatre staff have strongly negative views in this area.

Figure 14.3: Cohesion



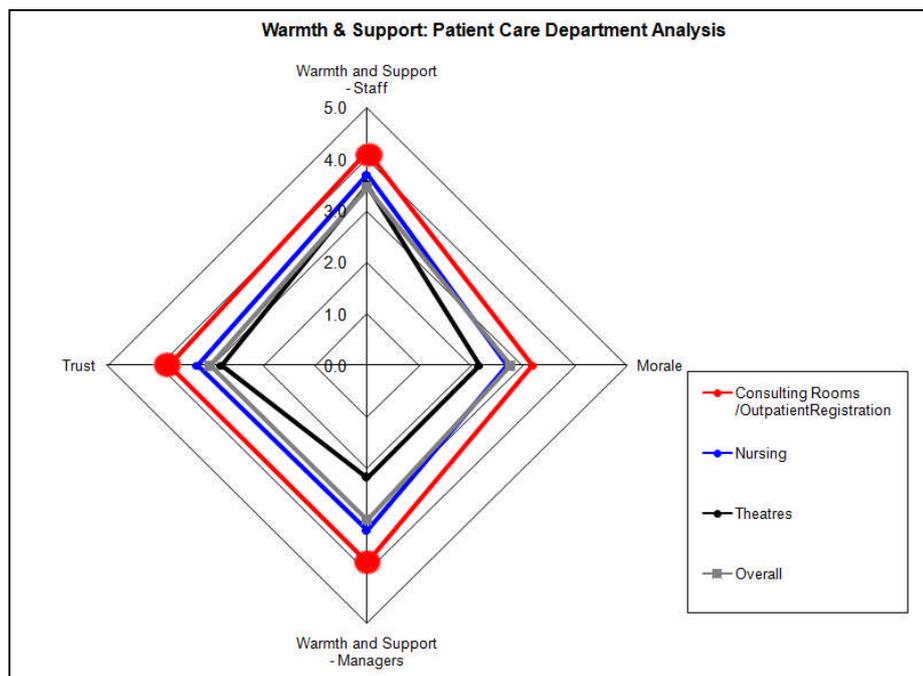
Overall, this

is an area of weakness for the hospital as is borne out by many of the comments made on the survey responses (see Table 3).

Particular note should be taken of:-

1. The Consulting Rooms/Outpatient Registration department have a fairly positive view of the Cohesion and Team factors.
2. The Theatre staff report particularly weak shared perception.

Figure 14.4: Warmth and Support

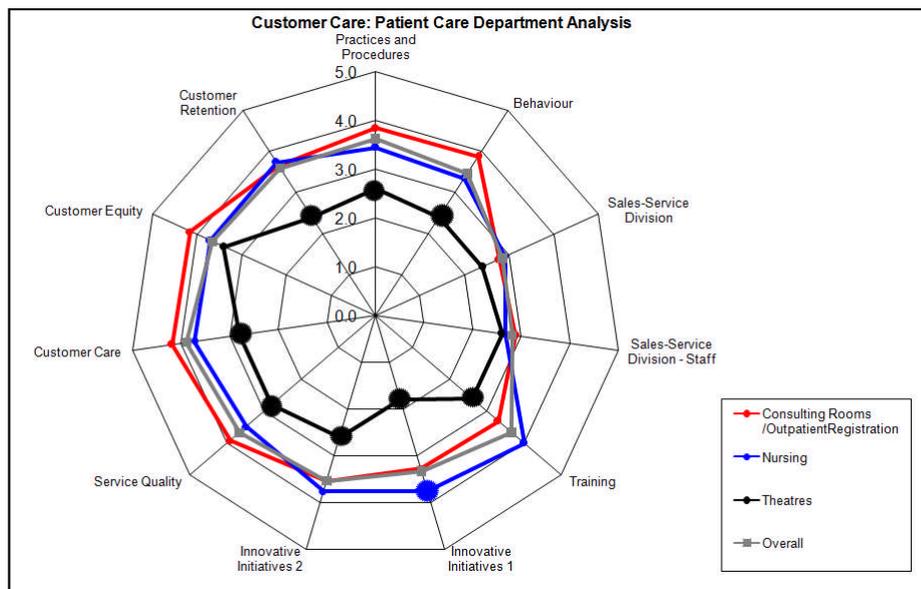


Again, overall, this is an area of weakness for the hospital as can be seen from the comments made on the survey responses (see below).

