Organizational Assessment and Organizational Role

Analysis: A Company Application

Giovanni Magliari

To my wife Juliette, for her love and ability to read through the lines in a caring way

To my children David and Marc, for the love and the light they have brought into my life

To my father Fiore and my mother Giusy for being the way they are

To my Angel that despite all still looks after me
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To Roger Lehman a great person in the mind and in the heart; To Erick Van de Loo that with his silence has allowed me to unlock important emotional doors; To Manfred Kets de Vries that has allowed me to live this incredible life experience.

To Anton Obholzer for firmly challenging my natural temptation to stay in the “middle”

To my CCC companions, I have all of you in my heart

To Gianni Baravalle, that during these years has taken care of my professional and human growth.

To Massimo Scaccabarozzi, for always opening doors to innovation

To Tiziana Reina, Elena Ferrari, Lorenzo Casella, Paolo Pifferi, Gabriele Allegri, Paola Babic, Patrizia Ponzi, Federica Mazzotti, Roberta Termini for their trust and courage.

To the county of Islay (Banrigh nan Eilean)
Abstract

An organizational assessment and role analysis was requested by the company leadership team before the introduction of a new business model. The key objectives were, on the one hand to provide management with a deeper understanding of the organizational system and specifically to identify the key areas where the “pain” was felt the most, while on the other hand trying a new way to increase trust and collaboration between the “new roles” introduced in 2008 and the traditional ones. The overall outcome of these two activities, and the observation of what happened during the project within and outside the team has shown clear and positive possibilities to enable change using a framework where reflection and listening play a key role. This initiative has helped the organization to be aware of some of the irrational forces that were working beneath the surface and that were slowing down the needed change. We were able to increase our ability to focus attention on the issues that matter the most and at the same time drive the organizational conversation about strategy back and forth between advocacy and inquiry.

Keywords: organizational change, matrix structure, reflection, listening, role analysis, time, team dynamics, leadership
ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL ROLE ANALYSIS: A COMPANY APPLICATION

Table of Content

Acknowledgment .......................................................................................................................... 2
Abstract ........................................................................................................................................ 3

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction to the Main Changes Occurring in the Pharmaceutical Market ............. 5
1.2 Organizational Implications of the External Market Changes ..................................... 7
1.3 The Rationale and Targets Behind Organizational Changes ...................................... 9
1.4 Overview of the Methodology Applied ........................................................................ 11
1.5 Overview of the Project Design .................................................................................... 14
1.6 The Unspoken Themes when Managing Organizational Change Initiatives ............ 17

CHAPTER 2: APPROACH UTILIZED FOR THE ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT ORGANIZATIONAL ROLE ANALYSIS AND TEAM DYNAMICS

2.1 Introduction ......................................................................................................................... 18
2.2 Organizational Assessment ................................................................................................. 19
2.3 Organizational Role Analysis ............................................................................................. 21
2.4 Team Management ............................................................................................................. 23
2.5 The Unconscious within the Team ..................................................................................... 24

CHAPTER 3: RESULTS

3.1 Introduction ......................................................................................................................... 25
3.2 Organizational Assessment Results .................................................................................. 26
3.3 Organizational Role Analysis Results ............................................................................... 26
3.4 Team Management Analysis ............................................................................................. 29
3.5 Personal Reflections on the Experience ........................................................................... 32
CHAPTER 4: PROJECT OUTCOMES AND POSSIBLE LINKS WITH A CONCEPTUAL MODEL FOR MANAGED CULTURE CHANGE

4.1 Introduction ................................................................. 38

4.2 Psychosocial Dynamics of this Change Initiative.............................. 38

4.3 Adaptive Leadership Theory and Practice: Another Possible Framework to Critically Review Project Approach and its Results................................................. 42

4.4 Conclusion........................................................................... 46

4.5 Limitations........................................................................... 48

4.6 Future Research.................................................................... 48

In Broken Images........................................................................ 49

References.................................................................................. 50
Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction to the Main Changes Occurring in the Pharmaceutical Market

The last report published in the year 2000, by the World Health Organization's ranking of the world's health systems, rated the Italian healthcare as second best after France. The National Health Service, however, which is the dominant provider of care, is nowadays struggling more and more to cope with rising costs, long waiting lists and poor management systems. The system in place up to now, by which regions are responsible for health service delivery whilst central government remains responsible for the distribution of funds, has resulted in mounting deficits in certain areas of the country.

The key external factors that are mostly contributing to this increase in health care costs over the last decade are the ageing population, the emergence of life-style drugs, a shift to newer and more expensive drugs, an increase in therapeutic coverage (i.e. new drugs for diseases that could not be treated in the past) (HAMILTON, 2005). The Italian government continues to introduce cost-containment measures in an effort to limit increases in pharmaceutical expenditure. Since 2003, a limit has been set on the proportion of SSN healthcare expenditure that may be spent on pharmaceuticals. Given this increase in the complexity of the external market, since 2002 Janssen has undertaken an organizational journey, not yet finished, to shift the company from a hierarchical model to a more flexible organization (Matrix). Within this market scenario, the traditional pharmaceutical selling model has started to show evident limitations, in other words the physicians are not the most important decision makers and influencers anymore, with respect to prescribing decisions. The dynamics of the healthcare setting have changed and new groups of prescribers such as hospital pharmacists, payers, Health Technology Assessment bodies, hospital formulary commissions have made the identification of the prescribing decision maker and influencing structure more complicated, altering the balance of influences on prescribing decisions (CHERTKOW, 2006). The increase in the number of stakeholders that influence prescribing choice
has forced all pharmaceutical companies to review their sales force strategy. In other words, the term “customer” today has to include a variety of stakeholders who were not taken into account at all a few years ago (JAKOVIC, 2009). As visually summarized below (figure 1), the Italian situation has grown in complexity in terms of stakeholders that a pharmaceutical company needs to manage, in order to ensure product access to patients.

Figure 1

1.2 Organizational Implications of the External Market Changes

Janssen tried to proactively detect and anticipate from an organizational perspective anticipate the external market shifts with a continuous change approach\(^1\) (BURKE, 2007). On a yearly basis after 2002, Janssen has undertaken a systematic approach to assess all key company processes responsible for generating financial results (Leadership, Product and Service Innovation, Demand, Supply, Organization and People and compliance). The related document preparation, process assessment meetings and final discussion of what were the key strengths of each process assessed, as well as opportunity for improvement identified, led on average to six/seven improvement

\(^1\) For Weick and Quinn, continuous change means “the idea that small continuous adjustments created simultaneously across units can cumulate and create substantial change.”
ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL ROLE ANALYSIS: A COMPANY APPLICATION

initiatives. This working approach, contributed over the years to implement processes and organizational changes, helping the company in the journey of breaking the silo culture by improving its ability to innovate and share, spur collaboration, foster initiatives, lead and work in teams, and finally to increase the accountability culture within the organization. These external/internal assessments, allowed the leadership team to take strategic decisions on what organizational structure should be put in place in order to better respond to the present and future external market changes. The first decision was taken in 2003 when a Key Account Manager franchise, hierarchically independent from the Business Units, was created with the purpose of supporting the business in the tendering process and in establishing a partnership with all regional new stakeholders influencing the buying or market access decisions of pharmaceutical products.

The second major organizational change was implemented in 2008 as a consequence of the above described activity. Three new roles were introduced to better respond to new market changes: Health and Economics and Market Access, Regional Access Managers and Medical Scientific Liaisons. The creation of these new functions aimed at supporting traditional sales and marketing roles with the products already on the market and the preparation of market access for the new ones. In terms of roles, they were and are expected to respond to the need for new competencies in external market changes. Internally, the organizational system needed to turn from a traditional organizational model, characterized by hierarchical structure (Business Unit), product focused and based on a one-to-one relation with the customer, toward a matrix model where product and non product value propositions are necessary, hierarchical structures work together with cross functional teams and the contact with the external market is characterized by integrated and multiple customer

2 All mentioned elements have been well described by the Courage Institute as major expected benefits when implementing of molecule structure
networks. A visual synthesis of this organizational change can be viewed in the following diagrams (figures 2 and 3).

One last organizational change made in this direction was implemented in September 2010, reinforcing the regional access structure with the introduction of a new role to cover the market access process in each region in a more structured and systematic way.

1.3 The Rationale and Targets Behind Organizational Changes

At the end of 2009, during the internal company assessment the leadership team decided to focus on four key processes: Launch Readiness, Shaping & Developing the Market, Generating Demand with New Customers and Customer Retention and Growth. The aim was to gather the perception of the various functions involved felt the organization was performing on these core organizational processes. The results were then analyzed and discussed during a workshop, with the aim of drawing a list of perceived strengths and opportunities for improvement on which to focus on in order to incrementally enhance organizational efficiency within the decided strategic frame.

