



# The Art of Change Making

**Curated and produced by**

John Atkinson, Emma Loftus and John Jarvis on behalf of the Systems Leadership Steering Group

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The Leadership Centre

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## Preface

For ten years, the Leadership Centre has sought to further our knowledge of what really works in response to the challenges of social issues in places around England. Through working with political, community and organisational leaders, the focus has evolved from local leadership projects through 'Total Place' to today's 'system leadership' and 'local vision' work.

Working now with partners from across the health and social care systems, supported by the 'Systems Leadership Steering Group', local vision projects are underway or delivered in over fifty locations, in counties and cities, towns and boroughs. Each has focused on how great local leadership can make a great place. Each has explored how we might help people live more meaningful lives through the avenue of a particular defined social issue such as reducing food poverty, tackling obesity or addressing long-term health conditions. In so doing we have been able to determine how different forms of leadership can influence these issues for the longer term. By experiencing successful approaches in one setting, people have been able to develop their capacity for leadership across a much wider system.

This guide is assembled from talking with the 'enablers' who have worked with each of these places. We asked them to share the models and approaches they have used in engaging with those places and the issues they chose to focus on. As such it is a rich and pragmatic handbook, based in real experience, sometimes honed over decades. It makes no pretence of being exhaustive or academically rigorous. Instead it shows how this work has been approached and offers a fresh perspective into working with novel and intransigent social issues whilst drawing on an extensive body of knowledge and wisdom.

## Acknowledgements

The Art of Change Making draws on a huge tradition and body of work that has its roots in many sources. We have tried always to go back to the original thought and credit the creators of the ideas and tools we have used. You will find the links to sources at the foot of each page and at the end of the guide. The people who built these ways of seeing the world and working with it and in it are the founders of this work.

John Atkinson deserves specific acknowledgment for the ideals he set in representing such an important body of work. Without his relentless drive, direction and contribution as editor, this piece of work would not have become what it is now.

We would also like to thank the team of enablers who suggested the elements we have covered. They have given freely from their practice and from their decades of learning. You will see their names throughout the work to illustrate how they have used each item. They are a hugely skilled and experienced bunch and have access to much wisdom. In particular we should like to thank Jill Barrow and Matt Gott for their thought and assistance in considering how everything could be brought together.

Emma Loftus deserves particular recognition for the hours of painstaking research and writing that brought each element to life. Most of the words here are hers; drawn from a desire to represent each element in a straightforward, easy-to-access way that respects deeply the original authors.

**The Leadership Centre  
2015**

# Navigating the Guide

## From Evolutionary Biology to Process Consultation – these are things enablers have used in doing their work in places

With the huge number of approaches, models and tools being used we had to find some way of organising them that not only made logical sense to a reader, but which is accessible in a dip-in and dip-out kind of way for those using it as a daily tool.

### The integrated leadership model

In organising 'The Art' we used the integrated systems leadership model developed through research commissioned by the Systems Leadership Steering Group as the basis for categorisation.

#### Public service context, systems leadership and systems leaders – an integrated model



The model has three rings. An outer ring describing the circumstances in which you are working. The middle ring describing the qualities/actions needed by those leading complex organisations through change – Systems Leadership; and an inner ring, describing the personal styles and behaviours needed of systems leaders.

If the issues you are facing fall under one or more of the outer ring circumstances, then you will find it helpful to explore this guide further.

Each element (approach, model or tool), was assessed for how it fits against the integrated leadership model by using the following questions; 'would you use this approach to develop... (e.g. shared power)?' or 'would you use this to change the way of... (e.g. thinking)?'

This was then recorded in a matrix that is at the back of this book. This allows you to search for something that achieves a particular outcome – and there may be more than one approach to use.

For example – you need an approach that changes the way people are relating, thinking and feeling, and that helps disturbs the system and create shared vision and values. Looking at the matrix you find that Social Movement Theory could be used for this.

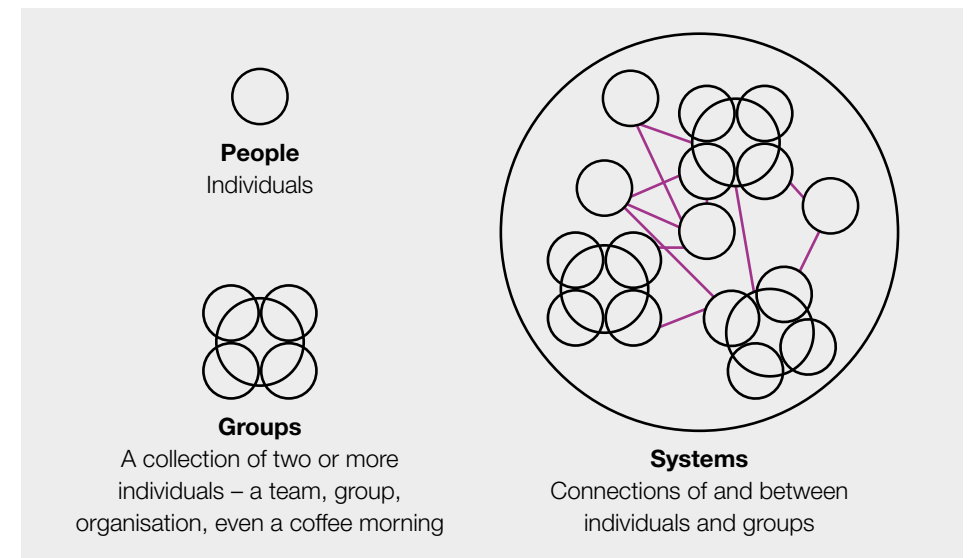
### The chapters of the Art of Change Making

As it turns out, reading a book through a spreadsheet isn't much fun, so it's handy that as we progressed through categorising each element against the integrated leadership model a different order emerged. The content appeared to self-organise. Elements appeared to naturally fit into the categories; understanding systems, understanding groups and understanding people, then tools and skills. This is the basis of the chapter structure we have used, though, you could also organise them in a different, yet equally valid way.

There are over seventy different models and approaches assembled in this handbook under the headings we have described. This is clearly not the only way to order such a range and depth of thought. Multiple ways of making sense of a situation is of itself a characteristic of working with complexity. These headings do however provide one useful frame for understanding the relationships and connections between these models and approaches and as such provide a good way to explore the richness and meaning that they add.

### Understanding people, groups and systems

We have defined people, groups and systems as below. There are no hard and fast rules defining these; they are porous and fluid.



## Tools and Skills

Tools are things you could pick up and do today that produce a defined output.

Skills are things that you can try today, but through practice you will get better and refine your approach.

## Publication structure

Designed to be easy to access, with the connections between the different models and approaches made clear, anyone facing a difficult issue where the resolution requires the interaction of different organisations and social groups will find this an invaluable asset in designing and approaching their work.

Some people will want to read through this work sequentially, building page by page a perspective of what it says. In doing this you will start with some of the big conceptual ideas that are by their very nature, complex and challenging. Other may use it to dip into and out of, following their curiosity and inspiration. That too will work. We have linked pages and concepts to help that happen. Either way is fine. There is something for everybody here. So find your own way through 'The Art of Change Making'; a way that helps you get from it whatever you find most useful.

We hope that the way the document is structured allows you to access it from different perspectives and angles.

## Page structure

Each page is made up of;

- An explanation of the item
- Relevant diagrams
- How it has been applied in real life by the enablers
- Links to other relevant items
- Sources

## Introduction

As our organisations have grown we have adopted ways of running them that are designed to do just that. They run our existing organisations efficiently and practically. We have systems of reward and recognition, strategy and planning, finance and information that help us run these organisations smoothly and deliberately.

## History

Our understanding of organisations is a product of their history. In the early industrial revolution as people flocked to our rapidly growing cities our work was to service the machines that fuelled our growth. People were hired hands, that toiled on lathes and looms and this language persisted in our organisations. For centuries, leading hands and charge hands were job roles and in some places they continue in existence to this day.

The guiding Cartesian philosophy that shaped this growth was reductionist in nature. By breaking things into their constituent parts we could understand anything. We saw it in physics, in biology, in chemistry. Classification and order were the norm, things that could be measured could be understood and were valuable. Things that were intangible were not.

In organisations this found its form in the organisation chart, a way of mapping the hierarchy, power structures and information flows that it is assumed make our organisations function. We have built financial management tools and performance management processes to reinforce this and to optimise performance. Managing a nation's health and social needs took on an industrial scale and with that it became an industrial process.

## The paradox

In many respects this really is efficient; to manage operations at any scale without structure risks huge waste and inefficiency. And yet, almost paradoxically, the effect of running our organisations in this fashion has given rise to just such waste, with real human consequences. We face novel and intransigent problems that are not resolved by deploying our standard operating procedures and improvement techniques. The more we try to do so, the more we have created a burgeoning bureaucracy. For example, we see the need for senior leaders to align the work of health and care professionals in our towns and cities so we form a Health and Well-Being Board to govern this. This board has no delivery or commissioning capacity so we create sub-boards that bring together the executive heads of the organisations to coordinate their activity. At the same time, they are still governed by their existing political structures, governance, regulations and monitoring. And so a proliferation of meetings arise whereby senior people meet in various guises and locations yet the capacity to truly change people's lives alters little. We have created a costly way of addressing social issues and yet at times, there seems so little progress as return on our significant investment in this social fabric.

## The challenge

The ways of thinking that were designed to efficiently run our organisations are proving less than efficient at addressing the complexity of modern life. Running our organisations efficiently is not enough. If we are to address the changing expectations of the relationship between the citizen and the state, the demographic change in society and the reduction in levels of funding for public services our existing patterns of thought must be stretched to encompass this new and complex dynamic. The recent five-year view for the NHS in England is predicated on reducing the numbers of people entering our hospitals. Yet this figure has risen repeatedly. There is no precedent through which our current organisations demonstrate the capability for delivering such significant levels of behaviour change within our society.

## Thinking differently

This points to the need to consider the problem differently. Einstein suggested that problems couldn't be resolved from within the same level of thinking that created them. To work with complex issues that have multiple causes, issues that we can improve or make worse but never completely resolve, requires a way of addressing these issues that recognises their complexity and inherent messiness. It requires us to consider this very human activity as a living process, one that recognises the multiplicity of relationships and connections we have as human beings, one that recognises our capacity to adapt to situations and to adapt situations in order to make something new that addresses our needs.

The approach to strategy that asks where are we now, where do we want to be, how are we going to get there, falls flat for issues where the situation, desired outcome and thus the means of getting there are contested. To work in this contested space requires us to work on the relationships between people, teams, organisations and communities. That means doing this from a standpoint that recognises they are not boxes on an organisation chart but are instead complex networks with multiple connections, relationships and values. With this will come a capacity to adapt and a search for meaning.

## A search for meaning

This is at the heart of this different way of working; a belief that lives should be meaningful. When people are able to live the sort of lives that they would choose to, whether they are patients, carers, front-line workers, clinical leaders, professional managers or simply the general public they take on a responsibility for adapting their environment to make it work. When this happens levels of demand on external services are reduced and services evolve to be more effective.

This handbook brings together a huge and truly impressive body of thought and practice that leads us in this direction. By placing at the core of our work the importance of making lives meaningful, the ways of understanding systems, people and groups alongside the tools and skills that support them bring alive the dimensions of systems leadership. These are described in recent research commissioned the the Systems Leadership Steering Group as ways of feeling, perceiving, thinking, doing, relating and being.

## The context for systems leadership

The integrated model for systems leadership has as its outer ring a description of circumstances that lead to the approaches we describe in this guide. If the issues you are facing fall under one or more of these then you will find it helpful to explore this guide further to see the sorts of models and approaches that 'enablers' have found invaluable in tackling this work.

### Increasing demand

As hospitals report a 10% increase, year on year, in admissions by ambulance of frail elderly people, it is clear that the demand on our public services is rising. It is also more than a volume problem. Our experience of the commercial world tells us that personalised products and responses are increasingly demanded and expected. This makes for new challenges for designers, commissioners and deliverers of public services.

### Decreasing resources

At the same time, public services are facing an unprecedented rate of reduction in funding. The natural inclination for those faced with unpalatable decisions is to look for internal efficiencies that will resolve this. The scale of change now challenges whether this is achievable and encourages people to look across organisations to remove unnecessary overlap and duplication. This takes us into a realm where we must work effectively across organisations in a situation where no individual holds hierarchical power and authority.

### Wicked issues

Wicked issues are either novel or recalcitrant. We have never faced them before, or our tried and trusted approaches impact little on the problem. They therefore respond badly to objective setting or performance management approaches and demand a more agile, adaptive response. This suggests the need to ask questions that help us to consider the real nature of the issue whose responses often involve 'bricolage', a melding of different tools, techniques and approaches into a clumsy solution that leads to progress.

### Regulation and inspection

Where objectives are clear and the means of achieving them proven, regulation and inspection provides a clear framework and measure for determining progress. In the realm of wicked problems where the context and its responses may be contested, regulation and inspection can result in different forms of gaming and all manner of unintended consequences.

### Opportunity

Unintended consequences are not necessarily negative or unpredicted. Often they are a source of rapid adaptation. Changes in circumstance driven by increasing demand or decreasing resource create new opportunities or make existing opportunities seem more palatable. These are rarely properly exploited through our traditional operational mind-set that instead wants to make them conform to existing practice.

## Paradox

So in a variety of social settings, we see new opportunities arising just as we see our capacity to exploit them diminishing. We see communities wishing to take a greater role in their affairs whilst at the same time expecting a broader range and response from public services. These circumstances cannot be made sense of through a linear response. Systems leadership asks us to hold paradoxical and competing views equally as different perceptions of the same situation.

## Interdependency and interconnectedness

Organisations and communities are inter-linked and interdependent. Reducing delays for elderly people as they transfer between different elements of care requires many organisations and voluntary services to work in a coordinated manner. Stress in any part of that system, be it financial, quality or volume causes knock-on effects for everyone else, particularly the patient.

## Risk

In an environment where many organisations are contributing to an outcome, responsibility may not be equally shared. Particular individuals may carry statutory responsibilities, for some there may be financial penalties for particular results. Risk is not shared evenly, even if those in the system wished that it were. Early intervention work also carries risk; new ways of working cannot always deliver projected savings. Any form of approach to working with a new problem, or a new approach to working with an old problem, by its very nature is a step into the unknown.

## VUCA

Bob Johansen at the Institute for the Future describes the future world as Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous (VUCA). In such environments, traditional management approaches do not yield their normal and expected results. Instead it requires ways of working that can be flexible as they encounter unprecedented situations and can be rapidly adapted as understanding of them grows.

## Being an 'enabler'

Being an effective enabler of systems leadership is more than simply knowing or using the models and approaches we describe. Important though these are, the way you conduct yourself in the work you do really matters and has an at times dramatic impact on the effectiveness of any approach you employ. The team of enablers who have contributed to this guide are highly skilled and many have a long experience of working in this way. However they would not suggest for a second that they have mastered all of the skills we list. For all of us, this form of mastery is a constant search that requires us to be conscious of how we are in each situation in order to learn how we work best.

Enabling work often involves connecting different people and organisations. As such we become holders of privileged information and unique insights. The temptation to retain these and to create relations of dependency with our clients is seductive. It is also self-limiting. It is vital to remind ourselves whom we are serving in this work, even if that can at times be a little difficult to discern.

Characteristically, we think being an effective enabler involves some combination of the following list. This is not an exhaustive list and as we suggested, mastery is never achieved. However, our hope is that by sharing our thoughts it allows the opportunity for people to consider their practice and the routes by which they might develop.

### Neutral

We think it is really hard to work as an enabler when you are perceived as belonging to, favouring or supporting one part of the system. In order to reflect the multiple dynamics in any system leadership work it is necessary to impartially reflect your observations. Of course, these too are simply our perceptions, but if we are not seen as neutral, are seen as having a particular viewpoint, then they are heard less clearly and their impact is reduced.

### Ego-less

Your work as an enabler is not about you. If you are seeking respect and recognition you will be seen as not working in the best interests of the whole system. It will also lead you towards specific approaches that may deliver more immediate impact, where at times part of the art is to slow down, hold the ambiguity and allow events to take their course.

### Observant

As an outsider who is connecting to a system you bring a fresh perspective. What you see and feel matters. Things that may not seem at first to be important may be significantly new or different for the existing players. By noticing the things that strike you as different, disturb you or confuse you, it is possible to add real value to the system with which you are working. This can lead you into new lines of inquiry or prompt the system to reflect differently on its activity.



## Reflective

The impact of much enabling work is felt over time. Reflecting on what you think you see going on (and how you know that), stops you falling into the same traps that the system itself may be caught in. Reflecting with others on what you think you are seeing is a really valuable way of helping a system become more reflective of itself.

## Knowledgeable

When enablers rely on only one model or approach they lead the people they are working with to consider things from their enabler perspective. By having a broad range of models and approaches that they can use, enablers are able to find a way of considering and working with an issue that allows people in the system to make sense of what is going on in a way that they will find valuable and retain in their work.

## Generous

Effective enablers generously offer of themselves to the systems they are working with. This can be about the time they commit, as it is often necessary to meet a wide range of people in a wide variety of settings. It is also about knowledge. Part of the work of enabling is to build an enduring capacity for change in the system so imparting an enabler's acquired wisdom is essential.

## Inquisitive

A naturally curious approach leads enablers to try and understand what they are seeing. It also encourages them to follow lines of enquiry that may go beyond the initial remit of the task. By trying to understand what is going on in the system, and how people really know, they can generate new and different approaches. By going beyond the obvious they expose new connections that change people's understanding of how their system really works.

## Empathetic

Human systems are made of people. At times working beyond normal lines of reporting and authority in the service of many demands can cause people considerable discomfort or stress. Good enablers understand the range of behavioural responses this can create and appreciate the different and at times conflicting perspectives of all involved.

## Creativity

There are many elements in the pages that follow, but one you will not find is on creativity. We thought about this long and hard and actually had a few goes at writing one. Each time we did this it didn't quite feel right. It felt as if what mattered in this topic wasn't being properly covered. Yet time after time, organisations describe what they are missing as just this, creativity (or sometimes 'entrepreneurship'.) What is it that makes this so hard to describe?

When we reflected further we felt that creativity was a very normal and natural human attribute. It is always there. People by their very nature are innately creative. What happens is we create systemic or group conditions that inhibit this creativity from working in service of our objectives. Everyday, in order to get their work done, people must find ways around finance or technology systems that don't naturally enable them to do what they need to do. They need to work with multiple and conflicting values and objectives and find a route through these that enables something of value to be done. Just doing the day job can sometimes be a hugely creative act.

Steve Jobs, founder of Apple Computers once said, "Creativity is just connecting things. When you ask creative people how they did something, they feel a little guilty because they didn't really do it, they just saw something. It seemed obvious to them after a while. That's because they were able to connect experiences they've had and synthesize new things."

So on reflection everything we offer here is about human creativity. If we meet, think and act in ways that allow us to bring our collective intelligence, skills and experience to bear on the problems we face, we are allowing creativity to arise in the interactions between us. Use the ways of thinking, skills and tools we offer here and you will release the creativity inherent in being human.



# 1

Understanding

# Systems

# An Ecology of Mind

Gregory Bateson

## A way of looking at systems through their connections and the nature of relationships

Gregory Bateson's work influenced and continues to influence thinking, practices and understanding across many fields, from anthropology, through to psychology and even mathematics. Bateson himself never settled into working in one field. He worked across a wide spectrum of areas believing that how we understand the world isn't separable into specific components, so different fields shouldn't and cannot exist separately. Bateson's work (along with other eminent thinkers and scientists) into understanding human behaviour at the Macy conferences, (1946-1953), led to the creation of the field of cybernetics and was the foundation of systems thinking. (Cybernetics is also the theory behind much of the technological innovation such as computing which we now take for granted).

### The mind

Bateson's view of the mind changed the ways in which theorists, scientists and thinkers viewed the world. The mind, Bateson said, isn't a 'thing'. It doesn't exist as a physical entity. The brain is the physical thing that allows us to think, but it isn't the thing that does our thinking. The mind is the way that we think and the physical world around us is the way through which that thinking is expressed. We think, Bateson said, with our minds and our mind is inseparable from our own physical form. It is inseparable from our brain, our blood, our heart, our body. Our body is inseparable from the ground on which we walk, the air that we breathe, the sounds that we hear, the things that we see. Our mind is inseparable from all that we experience and from the things that we do. Our experiences inform our perception and our perception influences how and what our mind decides to do. The mind, Bateson said, is inseparable because everything, every single thing in the world, is connected through a web of complex, tangled relationships. Our mind is part of a holistic ecology that is intentionally and unintentionally affected by the processes of our mind.

### Hierarchy of differences

We therefore need to consider systems and ourselves holistically as part of a wider whole. This is Bateson's idea of the hierarchy of differences. Bateson explains that the whole world is connected by the relationships between things. The world is a connected network of ideas. Everyone (and every system) is part of a network. That network includes the body, the mind, the wider environment, as well as our perceptions and the actual actions we take. Every idea interacts with the others. They share messages, information and influence. These messages are not held in consciousness or in the body. They are held in the pathways that connect us. Information passes continuously around this network and every

point in the network takes that information and changes it. Everything is interconnected and tangled up in baffling, sometimes conflicting and sometimes cooperating ways. So rather than considering the parts as separate entities we instead ask; what is the relationship between them?

But Bateson explained we have a tendency, rooted in the traditions of The Industrial Age to view things according to the separate parts that constitute the whole. We do this through the language we use, and through our perception. (Epistemology-How we know what we know). Our perception is affected by the contexts of the experiences we have; how something is framed affects how we see and understand it. We define function and purpose on a purely arbitrary basis, affected by our own judgement and view of the world. A definition clouded by education, religion, culture, emotion and self-understanding.

When we divide the world into parts we separate that part from the whole of the ecology in which it exists and we become unable to see the world clearly. We impose limits on our understanding of those parts themselves and of the whole. When we can't see the delicate intricacies of connections that give the whole its identity and strength, we act in ways that hurt it. We impose limits on our ability to see and understand how those parts relate to the other parts around them and the dynamics of the relationships between things.

### The difference that makes a difference

Bateson developed his theory of 'the difference that makes a difference' as a way of understanding something according to the relationships it has to other things, rather than seeing things as separate parts. The difference that makes a difference asks that we look at things in different ways. It doesn't ask; who or what caused this? Causality says Bateson isn't a linear process that can be traced back to a single event. Causality, he suggests is in fact a result of a complex process of things interacting, intertwining and tangling up together. Causality is actually distributed. It is a convergence of many different ideas, thoughts, actions and influences from across many different directions. Every bit of information (or difference) makes a difference to something, somewhere in the network. That means that the relationships between everything matters. When trying to explain or make a change in the behaviour of a system, it is necessary to think about the wider ecology and networks of which we are a part. That is mind, body, environment, perceptions and the actions we take.

Bateson would ask; what is the pattern that connects me to you, or this to that? a question that he never answered. It is a question that could never be answered, because the patterns between things are always changing. A living system is continuously changing as it self-corrects to cope with the conditions of ever changing environments. It is the ability to change and be flexible that actually gives the world stability. The things that cannot adapt, fail. They cease to exist. Systems are complex. They behave in complex, tangled, baffling ways. The question itself is the point. The question causes us to examine our view, our understanding and so through this enables us to see things differently.

## Seeing things differently

Seeing things differently is what matters. When we are faced with things we don't understand, with seemingly insurmountable problems, when we are stuck in what Bateson termed a 'double bind', in which there appears to be no way out, and whatever we do simply makes things worse, then we need to do something entirely differently. We need to think creatively, and that means taking a different standpoint. When you're standing looking at seemingly separate parts your view is constrained, you are unable to make full sense of what's happening. But when you consider that everything is a part of a network in a holistic ecology, when you try to and look from different perspectives you become able to see things that you never even knew were there, and you become able to see the complexity and dynamics of the relationships between things. Then you can ask; what are the things that are important to us that we need to hold onto and what are the things we can allow ourselves to change?

## How it's really applied

**Whenever I begin work with a new system people invariably introduce me to how it works by describing its separate parts, what each bit does, who the main characters are. Thinking of Bateson reminds me to enquire into the nature of the relationships between the different communities, organisations or people. It is often by seeking how these relationships function that we begin to see how the system really works.**



John Atkinson

### Why not also look at:

- Multiple Cause Diagrams
- Stakeholder Analysis – Trust and Agreement
- Open Space

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## Evolutionary Biology

Maturana and Varela

### An approach to help understand the ways systems respond to change based on the theory that human systems are biological in nature and respond to change in predictable ways

Maturana and Varela argue that an organisation is a biological living system. That means that it will behave just like any other biological system; an organisation will respond to change just the same way as any other living thing. They believe that all biological systems (including organisations) have common features, which means that they all respond to change in predictable ways.

### But why are organisations biological systems?

Human systems can be considered as biological because they are autopoietic. The term 'autopoiesis' is a term adopted by Varela and Maturana to describe the ways in which living systems function and all living systems have the same features:

#### Individuality

Biological systems have a distinct sense of identity. Everything they do is about preserving this identity.

#### Self-constructing

A system is made up of lots of different parts that all need to interact and relate to each other. There are no set rules and patterns for the way this must happen, only that it must. The organism decides this for itself according to what its individual needs and desires are. This determines how the organism is structured. It is self-constructing. It decides for itself how far it can push itself and what it believes it can cope with according to what it decides is safe; it defines its own limits.

#### Self-referencing

It understands itself by what it knows. That comes from within, based on past experience and internal knowledge. It understands the 'now' by what has happened before.

#### Autonomous

Every single function of an organism is there for ultimately just one thing; self-preservation, that is about maintaining the system and its identity.

#### A closed system

The system can survive on its own. It doesn't need any support from another system, any input. It's got everything it needs for basic survival already. All of its functions support the others. It functions as a closed circle, supporting itself. All the functions of autopoiesis are working in this closed circle to maintain identity.

## It's all about surviving

The living organism is only interested in one thing, surviving. That's about maintaining identity and maintaining the functions of autopoiesis. Everything it has learned how to do, all of its functions, have been developed to survive the environment. It is adapting in tiny little ways all of the time, without even knowing it. Maturana and Varela explain that because the living system is only out to maintain its autopoiesis, because it just cares about surviving, it manipulates and controls everything around it to give it the best chance possible to do that. What it actually does is decide what environment it needs around it to survive; it defines its environment.

The problem with change is that anything too threatening to the environment, anything that is interpreted as being an overt threat to survival, anything that scares the organism will simply be destroyed. The living organism destroys threats that are unacceptable and it destroys threats that are unprecedented. This means that the living system will attempt to destroy unprecedented 'change' and change that it interprets as unacceptable.

The biological system says Maturana and Varela uses a mixture of past experience and instinct to decide what changes it will allow to take place. That means that change has to meet certain requirements: the change must still allow the organism to be autopoietic and all the features of autopoiesis must still be able to happen.

Changes mustn't change identity, they should change behaviour but those changes in behaviour must still allow the organism to function in ways that still get the same end results. In other words even with a change in behaviour the outcome of that behaviour should still do what the organism needs.

According to Maturana and Varela, a human system is a biological system because it is autopoietic. It has a circulatory system of functions that are all about preserving identity, because identity is at the heart of survival.

### How does an organism adapt to change?

- How the organism changes its behaviours to adapt to the change depends on how it interprets the significance of that change to its overall survival. It asks; is this a threat? Do we need this change?
- An organism will only change if it becomes disturbed. Change has to cause an internal disruption, a pause in normality.
- The organism, not the change agent will decide where in the system the changes can be allowed to take place. That's usually where it feels safest. Change won't be allowed to happen everywhere all at once. (But because the living system is a closed system change in one place soon leads to another change elsewhere).

- The organism changes its behaviour by learning to do things in different ways but bases its new behaviours on the patterns of the old ones (past experience). A biological organism needs to make sense of change and because it's self-referencing that means that it understands what is happening now by what has happened before.
- A biological organism likes routine and depends on predictability. It predicts that the same patterns of behaviour will happen over and over again. It likes the predicted routine because it helps it maintain its identity. Change has to happen in ways that are sensitive to that predictability. When that routine doesn't happen the organism becomes confused and begins to disintegrate. That disintegration in organisations is a sign that a threat (a change), has messed up the system. If the system is to be saved then the functions of autopoiesis have to be encouraged to re-establish, this allows it to adapt and maintain its identity.

## How it's really applied

**Considering systems as living things evolving with their environment is sometimes really helpful for me. However much I see people wanting systems to behave differently, it is helpful to remember that disturbing systems usually results in them rejecting (or in biological terms, killing!) the change agents. I therefore try to build wider and wider alliances for change that bring more and more people into the process. This was the basis for the work in Bristol in the belief that at some point, the system will see the new perspective as part of its new environment and begin to adapt to accommodate the change.**



John Atkinson

### Why not also look at:

- **Neuro-Science – system 1 and system 2**
- **Learning Organisations**

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# Living Systems

Myron Rogers

## A way of understanding the ways in which social organisations work

Living Systems developed by Myron Rogers is a way of addressing the questions;

- How do systems work?
- How does this system work?
- How do I work in and with this system?

### Why think in terms of living systems?

The traditional view of organisations is that they are nothing more than machines, complicated perhaps but machines none the less. Machines that are artificially created and controlled. Machines that operate in restrictive, dictated, pre-set, prescribed, environmental conditions. The problem with this according to the concept of living systems is that when faced with change, change that is outside the normal parameters of function, the organisational machine doesn't know what to do. In the fixed space of a machine there's no room for learning, no capacity to adapt. This means that change brings chaos.

Living systems argues that organisations are in fact living, complex and dynamic. They are made up of many networks within networks. If we want organisations to be able to change, for them to be adaptive, resilient, intelligent, for them to be able to learn and progress, we have to stop thinking of them and treating them in terms of them being a machine and start thinking of them as being a living system.

### Chaos, complexity and self-organisation

Organisations (and thus the cause and effect of their actions) are often divided across time and space, this can have unexpected consequences, (which then have to be managed which creates still more complexity). At first glance the notion of an organisation being a living entity in which there exists a complex set of networks seems to be a chaotic system of existing and surviving. But the complex behaviour that keeps the system alive, that keeps getting the job done is surprisingly very stable. It's not just a random mix of thoughts and actions made by a random mix of individuals. Each individual is part of the overall network and that network is supported by simple rules of connection.

There's order in this complex system and it manages very successfully to organise itself; it is self-organising. This develops from the ways in which it understands itself according to identity, relationships and information. These three things form the mind and soul of the organisation. Each is inseparable from the others. They work together to give meaning to the system, help the system to understand itself and provide common purpose and shared belief in the common good. Every action is taken with thought about what 'its neighbours' are doing, and the collective purpose of the overall network.

## Identity

In a system, identity is at the heart of how an organisation defines and understands itself. That sense of identity is created not only from a sense of shared purpose and shared values but also from a sense of what it believes it knows. This is rooted in history, past experience and the sense of how it sees its future. Because identity is so important to living systems any point of change needs to begin with the questions, why are we doing this? And; how does that fit with our common purpose? Considering these questions helps change become 'meaningful'. It is a 'meaningful disturbance' because it supports what the system and its people already know and what they already believe. (See Maturana and Varela, Evolutionary Biology).

## Relationships

To understand a living system and help change happen it is necessary to understand the nature of the relationships within it. Relationships are the connections within the networks of an organisation. The relationships in a system are the thing that allows the organisation to talk to itself and spread information. Relationships also create and develop further information and help people and organisations learn. The stories that the organisation tells itself are how it makes sense of what's happening. Stories change their perception and ultimately their behaviour. Without the chatter that comes with relationships, the system is quiet and stuck, nothing happens, nothing changes. Change needs the system to act collectively. It won't work with one individual standing alone, so strong relationships need to be fostered across the system and the hierarchy.

## Information

The living system is constantly processing information. It exists through information, communicates through information and evolves through information. It is the way that it organises itself and it can't survive without it. A system that is stagnant doesn't survive, but a system that takes in all and every bit of information is unable to effectively deal with it. The living system walks the line between these two, choosing to use that information which is valuable to its evolution and discarding that information which is too threatening to its identity and survival.

When working with living systems it's important to know how the organisation uses and shares its information. Asking; what information is shared? What's not? Who sees the information? Who doesn't? How can we help the organisation learn to understand itself better? Information to be truly powerful needs to be shared by everyone. This develops trust and strengthens relationships and also furthers the collective understanding of identity and purpose (and change).

All living organisms perceive the world in ways that are unique to them. That means that different people see different things and different people understand things differently. These different perspectives all put together create a better picture and understanding of 'what's going on'.

## Problems, self-organising and change

A living system is hell-bent on survival and when faced with a threat the system has to decide how it will respond. A living system, just like any living creature instinctively tries to make sense of the world according to what they already know. They respond to threat according to the voice of past experience, but when faced with problems that doesn't always work. So they have to learn how to do things differently, they have to adapt.

Problems have to be addressed in ways that use the natural abilities of the living system. New and better pathways of relationships have to be forged, that open more people to more people. The right information needs to be shared across the system to develop understanding and change has to be meaningful to the system if it's to take root and work long-term.

## Emergence

In the living system procedures, rules and deadlines are used as guidelines, ideas, or simply statements of intent rather than 'must dos'. Ways of 'doing' and understanding that are neither planned nor expected, often develop outside of procedures, rules and deadlines. They develop in response to unexpected stimuli, including threat.

Change in the living system occurs as different ways of being and responding develop simultaneously in different parts of the system. In a stagnant system those thoughts would stay isolated and separated and only change attitudes and behaviour there, but a living system isn't like that. The living system is connected through simple rules, joined across networks, united by shared vision, empowered by shared information. In the living system these local unexpected thoughts are quickly disseminated and adopted throughout the system. A process of emergence has taken place. Emergent ideas occur quickly and often unexpectedly. They evolve as they spread so that often the end process doesn't resemble where it started from. Once they are taken up across the system they are hugely powerful.

## Working with living systems

The framework of living systems provides a way of understanding the organisation, but how can you use it?

Begin by remembering Myron's Maxims;

- Real change happens in real work
- Those who do the work do the change
- People own what they create
- Start anywhere, follow it everywhere
- Connect the system to more of itself

## How it's really applied

**One tool that I have found invaluable in working with systems leadership is Myron Roger's five maxims. I used it to design the Total Place programme and it underpins the work on Local Vision. Key is that 'real change takes place in real work'. I take this to mean getting away from meetings around board tables and out into conversations with communities and frontline staff. By involving people in the work they 'own what they create', finding better and better ways of doing things and deciding to alter their behaviour and approach to services. This naturally leads people to a co-production mentality, but by 'starting anywhere and following it everywhere' we get beyond the traditional boundaries on problems that have kept us recreating the same solutions. As a blueprint for working with living systems, the five maxims are essential.**



John Atkinson

### Why not also look at:

- World Café
- Open Space
- Future Search

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# Understanding Networks

## A way to understand the nature and importance of networks

Networks exist everywhere. They exist naturally in our environment and they are also deliberately created. Networks are the way that people connect virtually and in reality. They are the way that systems function and are organised, the way that the internet operates and connects us across the world. We use networks in science, mathematics, computer programming. Networks are the way that the world is structured, the way it operates and the way in which it shares information. Networks are powerful.

An organisation isn't just one network, it is several and they each have their own culture and identity. (see Douglas, Cultural Theory). Networks are all interlinked in tangled complex ways. Networks have a wide sphere of influence, they are not limited by organisational boundaries or hierarchy or formal structure. They're not limited to the confines of that organisation. Networks spread beyond one organisation and connect to many other organisations, individuals and to communities too.

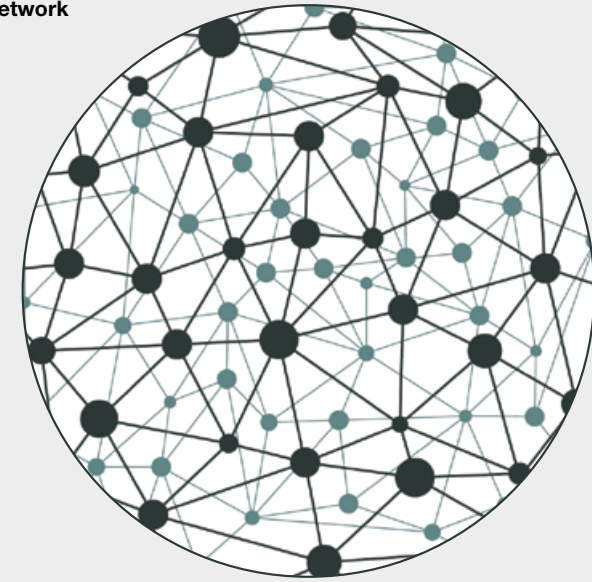
All networks have similar features. They all have connection points (people or processes or things). These are described as edges. They all have a clustering pattern described as a clustering coefficient, (similar to Granovetter's theory The Strength of Weak Ties). They all have pathways that can be understood as the average number of steps (or points, people, jumps, clicks etc), between one part on the network and another. Different network theories explain the properties of networks and the ways in which they function and behave in different ways:

A network is valuable. Increasingly the value of an organisation isn't held in its physical assets or in its bank balance, it's held in networks. Organisations need to be able to use networks to keep hold of that knowledge and information and they need networks to make change happen. They need to be able to use networks to connect people, to spread information and knowledge and ideas and skills. These properties of networks that we find in social settings mean we have a way of understanding why they do what they do. This gives us a way to explore how we use them to achieve desired outcomes, or change.

### Random Network Theory

Random Network Theory developed by Pál Erdős and Alfréd Rényi in 1959, suggests that there is no pattern to the way that edges (connection points) connect to each other. It suggests that each edge will have a broadly similar number of connections to other edges and that it has a low pattern of clustering co-efficiency, in other words the friends of the edge don't know each other. In a random network the average pathway between one point of the network and another is short and pathways also grow slowly in relation to the size of the network. This means that information spreads quickly, so when one connection point is infected or taken down the rate of infection and the 'knocking out' of the other connection points happens quickly.

Random network



### The Scale-Free Network

In 1999, Barabasi and Bonabeau developed a new network theory, based on the way that computer technology and more specifically the internet is structured and operates. The Scale-Free network is characterised by the existence of what Barabasi and Bonabeau termed power-hubs. These power-hubs grow rapidly as they become 'popular', which then makes them more attractive to new edges. This is termed preferential attachment.

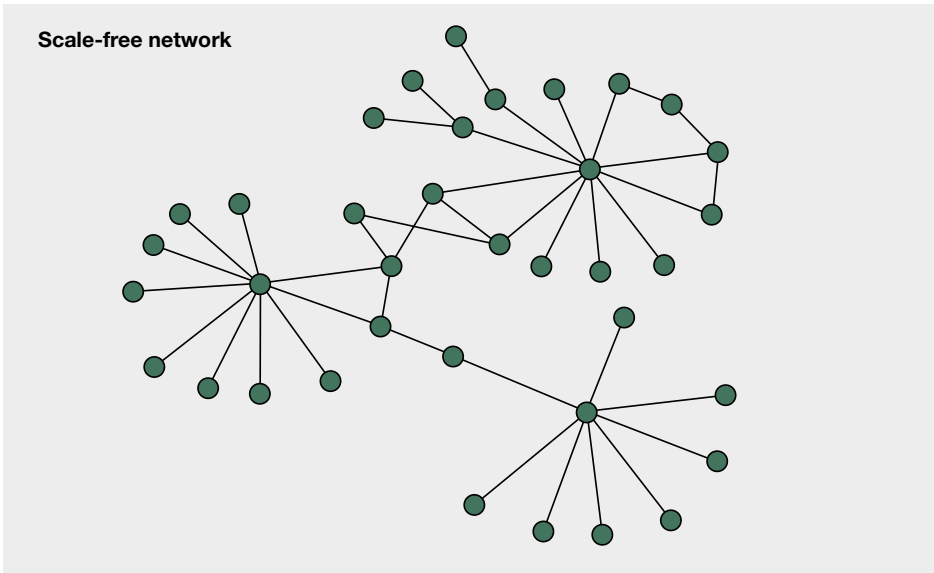
Unlike Random Network Theory, Barabasi and Bonabeau claim that the different edges in the network have varying numbers of connection to the network. Some edges, they claim have a huge number of other edges connected to them, while other edges just have a few. The Scale-Free Network is also characterised by unlimited growth, it has no outer limits on the amount of information it can hold and share or the number of new edges that it can support.

Scale-Free Network Theory also suggests that the cluster co-efficiency pattern across the network is variable. The power-hubs tend to have low cluster patterns, in other words their friends don't know each other, while the less well connected edges have well developed larger cluster patterns, (their friends will know each other).

The average pathway between points of the network is also small. This means that information is able to pass quickly around the network. However because of the nature of its connections, (power hubs and the differing clustering patterns), it is in fact remarkably resilient. Taking out one connection hub will not usually result in a rapid knock on effect to the others. One power-hub being knocked out will not be catastrophic, as many others

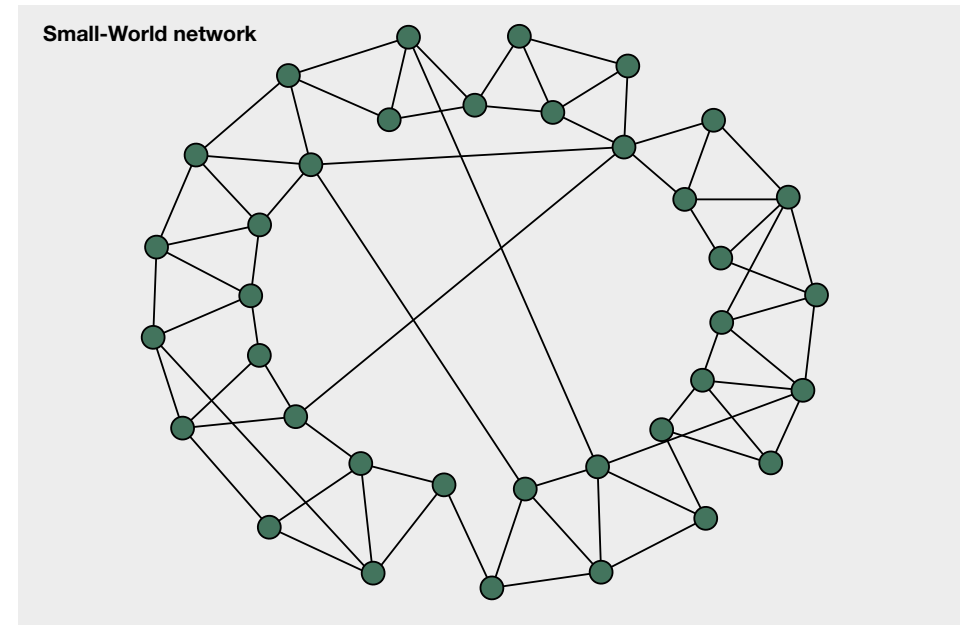


support the network. But of course that is also a weakness. It is entirely possible that all the power-hubs could be attacked simultaneously and the network will then rapidly become infected and collapse.



### Small-World Network Theory

Small-World Network Theory is commonly attributed to the work of Watts and Strogatz, (1998). Small-World Network Theory is based on the theory of Six degrees of Separation. The theory suggests that in all networks, a person is separated from one part of network to another by only six steps, (or jumps, clicks, points, people). Small-World Network Theory claims that networks in dynamic systems have small pathways connecting the network and that the network has a complex clustering pattern (all an edges friends know each other). This means that there are many local links but fewer longer ones. Small-World Network Theory also claims that while many edges will connect only to those nearest to them in their cluster, others will also connect randomly to edges further away. This means that often short cuts are created across a large network, and though this interferes with the clustering pattern, on average the pattern remains intact.



### How it's really applied

**Hierarchies or pyramids are network forms regular in organisations but rare in nature or society. Understand the network type and the differential impact of different networks. My favourite example of this is John Snows life saving map of cholera deaths and water pumps in 1854, it's the building block of public health.**



**Why not also look at:**

- Multiple Cause Diagrams
- Power Mapping
- Stakeholder Analysis – Trust and Agreement

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## The Strength of Weak Ties

Mark Granovetter

### A way of exploring the nature of human relationships and how they can contribute to the scale and spread of change

It was while studying for his Doctoral Thesis at Harvard that Granovetter developed his theory The Strength of Weak Ties. Granovetter was researching how people found jobs. He realised that people were actually finding jobs through their weak ties rather than their strong ones. It was through realising the similarity between this and the way hydrogen bonds relate to each other that led in 1969 to his weak ties theory.

### So what is a strong tie and what is a weak tie?

#### A strong tie

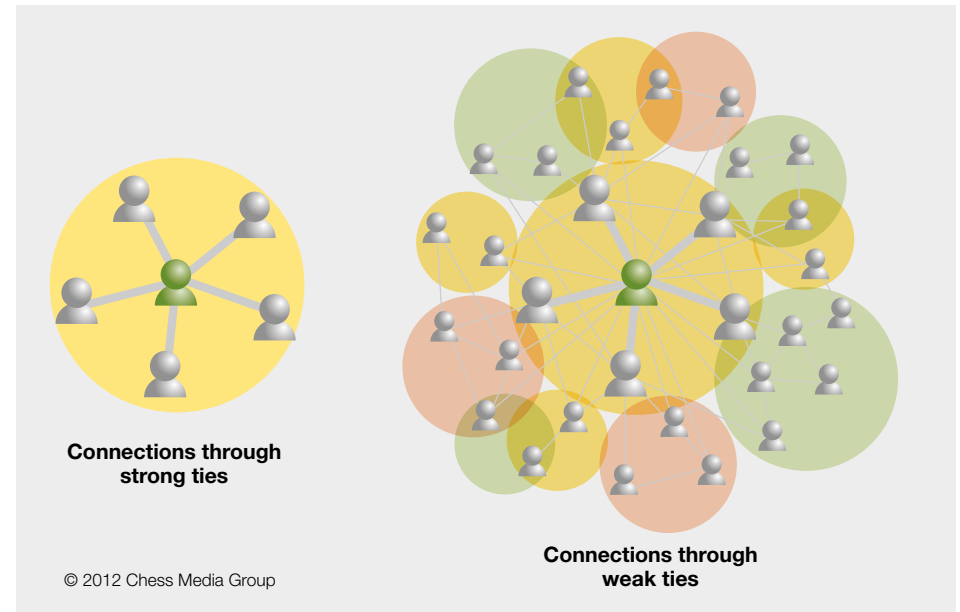
A strong tie is a connection that needs maintaining through time and effort. Strong ties are connected to each other through similar interest, similar behaviours and similar attitudes. We all have a set of strong ties that connect us into social circles. These social circles overlap, (much like a Venn diagram). There are common connections and common areas of interest and thought between the different groups. The people in one of our social circles will know the people in another. That means that they are limiting. They connect us to less circles than weak ties. They also overlap on what they can offer us. Ideas and experiences are disseminated through the group down any number of paths. It ends up at a dead end.

#### A weak tie

A weak tie on the other hand requires no work at all. It exists simply as a connection. Granovetter likens it to being acquaintances. We all have many of these weak ties. We don't really know the person we're tied to. We share little common interest, and we don't share the same social circles. Every weak tie therefore links us into an entirely different independent social circle, which doesn't overlap at all with our other circles. But these independent circles aren't just floating bubbles in isolation, because someone in every single independent circle will have some tie outside that circle with someone else. They are a bridge into another social group.

Weak ties give us access to a wider area of people who are essentially different to us. Weak ties are actually far better at connecting us to a wider array of circles. There isn't an overlap of connections or know how. That means that weak ties connect us and expose us to far more information and opportunity than strong ties.

Granovetter explains that weak ties lead to small interactions that ultimately have a big effect.



## How it's really applied

**Such a simple concept to grasp. Its one of those "obvious" points that we wonder why we did not realise this until Granovetter told us. And better still it's the perfect approach for participants to grasp by reflecting on what happens in their own lives.**

 Joe Simpson

**As part of Local Vision 1, I worked with the Healthy Villages Programme in Birmingham on enabling older people to stay well at home. I ran a series of workshops for members of the local community, primary care professionals (e.g. GPs, nurses), managers from the Community Health Trust, public health leads from the CCG and City Council to identify the relevant players in the local system and to develop the skills to build effective relationships with them. During one workshop participants were invited to identify all the people they would like to build a relationship with in order to make progress on their challenge. I then introduced the idea of strong and weak ties. I then asked participants to identify all the weak ties on their list – there were only a handful. I then asked them to brainstorm only additional weak ties that they would like to build relationships with. In only a few minutes they had generated tens of names of people and organizations beyond the usual suspects. We then prioritized these weak ties, identified strategies for relationship building and exactly who was going to take the necessary action.**

 Chris Lawrence-Pietroni

A really simple example for me is my use of Facebook and LinkedIn. I have a small number of contacts on Facebook that are my strong ties and hundreds of contacts on LinkedIn that include my weak ties. Facebook is great to catch up on stuff through my close circle of friends and family. LinkedIn provides a constant source of potentially intriguing new leads, albeit many of them lead to nothing!



John Atkinson

#### Why not also look at:

- Ethnography
- Future Search
- Open Space

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## The Tipping Point

Gladwell

### An epidemiological approach to understanding how change happens

#### The rules of epidemics

When thinking about change many places tend to think in terms of cause and effect and an 'it takes time' attitude. Gladwell suggests that that approach doesn't always fit. The Tipping Point is a different way of understanding change. According to the Tipping Point change can and will behave differently to what it is expected to. Gladwell believes that what actually happens is that social change behaves in the same ways as disease epidemics; thoughts, ideas, behaviour spread through communities just like disease does. Social patterns are contagious and there comes a point, just like in disease, when things suddenly start to spread at a tremendous rate.

Drawing on the science and case studies of epidemiology Gladwell explains that there are three factors that power social epidemic change; people, the infectious agent and the environment. Change just like disease will meander along, spreading a little but not really gaining any headway but something suddenly happens and it all takes hold. When that happens says The Tipping Point, it is because something has changed in one or more of these areas.

#### People: the law of the few

The law of the few says that it is a small percentage of people who are responsible for doing the work and getting things moving. These people change social patterns. They are knowledgeable in their areas, sociable, influential. What they say is heard and valued and believed. They drive the trend forwards through their charisma and connections.

#### The infectious agent: the stickiness factor

The 'agent' at work (the change idea), often goes unnoticed for some time. It makes little ripples but no real impact, but then something happens and the 'agent' changes the ways it behaves. That change makes the idea 'sticky'. It is held onto much easier, it becomes harder to shake off and forget.

Change happens best when something is memorable. Only the things that stick can drive someone into changing how they behave or think. That means that change ideas have got to be put across in ways that are different, ways that grab people's attention. They have to be presented and structured in ways that makes them sticky. If the idea is forgotten then it's no use at all.

### The environment: the power of context

Gladwell explains that humans are remarkably sensitive and reactive to what's happening in their environment. In today's world we live in a world where we're constantly surrounded by the noise and hustle and bustle of other people's lives. We can't handle all of that information and all of those connections so we learn to switch off noticing them; we learn indifference. That means that change is often met with the attitude; well someone else will do it'. This is known as 'the bystander problem'.

Change ideas have to be presented in ways that get through this block. It has to matter, so that people care enough to listen and move. The way to do that, says Gladwell is to pay attention to the little details of the situation and make it feel personal.