Note should be taken of:-

1. The Consulting Rooms/Outpatient Registration department have a positive view of the Trust and Warmth & Support – both Manager and Staff - factors.

Figure 14.5: Customer Care



In addition to the overall view, particular note should be taken of:-

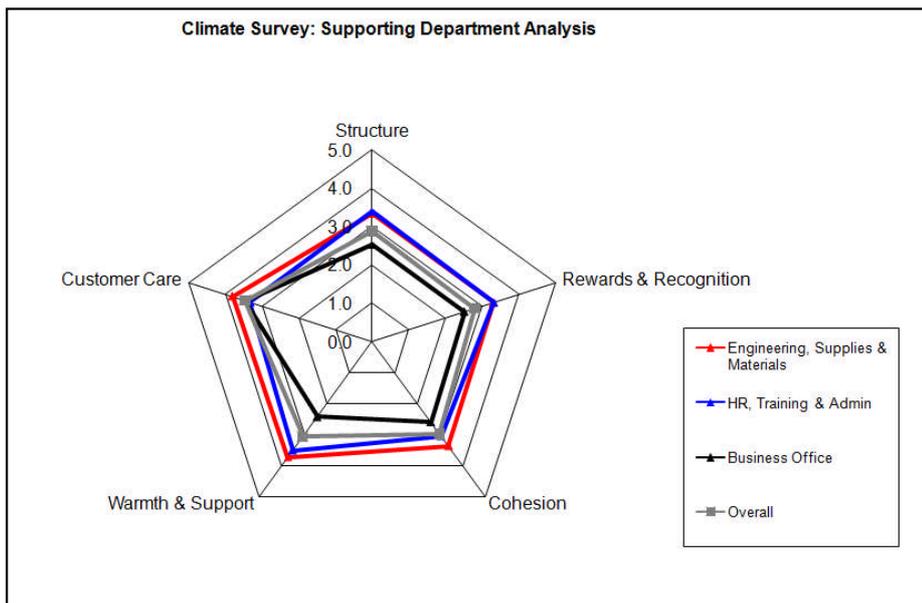
1. The Theatre staff have significantly more negative views than other staff for nearly all factors in this area.
2. Nursing staff believe that the organisation is actively involved in the use of innovative customer care initiatives more than the average.

For Patient Care departments then, the survey shows that a focus on improving the perceptions of the Theatre staff and analysis and sharing of best-in-class approaches across the ward infrastructure would be very beneficial as first steps.

### Other Supporting Departments

Looking at the overall picture for selected other departments shows a similar range of views. The employees from the Engineering, Supplies & Materials areas have the most positive views and those from the Business Office have the most negative views.