For the purpose of this paper, only two of the opportunities discussed and identified during the workshop will be mentioned, as they turned out to be core points. The first one is linked with a systematic higher evaluation given by board members on our performance versus the other groups involved in the survey (Board Direct Reports, Managers, Field Force)\(^3\) in all assessed processes.

During the working group’s discussions, this element was picked up and addressed as a clear data of

\(^3\) Janssen Self-Assessment 2009 report
the board’s disconnection from the “real” problems everybody at lower levels of the organization felt they had to face.

The second one was specifically linked with the functioning of the new organizational model implemented since 2003. It can be summarized with a quote coming from a colleague that participated to the workshop: “Market Access approach and new roles competency models have clearly been identified and formalized. The main concerns at the moment are: how people in these new roles perceive what they are really doing versus what is formally described in the competency model and how the new roles interact systematically with each other”. Looking at the theory behind organizational change and specifically referring to the model described by Porras and Silver (1991) the change framework described above falls into the linear depiction where an intervention either affects the vision of an organization, its purpose and mission (OT intervention) or rather is aimed at changing aspects of the work setting (OD intervention), in some cases the two types are operating. These interventions in turn affect organizational member’s thought processes or mental sets: this may occur at a single level or at multiple levels (alpha, beta, or gamma changes) and thus, behavior is changed, which then leads to improved performance and enhanced individual development (Burke, 2008). The organizational role I was assigned to, allowed me to be present at the conception of all these organizational changes as early as 2003. It has been quite impressive to observe how strong the belief of leading roles was (and still is) that change can happen simply by using this cognitive frame, where A leads to B, which in turn affects C and so on. Since the beginning of this journey it was clear (even if not fully grasped and discussed yet) that this change was not really happening the way it was planned. In practical terms the initiation of organizational change had begun with a vision of the future (cognitive process) and the assumption that this thought process would have then generated the necessary behavior for the expected change. Given this scenario, in January 2010 I was assigned the task of leading a project with the key objective of running an organizational assessment that would provide the leadership team with a deep
insight on the actual state of the art relating to the systemic cognitive change. These findings would also be relevant, for the starting of potential parallel initiatives on the identified issues before the introduction of the new organizational change, planned for September 2010. The second objective was linked with the feedback coming from the different assessments and informal talks, where a need clearly emerged to understand how individuals in the new functions took up their role in the system.

1.4 Overview of the Methodology Applied

To achieve the above mentioned objectives in my role I proposed (Managing Director and Human Resource Director) the following project design to my project sponsors. The idea came to me after reading an article (BEER & EISENSTAT, 2004) about the importance of having “honest” conversations within organizations. The core concept of the article is that according to the authors most initiatives fail to uncover the truth and thus lead only to superficial change; in particular their hypothesis is that 360° feed-back, interviews with an external consultant, relatively honest one-to-one conversations between the key manager and the CEO typically will not move organizations forward. The authors’ key assumption being that organization-wide conversations were essential: they developed a process that leaders could use to engage people in honest conversations, named the “strategic fitness process”. There are nine steps to this approach briefly described.

- **Step 1**: Leadership Team Launch Meeting (The Leadership team develops a statement of strategic and organizational direction; the Leadership Team selects a task force often of the best people in the organization; A Task Force indentifies interviewees)
- **Step 2**: Task Force training session (The Task Force is trained in interviewing)
- **Step 3**: Data collection period (The Task Force interviews people)
- **Step 4**: Task Force data consolidation meeting (The Task Force identifies major themes in the interviews; the task force prepares feedback)
**Step 5**: Task Force feedback discussion (The Task Force presents feedback to the Leadership team using the fishbowl format)

**Step 6**: Leadership Team Feedback response (The Leadership Team conducts an analysis of the root causes of the issues identified in the feedback and develops an integrated plan to address them)

**Step 7**: Task Force Plan Critique (The Leadership Team meets with the task force again to present its plan and receive feedback)

**Step 8**: Implementation (The Leadership Team announces change plans to the top 100° and initiates further dialogue; changes are implemented throughout the organization)

**Step 9**: Institutionalization (The Leadership team periodically repeats the process and extends it into subunits). The overall project’s timeline requested by the sponsor, who is to accomplish the objectives, can be viewed below (figure 4).

**Figure 4**

To accomplish the first objective (individual and systemic cognitive change state of art) a questionnaire adapted from *Organizational Assessment a step-by-step guide to effective consulting* edited by Harry Levinson (2008) was used. The choice made was to use this questionnaire in face to face interviews. The main advantage of this structured approach lies in the presumption that the

---

4The task force will discuss the issues it identified, while the members of the senior team sit at tables around the outside, observing and taking notes. The task force will not recommend solutions, and it won’t deliver a written report
data are likely to be rich detailed and refined. Many people will truly “open up”, state their opinions, and express their feelings in response to that situation. These outcomes, well described by Levinson, were exactly what we wanted to achieve. For the second objective that is to understand how individuals in the new functions took up their role in the system, it was decided to use the Organizational Role Analysis approach (BORWICK, 2006). The Organizational Role Analysis is a system process that functions at the role level and not at the individual level. The process holds the individual hostage, so to speak, in order to let the role come to the surface. This methodology was exactly what we needed. Keeping in mind the widespread organizational dissatisfaction about the functioning of the new roles, linked with the increasing diffidence about the people in these roles, it was necessary to use a methodology that, quoting Borwick, would -“allow the individual to examine his/her behavior as it relates to the role and not to his/her person”. The selected methodology for the final presentation to the Board was the fishbowl\(^5\) technique. The idea behind the use of this approach was to create a situation where listening and reflection would be fostered. In the following figure (figure5) the way the room was set, during step 5 of the strategic fitness process described above, is represented.

**Figure 5**

\(^5\) It is called a fish bowl because a central circle of people have a conversation and those sitting around them watch
1.5 Overview of the Project Design

The three methodological steps, explained above represented a real novelty for the company. It is essential that any change effort – whether personal or organization wide – be both cognitive and emotional; in other words, people have to be affected in both the head and the heart (Kets De Vries M., 2006). Before this project, all major organizational initiatives launched and implemented were the outcome of cognitive methodologies, such as process assessments and process redesign, six sigma or the like. In other words, everything that was done to drive change from 2003 onwards, within the organization, was assessed, designed and implemented following a pure left brain approach. This approach doubtlessly brought many benefits to the company, reducing inefficiencies within key processes, improving the quality in addressing internal and customer related issues. Unfortunately, it did not help in understanding and managing the emotional side of change. It was quite clear to me that this initiative was going to deal with emotions that had been neglected for years and that had never had an organizational room that allowed them to come to the surface and thus call for solutions. During step one (after sponsor’s approval on the presented approach); the project content and objectives were shared during individual meetings with all board members. While presenting the overall approach comments were positive, lot of questions were raised about the methodology and what we were trying to achieve. Nevertheless, they all expressed some concerns and skepticism about the possibility of really applying this methodology in an organizational context; the main reason being the apparent lack of culture and maturity of the organization to approach issues so “openly”. Phase two started with a two hours meeting where our managing director presented to the team the business reasons and the importance this project had for determining the real degree of change within the organization, and the strength of the link the project had to the changes that were going to be implemented in the short/medium term. The afternoon was then spent with the team in order to

6 The left cerebral hemisphere of the human brain, which includes areas associated with logical thinking, numerical calculation, and language skills: popularly regarded as the center of rational thought.
decide on how it wanted to proceed and share the criteria by which it was going to be evaluated, both as a team and individually.

1. Questionnaire’s structure review and team’s comprehension of each individual question.

2. Sharing of the methodological approach to use in order to synthesize and structure interviews outcome and final presentation to the board.