### How it's really applied

**Organisations often talk about needing to reach the tipping point without necessarily understanding what that would require or necessarily mean. As a small organisation the Leadership Centre has been disproportionately successful in instigating change because we consciously try to work with 'tipping points' and the fluid dynamics understanding of 'breaking waves'. This has meant finding what messages are sufficiently sticky, for example the whole place approaches we created in Total Place had deep resonance with many. We also work with key influencers, the Leeds Castle programme was unashamedly selective, we need to attract the people who were 'making the weather'. And then we needed to find the places where large groups of people came together, our work with councillors was deliberately situated within political parties not councils. The overall effect was that we could pick up and rapidly develop emerging trends in a way that many other organisations using more traditional means of dissemination simply couldn't, working beyond linear behaviour.**



John Jarvis

#### Why not also look at:

- Public Narrative
- Change and Culture Complexity
- Cultural Theory and Clumsy Solutions

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## Society 4.0 – from ego-system to eco-system

Otto Scharmer

### A way of understanding how to move from personal and organisational focus to overcome division in society

Scharmer explains that economic systems evolve through place and time. They have a natural life cycle that evolves as they respond to crisis and pressures from external circumstances and from within (consciousness). According to Scharmer there are different stages of economic development, from the Neolithic systems at 0.0 through to what he believes Western economies should be, society 4.0. Each stage has different ways of understanding, different approaches and different ways of being that are rooted in the practices of the previous stages.

- 0.0 Communal systems (Pre-modern)  
Communal leading, community driven
- 1.0 State driven economies (Traditional awareness)  
Authoritarian, controlled/driven through hierarchy and rules
- 2.0 Liberal market economies (Ego centric awareness)  
Persuade through incentives, driven by competition and markets
- 3.0 Social market economies (Stakeholder awareness)  
Lead through public opinion, driven by networks and negotiation
- 4.0 Globally aware ecosystem (Eco-Centric awareness)  
Presence of the whole, seeing and acting as whole

Scharmer claims that the economic system of today is beginning to emerge into a system 4.0, but its thinking and ways of doing and being are stuck in the economic practices and paradigms of the 3.0 capitalist social market economies, and the ego practices of society 2.0. It has not evolved in response to crisis. The system is still dealing with the same old problems in the same old ways, with the same old attitudes and beliefs and frameworks of being that caused the problems in the first place. Capitalism says Scharmer is failing to deal with the roots of the problems. Scharmer believes that society has become disconnected in three ways;

#### The ecological divide

Disconnection between self and nature

#### The social divide

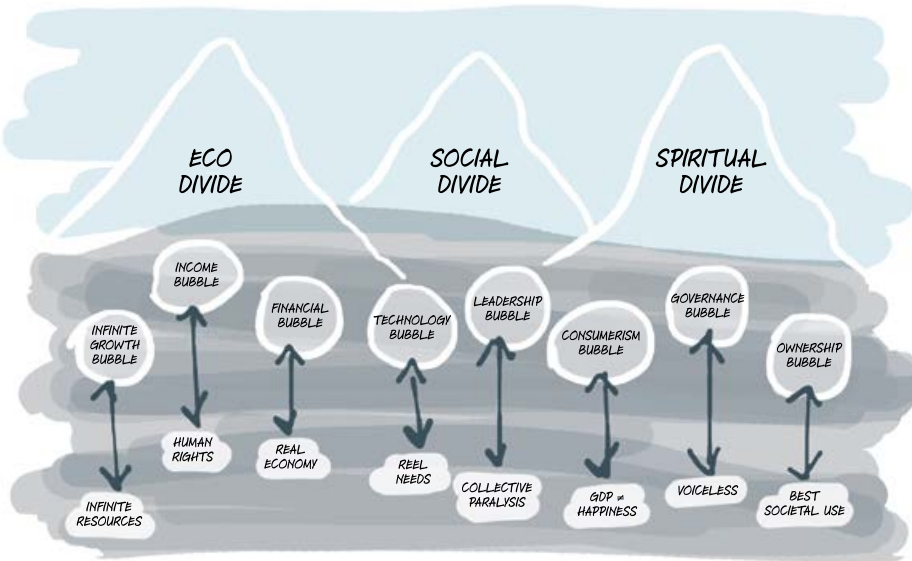
Disconnection between self and others

#### The spiritual divide

The inner divide, disconnection of self from self

These disconnections are shown through problems in society or organisations. Scharmer believes that the real problem is that society or organisations try to solve problems by just treating the obvious symptoms. They fail to realise that actually there is a much bigger problem beneath the surface, that has to be looked for. If these things below the surface are left untreated, the same old things will keep happening time and time again. Nothing will really ever change.

This is The Iceberg Model. There's far more going on beneath the surface than the symptoms that can be seen.



(<https://www.presencing.com>)

### Externalities and Consciousness

Crisis, says Scharmer, should be seen as an opportunity to change things. Crisis allows new possibilities to unfold. Those new possibilities can be found through what Scharmer terms the processes of externalities or consciousness.

#### Changes in externalities

The ways organisations usually react. They try to bring about change in behaviours. In other words they treat the symptoms.

#### Change in consciousness

Changing the old paradigms of thought. That means changing the ways people think and feel about themselves, other stakeholders and their organisations. It's not enough to simply consider how what you do may impact others, you also have to really feel what it is like to be them. In other words you have to 'walk in their shoes'. Thinking then becomes about

'the world' rather than just about 'I, me'. It's changing consciousness from ego systems to eco systems. Scharmer explains that consciousness is changed through having;

#### Open minds

Suspending usual ways of thinking and belief, seeing things anew.

#### Open hearts

See it from others points of view, walk in their shoes.

#### Open will

Letting go of the past ways of being and the old sense of identity that comes with it and letting come new ways of being and thinking.

### Why it matters?

Only through developing new consciousness says Scharmer does it become possible for change to take hold and new ways of being to come into existence. It becomes possible for organisations to move through to level 4.0 eco-Systems. That means that society and organisations will be thinking and doing in ways that are collaborative and in ways that consider the whole.

The result is that society will develop in ways that allow it to grow, in ways that encourage entrepreneurialism, learning, and creativity. Scharmer believes new infrastructures will develop in response to the new eco-centric consciousness, structures that allow the new consciousness of individuals, organisations and society to act as 'the whole' and with that he believes that democracy will become 'deeper'.

### How it's really applied

**Otto Scharmer's description of government 4.0 is a way of describing how a public organisation might develop beyond a bureaucratic or stakeholder system to truly connect with its community. I'm working with the City of Vienna on this. They see this as the way to realise the potential that exists amongst their citizens. It is a bold ambition and behind it lie many challenges, but it is causing them to reconsider altogether their approach to working with the city.**

 John Atkinson

#### Why not also look at:

- Learning Organisations
- Mindfulness
- Open Strategy – PRUB

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# Community

Peter Block

## A way of looking at communities and how they function based in the belief that change in such settings has to happen from within

Peter Block's theory of Community is essentially the idea that change in communities has to happen from within. Block explains that many change programs are developed around unifying visions that name the ideal future, but often that's an ideal scenario that imposes change onto communities from the outside. This approach is ineffective because these changes just treat the symptoms of the problems, not the causes. The result of that is that the problems never really go away, or they resurface just as strong as ever a few months down the line. What actually needs to happen is that the future has to be created by communities, for communities, the future can't just be named.

Block argues that for successful change to happen two interconnected processes need to happen, one can't happen without the other; the causes of the problems need to be addressed and along with that communities need to take ownership of the problem, and the ideas and action. (It has to come from within).

### Community fragmentation: the causes

Block believes that fragmentation is the cause of problems in the community. He explains that people in society aren't living as communities, they live close to each other but isolated from each other. Block argues that this is because of modernism; the ability to buy anything anytime, commercialism, the virtual world and corporatisation. If things are going to change then the way in which communities function needs to change. That's not about how a community behaves, it is about how it feels. How it feels affects how it sees and interacts with the world. Once a community feels a sense of interconnectedness, interdependence and a sense of obligation to each other they are better able to treat the symptoms of their problems.

### Owning change

Change that is imposed is simply a vision. It isn't owned by the community. They feel no sense of responsibility to it. Change that's imposed affects people, but they're powerless. It removes control. It removes choice. It encourages helplessness. Change that's imposed from the outside becomes a threat to history and to identity and is likely to be ignored, rejected or rebelled against it, because after all who has the right to tell other people how to live their lives or to change the way they've always done things?

On the other hand change that happens from within, that is created by the community belongs to the community. This gives them power and control. They have influence over what happens. They become a cause of change. They can choose, because of that they care about the ideas, the actions and they engage with it. It matters.

## Conversations change the world

The key to achieving all believes Block is conversation. He asks; how can communities become engaged communities who care for the community? How can communities become engaged communities who are accountable to themselves? He answers; through conversation.

### Changing the nature of conversations

Holding the right conversation helps communities come together to become accountable and committed to the ideas they produce and the actions they take. The difficulty says Block, is that the world is used to holding conversations that place blame, shirk responsibility and that expect others to come up with solutions. So the nature of the conversations that are held is the very first thing that has to change. They have to change from the responses and expectations of people being affected by change, to the responses and expectations of people making change happen.

### Change the conversation by changing the question

What goes on anywhere, any action, any conversation is governed by the questions that frame it. The problem with that is that conversation tends to become tied into questions of blame and ways of avoiding responsibility, questions that bully people into action. These questions say Block need to change to questions that encourage participation and allow people to engage with each other. This takes the expectation of someone else sorting things out and puts it instead into the hands of the community. This creates accountability.

### Change the narrative

How a place feels about itself is affected by the ways in which it thinks about itself. That's about the stories that it tells. Places tell themselves stories of their past, that colour the present and limit the future. Often that means that places sink into a feeling of powerlessness and fate. It's time to stop being stuck in the past and time to stop believing that what you were or what you are now decides the future. It's time to move from helpless resigned fate into asking; what can be? How can we make that happen? By taking responsibility for where they are and where they're going, communities take on accountability for their own story of their journey.

### Accountability-Action: Create the future one room at a time

Block recognises that a community can be an awfully big place and changing the future can't and won't just happen all at once, but he says it has to begin somewhere. That somewhere is the room that you're sat in right now. Change the thinking of a group he says, and that group goes out into the whole and mixes with everyone else. The ideas, the new way of conversation will take root in little pockets. They'll be tried and talked about, that will make them spread throughout the rest of the community. Over time that changes the way in which communities think about themselves and the ways in which they function.

From one room whole communities begin to ask different questions that lead to different

conversations, they take on ownership for themselves. They become accountable and then they take effective actions. The conditions in the community change and that creates the conditions for actions to take hold.

## How it's really applied

**Peter Block's work on community serves as a wise reminder when working with community groups of any sort. Most importantly of all, it reminds us that you cannot design services or solutions outside of a community and expect them to automatically work within them. Often, when coming up with approaches in conjunction with a group, professionals will suggest that this has been tried before and it didn't work. The difference is always in how the solution is created, rather than what the solution actually is. Similar approaches created jointly can work well when professionally driven 'solutions' have failed. Change the conversation and you change the outcome.**



John Atkinson

### Why not also look at:

- Future Search
- Open Space
- Co-production – The Egg Model

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## Building Capital

Joe Simpson

### A way of considering the building blocks that must come together to form strong and cohesive localities and places

Place is history that defines how people live now. Place is hope of how they want to live in the future. But in an ever changing world, places just like everywhere else need to change and find new ways of being. For local authorities that means finding a way to grow and shape their places that balances the needs of their areas with the hopes of what could be. They need ways of developing economic prosperity that also honour, encourage, value and maintain the individual identity of their places and the people who live and work within them, and that also work in harmony with the unique needs of their places. So places, just like everywhere else, need to not only measure their value but also develop their value too. Simpson explains that this can be done by measuring and developing their public capital.

### So what is public capital?

According to Simpson there are several blocks of public capital that are all interrelated; what happens in one block will have an effect in a different block. Every block is needed and the shape and needs of each block and the relationships between them are unique to every individual place. The blocks all work together and they also work individually to form the identity of a place.

How local authorities pay attention to the blocks, individually or collectively affects the shape of their local area and the lives of the people within it. Simpson explains that a successful place is one that adds value by strengthening their blocks.

These blocks can make or break a place, get it wrong and places are undesirable to those living there and they don't pull in people and investment – they are not all that successful. Get it right and places can quickly strengthen their overall value – they are appealing to their people and to everyone else too. They pull in investment, interest, people, jobs and they do it all relatively quickly. Getting blocks right creates success, getting blocks right gives value.

## The Blocks

### Human Capital

The skills, knowledge and employment of people effects the value of human capital. It's not enough to create new jobs, there has also got to be a workforce who is willing to and able to do them. That's not just about educating young people, it's about making sure that the skills and knowledge of the adult population are developed too. To develop human capital says Simpson, local authorities needs to develop opportunities that can close the skills gaps. However when developing the skills of a local population they need to consider what skills are actually needed in the local area and what skills might be needed in the future.

### Physical Capital

Simpson explains that the role of the local authority in developing physical capital has changed. Now they can't (and shouldn't) take on the sole responsibility for building infrastructure. Instead he says that (amongst other things), they need to collaborate with other agencies. Together they need to develop the best solutions for their places. They also need to get other agencies interested and make them stakeholders in what's happening. They should act with a long term 'master plan' in mind, not just considering the here and now.

### Social Capital

Essentially social capital is the sense of community of a place. It is the social behaviour of a place and it is affected by things such as public transport, local facilities, rural isolation, the crime rate. Social capital directly impacts on aspiration says Simpson. Places that live and breathe together do better.

### Culture Capital

The culture of a place is its quality of life. Places with an active, vibrant culture just 'feel better'. Culture is part of the appeal of a place. It draws in people who want to live there, work there, raise their families. All of that draws in business, investment, employment. In other words creating culture creates opportunity. Its value as an attraction shouldn't be ignored. It is a vital part of building public capital.

### Environmental Capital

A place can be culturally vibrant, have a clear sense of community, have a skilled and employed population but if it physically feels awful to live their and work there – then who's going to want to?

If a place is sunk into despairing desolation, if it feels rough, unsafe, dirty then who's going to come? But more than that how can communities take pride in their place if it feels bad to live there?

And more than that places where it feels bad to live foster bad behaviour; places that have an image problem have behaviour problems too and that affects social capital. Building environmental capital isn't just about tidying up though, it's about developing ways of doing things that are kind to the environment too.

### Future Capital

It's a fact that what's been done now in places is creating their legacies of the future. With that in mind places should always be looking to what the demands of the future might be, then incorporating ways of meeting those demands into their development strategies. In other words trying to be one step ahead. Simpson says they need to 'future proof' their places, whether that be superfast broadband or efficient transport links, or whatever else they think future places will need to be the best – to be successful.

## How it's really applied

### These ideas can help in two very different ways

**If the challenge is to explore the nature of a place – what makes it tick, what are its strengths and the challenges facing people who live there, then the different forms of capital described above can provide a really clear framework to enable local leaders, politicians and citizens to describe the work going on to build different types of capital, the actions being taken that enhance or undermine the capacity and strengths of the community. Very often these ideas are helpful when developing a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment with a Health and Wellbeing Board or public health team.**

**At the level of the individual, as we are increasingly exercising leadership through influence rather than organisational role, the question arises 'how to I strengthen my authority to encourage others to act?' The ideas of capital can be extended from the public domain to consider what capital do I have with others? I ask people to explore where they believe they have capital in terms of knowledge and understanding, trust, political instinct, values etc and where does this need to be built. The strength of your capital is directly related to your ability to exert influence on and with others.**



Robin Douglas

### Why not also look at:

- Open Strategy – PRUB

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# Public Value

Mark Moore

## A way to help organisations to understand the balance between what is considered to be 'public value' and their available resources, and the necessary authority to get things done

Moore developed the Public Value framework to help organisations understand the systems in which they operate: to understand how they are supported and constrained by the demands placed upon them and how they can balance these with the need to provide a service that has outcomes that are considered valuable by the public.

Those organisations that operate as public services are given state authority and public money. This means that they are accountable to the public. They are expected to provide a service, which is considered efficient and good value by the public, and that also provides outcomes that are of benefit to society.

When the leaders of organisations make their decisions on how to operate public services they are influenced by a mixture of technical and non-technical tools. Technical tools are things such as predictive data; things such as trialled scenarios, models, financial or other operational predictions. Non-technical tools are essentially the voices that speak to them; the voices and demands of politics, the media, the expectations of the people. The non-technical tools are the most powerful, and it is difficult for organisations to keep this voice balanced against operating according to the information from their technical tools, and within the opportunities and constraints of their resources.

Public managers are constantly walking the line between trying to balance this value with the expected outcomes, and the tensions between endless demand but limited resources. So how can organisations balance the demands of public value with their authorising environment and operational capability?

Moore's Public Value framework (Strategic Triangle), was developed to try and help them to do just that.

### Operational capability

This is about understanding what the organisation is capable of. It's about asking; Is the goal realistic? Is it achievable? Then working to improve the way that things are done (the operational capacity) to help achieve the goals.

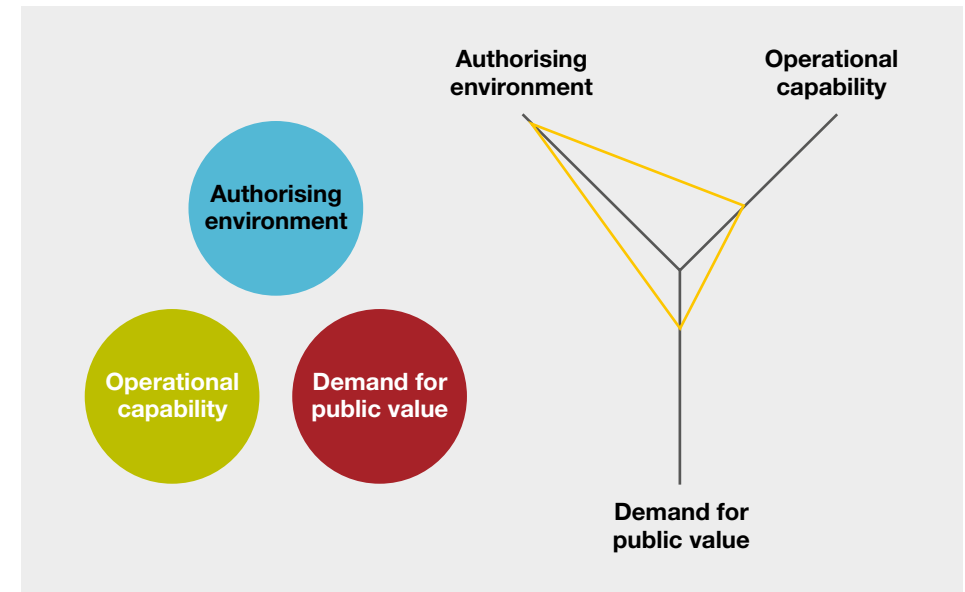
### Authorising environment

This is the sources of external support for the system, things that give them the 'yes' or 'no'. Systems need to maintain support through engaging in dialogue and developing trust.

### Demand for public value

The public want to know they are getting good value. Organisations need to make sure they are acting in such a way that will give public value. They should also be transparent about their purpose and ask before they begin: Is this really going to give value?

#### Moore – Public value strategic triangle



### How it's really applied

**I've used this a lot on leadership programmes, most recently in the East Riding of Yorkshire. Non-political leaders like the perspective that both managers and politicians have a duty to look for opportunities to create public value. People also appreciate Moore's emphasis on the need to combine this with building capacity and ensuring the support of those who can hold you accountable.**

**I used this framework with a group of potential Directors of children services and encouraged them to think about where the opportunities to create value were. Since these were often linked to how schools operated in their communities, the framework led us to looking at councillors as potential operational capacity as well as people who might hold them accountable. This led to some insights into how they could work with councillors as community leaders, galvanising local action; i.e. creating extra capacity to achieve extra value for communities.**

**If you haven't used it before, read his book and have some examples of your own to hand to clarify the concepts.**



Paul Tarplett

Many people have heard of ‘public value’, but I find that in practice few use it as an analytical or diagnostic tool. To address this I designed an exercise that asks participants to apply Moore’s three tests of public value to a given strategy or systems leadership challenge and then to identify areas of strength and how they could be amplified, weaknesses and action options. Working with a group of Directors of Public Health in the South West (for example) Mari Davis and I had the participants discuss their insights and co-coach each other in pairs before debriefing learning as a group. The outcome was both a deeper level of engagement with the ‘strategic triangle for public value’ and the generation of a series of alternative action options and systems interventions.



Chris Laurence-Pietroni

A local authority was considering changing in the way library services were provided in the Borough. Their initial view was that this could be ‘sold’ to residents as a simple efficiency improvement. However, once we developed a richer understanding of the public value of libraries in the minds of residents- perhaps particularly among those who never used the libraries but saw them as iconic symbols of learning opportunities for citizens- the Authority chose to look elsewhere for savings.



David Bolger

#### Why not also look at:

- Stakeholder Analysis – Trust and Agreement
- Multiple Cause Diagrams
- Future Search

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## Four Orders and Systemic Constellations

Bert Hellinger

### A way of recognising and surfacing the unconscious dynamics and forces within any system and using them to restore balance

The Four Orders of Love was originally developed by the psychotherapist Hellinger, who had an interest in Gestalt and Transactional Analysis. Hellinger developed the theory as a way of understanding how hidden factors influence the different roles and functions in family relationships, and as a form of family therapy through the Practice of Constellations. Constellations is now used widely across organisations. It aims to help solve tension and problems in a system. It does that by showing the whole picture of what’s going on, the hidden things as well as the obvious. That’s because much of how people interact with each other, their relationships, the dynamics between them is affected by what’s going on below the surface, the hidden influences. Hellinger describes these hidden influences as ‘The Four Orders’.

#### The Four Orders

Whenever a person or an organisation does something, things don’t always happen as they intended. What actually happens is that reality gets in the way. How things turn out is influenced by a variety of external factors such as government policy, conditions in the market place, even the weather. A lot of the influencing factors are obvious, so there’s an obvious line of cause and effect, that as well as explaining what has happened can also be taken into account for future actions. But there’s also things going on under the surface that aren’t obvious at all. The symptoms can be seen but no one knows why they happened. These hidden things going on are the Four Orders.

Hellinger believes that what goes on in each of the Four Orders affects the dynamics of an organization in both negative and positive ways. It affects interactions, relationships, behaviours, understanding and thinking and feeling. Although the ripples of behaviour and attitude caused by the Four Orders are visible, the things causing those ripples remain hidden. They aren’t known. That means that solutions offered to those problems don’t work in the long term, because the causes are left untreated. Constellations is a practice that aims to change that.

## Constellations

Constellations is a practice that creates a 'physical map' of the system that shows the relationships within it. Hellinger explains that this physical representation enables the whole to be seen from the outside in. This he argues causes those involved to become open to a new way of thinking, uncluttered by judgment of what's right and wrong and free from preconception of what's for the better, or for the worse. They are able to see what's really going on, what's causing the problems.

The physical representation has enabled a process of exploration and discovery that reveals the hidden things going on that are influencing a problem. It has enabled open discussion of those issues without blame or judgment. It explores how by changing someone's sense of 'place' in a system, in other words changing the dynamic of their relationships, then the whole system interacts, feels, understands and behaves differently. It has allowed the client to try the solution on for size. They can see how it could work.

### So what are the Four Orders and what do they do?

All the orders operate within the 'whole' of a person or organization. They are all related to each other and what happens in one order causes an effect in the others.

#### Time

What happened in the past, what's happening in the present and thoughts of what might happen in the future affect how people think and feel and so affects everything that they do, even if they're not aware of this. Places and people feel a sense of loyalty to the past, to past colleagues, leaders, traditions. They like to do things the way that they have always been done. When something happens that challenges traditions or loyalty there is often a negative response. On the other hand hope for the future and excitement at possibility, develops positive energy, emotion and actions.

#### Belonging

The degree to which someone feels they belong influences their thoughts, feelings and actions. When people feel that they belong, they feel 'just right'. Hellinger describes this as 'a feeling of innocence'. People feel a sense of contentment and peace; they feel settled. That usually results in them 'engaging themselves' fully within their organisation and their role in it. They give 'themselves' and work their best. On the other hand when they feel 'out of sync' with the place it makes them feel guilty.

That's not just about individuals; groups like to feel that they belong to a wider network too. A sense of belonging makes people feel as if they are a part of something. It gives a sense of identity, with that comes an attachment to their place. These invisible loyalties affect every thought and action. A sense of belonging evokes emotion; it makes people care. When something happens that threatens that sense of belonging the response is usually emotive. It can either create energy through positive emotion, or produce negative feeling and emotion that impacts negatively on performance and relationships.

#### Place

Every person and every system in an organisation has a sense of how they 'fit' in relation to everyone else, and every organisation has a sense of how they fit into the wider world. Everyone's place in that hierarchy and structure needs to be understood and respected. Organisations have a need for hierarchy and structure. Structure provides rules of how to 'be'; rules that are obvious, rules that are stated as well as the unwritten rules.

Organisations don't always fit people into the place best suited to them and that causes problems. If someone's not in the right place, not only do they feel that, but the rest of the organisation feels it too. The right place is about the right blend of role and function, and getting that right matters. It affects every interaction, which affects emotion, which impacts on other interactions. Just one person being out of place can impact on the whole feeling of what's going on in the organisation.

#### Exchange

This is the give and take in all relationships and between different processes and places. This isn't just about services, skills or knowledge. It's about the give and take of respect. Exchange is what gives the 'balance' in relationships. The right balance of give and take matters. The right balance is an exchange where there's no need for that interaction to continue. When the right amount has been given, (which usually happens instinctively in organisations), those involved just seem to know what's right for who and when.

Sometimes it's not a natural balance and both parties find they are drawn by their consciences to continuously try to redress the balance. Sometimes that will work and both parties feel that they have had equal measure of both. Sometimes the cycle continues and that's a damaging pattern that has to be broken. Everyone needs to both give and take equally.

## How do Constellations work?

### The problem

What is it the client wants to explore?

Who do they see as the key people involved in that problem?

What are the significant past events that have influenced the problem?

### Chose representatives

The client, (without entering into too much thought, which will cloud their instinctive feeling and spontaneity), chooses individuals from the group to represent who they see as the key people or what they see as the key influencing roles in the problem.

### Give them a place

The client puts every representative in an order, with the 'head' of the organisation at the top. They place the others according to their importance. That's based on the importance of their function in the system (the organisational hierarchy of roles), and the length of time they've been with the organisation (their seniority).

The client then positions the representatives to represent how they (the client) believe the real life relationships between the people/places being represented to be in the context of their problem. They show this through the distance they place the representatives from each other and the direction in which they are placed. This has created a physical representation of how the client views the group dynamics, the relationships that exist within the problem.

### Explore those places

Hellinger believes that these representatives now instinctively feel and understand how the person they are representing feels and why. So the practice of constellations suggests that by asking the representatives how they feel about the place they're in, and the relationships they have in it, that a picture of true reality will unfold.

Their answers, explains Hellinger, reveal hidden truths about the relationships between people and the relationships between place and people. It shows the hidden influences of the Four Orders. It explores the balance of exchanges. It reveals if they feel valued. Do they have a sense of belonging? Does that place 'fit them'? How do they fit into the timeline of the organisation? What's driving them? What has happened in the past to cause that feeling and behaviour now? What do they hope for?

### Reposition

The facilitator of the group then moves the representatives to explore how this affects their feelings and the feelings of the group. Just moving one person can change the whole dynamic of a group. They then ask the representatives again; how do you feel now? The process of re-positioning the representatives and asking is repeated, until their answers reflect a better feeling of acceptance with how things are. When the representatives feel that they are in the right place. Until it feels like discord has been harmonised. Now the constellation, says Hellinger represents what needs to be done.

## How it's really applied

Being sensitive to the Four Orders provided a helpful framework for understanding how Brent's plans to develop a dementia friendly community had become 'stuck'. The steering group did not have a clear sense of its Place in the local system. Supporting them to organise and run a 'community conversation' helped to establish their position. The way the conference was run, how people were invited, the tone that was set and the session that took place, with a focus on talking and working together – professionals, carers, family members, people experiencing dementia – supported the principle of Exchange, building trust and mutual respect.

Constellations can be used formally, requiring sensitive facilitation, and informally, as a fascinating way to map systems. Working with the local food system on the Wirral we asked representatives of the different elements (suppliers, consumers, schools etc) to 'find their place' in relation to each other, using the open space of a meeting room. Once they had done so, asking them to speak about their space in the system, what was important to them, and their relationship to others in the system, provided fascinating insights.



Matt Gott

### Why not also look at:

- Gestalt Theory of Change
- Power Mapping
- Framing/Reframing

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# Social Movements

Marshall Ganz

## A suite of approaches and leadership practices designed to mobilise and organise people towards achieving a common purpose

Marshall Ganz developed his ideas of Social Movements over a lifetime of leading activism. This began when he dropped out of Harvard in 1964 to join the Mississippi Summer project that was advocating for the rights of disenfranchised black voters.

According to Ganz a Social Movement is a reaction against injustice; an injustice that draws people voluntarily from across all walks of life in a reaction against the 'intolerable'. They come with a vision of the world as it should be. As they first come together they know that they don't have enough power, enough influence, that their voice is still small, so what they do through Social Movement is build power. They do that by drawing other people in to support them, who then draw in more people.

Every new person brings with them resources that give more potential and power to the movement to make change happen. Change says Ganz, isn't just about an overall win; something much more powerful has happened. Through people has come power that has changed the rules of how the game is played in the first place. From the people comes power and from power comes change. That is Social Movement.

Social Movements need 5 things says Ganz; stories, leadership, relationships, strategy and action.

### Leadership

Social Movements aren't a formal organisation with formal structure, hierarchy, ways of doing things and rules, because they are made up of people who volunteer, traditional formal authority isn't going to work. Instead authority comes through appealing to the sentiments that made people volunteer in the first place. It is an authority that asks people to do things based on their values of injustice and hope.

However, hope for change isn't enough to make change happen, because with that hope of how the future should be comes the despair of reality. The problem for leadership is keeping these drivers balanced in ways that keep people energised and motivated.

### Relationships

The power of a Social Movement comes from the people within it. When a Social Movement first begins everyone is disconnected from each other. They need to become linked together. That happens through developing relationships with each other. That's done through the recognition of the consequences of a shared past and a commitment

together of a shared future. Through their connections together they develop shared values, shared understanding, shared trust, shared ideas and shared hope that leads to shared action.

### Stories

At the heart of a Social Movement are stories. A Social Movement is about telling a new story. A story of hope about how things should be. A story that changes the world. Stories in Social Movements should make people care, create urgency and motivate them into action, and it can do that believes Ganz through using Public Narrative. Public Narrative tells The Story of Self, The Story of Us and The Story of Now.

#### The Story of Self

The Story of Self explains why I have been called into action – why I care.

#### The Story of Us

The Story of Us shows why we care, it shows what brought everyone together and that creates a sense of shared vision and shared community.

#### The Story of Now

The Story of Now is about motivating people into action. It should create urgency but give hope by telling the story of the world as it is now and the story of the world as it should be.

### Strategy

Strategy is the theory of change says Ganz. It's about asking how are we going to do this? How can we make the most of what we have? How can we challenge those more powerful than we are?

Strategic Capacity is using existing skills and knowledge. It is adapting to ever-changing situations and circumstance and seizing the right moment to take action when resources can make the most impact. It's also about keeping people motivated. That can be done by getting them to commit to action. Committed people give their energy. They are focused on success. That means that they work determinedly and willingly towards making it happen.

### Action

Action happens says Ganz, by creating what he terms 'a commitment culture'. This comes by making things happen on time and learning from them. In other words having measurable outcomes and deadlines. The problem is that getting people to commit to action is difficult. They can be afraid of taking action and afraid of failing. The trick here is to keep people motivated by having clear, specific goals that are easy to commit to.

Social Movement begins with a wrong. Through the simple resources of people caring and daring to hope, a movement for change grows that challenges powers greater than itself. Through having the bravery to stand and hoping for better a Social Movement can make change happen.

## How it's really applied

Coventry City Council identified increasing levels of physical activity as an issue around which they wanted to develop a social movement – recognizing that previous efforts to date had been largely ineffective. The early participants in this developing movement came from the public health team. Mari Davis and I worked initially with a small group of three who we trained in five leadership practices associated with social movements: public narrative, relationships, structure, strategy and action. The people we trained then used these practices to recruit others to a series of mobilisations, i.e. events at which 80-100 people gathered and were given the opportunity to join the movement and take action in various ways. A key moment came when a relatively junior member of council staff from outside public health became energized by the work and undertook to mobilise others around her. This led to the formation of an interdependent multi-stakeholder team that led the work from then on. Amongst the outcomes of this work was:

- a focus on mobilising within workplaces with a now annual 'Rush Hour Challenge' mobilising people to leave the car and take an alternative active form of travel on a given day each year;
- a focus on mobilising in communities working with community groups and local councillors to motivate a range of physical activity in a low-income neighbourhood;
- experiments in embedding social movement approaches within public health with a tender for a new mental wellbeing contract being designed around the use of social movement approaches with relevant training and support provided by the Council.



Chris Lawrence-Pietroni

### Why not also look at:

- Public Narrative
- World Café

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## Complexity

Stacey

### A way of understanding the uncertainty and unpredictability of change in organisations

Stacey's theories of complexity and The Stacey Matrix were firmly rooted in the complexity sciences. The complexity sciences are based on the belief that complex systems, including organisations inherently exist and function in conditions of uncertainty and unpredictability. This is different to the traditional view of the organisational and management sciences that are based on certainty. Complexity asks that organisations and leadership look at the wider picture of what's happening when they think about change, rather than the narrow lens that simply thinks about management taking action.

### Human interaction

Complexity sciences argue that organisations function in a complex web of human interaction. Every interaction has significance and impacts on the 'patterns' within the organisation. Every individual is seen and so understood as part of the wider whole. They exist only in relation to each other. The patterns of how the organisation functions in turn impact on every individual's way of being. Everything is interrelated in complex webs that are each linked together.

Stacey's complexity approach argued that the formal approaches and methods of implementing change are affected by the complexity of the relationships and understanding between people. This means that the concept of change being decided on by the bosses and then just implemented simply doesn't work. Stacey said it is impossible to predict the outcome of change because every single system, every single person in that organisation takes that change and looks at it differently. They each try it on, mess about with it, give it their own judgement and they each feel differently about it; people work out what those change ideas mean to them. The idea is interpreted in a multitude of ways that change the meaning altogether; meaning emerges. This means that exact outcomes can't be predicted when the plans for change are made.

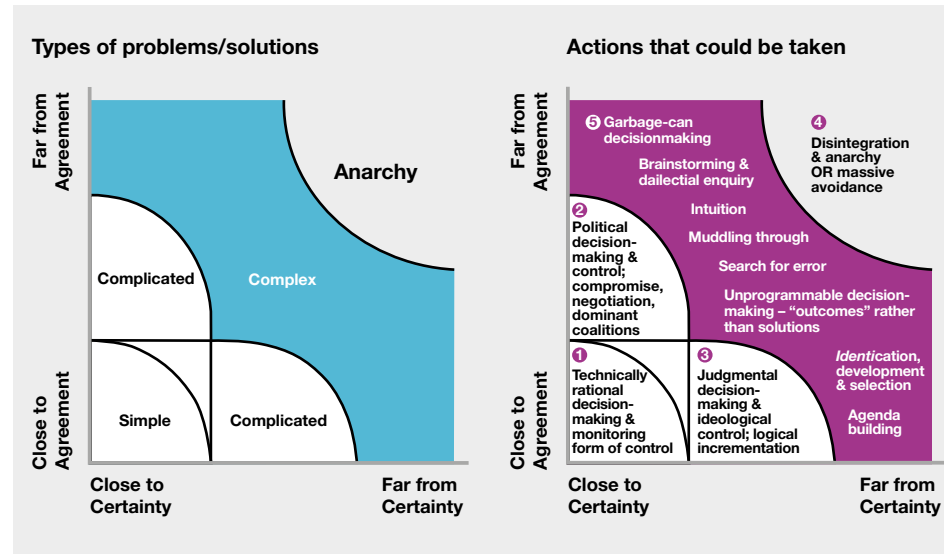
Therefore organisations can't just implement change through changes to structures and through creating well-intentioned plans and expect the plans to work. What actually happens isn't usually what they set out to achieve. Stacey's complexity model suggested that real change happens when organisations also engage with the informal processes, when they consider and work with the interactions and relationships behind the scenes. So when thinking about change, organisations need to think in terms of Uncertainty and Unpredictability.

### The Stacey Matrix

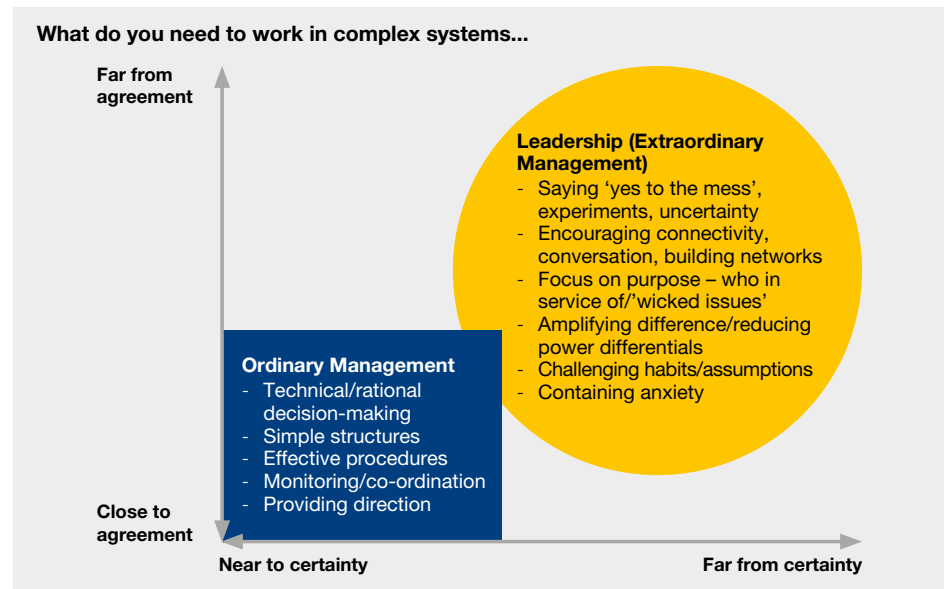
Stacey developed what has become termed 'The Stacey Matrix' to help organisations understand change in this way, (though it should be considered that Stacey has now distanced himself from the model). It provided a framework to help organisations understand the types of problems they face. It also showed the type of actions they should take based

on the amount of uncertainty and agreement there is. However these suggestions were not intended to be stand-alone, perfect fit, follow, because humans and their systems are complicated. They interpret and think and feel and do just as they wish accordingly, so the suggestions should be considered alongside ways that account for human action.

**The Stacey Matrix**



(<http://www.gp-training.net>)



**Using the Matrix**

**Agreement and certainty**

**Certainty**

How possible is it to predict what might happen, has this happened before?

**Agreement**

How much agreement is there amongst leaders and management about what the problem is or what can be done about it?

**How to lead in each situation**

**Simple and complicated problems (and their solutions)**

These are usually within traditional methods of leadership, teaching and telling, and familiar approaches. These are more or less routine things that sit comfortably. There's not much new here and applying what's been done before will probably work.

**Complex problems (sometimes called the edge of chaos)**

In this area, things are shaky; the problem is outside an organisation's know how and expertise. It's no good telling people what to do or teaching them how to do it, because what's already known isn't applicable. Problems and solutions in this area are about experimentation, free thinking and standing in the way of the old ways of doing that caused the problem in the first place.

**Chaos and anarchy**

This is where things have broken down and things feel out of control. Trying to prevent getting in this zone to start with is wise but if organisations end up sat here what can they do? Avoiding the issue isn't going to work.

## How it's really applied

Some of these principles are illustrated in the model, which is adapted from Stacey. The blue box 'ordinary management' emphasises what is needed in time of low uncertainty and high agreement – this speaks to more technical, managerial challenges. In times of high uncertainty and low agreement (which is what the current context often feels like) then some of the abilities, mindsets and qualities that link to the yellow circle, come into play. It's not to say that the skills in the blue box are not needed but on their own, and given the wicked issues and adaptive challenges that leaders face, they are not enough.

I have found this a helpful model to prompt conversation with senior leaders in public services about the kind of leadership that is needed in the times we face and have used it with Paul Tarplett, another system enabler over the years. The visual seems to work for people and can be a complement to looking at technical/adaptive 'wicked' challenges. I try to frame it as shifting the emphasis or widening the lens rather than seeing it as an either/or. Some useful prompts include:

- **Purpose and users – what benefits are important to residents, patients, citizens and those that support them? Who is our work in service of?**
- **Any connections you need to make, relationships to build? Conversations to have? What patterns do you notice? What needs to shift? How do you allow for/handle different perspectives.**
- **Are the right people involved (those who do the work)? Do you have diverse views? How might you connect with the disconnected? How do you work with informal networks?**
- **Do you have/can you build a sufficiently strong "container"/"just enough" structure to "hold the anxiety", including yours?**
- **Any power differentials stopping change? Or limiting innovation? How might these be minimised? How will you manage your authorising environment?**
- **What's "messy" that we need to live with? Is there space for experiments/safe fail? What do you need to be curious about? How can you help contain the anxiety including yours?**



Liz Goold

### Why not also look at:

- Cultural Web
- Adaptive Leadership

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## Critical, Tame, Wicked Problems. Messy and Elegant solutions

Keith Grint

### A way of identifying distinctive types of problems and the types of response appropriate to take effective action in relation to them

#### Critical, Tame, Wicked problems

Keith Grint, drawing on the work of Thompson and Messy Solutions, developed the idea of Critical, Tame, Wicked. Critical, Tame and Wicked is a way of understanding that there are different types of problems and that different problems need different responses. The 'one size fits all' approach to solving problems simply doesn't work. Problems and the people who solve them are much more complex than that. According to Grint there are three different types of problems, and each type of problem needs a different style of leadership:

#### Critical problems

These problems are those that cause a crisis. There is no time for discussion, solutions are needed and needed fast. These problems fetch with them un-certainty and fear. Their solutions need decisive action that gives immediate solutions. These problems need 'commanders' who coerce people into action or tell people what to do.

#### Tame problems

These are known problems with known solutions. Tame problems are like puzzles; they are complicated but there's a known way to solve it. Solving them is a process that's been done before. Tame problems are best approached from a 'management style' of leading, where thinking is logical and the approach structured. Management states; we've seen this before now this is what we're going to do?

#### Wicked problems

Wicked problems are complex. The problem isn't always clear. They hold many little problems within them. Often the big problem has lots of little knock on effects. There might not be a perfect fit solution that solves the problem once and for all. Wicked problems sometimes have to be accepted as the 'now' reality, and life has to adapt to the new situation.

Wicked problems need 'leadership' rather than 'command' or 'management'. This style of leadership involves everyone. It is comfortable with the unknown and encourages exploration. It's about gathering data, thinking about responses and not rushing into solutions. It says; yes we have a problem now let's leave it a while and think how best to solve it. Leadership accepts that there might not be answers and when trying to find solutions asks questions such as; what would happen if?



## Elegant and Clumsy Solutions

When a place has a problem it first needs to understand what type of problem it has, before it can then use the appropriate leadership to find solutions. Finding solutions can be difficult because everyone has different beliefs about what can work. Grint explains, (drawing on the ideas of Cultural Theory), that everyone has a group identity through which we understand ourselves and our place in the world. Each group understands and views the world differently. Grint suggests that the type of solutions created to solve problems is dependent on the identity and beliefs that the group holds.

### Cultural Theory

#### Hierarchical groups

Hierarchical groups believe that problems are caused by the lack of rules or the rules not working. They look to solve problems through strong leadership, more structure, and more rules.

#### Egalitarians

Egalitarians argue that the problem is that 'a change in attitude' is needed. They want discussion and debate. They believe in collective responsibility and finding answers by asking others.

#### Fatalists

Fatalists are resigned to the problem being insoluble.

#### Individualists

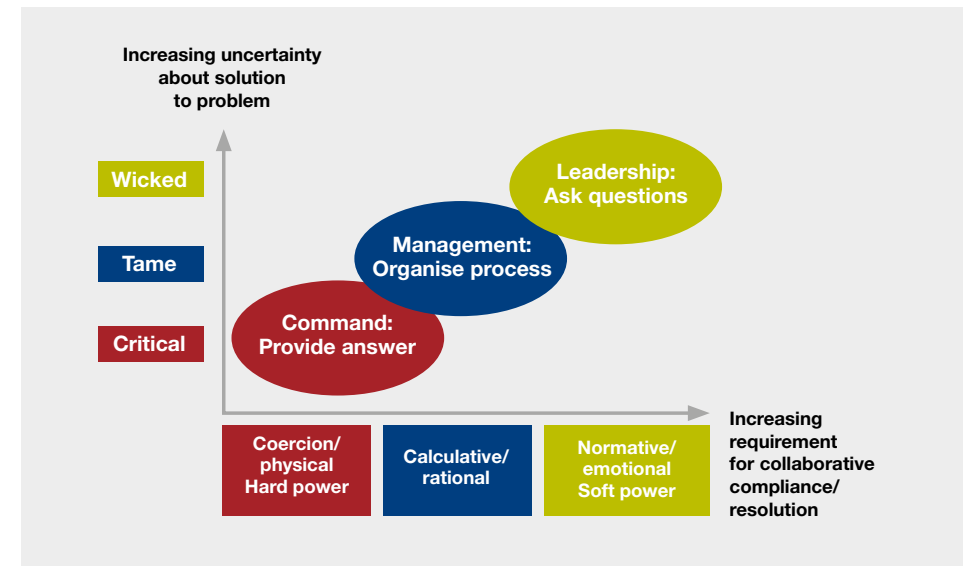
Individualists on the other hand, argue that the problem exists because people are constrained. They seek solutions by wanting to create opportunities for exploration and learning. They see problems logically and rationally.

Grint argues that some problems are solvable by just using one group's perspective, either through the perspective of the egalitarians, hierarchical group or individualist. The solutions that can be created through using just one group's approach are 'elegant solutions'. Elegant solutions are on a single path, single group perspective, consistent with what's been done before and are easily understood and actioned.

But asks Grint, What of those Wicked problems? The problems where not one of the group voices offers the solution we need. Where the problem doesn't fit one of these ways of thinking but sits across several? What of those wicked problems that need exploration, where elegant solutions simply won't work? What do we do then?

We can't just disregard the other group's standpoints, their opinions and beliefs, because they all offer something that's valuable. We need them and their ways of thinking. So says Grint, new types of solution are needed, 'messy solutions'. And that has to take place in a messy place. A messy place where it's acknowledged the problem itself is a mess. A messy place that admits that it doesn't know the answers. A messy place that says; we can't agree all the time but what do we agree on? A messy place that enables messy solutions to be found.

Messy solutions that just aren't perfect. Messy solutions that are complicated, and fiddly. Messy solutions that don't 'solve' everything. Messy solutions that cause other problems. Messy solutions that leave ripples in the sand. Messy solutions that are found through hearing everyone, through stirring together the 'we must change attitudes' of the egalitarians, the 'rules, rules, rules' voice of the hierarchists and the 'freedom to act' voices of the individualists. In a messy space messy solutions are found.



## How it's really applied

Clumsy solutions are a very helpful extension of Professor Keith Grint's 'wicked issues' typology. In national leadership development programmes, we have used this concept, together with the Mary Douglas categories, to help senior leaders to craft multi-faceted approaches to intractable problems. They learn, for example, that they have a particular world view themselves which, astonishingly, may not be shared by other people, even in their own organisation!



David Bolger

**Working on two systems leadership projects, I used the Grint framework to open a conversation about why this way of work was needed and different. After a five-minute description of the framework I asked people to talk in pairs for a couple of minutes about the topic at hand and where it fitted and what approaches might be useful.**

**The result in both places was that an expectation for working differently was established, as was a language to talk about it. Helpfully people also identified that they had their own preferences and this allowed for a deeper conversation about the approaches and behaviours that might support tackling complex challenges.**

**Tip: in order to do systemic work you still face the tame problems of project management and organisations. You will need at least one person who can plan, do logistics and organize people.**



Holly Wheeler

### Why not also look at:

- Appreciation Process
- Understanding the Connection between People and Performance
- Cultural Theory and Clumsy Solutions

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## The Landscapes Framework

CIMH

### A tool for understanding the nature of problems and for designing interventions

The Landscapes Framework suggests that different problems need to be treated differently. How the problem is treated depends on how the person responsible for making the change (the animateur), views both the nature of the problem and the nature of the goals within in it. These judgements define the landscape of the problem. The nature of the problem and the nature of the goals define how people respond to the problem and that defines the type of approach that's needed.

The Landscapes Approach thinks about systems in terms of them being both Adaptive and Designed systems. Every system it argues has and needs elements of both at different times to fulfil different functions. This means that the way a problem is approached needs to address the type of system at play at that time and furthermore because problems are dynamic what they need may change throughout time.

According to The Landscapes Approach a designed system is machine like. Its roles and functions are designated and controlled, because of that responses to change are expected to be predictable. Change here is usually imposed from the outside. On the other hand an adaptive system is considered to be a complex, self-organising ecosystem that thinks for itself. It adapts to change as it goes along. Change here is usually agitated from within.

### Types of problems – the landscape

How the animateur judges the nature of the problem and the nature of the goals within it determine its landscape. Is the problem judged as being Tame or Wicked. Should groups or individual people work on the problem?

### Tame problems

Tame problems according to The Landscapes Approach are those problems that are within the realms of familiarity; both the problem and the solution are within known experience and known expertise. People are in general agreement about what to do.

### Wicked problems

Wicked problems on the other hand cause confusion, they are different and fetch new challenges, the right path forwards isn't even in sight. There are conflicting views about what's best.

**What do the Landscapes look like and feel like?  
What approach is needed?**



**Mountains – Competition**

Individual goals, Tame problems

This mountain has been climbed before. The question is who's going to be the best at climbing it now? Problems in this landscape are about competition between groups and are best approached from the perspective of designed systems. That includes features such as clearly defined goals and clear rules that are imposed through praise or punishment, and includes things such as tenders and performance frameworks. It's a good environment to get all the players, (groups with a role in a problem), to perform to their best.

**Jigsaws – Co-ordination**

Collective goals, Tame Problems

The picture of what success will look like is clear, but to get there requires lots of separate groups to work on their own piece and coordinate with the other pieces about how to then fit it into the whole. They have to rely on each other to achieve the end picture. Features include goals and targets along the way. Problems here should approach problems from the designed system perspective. The steps along the way should be clearly stated and are based on past experiences of what's worked well before. This landscape needs coordination of all the parts and they need to be motivated to deliver their piece to the expected standard and on time.

It's a good way of approaching problems that can be broken down into smaller pieces.

**Donkeys – Cooperation**

Individual Goals, Wicked problems

Problems in this area have more than one player working to a solution, but at first they really don't know how to do that. They are intent on working individually, each believing that their approach is the one that will work. That's because in wicked problems everything is new. Players are simply set on doing what they need to do. The result of that is that they are pulling against each other and pulling away from any hope of finding a solution. They need to stop pulling against each other and cooperate to be able to walk towards their goals. It is about 'win win' for both players.

These types of problems need to be approached from the adaptive system perspective, it's about sharing and learning together and adapting how things are done. Features include resource sharing and deal making. Cooperation is suited to problems that need players to be able to work together towards a shared common goal.