Figure 15: Organisation 3: Other Supporting Departments Overall

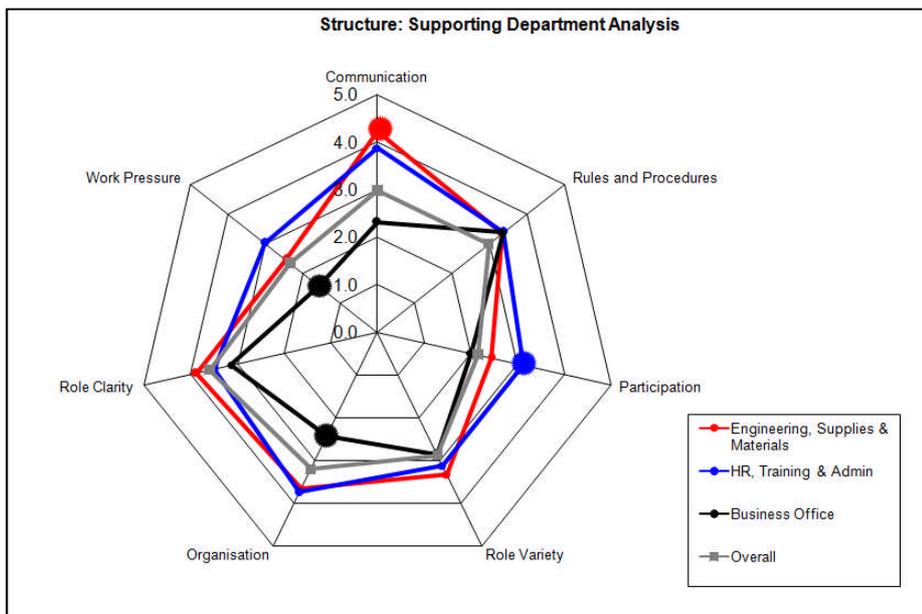


The most obvious initial inference here is that the response from the Business Office should be further investigated as it is the most negative.

The radar diagrams in Figure 16 show the results for the other supporting departments for each of the five key themes.

Figure 16: Organisation 3: The five key themes for Other Supporting Departments

Figure 16.1: Structure



For Structure, particular note should be taken of:-

1. The Business Office perceives that pressure of work is very high (higher even than in the Theatre) and that they are not well organised to handle this.

2. HR, Training and Admin see their participation in decision making more strongly than any other department.
3. Communication is not seen to be an issue for the Engineering and Supplies & Materials departments.

Figure 16.2: Rewards and Recognition

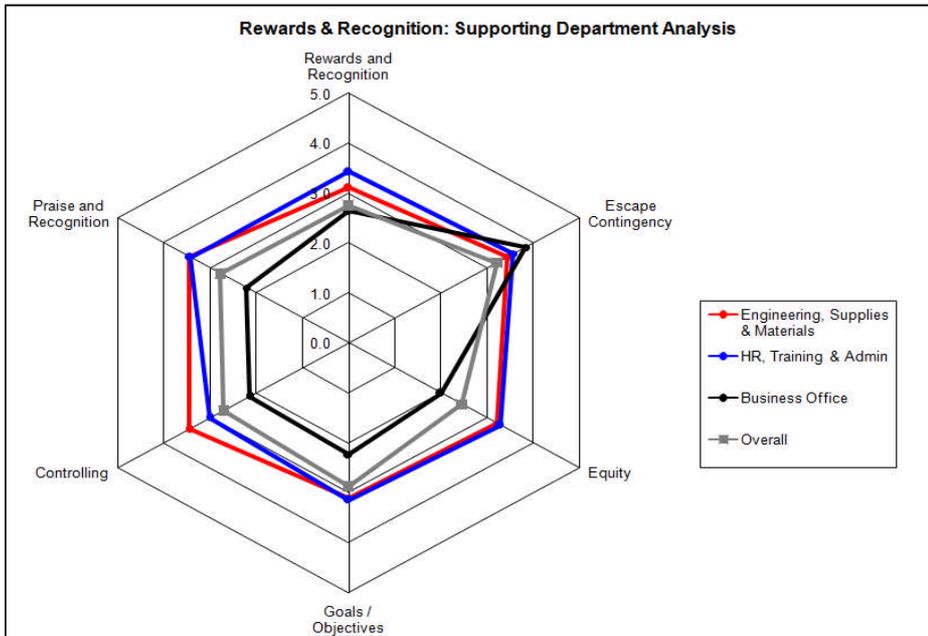
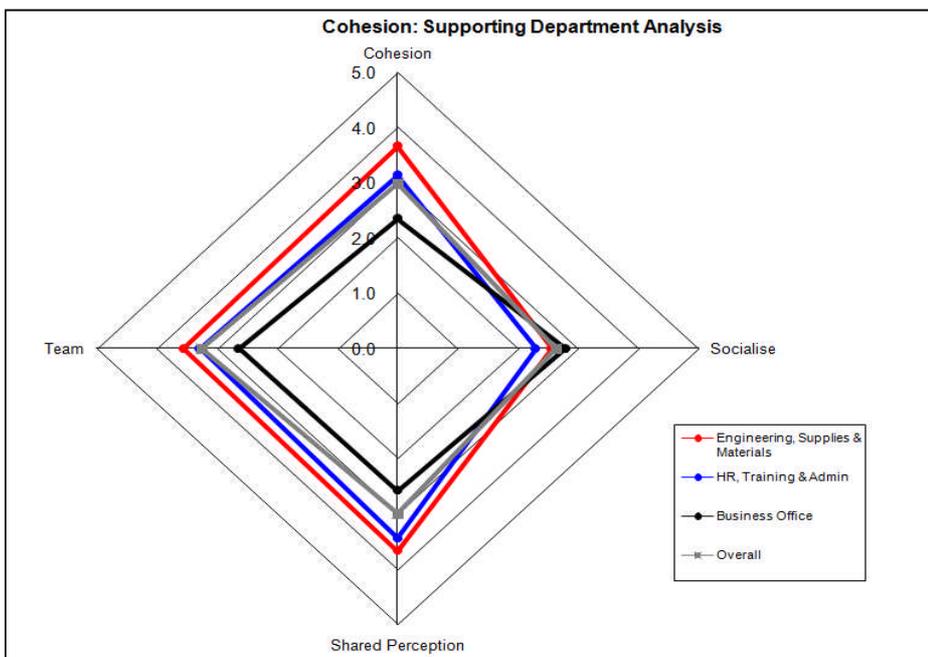