3. Importance and meaning of active listening during the interview phase

4. Team interview role play and debrief

5. Project Timing and linked activities.

During phase three, the interviews were carried out in pairs (five on the whole). Thirty people were selected to participate as interviewees, representing a good sample of all company roles and units. All hierarchies were included from the Board of Administration to the Sales Representatives level. Each pair of interviewers had the responsibility to contact directly the assigned six people and fix a date. Each interview was to last two hours, to properly introduce the initiative, to ask and record answers to the potential questions coming from the interviewee. Each pair of interviewers then had to work in order to formalize the findings using the agreed approach during phase two. All consultations were closed according to plan. In phase four, five presentations prepared by each couple of interviewers were shared with the team and discussed, with the final objective to find correspondences throughout all thirty interviews. Two full days were dedicated by the team to this activity. At the end we were able to formalize the final presentation for the fishbowl meeting and get a consensus on how to approach it as a team. For the preparation of the fifth phase, we asked our Sponsor to send out an e-mail to all board members with the objective to sum up what was done by the team and make sure that the
rules to follow during the fishbowl were clear to all participants. A week before the Board presentation the final report was presented to our sponsor. The objective of this meeting was to make sure he was fully aware of what we were going to present, to get his feedback on how this report will sound to the others in the organization. In doing so, it was made quite clear that the substance of the findings could not be changed and the need to have his support to state what we had to say in the most advantageous way. In step five, we presented the final report during a two hour meeting. The room was set as described (figure 5), each couple presenting one of the four systemic findings identified and the outcome of the Organizational Role Analysis exercise (more details on this part will be given later in the results’ section) to the team. Within step 4 and 5 of the strategic fitness process, a whole day was dedicated to the ORA exercise. Four people decided to volunteer, making it possible to organize two ORA sessions in the morning and two in the afternoon. Participant managers belonging to the interviewee list and the entire team were requested to assist one of the four sessions. They did not know upfront who they were going to listen to. Each session had about six to seven people in this role, and lasted two hours overall. Further, steps 6 and 7 took place three months after the fishbowl discussion. This delay was mainly linked with the “organizational discomfort” caused by the project outcome. During the meeting our two sponsors presented the plan on how to start improving the most critical areas presented during the fishbowl. On this occasion, we were able to view the real outcome of all actions that were already taking place and the planned ones as a direct consequence of our project outcome.

7 All these aspects of the closure process are well described in Levinson’s book Organizational Assessment A step-by step guide to effective consulting pages 232-233
1.6 The Unspoken Themes when Managing Organizational Change Initiatives

Human beings are notoriously resistant to change, even when the change appears to be relatively minor or those concerned have ostensibly agreed to it. Managing change inevitably requires managing the anxieties and resistance coming from the change process. (OBHOLZER, Afterword, 1994). In this paragraph “unconscious” factors that can block or derail change initiatives within organizations will be explored in more detail and where appropriate a specific link with the wider and more systemic “unspoken” issues of the pharmaceutical sector will be made. The time elapsed and the specific role I had come to play, allow me today to read the evidence gathered and outline some hypothesis on the type of forces encountered and their impact on the quality and effectiveness of the change initiative described in this paper. Using the Iceberg principle represented below (figure 6) the relevance and the impact that psychodynamic factors have on the quality of any change initiative becomes evident, even where not contemplated. The subject-logic level (strategy, structures, processes and functions) amounts to 10% of the overall human capacity, and the cultural level (emotional, unconscious fears, hopes social skills, attitude and motivation) accounts for as much as 90%.

Figure 6

“..These are challenging times for the pharmaceutical industry. Stakeholder trust, almost everywhere, is at an all time low but the pharmaceutical industry seems to have set itself up for a very special kind of criticism that even the likes of tobacco and armaments have managed to avoid…” (PARKER, 2007)

Taking the cue from this statement, one of the key aspects to consider while working with pharmaceutical organizations is they are nowadays facing exceptional social and economic threats
(government policies, cost containment measures...), but also an increasing negative reputation shared in many areas of our society. These constant attacks are based on a number of interrelated negative perceptions. Allegations include profiteering, over-priced medicines, excessive executive salaries, opulent corporate offices, and over-intensive sales and marketing activities. Moreover, critics highlight cases where promotional budgets exceed R&D budgets, and draw attention to what they claim to be exploitative, ruthless and aggressive tactics. Another major criticism is that there has been a general lack of transparency and, in particular, a paucity of honest and credible information when asked simple and direct questions. Given this scenario, organizations can develop defenses against difficult emotions which are too threatening or too painful to acknowledge, just like individuals do. Some institutional defenses can turn out to be “healthy”, in the sense that they enable the staff to cope with stress. Some on the other hand can obstruct contact with reality and in this way damage the staff; central among these defenses is denial, which involves pushing certain thoughts, feelings and experiences out of consciousness because they have become too anxiety-provoking (HALTON, 1994). This short description illustrates the psychodynamic setting that the present project was aiming to “contain”; just like in individuals, to ignore the underlying difficulties, be they personal, marital or familial is a perfect recipe for disaster. Managing them by denying and repressing them invariably leads to further difficulties and disturbances (OBHOLZER, 1994).

CHAPTER 2: APPROACH UTILIZED FOR THE ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT, ORGANIZATIONAL ROLE ANALYSIS AND TEAM DYNAMICS

2.1 Introduction

The main goal in this part is to explain the methodology used for the organizational assessment. A specific focus will be given to the questions used and their underlying dimension; the methodology used by the team to synthesize the findings of each interview will be illustrated. In the last section, the theory behind the Organizational Role Analysis applied in the project, as well as the conceptual frame used to
guide the team will be displayed. These three theoretical frames will then be linked with the “reality” faced during the project implementation.

### 2.2 Organizational Assessment

The team used the structured interview approach and questionnaire reported in the book *Organizational Assessment a step by-step guide to effective consulting* (Levinson, 2008). The original version contained forty one questions. As a team we decided that it was necessary to rank each question in terms of importance and meaning, and how strong was the link with the specific goals we had to achieve. Each pair of interviewers discussed all questions in turn and assigned a one, three, nine or blank value. This process helped us to funnel the questions from forty one down to twenty. Here below are the questions the team used for the interviews and their underlying dimensions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Underlying Dimensions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What do you do here?</td>
<td>Specific information regarding individuals task</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Occupational self-image</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Details, versus larger organizational goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Potential distance from others and their role (conflicts)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What sort of place is this to do your job? Why?</td>
<td>How do you like it here</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What it means to particular individuals to be in the organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What conflicts, hopes and aspirations might be engendered through the organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell me about the organization. How did it get to be the way it is?</td>
<td>History of the organization as the person knows it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Indication of their degree of investment in the organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Distance or closeness of individuals to the organization and their reactions to changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prodding question anything else may reveal special preoccupations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which outside groups does this organization pay attention to? How does it do so? How? And Why?</td>
<td>Where Employees see the attention of the organization being focused, Who are the reference groups, where do they felt pressures come from?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell me about the people here. How are they to work with?</td>
<td>Respondents need in their relationships with people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Closeness of their relationships. How they cope with authority relationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you were going to hire someone for a job like yours, what kind of person would you hire?</td>
<td>Respondents ego ideals (what I should be). Fears in terms of who or what kind of person will take his/her job.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell me what is done here to help a person along once he or she starts to work in this organization</td>
<td>Deals largely with the informal type of help present in the organization. Individuals’ needs for support. To what extent their dependency needs / expectations are recognized within the organization</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL ROLE ANALYSIS: A COMPANY APPLICATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How do you find out how you are doing?</th>
<th>Answers list the feedback mechanisms operating within the organization. Suggest the nature and quality of manager-subordinate relationships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What happens when problems come up?</td>
<td>Dependency relationships and to whom persons turn for support. Individual’s relationships to their supervisors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is today the most critical unresolved issue in your job</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What ways are there to find out what is going on around here?</td>
<td>Answers will describe communications and their reliability. It may reveal possible ground for paranoid fantasy, lack of trust or anxieties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How does the organization make use of a person’s experience and ideas?</td>
<td>Degree of participation in decision making, respect for individuals. Degree to which the organization makes use of ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which outside groups does (this organization) pay attention to? How? Why?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suppose this organization had to stop doing some of the things it does now. Assuming that your job would not be affected, what should not be changed?</td>
<td>The question will elicit what the respondents think are the most important functions and reveal how the employees see their relationship to those functions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suppose you were the head of this organization and had to make long range plans for it. What do you think would be the most important things about the organization that you would have to keep in mind in making these plans?</td>
<td>This question deals with the most important problems that the organization faces and how much they are known. How much people are involved in the realities of the organization and the interpersonal relationships in it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinking back over the things we have talked about, do you think most people here would look at these things the same way you do?</td>
<td>Asks how much people feel in tune with or deviant from, the others in the organization. Degree of alienation will be revealed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have asked you a lot of questions. Do you have any you would like to ask me?</td>
<td>Allows interviewees to ease their anxiety, satisfy curiosity. Obtain approval from the interviewer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As already mentioned, the main advantage of the structured interview lies in the presumption that the data is likely to be rich in detail. Considering the way we decided to approach this part of the project we would have had five couples of interviewers that were simultaneously going to gather insights. We needed to have a common way to group those details in order to get a systemic view of the findings as well as a scheme to communicate them to the rest of the organization. To achieve this, we agreed to use the Affinity Diagram technique. This business tool takes large amounts of disorganized data and information and enables one to organize them into groupings based on natural relationships. Each couple of interviewers had been invited to go through a systematic reflection and discussion about the content of what they had

---

8 Affinity diagram is one of the Seven Management and Planning Tools. The tool is commonly used within project management and allows large numbers of details to be sorted into groups for review and analysis. The affinity diagram was devised by Jiro Kawakita in the 1960s and is sometimes referred to as the KJ Method.
heard during interviews. Hypotheses were generated and shared, and each one of them had to be supported by real verbatims gathered.

