

# DRAGON

## DRAGON is the SCOS journal,

so that it will deal mainly with the subject of Organisation Symbolism. It will give priority to articles – case-studies or theoretical expositions – which consider the organisation as a human and social group within which we see the development of phenomena outside the precincts of classical systems analysis; beliefs, myths, rites, heroes, sagas, and so on. These new concepts usually coincide with the introduction to organisation study of disciplines formerly remote from it: linguistics, history, psychoanalysis, anthropology, etc.

## DRAGON publishes working papers,

consonant with a research area that is constantly evolving and which emerged simultaneously in several different conceptual "broths". Its aim is the rapid circulation of concepts and factual material. An important goal is to assist in formulating a common approach to the organisation enabling comparison between different cultural perceptions. At a later stage, DRAGON will provide other services: lectureship invitations, researcher exchanges (working and living accommodations to accompany research assignments), and so on.

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DRAGON EST REPRODUIT PAR L'ECOLE POLYTECHNIQUE (FRANCE)  
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## EDITORIAL

Vincent Degot, my good friend and the DRAGON's father, has asked me to write an editorial for this issue. He thinks that I, being the current editor of NOTE-WORK, might have experience to share and good advice to offer on how to raise this strange animal.

NOTE-WORK and the DRAGON are similar animals in at least one respect: they are "wild" animals. By design they do not aspire to become institutionalized media for promoting the careers of the contributors. Rather they are meant as a media for the early exchange of information on on-going research in the network, and for lively debate and feedback on the issues raised by the various papers. Unfortunately, it is generally more rewarding to learn about what others are doing than it is informing about one's own activity. Likewise it is generally more rewarding to receive than to give feedback. Thus, we may as well expect that the natural habitat of DRAGONS is full of "free-riders" - by intent or more likely by default due to lack of time and discipline. (I am here talking from my own experience as a would-be contributor more than as an editor). Still, also a DRAGON feeds only on papers submitted for publication. The meager diet of the DRAGON is probably provided by: a few idealists, who volunteer to have their papers eaten first, realizing that if nobody does there will be no DRAGON along; and the spiritualists, who believe that after having had their papers printed eternal silence will not ensue.

Everyone knows that fat DRAGONS have more fun than skinny ones. Maybe the natural habitat of the DRAGON will prove to be too much of a desert. Some engineering by the Father-in-Chief might then be in order. What could he do?

He might try to domesticate the DRAGON, i.e., to bring it into line with the ordinary journals. He would then have to insist on impeccable procedures for reviewing and selecting methodologically sound and theoretically full-fledged pieces of work. He would

probably also be required to change the name - something like "International Journal of Corporate Culture and Management" sounds more appropriate. In this way, the DRAGON might grow fat, but it would be no fun to watch!

Alternatively, he might change the DRAGON into a parasite living on the free-riders' conference papers. This may already be happening since the infant DRAGON has fed exclusively on papers presented at previous SCOS conferences. Such fast-food for DRAGONS has attractive features, not least for the feeder. However, in the longer run the nutritional value of this will probably prove to be too low.

Then perhaps it is better to turn the DRAGON into a beast of prey - actively snaring people into committing themselves personally to produce original contributions. The field of organizational symbolism is obviously full of prey. All it takes to entrap it is perhaps a personal "push". In my own experience, few ever responded on my repeated, general calls for contributions to NOTE-WORK, and few led me down when I specifically requested a contribution from them. If that would also be the case for the DRAGON's editor, the animal would grow and thrive - the only risk being that due to the workload the editor might get eaten up in the process.

We are many who will eagerly watch the DRAGON as it develops, and who believe in its mission and future. Our passivity does not signal lack of interest: we know that it would be rational for us to be active contributors, but that we - like Ulysses - show weakness of will. Therefore, help us attain at least an imperfect rationality by tying us to the tail of the DRAGON. The way you snared me into writing this editorial might be a modus operandi.

In the meantime, Vincent, drag on with the DRAGON and keep smiling.

Kristian Kreiner

## SUSCRIPTIONS

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# 1. IDENTITY. THE INDIVIDUAL AS A PARADIGM.

Philosophically, identity can be defined as "that which is identical to the self."

There is a correlation among:

- the being
- the entity (its essence and unity) and
- identity (sum and synthesis of essence and appearance as perceptible uniqueness)

BEING + ENTITY = IDENTITY (unique and identical to the self)

Identity is that which makes a being perceptible and memorizable as unique (identical to the self), and, consequently, different from other individuals. Identity is the dialectics of difference.

Insofar as the individual is identifiable, memorizable and enounceable by the other individuals of a community, the latter become subjects of communication.

In the context of corporate communication, identity does not exist as an essence but as an object. There is identification, which is the instantaneous act of perceiving and recognizing, performed by the receptor. By means of this act the notion of "identity" emerges in his/her consciousness. Identity and the act of identifying are experienced indissociably in a single perceptive instant. In this way two different things are confused in a single thing: perception and what is perceived. It is an essentially integrating act.

Now whenever, axiomatically, what is identified is "identical to itself" - in essence and appearance - for the receptor what is perceived is the real thing. Therefore, identity is not a representation of another absent thing, but the very present thing.

Thus, insofar as the identity of an individual is a gestalt that is essentially unique and perceptible as a whole, it is also re-presentable, or "presented again," through the artifice of an image (silhouette, profile, drawing, caricature, painting, photograph, holograph). Let's leave this subject here and take it up again later.

## 2. IDENTITY AND COMPLEXITY. THE BUSINESS ORGANIZATION.

If we go on now to communication of corporate identity in institutions and organizations, three essential factors can be highlighted:

- a) the principle of structural complexity, implicit in every heterogeneous organization,
- b) the principle of the conventionalization of identity in a system of signs,
- c) the principle of symbolic functionalization as a communicational pragmatic factor of identity.

### 2.1. Structural Complexity

Contrary to an individual, in every social organization - to the extent that it is a set of individuals and things - there is necessarily plurality, structural division, complexity, dispersion and discontinuity.

Confronting the philosopher's "I and here", as a concretion of the being (I) in a precise place (here), there is in the organization an "us and in many places." It is a question of this abstract set of diverse "organs": their components, hierarchical system and roles; their financial resources, facilities and possessions; their actions and interrelationships - all spread throughout space/time. In sum, the "organization" (where the productive articulation of this set of elements, by nature broken up, is the object of the creation of a functional relation).

This multiple characteristic, which is in the nature of every human organization, makes it difficult to imagine as a whole, and not at all presentable and representable as a whole.

### 2.2. Functional Complexity

The company is a dynamic being that generates a considerable flow of activity, similarly complex, through its production and intermediaries as well as by its physical and communicational extensions - its ubiquity - through the distribution of its products through sales outlets, the mass of information it emits, messages broadcast through the mass media and the transnational scope reached by the expansion of the company itself.

The complexity is therefore twofold: in internal and external structure. Products, actions and messages, multiplied by spaces plus times and divided by the coefficient of access, constitute the basic equation of this immense field of dispersion. All these elements in dispersion are - or should be - identity bearers. And this identity must necessarily be made explicit in a single, unique communicable form. This is the way to shape a whole in the mind of the public.

### 2.3. Complexity of the social environment

The company is a system, in the cybernetic sense of the term, embedded in another larger system: the social system or, more accurately, "the community."

The receptor universe external to the organization - the social field - is in turn a diverse, heterogeneous macro-set of publics. These can be characterized and typified in subsets, each definable by its peculiar system of interests (motivations) and "values" (cultural, economic, moral, etc.). It is precisely because of its insertion in this composite of "publics" that the company has a public life, public action, a public image and is exposed to public opinion.



Thus a private universe is found, indissociably, in interaction with another external universe: a public environment.

Superimposed on this essential complexity is a further dispersion factor inherent in our culture of the masses: the mode of perception and knowledge, so highly disordered and random. It is a "mosaic" process which constitutes a multiple, atomized - and especially overabundant - form of fragmentary, superficial and essential heterogeneous perceptions.

This process is complicated when the company expands its activities into the marketplaces of other continents, where ethnic, cultural and linguistic peculiarities multiply communication barriers, thus introducing new dissociation factors.

For all these reasons, the company must, as we have already mentioned, make its essential discontinuity and complexity explicit in a coherent, communicable form of its identity.

Furthermore, the greater complexity and variety of its social environment, and the conditions under which the company will be identified, require for this explicitness a single, universal language of synthesis.

Let's bear in mind the conclusions of these three sections.

### 3. CORPORATE IDENTITY, A SYSTEM OF SIGNS

Man is an intrinsic organic unity. The company is an artificially organized union.

If a company then cannot become present as a single whole, consequently, its identity cannot be represented. Company monographs, economic reports, corporate balance sheets, product catalogs and filmed reports, even if they are put together to add up to overall information, can offer no more than an "image" of the company, made up of fragments. But

they cannot represent a "gestalt totality" of the organization, perceptible and identifiable all at once and in a multi-faceted fashion - neither for the different separate elements that make up the company nor for itself as a whole.

Corporate identity can only be designated, signified, synthesized, symbolized.

The first identity sign is the name of the organization, a verbal sign (as opposed to an individual, whose first identity sign is the self). The name is the only truly inter-communicable identity sign: the Word, as the means of human communication par excellence. All other corporate identity signs are based on the name and will be verbalized - even when they are not verbal - by this name.

The second identity sign is the written transposition of the verbal name, characterized by specific graphics that take the form and/or functions of the logotype or "verbal trademark."

The third identity sign is a graphic sign, an iconic form: the symbol itself or "graphic trademark."

The final identity sign is an optical sign, particularly emotional: the emblematic color or "chromatic trademark."

These four classes of signs become a system because of the fact that:

- a) they are articulated with each other and are applied according to rules in the formulation of corporate identity;
- b) as a whole they appeal to the different psycho-visual registers of the receptor:
  - the logotype is linguistic in nature; it is a denoting factor, one of designation, and acts at the semantic level;
  - the symbol is graphic and signal in nature and is highly connotated; it has a function of impact and acts at the esthetic level;

- the corporate color is physical in nature; it is a fascination factor and acts at the emotional level of feeling.

### 3.1. Conventionalization of Identity

A symbol is a conventional sign that makes those abstract concepts and ideas communicable which are not visually representable. The conventional relationship of the symbol to what is symbolized is therefore essentially different from the analogical relation of the representation with what is represented.

The content and form of corporate identity signs vary enormously and there is not always consistency between them. In this conventionalization (which is the task of the conceptualist/visualist) the content is often more or less symbolic, i.e., it signifies ideas and attributes in relative degrees of polysemy. Other times it is more immediate and no longer takes attributes but objects as reference (products and things associated with them), or mythological or fantastic figures (visual metaphors) or emblems, like the flag (for example in airlines).

The form similarly ranges from a heraldic origin to the extreme in signs and from proximal visual rhetoric to allegory, going from levels of iconicity to abstraction.

### 4. TOWARD A "SIGNALIZING SYMBOLOGY" OF CORPORATE IDENTITY

All these conceptual and graphic variants of corporate identity signs are profusely applied by companies, institutions and groups of all types and sizes, from large multinational groups to small neighborhood shops. Thus a world of signs has grown up - not always justified by a correct communication strategy - which is characterized by both its generalization and profusion, as well as by its formal redundancy. All this ultimately becomes insignificance and undifferentiation, exactly the opposite of the essence and function of "cor-

porate identity."

There is an abuse of signs with no symbolic or identifying content, which remain simple geometric shapes and mere "visual noise."

The causes, as we have already stated, are twofold:

- their symbolic emptiness
- their indiscriminate proliferation.

If one of the objectives of this "Conference" is the organization of symbolic communication systems, it will be necessary, in our opinion, to set forth and defend two conceptual and functional principles:

1. Corporate identity signs must be symbolic or they will not function to the fullest. That is to say, they must be bearers of psychological attributes relating to the company, its profound and overall personality.
2. On becoming functionalized, corporate identity signs must constitute a signaletic system. In other words, an automatic communication system by signals (in the sense of Charles Morris).

Only if all the determinism and energy accumulated in the forms of major social symbols are incorporated into corporate identity signs, and if we use them to create a signaletic communication strategy, will corporate identity function in the developed business world in a time marked by strong competition.

### 5. Practical Examples

Let us now look at a few cases that may illustrate our thesis of signaletic symbology.

Slide 1.

Indiscriminate profusion and formal redundancy are characteristics of logotypes and trademarks with no symbolic content.

#### Slide 2.

Former trademark of the Caja Insular de Ahorros de Canarias (savings bank), which was replaced in 1982 as a result of a general corporate communication program.

#### Slide 3.

This is the new symbol. The palm tree stands for fertility in the Canary Islands. "Guarapo," or palm juice, is extracted from it and its branches are used to make tools for everyday use. The palm tree is also a constant on the island landscape.

The symbolic palm tree is shaped by overlaying the mathematical signs for addition and multiplication (+ x).

Its seven branches correspond to the seven islands that make up the Canary Island archipelago.

#### Slide 4.

The vocation of the Banco Hispano Americano is represented in this old trademark: Columbus's route linking Spain with the American continent.

#### Slide 5.

The bank's symbol has evolved throughout the years, but the sphere remains in all its transformations.

With the implementation of a communication program in 1981, the bank wanted to incorporate the attributes corresponding to the institution's new phase in its symbolism.



slide 2



slide 3



slide 4



slide 5



slide 6



slide 7



slide 8

## Slide 6.

The new symbol of the Banco Hispano Americano is a schematic representation of the preceding symbols. From them it preserves the sphere and the idea of expansion expressed by the arrows crossed in both directions.

Thus innovation, modern technology, the bank's expansion and its universality are the attributes incorporated in this new bank symbol.

## Slide 7.

A major Spanish iron and steel concern, the Empresa Nacional de Siderurgia, presented itself in the fashion of the years when it was created, or what some critics have called "Francoist esthetics."

## Slide 8.

Currently, with the country's industrial reconversion, this company has adopted a new visual identity and a new name: the initials ENSIDESA.

This symbol is based on the emblem of the iron and steel industry - the converter and lance - and at the same time evokes the letter E, inclined in a progressive direction.

## Slide 9.

In 1974 the Banco Nacional de México underwent a substantial change with the incorporation of new financial marketing and a change of corporate name, which evoked the idea of a government-owned bank, although it was not.

The new name, Banamex, was also the name of the group. The Banamex Group includes and coordinates five financial institutions. Therefore the symbol contains five equal elements

in active coordination. The motif of these elements is taken from ancient Aztec engravings and signifies relationship or communication.

The corporate colors are also symbolic of Mexican culture.

## Slide 10.

The association of rural savings banks and the Banco de Crédito Agrícola (farm credit bank) have been recently created in Spain. The main purpose of this state-run bank is to aid in stabilizing a large number of rural savings banks that have suffered from deficient management.

Thus 64 rural savings bank and one commercial bank, whose common vocation is financing the agricultural sector, have been organized into a group which has become one of the country's major groups.

Its new symbol expresses agriculture in a basic symbol: wheat and union.

## Slide 11.

The Federación de Cajas de Ahorros Vasco-Navarras (Basque-Navarre Federation of Savings Banks) includes the eight savings banks of the Spanish Basque Country.

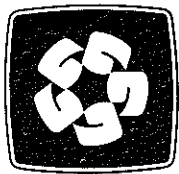
Its symbol intends to express the fabric created by these savings banks in their common task. Two vertical elements, two horizontal ones, two components slanting from left to right and two from right to left symbolically intertwine the solidary work of the eight savings banks.

## Slide 12.

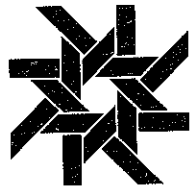
This is the symbol of the Banco de Bogotá, which was recently created in Colombia - last April.

The Banco de Bogotá is the country's leading bank, but up to now had no visual identity in accord with the idea of leadership.

The corporate colors are those of the Colombian flag.



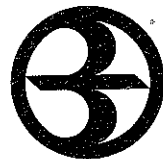
slide 9



slide 11



slide 10



slide 12

# LOOKING BACK: EXPERIENCES IN MINIMIZING RESEARCHER EFFECTS

Karen L. VINTON

## ABSTRACT

This paper examines the problems of researcher effects when using qualitative methodologies. Using the researcher's experiences, some guidelines are set forth for minimizing the bias which may result from researcher effects. A tool which the researcher developed for her study is also presented. Future researchers are cautioned to plan for researcher effects and are asked to share their research experiences with others.

## LOOKING BACK: EXPERIENCES IN MINIMIZING

### RESEARCHER EFFECTS

Recent years have seen an increase in the amount of qualitative research done by management researchers. For example, Administrative Science Quarterly dedicated one issue (December 1979) to issues surrounding qualitative research. The Journal of Management has specifically requested articles that use qualitative research. The Academy of Management has an interest group for research methods and has had paper sessions on qualitative research issues. The use of qualitative methods typically means that the researcher must interact with organizational participants, for example, through interviewing or observing. This leads to the researcher him/herself affecting the actual subjects of the research. Granted, the problem of researcher effects is crucial to all types of research, but it is most closely scrutinized when qualitative methods, such as participant observation, are used. Kerlinger stated that "the major problem of behavioral observation is the observer himself" (1973:538).

There are two major sources of bias when considering researcher effects: (1) the effects the researcher has on the behavior of the participants and organization and (2) the effects the participants and organization have on the researcher. As researchers, much of this is beyond our direct control. Researchers cannot make employees behave "naturally" (i.e. as if the researcher were not there). A researcher cannot look at an organization day after day, and continue to maintain the same fresh perspective as the first day the research began. However, researchers can try to control these biases and recognize when they are occurring in order to maximize the rigor of the research design. If the bias becomes uncontrollable, researchers have the obligation to recognize that and either scrap the results or clearly indicate these problems when reporting the results.

This article will first briefly review the experiences various researchers have had in dealing with this dilemma. Secondly, the author will describe her own experiences in dealing with researcher effects and will describe a tool which was developed to help aid in the control of these effects.

### DEALING WITH RESEARCHER EFFECTS

When researchers enter an organization, they bring certain preconceptions which may be compounded by the degree to which the researcher is an "insider" or "outsider" to the organization. Merton (1972) defined insiders and outsiders as follows: "Insiders are the members of specified groups and collectivities or occupants of specified social statuses; Outsiders are the nonmembers" (1972:21). In the pursuit of knowledge, Merton feels that researchers have often subscribed to either Insider doctrine or Outsider doctrine. The Insider doctrine means that you have to be a group member in order to understand that group. "One has monopolistic or privileged access to knowledge, or is wholly excluded from it, by virtue of one's group membership or social position" (1972:15). This doctrine also holds that "[the Outsider] no matter how careful and talented, is excluded in principle from gaining access to the social and cultural truth" (1972:15). Outsider doctrine, on the other hand, believes "that knowledge about groups, unprejudiced by membership in them, is accessible only to outsiders" (1972:31). Merton believes that neither approach is correct to the exclusion of the other. He calls for "Insiders and Outsiders in the domain of knowledge to unite" (1972:44).

The cumulative point of this variety of intellectual and institutional cases is not -- and this needs to be repeated with all possible emphasis -- is not a proposal to replace the extreme Insider doctrine by an extreme and equally vulnerable Outsider doctrine. The intent is, rather, to transform the original question altogether. We no longer ask whether it is the Insider or the Outsider who has monopolistic or privileged access to social truth; instead, we begin to consider their distinctive and interactive roles in the process of truth seeking (Merton, 1972:36).

Being an insider or an outsider has particular impact when using participant observation to study a group. Stephenson and Greer (1981) are two anthropologists who studied cultures with which they were familiar: Greer studied her home town, Stephenson studied a town in an area where he grew up. They found that familiarity with a culture led to economy in the discovery of cultural meanings because (1) less time was required to become acclimated to the culture; (2) the researcher could avoid superfluous questions; (3) it helped prevent misunderstandings (i.e. cultural faux pas); and (4) it was generally easier to enter the culture and establish rapport.

The four major disadvantages which Stephenson and Greer (1981) found in doing ethnographic research in a familiar setting dealt directly with issues concerning researcher effects, particularly how familiarity affects the researcher. First, familiarity with a culture can produce blindness (on the part of the researcher) to cultural patterns. Second, ordinary (at least the researcher perceives them as ordinary because of familiarity) happenings may be ignored and not recorded. These ordinary events may, in fact, be significant. Third, the role of researcher and the role of cultural member may conflict. Finally, if the researcher expects to have a continuing relationship with the culture studied, too much caution may be applied while conducting the study or writing the ethnography. They concluded, based upon their own experiences, that:

the principles underlying the problems and advantages identified are not any different from those encountered by ethnographers working in nonfamiliar cultures... Beneath their particular expressions in the familiar culture context lurk our old devil-friends bias, oversimplification, prior judgment, and the human inability to separate observation from feeling. Personally, we are willing to take the risks of familiarity in order to gain understanding (Stephenson and Greer, 1981:130).

Heilman (1980) also did research in a setting in which he was a member: his synagogue. He found that while there were problems in doing research where one is a familiar participant, there are also rewards. For example, one problem Heilman found was that some friendships became strained because of his role as a researcher. Yet his insider perspective provided him with the insights to examine links between ritual behavior and social status; something he felt an outsider never could have found.

...I have seen things available to no one else's eyes, but at the same time paid a price for my perspective. At times the price seems too high, while at other times -- particularly when I can stimulate others to think about the implications of what I have seen -- well worth it (Heilman, 1980:107).

In Van Maanen's (1982) research on police recruits he started as an outsider, but he was an active participant observer and went through the same activities as all new police recruits, becoming an insider as he progressed. Van Maanen states:

I believe I have learned to think like a cop, and yet I am able to stand back and critique that particular frame of reference as well as describe it. This is a curious state of mind and not at all characteristic of men and women I know in the police world who, of practical necessity, take for granted much of what I regard as unexpected fact. To suggest that I have become fully part of the police world or even to suggest I have come to understand it as the police themselves do would be a grave error. I do not have to live with the results of police action as my informants must. Ethnography involves participant observation, but observation is the governing term because no matter how far the researchers may move in the opposite direction, they remain outsiders who will eventually leave the field, write reports, and move on in ways quite different from those studied. The result is that fieldworkers, by moving in and out of a district social world, come to regard the factual validity of the informant's world as far more subjective or conjured than they do (Van Maanen, 1982:145).

## STUDYING YOUR FAMILY'S BUSINESS

I studied my family's business (through participant observation) as part of a study of organizational culture in small, family-owned businesses (Vinton, 1983). My decision to use my family's business was based primarily on two reasons. First, I could get access to this small closely held corporation. Second, as a stockholder and family member I could get access to information not readily available to outsiders in non-public corporations. The organization, QRS, Inc., was a small (17 employees) engineering and manufacturing firm. The problem of potential researcher effects seemed to be insurmountable due to the fact that I was a member of the owner's family, therefore, it was imperative that I carefully address these potential sources of bias. Four major steps were used in the study: evaluating preconceptions, designing the research, monitoring controls during the research, and maintaining controls during data analysis.

The first question which I raised was, "Do I have too many preconceived notions about QRS?" During an interview in which I recollected my thoughts about my family and QRS, I stated,

Business dealings were shielded from me as a child. We never talked much about the 'goings on' at work around the dinner table. I visited the shop a couple of times on the weekend. Usually when Dad had to go pick up a blueprint or something. I remember the shop on Park Avenue (the original location of the company). It was so dark and dingy... I remember visiting the current shop on Morris Road one year around Christmas time. It must have been when I was in college, because I flew into the airport, and my dad picked me up. We then returned to the shop for their Christmas party... Other than those times and a few times I met some of the people Dad worked with at home (i.e., Mom and Dad's 25th anniversary, my wedding), I never spent much time at the shop. The names I remember most were Hal, Ken, Dennis. I was probably a little more familiar with CGG, a division of QRS, because Andy was the husband of Mom's best friend and Paul (my brother) worked there too. I knew the receptionist, too, since she always answered the phone when I called Dad.

Evaluating one's own preconceptions is difficult so I discussed my feelings and knowledge about QRS with several colleagues. Based on these discussions, I concluded that my direct involvement with QRS was and had been minimal and that my familiarity with the company might even be an asset. One of my colleagues suggested that I try to identify all possible researcher effects which could occur. This I did, but I extended the analysis by determining what would be the outcomes of the various researcher effects. Each effect was related to potential negative and positive outcomes. The positive outcomes were listed with guidelines to help accentuate those outcomes; the negative outcomes were also listed with guidelines to control those effects. I displayed these issues and outcomes in a chart-like format which was used as a reference throughout the study (Figure 1.) Even though this chart was developed before any field work took place, items were added during the study. For example, a new employee started working for QRS during the second observation period. Item 8 in Figure 1 addresses what could happen if the research interfered with his socialization.

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Insert Figure 1 about here  
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The actual research design was also developed to help minimize researcher effect. Triangulation was used when collecting data: interviews, observations, and documents. Each source of data was compared to the other in order to help find variances due to the researcher. Document data was a non-reactive source of information about the organization and helped to assure that excessive bias in the observations and interviews had not occurred.

Another component of the research design was the timing of the fieldwork. The actual study had two separate observation periods. During the first period I tried to be especially cognizant of any serious researcher effects.



I was particularly concerned that I would be perceived as a spy (see Item 1, Figure 1). I was tested several times by various members of the organization. Their tests consisted of telling me something confidential and then seeing if I would betray their confidence by telling the owner or some other organization member. I was extremely careful to preserve confidentiality and as the organization members recognized this, they became more relaxed (and less cautious) around me. After the first observation period I, again, used colleagues to help "debrief" me. An initial comparison of the various types of data seemed to indicate that the researcher effects were not serious enough to consider changing the research site.

It was also important to implement some "controls" during the research. I used the chart as a guideline through the entire research period (including data analysis). Other controls included keeping a personal journal, taping interviews when possible, and conducting many of the interviews off-site. The journal was particularly helpful in recording my feelings and thoughts as the research progressed. My journal became my confidant during the fieldwork. I personally found that being a participant observer was a very lonely experience. I couldn't confide in my family about my experiences as the research progressed because they were subjects too. The research site was far away from friends and colleagues. When I wasn't observing at QRS, I was writing field notes, planning interviews, and examining documents. The journal provided an outlet for many unsaid feelings and comments. It helped to cleanse my mind so I could start each day with a fresh (relatively speaking) perspective. During data analysis, I could also refer to my journal in order to see if there were any parallels between my feelings and my observations.

The taping of interviews obviously helps to collect accurate data. I especially taped those interviews with family members. I felt, as an

interviewer, particularly susceptible to bias during those interviews. By taping (then transcribing) those interviews, I did not have to filter what I heard into notes. I had what was said verbatim. Another helpful technique was conducting as many of the interviews as possible off-site. Many of the employees had to leave the office to call on customers or run errands. I would travel with the employee and do the interview in the car or over lunch. This helped to avoid interruptions (a common occurrence at QRS) and to preserve the confidentiality of the interview. Finding private time with an employee was practically impossible at QRS's offices because only the owner had a private office.

Controls for researcher effects must continue into the data analysis phase of a study. The primary control I used was, again, dialoguing with colleagues. I had colleagues review my field notes and the results of my analysis in an effort to detect if any unseen bias (on my part) was creeping into the analysis. I also referred to my chart and journal. Were certain negative patterns appearing in the analysis? Did the data collected from documents, interviews and observations corroborate one another? Since all data cannot be reported, I carefully compared what I included in my study and what I did not. This analysis helped to reveal whether I was selectively including or excluding data which would be particularly favorable or unfavorable. For example, was I protecting my family by not reporting certain incidents? Was I being too harsh on my family by reporting everything? In the end, I was confident I had presented a balanced view of QRS because I had controlled for researcher effects throughout the study, from conception to publication.

#### CONCLUSION

If we, as researchers, are going to maintain rigor in our research, it is important to establish controls for researcher effects, especially when the

researcher interacts with the subjects. The most important insight gained from this researcher's experiences is to face potential problems before the research begins, then carefully design the study so researcher effects can be controlled.

It is impossible to eliminate research effects, unless one chooses a totally unobtrusive research design. However, in order to answer some of the research questions which face us today, unobtrusive measurements are typically impractical. I was aware that some researcher effects occurred during my study of QRS. Through informants, I know that the telling of off-color jokes disappeared when I started the study, but by the time I left, raunchy jokes were creeping back into the employees' joke repertoire.

I also know that QRS had an effect on me. I was slowly being socialized into the group. There were distinct parallels between what I observed occurring to the new employee and what was happening to me. By the end of the period I had a distinct role in the group, I could understand their lingo, I told jokes, I took my turn picking up lunch just like everyone else, and I had my "own" parking space. QRS even looked different to me. The office initially appeared as a mess to me, but by the end of my study, I could see that the mess had an order to it.

I don't believe the presence of researcher effects invalidates a study, rather it is something which can be controlled and recognized. Dealing with researcher effects can be instructive for the researcher. This was my first opportunity, since returning to academic life, to spend an extended period of time with a work group. Like Van Maanen (1982) stated previously, I could be both a member of a group and stand back and see the group. I found this a very different experience from being a full-time employee.

Finally, as management researchers explore new and different methodological horizons, we should share our research experiences as well as

our results. Reading the experiences of Van Maanen (1982), Stephensen and Greer (1981), Heilman (1980) and many others helped me become aware of researcher effects which I may have never considered. These researchers also helped to set a standard of rigor for my study. It's easy to do sloppy quantitative as well as qualitative research but there is some comfort when doing statistical work in knowing that a certain level of results will yield statistical significance. There are currently no such standards for qualitative research. There are, however, those researchers who share their experiences and help guide others in the development of rigorous research designs which use qualitative methods. These rigorous designs will help qualitative research achieve higher levels of "significance."

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## Researcher Effect Analysis Chart

Visible Happenings	Potential Outcomes	Positive Results	How to Accentuate	Negative Results	How to Control
1. Perceived as spy for owner (i.e., I'm feeding back the things I hear to Dad)	People will withhold information they feel may be detrimental to them personally.	If I can find out through other informants what I'm not being told, I may be able to find patterns of what people won't tell me.	Find good informant - compare various interviews and observations to see if there are gaps - ask informant for verification.	Things may be so buried (or it is an unwritten code to not mention X), I may never see the inconsistencies.	Talk to people individually and in groups. Peer pressure vs. no peer pressure. Demonstrate that I'm not feeding things back to Dad. The longer I'm at QRS the more this should be evident.
2. Potential role conflicts					
a. Researcher vs. Consultant	a. This role has been cast upon me by Dad and others in company - i.e., my "payment" for using their company as a research sight.	a. People are anxious for an outside opinion, so I will be told as much as possible.	a. Open ended questions - let people ramble.	a. I will view things as a consultant (i.e., what should change) instead of seeing "what is."	a. Have told Dad I will not write up my rec's until much later (after research over).
b. Researcher vs. Family Member (daughter, sister)	b. Family has to approve study - they may not like how I've written about them - would hate to have a family feud.	b. I know much more about the "environment" of the owner's family - know more about the family - have 24 hr/ day access to family.	b. Do free association - write down everything I think of - interview Mom & Bob.	b. I may suppress information which shows my family in a bad light - may be too anxious for their approval.	b. Write down everything - make a list of bad things about my family - compare to notes - as I suppress?
c. Researcher vs. Stockholder	c. Will my interest for keeping the company in a good light (value wise) affect how I report things.	c. As a stockholder, I have access to all company records and information.	c. Go through all records - if what records are kept - ask sensitive questions.	c. I have an interest in my investment - if I find things that may affect the value of the company - will I report?	c. Disguise company completely in my report. Change industries, names, etc.
d. Researcher vs. Future Owner (or Manager)	d. People know Bob and I are being left the company. Will they use this time to "butter-up" or "break-in" the new owner. I may act with proprietary interest.	d. People may want to be helpful so they "look" better.	d. Have people feel a part of the study - emphasize their importance to its success.	d. People may act toward me as an owner as opposed to how they "normally" act. I may not as an owner!	d. Not make decisions call if Dad feels well enough. Do not set myself apart (i.e., eat lunch with them).
e. Researcher vs. Message Carrier (boundary spanner)	e. I will take Brian's place carrying messages and mail back and forth to Dad.	e. I see what Dad is supposed to see and how timely it is.	e. Observe how Dad reacts to what is being sent.	e. I may be expected to get certain results from my Dad. If I don't, they may blame me. May interfere with future dealings between Dad and Brian.	e. Encourage people to call if Dad feels well enough. Don't handle your controversial messages.
f. Researcher vs. Confidant	f. I will be told things people don't want written down (i.e., I will be getting potentially valuable information - may give me ideas of what topics to pursue.	f. I will have an idea of what people consider confidential - I will be getting to substance - ask others about the topic.	f. Write things down later but note confidentiality - write down topic but not substance - ask others about the topic.	f. Could alienate subjects if I use things they think are confidential. I may remember what people said but not that it's confidential.	f. If possible, have other people talk about that subject - see if others will talk about it and what they say. Be very careful about preserving confidentiality.
g. Researcher vs. Informant (as an information pipe line)	g. Dad likes to hear what is going on at work - may get irritated if I don't tell him enough - wants detailed reports.	g. I can see what things Dad is particularly concerned with - see that Dad is still concerned and involved with business.	g. Ask Dad questions based on his questions.	g. May have to withhold information from Dad (moral conflict).	g. Avoid topics that I may know sensitive information.
h. Researcher vs. Worker	h. People may perceive me as wasting time, not contributing, expect me to work and produce.	h. People may start reacting to me "normally" - I may see the "true" culture.	h. Start blending into the work (be there for longer periods of time).	h. I may become socialized and no longer act as a naive observer.	h. Be Brief - have others read notes and see if my perspective has changed.
3. Homesickness	I may rush through in order to get back home sooner.	I won't drag on and on - keep me on schedule.	Return to Utah to do analysis.	I may conclude study sooner than I should.	Force myself to stay for a certain period of time - set goals originally - make sure I meet goals - be open to returning if necessary.
4. I could be seen as competition for current managers	They may "sabotage" my results - not answer questions correctly - report to my Dad that I'm interfering.	Could investigate why they feel I am endangering their position.		Will get a completely wrong picture of QRS.	Locate informants whom I would not "compete" with. Cross check their responses with manager's responses. Tell manager's I do not intend to come back to Illinois.
5. Let's "buddy up" to the future owner.	They may be unnaturally cooperative; work harder than normal. Try and show me what valuable employees they are.	People may cooperate with me more (give me necessary times for interviews, etc.)	Take advantage of the time that's available to me.	I could get an entirely false picture of QRS - and not know it.	Stay there for longer periods of time. (It's hard to maintain a facade for 3 or 4 weeks in a row).
6. People could be comparing Paul and me.	People may prefer me to Paul as an owner (i.e., "Gee, it's a shame Karen doesn't stay and run the company).	They may be glad Paul is here instead of me.	Recommend to Dad to give Paul a real role in the company (instead of his current "floating" position).	Paul's position in the company could deteriorate - hurt his opportunities for advancement.	Make clear to people that I am not returning - try to avoid situations where I am pitted against Paul.