Figure 16.3: Cohesion

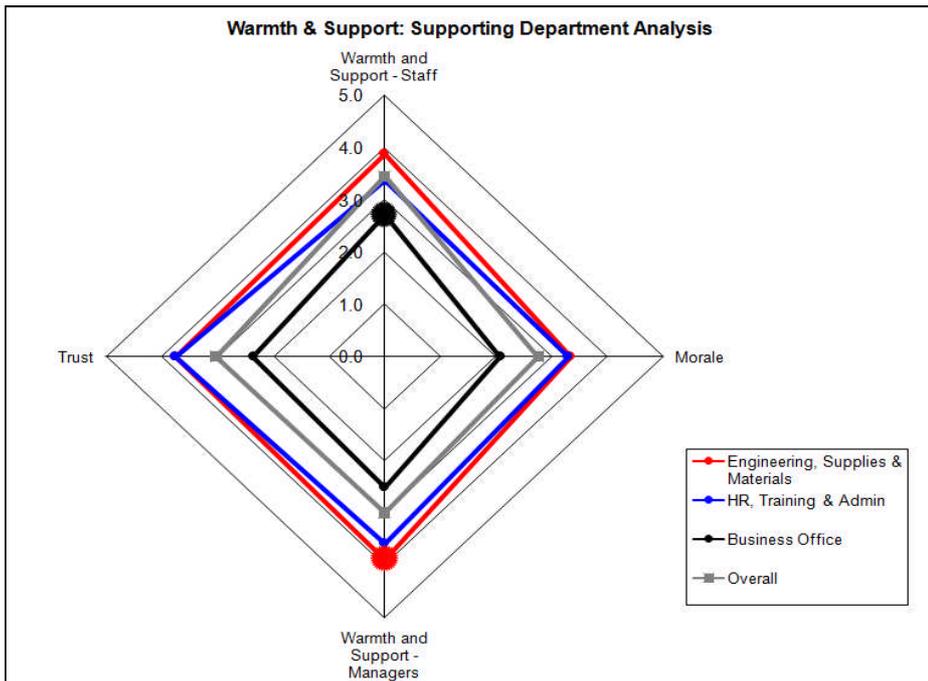


For

the Rewards &

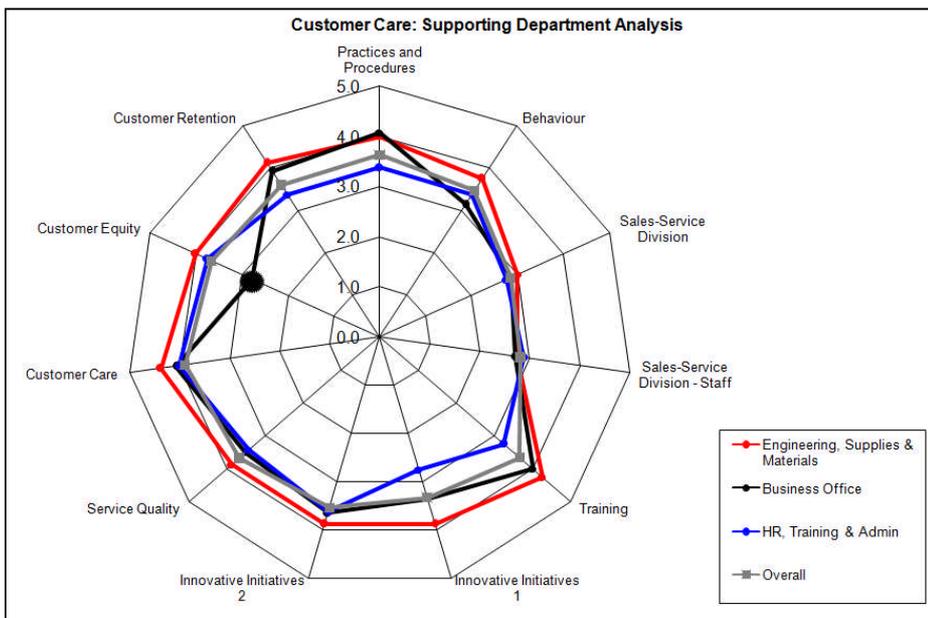
Recognition and Cohesion themes, no particular divergence from the overall average was displayed.

Figure 16.4: Warmth and Support



1. Warmth & Support in a Manager context is significantly stronger in the Engineering and Supplies & Materials departments.