2.3 Organizational Role Analysis

The process used for the ORA exercise, had been inspired by the Irving Borwick theory well described in the article *Organizational Role Analysis: Managing strategic change in business setting* (Coaching in Depth - The Organizational Role Analysis Approach, 2006). This theory was developed after his experience at the Family Therapy Department at the University of Louvain, where Luigi Boscolo and Gianfranco Cecchin of the Milan Family Therapy Centre demonstrated their newly developed systemic techniques. For a week he was able to observe marvelous changes in a brief time without huge conflicts. After this exposure, he hired the two therapists two days a month for a year to develop their techniques for managers. Unfortunately what worked well with families was a complete disaster with managers. With this experience and some reflection he developed a hypothesis linked with the concept of permanent versus temporary role. In families no one is threatened by such powerful interventions because by definition it is impossible to lose the role someone has. On the other hand, your role in a business organization is always temporary. This conclusion allowed him to elaborate a process equal to that developed by the Milan Family Therapy Group, but this new process would have had to move people from ideas to action that finally, would change behavior. The core concept about this systemic theory is that the role is the link between the individual and the organization. Working with this concept in mind it is in other words the role that has to change and not the person and his/her personality. Changing the role then can theoretically bring instant change in behavior. Hence Organizational Role Analysis is designed to examine a role in terms of rules and relations, and to avoid, wherever possible, character or personality analysis. A model ORA is divided into four basic parts or steps: Problem Presentation, Systemic Analysis, System Reflection, Individual Reflection.
During step one the ORA appears quite simple as it opens with the volunteer presenting and explaining the issue from her/his perspective. During step two the role of the participant managers who have joined this ORA is explained. They are asked to take up the role of “consultant” to the person who is presenting. The so called “consultants” are encouraged to ask questions. The only rule given is that each question asked must come with a hypothesis. No question will be answered without the related hypothesis to support it. Once the answer is given, the consultant should not discuss or criticize it; if he/she thinks the answer is not correct, the only resort is to ask more and better questions. Step three comes after questioning and answering have been going on a while and if a time-out seems appropriate. The presenting person does not participate to the discussion, and only listens. During step four, the presenting person is asked for her/his reaction to the set of hypotheses and her/his experience of the organizational role analysis, and finally has the last word before the session is closed.

The entire ORA is usually scheduled to last one and a half hours and its goal is not to solve the problem but merely to identify what the real issue is. This simple statement, if applied in organizations can be disruptive and revolutionary. As a matter of fact, managers frequently assume they have grasped where the problem lies and thus develop solutions to solve the problem, which inevitably turns out to be one that they know how to solve, but alas, often not the issue they are really facing. The importance of an hypothesis after each question as said, has to be a rule without exception. The reason for it being that the presence of an hypotheses affects all the roles involved in the ORA process. Without the hypothesis the question is no longer a conjecture, it is a kind of truth. As a consequence whatever we say has the burden of being seen as some kind of fact that has to be defended. This leads to conflict, arguments and disagreement. With hypotheses we are always in a state of becoming and never in a state of arrival, thus open to new ideas instead of defensively closed. The other element to consider is that everybody seems to need to give advice. Hence, while conducting an ORA exercise attention must be paid to advice under
the guise of a question. The implicit hypothesis behind such disguised questions being that the speaker is correct and knows exactly what needs to be done.

2.4 Team Management

The ten people assigned to the team were chosen among the best managers within the organization. As a project leader, I felt the responsibility of deciding upfront a framework to guide the ten leaders (all well known and respected within the organization) in the month we had at our disposal. Of course time and pressure were already against us from the start. While our sponsors were presenting the high level idea of the new organizational model that would have been implemented in two months, I could already see tensions about projects, goals and timelines given to achieve them, in most of the team members. The Tuchman Model\(^9\) was the initial framework used in order to understand and predict team development throughout the project. Looking at some of the characteristics identified during the formation phase (many attempts were made to get direction from the team leader, management or whoever else was perceived as having “answers” or as being in a position to determine them), some tools proved to be effective in order to respond to aspects such as: team members who get oriented to one another by the task assigned to them, poor listening, status given to members based largely on their position outside of the team, primary attention focused on what the team should be doing. The two basic early tasks covered were, on one hand, the creation of a sense of purpose, which included a clear review of project objectives, approach and timeline. The teams’ discussion during this part was about the achievability of what it was expected to deliver, common understanding of what needed to be accomplished, constraints imposed on the team, valorization of its activity once the project

\(^9\)Bruce Wayne Tuckman is an American Psychologist, who has carried out research into the theory of group dynamics. In 1965, he published one of his theories called “Tuckman's Stages. The model describes four linear stages (forming, storming, norming, and performing) that a group will go through in its unitary sequence of decision making. A fifth stage (adjourning) was added in 1977 when a new set of studies were reviewed (Tuckman & Jensen, 1977).
successfully closed. The second task, on the other hand, was about clarification and agreement on Roles /Responsibilities and Team Ground Rules.

In order to shape a common team vision of what success of the initiative would have to look like, each team member was called to go through a backward imaging exercise\textsuperscript{10}. Everyone had to describe what they would see, hear and feel while observing this point in the future when the project had been evaluated as very successful. Before the starting of the project, different criteria contained in two key dimensions, Degree of Change Expected and Difficulty of Implementation\textsuperscript{11}, were also discussed. The result was that the project was classified as high risk. Due to this outcome, a formal evaluation of the team and the quality of the project outcome was requested. A key reason behind this was the belief that such formal evaluation would have helped the fast adoption of the cooperative behavior needed, and also that it would have enabled the process of legitimation (AIME, MEYER, & HUMPHREY, 2007). Legitimacy has long been recognized as a fundamental social property affecting the behavior, structure, and stability of organizations and teams (HABERMAS, 1975). In other words members of a team who may not be individually convinced about the fairness of a reward method will tend to accept team legitimacy as guidance for behavior.

\textbf{2.5 The Unconscious within the Team}

Throughout the previous chapter, the theory and some tools that can be used to read and positively frame and direct a team’s unconscious energies and dynamics have been presented and applied. This approach, despite its concrete value, only takes the view of a specific aspect of what happens in team dynamics. In this paragraph some key theories of unconscious processes in groups will be presented. The aim is to provide an alternative level of reading a team’s dynamics that can be integrated and used, in order to improve the quality of any change initiative. A major contribution to the understanding of

\textsuperscript{10} It asks people to describe the future as they expect to see it when the project is successful, and to do so in specific, behavioral terms
\textsuperscript{11} These dimensions are contained in the complexity assessment tool. This tool helps to determine the level of change management support required for a given project
unconscious processes in groups has been given in his works by the psychoanalyst Wilfred Bion\textsuperscript{12}. He distinguished two main tendencies in the life of a group: the tendency towards work on the primary task or work-group mentality, and a second, often unconscious, tendency to avoid working on the primary task, which he termed basic assumption mentality. In work group mentality, members are intent on carrying out a specifiable task and want to assess their effectiveness in doing it. By contrast, in basic assumption mentality, the group’s behavior is directed at attempting to meet the unconscious needs of its member by reducing anxiety and internal conflicts (STOKES, 1994)\textsuperscript{13}. The three basic assumptions groups of Bion are: ba dependency (baD); ba fight/flight (baF/F) and ba pairing (baP). In practical terms, to identify a ba, give meaning to the behavior of the group and elucidate on what basis it is not operating as a working group can be another possible way of managing and guiding a team towards a common goal. Following this type of approach the existence of a working group is a rare event or to the extent that it might be considered merely as an idealized construct. This implies that the more we can identify basic assumption behavior through experience, and come to know it, the greater our chances will be of interpreting realities in which we live and our ability to transforming them. In this specific project the choice made was to work on setting clear and appropriate goals and leaving aside more sophisticated lens to read team dynamics and their functioning. The reasons behind this choice is linked with the fact that in time-limited specialized groups the goals must be focused, achievable and tailored to the capacity and potential of the group members (YALOM, 2005).