**The Ice Field – Mutual Support**

Collective Goal, Wicked Problem

There's a vague idea about what the end goals are, but it's all very unclear and no one knows how to proceed. In other words it's a tough landscape to be in. Things are constantly shifting. The landscape is changing as the problem continues to evolve and players try to work it out. It's common in this landscape for players to repeatedly think that they have the best solution without realising the knock on effects that solution may have. Many things have been tried and nothing has really worked. Features such as uncertainty, complexity and continual culture change mark this landscape. Solutions are found through working together; through saying; 'Everyone hold on to the next person, pull your weight and support each other and together we'll be able to move across the ice field'.

These problems require approaches from the perspective of adaptive systems, because players and the whole have to constantly adapt to the changing conditions. These environments are good for when a sense of urgency is required. The ice field is a good landscape to pull together separate groups with shared goals into a team who needs to work together.

**But in the world of problems nothing is static**

According to The Landscape Framework a problem might not fit wholly into one framework, elements of it may overlap into different frames. The players in the problem (and the animateur) have a great deal of influence about where the problem sits. They can choose to deliberately shift the focus to better solve it. For example they can move from mountain (working individually on tame problems), into realising that a problem is more complex than that and so shift their perspective into needing cooperation with others. It then becomes a donkey problem. In this way The Landscapes Framework offers a flexible way to understand and approach problems, in a world where the problems themselves are ever changing.

## How it's really applied

I used the landscapes model with health and wellbeing partners in Plymouth to support them in thinking about how they could approach 'alcohol' as an interconnected, complex issue which belonged to them all rather than as a complex issue which different agencies approached from the perspective of their organisational agendas. The landscapes framework was useful in enabling health and wellbeing board members to distinguish between wicked and tame aspects of the shared alcohol strategy and to gain some clarity about what approach was useful for what type of problem. However it was particularly useful in making a distinction between a co-operative approach to alcohol in which agencies supported each other to meet their different agendas (eg the police helped the hospital by setting up a Friday night field clinic), and a collaborative, approach to alcohol in which the different agencies create a new, networked relationship with shared system priorities and pooled resources to address the complexity of the issue. This raised questions about how to work with the dilemmas of individual organisational agendas in relation to integrated system agendas and provided a useful framework for system leaders to talk about and experiment with the challenges of shared agendas.



Allison Trimble

### Why not also look at:

- Adaptive Leadership

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# 2

Understanding

People

## Ethnography

**Ethnography is an anthropological approach that is specifically concerned with observation of people in their ‘natural environments’, that’s at work, at home, in social settings**

### Using ethnography

Ethnography presents an impartial observation of life. It is a way to reveal hidden truths about lives and services in order to galvanise new action and drive the design of new products and processes and build new perspectives and attitudes.

The information collected through ethnography shows how people think and behave in different places and contexts. People behave differently according to where they are, who they’re with and when. They behave differently according to their mood and their reason for being there. The ethnographer themselves also affects interactions and behaviour.

Ethnography doesn’t just record behaviours, interactions and culture – it also analyses. It asks things such as; what is it that is motivating people? What are their influences? What is the tradition? It also asks; ‘why?’ It shows how people interact and engage with services. How they use products. How they understand ideas. By understanding the intricacies of ‘lives’, the ethnography is also a useful way to find out what individuals and groups might find useful from future products and services. Understanding the cultures in which people live and how and why people behave the ways they do provides useful information for deciding what to do next. It can also help develop ways of working that are suited to the group’s needs and desires.

### Overt or covert?

Ethnographies can be approached either overtly or covertly. To research covertly opens up all sorts of ethical questions around deception and can’t really be justified in most environments. It also shouldn’t be used where the data is going to be shared beyond personal use. Overt research has the benefit that the group is more likely to take ‘ownership’ of the work and give information more freely. On the other hand their awareness of the research can also affect their usual patterns of behaviour and may cause them to close their doors, intentional or unintentionally.

## Types of observation

Ethnographies can be researched directly in ‘real life’. They can also be researched through materials such as biographies, third party field notes, diaries, letters, or indeed a combination of real life observations and third party materials.

There are several different approaches to ‘real life’ ethnography, but it basically comes down to whether to be a passive observer looking in from the outside, or whether to be a participant observer, researching from within; that’s living, working, experiencing with the group. Research can be conducted in several ways including focus group sessions, interviews, or observations of normal activities and sampling across a range of different places, contexts including time of day.

The ethnographer observes ‘real life’ behaviour; behaviour that is not deliberate, manipulated, or self-controlled. They collect, describe and analyse information about behaviour and interactions. They also collect information about cultural ideologies and practices. It is not simply a ‘picture’ of a culture, place, organisation or person. Ethnography is a holistic way of looking at what’s going on; it is concerned with the whole of people’s lives in that particular setting and context.

## Purpose and design

Ethnography is usually approached to address a particular concern, an idea; something specific that is hoped will emerge from observation. There’s a specific purpose, or a hypothesis about a group’s interactions, behaviour and culture. As the research progresses that scope will continuously shift and develop. New thinking will emerge; it is an emergent design.

## Trust and support

When conducting research the ethnographer has to accept that the process of conducting research changes how the group is going to interact. The ethnographer isn’t going to get a true observation of what really happens, not at first anyhow. That will develop over time with trust and acceptance into the group. It will only happen if the ethnographer manages to identify and then gain the support of the ‘gate keepers’ and the ‘key informants’.

Gate keepers can make access to the group and information easier or harder. While key informants give those extra insights, guidance and help. They give access to that ‘special’ privileged information that gives extra depth that the researcher would otherwise be excluded from.

## How it's really applied

Wirral wanted to change the way the local food system operates to promote fairness and health. They had mountains of data but no information, no stories. It felt cold and impenetrable. We trained a group of staff and hired professional ethnographers to spend a day with different people in the food system to really understand their perspectives – to get to the hidden truths. We used these stories to identify sharply defined themes for further action and shared these with a large conference (+100). They carried immense power for this group who collaborated in defining a compelling strategy and actions for change.



Matt Gott

### Why not also look at:

- An Ecology of Mind
- Understanding Networks
- The Tipping Point

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## Cultural Theory and Clumsy Solutions

Douglas and Thompson

**A way of understanding the different values that people hold and how people with different values relate to each other**

### Cultural Theory

Mary Douglas (initially with Basil Bernstein) began to develop Cultural Theory in 1970, she developed it further with both Aaron Wildavsky and Michael Thompson. Cultural Theory was developed as a way of understanding the different values that are held by different people across society and as a way of understanding the relationships between people who hold different values.

Cultural Theory is rooted in the premise that everyone perceives danger and responds to danger in different ways, and that everyone has different ideologies about how they want the world to be. These lead to different types of social organisations, each of these social organisations has its own values and beliefs. These beliefs and values govern the way that they function within the group and also how they function externally outside their group within society (civilisation). It also affects how they behave towards and interact with other groups.

### Cultural bias

According to Cultural Theory there are four main groups (but an infinite number of variances possible in each group). Membership of each group (or cultural bias as Thompson terms it), is influenced by a persons need for group belonging, how much their identity is defined by that group and by the amount of freedom a person has within a group to be themselves. Douglas termed these needs Group and Grid.

The dynamic between Group and Grid produces the four distinct cultural groups;

- Hierarchical
- Egalitarian
- Individualistic
- Fatalistic

Each group is in constant competition with the others for membership and believes themselves to be the 'best group'. Their knowledge is produced and shaped by their values, values that are deeply entrenched in their institution. Each group (or culture) typically believes that their values are the only values that make sense. The different groups often put down and dismiss as 'idiotic' the values of the other groups. But, each group needs the others, they need those contradictory values to rally against and draw their energy from. They need those other groups in order to define themselves. Without the other groups there is no point to their own existence.

Through Cultural Theory it is possible to understand the different cultures of each group. It is possible to begin to see and understand where they are coming from and what they are thinking and why. We become able to identify their values. As different culture groups conflict with each other over issues both large and small and what seem to be irreconcilable differences, we need to understand that it's not only a conflict of opinion, it is also a conflict of culture. In short they are all speaking from different platforms and each think their way is the right and moral one.

## Clumsy Solutions

Michael Thompson

Michael Thompson's idea of Clumsy Solutions is based on Cultural Theory. According to Cultural Theory society is made up of four voices, the three active voices of the hierarchical, egalitarian and individualistic groups and the passive voice of the fatalistic group. Thompson believes that the well-being of a community needs all four voices, because each group keeps the behaviour of the other cultures in check, keeping the community balanced.

Thompson believes that the more the active voices of society are heard the more the power of the attraction of passive fatalism is reduced. If the active voices are excluded in discussion then fatalistic membership and passive voices get larger.

In times of change or challenge it is important that each voice is represented in the discussion, rather than groups seeking out one-sided, 'elegant' solutions. For Thompson, 'clumsy solutions' occur out of a messy, noisy, argumentative process of discussion. It's not about compromising with other groups or reaching a consensus. It's about discussions between the three active groups in a way that enables every voice to be heard, and these voices need to be responsive to the voices of the others.

This clumsiness enables solutions to be reached that represent the whole of society. Furthermore, these solutions actually work out to suit each group better than if they had gone it alone and pushed their way as the only way. Instead they now get more of what they want and less of what they don't want.

### The values of each culture group

#### Hierarchical

These groups tend to place value in the 'traditional institution'. Members often have formal status within the group. In times of change they speak of tolerable risks and safe limits and want expert knowledge and advice to support each decision they make. When thinking of human nature they think in terms of re-deemable sin and they take on an headmasterly role within society. Their voice is traditional and dominant.

#### Egalitarian

These groups believe that everything is interconnected in complex ways and in ways that we do not know about or understand. When thinking of change they are distrustful of change and their approach is to say; be careful, there are no safe limits. Their

approach is one of wholism and a belief that it's not possible to just change one thing, because that thing is connected to the whole. They see human nature as being sharing and caring. but that that nature has been corrupted by the hierarchical institutions. Their voice is the one that interferes with the traditional hierarchical way of doing things.

#### Individualistic

These groups don't like restrictions. They are competitive and self-thinking. They believe in the self-seeking nature of man and furthermore believe that this self-seeking is for the good of all society. They believe that man and society is robust and that will recover from everything. They seek experimentation and exploration and believe that man and civilisation is without limits. They are much more interested in the fact that a solution to a problem works than what form that solution actually takes.

#### Fatalism

This group is considered to be the passive group. Membership of the group happens because they don't fit into the requirements of the other groups. They state that everyone is the same, believe that learning is impossible, that everything always remains the same. In times of change they say; why bother we can't change anything. They stand and do nothing instead.

## How it's really applied

**That people are different is a trite truism. Mary Douglas brings this truism to life through a powerful four-way (and sometimes five way) classification, ("cultural theory" that underpins the argument for "clumsy solutions"). What's brilliant about using this approach is that whilst people may struggle with this in abstract, once the story is told through real examples the penny drops.**



Joe Simpson

#### Why not also look at:

- **Critical, Tame, Wicked**
- **Complexity**
- **The Three Levels of Organisational Culture**

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# Cultural Dynamic Values Space – The Value Modes model

CDSM and Chris Rose

## A model based on the idea that everyone has a group of principles that guide their every action and thought

The Cultural Dynamics Values Space, developed by CDSM and explored by Chris Rose in his book; *What Makes People Tick*, is based around the idea that everyone is different. We each direct our attention in different ways. We all hold different core values that influence everything in our lives; the ways we choose to live, the choices we make, the things that impress us, the things that don't, the things we enjoy. When it comes to a choice, making a judgement, committing to action and actually doing something, it is our core values that determine how we feel and what we will do.

### Group belonging

The Cultural Dynamics Values Space draws on Maslow's work of the Psychological Theory of Motivation. It explains that there are three value groups; Settler, Prospector and Pioneer, (with four subsets in each), and that we all naturally belong in one of them. That value group explains our entire subconscious thinking about what feels right to us. Each group has different 'rights'. What feels right to members of one group doesn't feel 'right' to members in another. The model explains why we do things and how different groups approach change.

We sometimes do things that don't feel right. Sometimes we put aside our values simply to get things done, to get by. Sometimes we put aside our values so that we can fit it to a group, a place, work, because sometimes we have to, we need to. But that's not easy. It means putting aside what is important to us in our hearts and minds and that makes us uncomfortable. If we could choose what to do we wouldn't choose this compromise at all. That means that we're never fully engaged, or fully committed and as soon as we can we'll get out of it, or we'll try and avoid that situation all together.

### So why does it matter?

It matters because it's about finding effective ways of communicating and effective ways of asking. It matters because if you want to engage someone in something, if you want to gain their enthusiasm, hold their interest, if you want them to do something, agree with something, then you need to communicate with them in ways that will work. Because each group has different values, it's no good communicating with everyone in the same way. What appeals to a Prospector won't appeal at all to a Settler. What grabs the interest of a Pioneer will just pass by unnoticed by a Prospector. So when communicating and asking something it's important to understand where they are coming from and how to get from

them what you need. They each need asking in different ways, and they each need to be asked different things.

According to The Cultural Dynamic Values Space model, to persuade someone to do something means you need to appeal to his or her subconscious values. To do this you have to communicate with them, not through your own values but through theirs. If you grab their attention and enthusiasm in ways that appeal to them you'll get much better results than if you cajole them, or than by simply enforcing a way of doing that leaves them no choice but to compromise their values and just get on and fit in.

In the words of Chris Rose; 'start from where the audience is, not where you are'.

## The value groups

### Settlers

- Like control and regulation
- Dislike threats
- Like security
- Value tradition
- Like to do things the way they've always been done, that's the 'right' way

That means that communication should appeal to their sense of keeping things safe and doing things the correct, normal way. They are more likely to respond to people who they feel know them and will keep them safe; traditional leadership, authority figures, family, their boss. They like action that feels like routine, that feels safe, that is low risk and that they feel in control of.

### Prospectors

- Prospectors like to look and feel like they are one step ahead of the game
- Value being on trend
- Like to feel important
- Like to be around the important, powerful and famous
- Always want bigger and better

Communication to Prospectors needs to be done in ways that makes you look good and makes them feel good (esteem). Prospectors are most likely to listen to people who are powerful and to people who have more influence and fame than they personally do, (the high achievers, the 'big' people). Prospectors prefer to take action that is high profile, fun and easy.

**Pioneers**

- Like to live with ethical morality
- Explore and seek out new opportunities
- Like learning
- Value creativity
- Want to be fulfilled and help others to be fulfilled
- Want to make life better
- And want to live life better

Communicating with Pioneers should appeal to their desire to live authentically and ethically as well as their desire to be creative. They are most likely to listen to people who are creative and those that have obvious strong ethical boundaries who are doing 'good' in the world. That's not famous people, just authentic ones. Pioneers prefer to take action that is complex, thoughtful, innovative and stimulating.

**How it's really applied**

**Pioneers, prospectors, settlers – the titles describe each value set. Public service is bedeviled by pioneers addressing settlers in language almost guaranteed to have the opposite effect to that intended. Yet unless we can feel some empathy for people with different value sets, we do not persuade them, we alienate them.**



Joe Simpson

**Why not also look at:**

- Basic Assumption Groups and Psychodynamic Approaches
- Push and Pull Influencing Style
- Owl, Fox, Donkey, Sheep: Political Skills for Managers

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**Adoption Curves**

Iowa State University by Rogers et al.

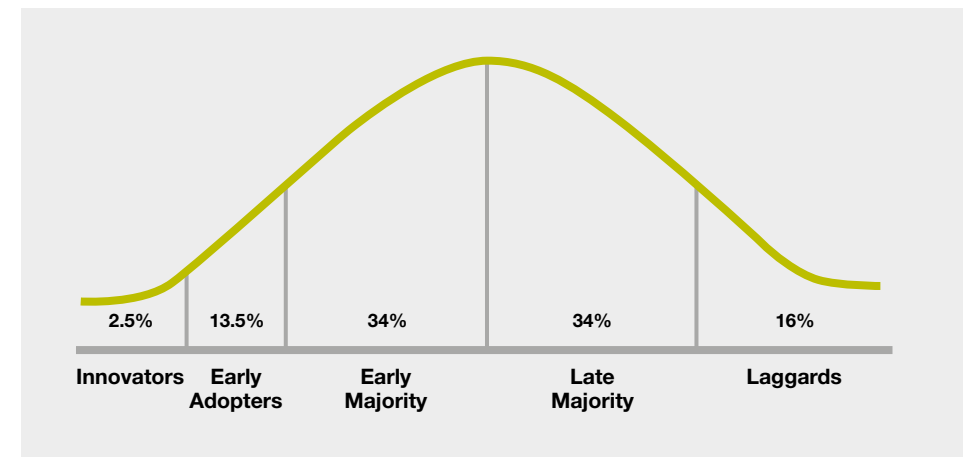
**A model to help understand how individuals respond to innovation and change**

The theory behind Adoption Curves was developed by Iowa State University with Rogers et al. in 1957. The original theory explained diffusion or adoption of new products in the farming community. The model has since been adopted (and adapted) by a wide variety of sectors, including technology and innovation and also marketing, as a way to understand how ideas, products and 'ways of doing things' are adopted across communities.

**Bell curve**

The basic model presented by Rogers et al. explains that different 'groups' of people adopt new things at different moments in time. This is represented graphically in what is commonly termed a bell curve. The bell curve shows the rise in popularity of the new idea to a high top-out point and then a slow-down in the adoption rate.

Understanding how new ideas are taken up across a population can help decide where best to focus 'marketing' energies at certain times to have the best take up rate possible.



(www.jbdon.com)

## The characteristics of the adoption groups

### Innovators

Innovators are the first group of people to take up a new idea. They have the least to lose in terms of security (economic, position, career etc.) than any other group, and they are willing to take risks. They try something new just through curiosity. They are willing to experiment and work out how best to use something.

### Early Adopters

Early Adopters are secure in their positions. They are intrigued by how new ideas might help them achieve a task, or do something. These Early Adopters are the ones that influence others into taking up the idea.

### Early Majority

This group like new ideas, but are less secure than the Early Adopters and Innovators. They tend to wait and see if something is going to be useful before they are willing to try it. They use the adoption of new things in order to promote their own status and security.

### Late Majority

This group is less secure again. They are afraid of the risk of trying new things and doubt that they are capable of doing things differently. They like things to have been polished and made easy to use and accessible before they take it in. They also like an idea to have been proven useful before they are willing to adopt it.

### Laggards

Laggards don't want change at all. They have no interest in new ideas. They don't want to do things differently and tend to take up new ideas only because they have to. This means that they are the last group to take up anything new.

## How it's really applied

The adoption curve is the standard distribution curve, codified by Everett Rogers to outline how people embrace and respond to change. I used it with the Scottish Prison Service some time ago when it was going through a significant change programme. Some staff were racing ahead, able to build up a following to support and enable change, while at the opposite end some small numbers of staff were not just holding back change, but blocking it. It was this latter group of staff that the organisation had to robustly performance manage. The criticism in public services is often that these staff cannot be dealt with, but the example I worked with here was that good managers can provide leadership that the organisation needs in order to enable change.



John Deffenbaugh

### Why not also look at:

- **Understanding the Connection between People and Performance**

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## Change curve – stages of grief

Kubler Ross

### A way of understanding the ways in which people and systems respond to change

It was whilst working with terminally ill patients in the 1960's that Kubler-Ross developed her ideas of The Grief Cycle. She developed a model that explored and explained the impact of grieving on everyday lives. The model has since been adopted as an approach to understanding the process of change across lives and within organisations.

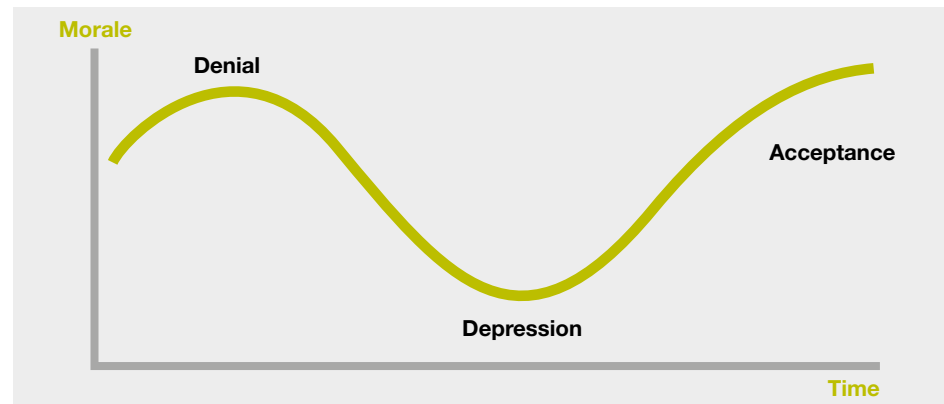
The basic Kubler-Ross model has three transitional stages of grief, but some later models developed by other theorists have adapted the model into seven or more stages. However the basic premise remains the same: When a change happens that causes a disruption in a person's life then they have to go through stages of emotion before they are able to move forwards and live wholly again. A process from top to bottom and back up again.

### The individuality of grief

Responses to change and the ways in which we grieve are personal and subjective, that's because everyone is different. What one person finds disturbing and upsetting may to another person not be an issue at all. How we experience the grief cycle will be entirely different too. For some people it's a rapid decline and rise back up. For others it's a tangled up and down ride. Others get trapped in repeating emotional patterns and some go slow and steady, taking their time.

There's no starting point to the cycle. People begin at different points. Every stage does have to be gone through, it's not possible to miss a stage. To miss a stage or not to complete it just leads to a fall back, a renewed cycle of the grieving process.

### The Grief Cycle



### Stages of grief

#### Stage 1 Shock and denial

How can this be happening? It's not true? What am I going to do? At this stage you shut the world down and go into survival mode, just getting by. You stop aiming high and instead retreat into doing only what's needed. In organisations this is seen in missed deadlines, lost productivity. It's fed by confusion, lack of information, fear of what's going to happen next and fear of getting it wrong.

#### Stage 2 Anger and depression

As you enter this stage there's still a sense of disbelief and a sense of injustice settles onto your shoulders. It's not fair and it shouldn't happen to you. You're low, scared, confused. It's frustrating and you're angry and looking for someone to blame and that includes blaming yourself. Things seem so much worse than they actually are. Little things take on gigantic proportions and are blown up beyond their truth. In an organisation performance has slumped, productivity is low, nothings getting done, even the minimum is suffering.

#### Stage 3 Acceptance and integration

Then right at the very bottom, at the very lowest point something happens. There is a sudden moment of clarity. You realise that it's actually true. This is acceptance. There's a sense of relief and things seem brighter. It becomes possible to see a way forwards. To make what's happening fit to your life and needs. You see the possibilities ahead, the new opportunities. With that comes re-found energy, a spark, enthusiasm but also a touch of impatience to get the change over and done with, so that you can move on so that things can settle down.

## How it's really applied

I used this model with a third sector organisation which was experiencing significant change in funding from local government and was stuck in a combative relationship with their local authority partner. A key feature of the relationship was one of angry denial and outrage by the third sector partner (“how can they do this to us...”, “they can’t get away with this”) and a refusal to talk from the local authority partner. We spent some time in the community organisation talking through the emotional dynamics of change, particularly when survival and core values are threatened. This enabled the organisations to understand better what was getting in the way of addressing the Funding issue and helped individuals come to terms with the inevitability of the changes. This led to a more creative acceptance and strategy for the future, including a different kind of conversation with their local authority partner about how to collaborate with the CCG and other statutory players to protect the needs of local people in the context of local authority cuts.



Allison Trimble

I am exploring Public Narrative as a potential tool to ease the depth and length of the downward change curve. I am working with a partner organisation that specialises in personal resilience to develop an approach that prepares individuals and teams for change before using Public Narrative to explore need for change. The objective is to get an organisation to sponsor experimentation with this to challenge my thesis that this type of engagement before change will reduce the downward impact of change and therefore save the organisation money and lead to sustainable and highly effective whole system change.



Ken Perry

### Why not also look at:

- Mindfulness
- Four Orders and Systemic Constellations
- Society 4.0 – from ego-system to eco-system

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## Taxonomy of Needs

Johnathon Bradshaw

### An approach that is based on the needs and wants that must be considered when developing citizen focused services and outcomes

Johnathon Bradshaw was (for over 40 years) a student, lecturer and researcher of Social Policy at York University. He developed his theories of The Taxonomy of Social Need in 1972, drawing on the findings of his Master's dissertation where he researched poverty in older people in York. The Taxonomy of Social Need was based around work with social services, but his theories have since been adopted across health, education and other organisations.

Bradshaw realised that Social Services were facing a problem. Their purpose was to provide services that meet need, but exactly how can those needs be defined? He asked: Who has decided what those needs are? Who has defined them? Is the right definition of need at that time in that situation being used? He also asked: Who should define needs? Is it a purely personal right? Or can and should organisations that provide services define need?

### The Taxonomy of Needs

Bradshaw made a distinction between four different types of needs to take into account both personal subjectivity and environmental and situational influences;

- Normative needs
- Felt needs
- Expressed needs
- Comparative needs

Understanding the different ways of defining needs says Bradshaw can help researchers and providers understand the different ways in which needs are perceived, expressed and measured. It allows the different types of needs to be taken into account when planning services, so that the individual voice and formal measurement and demand and provision can be developed to better fit needs.

But, explains Bradshaw The Taxonomy of Needs won't provide a perfect solution because needs are subjective to environment and circumstance, needs are personal and needs change.

**Normative needs**

These needs are defined by the expert in that situation, for example the doctor, social worker or nurse. These needs are measurable and defined against ‘standards’. If you don’t meet the defined standard then you are defined as being in ‘need’.

The problem is that these needs are measured according to a value system, which means that they may be tainted by bias and irrelevant expectations. And of course different experts in the same field may define need differently. There is no room for individual circumstance or voice.

**Felt needs**

Needs here are defined by what the individual wants. It’s about what clients and customers feel they need. Often felt needs are unexpressed and remain hidden.

Needs here are purely perceptual and so effected by social circumstance, education and the services a person thinks or knows exists. Needs can swing from denial of need because of embarrassment, or not wanting to receive services, to exaggeration in order to get all that they feel that they are entitled to.

**Expressed needs**

When a person or group asks for services to meet their ‘felt need’ it then becomes an ‘expressed need’ and people seek out help. Sometimes people seek out help to meet genuine perceived needs. At other times they seek out help for needs they don’t have, or for exaggerated needs. Sometimes they have needs but don’t seek out help at all.

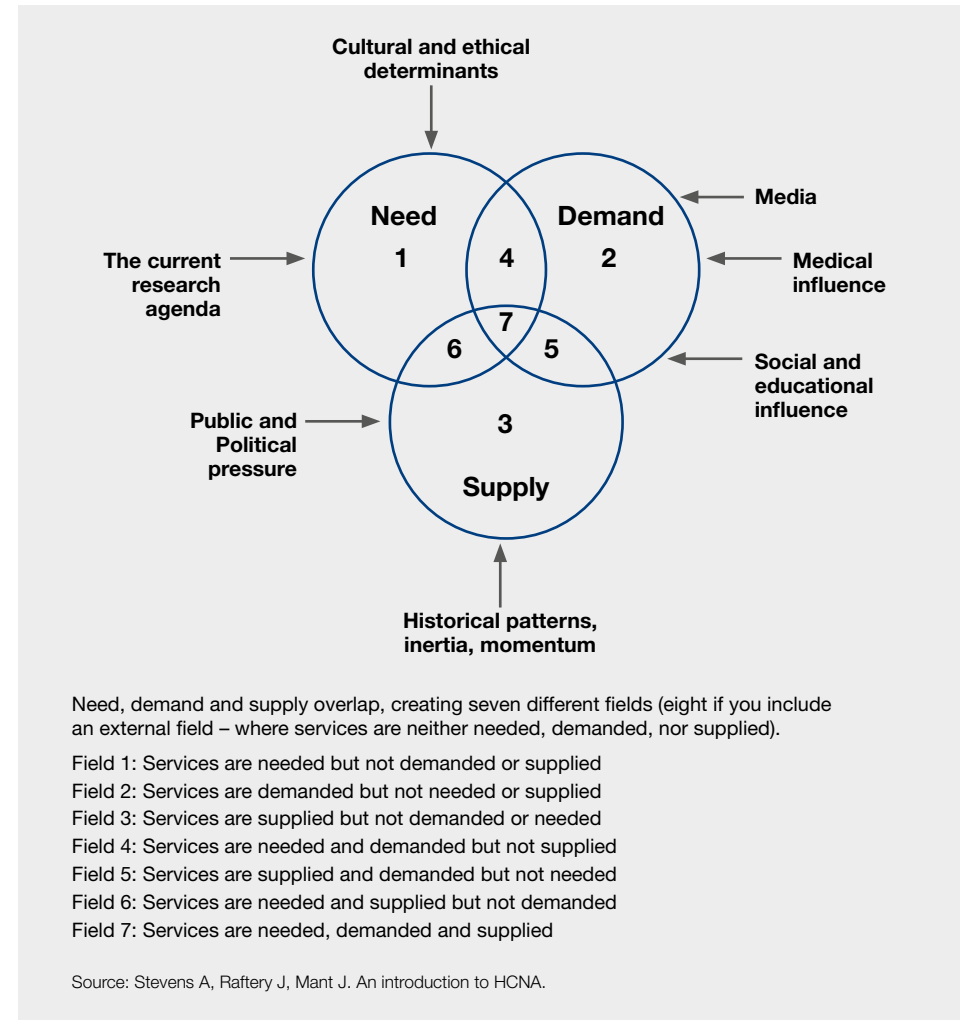
This can be a useful way of developing services according to what people want, but it can also lead to problems such as waiting lists for services, clogged with people who don’t actually have a real need for them. There’s also the problem that people will only tend to seek out help where they know that help exists, so they need to know about a service to begin with.

**Comparative need**

This is when an identified need is used as a measure to define needs across a wider population or community. It is used to identify those who have similar needs but who aren’t yet receiving the services that could help them. It can highlight gaps in service provision and is a tool used to standardise provision.

The problem is that means that the characteristics of ‘needs’ are standardised. That’s problematic Bradshaw explains; just because two people have the same characteristics of need does not mean that they both have the same need or want for services. That’s because need is subjective and it’s personal.

**Need, demand and supply: influences and overlaps**



(<http://www.hcna.bham.ac.uk/introduction.shtml>)

**Why not also look at:**

- **Open Strategy – PRUB**

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# Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs – a theory of human motivation

Abraham Maslow

## A way of considering the basic levels of human motivation

Abraham Maslow first developed his Theory of Human Motivation in 1943. Commonly known as The Hierarchy of Needs. The model draws on humanistic and holistic psychology, particularly Gestalt psychology and the Self Actualisation theories of psychologists such as Fromm, Rogers and Goldstein. Maslow believed that motivation is about the fulfilment of needs rather than for reward or to fulfil desires. Maslow suggests that humans are motivated to fulfil their needs according to a hierarchy of importance to survival.

### Using The Hierarchy of Needs

The Hierarchy of Needs has been used across education and organisations as a way of understanding human motivation. The model rather than focusing on correcting behaviour or motivating through reward and punishment instead focuses on the 'needs' motivations of the individual.

It shows how and why people are motivated and can help understand how their motivations impact on their work. The Hierarchy of Needs is also helpful in understanding why an individual's personal and work motivation changes in response to events that disrupt how their lower levels needs are met.

### Levels of need

Maslow's original Hierarchy of Needs had five hierarchical levels, though Maslow later adapted the hierarchy to eight levels. However it is the five level pyramid that still tends to be used. The first four levels of the pyramid are what Maslow termed 'the deficit needs' or survival needs. We are largely motivated to fulfil these needs purely on instinct. He believed that if we don't have enough of something that we need (a deficit), then we are motivated to fulfil that deficit. Once that deficit has been met then we are no longer motivated to meet it. Needs here are met by whatever is most important to our survival at any given time, so for example breathing over hunger. But once that need is met we then focus on meeting another higher need. Once these deficit needs have been fulfilled it then becomes possible to focus on growth, Maslow termed this self-actualisation.

There are four hierarchies of deficit need;

#### Physiological needs

Biological needs for survival, for example; food, warmth, sleep, exercise.

#### Safety and security needs

The need to feel safe and secure.

We become motivated to fulfil the need for things such as living in a safe environment, job security and savings.

#### Love and belonging

The motivation to have relationships and feel belonging; the need to feel a part of a community, at work or at home.

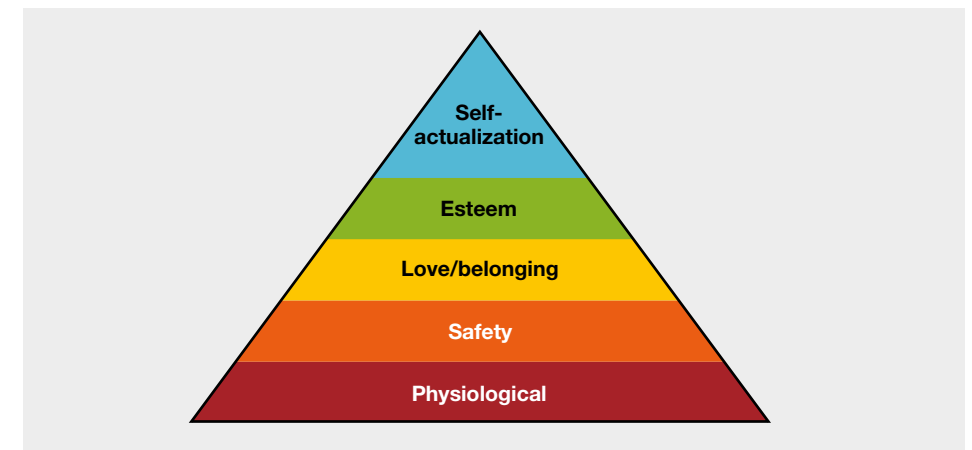
Personal relationships with family and friends.

#### Esteem needs

Maslow recognised two levels of esteem need: Lower level esteem – Respect from others and Higher level esteem – self respect.

#### Self-actualisation

Motivation here is no longer about meeting a deficit. It is instead about growth. The more we experience self-growth the more we want it, in other words our motivation increases. Self-actualisation is the drive for self-growth and achieving our full potential. Maslow believes that we develop this through experiencing 'peak experiences'; experiences in which we become 'lost' in the doing. We find this experience in the things that bring us happiness and a sense of well-being. But, Maslow argues, it is not possible to think about pursuing self-fulfilment unless our deficiency needs are met. So for example we are unable to pursue peak experiences when we're under threat, when we're hungry, when we're sad.



### Personal influences

Despite Maslow's theory being hierarchical, Maslow also believed that everyone is motivated in different degrees by different needs. Our motivation is dependent on our personal physiological needs as well as our life experiences. That means that some people become psychologically fixated on fulfilling certain needs even when those needs have theoretically been met. Maslow termed this 'neurosis'. For example, the adult who was hungry as a

child may grow into an adult who is obsessed by storing food or even eating it. Additionally people regress and progress throughout the levels for the whole of their lives, responding to circumstance.

### Criticisms

Maslow's theory while providing an insight into human motivation does have its flaws. Maslow's methodology is criticised (he based his theory of self-actualisation on studies of just 18, mostly male, 'human greats' whom he considered to have achieved self-actualisation). There are also concerns about his fundamental premise. It is asked; are human needs hierarchical at all? Do we need food more than we need to feel fulfilled or loved? And is self-actualisation possible only when our other basic needs are met? Biologically we can't argue that we need food, but what of our humanity, our emotion, our passions? It's a tricky question. One that Maslow's detractors answer with the examples of human greatness from those whose needs have arguably not been fulfilled, from stories of the world's great artists to those who lived and died in concentration camps.

### How it's really applied

**I don't often work explicitly with Maslow's hierarchy of needs and when I do I'll do it in conjunction with Herzberg's hygiene factors. Where I find it most helpful is as a reminder that not everyone is looking at a problem from the same position. For those who are comfortable, because they are employed, because they have a senior position in a hierarchy, because they control access to resources, the emotional connection with issues can be very different to those who are struggling to get by or disempowered. So for example, one group of professionals in a conversation about food in Cornwall looked at interesting recipes to get children fascinated by cooking and trying more healthy food. They missed that for a single mum, bringing up a family on benefits, the cost of ingredients was more than her spare disposable income, and that most likely the food would never get eaten. As a way of changing things, it started too high up the pyramid.**



John Atkinson

#### Why not also look at:

- Coaching Conversations
- Dialogue
- Communities of Practice (CoP)

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## Gestalt Theory of Change

### An approach that considers 'the whole' as once the whole is seen it's possible to move towards change

The term 'Gestalt' was first used by the psychologist Christian von Ehrenfels in 1890 to explain how the whole is more than the sum of its parts. It was further developed during the 1920's and 1930's by scientists and psychologists including Werthimer, Koffka, Köhler and Goldstein. There are various different schools of thought about how exactly the whole mind and its individual parts think, feel, behave and interact together.

The idea of viewing the mind as a whole and the many parts within it functioning together and inseparably from each other remains the building blocks of the ideas of Gestalt used today, which have been primarily developed by Fritz and Laura Perls (in the 1950's) based on Goldstein's holistic approach. Gestalt theory has been used as a psychotherapy treatment to help people understand and move through change in their lives. It been adopted as an approach to change within organisations.

### Core Gestalt principles

#### The whole is different from the sum of its parts

Gestalt theory suggests that people (and places), often don't realise that absolutely everything matters equally. People are so wrapped up in seeing their reality through visions of how it was or how they want they want it to be, dwelling in the past and repeating the same old pattern of behaviour that they don't see the individual shapes or how those shapes all dance and tessellate together. They certainly don't see how those patterns look as a whole picture.

#### All is occurring in the here and now

It is only from the present influence of organisations and the wider field that individuals can make sense of their current experience. In organisations, the remembering of the past and the anticipation of the future in current conversations are occurring in the present moment. It's the patterns of relating and contacting that explain current behaviour. Each person's experience and the context they are part of is unique, specific to that situation. Gestalt theory says it is necessary to ask, 'what's going on right here, right now'? 'What are we doing and how are we doing it'?

#### Emotional and intellectual presence

Gestalt privileges emotional presence over intellectual presence. The body is a source of meaning making (embodied knowing).



**Everything is data**

Everyone in an organisation/system has potential relevance and meaning. Therefore, it is important to pay attention to aspects or voices in the system that are often overlooked or persistently dismissed.

**If you really want to change, focus on what is**

By really paying attention to the here and now, what needs to change will become obvious. It is necessary to fully experience 'what is' before recognising all the alternatives of 'what may be'. This attention brings a heightened emotional quality of awareness and therefore amplifies different views. This contrasts with more traditional approaches to change, which tends to focus on a more detailed vision of the future, which can alienate those who are involved in the present.

**Change happens through amplifying difference**

Through paying attention to recurring patterns at the local level and the different experience that people have of these patterns, a shift may occur at a larger level.

**Organisations/systems are in a constant state of flux**

Nothing is static, change is occurring all the time. It is therefore important not to label or over-categorise. There is usually a great deal of ambivalence about change in any system, this can display itself as 'stuckness'. Gestalt views this as a normal and potentially useful state. It therefore it is important to heighten awareness of the forces acting 'for' and 'against' moving to a new place on a problem or issue. This may in turn, resolve the dilemmas that underline the ambivalence.

Resistance is seen as strength, as a force to be respected and inquired into – as energy going in a different direction. This may mean listening and inquiring to all objections. This contrasts with conventional management thinking which sees resistance as something to be managed.

**Change takes place in relationships**

Organisations and systems are made up of relationships, therefore for something different to happen in an organisation/system the change must be occur in the habits of relationships that exist between people. This also implies that relationships will not change unless you are willing to be changed through them.

**Change happens through experimentation**

Trying something out and seeing what happens. The intention is to enhance awareness, rather than moving or changing a situation to a predetermined outcome or behaving in a predetermined way. This implies a stance of creative indifference – of not being attached to a particular outcome or position – another Gestalt concept.

**Cycle of experience**

This speaks to our life experiences as being 'fluid'.

**The Gestalt Cycle****State of rest**

The 'normal' way of being.  
Everything's working just fine.

**Disturbance**

Sensing; 'There's something wrong'. There's a problem somewhere.  
Things just don't feel right but people don't know what is wrong or why.

**Awareness**

At this stage people (and places) have a nagging worry and now they need to know what the need is that's causing it. If a need is denied and they remain unaware of its nature, it will either fade into background noise feeding continued dissatisfaction or it will become forceful, urgent and result in frustration and system tensions.

**Mobility**

People have been focusing energy and resources into finding out about their needs, but once the need is identified they are then 'free' to use energy and resources to work out what to do about it.

**Action**

Now people have been mobilised into action they can begin to try and work out how to solve the problem. It's about trying things out and seeing what happens, taking little steps forwards.

**Contact**

Those little steps have really connected places with the problem. They've taken decisive action and are meeting the demands of the problem head on. They are really making a difference.

**Satisfaction and decreasing tension**

Things feel better, that need has been met. It's a job well done. The tension that came with the problem has receded and people feel satisfied with all that work.

**Return of balance**

Things settle back down. The problem is solved and places can withdraw from 'being on the case'.

## How it's really applied

I use this approach to help shift 'stuck' relationships'. For example in an Action Learning Set, a stuck situation between a senior manager in social care and health was worked with by inviting the individual to physically step in the shoes of the other, and then to return to their own position – several times. Each time, I asked them to sense into what they were feeling and to speak from that place. I then invited them to physically move out of those two positions to a 'Third Position' and from this place to characterise the relationship between the two – what they noticed/observed. And then to say what they think this relationship needed – in order to shift or find movement. And then what needed to shift within herself for that to happen.

### Outcomes

The individual concerned got some new insights about the other by stepping into the other's shoes, rather than just seeing from her position – as well as a greater appreciation of the relationship dynamic and her part in it and the impact that the wider system and different cultures had on their relationship pattern

Following this experiment, the individual sat more lightly to the situation and saw the relationship from a different perspective. She was able to engage differently with the other without holding tightly to her position or a particular outcome. It allowed for both parties to then have a more open conversation that explored some of the pressures they were both carrying from their different organisational contexts and how they might better support each other, rather than be in competition with each other.



Liz Goold

### Why not also look at:

- Coaching Conversations
- Mindfulness
- Framing/Reframing

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## Lewin's Model of Change

Kurt Lewin

### A way of understanding the stages that people must go through to make effective change happen

The Model for Change is a way of understanding the processes that a system has to undergo in order to make effective change happen. It works alongside the intervention Force Field Analysis. Lewin believed that change is a sociological and psychological process (transition). He believed that change is not simply an event, but that it has to be a feeling too. Change should not and cannot simply be declared and put in place, because change needs to 'involve heart'. Change that doesn't have heart, that doesn't become part of the culture won't take hold. Lewin suggested that for change to be successful it has to go through three stages;

### Unfreeze

This first stage is about preparing for change. At this stage places need to recognise that there is a problem. They need to accept that there is a problem and they need to decide to do something about it. To do that they will need to gain support for change from the system and the people within it. But those people and the place itself are often trapped in blindness, indecision and fear. In order to make change happen they need to move forwards; they need to unfreeze.

To unfreeze they need

- To be motivated into action; to realise that change is necessary
- Feel enough pressure to want to do something about it
- To silence the voice that is saying 'we can't'

Processes such as Lewin's Force Field Analysis are useful to show the things that are working for and against change and reduce opposition from the negative forces.

### Cognitive restructuring

Once places have decided they need to take action, actually doing that isn't so easy. It's hard to commit to a scary new path that questions the usual ways. It's hard to stand against tradition. There's always opposition from the system and the people within it who don't want change to happen, those who like the comfort of tradition and who are scared of learning how to be different. Places need support to help them see the good and help them keep those negative resistant forces in check. They need encouragement to keep on going.

At this stage there's a great deal of uncertainty and fear; fear of change and fear of learning. Fear of learning says Lewin is the biggest obstacle to overcome. Places and the people within them are learning how to do things differently and they are also learning about what

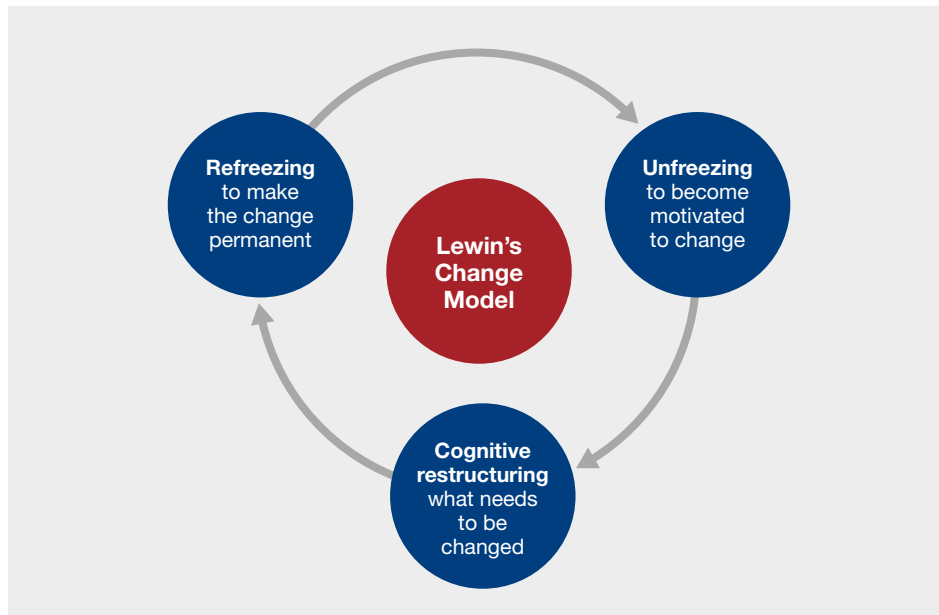
they feel; they are learning to think differently and behave differently. They are learning what works for change and what doesn't. Some of those new things don't always work out well and that's hard to overcome.

### Refreeze

Change shakes up the system. It disrupts how things are done and it also effects how people feel and think. It changes relationships, creates new routines and questions understanding. The system needs time to settle back down and work out how it feels now. It needs to work out how the change is actually going to work for them. If change is going to take root then it needs to be adopted across the whole of the system and by everyone and that takes time.

It's also important to understand that this refreeze stage is often temporary before the next change is implemented. So rather than a 'solid refreeze' it's perhaps more useful to view this stage as a 'settling down'. For many, facing change after change the idea of settling down can be very difficult, because; what's the point if it's all going to change again?

For Lewin in 1947 (and it's still true today) the point was that change needs to be reinforced positively in the system. It needs to be implemented firmly with belief and support and intent. Change has to be accepted as the new norm, even if that new normality proves to be short lived. If the change isn't accepted, then the chances are that after a while places will slip back into those familiar, long-standing comfort zones and revert back into those traditional ways of doing things.



## How it's really applied

**I use Kurt Lewin's framework for change repeatedly in systems leadership work. In particular, I look to see how the system I am working with has dealt with unfreezing. Almost always there is disconfirming information in place that contradicts the validity of the way we are currently doing things. Increasingly and as budgets are stretched this causes survival anxiety as people feel their role and identity threatened. Most often though, I see little in place that will overcome learning anxiety people's fear that they cannot make the transition to what is needed. As a result they stay stuck where they are, working increasingly hard in a system that needs to change. By finding ways to help people explore what a new way of doing things might be, in groups, largely through experiments, learning anxiety can be overcome and the stuckness resolved.**



John Atkinson

### Why not also look at:

- Lewin's Force Field Analysis
- Action Learning
- Adaptive Leadership

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# Transactional Analysis

Eric Berne

## A way of understanding the different ways in which people interact with each other

It was while working as a psychiatrist in California in the 1950s that Berne began to develop his theory of Transactional Analysis. Berne realised that all his patients presented different 'natures' at different times in their treatment and that these natures were influenced by their past experiences as well as the present situation and interaction they were in. This was the basis of his theory of Transactional Analysis.

Drawing on the work already done by psychotherapists, including Freud, and scientists such as Dr Wilder Penfield, Berne already believed that the human brain is made up of several different voices or personalities that affect how we live our lives and how we interact with the world, and that we have different feelings and emotions associated with them.

### Underlying principles

The concept of Transactional Analysis first developed by Berne has been developed by practitioners over the years to represent better the ways in which humans interact, but the basic essence remains the same; that is that communication is the heart of human connection and social relationships. Communication isn't just about talking with someone: It's about our facial expressions, what our hands do, the way we stand and sit (our body language). It's about how we use our words, how we say them, our intonation, speed, noise. It's about the way we listen and respond, and the ways in which we address others.

And every human 'transaction' functions and behaves in different ways. These are dependent on the 'nature' being presented by each person at that particular time, which depends on how we feel right then in that moment. We can deliberately change the nature we are using, but that's difficult and needs a deliberate and conscious effort.

In its most basic form Transactional Analysis explains that we all have three natures, (or alter egos); parent, child, adult. Modern Transactional Analysis has developed the model into a seven state model. It is this model that is most often used. In the seven state model the parent nature and child nature each has two different voices and each voice can speak negatively or positively.

### Parent – the taught voice

The voice of authority that tells people what to do, it could be heard saying 'you must' along with head shaking and finger pointing. This is the voice we inadvertently learn as we grow up based on the authority figures we encounter in our childhoods.

This voice says 'you'.

Nurturing nature both nurtures (positive) and spoils (negative).

Controlling nature gives structure (positive) but can often be critical (negative).

### Child – the felt voice

The voice that reflects our inner thoughts and feelings, our gut reactions, our emotional response. This alter ego is cooperative or resistant. It says things like 'it's always my fault' and has mannerisms such as eye rolling.

This voice says 'I'.

Adapted nature is cooperative (positive) or overly compliant or resistant (negative).

Free nature is spontaneous (positive) but also immature (negative).

### Adult – the thought voice

This is the real us. The voice that is our independent thought. It draws from both the parent alter ego and the child nature. It represents what we really want to say and who we really are. This nature listens attentively and is able to see people without judgment. It exists in the here and now, and could be heard saying things such as 'In my opinion'.

This voice says 'we'.

The adult voice remains the same and is considered to be the 'accounting voice'. It balances up what's really happening. It tries to keep equilibrium between the child or adult voices and decides when it is appropriate to use them.

### Structural analysis

Transactional Analysis explores how these voices interact together, aims to understand how people communicate with others, as well as how people conduct their individual internal dialogues. This is 'structural analysis'. Structural analysis is a simple two way model where one person (or voice) speaks and another person (or internal voice) responds. Or put even more simply; I do something – You do something back.

In more complex terms an agent provides a transactional stimuli. And then the respondent reacts with a transactional response.

Both agent and respondent have the ability to choose any nature they wish to communicate with. People can choose a nature to speak with and a nature to respond with. That's a

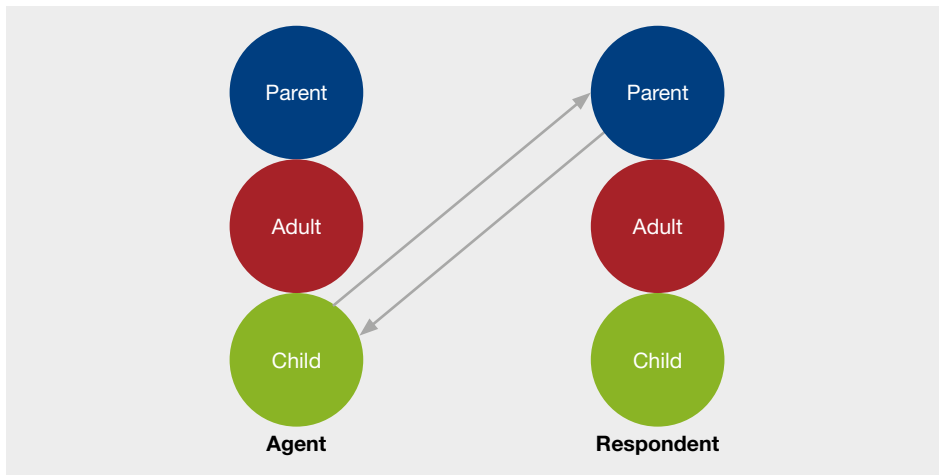
possible seven natures or nine separate voices each. It's about how the agent's three natures of child, adult, parent interact with the respondent's three natures of child, adult, parent.