2. Warmth & Support in a Staff context is significantly weaker in the Business Office department.

Figure 16.5: Customer Care



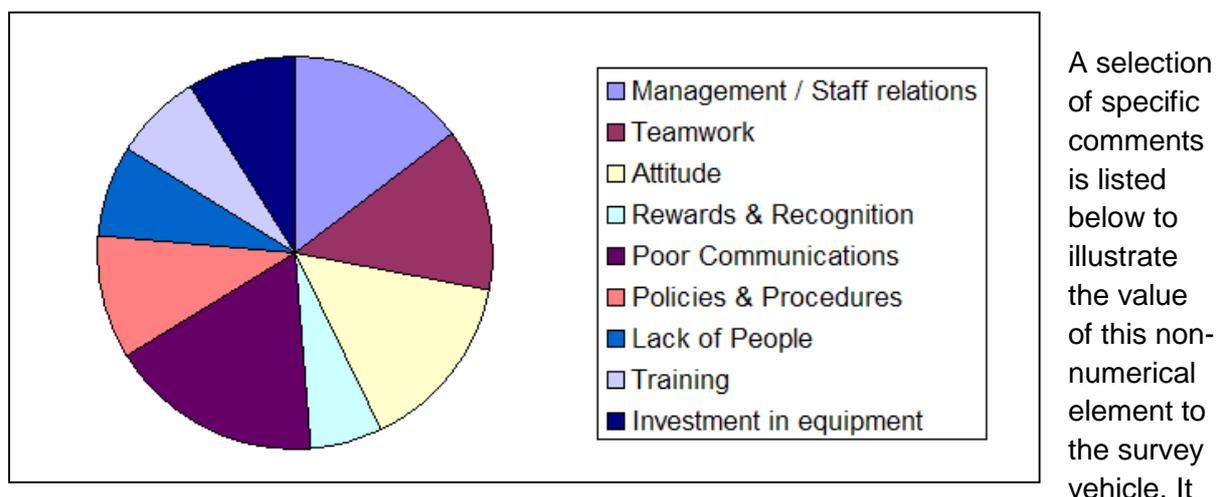
1. Business Office staff are less inclined to the view that 'Customers are treated equally regardless of their value to the company' than others.