CHAPTER 3: RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

After illustrating the results obtained with the Organizational Assessment and the Organizational Role Analysis exercise, the following step will here be to describe how these results were presented for the systemic reflection during the fishbowl meeting and how, as an organization, we decided to act on the identified problems. It appears that some significant

\begin{itemize}
  \item Wilfred Ruprecht Bion (Muttra, 8 September 1897 – Oxford 8 November 1979)
  \item For further understanding of Bion’s work see Anderson 1992; Meltzer 1978; and Symington 1986
\end{itemize}
events that occurred during the different phases of the project, but remained beneath the surface are also very worth mentioning; the attempt will be to describe them using a classification scheme constituted by several layers: Organization, Team and individual. The conclusion of the chapter will relate to the team evaluation results.

3.2 Organizational Assessment Results

In paragraph 2.2 the process used by the team is described; it allowed us to reach a robust hypothesis of the systemic voice on how things were perceived to be. The means to build this hypothesis have mainly been the thirty face to face interviews carried out in using the revised questionnaire. The findings here reported will be illustrated following the same flow that has been used for the fishbowl presentation. In the diagram below (figure 7) the conceptual dimensions of the system used to present and explain the Leadership Team findings are illustrated.

**Figure 7**

![Diagram](attachment:image.png)

3.3 Organizational Role Analysis Results

At the end of the one day meeting dedicated to the ORA exercise, four people within new roles decided to volunteer, while twenty people (the entire project team members and a pool of the interviewees) participated as consultants. The unfolding of the four ORA exercises confirmed
that the use of the hypotheses guarantees the lack of turbulence and conflict: the shift from judge to explorer in the speaker was made perfectly intelligible. The type of problems presented during the different sessions would have generated disputes with the only objective to demonstrate how inefficient the “others” were. Indeed it was an amazing and instructive experience to witness how, through the endeavor to apply the ORA process design, it had been possible to contain and regulate these emotional eruptions, granting a full examination of the issue presented at the same time. Having said as much to illustrate the validity of the approach followed, it is also important to admit that during the four exercises a lot of contained and repressed anger was expressed, while listening and asking questions in my role of observer. The impression I was left with was that these feelings were superficially linked with a series of negative professional experiences, but the hypothesis that the root cause underneath was the concept of role boundaries got evidence to me. Moving forth from a rational perspective, many organizational theories have put a lot of weight on the significance of the boundary that separates the organization from its environment, one division from another and people from the roles they play (HIRSCHHORN, 1988). Following this perspective, the role plays an important function in defining the point where uncertainty is converted into information and decisions (GALBRAITH, 1973). The fantasy behind this theory is that senior managers create a more controllable world in which activities within the boundaries are relatively predictable and organized and can therefore be coordinated to respond to an uncertain outer world. This rational point of view that has guided our organization through the different changes in a relevant proportion, though certainly a major improvement factor, failed to take into account its (of the role) subjective properties. During the ORA exercise, this subjective element clearly emerged adding a new layer to develop a hypothesis about what was happening. All the problems presented during the day were referring to situations where people faced uncertainty and felt at risk. Linking this observation with theories developed by authors such as Trist, Jaques, Menzies, Rice and Miller, it appears to be quite certain that when people face such situations they set up
psychological boundaries that violate pragmatic boundaries based on tasks simply to reduce anxiety. During the group discussion about the issues presented, the violation was linked with the escape from the risks that the type of work requested. By doing this, the sustainment of an anxiety chain was enabled through which co-workers were hurt (HIRSCHHORN, 1988). The results reported in this paper are the outcome of the guiding principle followed, where we dealt with three levels of effect symptom (surface), root and area (BORWICK, 2006). These five layers are known under the name of Pirandello effect\(^1\) and the findings are referring to the observed in the area meaning (figure 8).

**Figure 8**

What has been described above only represents the “tip of the iceberg”, a tiny part of what happened during the project. It seems nevertheless crucial to simply view the link of these systemic problems with the consequent plan we started to work on, as a direct evidence of the success of this project. Looking at the organizational reality today, most of the expected outcomes of the project have been achieved. In particular, there has been a formal recognition and dedication put into the work and we were able to focus on the core issues. Since September 2010 the organization has started different work streams to address the selected systemic problems highlighted during the board presentation. In detail, the four work streams activated that were to accomplish the following goals:

---
\(^1\)First Pirandello effect is the symptom (the problem or the issue presented); the second one is the root meaning that connects symptoms; third effect is the area meaning (it connects root systems into an area meaning).
3.4 Team Management Analysis

For most of the team members this specific project was at the same time emotionally intense and with scarce possibility to unwind; due to the short time at our disposal to accomplish the task, not much space was dedicated to team reflection. The team composition was quite heterogeneous regarding personalities, skills and experiences. The only common factor was that everyone was a well respected leader within the organization. The attempt to analyze the outcome of the team self-evaluation brought to a first set of hypotheses on how we functioned as a team, and if this functioning could be linked to any measurable effectiveness of our activity. The below graph (figure 9) represents the individual evaluation of team performance in the different criteria. The top three teams characteristics were: the focus on objectives, timeline adherence and credo values. These resulting marks confirm the assumption about the overbalance on the side of action against reflection. **Figure 9**
Among the less evident strengths were the ability of the team to perform well on criteria like flexibility, conflict management and learning from mistakes. To give some insight on self-perception among team members, it seems useful to report some of the answers given to the following open question: -“What has been the most evident strength of this team?”.

The replies were: trust and focus on the objective, clear and shared purpose, shared belief that we were going to make it, determination, openness and high commitment. Starting from the assumption that the team achieved the goals assigned, in other words that it was effective, a link with these aspects (evaluation, objective characteristics about how this team was formed and performed during the project) will be attempted in a theoretical frame (figure 10) on conditions that should be present to ensure team effectiveness (Tracy, 2010).

**Figure 10**

![Diagram showing the real team condition requirements]

- The real team condition requires: **Interdependency** – this means it has collective work to do which requires members of the team to work together. Moreover it must be evident that the sense of interdependence does not fade when the meeting ends. The leader and the members continue working together, seeking one another’s advice and support and holding one another accountable (Wageman, Nenes, Burrus, & Hackman, 2008). This aspect of interdependency was very evident, although the team had scheduled three formal meetings before the fishbowl presentation, most findings of the project, most ideas of how to adapt our
team strategy in consideration of what we were learning were discussed and shared outside team sessions.

- **Boundedness** – it needs to be clear who is in the team and who is not. (Wageman found that only 7% of their teams agreed when asked who was on or not). Despite the fact that this condition might state the obvious, this aspect was very clear in our case. The kick off meeting opened by our managing director left us with no doubts about who were members of the team.

**Degree of stability** – Groups of people cannot become teams without stable membership for a reasonable period. The definition of reasonable period in this case represents the weakest ring of the chain. Several recent reviews of the teams literature have also called attention to the disregard of temporal issues in groups (Cohen & Bailey, 1997; Iugen, 1999; McGrath & Argote, 2001). Koziow M and Bell (2002) refer to time as “perhaps the most neglected critical issue” in team research (p. 38) (HARRISON, MOHAMMED, & MCGRATH, 2003).

**A compelling direction:** The team’s purpose is not merely the sum of the individual member’s contributions, nor is the purpose of the organization, every leadership team should ask itself the question: ‘What is the team for that no other entity in the organization could accomplish’. This question was in our case indirectly defined, through the backward imaging exercise when we described ourselves as the ones that were going to represent a breaking point from the past, implicitly meaning that the team was motivated to play the uncomfortable role of change setters that nobody wanted before.

**The right People:** In highly effective leadership teams, the CEO does not just include all his direct reports, but selects additional team members who are committed to the direction and contributing to a collective leadership team that takes enterprise-wide responsibility and has the right capabilities and capacities. The team was formed including people from all company functions (Business Units, Finance, Market Access, Medical, Human Resources etc...). All team
members were included also in consideration of their recognized leadership and experience in the company.

**A solid team structure:** Being the right size (8-9 Members), having a clear team tasks that are strategic, clear norms and protocols about how the team should behave both in meetings and beyond and a sense of collective responsibility. In this case all criteria above were met (10 people including myself), the task resulted very clear (this was confirmed by the team self evaluation too). Norms and behavior were collectively defined during the first meeting, even if during the project beyond the meetings it was necessary to intervene in order to contain behaviors that were going against the agreed set of rules, sometimes succeeding other times less, and even allowing them for a while, as a relief valve for feelings like anxiety, fear or fantasies about what would append the day the team would present the findings.