Learning how we interact with the world and how to recognise how others are interacting with us, helps us to deliberately adapt the nature of the interactions we make. This means that we can function better in different situations and communicate more effectively with different people in different scenarios. We will speak better and we will hear better and respond better.

### Complementary transactions

In effective communication the respondent is able to work out which nature the message is directed at and respond appropriately. The messages between agent and respondent must travel to and fro on the same path. If a child nature speaks to a parent nature then the respondent should respond with a parent voice speaking to a child. These are what Berne called complimentary transactions.

#### Example – Child nature interacting with parent nature

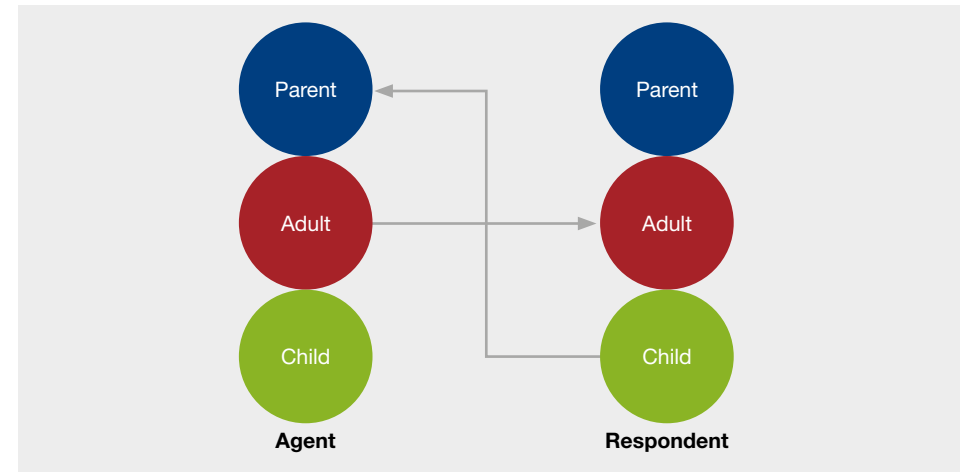


(<http://www.ericberne.com>)

### Crossed transactions

Sometimes the paths of communication become crossed and the two people are communicating with different natures, along different paths. For example; child speaks to parent nature, but the respondent replies as adult to child. The result is communication that is jumbled, confusing, defensive, misheard and messages become misconstrued. Communication becomes ineffective. In crossed transactions, the interaction needs to be rescued by either the agent or respondent altering their pathway to compliment the other and if that doesn't happen communication breaks down. The discussion ends and the situation becomes about the relationship between the agent and the respondent.

#### Example – Crossed Transaction



(<http://www.ericberne.com>)

### How it's really applied

I use the ideas within transactional analysis to help people consider the nature of their communications with one another in work settings. We often start with a discussion of how we 'hook' one another in our private lives...'I've had a hard day at work (from child looking for sympathy) – 'you think you have had it hard, well'... (parental response, offering no support but potentially triggering further non adult responses)...the battle begins. In organisations the same patterns are easily identified that obstruct effective engagement. A further step is to explore the behaviour patterns that we seem to repeat (life scripts) that we find take us into familiar but sometimes potentially destructive pathways. Increasing awareness through the use of this relatively simple language can give people other options and choices in the ways they communicate and engage with others.

 Robin Douglas

#### Why not also look at:

- Coaching Conversations
- Push and Pull Influencing Style
- Basic Assumption Groups and Psychodynamic Approaches

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# Johari Window

Ingram and Luft

## A way to understand how people and groups learn about self and each other

Joe Ingram and Harry Luft developed The Johari Window in 1955 while they were studying group dynamics. (The title Johari was simply taken from their names). The window is a way of visually representing a person or group's characteristics and is used as a tool for self-development. The window is also a useful tool in groups to help people get to know each other better and a way to encourage communication and develop trust.

### The window

The window represents four different areas of personal awareness in different panes. The panes vary in size according to how much is known in that area and they can change in size. The purpose of The Johari Model is to encourage the open pane to grow. This is achieved through the processes of feedback, disclosure and discovery.

### The open pane

This pane represents all the things that are known by a person and the things that the world knows about that person too. Superficially this can be obvious things like they have blue eyes or they like mars bars. On a deeper level it's about behaviours and motivations and personal stories. Luft and Ingram consider the Open pane to be the most important, because being here is a place of integrity and honesty. It's where we are most comfortable, because we're comfortable being in this pane it is where we are at our best and where we do our best. It is while being in this area that relationships of trust are developed; because the more we're open with the world, the more open the world is with us. Expanding the open pane is the aim of The Johari Model, this is achieved by reducing the size of the other panels.

### The hidden pane

This pane represents the things that are known to a person but not shared with the world; the little secrets and the big. This pane is always going to be needed, it's where we hide the vulnerable bits of ourselves safely away, and that's as it should be. There are things about us that are just for us. But Luft and Ingram explain that through disclosure, through sharing self, this pane will shrink and allow the open pane to expand. Disclosure isn't about sharing deep personal secrets, it's about healthy disclosure. Disclosure from one person encourages the other person to respond with disclosure of their own, and so in this way builds relationships and develops trust.

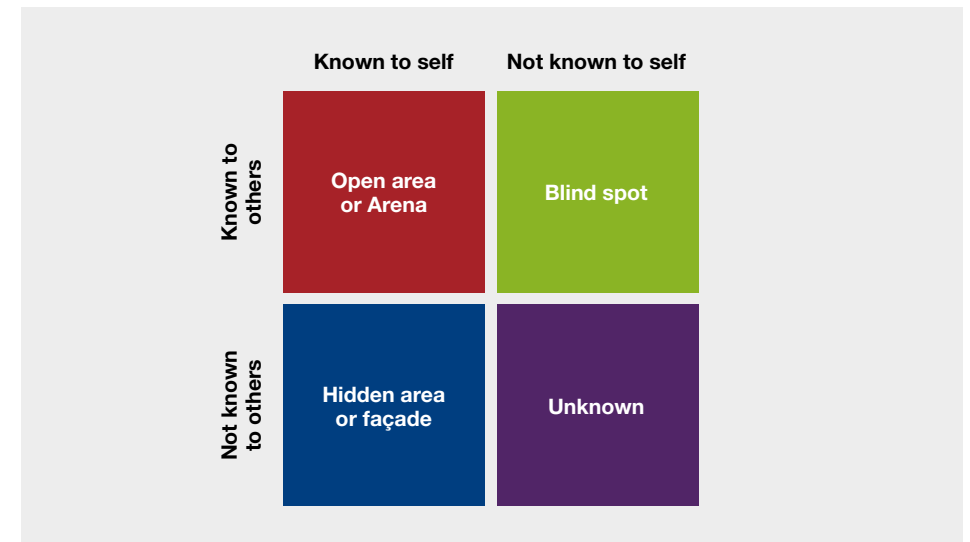
### The blind pane

The blind pane represents all the things that the world sees and knows about us but we are unaware of ourselves. This may be a superficial thing such as that smear of dirt on our face, to more complex behaviours and attitudes such as coming across brashly, things that really have an impact on how the world sees us.

Learning about this pane is done through receiving feedback from others, but explain Ingram and Luft feedback should only be done with the permission of a person, because through being open to feedback they become engaged with and willing to receive it. When we're open to feedback we become vulnerable and we place trust in the giver, so it should be given kindly and gently. Luft and Ingram explain that through feedback people begins to know themselves more and so grows their open pane.

### The unknown pane

No one knows what's going on in here. It's the things that a person is unaware of them about themselves and the world is unaware of too. But they're there. Everyone has an Unknown pane, the undiscovered, valuable, exciting truths waiting to be discovered in the future. Experiencing new situations and reflection on them can deliberately encourage discovery. This will shrink the size of this pane and allow the open pane to grow more.



(<http://www.communicationtheory.org>)

## Using the Johari Window

### The adjective method

A person is asked to choose a number of adjectives to describe themselves (there's a list of 56 positive adjectives to choose from), and the rest of the group chooses the same number of adjectives to describe that person. The two are then compared, revealing the discrepancies between how someone thinks they are seen and how they actually are, this is about feedback and may also enable disclosure.

## The questions method

This method is more about disclosure. Through a series of gentle, well thought out questions the group discovers more about each other. Questions should be guided and considered carefully. Questions that cause discomfort or that are threatening are not useful at all. Of course a person has the right not to answer questions at all. The questions should begin at a low level, from the daft things such as asking; favourite chocolate? And can then build into deeper things.

## How it's really applied

**In my experience, this idea comes to life when you relate it to the famous Donald Rumsfeld quote: 'there are things we don't know that we don't know'. I typically use the Window to help leaders develop their capacity to ask for and to offer others frank, actionable feedback. This has proved particularly valuable when working with senior local authority executives and politicians, who have typically found that they have more in common than they had assumed regarding their motivations.**



David Bolger

**Working with a rural setting with David Bolger we took a working group and the Health and Wellbeing Board into the "unknown" pane through a new experience of working directly with the community. We brought together three communities, the working group and the Health and Wellbeing Board for a session in a community centre. As a result of this experience the Health and Wellbeing Board agreed to a development session and at the session made a decision to develop the strategy around small local geographies of population.**

**Tip: starting with disclosures and then feedback helps build the trust and confidence needed to work in the unknown space.**



Holly Wheeler

### Why not also look at:

- Coaching Conversations
- Four Orders and Systemic Constellations
- Framing/Reframing

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## Positive Psychology

Martin Seligman

### A strengths-based approach to creating individual change that brings a positive intent to our work in systems

After working as a psychologist for many years Martin Seligman wanted to use psychology in a new way. Rather than just focusing on treating misery and damage he instead focused on developing interventions that could make people happier and help them lead fulfilled, meaningful lives. It was with this hope for the future of psychology and hope for the future of happiness that Seligman developed Positive Psychology; 'the science of what makes life worth living' (Seligman, TED2004). Seligman found that happiness isn't so easily defined and that it is in fact made of three independent parts:

#### The pleasant life

Pleasure gives the experience of positive emotion. It's about doing as many pleasurable activities as you can and finding ways of enhancing that pleasure, through skills such as savouring the moment and mindfulness. But pleasure has some problems;

- It is not enough on its own to lead to 'a happy life'. It just adds something extra.
- How people feel when they experience pleasure is actually heritable, it's passed from parent to child.
- There are some tricks that can be taught to enhance the positive experiences from pleasurable activities but these only slightly increase the pleasure.
- Pleasures soon become more of the 'same old same old'. The excitement and thrill of the first time experience are soon lost, so new pleasures have to be sought to give positive experiences.

#### A life of engagement

Being lost in 'eudaimonian flow' (flourishing through flow). Drawing on the work of Mike Csikszentmihalyi who developed the concept of 'Flow', Seligman explains that another part of being happy comes through being engaged in activities that enable people to be lost in the moment; activities where they lose all sense of time, feeling and emotion. Seligman found that people are much more likely to enter a state of flow when they are engaged in things that require intense concentration, activities which draw on a person's best, highest strength, such as a deeply engaging job, playing games such as chess or bridge, or playing sports. In order to be happier people need to engage in more of the things that use their highest strengths.

## The meaningful life

A meaningful life occurs through doing things that make you feel valuable. Seligman explains that a meaningful life comes from a person simply using their highest strengths in a way that gives to the greater good. By feeling that they are doing something valuable in ways that are valuable to them, a person feels that their life has meaning and so they feel happier.

But it should always be remembered that;

- You can't make people happy.
- Happiness varies from person to person. One person's heaven is another person's hell.
- You can provide opportunities and tricks to help people to develop their 'happiness' states, but you can't make them take those opportunities.

By using positive psychology it is likely that employees will feel happier at work and have greater job satisfaction. Positive psychology can make an employee happy and a happy employee is more engaged with their work, which will in turn increase organisational productivity and customer satisfaction.

## How it's really applied

**I used Seligman's VIA Strengths Survey (on line questionnaire) with a coaching client so that he could identify his signature strengths. He was going through difficulties in his work and had come to the point of deciding to resign and look for pastures new. His confidence was low and he had forgotten what his passions in life were and was very unsure where to focus his energy going forward. His signature strengths included love of learning; social intelligence/ personal intelligence/emotional intelligence; zest/passion/enthusiasm; humility and modesty. He found the insights extremely helpful in thinking about his core purpose in life and the outcome was him making practical suggestions about ways he might enact (and so rediscover) his strength over the next month. In the next coaching session he said that he had felt joy and zest when using his strengths and was left feeling he wanted to focus on positive action going forward and that he was going to look for alternative employment where he could use his strengths.**

**The survey takes a couple of hours to do and then work through so allow time but also return to it in subsequent coaching sessions. It is one tool to use in taking a positive psychology approach but the value is in the ensuing conversation and changes in mindset and framing that might follow.**



Mari Davis

### Why not also look at:

- Mindfulness
- Coaching Conversations

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# Learning Cycles and Learning Styles

## Ways to understand how we learn, different learning preferences and how these can be valuable

## Learning Cycle

David Kolb

It was whilst working as a volunteer for the Peace Corp that Kolb first became interested in Experiential Learning. The Peace Corp wanted to reduce the numbers of people quitting their posts, so Kolb helped them develop a self-assessment tool for volunteers; asking them to reflect on their practical training experiences and asking them if they thought that they could be successful with that type of work in the 'real life field'. It was a success and the numbers of volunteers leaving their positions was reduced. Kolb realised that learning was an on-going process and that experience was essential to learning, and that everyone was learning in different ways. This was the beginning of Kolb's Model of Experiential Learning.

## Learning from experience

Kolb drawing on the work of Dewey, Piaget and Lewin presents a theory of experiential learning through the 'Learning Cycle'. It is concerned with understanding the processes of learning through experience. Kolb's ideas of experiential learning are distinct from theories of behavioural or cognitive learning, in that the grounding premise at the heart of the model is that learning is an active process that is best achieved through experience and reflection, rather than the simple acquisition and absorption of new information.

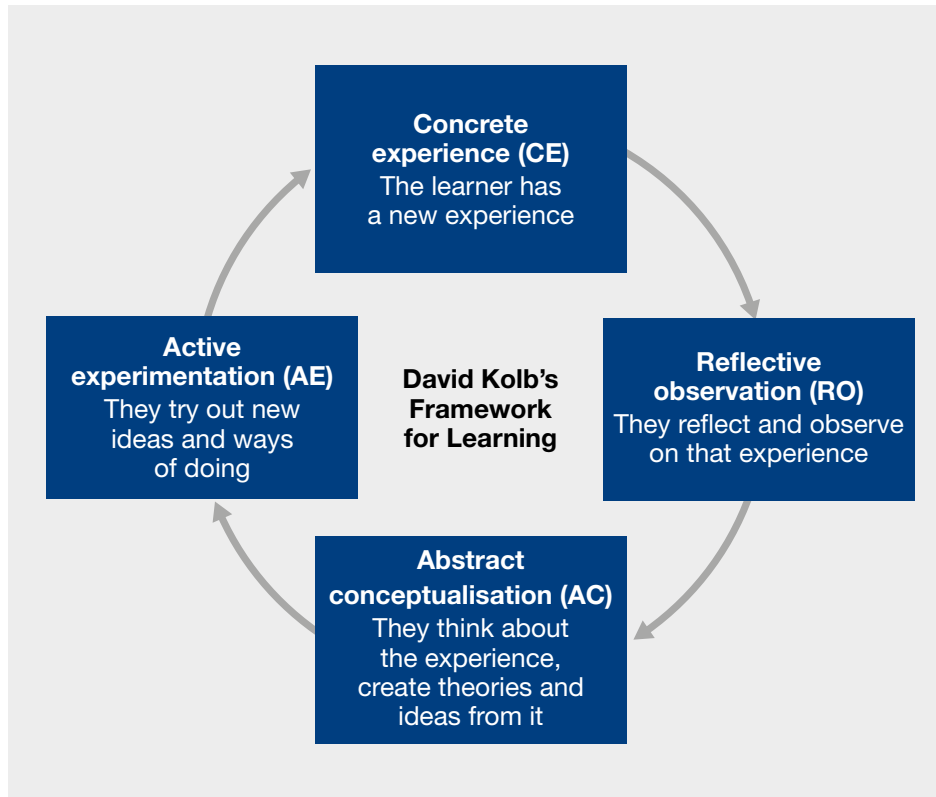
## Self-engagement

Effective learning is a process of the discovery of new ideas from new experiences. Learning isn't a stagnant, linear, one off only applicable in that situation. It's about engagement with ourselves and the world; a process of understanding and seeing that opens up new ways of experiencing and being across the whole of life. Learning is about engaging with the whole of ourselves; that is thinking, seeing, perceiving and behaving. To learn effectively a person has to know not only what they are thinking or feeling but also understand how these thoughts and feeling influence how they behave.

We become effective at learning by managing our own learning processes. According to Kolb's Theory of Experiential Learning there are four separate learning processes and both The Learning Cycle and Learning Styles Models are based on these four processes.



## The four learning processes



## Learning Styles

Honey and Mumford

It was while working for the Chloride organisation in the 1970's that Honey and Mumford developed their Model of Learning Styles. They published *The Manual of Learning Styles* in 1986. The Learning Styles Approach based on the work of both Lewin and Kolb recognises that there are different stages in the process of learning, and each stage is needed for effective learning. The approach of Honey and Mumford aims to help people to understand their learning style better and also help them to learn.

### Learning preferences

According to Honey and Mumford everyone has a preferred style of learning. That doesn't mean that they don't learn in different ways or can't, in fact how people learn best can change with context and the experience. What it does mean is that they learn more effectively when they are able to use their preferred style of learning. By knowing and understanding their learning preferences people can deliberately set out to become better 'all-round' learners by seeking learning opportunities that make them step away from their preferred style. The problem, according to Honey and Mumford, is that the world is full of opportunities for learning, but those opportunities mostly pass by unnoticed and a chance for new learning is missed.

In the learning style questionnaire, a self-diagnostic tool for learning style preferences, Honey and Mumford aim to not only to diagnose an individual's learning preference, but also help them understand and use their learning better to become more effective learners.

### The four learning styles

#### Activists 'have a go' learners

- Learn by doing
- Tend to jump in and just get on with it
- Good problem solvers
- Active in discussions

#### Theorists 'convince me' learners

- Like everything to make sense before they do anything
- Analyse information and make sense of it by first making it fit to what they are doing right now
- They like models of action, concepts, straight facts

**Reflectors ‘tell me’ learners**

- Tend to be observers
- They watch and think about what is happening
- They tend to work better in small groups
- Good at reflective discussion, analysis and giving feedback

**Pragmatists ‘show me’ learners**

- These learners like to understand how something is useful in real life
- They like models and expert input
- They are experimenters – trying out things to see how they work

**How it’s really applied**

**When working with a large city system it was evident that an ability to walk in others shoes would be a really useful skill for local leaders to develop and encourage in others. Using the learning cycle and learning styles to generate a contracting conversation about behaviours and needs, I asked the group to identify their own preference, making note of their learning needs. After finding a partner of a different preference, each member of group individually considered what activities and learning spaces their pair might need. They then compared notes, looking at similarities and difference, and thought about were they might be weakest on the learning cycle given their preference. The outcome was a group who had some consideration for each other’s needs and awareness that they may not always like a session but its still useful and someone else might really prefer it. It was start on a journey to understanding that we don’t all experience the world in the same way**



Holly Wheeler

**When working with teams and individuals where their ability to learn is a crucial element to the process, I will often introduce them to Kolb’s ideas. Asking people to describe how they believe they learn most successfully followed by a brief discussion or reflection in the groups can usually surface the dominant preferences. The next step is to ask what they avoid doing and why? We can then explore the opportunities for widening and strengthening their individual learning processes and ask for commitments to shift their ‘practice’. This can be discussed in further sessions. The next step is add the ‘double loop’ learning by supporting a process of observing their own reactions to new approaches and internalising the idea of shaping and improving their ‘natural learning practice’**

**There is a specific individual assessment tool based on the framework that can be used to identify personal preferences.**



Robin Douglas

**Why not also look at:**

- **Argyris, Theories of Action – double loop learning and organisational theories of action**
- **Action Learning**
- **Communities of Practice (CoP)**

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## Neuro-Science – system 1 and system 2

Kahneman

### A way of understanding how the way in which people think is influenced by simple rules of thumb (heuristics)

Daniel Kahneman had always been interested in understanding judgement and decision-making, but it was while he was working in Israel in the 1970's with Amos Tversky, that Kahneman began to develop his theories of 'how we know what we know'. During a meeting he realised that there are two different ways in which the human brain thinks about 'knowing' and 2 different ways it thinks about 'coherence'. Kahneman termed these System 1 and System 2. Both systems are needed to make sense (coherence) of the world and each system has a different role to play.

#### System 1

- Sense makes through associative coherence; it looks for things it already knows to weigh everything up against.
- Is automatic, it does all of those things that we can do without thinking, all of those instant split second judgements and decisions are made by system 1.
- We have no intentional control over system 1.
- Thoughts are intuitive, its actions instinctive and it involves our feeling and emotions.
- Responds really quickly.
- Is 'effortless'.

#### System 2

- Sense makes through logical thinking and serial processes.
- Thinking is all those things that involve deliberate intention to think, the things that need concentration.
- Is good at things that have multiple steps or tackling several problems and ideas at once. It is high drain, high energy and needs thoughtfulness.
- Thoughts are controlled and responses considered. All of the thinking is consciously made.
- Is slower and needs time.
- Is 'effortful'.

### The law of least effort

System 2 has all of the authority to decide what to do. It can override the judgements and decisions of system 1 but it usually defers to system 1 thinking. There simply isn't always the time or energy to involve slow, tiring system 2 thinking. That's the 'law of least effort' says Kahneman, most people will always choose to do things the easiest way. System 2 is lazy.

### System 1 shortcuts

Because system 1 is fast; it has to make sense of the world very quickly, so it needs to take shortcuts. It does this by applying rules such as best guess, common sense or rules of thumb (Heuristics and biases). This is associative coherence – a network of connected associations that system 1 uses to interpret the situation and make judgements and decisions.

Kahneman explains that these associative reasoning networks aren't fixed points of reference; they are in fact flexible and change. New experiences create new associations and new points of reference. This network of associations and the rules that come from it are based on past experiences and expectations and current perception of what's going on. System 1 uses shortcuts in several different ways, including;

#### Anchoring

We become fixated on an idea, often the first thought we have. We become anchored to it and this thought will influence judgement and the decisions made.

#### Framing

How System 1 interprets an event depends on how it's framed.

System 1 looks though all its stores of past experiences looking for something similar to base its reaction on.

It looks for typical ways of responding to similar situations, using generalised information.

#### Availability

System 1 decides how important something is by how easily it can retrieve information on it, applying the rule; 'if you can think of it it must be important'. So the more frequently something has happened before the more available it becomes to system 1 and because of that system 1 is more likely to class it as important information.

### A flawed system

But system 1 thinking can also be flawed. It biases rational thought and effects judgement. It jumps to conclusions (informed by that heuristic network of associations), but presents it as reliable information; it makes up a good story.

Sometimes system 1 works backwards, it makes split second conclusions first and then automatically believes it as acted on the right information. It can't see the error in the input or the process. It's adamant that it is right; that the conclusion that it made is the only truth.

It makes ideas fit together to make a coherent story. To make stories more coherent system 1 disregards the information that doesn't fit (suppressing doubt), instead looking for nearest fit patterns.

System 1 chooses an interpretation instinctively, intuitively and is unaware of any ambiguity. If it doesn't have all the information it needs it will simply create the best story it can from what it does know. It won't admit to what it doesn't know, it suppresses it.

### Confidence and coherence

The more coherent system 1's story is the more it is believed. There's overconfidence that the stories that system 1 tell are true and correct. They go unquestioned by the lazy system 2, which is quite happy to let system 1 carry on unchecked, (unless our lives depend on it or unless it is asked to become deliberately involved). The problem says Kahneman, is that often system 1's thinking is flawed but because of that overconfidence it goes unnoticed. To make better decisions and judgements it is necessary to deliberately slow down and get system 2 involved; to question the thinking of system 1 and to apply different ways of thinking.

### Identifying with system 1

To make judgements and decisions be accepted by others then it is necessary to communicate effectively with their system 1's. However, system 1 is involved in everything we do and does most of the work through processes that are automatic-and thus hidden. This means that we are not aware of what system 1 does, and because of that we don't identify with system 1. We instead identify ourselves with all the deliberate actions and thought processes of system 2.

The best way to begin to identify with system 1, suggests Kahneman is through stories. All system 1's sense make through stories. Those stories need to be coherent and they need to be easily accessible; so they need to make sense easily. They also need to be repeated many times, so that they are recognised as a frequent occurrence by system 1. The information being presented (the story), needs to be easily processed (one way is through using rhyme). If it's processed easily it is more likely to be accepted as truth.

If those stories are coherent then they will be confidence that they are the right judgement and the right things to do, and they're more likely to be believed if they come from a source that is trusted and liked.

## How it's really applied

**Working with local systems, for example in Gloucestershire around the issue of obesity, we found a number of assumptions are made by local government and health professionals about how communities work; how they respond to Government and other initiatives; and how they may be encouraged to change their behaviour. These unconscious biases (heuristics, to use the language of the distinguished psychologist, Daniel Kahneman) did not long survive direct contact with communities, who revealed what was really important to them. The message is that we all harbour unconscious biases about how the world works, and that, at that very moment when we are absolutely convinced that we have the answer, we should probably check it out with those who are supposed to benefit from our wisdom.**



David Bolger

#### Why not also look at:

- **Nudge Theory – designing choice environments**
- **The Tipping Point**
- **Coaching Conversations**

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## The Divided Brain – The master and his emissary

Iain McGilchrist

### A way of understanding how the human brain does what it does and therefore how we pay attention to the world around us

The Divided Brain is a way of understanding how the human brain does what it does. That includes the way in which it influences how people (the individual) give meaning to and understand reality, and how the wider world gives meaning to and understands reality. It's not only a way of understanding human perception and behaviour but also a way of understanding how organisations and wider culture conceive their realities too.

Research into understanding the two hemispheres of the human brain has for years been considered a scientific 'no-no'. The world was stuck with the idea that the right hand side of the brain and the left hand side of the brain were two entirely different entities: The left making us cold and rational, the right, creative and sensitive. The brain was seen as nothing more than a mechanical machine separate from being human. Intrigued by how humans functioned differently in different contexts McGilchrist set out to prove all of that wrong.

The human brain isn't what we traditionally think says McGilchrist. It's not an independent machine dictating what we do and when. It doesn't just react mechanically to data. It experiences the world with us fully involved and through that experience gives the world meaning. McGilchrist believes that what really matters is not 'what' the brain does, but 'how' it does what it does.

### The science

The basic science at the heart of McGilchrist's theory is that the brain is divided into two hemispheres, the left and the right. These are joined by a band of tissue called the corpus callosum. What is interesting says McGilchrist is that both sides of the brain can and do function separately from each other. That's an evolutionary edge that means that humans (and other animals) can do two things at once. Both sides of the brain are capable of doing any task, but we develop a preference for doing something a certain way (a certain brain side), based on which side does it better.

However, McGilchrist says both sides of the brain are needed and they need to work together for the 'best' performance. We need to be able to watch out for danger while we eat the meat.

### Communication and control in the brain

The corpus callosum says McGilchrist lets the two sides of the brain communicate with each other, but it is also in control of which part of the brain is allowed to act at any given time. It shuts up the part of the brain that is the least experienced at the job to let the better, more experienced side do its stuff.

However, the left side of the brain is much better at inhibiting the right side of the brain than the right side is the left. It's better at being the dominant voice. That means that despite it being bossier and more controlling, the left side of the brain is the least important in how it helps us understand and bring meaning to the world.

### Different viewpoints

According to McGilchrist there are many differences in how the different hemispheres of the brain function. His core argument is that the left and right hemisphere hemispheres perceive different versions of reality. They give different ways of thinking about the world, different viewpoints:

#### The left side

The left side (and dominant side) is very narrowly focused. It is the controlling side that is looking to manipulate the environment to its advantage. It is rational and logical. It's the plan maker and it likes the sound of its own voice.

#### The right side

The right hand side sees things more widely, the bigger picture, (the Gestalt whole). It is much more grounded in reality. It is the voice of experience. It also likes to hear the voice of the left side to help it decide what's going on. It gives a more accurate view of reality.

### Focus of attention

How we see the world depends on how we're paying attention to it. That matters because where we focus our attention changes what we find. What we find influences the type of attention we pay to it in the future. How we focus our attention changes the world.

If things are to change argues McGilchrist then there needs to be a deliberate drawing of our attention to trying to see and experience the world through the wider focus of the right hemisphere, to see more of a wider reality rather than becoming lost in the left side's dominant bureaucracy of logical reasoning and perfect plans.

## How it's really applied

I've been including this concept in leadership development programmes, since I came across it in 2012, e.g. in LB Harrow. I've used it to emphasise that the mental models we use are abstractions and that we need to keep re-engaging with reality.

I've found it appeals to those who like deeper explanations for persistent but unproductive behaviour. It explains why we're tempted to stay with our abstractions because we control them, whereas reality is beyond our control. This is particularly apt when we're dealing with complex adaptive systems, where safe fail experiments may be the best we can do. Those who find this uncertainty too destabilising may retreat into revising project plans, progress reports and the whole gamut of project management techniques, even when this just creates more unhelpful paper, reports and meetings.

I think it's led to a greater willingness to see the tools we use for what they are and encouraged more people to leave their offices and find out what's happening.

It's worth asking why you're using it and how you can link it to the other concepts such as complexity and user engagement. For those who just want practical "advice" it may be worth highlighting the value of a good theory or just acknowledging it isn't essential but some find it helpful.



Paul Tarplett

### Why not also look at:

- Push and Pull Influencing Style
- Mindfulness
- Reflective Practice

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## MBTI Myers Briggs Type Indicator

Katharine Briggs and Isabel Briggs Myers

### A way of indicating people's preferences for how they take in information and make decisions

Katharine Briggs had been interested in Jung's Psychology approach to behaviour for many years. It was the brutality and distress of the Second World War that made her want to develop a way that would help people understand each other and themselves more constructively, potentially avoiding the fallout and destruction of conflict. Briggs wanted to do this through using the Jungian approach to behaviour but in ways that made it easily accessible and easily usable. It was with this idea that Katharine Briggs and her daughter Isabel Myers Briggs developed The MBTI approach.

The MBTI approach is based around the ideas of Jungian psychology; that is that everyone has a preferred way of perceiving and of judging the world that affects their every thought and action. Behaviour isn't just random or pointless claims MBTI. Behaviour is in fact the result of very complex relationships between how an individual perceives the world and how they judge it.

### Using MBTI

MBTI can help people to understand themselves and help them to understand each other better too and so develop different ways of working, different ways of communicating and different ways collaborating together.

### The MBTI indicator test

The MBTI test determines a person's preferred response across four separate areas. Their four preferences are four separate parts that when put together form their whole type. There are 16 possible personality types.

There are no right or wrong responses. All responses are equal; one isn't better than the other, and preferred doesn't mean only! In fact every single person uses each way of responding at different times, because we react according to the different situations we find ourselves in. Sometimes the situation needs a person to focus their energy inwards while at other times they need to respond in the extraverted way and interact with the world around them.

**How does a person prefer to focus their energy?** (Jung-Attitude)  
 Extrovert (E): Do they prefer to spend time in the outside world?  
 Introvert (I): Or do they prefer to be alone in their internal world?

**How they prefer to take in information?** (Jung-Perception)  
 Sensing (S): Do they prefer to just take information in as it is?  
 Intuition (N): Or do they prefer to give that information meaning?

**How they prefer to make decisions?** (Jung-Judging)  
 Thinking (T): Do they prefer to make decisions through logic?  
 Feeling (F): Or do they prefer to make decisions based on people, feelings, circumstances?

**How they prefer to function?** (Jung-Structure)  
 Judging (J): Do they prefer to make decisions that are final?  
 Perceiving (P): Or do they have an open mind to changing them?

<b>ISTJ</b> Doing what should be done	<b>ISFJ</b> Doing what should be done	<b>INFJ</b> An inspiration to others	<b>INTJ</b> Everything has room for improvement
<b>ISTP</b> ready to try anything once	<b>ISFP</b> See much but shares little	<b>INFJ</b> Performing noble service to aid society	<b>INTP</b> A love of problem solving
<b>ESTP</b> The ultimate realists	<b>ESFP</b> You only go around once in life	<b>ENFP</b> Giving life an extra squeeze	<b>ENTP</b> One exciting challenge after another
<b>ESTJ</b> life's administrator	<b>ESFJ</b> Host and hostesses of the world	<b>ENFJ</b> smooth talking persuaders	<b>ENTJ</b> Life's natural leaders

## How it's really applied

I've used this with many top teams and on leadership programmes, most recently with Lincolnshire CC.

I've used it a lot as part of team development. I've normally given people time in pairs/triads to think about how the mix of types in the team affects how the team works, how it helps them feel part of the team or not and how it might affect their relationship with other teams/the rest of the organisation. This brings out that if the team is very different, it can be a strength based on diversity but this can get lost if we don't value difference. If the team is very similar then it tends to make for easy working together but means that some important areas may get missed. I usually allow 2 hours to a half day for this type of work.



Paul Tarplett

I used MBTI with a group of local politicians – The focus of the session was on change and innovation and the different roles each of us can play.

MBTI helped the politicians understand themselves better and in particular how their preferences affected how they approached change and innovation. In addition to the personal insights gained, many of the politicians were able to identify the importance of difference – that people have different preferences and this can have a huge impact on how change is perceived. They recognised the characteristics of some of their colleagues in authority and saw the strengths of others as well as their own. For some people, this was a light-bulb moment.

MBTI work can be much more valuable when it is directly linked to a specific context such as the leadership of change rather than as an end in itself.

My tip would be to keep the pace moving, also ask the preference types if they want a 'tip' before you give them one!



Mari Davis

### Why not also look at:

- Argyris, Theories of Action – double loop learning and organisational theories of action
- Mindfulness

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# 3

Understanding  
**Groups**



# Basic Assumption Groups and Psychodynamic Approaches

## A way of considering basic reactions in groups and how they react to anxiety

### Basic Assumption Groups

Bion

Bion was a psychoanalyst, his interest in the psychodynamics of groups began while he was working in Military hospitals during and after the Second World War and later during his work with the Tavistock Clinic. Bion was interested in why it was that groups often failed to function effectively and meet their own expectations. He wondered; what was going on that lead to this destructive behaviour?

Bion explains that within any group of people there are two separate things happening, two groups of behaviour at play. Everyone within a group (and the group as a whole) behaves in two different ways according to the influences of their 'Work Group Behaviour' and their 'Basic Assumption Group'.

#### Work group behaviour

The manifested behaviour, and thus the most obvious is driven by what Bion termed, 'work group behaviour'. Behaviour based in the 'work group' area is all about getting things done. Behaviours are definable actions, thoughts and expectations directed towards achieving a task. Members within groups know about these behaviours, and the shared expectations, functions and purposes expected of them.

However, the behaviour manifested through work group behaviour is influenced by the Basic Assumption Group that they currently feel that they belong to.

#### The Basic Assumption Groups

A group holds subconscious beliefs about 'who or what will save us'. Bion categorised these beliefs into three distinct areas of motivation, thought and behaviour, which he termed Basic Assumption Groups.

A group's focus isn't permanently fixed. It is useful for groups to be focused in different assumption groups at different times, drawing on different emotional energy. Focus can shift from assumption group to assumption group and groups will move through different stages at different times, adapting to circumstance.

It is useful to be able to identify which assumption group is at play, as it can be helpful in understanding group dynamics; it explains what's going on and why. It's also useful to the groups themselves because by being aware of their influences they are then able to take an active role in changing and adapting their patterns of harmful behaviour. Because both the problem and the benefit of assumption groups is that the focus of emotional energy affects everything.

#### The dependency group

Thinking in the Dependency Group is all about being saved by a great omnipotent leader and being protected by them. The leader is never questioned and is followed without thought. This results in immature behaviour and a lack of self and group responsibility, along with a denial of their own capabilities. The group cannot see their own skill or ability and they become passive and dependent on the leader to tell them what to do and think. It is an impossible leadership role to fulfil because no-one can possibly live up to the expectation of being able to save everyone and everything. When the leader falls short the group simply removes them and appoints someone else as the wise, all powerful leader.

#### The fight or flight group

Behaviour in this group is a survival response to a threatening event. Behaviour influenced by this way of thinking is about self-preservation of the group at whatever cost. Groups here need an enemy to focus on and where none exists they'll readily create one who will then become a scapegoat for all that's wrong. In flight, groups withdraw into a pattern of lethargy and try to distance themselves by retreating from responsibility. In fight they can generate tremendous energy, healthily used this drives energy outside the group and can be a great source of motivation to make things happen quick but such behaviour can also be aggressive. There is also a tendency for this energy to turn inwards and the group then engages in patterns of self-destructive behaviour. Relationships in flight or fight mode are tense, people are readily and easily dropped if they are seen as being a threat and fear rules the day. Leadership of groups focused in flight or fight is about self-sacrifice and the courage to lead the group actively into flight or attack. A leader who doesn't engage the group in this way is seen as weak and is disposed of.

#### The pairing group

When assumptions sit here there's an atmosphere of hope and ever building anticipation that rescue is on its way. The group eagerly watches and waits for a successful 'mating' to take place. A mating of two people who together are seen as being joint collaborators who will create a leader or idea, a solution to everything. But then whenever these two people do come up with something it's brought down quickly and a new cycle of hoping and waiting begins. It's a cycle of hope and despair and nothing gets done. The group sits frozen waiting for someone or something to arrive that will take the problem away, but then they crush whatever emerges so they can carry on hoping rather than having to accept responsibility and act themselves.

## Psychodynamic Approaches

Contributed by Robin Douglas

This refers to the ideas and practice of those associated with the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations. It is often confused with the Tavistock Clinic – an NHS therapeutic service. Their work is based firmly on psychoanalytic theories of Freud, Klein and Jung and more recently, Bion and Laing.

From its foundation in 1946, it has provided practice experience and training in group and organisational behaviour.

### In practice

The emphasis on applying reflective practice, containment and non-judgemental approaches to the dynamics of organisational life provides some useful material to those working as facilitators, change agents and consultants. Much of the Tavistock's training takes place in lightly structured group events where members are encouraged to explore the dynamics that they experience in the process itself. This is then used as data, that when translated to similar patterns in organisations, is used to help understand how the relations between people and groups shape the actions and culture. It is not necessary to subscribe to the underlying psychoanalytic base to find useful practice ideas and learning from their consultancy and change work.

A useful summary of their consulting approaches is available in 'Mind-ful Consulting' pub 2009 Ed Whittle and Izod. This is a collection of stories drawn from the public and private sector of organisational and personal change. It focuses on;

- Working with complexity and uncertainty
- Consulting in 'hyperturbulent' conditions
- Understanding power dynamics
- Executive coaching in major change

A number of other bodies use or have adapted similar ideas. The Grubb Institute (named after Sir Kenneth Grubb) led by Rev Bruce Reed shared many 'group relations conferences' with Ken Rice of the Tavistock Institute. Reed's emphasis on a Christian basis for their work brought both support and resistance to his ideas. A particularly useful theme that can be taken from this work is the encouragement to see people in organisations as much more than simply filling pre-existing roles. The Grubb Institute's approach is to explore the three dynamics of person, role and task, the interplay between them to understand the dynamic nature of organisational life.

## How it's really applied

**When members of the Board blame the Government or the NHS or the 'people in the middle who won't change'; then it is time to explore where this set of common assumptions comes from. Sometimes it seems that only an expensive expert from an external consultancy can help; or perhaps if we forge a partnership with the people next door the solution will become obvious.**

**Bion's work offers us a language to describe this diversion from the real work and is one of a number of tools I use to confront accepted paradigms; and then help leaders reflect upon their practice in live work groups. If you can't blame others or expect heroes to solve your problems, then the responsibility remains with you and the group. Working with complex or wicked issues requires active commitment and persistence not fight, flight or just great leaders.**



Robin Douglas

**In a very similar way to framing and re-framing, VanGundy in his work, Techniques of structure problem solving, presents a range of techniques that require attention on the problem and its definition. Two particular techniques I have used in personal, organisation and community settings are Boundary Examinations and the work of Rickard on Goal Orientation. My view is that both of these aid framing and reframing and when linked to Relevance Systems work, talk very well to our efforts around systems leadership and Public Narrative.**



Ken Perry

### Why not also look at:

- Johari Window
- Stakeholder Analysis – Trust and Agreement
- Four Orders and Systemic Constellations

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# Argyris, Theories of Action – double loop learning and organisational theories of action

Argyris

## A way of understanding how people explain and understand their actions as well as what they actually do so they can learn from them

### Theories of action

Argyris believed that we all have mental maps (a theory of action). These mental maps tell us how to react in any given situation. They tell us how to plan and implement actions and affect how we see our actions after the event. According to Argyris what we do is not accidental; it's not just because of 'something'. Rather that our actions are controlled and defined by our environment and our internal values. (Our governing variables). We decide our actions BUT we tend to do so without knowing the reasons why.

### Espoused theories of use

Argyris termed the way that we explain our actions or how we expect ourselves to behave as our 'espoused theory of use'. He suggested that our espoused theory of use rarely matches the reality of what we actually do, (our theory of use).

### Connecting the theories

Argyris believes that the best results, the most effective actions, ways of doing and learning happen when the espoused theory and theory in use are connected. We can connect them by developing an understanding of how the two theories are working together. We do this by reflecting on what we actually did and how we try to explain those actions. We need to consider:

#### Governing variables

These are the acceptable limits. The boundaries that we set ourselves in which we want to behave and perform.

They are influenced by environment, organisational values, personal values and how we wish to be perceived.

#### Action strategies

These are things that we do to keep our governing variables safe.

#### Consequences

What actually happened as a result of our actions?

Is it what we wanted to happen?

Does the outcome match with our original intention?

If there is a match between our intention and the outcome of our actions, then the espoused theory of action and theory in use are well connected. But more often than not there will be a mismatch, the consequences will be unexpected or the consequences don't match against the governing variables. Argyris describes this as an error in our system. If we're going to improve performance and productivity, and promote learning then we need to deal with that error.

The first step to doing that is asking ourselves; what do we do when something goes wrong? It's the answer to that question that will help us learn to perform better, and create a better match between what we want and what actually happens.

### Single loop learning

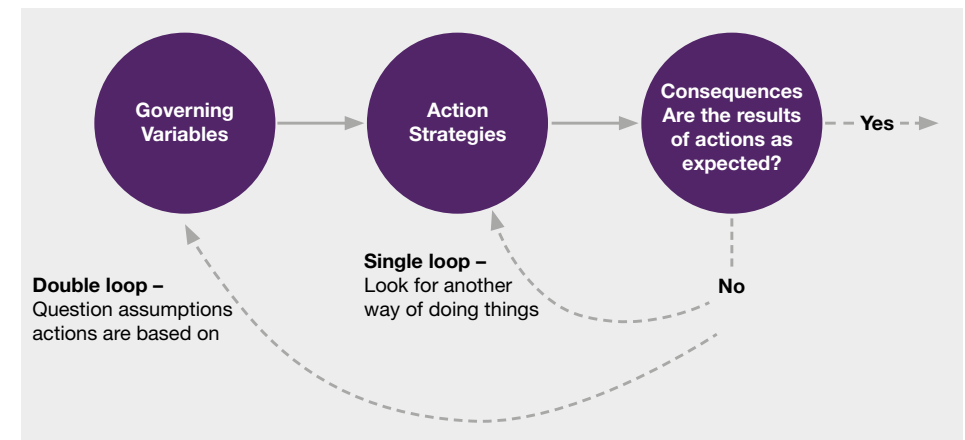
When things go wrong what do you look for another way of doing things that still works within your governing values (the acceptable limits)? Do you simply seek to identify and correct errors in the external environment?

This is single loop learning. It is safer and more comfortable to continue to work according to normal procedures and keep existing routines and work to old plans. But what have we really changed? What has really been learnt?

### Double loop learning

When things go wrong do you question the reasons why you did what you did, by examining the variables on which your actions were based? Do you try to identify the ways in which you inadvertently contributed to the problems and then change the way that you act?

This is double loop learning. Double loop learning is when we question the very basis of our choices by questioning our values and reasoning. That's scary and could lead to more unexpected results. This questioning environment promotes the development of understanding and real learning about who we are and what we do. It enables the gap to be closed between espoused theory and theory in use, between intention and outcome, so it is double loop learning that needs to be encouraged.



## Organisational reasoning

An organisation's reasoning processes when things do go wrong works for or against double loop learning.

### Model 1 reasoning process

This is when organisations react defensively, avoiding explanation. They don't explore their reasoning. If they cover their actions to try and avoid embarrassment, if they hide the truth to make themselves appear competent then they inhibit double loop learning.

### Model 2 reasoning process

This is when discussions are open and inclusive. The organisation values the views of participants rather than imposing the organisational view as 'the one'. There is room to explore. Open communication, inquiry and questioning are encouraged. There is shared control and free choice. The theories are tried and tested openly and double loop learning is supported.

## Organisational theory in use

An organisation just like an individual has a theory of use and an espoused theory, which combine to influence what they do. The way in which an organisation understands and learns is contained in maps (its theory of action). These organisational maps of understanding and doing are made up of all the individuals' theories of action about the organisation. However these individual maps are incomplete; no one ever has the whole picture. The ways that people see and understand the organisation and its actions (and their own) are constantly updated as people try to understand how they themselves fit into the organisation.

An organisation can change what people's theories of action (maps) look like. They can do this by encoding and embedded learning and know-how about 'how things are done' into the organisational memory. In order to do this the organisation needs to be effective at model 2 reasoning. They also need to be users of double loop learning. But unfortunately it's not as straight forwards as that, because how an organisation learns is effected by the ways in which the individuals within it learn, think and behave.

Model 1 individuals create organisation 1 learning systems. That's learning systems that just like model 1 individuals are limited by their defensive reasoning; they are afraid of questioning themselves. They are comfortable (but trapped) in their normality. Their ability to detect and correct error (double loop learning) is inhibited and they fail to thrive and adapt to change. When things go wrong they malfunction.

These organisations are the ones that need intervention they need to adjust from being a defensive system and turn into an organisational 2 learning system.

## How it's really applied

**In one health integration pioneer site, we realised through the diagnostic stage that despite many, many meetings, endless papers and business cases, copious diagrams – progress was strangely slow. Leaders attended meetings defensively 'to see what others proposed' or sent junior managers who lacked the authority to make decisions. The real operational practitioners were often missing – and consultants, interims and project managers began to fill the spaces as leaders absented themselves – but underneath all the activity – actual change was imaginary.**

**The shift to double-loop learning was to look not at the agenda of each meeting, but at the pattern of endless meetings without result – to begin to challenge assumptions about what 'work' involved – to halt the parade of papers and begin to talk honestly about the difficulties. Now meetings are challenging, we are testing assumptions and exploring new ways of thinking – but progress is real.**



Sue Goss

### Why not also look at:

- Learning Cycles and Learning Styles
- Action Learning
- Multiple Cause Diagrams

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# The Three Levels of Organisational Culture

Schein

## Explores the effects of symbols, stated values and the underlying assumptions and beliefs that inform behaviour

According to Schein, Culture matters. Culture isn't just about how things are done, it is much more than that. Culture is the way that an organisation survives. It is a way of being, believing and feeling that gives consistency and stability. It gives a way of surviving internal and external threat and disruption. It is how a place makes sense of the world. It is how it does things and how it chooses to be seen.

Schein believes that an organisation doesn't just have one culture; it actually has several. There is an overarching culture of the whole organisation then an infinite number of sub-cultures. These sub-cultures have evolved around specific functions, or beliefs, or practices. (Much like the theory of Communities of Practice).

Culture develops over a period of time in response to different situations and experiences. Culture emerges through learning. That means that culture is continuously changing, but in ways that are gradual and often unnoticed.

### Culture and change

When change is introduced into an organisation that change is often a noticeable difference to how things are done, because of that it is seen as threat to the stability of the culture and it is likely to be met with resistance. In addition change programs often aim simply to change behaviours. This approach says Schein has little if any chance of success, because such approaches fail to look at how and why those behaviours and ways of being exist in the first place.

There's a need to look beyond the obvious explains Schein, beyond what's seen and felt. Much of what happens in organisational culture is actually invisible and it's not so easily defined.

### The three levels of culture

#### Level 1 The artefacts

The first level is the things that are visible, the seen and felt experience of 'being'. These are the ways that people behave, how the place feels, the attitude. It's about the dress code, the décor, the urgency, caring. It is what makes you feel a like or dislike for a place. Schein describes this level as the manifestation of organisational culture. These things are noticed and felt but to make change happen and to understand a place properly you need to explain why these things happen in the first place.

#### Level 2 Espoused values

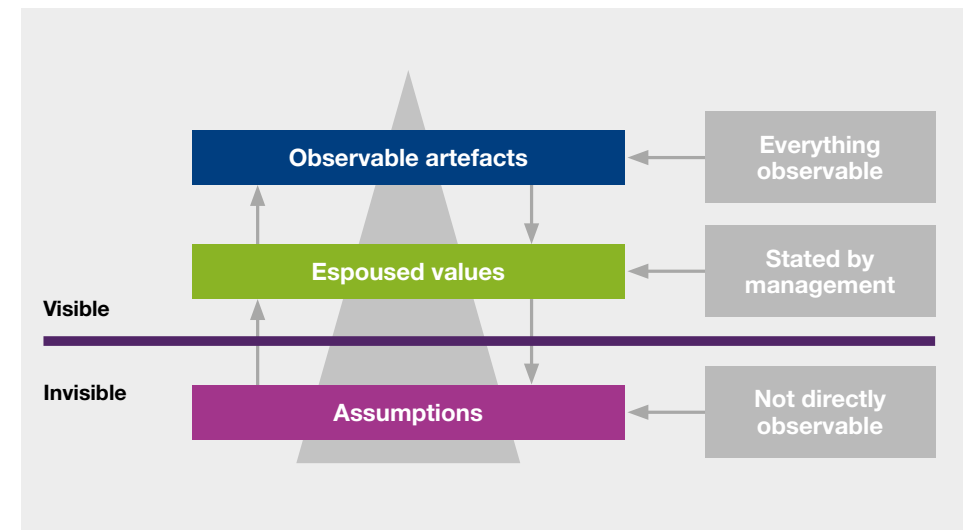
The espoused values are how an organisation explains its culture. They are the official line of explanation, the official policies or the official beliefs, the official ways of doing. It's saying; 'we do this because...' Finding the espoused values is about asking the 'why' questions and asking the right people the right questions. It's about listening properly to the answers; often the answers don't really adequately explain things at all. That's because there's yet more going on behind the official mantra, behind the things that everyone knows.

#### Level 3 Shared tacit assumptions

Schein explains that behind everything else there are 'Shared Tacit Assumptions'. Two organisations can have exactly the same espoused values but yet have very different ways of being and doing. That's because right at the heart of the culture, away from officialdom, there's a whole set of other things going on; there are assumptions, values, beliefs. These are the understood ways of being, doing, understanding.