In summary, the use of departmental groupings in the numerical analysis of survey responses can be an effective tool in highlighting areas of focus for improvement programmes.

#### 4.3.2. Analysis of free-form comments made in answer to the three open questions

The results from the numerical analysis already discussed are also supported by the suggestions and comments made by respondents. A simple analysis of the area of concern dealt with by the comment is shown here and illustrates that the four most mentioned issues are concerned with Manager/Staff relations, Teamwork, Communications and Attitudes.

Figure 17: Comment Analysis



A selection of specific comments is listed below to illustrate the value of this non-numerical element to the survey vehicle. It

is very clear that there is a lot of qualitative data here to assist in improving the overall climate in the hospital.

Table 3: Organisation 3: Qualitative Responses

**Patient Care** (Nursing, Theatre, Consulting Rooms, Outpatients, Registration, Physiotherapy)

<b>What key barriers are there in your organisation to implementing a customer focused approach?</b>	<b>How do you think these could be overcome?</b>	<b>What could the organisation do in the longer term to maintain a customer focus?</b>
<p>The manager where I work takes up to 1hr 10mins for breakfast break, and tea break. The rest of us, 15 mins!</p> <p>Staff are all treated differently, pay and sick-pay, bonus and gifts are rewarded to those who's face fits. The imbalance is so obvious it makes the staff not receiving these undervalued, it's demoralising and unfair.</p>	<p>All depts to treat staff the same. Wages for jobs the same. Currently, there are favourites who earn more than others for doing the same job.</p>	<p>If staff serving customers are made to feel valued it will reflect in the way they work with customers. Managers to start treating staff as though they matter - the rest will follow. Also not being so strict with staff will get better results. Having and showing favouritism must stop. It's discrimination, on a huge scale.</p>
<p>Different cultures. Language barrier. Patient's high expectations.</p>	<p>Training for staff about cultural studies. Interpreter. Customer is always right.</p>	<p>Acknowledge different cultures. Treat each patient as an individual.</p>
<p>Adequate staff numbers on each shift. Adequate working equipment used on patients to enable staff to get the job done in a professional manner - BP machines frequently do not work.</p>	<p>Better deployment of staff - Supply and maintenance of equipment in use. Adequate top up of disposables.</p>	<p>Effective training of staff - re-enforcement of this training throughout the year - reminders and managers to think of patients as customers, not numbers.</p>
<p>Poor communications. Not enough time to spend with customers questions.</p>	<p>More meetings and more communications between day and night staff.</p>	<p><i>No comment entered</i></p>
<p>Equal opportunity for all staff. Lack of equipment to maintain standard of care. Lack of response from people at the top.</p>	<p>Listen to those at grass roots e.g. Nurses. We attend to the patients, we are the ones who get frustrated when we haven't got the equipment to do the job properly.</p>	<p>Give us the tools to do the job properly - and salary doesn't even come into it - we just need more equipment.</p>