**A supportive organizational context:** To be highly effective, the team needs to have the information, education, and material resources necessary to do its job and a performance management and reward structure that recognizes joint accountability and team contribution above and beyond individual and divisional performance. In our project the team contribution and joint accountability and reward was guaranteed by the team evaluation methodology presented during the kick off meeting. Information, education and material resources to accomplish the job were guaranteed by full board involvement and commitment throughout the entire length of the project.

**Competent team coaching:** The best teams are continually being coached. This condition was not even taken into account

**3.5 Personal reflections on the experience**

To start this personal reflection it is necessary to explain how I became involved in the project and was selected to guide it through its various phases. In my role I was training and coaching projects leader, assigned to the five improvement initiatives that were identified after the internal assessment done in 2009. During the first module at CCC, I was introduced to the organizational
role analysis. This concept immediately caught my attention. So much so that my first case was an attempt to link these new inputs to the recent business model Janssen had implemented in 2008.

What really intrigued me about this way to approach change was the question behind it, that I am going to quote\(^{15}\): “It fascinates me that so many can be committed to so much and do so little about it. My single-minded search has been to bridge what I call the “gap” between idea and action”. The content of this phrase brought to mind the recurrent experience of the same gap in my professional life, but also the awareness of the amount of energy spent on both personal and organizational levels in trying to find “rational” explanations or solutions to it. Worse even, some flagrant cases of wasted energy, trying to lift up defensive mechanisms at various levels which lead to avoid dealing with deep issues. In January 2010, while reviewing the project planning and team members with my supervisor and discussing the best way to approach it, he passed me the article “How to have an honest conversation about your business strategy”. While listening to how this approach could have been integrated with the ORA exercise, I thought about Harry Levinson’s book on organizational assessment, and how the structured questionnaire could have served our objective well. By the end of the meeting, I asked my supervisor if I could lead this project, with the intention to personally take the responsibility for starting the journey even if only to “bridge the gap between idea and action” One of the first things I recall doing was going back and reading the chapter dedicated to the role of the Internal Consultant\(^{16}\). The first three lines written in the paragraph about the internal consultant role were pretty discouraging: due to his vast experience no internal member of an organization could be sufficiently separate to take an objective view when driving this type of change initiative. This consideration struck me as very realistic and the first thought was what could be done to mitigate this risk? On the other hand, this


\(^{16}\) Harry Levinson - Organizational Assessment A step by step guide to effective consulting – Ethical Problems and Consulting guidelines (p. 37)
idea was in contrast with the one presented in the article\(^\text{17}\) where on the contrary the sustained hypothesis was that interviews by external consultants typically do not move the organization forward. They do not convince employees that management wants to know the truth. I felt that both hypotheses on how to approach change contained elements to consider and my idea was to find a way to blend these perspectives. The way which interviewers were paired up (persons with distant views on how the organization was doing, or a person with a specific view paired up with a person from a support function) was the way utilized to mitigate the risk of the internal consultant role not being able to report things objectively. In the experience here described, this approach mitigated the risk well, which was indeed shown to be strong during the unfolding of the project. One example among others is the fact that during the two team meetings in preparation of the fishbowl presentation, there were moments where some findings were pushed forward with evident weak systemic evidence. Apart from my interventions questioning this way of proceeding every time it seemed to put the quality of outcome at risk, we tried to be very cautious in building the framework of the project (five pairs of interviewer reporting their systemic view). This allowed the entire team to question and challenge any statement that was made far from what they heard or observed during their interviews. During the last CCC module, the opportunity given to present this project case to the class was extremely valuable. Indeed this personal case presentation was one of the most enlightening and important moments of the program; it represented a positive step toward self-discovery (Kets De Vries & Korotov, 2007). In the following pages the entire number of free associations that were provided to me after the case presentation will be reported, in order to allow a description of the impact they had on my self-awareness which in turn helped me to modify effectively some aspects of my behavior in managing the team. I would also like to empirically evaluate and reflect on how strong the link was between these free associations and the organizational environment I was facing.

\(^{17}\) How to have an open and honest conversation about your business strategy (Beer & Eisenstat, 2004)
Free Associations: Coliseum in Rome: we will; I saw Dino: you reciting a Drama

Tragedy and people are watching, people putting on masks; fishbowl with emotions and limited space. The moment you started to draw the setting, I saw two groups, you looking at the people, the ten people not being able to see board members, no contact. A number of puzzles that don’t fit. Steam train, you are the driver, but you know the track finishes but you don’t care. I saw someone determined to shake the organization like a virus. Personal cause. You linking back to childhood, asking your parents “what do I do?”. They answering... just do it. Perhaps a game you did not play as a child; separation lines, circle; you and your boss...I thought of Icarus and Dideros the guy that jumps from the cliff – he jumps and falls into the sea (Board the sea; you: Icarus; CCC: Dideros); Thought: primary risk/primary task; feeling what strikes me is the impression: torpedoes full steam ahead, my fantasy: body language of Giovanni: damn the torpedoes full steam ahead; Russian roulette, deadly game. This is the second time you share a case, there is a message because of the timing you shared. I was James Dean A rebel without a cause A boomerang; where is Giovanni’s painting? The guy with the boomerang/ in the picture there is a sword; impression of risk taking, behavior of a school boy doing a science project. Playing with fire because it can explode, uncontrolled experiment, risky. I saw an open kitchen, clients enter the kitchen, the cooking process takes too long, food is ready; we are not hungry anymore... we will just eat the scrimps and the rest goes to the trash. I thought he is courageous to do this. My impression, he must get what he wants (you have power), though, as I was trying to understand I got back; I did feel the sense of you; I couldn’t experience you while you were talking; three words dangerous, unsafe, rethink. I felt a lot of anxiety; my anxiety is related to what extent people understand their exposure. Can you relate to people who do care; new process and delicate issues, I wonder why you do not use one of us in the market; Town hall meeting in the simulation, I was listening and panicked, three associations (paint running, a man in a mask, marketplace man with glasses); I felt the anxiety, I saw you carrying a heavy weight; you want to take something out from CCC; I see sadness and
anxiety in your breathing; I was thinking are you connected to this group? Are you playing a game? I felt discomfort, people being killed for a cause, I don’t care…”. These counter-transference\(^\text{18}\) elements enabled me almost immediately afterwards to steer my personal reflections on questions such as: Am I really driving this project as a personal cause? Am I connecting to people in the team the way I should? Am I not playing like a kid in a sandbox in leading this project? The reflection on these questions drove me to change some specific traits of my behavior and increase my awareness during the course of the project. In the graph that follows (figure 11), the team members’ evaluation of my performance as Project leader is reported. These data are useful to verify ex-post if my hypothetical behavioral changes occurred in reality after the counter-transference session and if so, to what degree it was perceived. \textbf{Figure 11}

Analyzing the overall results, it appears that the team did perceive me to be connected on more levels. These good results are to ascribe, to a very large extent to the self-reflection that came after presenting the case. Looking at the dimensions that scored the lowest, these were related to

---

\(^{18}\) In a therapy context, \textit{transference} refers to redirection of a patient’s feelings for a significant person to the therapist. Transference is often manifested as an erotic attraction towards a therapist, but can be seen in many other forms such as rage, hatred, mistrust, extreme dependence, or even placing the therapist in a god-like or guru status. \textit{Counter transference} is defined as redirection of a therapist’s feelings toward a patient, or more generally, as a therapist’s emotional entanglement with a patient. A therapist’s attunement to their own counter transference is nearly as critical as understanding the transference. Not only does this help therapists regulate their emotions in the therapeutic relationship, but it also gives therapists valuable insight into what patients are attempting to elicit in them.
my ability to defend the team and influence the key stakeholders. One of the recurrent themes of the free associations was the high risk behind the design and content of this initiative.

Considering that the project was already approved and hence could not be modified, I considered the report presentation as being the part of the plan with the highest stakes and risks. Pondering over this issue, Levinson refers to this phase as one of the most critical ones, suggesting that until an afternoon-evening-morning schedule is arranged no feedback should be given. Unfortunately, due to the tight timeline we had, this flow was only possible for one of the sponsors (our MD was in the US for a meeting the entire week). The fact that the communication to the MD had to be made delegating to the other sponsor turned out to be a major “blind spot” in my managing the project. It has certainly been the only completely blind one, but its implications were important during the fishbowl presentation, the most risky situation of the entire project.

Reflecting today on the potential reasons behind this missing of a crucial step, the first thought that arises is the following free association received during the last CCC. I quote: “Feeling: What strikes me is the impression: torpedoes full steam ahead, my fantasy : body language of Giovanni : damn the torpedoes full steam ahead.