This is where it really matters, because it's here that is the heart, soul and brain of the culture. It's the things here that really influence how things are done. They determine attitudes to work, to success, to failure, to doing. It's a heart, brain and soul that started right at the founding of the organisation. Everything that has been and gone before has left its mark here.

It's because these tacit assumptions are the heart of where problems are that when organisations try and do things in ways that contradict them they are destined for failure. When change is implemented that fails to try and understand these assumptions or changes them, it is destined for failure.



## How it's really applied

For the leadership centre, the artefacts of our culture were obvious. We developed a different writing style, way of meeting and even colour palette that marked us out from our immediate environment. When we had to move to within a wider group setting losing our artefacts was hard; it felt like we were giving up our identity. And yet beneath this although our espoused values had now taken on a more corporate feel, our tacit assumptions about what made us valuable remained. We retained our focus on lightness of touch, speed of movement and edgy challenge. As a result we have been able to repeatedly move faster than the market and influence the direction of policy and culture in a way that is disproportionate to our size.



John Jarvis

### Why not also look at:

- Evolutionary Biology
- Living Systems
- Lewin's Model of Change

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## Cultural Web

Johnson and Scholes

### A way of describing the visible manifestations of organisational culture and the core underlying paradigms that give rise to this

The Cultural Web developed by Johnson and Scholes was first used as a way of understanding public sector strategy. It maps the culture of an organisation and is a way of seeing and understanding the different influences that affect organisational culture.

### Using The Cultural Web

Using The Cultural Web can be a one stage or two-stage process. It can be used to map existing culture and it can also be used to map future culture based on the question; 'What does the culture need to look like to make this change/strategy come into play'? The two can then be compared to promote discussion and highlight the things that need to be changed and how.

Working from the key points raised from the mapping of the current system, (the surfaced issues, the sticking points, the aligned factors, the plans for change), the system should be remapped according to how it would look if the new strategy were in place. This allows the strategy to be explored through the same process of surfacing, highlighting of sticking points and aligned factors and plans for change.

Mapping culture is useful in three ways explains Johnson and Scholes:

#### Surfacing

As the culture is mapped, the ways of thinking and doing are explored. It shows what is being done, how things are done and why they are being done. In this way it allows them to be changed; because after all if you don't know that something exists how can you change it?

#### Barriers and alignment

Mapping organisational culture can show the sticking points that are getting in the way of the change and the things that are already closely aligned with the strategic objective.

#### Planning changes

Through mapping it becomes clear what changes need to happen and how to manage those changes. The Cultural Web can be a useful way of planning what needs to happen next.

## Creating the web

The first part of the process is identifying the paradigm. That's not all that easy explain Johnson and Scholes. It's not about strategy, constructs, dreams or 'should bes'; it's about heart. At the very heart of culture is the paradigm. The paradigm is the core beliefs of the organisation about themselves. The paradigm and the organisations behaviours, actions and thoughts are interlinked, they are a complex web and are inseparable. Every thought, behaviour and action feeds into the paradigm and the paradigm in turn influences every thought and action. That means that cultural paradigms are self-sustaining.

## The cultural influences

There are six cultural influences that form The Cultural Web.

### Stories

- Stories are how an organisation communicates with itself and makes sense of the world.
- Stories drawing on past history underpin current cultural values, behaviours and beliefs.
- Stories about now make sense of the present according to past understanding.
- Stories of the future rationalise what may happen according to how things are now.
- Looking at the stories of an organisation will explain its behaviour and show not only its values but also why it believes them in the first place.

### Rituals and routines

The things that people do from day to day, the accepted norms and ways of being. People will usually react to situations in the socially accepted way and that's what is expected and desired by leaders.

### Symbols

The way the organisation is physically represented does actually matter. That's the official and the unofficial too, things such as the uniform and the unofficial style of wearing it, the décor, the toilets, the logo. All these things reflect cultural paradigm and re-enforce it.

### Organisational structures

The culture of an organisation is influenced by the structures of the organisation. Structure informs the paradigm and the paradigm informs the structure. That's about both the formal structures and formal hierarchy and the informal ones. It's not only the official leaders who have power and influences. Other people's voices also contribute strongly to how things are done and what is perceived and believed.

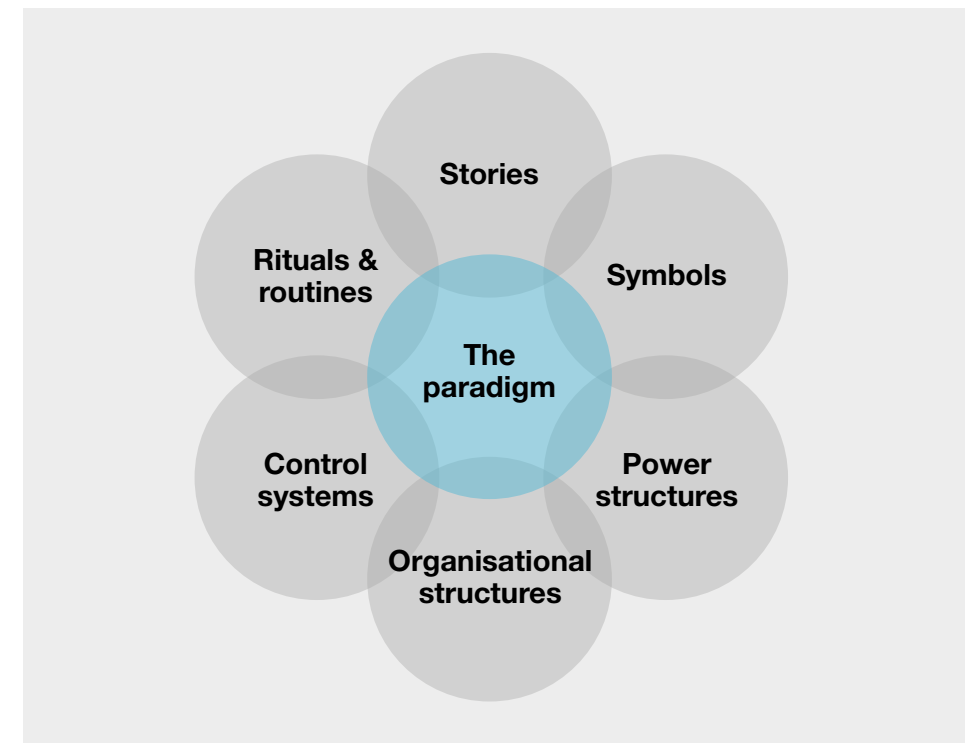
### Power structures

In every organisation there are a few key people or systems that have the power to get things done. These are the people who can make things happen yesterday or make things not happen at all. Their fingers are in every pie, their voices in every decision. That means that their power is felt everywhere. Their power influences every action; things such as

strategy and policy. Their power influences thoughts and behaviour; that means they influence how the organisation feels about itself and its beliefs.

### Control systems

These are the ways that an organisation controls how things are done, from things such as quality control and financial control, through to reward and punishment. How things are controlled and the way they are controlled affects how people feel and think about the organisation. People will behave in ways that they think will please the control system. So the control system influences the cultural paradigm.



(<http://www.mindtools.com>)

## How it's really applied

At the time of organisation merger, the Culture Web is a beneficial framework that helps leaders make the transition from where they are now to where they want to be. Along with colleagues I introduced the Culture Web when carrying out a culture audit and developing an action plan for the merger of Greenwich and Lewisham hospitals. We facilitated a wide range of focus groups across the two organisations, which included both hospital and community services. These focus groups embraced all staff groups, and highlighted both their passion for service delivery, and the different cultures of the hospitals, and between hospital and community. The Culture Web helped staff to interpret culture, to understand where they are now, and what they aspire for the future. The resulting action plan enabled the new merged organisation to put in place initiatives to shape their own future. The culture audit was repeated one year on using the Culture Web, highlighting areas both of progress and where more was needed.



John Deffenbaugh

### Why not also look at:

- Four Orders and Systemic Constellations
- An Ecology of Mind
- Public Narrative

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## Change and Culture Complexity

Richard Seel

### A collection of theories that help our understanding of how to support cultural change

In his discussion of change and cultural complexity Seel draws on a variety of approaches, including Complexity and Emergence, Cultural Theory, The Cultural Web and Epidemiology. His starting point is firmly rooted in the complexity sciences. He argues that what he terms, the 'traditional' methods of thinking about cultural change in organisations fail to see that organisations are complex, ever evolving beings. They fail to account for the fact that organisations have cultures that are dynamic, not rigid, yet those cultures are secure and stable. They fail to realise that these cultures don't fit into molded definitions. They fail to realise that thinking of them in terms of mechanical machines and trying to enforce change programmes simply isn't going to work.

### Self organization and emergence

Change happens, argues Seel through changing the culture of an organization. Organisations have complex cultures that are driven by complex individuals. That means that in a complex culture, change doesn't just happen; it can't be imposed. What actually happens says Seel, referring to Cultural Theory (Douglas), is that organisations are self-organising. Change happens through the process of emergence; it emerges through the culture of an organization. It is transmitted through relationships, through the ways in which people understand and do, through the conversations they have about 'the right way to do things'. So the question needs to be asked; 'How can we help change emerge?' rather than; 'How can we make change happen?'

### Epidemiology

Seel suggests that the best way to help change emerge is to approach change from the epidemiological perspective; by making people in the organisation the viral agents who spread new ways of thinking and behaving. There are three things that need to happen to make change stick.

### Change the conversation

People talk all the time. It's how they connect to each other and build relationships. It's how they make sense of the world and make sense of change. Conversation is the way that people learn, understand and do. This means that in order to make change happen then the nature of the conversations needs to be changed.

### Change the paradigm

All cultures are governed by a paradigm. The paradigm influences all thoughts and actions. All structures and plans and ways of being are based on it. A paradigm is the belief that



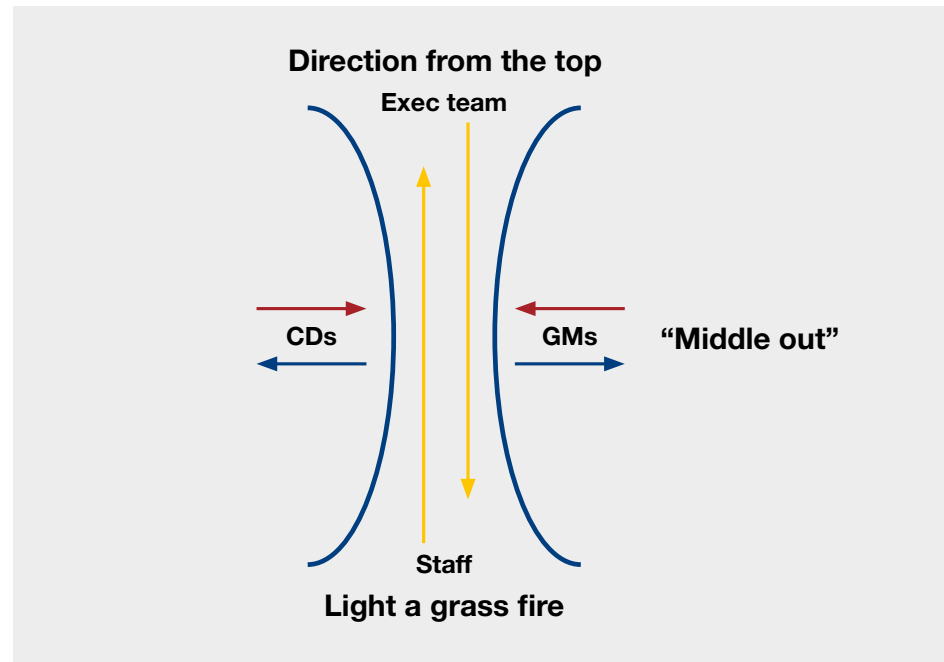
fuels the current version of reality. (Eg, blame cultures or saying things like ‘I am a failure’.) Seel, draws on the Cultural web model of Scholes and Johnson to understand the differing influencing factors on organisational culture. He explains how the cultural paradigm has emerged through community and cultural practice.

Seel also explains that the cultural paradigm is self-sustaining. People behave according to what they believe the paradigm says, which simply reinforces it. Change efforts that only try to change the outer web of influences are destined to fail, because the paradigm at the core, that central belief that powered those behaviour, actions and feeling still remains in place and still exerts influence. To change culture the paradigm at the core needs to be changed, and that’s about changing beliefs about ‘the way that we are’. That’s hard, these old, familiar beliefs tend to cling on and fight their way back.

**Lead from the middle out**

Most change programmes try and tackle change from the bottom up or the top down. But Seel believes that the most effective changes take place from the middle out, with no particular starting point. That’s because changing culture isn’t a linear process. For it to take hold it needs to spread, the best way to do that is by making it an epidemic. That happens through connections. And those in the middle are the best-connected agents of change.

**Middle out leadership – John Deffenbaugh**



(John Deffenbaugh)

The middle has tremendous influence in the organisational hierarchy. These are the people who engage with everyone, they get things done and make things happen. They spread ideas and ways of being. If change is to take root and begin to emerge through an organisation then it’s the middle leaders who can make it happen. It’s also the middle leaders who can get in the way and block change. Middle Leaders need to build relationships that stretch into new areas across the hierarchy. They need to open up new channels of conversation that communicates information both up and down the line.

Actually doing that isn’t so easy if you’re in the middle. People here are operating in an area often referred to as the squeezed middle. They feel pressure from above them and pressure from below. They’re trying to do everything right and please everyone but they often feeling like they’re doing it all wrong.

So the next question becomes: ‘How can we help middle leaders’?’

**How it’s really applied**

I worked with colleagues in Frontline and Loop2 to carry out a culture audit to inform the merger between Lewisham and Greenwich trusts. We used The Culture Web as a guiding model. Richard Seel’s insight to the complexity of culture was insightful in combining the somewhat mechanistic approach that is the culture web with the realities of the organisation. The culture web highlighted the current separate paradigms and gave a steer toward a future one. Seel’s emphasis put in focus the effort required in building effective relationships as a means to actually deliver change culture, so that relationships are ultimately the key to long term culture change. The findings from the culture audit at Lewisham highlighted both the benefits of achieving change where effective relationships worked, and the challenges in merging two organisations where the relationships require much improvement.

 John Deffenbaugh

**Why not also look at:**

- Ethnography
- Complexity
- Dialogue

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## Learning Organisations

### Approaches to develop environments, skills and practices for generative learning and learning culture

## Learning Organisations

John Burgoyne

Burgoyne explains that in a changing world the knowledge economy is growing quickly. The value of a company is becoming more about its capabilities to 'know and learn', than about the capital value of its assets. An organisation's value is increasingly measured according to its knowledge. That knowledge is the 'social capital' of an organisation. Social capital is as much about an organisation's learning capability and social knowledge (drawing on the idea of Communities of Practice), as it is about human capital. Burgoyne says organisations need to develop their learning capabilities. To do that means they need to provide opportunities for learning. According to Burgoyne learning is done in two ways, natural learning or formal learning.

### Natural learning

Natural learning is learning without really knowing it, it is learning as you do it through trial and error, through observation, by being hands on. Natural learning is encouraged through a 'learning environment'. That's an environment that encourages free thinking, creativity, problem solving, rather than one which is about static ways of doing, and blame and punishment. Teaching methods such as coaching and mentoring (and communities of practice), are ways of officially harnessing natural learning potential.

### Formal learning

Formal learning is done through formal deliberate intervention that transfers knowledge and the ways of doing, including workshops, training days, development programmes. This formal learning is a great way of bringing in new skills and knowledge into the organisation and formally developing someone's skills and knowledge towards an end goal.

Burgoyne believes that organisations need to encourage learning. Learning encourages new thinking and the development of new ideas; this encourages new ways of doing that can transform companies. However you can teach a person new skills and give them new knowledge but they can still choose not to use them. Therefore organisations need to also develop environments which make people want to use their skills and knowledge and also provide opportunities for those skills and knowledge and learning to be used. Otherwise there's no point to encouraging learning in the first place.

## The Learning Organisation

Peter Senge

The Learning Organisation is sometimes referred to as The Fifth Discipline. The Learning Organisation is an approach that is based on the question; 'how do Organisations work at their best?' It responds with the answer; when they are able to work in ways that enable them to learn and develop to create what it is they want. In other words when they become Learning Organisations.

People are at their most content, at their most fulfilled when they feel they are living life to the fullest; when they feel they have engaged their hearts and souls. The way to continuously recreate that feeling is through the process of learning. When people are truly open to learning they see themselves. That's not simply about adapting to change (adaptive learning). It is also about generative learning, learning that is an inherent part of an organisation.

According to The Fifth Discipline there are five features of a Learning Organisation. (Senge terms them disciplines);

<b>The 4 Core Disciplines</b>	Personal mastery Mental models Building a shared vision Team learning
<b>The 5th Discipline</b>	Systems learning

### The 4 core disciplines

#### Personal mastery

Personal mastery is about people being the conscious masters of their own learning. Personal mastery of learning is when learning is a vocation; a way of being that's not fuelled by the wish for personal advancement in work or in the wider world, but instead when learning is undertaken just for the sake of learning, for the journey, for the experience. The way to do that is through having clear vision, being patient and not rushing, focusing energy where it's needed and viewing reality objectively. This is done through open reflection that allows things (including self) to be seen as they actually are, not as they are expected to be or wanted to be.

Senge explains that at the heart of great organisational learning are great learning individuals. An organisation simply can't learn without them. Just because individuals are engaged in learning doesn't automatically mean that the organisation will be. Organisations need to be places that promote and engage with learning and they also need to become masters of their own learning, through reflection, vision, patience and focused energy. Learning needs to be their vocation.

## Mental models

Mental models are the beliefs that underpin absolutely everything; ways of thinking, ways of perceiving, ways of doing. Entrenched mental models, the 'traditional' ways of being are often ones that damage an organisation and limit its learning. Senge argues that organisations need to consider their mental models, they need to look inside themselves and ask; what's really going on here and why? They need to continuously be challenging themselves through what Senge terms 'learningful' conversations.

## Shared vision

The way to inspire learning is through shared vision. A clear powerful vision engages people and visions inspire new behaviour. A clear powerful vision sticks and it will spread from one person to another and through the organisation. But it can't just be any vision. It has to be a vision that appeals to people's beliefs and values and drive. It has to be powerful and it has to be clear. A confusing vision soon gets lost in translation or abandoned on the side of the road.

## Team learning

Senge argues that organisations need teams that can act together, think together and learn together. When places learn together and when individuals learn as part of a team they not only learn better but that learning is taken on board quicker and is spread much more easily. To be able to learn, teams need to be able to ask; 'what is it we want and how can we do that together'? According to Senge, the best way that teams learn is through dialogue, true communication that cuts across hierarchy and structure and allows people to really say what they wish to and allows them to really be heard.

## The 5th Discipline

### Systems learning

Systems thinking is the binding glue that sticks all the other disciplines together and makes them as one. Systems thinking is thinking as a whole system, not as lots of different co-existing entities. It's also seeing the whole system; taking that step back and deliberately looking at the whole picture. Noticing the nuances of every process, rather than just seeing the bits that are known, or seeing what's right in front of you. It's thinking about the long-term consequences and cumulative effects over time, not the short term, because what seems to be a minor consequence now, can over time turn out to be pretty huge.

When the system is seen as whole it can be better understood. If organisations think and see as whole systems then they can react to problems better. That's important because problems are complex and complex problems can't be solved with one-sided simple solutions. Solutions need to address the whole.

It's really important to remember that what actually happens is down to the people in an organisation. How they think and feel about something affects how they act. Their beliefs lead to actions that impact on the systems and structures within an organisation.

## Leading a learning organisation

Learning organisations have five disciplines that allow them to operate at their best potential, but having those disciplines isn't actually enough. A learning organisation also needs learning leadership. Leadership that's based on traditional methods of leading the perceived powerless and telling them what to do just won't work. The leader of the learning organisation is the promoter of learning; they foster learning and engage with learning.

## How it's really applied

**When The Public Office started to work with Essex County Council on innovation in commissioning, we committed to underpin the journey with explicit reflection and learning, and to build the organisation's capacity as we went in response to what we learnt. This means at every stage we have explicitly asked: What did that feel like? What are we thinking? What does this suggest we need to do (differently)?**

**By curating moments in which reflection can happen, capturing that learning, and playing it back into the organisation (which sometimes requires translation services) we have begun to establish a new shared language and self-consciousness. It makes it much easier to get to conversations about whether the system conditions are right for what the organisation (or organisations) want to do; about whether there really are the right metrics in place to judge 'success'; about whether the skills and tools within the organisation are still fit for purpose. As people have reflected and learnt together, they have shared honestly, connected as humans, and built trust. All these actions in turn foster systems leadership. You need to be ready for the 'Ouch' moments too: reflecting on existing practices exposes things that don't work or that are counter-productive. This is often uncomfortable; it takes people truly committed to a clearly defined and shared end-state outcome to navigate through when the passage gets rough.**



Ruth Kennedy

### Why not also look at:

- Communities of Practice (CoP)
- Living Systems
- Action Learning

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# Five Capacities of High Performance Teams

Peter Hawkins

## A framework to explain the key things a high performing team does and how by focusing on these teams can consciously raise their performance

During an extensive career working with organisations Peter Hawkins noticed that while some teams were successful, other similar teams, despite being composed of a set of bright, driven, experienced individuals, failed to achieve their purpose and failed to work well together. He wondered what it was that these successful teams (he termed them high performing teams) were doing differently. Hawkins suggests that high performing teams do five basic things. He called this 'The 5c's model of High Performing Teams'.

### The 5 Cs model

#### Commission: Why are we here and who cares?

Commission is simply asking; what is our key concern? Who are we answerable to? Who does this effect? That's about taking into account all the stakeholders, the key players and the little ones. Stakeholders are drawn from across a variety of sectors, including customers, board members and interest groups. Within public services this also means paying attention to the authorising environment, including elected members and groups such as patients and residents. Missing out a stakeholder means potentially missing out a vital voice that has control and influence over what the team does.

#### Clarifying: So what exactly is this team?

Clarifying is about creating a shared identity and shared purpose. It's about stating the shared ways of doing, the rules, the goals, the functions. It's about stating exactly what it is the team is there to do. Asking; why are we here? What are we trying to do? Why does this team matter? What can we do together that we can't do apart?

#### Co-creation: How are we going to work together to make this happen?

Hawkins describes this process as 'living the plans'. There's no point to a team's existence and no point in having plans if nothing actually happens. So this process is concerned with thinking about the ways the team can actually make things happen. Asking; how can we all work together in ways that actually do something? In ways that bring something new to the table? In ways that encourage creativity? How can we work together in ways that develops new ways of thinking that bring new fresh ideas? How are we going to work together and what are we going to actually do?

### Connecting: Beyond the island

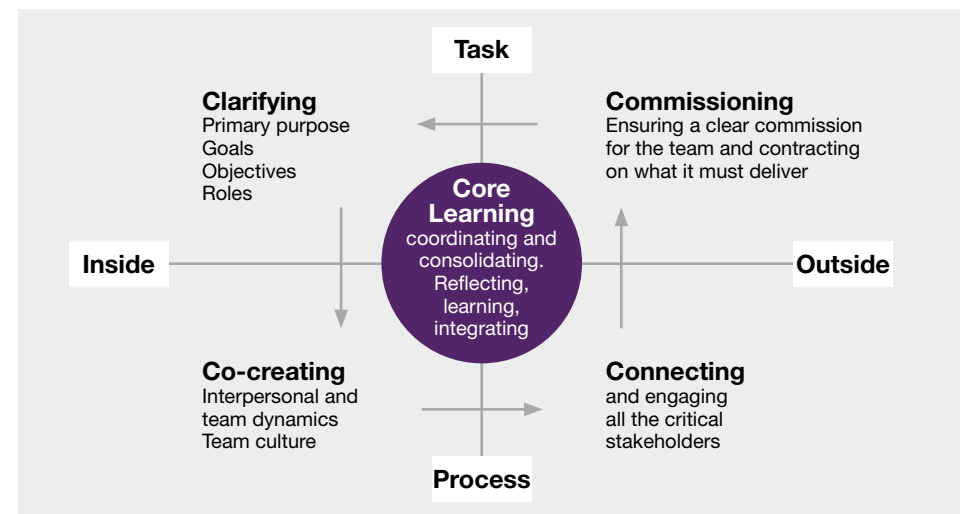
A team is often (through their nature) an isolated island of thinking, activity and belonging. However they are part of a wider system and their work, purpose, aims, needs more than just the team and effects more than just the team. Action needs everyone on board and that means involving both the stakeholders and the team. Hawkins explains that a high performing team spreads the team feeling, the team message, the essence of the team away from their members by interacting with and connecting with other people. Connecting is about asking; how do I take the team with me in everything that I do to everyone that I meet?

### Core learning

The heart of a high performance team is learning. That's about enabling the individual members of the team to learn but also developing an environment that allows for collective learning. A leader of a high performance team should be continuously asking; how do we grow and learn collectively? The answer to that suggests Hawkins is through processes of active deliberate reflection and always looking forwards to what's needed next.

### Creating high performing teams

High performing teams don't just happen, says Hawkins. High performing teams are created. High performing teams know what they are doing and why. They have a collective purpose and they balance all the 5 Cs to achieve it. Team coaching (systemic team coaching), can be a useful way of building these capacities over time. It involves a team coach working alongside the team, in team meetings, off site workshops and in their engagement with key external stakeholders. The team is encouraged to practice and experiment with new skills and behaviours they learn. They are also asked to have mutual accountability for their actions and outcomes.



## How it's really applied

It's important to frame the work in terms of task, even when you are doing dynamics and relationship work. It will help when talking about feelings and emotions with those less comfortable with this type of work.

You don't need to make this model explicit at the beginning or at all.



Holly Wheeler

I find this framework helpful in my leadership team coaching work as it pays attention to the wider system and external relationships, not just inward looking. I've worked with a local authority team where there were many interpersonal conflicts. We spent time in facilitated conversations and team sessions to work through the different stories behind these differences, explore underlying assumptions and feelings and then practice new skills and behaviours in-between sessions to build capacity for the future.

Overall, the team is now engaging together and with the wider organisation and external stakeholders at a much more strategic level, and their positive influence and behaviours in the organisation is noticeable. They are now in a better position to look outwards and engage in more resilient and robust conversations with each other and externally. They have a greater capacity to learn and change into the future. The learning from this experience has also gone on to inform a wider organisational development and change initiative, including culture change, as well as having a positive impact on external stakeholder relationships.



Liz Goold

### Why not also look at:

- Coaching Conversations
- Power Mapping
- Organisational Design – The Star Model

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## Cross-functional teams and X-Teams

Ways of creating teams from across the hierarchy and organisational departments to bring different skills and different understanding to create different solutions

### Cross-functional teams

Cross-functional teams are made up of members who have different values, different experiences, different expectations, different skills, different know-how and different connection outside the team. This means they each bring a different perspective and understanding of the problem. They each offer different approaches and different solutions and often the best ideas come from the most unlikely of sources.

#### Shared decision making

Cross-functional teams work differently to the traditional team. They aren't told what to do or directed. They decide their own way forward guided by the needs of the problem. Decision-making tends to happen through consensus rather than being imposed from the top of the organisational hierarchy. Membership is fluid, it changes according to what's needed at any given time and brings with it constantly changing input that changes the direction and aims of the team.

#### Connections

Each member of the team brings with them their connections both in and out of the organisation. This increases the team's sphere of influence. Through their connections the team is constantly linked into what's happening and can easily keep the organisation in touch with what they are doing. This increases understanding and support for their work. They can also use their influence to make things happen where and when it's needed. This means that they have at their fingertips a vast array of easily accessible information and resources.

#### Potential difficulties

It's also important to know that the same things that are of benefit to the cross-functional team are also the things that can cause difficulties. Because each member has different values, different understanding and different needs they speak 'different languages'. Sometimes this means that each member will be fighting strongly for 'their corner', believing that their own perspective is the best and right one. This can lead to internal conflict and disagreements.

Also because membership is fluid, it is difficult for the team to have a constantly cohesive identity.

Another difficulty can be that the people within the cross functional team aren't only working for the team, they also have to work at their 'day jobs'. This can impact on how much a person is committed to the work of the team and brings with it added time pressures and stress. What needs doing for the team is often at the bottom of their list of priorities, things might not get done or they might not done get done fast.

### Overcoming difficulties

- Set clear targets and clear objectives keeps people motivated and on track.
- Clear communication with each other and externally outside of the team helps eliminate 'cross wires' and rumour and develops shared understanding.
- Information should be presented in ways that can be understood by anyone in the system, which includes avoiding specialist jargon and presenting clear results not confusing statistics.
- Discussions should be open and managed in ways that enable everyone to be heard.
- Identity can be strengthened through group activities and through shared understanding.

## X-Teams

Deborah Ancona

Deborah Ancona conducted over 25 years of research into organisations to find out exactly why it was that sometimes good, talented, experienced and knowledgeable teams fail and what exactly it was that successful teams do differently. According to Ancona the answer was startlingly simply; the most successful teams focused externally, outside of the team as well as internally, inside the team. This is the core idea of X-Teams. 'X' stands for external focus.

### Traditional teams

Organisations explains Ancona typically create teams that are built on the 'traditional' ideas of what constitutes a good team, that's because these traditional ideas are deeply embedded as the known and accepted way of doing things. These traditional team values include things such as; good internal relationships, trust, good leadership, collaboration, varying skill sets, common goals, shared vision and shared direction. Ancona says that that is right, all of these things are needed and are valuable. But it's only half right and that's an awful lot of wrong. Successful teams need more. That more is an external focus.

### X-Teams

Successful team are X-Teams. X-Teams are successful because the world is never ever still. Things are changing rapidly from day to day. Teams need to know exactly what is happening. They need to know 'the now'. They need to know what's happening tomorrow before it happens. They need to have their fingers on the pulse, so that they can evolve, develop, react and respond quickly and relevantly, so that they are one step ahead. If they're not then someone else will simply leave them behind.

## Basic core features of the X-Team

### External activity

This is the essence of X-Teams. It's what makes them X-Teams. Teams need to engage in three processes;

#### Scouting

This is all about being out there, external to the team, looking at what's going on both inside the rest of the organisation and externally too. It's about 'sense making', asking; what's going on here? What's going on right now? How do we respond? What can we do?

#### Scaling

This is working up and down the organisation, gathering enthusiasm, sharing stories, making connections, linking the team to the place. This allows the team to not only have support from the organisation throughout the hierarchy but also allows them to align their vision, plans and actions with the organisations driving vision and over-arching strategy.

#### Task co-ordination

All over the organisation there are teams and individuals working on ideas, plans and actions. It's inevitable that some of those tasks are going to overlap with what other teams are doing. X-Teams need to find out what others are doing and co-ordinate with them so that information is shared and tasks are not duplicated. That involves communicating across the organisation and making sure that other teams do what they are supposed to do and when it's supposed to be done, so that the X-Teams project doesn't stall.

### Expandable tiers

This is about the structure of the X-Team. How they are structured affects their identity and their aspirations. It's how they see themselves in relation to the world around them and react to the external world. It also effects how the world reacts to them. An X-Team should have three tiers, members of the team move from tier to tier throughout the team's life. They are not glued into one tier at any time.

#### Core members

These members are often part of the team from the very beginning. This means that they see the whole picture and that's the area in which they act. They are the identity of the team and they are the history of the team and they share this with new members. This creates a sense of belonging. They know about past experiences and the reasoning behind them. That means that they have built in wisdom and they use that to inform what's going on now and the current decisions being made.

#### Operational members

Operational members do the things that need to be done. They are the cogs. The people here are very connected to each other and to the core tier. They work on specific tasks and make the key decisions about doing these core tasks.

**Outer-net members**

Outer-net members are always changing. They are pulled in from outside the core and operational tiers. They bring with them specialisms and expertise that the X-Team needs to work on specific tasks. These members usually have close ties with people in the other two tiers, but they are only loosely connected to each other.

**Flexible membership**

Team membership can change all the time depending on what's needed. Members can also move up and down and back up the tiers at any point in time.

**Extensive ties**

The people in the team are well connected internally to the organisation and externally. That means that they are in good positions to network and to bring in new expertise and knowledge from outside the team.

**Mechanisms for execution**

This is all about keeping the external world outside the team within reach. Teams can do this through;

**Integrative meetings**

Keeping everyone involved. That's essentially meetings and other ways of sharing information about what's going on in the outside world. This means that the decisions the team makes are based on what's happening right then. They're based on 'real time' data.

**Transparent decisions**

Tell everyone the reasons behind every decision; keep them in the loop. This increases understanding of what's going on and increases support.

**Scheduling tools**

Time planning, setting deadlines, scheduling activities. These motivate people and keep them moving, but they need to be flexible so that they can adapt to external circumstances.

**Basic functions**

**Explore**

Checking out what's going on outside of their team, inside and outside their organisation.

**Execute**

Keeping their external focus, teams now need to begin to think about the outcomes of the things that are doing. How will they impact? What will happen?

**Exploit**

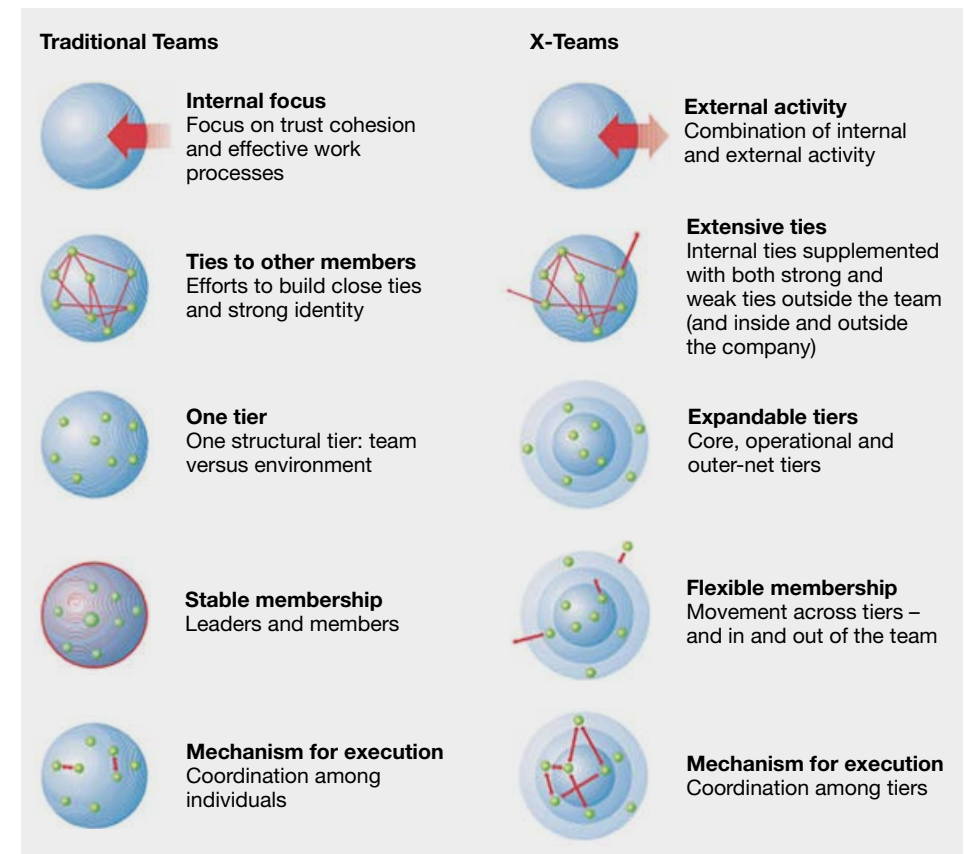
Teams by this stage have a love for what they have created. They are enthusiastic and passionate.

This is the stage that their products, ideas, actions come into being, take hold and began to happen. Teams need to share their love, pass it on to others, make it infectious, exploit it and make others love what they have created too.

**Supporting the X-Team**

The X-Team needs to be supported by the structure of the organisation. Organisations need to encourage and foster all the things that make the X-Team special. An X-Team also needs a different kind of leadership to traditional leadership styles, because the old ways of leading, of the top dog telling the minions what to do won't work for X-Teams. Instead organisations need what Ancona calls 'distributed leadership. That's leadership that crosses hierarchies, that leads change from all levels of the hierarchy, rather than from the top down.

**X-Teams versus Traditional teams: Five components**



(<http://sloanreview.mit.edu/files/2002/04/4333-s2.jpg>)

## How it's really applied

Mari Davis and I worked with Directors of Public Health (DsPH) in the West Midlands initially in the Skills for Systems Leadership programme and then in follow-up teamwork. They set themselves the goal of becoming an interdependent team with a clear, shared purpose, roles and norms that would enable them to best serve the citizens of the West Midlands. This process was enabled through the application of skills they are learned through the programme: they built intentional relationships with each other identifying shared values, interests and resources; they shared their stories of self, revealing their personal motivations; they developed a shared story of us which showed their collective successes and failures and sources of hope; they developed a compelling and consequential shared purpose which provided the basis of a story of now. Having worked on relationships and narrative the emerging team was able to identify shared priorities and assign interdependent roles around this work, identify the right people to be involved and agree norms to which they would hold themselves accountable. In addition to the growing sense of shared purpose and capacity for shared action amongst the DsPH, this work also led the DsPH to agree to undertake a similar process with their wider team with the aim of forming an interdependent network of public health professionals across the West Midlands.



Chris Lawrence-Pietroni

### Why not also look at:

- Communities of Practice (CoP)
- Complexity

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## Owl, Fox, Donkey, Sheep: Political Skills for Managers

Simon Baddeley and Kim James – Institute of Local Government Studies, University of Birmingham 1987

### A way of understanding the political behaviour of others in organisations

Baddeley and James, influenced by the theories of Mintzberg (and others) explain that political behaviour in organisations is illegitimate behaviour. It is the informal behaviour that goes on away from institutional policy, objectives and ideology and it is usually divisive. Politics can either be ignored or used, but ignoring is rarely a good option. Politics has to be played but choosing how to play is what matters.

### Political behaviour

Political behaviour is the unsaid dynamic in organisations, yet it is everywhere. It is behind the thoughts and actions of many individuals and it impacts on the ways in which organisations function. It impacts on the ways that an individual engages with the political behaviour of others. In addition the ways in which they personally choose to act politically also affects how they are perceived. It affects the work they are involved in and it affects their current role in the organisation and their future career.

Baddeley and James explain that by being aware of these trends in political behaviour, both in self and in others, people are then able to really watch what's going on in the political life of an organisation. It is possible to see how political behaviour affects relationships, communication, and productivity and how it affects change programmes. Through understanding it becomes possible to choose how to respond to the political behaviour of others. The behaviour of others can be predicted, defused or confronted. That begins by asking; 'what's going on here and why'?

The model of political skills developed by Baddeley and James is a descriptive model that explains people's political behaviour according to;

### External focus

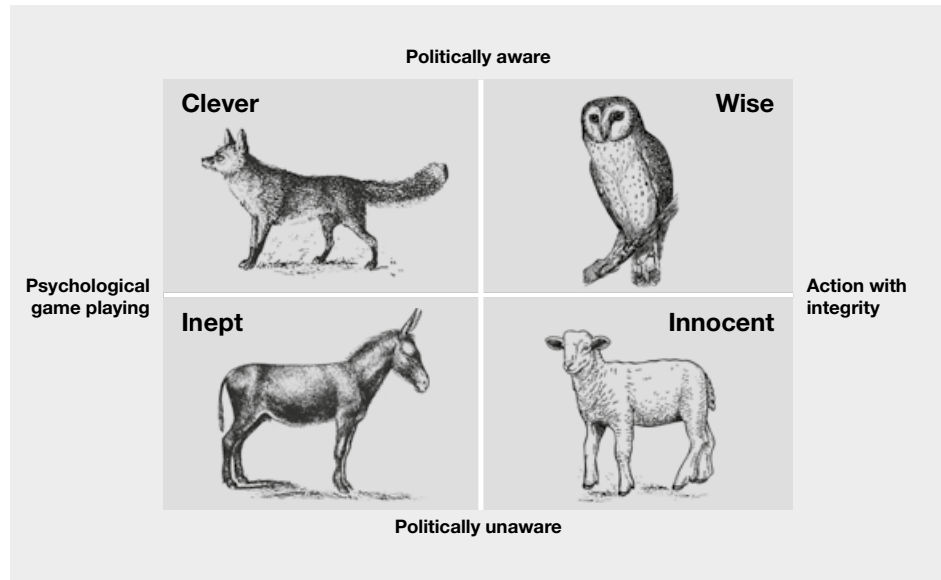
- What happens when they look externally of themselves and look at what's happening in the organisation? What do they see and understand?
- How much are they are aware of the politics happening in the organisation. This is dependent on their ability to 'read' what's happening and how they choose to 'read it'.
- How much do they know the 'ins and the outs' of organisational politics?

### Internal focus

- How are they motivated? How are they likely to behave? Is it about me or is it about the organisation? This is about the games people play, (drawn from the theories of transactional analysis). It asks; how likely are they to play the political game?



- How much and what a person ‘carries’ in to a situation. These two things are interrelated. How much a person knows or is willing to see in a situation will affect how much they are likely to want to act, and vice versa.



(<http://www.ctrtraining.co.uk>)

### The Innocent Sheep

Acts with integrity and is politically unaware.

The innocent sheep either doesn't understand organisational politics or chooses not to see them. They refuse to take part in political games and seem surprised when others do. They tend to see things as black and white and are unlikely to stray from the formal functions of hierarchy. They follow authority without question. They are accepting of change.

### The Inept Donkey

Politically unaware and a game player.

Like the sheep figure the donkey is blind to organisational politics, but they are self-interested and out to do what pleases them. They don't like being told what to do and try to do things in their own way to meet their own ends. They are resistant to change and protest loudly.

### The Clever Fox

Politically aware and a game player.

The cunning ambitious fox's behaviour is marked by sly, self-interest. They manipulate situations to suit what they want. They tend to act according to their own feelings rather than make informed judgements and decisions. They are big game players and are very politically astute as to what everyone else is doing and where.

### The Wise Owl

Politically aware and acts with integrity.

The Wise Owl is loyal and respected. They are aware of organisational politics and they are aware of how others are playing the political game. They know what's happening on the surface and the rumours underneath.

## How it's really applied

I used this with a mixed group of Scottish social services leaders in a development programme. The group wanted to explore how they were working together across the sectors and it was apparent that there were different political styles and tactics being employed by different players with a resultant lack of trust and suspicion amongst them. The animal metaphors and caricatures were helpful in enabling the group to work with a serious blockage in their partnership relationship and allowed them to explore the impact of different political behaviours on joint decision-making. The framework offers a playful language and simple yet powerful guide to behaviours that enables individuals to see themselves differently and to develop strategies for working with political agendas and relational change.



Allison Trimble

#### Why not also look at:

- Johari Window
- Transactional Analysis
- Stakeholder Analysis – Trust and Agreement

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# Understanding the Connection between People and Performance

Evidence based models that shows the cause and effect relationship between investment in people and organisational performance

## Results Based Leadership

Ulrich, Zenger and Smallwood

Ulrich et al. argue that the idea of Results based Leadership is different to other models of leadership. These other models, they suggest, tend to focus on skills and characteristics such as integrity, vision and communication skills. Results based Leadership argues that good leaders do something else too. Good leaders are the ones who are able to use their leadership attributes to improve results; improving results for employees, organisations, investors and customers. It is about more than just profits.

### Improving employee results

Employees are the heart of any organisation. Ulrich et al. term the value of employees as 'human capital'. Human capital is important because it affects productivity, which affects organisational capability. This affects overall productivity and performance, (organisational results), which impacts on investor results. In addition it is employees who have the most direct impact on customer results. The employees are the ones who produce the products, the service and the ones who interact with the customers. For that reason the core thing an effective leader should do is look after their human capital; valuing the human capital they already have and leading them in ways that improve their results.

### Human capital

Human capital, Ulrich et al. believe is a result of employee capabilities and employee commitment. This is expressed as;

$$\text{Human capital} = \text{Employee capability and employee commitment}$$

If an employee's skills are improved (their capability) and/ or their dedication (commitment) increases they will perform better and so their productivity will improve. Leaders need to appreciate and value the human capital that's already in the organisation. They also need to improve that value, through improving employee knowledge, skills, and productivity. Leaders should think about and adjust the human capital priorities of the organisation and invest in those who directly interact with the customer.

### Improving commitment will improve performance

This is about improving the ways employees think about the organisation and their work. It's about making it valuable to them so they feel motivated to achieve good results. When employee's capabilities are improved it increases the capabilities of the overall organisation. It adds value.

### Improving overall capabilities will improve performance

Ulrich et al. explain that successful organisations already do several things that enhance their performance; they encourage learning and adjust how they function according to what's happening in the market. However they should also think about ways to align, improve and measure their capabilities, this puts an emphasis on achievement, which will improve organisational results.

### Investor results

An organisation needs its investors and for that reason they need to keep their investors happy. This is achieved by giving them the results that they want; they expect a return on their investment. Effective leaders will balance up what needs to be invested and what needs to be spent in order to keep the organisation growing, against the needs for high value returns for investors.

### The customer

The customer is essential to the organisation. Good leadership is about achieving good results for customers too. That's done through such things as customer satisfaction and good branding. But the trouble is that the customer can also be the organisation's biggest problem. The fact is, explain Ulrich et al, that the customer isn't always right. You can't please everyone all of the time, so spending huge sums of money and huge amounts of time trying to do that is a waste of resources. There has to be a degree of wisdom thrown in too.

# The Sears Employee-Customer – Profit Model

In the 1990's the Sears Chain was at an all-time low. It needed to find a way out of the rut, but wanted to find a way that would last long-term, that didn't just balance precariously on short term hits. They realised that they needed to do something different. They recognised that they needed to change the culture of the organisation and they realised that success doesn't just happen; it's made, it's an outcome. Sears suggest that in organisations that outcome is a direct result not only of the behaviour of customers but also as a result of the behaviour of employees. It is simply about cause and effect.

## The 3 c's

Sears developed The Employee-Customer Profit Model to explain and chart the process of cause and effect from employee through to customer and also investment. The heart of this model is what has been affectionately termed The 3 c's;

Sears a compelling place to shop, a compelling place to work and a compelling place to invest.

The model is built around the idea that at the heart of success is the employee. Employee satisfaction realised Sears, creates employees who care about what they do. That satisfaction is reached through creating an environment that allows creativity, develops employees and supports them. However it's more complicated than that, it's not about simply putting measures in place that aim to improve employee performance. If things are to change than everyone in an organisation has to feel ownership for what happens; for the problems and for the solutions.

The traditional style of top down management and enforcement isn't going to work here. Change and success has to be developed from inside an organisation not from the outside. Employees and management need to understand what the purpose of the company is, the ethos. They need to understand the point of change and what it is they're trying to do. If they don't really understand what's happening, how can they fully support it or fully care about it? How can they act in ways that match the company's needs?

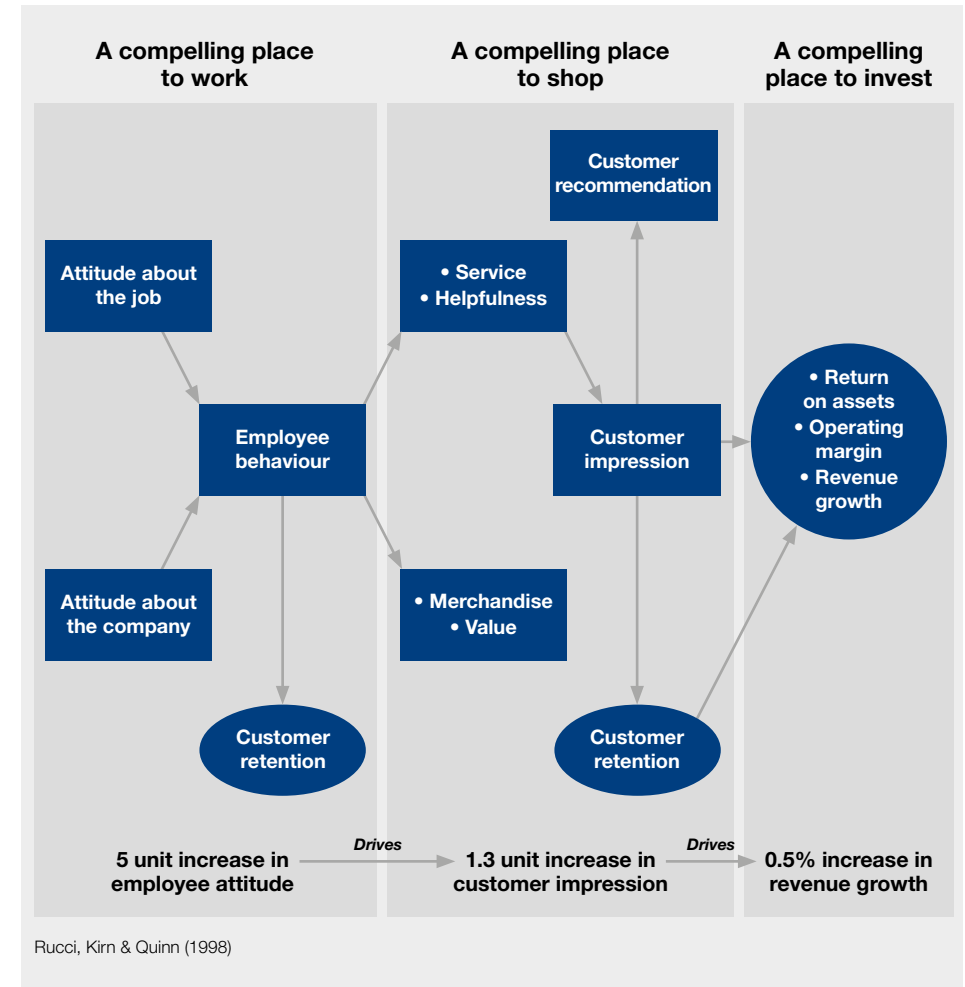
## Measuring success

Sears knew that simply having a model of change wasn't enough. They needed to be a way of supporting that model and measuring it. A way that takes into account what is happening now and a way of measuring that can predict what might happen in the future. A tough challenge, but one they claim to have solved by applying their 'Total Performance Indicators'.

These indicators don't just concentrate on hard data such as statistics; they draw on surveys, interviews, employee review information and research data too. They consider everything from introducing a new management style to a new shop floor process. It monitors personal development, career pathways and a great deal more as well. These measurements say Sears monitor the trail from cause to effect.

The Employee-Customer Profit Model isn't just another model claim Sears, its one based in real life evidence, used properly it actually does work and furthermore Sears proved it.

Sears: Employee-Customer-Profit Chain



## How it's really applied

The Sears example is evidence-based work that shows that if you invest in people you improve performance of a company. This is fundamental to making investment decisions and, putting my none executive director (NED) hat on, I'm interested in what the result will be of investment, seemingly intangible and long term. This links to the approach taken by the balanced scorecard, though most folk use this without the cause and effect relationship.

Application to the public sector is less evidence-based, though the work by Michael West over the years is along these lines: basically, if staff work in real teams, they kill fewer customers.

The Holy Grail is to firm up this cause and effect relationship between investment for the long term and the results it achieves. At least the Sears example shows this.



John Deffenbaugh

### Why not also look at:

- Public Value
- Open strategy – PRUB
- Building Capital

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## Employee Engagement

The Macleod Review 'Engaging for Success' (2009). The Four pillars

### A way of understanding how employee engagement improves organisational performance

In 2008 the secretary of state commissioned the Macleod Review to look at the benefits that employee engagement has to companies and organisations. It specifically asked; can employee engagement could have an impact on UK competitiveness and performance through difficult economic times, as well as in a market of ever increasing global competition? It also asked; could employee engagement be a way of making the most of the economic upturn when it began to happen? The answer was yes to all.

Drawing on their findings The Macleod Review aims to share understanding and promote 'doing' of employer engagement, to transform the way that business is done in the UK and improve the UK's overall performance and competitiveness. The report aims to change the culture of Britain's workplaces. It aims to show organisations how to value their biggest asset – their employees and how to engage their employees better.

### The value of employee engagement

The review found that there is a strong link between employee engagement and organisational performance. Improved employee engagement leads to improved employee performance that leads to improved organisational performance, and engaged employees are happy employees. What all this means is that the employee feels that they are of value. If they feel like they are valuable then they voluntarily perform better. They don't need to be cajoled or bullied, it just happens; because they are happy they give more.

The review claims that this is in contrast to the ways many places traditionally operate where the individual employee is seen as an aggregate member of 'the human resources', represented as nothing more than a necessary financial burden on a balance sheet. The employee is removed of humanity and treated as a cog in the organisational machine, and that's exactly how they then function and perform, turning day-by-day, just doing what's required.

### Pillars of practice

Typically, work force development is concerned with the development of new skills, qualifications, all the technical aspects of doing a job. The report suggests that if workplace culture is going to change then organisations need to develop the 'people' skills of their middle management teams as well as making people skills the core of the organisation. The report found that the organisations that had good employee engagement were doing things differently to those that didn't. They had four main pillars of practice;

### Strategic narrative

There was a sense of where the organisation was going, what they were trying to do and everyone felt a part of that, they knew how they fitted in.

### Engaging management

These managers did things differently; to them everyone was an individual, not a numerical commodity. They gave re-enforcing feedback and clear direction to the workforce. Engaging managers make sure that everyone knows what is expected of them.

### Employee voices

Employees really did have a voice that was listened to, not just the good things but the negative things too. Their opinion mattered.

### Organisational integrity

The whole organisation has shared values and shared understanding and behaviours. The organisation's acted in ways that support these. Behaviour is consistent with values.

### Enablers of employee engagement



## How it's really applied

I worked with the chief executive of Glasgow City Council to support him in the planning and implementation of an early years intervention initiative. This was a prime council initiative to change the shape of both service delivery and citizen experience. Key was the engagement of staff that provide the services, which are multi-agency, and needed to change in response to both immediate citizen expectations and needs, and long term pressures on finances. Staff were engaged through the alignment of their activities with the new early years programme initiatives, drawing them into help shape both the synergies among the programmes and the cause and effect linkages of what they contribute to and long term outcomes. The resulting programme funding recommendations were fully endorsed by the Council, and the outcomes framework was put in place to monitor implementation.



John Deffenbaugh

### Why not also look at:

- Public Narrative

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# 4 Skills

# Process Consultation

Schein

## A way of consulting to organisations that helps them learn to help themselves

Schein developed process consultation after two eureka moments in different meetings. The first was a Training Group meeting in 1958, when one of the trainers simply said; 'our job here is to learn together'. (E.H. Schein on how the Concepts of 'Process Consultation' and 'Helping' were invented. 2013). Schein realised that that simple statement changed how things developed. He realised that people learnt more in an environment that allowed the discovery of learning, rather than in a prescriptive environment where people are told what to do.

The second eureka moment came to Schein when he was working as a consultant in the 1960's with a group he describes as a 'dynamics disaster', who spent their meetings in a state of constant disruption. Schein tried to correct this behaviour by making recommendations to them about how to behave, based on his own expectations and experiences, but that didn't work. Then one day, by accident, Schein stumbled across something that did work. He began to act in ways that drew attention to their ideas, because after all that's what they were there for. He realised that he had managed to get inside their mindset and because of that they changed their style of interaction. They began to listen to each other.

### Founding principles

These two eureka moments gave Schein the founding principles of what was to become process consultation.

- Learning happens best, not when people are told what to do but when environments are created that enable them to discover for themselves.
- You can't go in and make recommendations based on your own expectations, thoughts and experience. Instead you have to help organisations in ways that engage with their ideas.

Schein realised that interventions are all about helping the organisation to help itself. They are not about telling them what to do. Every single action and thought should begin with the question; will this help?

That's not about a consultant going in and making a formal diagnosis of problems, writing reports or lists of recommendations. Though those things can still be useful if the client requests it. What it should be about is enabling organisations to learn at their own pace and helping them to develop their own insights; insights that help them to solve their own problems. What a consultant should be doing is selling 'help' not selling solutions. By working in 'helpful ways' consultants help organisations to help themselves.

## Helping relationships

Developing helping relationships is the core to being helpful. Every interaction from initial contact should be about building those relationships.

However, it is not as straight forwards as that. Within any problem there are a multitude of different types of clients (or stakeholders) and each of them has different perspectives, values, drivers and needs. That means that each type of client needs a different relationship. In addition how the problem is focused creates a separate groups of relationships. That means that the types of interactions needed to give help are constantly changing according to the nature of the problem at that time. Furthermore, what is helpful changes from client to client. The key to helping whoever the client, or whatever the focus of the problem, is to remember to only do things that are helpful, not only for the primary client but to the other 'clients' too.

### The principles of helping

There are ten principles that can guide thoughts and behaviours says Schein. These are not prescriptive rules but simply reminders.

#### 1) Always try to be careful

Make sure that what you do will actually help!

#### 2) Always stay in touch with the current reality

Every interaction should help the consultant understand what's happening there and then. Their understanding of the problem should come from this, not from what they expect or have seen before elsewhere. It's about fresh eyes and reacting in fresh ways that suit the reality. Consultants should be constantly looking for and asking; what's going on here for this client?

#### 3) Access your ignorance

You don't know it all, says Schein. There are things going on in the situation that you just don't know about or don't understand. So admit it to yourself, admit it the client and ask. Those gaps need filling to truly know what's happening and those gaps need filling because a best guess response isn't really going to be helpful at all.

#### 4) Everything you do is an intervention

Every single interaction from first contact is an intervention. It affects in some way how the client sees the consultant and how the consultant sees the client, because of that it affects their relationship. So make sure everything you do and say is going to be helpful to that relationship and to the work.

#### 5) The client owns the problem and the solution

Consultants aren't there to shoulder problems and give solutions. They are there to help clients discover solutions for themselves. They are the ones living with the problem and the ones who will have to live with the consequences of their solutions.

**6) Go with the flow**

Things happen when they happen. When things happen is dependent upon the culture of an organisation. Consultants must respect the flow and go with it. Any attempt to force things and hurry things challenges the organisational culture and is unlikely to be helpful. That's not to say that organisations don't have inspiration or motivation for change, and these should be built on to develop new flows of change with the client.

**7) Timing is crucial**

Schein explains that when something is asked affects the way it is answered. So ask things, inquire about things at the right time, that's when the client's attention is focused.

**8) Seize the moment for constructive intervention**

If an opportunity presents itself when the client seems open to discussion and new ideas then go for it. These are good times to present new and challenging ideas.

**9) Be prepared for surprises and learn from them**

It's a fact that sometimes things don't go as planned. Things do go wrong and the unexpected does happen. The consultant will in all likelihood, at some point, in some way, do something that causes upset or annoyance with their clients. Rather than covering that up, consultants should instead accept responsibility and see it as an opportunity for learning. They can learn what works and how to do things differently. In other words they can learn from their mistakes and in this way better learn how to help their client.

**10) Share the problem**

You have a problem and you don't know what to do, but that's ok explains Schein. Neither client nor consultant knows everything there is to know and neither will always know what to do. It is important to share with each other, make the reality clear, share what's really going on. Admit that you don't know what to do, get the client to help you be helpful to them. This makes the way forwards a joint effort as solutions are explored together.

**How it's really applied**

**Consulting to a meeting or workshop is an important element of process consultation. The task is to use interventions – in the form of comments and or questions – to both help the meeting achieve its task and by doing so to draw attention to issues relevant to the wider system, group or organisation. It is very different to the task of facilitating or chairing at meeting.**

**Consulting to a meeting or workshop takes maximum advantage of the consultants' position on the edge of a group or organisation. She or he is not "in the thick of it" and is well placed to use that informed detachment to help a group make progress.**

**Here are four things to bear in mind when fulfilling this role:**

- **First, the most helpful interventions generally take the form of a question or observation. For example: "I'm aware that nobody from a clinical commissioning group has contributed to the discussion yet and wonder why this is."**
- **Second, how the consultant feels is important and potentially useful. If she or he feels angry, frustrated or optimistic that almost certainly says something about the mood of the meeting and the wider system.**
- **Third, pay attention to the overall group dynamic. Is the group responding to the challenges it faces by targeting a single enemy, by avoiding a key issue, or by placing all its hope in a single individual or pair?**
- **Fourth, negotiate a short slot at the end of the session for an opportunity to reflect on how they worked as a group.**



Phil Swann

**Why not also look at:**

- **Argyris, Theories of Action – double loop learning and organisational theories of action**
- **Lewin's Model of Change**
- **Positive Psychology**

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# Adaptive Leadership

Heifetz

## A theory explaining the need of people, organisations and systems to adapt in the face of complex challenges requiring the pooling of losses, conflict and factional perspective – ‘Giving responsibility back’

Ronald Heifetz, a leadership expert and lecturer at Harvard Kennedy Business School published the book; Leadership Without Easy Answers in 1994, in which he explains that leadership is about more than just having authority. It should also be about having the ability to recognise problems and having the ability to lead people to solutions. People expect those in authority to solve their problems and they are often disappointed when that doesn't happen, or the same old problems come back time and again – yet they continue to look to their leaders expecting a solution. The key to good leadership says Heifetz is being able to distinguish between different kinds of problems and then leading appropriately.

Most problems are a mixture of ‘technical challenges’ and ‘adaptive challenges’. Leaders need to be able to recognise these different types of problem and then treat them accordingly, because the two need different responses across a different time frame.

### Technical challenges

Technical challenges are those problems that are predictable. They cause distress and anxiety, but places experiencing these challenges are on familiar ground. They know how to deal with them. These challenges are within existing ‘know how’ and expertise, which means that the solutions are comfortable. These challenges call for strong leadership to take decisive action.

Because technical challenges are easy, because the solutions comfortable and within what is already known organisations try and solve all problems as if they are technical ones. Of course that's the very reason why they often fail to resolve them. Sometimes in living organisations the problems are more complex.

### Adaptive challenges

Adaptive challenges are problems that are outside the familiar. These problems require a change in environment and behaviour to work out not only how to solve the immediate problem but also how to create long-term change. The solutions are unknown and require a new way of thinking that's away from the norm. These problems take time to solve. They require leadership down an unknown path. And because it is unknown it is going to be rough and challenge pretty much everything that's gone before.

### Recognising adaptive challenges

Adaptive challenges are usually those that occur at a point of crisis or cause a recurrent crisis, when the same old mess happens again and again. These are marked by persistent confrontation and resurfacing issues. There's an uncertainty because places don't know how to react; the solutions are outside existing expertise, experience and knowledge.

### Reacting to adaptive challenges

The solutions are not obvious. It's chaos. Imposing strong authority isn't going to help. The solutions are within the learning capacity of the organisation but they have to be looked for, tried, explored. That means that the people in the system need to be involved. It's about enabling discovery and learning. It needs a different type of conversation to take place.

### Leading through adaptive challenges

The way to successfully lead through these challenges isn't going to be found through asserting authority. It's going to be found through discussion, openness and through asking questions. Questions that challenge the way that things are usually done and questions that challenge people.

To lead through adaptive challenges leaders need to take a step back from being active and take on a more passive role. Skilled leaders will learn to see what's truly happening, feel the nuances, hear the voices behind the noise and hear the real story. ‘Going to the balcony and watching the dance floor’, as Heifetz says.

### Manage hungers

The other thing leaders need to do is manage hungers explains Heifetz. Hungers are the things that people do to feel like they retain control:

#### Power and control

Adaptive leadership is about sharing power to empower others. It isn't about relinquishing control, or enforcing control.

#### Importance/affirmation

In times of crisis, people are desperate for solutions and people can be driven by the desire to be ‘heroic’ to do things that stand out from the crowd. But all this does is hide what is really going on, it stops them seeing the real issues.

#### Intimacy

People especially at times of change are under tremendous pressure. A way of alleviating this is to seek out work relationships that engage in gossip, rumour and venting. This belittles and damages the change process.

## Reactions to adaptive challenges

Leading through adaptive challenges is about giving control of what's happening back to the people. It's about engaging them in a learning process in an environment of tolerable pressure. It's about challenging what's already been done. Questioning what and how. Asking people to question themselves. It means challenging what has always been done and what's already known. When the old ways of doing and being are questioned people feel disloyal. They feel like they are betraying the past and the past values, because of that it feels threatening.

When things are threatening people react defensively and meet change head on with resistance, either overtly or covertly in an attempt to shut it down. They will try and marginalise the change, divert it or attack it. An effective leader will manage those threats not by crushing them, but by openly acknowledging them. They will talk openly with people to gain a real feeling of what's happening and why.

## How it's really applied

**I used Heifetz as one of the underpinning models for work with the sponsor boards (Chief Executives) in the Lambeth & Southwark and Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Local Vision projects. The challenge for integration in health and social care in both places was not technical but adaptive. Through one-to-one conversations and facilitated workshops we explored together the re-organisation, reaction and requirements to lead in adaptive challenges. We modelled open, honest discussion with skilled questioning, for enquiry and stepping back as leaders to 'see things differently'. The sponsor boards developed system leadership approached to ensure participation, empowerment and learning to develop new solution across organisational boundaries.**



Jill Barrow

### Why not also look at:

- The Landscapes Framework
- Living Systems

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## Public Narrative

Marshall Ganz

### A leadership practice that helps us develop powerful stories to motivate others to join us in action

The idea of Public Narrative was developed by Marshall Ganz as a way of motivating others into action through narrative. It brings together Stories of Self, Stories of Us and Stories of Now. Stories that are engaging and real. Stories that connect. Stories that teach. Stories that inspire.

### The value of stories

Stories are the natural way that people make sense of the world. They are used to create emotional bonds with others and create shared identity. They help individuals and communities understand what happened in the past and make sense of the present. They allow the reasons why choices were made to be explored and they develop an understanding of motivation, value and emotion. Stories are learning opportunities.

Public Narrative is more than just telling stories. It's about telling stories that matter. Stories that involve the heart. We develop our values through the experiences of our emotions and our emotions tell us what to do. When we are faced with choices we ask ourselves; why should we take action, one way or another? Why do we care? We care because of the values that we hold, so we care because of our emotion.

When communities and organisations are at a crunch point, when they have to make a choice about what to do, people have to be made to care enough to want to do something about it. Good leaders, says Ganz, take the scared feelings that are inhibiting change and turn them into feelings that motivate people into action. They do that through giving hope. That can be done through Public Narrative.

### The Story of Self

Public Narrative begins with the Story of Self. The Story of Self is important because leaders have a responsibility to give a public account of themselves. Through telling their own stories leaders have control about what's said, about how they come across.

The Story of Self is essentially the story of what called you into action. It is about the values that you hold. Those values shape the choices that you make. The choices that you make shape the person you are.

The Story of Self is centred on a moment of choice in the protagonist's life.

The Story of Self needs three elements;

### Plot

The plot should grab the audience's attention. The plot in a Public Narrative has three main features, a challenge, a choice and an outcome.

### A central character

The character needs to get inside the audiences hearts. The audience needs to be able to identify with them if they are to care what happens.

### A moral

All good stories end with a moral. Morals connect the information of the story (the head) to the heart. What did the protagonist learn from the consequences of their choices? What did the audience learn as a result?

## The Story of Us

The Story of Us moves the story and its values from 'this is me and this is you' into being about 'Us'.

It's about the shared collective experiences of everyone in the room. The Story of Us shows people how they are connected to each other. Shared stories create shared identity and shared understanding through a shared history. The Story of Us should have a challenge, a choice and an outcome. The story of Us is the story of the people in the room. It asks; 'what is our challenge? What are the shared experiences?'

## The Story of Now

The Story of Now is about motivating people into action. Telling the story of the world as it is now and the story of world as it should be does that. It should create a sense of urgency. It says; Lets take action together, what we hold dear is under threat! It asks; what is the choice? What will happen if action isn't taken? What will the future look like if we take action? What's the dream?

But the Story of Now should also offer hope, because hope overcomes fear. When people are faced with a difficult choice, when they are deciding whether to act, they are motivated by a sense of urgency and held back by fear.



## How it's really applied

### Developing a team's story

**I worked with Solihull- the place, as their team coach for the Leadership for Change programme. They wanted to learn how to tell stories that would show their values and motivate others to take action in respect of the integration challenges they faced in Solihull. We started by identifying the purpose of the narrative; who it would be for; and the key messages that would mobilise action. We identified the challenges and successes of the last 10 years and then told these as stories with a challenge, choice, outcome – Story of Us. Then focused on the story of Now – and created the story showing what it would be like if we did nothing and the story of the hopeful vision. The morning resulted in many stories being generated. We also drew all of this on a roll of white paper and it became clear how important Solihull the place was to people living there. As a result of this session Solihull went on to create a narrative that they are now using to engage people across the system to take action; they also arranged a later session to listen to the stories of people working in the system to improve discharge from hospital. The tip would be to avoid a narrative becoming a script – a good narrative is framed to mobilise an intended audience.**



Mari Davis

### Why not also look at:

- Social Movements
- Cultural Dynamic Value Modes

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# Dialogue

Bill Isaacs

## A way of speaking together that creates different ways of listening and of being heard

Isaacs' Dialogue Model is rooted in the belief that for true creativity to take place then organisations need to rethink the ways in which they communicate with themselves; organisations need to step away from the traditional discussion format and engage in dialogue. Dialogue is a deliberate process that has to be intended. It recognises that creativity can't be ordered or planned. It happens in its own timeframe. It isn't linear and it isn't structured. It will be as it will.

The Dialogue Model recognises that discussions can be useful. They are useful to make decisions about how to handle complex problems with known solutions, but they also impose limitations on what is said and what is heard. They stifle creativity. Discussions often follow a set plan, with set questions and operate in a set limited timeframe. People behave in set patterns and speak with pre-set voices that often speak defensively about their work, trying to defend its validity. In addition sometimes what is being said isn't actually really heard. It is measured and judged according to pre-set judgement and expectation. There is little room, if any, for exploration. There is no space for creativity and voicing what you really think, because in these stifled spaces (containers) it doesn't feel safe. So something needs to change.

### Creating a 'safe container'

Dialogue is a different way of engaging in conversation. It is a different way of speaking, listening and being and for that to happen a safe container has to be created. The development of a container will typically follow through four steps:

#### Instability of the container

To begin with people will be wary of each other; they don't trust each other. This means that they don't feel safe.

#### Instability in the container

People run into each other 'head on' with conflicting opinions. This leads to conflict, isolation and polarisation in the group.

#### Inquiry in the container

Once the container is stable people can begin to explore these conflicts and examine the reasons behind them. This can be a stressful and painful stage.

#### Creativity in the container

With examination and exploration of the issues and of others points of views, understanding develops in the group. This leads to open conversations and then true exploration and creativity begins to take place. This is the stage where people can truly begin to engage in dialogue.

## Not knowing is at the heart of the Dialogue model

Dialogue begins with admitting that quite simply you do not know. You don't know what's happening. You don't know what the problem is or what the solution is. Admitting that you don't know looks like weakness, failure or incompetence. No one wants to put their hand in the air and say; 'actually I don't know'. It takes an act of courage, but it's an act of courage that leads to exploration and learning.

### Letting go of 'noisy voices'

The model argues that everything we do is governed by the conflicting voices that are in our own heads. The voices that tell us how things should be, what we should know, how we should believe and what we should do. These noisy voices are influenced by our own preconceptions, past knowledge and experience and through our interactions with others. The noisy voices limit what we allow ourselves to think, speak and hear. So to engage in good dialogue we need to learn to let go of those voices, those beliefs that we are right. We need to become conscious of what is actually real in the world and then we can think clearly. That is about ourselves and how we engage with others in the group. This allows the problems that exist to be seen more clearly, explored vibrantly and be solved creatively.

### It begins with you! But it's about everyone else!

Traditional discussion is very much based on individuals expressing themselves as individuals in a group, the voice of 'I'. The trick according to the dialogue model is for the group to see themselves as a whole, as 'one', for each person to see themselves as part of the collective voice. This means that they will see the problem in the wider context and from there it become possible for the group to think together as a unit, as 'we'. They become a collective entity with a collective identity, collective thought process and a collective voice that is made up of all the vibrancy and power of thought and creativity of each individual member.

## Engaging in Dialogue

### Listening

Just hear what others are saying without judgement and without fighting what they say.

### Respecting

Everyone has their own point of view that just like you comes from their heart. It is part of them. Respect that and treat it well. To treat it with disrespect hurts them, just as it would you.

### Suspending

To truly hear what is being said then you have to accept that your thoughts, ideas, ways of being aren't necessarily the right way or the only way. By putting your own beliefs down you become open to the ideas of others.

### Voicing

In all aspects of life our voices are often influenced by what we think we should say, according to what we think other people need to hear. We constantly juggle the voices of others and express our own down a middle line that suits everyone. That's not your true voice. Be brave, say what you believe, what you think, be yourself. Let others see your thoughts. Let them hear you. That's scary.

## How it's really applied

I use this as a framework for having conversations in Durham Total Place (and many other settings), to bring together conflicting voices in a constructive developmental way. One particular session included registered social landlords, private housing developers, planners, and representatives from funders and government. Framing it as both a practice skill for system leadership and a way of progressing 'stuck' issues; I outlined the differences between dialectic (and other modes of communication) and dialogue. Table facilitators gently drew attention to any 'straying' from the rules of the conversation. People generally felt initially constrained by the frame, and uncomfortable being denied their standard practices; but held to it and developed new insights on the perspectives of others and their own perspective being 'just' a construct – key insights for systemic working. This enabled new ways forward to be opened up for consideration and subsequent development into proposed actions.



Di Neale

### Why not also look at:

- Learning Organisations
- Society 4.0 – from ego-system to eco-system
- Neuro-Science – system 1 and system 2

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## Vital Conversations – The FAB approach

Alec Grimsley

### An approach to managing difficult conversations that is based on meditation

Unfortunately, says Grimsley, life is a series of uncomfortable conversations. We have no choice but to do them, but we don't want to and they never get any easier. Just the very thought makes us feel uncomfortable. But he says we can learn to do these conversations better, not by learning new conversational techniques, but by learning to engage with our conscious thinking rather than letting emotion rule the day. To do that we need to use deliberate focus (meditation), to refocus the unconscious emotive processes that our brain is revelling in, onto more deliberate conscious processes of thinking and perceiving.

### The science – a basic overview

The human brain when left 'to just get on with it' is unable to distinguish between different types of threat. It reacts on pure animal instinct of flight or fight. That's because the amygdala gland that puts us into the survival instinct of flight or fight only acts on messages it receives from the rest of the brain. It isn't able to interpret the information, it doesn't know if we've encountered a physical or emotional threat or even if that threat is real at all. It just acts.

The messages the amygdala gland receives are purely based on information it gets from the thalamus about how the body feels. The thalamus is the body's messenger. When it feels the body is under too much stress it immediately shuts down rational thinking about behaviour, because when it comes down to life or death we don't need to think. The thalamus then sends a danger message to the pituitary gland, which fuels our adrenaline (just making things worse), and to the amygdala gland, which then takes over all thinking and simply puts us into flight or fight.

These uncomfortable conversations, the ones where you just have to say 'no', or the ones where you need to address an issue, or give feedback to someone, give someone bad news, immediately make us feel highly emotional and that immediately stimulates the thalamus.

### Emotional loops

When we're in a hugely charged conversation we enter an emotional loop that's hard to break. Grimsley termed this the cybernetic closed loop. We get stuck in the loop because we can't physically run or fight, so all that emotion gets trapped. This sends more emotional data to the thalamus that sends more panic messages out, and our survival state gets even more heightened.

## Interfere with the brain

What we need to do, says Grimsley, is break the pathways, break the cycles. We need to learn to think in different ways that get in the way of the brain's survival messages. We can do that by becoming conscious actors, who are thinking and in control of our emotional response, rather than being lost to the unthinking subconscious that has us trapped in unhelpful flight or fight mode. That needs a deliberate process of interruption. Grimsley suggests the FAB method. Of course FAB is going to take some practice. It's not a sudden cure, but according to Grimsley it can make a difference to how we feel during those difficult conversations. If we feel better we'll communicate and respond better, and so we're much more likely to hold a better conversation.

### The FAB approach

#### Facinating

Think 'fascinating' just say the word in your head. This is what Grimsley describes as a trigger word. It's a signal to our brain to do something differently. Using a signal to the brain makes the brain think. It interferes with the flow of messages around the brain. It then interrupts the signals from the thalamus to the amygdala. By thinking we have become deliberately engaged with ourselves, so we go into conscious thinking.

And the beauty about the word fascinating says Grimsley is that just saying it silently in response to the conversation is actually quite entertaining. It triggers a different emotional response.

#### Acknowledge

Now acknowledge your emotion. Say to yourself; 'this makes me feel bad because...' By deliberately thinking about your emotions you become more in control of them.

#### Breathe

Now breathe. Breathing really does affect how you feel. Fast shallow breathing makes us feel out of control and panicked and fast shallow breathing tells the thalamus that our body is in distress. So says Grimsley by focusing on breathing slow and deep we can take control of how we feel physically and it helps calm us down too.

#### Why not also look at:

- Dialogue

#### Sources

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## Framing/Reframing

### The process of altering language, metaphors and associations used to describe issues so as to change perceptions and response without changing the facts

The idea of reframing an issue through how it is presented is nothing new. It's a persuasive behaviour that we often engage in without really realising it. It is a favourite tool of politicians and salesman and has been used in a variety of behavioural therapies. Reframing as a deliberate action has been developed through a number of theories including Kahneman and heuristics (Thinking, Fast and Slow).

How an idea is framed effects how it is judged, understood and reacted to. Often things are framed in ways that are unhelpful or in ways that confuse and cloud the intended meaning. Reframing is a way of finding the intended meaning and holding onto it by expressing an idea in a new way, changing how it is judged and understood and reacted to. Reframing can be a useful mediation tool to help settle disputes. It can also be used to put a positive spin onto things and to reframe negatively an opposition's comments. It presents the idea from a different perspective.

When we first present an idea we do so quite instinctively, so we present it how it feels right to us. That means that how we express the idea is influenced by our own thoughts, feelings and knowledge. In other words we present it with bias, both unintentional and deliberate. However the downside to that is that our unintentional bias clouds the issue.

What we're really saying is lost in how we say it. Covered in emotion, meaning becomes lost in anger, frustration, bitterness, passion. Meaning becomes hidden by our own knowledge and understanding of the situation and we forget that other people don't see things the same way, that they are hearing us limited by their own voice, feelings and knowledge. We forget that the point where we stand and speak from isn't shared. We don't realise that others won't interpret us in the way we meant.

Now picture two opposing parties presenting their ideas loaded with intentional and unintentional bias, that's a lot being said and a lot being lost in emotion and confusion.

### Reframing: changing the context

The purpose of reframing is to find out what's really going on behind all the words. What is actually being said? That's done by deliberately and carefully examining everything's that's been said and finding a new way of expressing the meaning. Changing the frame, by changing the content and the context.

#### Identify the frame

The first stage is identifying how the idea is being framed. How is someone else going to see this, hear it, what response is it going to evoke?

### Identify the biases

The biases influencing how the idea is framed need to be identified. Which begins with the question; What is important here'?

### Re-express the meaning

Then try to re-express that meaning by rephrasing, using metaphor. Using language that is less emotive, less adversarial. Using language that doesn't carry blame. Using simple expressions of intent that aren't tangled in implied meaning, or one sided understanding and knowledge. It is thinking about what is being said and how, in order to draw focus to where it matters, and what matters is the meaning.

## How it's really applied

**In a very similar way to framing and re-framing, VanGundy in his work, Techniques of structure problem solving, presents a range of techniques that require attention on the problem and its definition. Two particular techniques I have used in personal, organisation and community settings are boundary examinations and the work of Rickard on goal orientation. My view is that both of these aid framing and reframing and when linked to relevance systems work, talk very well to our efforts around systems leadership and Public Narrative.**



Ken Perry

#### Why not also look at:

- **The Divided Brain – The master and his emissary**

#### Sources

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## Push and Pull Influencing Style

Roger Harrison

### How to understand the ways in which leaders can use 'push' and 'pull' energy and style to influence others

Influencing style is often used as a way to understand and use marketing strategy. It has been adopted as a way of understanding styles of leadership. The push/pull model developed by Roger Harrison explores the ways in which leaders exert influence to reach organisational goals. Some interventions administer specifically designed questionnaires to enable leaders to understand their style of leadership.

Leaders are influencers. Influencers are those that have the power to use their influence to drive others into action. Influencers draw people (resources) towards them because they want something from that resource.

Influence is exerted through a mixture of two different styles according to Roger Harrison's push/pull model. It is either forced onto the resource (pushed); 'this is what you must do because I say so', or the resources are encouraged towards the influencer (pulled); 'lets work on this problem together'. Both methods are useful in different situations and neither is used exclusively. It's not a case of one or the other, but successful leadership is about leading with the right balance between the two and using the right method in the right context.

### The push method of leadership

The push method of leadership is useful when time is short. It is a way of driving people towards goals and can be used in situations where the procedure/information is already familiar or where expected resistance is low. It's good for 'safe' ideas and focuses on goal setting and achievement.

### Characteristics

The characteristics of the push style of leadership method are using persuasion and rewards and punishment as ways of leading. This leads to two styles; persuading and asserting.

Leaders are enthusiastic about their objectives and not afraid of making themselves heard to make their point. They are active and forceful in debate using fact and logic, rather than holding conversations. They often get so wrapped up in their perspective that they are unable to hear others points of view. They drive (push) others through a process of reward or punishment, setting goals and incentives and punishing failure. Highly judgemental of others actions they use their influence as a way of controlling, and at the extreme 'scaring' people into action. They are not afraid of exerting their influence or expressing their disapproval, but will also praise what they see as success. Push leaders say 'I want...'

## The pull method of leadership

The pull method of leadership is best used when the ideas are more 'dangerous' and acceptance of them is wobbly. This is a way of encouraging people into action. It is time demanding for leaders who need to be actively engaged in the process of learning and discussion. The pull method recognises that the best results come not from forcing people into doing things or trying to make them accept new ideas, but instead that when people are encouraged they want to succeed and so new boundaries of learning become possible.

### Characteristics

The characteristics of the pull method of leadership are encouraging participation, trust and shared vision. This leads to two further styles; bridging and common vision.

Leaders are committed to achieving the organisational goals but do so through an environment of openness and shared trust. They try to understand the opinions of others and are skilled listeners who encourage conversations as a way to explore ways of doing and new ideas. Pull influencers tend not to set static goals. They instead aim for future aspirations and are always looking to the future. They are happy to be lead into new areas of possibility. They build on the existing strengths of people and their organisations to make change happen and pull people towards them with shared vision, collective identity and shared goals. Pull influencers say 'we are...'

## How it's really applied

I've mainly used this on leadership programmes e.g. Lincolnshire CC, London Borough of Harrow and on those designed to train facilitators and organisational development practitioners e.g. Belfast City Council. I provide a brief introduction to the idea of push and pull energies and take people through the four styles, giving examples of the kinds of things people do/say when they are using the style.

This usually flows into a conversation about in what situations each style is likely to work. I then ask people to work on their own or in pairs on something/ someone they want to influence and to use a check-list to determine the most appropriate style and compare this with what they are doing/intending to do. If it's a single organisation group I also get them to think about whether they are over reliant on one or two particular styles.

The response has always been positive. People like the small number of styles, can see that all can be valuable, that you might need to move between them and that they can learn to do so. Sometimes people have been concerned about being manipulative when using the pull styles i.e. I have something I want you to do but want you to get there without me telling you. By taking people back to the criteria you can normally help people see that you use the pull styles to get other's ideas and commitment – not when you've already got an answer you're completely committed to!



Paul Tarplett

### Why not also look at:

- Nudge Theory – designing choice environments

### Sources

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# Mindfulness

## A practice for learning to act with awareness of all that is happening in the world

Mindfulness is a core feature of the practice of Buddhism. It is the seventh step of The Eightfold Path to enlightenment. 'Right mindfulness' along with the steps 'right effort' and 'right concentration' are mental development practices that it is believed will ease our suffering. Mindfulness isn't a lesson to be learnt or a story to be heard. It is an exploration, a discovery. It is a way of being. The practice of all Buddhist meditation is focused around developing mindfulness through training the mind. Mindfulness is, at its most basic, understood to be the practice of being fully present in the moment.

### The four practices

In the Buddhist practice of mindfulness there are four inter-linked frames of practice: Mindfulness of the body (*kayasati*), mindfulness of feelings (*vedanasati*), mindfulness of mental processes (*cittasati*) and mindfulness of mental objects, or blockages (*dhammasati*). It is suggested that connecting with self in this way allows us to see the world and our place and actions in it much more clearly. We become more able to see the bigger picture of what's really going on.

These frames have been widely adopted into the Western practice of mindfulness. Mindfulness has become an increasingly popular practice in Western culture in recent years, primarily developed in the West by the Psychologist Ellen Langer, as well as scholars such as Gudykunst and theorists such as Otto Scharmer. It is used across many areas, including personal practice, individual practice, in counselling, in psychological therapies, as a leadership tool and across organisations.

In the busy Western world both at home and at work, we have (argues Scharmer of The Presencing Institute) become increasingly disconnected from our worlds and ourselves. We need to reconnect and the world needs us to too. And we can do that through mindfulness.

### Practicing mindfulness

The key to mindfulness and learning to be present in the moment is about becoming aware of our bodies, our thoughts, our feelings, our actions and how these things impact in our worlds. It is asking questions about our world and us. Questions that help us understand who we are and what we do and how those things affect the rest of our lives, the people around us and the world and how they in turn affect us. It is becoming implicitly aware of place, self and all the information around us. The amount and quality and depth of these things doesn't matter, so long as the person involved is aware of some element of them.

It is about learning to act with awareness in the world, to act with thought rather than acting blindly. It is says Scharmer, about learning to be without ego and instead being in the world for the world not for us. A concept he explores in Governance (Society) 4.0 (See Society 4.0 – from ego-system to eco-system).

### The characteristics of mindfulness

#### Categorisation of the world

In our lives we constantly categorise our experiences and the world. This enables us to make sense of the world but it also affects our judgement and understanding. We categorise by habit and often fail to think about how we are doing this. And because we categorise we limit our perception and our understanding. Langer argues that we need to question our categories and also constantly create new ones and get rid of old one, so that we further our knowledge and our understanding. This makes us pay attention to what we experiencing and seeing and feeling.

#### Be open

When we live our lives on automatic we accidentally or deliberately shut ourselves off to new thinking, new experiences, new ways of doing. We do things the same old comfortable ways. We often consider our position and beliefs as the right and only ones. Being mindful means to question all of that. Accept that you don't know everything. Accept there are things that you don't understand. Accept that you might not have got it right. Be open and learn to see clearly. Do this by becoming aware of self and others; deliberately look for the signs and signals that are telling you something, if only you'd care to see.

#### See others

When we live without pausing, without thinking we often miss the voices of those around us. We think we're listening but actually we don't hear at all. Your voice matters to you and what others think, feel, see and say matters to them. There are different viewpoints, different ways of understanding and different ways of doing and being and they all matter.

## Mindfulness and leadership

Mindfulness in leadership is about taking all of these personal practices of mindfulness and using them to lead in ways that enable you to see and feel and connect with those around you. It is also a useful practice to help quieten the mind so that you are able to see beyond the noise of the chaos around you. To be able to see what's really going on and act in ways that aren't about you and your ego but are instead about the people who you are with and the place where you are.

Mindfulness and leadership is about becoming present without being self-involved; without ego. It is a shift in the consciousness of your awareness and a shift in how you lead.

## Collective mindfulness

Mindfulness explains Scharmer in Governance (Society) 4.0 is the key to changing how the organisations and how the societies of the modern world are functioning. Scharmer believes that organisations continuously create more difficulties because they are disconnected from the reality around them. That's because we are stuck in the out-dated paradigms of ego-capitalism. Where the 'I' matters more than the 'we'. Where individualistic pursuit, and gain and happiness is valued more than the needs of the collective whole. Mindfulness, through exploring the inner and seeing beyond the rush of life believes Scharmer can transform thinking from 'me' to 'we'.

### Why not also look at:

- Society 4.0 – from ego-system to eco-system
- Gestalt Theory of Change

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## Reflective Practice

Donald Schon

### A way of considering not just what happened but also our responses to what happened so that we can learn in a way that avoids replicating past mistakes

Schon, a philosopher with an interest in learning systems and reflective practice developed the theory at the heart of Reflective Practice in opposition to the theory of what is commonly called 'the battery way of learning'. The battery way of learning believes that learning is simply about 'charging' people up with knowledge and then sending them out into the world to use that knowledge.

### Continuous learning

According to Schon that theory is flawed. It doesn't acknowledge people are in a constant state of learning in response to the world around them. In this fast moving world that's always changing, people are faced with a multitude of things to think about and things to do, this means we are learning and adapting all of the time. Schon describes this as 'continuous learning'. He believes that we learn through reflection. Continuous learning happens as we make on the spot decisions in response to surprising events (Reflection IN Learning), and the ways in which we reflect on our actions to that surprise after the event (Reflection ON Learning).

### Reflection

When we come up against an unexpected event, a surprise then we have to think; we need to reflect. That's because every new surprise is unique, although it may have similarities to problems and situations that we have found ourselves in before. Because every problem is unique it's not possible for us to have a consistent plan that we can apply to each and every problem, but we can use past experiences to help us assess the situation and improvise a solution to the problem.

Now that problem, that sudden surprise might be as simple as the kid running in front of the car, but it demands a response and that response comes through thinking. That thinking is instant in the moment thinking and we're not aware of it happening. We're literally thinking on our feet. It just happens. This is Reflection IN Action.

## The process of Reflection IN Action

- We come across a surprise
- We assess the surprise and measure it up against past experience/knowledge (our repertoire)
- We try on solutions by testing them out. We dip a toe in the water. We improvise a solution and see how it goes
- Then we assess the situation again, instinctively and often without knowing, by Reflecting ON our Actions. We ask; 'have we still got a problem?'

If we answer; 'No! The problem is solved!' Then that experience becomes part of our repertoire of problem solving. We file it as; 'this is what works for X', and we will use it to try and solve similar problems in the future.

## The process of Reflection ON Action

However, sometimes we can't solve problems easily, or our solutions haven't worked, and that leaves us needing to think about what happened and why. Schon explains that we need to Reflect ON Action. Reflection ON Action involves deliberate thinking. We do things similarly to how we Reflect IN Action but when we Reflect ON Action something else happens too.

We try to make sense of the new situation by framing it through context and our experiences. This process involves deliberately engaging with ourselves in conversation. We ask ourselves a series of reflective questions and a list of possible solutions. Questions such as; what was our strategy that led to us taking that action? What feelings did we have at the time that influenced our thinking? How did we assess the situation? What past reference point did we use?

As we answer each question we are reframing our perception of the problem, seeing it with fresh eyes and that changes our thinking. We evolve says Schon and that changes how we then see the problem and how we will see similar problems in the future. This new thinking will lead us into trying out or adapting past solutions from our repertoire. We try them out; we test the limits of the new solution. We do that by physically running with the solution and trying it for real, or by framing it in discussion, imagined scenarios, dry runs, through telling stories. Then we reassess and we will reframe until we end up with a solution that works. This is an entirely new solution and we are then able to file the problem and the solution away added to our ever-increasing repertoire of things that might just work for future surprises.

## How it's really applied

Getting busy public leaders to prioritise reflection is an axiomatically difficult thing to do! I have found that for certain clients – particularly senior audiences with a penchant for a touch of theory and hint of academic rigour – it can be helpful to offer them the classic Reflection IN Action/Reflection ON Action framework developed by Donald Schon in *The Reflective Practitioner*. Alongside this I find it helpful to provide specific reflective writing exercises rather than more general admonitions. I find it particularly helpful to encourage people to write whatever comes leaving out their internal censor. One exercise I use early on which helps with this (borrowed from Gillie Bolton's excellent *Reflective Practice: Writing and Professional Development*) runs as follows:

- **List the milestones in your life: quickly without much thinking**
- **Read back to yourself: delete, add, clarify or expand as you wish.**
- **Add some divergent things: challenges, successes or failures. (e.g when did you first stand up to someone? when did you first experience achieving something significant in a team?)**
- **Choose one: write a few paragraphs about it.**
- **Read back to yourself with care, add or delete (ignore your negative critic)**



Chris Lawrence-Pietroni

### Why not also look at:

- **Argyris, Theories of Action – double loop learning and organisational theories of action**

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# 5 Tools

## Lewin's Force Field Analysis

Kurt Lewin

### A way of surfacing how a problem is affected by issues in the wider world and how they might impact on a change process

Kurt Lewin developed Force Field Analysis in 1951. Lewin was interested in different ways of using psychology. He wanted a way to use psychology to help with problems across society. He created a process called Force Field analysis, a mix of Gestalt and behaviourism. It is a way of seeing how a problem is affected by the wider world around it (the field), and how the problem affects the wider world.

#### Consider everything

The surrounding environment of a person or place, explained Lewin, influences behaviour. And also, a person or place's behaviour affects their wider environment. The two are inseparable. Everything said Lewin acts as part of the whole. (See Gestalt.) Everything is in relation to something else. Nothing is independent. Whatever one thing does will cause a reaction somewhere else. So when something has to change, when a problem needs addressing, it is important that every single thing is considered.

#### Driving and resistant forces

Everything that has influence on a change: beliefs, values, money, tradition, organisational structure, policies. Every process, every thought, every behaviour, either works to make change easier or harder. Positive driving forces push movement towards change happening and resistant forces get in the way of the positive forces, blocking the path and causing conflict. The resisting force that gets in the way of change most of all is fear. Fear of change and fear of learning how to do things differently.

#### Look at 'the field'

To understand how exactly the forces are working for change or getting in the way of change happening, places need to be able to see the whole field accurately. Just like in Gestalt that involves stepping back and looking in and exploring everything and anything. But Lewin was a bit more specific than that. Lewin believed that by representing the change diagrammatically and giving each influence a score, places would be able to measure up exactly which things were of most importance or even decide that something isn't important at all. The process is quite simple;

- Name the proposed change in the centre of a piece of paper
- Then through discussions;
  - List on the left hand side the things that are positive drivers.
  - List on the right hand side the things that are working against the drivers.
  - Give each point in both lists a score between 1 and 10. Numbers can be used more than once, (1 represents a weak influence, 10 a strong one).

### Create an action plan

This simple representation enables places to see the whole more clearly. They can see the value of each factor and then they can decide what to do next by creating an action plan. The action plan shouldn't be about making the good things stronger because those resistant forces will still be there, getting in the way. What it should actually do is work out ways of reducing the strength of the resistant forces. The intervention in the system is not; what do we need to add? It is; what do we need to take away?

#### Force field analysis



## How it's really applied

I used Kurt Lewin's force field analysis as part of a wider conference on challenging inequalities in Bristol. As always, the things that encouraged us to move were easy to identify and many in number. They were often very tangible, sometimes quite analytical, sometimes emotional; like a burning sense of injustice. What arose (and always arises) was that the resistors to change are primarily within us. Someone questioned whether all of us whose organisations and livelihoods were built around ending inequality really wanted it to end. Once it did, our purpose and our living would be gone. That changed the tone of the conversation and caused us to consider more deeply what we wanted to do. If we were serious about the change, there were things we really should just do.



John Atkinson

### Why not also look at:

- Lewin's Model of Change
- Public Value
- Gestalt Theory of Change

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## Power Mapping

### A model looking at webs of interest, power and influence to understand systems

Power maps are everywhere. We all use them across a variety of situations, from buying cars to dealing with the family. Power maps are about understanding where the power is and using it to get what we want. It is a tool of persuasion and much of the time we're not aware that we're using it.

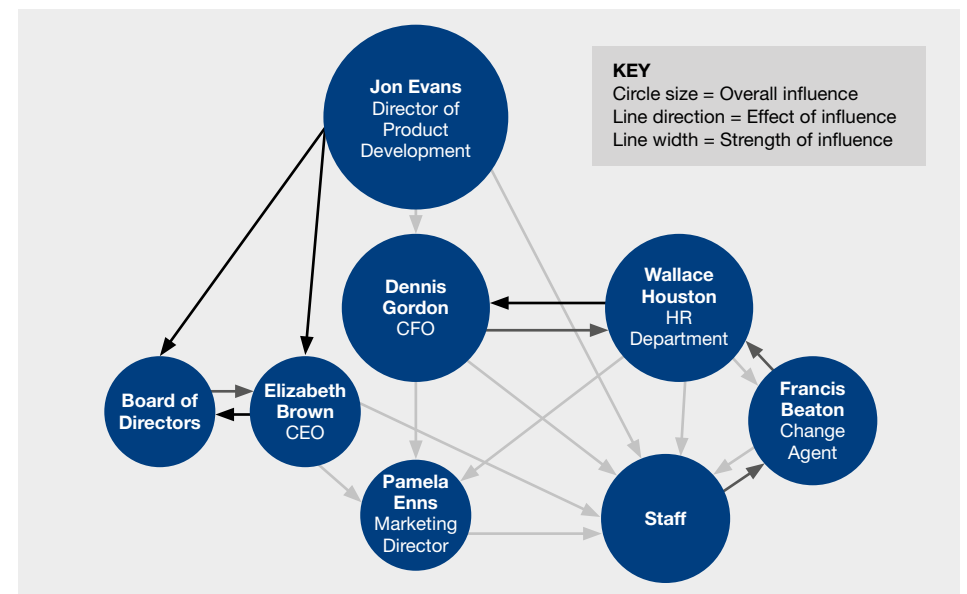
A power map shows who has influence and where, that makes it possible to see who can be helpful and who could cause a problem. That means we can plan how to manage them. A power map makes it possible to see where and whom you need to pay attention to in order to get what you want.

There are three main factors to consider;

- How important a person's influence is
- How much they can influence others
- Who they can influence

### Drawing the map

- Everyone with influence is represented as a circle, (and named within it)
- The more influence they have the bigger their circle
- They are connected by lines to others whom they have influence over or who they are influenced by
- The thickness/colour of the line represents how powerful that influence is



## How it's really applied

A power map is particularly useful in partnerships and multi-agency settings – since unless we have organised our partnerships in such a way that they have the power to ‘act’ – they become talking shops. Power mapping can provide a way of thinking about ‘agency’ – who has the power to act, and what will influence them to use that power? It makes us think not about what we do on our own – but how we orchestrate our influence and our impact on others, to ensure that action follows. In Medway, we decided to map all the key players involved in the system change we wanted to see – exploring who were sponsors – who were critics – who were neutral. This map then led to a series of conversations about where and how to intervene. How could the people in the room influence all the other players in the system? What do we mean by ‘power’ in this situation? How might others be induced or persuaded to change their roles – to move from neutral to sponsors? What are the system pressures that hold people in the roles they play? How could we interrupt or disturb these pressures? In who's interests were the changes proposed?

We are still working on these issues.



Sue Goss

### Why not also look at:

- Basic Assumption Groups and Psychodynamic Approaches
- Owl, Fox, Donkey, Sheep: Political skills for Managers

### Sources

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## Stakeholder Analysis – Trust and Agreement

Peter Block

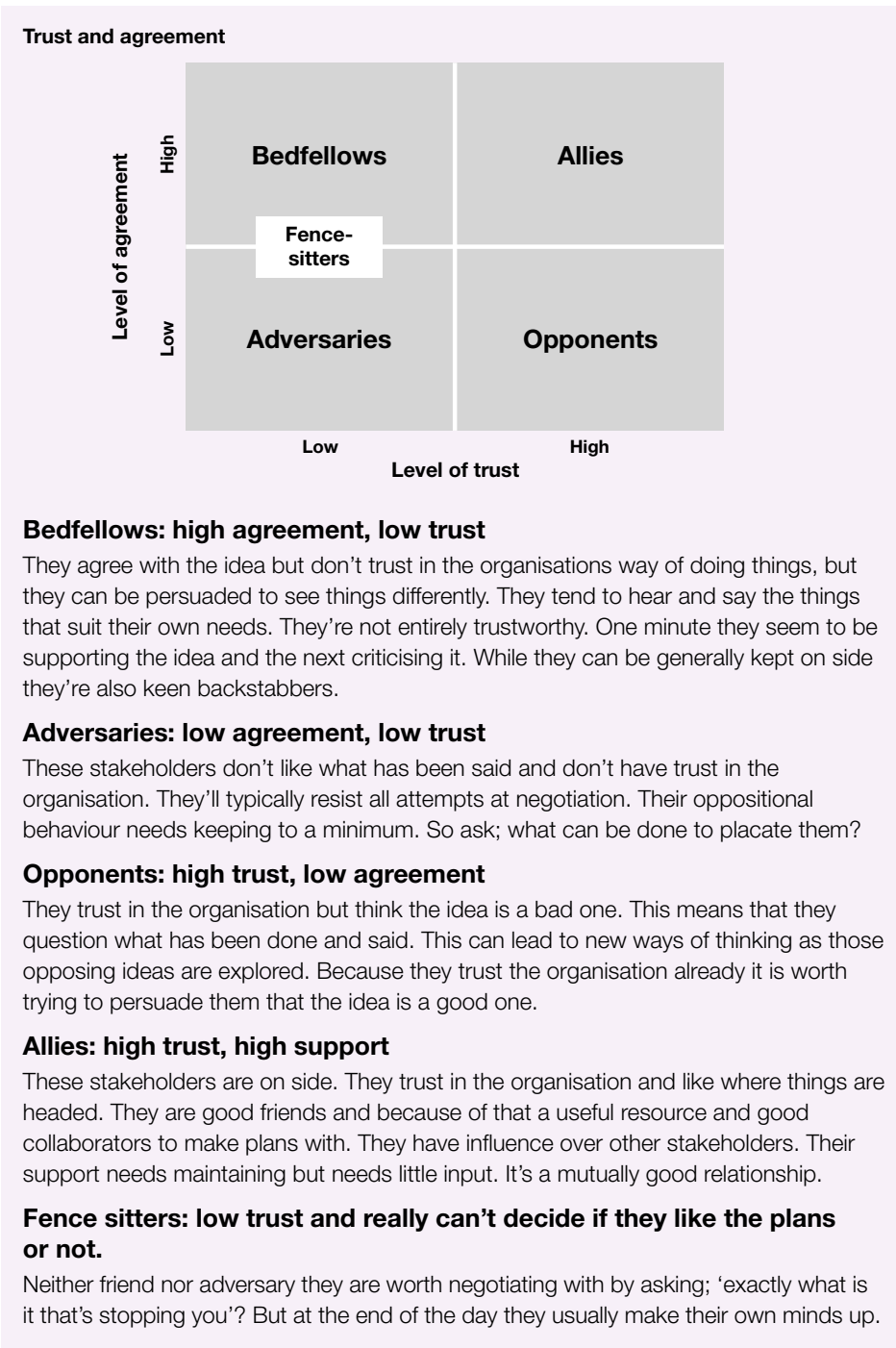
**A tool that maps the stakeholders in the system to help managers understand the ways in which different people can and will exert their influences over ‘change programmes’**

Stakeholder analysis identifies those who have influence in a system. It provides a framework to help understand the needs that they have and how to respond to those needs. That's important because by knowing the ‘characteristics’ of stakeholders managers can understand how to respond to those needs. By knowing what stakeholders need, managers know what it is they need to do to successfully implement their ideas.

### Trust and Agreement

Stakeholder analysis categorises people according to the amount of agreement they hold for the programme and the amount of trust they have in the organisation to make success happen. Each of the different categories has different characteristics, different needs, demands and influences and they need to be treated in different ways. It asks questions such as;

- What can they do?
- What are their needs?
- What are their interests?
- What are their concerns?



## How it's really applied

I used this model of stakeholder political analysis by Peter Block in my work with health and wellbeing boards across England. The model outlines that though groups will have disagreement on the way forward, it is the quality of their relationship – the level of trust in the relationship – that enables stakeholders to be able to discuss their difference and move towards consensus. In working with Doncaster Council, for instance, I helped them to explore the challenges of improving health and wellbeing while moving resources from acute services. Rather than adopting an adversarial relationship we used the model to focus on building trust, so that they became fellow travellers in working through the differences that then became part of the Better Care Fund



John Deffenbaugh

### Why not also look at:

- Owl, Fox, Donkey, Sheep: Political Skills for Managers
- Public Value
- Cultural Dynamics Values Modes

### Sources

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# Multiple Cause Diagrams

The Open University. Jake Chapman

## A tool for seeing patterns in complex problems that enables us to decide where best to act

The Multiple Cause Diagram was developed by Jake Chapman with the Open University. It is a tool to see problems differently. It is a way of seeing the complexity of a problem. With a background in physics and energy renewables Chapman had a different way of thinking about problems. Chapman believed that the problems that exist within organisation are often systemic in nature. He developed several theories and approaches to help organisations understand complex problems through systemic thinking.

### Managing complex problems

When faced with complex problems, people and places often stumble around tackling what they consider to be the root of the problem, throwing energy into solution after solution. They are left more than a little muddled when nothing works out. They're left in a mess and still have the same problems that they had to begin with.

Chapman believes that that is because they aren't seeing the whole picture. They don't see the little things. They might even miss some big things and they sure don't appreciate how it all fits together. So when they tackle what they consider to be the cause of the problem, they fail to realise that actually the problem also has other causes and that those other causes have causes of their own: Each cause has an effect, that is the cause or effect of something else. The causes and effects all form part of loop, a vicious circle that you can't just break.

### Using The Multiple Cause Diagram

The Multiple Cause Diagram is a tool that aims to change the ways people think when they consider complex problems. It does not aim to provide solutions. The Multiple Cause Diagram gives a visual picture of a problem. It recognises that different people have different views about what constitutes a problem and allows each perspective to be represented. It shows the many contributory causes and effects of a problem but treats all types of cause and effect equally. It gives a wider view of the problem rather than a restricted narrow perspective. It shows how things connect together and how one thing leads to another. It allows the feedback loops and trapped vicious circles to be identified. It is a platform for discussion and reflection.

People and places work through the process of creating and reviewing the diagram it makes them examine their viewpoints as well as the causes and effects. It allows possible points of intervention to be identified. It draws attention to the more influential paths and points.

## Making a Multiple Cause Diagram

### Start at the end and begin with the problem

Just one problem. (You could do more but the diagram will get very cluttered).

### Think about the primary causes of this problem

Ask; why is this happening?

### Connect the causes to their effect

Connect with an arrow that shows the direction of the path from cause at the foot of the arrow to effect at the pointed head. The arrow simply means causes or leads to.

### Now think about the causes of those causes

Ask again; why is this happening?

### And connect, and ask again, and so on

Repeat this until all options have been exhausted, until there are no more answers to 'why'?

### Make sure paths make sense

Make sure that they are logical. Is the jump from cause to effect too large? Does it explain why that's happened? Or is something else happening along the way? Add in micro steps if necessary. Try not to cross arrows over each other, because that's confusing to look at. Move things around instead.

Make sure that all arrows from one point on the 'map' eventually lead you to the central problem.

### Review the diagram, explore and discuss it

Now it's possible to really see what's going on.

It's not so simple after all. It's a swirl of interconnected paths.

Highlight the most important paths. Highlight the most important points.

Now don't ask how you can solve the problem instead ask; Where can we begin?

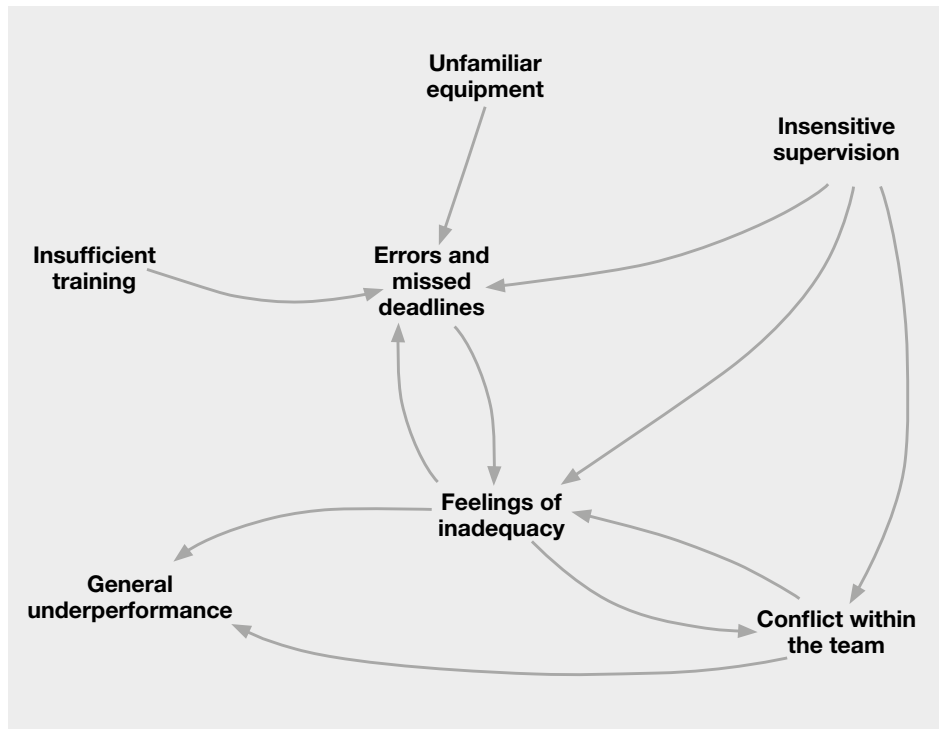
### Ask where can intervention be made?

At which points would it be effective?

Where are the feedback loops where one thing feeds another that feeds another that leads back again?

Can they be broken?

### Example – Why a Work Group is underperforming?



(<http://www.projects.kmi.open.ac.uk>)

## How its really applied

I was working in Nottinghamshire with all the organisations that had set up a multi-agency safeguarding hub – called a MASH – and we were exploring the teething problems that were leading to tensions and conflicts between the sponsoring partners. I felt, as I listened to the different stories of each manager and from each agency, that everyone saw a different part of the ‘system in action’ – and there was a temptation to blame others rather than understand the way the system created unintended consequences and feedback loops. Using Jake Chapman’s ‘multiple cause diagrams’ we started to map these – and were able to create two very different ‘system maps’ – one which showed a very limited perspective of the problems which laid the blame for bottlenecks at the door of one partner – and another which drew on the richer picture when you put all the perspectives together – and began to show how other elements of the system were increasing demand. Once all the partners could trace the way referrals were moving through the system, they were able to identify several different places where intervention was needed – and to agree to act together.

That process of ‘seeing the system from all angles’ then led the leaders of the participating organisations to work together to build a shared understanding of the real purpose of the MASH, which in turn led to stronger partnership working, and a clearer sense of direction. Jake Chapman has created a set of slides that show you how to make multiple-cause diagrams – and it’s a matter of trial and error. You start with the problem and ask on the one hand – what causes this to happen? And on the other – what other problems does this cause? You begin drawing in all the causes, and the consequences – tracking them through the ‘whole system’. We learnt that you often cross things out and start again – and it’s that process of drawing, testing, reflecting, learning, crumpling it up and starting again somewhere else – that leads to understanding.



Sue Goss

### Why not also look at:

- Building Capital
- Complexity
- The Landscapes Framework

### Sources

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# Organisational Design – The Star Model

Jay Galbraith

## A model that helps people design organisations by highlighting the real underlying dynamics beneath their structure

There's more to an organisation than just 'the organisation' explains Galbraith. An organisation's purpose is to deliver services. It does that through achieving its strategic goals. In other words an organisation is just a vehicle of delivery. It is the living machine through which things get done. So it stands to reason that an organisation that is well designed will do a better job at getting things done, a better job at delivering services and a better job at achieving strategic goals.

The problem is that most organisations are simply designed around a structure, and structure is simply concerned with who gets things done and what that comes down to is power. However things don't just happen in isolation, there are lots of other things happening too. Everything means something, everything influences behaviour and that influences outcomes. It all comes back to achieving those strategies.

### The Star Model

Galbraith explains that when designing an organisation (or redesigning an organisation), it's important to think about the other things going on and plan for them too. Organisational design is a thinking and planning process, and putting that into practice is done through The Star Model. Every point on the star model affects behaviours that affect performance and so with each point optimally designed an organisation will function a whole lot better.

All organisations are unique. They each function in different operating environments and conditions. They each have different personal strategies. Their strategies are constantly evolving to meet the demands and needs of an ever-changing operating environment in an ever-changing world. That means that there's no set exact formula to what makes a good organisational design. Each of these points has different importance and different meaning to different organisations. Every individual strategy needs a different type of organisation to make it happen. That means that every organisation has different requirements from each star point. Each point is simply a tool that can be manipulated to meet their own individual needs.

With the right balance, with the right design of the star, processes will lead to the right behaviours becoming part of the culture of the organisation. These behaviours lead to better performance, which means the organisation functions better at achieving its strategic goals

The Star Model™



© Jay R. Galbraith

### The Star points

The beginning of design in The Star Model is strategy, because what the strategy is determines what the structure should be, which then impacts on the design of processes. Processes directly influence how rewards are designed and the type of people needed and the skills that they need.

#### Strategy

What is it we want to do?

How are we going to do it?

#### Structure

The formal structure of an organisation, the departments and what they do, the hierarchy, authority.

Who has the power and where? Who can get things done and how?

#### Processes

How is information shared and communicated?

Is it formally through budgets and planning or is it through relationships?

#### Rewards systems

Reward systems are about getting desired behaviours.

How can we motivate people to do what we want?

How do we make them comply?

How do we encourage them?

#### People

The right people = the right behaviour.

What kind of person do we need? What skills and attributes do they need?

How do we recruit them?

How can we develop the workforce?

What training do we need in place?

## How it's really applied

I've used this on leadership courses and those concerned with organisation change and during work with top teams on change, e.g. in Shropshire looking at what a "commissioning organisation" might look like. I've used it by talking through the elements of the model, arguing that organisations are more than their structures and if we are thinking about changing structures then we need to also think about how this will fit with other elements of organisation design. I've then asked people to think about what changes they want to make to other aspects of organisation design, how they will do this and challenging them about "fit". E.g. if you move to flatter structures but don't change information flows and decision-making powers then the design probably won't work very well.

When I've used it people instinctively recognise the framework and can use it to consider how they can redesign their organisations in light of any changes to purpose or any element of the design. I have some questions that can be used to think about each of the design elements and how they interrelate. But at the very least people find it a helpful checklist of things to think about.



Paul Tarplett

### Why not also look at:

- Cultural Web
- The Three Levels of Organisational Culture
- Five Capacities of High Performance Teams

#### Sources

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## Co-production – The Egg Model

Alakeson, Bunnin and Miller

### A model for engaging users in changing organisations and services

The term co-production has come into popular usage in the last 15 years. It is used in several ways: At one level it is stating the obvious that outcomes can only be achieved with service users. It is not service providers who improve someone's health, the individuals do that themselves by the way in which they choose to use services, or not. The concept has also been used to highlight the wide range of individuals, groups and agencies that can influence an outcome; this helps us see different ways into achieving an outcome.

Alakeson et al. explain that co-production should be a combination of the 'learned' expertise of the professional and the 'lived' experience of the user.

### Traditional approaches

The traditional approach has been of prescribing services to a passive user. The user is expected to do as they're told because someone else has decided what's best for them. It's been about a passive user looking for answers rather than accepting responsibility for what happens and why. Of course the outcomes of these prescriptive methods aren't that effective and could be a whole lot better. Prescriptive methods fail to take into account that the user ultimately decides what they themselves will do and how. It is the user who actually determines the outcome, not the expert and their planned outcomes.

### Social capital

The user of a service is tremendously powerful; they not only know what they want, they also know how they want it to be delivered and what will work for them. Not only that, it's not just that user, that one person who has influence and power and the ability to make a difference here, it's their families and wider connections too. Alakeson et al. term this social capital. These voices have to not only be considered; they also have to be an active part of co-producing services and outcomes. To ignore the power of social capital and its influence, skills, abilities and many voices will reduce the effectiveness of service outcomes.

### Accepting responsibility

The co-production model states that it is not only time to recognise these voices, and to recognise what people and communities want, it is also time to pass on responsibility for their own outcomes to them. It's time for them to stop looking for someone to sort their problems. It's time for them to take on responsibility for what they are capable of doing. It's time for them to stop being passive and become active participants instead; to take on responsibility for what they want to happen and how.

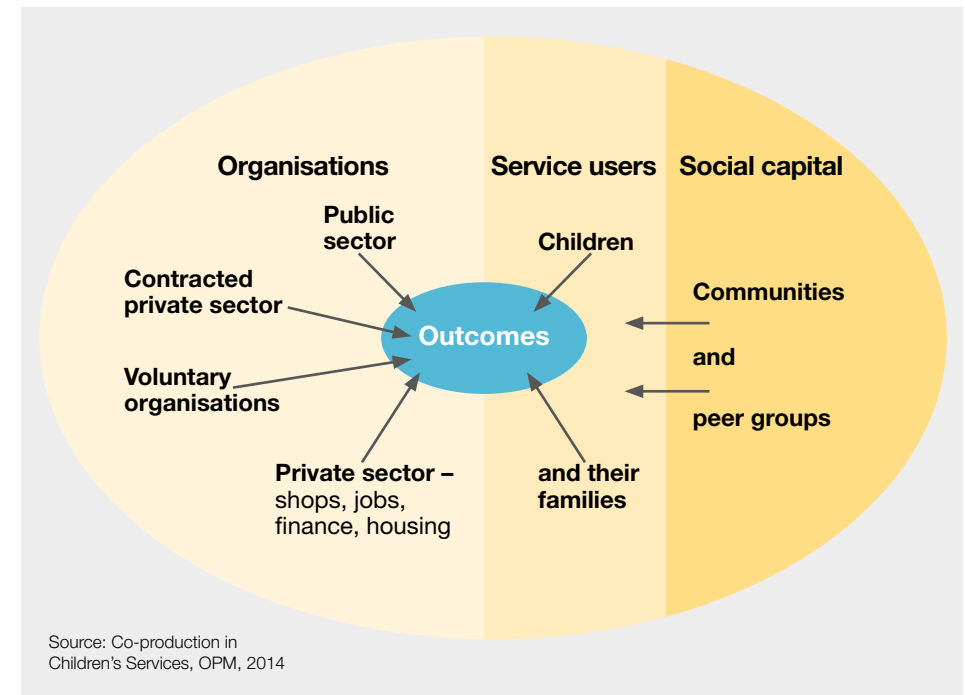
### Transformative co-production

Effective co-production isn't simply about acknowledging that users have needs (Alakeson et al, term this description co-production), or listening to them (recognition co-production). Effective co-production is about transformative co-production. Transformative co-production puts users and providers on an equal footing. It will change not only what is done but also the way in which it is done. That means rewriting the rulebook, creating new infrastructures and new understanding. Services and outcomes shouldn't be about provision and compliance. It should be about shared responsibility for what is delivered and how it is delivered. A combination of learned expertise and lived experience.

### How it's really applied

**Below is the framework I have used and developed with colleagues for many years to describe the relationship between organisational activity...inputs or logistics (getting the right things in the right place at the right time), outputs or services (what we do, deliver, offer to people), and the real reason we get up in the morning – human outcomes (the benefits, personal or community gains from the engagement with services. Working with individuals or groups with this framework it is then possible to help them see the relationship between organisational activity, that if well done leads to effective services, and that in turn leads to the potential to achieve outcomes with/for people. The co-productive challenge is that good services do not necessarily lead to good outcomes. People interact with services, use them or not and choose to some degree the benefits they gain. This set of ideas also helps explain the differences between commercial enterprise, where outcomes may be less important than outputs, and public services, where outcomes are the primary focus. The most recent work has been to question 'who owns the outcomes?' Working with public health, for example, is a joint strategic needs assessment the result of skilful professional analysis or is it based on discussion and engagement with local people? (see Taxonomy of Needs).**

### Co-production



 Paul Tarplett

#### Why not also look at:

- Community
- Building Capital
- Public Value

#### Sources

Alakeson, V. and Bunnin, A. and Miller, C. (2013) *Coproduction of health and wellbeing outcomes: the new paradigm for effective health and social care* [Online], OPM. Available at <http://www.opm.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Coproduction-of-health-and-wellbeing-outcomes-March-2013.pdf> (Accessed 03/11/2014).  
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## Results (Outcomes) Based Accountability (RBA or OBA)

Mark Freidman

### A way of thinking that focuses on the outcomes that a place wants to achieve as a way to develop responsibility for achieving them

Results based accountability (RBA) was developed by Mark Friedman. It is an approach that rather than just thinking about efficiency or processes also considers the results that a service achieves. It is useful as a tool for planning services, informing decisions and monitoring progress. It is a way to develop a sense of shared responsibility across organisations and communities. It is a useful way to show what is being done and why.

#### Types of accountability

RBA asks; who is responsible? There are two types of accountability according to RBA;

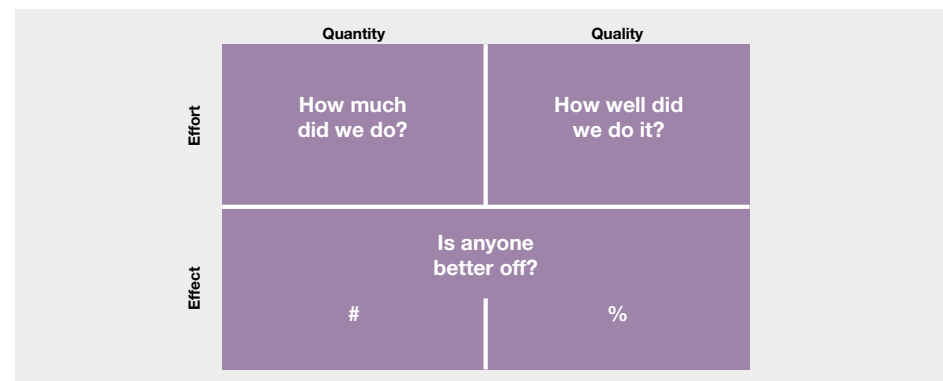
##### Population accountability

- Accountability to the community by the community.
- The outcome of the programme is important to a community, so accountability needs to come from the population as a whole.
- No single person or group can be held responsible for the problem and its solution; it is too large and crosses over many boundaries.

##### Performance accountability

- Accountability by managers to customers (The customer results).
- Performance accountability is concerned with the well-being of customer populations.
- A specific person or body can be held accountable for how the program has performed and the strategies it decides to use.
- Its key role is to ask; 'are people better off'?

##### Program performance measures



(<http://resultsaccountability.com>)

## How RBA works

### Ends to means

RBA works backwards from ends to means. The first question the process asks is 'What do we want'? This should be a desirable well-being outcome for either a community or a customer. It then asks; 'How will we recognise it'? This is about measuring success. Finally the process asks; 'How are we going to get there'? This is thinking about the strategies that are needed and the things that must be done.

### Turning the curve

The key feature of using RBA is what Freidman terms 'turning the curve'. This is about breaking previous patterns of behaviour. The first step is creating a baseline that shows a path from the past to the future. It asks places to think about what has happened in the past and how that has got them to where they are now. It then asks them to think where they are going to end up in the future if the path carries on following previous patterns of behaviour. Creating the base-line asks the questions;

- Where are we now?
- Where were we before?
- What informed those past decisions?
- Where we will end up if nothing changes?

Asking these questions and creating the baseline creates accountability for what is going on now. It also shows what will happen if things are allowed to carry on as they are.

Next the process of RBA asks places to think about what they need to do to break this trend; Friedman calls this 'turning the curve'. Turning the curve away from that baseline is achieved by asking;

- Where do we want to be?
- How can we get there?
- Who do we need to involve? Who can help?
- What works for this situation?
- So what can we do about it?

#### Why not also look at:

- Public Value
- Understanding the Connection between People and Performance

#### Sources

Freidman, M. (2014) *Results based accountability 101 20-minute presentation Slides* (Powerpoint) [Online]. Fiscal Policy Studies Institute. Available at <http://resultsaccountability.com/results-based-accountability-101-20-minute-presentation-2009-slides/> (Accessed 06/10/2014).

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## Open Strategy – PRUB (Projects, Results, Users, Benefits)

Phil Driver

**A framework that suggests ways to work in complex strategy environments and provides a framework for creating strategies for doing this**

Phil Driver developed the concept of Open Strategy as an approach to enable organisations (mostly public sector), to assess their existing strategies and develop new strategies. It is based on the theories and practices of Open Source Software and provides a series of rules and principles to guide people through making change. It follows the principles of Mintzberg who said that; strategies should plan what needs to be done. The PRUB model is the core of open strategy.

### Complex strategy environments

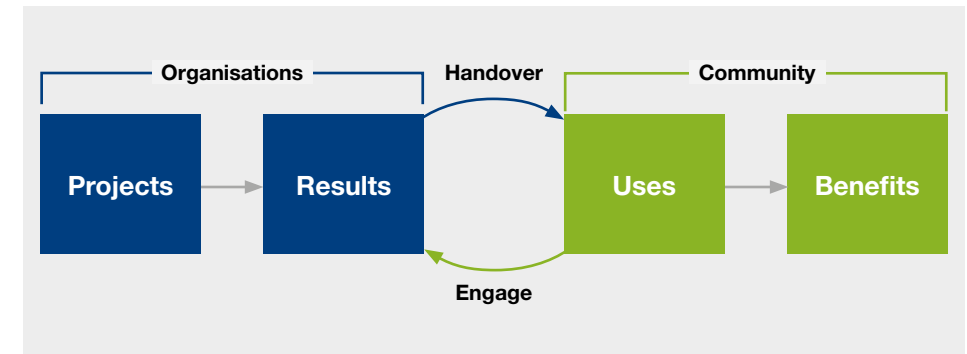
Driver says that it's difficult creating strategies for change because organisations are always trying to create strategies that work 'to' and 'with' the strategies of other organisations, whose needs and purposes cross over with their own. There are multiple stakeholders who have different areas of expertise and interests. That means that among other things they have different aims, different demands and different understanding. There are also multiple overlapping themes, multiple demographic groups that the strategy is aiming at, multiple levels of strategy and policy to adhere to (local, regional national). Driver describes these conditions as a complex strategy environment.

Driver claims that in these complex strategy environments there is confusion about what the strategy is. Often management think they have good strategy and don't even realise that their strategy isn't actually a strategy at all. As a result the majority of organisations create and try to implement planning strategies that simply don't work. Organisations need to find better ways to work with their strategies. According to Driver the formula for that is quite simple: All that organisations need to do is to create strategies that work with the reasons for their existence. They exist to provide a service – that achieves results – that changes something. So their strategies should aim to do that too. The building block of all strategies should be the principle PRUB;

**Projects** produce **Results** and enable people to **Use** them to create **Benefits**

Every strategic idea can follow this principle and will be made up of multiple PRUBs that all link together.

### Example of PRUB



(www.openstrategies.com)

Organisations create projects that have results. Communities use those results and create benefits from them.

### Validation

Driver explains that creating strategies isn't enough, those strategies have also got to be proven to be valid. The first and most important thing to consider is uses. Will the community actually make use of the service provided (the result)? What's the evidence? What are the benefits from this use? Is it good value against the cost of creating the result? Is it worth it? If they're not valid they should be abandoned.

### Wasteful results

It's a fact that some projects just won't work. The results they generate won't be used so they will have no community benefit. These are orphaned results and should be abandoned unless the result can be adopted by another organisation or strategy to develop other projects. (Adopted orphan results).

Driver explains that organisations should only run their projects if their PRUB strategies demonstrate that there will be a valid use, and thus benefit for the community, or if the result they make will be adopted by someone else.

## How it's really applied

I've made this part of my introduction to system leadership presentations in both Wiltshire and Calderdale. I use it to emphasise three aspects of strategy and thinking about change, firstly being clear how actions and services are intended to lead to outcomes/benefits; secondly the importance of providing enough detail below the aspirational level of strategies to enable more junior staff to turn aspirations into actions; and finally and most importantly to highlight that it is how people use services/outputs that determines the benefits/outcomes so we can't think well about how to achieve outcomes without understanding uses, (i.e. co-production). (There was a good example where services for drug users were decentralised to make them closer to where users lived. This led to poorer outcomes because when they didn't have to spend the day travelling the ex-offenders had more time on their hands and fell back into old ways).

Some people argue that they don't know how things will work; they're not in a linear system so want to experiment. This is fine, of course and PRUB accommodates all systems from simple, through complicated, complex and chaotic; but people still need to decide to do something and think about who the users are and how they will work with them.



Paul Tarplett

### Why not also look at:

- Community
- Push and Pull Influencing Style
- Taxonomy of Needs

#### Sources

Driver, P. (2014) *Introduction Validating Strategies: Project, Results, Uses, Benefits*. Gower Publishing [Online]. Available at <http://www.gowerpublishing.com/pdf/SamplePages/Validating-Strategies-CH1.pdf> (Accessed 12/10/2014).

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## Nudge Theory – designing choice environments

Thaler and Sunstein

### A way of understanding how to influence the choices that people make

Thaler and Sunstein wrote, *Nudge: Improving decisions about health, wealth and happiness* in 2008. It has since been utilised worldwide as a tool to help understand and influence the ways in which people behave. It has been used for a variety of purposes including increasing registered organ donors in the UK, to use as a marketing tool to sell video games.

Based on the Heuristics theories developed by Kahneman and Tversky in the 1970's, Nudge Theory aims to improve the decisions that people make without limiting the choices they have. It is the idea of libertarian paternalism; preserving the people's right to choose but also promoting their welfare. It is the idea that people can be guided (nudged) into making the choices that you want as opposed to autocratic theories, which say that people should be (forced) pushed into making the right choices.

### The inner planner and the inner doer

Nudge Theory argues that autocratic methods of persuasion presume that people are always rational and consistent and so make choices that are predictable. But people aren't like that at all. In fact people make inconsistent choices. They never think in the same way twice. The reason for this is the constant argument between the inner voice of what people intend to do (the inner planner) and what they actually want to do (the voice of the inner doer). When people take action and make choices they have to decide which voice they want to side with and how they do that is inconsistent too. The knack is in getting the two inner voices to combine and think the way that you want them to, so people will choose what you want. And that's about designing the right choice environment.

### Designing choice environments

Nudge Theory argues that people have free will and with that free choice. They respond better when they feel like they have choice rather than being told that they have to do something. So choices have to be designed that actively guide people into doing things differently. This can be done through processes that help people think differently about the choices they have and also through identifying and then changing the influences on them that are unhelpful. The technique avoids giving direct instruction or enforcing rules. Instead it works by literally nudging people in the right direction.

Nudging people into action is gentle. People feel like they have a choice and they then make their choices with more thought. Because they don't feel pressure, that makes making choices easier. In contrast when faced with enforcement people have to make active decisions and take active action. They have to deliberately engage with what's required of them. In addition enforcement techniques are often threatening or confrontational and provoke negative reactions, including resistance.



## Choice architecture

When developing choice architecture the aim is to create a feature in the environment that attracts people's attention. This will lead to a change in their behaviour. They are nudged into choosing the right thing and that nudge can be good (quit smoking) or evil (buy these donuts). In a choice environment there has to be a choice. It can't be neutral and it has to do something. This preserves people's sense of freewill and their right to choose.

## Features of choice environments

### Default choices

These options are sticky options. People tend to stick with them because it's already been selected for them. It's easy. These are automatic choices that happen if people don't actively choose otherwise.

### Expect error

Design a system that expects people to get it wrong, so make the choice easy for them to get it right.

### Give feedback

Show people what effect their choices actually have, this makes them more likely to choose the 'right' one.

### Structure complex choices

### Give incentives

## How it's really applied

**Read almost any other Cass Sunstein book than Nudge itself. I would start with Rumor (sic). And better still read Daniel Kahneman. Nudge booked the sales and so popularised that No 10 even created its own unit. And remember we also occasionally need shoves.**



Joe Simpson

### Why not also look at:

- Neuro-Science – system 1 and system 2
- The Tipping Point
- Argyris, Theories of Action – double loop learning and organisational theories of action

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## Nominal Group Technique

### A group process for open problem identification, solution generation and decision-making

Nominal Group Technique (NGT) is a very simple tool to help groups understand simple problems and to reach a consensus about the way forwards. It is a useful tool for groups where there are a mixture of strong and quiet voices and where unhelpful noise and disagreement is dominating discussions. It allows everyone to be heard in a constructive way through a process of thinking, round robins, discussion and finally consensus agreement.

### The five stages of nominal group technique

#### 1) Thinking about ideas

The idea or question being discussed is clearly stated and then the group silently and individually thinks about how they would like to respond. Each person writes their thoughts down as one-sentence responses. (Post-its are useful).

#### 2) Shared idea generation – round robin

Each person is asked to share what he or she considers to be their 'best' response with the group, ideas shouldn't be repeated. No one has to contribute. These are all recorded on flipchart/ screen for everyone to see.

#### 3) Clarification-discussion

Each idea raised is discussed. This is the time to ask questions to get clarification and detail of ideas, but the wording of each idea is changed only with the contributors consent. It has to remain a representation of their voice.

#### 4) Voting

The ideas are prioritised. Everyone votes privately for each idea and then the vote scores combined to see which idea rates the most highly.

#### 5) Decision

The group discusses the next steps forwards using the vote results that have highlighted the most popular ideas.

## How it's really applied

Many people use this approach without realising it has a theoretical and research base. It is based on open problem identification, solution generation and decision-making. The key feature is the requirement for each member of an event, group or team to write down their ideas, thoughts, reactions etc without being influenced or 'infected' with the ideas of others. This is often done with the use of sticky 'post its' that are then discussed, collected or displayed for further work. The key underlying element is that everyone contributes an idea or question, not just the noisy, articulate or powerful players.

The formal approaches to NGT have a number of key stages, but used as part of training sessions or group discussions it is a really useful way of shaping the process away from the more recognisable 'agenda/discussion/decision approach' that can limit engagement and creativity.

A number of the ideas, models and frameworks above use NGT as a tool to enable groups to develop and exchange ideas without intrusion, or influence from others. I commonly ask groups large and small to jot down their initial reactions to a trigger question before we begin discussions. Post its are a very useful way of enabling people to write down their thoughts quickly and in concise ways – you choose the size of the post it to limit or expand the space available. This approach also informs how I write down on flip charts what is said in groups. It is really important to write directly in the words that people use rather than what I thought they said. This awareness gives direct recognition to each individual's contribution, not processed through my thoughts and experience.



Robin Douglas

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## Appreciation Process

### A group problem solving and decision making tool

A technique adapted from the British Army. The Appreciation Process is a problem solving technique, much like brainstorming. It recognises that all problems have hidden information and hidden possibilities. The Appreciation Process aims to uncover as much information about a problem as possible, including things that could otherwise be overlooked.

It can be a helpful process in discovering the unknown and the overlooked or pulling out the disregarded information. This is important because these things are often the things that really matter and that can make a difference. Through exploring all the possibilities within a problem decisions can be made which are more informed and more considered.

### Using The Appreciation Process

The Appreciation Process can be used to solve all types of problems in all types of environments. It is particularly useful for helping understand complex 'soft' problems. Those problems that are messy, tangled, difficult to define with blurred edge. Those problems where in fact sometimes it's not even clear what the problem is at all. The Appreciation Process can also be useful in helping to explore 'hard' problems, so called because they have hard facts that define them. These problems appear simpler; they have clear definitions, clear parameters and clear solutions. However nothing is as simple as it first seems and hard problems often have softer edges that hide vital information and valuable solutions.

### The process

#### Aim

Define the problem or aim. Ask;

- What is the problem?
- Why is it a problem?
- When does it need to be solved by?
- Who needs to be involved?

#### Factors

Explore all the factors that could influence the outcome of the problem or aim. This will help you to find out what each thing really means to the problem; is it something that has real impact? Or something that has little consequence? Factors can include time, cost, resources, materials, motivation and morale. List all the things that can influence the outcome and then explore every factor by repeatedly asking the question; so what?

**Course**

Choose at least three possible causes of action. Ask;

- What are all the pros and cons to each option?
- How does each make you feel?
- Which options could we try? Why?
- Which are we going to discard? Why?

**Plan**

Now what are you going to do? List the things that you are going to do in detail, ask more questions of each thing until there are no more possible answers. Make sure everyone knows 'who will do what, to whom, when'.

**How it's really applied**

**This is a very simple tool that helps people move from consideration to action. The key to using it is to collectively decide on an aim and eventually a plan of action that recognises all the various factors that the different people involved need to consider. When generating courses of action I have found it helpful to list the pros and cons of each rather than argue one off against another. In this way, what often happens is that new potential courses of action emerge or existing ones get modified to become more workable. This was the case in the work in Coventry where three new approaches to changing levels of activity in the city became apparent as a result of exploring the wide range of factors that impacted on the situation.**



John Atkinson

**Why not also look at:**

- **Critical, Tame, Wicked**

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**Presentations and Lectures****Hints and tips on improving these everyday organisational activities****Presentations**

A presentation shares information that is important to you and it aims to make it important to your audience. A presentation is a journey that shares your enthusiasm with the audience. It says 'I care, this is why you should'. Good presentations should be stories that change how people see the world; a new thought, new knowledge, a changed perception, a new way of thinking.

The art of a good presentation is to follow the process of the 3Ps:  
Plan, Practice, Perform

**Planning**

The starting part of all presentations should begin with the questions;

- What is it I want to talk about?
- What journey do I want to take my audience on?
- Why?
- Is this worth talking about?

**The audience**

You have to decide what to include and what not to include. That changes from audience to audience.

So ask yourself;

- Who am I presenting to?
- What do they already know?
- Is there shared knowledge across the room?
- Are they from the same organisation, the same departments?
- What's their collective and individual experience?
- Is everyone on the same page'?

### Where and how?

- Where will you be presenting?

You need to know this to make sure your presentation will work in the space you have and its layout. You should consider the room size, how people will be sitting and the light and availability of resources.

- How are you going to do this?

The general rules are keep it simple, keep it moving and make it interesting.

A presentation is the highlights. It should just give the best bits.

### Beginning, middle, end

You'll need a beginning, middle and an end. An introduction should say hello and should be a brief overview of what you're there to share. The body is the main part of your argument; persuading people that the subject important and matters. The conclusion quickly reiterates the main points and thanks people.

### Planning the body

Choose the main points that you consider important. The main points are your headings. Decide what the main features for each heading need to be. The points should lead from one to another. Abstract, chaotic links just confuse.

Give evidence for everything that you're saying. Use as much real life example drawn from your audience's own experiences as possible, rather than drawing on factual evidence from elsewhere. There needs to be a balance between giving factual information and storytelling. What that balance is will vary from presentation to presentation. Both are needed and should be built in alternating layers, sometimes thickly laid down data covered delicately with narrative, sometimes deep layers of story iced with a sprinkling of facts. Whatever the style of your cake keep it interesting. Use presentation tools to add that extra something, from diagrams and pictures, to videos, to multimedia presentation. Each has its use. (See presentation tools).

If needs be use handouts to give the extra information that supports your presentation. If you want people to use them as you present then give them out beforehand, but you should also remember that handouts could be a distraction.

### Practice

Practice, even if that's just a little. Make sure it flows. Make sure it works. Record yourself, time it, dry run it on a dummy audience and ask; do I need to change something? How could it be better? Not only does this iron out errors, it also gives you confidence. It helps you feel that you know what you're doing and helps you to know what you're doing.

### Perform

- Do set up your equipment beforehand.
- Don't take reams of notes-you'll be tempted to read from them rather than speak from your heart.
- Do take a postcard of memory boosters (just in case).
- Relax, breathe deeply and begin.
- Begin by standing well
  - Stand straight, look confident, no hands in pockets, no hiding behind lecterns.
  - Stand proudly in that space, it's meant for you.
  - Stand still but not too still. Do move but try not to nervously bounce around. Do use your hands, just do it deliberately.
- Engage with your audience, ask rhetorical questions, smile, and look at them.
- Make eye contact or look as if you are. But no staring. Change your focus; look at different parts of the room.
- Speak clearly and slowly.
- Put in deliberate pauses. These fill in the bits where you would 'erm' and buy you time and are also a great way of showing that something important is coming. A pause says 'wait for it...'
- If you're interrupted, feel free to say 'hold that thought' but do make sure you come back to it.
- Do stick to your allocated time and to your planned topic.

# Lectures

A lecture tells the audience something special. It gives them a unique nugget of information that they won't get anywhere else. A lecture is a springboard of background knowledge for further learning. It's part of a wider process of learning.

## Structuring a lecture

### The rule of threes

The rule of threes is a theory that people like to do and learn best when things are presented in sets of threes. A lecture naturally fits into the rule with a structure of beginning, middle and end. But each of these sections should also be split into three parts.

### The beginning

- Give an introduction to the lecture
- State the aims/ expectations of the lecture
  - What is it you want people to do?
  - What is it you are going to do?
  - What are the important concepts you're going to introduce?
  - How does this fit into the bigger picture?
- Give the learning objectives

### The middle

This is the content part of the lecture. Keep it interesting and present it in an interesting way. It should have a logical sequential structure. There should be a clear and logical development of the points made that gradually builds from giving general information to giving more specific more complex information. Every point introduced should be linked it to the overall learning of the lecture.

You should have three thematic stages. Here less is more. A lecture shouldn't give every detail. It should give key points that enhance learners existing learning by linking new knowledge to what they already know.

### The end

- Give a summary of the lecture
- Check the understanding of the audience
- Close the lecture

## Supporting your lecture

### Use hand-outs

When to give them is up to you. They are a good source of information for the audience during your lecture. They can be used to give supporting information to the points that you are discussing, but hand-outs are also a distraction. A hand-out of a lecture needs to contain several key bits of information;

- An outline of the lecture
- Essential diagrams that you've explained
- The special bonus material that made the lecture unique
- A reading list to prompt further learning
- Questions that will make the learner think

### Use audio-visual materials

There are lots of different types available from the simple white-board, to more technical approaches. (For further information look at presentation and lecture tools).

## Pros and cons

A lecture undoubtedly has some benefits. It is a cost effective way of imparting information to large group of people that enhances meaning in a unique way. But there are also some downsides. You can't adapt the information to everyone's needs. Lectures are presented on one level only. They assume an equal degree of knowledge and understanding in the whole of the audience. A lecture is a passive experience, this can make it harder to engage people and make it harder for them to learn. A lecture gives information that the audience memorises. They don't get to see that information in action, they don't get to use it or try it out. And a lecture isn't about changing thinking. It's about giving knowledge.

## Presentation and Lecture Tools

There are many different types of presentation building tools available. Some are old favourites. Some are new ways of doing things. It's an ever-changing scene and market place with an increasing array of tools using software that's available via the Internet. Which one you use in a presentation all depends on what it is you're trying to do.

### To illustrate a point as you go along

Tools such as flipcharts, white boards, overhead projectors or the interactive whiteboard linked to a computer can come in useful. Write down main points; draw diagrams to develop points and a useful way of explaining diagrams by drawing them as you speak.

### Need to show graphical information alongside an oral presentation?

There are a variety of different software products available that can include sound, images, video, diagrams and charts. They can be displayed live from a computer, presented via the web, navigated through by a presenter; they can also be projected by video projector.

The following examples are drawn from across the whole range of products and services available. It is not an exhaustive list nor should it be considered an endorsement of any particular product.

#### Microsoft PowerPoint

Part of the Microsoft Office Package, PowerPoint is a way of creating a technical slideshow. There are a variety of templates available that can be customised with images, video and sound.

#### Google Slides

A free web (cloud) based software (slides can also be worked on offline). Google Slides presentations can be created and used across a variety of devices. It is compatible for use with PowerPoint. Presentations can be worked on collaboratively by a number of people across the web in real-time who can also chat and leave notes for each other.

#### Keynote

For use on Apple devices, keynote is part of the iwork productivity suite. It is compatible with PowerPoint.

Presenters can interact with keynote during their presentations, highlighting key points and using sliders to move through charts point by point. Presentations can be worked on collaboratively by a group of people in real-time and can be shared with others via a link or through cloud systems such as icloud or dropbox.

#### Adobe Presenter 10

A video-making tool for Windows and Mac. It can be used to convert PowerPoint presentations into video as well as creating video from desktop. It allows the addition of other multi-media items alongside the video, such as diagrams and charts, as well as quizzes and surveys. It can be viewed on a variety of devices including tablets and mobile phones. It is often used as a video lecture tool in eLearning.

#### Powtoon

A web (cloud) based software. Powtoon creates animated video presentations, which includes active text sequences and animated characters. Videos can be put onto YouTube to be shared or downloaded onto computer.

#### Haiku Deck

Software for use by both Windows and Mac. Its ethos is 'story telling through simplicity'. It allows simple text and images to be presented in ways that are 'eye-catching'. It uses a variety of tools such as background images, fonts and different layouts, either using templates or creating your own. 'Decks' are viewable online or can be shared via email, YouTube or Twitter and embedded into blogs and websites. They can also be projected for presentation.

#### Prezi

A web (cloud) based software tool that can also be downloaded. It can be used by Mac and Windows.

Prezi creates presentations that can include photo, video, sound, narration, text, diagrams.

The presentation is presented through a pathway and each step in the path can be reused later on. Prezi uses a virtual canvas and the presentation can zoom in and out to any point of the canvas at any time. Presentations can be worked on collaboratively. Presentations can be downloaded or stored in the cloud and shared via links. It can also be embedded into websites and blogs and presented via projector.

#### Slidedog

Slidedog allows almost any mixture of other multimedia presentations to be incorporated into one 'master' presentation. It can add amongst others, PowerPoints, Prezi, movie clips, webpages, images and items from YouTube. Surveys and questionnaires can also be added. The files are simply dragged and dropped into the Slidedog to create a 'playlist'.

## How it's really applied

Presentations are composed of three main elements – Visual, Text and Sound (your voice). They best way I've found of getting the most out of presentations is to consider how I will:

- Engage the audience through using stories – the power of story is immense; our brains are hardwired for storytelling. They can make the complex simple, persuade where facts can't and help connect the rational and emotional.
- Visualise ideas using strong imagery – to help connect your spoken word to visual memory.
- Involve the audience – stimulate their thinking by asking questions, for example.
- Reduce text to a minimum – you want them listening not reading.
- Consistency of the slide deck design – so each slide feels part of the story.

The elements above are not discrete, audiences rarely retain all the information offered through presentations so using strong visuals and connecting them to key words is a way of enabling them to remember the overall story you were telling.

It's also worthwhile reproducing graphical elements to ensure they fit your overall slide deck look and feel – it may feel like unnecessary work but people remember beautiful things.



John Jarvis

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## Action Learning

Reg Revans

### A way of developing a structure, skills and culture for on-going peer learning, action and review in organisations around real life work issues and dilemmas. Learning from working on real work!

Action learning was developed by Reg Revans. Revans had always been interested in the processes of learning. He was influenced by the work of his father who had been involved with questioning the surviving crew member of The Titanic and later Rutherford who he worked with as a research scientist at the Cavendish Laboratories, Cambridge. It was while he was writing an educational plan for the employers of the National Coal Board in 1945 that Revans began to form his ideas into the concept of action learning.

Revans realised that people learnt best as part of a process of questioning and evaluation. He expressed this as;

Learning = Programming knowledge + Questioning

Revans argued that if an organisation creates an environment for learning, an environment where learning is supported, then people will want to learn, and they will. Through learning they will develop and grow and consequently the organisation will develop and grow too. Revans suggested that learning can and should become part of organisational culture.

However Revans realised that learning on its own isn't enough, because in organisations it's not quite as simple as that. Organisations are adapting and undergoing change all of the time, so if an organisation is going to survive then its rate of learning has to at least equal the rate of changes that it undergoes. This has been termed Revan's law.

### Using action learning sets

Revans argues that learning happens best in organisations when people take part in focused group sessions addressing particular issues. It's from here that the use of action learning sets as an intervention has been developed. Action learning sets are a method of problem sharing and solution empowerment. An action learning set gives individuals time to explore their problems supported by other people, who help guide them to finding a solution through mutual support, and shared experience and knowledge. There are different formats and different approaches that can be used, but so long as discussions include the principles and processes below then the format doesn't really matter.

## The guiding principles

- An action learning set is a group of between 5-8 people.
- They meet regularly to discuss real 'living' problems, and they work together to find real solutions.
- They plan what action they need to take to make things better.
- The meetings are compulsory for all members, there's no opt out box.
- The meetings are confidential; what's said in the room stays in the room unless agreed otherwise.
- The group needs an atmosphere of trust and everyone needs to feel respected, listened to, that their voice matters.

## The key processes

### Working on real issues/problems

Members bring current and real live 'solvable' problems that they need help with; problems that action can be taken on. It's not about trying to solve the impossible or a process of punishment for past wrongs.

### Questions

Asking questions is really important. Questions make people think and explore issues, and help them to see things from a different perspective. Questions draw attention beyond the obvious into the undiscovered and overlooked. Questions need to be considered, useful, insightful, probing and gently challenging, because questions that are critical and challenge in negative ways are counterproductive.

### Actively listening

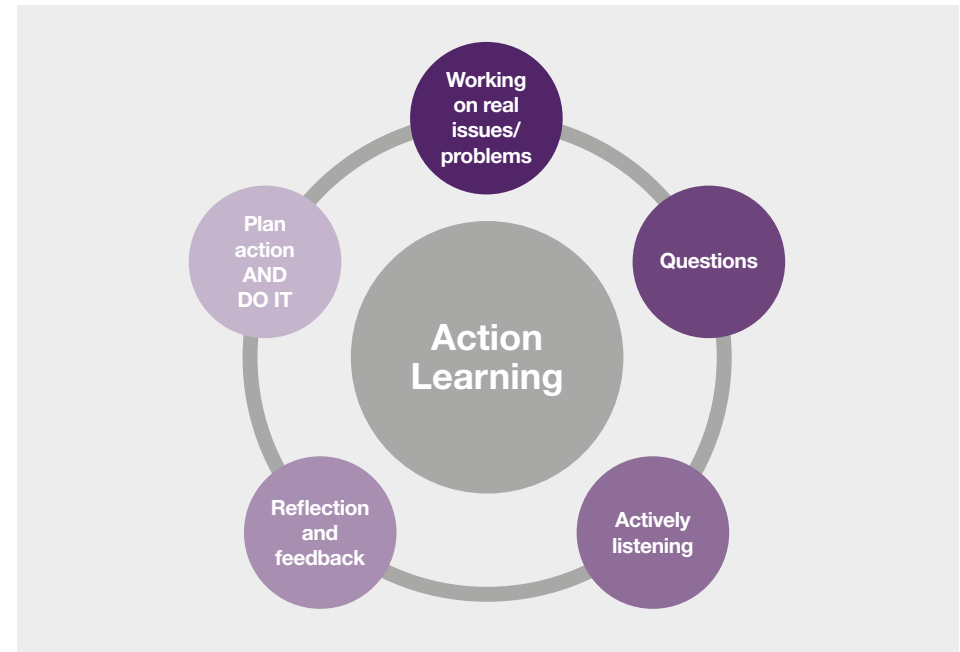
When people are listened to they feel valued and supported. It's really important to listen properly to what people are saying and equally important to hear what they're not. Listening has also got to be open minded; listening with bias judgement, preconception and personal feeling means that half of what is said is missed. Listening is an active process of thinking – think about how best you can be of use. Ask what can I offer here? What support can I give?

### Reflection and feedback

Reflection is an important part of the process of learning and development. Reflection and feedback makes us better at learning. It is an important part of learning about how we're learning. Thinking about what we have done and why helps us to realise where things have gone well and build on that. It also helps us to see where things could be improved.

### Plan action and do it

It's not all about the thinking. Action learning sets are about using the people who have the experience, knowledge and ability to find real solutions, solutions that can really work.



## How it's really applied

**I use action learning as an integral tool within systems leadership projects to encourage and model peer learning using real work. Action learning enables participants to gain multiple perspectives from peers on 'messy' issues they are facing, leading to new solutions.**



Jill Barrow

### Why not also look at:

- Learning Cycles and Learning Styles
- Lewin's Model of Change
- Learning Organisations

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# Communities of Practice (CoP)

Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger

## A way of collectively enquiring into how we can be effective in our roles

The concept of Communities of Practice was developed by Etienne Wenger and Jean Lave. It was first used as a way to describe the process of learning in apprenticeships between a student and a master. They realised that learning was happening through a social relationship rather than a formal process. Wenger and Lave realised that Communities of Practice exist everywhere, formally and informally. They expanded their original description to reflect this and the term Communities of Practice is now used to describe a dynamic learning community, where learning takes place in everyone.

### Shared values

A Community of Practice develops around the things that matter to people, and 'the practice' reflects the things that are important to its 'members'. The community is made up of people with a shared passion for what they do, who share their learning and passion in the community. They often occur informally outside normal organisational functions and structures, though those outside influences affect their functions and actions. A Community of Practice doesn't have a fixed life cycle. Its life is dictated by its usefulness and the value it gives to its members. It can begin at any point and ends when it has no further use or value to add.

### Sharing 'knowing'

Information, 'knowing' is an organisations most valuable asset. A Community of Practice is an informal way of sharing information and learning across an organisation and is a useful way of creating and applying and sharing knowledge. A Community of Practice is the way that an organisation learns and it is the way that it 'knows'; it embodies the learning and knowing of an organisation. They are a vital source of information, a living database holding shared memory, stories, experience, ideas and energy.

### Membership

An organisation can contain many interconnected communities that span the hierarchy and the traditional institutional structure. An individual can belong to any number of communities. Often this cross-group membership transmits knowledge from one group to another. In some groups we will be core members, taking on central roles in the function of the group, in other groups we will be part of the periphery of the group. This is part of the learning and knowing process, we begin at the edges and as we learn more, know more we move to the centre.

## Defining features

### The domain

- What is it all about?
- What is the joint practice?
- What defines them?
- What is the identity?