<p><b>What key barriers are there in your organisation to implementing a customer focused approach?</b></p>	<p><b>How do you think these could be overcome?</b></p>	<p><b>What could the organisation do in the longer term to maintain a customer focus?</b></p>
<p>Equal chances for everybody. Salary. More friendly looking ward - lighter colours, more pictures, more windows, air conditioning.</p>	<p>Spending money on redecoration, air conditioning. Being fair with salaries.</p>	<p>Involve staff - they know best about the situation in their area</p>
<p>The managers support their friends.</p>	<p>Staff should be treated equally, when an error or incident happens, not action being taken for some.</p>	<p>Treat staff equally and appreciate and be thankful to the staff for work well done.</p>
<p>Encourage staff to be more actively responsible for the care of the customer.</p>	<p>Ensure that customer/worker /colleague communications are the very best.</p>	<p>Encourage a 'can do / will do' attitude - not a 'it's not my problem' attitude.</p>
<p>Top management take no interest in implementation of customer focused approach on lower level.</p>	<p>Create communication line between management and their staff. My manager is my customer as well as I am his/her customer.</p>	<p>Make sure that everybody is aware that they are all somebodies customer as well as everybody else being their customer, on all levels.</p>
<p>Staff who feel demoralised show less interest.</p>	<p>Positive praise / recognition for good work. Acknowledgement and action for poor or lazy performance.</p>	<p>Better team building across the departments. We need to try to shift the 'Department' decides attitude.sense???</p>
<p>Ineffective communications top down and interdepartmental due to high workload and pressures accrued from this.</p>	<p>More supportive roles to departmental managers to offload work pressures</p>	<p>Ask for staff views and opinions on an annual basis. Bi-annually meet with senior staff to be seen that their opinions do matter.</p>
<p>Certain structures are archaic and do not support or benefit the staff in the workplace. Practices could be improved, people and management should endeavour to recognise and enforce best practices.</p>	<p>By voicing concerns to our superiors and then supporting them in the changes.</p>	<p>Have a dedicated person to answer the theatre telephone that for 90% of the time rings for minutes on end. Answering the phone before the 3rd ring is a customer core objective especially when it comes to places like theatres where any call could be an "EMERGENCY!!!"</p>

<b>What key barriers are there in your organisation to implementing a customer focused approach?</b>	<b>How do you think these could be overcome?</b>	<b>What could the organisation do in the longer term to maintain a customer focus?</b>
Outpatient reg is in the wrong place, should be moved to Atrium so we can face patients instead of having our backs to them. Doctors should be monitored and reprimanded if running late.	Move the desks to a different position Write to / penalise doctors for running late so we do not look bad.	Listen to the staff and do more surveys so we can tell you what is wrong / could be changed.
Lack of feedback. Lack of communication between staff and management on changes in the department.	More feedback on things going on in the Hospital. More positive appraisal, compliments.	More involvement with staff on changes. Take staff comments more seriously.

**Hotel Services** (Meals, Housekeeping)

Everyone should be treated the same whichever dept you work in. Less favouritism. Break times should be equal, Fairness is vital and a thank you is of great importance More eyes should be on Managers and Supervisors.	More information from Managers and Supervisors about what is going on in your dept rather than finding out from someone in another area. Customer Care should be paramount, to staff, visitors and most of all to patients if we want them to come back.	The mood of the staff reflects on to patients and visitors. Make staff happy and you have a happy hospital. Simple! One tea break for one dept and three for another does not make many happy!
Generally speaking I find the nursing staff is much more 'customer motivated' than the servery staff who should be more caring about the patients. (Strange for me to say this as I'm part of the servery staff myself.)	Difficult to say, but maybe the servery staff should be more aware of the fact that the patients - who are in fact the clients - are providing the income to pay their wages or to put the hospital in a position to do so!	<i>No comment entered</i>
There is no one common goal to providing excellent care. Each dept has its own values and culture. There is also no accountability for poor service and services are not checked enough.	The patient journey group agrees with 1 mystery shopper from within the hospital to report back general impressions. This would be 100% anonymous except for the Chair of the group and the shopper.	Change the culture and maintain staffing levels not keep restricting them.

<b>What key barriers are there in your organisation to implementing a customer focused approach?</b>	<b>How do you think these could be overcome?</b>	<b>What could the organisation do in the longer term to maintain a customer focus?</b>
Lack of information, communication between departments, lack of organisation within the hospital on the whole.	Meetings to discuss the problems arising from the above, focus on departments working together as one and not passing the ball.	More organisation, stop patients being sent round the houses i.e. registration, more porters and selected customer focus staff.
No cooperation from clinical staff towards non-clinical.	Heads of department listening and acting.	Treat all staff with equal respect to get the most out of them.
No recognition or reward from department managers	Treating all departments equally	Encourage teamwork and look after the staff who will then look after the customers.

