

The current global fiscal environment has forced most test organizations around the world to rethink the cost-to-value ratio of their test infrastructure and business practices. Whether driven by government cutbacks or corporate restructuring, attempts to better this cost-to-value ratio is most often cost-focused versus value-oriented. Attempting to restructure on cost data alone will result in a dismissal of the inherent hidden value in an organization's assets. When an organization chooses to nurture and develop its value, it creates transformative change and opportunities that can be leveraged across the enterprise. Unfortunately, value is an abstract idea that truly lies in the eye of the beholder. In the case of flight-test, "faster, cheaper, safer" are commonly espoused values. Ironically, we choose to go faster by throwing more money at the problem; we get safer by adding more oversight and bureaucracy into the process, and we get cheaper by reducing the money we put towards the endeavor. To get out of this paradigmatic spiral, we must innovate. Well-groomed innovation allows individual organizations of all sizes to develop their underutilized or inefficiently utilized value-assets. This spans from aircraft to facilities to people. There are numerous examples of organizations in and out of the test community that emphasize adding value versus simply working more efficiently. A few of the case studies that will be discussed are the 46 Test Group at Holloman AFB, Scaled Composites, Lockheed Skunk Works and even Google to name a few. The organizations that are most successful at this strategy are those organizations that recognize where their hidden talents lie and then encourage their development. They also structure and lead their organization so that innovation is a core value in their every day operation. The focus of this paper is to illustrate some of the success stories of value-oriented organizations, show how their culture of innovation is pervasive from top to bottom and most importantly, provide a framework for the flight test community to discover our own hidden values.