FIGURE 1 (cont)  
Researcher Effect Analysis Chart

Possible Happenings	Potential Outcomes	Positive Results	How to Accentuate	Negative Results	How to Control
7. I may need to perceive Dad in a positive way (i.e., he is a good businessman).	I may find that Dad is "hated" at work or that the company is in bad shape.	By recognizing this in myself, I can try to combat it.	Have someone else read transcripts of interviews - see if I'm being biased - write out questions before the interview.	I may hesitate to be completely honest when writing my report.	Validate all my statements (i.e., make sure I have adequate documentation).
8. By observing Dick I may foul up his socialization.	Dick is being socialized while I am at QRS. It's possible that the organization is "different" because I am there - he's being socialized differently than others.	I will be there during the <u>actual</u> socialization - Dick will be used to me being there (because he was never here when I wasn't) - I may seem more "natural" and therefore he won't find my questions and observations as intrusive.	Observe Dick several times during the day - walk around the office often (so my observations don't seem so abrupt) - make sure he sees I'm doing it to all.	May cause Dick difficulties in the future.	I will leave organization (hopefully) before too much damage has been done - through interviews make sure Dick is learning things as he should - compare his answers to my observations.
9. I am used as official messenger between Dad and QRS.	I may temporarily replace Brian as messenger and eliminate his role (temporarily) as boundary spanner.	Removes some unwanted pressure from Brian - maybe Brian will be "grateful" and cooperate with me more.	Keep track of what people ask me, talk to me about.	Brian's usefulness as an informant may deteriorate.	Not be available as a messenger at all times. Ask Brian questions which indicate if I'm being used as a messenger the <u>same</u> way he was.
10. I may fill leadership gap in company (for some or maybe all employees).	Employees may start coming to me for input in decision.	Gives me the opportunity to see what kinds of decisions people won't make by themselves - see what kinds of interactions Dad had with employees.	Keep track of what people ask me, talk to me about.	I may be filling a gap but it may not be the one Dad left - maybe they never had anyone to talk to about certain issues.	Ask Dad and others what kind of interactions they had in past - observe Dad at work one day see if some of these things are brought up.
11. I may get bored.	Get "tired" of doing research - get careless - try to rush things - will not search deep enough for meanings.	See subjects in all sorts of situations - get intimate knowledge.	Stay at home - not have husband with me while (she (family) may get different - on guard - around my husband).	Miss valuable data through laziness.	"Break up" observations - take trips with salesmen - go away for weekend - talk to an outsider.
12. Never get far enough away from subjects.	Spend 24 hrs/day with "The Family" and its business.	See subjects in all sorts of situations - get intimate knowledge.	Stay at home - not have husband with me while (she (family) may get different - on guard - around my husband).	Start to lose perspective - get too much into the daughter role.	Break up observation periods (1 week, 4 weeks). Take time off from observing.
13. Intrafamily jealousy.	Paul may perceive me as an interloper in QRS. Mom may become jealous of my involvement with Dad.	Can use ethical guidelines as an excuse if I'm caught in a bind.	Tell everyone what the ethics of a researcher are.	Hurt my position in the family - have long term problems with Mom, Bob Dad.	Act as normal as possible. Avoid being in situations where I'm pitted against family member.
14. Ethical conflicts may arise.	Ethics as a researcher (agency voluntary cooperation) may clash with the ethics of being a daughter vs. ethics of a consultant.	Can use ethical guidelines as an excuse if I'm caught in a bind.	Tell everyone what the ethics of a researcher are.	May have to "overlook" ethics.	If in a situation like this - note everything that is occurring - why do I feel ethics are in conflict?
15. Employees were told by Dad - "You will cooperate with Karen."	Subjects may rebel against this "edict" especially if they feel coerced.	By observing how this "edict" was followed, may be enlightening about the culture.	Take good notes - listen for extraneous comments.	People will not be good subjects - may try to sabotage my study.	Tell people they don't <u>have</u> to answer questions. Don't force people to answer questions. Keep confidences.
16. Information may be considered or source of power.	People may not be willing to share their "wealth" without something in return.	By observing how information is handled, may provide insights into culture (what info is readily divulged vs. what info is not).	Observe conversations between other people, what questions I ask are and are not answered.	I may not have any information worth trading - people may withhold valuable information without me knowing it.	Try to use nonessential information for trading (i.e., info about myself). Cross check information from various informants.

## MUTUAL EFFECTS AMONG NATIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURES

by  
Theodore D. Weinshall and Yael A. Raveh

### INTRODUCTION

Obviously, there is a linkage between the national culture of a country and the organizational cultures of the corporations operating within it.

Such a mutual linkage between national and organizational culture is weaker when the organization is a subsidiary of a multinational corporation, but even then it exists. In order to discover such a cultural affinity we could compare the sub-cultures of subsidiaries of the same multinational corporation in different countries. We would discover that the cultural differences between such subsidiaries are actually the cultural variations among the countries in which the subsidiaries are located.

There are several poignant questions, however, about this linkage between national and organizational culture:

- In what cultural aspects are national and organizational cultures similar?
- Is culture the only link between the behavior of the nation state and the behavior of organizations operating within it?
- In what cases and how has one culture a larger effect over the other?
- When is the national culture dominant over the organizational culture, and when is it vice versa?

The analysis of the relationship between national and organizational culture is done in this paper by way of the concepts of the Total Organizational System (TOS) which we present in a recent book of ours (Weinshall and Raveh, 1983). This is why we start this paper with a description of the dynamics of the TOS.

This is followed by a part which discusses some national culture aspects which have a bearing upon organizational behavior and culture. We then deal with different aspects of nation-states which influence organizational and cultural behavior. In TOS (Total Organizational

System) terms we are dealing in this part with the Wider Environment in which organizations operate, which consists of five environmental systems: the employment market, the money market, the consumer market, the technological-scientific and the socio-cultural systems. In this part we devote special attention to the TOS of governments and their relation with the five environmental systems.

Next, in the fourth part of the paper, we proceed to survey various types of nation states. We present few examples of developing, of industrialized, and of highly industrialized nation states.

Subsequently, in the fifth part, we look at different types of organizations, from the point of view of democracy, autocracy and other factors. We sum up this part by describing different organizational cultures, by way of the degree of customer involvement in them; as examples of types of organizations for this classification, we give business corporations, State Owned Enterprises (SOE), government and military organizations, and universities.

Finally, in the last part of the paper, we discuss the relation between nations and organizations operating in them.

### 1. THE TOTAL ORGANIZATIONAL SYSTEM (TOS)

The TOS deals with what organizations must do to survive, what they must do to avoid stagnation and collapse. The dynamics of management and organizations over time are described and analysed by way of the TOS (Total Organizational System). This notion of a total organization system assumes a dynamic relationship between management of the organization and the environment, both of which are affected by changing conditions of size, place, and human nature. Any change in one part of the total system affects the other parts and the survival of any organization is continually threatened by the changes brought about by growth, which in itself is essential for survival.

The TOS (see Figure 1) is composed of the immediate environment, the wider environment, the organizational strategy, the scope of decision making, the managerial structure, and the managerial characteristics. The immediate environment includes the organizations competing for the

organizational co-operation of the human factors of managers, workers, trade unions, bankers, shareholders, suppliers, customers, government, etc. The wider environment includes the systems of the employment market, money market, supply of and demand market for materials and products, as well as the technology and socio-cultural systems. The scope of decision making is the total amount and complexity of the decisions imposed upon the management by their own organizational strategy, influenced by both the immediate and wider environments. Managerial structure refers to the *actual* way in which the decision making is carried out, formally or informally. The managerial characteristics are the leadership and followership characteristics of managers, from the chief executive down.

Consequently, organizational systems are actually contingency systems; that is to say that the different components are contingent upon each other. A major change in one subsystem may not only affect what is happening in other subsystems, but may also alter the rules by which these systems are governed. It will be shown, therefore, that principles which, until quite recently, have governed management education, its teaching and writing, are based on false assumptions.

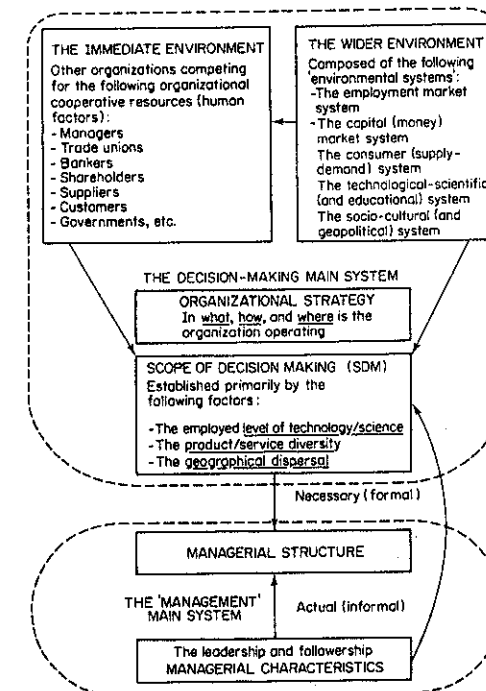


Figure 1 Two main systems and six principal systems of the TOS

Thus, all of the following principles turn out to be *absolutely wrong*:

- there exists a 'good' and desirable organizational structure in which an organization should operate at all times;
- there are good and bad managers, i.e. a good manager will always be good and a manager who has completely failed in one organization or another could never succeed in the same or in any other organization;
- it is desirable to have people continue to work in the organization as long as possible, and the organization should do whatever it can to hold on to employees who are doing very well today;
- there are rules which should govern the establishment of organizational structures. One of these rules is the so-called 'span of control'; it represents the number of subordinates that a manager can control.

There are a few Total Organizational System (TOS) terms and abbreviations which we use in this paper. We therefore present several items out of the Abbreviations and Glossary, appearing at the beginning of our recent book. Where abbreviations and terms appearing in the definition are themselves defined elsewhere in this glossary, they are printed in *italic*.

**Communicogram** A technique for describing, analysing, and feeding back oral interactions for therapeutic and corrective purposes. It is usually based on a two-weeks' self-recording study carried out among about 30-50 managers who record their interactions from memory. The interactions are subsequently matched and the results are fed back to the participants.

**FDM** **FACTOR/S OF DECISION MAKING**, the human factors which take part in the *decision making*, namely the human groups into which all the members of the *organization* are divided according to their *TOS* roles (i.e. according to their roles in the organizational input-output system) and their effects on organizational survival. The FDM in industrial and business organizations include: *managers, workers, trade unions, bankers, shareholders, suppliers, customers, and governments*. In other types of organizations the names of the FDM may be different.

**Immediate environment** The environment in which organizations compete with each other for the *FDM*.

**MC** **MANAGERIAL CHARACTERISTICS**, the inter-personal characteristics (leadership, followership, and others) of *managers*. A manager relates best to other people and to his work when his role in the *managerial structure (MS)* is suited to his MC, and when the *MS* is the proper one for the organizational *scope of decision making (SDM)*.

**MS** **MANAGERIAL STRUCTURE**, the actual relationship structure of the *management*, which indicates the way in which the managers are directed by the person who is at their head. When the *MS* is of a whole *organization*, we find the *CE* at the head of the *MS*. In order to encompass and manage the growing *organization*, *management* has to adapt its structure to the *SDM* from time to time. The main *MS* in which managements are structured when the *organization* grows over time are: entrepreneurial structure (informally centralized), functional structure (formally centralized), product/service line structure, and area structure (the latter two are formally decentralized).

**NATO** North Atlantic (Alliance) Treaty Organization

**OAEPC** **ORGANIZATION OF ARAB PETROLEUM EXPORTING COUNTRIES**. The majority of the *OAEPC* countries, with an overwhelming share of the *OPEC* oil reserves, are Arab countries. Two of the *OAEPC* members, Algeria and Indonesia, are non-Arab but exclusively Muslim countries.

**OPEC** **ORGANIZATION OF PETROLEUM EXPORTING COUNTRIES**, the members of which were, in 1973: Algeria, Ecuador, Gabon (associate), Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Nigeria, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, and Venezuela. The majority of these belong to *OAEPC*.

**Organization** From among the many definitions of organization, we prefer that of Chester Barnard (*The Functions of the Executive*, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass., 1938, p.81): 'A system of consciously co-ordinated activities or forces of two or more persons.' These persons or members of the organization are not only the *managers* and *workers* (whom we refer to as the *operating organization*) but also persons - for example -

the customers - belonging to any of the *factors of decision making (FDM)* without the co-operation of whom the organization cannot survive.

SDM

SCOPE/S OF DECISION MAKING, the total physical amount and complexity of the managerial DM, which the *management* undertakes in order to ensure the continued co-operation of the *FDM* so that the *organization* may survive. The SDM is a function of the competition of other organizations for the different *FDM* in the *immediate environment*. The intensity of the competition is determined by the conditions existing in the *wider environment*.

SOE

STATE-OWNED ENTERPRISE/S, the economic organizations owned by the state. The degree to which the state is actually involved in managing the SOE may vary in a way similar to the involvement of the shareholders and their boards of directors in managing the organizations. There is, however, one important difference between an SOE and a non-SOE. The shareholders and the government in an SOE are one and the same *FDM*.

TOS

TOTAL ORGANIZATION SYSTEM is a set of interrelated organizational systems presenting the contingency dynamics of the *organization* over time, navigated by *management*. It serves primarily analytical purposes and leads to a better understanding and evaluation of the state of an *organization* at a given point in time. Its other contribution is in permitting the strategic planning of all its component systems and their effect on each other.

UNESCO

United Nations Educational, Social and Cultural Organization

WHO

World Health Organization

Wider Environment

One of the six principal systems of the *TOS* and one of the four principal systems of the main system of *decision making* in the *TOS*. It is composed of five environmental systems: the employment market, the capital market, the consumer market, the technological-scientific system, and the socio-cultural system. Together with the *MC* it is one of the two principal systems of the *TOS* which are independent of other principal systems.

Zaibatsu

A very large Japanese corporation. It is usually very diversified in its product/service lines (i.e. conglomerated). The Zaibatsu of which there are only two scores, have their own employers' association. It is the top employers' association of Japan, *Ac Keidanren*. The heads of the Zaibatsu and their *Keidanren* seem to be at the top of the power hierarchy of Japan.

## 2. CROSS-CULTURAL MANAGEMENT: MANAGERIAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN COUNTRIES

When a group of people from a variety of countries are gathered into the same formal organization, they bring along with them all the differences in communication behaviour, education, social stratification, organizational structures, and languages which we discussed in the previous two chapters. Nobody could better describe the consequences of such a gathering than the author of *Genesis* in his account of the construction of the Tower of Babel (Babylon):<sup>56</sup>

Once upon a time all the world spoke a single language and used the same words. As men journeyed in the east, they came upon a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. They said to one another, 'Come, let us make bricks and bake them hard'; they used bricks for stone and bitumen for mortar. 'Come,' they said, 'let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and make a name for ourselves; or we shall be dispersed all over the earth.' Then the Lord came down to see the city and tower which mortal men had built, and he said, 'Here they are, one people with a single language, and now they have started to do this; henceforward nothing they have a mind to do will be beyond their reach. Come, let us go down there and confuse their speech, so that they will not understand what they say to one another.' So the Lord dispersed them from there all over the earth, and they left off building the city. That is why it is called Babel, because the Lord there made a babble of the language of all the world; from that place the Lord scattered men all over the face of the earth.

One has to consider a 'language' in its wider meaning and exchange the type of organization from a construction organization building the Tower of Babel to, say, a military one defending the Western democracies (NATO) or to political ones, preserving the health and culture of the world (WHO).

and UNESCO), and we are transplanting this passage from about the twenty-eighth century BC to the twentieth century AD.<sup>57</sup>

Five areas in which such national 'language' differences occur are communication, education, social stratification, organization structure, and language itself. These are not the only areas which affect management and in which one would find national differences. Nevertheless, these five seem to be the most predominant in so far as they affect multinational management.

Other areas influenced by cultural values, though sometimes crucial for multinational managers, seem to be of secondary importance when compared with the ones chosen for discussion. One such additional area is that of competition and profits, attitudes to which differ substantially from one culture to another. Attitudes also differ substantially with regard to what one might call business morality. This includes such matters as bribery, which in some countries is regarded as outright corruption, and in others is accepted. The degree of government intervention and the extent to which this is considered tolerable is another factor for multinational managers to take into account.

The national differences discussed concern primarily countries which belong to what is commonly referred to as the 'Western culture'. This excludes completely different types of culture, as, for example, that of Japan which has a totally different 'business ideology'. This may be defined as 'any system of beliefs publicly expressed with the manifest purpose of influencing the sentiments and actions of others'.<sup>58</sup> The term 'business ideology' is used in a recent description of the Japanese managerial systems, in which the personal and cultural background and practices of Japanese management are summarized for a period of over 100 years.<sup>59</sup> Communication, education, social stratification, and organization structures are covered by this study, together with a comprehensive discussion of the historical development of Japan's business ideologies. The study shows that the ways of thinking and the decision-making process are being conducted in Japan in an environment that is in no way derived from Western culture. Hence the following discussion will only be concerned with Western types of behaviour, and the references to Japan are incidental.

*Communication* The existence of different patterns of communication in different countries has often been suggested, but seldom systematically

investigated.<sup>60</sup> For greater precision it has been necessary to develop a new analytical tool - the communication diagram, or communicogram as it is now called. This makes it possible to discern and analyse one of the basic differences in managerial structure among different cultural environments, namely that of communications behaviour. This use of the communicogram became evident by coincidence rather than through testing hypotheses concerning management communication. In 1966 a group of students carried out a communicogram study which was conducted in three organizations, one British and two French; this was done simultaneously with another study exploring the relationships and attitudes of the same managers included in the communicogram study. The chief executives of all three organizations had been promised that they would receive not only the results of their own respective studies, but also a comparison between themselves and the other two organizations. However, analysis of the data by the computer showed that the total number of interactions in the British organization for the 50 participants during two weeks was 2639; but the number of interactions for the 21 and 26 participants of the two French companies was 128 and 215 respectively, too small for analysis.

When the British chief executive was presented with the results of his organization, an apology was made for not being able to provide him with a comparison with the two French organizations, on the grounds that the French managers failed to report their interactions. He replied: 'The reason is quite clear to me, they just do not interact orally.'

He was right. We went back to the individual daily interaction sheets and discovered that on each British sheet there was an average of some 15 interactions per person per day, but only two or three interactions per person per day appeared on the sheets of the managers in the two French organizations. The number of reported interactions with other managers participating in the study was usually about one third of the total recorded interactions; this corresponds with the results of an average of 5.3 per person per day in the British organization and 0.5 and 1.0 interactions in the two French organizations. The reasons why such cultural differences evolved probably have to do with the fact that French organizational culture has been more affected by the development of business organizations which have been influenced by the Church, the army, and governmental organizations, than the other way around; French organizations are relatively more bureaucratized (i.e. formalized), and consequently adhere to more written and less oral communication.



Therefore, while the degree of formalization is an indication of managerial structure, it is also an indication of the cultural effects on management. That is to say, that if two identical organizations had been compared from the point of view of their scope of decision making and of their managerial structure, but with one operating in France and the other in the UK, significantly more oral communication would have been found in the latter. The other finding is that when comparing oral communication in the three Western countries (see Table 1) - the USA, the UK, and France - the US and the UK figures are found to be similar (4.7, 5.0, and 5.3 interactions per person per day, respectively), while the French figures (0.5 and 1.0) are significantly lower.

The similarity of Britain to the USA rather than to other European countries with regard to managerial behaviour has already been found by others in connection with managerial attitudes and decision-making processes.<sup>61</sup> The almost identical rate of oral communication in Anglo-Saxon organizations on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean is another indication of the cultural affinity between the USA and Britain.

Israel is represented in Table 1 by two types of organizations - military and banking. These two types explain why the daily numbers of interactions per person in Israel (2.6 to 4.4) are smaller than those of the UK and the USA (between 4.7 and 5.3). Had we drawn a formal written or informal oral scale of communication, we would have placed France on the formal end of the scale, the UK somewhere between the middle of the scale and its informal end,<sup>62</sup> and Israel at the very extreme of informality.<sup>63</sup> However, the two types of organizations studied in Israel, military and banking, are typically formal, hence the relatively low oral communication. There have been only a relatively small number of studies which have been devoted to explaining the reasons for national differences in communication patterns. The explanation for such differences is in the cultural variances among the countries.<sup>64</sup>

*Education* The suggestion has been made that the availability of higher education in a country determines its economic growth.<sup>65</sup> This theory is hard to verify because of the differences in educational methods between countries. Some of these differences affect managerial style more clearly than the general amount of education available. For instance, the difference between the French approach and that of the USA can best be described by saying that one is dogmatic and the other is pragmatic. The French approach is Cartesian: the most systematic and quantitative assault

Table 1 Comparison of self-recorded interaction studies in organizations in four countries<sup>d</sup>

	Industrial plastics <sup>b</sup> USA 1959	Marketing pharma- ceutical consumer goods <sup>c</sup> UK 1966	Industrial electronic components <sup>c</sup> France 1966	Industrial aircraft production <sup>c</sup> France 1966	Army ordnance <sup>d</sup> Israel 1969	Education: management development <sup>e</sup> UK 1971	Banking <sup>f</sup>	
							Israel 1976 A	B
Number of managers: approached	50	60	26	21	48	32		
participated	34	50	26	21	41	27		
Length of study (number of days)	10	10	10	10	10	10		
Interactions with other participants:								
total reported	1708	2639	128	215	672	1272	788	1049
mutually perceived	26	14	17		7	38	17	16
daily average per person	5.0	5.3	0.5	1.0	2.6	4.7	3.4	4.4
Interactions by telephone	22	45	73	29	19	14	25	18.5
face to face	78	55	27	71	81	86	75	81.5
Consensus as to type of interactions	47	35	46	73	50	43	51.5	39

<sup>a</sup> The data concerning the first six studies appearing in this figure are from Weinshall (1979, p. 261). The last two columns present the data from two studies of the same banking organization which were studied simultaneously.  
<sup>b</sup> Originally published in Weinshall (1966) on which Weinshall (1979, pp. 211-226) was subsequently based.  
<sup>c</sup> Originally published in Weinshall and Vickery (1970), on which Weinshall (1979, pp. 259-265 and 411-415) was subsequently based.  
<sup>d</sup> Originally published in Tsirlunsky and Weinshall (1974), on which Weinshall (1979, pp. 291-307) was subsequently based.  
<sup>e</sup> Originally appeared in Weinshall *et al.* (1971), on which Weinshall (1979, pp. 365-373) was subsequently based.  
<sup>f</sup> Originally appeared in Nachmias *et al.* (1978) and Weinshall and Vickery (1970) on which Weinshall (1979, pp. 411-432) was subsequently based.

possible on every problem, while taking into consideration all factors which may influence it. The Americans, on the other hand, are more interested in the usefulness of the result than in the theoretical side of the method used to approach the problem.

Thus, if the same problem is presented to a French and to an American businessman, the former is liable to discover, say, 20 factors which influence it, think of about 50 alternative solutions, and attempt to find the connection between them. Each alternative would be weighed in the light of the conditioning factors. The American, by contrast, would probably look for the three main factors which influence the problem and take these into consideration. He would then decide on, say, five alternative solutions and evaluate them in the light of these factors. The two different ways of thinking show that there is a basic difference in the social, cultural, and educational values of the two people. Many Americans, for example, envy the French for being highly cultured and broadly educated, but despise them for their supposed inefficiency, disorder, and uncleanness. It is precisely their tendency to specialize, which is so often incompatible with a broad outlook, which seems to enable the Americans to attack their business problems so efficiently. The French

broad outlook, on the other hand, and a knowledge of the culture of the world, while they may confer an ability to see the whole picture, also give rise to a tendency to include more and more factors in the analysis of a problem.

The separation between faculty and students, of which the French universities have been an extreme example, has been made possible by both the teaching methods and the design of the physical facilities. The professor enters the lecture hall by a door other than that used by his students and confronts a crowd of hundreds, usually in a hall originally designed to contain a much smaller number. He delivers his lecture, often read, and repeated from year to year with modifications, without allowing subsequent discussion. The students perceive this way of teaching, in many instances, as the pronouncement of gospel in whatever field of learning this may be.

The physical design of many French universities prevents the faculty from meeting their students out of class, even by chance. Separate facilities exist for faculty and students, e.g. restaurants, toilets, and, even, lifts and staircases.

While continental European universities prefer a separation of faculty and students similar to the one described in France, British universities advocate a certain degree of co-operation. This is chiefly practised out of the classroom in the so-called 'tutoring' sessions. Members of the faculty, usually junior members, coach the students on the material covered in class, or any additional material. The consequence of this co-operation out of the classroom is that there is also a fair amount of participation inside the classroom.

The third learning method advocates, in principle, co-operation between the faculty and the students both in the classroom and outside. This method originated in the USA, but is spreading quickly elsewhere, especially to countries like Israel where the ties with cultural tradition are not as strong as those in western continental Europe.<sup>66</sup>

The purpose of graduate studies in management and business administration is the academic training of managers for middle and higher management levels in economic and public organizations. The former include industry, agriculture, banking, insurance, transport, tourism, and other services. The public organizations are governmental, military, and municipal ones,

other public services, and trade unions. Graduate management studies are not for the training of professional people who might serve public and economic organizations in fields such as engineering, chemistry, law, economics, and others. Their purpose is to train people who might fulfil management functions. The training includes finance, control, production, marketing, research and development, personnel, as well as a synthesis which combines all these and is called 'business policy'.<sup>67</sup> As every one of the managers in charge of the above mentioned functions has to be in a permanent relationship with the other functions of the organization, every manager has to receive a thorough and all-round training in them all. In the modern organization, the proportion of professional people is increasing from year to year. There are those who believe that within 20 years the number of professional people in an industrial organization will exceed the number of non-professionals.

The manager, who has to be a professional himself, finds himself in charge of one or more functions, each of which involves know-how at an academic level, and many of his subordinates are also professionals: auditors report to comptrollers, economists to finance managers, market research people to marketing managers, engineers and scientists to the research and development and production managers, sociologists and psychologists to personnel and manpower managers.

This means that the manager in the modern organization has to have a profession before he becomes a manager. In many cases, a man acquires a managerial position by working himself up one of the 'functional channels'. Thus, for example, a man starts as a junior engineer in a certain organization, progresses through the various stages of engineering and production, and becomes manager of the production or research and development division. When he reaches management in this way, he is well acquainted with his function but does not always know how to manage it. This is why we sometimes lose a good engineer and gain a bad manager. In other instances, an old-time engineer (or old-time auditor, economist, and so on) will receive management training through advanced management courses or through a graduate school of management. Nevertheless, he has to make this lengthy practical journey along one of the 'functional channels'. He has to have had previous academic training, meaning a bachelor's degree, to ensure that he has the educational ability to know how to study what is going on in the organization. His bachelor's degree might be in any field.

The case studies included in the learning programme are usually chosen to ensure coverage of various situations that have occurred in recent times in business and other organizations which might employ new managers after their graduation. The length of the 'recent times' depends on the circumstances and especially on the rate of the technological changes which dictate the conditions under which the executive operates. The cases studied today in good graduate business schools generally describe situations which have occurred since the Second World War. Most of the cases occurred during the last ten years, and some only in the last five.

Readings, seminars, reports, business games, and all other teaching material complementary to the case method are usually based on the problems to be encountered in the cases. This is why the material studied is very rarely out of the context of the situations in which the manager might expect to find himself during his career. In addition, it has been suggested that there is a need for fictional cases, based on expectations of future managerial situations. Such opinions are prompted by the increasing rate of change occurring in organizations today. Thus, for example, even the study of business history is carried out in relation to those themes that have a direct bearing on what is happening in present situations and are important for the actual performance of the manager's functions. Such an approach results in a large economy of the students' time. These points are relevant to the training of all managers. However, the participative learning method is of special importance in the training of multinational managers, who will have to operate in different socio-cultural environments.

The possible effects of higher education on multinational management have already been discussed. We should, however, realize that management is composed of, and assisted by, people who do not necessarily have a university education. Let us therefore consider the degree of secondary education in several countries. Table 2 shows the percentage of 6-17 and 20-24 year-olds in education in different countries. As all the four

Table 2 Flow of high school education to higher education in four countries

	% of 6-17-year-olds in education (1)	% of 20-24-year-olds in higher education (2)	% in higher education of those with previous education (1) and (2)
Britain	94	20	21
Holland	93	23	25
Israel	82	24	29
USA	85	54	64

Source: UNESCO (1976). The figures for Britain are for 1973, those for Holland, Israel, and the USA for 1974.

countries had obligatory education up to at least age 15 at the time (1973-1974), the difference in the 20-24 year-olds' column amount to much larger differences than the percentages of high school students, i.e. people with secondary education, in these countries.

Table 2 therefore explains why many jobs which are held in Western Europe by those with a secondary education are held in the USA by university graduates. In Israel, on the other hand, there is a severe shortage of secondary school graduates. A typical example of the different type of people used for the same type of job in the various countries is to be found in secretarial work. Following the differences appearing in Table 2; in Western Europe, secretaries generally have secondary education; in the USA they have at least secondary education and there are many who have had higher education. In Israel, by contrast, all these are exceptions; most secretaries have only finished elementary school.

There exists a connection between the education levels of the population and their standards of living, which in turn are related to the rate of development of the country.

One way to explain the degree of economic development of a country is to relate it to the availability of higher education in that country.<sup>68</sup> A study of the six European Common Market countries in the mid-1970s, as well as Britain, the USA and the USSR, showed that within the Common Market as a whole, and in each of its countries individually, the achievements of the children of lower income classes in obtaining higher education were very low.<sup>69</sup>

*Social stratification* The differences in learning methods in different countries seem to be related to the degree of social stratification existing in those countries. Israel, which may be considered the least socially stratified country in the world, has democratic and participative learning.<sup>66</sup> The USA is the least socially stratified of the larger Western democracies.

One way to measure social stratification in a country is by considering social mobility in that country. Table 3 presents the inequality of opportunities in various countries. The countries can be divided into five groups, moving from those with the lowest to those with the highest inequality ratio. The effects of social stratification on the management of national and multinational companies in the different countries are

Table 3 Educational inequalities

Inequality ratio	Countries
Less than 250	Israel (Haifa), Great Britain, USSR (refugees)
250-299	Australia, Denmark, France, India, USA, Brazil, Sweden, Holland, Japan
300-499	Norway, West Germany, Puerto Rico
500-799	Hungary, Finland, Italy
More than 800	Belgium

Source: Bendix and Lipset (1966).

Note:

Inequality ratio =  $\frac{(\text{Non-manual worker sons of non-manual workers})}{(\text{Non-manual worker sons of manual workers})}$

dramatic. Some of these effects carry through from elementary, secondary, and higher education right to the positions for which people are hired in business organizations. Let us consider the cases of Britain and France.

There is still a correlation between the social class of candidates in both countries and their chances of being admitted into Oxford, Cambridge or the *grandes écoles*. Nevertheless, the admission to these universities is based more and more on achievement than on family background. Similarly, those who graduate in the USA from, say, Harvard, and the graduates of Oxbridge and the *grandes écoles*, are preferred by employers to other university graduates. At this point, however, the similarity between Oxbridge and the *grandes écoles* ends.

In Britain and the USA the companies seek to employ the top graduates. In France those who recruit for organizations from the *grandes écoles* are themselves graduates of those same *grandes écoles*, and they usually go all out to hire from their own *Alma Mater*. Thus, in a certain organization with a top executive from, say, the Haute Ecole de Commerce, there is a good chance that most of the graduates in the organization are from that school.

Another difference between university graduates in US and British as against French organizations is an extension of this relationship between university and job. In the Anglo-Saxon countries a degree from a 'good' university helps one to get a 'good' job, but from then on performance is more important for progress; in France, on the other hand, performance has much less significance throughout a person's career. Once a person has graduated from a *grande école* he has, in the great majority of cases, made it for life. He could be a complete failure, but usually the graduates

of his own school will make sure that his career progresses as if nothing had happened. Thus in France one's chances to succeed throughout life are much more related to one's education than in Britain.

In Britain the custom of many companies of placing only members of the higher social classes in positions like that of directors has been gradually disappearing, while it is still common in France. There are still in existence French companies which would not hire a top executive for the formal position of *directeur* - somewhat parallel to a vice president who is a member of the board of directors - unless he belonged to one of the so-called '200 best families' of France. Strong social stratification is evident in other Western European countries as well. In some of them this social stratification seems to be even more polarized.

In most of these countries such things as the way of addressing people in business organizations, and the times at which people arrive at work and leave it, vary according to their social and organizational positions. Thus, while in the USA people usually address each other by their first name whatever their rank, in Western Europe the form of address usually changes from level to level, and differs between two people at different managerial levels. Again, while it is customary in the USA for everybody to arrive at work at the same time, though higher ranking executives may leave later, in Europe the higher the person in the organization the later he often arrives at and leaves work.

*Managerial structures* Managerial structures are related to the socio-cultural environment and the emerging educational patterns in the different countries. There is a direct connection between the ability of the organizations to grow, to innovate, and to absorb new technologies and their propensity to change and adapt their managerial structures to the growing need to absorb broader scopes of decision-making. However, every managerial structure requires a different type of manager, and therefore managers have to move from one company to another. Alternatively, they could be transferred from one part to another, if the organization is large enough to contain different types of structures within it.

The socio-cultural environment affects the processes of growth, change, and mobility in several different ways, but primarily in the way that new generations of managers are being educated. The preparation of the new type of leader required for a new type of managerial structure takes at

least one generation. Fifty years ago the USA had very few people who could become chief executives of decentralized structures. However, as the educational system became more participative and to some degree permissive, more and more decentralized leaders emerged out of American families and educational institutes.