### Support Services (Physiological, Pathology, Imaging, Pharmacy, Engineering, Supplies)

Lack of cohesion and understanding between primary patient depts. Lack of staff answering the phone for patient calls / price enquiries etc.	Get them sorted out and more staff on the phones.	Answer the phone, call enquirers back quickly with follow-up calls to answer their queries. Offer competitive prices. Get patients in the door!
No communication between staff No Teamwork	<i>No comment entered</i>	Staff could be rewarded more often to keep smiles on faces.
No standard training for all staff coming in contact with customers. Job roles / profiles between staff blurred.	All staff made aware and practise customer care and response to all customers. Staff understanding role of other staff.	All new staff to practise and know how to deal with customers and existing staff to go through annual reminder.
Partiality shown to some members of staff.	Equal treatment of all staff.	Better management in the department.
Different cultures produce different upbringings which regularly clash!	Some well thought out questions at interviews.	Targeting staff who normally adapt to different cultures and recognise what is and is not a polite tone / vocabulary / bad language.
Staff perception and mindset. Current culture.	Departmental reward system for good performance as a motivator to deliver consistent good customer service.	Customer focused reward system as this will in time change the culture and mindset of poor staff attitude towards customer care standards.

**HR & Admin** (HR, Business Office, Hospital Admin)

<b>What key barriers are there in your organisation to implementing a customer focused approach?</b>	<b>How do you think these could be overcome?</b>	<b>What could the organisation do in the longer term to maintain a customer focus?</b>
Lack of thought.	More training including role play i.e. learning how to feel as a customer.	Keep reminding staff. Ensure that new staff are properly trained.
When a patient attends the hospital they often speak to departments as they may need to register. They are asked questions and they offer their details to be entered correctly in a data base.	Data base needs a quicker program to update new addresses and insurance details on all episodes.	All departments work together to correct and update patient data base details correctly. This way they would know that they were listened to.
Lack of IT systems / performance measures to monitor customer care.	Understanding of benefits; Investment.	Consider appointing customer liaison officers and a customer care department.
Lack of departmental cooperation. Lack of inter-departmental respect / understanding. Lack of creative thinking when faced with limited resources.	Make departments jointly responsible for a given task. Managers / supervisors to present their action plan. Make MTM?????? stronger.	More importance and specific actions. Monitor and report them. Give customers personalised service from first contact to last.

## 5. Conclusions

This report has presented the findings from a research study which has explored the organisational climate of a number of organisations using a research tool developed by Professor Moira Clark for assessing and measuring the CRM Climate of both public and private sector companies.

The findings confirm the value of the survey tool as an assessor of an organisations climate and have proven its effectiveness in both the public and the private sectors.

A variety of approaches to the quantitative analysis were explored in the study and the conclusions are that:-

- Use of the statistical functions to derive Cronbach's alpha and to perform a Ttest on sets of data adds credibility and value to the quantitative analysis.
- Departmental analysis provides meaningful insight into issues and areas of concern in organisations where the climate is in need of improvement.
- Management v Non-Management analysis can also be useful
- Gender, length of service and other similar groupings do not appear to be particularly useful.

The organisations surveyed in this study, particularly the private hospital and the local authority department, have organisational climates that are in need of significant improvement. Service Excellence Organisations have a lot to teach organisations like these.

The qualitative part of the survey is extremely useful in highlighting climate issues and suggesting possible approaches to achieve improvement.

Having confirmed the validity of the survey tool and developed a useful range of techniques for analysis, future research would be useful to:-

- Assess the value of the qualitative suggestions through following up improvement projects in organisations that have been surveyed.
- Explore the organisational climate in circumstances where both in-house and outsourced teams deliver customer service. (e.g. In an organisation that has its own call-centre staff and also uses out-sourced staff at peak periods, to cover 24\*7 availability of service etc.

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