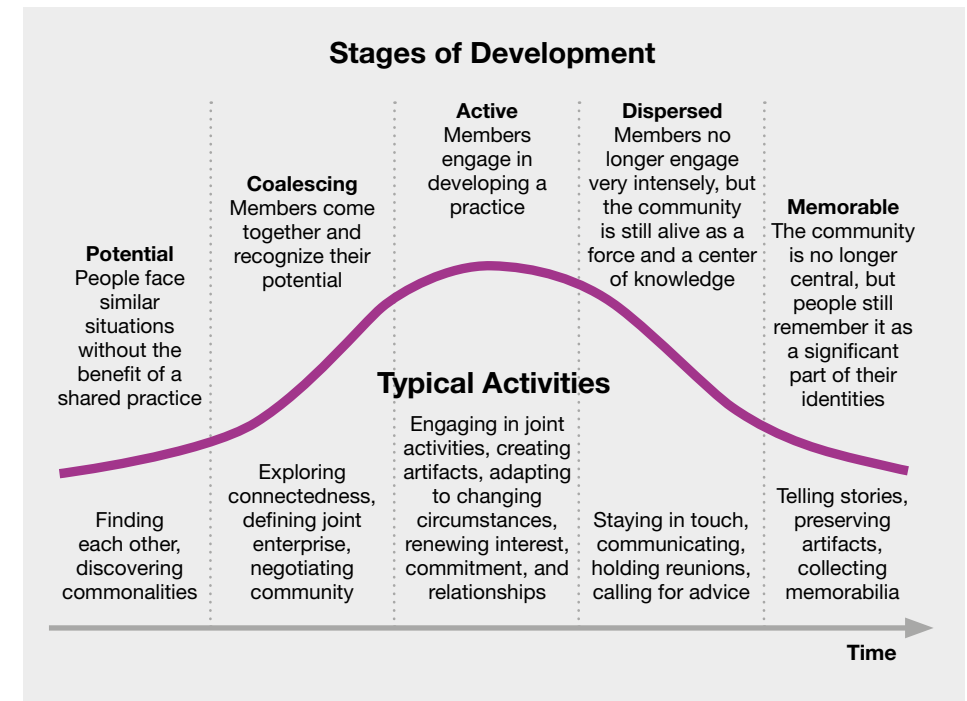
### The community

- The group interactions that enable them to develop learning together.
- The things they do that make them a community. (Learning and interaction).

### The practice

- The shared features of the practice acquired over time.
- The shared routines, style, vocabulary, stories.

## The life cycle of a CoP



(www.co-i-l.com)

## How it's really applied

I have used communities of practice where a group of people have a common way of working that they are trying to develop and improve. Unlike action learning sets (that work with the variety of issues that each member of the group face) a CoP is a discrete enquiry into a particular way of working. In one region I used it to explore how senior directors could work effectively in an environment that required them to work together outside of their formal organisational authority. Each time we met they brought examples of them doing this and as a group we explored what went on, what they might learn from it and what different action they might now take. Over time they built a collective understanding between them of the pitfalls and practicalities of operating in this way that they used to great effect in addressing the challenges of their everyday work.



John Atkinson

### Why not also look at:

- Learning Organisations

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## Coaching Conversations (Individual and Team)

A collection of approaches and models for coaching people and teams to understand their role and influence and build strategies for improving them

## The GROW Model (Goals, Reality, Options, Will)

John Whitmore

The GROW model was developed by Sir John Whitmore and colleagues in the 1980's. Whitmore once a successful racing driver (driving for Ford at Le Mans in the 1940's as well as winning the British and European Saloon Car championships in the 1960's) is now considered to be a leading figure in coaching and organisational change. It was during his racing career that Whitmore realised fear and self-doubt were the biggest obstacles to success. This core principle has under-written his coaching philosophy ever since. Initially Whitmore focused on sports coaching but soon realised that his coaching principles would have value in the business world too.

### Developing potential

Whitmore's coaching ideology focuses on the whole person. It is a way of seeing people and their potential. It seeks to generate positive action that will in turn lead to peak performance, rather than focusing on failure and bad experiences. It's about developing trust and authentic relationships. It's about open, honest communication. It is about awareness of self and of others, as well as awareness of the environment and self-responsibility. It's about learning about ourselves and what's going on, with open rhetoric and dialogue. It's about 'can do' rather than being suffocated by fear and doubt. If we do all of these things we will grow.

### The process

The GROW model isn't intended to be a linear process. It can begin anywhere and lead to any point and back again. The process involves asking a series of genuine questions based on four interchangeable stages of thought. These questions ask that we listen more; more to ourselves and more to others, and that we talk a whole lot less.

## Goals

This stage aims to raise awareness of hopes and aspirations. It should be approached with questions that explore what is really desired. The goals set should be achievable, time bound, realistic, reachable, and specific. (SMART – Specific, Measurable, Agreed, Realistic and Time-framed).

The goals should be broken down from the dream right back into initial steps, so that a step by step pathway is developed. This makes success possible and makes it feel possible.

Coaches should ask;

- What is it you really want to see accomplished?
- How will you know if you're successful?
- What is the problem? How do you hope to solve it?
- How will you know if you have solved the problem?

## Reality

Examining the reality of the situation. Often when setting new goals people and places fail to consider their current realities. They don't adequately see where they are starting from or sometimes don't see the start at all. This means they don't have the right information or enough information to help them to achieve success. Coaching here involves asking questions such as;

- What is happening right now?
- What have you already done to try and achieve your goal?
- Was that successful?

## Options

This stage is about exploring the possibilities; asking, 'what action can you take'? It should be a vibrant discussion of ideas, an exploration of how things could happen. A brainstorming, a weighing up of what could be done balanced against reality. Asking;

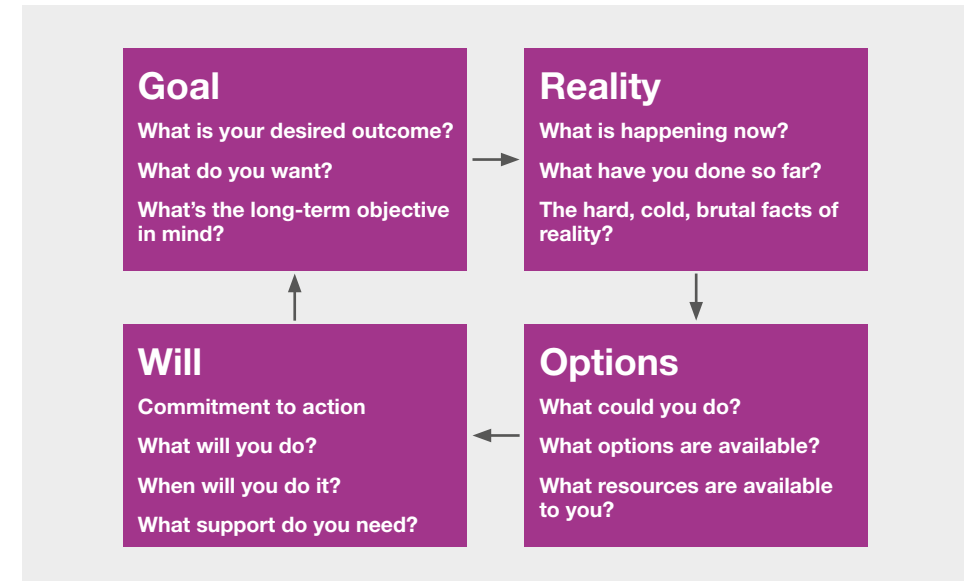
- What can you do?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages to that option?
- What do you need to start doing to achieve each goal?
- What do you need to stop doing?

## Will

This stage asks; 'what's the point of aiming and dreaming, what is the point of seeing the path, what is the point in wanting if you're never going to go for it'? It is about finding ways to motivate and inspire, finding the will to make it happen. This is not about what you wish would happen or what you could do. It is;

- What will you do?
- How will you move forwards?
- How will you measure your progress?
- How will you keep yourself motivated?

## Goal setting



## How it's really applied

**I have used this extensively with leaders to build relationships, deeper understanding of self and clarify goals in leading change. Incorporating a series of 1-to-1 sessions in this way enables individual space for review and reflection and defines clarity of purpose, within the complexity of local vision and pioneer projects.**



Jill Barrow

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# Transformational Coaching – The CLEAR model (Contracting, Listening, Explore, Action, Review)

Hawkins

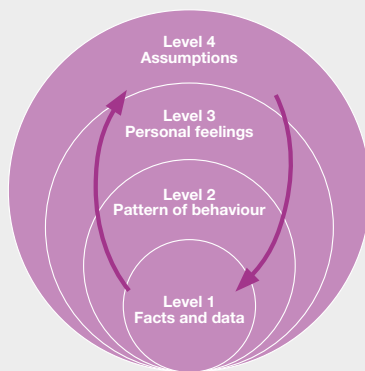
The CLEAR model is a transformational approach to coaching. Transformational coaching aims to create 'shifts' in the way of thinking, feeling and behaving towards others. The intention is that this shift in attitude within the 'coachee' will have a knock on effect throughout the wider system. The aim of Transformational coaching is to help the coachee to shift the understanding and reasoning that are behind certain behaviours, as well as the behaviour itself. Hawkins, drawing on the theories of Bateson, describes this as level 2 learning, or double loop learning (Argyris).

## Applying transformational change

According to Hawkins transformational change is suited to those situations where a shift in attitude and behaviour is needed and needed fast, where there's no time for slow steady change and development. Transformational change can bring about change across a system quickly. However it's not entirely that straight forwards because transformational coaching is about second order change, that's the changing of attitudes and perceptions and beliefs. The coachee therefore has to be willing to change and they have to be willing to engage openly in the process.

## The process

The CLEAR model of transformational change begins in 'the room'. This emphasis on change in the room is what makes the Clear model different to other coaching models. The change is often felt as a 'shift' in the room; a change in attitude can be felt and reflected in the ways the coachee engages with the coaching process. This shows that the coachee has moved past good intentions into starting to do. That means that change is much more likely to take hold and make a difference.



## Four levels of engagement

The CLEAR model aims to do that by creating a 'shift' in attitude and so in behaviour. This means changing how the coachee views and understands a situation and how they will then behave. It does this by working across four interlinked areas (4 levels of engagement);

### Level 1: The Facts, the data

- What is the problem?

### Level 2: Patterns of behaviour

- What's going on behind the obvious facts?
- What are the patterns of behaviour that are causing problems?

### Level 3: Personal feelings

- Why are you reacting in that way?
- What feelings are triggering that response?

### Level 4: Assumptions

- Now why do you feel that way?
- What are the hidden motivations?
- What are your assumptions?
- What is your story? The story behind your feelings, feelings that link to the behaviour that you want to change?

## Using CLEAR

The CLEAR model deliberately explores all of these areas through a five stage process.

### Contracting

The facts and patterns of behaviour.

Working with the coachee on defining the focus of the work, roles and boundaries for the individual and organisation, including issues to address and difference they would like to see as a result. They also identify what actions needs to happen right there and then to make those things happen.

### Listening

Behaviours and feelings.

Listening to the context of the issues brought but also the feeling and how the story is framed. That's hearing beyond what's been said, it's hearing the unsaid and all the frustration with what's been tried before. Hawkins terms this generative emphatic listening, or level 4 listening.

The coach listens, reflects and uses their intuition. They feed this back in a way that helps the coachee hear themselves better and that also says; 'hey I get you, I understand what you feel like in that situation'. This helps transformational change begin right there in the room.

### Explore

Feelings and assumptions.

Exploring with the coachee the underlying dynamics or relationships (including the coaching relationship). This is about exploring what's already been said through a process of skilful questioning and attentive, level 4 listening. The questions should enable the coachee to stand and see the situation from a different perspective. A perspective that challenges their assumptions, that are fuelling their feelings and behaviours. In this way it opens up new ways of thinking and the seeing of new possibilities. Hawkins explains that the coach can use a range of different types of questions; closed, open, leading, inquiry, and transformative questions to support this.

### Action

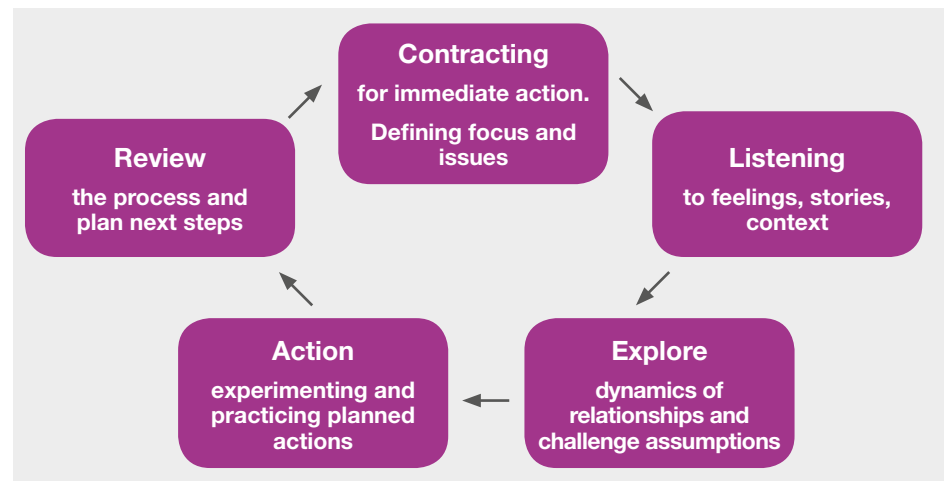
Feelings, assumptions and behaviours. Moving to new actions and experimenting.

This is about experimenting and practicing planned actions and seeing change happen in the room. Practicing says Hawkins makes plans and thoughts seem real. Practice changes mind-set and their behaviour. A shift in the room makes it much more likely that when it comes down to doing this in real life they'll actually see it through, because they've already stated the process of change by acting it out.

### Review

The facts, behaviours, feelings and assumptions. Review of the process and next steps.

The coachee reviews what has worked for them during the coaching process and is able to see the connections in the process, including those within the coaching process. This helps them understand their own change process.



### Using CLEAR to contract in team coaching

The CLEAR framework is also used in team coaching. Hawkins presents this through the expanded framework of CID-CLEAR. (Initial Contracting, Inquiry and Diagnosis). The process should take place before the contracting phase of the CLEAR model. This allows co-design and ownership of the team coaching process.

The first stage would involve asking questions such as;

- What is the team's stakeholder world requiring them to step up to and achieve?
- Why do you want help with your team? And why now?
- Whose idea was it? Is everyone in agreement about it?
- Have you done team development before? What worked, and what could have been better?
- What's your understanding of a team coaching approach?
- What would success look like, feel like? How would you know?

After some initial inquiry and diagnosis, a second stage of contracting needs to take place with the whole team. This would involve;

- Reaching a joint understanding of the current state of the team.
- Agreeing collectively where the team would like to be.
- Agreeing where the focus/priority needs to be – at least initially.
- What the team-coaching journey might look like.
- Agreeing roles, boundaries and ways of working between team, team leader and team coach.

### For the coach

A coaching session isn't just about the client who is there in the room, it is also about the wider system, and so everything that the coach does has to bear that in mind. Hawkins explains that transformational coaching is about the coach looking for answers to the questions;

- What is the shift that needs to happen in this wider system?
- Who is the shift ultimately in service of?
- What needs to shift in the relationship between this individual and the issue they are describing?
- For those shifts to occur, what needs to shift right now in this individual?
- 'To be in service of the changes, what needs to shift in my relationship to this coachee right now? What do I need to alter in my being to help bring that about?'

## How it's really applied

I have used the CID-CLEAR process in team coaching work with a number of senior/multi-stakeholder teams in social care and health. It provides a useful way of structuring our work together – as well as being a useful framework for others to use in the design of everyday meetings and workshops. Many have found this very helpful as it gives the necessary space for thinking and exploration before rushing to solutions. This in turn improves the quality of sense-making and in turn, decisions and actions that flow from this.

At the team contracting stage, after I have fed back key themes using the Hawkins framework, I will then use flip charts with the following statements to agree a collective contract together.

- This team coaching will be a success for us as individuals if:.....
- This team coaching will be a success for us as a team if.....
- This team coaching will be a success for our organisation if...
- This team coaching work will be a success for our residents, service users, patients if...

I invite individuals to rotate around, discuss and complete – and then feedback common themes. I then ask what the team needs from me and each other to achieve this success. This leads us into agreeing a working alliance, boundaries, roles and ground-rules that we all hold each other mutually accountable for. This also helps to level out any unrealistic expectations or projections.

By doing this, I have found there is more likelihood that the team will take ownership of the process and outcomes. It also broadens their thinking to ensure the primary purpose/who the organisation is in service of, is included as part of any contracting process by asking; who is this ultimately in service of? I have found that the outcomes of this exercise provides a useful point of reference to check back to monitor progress and where positive shifts are taking place, where further focus is needed or indeed, where re-contracting may be needed as the context changes.



Liz Goold

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## Coaching Conversations – The Inner Game (self 1 & self 2)

W. Timothy Gallwey

**Gallwey was a successful US tennis player who coached professionally for many years. It was while he was coaching that Gallwey became interested in learning theory and learning processes, specifically he wondered exactly what it was that caused a player to falter when they knew what to do and how. He asked; what stops them doing it?**

Gallwey began to observe the students he was coaching and the ways in which he was teaching. He realised that there is a constant narrative at play within everyone. Gallwey noted that 'I' talking to 'myself' was the voice that leads to hesitancy, the voice that interfered in what we are able to do. Gallwey termed this; 'Self 1 talking to Self 2'. How the two voices relate together affects our ultimate performance.

This was the basis of his theory of The Inner Game. A theory he developed further in his book *The Inner Game of Tennis* published in 1974. Although originally developed as a method of sports coaching the concept of The Inner Game as a way of understanding how people learn and perform easily transposes into the whole of life including the work place. It is a useful tool for helping guide organisations through change.

### Self 2

Self 2 is our potential, it is all we are capable of. Self 2 knows what to do instinctively. It has learnt how to hit that ball, ride that bike. It is driven by intuition and our unconscious mind.

### Self 1

Self 1 is the interference of our mind, the inner voice that gives us a constant narrative of our worth.

Self 1 is a noisy voice. It is the voice that measures us, weighs us up, and chastises us. It adds anxiety and self-doubt. It is powered by years of habit, and its constant noise gets in the way. Self 1 does not trust the ability of self 2 and does not believe in the potential that self 2 has. Self 1 provides a constant dialogue that distracts self 2 from doing what it knows how to do. It interferes with our potential.

## Controlling self 1

The Inner Game theorises that in order to perform at our absolute best then the power of interference (self 1) has to be diminished or even taken away all together. We need to learn to get out of our own way. Gallwey explains that there are several things we can limit the noise of self 1 which leaves self 2 then able to do what it knows how to do. This is expressed in the Inner Game equation;

$$\text{Potential} - \text{Interference} = \text{Performance}$$

### Identify your goals

Clearly identify what your goal is, by asking not what success is, or what it is not but instead asking;

- What do you actually want to happen?
- What is your desire?
- What drives you?

We should then ask; what are the things that drive you towards success? Is it your inner chastising voice? Or is it something else?

In recognising what drives us forwards we are able to see not only how we will do something but we are also able to generate energy, force and drive that will help us work to our potential. We generate the will to reach our potential.

### Control self 1 interference

The will to do something and the way we do it are influenced by the noisy, interfering voice of self 1. This means that having the will to do something and knowing how to do it is not enough. So how can we improve this balance? For Gallwey in order to maximise performance then we must learn to control and even silence self 1. To silence self 1 we need to learn how to change our focus and attention.

### Identify self-limiting beliefs

Self 1 is governed by thought, feeling and emotion and is generally not nice. It is judgemental and negatively focused. It expects us to fail. It limits our potential by constraining us with self-limiting beliefs and assumptions. We need to learn how to identify those limiting assumptions and beliefs. Identifying them and discussing them enables us to identify the critical variables, the things that really do matter and allows us to discard the things that really don't matter at all. Then we can take those critical variables one by one and work out what and how we can address them.

## The here and now

We also need to focus our attention on the here and now. This is to be in the present, focusing on what's happening right now and what matters now. Not trying to guess what might happen in the future and not sitting in the past with all the self-congratulations and self-castigations that come with that. It's not about 'ifs'. It is about being present. With that will come calmness as we become more aware of what is going on in our now. This reduces anxiety, which quietens the anxious voice of self 1.

### Stop judging and measuring and start observing

We also need to learn to stop judging ourselves and measuring ourselves. Self 1 forms emotional attachment to the actions of our lives and when change happens it feels threatened and reacts in complaint by challenging us. The judging voice of self 1 places value on our actions, so that things become 'good' or 'bad', rather than just being the actions that they are.

We need to become impartial observers of what is happening in the here and the now, so that we can clearly see what is actually happening and how we may be able to alter our actions to help us achieve our goals. We need to clearly look at our actions without placing value on them.

By removing this emotional weighing of ourselves we will build inner stability that will help us to stay calm and see clearly, even during times of rapid and unsettling change. That's not about hiding from the truth of the situation we're in. It is about accepting the truth and analysing it with detachment so that we can respond appropriately.

If we can focus our attention onto the here and now, if we are present without judgement and the interference of the emotional baggage thrown at us by self 1, then self 2 becomes free to act on intuition, on instinct, to do what it has learnt how to do and to do what it knows it needs to do and how. Self 2 knows where it wants to go and how. Freed of emotional pressure it becomes able to work to its potential and maximise our performance to the best of our ability. We should trust in it.

## How its really applied

I began by having conversations with each of the local leaders in Islington to understand how their system works and to provide a space for each of them to arrive at an understanding of their own values and motivations to achieve the system change to integrate health and social care. They appreciated having a safe place to reflect on their own leadership behaviours, how these may affect others and to understand each other's contexts, drivers and cultures.

I approached this through the lens of coaching and began by asking a series of open questions, such as what does it feel like working here, what do you think would make the biggest difference to achieving integrated care, what do you think are the barriers, who's in the room, who do you think needs to be in the room (code for governance).

Then, with Bernie Brooks we designed a session to explore these with the whole leadership team, concentrating on what connects them through their shared values. This led them to quickly confirm their successes to date, agree their focus for the next six months, how would they "prove concept" and get greater 'buy in' and distribute leadership across the whole work force, especially with GPs, and importantly how they would give each other permission to hold each other to account.

My sense is that they feel more comfortable about having the difficult conversations, particularly about the money. They have refreshed their governance and asked others to join them. They recognise that it's messy territory, that there aren't perfect solutions and that they need to have a shared narrative.

I have continued to have individual coaching conversations, especially with the Programme Director, but they have also carved out regular space for them as a leadership team to have conversations alongside progressing the business.



Jo Cleary

### Why not also look at:

- Gestalt Theory of Change
- Johari Window
- Positive Psychology
- Neuro-Science – system 1 and system 2

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## Learning History

MIT with Art Kleiner and George Roth

### A way of generalising the learning and sharing the learning of an organisation from a 'change event'

The Learning History was developed by MIT with Art Kleiner and George Roth as a way of seeing and understanding the learning of an organisation. It was developed in response to the realisation that often in organisations the learning that happens around significant events or processes is lost. The feelings and thoughts, both negative and positive, are internalised by the organisation and along with that any learning that happened along the way. What that means is that any learning that did occur isn't actually useful at all. Instead organisations will carry on doing things the way that they always have and carry on making the same mistakes. The learning is wasted.

That means that the organisation isn't able to adjust the things that aren't working, or avoid things that simply can't work, or embrace the things that do. It really doesn't know what people are thinking and feeling, that's left to speculation and rumour. The Learning History was developed as a tool that captures what really going on.

- It generalises the learning.
- It enables organisations to learn and develop how they do things.
- It allows them to see what's happening and makes changes as they go along.
- It allows 'the learning' to be transferred both within that organisation and across other organisations.
- It provides a way for places, systems and people to see how they 'fit' into what's happening in the change event or process.
- It raises issues and questions about what's happening and why.
- It enables individuals to reflect on their own experiences and learning, and it enables organisations to do the same.

It does this by simply telling the story. A story that is made up of a variety of voices, from across the hierarchy and across different parts of the system. That's because no single voice knows everything. Everyone sees and experiences and feels in different ways, to hear the whole picture you need all the voices.

The Learning History isn't a formal process of assessment. There is no expectation, or right and wrong. People are invited to talk through semi structured 1:1 interviews, privately and anonymously about what they think and feel. It provides an opportunity for voices to be heard that would otherwise remain quiet or ignored. This makes people feel that what they have to say is important, that they matter and allows a reflection and unleashing of feeling that's recorded and shared with others. These voices are represented in the narrative of the Learning History report.



The narrative is presented as a series of anonymous, word for word quotes that represent the thoughts and feelings of those involved and represents both the things that people thought went well and the things they thought could have been improved upon.

The Learning History's simple layout means that the narrative tells its own story. It includes information about the change event such as the decisions made and specific things that happened so that the reader can ground their reading in what was happening at the time. This narrative is accompanied by a commentary that highlights important points and recurring themes, but is not judgmental or analytical.

The Learning History in this way provides an accessible way of seeing and understanding and using the learning that happens in organisations.

## How it's really applied

I used a Learning History approach in the Norfolk LEAPP (Learn, Engage, Aspire, Perform in Partnership) programme, which was a collaboration and system learning process involving 250 senior and middle managers from across the public sector, at a time of change and tension across the system. A Learning History presents the experiences and understandings of people who initiate, implement and participate in system change, and collaborative learning experience, as well as non-participants affected by these. We used it because whilst there was 'top down' teaching in the programme, particularly in relation to systemic and leadership concepts and methodologies, and I believed it would further engagement and learning if people were engaged in a process of thinking about 'what's going on here' both individually, collectively and systemically, within the frame of the programme activity and outside it. Throughout the six months of activity, we invited people to reflect in conversations, video and writing on what was going on for them. The reflective learning content then generates the themes that speak of the system learning experiences and, as such, is both generative of further change and contributory to system memory. Participants valued the reflective space for their own development and the history gave a collective perspective that sometimes challenged individual experience. Learning histories are a significant commitment, but can be the source of great stories and insights that can sustain energy, enthusiasm and momentum through the tough times.



Di Neale

I worked with Emma Loftus to create a Learning History for the Food and Cornwall programme so that we could all understand the experiences and learning of those involved and so influence the next steps.

Emma interviewed 23 people who had been involved and asked them about their experience of the programme, what was working well, what could be different and what should happen next and did this in a very visual way by getting them to draw on a timeline.

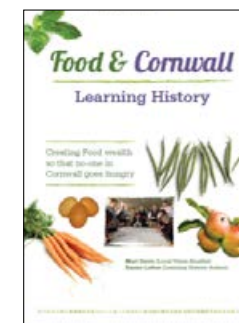
The outcome was captured as a written story of their journey, showing why they all cared about tackling food poverty, reflections on how they thought change would happen and the impact of taking a systems leadership approach.

As a result of hearing their own story at this point they were able to discuss and share learning and next steps with each other and also contribute more widely to the learning about what works in systems leadership.

A tip: Think about collecting Learning (Hi)stories at various stages in the change cycle not just at the end.



Mari Davis  
Emma Loftus



### Why not also look at:

- Community
- Building Capital
- MBTI

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## Communication Circles – talking circles, wisdom circles, open circles

### A way of meeting together that creates space for everyone to listen and be heard

The communication circle is a practice that is rooted in indigenous cultures across the world, most notably Native American. It is practiced across a wide variety of areas, including use within spiritualist religious practice and use by self-help groups, healthcare user groups, schools, community groups and social care. There are different formats, different aims and different practices, but wherever and however they are used the core principles and purpose remain the same.

In a world that's constantly chatting, in a world that talks as fast as it can as much as it can, there's an awful lot of noise. So much that people can't hear themselves, let alone hear what anyone else is actually trying to say. Individual voices are in constant competition with each other to make themselves heard. The communication circle is different.

The communication circle places everyone on an equal footing and through its principles and practices provides a way for everyone to be heard and for everyone to listen. A space that empowers thought, that allows free speech, that allows silence and reflection. It can be used to bring people together to unify them to a common purpose. A place for opposing views to be heard and differences to be reconciled. A place for open 'heart to hearts' about things that matter to the people in the group, and a safe place to communicate about problems.

### The communication circle is literally a circle

In Native American tradition the circle is seen as representing the whole of the world and life, sitting in a circle reminds everyone that they are related to each other and to the whole. The very act of sitting in a circle alters the dynamics of group thinking. It places everyone equally, there is no hierarchy, everyone can be seen equally and heard equally so try to sit people in a near a perfect circle as the room will allow.

### Unburdening and open mind

There are several traditions associated with traditional Native American circle meetings ranging from burden baskets at the entrance of the room, where participants are asked to metaphorically put inside their worries so they don't get in the way of open communication, to the smudging of sage on the forehead of everyone taking part which is believed to help them get rid of their negative thinking.

These traditions might not take part in the circle meetings held across many places today, but the principle behind them remains valid; that is that when entering the circle everyone should enter with an open mind. They shouldn't be so intent on simply speaking what they think they need to say, that they become unable to listen. They shouldn't be so wrapped up in their own thoughts that they cannot think or see anything else. It places thinking in the here and now.

### The talking stick

The traditional practice is for there to be 'a talking stick' or 'feather' that is passed around the circle. The person holding the stick is the only person allowed to speak. People can either speak when they have the stick or use the moment to hold reflective silence. The stick is passed around the circle as many times as is necessary until everyone has said what he or she wants to say. The passing of the stick slows down communication, giving pause for thinking before words are said. This means that what is said is less likely to be reactive and more likely to be truly from the heart.

### The circle rules

The meeting should be on a collective topic that's important to everyone invited.

Only one person speaks at a time. There should be no interruptions and no constraints.

Speak from the heart. The person talking can say whatever they wish. It doesn't have to relate to anything that's been said before, but they should speak with wisdom, thought and truth, not be blinded by emotion such as anger.

Listen with care; respect what is being said. What's being said matters to the person speaking.

Listen without judgement. Allow your mind to hear what's been said as if it were new. Let yourself explore the idea as if you'd never heard it before. Listening this way creates new possibilities because it silences the noisy pre-judgements that get in the way.

Silence is just as important as speaking. Silence gives opportunity for reflection and thinking. It slows communication down and gives meaning.

Confidentiality. The circle is closed. That means that's what's said in the circle stays in the circle. This makes the space feel safe and more open communication is likely to take place.

## How it's really applied

I use open circle as a way to enable participants in development programmes to share what's on their minds at the beginning of each day of the programme. The basic rules are that anyone can start, but somebody must; and everyone must say something and listen to their colleagues. We use this to encourage participants to get stuff 'off their chests' so that they can approach the new day without unhelpful baggage.



David Bolger

### Why not also look at:

- Community
- Dialogue

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## Future Search (futuresearch.net)

**A way of bringing together large groups of people from diverse and often conflicting backgrounds to enable them to work together on understanding and creating action around a common issue**

Future Search is based on the principles of Lewin and the pioneering work of Ronald Lippitt and Eva Schindler-Rainman, who successfully hosted large cross-section action meetings in North America in the 1970's. It is also based on the work of the social scientists Emery and Trist in the 1960's who helped two competing aeroplane companies successfully merge. These ground breaking meetings laid the foundation stones of what has become future search.

Future Search is essentially a large group conversation (60+ people); a conversation about things that matter collectively to the people in the room. They hold a conversation about their pasts, their present and their futures. Through that conversation they learn how to communicate and develop ways of cooperating with each other, despite their differences. They also learn about each other. Through conversation they find common ground; shared experiences, shared ambitions and shared values. Together they work to create shared hope and plan concrete actions about how they are going to turn that shared hope into a shared reality of their joint aspirations.

### The founding principles

- Get everyone in the room.
- It's about what can happen in the future, not current problems or past conflicts.
- Talk about the same world, that's the same experiences, the same ideas.
- Get them to manage their own planning.

### Hosting a Future Search meeting

#### Key points

- It's a 16-hour meeting held across 3 days, (4 or 5 sessions, each ½ day long). The down times give time for the conversation to be absorbed and reflected on.
- Expect everyone to be there the whole time. They need to give full commitment to the process.
- Ask for publically announced volunteered next steps before the end. But people can't be persuaded or forced into action. If they volunteer it means something to them.
- Make it a healthy, positive environment, because you want people to want to be there and to be keen to take part. Provide good refreshments, open, spacious rooms, fresh air.

**Day 1****Focus on the past**

This unites people around shared emotion and similar experiences. It adds humanity, evokes feeling, creates a shared past.

Think about what each individual's experience is about the 'shared issue'.

Use tools such as timelines, mind maps. Encourage groups to share stories with each other.

- What are their stories?
- What is the history of the issue itself?

**Focus on the present – external trends, part 1**

As a whole group hold a discussion (and mindmap) about the things that are affecting the 'issue' right now. Decide which are the most important.

**Day 2 (morning)****Focus on the present – external trends, part 2**

- What are you all doing about these trends right now?
- What would you like to do about them in the future?

Focus on the Present - reflection. Ask individuals to think about and share with others those things that they think they are doing well, and those things they think they are not doing well.

**Day 2 (afternoon)****Ideal scenarios. The perfect future**

- What's the perfect vision?
- If the future was here right now what would it look like? What would it feel like?

**Identify common ground**

They are a diverse group of people with different histories, different presents, and different hopes for the future, so there needs to be a shared purpose between them. Ask every different voice to input what they consider to be the 'common ground'.

**Day 3****Confirm common ground**

As a whole group discuss the ideas for common ground, weigh them up and come up with a shared consensus about what it is that can represent the whole of the room.

- What do you all want collectively?

**Action planning**

Ask people to volunteer for action

- What can you do?
- What will you do?
- When will you do it?

**How it's really applied**

In Bristol, as part of the work on building a more equitable and sustainable economic future for people in the city, we worked with three estates to consider what people might wish to do to change things locally. For each I designed an intervention for a wide range of stakeholders based around a Future Search model. The timeline really energised people and brought them together, building a sense of collective history and identity. A real benefit of the approach was a more common understanding of all things that took place on the estates and who the people were from the various agencies involved. And also, to be honest, we lacked the time to follow the process in its entirety, so although the question structure really helped and moved us on, we didn't move people to the level of action we had hoped. You can compromise when designing interventions but there are always consequences



John Atkinson

**Why not also look at:**

- Community
- Living Systems

Sources

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# Open Space

Harrison Owen

## A large group process for meetings to deal with complex issues that allows people to find their own ways of working together and develop their own plans and actions

Harrison Owen came across the ideas that became Open Space Technology quite by accident in 1983, when he was responsible for organising a very large group meeting. He proceeded to carefully plan an agenda and all of the usual things that large meetings usually run with and was somewhat disheartened, but curious to find out that despite all his hard work the time when people had really felt their most productive and useful, when progress was truly made was during the coffee breaks.

### A different way of doing things

Owen realised that he was onto something that could change how people worked, not only in meetings but also across organisations. A different way of doing things, without tightly structured agendas, formal groupings, discussion plans. A way of working that used the energy, freedom, creativity, and sociability of the coffee break to make things happen. To do that he realised that things would have to be done in a different way. Inspired by his experiences of community life in West Africa Owen decided to base his new way of organising on the traditional community village structures, a basic format that Open Space still follows today.

### Self-organising

Owen explains that Open Space is a way of bringing people together around a common theme or purpose that encourages them to find their own ways of working and lead themselves to their own plans and actions. There is no planned formal agenda.

It's self-organising and because it's self-organising it is suited to situations that are complex, that involve a diverse group of people, situations where there's the potential for conflict and where there's a sense of urgency.

### The structure

- **Get everyone in a circle**  
Sitting in a circle places everyone equally. It changes dynamics, removes positions of power and allows everyone to speak and be heard
- **Post a bulletin board**  
Everyone in the room is asked to post anything and everything they would like to talk about on the bulletin board

- **Open the market place**  
The person who posted the idea for discussion plans a time and place for the topic to be discussed. People sign up.
- **Get to work**  
Now do it!

### The guiding principles

Owen explains that the guiding principles remind people to be in the meeting in the here and now, rather than wishing for other things to happen, or dwelling in the past or dreaming of future possibilities that haven't or cannot emerge.

- **Whoever comes are the right people**  
The fact that they have come shows that they care enough to want to work on the issue and care enough to do something about it. It's not about the number of people present or who's missing
- **Whatever happens is the only thing that could have**  
Be here in the moment, says Owen. There's no point thinking about could haves, should haves and might have beens. Use what's here now
- **Whenever it starts is the right time**  
True creativity happens in its own time, it can't be forced or rushed, so when it happens it happens. There's no point in panicking and trying to be hasty
- **When it's over it's over**  
So make the most of it, don't waste time, do what needs doing and then move on

### One rule: the law of two feet

If you don't like where you are for whatever reason, then move, go somewhere else, get some air and come back – but move. Owen's reasoning behind this was quite simple – make people own their own learning, they can't be forced, or pressured and they must want it.

But Owen believes that something else happens as well. The law of two feet enables Open Space meetings to happen without raging conflict or argument and that's despite the fact that there are often large groups of conflicting, diverse opinions, cultural differences and long standing disputes. Owen believes that this happens because 'the law of two feet' allows people to feel ok to feel uncomfortable and that gives them breathing space. When they return to the group it's because they want to not because they have to.

### The value of open space

Owen believes that as Open Space brings people together in these new ways it enables learning; it enables organisations to learn how to do things differently. It shows that their need to control every little thing in organisational life is both un-needed and unnecessary. It teaches people that it's more than ok to be yourself.

It shows that everyone is valuable and everyone brings something of value to the table.

## How it's really applied

In small rural geography I used an adapted open space method as part of a whole system event to look at improving the lives of the frail elderly. Those attending included residents, GPs, nurses, social workers, officers, managers, members including the leaders of the council and local mayor.

During the morning the system surfaced the reality of the current situation and aspirations of local people. The Open Space work was during the afternoon and focused on areas that had emerged from the morning that people wanted to develop. Six individuals took issues that had emerged from the mornings work and pitched them as areas they wanted to progress. The afternoon was spent understanding more and developing commitments to take actions and make connections.

Some of the resulting work included commitment to; join up several “whole system communication platforms” and look at a jointly owned resource that could be contributed by local people; for a local practice to work with the hospitals on trial of community geriatrics; to begin work on encouraging volunteering through practical projects like a time bank.

Tips: this is a good tool to use for creating ownership of challenges and actions where local people and frontliners are interested. It won't run or create energy for projects that leaders think are a good idea.



Holly Wheeler

Working with Jo Cleary in Suffolk, I designed an ‘Open Space’ process to bring together mental health service users, commissioners, providers and carers. I used this because users often felt out of place and disadvantaged in more formal settings and it was vital to get their views and opinions into the conversation. We had about 60 people at two events that we designed with users involving a mix of topics generated by the commissioners and by the users themselves. The result was a real engagement from all parties and service users are now actively involved throughout the commissioning process. Often when designing these events I worry about lone voices disrupting everyone's engagement. Yes they came, and everyone else knows they are single agenda too, so almost invariably the conversations self manage. And if you're really hearing something you don't like, maybe you really need to listen.



John Atkinson

I used this tool to support an NHS Foundation Trust to host a series of discussions about priorities for the future with staff, communities and partners. The aim was to enable diverse stakeholders to work together and build on their different understanding of what was important in order to shape the Trusts Business Plan for 2013/15. Three separate Open Space conversations were held for staff, partners and communities to build confidence and provide a protected space for difficult things to be articulated. A large (200 plus people) Open Space conversation was then held for all stakeholders with the aim of trying to connect the different perspectives and to generate a shared agenda for the future. The result was a set of co-owned principles for the Business Plan and the release of a great deal of energy and motivation across the system for delivering on these.



Allison Trimble

### Why not also look at:

- Community
- Living Systems
- Learning Organisations

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## World Café (theworldcafe.com)

Juanita Brown

### A different way of holding large group meetings that works through smaller group connections to create common meaning

The concept of The World Café occurred entirely by accident, when a traditional large group circle meeting (owing to bad weather) broke up into small groups at individual tables, moving around the room exchanging ideas and literally writing their thoughts on the tablecloths. They found that this different way of working had unexpected results. The more relaxed intimate setting allowed people to really connect together.

Conversations were more open and ideas developed quickly. Moving around and developing discussion with new people connected and developed the ideas and gave them power. Sharing them (harvesting) meant that patterns of thought were noticed and could be developed further. The meeting was a huge success and led Juanita Brown and David Isaacs who were hosting the meeting to question the traditional methods of group discussion and develop The World Café approach; a new way of hosting conversation.

### What is World Café?

The ethos of World Cafe is that conversation is the process that drives life. World Café is a way of being together to have conversations that have meaning. World Café is a way of conducting large group discussion in a way that develops connection, empowers thought, encourages exploration and shares ideas collaboratively so that they grew into solutions.

### The conversations

- Seat 4 or 5 people together at café style tables
- Ask each table to nominate a host who will keep track of the conversation
- Allow the conversation to run for 20-30 minutes
- Then interrupt the conversation and ask everyone but the host to move to different tables
- When they arrive, the host summarises the table conversation and it resumes
- Do three rounds of conversation
- Then hold a whole group discussion to discover shared insights

## Designing your own World Café

### Purpose

Considering purpose will help you make sure that you get the right people together and that the conversation that happens is in the right frame.

- Why do you want to bring people together?
- What is the point?
- What are you trying to achieve?

### Hospitable space

Create a space for conversation where people feel at ease, because when people feel comfortable they are more relaxed. They think better, listen better and better conversations take place.

### Explore questions that matter

The questions need to matter to the people who are there. This evokes emotion and creates drive and desire for solutions.

### Encourage everyone's contribution

There's a difference between participation and contribution. Participation is taking part by being there and listening. Contributing is adding thoughts and feelings to the action. Some people may only want to participate, but most people want to contribute.

Conversations need to be open and accessible to everyone to encourage all to contribute in a way that ensures that they are heard.

### Connecting diverse perspectives

The different groups will develop different frames of conversation and have different ideas and thoughts. These ideas need to spread and develop across the whole group by giving people the opportunity to move to new tables and take their points of interest with them. This will start up conversation afresh and with the contribution of new voices, develop new insights.

### Encourage listening and sharing

Give opportunity for shared listening and help pull out the shared thoughts and insights. This builds up a sense of connection between the small group discussions to the whole group purpose.

### The harvest

Whole group conversation. Ask the groups to share their key points with the rest of the room, then discuss and reflect on the key common features of the whole room and highlight the commonalities across the room. Capture the key points (perhaps by using a graphic recorder).

## Tips

- Ask questions that matter
- Give the Café a name
- Frame the invitation (and so the intended conversation)
- Have a relaxed café environment
- Welcome people individually
- Explain purpose
- Explain rules and etiquette
- Explain how the café will run
- Pose the questions for the rounds of conversation
- Remind people to write, draw thoughts and key ideas anywhere!!
- Gently move the rounds and conversations on
- Capture key insights

## How it's really applied

I used this conversation-based tool with communities and NHS organisations in the Humber to explore options for the future of community hospitals as Health and Well-being Centres. Residents often arrived angry for the discussion, seeing it as yet another consultation about bed closure and were fatigued with being over consulted but not listened to. The café approach emphasises the value and validity of different perspectives and specifically asks all participants to listen in order to understand each other's perspectives and to make connections between different positions e.g. the need to save money/avoid duplication of services vs the need for individualised care in local communities. The result was a greater shared understanding of the dilemmas faced by communities and service users alongside those of statutory agencies charged with cost saving. A host of creative co-owned solutions for change emerged and a different basis was developed for on-going conversations between communities and statutory health and social care organisations.



Allison Trimble

At the beginning of working with a health and well-being system I used a World Café to help create a collective sense of the challenges facing the system. After a series of one to one interviews the Health and Well-being board came together for a development session of 3 hours, they had not done any development work for 12 months. The feedback from the one to ones was presented and included the common challenges of lack of shared goals, poor relationships, low understanding of organisational drivers and personal values, as well as the legacy of a difficult transition from shadow to official form.

The café session allowed voices from all parties and individuals talk about some of the unspoken difficulties, which had been limiting the board's ability to function. In the round up session at the end, an agenda for future work began to emerge and political concerns about accountability were evident. Always make sure you have time to close this activity properly. The last things that get said are usually really important to the underlying dynamics of the system.

**Tips:** three questions are usually about enough, and people will talk about what they need to: always ask “what did you actually talk about?”.



Holly Wheeler

### Why not also look at:

- Community
- Learning Organisations
- Living Systems

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[www.theworldcafe.com](http://www.theworldcafe.com)



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An epidemiological approach to understanding how change happens

**Transactional Analysis****Eric Berne – pg. 97**

A way of understanding the different ways in which people interact with each other

**Understanding Networks****pg. 25**

A way to understand the nature and importance of networks

**Understanding the Connection between People and Performance****Ulrich, Zenger, Smallwood – pg. 157**

Evidence based models that shows the cause and effect relationship between investment in people and organisational performance

**Vital Conversations – The FAB Approach****Alec Grimsley – pg. 180**

An approach to managing difficult conversations that is based on meditation

**World Café (theworldcafe.com)****Juanita Brown – pg. 263**

A different way of holding large group meetings that works through smaller group connections to create common meaning

# Systems Leadership Steering Group

The systems leadership programme has been based on collaborative working across a wide range of stakeholders who have come together around the shared vision of transforming services through leadership development and new ways of working.

**Systems Leadership Steering Group Members include:**

Association of Directors of Adult Social Services

Association of Directors of Public Health

Department of Health

Leadership Centre

Local Government Association

Monitor

NHS Confederation

NHS England

NHS Improving Quality

NHS Leadership Academy

Public Health England

Skills for Care / The National Skills Academy for Social Care

Social Care Institute for Excellence

Think Local Act Personal

Virtual Staff College

John Atkinson, Director Local Vision

**...and is chaired by:**

Martin Reeves, Chief Executive, Coventry City Council, and John Wilderspin, National Implementation Director, Improvement and Leadership Development, NHS England

The table below allows you to identify a particular theory or tool to develop a specific leadership quality or behaviour.

Often there is more than one element for a developing a specific quality, and many of the elements develop more than one quality of behaviour.

**Systems Leaders – describing leadership behaviours (inner ring)**

**Systems Leadership – describing the qualities/actions needed by those leading complex change (middle ring)**

	Doing	Being	Perceiving	Feeling	Relating	Thinking		Collective & participatory	Shared power	Relationship based	Influencing and nudging	Shared vision and values	Focused on products not process	Conflicted & contested	Disturbs the system	Experiential & innovative	Distributed
232 Action Learning	●							●		●	●						●
171 Adaptive Leadership	●					●			●					●			●
78 Adoption Curves	●		●			●				●	●	●		●			
15 An Ecology of Mind		●	●		●	●		●		●				●			
222 Appreciation Process	●		●		●	●							●	●	●		
127 Argyris, Theories of Action – double loop learning and organisational theories of action	●	●			●	●					●	●					
123 Basic Assumption Groups and Psychodynamic Approaches			●	●		●				●	●	●		●			
40 Building Capital	●		●	●		●		●		●		●		●			●
81 Change curve – stages of grief	●		●		●	●							●	●			
138 Change and Culture Complexity	●		●		●	●				●	●			●	●		●
210 Co-production (The Egg Model)	●		●		●			●		●					●		●
238 Coaching Conversations	●	●	●	●	●	●							●				
253 Communication Circles – talking circles, wisdom circles, open circles	●	●	●	●	●	●		●		●				●			
235 Communities of Practice (CoP)	●							●		●	●						
37 Community	●		●		●	●		●		●		●	●		●		
54 Complexity	●		●			●				●				●			
58 Critical, Tame, Wicked Problems. Messy and Elegant solutions	●		●	●		●		●		●				●	●		
148 Cross-Functional teams and X-Teams	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●		●	●		●
75 Cultural Dynamic Values Space. (The Value Modes model)			●	●	●	●				●	●	●		●			
72 Cultural Theory and Clumsy Solutions				●	●	●				●		●		●			
134 Cultural Web			●		●	●				●					●		
177 Dialogue	●		●		●			●		●		●		●			●

**Key**  
 ● Strong application  
 ● Weak application

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162 Employee Engagement	●	●	●	●	●			●		●		●			●		
69 Ethnography	●		●	●	●	●				●	●			●	●		
18 Evolutionary Biology	●		●	●	●	●				●		●		●	●	●	
145 Five Capacities of High Performance Teams	●		●	●	●			●		●					●		
46 Four Orders and Systemic Constellations	●	●	●	●	●	●		●		●		●		●	●	●	
182 Framing/Reframing	●		●	●	●						●	●		●			
256 Future Search (futuresearch.net)	●	●	●	●	●	●		●		●	●	●	●	●			
90 Gestalt Theory of Change	●		●		●	●				●				●			
101 Johari Window	●	●	●	●	●	●				●						●	
106 Learning Cycle and Learning Styles	●	●	●		●	●				●							
250 Learning History	●	●	●	●	●	●		●		●	●			●	●	●	
141 Learning Organisations	●	●	●	●	●	●		●		●		●					
195 Lewin's Force Field Analysis	●	●	●	●		●				●			●	●	●		
94 Lewin's Model of Change	●	●		●	●	●					●	●	●	●			
21 Living Systems	●	●	●	●	●	●				●				●	●		
87 Maslow's Hierarchy of Need – a theory of human motivation			●		●	●				●	●						
118 MBTI Myers Briggs Type Indicator	●	●	●		●	●				●	●			●			
187 Mindfulness	●	●	●	●	●	●			●	●		●		●			
203 Multiple Cause Diagrams	●		●			●		●		●			●	●			
111 Neuro-Science – system 1 and system 2	●	●	●		●	●					●						
220 Nominal Group Technique	●		●		●	●		●		●		●	●	●			
218 Nudge Theory – designing choice environments	●			●		●					●	●	●				
259 Open Space	●	●	●	●	●			●		●		●	●	●	●		
215 Open Strategy – PRUB	●					●		●					●		●		
207 Organisational Design – The Star Model	●				●	●							●		●		
154 Owl, Fox, Donkey, Sheep: Political Skills for Managers	●		●	●		●				●	●	●		●			
104 Positive Psychology	●	●			●	●											
198 Power Mapping	●		●		●	●				●	●			●			

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 ● Weak application

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224 Presentations and Lectures	●			●		●					●						
167 Process Consultation	●		●					●			●						
174 Public Narrative	●	●	●	●	●	●		●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	
43 Public Value	●	●	●		●					●	●	●	●	●	●		
184 Push and Pull Influencing Style	●	●	●	●	●	●					●		●	●			
190 Reflective Practice	●	●	●		●	●				●			●				
213 Results (Outcomes) Based Accountability (RBA or OBA)	●	●	●	●	●			●		●			●	●	●		
51 Social Movements	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
34 Society 4.0 from ego-systems to eco-system	●	●	●	●	●	●									●		
200 Stakeholder Analysis – Trust and Agreement			●	●	●	●				●	●	●		●			
84 Taxonomy of Needs	●		●		●	●				●			●		●		
115 The Divided Brain – The master and his emissary		●	●		●	●				●	●						
62 The Landscapes Framework	●		●			●								●	●		
29 The Strength of Weak Ties					●			●		●	●						
131 The Three Levels of Organisational Culture	●		●	●	●	●								●			
32 The Tipping Point			●		●	●				●	●		●		●		
97 Transactional Analysis	●	●	●	●	●	●				●	●			●			
25 Understanding Networks	●		●		●	●		●		●	●	●		●	●		
157 Understanding the Connection between People and Performance	●	●		●	●	●		●		●		●					●
180 Vital Conversation – The FAB Approach	●			●				●		●				●	●		
263 World Café (theworldcafe.com)	●		●	●	●	●		●		●		●		●	●		

**Key**  
 ● Strong application  
 ● Weak application

“Learn how to see.  
Realise that everything  
connects to everything else”

**Leonardo Da Vinci**

**The Leadership Centre**

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[www.localleadership.gov.uk](http://www.localleadership.gov.uk)

