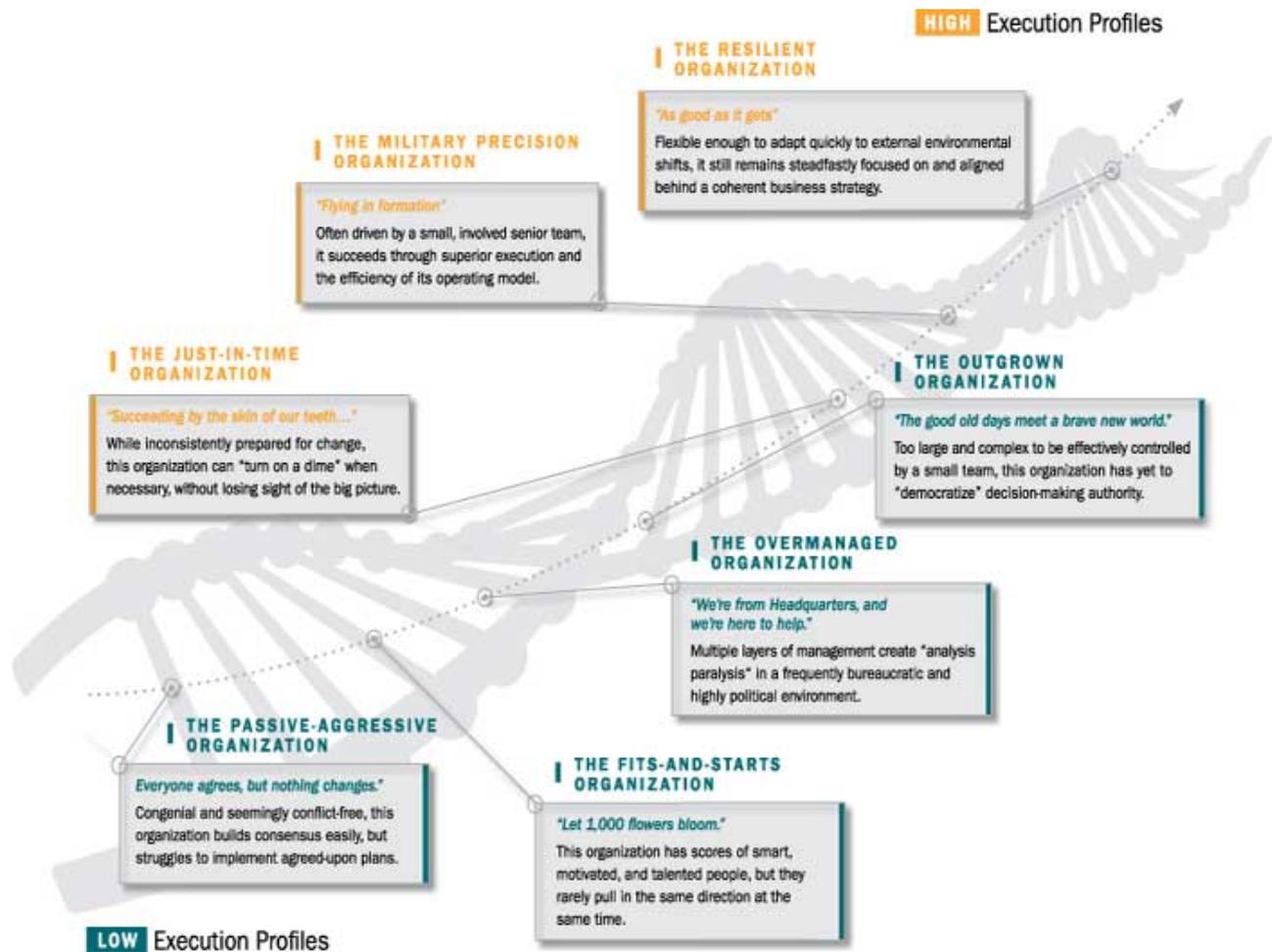


# The Seven Organization Types

Based on Booz/Allen's experience working with government agencies and not-for-profit organizations and their research on how well or badly the four Mission DNA building blocks are aligned within them, they have identified seven principal types of organizations—four unhealthy, and three healthy. Organizations are typically mosaics of more than one type—it depends on whom you ask—but one typically predominates.



## Resilient

### *"As good as it gets..."*

This is the organization that inspires both awe and envy because everything seems to come so easily to it: rewards, talent, respect. Like the popular kid in high school who got all A's and lettered in track, the Resilient organization seems destined for greatness; it fires on all cylinders. Resilient organizations are flexible, forward looking, and fun, and they attract team players. While it may hit the occasional bump in the road, the Resilient organization bounces back immediately, having learned from the experience. The Resilient organization is the healthiest of all the profiles, precisely because it doesn't believe its own press; rather, it is always scanning the horizon for the next threat or opportunity.

## Military Precision

### *"Flying in formation..."*

Everyone knows his or her role and implements it diligently in this organization, creating the overall effect of fluid and consistent execution. The Military Precision organization is hierarchical and operates under a highly controlled

management model that allows it to efficiently execute large volumes of similar transactions. It can conceive and execute brilliant strategies—often repeatedly—because it has drilled the organization and run it through every scenario in the manual. However, it does not typically deal well with events for which it has not planned.

### **Just-in-Time**

#### ***"Succeeding by the skin of our teeth..."***

Although not always proactive in preparing for change, this type of organization has demonstrated an ability to “turn on a dime” when necessary, without losing sight of the big picture. Just-in-Time organizations have a “can-do” attitude that infuses the office and inspires creative outbursts, frequently real breakthroughs, but it can also burn out the best and brightest bulbs. In the absence of consistent, disciplined structures and processes, this organization’s home runs often become “one-hit wonders,” rather than a reliable source of advantage, leaving this organization scrambling to keep up.

### **Fits-and-Starts**

#### ***"Let 1,000 flowers bloom."***

This organization lures intellect and initiative—smart people with enthusiasm and drive, but they do not often pull in the same direction at the same time. It’s a no-holds-barred environment in which a person can take an idea and run with it. But, in the absence of strong direction from the top and a solid foundation of common values below, initiatives either clash and burn or simply peter out. The result is an overextended organization on the verge of spinning out of control.

### **Outgrown**

#### ***"The good old days meet a brave new world."***

This organization is literally bursting at the seams, having expanded beyond its original organizational model. Because power is closely held at the top, the Outgrown organization tends to react slowly to market developments and often finds it cannot get out of its own way. If you’re in the middle of this organization, you might well see opportunities for positive change, but it’s just too hard to run these ideas up the flagpole. The legacy of top-down direction and decision-making is too well entrenched.

### **Overmanaged**

#### ***"We’re from Headquarters, and we’re here to help."***

Burdened with multiple layers of organizational hierarchy, this organization is a case study in “analysis paralysis.” More consumed with the trees than the forest, managers spend their time checking subordinates’ work rather than scanning the horizon for new opportunities or threats. Frequently bureaucratic and highly political, this organization frustrates self-starters and results-oriented individuals.

### **Passive-Aggressive**

#### ***"Everyone agrees, but nothing changes."***

This is the seething, smiley-face organization. Building consensus to make major changes is not a problem; implementing these changes, however, is next to impossible. Entrenched, underground resistance from field operations routinely defeats headquarters initiatives, as line employees assume “this too shall pass.” Confronted with an apathetic organization, senior management laments the futility of “nailing Jell-O to the wall.”