Taking France again as an example, there are few of what might be called 'decentralized leaders' in the country and, therefore, few decentralized structures. As a result, organizations cannot absorb broader scopes of decision-making than their functional structures permit. This fact hinders developments in more advanced technologies, more diversified product lines, and more international activities.

Another environmental effect on the dynamics and adaptability of managerial structures is the 'anti-mobility value' to which we shall return at some length. This anti-mobility value is a constraint on the inter-organizational mobility which is required in order to enable the progression of management from an entrepreneurial structure to a functional one and from there to a decentralized system. The anti-mobility value is quite powerful in European countries. It likewise almost completely freezes any movement of managers between organizations in the large corporations of Japan.

However, the appearance of the so-called multistrukture organization has enabled countries with strong anti-mobility values to bypass the necessity of inter-organizational mobility. It is interesting to highlight two points regarding the anti-mobility value and the evaluation of large Japanese multistrukture organizations. The anti-mobility value was introduced into Japanese business only just before the First World War, in order to stop the enormously high inter-organizational mobility which existed at the time and was thought to be contrary to the Japanese aspirations of growth and technological progress.<sup>70</sup> Until now a very strict anti-mobility value has been preserved among large Japanese organizations. However, in the smaller ones, where inter-organizational mobility is a condition of their survival through a progression from one managerial structure to another, such mobility does exist.

Countries with cultures permitting the establishment of multistrukture organizations are able to bypass the anti-mobility value by means of arranging a systematic managerial mobility, not between one organization and another, but rather within the various parts of the same organization.

Such multistrukture organizations are in existence in both the USA and Europe. However, they are of special importance for European countries where the anti-mobility value is quite strong. Not all Western European countries have welcomed the appearance of very large business organizations through growth, merger, and acquisition.

Managerial structures can be measured and established by way of the degree of autonomy and the degree of clarity in the relationships between the managers of organizations. However, the degree of clarity is related not only to the managerial structure, but also to the culture in which the organization operates. This culture is determined by the country in which the organization functions and the field - business, political, military, and so on - in which it operates. Therefore, when one is measuring the relationships in order to establish the managerial structure of an organization, one should be aware of different flavours of relationships describing essentially the same types of managerial structure. Thus, an entrepreneurial structure of a French organization may be expected to be more formalized than a similar structure in an American organization; and functional structures in France would be more 'bureaucratic' than the same structures in the USA. One of the reasons for these differences is the relative degree of usage of oral and written communication in the different countries.

*Spoken languages* Probably the most formidable obstacle to the spreading of multinational corporations throughout the world is the degree of knowledge of 'international languages' in the various countries. These 'international languages' are tending to become just one language, the English language. Just as French was the international language of the nineteenth century, so English has become that of the twentieth century in business, government, and science. This even applies to Russia, China, and Japan. Indeed, the awareness of the ever-growing dominance of the English language has already impressed many *avant-garde* Japanese who, drawing upon their pragmatism, propagandize for a much more intensive study of English in Japan. US technological superiority has undoubtedly contributed to the emergence of the English language as the future world language.<sup>71</sup>

This international spread and increasing superiority of one language is closely linked with the spread and growing influence of multinational corporations. These, in our opinion, will, by the end of this century, do the planning for, and direct the destiny of mankind rather than the

nation states. This is, in our opinion, a positive development, because it would entail better understanding among nations, a safeguard against wars, and a better planning of the world. This is the subject of the following section.

However, before we reach the stage of 'one world, one language', the world will have to pass through a period of better international acquaintance and language competence than we have experienced hitherto. Indeed, until the Second World War, language competence was rare. This has been changing rapidly. Technological advances and cheaper travel enable very large numbers of citizens, chiefly of the industrial countries, to visit other countries, spending weeks and months there and learning the local languages and the ways and customs of their neighbours. Many of the heads of business organizations from the industrial countries in Europe are today fluent in several languages and feel quite at ease in the company of their colleagues from other countries. There has even been a marked change in the attitude of Americans towards learning the customs and languages of the people with whom they come in contact, particularly since the sensation caused by the publication of *The Ugly American*.<sup>72</sup> Finally, there is evidence that the economic success of smaller countries goes hand in hand with the population's knowledge of and fluency in other languages. Switzerland and Holland are outstanding examples of smaller countries which have achieved economic success in spite of relatively small populations and other limitations. Switzerland, for example, has very limited natural resources and no outlet to the sea; it is doubtful if it would have achieved such great success in tourism were it not for the excellent service it offers in which knowledge of languages plays a big part. Holland, though suffering from the destruction of the Second World War and the loss of its Far Eastern empire, has re-established its eminence in international commerce and tourism in spite of the fact that in the latter it does not have the spectacular geographical attractions of, for instance, Switzerland. Both countries start the foreign language education of children at a very early age.

English, French, and Germany were the official languages of INSEAD in Fontainebleau, France, when it was set up in order to promote the economic unification of Europe and to help Europe contest the USA's invasion of her sphere of economic interests.<sup>73</sup> The two dominant languages at INSEAD nowadays are English and French. Instruction is based on the case study method which describes a business situation. Small groups of students study, analyse, and discuss the case. Later these groups meet in a class

for final analysis, led by a professor. More than 50 students from more than 20 different countries participate in these studies.<sup>74</sup> The case studies are usually in French or English. The discussion groups or the lectures are not necessarily conducted in the language of the case study; the individual student may use any one of the above three languages. Candidates for the Fontainebleau Institute must therefore be fluent in England and French and by their graduation have at least a fair knowledge of German.

There are very strong indications that the ability to speak more than one language is not an inherent talent, but rather is acquired. Indeed, we all know very talented people, brilliant and genial, who find it extremely difficult to speak a second language fluently; and, on the other hand, many untalented people who are fluent in several languages. It also seems that this facility to pick up languages is acquired by people when they are very young. We would hypothesize that the longer a child is exposed simultaneously to more than one language between the ages of 1 and 10 years, the easier it will be for that person to acquire languages which he is motivated to learn at any subsequent time in his life. For example, the Jews had an ability to learn languages because from infancy they spoke either Yiddish (European and US Jews) or Ladino (Mediterranean and oriental Jews) in addition to at least one other language, that of the country in which they were raised; this, we believe, is the explanation for the language facility of Jews at least until the middle of the twentieth century.<sup>75</sup>

CHRISTMAS TIME AND CONTROL:  
AN EXPLORATION IN THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE  
OF FORMAL ORGANIZATIONS

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Certain immaterial facts have been changed in this work. These include, for example, the names of the organization and individuals presented here.

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#### Abstract

Two mechanisms of control are examined here in relationship to the production of social structure in an advertising agency, Shoenman and Associates, in which one of the authors conducted an ethnographic study. These mechanisms are language and social drama. Both examples explored are based within a two-dimensional framework for the analysis of sociocultural process. These two realms are the social and the cultural.

#### Introduction

The downtown club was designed on the inside to look like a hunting lodge. Rough sawn pine walls and only slightly finished wood molding gave the place a log cabin look. A fit place to come in from the cold. Homey and warm. A place where you could drink with your buddies and be safe. The Christmas decorations - the tree, the lights, everything - just added to this coziness.

The hundred or so people that were there looked like the "downtown crowd." Men in business suits, women in business suits or dresses. Clean



and formal. Conventional. Likely people who had stopped in on their way home from work, somewhat suspended between the office and the weekend.

The downstairs bar and dance area were crowded; people drinking, talking, dancing, circulating and having fun, enjoying the scene. Drinks were free, an "open bar." As the night went on the place grew more open, people talking and laughing, touching arms and patting shoulders. Some were obviously on the make, either just for the fun of flirting or looking.

During the slow dances people snuggled up, arms over shoulders or clutched around the small of a back, and during the fast dances - good American disco - these folks moved, jerked, and jumped just like anyone is expected to.

An outsider, someone just walking in off the downtown street, might take the activities here for an after work get together that continued too late into the evening. Maybe the people forgot to go home. An after work gathering flowing so well it continued beyond the two beer stage.

On the other hand, perhaps these people were participating in a more formal occasion. Everyone there dancing and drinking through a Friday night near Christmas under the auspices of some club, church, charity, or business, part of the obligatory "holiday parties."

They are, in fact, all employees of Shoenman and Associates, of Pittsburgh, Boston, Baltimore, Detroit, or any major U.S. city you want them to be in. Except New York. Advertising agencies in New York dwarf Shoenman and Associates by several multiples. It is, however, the second largest agency (in billing and employees) in its metropolitan area.

On the Friday evening before Christmas the members of Shoenman and Associates walk from the company office to a downtown social club rented for the evening. Every member is required to attend. Spouses, mates, and/or dates, on the other hand, are forbidden from participating, even though the party is during a weekend evening, and frequently carries on, in strong swing, until one or two in the morning. The dancing we saw above, for example, is all between members of the agency.

This Christmas party is only one in a countless flow of events which constitute Shoenman and Associates. For ten months one of the authors did fieldwork in this advertising agency, spending an average of 33 hours per week listening to and talking with organization members, examining documents, and more generally, observing business meetings and social functions, those both formal and informal (Rosen 1985a; 1985b; 1985c). During this period the agency employed an average of 114 people and recorded a yearly revenue of 44.8 million dollars.

The purpose of this work was to observe the day-to-day operation of an organization, and from this to explicate the processes through which social structure is enacted. Social structure is understood in this work as the system of rules and statuses forming at least a relatively stable pattern in a given setting. It is the order in a system. It "is all that holds people apart, defines their differences, and constrains their actions" (Turner 1974:47). Social structure is the organization of instrumental relations, and as such, it is primarily the realm of order. Derivatively,

control of the labor process is the fundamental problem of formal organization, for the control process is quintessentially concerned with the ongoing production of order, which is structure.

### Constructing Reality

Reality, Berger and Luckmann (1976:121) remind us, is constructed in the face of chaos. The natural stability of order, and relatedly, of organization, is an illusion, whose front is maintained through the management of a common backstage of meaning. Whenever the mechanisms of legitimation which obscure this precariousness are threatened, "anomic terror" rears its head. Hence, the work of management within formal organization is largely that of directing and protecting these mechanisms of legitimation, which give face to not only the organizational order of things, but within this the role of the managerial group itself.

In this article two mechanisms of control are examined in relationship to the production of social structure in Shoenman and Associates. The influence of language in the production of control will first be explored, and then returning to the Christmas Party introduced earlier, the notion of social drama is introduced and explored as a snapshot of the manner in which reality is constructed. Both examples are based within a two-dimensional framework for the analysis of sociocultural process. The two realms within this framework are the social and the cultural, one consisting of the behavior and the other of ideas. Cohen (1974) identifies the former as the "power order" - the realm of socioeconomic action - and the latter as the "symbolic order" - the realm of the ideational, the cultural. Culture, or the symbolic order, may be understood as a public document, a "rhetoric" (Geertz, 1980:102), developing over time through the shared, accumulated experience of system members, giving rise to system specific ideational elements, such as assumptions, ideas, values, and norms.

While the symbolic order emerges from action, it acts back upon it, recreating and transforming action through the provision of meaning. To function in a setting, and to gain meaning from behavior, culture systems are internalized. Hence, our ideas, values, assumptions, and norms are "envehicled meanings" (Geertz, 1980:135), with symbols the vehicles through which communication occurs. Symbols are here the "objects, acts, relationships, or linguistic formations that stand ambiguously for a multiplicity of meanings, evoke emotions, and impel men to action" (Cohen, 1974:23). They are thus anything that signifies, an intersubjective process, and thus public (Geertz, 1980:135). Further, given the ambiguity of symbols, and the necessity of this ambiguity for orderly communication, the conscious and/or unconscious manipulation of symbols (and thus culture) is constantly and necessarily ongoing in the struggle for and attempted maintenance of power among asymmetrical groups. Consequently, culture is a control mechanism, or as Geertz (1973:44) argues, a system of "control mechanisms - plans, recipes, instructions what computer engineers call 'programs' - for the governing of behavior."

Here, the social and cultural orders are understood as autonomous, not mechanically reducible one to the other. Cohen (1974) terms this relationship a "politico-symbolic dialectic." Symbols do not mechanically reflect political/social relationships, but reflexively create, maintain,



and reproduce these relationships through the provision of meaning for understanding and action, while action reflexively shapes meaning (Bailey 1983).

Fundamentally, then, the symbolic order provides for the perception of order and reproduction of social relations, giving meaning to social structure. Cohen notes that the understood stability of a social system

"is in effect maintained by repetitive symbolic activities which continuously create and recreate the system. The ceremonies of authority have to be periodically staged to reassert its existence and efficacy... Symbols achieve this measure of continuity-in-change by their ambiguity and multiplicity of meanings. A ceremonial may be repeated over and over again in the same form though its symbols may be charged with different meanings to accommodate new developments [in the power order]. There is thus a continuous process of action and counteraction between the symbolic order and the power order even when there is no significant structural change" (Cohen, 1974:36).

Thus, symbolic forms enable us to perceive fixed points through the condensation of meaning via the ambiguity of symbols. Social discourse is enabled on the basis of this ambiguity.

This conceptual approach carries with it a number of implications running counter to many of the central concepts and assumptions predominant in organizational analysis. By looking further than the perceived "objective" social interactions that generate power relationships through resource exchange, to the intersubjectively meaningful symbols legitimating these relationships, analysis moves beyond an investigation of surface interaction to the "deep structures" in which interaction is embedded, and which shape, constrain, and regulate the form interaction takes (Clegg, 1975).

#### The Influence of Language

Writing of communicative competence, Habermas (1970:220) states that "today the problem of language has replaced the traditional problem of consciousness; the transcendental critique of language supersedes that of consciousness." It is through the analysis of language, Habermas thus proposes, that an understanding may be achieved concerning social process. Our purpose here is to briefly investigate the language of bureaucracy in relationship to control.

It is in language that the objectivity of social structure is established, where system members are caught up in understandings biased by the nature of their communication. Language is consequently "a structure of prejudices," where "the grammars of language games [are] dogmatically inculcated as rules for interpreting the world and for action" (Habermas 1977:358). The process of communicating through particular language systems then influences the construction of a particular reality, and consequently influences consciousness. Language is hence "intricately bound up with other aspects of life, with plans and fears and thoughts and activities, and cannot be understood in isolation from these" (Hunter 1971:275). Along this order Wittgenstein proposes that language is best approached in its

relationship to action, with which it is interwoven in "language games" (1958:5). From this view language is not a rationally formal system. Instead, it is something played with, manipulated and bent by its users. This flexibility will be observed below in relation to the annual Christmas Party, where structures of meaning are "played with" to communicate meaning and channel behavior.

Addressing the relationship between language and power, Pfeffer (1981:184) writes that "language and symbolism are important in the exercise of power," but "contribute only marginally to the development of the power of various organizational participants." "Rather," he continues, "power derives from the conditions of resource control and resource interdependence. It is possible that those who have emphasized the role of language and political symbols have confused the exercise of power with its foundations." We propose, one the other hand, that this position considers only surface exchange. It is unreflexive, for as Habermas notes,

"it makes good sense to conceive of language as a kind of metainstitution on which all social institutions are dependent; for social action is constituted only in ordinary language communication... Language is also a medium of domination and social power. It serves to legitimate relations of organized force. In so far as the legitimations do not articulate the relations of force that they make possible, in so far as these relations are merely expressed in the legitimations, language is also ideological. Here it is not a question of deceptions within language, but of deceptions with language" (1977:359).

The orthogonal distinction that same make between the institutionalization of power, control, and domination and their exercise (Pfeffer 1981; Salancik 1984) leads one away from a systematic sociology of power. The manifestation of control by capital in administrative organization is an act of reality definition, and hence likely of recreation as well. The grammar of the symbolic order, as a "medium of domination and social power," is a "correlate... of the world" (Wittgenstein 1958:44), where a reciprocal relation exists between symbolic and social action such that one domain directly implies and recreates or subverts the other. To propose otherwise is to limit analysis to syntactic, semantic, and phonetic features of communication, rather than to examine and appreciate the grammar of "language games," the relationship between language and social process, existing prior to and into which the individual is socialized. For this reason Berger and Berger (1972:81) refer to language as "the fundamental institution of society." The truth claims of social structure if projects are objectified as attributes of reality. Social artifact is thus experienced as perceived ontological fact. This does not mean that a particular string of phonemes causes some to be more powerful than others - naming one a "Secretary" does not make her or him less powerful than identifying the person as an "Account Supervisor" while maintaining the same task and social structure - but that sociolinguistic categories of reality are defined in direct correspondence to a system's procedure of knowing.

Knowing is the process of establishing categories of a reality and accepting relationships between these, a process into which all are socialized and in which some exert noticeable influence. Where

communication transmits these notions with validity claims institutionalized meanings become manifestations, bases, and expressions of power and control.

The language of bureaucracy, as any language, contains validity claims as to the truth and objectivity of its underlying assumptions and social relations. When viewed according to the dimensions of institutionalization proposed by Berger and Berger (1972:80-91), the relationship of language to social process is highlighted. Firstly, taking the role of secretary as illustration, a person occupying this position is publicly and undeniably a Secretary. This is a known fact, which she (at Shoenman and Associates all Secretaries are female) cannot deny nor wish away. As such her secretariness has the awareness of "external reality." Furthermore, as a Secretary there is an accepted normative way for her to behave in organizational relations, which has a recognized "objectivity" within the ideational system. If a Secretary transcends these norms, perhaps forcing the situation by refusing to type for others and demanding clients of her own, she will surely be quickly reprimanded and reminded that she is a Secretary, occupying a particular role which dictates her acceptable range of behavior within the organization. In other words, the "moral authority" of the system, including the role of secretariness, will be evoked, and if necessary the "coercive power" of actually reminding her of consequences if she persists with her outrageousness will also be operationalized. Finally, to convince her and others of the legitimacy of the normal position of secretariness, the "historicity" of the position will likely be brought forth; Secretaries have always typed for their superiors, and furthermore, Secretaries have never had their own clients. In this way secretariness is an institutionalized symbolic form fitting its social environment and influencing reproduction, as do other linguistic formations describing bureaucratic position and process. They present an institutionalized meaning influencing the maintenance of the power order they fit.

It is not that the particular phonemic structure creates the role and power of a Secretary, any more than phonemic structure creates the role and power of a Slave. Instead, it is the underlying meanings of secretariness and slaveness, each a product of and construct in a particular economic order, representing different institutionalized social relations and structural advantages, that define power and role. Words such as chief executive officer, president, senior vice president, vice president, and manager are formations reflecting and recreating the hierarchical stratification upon which bureaucratic control is based and maintained. Unless members of the organization are hierarchically stratified, and accept this stratification as a natural and neutral fact, bureaucratic control cannot occur. The very concepts of "manager" and "management," expressed through their phonemic formations, are social artifacts reflecting the social relations, the power order, in our society.

The power of labeling in the process of enacting stratification is brilliantly apparent in instances where people refuse to do so. Hence, as Myerhoff (1975:55) wonderfully observes, those involved with the ecstasies of the "Woodstock Nation" in the middle and late 1960's often exhibited an "avoidance, almost [an] abhorrence, of labeling and discussing" their communal experiences. This is likely so in that "labeling defines and fixes that which it refers to; it makes it part of structure, removes it

from the category of flow which is characteristic of liminal states and *communitas*." Avoiding labeling aids in avoiding structure, in creating a communion among those sharing an experience.

The effort to avoid categorization in the case of the Woodstock pilgrims stands in strong contrast to the bureaucratic world. Because bureaucracy is based upon extensive stratification (Edwards 1979), a reality construction within this organizational form is the establishment of numerous discrete areas of authority and responsibility, accomplished through institutionalizing a meaning system enabling such stratification. The titles representing this stratification define the boundaries of a job, stake out its territory, and thereby exclude others from trespassing, or even the conception of trespassing, on that domain. Patterns of dominance are consequently transfused into individual psyches through the communication of a particular reality.

Hence, in Shoenman, sections of the membership are removed from the major contest for power, prestige, and wealth by the system of meaning, the language games used to define them. One dichotomization is that between "professionals" and "clerical and special services" people. The "professionals" are core members of the agency's departments, such as accounting, media, art, and the account groups, while the "clerical and special service" workers are Secretaries, Receptionists, the Cook, and so on. The "professional" label is charged with meaning, structurally objectifying upon its bearers the status of excellence, competence, skill, and so on, while those ordained otherwise are reified as in an inferior status. This status awareness is constantly reinforced through the omnipresence of the "professional" label in the minutiae of everyday life. For example, when the intercom system is used to page people, "nonprofessionals" are usually announced by both their first and last names, while "professionals" are usually announced by a gender title and their last name. Addressing someone by a first and last name is culturally more familiar and baser than addressing one with a title. Similarly, when outsiders telephone and ask for a "professional" who is not accessible, a gender title and last name will usually be used to inform them of this inaccessibility, while for a "nonprofessional" a first and last name will usually be used. In intra-member conversation, addressing top managers by formal gender title and others by their first name only, thus recognizing hierarchical status, also reinvests social artifacts with validity.

By means of categorization the "clerical" group, approximately forty per cent of the organization's membership, is identified as different from those occupying the agency's significant political arena, from the professionals. It is thus through language gamesmanship that a seemingly neutral "professionalism" is classified, ascribing perceived differential superiority and competence to one group, reflecting and reproducing the underlying power order: language creates and reflects. Labeling shapes consciousness, programs self-awareness and identity, and makes it inconceivable that what is social artifact could unfold differently.

Similarly, within the agency's "professional" group language institutionalizes the division discussed earlier between the "creative" and "business" people. The members of both groups have had their respective functional territories staked out and guard them jealously. Friction often results when territorial transgressions occur. Reflecting this artifact,

the Office Manager once stated, "We have an ongoing conflict between creative and account people here. The account people think they're Copywriters and Art Directors, and sometimes creative people think they're account people. But it's kind of fun." Meetings were often attended in which a potential or current advertising scheme was discussed among "business" and "creative" types. Though signs of territorial conflict were infrequently manifested during these sessions, creative people would often later criticize various business people for "trying to be creative" and for "taking their own creative ideas seriously," fully believing that business people cannot make aesthetic judgments. Similarly, business people frequently criticize the arty types for acting in a "financial" manner. This art versus money conflict is occasionally explicit. Hence, business people do not have the right of aesthetic authority, which illogically includes a number of the younger Account Executives who at one time worked in the creative departments of competing agencies. At the same time, the business people view those performing creative functions as generally irresponsible, unskilled, untrained, and so on, and consequently unfit for business work. Account personnel often decry the lack of business acumen on the part of creative people, complaining, for example, that "they are not motivated to get the work done on time," and so on.

Language games thus recreate the identity consciousnesses of the two groups, as it represents their positions of power. In this field the business people are clearly dominant, where Shoenman and Associates is known as an "Account Executive's agency," and organizational rewards and influence, in the form of the corporation's top positions and prizes, are controlled by the business side. There is nothing inherent in the nature of advertising work which makes this materially necessary, however. Other agencies are in fact known as "creative houses," where creativity is defined as the critical organizational resource and function, and where most top managers are drawn from the creative area. The dominance of business people in this agency clearly derives from the reality definitions imposed by its senior executives. Both Walter Shoenman the Chairman, and Barry Kassian, the President, have come from the business side, as have each of the other top officers in the corporation. A particular reality was defined, rules formulated to respond to it, and through institutionalization a recreation process begun.

Hence, though the material bases of exchange are transacted to manifest perceived power and influence, the ideational structure of social relations into which one is socialized provides the foundation for the subsequent definition of what is critical and how it is to be used. From this perspective, bureaucracy itself is an ideational concept, constraining certain perceptions and practices, and encouraging others. Its practice is a sociohistorical outcome of particular forces. The study of social structure within organization analysis must then account for the specific nature of bureaucracy, for its particular processes of control.

This aim informs the remainder of this paper. The concept of "social drama" will be introduced as a unit of social process in which social relations are uniquely visible, and thus explicable. The Shoenman and Associates Christmas Party is such a drama. Of course, the Party is only one event in the total set of activities that make up this agency. However, just as a paragraph or a sentence may be analyzed to reveal the grammar of a language, this unit of social process may be examined to

reveal the social structure of Shoenman and Associates. To enable this analysis, however, several concepts will first be introduced. These center around the notion of interests and the non-neutrality of bureaucratic control.

### Interests, Power, and Bureaucracy

Barnard (1938), from whom much of the traditional orientation in organization analysis has derived (Perrow 1979:78-79), viewed bureaucracy as equitable, moral, and functional for members from all its levels. Further, he believed authority to emanate from the lower levels of hierarchy and flow upward. The rule of management was consequently in the interests of all. Hence, one cannot speak of an elite acting contrary to the interests of others. Instead, managers coordinate work under the auspices of workers. As Perrow (*ibid.*:88) writes, for Barnard "organizations were the measure of man's cooperative instincts and were [thus] essentially democratic in nature and benign in their influence." The critical analysis of authority, and the further problematic areas of organization studies that it entails, such as power, conflict, and individual goals and interests, are thus fundamentally ignored as "outside of his model" (*ibid.*). Instead, questions of legitimacy, power, authority, and so on, are considered from a position buttressing the status quo structure of power and authority underlying our society.

Somewhat similarly, Weber and Parsons speak of power as essentially consensual, based in social systems that change only slowly. In such systems coercion is an ineffective manner of maintaining control; power may dominate, but it would remain uninstitutionalized, and hence ineffective for the conduct of everyday social life. Instead, legitimate, consensual power is necessary for the relative fluid transaction of behavior. For Parsons, power is a symbolic medium, in which compliance, in essence legitimacy,

"is a type of support that derived... from the values held by the individuals formulating, influencing, and being affected by political ends... The derivation of legitimacy from values comes through the establishment of a positive connection between the entity or process having legitimacy and those values. It involves a set of expectations in the minds of those who accept the legitimacy. These expectations are to the effect that the legitimate entity or process will, under certain circumstances, meet certain obligations that are held by those who view it as legitimate. Legitimacy is a type of evaluation that imputes future behavior of an expected and desired type" (Parsons 1963:238).

The basis of social power is people's trust in others and in the relationships that bind them together in organizations. This investment of trust in collective activities occurs when participants believe that those exercising authority will act in ways beneficial to them, according to shared cultural values, in their interests.

However, the symbolic interactionist, interpretive perspective proposed here, in which meaning is manipulated to achieve social order highlights a quite different view of authority than that provided above.

From our perspective, the authority of leaders is "legitimate" in that it is an artifact of the social construction of reality. It derives from sociocultural processes. Consensus is a social construct, where "real interests" are obscured and confounded with subjective "conscious wants" (Connolly 1972). This does not mean that organizational elites necessarily and always consciously attempt to manipulate symbolic ideas in order to amass power per se. The political ramification of their actions may be unintended and unconscious (Cohen 1974), and the process is clearly dialectical. Nevertheless, the opportunity of elites, relative to non-elites, to define reality through social process gives them a potential for imposing upon others their conception of the way the world is and should be.

#### Power, Domination, and Bureaucracy

Simmel (1950) argues that systems of domination are significant because people orient their behavior in formal organizations to the system of rewards, primarily from an economic nature, which are maintained by the elite, and which result in the obfuscation of the real interests of the non-elite. Obfuscation occurs when a principle of social organization, such as the profit system, is perceived as "a concrete object [which] governs the domination" (Simmel 1971:11) of subordinate groups, rather than as a control mechanism per se. People orient behavior towards and internalize these structures of domination because these are, put simply, the most salient webs of meaning available. In our situation, the ideals of "bureaucracy" and the "profit motive" function as key principles giving logic to behavior. Altogether, this system of norms, beliefs, values, and so on, constitutes the particular conditions of production which is bureaucracy.

It is the power inherent in this instrument of control for capital has been the principle reason for its predominance. Hence, as Blasi (1978), Edwards (1979), Clawson (1980), Thomas and Logan (1982), and others have shown, the presumed "technical superiority" of bureaucratic production over other forms is a misnomer. Bureaucracy is merely "efficient" - for capital - as it provides an increased distribution of income to capital (accrued in the category of profit) than was previously possible.

#### Social Drama

As noted, inherent in the notion of a politico-symbolic dialectic is the idea that, as Whitehead (1929:33) states, "the actual world is a process," a state of continual "becoming." Order is in transition and must be reproduced. Turner (1974, Chap. 1) links this notion to a related concept, termed "social drama." A social drama is a temporal structure in social process which, for analytic purposes, is crystallized from this process. In social drama social structure is particularly evident, for drama induces a state of at least partial suspension of normal structural relationships, likely focusing into a state of communion, an "unstructured or rudimentarily and relatively undifferentiated *comitatus*" (Turner 1969:96). Social structure is thus unfrozen, and may or may not revert to its previous state. By focusing attention on particular interpretations about the ultimate nature of social reality, these interpretations are presented as, and may be transformed into, perceived reality. As such, social drama focuses attention on the ontological nature of reality,

presenting an opportunity for profoundly recreating or transforming its basic form as structure is reaggregated. For this reason Geertz (1980:104) likens social drama to "metaphysical theatre"; an existential order is presented, and through presentation transformed into reality. In this section we look at the staging of such a drama, the advertising agency's annual Christmas Party, and focus on some of the techniques of dramaturgy with ramifications for the power order.

The ambiguity of symbols provides a focus for consensus production, generating a possibility for consent, a bureaucratic consciousness. The degree to which symbols evoke emotion is crucial. If ritual fails to access the emotive pole social drama is likely less operationally efficacious. For this reason Cohen (1981, p.207) refers to "ecstasy" in drama as enhancing communion, drawing individuals into a consent by enticing an acceptance of the moral imperatives conveyed in and by drama. To comprehend the role of drama in structuring consent, it is useful to introduce two further concepts. These are the related notions of freedom and flow.

#### Freedom

Whereas leisure is understood as freedom from the "forced rhythms" of social structure, including organizational requirements, and the concomitant freedom to "transcend social structural normative limitations" (Turner 1977:42), the fact that a great number of ceremonials performed in bureaucratic circumstances take the form of "play," which is synonymous with freedom, is not surprising considering that *communitas* arises with the suspension of the normally ordered relations of social structure. A *communitas* fitting bureaucracy, an organismic "we-ness" necessarily evoked for perpetuation of consent to control, arises in situations of anti-structure, when the ordering relations of structure are transfigured. Play, or the "ludic," is a symbolic form enabling this transformation. The major social dramas at Shoenman and Associates, for example, are intertwined with recognized forms of play, or leisure, as will be seen in the Christmas Party drama.

Expectedly, the rituals of bureaucracy commonly make use of symbolic forms of leisure. Paradoxically, however, this leisure motif conveys the message of "freedom-from" bureaucratic control. As the absence of control is experienced, one is likely to experience an invigorating form of *communitas*. This results from a passage from constraint through structure to an "as if" feeling of unrestraint and communion with others. It leads back to the statics of structure. This invigorating form is the foundation for the recreation of social structure; it gives meaning to the reaggregated form. Willingness to participate in the relations of bureaucracy is then conditioned by the temporary release from its grasp through a managed *communitas* arising during ritual.

#### Flow

Explicit within the above discussion concerning the enticement of an engineered *communitas* - experienced during the liminal phase of bureaucratic ritual - is the notion that this *communitas*, among humans and between humans and the perception of an object, is rewarding. However, the points for the derivation of this feeling of reward have not been explored.

Such analysis is possible through an exploration of the relationship between Csikszentmihalyi's (1975, Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton 1981) notion of flow and Turner's notion of *communitas*. Csikszentmihalyi defines flow as the "holistic sensation present when we act with total involvement." It is "a state in which action follows action according to an internal logic which seems to need no conscious intervention on our part." Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton (1981:186) identify six elements of flow. These bear a strong similarity to the overarching notion of *communitas*. The six characteristics are:

- (1) A merging of action and awareness: during flow one is not conscious of a duality of thought and action.
- (2) The merging of action and awareness is possible, according to Csikszentmihalyi, because there is a centering of attention on a limited stimulus field.
- (3) Loss of ego or sense of self: during flow, ego as broker between "self" and "other" in social structural relationships dissolves. The bracketing of a cosmos by rules understood by all participants, and the merging of action and awareness, makes the "self" as broker unnecessary.
- (4) In flow one experiences control over one's actions and over the environment. One believes that her or his skills are matched to the demands of the action, helping to create "a positive self-concept" (Turner 1977:50).

Members of a social system thus develop a secure sense of commonly understood status-roles, and through the experience of flow regenerate their understanding of and adherence to that set of roles. The set is projected as natural and its rewards and occasional processes experienced as enjoyable.

- (5) Flow provides coherent noncontradictory demands for action, and clear, unambiguous feedback to a person's actions. This is accomplished by the focusing of awareness on an easily comprehensible arena. From Geertz's (1973:44) notion of culture "as a set of control mechanisms... for the governing of behavior" we see culture as a focusing mechanism for flow, a normative regulator of behavior.

- (6) The rewards from flow activities are intrinsic, or autotelic: "people are motivated to pursue these activities because they derive some [intrinsic] satisfaction from them, and this satisfaction itself acts as a reward" (Csikszentmihalyi 1975:13). The motivation to engage in flow activities, therefore, is not to maximize "conventional" extrinsic rewards, such as status, power, or wealth (*ibid.*). Instead, the structure of autotelic activities provides a background of meaning against which immediate, intrinsic rewards are maximized. The social ramifications of this autotelic activity, compensating for alienating tasks, is the reproduction of the dominant mode of production. Such flow in the bureaucratic field mystifies the interests of labor, fostering managerial hegemony.

In summary, the efficacy of social drama - from formalized rituals to less formalized interactions - in recreating consent to the capitalist mode

of production lies in its ability to engage attention in acts of perception that lead to the flow experience. Through the flow activity the organization of work relations is experienced in a particular way that structures attention; projecting an enjoyment and psychic identification with bureaucracy.

### Christmas Party

The Christmas Party we began to witness at the beginning of this paper weaves together numerous and sometimes conflicting aspects of human social process. Most strikingly, it yokes together that which is work with that which is its opposite; symbolically bringing together the instrumental relationships expected of "work" and the moral, communal relationships associated with evenings and weekends, with anti-work. This "Party" integrates such aspects of social process as dress, dance, music, food, alcohol, performance, laughter, sex, and talk into a drama which speaks to each present concerning the nature of their relationship to Shoenman and Associates, and more generally, their place in the surrounding sea of social relationships.

It is relevant in exploring the events recounted here to realize that this Party challenges the boundary between work and play. It, in fact, seeks to fuse these realms which are normally experienced as opposite realms. Within this social club, on this evening one each year, the hierarchically arranged relationships of the office are, at least to a degree, stripped and leveled as people play. A community, a fusion of the individual within the group, is enacted on the dance floor, around the dinner tables, on the stage, at the bar, and so on. Hence, an "us" of Shoenman and Associates is enacted, symbolizing the bonding within the organization. Turner (1969) identifies this type of relationship as "*communitas*," an interpersonal relationship free from the asymmetries of social structure, thus enabling individuals to enjoy one another in a spontaneous and equal manner.

As people arrive at the club they leave their overcoats, overshoes, hats, and gloves in the cloak room - December is a cold and often snowy month in the City of Shoenman and Associates - and enter the main bar and dance room on the ground level of the club. The bar is free. People take advantage of this, talking, drinking, and frequently just standing and staring at one another or at nothing in particular. Cliques stake off general territorial areas, which become more diffuse over the hour and a half that people stay downstairs.

Although the Christmas Party takes place during the leisure hours of the evening and the weekend, which are generally associated with "free time" and/or the family, and the event is identified as a party, which is a social arena associated with relaxation, with the absence of formal structure, spouses are excluded from the event. Not only are the members expected - in fact required - to spend a weekend evening away from their mates and with the other members of the business, but they are to eat, drink, and ultimately dance with these people as well. According to one married member, the structure of this Christmas event says that "your work is your life, and these are your friends. It's so fucking weird, there's dancing later. I don't want to dance with people that I work with. It's so fucking weird." But it occurs. People drink, often to inebriation,



eat, laugh, and dance together - or at least male and female members dance with each other, as will be observed below. Only Walter Shoenman the Chairman, brings along family members, normally his wife and some of his children.

Dress for the Party is officially casual, but primarily except for Walter Shoenman and Barry Kassian, the President, it is not. Even the one male from the Creative Department who is particularly incorrigible, not dressing in a tie and jacket to other central dramas, dressed formally for the Party. For example, the Secretaries, all women, were noticeably more fashionably sophisticated in dress, makeup, jewelry, and hair style than on a normal work day. On the other hand, Walter and Barry are "dressed down," having changed from their business suits since leaving the office and arriving at the Party. Walter, who normally wears high quality, expensive corporate suits had left on his suit jacket, shirt, tie, and business shoes, but had put on a pair of greyish plaid pants. Barry had left on his shirt and tie, but had put on a plaid jacket with nonmatching khaki colored pants. Morry Kreiner, head of the important Hotel and Travel Division, dressed in a style between the formality of the normally required business suit for males, and the discoordination of color and style affected by Barry and Walter. He wore a blue sportsjacket and grey pants, a burgundy colored tie, and a stylized handkerchief in his jacket breastpocket. Others, on the other hand, dressed more elegantly than on a normal work day.

At about 7:00 PM people were made aware that they should go upstairs, where twelve round tables, each set for nine, had been crowdedly arranged, more or less facing a large, raised stage. There was a decorated Christmas tree in one corner of the room, and every table had a red tablecloth and green napkins; green and red being the standard colors of Christmas. There was also a bottle of wine on each table, and Christmas motif decorations on the walls.

Seating was open, and those who arrived at a table often reserved room for their friends. After securing seating people went to the buffet line and were served a dinner of meats, salads, and desserts. During the eating phase of the dinner Walter rarely sat and ate. Instead, he almost continuously circulated from table to table, making "small talk" at each stop, welcoming members and indicating to all celebrants that their participation was enjoyed and appreciated. Eventually, after "enough" time had passed for people to eat, the lights were turned off, and people began to clap expectantly, facing the stage. Nothing immediately happened. The stage curtain did not rise nor did anyone appear to provide information, so people began to bang on their tables. Finally, one of the young Account Executives came on stage and welcomed everyone to a Shoenman and Associates show entitled "You Asked For It." Programs had earlier been supplied at each table setting, so people aware of the evening's traditions already knew the general theme of the skits.

On one piece of yellow heavyweight paper, folded in half and printed on each of the subsequent four sides, was a listing of skits and a series of jokes and credits. The first page consisted of the show's title, taken from a popular television game show, with a prominent member's head partially reproduced. The inside consisted of the titles of the ten skits, and the credits. The last page consisted of a series of particularly

sarcastic jokes concerning the political situation in the agency, including events of importance from the past year. For example, the White House is depicted with the phrase "Famous Name A.C. [Atlantic City] Casino [for Sale] Cheap!" A major client loss to the agency during the past year was the Playboy Casino in Atlantic City, whose management decided to use another advertising agency. This was an important blow to the agency. The Casino loss was directly related to the firing of six employees later in the Spring, due to the proported "lack of business." In the Party's program, however, this loss is mocked by the very people who are likely to suffer most from it, the rank and file members who are the major writers and actors in the skits. That thing most serious to members as employees, namely job and organization survival, is open here for public joke making. Similarly, on the program Walter, Barry, and Morry are represented using the caricatures of "Manny, Moe, and Jack," the cartoon spokespeople for a retail automobile supply chain. These characters are emphatically not the "three best friends this (or any other) agency every had!!!" Just as one is, in our culture, "commonsensibly" skeptical of trusting car sales and repair people, so one is instructed to be aware of Walter, Barry, and Morry. Further, just as "Manny, Moe, and Jack" are three sly Jewish businessmen, with the stereotypic images and warnings this entails, so are the Shoenman and Associates managers. To complete the image, these bosses are dressed in the seasonably merry and appropriate garb of Santa Claus or the elves, complete with Walter's cigar and Barry's cigarette.

In what is a central theme in this year's Party, Walter, Barry, and Morry's current divorce proceedings are joked about through the "3 Used King-Size Beds used-on-one-side" cartoon, advising potential buyers to purchase soon because prices go up after the couples have agreed on the division of their properties. In this instance, as in the following allusions to these divorces, a situation of probable personal pain and anguish to top managers is publicly joked about in a way provoking laughter and merriment.

Another "joke" on the skit guide is of interest. A coupon for shock treatment at a psychiatric center taps the commonly expressed sentiment that "this [Shoenman and Associates] is a really crazy place to work"; jokingly, the people are strange and the pressure to produce causes even more neuroses and psychoses than these "crazy" people would otherwise experience. The terms "insane" and "crazy" are frequently used by members to refer to a particularly fast paced day, and/or to the agency in general. Labeling organization relations as special appears important. Making fun of the pressure facilitates endurance.

In each of the instances here, just as in many of the skits to follow, a form of "joking relationship" is established, providing a commentary on social structure. Radcliffe-Brown (1977:174) writes that the joking relationship

"is a relation between two [or more groups and/or] persons in which one is by custom permitted, and in some instances required, to tease or make fun of the other, who in some instances is required to take no offense... The joking relationship is a peculiar combination of friendliness and antagonism."

During the social drama of the Party the joking relationship is

fundamentally "asymmetrical; A jokes at the expense of B and B accepts the teasing good humouredly but without retaliating" (Radcliffe-Brown 1977:174). The anti-structural nature of the skit phase establishes this pattern. However, while the anthropology literature has identified and examined full and permanent joking relationships, the instance here is only temporal, and thus in some sense is a pseudojoking relationship. Basic resemblances nevertheless exist to that identified by Radcliffe-Brown, among others, as a joking relationship. Analogy is valid.

The "structural conditions in which the joking relationship is established "are likely to be those with an element of ambiguity" (Gluckman 1965:194). Such ambiguity exists when those of differing rank and power come together in this situation of anti-structure, when the structural norms governing behavior are temporarily relaxed, if not relatively abandoned. The joking relationship consequently functions to meliorate sociological strain, realized in this vacuum through the absence of the usually present channelling of structure. As we have seen, such strain is inherent in bureaucratic organization, where differences in rank, status, remuneration, power, and so on, need in normal process be given consent. With suspension, nonelite members concentrate on ridiculing bureaucratic authority relations, not necessarily with critical intent of change. Elite members' status is jokingly slandered, their familial suitability and sexual prowess derided, the loss of major business mocked, and so on, but structural change is not imagined. Instead, a form of adulation for the perceived leaders is enacted.

The asymmetry here does not mean that any form of joking is tolerated: norms do exist. For example, on the skit program from one year ago a picture of Walter Shoenman's head had been superimposed on a picture of a farmer in overalls and boots holding a pitchfork, underneath which was written, "Big Walley sells bullshit cheaper." Walter Shoenman let his displeasure be known to those planning this year's event. One officer told me that although this allusion would have been suffered during a skit, its permanence on the brochure was beyond toleration.

### The Skits

As one might reasonably expect from the members of an established advertising agency with a reportedly sophisticated creative staff, the skits were insightful, polished, and funny. The writers and performers, who were frequently the same people, burlesqued agency relations in an often irreverent manner, as they were expected to do. Anything less would have been considered disappointing. Thus, while such skits as "Will Jerry Elms really sell 'Shoenman's Heroes' [the agency softball team] to George Steinbrenner's Yankees?", or "What does Herb Smith [Media Director] really do?", were mild, others were cutting. One included a telephone receptionist on stage answering outside calls. In response to one caller's supposed questioning of the changing agency personnel she said, "Well honey, I can't tell you myself what's going on around here. Things change alot. The Associates don't associate much. The place could be called Shoenman and Company." Later she received a series of phone calls and forwarded them: "Hello Mr. Kassian, it's your wife's [divorce] lawyer"..."Hello Mr. Shoenman, it's your wife's lawyer"..."Hello Morry, it's your wife's lawyer." Later she was paging someone for Barry Kassian, "Mr. Quenzel, get your ass in Mr. Kassian's office!" Under the veneer of corporate

politeness the raw authoritarian nature of relations exists. And another phone message: "Mr. Ebert, [Research Director] yes, a guy on 15th Street is calling, say's he's your bookie." Harry loves to gamble: cards, horses, whatever. The surface image of a managerial elite Brahmanism, an unreachableness due to status, is mocked. Similarly, Morry Kreiner is known as a success story in the agency, as one who, in his mid-thirties, has risen to a position of responsibility. On the other hand, he is known as a "bastard" to work for and with, showing little personal concern for his coworkers. For example, he has an unusually high Secretary turnover rate, even for "this business. Therefore, during the course of one skit a Secretary intendedly telephoned Erica, one of Morry's Secretaries during the past year; "Hello Erica, this is Carol. I wanted to call and congratulate you for being the first Secretary to work for Morry Kreiner for so long. Oh, this isn't Erica? She's not here anymore? Sorry."

In another instance the symbolic technique of dress as a mechanism for defining identity was raised in a caustic manner. A number of women in the organization, who are primarily in their mid to late thirties and hold middle management positions, dye their hair blond. It would be outrageous for someone to publicly comment under normal structural conditions to these women concerning this coloring. For example, for another to mention during a business meeting or a lunch that the dye this month is darker or lighter than last month's is not acceptable. During one skit, however, there was an announcement over the public address system asking Betty Forte, Cindi Ciccone, Janet Calderwood, and others to report to the large conference room for a "root check," a reference to their fake hair color. Again, a reality normally taboo is brought up for all to view in a forum requiring the real women sitting in the audience to accept this burlesque seemingly amicably.

In another reference to dress lore, that separating the formality of the "business" people from the informality of the "creative" people, including the differences in required behavior between the two groups, was evoked during the course of a monologue when someone on stage said, "Perhaps you like old clothes. Join the Creative Department, they wear old clothes all the time. And if you belong to Creative, you don't have to talk with people either. You can say, 'Hey, I'm an artist.'" Here art belongs to the unconstrained world of the liminoid, and those who pursue it even within the corporate arena are allowed and expected to behave in ways mimicking the liminoidness of leisure. This means, among other things, dressing in a way that is artistically classy yet leisurely, and ignoring (as much as possible) corporate constrained behavior. At least in the stereotype, business civility does not apply.

During a skit entitled "Which Wild and Crazy Corporate King Will Win a Date with the Sexy Blonde?" Walter, Barry, and Morry are portrayed as participants in a game show entitled "The Mating Game," a takeoff on the formerly popular television program "The Dating Game," during which a "bachelorette" would ask three "willing bachelors" a series of questions and from these choose the man she wanted to date. The comparison of the skit to this television program is clear, particularly considering the theme of Walter, Barry, and Morry's divorce proceedings. In this instance a "sexy" blond with a caricatured figure is the object/prize, where the sexual exploits and appetites of these three "wild and crazy corporate kings" is mocked in a safe arena. The mocking of the elites' sexual

relations throughout this drama is a thinly veiled mechanism to ridicule their organizational relations. Deriding management's successes and/or abilities in the sexual arena is a manner to criticize their authority, dominance, performance, prestige, and skill in the bureaucratic arena, particularly as sexual relations throughout the skits are conducted on the superficial "boasting" level stereotypically characterizing male crassness. In this asymmetrical instance the high are temporarily brought low.

After the skits and the considerable applause ended people returned downstairs. In their absence a professional disk jockey had set up his equipment, and began to play disco and rock music. People went to the bar and again began their alcohol consumption, and male and female members started to dance with each other. The drinking, dancing, walking about, sitting, talking, and staring into space continued for the rest of the evening.

#### Symbolic Techniques and Communitas

Communitas, as we have seen, includes a temporary intimacy among participants in a social drama. Consequently, symbolic forms and techniques associated with intimacy are likely to be used in anti-structure to elicit communitas. For example, an encompassing technique of the Party is commensality, in its interdispersed emphases on drinking and eating. That the members of Shoenman and Associates all stand, and later sit and eat together, in one room as one body transforms formally unfunctional, contractual relationships to one another and to the Shoenman and Associates entity into an arena for multifunctional relations of communion and amity. At the same time, group identity and exclusiveness is signified by the body "breaking bread together." Those inside the clubroom are Shoenman and Associates. Those outside are not. In addition, the act of eating has been compared to copulation, both involving, in Levi-Strauss' terminology "une conjonction par complémentarité," a uniting of two separate but complementary units (see Goody 1982:114). While Levi-Strauss is referring specifically to eating and sexual relations, and not to the intersubjective meaning of commensality, the relationship between commensality and copulation is similar, where interdining is the unity of usually separate units in a complementary relationship. Both involve particularly close forms of contact between people. It is for this reason that sexual relationships and interdining between disparate groups, whether classes, religions, nationalities, and so on, is frequently forbidden (Stevenson 1954) to maintain distance. On the other hand, ritualized interdining accomplishes the opposite; it encourages an intimacy which, no matter how temporary, bears an element of communitas.

Similarly, a social role of alcohol is to create a particularly intense relationship among members of a group (Rosen and Mullen 1985). This role centers around the potentially inebriating affect of the substance's consumption, but varies in intensity from using alcoholic beverages to mark an event as sacred - a sacrament - to exploiting its psychosocial ability to affect an altered state in which non-routine behavior is accepted, in which normal social relations are suspended. Rohlen (1971) has illustrated this inversion of normal relations in his analysis of social processes in a Japanese bank. Here, after-office-hour parties and bar hopping leads to frequent and intense drinking, in which the strong restraint Rohlen describes as usually present in Japanese business relations gives way to a

more leveled comradeship. Rohlen hence explores the manner in which inebriation is used in the process of creating a communion among organization members.

Relatedly, the drinking at the Christmas Party, which is more intense than at any other Shoenman and Associates ceremonial, and also corresponds to the culturally "mandated" drinking during the Christmas to New Years season, also leads to the suspension of normal structural distance. Along the way from drinking before, during, and after the dinner some members become slightly buzzed, while others end up having trouble standing. One result of this psychoactive state, particularly when combined with other symbolic techniques present in this social drama, is the realization of behavior generally not encountered in regular agency process. This includes a temporary alliance among stratified or feuding members, which may be established during the pre-dinner drinking and socializing, at the dinner table, among members during the skits, during the drinking and socializing following the skits, or between male and female members during the dancing. A boss and subordinate, usually distant, might reduce hierarchy by "buddying around" at the bar, arms over shoulders, joking and laughing, perhaps drunk, taking advantage of the social license provided by the circumstances. Perhaps partially feuding individuals, each belonging to the same social circle, will take the opportunity to mend the breached relationship. Perhaps some will take advantage of the drink, music, and dance to make sexual advances towards others. If rebuffed the excuse of alcohol exists. If accepted another office affair might begin. And so on.

The exchange or copartaking of alcoholic beverages is associated with numerous religious rituals throughout the world, where it is often used to create a communality between living participants in a ceremony, between the living and the dead, or between humans and gods (Cohen 1981:211). Particularly in the "Westernized" world alcoholic drink, such as beer and wine, is the object of the advertising industry's focused fantasies of liminoid freedom from the drudgery of work life and freedom to experience creativity. Such advertising slogans as, "You only go around once. Grab for all the gusto you can get," or "Welcome to Miller [after-work freedom from] time, yours and mine," communicate this message. In our society beer and "hard liquor," of which a great deal is consumed during the Party, are typically basse cuisine drinks culturally associated with the good times of leisure, and consequently, with the arena of equality in anti-structure. This communality is reinforced through its inebriating effect, particularly as the evening wears on. Commensality, including drink, together with the other symbolic techniques, serves to achieve a liminoid state satisfying the needs for freedom from and freedom to, and relates this to the structure of bureaucracy. Bureaucratization has increasingly come to include even our liminoid experiences, further making it a totalitarian entity.

The Party is sufficiently liminoid such that friction encountered here is, at least on the surface, likely forgiven, just as two guys in a fistfight in a bar often carry little or no observable antagonism beyond that encounter. Confrontations are readily excused. Similarly, Rohlen (1971) illustrates that inebriated workers who flagrantly violate norms at office parties are bore no lingering malice. In a related vein, at the Shoenman party Morry Kreiner approached Betty Forte, the Office Manager, asking her how he is regarded throughout the agency. She later commented



that normally she would have said nothing, but was at a party and realized, according to her, "what the hell?" She told him he is considered a "bastard," and is the "most disliked person in the agency." According to Betty he acted offended at the time, but unchanged beyond that. They, for instance, still interact jovially. More importantly, Betty voiced the belief that he asked at the Party because he felt it a period of unusual license, and she responded from the same feeling.

The dancing, which occurs in agency process only during the Christmas Party, is an especially serious form of contact between members from generally stratified positions, for a majority of women in the organization are Secretaries, who dance with their immediate or more distant male superiors. Even those women more advanced in the hierarchy are likely to dance with males from yet higher positions, for there is a tendency, observing the dancing, for the women to dance with men at least their own age, and from a position at least as advanced as their own. The form and intensity of contact during dancing is similar in kind to that during sexual interaction. In this instance the units are clearly separate yet complementary, while for both direct participants and onlookers the publicness of the intimate interaction signifies and at the same time creates a temporary intimacy among members. A normally taboo form of interaction is ritually efficacious for eliciting flow, or *communitas*, particularly when culminating an evening of unusually intimate and unifying interaction, including during this phase drinking, music, and dark lighting, as is common in other "intimate" situations.

The symbolic techniques of the Party identify and focus this unit as an arena of liminal relations. Through the excitement of laughing, clapping, screaming, drinking, and dancing a state of ecstasy is likely achieved. As Cohen (1974:210) indicates, ecstasy literally means "a standing out of oneself," which is the self-rewarding egoless merging of awareness and action of flow. People participate vigorously to achieve a high level of agitation, which is a high level of communality. The rules and activities of the Party define and concentrate this *communitas*. Normal hierarchy is somewhat leveled. A temporary condition showing the fallibility of the influential in a marginal arena is established.

In summary, the symbolic form and the dramaturgical techniques of this situation affect a situation of anti-structure in which the individual need for freedom from the bounded relations of work is channeled into a *communitas* of organization membership and a freedom to be creative, spontaneous, and so on. Consequently, even the need for freedom from bureaucracy and freedom to enjoy others for their own sake is accommodated within the bureaucratic form, and aids in the recreation of the bureaucratic status quo. In this situation the hierarchical agonism of bureaucratic stratification is camouflaged through the comradeship of participation in a series of dramas operating to elicit the flow of *communitas*. In this instance the interests of all Shoenman and Associate members are the same: to celebrate and enjoy the "us" of the organization. This communion of interests is to carry over into the regular realm of work.

#### Conclusion

Through an exploration of the language of bureaucracy and the

presentation of one social drama, we have briefly viewed the processes through which the social structure of Shoenman and Associates is constructed. Order is achieved as people dance and stumble, and as creative people argue with business types over who really understands what. Social relations are identified and categorized as people enact the asymmetries of bureaucracy.

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The Role of Culture in Affirmative Action Strategy.  
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#### ABSTRACT

Affirmative action change at the manifest level involves structural and systemic adjustments to enhance representation of women, visible minorities and disabled persons through a wider range of occupations. At the latent level, the changes involve archetypal values particularly those held about male and female relationships. Change involving archetypal values has a low probability of success when addressed through linear or adaptive strategy. Interpretative strategy (Chaffee, 1984) is a more appropriate strategy to address change where cultural factors are involved.

#### INTRODUCTION

Organizations have approached affirmative action planning as a business problem with social dimensions. They have planned from a rational-economic perspective using linear or adaptive strategy. Affirmative action however has cultural implications. The normal planning modes may be unable to take cultural factors into account. They have been notoriously incapable of producing affirmative action change in Canada...assuming change was intended.

Viewing affirmative action from a cultural perspective provides different insights into the appropriateness of currently used strategies. From this view, organizations are cultures which by definition includes the social life of all the participants (Keesing, 1976). Over some period of time through social interactions in the daily life of the organization, patterns of behaviours, systems and structures emerge and become formalized and institutionalized. The social interactions were and are informed by the individual's or group's values, cause and effect beliefs and the group's accepted norms of behaviour, their system of meaning. The system of meanings shared by the group is the source of the reference points or implicit rules that guide interactions in the organization's daily work life.

Affirmative action change this paper will argue, must take account in the change process of the nature of the organization as a culture, the systems of meaning that the culture holds. Affirmative action planning, programming and implementation occurs through the removal of barriers, structural and systemic to the advancement of women and other target groups. While affirmative action for women is manifest through changes to systems and structures in both task and process, there is, however, a latent level of involvement, through the change process, in the traditional relationships between men and women in their social roles. These social roles, primary male/female relationships, are guided by archetypal values in the Jungian sense of modes of inherited thought. These may be built into the unconscious behaviour and thought patterns of the race/culture. The traditional male and female social relationship patterns and the values, beliefs and norms of behaviour that support them are powerful and largely unconscious motivators for maintaining current structures and practices. This latent level of involvement and effect on social roles is not considered in typical affirmative action planning. Affirmative action interventions made into the structures, systems and other forms and patterns

show little understanding of the impact of culture on the change.

Affirmative action change programs are designed and implemented using routine planned change models. For example, the planning model advocated by the Affirmative Action Consulting Service of the Ontario Government is a model following the sequence of ..plan --> analyze --> implement --> evaluate. The model used by the Canadian Government varies only slightly. The Ontario Government Consulting Service alone had met by 1982 with 342 of the approximately 900 employers with over 500 employees in Ontario (Ontario Women's Directorate, 1982). The companies seeking consulting support from the Ontario and Federal Government would be serviced with linear style planning models.

Linear strategy as described by Chaffee (1985), is sequential, and methodological. Used routinely by organizations to achieve specific goals particularly involving markets and products, it is targeted at changing forms, patterns and structural arrangements to meet new business goals. Chaffee also describes adaptive strategy which focuses on change arising from environmental influences and is used to adjust the internal environment to demands from the external environment. Neither model of strategy takes account of the nature of the culture. Where change involves member's deeply held beliefs and values, as in affirmative action, linear and adaptive strategy must be seriously questioned as the strategy of choice.

Chaffee has identified a further model of strategy emerging in the literature concurrent with the emergence of the phenomena of culture. While the parameters are still unclear, it is clear the model assumes reality is socially constructed. "Interpretive" strategy is achieved through cooperative agreement, desired relationships, symbolic actions and communication. "Successful strategic management requires skillful use of all forms of communication and of the symbols used to portray the collective reality of participants - in short, the management of meaning" (Chaffee, 1984, p.213). The model has the capacity to take account of cultural factors in a change process. Chaffee (1985) also suggests the possibility that interpretative strategy, in a hierarchical framework would incorporate the other strategy models. Recent articles explore this possibility, and tentatively agree (Weick and Daft, 1983; Cummings, 1983). Empirical research is yet to be done.

There is evidence that a change and the associated processes must fit the host organization if the change is to succeed. Levine (1980) studied the survival or termination of fourteen organization innovations which he defined as any departure from an organization's traditional practices. He found that where the change fit the values, goals and norms of the organization there was a higher probability that the innovation would succeed. "No matter what the nature of the organization, the innovation must be compatible with it (norms, values and goals of the innovation are congruent with the host).... if the innovation is to succeed" (p.168). Success was measured as the institutionalization of the change.

Chaffee (1984) in a study of fourteen colleges attempting to recover from financial decline, found the adaptive model of strategy appeared to assist the colleges in their recovery efforts but could not account for a faster recovery in what she termed "the more resilient set" (p.234). The interpretive model, which assumes the organization is a network of members "who construct reality from their perception of the system, was followed consistently by the more

resilient colleges to a greater extent than by the less resilient colleges" (p.234).

The following proposition will be tested:

In change involving archetypal values, deeply held beliefs and long standing norms of behaviour, linear or adaptive strategies alone will not achieve the objective. Strategies that take account of the culture are also essential. Interpretive strategies are addressed to cultural factors. They are the strategies of choice to achieve change where culture is involved, as in affirmative action.

#### THE STUDY

To test this proposition, an exploratory study (of which this paper reports a segment) addressed the following questions:

- What models of strategy have been used by employers who were successful in achieving affirmative action goals?
- Were there multiple strategies, and was there a hierarchy of strategy models?
- Were the strategies emergent or deliberate (Mintzberg and Waters, 1985)?
- What model(s) of strategy most significantly contributed to affirmative action success?

A historical perspective covering a ten year period was used to study a private and a public sector organization that has achieved significant affirmative action results. Criteria for success was set as: representation of females in a broader range of occupational categories than in 1975, 30% representation of women in professional and managerial ranks (the Ontario Government's target for the year 2000) and a 90% or better ratio of women's wages to men's. Two organizations who met this criteria agreed to participate in the study: a large Canadian multinational firm in the financial sector and the Ministry of Correction of the Government of Ontario.

#### THE STUDY DESIGN

The method used was to reconstruct through historical documents and interviews how, from the perspective of those involved, affirmative action was enacted. The period chosen was ten years because of the time needed to see significant results in affirmative action, and because change in occupational mobility during this period was slow due to economics and slow growth. The private sector financial firm was the first study site and the one reported here in the subsequent case study. The method chosen follows Lincoln and Guba (1984), naturalistic inquiry.

In phase one of the study, historical documents such as publications on the company's history, newspaper and magazine articles, company reports, speeches, policy, procedures and statistics were examined to provide a picture of the organization's culture and its position on affirmative action through its espoused and public positions.

In phase two, interviews with 24 participants from all levels of employees in the company's head office were carried out. Fifty five employees were selected to receive an explanatory letter and invited to participate. Forty responded with acceptance. Of these 24 were available when called for interviews. They formed a maximum variation cohort by age, sex, ethnic origin, service and level.

Interviews focused on oral histories about the organization, its culture, the change process and how it was enacted. The first interviews were open ended and unstructured and provided data for more focused interviews as the process proceeded. Recognition of the salient themes and patterns led to even more specific interviewing.

The interviews were taped and precis notes were made. They were transcribed and coded to provide an audit trail for the subsequent analysis and interpretation of the data. Impressions and insights were noted in a journal. The journal was also used to record the experience from the perspective of the interviewer, the site and organization data and the unfolding story. The unfolding story was checked at the end of each session with participants to ensure its progressive validity in their experience.

In phase three the emergent patterns of the strategies and the historical and cultural interpretations made by the researcher were reviewed with a focus group of the population involved in the study until their accord with the story was achieved. "In general - group agreement determines truth" (Hesse, 1980, p.145 cited by Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

The data analysis method was an inductive "analysis in process" as described above (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). The search was for the enacted strategies, the nature of the culture and other categories or themes in the enactment of affirmative action.

The case study report format was chosen as the most appropriate form for an exploratory study in a field site using qualitative methodology. Case study can demonstrate the operation and influence of beliefs, values and behaviours as they affect the processes of affirmative action change.

#### BACKGROUND ON AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

The term affirmative action describes three types of activities designed to increase women's representation in higher level jobs and in a broader range of occupational categories, and as a result to reduce the wage gap between men's and women's wages. The three types of activities are the removal of systemic discriminatory mechanisms, the implementation of systems-related initiatives, and the introduction of special measures, enabling factors, that can solve the organic problems of advancement. The first two of these activities when implemented without the third would constitute an equal opportunity program. The newer Canadian term, introduced by Judge Abella (1984) is "Employment Equity". This newer concept includes the three activities of affirmative action and adds two new dimensions - the removal of residual effects of past discrimination (as in pay equity), and the creation of equitable competition for employment opportunities (as in the introduction of day care).

Affirmative action and equal opportunity were the terms and methods in good

currency during the period studied. Affirmative action was the most commonly used term, and will be the focus of this study.

Statistics show that whether mandatory as in the United States or voluntary as in Canada, affirmative action has not resulted in significant change in the ratio of women's income to men's and in the distribution of women into a wider range of occupations. In Ontario, women working full time earned on average in 1971 59.9% of what men earned, and in 1983, 63.0% (Government of Canada, 1984). In 1971, 55.2% of working women clustered in three of the 23 occupational categories reported on by Statistics Canada. In 1981, the figure was 58.8%. Males distributed well throughout the 23 categories with no category being in excess of 10.5%. The percentage of working women employed in managerial, administrative and related occupations in 1971 was 2.0% and in 1981, 4.2%. The figures for males were 5.5% and 8.7% (Abella, 1984). There is consensus in Canada that affirmative action has not been effective (Abella, 1984, Cohen, 1983).

#### A CASE STUDY OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

The Canadian Finance Company is over 100 years old. A father of confederation was its first president and imbued the leadership that followed with traditional and conservative values. The company perceives itself as having grown along with Canada. It had strong growth from the beginning and had spread to Europe, Asia and the United States by the early years of this century. With flexibility, good planning and a long term view it weathered the two world wars, and emerged into the fifties stronger than at any other time. CFC is a stable, paternalistic and low key organization. In its Head Office, the site of this study, it employs 1500 people.

Leadership and power in CFC, as in similar companies came through the actuarial stream. As a result the style of the organization was solid, trustworthy, forever. It projected quality. The most visible symbols of the quality and style are in their buildings. The Head Office is very beautiful and calm. The tones are muted but interesting. People sit in well appointed cubicles of good size in a spacious layout, where privacy and quiet are assured. As you enter the old building - with the traditional facade of a hundred year old financial institution - the appearance is of a mansion. High ceilings, granite. The new building is attached and echoes the mood of the old. The passage is not abrupt, as the new architecture glows with granites, brasses and bronzed windows. Exceptional works of Canadian art, beautifully featured and illuminated under an expansive dome symbolize good taste, affluence, a sense of tradition and broad thinking. The Canadian tradition, the maturity, the sense of quality are symbolic within the company of its attitude and behaviour in working with clients, employees and suppliers.

CFC has a low key, low profile approach to business. It does not advertise. It provides information to clients and supports them as they work out their own decisions. They are prepared to take the time needed for transactions to come naturally to a mutually satisfactory solution. They are politely and quietly aggressive. Good manners and dress are important, as is respect for the client and even for competitors. There return is better the longer the life of some of their clients. They support with education and money good health in the community at large. Some of these supports have become highly symbolic of the organization in the eyes of the public. The company is very profitable.

Over the years of growth, expansion and conservative management, CFC had lost some of its flexibility and responsiveness to change. The late 60s and the early 70's were a period of philosophical and structural change. Sixteen executives retired over an 18 month period, providing an opportunity for some younger managers to participate in the development of a new fifteen year corporate plan. The plan included moving from a functional to a decentralized, geographic structure, from manual and clerical work to leading edge technology, and from a paternalistic culture to one capable of innovation. The strategies included strengthening and revitalizing the human resource function, and the automation of clerical work.

The new President was in his early forties. The consultant who had led the development of the corporate plan joined CFC as vice president to redesign the personnel function. The thrust towards new technologies led to the development of a progressive and sophisticated computing staff and function, also with a new, young vice president.

Change occurred rapidly once implemented. During the following two years about 140 people, mainly older middle level employees, all male, were released from service. This was done to improve productivity and to move accountability down to lower levels. Opportunities then existed for younger management to move into positions of authority.

During the same period, the formal management training program was dropped. Concurrently, with the automation thrust, a training program was implemented to develop computer generalists who were impossible to find. The Data processing function (DP) was actively recruiting people both internally and externally for the program. The criteria was new for this traditional firm: good communicators, analytical and questioning qualities, leadership skills, unconventional thinkers. The new staff, deeply involved with development in the training program, were asking users questions like "What can we do for you?" The new people were collaborative, service and process oriented, and they were learners. "Women fit the new model better than men" and over time became 52% of the recruits into the function.

In Human Resources change was also occurring rapidly. An employee survey identified needs that the company quickly responded to. A new performance appraisal system was introduced, the job evaluation system was redesigned to the most current technology, all jobs were reassessed and a job posting system was started. Optime - an extension of flextime - was introduced, training programs were significantly extended, a day care subsidy program was implemented.

During this period a new climate was developing that could be characterized as an emerging meritocracy, where there was a deliberate attempt to pay people for performance, to promote on merit, where individuality was appreciated, where communication was more open. The new climate emerged as opportunities rose from growth and change.

Starting in 1972 -3 when promotion was occurring rapidly, the DP people became a major source of entrants to the new management stream, and the percentage of successful women in the stream was very high.



## THE CULTURE

Recurrent themes run through the stories of the CFC people, who have a history of long service and loyalty: "I am CFC and CFC is me".

There is a family quality within the company. Relatives are hired and whole families work there, including aunts and cousins. There are genteel teas, very well attended, a Christmas carol service, picnics with an important, often referred to tug-of-war. Spouses are not generally invited to company events, so employees socialize together.

There is a strong value around fair play. "We went from paternalism to fair play". Several people reported that when the executive reviewed a report on women, there sense was that, members of the family were not being fairly treated. Employees perceive that they are treated "even handedly" by the company. Some managers do not live up to the standard, but blame tends to fall on the individual and not the company.

The process of building consensus before any large change is made is an important theme in this culture. Task forces are used and "give people a chance to get on-side". There are numerous examples of how both company and employee adjust through process together. "Change starts with sensors, people on the boundary, mostly in middle management. They sense dissonance and they move to close. The process of closing is an idea formation. Change here seems to start with the individual who talks up the issue, gathers together a group of people who share an interest or a concern with the idea. They again talk it up until the idea is broadly framed into an issue. Only tacit support is there to now. Then as a group they seek a sponsor in senior management using a discussion process, and a kind of strategy develops to get their buy-in. The sponsor will fit the issue and its dimensions. When he or she buys in they support it publicly. By this time many people are on-side and a change can go through easily. All this occurs through networking". The networking is done by mainly the same people.

The company image is very important. "It is part of what drives us". It is important to employees as well. "I'm CFC and people perceive me as such".

There is acceptance of difference, even a celebration of them since the early seventies. "You are allowed to question, indeed you're expected to". An executive said "I was surprised at the mix when I came here. Irish Catholics, Jews, Italians were working together in management ranks as though that happened everywhere". There are legends about the female marxian psychologist, and other "new thinkers". An advertisement for programmers in the 70's was titled Virginal Player (or Sackbut specialist). "If you are an existentialist dadiast or hedonistic male female hermaphrodite or hobbit any or all of these we would like to talk to you somewhere sometime" and promised not to "pour you into pin stripes" and to "interview you whether you turned up in your best suit only suit or no suit". Legend has it that the ad attracted no response, and it did not meet with favour in some parts of management.

Open, frequent and sincere communication is a strongly held value. People are verbally fluent, expressive, look you in the eye. They are confident in what they say and are well informed about the company. Bulletin boards are everywhere and they are up to date, colorful and well organized. The latest job

openings are posted on them and at lunch hour groups gather. There are a variety of company publications, newspapers, magazines, perspectives, position papers, reports, and they are widely distributed. Employee surveys are done biannually, the results are published and programs to respond to issues are developed. Management and employees interact freely. "The president comes to my cubicle to ask me for information or to discuss something he thinks I might have a view on". "We can drop in on him". People do.

It is a widely held belief within CFC, that the dominant values and corporate ethos are being an enlightened employer, a quality service provider to its clients, and a responsible Canadian corporation. Public opinion of the company would affirm these values are upheld. The company's image is a strong value and the company is perceived by employees as wanting very much to live up to it. Employees expect that the company will. There is a strong rapport between employees and management, built on a long history where the company has been consistent in its treatment and attitudes to its staff and clients.

## AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AT CFC

In May, 1974, the Women for Advancement in CFC Group (WAC) formed by a representative group of women advocated that CFC make use of its most valuable resource "its women". Their aims were to offer CFC women "support and reinforcement in more clearly defining themselves and their goals", to promote equal opportunity by encouraging men and women to think this way and expose discrimination, and to research and recommend learning opportunities for women. (CFC news, May 30, 1974).

The report to the executive was "serendipitous" with concerns about women's issues felt on the part of some of the senior management. The president's daughters were coming of age and he was very interested in their future opportunities. The wife of another member of the team was on the Ontario Status of Women Council, others had professional or employed wives. International Women's Year was to be celebrated in 1975. 1975 was also the year in which Title VII was enacted in the United States, where CFC did about 60% of its business, making affirmative action for women mandatory. The president was opposed to government intervention into business operations, and believed in early action to forestall it.

In the president's July, 1975 planning letter, he indicated the company's intention to examine the current status of women and to seek advice on the achievement of equal opportunities for women at CFC. A task force was set up consisting of 6 senior managers and 6 women, not as senior as the men, "but dynamic". These were staff who could implement a change and within 5 to 7 years would be in executive positions. They reported to the executive committee in 9 months with a set of recommendations. The goal was to create equal opportunities at CFC through three major recommendations. They were a) improve management practices, b) create an equal opportunity climate and c) increase the number of capable women who can take advantage of the opportunities. (CFC Report - Equal Opportunities For Women, 1976).

Response was immediate and within 6 months, a woman was appointed to the Board of Directors. A job evaluation committee was appointed. Two training streams were initiated: awareness training on the issues and appropriate responses for men, and assertiveness training for women. Career development and business

skills training for women was supplemented. A survey to support program design was conducted to assess men's and women's perception of what factors were most important in their advancement. The first woman was promoted to a senior position. Statistics were designed and maintained to track results. "These were the main program content items in the ten years". "Management and the women took it from there".

The task force experience affected the participants deeply. Men said they changed their beliefs about women in business during the nine month study. "My boss said it turned him around". "Attitudes changed in key individuals. It was a subtle transition. Some who had been against now started to say the right things, to feel the subject, see the problem and to expect different results. What a change!". They recognized they "would have working professional relationships with women. So they had to sort out the dynamics".

No women were tokens, but "The first group didn't survive. They were outsiders and had behaviours that didn't fit. They hadn't taken the long way up and weren't organization team players. Management lost confidence in them". "They were not the right people in the right jobs. The next wave held and became the role models." "One of the strategies was to position women where there was a need for good performance so the woman could shine. And the women did".

The DP function was a role model of what was expected and what could be achieved. It had a high profile, a quality staff "of 50's people" and was recognized for high performance. Staffing was about equally men and women, technical and professional, who worked collaboratively. The department had "a processy and service oriented style".

Women were "ripe and ready", especially the DP women with their understanding of the business, their technical competence, collaborative and service oriented style. The women "showed the needed aggressiveness for high places". Female actuaries, economists, financial analysts and lawyers were starting to graduate. When they were "presented for hire or promotion there was no argument against. The company had become more open minded, liberal, and forward thinking". During this period there was growth and decentralization. New linkages and coordinators were needed. New positions were becoming available. Women were a good fit to the needs of the changing organization.

More junior women started to develop the capacity to advance. They were prepared through a combination of factors: the assertiveness training and the skill building, the opportunities for lateral mobility, watching the advancement of more senior women and feeling encouraged by their stories in the company press, and also through mentoring.

Many women had mentors who played a vital role in the fit of the women to the corporate norms. Being given the "right" tasks, being placed on the "right task forces" gave exposures in the "right way", meaning safely. The mentors were men: "I got my most support from senior men who valued the strengths women brought to management - the inner quality they saw as positive. They helped me to build confidence."

There was some trial and error learning. Forms asking managers to respond to the question "What plans do you have for the advancement of women this year?" Managers argued, disagreed, but had to respond in a credible way for the

accountability process. The form was dropped after several years, but it had a consciousness raising, discussion increasing effect. Other consciousness raising questions put to managers were "Do you plan to try to find a woman for this job?" Were qualified women put forth for this opportunity?"

Accountability of management on equal opportunity was continuous. As a result of the task force recommendations, statistics were kept and manager's reported on progress. They were assessed in performance appraisals on how well they addressed opportunities and how well they were developing their staff.

Women's issues were quite high profile during the period. WAC had lunch hour sessions where men and women discussed problems of women's advancement, often with prominent speakers like Laura Sabia, Chairman of the Status of Women Council. There were frequent articles and debates in the company press. One man, obviously up to his eye teeth in the subject, wrote to the editor "I am sick of it all", which spurred another lively debate for several months. Statistics were published. In the "identify the executives as babies contest" the committee ensured there were male and female babies. CFC advertised as an equal opportunity employer. In the mid 70's their ads pictured men and women working together. Strong and visible support was given to the equal opportunity coordinator. People saw the support as a symbol. "She had a high profile and the company supported her". "She was important in what happened here, and she always had management's support". "Her being a woman, and officially supported has done a lot".

Company legends were told and retold. When the president received the task force report, he said "Is this unanimous?" It was. "Let's proceed". A senior vice president in an argument with his colleagues about women's abilities said "My mother and wife are more intelligent than me, I don't know about your experience".

CFC was instrumental in getting a change in government legislation on supplementary payment to women on maternity leave. Senior women were starting to take maternity leave and the costs were heavy. They lobbied with the company for support. The company developed a plan for women at all levels, whereby a supplement to the leave payment would be made as a loan during their absence, and be "forgiven" if the woman returned to the company's employ.

During the period when people were advancing, the process of change seemed to be absorbed into the company and ceased to be seen as a program. "It happened naturally. Women were coming up, and were accepted readily. This is a people oriented company. Senior management is quick to recognize an issue and it was not hard to see this one. They didn't discover a terrible situation. They realized it was an element to be dealt with and that the right things would happen. Right things? No pushing ahead. But no negative bias. Ensuring there was a continuous stream of people being promoted for abilities and potential. A fostering of this attitude. Is this naive? I never sensed people being pushed ahead unwisely - no different from men". "Once you've got women going up, it gets a whole lot easier because people get over the reaction. It then seems like a natural process".

"There isn't a program for women, programs are presented for all". "There is no organized program, no numeric goals. The affirmative action approach arose from the cultural events of the time". "There is no numbers game here. It seemed to

evolve on its own, low key which is probably best". "There were many formal statements but as much was accomplished by style as anything else. It was done subliminally, almost unconsciously".

The program now is seen as a philosophy that reflects a set of values, an operating philosophy that reflects even handed treatment of all employees.

In 1985, CFC won an important award for affirmative action achievements of 12% percent women at the executive level, 33% females at the professional, managerial level and a wage gap of 9%. When the president spoke of the award as he reviewed the years achievements at the Christmas Carol service, he said that receiving it was like being recognized "for stopping beating your wife". The suggestion is that the process of women taking a fuller role in the affairs of the business has become a norm at CFC.

#### RESULTS OF THE STUDY

The strategies employed by CFC in affirmative action can not be described as linear in Chaffee's (1985) terms. While specific linear strategies were never identified, linear strategy can be assumed to have been employed in planning the implementation of the task force recommendations: for example, in the development of specific programs within the recommendations, in the development of statistics and in the processes of accountability of managers. In short linear strategy, at CFC is used as an implementation method.

Adaptive strategy is a major strategy in this firm. It fits well the "process of building consensus before any large change" described as recognizing a discrepancy, and creating internal support so that the issue may be addressed and the adjustments made. This process works for both internally and externally generated problems and issues. It was the process used to recognize, build an awareness and create a response to affirmative action needs. The fitting of the response to many environmental pressures is clear: International Women's Year, changes in U.S. legislation, rising expectations of women in the community, increased female graduates seeking employment. The success of this strategy can be seen in the communities recognition of CFC as an exemplary organization in affirmative action.

Interpretative strategy is the strategy that enacted the firms response to the recommendations. This strategy works through gaining cooperative agreement, symbolic actions, using language, and communications.

Cooperative agreements emerged from the task force on several levels. Firstly, agreement to proceed with actions to change the company's behaviour in terms of opening opportunities to women. Secondly, an agreement must have been reached, considering subsequent activities to open the subject to full debate, to create very open communication channels between management and employees on women's issues. Thirdly, to pursue the changes themselves as managers, thereby demonstrating shared changes to behaviour.

There were many symbolic actions. The appointment of the task force, the level of the members and the equal numbers of men and women, were all symbolic of the level of the executive's interest in the subject. So was the rapid implementation of the recommendations. The appointment of role models, the recognition of the DF function and the rapid promotion of both men and women

from this group, the management's support of the coordinator, positioning women so "they would shine", the publication of statistics, the forms requesting the plans for women all had very important symbolic value to employees. Others were: addressing the government on behalf of women and getting a change to legislation, paying supplemental benefits on maternity leave, the style of advertisement, the mentoring by executives of women trying to advance. These are what people describe as "how it happened". The symbolic actions, in many cases became stories and legends that then expressed intent and expectations and became guides to others responsible for causing the changes to occur.

Communication was a powerful strategy. The executive and senior management were overtly supportive. The publications throughout the 70's were full of women's issues with a focus on affirmative action and the company's response. They were very open and frank. Policies were rewritten, as was the employee orientation. Company manuals were revised to include the affirmative action position. These were done of course following the adaptive strategies of getting people "on-side". The educational programs and the programs dealing with subjects helpful to women were expanded. Women were encouraged to use the programs and were supported interpersonally as they made the effort.

CFC has used the three models of strategy. Adaptive strategy to sense and initiate a response to the changes that occur in its internal and external environment. Interpretive strategy as the method of enacting the planned response, and linear strategy as the method of implementing specific programs that have procedural components. In the case of CFC, it is not clear that the strategies were hierarchical. If a hierarchy did exist it would be in the order of adaptive --> interpretive + linear; and not Interpretive --> adaptive --> linear as Chaffee (1984) suggests.

The adaptive strategy in CFC is a company convention, well recognized and described. It would thus be a deliberate strategy. Linear strategy is clearly deliberate and purposefully targeted at specific goals. Interpretive strategy is not deliberate in CFC, but of the form that Mintzberg and Waters have described as deliberately emergent (Mintzberg and Waters, 1985). In this form, the "central leadership intentionally creates the conditions under which strategies can emerge" (p.263).

The strategies that contributed the most to achieving success in CFC's affirmative action plans are adaptive and interpretive strategy. Adaptive strategy initiated the change and the process of achieving shared understanding of what needed to be done. The enactment of the change occurred mainly through interpretive strategy, through communications, achieving shared agreements and most importantly the symbolic actions.

#### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

It is important to understand the convergence of factors that led to the success of CFC's affirmative actions. Both the subject and the timing fit well with the company's business and cultural changes as they were planned in the 15 year corporate plan.

The dominant ethos of CFC, an enlightened employer with respect and concern for people, even handed, ensured that the issue would be heard and that it would be responded to as good business and in a sense of fair play.



The business factors were exceptionally important: the trend in the U.S. for example; the growth of technology in the firm and the need for new skills and a new style to fit the demands of growth and innovation.

The changes occurring in the culture were profound: the change from paternalistic to individualistic in the leadership and management style, from conservative to forward thinking, from secretive to open, and the new responsiveness to employees needs with the adjustments to the human resource systems and the recognition of employee contribution. The culture was open to change. The changes underway moved the climate towards the type of internal environment in which affirmative action could flourish.

The affirmative action strategies, all three, fit the style and methods of change being used at CFC. The adaptive strategy fit the organization's normal adaptive process, the recommendations that emerged were not in conflict with the company's goals. The interpretive strategies were enacted mainly through normal work routines and through the behaviours of staff and managers. CFC uses linear strategy routinely to implement changes. The change and its process were compatible with the goals and values of the organization. The norms of behaviours were adapted through the organization's traditional process of giving people time to get on-side. A congruence, or fit, of the change to the host appears to have been achieved.

During the period starting with the task force appointment, the system of meaning held about women's role in the organization, and about work relationships between men and women changed. Initially, the change in beliefs was experienced by the executive and the task force members. The changes in beliefs and subsequently, behaviours and by strong implications to values were displayed to the rest of the organization through the immediate implementation of recommendations and through symbolic acts and constant communication. Over time a shared understanding emerged that women would play a full role and "management and women" would enact it. The reference to the "naturalness" and "it just happened" is evidence that the system of meaning around women's role in the organization had changed. The processes guiding that change had been institutionalized and therefore a part of the system of meaning.

While there is evidence that beliefs and behaviours have reformed through the change process, the evidence is less clear on values related changes. As people and colleagues women are clearly valued and this is evident in behaviour. The women report however that men have adjusted behaviourally and intellectually but not emotionally to having women as peers and to handling the dynamics involved. Given the stable quality of deeply held beliefs and values, even the change that was enacted, is visible, and manifest through the statistics, and is now institutionalized is remarkable. The slowness of the adjustment would seem in accord with the nature of archetypal values.

Interpretive strategy was an essential component in achieving the results. This is best seen by considering what would have happened had the process ended with adaptive strategy - the task force and its recommendations - and the linear process of implementation, where most affirmative action programs cease. The typical Canadian experience suggests that the results would have been slight. Interpretive strategy and its effect on the culture made the significant difference in the affirmative action success at CFC. It was the significant, and the essential component in the company's success.

This study has examined the implementation of affirmative action as it applied to women. Affirmative action for visible minorities and people who are disabled is even more difficult to achieve. Interpretive strategy should be an essential component in any affirmative action change.

## TYPES OF STRATEGY

ACTIVITY -----	WORKS ON -----	TOWARDS -----
<p>LINEAR</p> <p>PLANNING: step by step as in analyze, plan, implement and evaluate.</p> <p>(direct)</p>	<p>* systems</p> <p>* structures</p> <p>* procedures</p>	<p>* specif. object:</p> <p>* goals</p>
<p>ADAPTIVE</p> <p>FITTING: external change to internal change ( i.e. laws, inventions)</p> <p>(direct &amp; indirect)</p>	<p>* tasks</p> <p>* policy</p> <p>* methods</p>	<p>* congru with expect (i.e. custom shareh</p>
<p>INTERPRETIVE</p> <p>IMPROVING UNDERSTANDING AND RELATIONSHIPS: through communicating the meanings of the change with language, images, symbols.</p> <p>(indirect)</p>	<p>* perceptions</p> <p>* beliefs</p> <p>* behaviours</p>	<p>* shared unders</p> <p>* legiti the ch</p>

Adapted from Chaffee (1985).

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## THE ANALYSIS OF SOCIOCULTURAL TRENDS :

### A METHOD FOR CORPORATE CULTURE INVESTIGATION

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#### Abstract

The state-of-the-art in the methodologies for analysing corporate culture focuses on a clinical approach based on observing, interviewing, feeling. This approach is highly valuable, but has some weaknesses : it is time consuming, difficult to validate and opens a credibility gap between the researcher or the consultant and the top management of the investigated companies.

The analysis of sociocultural trends does not replace this traditional investigation method, but it permits to overcome partly its weaknesses. Consequently, it appears as a usefull complementary method to enrich the diagnosis on corporate culture.

#### Background

When starting a cultural engineering program, the first duty with which the researcher or the consultant is immediately confronted is that of the deciphering of the investigated corporate culture.

In this respect, the most reputed authors all agree to propose a very loose and soft methodology to attain this understanding. For instance, Deal and Kennedy (1) advocate to proceed with the reading of the organizational culture in accordance to the following steps :

- (a) study the physical setting
- (b) read what the company says about its culture
- (c) test how the company greets strangers
- (d) observe how people spend their time
- (e) interview company people, the interview guidelines being some magic questions such as :
  - tell me about the history of the company
  - why is the company a success, what explains its growth ?
  - what kind of people work here, who gets ahead in the long term ?

The method suggested by Vijay Sathe (2) also rests on "asking, observing, reading and feeling" "shared things, shared sayings, shared doings and shared feelings". He recognises however that "reading a culture is an interpretive, subjective activity. There are no exact answers, and two observers may come up with somewhat different descriptions of the same culture".

On his part, Edgar Schein proposes a method by which the external observer and the members of the organization carry out a "joint exploration through iterative interviewing". This cooperation between the outsider and the insiders is intended to :

- a) avoid the subjectivity bias of the outsider, whose misinterpretations are corrected by the insiders;
- b) overcome the internal invisibility on the part of the insiders, whose implicit assumptions are uncovered by the outsider.

Fundamentally, whoever has been facing a situation where he or she has to "read" the culture of an enterprise has been bound to use neighbouring methods to those which are above described, and knows all together their validity and their weaknesses.

The validity (or the impression thereof) which the observation methods are giving derives from the fact that all of them undoubtedly permit to capture some elements of an organizational culture. For example :

- open physical settings, favouring peoples' communication, where the CEO's office is not bigger or more luxurious than the offices of middle managers may reveal the existence of an egalitarian culture where a direct and informal relation is encouraged;
- explanations about the reasons of earlier successes are certainly so many stepping stones on which the assumption about the conditions of future successes are built.
- the so called fashionable carriers or functions reveal the technical skill which are regarded as a determining factor of performance of the enterprise.

The problem arises when one must orderly integrate all the collected information and correctly weight the effective power of these shared assumptions.

In the opinion of Vijay Sathe, the larger the number of the people who seem to share the same set of assumptions in the organization, the stronger the corporate culture. This opinion does not take into account that, due to their status or position in the organization, certain members are opinion leaders and therefore all participants do not have the same weight in the definition of its dominant values.

Finally, we are also facing the huge problem of the existence of sub-cultures. Certain values may be shared by a limited number of members of the organization. Different departments or services may therefore have their own cultural traits. The same also stands for the various functions existing in the organizations, on the basis of which differing or even conflicting values may develop.

In other words, if the qualitative clinical approach undoubtedly permits to shed light on some cultural traits of the investigated company, it is much more difficult on this basis, to fully appreciate the weight of the various trends which are discovered, and also to check that all the significant factors have been perceived by the outside observer, in a way

which enables him to reconstruct a correct and complete image of the corporate culture.

In sum, the qualitative approach to the study of corporate cultures, however valuable, presents some weaknesses :

a) A problem of validation

As I mentioned earlier, even the most skillfull analyst, using rigorous methods and having the finest intuitions has no means to verify that his information is complete, that he has not overestimated such artefact, or such convergent point of view among the organization's members. More precisely, it is difficult for him to check that he has not taken the culture of one subgroup for the culture of the whole group, especially in a very large company.

b) A problem of cost

Being based on numerous in-depth interviews, the method is very time-consuming and consequently, in client-consultant relationship, it is an expensive method. Here again, the larger the company, the more serious the problem.

c) A problem of legitimacy

Last but certainly not least, the qualitative methodology sets a problem of legitimacy, which should be obvious to specialists of organizational symbolism, and this is particularly true in the consulting situation. Indeed, in this situation, the client, or the potential client, is generally a member of the top management of the company. How open-minded this person can be, he or she is generally more exposed to a rationalist approach of hard facts. As a result, conclusions drawn on the basis of a "soft" method of observation applied to a "soft" field of investigation (the corporate culture) could very well appear as having a rather low credibility. This is partially what explains the "horrified reaction" encountered by researchers giving a feedback information to the members of a company about their findings on the corporate culture (4). Often, people do not recognize the image of their own company, and they naturally tend to contest the investigation method.

These various problems can undoubtedly raise a real "barrier to entry" in some companies. And this holds for the researcher as much as for the consultant. Indeed, the former generally obtains the company's cooperation only if he or she promises that some kind of interesting findings will come out of the investigation. And this in turn assumes that the results must have an acceptable level of credibility.

For all these reasons, it can be important for the researcher as much as for the consultant to have a tool which permits him to validate and crossfertilize the information collected upon the above described methods.

In this respect, the method of sociocultural trends analysis deserves further examination.

The analysis of the sociocultural trends

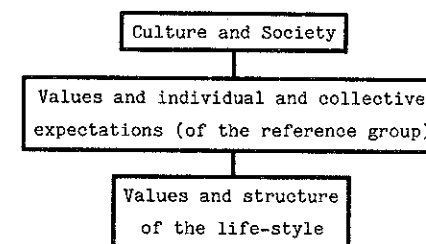
1. Origin of the method : the life-style studies

The analysis of the sociocultural trends is a methodology which has been developed on the basis of the consumers life-style studies, in the field of marketing research.

Researchers in this field, having noted "the inadequacy of the traditional variables (demographic and socio-economic) to explain the consumer's behaviour" (5) have searched new variables leading to a better understanding of this behaviour. More precisely, "the research tried to explain why the consumers behaved in such or such way, rather than keeping on identifying who those consumers were. A very interesting concept in this context was that of the life-style".

"The life-style concept refers to the various ways of living of the society at large or of one segment of that society. The life-style is related to those distinctive elements or particularities which can describe the way of living of a cultural or economic group, and permits to single that group out of the other groups. It includes the structures which develop and emerge from the dynamics of the society's life. As a consequence, the life-style is the result of strengths such as culture, values, symbolism associated with certain objects, ethical and moral values" (6).

The whole process can be presented in the following frame :



The three main aspects of the life-style are :

a) the activities

the activities relate to what people do as well in the field of their private life (their hobbies, friends, social and cultural activities) as in the field of their professional habits.

### b) the attitudes

the attitudes are linked to each person's individual value system which determines the way that person is going to organize his (her) relations with others.

Attitudes are based on :

- the ideal and the beliefs
- the perception of the society's members' role
- the way people are interacting with others (communication patterns, attitudes towards leaders, etc...).

### c) the opinions

the opinions relate to everyone's idea about him or herself, the environment and the world at large.

Having acknowledged that the consumers life-style was guiding their buying activities and decisions i.e. because of the symbolic value attached to the consumption goods, the researchers in marketing tried to build measurement tools able to capture the individuals life-style. In order to do so, they defined a number of variables describing the life-style, and designed questionnaires apt to measure those variables.

In Belgium, this type of questionnaire was administered for the first time in 1983 by SOBEMAP (\*), to a sample of 2.500 persons, representative of the Belgian population. The purpose of the survey was to enlight the main trends in the population, by the mean of 37 indicators, which can be clustered in 7 areas of sensitivity.

The sociocultural map of Belgium which resulted from this investigation is represented in Appendix I.

The seven areas of sensitivity which have been described are the following :

#### (1) Contestation, refusal of the norms

In this area, one finds trends such as :

- the rejection of formal authority
- the sensitivity towards social constraints
- the flexibility towards standards
- less attraction to order.

#### (2) Sticking to new values, voracity

There is the will to live intensively, to enjoy life, here and now; we find such trends as :

- the taste for risks
- sexual permissiveness
- intense and lively style

(\*) SOBEMAP : Société Belge de Mathématiques Appliquées : private company working i.e. in the field of marketing studies.

- openness to change
- hedonism
- mobile roots
- ...

### (3) Personal expression

There we find several trends showing that the people are keen to express their profound personality :

- autonomy
- narcissism
- acceptance of the irrationality
- ...

### (4) Superficial expression

In this area, we find the trends associated with the outer-directed concerns such as :

- concern for personal appearance
- search for novelty.

### (5) Harmony with the society

It expresses the affective search for harmony with the society at large :

- empathy
- decline of the fatherland as a central value
- search for collective emotions.

### (6) Harmony with the immediate environment

Here is the search for a "soft" relation to one's close environment, expressed by trends such as :

- back to nature
- health and shape concern
- need for roots
- integration of the time perspective.

### (7) Decline of combativeness, search for security

Here we find a number of trends showing the decline of traditional values such as social status, combativeness :

- non-achievement
- anti-standing
- decline of the money as a central value
- need for security
- search for professional selfactualization.

The sociocultural map which has been established on the basis of the global Belgian population serves then as a reference to appreciate the trends of any subgroup measured by the above mentioned indicators. The subgroup will be described by the fact that it is "ahead of", "in phase with" or "behind" the trends demonstrated in the global population.

For example, the clients of two large Belgian banks have been analysed through that method. It is interesting to see how different they are (7).

The clients of bank A look :

- relatively traditional
- concerned with the social constraints but without any contestation
- much in advance on most of the trends related to the area of "fusional harmony"
- very sensitive (emotionally) to other people concerns/feelings
- looking for a quiet life (back to nature, peacefulness)
- attracted by the "irrational".

Whereas the clients of bank B present very different trends :

- voracity, intense life, enjoying the current moment
- much sensitive to social constraints (what if f.ex. calling maximal flexibility in opening hours of the branches)
- open to change
- sexual permissiveness
- wanting to express quite freely their personality
- valorising the feelings
- money to them is not a social language but a tool for living.

## 2. Sociocultural analysis in companies

### 2.1. One case analysis

The method which has been described has also been applied among others by SOBEMAP in Belgium and COFREMA in France (8), in order to construct the sociocultural map of companies' personnel.

In one of the Belgian companies where the analysis was conducted, the sociocultural map (see Appendix II) shows, for the whole group of the personnel members, the following main trends :

- (1) the adhesion to new values, which appears in the taste for risk, a limited attraction for order, sexual permissiveness and the ability to establish open communications with very different environment;
- (2) the search for novelty, for fashions, for new products and ideas; a capacity for personal creativity, for accepting irrational facts or opinions;
- (3) on the other hand, this personnel is not very much interested by the current ecologist trends (back to nature, hypernatural);

- (4) finally, these people demonstrate a high need for achievement. Social status and money remain central values for them. They do not follow the current movement of indifference towards effort, material goods and the status they give.

The examination of the sociocultural map worked out for some specific subgroups in the company shows that only a portion of these trends is shared by the whole personnel, and that each subgroup has some unique characteristics.

Let us have a look, for instance, at the maps carried out for the personnel of the production department (Appendix III) and that of the sales force (Appendix IV).

The production personnel appears as a group of pragmatic individuals, not very much inclined to narcissism or hedonism, not very much ecologist. They are ready to accept novelties. They are also achievers. Money is an important value for them, as well as the social status it gives. But they do not much seek their personal fulfillment at work. Their jobs remain essentially a way of earning their lives, but not a mean of selfactualization.

Finally, the search for adhesion to the group, for shared emotions and feelings is characteristic of that subgroup. This can be explained partially by the fact that the production plant is located in the Flemish part of the country, where the need for belonging is generally very high. This trend could be then a societal characteristic. In addition, this group is composed of a majority of blue collar workers, generally less individualistic than the management personnel.

The map carried out for the sales forces personnel shows some common traits and some differences between the two groups :

First, these people are very much concerned with their personal appearance and attracted by the novelties. They are open to new ideas and products, to the fashion. They like to show off, as a way to assert themselves, but not by gratuitous narcissism.

The sales personnel also seems rather individualistic, and demonstrate a high flexibility towards norms. They do not easily yield to an imposed discipline.

The main common characteristics of the production group and the sales force are the need for achievement and the concern for social status, which are even higher in the second group than in the first one.

In the aggregate, the personnel of this company shows a very deep concern for material values, but not a strong professional involvement, in the sense that the job is not viewed as a source of selfactualization. Rather, the work appears as a way to earn one's living.

As could be expected, the sales force is formed with very individualistic personalities, concerned with their appearance, and open to novelty,



whereas the plant personnel has a stronger need for belonging. However, this feeling of belonging holds more for their immediate environment (the workshop, the plant) than for the company as such.

## 2.2. Utility of these results

### a) Utility of the global analysis

It is obvious that the sociocultural analysis does not give information about the corporate identity. Rather, what it does give is information about the people's personal values, as individuals. Consequently, this tool makes it possible to evaluate the coherence between the first and the second.

In the case which is prescribed above, for example, one of the corporate culture norms is that the relations between the members of the personnel are quite participative, and informal. Workers of all hierarchic levels are invited to give their opinions, to express their creativity. The company has organized very soon quality circles, which are actually viewed as quite useful and productive.

This is coherent with the values which have been evidenced by the sociocultural analysis : personal creativity, taste for risk, search for novelty, for irrationality, aptitude for the dialogue.

Furthermore, it is interesting to note that this kind of analysis shows very clearly that, even if the corporate identity must be coherent with the personnel's deep values, both are not the same thing.

The corporate culture is undoubtedly built upon the personnel's values, which assume the coherence between both, but there cannot be any confusion between the two concepts.

As a consequence, the sociocultural analysis of the personnel of a company does not completely substitute an investigation of the corporate culture by a clinical qualitative inquiry.

Nevertheless, the utility of such an analysis is notable for the following reasons :

- (1) It permits to confirm and significantly enrich the data gathered about the corporate identity.
- (2) It leads to a diagnosis on the coherence between the corporate identity and the personnel's fundamental values.  
In that sense, one may think that the strongest that coherence, the strongest the corporate culture.
- (3) Information about the sociocultural trends of the company's personnel makes it possible to evaluate the opportunity and the chances of success of any action envisaged in the field of the social strategy

or cultural change.

It also provides the top management with information about the best way to communicate with the personnel of the company. In this sense, the sociocultural map becomes again what it was originally, namely a marketing analysis tool. The "product" to be sold being here the company itself, its identity and its main strategic axes, and the "market" being the personnel itself.

- (4) In a period of major changes, such an analysis can provide valuable indications about the personnel's capacity to accept new values, and about the kind of values that could be developed within the company.
- (5) Finally, when the top management wishes to modify the "sociocultural mix" of the company's personnel, this approach could usefully guide the recruitment policy to be elaborated.

### b) Utility of the typological analysis

It is of course possible, on the basis of the sociocultural analysis tool, to make any kind of detailed analysis of the several subgroups composing the company : one can distinguish between the personnel of the various departments, geographic locations, hierarchic levels, between men and women, junior and senior personnel, etc...

We have seen in the above case that the analysis had very clearly uncovered the fundamental points of convergence among the personnel of the company, on the one hand, and the local specificities, on the other.

In certain situations, the social strategy of the company must take into account such differences. For example, the communication tools and the messages are to be adapted to the various targets.

## 2.3. Possible improvements of the method

The sociocultural analysis tool can be improved in several ways :

### (1) Cluster analysis

The same data can also be submitted to a cluster analysis, which means that the main groups of the company are searched by way of statistical analysis.

This provides a good information about the level of "sociocultural homogeneity" among the company personnel.

### (2) Sociocultural analysis of the company's clients

In such enterprises as service companies, for example, it can be interesting to determine if the personnel which is in close relationship with the clients is also "socioculturally close" to the clientèle.

This is another use that can be made of the sociocultural instrument. Its usefulness is obvious to achieve the best adaptation between the marketing and personnel strategy.

### CONCLUSION

The sociocultural analysis is a tool which, in the context of the cultural investigation of the company, presents some advantages, but has also its limits.

The advantages are that :

- 1) it makes it possible to decipher the personal values of the company's personnel and to measure the level of coherence between these values and the corporate identity (or the identity which the top management wants to build for the company).
- 2) it makes it possible to appreciate the level of homogeneity or heterogeneity of the personnel, from the sociocultural point of view. It also permits to throw light on the various groups existing in the company and to analyze the differences between them.
- 3) it gives valuable information in order to elaborate a social strategy and even a general strategy, which is adapted to the needs, the trends, the values, the skills of the personnel within the company. And this is undoubtedly a major stepping-stone for a high performance.

The main limit of this tool is that it does not give direct information about the corporate culture and identity, in the sense that the whole may have characteristics which the analysis of the parts does not show. In this respect, the sociocultural analysis does not replace a more qualitative and global investigation of the corporate culture. But it provides information which certainly permits to confirm and enrich the diagnosis elaborated on the basis of such investigation.

Taste for risks .

Sexual permissiveness .

Mobile roots .

Less attraction to order .

Hedonism .

Anti-accumulation .

Rejection authority .

Flexibility towards standards .

Open towards changes .

Bio-emotivity .

Intense life .

Sensible to social pressure .

Integrated femininity .

Trust in science .

Sensible to violence .

Need for personal security .

Non achievement .

Decline of valorization from financial resources

Decline of standing .

Personal appearance .

Novelty .

Self manipulation .

Irrational .

Narcissistic egotism .

Polysexuality .

Self expression .

Personal creativity .

Sensibility to own environment .

Emotional experience .

Decline of Belgian patriotism .

Intracception .

Integration of time .

Health & Fitness .

Sensible to manipulation .

Need for roots .

Simplification of life .

Fulfillment at work .

Back to nature .

Hypernatural .

Fulfillment at work .

Need for roots .

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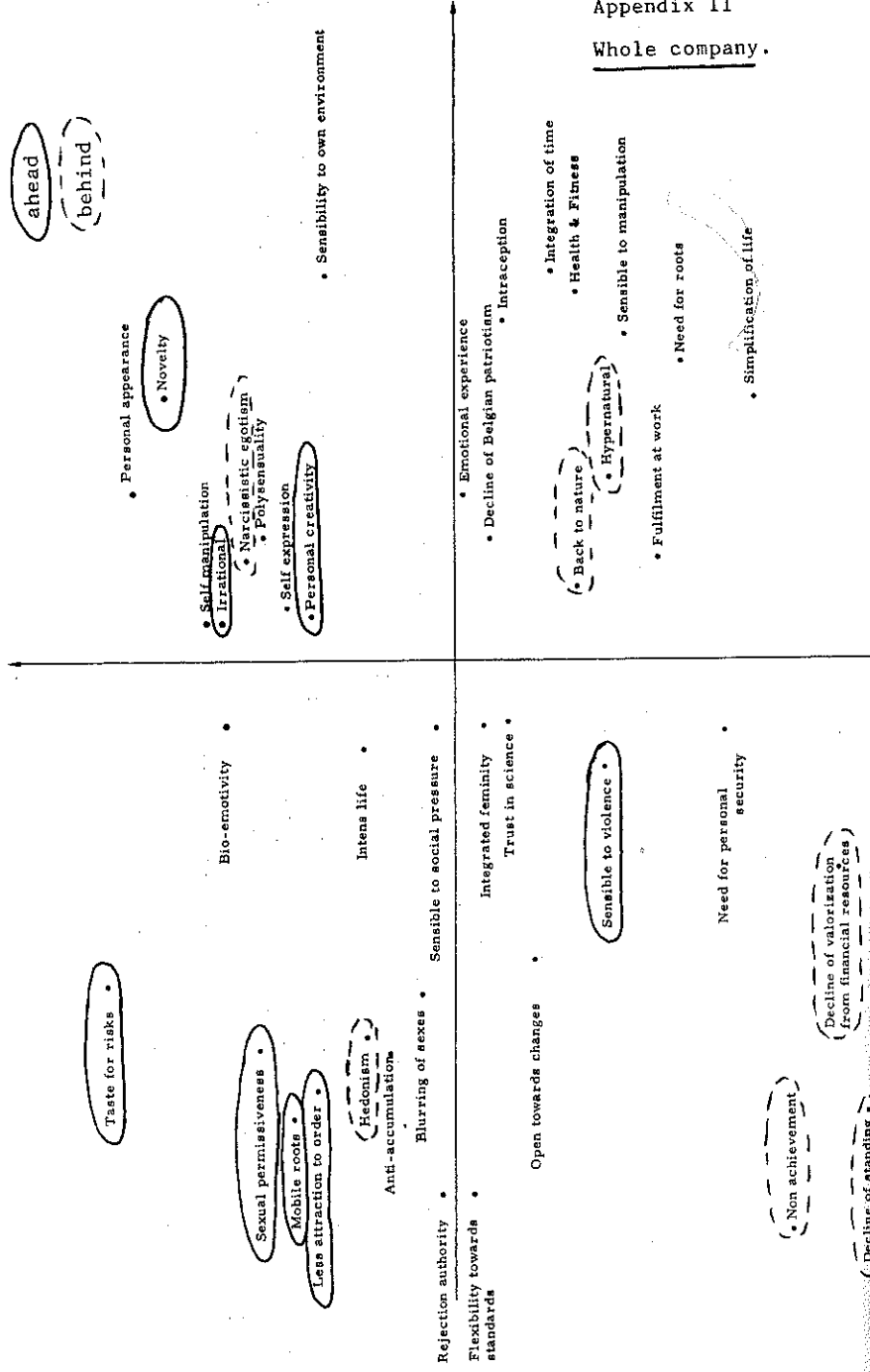
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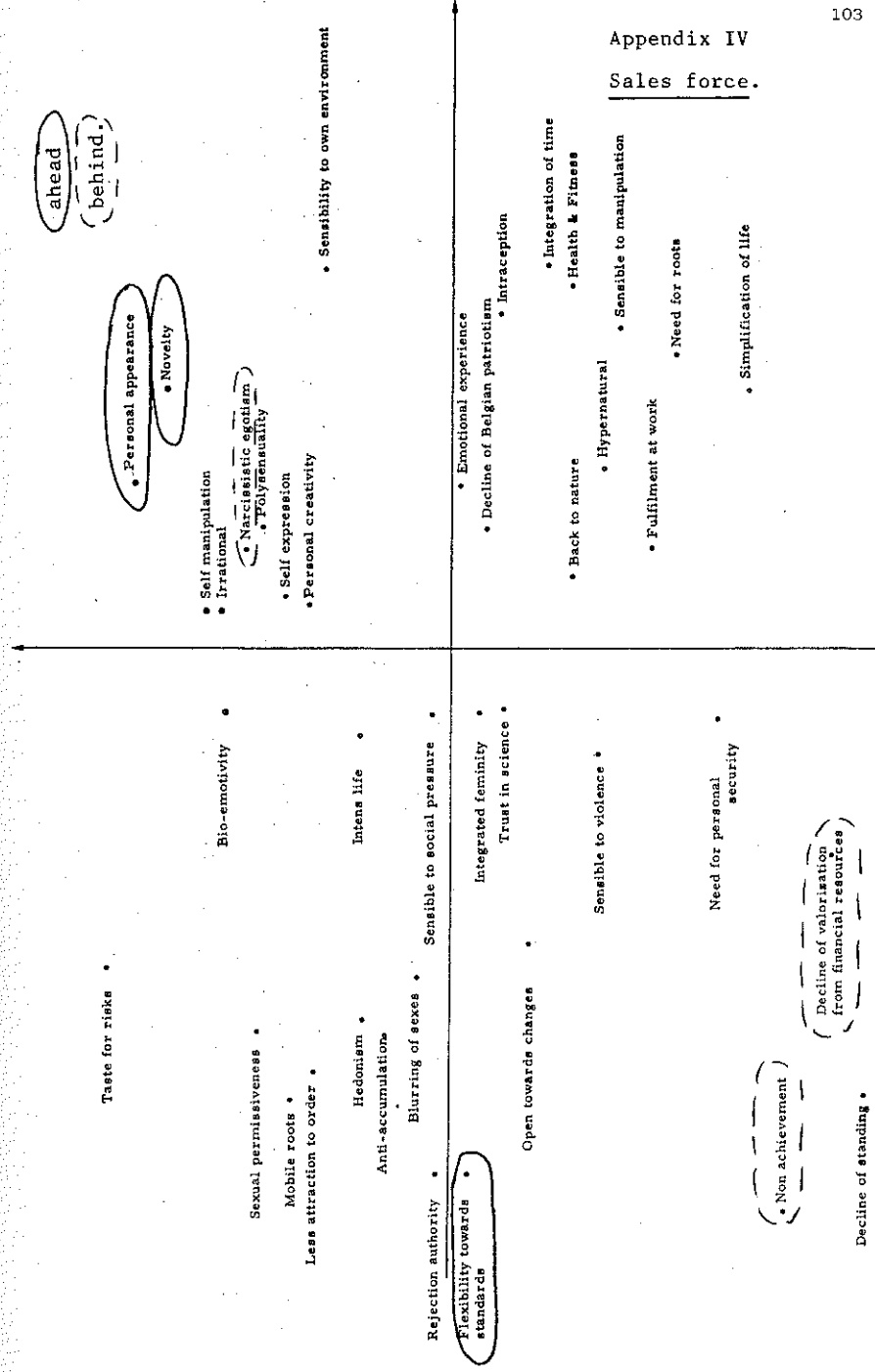
# Appendix II

## Whole company.



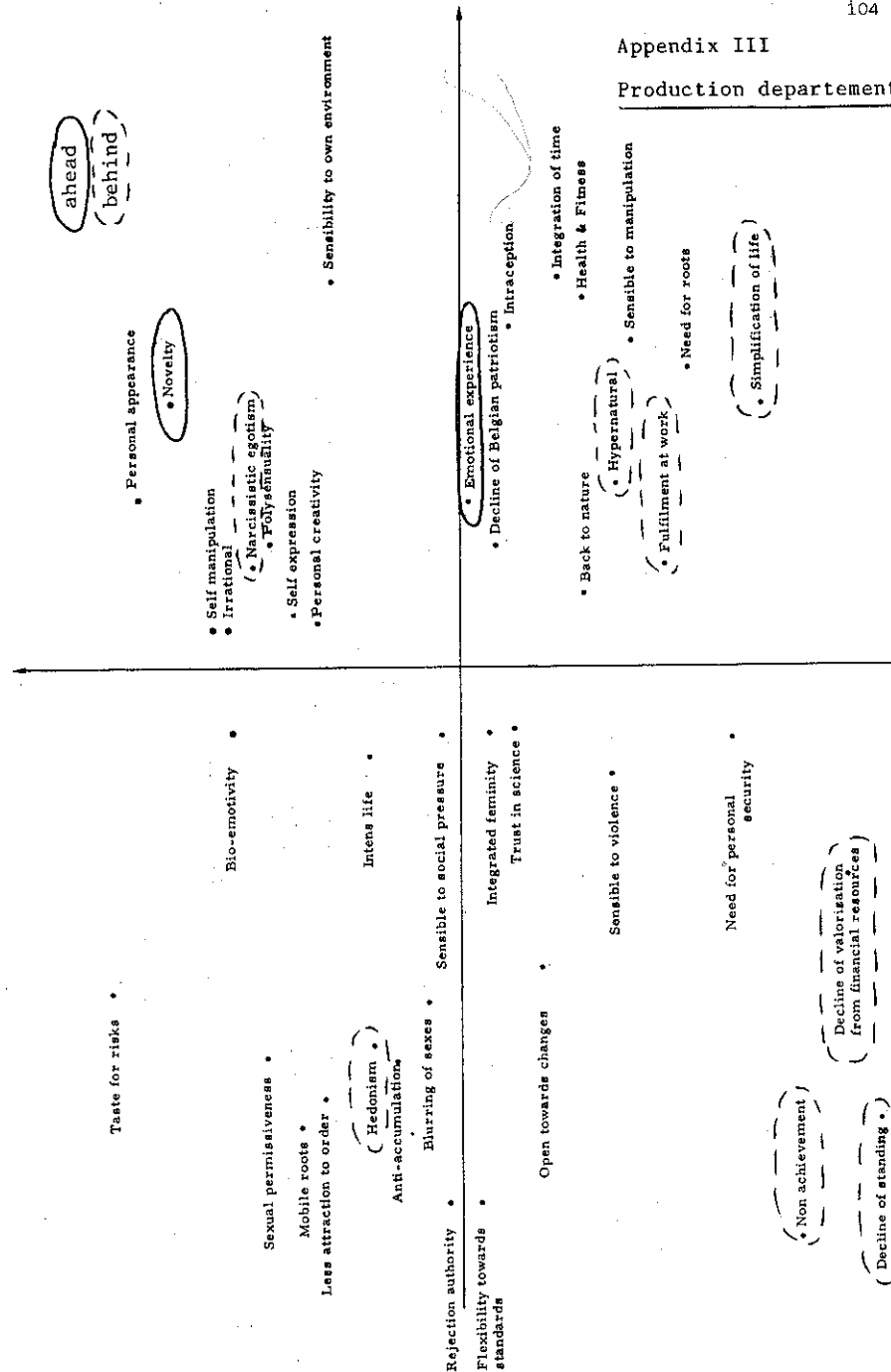
# Appendix IV

## Sales force.



## Appendix III

## Production departement.



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## ENGINEERING CHANGE: DOCUMENTING STAFF SUCCESSES WITH VIDEO

Brenda Beck  
The Forum Learning Systems Canada  
April 29, 1986

(Paper prepared for the SCOS 1986 Congress  
June 25 to 27  
University of Quebec at Montreal)

## ABSTRACT

This paper reports on a video experiment currently in progress inside one of Canada's leading banks. The technique, called "anecdotal video" relies on six minute informal documentaries that describe specific branches of the bank where staff have developed some new, fun, upbeat customer service idea using their own design and local talent. The philosophy behind the experiment resembles that used in competency research: high performing corporations, or high performing managers are selected and their distinguishing features are then used to drive a larger program of corporate culture change. The new twist is that these videos document high performance, team creativity and positive attitudes for front line teams. In sum, short well-told success stories can now be used directly, as a means to inspire other staff groups. In each video the focus is on a specific branch team and how it seized a given opportunity. The role managerial leadership can play in encouraging such developments is only implicitly addressed. These materials, when shared with the staff at other branches, are expected to induce a spirit of emulation. It is believed that this highly emotive and symbolic technique will be effective in helping to "sprout" new subcultural innovation teams throughout the corporation. Two sample six minute videos accompany the paper's presentation.

## AUTHOR'S BACKGROUND

To appreciate the "anecdotal video" concept it is important to know that the author of this paper is a fully trained cultural anthropologist with sixteen years of experience teaching this subject at the University of British Columbia. For the past five years, however, she has moved gradually into the field of organizational behavior and (more specifically) into management training. Although she continues to hold the Full Professor title (now at the University of Toronto), the author currently works full time as a management training consultant. Much of her work involves ethnographic field research and behind-the-scenes design issues concerning training program development. The second team member, cameraman and technician for the videos, is a

thirty-year CBC veteran specializing in documentary film making for Canadian TV. This unique combination of skills and theoretical backgrounds lies behind the "anecdotal video" concept and helps to clarify its cross-cultural roots.

## THE THEORETICAL BACKGROUND &amp; AN IDENTIFICATION OF WHAT IS NEW

The idea of looking at the successful corporation or the successful person, and then attempting emulation, has been around a long time. Indeed, if one left out the word corporation and substituted terms like family team, hunting group or drama troupe, then this emulation idea has been with us as long as mankind has enjoyed social organization in any form. What used to happen almost subconsciously through apprenticeship to a master manager or craftsman has only in recent decades been made available via classroom or seminar training. Indeed, in learning human communication skills it is still one's own favorite senior work associate, or family elder handled difficult motivational and leadership issues.

Looking at ideas and contributions closer to the management consultant field, the recently popular books In Search of Excellence and Passion For Excellence stand out. Both works are based on the question "what did the excellent company, the outstanding performer, do that was different?" Well before either was published, of course, consulting companies like the Forum Corporation used various in-depth techniques to identify management practices that serve to differentiate a company's outstanding performers. Such specific practices were then routinely built into training programs designed for other managers, in an effort to try to raise general levels of performance, company wide. Many people have also looked at performance differences cross culturally, particularly at the "Japanese model." The post war Japanese economy has been very successful. Hence many have asked what do the Japanese do differently and could some of their management techniques work in our country?

There is no doubt that a lot of the ideas generated by this kind of competency research are good. Many companies, for example, have adopted the Japanese "quality circle" idea with some success. The Forum Corporation, furthermore, has had a very substantial success rate in designing training programs where specific management practices, successful in a given setting, are pre-researched and then built into case materials and simulation exercises for others. Anonymous but current feedback from subordinates, as well as from colleagues and from customers, also helps to stimulate improvement.

Closer to the focus of the present paper is the fact that recent research suggests that customers sense changes in the managerial climate of a given office (or other setting) where they receive service. Staff, therefore, are often the medium through which a general set of corporate attitudes are transmitted to a wider public. Like braking fluid, or the car's clutch connect the car to its wheels, company staff are the means by which a corporation connects with its customers. Good staff

teamwork ultimately makes the difference in whether the right kind of customer is attracted to a company, and in whether they will show up in adequate numbers.

As yet, however, we have little expertise in how to involve line staff in the culture change process. We know that quality circle kinds of arrangements can help encourage line participation. But little research effort has been devoted to comparing highly successful line teams with the moderately successful ones apart from looking at leadership and control issues. We know that the right managerial practices can make a big difference, but what else could one do to aid a program of corporate change? What tools can one give work groups directly, to help them think about their role in the organization and to help them seize opportunities faster and more directly? We know that all managers are not equally successful leaders of change, nor stimulators of creative effort. And even when the manager is a talented facilitator there is still a need for corporate support for the new ideas that sprout. Concrete illustrations, like good role models, always help the change process along.

Three standard tools presently reside in the consultant's handbag. One is to provide the staff (or the manager) with lots of written material. Often this is quality material, incorporating lots of positive spirit and lots of suggestions. But today's managers are inundated with too much paper already. They don't have time to read it all, let alone to pass the ideas on to staff. And the same problem holds true for line personnel. They either have too much paper to deal with already, or/and they don't like to read. Very few people today will read something given to them at work and be stimulated by it in a creative sense. If they read it at all it is because they have to read it, they were told to read something. The problem is reading becomes defined as "work" to be dispensed with, something to be put behind one as soon as possible.

A second approach is to have a series of training seminars or courses that staff can be sent on. These can be fun. They can also be a lot more stimulating than just reading about ideas. But there are several drawbacks here too. Courses for line staff in a large corporation are a huge undertaking. Simply put, there are too many staff to be reached. And secondly, one can not normally send work teams on a course. If one did the whole work unit would have to shut down. Thus managers have to pick one person here and one person there to go on a course, while the work continues. Doing this does not create a team experience, the needed spirit of cooperation. How can a person who went on such a course communicate their experience to the others, back on the job? Those left behind may also become jealous that they haven't been offered the same opportunity, or at least not so soon.

A third way to facilitate communication, in a situation where a corporate culture change is desired, is to prepare video presentations. The usual technique is to have by very senior corporate staff speak out on key issues. Such presentations do have some impact. Done well, they show that senior management support the new ideas. They can also give staff a new sense of the personality of their senior leaders. Such videos help

permeate a company with a sense of purpose...even with an uplifting vision of the product, product teams, and of the satisfied public to be served.

These executive video presentations, however, also fall short in some ways. This style of communication helps to unify a company at a symbolic level. But such videos take the form of messages "from the top." Staff audiences generally react well to these corporate messages if they see nothing else. They are pleased to see the Chairman's face or to hear the President's own words. His staff may remember one or two key phrases or concepts weeks later. They may gain a little pride in their company's efforts to communicate, and be reassured that someone thinks their role as line personnel is important. Yet there is rarely a lively discussion after such video showings. What can one say except to praise the Chairman's words or to repeat them using a somewhat different vocabulary and a few local examples?

Anecdotal videos, therefore, add one very powerful tool to this list of culture change techniques. These short, ethnographic capsules provide concrete examples of things other staff groups, often people in one's own company, have done. Yet such videos are not lecturettes. Anecdotal videos are little stories, stories that a particular staff group tell in their own words. They are shot on site, in the work area, and are very informal in tone. Often you can hear work noises in the background. Sometimes a co-worker even walks through the shot. The lighting may not be just right, and the focus may be out because the camera had to jump quickly to a second person in a group discussion. But the story is real, and the feel is real. Part of the intended symbolic message in such videos (never verbally stated) is that enthusiasm is important and that formality is not. Not everything a team does has to be socially polished. The staff is not being asked to perform on stage, or to be like a group of executives in a video studio. Instead they are being praised for being themselves. The focus is on the group's personality and on their creative, resourceful style.

In addition to being informal, anecdotal video is always upbeat. It is set to music, first of all, and the music is pleasing. Furthermore, what the staff who are interviewed say is full of enthusiasm. The feelings expressed suggest that the work is fun, and that the people interviewed are thinking on the job. There is laughter and there are body gestures. Sometimes the observations made or an interplay between persons captured by the camera contain some nice humor. Hence one could say that anecdotal video has a "folk style". Furthermore, such videos convey a mood that is specific to the work group in question. Each anecdotal video, therefore, is different in mood. No uniform company stamp can be put on them, except for a logo at the beginning and a repeat logo at the end.

#### THE VIDEOS: THEIR SYMBOLIC CONTENT

Each anecdotal video contains a little story, a story that has the quality of a folktale. Each says something about some little but very creative "thing" that work group did, and it

tells how that little thing got started. Often there is even a heroine, or a hero, or hero who pursued the idea under duress. There can also be a magical spot where the discovery occurred. Since watching these videos leaves the viewer with lasting memories, these works also have a kind of mythic quality. They take place in an unspecified time frame, yet describe the origin of something new. Sometimes magic objects contribute to this feel...a special ashtray, a funny poster. Most importantly, perhaps, the staff in an anecdotal video speak from the heart. They speak for themselves about what their work feels like and about the team environment they know.

In addition to the official logo of the corporation at the beginning and end of each video, less formal references often appear "accidentally" in the film. These can be a hat a given staff person wears, a sign the camera caught in the background, or even a logo on a desk. Nonverbally, therefore, a corporate presence is usually obvious. Yet all ideas and all the enthusiasm in the story come from line personnel. That enthusiasm, of course, must be genuine. One can not "fake" such a video. It is a documentary art form. The story and the mood must be there to film.

The anecdotal video is symbolic and emotive. It makes statements about feeling, and those get matched by music that captures that particular feeling. And the art form is always setting specific. People are at work in the background. Sometimes customers may be seen. Hence these videos model mood and attitude as much as they model specific ideas or behaviors.

#### THE VIDEOS: THEIR DESCRIPTIVE CONTENT

The two videos that are part of this paper are about two very different branches in a specific Canadian bank. At one branch there is a poster campaign. It is an all female branch staff and the women enjoy hanging picture cutouts of various male rock and movie stars in the staff washroom. After a while they began to draw cartoonlike balloons issuing from the male mouths. They had words in them like "I'm in love with Kathy" or "you can have my mind, but my body belongs to Susan." Soon it became time for the annual VISA campaign and someone suggested a big wall poster made from these male cutouts. So the staff took the pictures and made a large hanging sign. Then they changed the sayings in the mouths of the characters so that the humorous comments were all about VISA. For example one rock star with long hair now said "My hairdresser takes VISA." Another character lies on the beach and says "Its so nice here. I wish I hadn't forgotten my VISA".

On film the staff are seen during an informal meeting. There they respond to questions about how their idea grew. The video scenes go back and forth between this story, the laughing faces of the staff, and close-ups of the poster. The music is very upbeat. Furthermore, the manager of the branch comments at several points about how it was a staff idea and about how they have made all the difference. She also describes how she once responded to the question "what if someone shown on the poster

wants to sue you for this?" Her answer, given with a lovely laugh, is "If Robert Redford would like to sue me, I would just love to talk to him." One teller comments that this VISA campaign was a big success. "It is a hard product to sell these days, because most people already have a VISA. The customers loved the poster and they laughed as they stood in line. The idea was great for creating a positive customer mood."

The second video shows a different branch, one with a contrasting style. There the branch team is less raucous. The tone is soft and contemplative. Here the staff speak from their desks and their wickets, as they work. Their little idea was a simple one. They determined that they would look in each customer's eyes as they served their clients. After each transaction they would mark down what color those eyes were. Later there was a competition, of sorts, between the tellers and the counter officers to see who could mark down the most eyes of a particular color on any given day. Various staff talk about how the idea originated in a quality circle meeting. They also talk about how their feelings toward customers have changed. And they joke about how they now use various tricks to get a customer to look at them.

One customer is shown as the teller tells him about the idea. He laughs warmly. One assistant manager speaks about how such customers like the extra attention they are getting. A clerk comments on how he likes the branch and about how he is having fun. He likes coming to work in the morning. In between the various segments of the video there are close-up shots of people's eyes, most of them smiling eyes. The narration also talks about eyes...the great topic of conversation at this branch. Soft music sets the wider mood of the piece. It is a warm, pleasant and very human atmosphere to work in.

#### PREPARING THE GROUND: SOCIAL AND CULTURAL VARIABLES

These videos can not be done in a vacuum. Anecdotal video must go hand-in-hand with a larger program of culture change initiatives. Firstly, such videos can not be filmed nor presented in a vacuum. Staff must understand that they are part of a new mood at company headquarters. The senior executive must be shown to be supportive of innovation, interested in new ideas for quality and for service.

Fun on the front line must be understood as a key to productivity, and appreciated. In addition, the managers of such work units must be prepared for this kind of mood change. They must already be familiar with the ideas presented and be willing to support innovation, creativity and risk taking from their own staff. Generally, a managerial training program built around these concepts should proceed the wide distribution of anecdotal video modules. Furthermore, most corporations have "internal barriers", various departments and/or procedures that handcuff staff spontaneity. Usually these contain subtle messages that ask staff not to innovate or rock the boat. Steps must be undertaken to dissolve such barriers at the same time that these video models of changed attitudes are distributed.

No one thing, by itself, will achieve a major corporate culture shift. With a great corporate octopus installed, having much history and many tentacles, a lot must be done to change work habits. Training courses, executive videos, anti-barrier campaigns, feedback procedures and reformed reward structures are all needed. This author believes, however, that an anecdotal video library can add a forceful tool to this larger kit.

#### PREPARING THE GROUND: PRODUCTION REQUIREMENTS

Anecdotal video is a technique that requires special equipment and a special personnel. The camera person must have prior experience shooting in the informal "as it happens" mode. This person must also skillfully adapt a low key, fade-into-the-furniture style. On line workers are not accustomed to being on camera and, understandably, can get uptight very quickly. They have to get used to the camera and the camera person...and then forget (at least partially forget) that it's there. The role of the ethnographer/interviewer is also very important. This person must know the locale and have an idea of the story beforehand. The ethnographer must do the talking, engaging each person so thoroughly that their focus is on the conversation's contents and not on the camera.

Technically speaking, there are also several hardware considerations to bear in mind. The video camera must be one of the small, high quality ones only recently released on the market. And the film it uses must be of a technical quality able to withstand extensive editing and copying procedures. The camera will normally be hand held, simply set on a desk (or chair back). Tripods are too unwieldy, and they only call attention to the project. Additional lighting is sometimes necessary but it must be kept to a minimum. Once set up it should be ignored. Perhaps the biggest technical problem of all, however, is the sound. In most work settings there is a great deal of ambient sound. The microphone on the camera picks up much of it. Neck mikes and wires quickly tense people up. They also make the set up for each conversation much too involved. An extension mike, mounted on the camera, appears to be the best compromise available. Nonetheless, ambient sound will always be a problem with the anecdotal video. Interestingly, it does add to the style of the whole, which is always one of realism and informality.

Much of the art of anecdotal video is in the editing. Hence the role of the producer is crucial. Anecdotal video should only be produced by the person who researched the story and who was present at the shoot. Otherwise one can not accurately capture the mood of the work setting correctly, let alone the true story. Editing, however, should be done in a professional studio. The bits of the shoot must be pieced together as smoothly as possible. Anecdotal video requires a lot of cutting and editing work, not to speak of later laying on music and a brief commentary. The amount of work at this stage, furthermore, is always unpredictable. Some stories and some shoots require much more editing than do others. It depends on how the tale unfolds.

One must now ask how does the ethnographer locate a good anecdotal story? The two films that accompany this paper were produced as part of a larger program of change embarked on by one specific Canadian bank. A major training course for branch managers preceded the video development work. This week long seminar focused on leadership, risk taking, and the importance of fine customer service at the branch level. Ten managers that went through this program early on were then selected to form a special group. They were then followed by the author for a four month period after the training program had been completed.

This follow-up research was used to help the bank decide about how it could best maximize the benefits of their training effort. In particular, there was interest in how to convey the messages and the mood embodied in that managerial course to local staff. Assigned to this follow-up project, the author became ethnographer. She personally visited all the branches in the special sample. Some branches were visited more than once. Furthermore, all were repeatedly contacted by telephone. In this way, several branches that had good stories to tell were located.

It should be noted, however, that despite all the ground work, one story really happened during a branch visit, and was unknown to the ethnographer beforehand. That this branch had a humorous poster on the wall was a surprise. It was known that the mood at the branch was good, but no one had described the poster. It was just "there" when we arrived. In sum, anecdotal video is an unpredictable medium. Sometimes the best stories grow out of the unexpected. One sometimes has to hang around a lot in order to get that special "unexpected" story to happen.

#### FUTURE DIRECTIONS AND OVERALL PURPOSE

The anecdotal video idea is still under experimental development. We would like to produce a series of such videos within one corporation, enough to form a proper series. It is hard to know how many it would take before the necessary ground gets covered. At a guess, ten or twelve for a specific corporation should be enough to convey the key ideas the videos are intended to advocate (creativity, fun, and good customer relations). Such films need not be all sent out to a branch at once, furthermore. They can be staggered in a sort of newsletter format. As such videos do not become dated very quickly they can also be made when opportunity knocks and then kept on hand for later use. The major intent of building a series of examples would be to show them at the branch level. However, such films can also be used in a variety of training course formats. They can serve to show managers, for example, what an upbeat, turned on branch staff feels like. They can also be shown to persons working in various internal departments (mortgages, computer services, etc.) to give them a better idea of their clients, the branch staff personnel.

Each anecdotal video's larger purpose is to effect culture change, at a grass roots level, in a large corporation. Videos modeling real life examples from within the industry, and



hopefully from within the company itself, can make a huge impact. Short documentaries that show a fun atmosphere and a creative staff at work should go a long way toward helping these attitudes to flourish throughout the corporation. One such video has already been shown to another staff group. The response was electric. Several people commented "Gee, that branch had a good idea. I wonder what we could come up with". We asked for a call when that future project gets underway.

Large corporations can often be unwieldy and seemingly so similar across locations. Here is a tactic, a strategy helps build enthusiasm and loyalty to the whole, and at the same time stimulates local individuality. The informal, storylike style of anecdotal video makes it engaging, while its mythic and emotive qualities also make it a very powerful agent of positive change.

## HUMANIZING WARRIORS: ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT AND THE MILITARY

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### ABSTRACT

In the past year Organizational Development (OD) as a formal program has been virtually terminated in the Army, Air Force and Navy. There are diverse reasons for the uneven history of OD in the military, only some of which relate to the difficulty of changing very established organizational cultures. There are several lessons to be learned about the political, economic, social, and bureaucratic dimensions associated with reengineering cultures. Although temporarily diminished, the future prospects and opportunities for OD in the military are significant but in directions and forms that may not reflect the conventional wisdom characteristic of contemporary OD theory and practice. In particular, rational linear perspectives of change processes in organizations need to be greatly tempered by adaptation to anarchic (i.e., garbage can) properties of complex institutions such as the military. Also, organization culture may be influenced by certain manpower and personnel practices more strongly than by fashionable leadership nostrums currently touted in the management literature.

Over the last two decades the American military has experienced as much organizational change as it has over the past two centuries. Vietnam was its first foreign defeat and the abolition of the draft perhaps its biggest domestic setback. Societal pressures and demographic trends have substantially increased the numbers of blacks and women serving in uniform in what was traditionally an institution dominated by white males. Turbulent geopolitics, uncertain economies and accelerating technologies have all contributed to a chaotic environment that makes organizational adaptation exceedingly problematic for large complex institutions such as the military. This article considers the efforts of the American military, over the last two decades, to engineer its culture by discussing the genesis, evaluation, and decline of the practice of Organizational Development (OD) as a vehicle to produce organizational change.

Organizations typically exist in a reflexive relationship with the larger societal environment, i.e., they both influence and are influenced by the external environment. In this reciprocal

relationship, the organization as a unit of analysis, often evolves into a microcosm of the larger entity. Such demographic and normative characters of organizations are typically studied by considering the unique influences of both their internal and external environments. In discussing the genesis of OD in the American military, it is important to consider the internal and external pressures for change.

In the early 1970's Organizational Development was introduced into the US Navy, the Army, and to a lesser extent, the Air Force as one of several initiatives to respond to the crises in leadership and management that threatened the basic foundations of the military (Gabriel and Savage, 1978). During this period, U.S. military organizations became targets for change as social and political tensions grew to monumental proportions. Some key environmental occurrences which affected military organizations included intense racial turmoil, the identity crisis which beset the military during the late stages of the Vietnam War; and the decision to abolish the draft in favor of an all-volunteer force. These factors, combined with a highly activist society at large and increasing congressional demands for action served to heighten forces for change.

In considering the internal environments of American military organizations, similar precipitating agents can be identified. "Grass-root" initiatives in the field, some stimulated by the shift to an all-volunteer force with its unique leadership and management requirements combined with supportive and enlightened key figures in the military structure, provided internal pressures that helped germinate new directions for the application of behavioral sciences in the military services. In an era of large defense budgets and faced with the overwhelming civilian criticism which cut deeply into the fabric of military stability, the stage was set for the introduction of OD in the armed services. OD with its humanistic and egalitarian values was a stark contrast to the authoritarian traditions of the military. OD was thus seen by some as the obvious antidote to the ills and deficiencies attributable to archaic philosophies of exploitation and servitude.

As one might expect, the evolution of OD in the different military services reflected the unique missions, organizational structure, and culture of the respective service organization. Prior to the decade of the 1970's, the major military people programs were characterized by both human relations and human factors orientations. As reported by Butler (1981), the U.S. Air Force established the Human Resources Laboratories in 1946 at several bases to study human factors, motivation, performance evaluation, career patterns and aptitudes, and a number of more human relations oriented subjects like racial and sexual integration. The Army's efforts resulted in the establishment of its Human Relations Office in 1950 focusing on issues of cross-cultural communication, adaptation, enlistment, reenlistment, and other areas similar to Air Force interests. The Navy's orientation was also very similar, focusing on human factors.



As the 1970's approached with increased turbulence in human and social relations, Army and Air Force efforts more closely paralleled the existing manifestations of the problem areas, while Navy efforts remained about the same as previously described (Butler, 1981). For example, in the area of race relations, as forces within the greater American society began to demand more racially balanced policies, the Army and Air Force made some representative responses in those directions. The Navy balance and policies remained at the one or two percent minority officer representation level that was characteristic of Navy officer composition during the 1960's.

Many early attempts to humanize the Armed Forces were hastily conceived responses to very visible and catastrophic crises. Well-publicized race riots in the Navy (e.g., Kitty Hawk, Constellation, and Hassayampa), more violent incidents of insubordination in Vietnam, and increasing lawlessness at many American bases forced immediate and pervasive measures to demonstrate some corrective initiative, however cosmetic. OD offered a convenient perspective which promised not only social harmony but increased effectiveness as well. With OD's solid academic foundation, it was a respectable remedy which had irresistible promise for the military.

All efforts at this point were not coherently planned and coordinated. OD could be more accurately described as evolving through the innovative efforts of a few highly motivated individuals, skilled in the application of its methods; and commanders who were willing to undertake some risks in exposing themselves to the benefits OD efforts purported to offer (Schaum, 1977).

As champions emerged, sufficiently high in the executive chain of command in the respective services to positively influence and promulgate existing efforts in the more coordinated forms, special project teams or "skunkworks" were established. In the early 1970's the Air Force, Army, and Navy, largely independent of one another, developed centralized efforts to better manage human resources. Much of this was in response to DOD policies in the area of human goals to liberalize and improve civil rights in the military.

In 1970, Admiral Elmo Zumwalt became Chief of Naval Operations. The philosophically liberal Zumwalt represented a departure in managerial values that had come to characterize the Navy as traditional. According to Butler (1981), Zumwalt's impact on the Navy as an agent of new values could be understood in light of the value stagnation that had evolved between World War II and 1970. Traditional modes of authoritarian leadership combined with a greatly underrepresented minority population in upper enlisted and officer ranks had endured despite substantial movement in equal opportunity throughout society. One of Zumwalt's first projects was to address these issues. In doing so, he ordered his staff to give highest priority to a thorough review of Navy practices and policies. Zumwalt's efforts to improve the management of human resources resulted in the selection of a group of 24 officers and enlisted personnel to explore existing ideas in social science literature to address the identified concerns.

From this research, the pilot group identified organizational development as the strategy offering the most promise for Navy problems.

In the early 1970's, similar efforts were underway in the Army. Under a very progressive Chief of Staff, General Bernard Rogers, indepth studies on professionalism and leadership were conducted by the Army War College in conjunction with a behavioral science study group. According to Schaum (1977), these efforts set the stage for a three-year experimental program consisting of six pilot projects, under the direction of Headquarters, Department of the Army. These projects collectively focused on the evaluation of OD in various military contexts. The project located at Fort Ord, California was eventually selected to provide the capability for OD training and officially became the Organizational Effectiveness Training Center on 1 July 1975.

1975 marked a turning point for human resource management issues in the Air Force. Prior to that time, efforts were largely decentralized and tended to center around man-machine and job design issues, especially job enrichment (Herzberg, 1966). In April, 1975, the U.S. Air Force Chief of Staff established the Air Force Management Improvement Group (AFMIG). Its broad charter was to "make a good service better". The group was "people-oriented" and developed a significant number of initiatives directed at improving the quality of life of USAF members. (Gregory, 1977). Two AFMIG initiatives were instrumental in creating more centralized policy in coordinating OD efforts. One initiative was the establishment of the Human Resource Development Deputy Directorate whose major function was to institutionalize existing HRD programs, provide centralized direction, and develop HRO initiatives. The other initiative involved the establishment of The Leadership Management Development Center (LMDC) which had a three-phase mission: curriculum development for leadership and management education, training of instructors and staff officers, and field consultation in leadership and management.

The decade between 1975 and 1985 witnessed many efforts to further institutionalize OD efforts in the different military services. Success waxed and waned depending upon mid- to upper-level champions rotating in and out of strategic and influential positions in the military hierarchy. Also, OD programs were affected as defense department budgets fluctuated. Many other factors, as well, would come to affect the viability of military OD programs.

A key factor underlying the effectiveness of these OD programs was the uneven quality of personnel assigned as consultants. While many were volunteers with high commitment and enthusiasm, others were cast-offs from other parts of the military who were marginally competent. Another element was the variable effectiveness of consulting training. As budgets and commitment declined, OD training suffered in scope, rigor and length. A third aspect was the proliferation of official policies, regulations and instructions relating to OD. Although these served to legitimate and support OD initiatives, they consumed large amounts of time and energy to develop and approve. Often, they were as confining as they were

enabling, i.e., while authorizing certain responsibilities and prerogatives they also specified constraints and prohibitions.

As efforts increased to embed OD programs into the larger military bureaucracy, program managers found themselves in the uncomfortable and sometimes tenuous position of being nested in a bureaucracy which it often sought to change. The marked resistance to change came from strong traditional elements in all of the service organizations. In addition to competition for economic resources, the various OD sponsors experienced ongoing jurisdictional conflicts with entrenched bureaucratic coalitions. As each military department began their OD efforts at the headquarters level as a special project, they found that attempts to integrate OD throughout the chain of command encountered widespread resistance from those quarters who saw OD as a present threat to their accustomed practices and protected power bases. For some antagonists, OD was the antithesis of military values.

Articles bounding the beginning and the end of the Army's Organizational Effectiveness (OE) program expressed concern over a perceived incompatibility of OD tenets and traditional Army values (Nadal in interview with Cahn, 1978; Spehn, 1985). Most organizational practitioners have experienced some resistance to change brought about by OD efforts. However, Nadal and Spehn were especially concerned with a traditional Army culture that would become threatened when faced with certain elements of the OE program.

For Nadal, this threat was two-fold. Recognizing that the Army, like many bureaucracies, functioned with many informal nets of communication and subpower structures, he felt that traditionalists would view the OE consultant as a "threat to the integrity of the Chain-of-Command". Secondly, he argued, commanders often felt that the mere presence of an Organizational Effectiveness Staff Officer (OESO) might signal that something was deficient in their leadership and management. As a result, Nadal stressed the voluntary aspect of the OE program as beneficial, pointing out that the commander is in control at all times.

In his reflective essay covering some ten years of experience as faculty, staff, and administrator at OECS, Spehn also noted the resistance to OE inherent in traditional military culture. Not only did some of the basic tenets of OE (e.g., participative management, candid feedback, open conflict resolution, etc.) jar Army tradition and culture but, because of the time involved in bringing about systemic change, Army commanders faced with a constant round of short tours wanted and needed easy, visible, and sometimes instant evidence of change.

Similar observations occurred in an accounting of attempts to institutionalize OD in the Navy. Butler (1981) cites the limitations involved in trying to apply behavioral science principles in bureaucratic contexts. The unpalatable aspect of behavioral science terms with traditional military values was evidenced by the selection of simplistic behavioristic paradigms to account for human behavior over more complex cognitive approaches.

In a very vivid example highlighting some experiences in the Navy's Human Resource Management School, Butler relates how the Navy as an organization, reacted to newer concepts lying outside its traditional and conventional ways of viewing the world. Essentially, it reacted by "selecting theoretical modes of explaining behavior in more straightforward, simplistic and easily illustrated ways." According to Butler, this practice was more easily accomplished by subscription to behaviorist theories that tend to set aside the complexities of human cognition in favor of action-reaction models. Moreover, these paradigms were often applied in mechanistic fashion without regard for the ideographic nature of human interactions.

As a result of these value differences, increased efforts on the part of the motivated promulgators of OD in all service organizations tended to be viewed with increased skepticism and contempt.

A discussion of the difficulties encountered in institutionalizing and sustaining military OD programs would not be complete without some recognition of the importance of marketing efforts to build and cultivate a client constituency and measures that would demonstrate and document benefits, value, and need for OD programs. Interestingly, difficulties experienced in these areas would later serve as key contributing factors in the decline of OD in U.S. military organizations.

In the face of resistance of traditional military elements to the underlying values of OD Programs, one might agree that marketing efforts toward dispersion of positive outcomes is essential. This view is well sustained in the literature on the conduct of OD in complex bureaucracies, in general (Greiner and Schein, 1977) and in the military, in particular.

To compound this issue, lack of understanding of the purpose and potential of OD programs, as well as the tenets of behavioral science as a discipline, contributed to the ultimate failure of those at the very top of the military structure to support OD. As reported by Butler (1981), top-level admirals subsequent to ADM Zumwalt in the Navy did not fully support the Navy's OD program. In addition to reported interviews with five Rear Admirals and two Vice Admirals who supported the stereotype that OD had little effect on operational readiness, Butler cited notable case files where top flag (admiral) officers managed to avoid personal involvement in almost all of the activities of an OD operation, while advocating it like "good medicine" for subordinates.

In an appraisal of the Navy's OD program, Booze, Allen, and Hamilton (1979) observed:

Perhaps more than anything, the HRM Program (OD) at this stage of its development needs to have greater visibility, a positive, "clean" image, and aggressive but thoughtful marketing to all levels in the chain of command. It is, therefore, recommended that HRM staff at all levels, from the program sponsor on down, assume responsibility for aggressive, positive promotion of the HRM program to the user commands

-- and higher staffs...

The general feeling was that if higher authority in Washington demonstrates support for the HRM Program then the program will be supported "in the field".

Similar concerns were expressed in considering the Army's attempts to institutionalize its OD program. In previously cited articles by Nadal and Spehn, marketing was considered essential to ensure program viability and longevity.

Roberts and Barko (1986) reported that although a large volume of case studies were documented which described numerous success stories of OD interventions in the Army, there was little evidence that this information was shared with key Army leaders or incorporated as part of a marketing strategy. In fact, many Army officers still carried an earlier stereotype of OE as a "touchy-feely" program undermining good order and discipline and this continued as a powerful ghost until the program's termination in 1985. Other OECS internal documents show that in 1980 an Army-wide cost-benefit analysis study was conducted which attempted to use human resource accounting techniques to quantify the cost saving of OE interventions. Documents show that the cost savings were estimated in excess of 100 million dollars. The results of this study were rarely shared, validated, or duplicated and thus were of little use in persuading skeptics and opponents of OD. The Navy conducted a formal assessment of its OD program in 1985 which concluded that it was basically sound and worthwhile although some structural changes were indicated. Although no rigorous measure of cost-benefit tradeoffs was conducted. The qualitative evaluation was unequivocally in support of continuing OD in the Navy.

There were many attempts by the OE community to reach into the Army at large. Most of these efforts were confined to publications such as the Army OE Communique (later, The Army OE Journal) the Navy's Leadership and Organization Effectiveness Journal, and to published doctrine in the form of commander guides, reference books, and TV tapes. However, as Spehn reported, "Most of its (OECS) preaching reached only the Chair of OE believers." Thus, "all this effort remained unorchestrated into a true outreach program". Only recently, and too late, had OECS developed an integrated plan to let the Army know what it had done and could do.

The failure to engage in effective marketing strategies is certainly not unique to the Army's OE program. Zenger (interview with Cahn, 1978) observed that few individuals in the Organizational Development profession are good salesmen. The OD consultant rarely approaches the consulting relationship from the client or customer's perspective in terms of the client's needs. Rather, the consultant is apt to offer a particular intervention contained within his own repertoire of techniques without showing the client how this particular intervention will address the client's needs.

One can gain some understanding of this weakness in marketing and selling by considering the historical development of OD.

Organizational Development was given birth by academic social scientists and retains its strong university affiliations. The initial thrust was to conduct research, instruct and deliver help to people in organizations. These missions took precedence over selling OD and may have curtailed more widespread adoption beyond limited clientele.

The paradox for both Army and Navy OD programs was that sensitivity to traditional military culture and values not only created an ambivalent orientation toward their own role, but also failed to cultivate proactive and assertive marketing strategies necessary for survival. OE consultants initially walked lightly around commanders who were still skeptical concerning the utility of OE in their units. Moreover, this cautious approach inhibited officers from working at the highest levels in the respective service which might have engendered necessary support from the top. Instead, consultants worked at levels characterized by comfort and caution. Considering the predictable rotation of military personnel and consequent alternative executive support for the OD programs, marketing became not a "nice-to-have" but a necessity of bureaucratic life.

In the case of both Army and Navy programs, directly related to marketing considerations are the generic concerns that characterize the practice of organizational development in bureaucracies, especially military bureaucracies. The general concerns have been well articulated by Burke (1980) and Golembiewski (1969, 1979).

Burke cites the difficulties that organizational development consultants have had in attempting to introduce change in bureaucracies which possibly limits the scope of interventions attainable. Golembiewski specifically points out characteristics in the public sector that serve to inhibit OD efforts. Included in his analysis are factors such as multiple accountability, decision making, and reporting relationships, as well as the difficulty to muster support and gain the approvals necessary to enter OD activities in the first place. Thus, networking skills become paramount if OD is to be effective.

In considering military bureaucracies in particular, Sabrosky, Thompson and McPherson (1982) describe an aspect of the culture of the Defense Department bureaucracy as one offering "innumerable opportunities for the classic bureaucratic gamesmanship to be played". Recognizing that organizations do act in their own interest, which is not always congruent with the national interest, they describe a parochialism in which many military bureaucracies are more concerned with what will help them prosper than what will benefit national security in general. Thus, from a systemic perspective, problems are often solved not by a careful selection of the optimal choice from available alternatives, but in terms of the shifting dominance of various bureaucratic coalitions.

To add to an understanding of this condition, consider the work of Gabriel and Savage (1978) and Gabriel (1979) in which they describe the displacement of the more traditional corporate structure in recent years by the ethics of the entrepreneur, thus

emphasizing tangible benefits and careerism over intangible recognition and subscription to the military ethos. In addition, variable military spending over a decade exacerbated the organizational competition for resources and prestige.

Thus, a well developed and articulated marketing strategy may have greatly enhanced the institutionalization and retention of OD in both the Army and Navy. The difficulties experienced in obtaining systematic and credible evaluations were certainly not unique to military OD programs; however, rigid bureaucratic structures, unique military missions and the work context itself served to exacerbate those difficulties.

Some who reflect on the field of OD as a discipline (French and Bell, 1978; Huse and Cummings, 1985) tend to describe individuals in the OD profession as practitioners who tend to be more involved in practicing OD methods than evaluating OD from a research or managerial standpoint. Considering some of the difficulties involved in conducting field research and program evaluation, some apprehension is understandable.

First, the issue of internal validity is problematic. Because of the nature of the evaluative methods that are appropriate in these cases, many lack the rigor to depict cause and effect relationships in a demonstrative fashion. As related by French and Bell, "This is a problem in all field research and evaluation research: there is simply so much going on in the real-world situation that it is difficult to pinpoint what is causing change to occur." Thus, in the evaluation of OD efforts, it becomes very difficult to tease out the effects of an intervention from other occurrences in the organization's internal and external environments. Some of these issues can be accommodated in utilizing appropriate research designs. For example, Cook and Campbell (1979) have suggested a number of quasi-experimental designs that overcome threats to internal and external validity. These designs provide the justifications needed to rule out rival explanations for the changes found. However, when OD practitioners find themselves working in volatile political climates, ironically, evaluation efforts are often difficult, if not impossible.

A second issue of external validity plagues many OD efforts. Because of the uniqueness of settings, what works in one situation may not work in others. For example, the Navy's massive experience with survey-guided development which was required for all fleet units every 18-24 months was very uneven in terms of impact. Even though the methodology was standardized to a very high degree, there was not high consistency in outcomes to the client organizations. Some units enjoyed substantial benefits from the interventions; some found it an utter waste of time; most had very mixed and usually short-lived results. In contrast, the Army and Navy enjoyed broad success with transition workshops to facilitate changes in command. The anecdotal evidence was overwhelmingly positive in support of the benefits to clients.

Nevertheless, the OD programs as a whole in each of the three services came to be seen by some top military leaders as an amorphous unfocused conglomeration of activities with little demonstrable pay-off in economic or operational terms.

In retrospect the reasons for the demise of OD in the three services are not particularly obscure. In the competition for scarce resources, the OD programs did not enjoy the confidence and understanding of key officials in the central budget allocation process. Without incontrovertible evidence of substantial cost effectiveness contributions to readiness or efficiency, OD was vulnerable to those critics who argued that it had outlived its usefulness and should be easily sacrificed in the face of higher priority requirements. However what was totally unexpected was the timing and the rapidity of the termination of both OD programs in the Army and the Navy. In each instance there was little or no foreshadowing of the impending termination which was decided personally by the Army Chief of Staff and by the Chief of Naval Operations. Presumably the decisions were made after careful deliberations of the consequences and the implications of the termination, however in the case of the Army and the Navy the principal proponents of OD were not directly involved in the final outcome. Moreover once the decision was announced the execution of the disestablishment of both OD programs proceeded with astonishing rapidity.

What had taken over a decade to create and develop was demolished in less than six months. There remain the inevitable suspicions that some carefully managed conspiracy was the actual cause of the demise of military OD and that it was only the latest casualty in the bureaucratic intrigues that plague all large institutions. In the case of the military the budgetary turbulence of 1985 and 1986 placed at risk all marginal and many controversial programs. Large bureaucracies which are so complex as to resemble organized anarchies (Cohen, March and Olsen, 1974) often engage in decision making that are not explicable from simple rational perspectives, i.e., decisions may only loosely be connected with the avowed intentions and the putative objectives of the organization. In the case of the termination of OD in the military it appears to some that decision rested less on economic justifications than it did on cultural and political incompatibilities.

Although disestablished as a formal program OD does continue in greatly diminished degrees. In the Army several subordinate commanders who have successful experiences with OD elected to maintain their own OD resources and capabilities taking the resources 'out of hide'. Also proponentcy for many OD issues has shifted to the Center for Army Leadership, a relatively new agency which is responsible for guiding and coordinating all leadership training and research. In the Navy OD has fared less well. Although there are a few individual shore commands that maintain small OD consulting staffs they are largely civilian and are limited to local responsibilities. Other programs that are organically related to OD such as the Navy's Leadership and

Management Education Training (LMET) program and the CNO's initiatives on Personnel Excellence may offer future opportunities for the application of OD processes but there are no immediate prospects for the programmatic evolution as it had experienced up to now. The Air Force is in a similar situation with the only residual OD capabilities located in isolated training and education institutions where OD sympathizers continue to work independently.

The current prognosis for OD in the armed services is not optimistic. Barring any repetition of the major crises of the 1970's, it is unlikely that OD would be resurrected anytime in the immediate future. Having made the painful decision to disestablish OD it would be a gross embarrassment to reverse the decision under the current regime. It is not impossible that changes in the top leadership in the military may occasion the reconsideration of OD sometime well downstream provided that there be sufficiently plausible justification for reintroducing OD after such a tumultuous history. A more likely scenario is that numerous small initiatives to apply OD will proliferate in a decentralized way throughout the military as individual commanders discover the benefits and advantages of specific interventions that may obtain in particular situations. Absent the constellation of internal and external forces for change that dominated the military in the early 1970's, the prospects of a unitary large systems introduction of OD seem remote.

The experience of OD in the military is difficult to interpret. It would be an oversimplification to assert that OD was merely a passing fashion with which the military became disillusioned. Although all of the services made substantial investments of people and resources to the utilization of OD, their commitment was always characterized by ambivalence and doubt. While this history may be reflective of the unique culture and environment of the armed services, it may also be indicative of the conceptual strengths and weaknesses of OD as an applied behavioral science. It would be highly instructive to determine whether either the military or the field of OD has gained in any appreciable way from this equivocal marriage.

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## CULTURAL REDIRECTION: A SUCCESS STORY

by

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### Abstract

The U.S. subsidiary of a multi-national chemical firm began a change process that is continuing after substantial revisions of all major organizational components. A four-year project to provide executive education to senior management became a vehicle to foster a cultural shift, providing a context for managers who were struggling with major reorganizations and new systems. Corporate leadership gained credibility and trust of the middle management through an evolutionary dialogue on critical change issues, unprecedented in the company's history. Both qualitative and quantitative data are presented showing substantial positive change in perceptions among all senior executives on major cultural issues. The roles of internal and external change agents in assisting the leadership work within a political environment are explored. Conclusions are drawn which underscore the fact that culture cannot be changed, it can only be uncovered and utilized to adapt to the current marketplace. A change model is presented based on utilizing organizational strengths.

### Introduction: A Case Study of Cultural Redirection

In my experience as Corporate Manager of both Organizational Development and Executive Development, I participated as a member of a corporate culture and as well as a change agent. During this process, I observed many phenomena which led me to a philosophy that can serve as a basis for cultural redirection. In the following material, I will present the case study of the corporation and the change project which I led over a period of four years.



### The Situation

A low risk, stable, research-driven culture had successfully created highly profitable, patented specialties for most of the 200 year history of a multi-national chemical corporation.

Chemicals, once a growth industry, became a commodity business during the 1970's. Major profit-making products lost their patent protection in this firm during the decade. By 1980, the U.S. headquarters of the European owned firm was confronted with the inescapable fact that the annual research investment--nearly half a billion dollars worldwide--had produced only one major new product in over 15 years. Profit margins had narrowed across 5 divisions for several years, until in 1980 U.S. management faced an appalling 1% return on sales of \$2B. The business plan, based on assumptions of the past, was not competitive. The assumptions seemed in fact to be counterproductive.

2 of 5 divisions carried the major (70%) burden of profitability for the company. Of the 2, the agricultural products division with 1/3 the employees of the pharmaceutical division (the other money-maker) contributed slightly more to the bottom line. There had been no new pharmaceutical products developed in-house since the early 1960's. Pharmaceuticals was holding a stable margin on outdated products with an expensive, highly educated workforce and enormous research commitment.

In 1979, as the financial situation worsened, consultants were called in and by 1980 a major reorganization at the top of the U.S. subsidiary was in place. A strategic planning group was created. A performance incentive system was installed from the top down to focus on results achieved--a major innovation in an organization that heavily emphasized internal processes (engineering, manufacturing, research). By 1981, two major divisions began reorganizing from traditional functions into "strategic" business centers in order to be closer to the customer.

Strategic tasks were new, and the firm's skills and systems were found lacking to meet the challenges posed. An individualistic, scientific "expert" model had been the basis for organizational structure, business interactions, status, and values. Small business teams with representatives from each function were now asked to make decisions together in the industrial divisions. There was no real precedent for this kind of collaboration. All businesses had been run by each discipline making a separate contribution to an overall plan directed at the vice presidential level. Assumptions and beliefs about how to do business were in question. What people had valued in interactions with one another no longer applied. Marketing concepts were foreign to production and research--and vice versa. Decision making was difficult at best.

Senior management labelled the difficulties "normal" and "expected" in the face of such stressful changes. Attempts were made to minimize the impact they created and wait out the problems with a "business as usual" attitude.

As management made changes in the structures, strategies and systems, the culture, which functions as the interpretation system used to make sense of daily events, was not integrating the changes into the "way we do things around here". Management's "espoused" and employee's "operational" values were in conflict in some areas, eroding the basis for committed action, (Argyris & Schon, 1978) and in at least one division, overall performance (Denison, 1986)

Attention was tuned to the "hard systems" of strategy, structures and systems which were "on track" as described in the Annual Report of those years. The "soft" part of the business--staff, style (read: culture), skills and superordinate goals (McKenzie "7S" model)--was the business of Human Resources staff to deal with as their (separate) contribution to the progress of the firm.

Work with lower and middle management in organization development projects and training seminars surfaced much discontent over a "lack of leadership" that was perceived as "not giving direction for the daily running of the businesses". Changes were needed from senior management. However they had never considered themselves available as a client for corporate Organization Development.

In 1981, a survey of 24 vice-presidents and their subordinates was made to test their receptivity to the idea of executive education within the company. The hidden agenda was to look at how change in leadership style could be fostered at the top levels.

Divisions within the corporation had begun their own change efforts. The most profitable led the way with a modification of the business strategy and organizational structure to stress marketing and product management over sales to improve their competitive position.

At the same time, a major change was begun by the most mature of the businesses, relegated to the quadrant of "cash cow". Attitude surveys in 1979 and 1981 said that morale was at its nadir, profitability was in the loss column, and discussions with the Boston Consulting Group produced the advice to divest. European headquarters did their own analysis, said they were committed to the business worldwide, and the U.S. division made a decision to "turn the thing around". A personal commitment by the Division President was made to step back from the operations, restaff and restart. \*\*

\*\* The turnaround was a classic. Beginning with a mission statement to be the "best in the world" and to "generate cash for the existing businesses", the division focused on excellence through a rigorous quality program, and by 1983 were "in the black", costs were down at the major production facility by over 40% on their way, in 1984, to a \$40mm reduction of a \$70mm budget.

A convergence of "soft" and "hard" systems was occurring that was only dimly apparent to the players at the time. It was in this climate that a proposal for executive education was made.

#### An Executive Seminar as a Forum for Change

A proposal for executive education was approved in late 1981.

A task force of specially selected vice presidents and business heads was convened. They initially recommended business education as a solution for what they heard as a simple "technical" problem: lack of business knowledge. Objectives were status quo--perfectly in line with the low risk culture of the company.

The Chief Executive Officer, the real and final decision-maker, initially agreed with the proposal of the task force for universal executive education. He did not endorse--or see the need for--a change project.

The proposal was originally approved by only 5 of the 12 Management Committee members. This "inner circle" of decision-makers, called the Executive Committee, was comprised of the Chief Executive Officer, the Chief Operating Officer, two division presidents, and the Chief Financial Officer. Three division presidents and 6 corporate vice presidents were excluded from the original commitment.

Trust and influence among the Management Committee were uneven. The initial advocate of the proposal, a new COO, was working on relationships with key players on the Management Committee who, with the new structure, were simultaneously his peers and his subordinates. His sponsorship added political complexities.

Likewise, the Management Committee had not previously acted as corporate leaders. Their primary concerns were division specific. Consequently, individual "turf" was a factor in every decision.

The priority at this beginning stage of the project was to transfer ownership from Human Resources to top management. That became a delicate, step-by-step process. Knowing that an executive seminar would never be more than a pleasant educational experience if current expectations continued, a political approach was taken to create a consensus in key power networks that 1) values about the way to do business (cultural issues) needed to be addressed in this forum and that 2) senior management were the ones to address them.

The solution: bring in "experts"--external consultants who were highly regarded by a culture founded on expertise, and who could be neutral parties in naming issues in a potentially highly charged political environment.

In 1982, a firm specializing in strategic planning and cultural analysis was engaged to conduct extensive interviews with top executives as a needs assessment for an internal seminar in business skills.

According to interviews of 44 top executives across all 5 divisions, including the 12 members of the Management Committee, the following skills were needed within the executive population to be able to direct the newly structured organization to a more competitive position:

- 1) A working knowledge of all aspects of the business by the many specialist groups, often isolated within the organization. The thrust of this goal was to promote sharing of expertise. This was cited as the major objective: to create a "general manager perspective".
- 2) The skills and theories of strategic business planning needed to be extended down into the organization where decisions were now required.
- 3) Marketing skills such as industry and competitive analysis were needed, as well as a solid introduction to marketing for the non-marketers.
- 4) Financial analysis along with the ability to use finance as a management tool was the need of the vast majority of technical specialists.
- 5) Perspectives on leadership of change and innovation, including how human resource systems support the organization, were needed by the largely technical population.

This assessment and discussions of the findings with the senior 12 executives over a period of 9 months established the seminar as an appropriate forum to address "change". This word was used as an umbrella for publically tackling the skills, and discussing the shift in emphases necessary to enable the new structures and strategies to succeed. This focus of changing the way of doing business through a seminar was an unprecedented synergy between operations and human resources.



### Making the Cultural Shift

The challenge was: how to move a project forward that was perceived by the organization to merely involve task skills, when in reality the core values underlying the skills needed to be addressed. For this, an external perspective was invaluable in naming additional CULTURAL ISSUES which were, indeed, invisible to both business and human resources leadership.

The external perspective of the consulting firm captured the underlying cultural shifts needed for a successful realignment of values with the restructured organization. What is important about this list is the difference in content and scope of each issue and what it meant to the organization when compared to the list of training needs.

#### 1. Legitimizing a generalist in a specialist culture.

"We're a specialty business. Technical expertise is highly valued."

(translation obtained in interviews: general managers don't do 'real' work...they've lost their expertise and therefore are not as legitimate as a Ph.D.)

#### 2. Creating a shift from a research orientation to an emphasis on marketing, the customer, and profitability.

"Our business was built on patented specialties".

(translation: we just need a technical breakthrough. The products will continue to sell themselves. Marketing is not critical. We need a strong, well motivated and trained sales force.)

Interviews showed a shift was needed from an internal, process orientation to an emphasis on the external analysis of markets, competitors, and the environment, with a resulting product orientation. Stress needed to be placed on the "D" of "R & D".

#### 3. Creating a company-wide orientation in a strongly divisionalized culture.

"There is no company culture. We have nothing in common with the other divisions. Our businesses are too different."

A corporate-sponsored project was suspect. A strongly divisionalized orientation created resistance to projects (translated as 'control') from both U.S. and European headquarters.

Products and technologies were used as walls to reinforce the basic belief in "turf".

#### 4. Moving from a policy-bound decision-making process to a more risk-oriented, entrepreneurial one.

"We avoid risks. We use 'analysis to paralysis'. Policies are more important than results".

Rules counted a great deal in this organization. A "systematic approach" was paramount. "Start with a pilot project" was a major rule to avoid failure and minimize risk. Political networks were critical to get projects approved. For any capital project over \$125,000, approval had to be granted by overseas headquarters with many layers of (U.S.) corporate review in between.

Corporate staff groups, acting on behalf of management as auditors, were called "overhead" by line managers who chafed at the restrictions to their autonomy, challenging the expertise of the staff. Tensions over control took up energies needed to be expended on the marketplace.

#### 5. Creating sponsorship for individual "idea champions" in a culture established by a European parent as risk-averse, where actions are based on consensus of the group and credit goes to the team.

"This is a company managed by a committee. Decisions are not made, they evolve..."

"[the company] will never be a General Motors. We don't take risks".

The Chairman did not want to create "stars" or heroes who received special recognition. The desire for public praise was tolerated for "marketing types" but was clearly in contradiction to the low profile of the scientist seeking occasional, external, professional acknowledgement.

What had been a "Bet Your Company" (high risk on large projects) culture had lapsed, corporate-wide, into what appeared to be a "Process" (bureaucratic) culture (Deal & Kennedy, 1982) that was largely ineffective at the processes needed to produce new products.

Resistance to change expressed in the interviews was to be expected. The interviewees were presenting the picture of "the way it is around here" with little hope of seeing anything different. Furthermore, most change efforts imply or state outright that the way things have been done in the past is inadequate, so that the interviews themselves elicited a lot of skepticism.

However, this project soon became grounded on a very simple premise: Build on Strengths. The redirection effort was therefore based on the following cultural strengths found within the current weaknesses:

- > The scientific experts of the culture loved learning. Education was prized and thereby became a perfect vehicle for influencing change.  
World headquarters put on an in-company, residential seminar that was staffed totally by company leadership. The precedent for business education across geographical and product lines was established.
- > The strongly divisionalized culture was based on a great respect for autonomy and diversity.  
Toleration for diverse opinions and styles existed within the Management Committee and set the tone for the corporation.
- > Technical risk-taking was commonplace.  
Millions of dollars had been spent on research and development, as well as high risk acquisitions of businesses and technology.
- > Lack of rapid change meant strong commitment and loyalty to the firm.  
This could be used as a motivating factor and common bond during a change process.
- > Successful models of a marketing orientation existed within the company, although outside the mainstream culture.  
A consumer products company had been acquired in the mid '70's and had attained an astounding recent success. The marketing effort could provide a great source of expertise.

#### Implementation Strategy and Outcomes

Most managers at the senior level are not prepared for the kind of questions raised in the organization as training is implemented. Fortunately, 10 years earlier in this very organization after some 2,000 managers had attended Phase I of the Managerial Grid the most common question asked by seminar participants was: Why doesn't my management use or believe in principles espoused in the seminar? The failure of this organization to lead change from the top on a previous occasion was a powerful rationale to start the leadership listening to alternative ways to introduce this seminar. Including as many political networks as possible became the major strategy to ensure participation and, therefore, commitment by senior management to the cultural issues.

The following is a summary of critical tactical moves made in this project to take it from the beginning objective of education for business skills to education to influence the culture--working through the existing political environment.

#### STRATEGY

1. Give 4 choices for a Purpose of the effort to the Management Committee:

- education
- motivation
- change
- assessment

3. Since "change" was selected, the condition is made that the approach must now be "top down", starting with the Management Committee.

5. Get agreement to have the vice presidents--the implementers--attend a 6-day seminar. The Management Committee is faculty along with external professors. The seminar design includes an examination of "what it will take to reach excellence".

7. As director level starts to attend, V.P.'s were not involved, although the Mgmt. Comm. was still serving as faculty. Trust of the change objectives was low. After directors complained, the CEO allowed the V.P.'s to be more active in the effort.

9. Participant course evaluations were used as tools for influence. Each session's report was distributed to all V.P.s and Mgmt. Comm. members with a cover letter from the CEO and COO.

#### OUTCOME

2. Participation in choosing a direction for the seminar gains the involvement of key leaders in the project.

"Change" is selected as the purpose by the Executive Committee and agreed to by the rest.

4. The Executive Program is launched with the Management Committee as participants. They formulate a direction for the entire effort. With this act they assume leadership of the effort.

6. The seminar as a change vehicle attained credibility when the Executive Committee responded positively to the request to double the capital approval spending limit. Key V.P.'s returned to initiate changes and support the seminar goals.

8. Gradual ownership of the change objectives were moved into senior management.

10. Faculty presentations and course content were revised to reflect current company issues based on the course evaluations. This demonstrated the responsiveness of top management.

A longitudinal study was conducted to determine the impact on the executive population of 5 of the goal areas established by the Management Committee in February of 1983. (See Appendix A) From March of 1983 to May of 1985, 398 or 98% of the executive population attended one of 8 residential seminars (7 director-level programs were two weeks long). A written survey was administered to all participants as they entered each class, with a follow-up given in December of 1984. Analysis of the following dimensions is reported:

- encouragement of cross-functional collaboration
- support for entrepreneurial, "idea champions"
- focus on long vs. short term priorities
- focus on business results over procedures and policies
- vertical cooperation (with US headquarters and the parent)
- familiarity with other businesses and staff functions
- impact of human resource data on business decisions
- encouragement of cross-functional and cross-divisional transfer and rotation.

The following summary of perceptions was extracted during an analysis of the change in ratings from the time of the initial responses to the follow-up survey (see Appendix B):

<u>Positive Change</u>		<u>Negative Change</u>		<u>No Change</u>	
<u>VP's</u>	<u>DIRECTORS</u>	<u>VP's</u>	<u>DIRECTORS</u>	<u>VP's</u>	<u>DIRECTORS</u>
*	**				***
18	13	0	1	5	7

The positive shift in responses suggests that there was a positive shift overall. This was supported by a trend analysis computed for all questions. Trend lines were positive in all areas except two: the effectiveness of performance appraisals in measuring business results, and the tendency of vice presidents to ask for collaboration from their subordinates.

These results were used to propose future executive education for the vice presidential level, in order to continue what is the beginning of a long term redirection for the firm.

\* 2 of these positive responses were statistically significant to >.05 error.

\*\* 3 of these positive responses were statistically significant to >.05 error

\*\*\* Ratings in 3 of these 7 areas were marked high enough initially that little, if any, change would occur in any case.

### Discussion of Outcomes

At the inception of the project and for perhaps the first few months, corporate leadership was divided and resistant themselves to the newly developed change objectives; they were embedded in the mature cultural standards they had helped create and lived by for careers averaging 20 years with the company. Over the next two years, the leadership took significant risks themselves in reevaluating long cherished "sacred cows".

Professors from the business schools of Harvard, Dartmouth, Northeastern and MIT challenged the internal business practices and methodology through examination of case studies in related industries. By co-leading these sessions, top management gradually integrated new ideas.

In the process of leading these seminars with the external faculty, senior managers became known to mid-level managers outside their own businesses, some for the first time. Presentations on issues current to the business were opened to managers who had never had such timely insights into decision-making. Trust grew as "privileged information" was shared by the company president who returned from Europe and swore the group to secrecy as he disclosed the latest rankings of business centers by profitability. A division president did the same when he shared why a business was to be divested the following week. The Management Committee faculty spent every evening of the two week program socializing informally with the participants, dissolving barriers on a personal basis.

Discussions about policies were at times heated. Participants were asked to propose changes--and beyond that, to stop waiting around for permission to do so--and "take risks" in running their businesses. Participants challenged back. They railed at bureaucratic procedures and corporate limits. The CEO challenged them to make it better by going beyond "self-imposed limits". The Corporate Human Resources VP told a seminar that "the system was made to get around. If you don't know that by now, then you haven't been paying attention."

In January of 1984, at the 4th of the 8 sessions, this statement was made to the Management Committee by a spokesman for the participants:

"You've done your part. Now it's up to us."

This signaled a maturing of the rebellious middle managers as the personal interaction with their leadership established mutual respect. Trust continued to build...slowly. Reactions of the participants expressed pride and excitement about their company and the colleagues from the very divisions which they felt had nothing to teach them:

"What I learned from the consumer products division was worth the whole course". (Pharmaceutical business director, September, 1983)

"(I have) a renewed belief that the company has the people to become excellent and in fact seems to be dedicated to doing so." (April, 1983)

The highlight of the course was "the dedication of the Executive Committee plus the interaction of the group. I learned a great deal in the exchanges with peers in other divisions." (January, 1984)

1984 sales and profitability were reported as having reached the highest levels in company history.

Seminar content and design modifications gradually introduced new subjects in a controlled way for the key authority figures to lead. The Management Committee thus evolved the meaning and application of the original change objectives with middle management.

By 1985, 5 company case studies had been developed to promote internal examination--replacing initial case studies of other firms. The seminar became a forum spotlighting critical issues which in turn demanded literacy of senior management. Acting as faculty and continually being put on the spot built confidence for most. They honed their thinking and closely examined policies. A strategic plan for the environment was created and a reexamination and restructuring of a divisional performance appraisal system occurred after discussions of these topics in the seminar. The open discussions created understanding and communication among the middle managers.

"The fact that the issue [line/staff conflict] was addressed is a credit to the boldness of the program. Keep it up." (April, 1984)

"Challenging questions and honest answers. Openness and owning up of [Division President] to the difficult questions (environmental) and trying to deal with it is very encouraging." (January, 1985)

The message was spread by returning participants to the entire organization.

New symbols and heroes were created from a corporate vantage point. Risk-taking and entrepreneurship were supported to encourage a more competitive approach to the marketplace. The method of doing this was to bring forth existing examples and publicize them: credible data to preserve and build on strengths.

"Intrapreneurs" and their success stories, which were never shared in public before, (senior management initially feared a message that might encourage disruptiveness) created new myths and stories that showed how to innovate within the culture. This built on substantial strengths in the organization while removing the excuse for not taking action because of the inhibiting procedures and policies.

Presentations by colleagues and superiors on how they took risks to create a new product or ad campaign were cited as inspirational. One example in particular was striking. A research director of a corporate staff group was threatened with "de-funding". Convinced he'd found a marketable compound, he went to the CEO with the support of his vice president. He was given a small budget very quietly. And very quietly he created a business center that manufactured and sold the original, and then a growing line of products, to reach \$2mm in sales 3 years later, with \$10mm attainable in 1986 (5 years later). People who had been with the company for 15 and 20 years had "never heard about this before." Top management denied a request to have him as a presenter in the first year of the program, worried that "research will think we're telling them this is the way to behave." By the 2nd year he was inserted as a featured speaker in a new section on "intrapreneurship," along with a divisional director telling, on videotape, how he had circumvented the system to develop a new product.

The low-risk, stable, unchanging culture that existed in the perception of all was found to have "skunk-works" and heroes! Examples from within the company, impossible to find at the beginning of the effort, began to be shared openly, and statements about "cultural change", which were never believed possible, were made in increasing numbers as participants said they felt personal responsibility for improvements.

Top management acting as faculty (along with the outside professors) were continually commended for their "excellent exchange of issues felt critical to our business" as well as "their sincerity and the time commitment they made to this program." As one participant enthused:

"The Management Committee is a living embodiment of excellence." (January, 1984)

Recognition and acknowledgement in public, long the prerogative of sales and marketing or annual business meetings, became increasingly acceptable. Results were being celebrated. Two divisions started public monetary awards for outstanding contributions. Although controversial, the new ideal of working for "excellence" was supported in status with or above "playing by the rules".

The full meaning for the business emerged from 1983 to 1985 as specific actions were taken, step-by-step. Changes are still in process.

>Senior management is acting as faculty for a management seminar for the high potential subordinates of those who attended the original executive seminar.

>Both the CEO and COO surprisingly resigned in the fall of 1985 to pass the leadership to two of the Executive Committee who were key in promoting staff and operations changes.

>What had been an original contract for a set number of executive programs to end in 1985 was asked to be continued on an annual basis as an orientation for all new director level executives. Proposals are being entertained for supplementary education for all vice presidents.

>A company-wide emphasis on productivity is a major change project for 1986, again crossing divisional lines.

>Corporate Organizational Development personnel now consult directly with top management as a client group.

### CONCLUSIONS

According to Noel Tichy (1982), there are three major themes in an organization: technical, cultural and political.

He defines technical strategies as those which influence the structure and systems of the organization. Political strategies are those in which influence is applied to the power structure to affect decisions regarding the allocation of resources. Cultural strategies are those that influence the values of the current leadership. A "change" project of any scope implies work being done in all three areas. However, a different approach is vital for each. Moreover, the assumptions that are used in each of the three areas need to be distinct: the three themes in an organization are not coequal in importance. Work following Tichy's initial study explored and developed a broader concept of just what culture is and how it functions in an organization. Culture is not only difficult (if not impossible) to change (Wilkins & Patterson, 1985), it should be. Culture is the bedrock of all other systems.

According to Edgar Schein (1985), "culture" summarizes the beliefs, values and interpretations of events over a period of time that are seen as successes by key leaders in managing the business. These values and beliefs become taken for granted, integrated into the "way it is around here", and act as shared assumptions. These values produce norms for desired behavior, stories that perpetuate the desirability of taking certain actions, and symbols that represent success and a continuation of the culture. He supports this contention with work done by Parsons (1951) and Merton (1957):

"What culture does is to solve the group's basic problems of (1) survival in and adaptation to the external environment and (2) integration of its internal processes to ensure the capacity to continue to survive and adapt." p.50.

The definition of an organizational culture as those values expressed by the current leadership discounts the cumulative nature of learning over time--especially those learnings that produce success. Kilmann (1985) likens culture to an iceberg, a metaphor which serves most aptly for large corporations. Formal or espoused values of the leadership (the "tip" of the iceberg) do not necessarily have a permanent effect on such an organization, as was witnessed at ITT after Harold Geneen left. Nor do the leader's values always influence the followers with the desired effect, as Morgan and Smircich document in an insurance company where existing executive networks reinterpret the president's mandates for change in light of his actual, contradictory behavior. The net effect was to go along with the leader while subtly sabotaging the effort.

Environmental changes occur more rapidly than the organization's culture evolves. Also, in the course of time, the invisible part of the cultural iceberg gets layered over with individual issues and interpretations. Subcultures evolve and the basic strengths are diffused. There is then need for re-adaptation of the basic beliefs to the existing situation.

By definition, culture (as the repository of a company's wisdom about how to survive) must be built upon unique strengths and a particular contribution to the marketplace.

Therefore, change models need to be turned "upside down" or "inside out" to uncover the source of organizational strengths. These strengths can then be used by the leadership to align values with the internal systems and the marketplace.

A classic change model ascertains the desired state of the organization (where we "should" be), compares it with the actual situation, and then identifies strategies for closing the gap between the two. Consequently, change is made most often in areas where leadership has control: replacing staff, reorganizing, and/or changing the systems and strategy. Senior managers certainly prefer such quick, controlled changes (Peters, 1978).

One might assume that this same model can be applied so that culture can be manipulated and changed. However, how people in the organization work with and through the systems and structures is much more elusive and less controllable. In the organization in which I worked and participated both as a member of the culture and change agent, the classic notion of planned change failed to work as predicted. One flaw in the model is the assumption that "where we should be" is achievable. You actually never get there. "Shoulds" are just traded in. There is no real satisfaction in the process. (Tidball, 1986) The process also tends to make the role of the change agent very "parental", setting up resistance with the client organization.

Managing the threatening situation of change with the leadership is the appropriate job of the change agent. Another way to say this might be: to put the leadership in control of giving up control. This can be done most effectively by building on the strengths that exist within the culture.

The pivotal experiences that redirected the culture in this corporation occurred when existing strengths were uncovered in areas targeted for strengthening, publicized, and examples made of successful fellow employees. An old adage about a strength taken to an extreme becoming a weakness can be reversed: look within weakness to find underlying strength.

The broader concept of "culture" opened new doors to a process of producing change and led me to the following conclusions:

>Culture functions as a "personality" for a corporation, collecting learnings--especially successes. As such, culture cannot be fundamentally changed. It can be "matured."

>Naming the cultural beliefs a company holds is a process analogous to naming your own personal strengths. Most people need an external source to help in doing it.

>Culture is an evolutionary process that does not have an explicit starting or stopping point. Any effort to "change" a culture is really a process of eliciting cultural assumptions and helping the organization articulate them as meaningful ways to adapt to the environment using all other systems.

>Leadership awareness of the organization's cultural assumptions is vital for successful strategies, systems and structures. This knowledge can facilitate acquisitions, mergers, development efforts, and management of the human resources of the corporation.

>The role of an internal "change agent" is often a political one in building consensus for movement in cultural areas that involve deeply held loyalties and beliefs. Success depends on working with key leaders to promote organizational strengths in areas needing redirecting. They can then draw on personal knowledge and commitments, gathering support from their own influential networks.

Based upon my experience of this four-year effort at cultural redirection, I propose a new model for organizational change. Rather than start with the way it "should" be, or with the business plan,

- 1) Determine the current culture, the basic strengths or individuality of the organization. This must be done by a neutral, external consultant in concert with an organizationally sensitive internal consultant.
- 2) Determine, through the collection of data from different groups, the degree of cultural alignment between different levels and functions in the firm.
- 3) Determine the fit between the culture, the internal systems and the strategic plans.
- 4) Define the redirection with the leadership for the firm's strategy, structure, and systems, built upon cultural strengths. Senior management must implement the shift through the political networks to all systems for greater alignment internally and with the environment.

The case for "sticking to the knitting" has been made by strategic analysts as well as Peters & Waterman (1982). This model makes a case for growth through conscious application of cultural strengths.

## APPENDIX A

The EXECUTIVE PROGRAM: CHANGE OBJECTIVES  
as formulated by the Management Committee  
February, 1983

**DEVELOP A GENERAL MANAGERIAL PERSPECTIVE**  
by moving away from the isolation of the technical specialist; by fostering collaboration across the organization.

**PLACE MORE EMPHASIS ON PROFIT AND THE MARKETPLACE**  
rather than focusing on internal goals and activities or merely financial contribution.

**DEVELOP (business) RISK-TAKING IN SERVICE OF EXCELLENCE**  
by encouraging "idea champions".

**DEVELOP INDIVIDUAL ACCOUNTABILITY THROUGH INCREASED DELEGATION** by a continued practice of senior management to push accountability down into the organization, and by eliminating blame of European and U.S. headquarters for lack of results.

**PROMOTE A LEADERSHIP ROLE IN CONTRIBUTING TO WORLDWIDE GROWTH**  
by achieving financial results leading to a greater independence of the parent company.

## APPENDIX B

CHANGES IN PERCEPTION REPORTED BY PARTICIPANTS  
ATTENDING THE EXECUTIVE PROGRAM 1983-1985

All "BEFORE" scores refer to the mean of the scores taken prior to attending the seminar.

All "AFTER" scores refer to the mean of the scores taken on the same survey administered during January, 1985.

QUESTION	Vice President level (N=56)			Director level (N=342)		
	BEFORE	AFTER	CHANGE	BEFORE	AFTER	CHANGE
1. Asked to consult other dep'ts?	3.40	3.67	+	3.42	3.53	+
2. "Idea champions" encouraged?	3.20	3.61	++	3.48	3.61	+
3. Focus on results?	2.20	2.45	+	2.25	2.37	+
4. Focus on policies (1), balanced (3), or results(5)?	3.24	3.36	+	3.24	3.38	+
5. Familiar with other divisions' business issues?	2.62	2.78	+	2.25	2.73	++
6. Familiar with corporate staff?	2.90	3.09	+	2.66	2.96	++
7. Knowledge of businesses useful?	3.20	3.47	+	3.10	3.18	o
8. Knowledge of corporate useful?	3.60	3.79	+	3.30	3.38	o
9. Extent Europe <u>is</u> consulted?	3.23	3.15	o	3.31	3.22	o
10. Extent Europe <u>should</u> be consulted?	2.80	2.88	o	2.88	2.84	o
11. Extent Hum. Res. data affects business strategy?	2.44	2.55	+	2.94	2.77	-
12. Extent Hum. Res. data <u>should</u> affect?	3.28	3.27	o	3.43	3.39	o

+ Positive change. o No change. - Negative change.  
++ Statistically significant to >.05 error.



## APPENDIX B

QUESTION	Vice Presidents			Directors		
	BEFORE	AFTER	CHANGE	BEFORE	AFTER	CHANGE
13. Job rotations encouraged across divisions?	1.90	2.27	+	1.89	2.03	+
14. Job rotations encouraged across dept's?	2.54	3.12	++	2.60	2.83	++
15. Job rotations across divisions in other units?	1.70	1.85	+	1.77	1.91	+
16. Job rotations useful?	3.70	3.97	+	3.79	3.79	o
17. Willing to take a lateral to another division for a promotion?	3.81	3.76	o	3.71	3.72	o
18. Willing to work in another function for promotion?	3.76	3.94	+	3.96	4.01	o *
19. Willing to move regardless of promotion?	3.40	3.64	+	3.51	3.45	o
20. Performance appraisals measure business effectiveness?	N.A.	3.30	o	2.98	3.07	o
21. Differences in priority bet. Europe & US hqtrs?	3.02	2.61	+	2.95	2.76	+
22. Differences bet. Corp. US and division?	2.64	2.39	+	2.64	2.51	+
23. Differences bet. division and SBU's?	2.14	2.00	+	2.31	2.16	+

+ Positive change. o No change. - Negative change.

++ Statistically significant to >.05 error.

N.A. Data not available for this response.

\* Initial response was so high that no change is likely on this question

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This paper refers to an as-yet unfinished assignment designed to establish a particular system of symbols within a business corporation (which is not, incidentally, Electricité de France). We shall thus be looking at the theoretical basis and approach adopted, followed by the first stages of their practical implementation. Although this particular task was undertaken in response to a spontaneous request by the corporation's management, it is appropriate to demonstrate how the creating of symbols could be regarded as a possible solution to the problem at issue. Also, we must be satisfied that what we are putting forward can accurately be described as symbols, in the sense that they possess the properties commonly or scientifically attributed to these, and that they are, furthermore, suited to resolving that problem. Finally, if we are to succeed in creating symbols of the right kind, we must be able to refer to a representation which reveals both their inner workings and their compatibility with the intended procedures for forming and implanting them.

#### 1 - A General View of the Symbol

From the outset, we wish to avoid any attempt at a comprehensive definition of what is meant by a symbol. This would take us far, since the concept is an evolving one and we would have to enter into the characteristics of each of successive expressions of it in order to extract a common essence: the allegorical iconography of the Quattrocento painters, the symbolic landscapes of the 19th-century Romantics, the Freudian catalogue of symbols, and the ideological symbolism exemplified by Nazism. It can however be said that these successive manifestations reveal two main trends - not to be confused with the dual nature of the symbol we have discussed

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in earlier work (2) elsewhere) - represented by:

- on the one hand, we have symbols of a "natural" kind, not as being the archetypes alluded to by Jung and by Mary Douglas (2), but in that they result from a process (possibly a socio-historical one and thus hardly natural in the usual sense of the term) outside human control - even though there may be some interpretative formulations of its status from time to time, such as by Voragine with his "Golden Legend", and by Cesare Ripa, or Baronius (3);
- on the other hand, there are the "artificial" symbols, those whose emergence implies some deliberate intervention. The latter may lie in the exposition of a theory bringing symbols (some of these may be "natural" ones) to light, as with Freudian psychoanalysis, or in the development of a symbolical system to support and justify extremist action (sometimes by reference to historical factors), as with the Fascist and Nazi ideologists.

As time goes on, we see increasing evidence of an extension of the use of symbolism to convey messages (feelings, impulses, power relationships) which become more and more varied with the appearance of similarly more varied media to support them; and also increasing objectivisation of the symbol, leading to new symbol-based theories and attempts to impose symbols.

Two common and related features of all these symbols - to which we will return later when giving our own definition - should be borne in mind:

- they introduce a form of abstract generality into what are otherwise isolated situations or events,

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- they form a bridge between two separate worlds or social entities: the lay and the religious, the State and the citizen, Nature and Society, business and Society.

Here, we are concerned only with the symbolism affecting corporations. Leaving aside any vestiges of archetypal, or "pre-industrial" symbolism, there remain two relevant kinds of symbols:

- those imported into the corporation by its staff and workers, drawing on their experience of the outer society;
- and those referring to external and abstract concepts, but which the corporation has traditionally interpreted in its own specific terms, such as the notion of Authority.

In both cases, these symbols made their appearance at the Society/Corporation interface and then, as the interface widened (4), began to multiply. The particular example to which we shall be referring hereunder consists in an attempt to manipulate that interface as a means of creating symbols which possess the "right" properties in relation to one corporation's requirements.

## 2 - The Symbol and the Corporation

When examining the process by which symbols first appear and then become effective, two different points of view have to be adopted:

- the overall and abstract standpoint directed to the symbolistic system being generated at the Society/Corporation

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interface;

- and the specific everyday effect of the symbol on the individual.

Our aim, it must be remembered, is to produce models representing events on these two levels, as a basis for creating symbols relevant to given situations.

### 2.1 - The overall standpoint.

The symbol emerges and is perceived in connection with a particular event taking place in a concrete situation and involving a greater or lesser number of individuals; and it owes its effect to the fact that it carries a meaning which is not entirely dependent on that particular event - a meaning which is taken in by some, if not all, of the individuals present. The force of its impact and influence on those individuals is derived from the way in which it links together a whole series of apparently unconnected events by associating them with a common meaningfulness. The symbol thus makes implicit reference to a body of past situations and events, of which it represents the common factor and for which it to some extent provides the justification: it brings in n precedents to show that event n+1 is a natural and foreseeable part of the chain.

However, for this effect to be produced, each of the events considered - whether a part of everyday life or not - must be related to a higher plane than their own, which consolidates and "consecrates" the symbol by giving it a foundation in concepts that cannot be challenged or amended from their lower level. This gives the symbol a kind of autonomous status, integrating it into

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a system and enabling a single symbolic "germ" to flower in many different forms.

This higher level of reality (so-called because those who comprehend the symbol recognise its "transcendent" meaning) can take on different forms. In religious terms, it could be represented by the Holy Scriptures; the mental therapist would probably refer to psychoanalytical theory; for our own purposes in this paper, the types of symbol relevant to the corporation are those deriving from social or cultural concepts which are accepted throughout a given society or industrial civilisation. In every case, the source of the symbolism lies on a higher plane than that where particular symbols may from time to time be given concrete expression.

It is these sources which establish the link between events, consolidate the significations of the symbols, and dismiss the differences in time and space which otherwise separate the symbol's appearances on the lower plane. This agglomerating effect adds force to the symbol, since the concepts thereby symbolised are placed out of reach: the founts of inspiration and power remain unsullied. This is not to say that the symbols themselves do not change over time, and we shall in fact try to show that they do, but that the symbolistic system is effective because it imposes recognition of the existence of fundamental and lasting truths and forces which bear on otherwise disparate events.

By analogy, we can say that the symbol is charged with an energy which powers a shift of meaning in the situations where it

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makes an appearance, touching on two planes of reality and causing a short-circuit between them. The energy derives from the difference in potential between the more abstract and supposedly more inert concepts on the higher level, and the more active concepts ruling everyday life. For example, the corporation evolves much more rapidly (structurally and technologically) than does society at large. The latter thus has reserves of potential which we can hope to harness for the benefit of the former, provided we are able to establish the right connections.

## 2.2 - The individual standpoint

First of all, it should be made clear that the effect of a symbol may extend to reach individuals who themselves remain unaware of it: this is when such awareness becomes a sign of mutual recognition and the unaware can be identified as outsiders (non-believers for the religious, petits bourgeois for the social reformers, and so on). The cohesion and sense of identity of the "initiated" groups are thereby reinforced.

When the symbol has a positive effect on an individual, it provokes a reaction comparable to the one described above from the overall standpoint. It can be said, even, that it is the reaction of the individual which gives the symbol its collective value. A symbol acts on individual memories, through its power to assemble in an orderly form whole series of perceptions of past events and situations. The individual realises that the forces at work in a current situation are of the same kind as those he has encountered in many previous situations which, although apparently quite different, contained a common feature which is highlighted and reinforced by the symbol. Through

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this compilation of a series in his memory store (not necessarily on the conscious level), the individual is brought to realise the existence of a higher plane of reality which can translate into everyday events of various kinds. Simultaneously with such a flashback of memory, the individual recognises, in his immediate situation, multiple manifestations of the same symbol, which go to compound its credibility and forcefulness. (A valuable contribution to the study of memory and symbols will be found in the commentaries of G. Deleuze (5) on the works of Proust).

### 2.3 - The symbol itself

The symbol, which has the power to crystallise a series of past events in an individual's memory, together with his direct perceptions in a current situation, is itself the product of a crystallisation process. This means two things:

- firstly, that it is the outcome of a fairly lengthy process of sedimentation of events, throughout which natural or artificial mechanisms have strained off a common ingredient and then purified it to extract the symbolic essence;
- secondly, that it possesses multiple facettes - and this again has two implications: it can be perceived from many different standpoints in many and varied situations; and it can crystallise a very wide variety of memory series.

The "crystalline" structure of the symbol enables its energy potential and its complexity to augment with the frequency

of its use (just as pearls are said to lose their sheen when left unworn).

### 3 - Our Practical Work Assignment: Specifications given by the Corporation concerned

The above definition of the symbol - which is consistent both with past and present symbolic systems and with the findings of most writers on the subject - suggests that it acts on the individual by putting him "in phase" with the world, making him see things through a regulating and clarifying prism. It can thus become a redoubtable instrument if used with total effectiveness (some symbolic systems, linked to religious sects or totalitarian States, stimulate the followers of these but, conversely, arouse a powerful backlash elsewhere).

The request formulated by the corporation with which we developed a reflection on these lines might, at first sight and given the current popularity of management studies based on the notion of corporate culture, appear fairly straightforward: we were to find ways of strengthening the corporate team-spirit on the basis of a number of key values. However, the assignment comprised two rather uncommon aspects:

- the manner in which the key values were formulated,
- and the manner in which the management of the corporation proposed to impress its staff with them.

#### 3.1 - The message which the management asked us to translate into

symbolic form was seen to be more a statement of fact than a planned objective for the future, in that it's content covered such matters as the corporation's current position on the world market, the special features of its products, and its technology. This contrasts immediately with most contemporary attempts to remodel a corporate culture (which have flourished in France during the past few years under the name of "Projets d'entreprise") by mobilising the work force under the flag of participative projects. In the case in point, the impression given was that the management was anxious to consolidate an acquired status, without looking ahead to any particular type of future development. Consequently, it was necessary for the system carrying the message to leave the widest possible scope for initiative, in the process of strengthening the existing internal cohesion with regard to the key values specified, so that the corporation would be able to retain the flexibility required for taking on its further objectives as they were determined. The "cultural" intervention (as it must be called) was thus to remain distinct from the strategic options for which it paved the way.

3.2 - The approach finally adopted is quite consistent with the tone of this message, leaving a latent springboard from which the corporation can launch into as-yet-unformed projects. It is in keeping with a discussion of the notion of corporate culture. The "classical" approach in this area (6) consists in mobilising potential to support values that are consistent with attaining precise objectives. It is thus backed by arguments presenting those objectives as both desirable and feasible targets, so that they ultimately become in some way "binding" on the corporation. This approach also relies on a permanent reiteration of the objectives and values it supports, together with a permanent cementing of the consensus by the organisation of various "rites": New Year message from the Chairman, presentations of various kinds, and so on (7). On the other hand, as we pointed out above,

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the symbolic approach is a system which becomes more potent and more stable as it goes along, with each new appearance of a symbol being added to an existing series and giving it greater weight and appeal.

3.3 - A more profound difference between the exercise we are describing here and the henceforth classical approaches is that it is based on what is primarily the affirmation of a de facto existence: the corporation exists as such, without having to tend towards becoming an entity, instead of existing only to the extent that it is held together by the pursuit of corporate goals.

This novel aspect of the problem - arising from the manner in which it was formulated - is a vital factor when it comes to finding a solution by creating symbols. Hitherto, Society at large was considered as the higher plane from which the corporation would draw the energy needed to sustain its symbols, whether these were of a cultural (power, progress, etc) or a sociological (social structures) order. Now, given the existential affirmation just expounded, the corporation itself can become the higher plane, meeting its requirements by deploying symbols which have meaning and existence only within its own context, although drawing on a latent energy potential to be found in outer Society, where it was unable to find lasting expression.

By making this affirmation of self-contained existence, the corporation lays claim to a status already enjoyed by the

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great social institutions such as the Church, the State, the Society, and so on. It is this very quality of existing without reference to seeking achievement which can be seen as the essential characteristic of a higher plane of reality in relation to the symbol, enabling the latter's manifestations to relate to a kind of self-sufficient entity.

The very form in which our client's needs were specified thus expressed something of an introspective stand, a waking realisation of autonomous being, and made it possible to create the conditions for a solution based on a specific symbolism.

#### 4 - The Device of the "True Professional" Image

The above considerations already point to the kind of symbols we should be looking for. It is clear that they should:

- be capable of insertion, with some flexibility but without losing their central signification, within the procedures and organisation structure (work stations, hierarchy, etc) of the host corporation;
- leave maximum scope for future options, providing a suitable basis of operations for whatever objectives the corporation may set itself in due course;
- offer the means of drawing off a part of the energy potential contained in the social complex, by harnessing qualities which have high profiles there but have failed

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to find any fixed point of settlement. Our intention is to provide fixation points for them within the corporation, where they will take on substance by drawing both on the corporate body and on the imaginative resources of the social environment.

A working group was set up inside the corporation to examine the problem in the light of the above considerations (themselves developed to a large extent by that group). It became clear (after a consensus reached when many avenues had been explored, involving both direct observation of corporate life and the recourse to basic findings culled from the disciplines of History, Ethnography, Sociology, and so on), that a possible solution consisted in promoting a particular behavioural attitude among the staff of the corporation. Such an attitude being no more than an abstract concept, it was necessary to illustrate it in terms of a personality profile that would carry real meaning in the eyes of as many people in the corporation as possible. Working along these lines, we gradually brought out the "true professional" image as being the best incarnation of the type of behaviour required.

#### 4.1 - Definition of the True Professional (8)

The association is mainly with fictional characters in crime and spy novels, so that it relates to the world of popular imagination without being personified in everyday life. The professional in this sense is an individual who carries out missions whose aims are assigned to him from the start, but he has wide latitude concerning the ways he goes about achieving

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these. He is reliable and loyal to his employers and has earned their confidence through past successes. He produces a "clean job", meaning that no loose ends are left to be picked up, but without drawing particular attention to himself (the suggestion is that any other true professional in his line would have performed comparably). Our professional is thus the behavioural and symbolic transposition of the "satisfactory" performance in the terms of March and Simon (9).

#### 4.2 - Why the "True Professional" image is relevant

If we look back at the requirements originally expressed, we find that the professional image meets them in full:

- an individual of this type is consonant with all the activities of the corporation, although the ones organised on project lines (marketing, some production areas, contract negotiators, etc) are particularly fertile ground;
- as suggested earlier, the image is already in phase with the popular conceptual process: more and more often do we hear expressions such as "that's a real professional job ... So-and-so is a true pro" being voiced by people of all kinds;
- the attitude is one which is bound to be to the benefit of the corporation, without committing it to speculative future options (such as would be implied by encouraging a specific type of skills, for example). It is thus fully consistent with the "neutral" style we were looking for.

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The only objection raised to this image during discussion was its relative lack of warmth, especially in view of the fictional references adopted. It thus has to be to some extent adapted to the cultural demands of the corporation, which can be done without affecting the symbol's basic signification (after all, even James Bond is given his more torrid moments!).

#### 5 - Putting across the "True Professional" Image

I have personally spent a great deal of time and paper (10) on both the theoretical basis and the practical implications of this image. In the course of this I have developed a technique for putting it across which I consider very effective - but not easy to implement, especially in the specific context now before us. Described as the "conspiracy" approach, it involves some manipulation of executive careers and arranging for explanatory comments to be discreetly leaked. The "conspirators" are a group of senior executives, secretly wielding their influence in a common aim. This system is being experimented with in other corporations than the one considered here (11).

To come back to the case in point, the operation was launched too publicly for the above scenario to be applied and, at all events, such an approach would probably have failed to appeal to the corporate management sponsoring it. Consequently, we took a more conventional approach, employing the existing means of communication within the corporation; these means are many and varied, consonantly with the firm's size and market status and with its predilection for the institutional type of advertising.

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This is in fact mainly "prestige" advertising, being addressed to a general public who are not prospective buyers of the capital goods the corporation manufactures. But, via that general public and the mass media carrying the advertisements, the corporation reaches out to its own personnel. The advertisements themselves enjoy some reputation for being objective, as they make no obvious sales pitch and seek mainly to convey the corporate image; they thus provide a means of broadcasting an idealised image of the people who staff the corporation.

Given that one of the aims of the symbolisation exercise as thus briefly described is to impress the image of the corporation and its staff on the part of the labour pool formed by young graduates (especially, in France, those from the Grandes Ecoles), so as to attract the most promising and the nearest to the "true professional" type, this particular kind of approach - with its various possibilities - can prove quite effective. Furthermore, it bears fruit much more rapidly than can be expected from the conspiracy scenario described earlier, which may take as long as ten or fifteen years to mature.

However, the more conventional method also has a rather serious drawback, to the extent that it relies heavily on an explicit presentation. This weakens the power of the symbol and adds an element of predetermination which the original scheme had avoided: it is henceforth necessary to associate the symbol with concrete aspects of the corporation's activity, exemplifying the aim or, even, arguing the case for it. We thus have a part of the scheme where outside pressure is visibly applied, which is likely to arouse adverse reactions from people who feel that they fail to match the image being promoted.

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Under the conspiracy scenario, on the other hand, the principle remains that the management executives will eventually (even if the date is distant) realise that they are themselves true professionals, since they form part of a whole body of such, from top to bottom of the corporate hierarchy.

## 6 - Conclusions

We are aware that a more explicit treatment of several points would have given a better demonstration of the remarkable effectiveness which can be obtained by manipulating the corporate symbolism. But we wish to end by considering, as the title of this meeting invites us to, the ethical aspects of this kind of approach. When we described the technique, in much greater detail than above, to managements, corporate executives, and French business school students, the ethical implications of such manipulation aroused no comments or objections. By contrast, the same description given to academic audiences (teachers and researchers) brought criticism on this score. The question really raised is that of the relevancy of these two kinds of public respectively:

- the first of them live in a world where manipulation is the order of the day and they know that, henceforth, their ideas have to be "sold" to the corporation, to their bosses, to their subordinates, to their future employers, and so on;
- the others, attempting to understand the corporation from outside, clearly think that some sights are better not unveiled and prefer to hide distasteful findings under cover of theoretical models, even if these are often based on unkind assumptions as to the nature of Man, the function of the corporation, and the social purpose.

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3rd INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ORGANIZATIONAL SYMBOLISM  
AND CORPORATE CULTURE

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The Conference has also been conceived as an overall occasion for meeting ground and communication on current research interests and new approaches. Alongside the main theme, the Conference will then be open to contributions on different topics in the broad area of organizational symbolism and culture.

According to the SCOS tradition, the Conference will be addressed to people working in many disciplines: psychology, sociology, anthropology, psychoanalysis, linguistics, business administration, the arts and literature, etc. The Conference will be held in the centre of Milan, near to the most famous Roman churches and the site of Leonardo's Last Supper. Many symbolic events will be arranged according to the opportunities offered by the town, the season and the theme.

Substantial abstracts should be sent before the FIRST OF DECEMBER 1986 to

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Final papers should be sent to the same address before the THIRTIETH OF MARCH 1987.