This brief reflection on how free associations helped me to positively modify my own behavior in leading the project allows me to conclude that this has been by far one of the most important aspects learned.
CHAPTER 4: PROJECT OUTCOMES AND POSSIBLE LINKS WITH A CONCEPTUAL MODEL FOR MANAGED CULTURE CHANGE

4.1 Introduction

The current thesis was an interpretative case study. Since the aim of interpretative research is not to uncover facts or to realize accurate models, but rather to describe and to increase understanding of the phenomena under consideration (BABBIE & MOUTON, 2001) its results are always partially subjective and open to different interpretations. In this chapter, the aim is to retrace the key steps of this initiative, trying to explore potential connections with two conceptual models one based on the Psychosocial Dynamics of transformative organizational change (Schein, 2004) and the other one linked with the Adaptive leadership theory that tries to understand the relationship among leadership, adaptation, systems and change (HEIFETZ, 2009) with a practical approach.

4.2 Psychosocial Dynamics of this Change Initiative

All human systems attempt to maintain equilibrium and to maximize their autonomy vis-à-vis their environment. Coping, growth and survival all involve maintaining the integrity of the system confronted to a changing environment that is constantly causing varying degrees of disequilibrium. The function of cognitive structures such as concepts, beliefs, attitudes, values and assumption is to organize the mass of environmental stimuli, to make sense of them, and to thereby provide a sense of predictability and meaning to the individual (Schein, 2004). Keeping in mind this conceptual definition of all human systems, the way the strategic fitness process is designed has deeply touched and challenged most of these cognitive structures (values, assumptions, beliefs). The fishbowl presentation and its dynamic, the organizational assessment done with the key objective to identify the organizational “pain”, the
ORA exercise and its focus on listening and understanding, has represented for the organization a real moment of disequilibrium. Lewin called the creation of such disequilibrium unfreezing (Lewin, 1947). Schein’s analysis of the unfreezing moment is composed of three very different processes, each of which must be present to a certain degree for the system to develop any motivation to change. Enough disconfirming data to cause serious discomfort and disequilibrium, the connection of the disconfirming data to important goals and ideals causing anxiety and/or guilt. Enough psychological safety, in the sense of being able to see a possibility of solving the problem and learning something new without loss of identity.

Based on the evidence of the project dynamic described in this paper, these three processes were all present. If we take Schein’s definition of disconfirming data, there are many items of information that show the organization that some of its goals are not being met. Following this definition, the fishbowl presentation as discussed in paragraph 3.2 contained much disconfirming data, most of which linked with important goals and ideals. In this light, it is possible to frame and find a fitting explanation for the observed anxiety within and outside the team, during the course of the project and right after the final presentation. Schein, going ahead in describing these processes, underlines that disconfirmation (and its attendant survival anxiety) does not by itself automatically produce a motivation to change. Rationalization or denial of the anxiety and guilt will rather be activated as soon as the potential change implies some threat to the more basic sense of identity that the group feels. After the final presentation to the board, the fear that this reaction could have been a possible outcome of our effort was very strong. Fortunately, this fear has been disconfirmed by the implementation plan and strong commitment and energy shown by all company members involved in the movement towards organizational change since September. These last points connect well with the need to have enough psychological safety as a necessary condition for the unfreezing moment. In our case the transition from an anxiety/guilt state to feeling as an organization enough psychological safety was guaranteed by a strong visionary leadership. Analyzing the eight
necessary conditions presented by Schein to create the needed psychological safety, my attempt is reconcile them critically with our endeavors of the recent past and of today.

1. A compelling positive vision. The targets of change must believe that the organization will be better off if they learn the new way of thinking and working. Such a vision must be articulated and widely held by senior management. Following the fishbowl presentation, in presenting the new business model to the organization in July and September our senior management has systematically acknowledged and communicated the findings of the project. This behavior has guaranteed a concrete connection with the organization, helping a more effective communication on the vision behind this new model.

2. Formal Training. If the new way of working requires new knowledge and skill, members must be provided with the necessary formal and informal training. For example, if the new way of working requires teamwork, then formal training on team building and maintenance must be provided. Since September a comprehensive training plan has been designed and implemented for all new roles. The training contains technical courses linked with the new competencies requested by the role as well as more managerial trainings where the new way of working and set of behavior requested are communicated.

3. Involvement of the learner. If the formal training is to take hold, the learners must have a sense that they can manage their own informal training process, practice, and method of learning. On this particular point, it clearly emerged during the organizational assessment that the company has been very active and effective, even before this change initiative. Also in the case of this initiative all training modules are based on the involvement of the learner.

4. Informal training of relevant “family” groups and teams. Because, cultural assumptions are embedded in groups, informal training and practice must be provided to whole groups so that new
norms and new assumptions can be jointly built. This specific point is now covered with a project called Account Management Excellence. All relevant groups and teams are exposed to intensive training on team working, project management, accountability in non hierarchical lines, importance of common objectives and so on.

5. Practice Fields, coaches and feedback. Learners cannot learn something fundamentally new if they don’t have the time, the resources, the coaching, and valid feedback on how they are doing. This is an aspect, like in the case of point three, which the organization has taken into consideration and has been working effectively on for a long time.

6. Positive role models. The new way of thinking and behaving may be so different from what learners are used to that they may need to be able to see what it looks like before they can imagine themselves doing it. Reflecting on this element at the present moment, it appears that this is a critical point which needs more organizational attention. Outside formal team events and sessions, the attempt to go back to old behaviors is still very strong and even if a systematic effort is put in place to contain and avoid this, this could well be an obstacle to achieve the needed behavioral change.

7. Support groups in which learning problems can be aired and discussed. Learners need to be able to talk about their frustrations and difficulties in learning with others who are experiencing similar difficulties so that they can support each other and jointly learn new ways of dealing with the difficulties. Thinking about our actual situation, it might be convenient to enlarge the scope of this point, including the possibility to have a dedicated space where the roles impacted by the new organizational model, will have fixed moments where potential issues, frustrations, anxieties (linked with the new way of working) will be discussed and solved constructively. The organization is currently planning team coaching sessions, which will be guaranteed at least for the two new teams that represent the heart of the new business model.
ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL ROLE ANALYSIS: A COMPANY APPLICATION

8. A reward and discipline system and organizational structures that are consistent with the new way of thinking and working. For example, if the goal of the change initiative is to learn how to be more of a team player, the reward system must be group oriented, the discipline system must punish individually selfish behavior, and the organizational structures must make it possible to work as a team. One of the work streams running at the moment is precisely related to the design of the reward system for the matrix organization. Despite the evidence on how this process could really drive the needed team work, being a team member of this work stream, I have to acknowledge that the drives not to move away from a traditional individual reward system are quite unabashed. The group oriented reward option is still under discussion, but potentially it could be another important step that might, if not solved in the right direction (the one articulated in the vision), sorely damage the journey toward a real cultural change. Reflecting on the eight steps needed for the creation of psychological safety for organizational members, and bearing in mind the case presented, one may quite safely conclude, after this link with what is being done currently, that the organizational leadership has moved concretely in the direction of creating this space. This fact implies that the work done to overcome the potential risk of repressing and denying the truth of the disconfirming data emerged after the project closure, has been an effective one. The hypothesis that a change agent or team has to produce disconfirmation data in order to activate a real cultural change is in line, then, with Schein’s view that some sense of threat, crisis must be present before enough motivation is present to start the process of unlearning and relearning (Schein, 2004).

4.3: Adaptive Leadership Framework: An alternative theory to critically “read” this change initiative and its outcomes

Adaptive leadership is a framework that has been developed since 1994 and its content grew starting from the effort to understand in practical ways the relationship among leadership, adaptation, system and change. Adaptive leadership is the practice of mobilizing people to tackle tough challenges and thrive. The concept of thriving is drawn from evolutionary biology, in which
A successful adaptation has three characteristics: 1) It preserves the DNA essential for the species continued survival; 2) It discards (reregulates or rearranges) the DNA that no longer serves the species current needs; and 3) it creates DNA arrangements that give the species the ability to flourish in new ways and in more challenging environments (HEIFETZ, 2009).

Adaptive leadership is specifically about change that enables the capacity to thrive. Revisiting this specific initiative under the lens of adaptive leadership theory it represents a real organizational case to thrive under challenging circumstances, rather than perish or worse regress. Two years later, not all the findings of course generated the needed organizational change, but some relevant ones (i.e. the need to be more competitive with the fast paced evolving pharmaceutical scenario) did and they represent today a real example on how this concept of thriving works. Some factual signs of this thriving culture could be found in the positive evolution of the Market Access Index for Janssen Italy since 2010 shown below (figure 12) (2010 Rank 12th; 2012 7th).

![Figure 12](image-url)

Successful adaptive changes build on the past rather than jettison it. One of the project’s objectives was to “learn” from the past re organizations in order to revisit and modify in case of

---

19 The index is a value expressed by the customer that combines three Factors: Leadership; Ethics; Relationship on the different pharmaceutical companies he is interacting with.

The market research agency is Doxapharma part of the Win-Gallup Association [http://www.doxa.it/Chi-siamo/network](http://www.doxa.it/Chi-siamo/network)
necessity the new model that in a few months would have been launched. According to this hypothesis any successful adaptation should be conservative and progressive. Analyzing the overall outcomes coming from this initiative these “conservative” and “progressive” behaviors can be found. A sign of progressive behaviors can be found in the decision to implement the Regional Team model; this was a decision taken after the assessment. The positive results achieved shown (figure 12) can provide an idea of the “value” of these progressive behaviors in the market place. An example of the “conservative” behaviors instead could be well represented by the company decision not to reward the team activity; this decision might be connected with the fear of losing control and power while transitioning the company structure from pure hierarchy to an hybrid model (matrix).

**Organizational adaptation occurs through experimentation.**

According to this theory, in biology, reproduction is an experiment: it rapidly produces variations-along with high failure rates. The assumption is that in Organizations the process is similar. Global pharmaceutical giants for example must be willing to lose money in failures to find the next profitable medicine. Linking this third characteristic to this specific initiative the “experimental” mindset was there since the beginning. Apart from the three guiding concepts (assessment, organizational role analysis and fish-bowl) everything else described in this paper was all about learning and improvising as we moved along with the activities.

**Adaptation relies on diversity**

In evolutionary biology, nature acts as a fund manager, diversifying risk. Each conception is a variant, producing an organism with capacities somewhat different from the rest of the population. By diversifying the gene pool, nature markedly increases the odds that some members of the species will have the ability to survive in a changing ecosystem. Looking at the project also under this
aspect the concept of diversity is present in many areas: 1) The opening to this new approach to drive change -from pure left brain company culture and language to a more blended approach (right and left) 2) fishbowl technique in order to foster “active listening” and reflection 3) ORA approach to foster understanding and learning about real and recurrent problems faced by people

New adaptations significantly displace, reregulate, and rearrange some old DNA.

By Analogy, leadership on adaptive challenges generates loss. Learning is often painful. One person’s innovation can cause another person to feel irrelevant. Leadership requires the diagnostic ability to recognize those losses and the predictable defensive patterns of response that operate at the individual and systemic level as well as knowing how to counteract these patterns. This specific aspect could be well considered the “weakest” part of the present project. Despite the successful project and important outcomes the lack of precision in predicting as well as efficiently counteracting the defensive behaviors emerged during the fishbowl did produce antibodies against the team, the leader and the findings brought to the surface.

Adaptation takes time

Most biological adaptations that greatly enhance a species’ capacity to thrive unfold over thousands, even millions, of years. Progress is radical over time yet incremental in time. This last element highlights the importance of time. Organizations in fact take time to consolidate into new sets of norms and processes. The chance to write after two years since the closure of this initiative seems to confirm also in this specific case the assumption that significant change is the product of incremental experiments that build up over time. The projects’ outcomes and the actions taken as well as the positive evolution of the Market Access Index since 2010 seems to confirm the above hypothesis that progress is radical over time yet incremental in time.
4.4 Conclusion

The main attempt of the present paper was to demonstrate that more awareness on the mechanisms that allow the integration of right brain and left brain (table 1) can lead to more effective and healthy organizational changes, through the step by step unrolling of a real project taken as case study.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEFT BRAIN FUNCTIONS</th>
<th>RIGHT BRAIN FUNCTIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>uses logic</td>
<td>uses feeling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>detail oriented</td>
<td>big picture oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>facts rule</td>
<td>imagination rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>words and language</td>
<td>symbols and images</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>present and past</td>
<td>present and future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>math and science</td>
<td>philosophy &amp; religion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>can comprehend</td>
<td>can &quot;get it&quot; (i.e. meaning)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>knowing</td>
<td>believes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>acknowledges</td>
<td>appreciates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>order/pattern perception</td>
<td>spatial perception</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>knows object name</td>
<td>knows object function</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reality based</td>
<td>fantasy based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>forms strategies</td>
<td>presents possibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>practical</td>
<td>impetus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>safe</td>
<td>risk taking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In chapter 1, a high level introduction about the Italian Health system and the most important external shifts occurred in recent years were described, highlighting in particular the evolution toward more complexity in terms of decision makers involved in the health system. It was then analyzed and explained how these outside events influenced the organizational changes implemented in the last decade. As a consequence of these organizational adaptations, an overview of the major methodologies used within the company to reinforce this transition was given. It was then pointed out how these wide organizational initiatives to support the needed change were pure cognitive methodologies; underlying how these approaches were working on a conceptual model that implied that the desired behavior would have been generated as a consequence of the rational approach used. This last point was the background that saw the birth of the change project described in this paper. In order to better understand the approach used, a first helicopter view on the methodology was given. The nine steps of the strategic fitness process were
described, adding for each phase a short snapshot on what was done concretely during the project. The last chapter was dedicated to introduce the “unconscious” factors that can block or derail change initiatives within organizations linked with the wider and more systemic “unspoken” issue of affecting the health and pharmaceutical sector. **In chapter 2**, the approach and the questionnaire used for the organizational assessment were reviewed in detail and the way chosen to communicate the findings to the leadership team through the fishbowl setting, with the aim to empower listening and reflection. Integrated with these two methodologies a comprehensive space was given to the explanation of the theory behind the Organizational Role Analysis and how this methodology was tightly linked with our project goals. The last section was dedicated to explain the approach used to manage the team, introducing the Tuckman model as a frame used to predict team development.

The theory of unconscious processes in groups as investigated by Wilfred Bion was then presented. The aim was to provide another alternative level of reading a team’s dynamics that can be integrated and used, in order to improve the quality of any change initiative. **Chapter 3** was entirely dedicated to present the results of the Organizational Assessment and ORA exercise. A comprehensive overview on how we carried out the project and its consequent findings was given; it was shown how these two aspects were the unleash factor that activated the wide organizational effort to overcome the emerging criticalities. A specific part was then dedicated to explain the use of the free associations gathered during the case presentation. It was illustrated how they were applied as a mean of self reflection and awareness that as a consequence produced a change in my behavior toward the team and the project. An analysis to measure ex-post the effectiveness of this change was provided. **Chapter 4** was devoted to retracing the key phases of the project to explore potential connections with two of the main conceptual model based on Psychosocial Dynamics of transformative, organizational change developed by Schein and the theory of Adaptive Leadership by Ronald Heifets. The concept of the unfreezing moment in the processes of disconfirming data, connection of these data to important goals/ideals and psychological safety was delved into. The same approach was followed with the Adaptive Leadership concepts capacity to thrive, changes built on the past,
the use of experimentation, the importance of diversity, displacement, reregulate and rearrangement and time. The aim was to compare two different models that can be used to interpret organizational change initiatives and empirically evaluate which one could better fit with the way the project was managed and its outcomes.

4.5 Limitations

The current thesis was an interpretative case study and its results are by definition partially subjective and open to different interpretations.

4.6 Future Research

This case study has been an attempt to apply psychodynamic concepts to a real company case with the aim to help the organizational leadership to gather deeper understanding on the organizational “pain” and try new methodologies to increase trust and collaboration between new roles and traditional ones. Elements such as role analysis, team work and team dynamics, matrix structure and leadership have been central themes in this paper. Reflecting on the type of changes that the pharmaceutical industry will face in the next five to ten years it would be extremely interesting to explore the functioning of networks where cells are held together by the web. Questions for research could refer to the factors that mainly influence their effectiveness, how decisions get made and if clarity of purpose is more important than trust. A second line of research linked with “web networks” could investigate how power and politics function and what the relationship of virtual leader and followers is.
In Broken Images

He is quick, thinking in clear images;

I am slow, thinking in broken images.

He becomes dull, trusting his clear images;

I become sharp, mistrusting my broken images,

Trusting his images, he assumes their relevance;

Mistrusting my images, I question their relevance.

Assuming their relevance, he assumes the fact,

Questioning their relevance, I question the fact.

When the fact fails him, he questions his senses;

When the fact fails me, I approve my senses.

He continues quick and dull in his clear images;

I continue slow and sharp in my broken images.

He in a new confusion of his understanding;

I in a new understanding of my confusion.

Robert Graves
ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL ROLE
ANALYSIS: A COMPANY APPLICATION

References:


