The Octograph with cases in Organization Development and Project Management, Leadership and Human Resource Management

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Figures and tables:

The Octograph with cases in Organization Development and Project Management, Leadership and Human Resource Management

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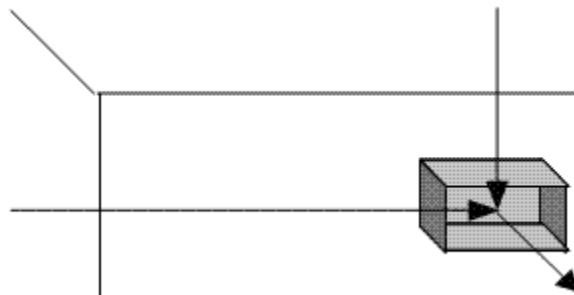# THE OCTOGRAPH AND THE DELIGHT OF ORGANISATIONAL UNDERSTANDING: SYSTEM FLEXIBILITY AND GROUP COHESION

Introduction

In the existing management and organizational literatures, organizational models are often based on concepts of General System theory according to which input, throughput and output are processed on each of the three levels of meta-system, system and subsystem. The outcome, or conformity between organizational processes and societal needs, is left to feedback from clients and customers. Models based on theories of complex systems are comparatively few, because of the difficulty in deciding dependency relations among their variables and processes. The Octograph belongs to the last category. It is more in line with theories of complex systems than with General System Theory.

The Octograph has the shape of a cube or a matchbox. The corners, lines and variables of the cube are interwoven into four processes that cover strategic and ethical dimensions. These are the processes of decision-making, communication, production and innovation.

An assessment of how the concepts of the Octograph were conceived opened for the utility of the model for puzzling out problems. As an example on how to interpret partial models in the Octograph, I have singled out the core framework "*The System of Distribution*", around which the parts of the Octograph are built. The central thesis is that employees behave differently when playing their occupational roles than when interacting socio-psychologically. The "Management of flexibility" that concerns the redistribution of responsibilities, resources and roles must therefore be effective so as to handle the antagonistic harmony or a love and hate feeling, between employees. The opponent, or the antithesis, of the previous model is presented as the partial model of "The process of communication." It is here that the antagonistic harmony is supposed to be tackled through the "Management of cultural-mixes".

An organization is a place where four processes of leadership and organizational behaviour take place. A *manager* is obliged to make decisions, effective or not, that materializes the responsibility to steer an organization. Here lies the process of decision-making. Once taken, decisions are communicated to those who do the job. Here lies the process of communication. The communication process is the most important and complicated function of a leader. Therefore, whenever communication is successful, the job will be carried out successfully, and may be more efficiently. This brings us to the process of production. During production, a need for change may arise and be handled. With this, we

move to the process of innovation. The three processes of decision-making, production and innovation are built into the responsibilities of every manager. However, this is not true with the fourth process, i.e. the process of communication, the most complex one.

These four processes of leadership and organisational behaviour are encountered in almost all activities, including those in private life [1], often in the above numbered sequence. In the specialised literature, I did no come across these four processes, neither collected in one place, nor in the same order. They stand as an independent system apart.

In the Octograph, these four processes are called: The processes of leadership and organisational behaviour. It is not my intention to elaborate further on these processes, but simply underline their natural sequence or order of appearance.

The Octograph stands as a unique organisational model, both in form and matter. The theory of Complex Systems has a number of properties (Steel, 2000). Among them the Octograph satisfies the principle of "emergence", a kind of "eureka-discovery"; the principle of parts not containing the whole, i.e. independency of components; and the principle of parts being nested together. To grasp the logic behind the contents of the Octograph, one must reflect on both form and matter. This is what I have tried to explain through the discussion of the structure of the model and its two opposing partial models. Many of the themes that were slightly touched during this discussion could deserve independent articles: the four processes of leadership and organisational behaviour, the nature of the meta-system surrounding the Octograph, its conception of manager and agent of change and the concept of cultural-mix. The road is thus open for further developments.

I shall explain the core framework around which the parts of the model are built. I shall interpret the dependency between the variables of this core framework and single out its counterpart. By the end, I shall gather in one place all the ingredients of the Octograph.

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[1] In many of our daily undertakings we use these processes without giving them name. Imagining the operation of baking bread. First you decide that: "today you are going to bake break" (decision-making). You communicate this wish first to yourself, read the prescriptions on the package of flour and visualise in your head (communication) what you need of materials and utensils. Then you start baking your bread (production). Once the bread is out of the stove, your daughter tastes a slice of bread and if she was not satisfied, you may reflect over what went wrong, the time of fermentation etc. and how to better the procedure for next time (the process of innovation). Communication takes place with others, but it could also occur as an inner reflection. In the Octograph, the four processes describe how activities are initiated, carried out and/or improved.

The overall objective is to explain the structure and the system of causality in the Octograph, as well as the contradictions that result from the interaction between its processes. The Octograph gives managers as well as change agents an understanding of the how and why of these organizational processes. Theoreticians will find the Octograph still open for further theory building. One can also use the components of the model to puzzle out problems through brainstorming

1 The systems of distribution and the cultural mix

One day the house of Juha became engulfed in flames. His friends, having watched the fire, ran to alert him. Juha took the whole matter with calmness and explained: "You have to give this message to my wife," he said. "We have agreed that I am responsible for all that happens outdoors and she is responsible for the house". The moral is that inflexible division of power and authority could have disastrous consequences for an organisation. All organisations reshuffle from time to time their distribution of roles. Do organisations notice the antagonism between group cohesion and flexibility of roles?

Today's technological innovations "steal" much of the working hours making it important for management to reshuffle roles and responsibilities more frequently than before. However, there is no guarantee that people will behave as anticipated when playing their occupational roles or when interacting socio-psychologically. In the following pages I shall discuss this contradiction through two partial models of the Octograph that are conceived in opposition to each other. These are the partial model "The system of distribution" and "The process of communication".

I shall first explain the partial model, or the partition of the Octograph that I call "The system of distribution ". Thereafter, I shall discuss its counterpart that is the partial model "The process of communication" where I define group cohesion as teams, supportive groups or individualists.
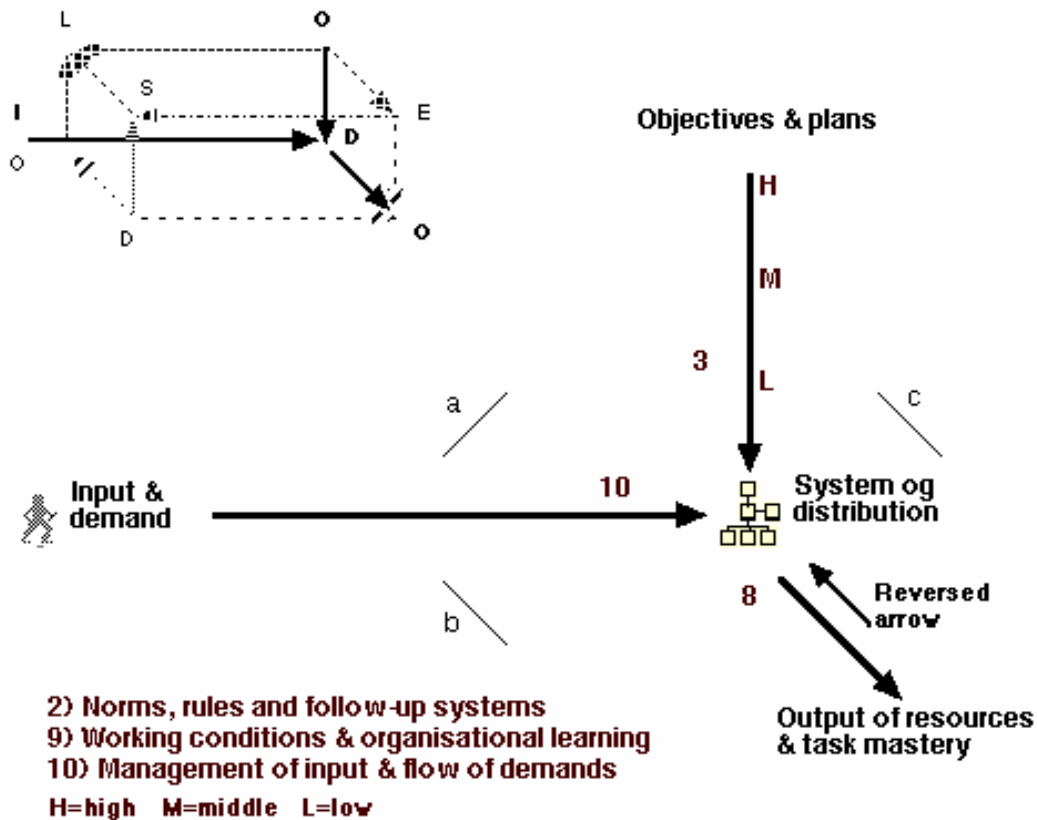
Figure 1: the systems of distribution, its concepts, line names and measurements

1.1 The System of distribution

The partial model, "The system of distribution," appears with bold lines in the small Octograph and is zoomed out in figure 1. It is around this framework that I construct all the other parts of the Octograph.

The concepts of the Octograph are originally conceived as complete sentences that are abbreviated twice to derive from them simpler concepts. The concepts of figure 1 appear as shortened sentences. These sentences are further abbreviated as **IDOLSEODO** on the corners of the smaller Octograph (see figure 2 below).

The partial model above is named "The system of distribution", a name that also covers its main corner where three angles meet. The main corner refers to the distribution and of responsibilities, resources and roles. I shall start the discussion of the partial model with this corner. Then, I shall discuss each of these three extremities stressing their connections to the rest of the model.

1. 1. 1 The main corner of the partial model "The system of distribution"

The main corner of the partial model concerns the everlasting division of responsibilities, resources and roles, as could be seen on an organisational chart.

The ultimate target behind the System of distribution is to meet demands and input from customers and clients in accordance with certain objectives, plans and follow-up systems (throughput). Many actors are normally implied in an output of goods and services. A service given to a client consists of what is rendered, how it is rendered, why it is rendered, and with which effects[2].

Some actors perform as economic agents, citizens, or clients when envisaged through the function of "Input & demand". Others act as planners, system analysts and controllers, as seen through "Objectives & plans". Roles as professionals, specialists or employees are seen through the "Output of resources" (See also table 2-4-3 on roles change).

Employees in modern working places often alternate between complementary roles from one level of performance to another, irrespective of their contracts at the time of enrolment or their position on an organisational chart. Flexible strategies and plans are therefore necessary to shuffle and rearrange role changes. I call this the "Management of flexibility".

Although flexibility of roles is not always reflected on an organisational chart, the chart influences the conduct and behaviour of actors through specifying where a task could belong (perceived as flexible) and who has the right to decide and steer from a hierarchical level to another. The structure has also a socio-psychological impact that is often heard when people talk about change of position or workload.

A statement like: "The organisational chart does not correspond to the landscape" underlines deviations in distribution of responsibilities, resources and roles. However, to design such a chart is normally not a frequent undertaking. Nevertheless, to recognise the importance, extent, type and sector of distribution of roles and responsibilities is as important as redesigning the chart. This does not mean that one should altogether neglect organisational charts.

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[2] Objectives, outputs and outcomes are referred to by the three O's in the acronym ISOLSEODO.

The Organisational model, The Octograph: © A. M. Al-Araki.

The partial model "The system of distribution" represents the beating heart of an organisation. It is the core framework around which the whole Octograph is constructed. Below I shall discuss the dependency relations connecting the lines composing this partial model. The discussion may also reveal the sound construction of the partial model.

1. 1. 2 Dependency relations between three lines

Saying, "We depend on each other for the performance of this task" does not give the same information as saying, "I depend on you more than you depend on me for the performance of this task." In the Octograph, one-way and two-ways-arrows must be supported by their situational arguments. The following lines and dependency relations[3] connect together the components of the partial model.

> 10. Input & demand influence the system of distribution"
>
> 3. Objectives & plans influence the system of distribution
>
> 8. Output of resources is dependent on the system of distribution"

As earlier said, these concepts of the Octograph are originally made of complete sentences. When discussing them, I shall write the complete sentence in cursive when it appears for the first time and otherwise as shortened sentence.

The dependency <u>relation no. 10</u> reads that the "*distribution of responsibilities, resources & roles*" (the system of distribution) in an organisation is influenced by data on the "*differentiation of input and demand in accordance with demography & local interests*". To properly analyze this data one needs an appropriate "*Management of input & flow of demand*" (the name of line no 10)[4]. Somebody in the organisation has an overview on which products suit which customers and age groups and how they are produced.

If we reverse the direction of the arrow in <u>relation 10</u>, this may give employees or role-holders a strong influence, irrespective of what the gathered data might reveal, as in politically steered or charitable organisations.

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[3] The numbers preceding these relations originate from specific sequences in the Octograph.

[4] The line connecting two acronyms is often conceived as the medium by which the logic of the twoaut acronyms is realised. It mostly equates the HOW of things.

The dependency relation 3 reads: that the system of distribution in an organisation depends also on "*Objectives, priorities, plans and follow-up systems*", a dependency that is solved through respect for "*norms, rules & guidelines*" (name of lines no. 3). Successful organisations, private or public, are often keen about proactive planning. This is a matter of concern for those who plan, those who implement, and those who profit form plans. If we reverse the arrow in relation 3, this will make objectives and plans dependent on the system of distribution, as in reactive planning where things are done on an ad hoc basis.

The dependency relation 8 states that the "*output of resources and mastery of task performance*", or simply productivity, depends on the system of distribution. This dependency is solved through proper "*working conditions, cultural mix and organisational learning*", (the name of the ethical lines no. 8[5]). If we reverse the arrow in this relation, the system of distribution suits those who master the jobs from before, i.e. no competency building or on-the-job training. Such policies will not suit today's rapidly changing organisations.

Figure 1, shows also three supplementary relations marked with lines "a", "b" & "c", but without arrows.

To allocate an arrow to line "a" that makes input & demand dependent on objectives and plans is less realistic because this presupposes that we have highly influential customers and agents, as the case is in political or charitable organisations. To allot an arrow to line "b" that makes output of resources dependent on input and demand [6] as is already shown in the core model raises issues of access to raw materials or of purchasing power. The inverse arrow evokes the question of conformity between the organization and the external needs. To allot an arrow to the line "c" to make objectives & plans dependent on the output of resources, or production, is unrealistic, because proactive planning normally comes before production, as shown in the core model.

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[5] Line no. 8 is one of the four ethical lines of the Octograph. The ethical dimension lies in how conscious and willing the management is to secure the working conditions for employees, and ameliorate their ability to learn, plan and master their tasks.
[6] The inverse of this dependency raises issues of access to raw materials or of purchasing power.

The conclusion so far is that supplementary relations between the extremities of the core model are either indirectly covered by existing relations or described as less realistic. The core model, therefore, keeps its original arguments and dependency relations: input and demand handled through flexible system of distribution and in accordance with appropriate objectives and plans, would lead to effective outcome of resources, or effective production of goods and services.

The partial model" The system of distribution" can further be summed up through the names of lines no. 10, 8, and 3 as follows: *It is through good working conditions and in learning organisations that the production of goods and services becomes effective. However, this demands efficient management of input and flow of demand as well as respect for rules and norms that are in force.* The reversed relations of these lines do not point to such positive directions.

A successful policy of distribution of roles and responsibilities (Management of flexibility) expands the ability to communicate with others and affects the ability to learn (Argyris & Schön 1978) and master task performance. Work becomes monotonous when people are not given the incentive to use their mind and knowledge, for instance, to reduce losses.

A "Management of flexibility" is therefore an important necessity in flexible organisations. For some employees flexibility of roles is explicitly included in their first contract of employment. For those on higher levels, flexibility is implicit in their positions. The management of flexibility could make such roles both visible and productive through, for instance, Job Expectation Techniques.

So far, I have discussed the partial model "The system of distribution", its main corner, extremities, dependency relations and lines. Could external relations from the rest of the Octograph support the structure of the core model or the argument of the necessity of a "Management of flexibility"?

1. 1. 3 External lines of impact through interpenetration

The external lines of impact referred to here are those existing outside the partial model. They are of two types: First, the three lines that directly influence the partial model with arrows pointing towards its extremities. Second, any of the other lines of the Octograph that point towards the partial model because of situational arguments. The researcher decides these situational arguments. Every partial model has thus three basic lines that influence it directly.

Input & demand, in the partial model "The system of distribution", is externally influenced by line no. 11 on "*environmental influence & development of outputs*". The output of resources, or production, is influenced by "*efficiency & quality insurance*" (line no. 7) as well as by "*development of internal resources*" (ethical line no. 9). The three lines[7] represent the environmental influences or the meta-system of the partial model.

   The external lines of impact do not alter the arguments of the partial model, because the *"management of flexibility"* will probably not succeed without concern for environmental influences, without development of internal resources, or without proper measurements to control efficiency and insure quality.

The question I earlier put was the following: Do organisations notice the antagonism between group cohesion and flexibility of roles?

   However, since the "Management of flexibility" produces antagonistic feelings, the "Management of cultural-mix" should counterbalance it. Below, I shall expose the two opposing models as they stand in the Octograph.

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[7] The lines of the Octograph could be graded in a qualitative scale, for instance, High, Middle, and Low. When all lines are marked as "High", this will cover the entire area of the model. Other scales of measurement are possible depending on the functionality of the data gathered.

1. 1. 4 The Management of flexibility

"There is some evidence that low correlations between individual characteristics and performance criteria are a function of inappropriate organizational arrangements, such as job design, organization structure, and management process. Thus organization design and process play an important role in unleashing people's potential" (Beer 1980: 90)

One could generally say that there is no organisation without an organisational structure, graphically displayed or not. No organisation without policy declarations, written or unwritten. To know the potentials of one's position on the organisational chart clarifies the reasons and arguments for having that position reshuffled. Some get used to the same job year in and year out, and they risk stagnation. Others have change embodied in their tasks. Both may equally profit from a conscious redistribution of roles and responsibilities.

The organisation's structures (reward systems, policies, control and evaluation systems, etc.) should signal to organizational members which behaviours are desired and reinforced. Thus, the structure shapes organizational behaviour and process and channels behaviour in a specific direction through rights and duties (Beer 1980; Egeberg 1984).

Michael Beer says: "Structures and process together mediate the relationship between people's needs, expectations, and capacities when they enter the organization and the attitudes and capacities developed as a result of living and working in the organization" (Beer 1980: 78). Further, he says that: "…attention has increasingly shifted to the examination of structures within organizations which guide and shape behaviour." (Beer 1980: 87)

One of the classical interventions for distribution of authority and roles is called JET "Job Expectation Technique"[8]. Such interventions, both at the individual and the organisational level, are useful to develop group cohesion and reduce role conflicts.

On the other hand, flexible roles, even when based on supportive structures and follow-up systems, could still lead to stress and other socio-psychological symptoms. Unleashing some people's potentials does not happen without restricting other's potentials. The

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[8]JET proceeds as follows: "Members take turns listing their perceived job duties and responsibilities; others comment until a consensus job definition is reached, and so on until the whole team has developed an understanding and agreement of each member's prescribed and discretionary role space. The process of JET opens channels of information about jobs among employees. JET informs the focal person of how relevant others believe he should and should not behave – providing norms or standards for performance and, hence, feedback for dampening behavioural variation." (Lundberg, 1980:260)

"Management of flexibility" should therefore be counterbalanced with what I call the "Management of cultural-mix."

1. 2. 5 The management of cultural mixes

In modern societies, we walk daily in and out of our organisations while encountering national culture, organisational culture, subcultures and cultural-mixes. Psycho-sociological and organisational problems are shared differently from one cultural sphere to another. In the sphere of the national culture individuals meet and talk. Once in front of his or her company, the individual enters the sphere of organisational culture and exchange some words with colleagues from others departments. When reaching his or her department, the individual is surrounded by different subcultures that are neglected or tackled informally. However, working together with his or her colleagues, the individual interacts with his working group within the sphere of *cultural-mix*. The effect of the distribution and redistribution of responsibilities, resources and roles is directly felt within this sphere of cultural-mix.

Cultural-mix refers in short to the mix of styles, identities and mentalities of individuals grouped for some reason or another outside their organisation or inside it together with their leader.

Now, if the leader's cultural-mix, when together with his leader-colleagues, is vivid through discussion and constructive feedbacks, the leader will be able to create a similar cultural-mix with his subordinates. He could for instance initiate clarifying confrontations having recourse to techniques like Johari-Window, Bion's socio-psychological parameters, Fixed Role Therapy of George Kelly, risk-analysis etc. This may help tackle socio-psychological challenges that are met not only inside but also outside the working place, and the ultimate goal is to alleviate communication, also informal.

According to Luhmann (1984) there are three systems for maintaining communication. These are the biological, the psychic and the social systems. The first one maintains life, the two others creates and maintain consciousness (thoughts, feelings, perception, memory etc.) The social systems, or the basis of contact between people, have to do with interaction, organisation and society. (Luhmann 1984)

The Organisational model, The Octograph: © A. M. Al-Araki.

Society, says Luhmann, is neither a gathering of individuals, nor conglomerate of social interactions. Society is communication. Luhmann says that communication requires the synthesis of three selections: Information, utterances (Mitteilung) and a need to understand it all", (Luhmann 1990:3) Information and utterances originate from the mediator (Ego). The need to understand is up to the receiver (Alter).

One could say that in its essence, *communication is enjoyment of social gatherings* that extend beyond working relations. One does not necessarily have to befriend those one works with, but enjoy their company. To *enjoy the company of others* while at work implies that one is engaged, can reason economically together with the group to develop common interests. It is here that an active management of cultural-mixes could have tremendous effects.

It may seem strange to include economic reasoning among the above concerns. Some business communities use final results as basis for bonus and similar incentives for their employees. Economic reasoning, as proposed here, is the common sense understanding of how these results are achieved. It is about the "need to understand it all", as Luhmann would have said. This understanding develops communication among the staff and eases feedback from employees to managers.

We inform and communicate with each other formally and informally, in written form and verbally. In written communication, form and content are of bigger importance for understanding than in verbal communication, because writing does not imply mediation of feelings. However, antagonism is often mediated through feelings that disturb group status and cohesion. It is here that the concept of cultural-mix is useful, especially when the "Management of flexibility" is of functional importance for the organization. A "Management of flexibility" without socio-psychological attention, may be detrimental as to the efficiency and effectiveness of the organisation.

The Organisational model, The Octograph: © A. M. Al-Araki.

1. 2. 6 The structure of the two opposing partial models

The Octograph conceives employees in two different settings, as holders of different positions and roles (concern for production) and as a socio-psychological group (concern for people). This gives two partial models:[9]

- "The system of distribution" that is centred around the "Distribution of roles" and
- "The process of communication" that is cantered around "Supportive groups".

The first, as earlier mentioned, stresses objectives, priorities and plans (OPF) that influence the distribution of responsibilities, resources and roles, based on an effective "Management of flexibility". It borrows its lines from three of the four processes of the Octograph, with the exception of the process of communication, being not directly dependent on distribution of power.

The second partial model, built around the main corner TSI, is about "The process of communication". It refers to patterns of socio-psychological cohesion among employees as teams, supportive groups or individualists.

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[9] These are the only partial models where the main corner is composed of three angles as opposed to two angels in the remaining partial models (see figure 4-1 in the appendix).

The Organisational model, The Octograph: © A. M. Al-Araki.
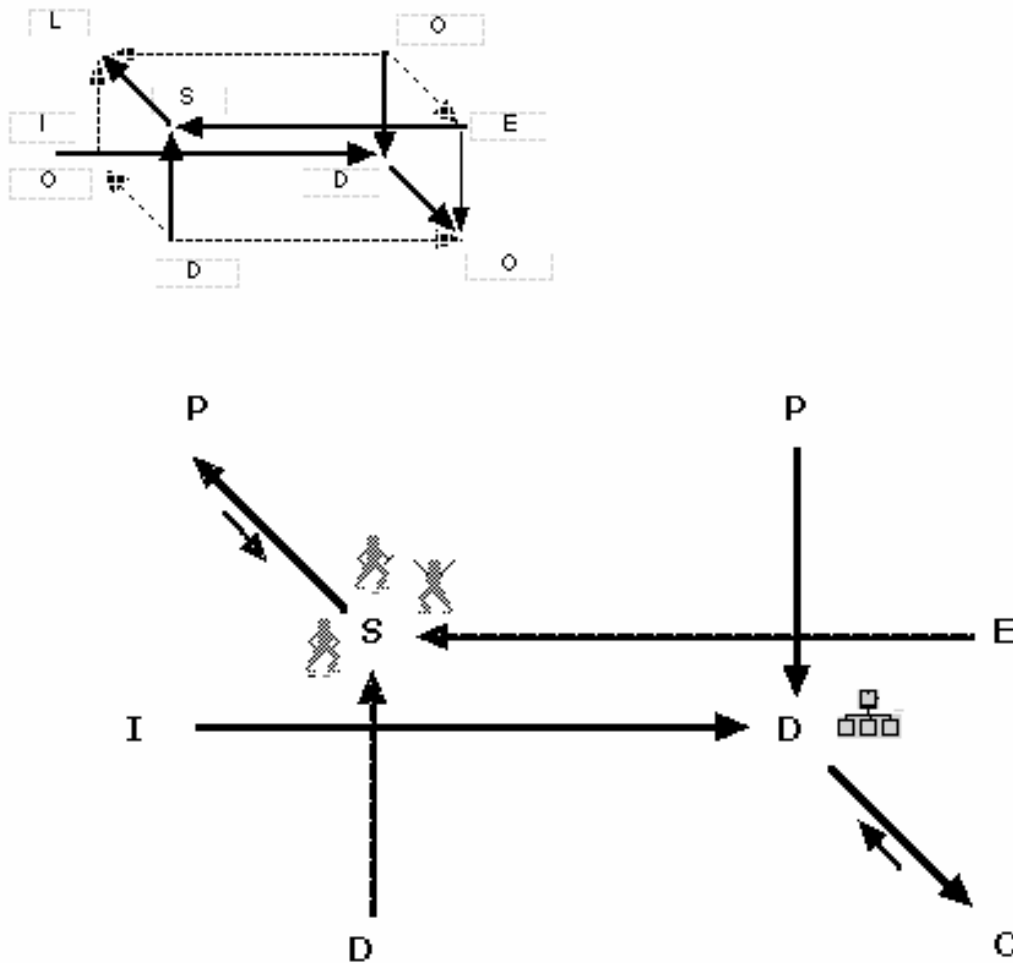
Figure 2: Formal and informal human resources

The smaller Octograph in the figure above shows two concepts that influence all the others. Objectives, priorities and plans (OPF) influence leadership, employees' welfare and the division of roles and responsibilities. Development issues (ODR) influences employees' cohesion, their production and their customers and clients. The adage is that: without planning (OPF) and development (ODR), an organisation could face failure.

Similarly to the core model of the System of distribution, the partial model "the process of communication" is designed around a specific perception of group cohesion, i.e. teams, supportive groups and individualists" (TSI)[10]

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[10] If case of difficulty when drawing the figure above, start with the lines in the middle, i.e. TSI-WER & DID-SDR and add thereafter the other lines.

Socio-psychological cohesion within a group depends often on "Welfare and economic reasoning" (WER) and on "Development of resources" (ODR). Only then can a manager fortify his platform of responsibility (LPR), not only through informing, but also through receiving constructive feedback from his employees. This presupposes maturity of both management and employees.

The concepts and the ethical lines of the partial model "The process of communication" could be read as follows: *As our leader, you have to explicitly choose your platform of responsibility in order to observe and care for our socio-psychological constellations. You have also to promulgate welfare among us that we manage to co-operate and reason economically to the benefit of the whole organisation. But do not forget that the clients, who may be our relatives, and everything is in continuous change. Therefore human and material resources, as well as services and products must be developed in tact with this law of change.* Such qualities may demand a manager that is at ease both with his colleagues-cultural-mix and that of his subordinates.

The main corner (TSI), the extremities as well as the internal and external relations of the partial model "The process of communication" could be discussed the same way as earlier done with the core framework "The system of distribution" and with the help of tables and figures in section 2.

Instead of repeating the earlier steps for explaining a partial model, I would prefer that the reader here try to do the following two exercises before moving further:
- To interpret (free and reasoned interpretation) the concepts of the two important models in the figure 2 above. This will make the next chapter easier to grasp.
- To connect the missing lines in the same figure. This completes the shape of the cube and indicates how the four operational processes of leadership and organisational behaviour are interwoven (See also the entire Octograph in figures 10 and 11 below)

In the following pages I shall move to the utility of the Octograph as a device for brainstorming and for puzzling out problems. In so doing, other details of the model will also be commented.

2. The Process of Decision Making and of Communication

As an organisational model, with its surroundings, the Octograph is related to General Systems theory. Conceived through its interwoven components, it is more in line with theories of complex systems. Complexity is here envisaged through inner logic that binds together the constituent elements of the model.

Complex Systems have a number of properties (cf. for instance Richard Steed, 2000). Among these properties the Octograph satisfies that of "emergence", that of parts not containing the whole and that of parts being nested together. It is the dynamics behind such properties that have made me choose a cube instead of choosing, for instance, a circle to illustrate my understanding of the organisational system.

Imagine yourself now holding a cube in your hand. Each of the eight corners of the cube has its name. Each group of three lines that meet at a corner of the cube constitute a main partial model. There are eight of the partial models of the Octograph that, though delimited, are nested together. None of them can contain the Octograph.

The eight components defining the corners of the cube are abbreviated as follows: Input & demand; Distribution of authority & roles; Objectives & control systems; Leadership; Group status & cohesion; Welfare and economic results; Human outputs; Development of resources and Conformity of outcomes.

To exploit fully the geometrical combinations of the cube, it is important to "remember" on which corner of the cube each of the eight components is placed. This is also useful when generating associations, establishing causality relationships or localising themes under one or more of the partial models.

The interaction between actors from the environment with employees, superiors and followers, who maintain the organisational system, generates organizational behaviour and activates four processes that affect production, development and outcomes.

The main objective of this chapter is to give a holistic picture of the Octograph as an organisational model, make accessible its construction, utility, causality and its conception of organisational behaviour.

We will first examine the composition of the model as form and matter, i.e. its

geometrical parts, its axioms and their power of association. Second, I shall examine the causal dependency, one-way causality and mutual-causality between the components of the model. Third, I shall single out one of the geometrical parts of the Octograph to represent "The Policy of Distribution", i.e. distribution of authority, resources and roles.

2.1 Four processes of leadership and organizational behaviour

The manager carries out her responsibility towards the organisation, its followers, clients or users, and implements her development plans through the four **processes** of leadership and organisational behaviour.

As a power holder, a *manager* is obliged to make decisions, effective or not, that materialise her responsibility to steer the organisation (we use the verb "to steer" an organisation, as opposed to leading people). Here lies the process of decision-making. It is of course important that other parties become involved in this process, but the leader is the one who should have strength or solidity to bear the consequences of any decision.

Once taken, decisions are communicated to those who carry them out or do the job. Here lies the process of communication. It gets materialised through appropriate transfer of information but also through carrying out one's responsibility towards one's employees. The weight is put on the ability to influence employees and followers, be responsible towards them and accountable to them, all while building a bridge between the world outside and inside the organisation.

The communication process is perhaps the most important and complicated task that faces a leader. Even though things are often better emphasised in their contexts, misunderstanding are still possible. The leader may or may not succeed in communicating the "right" way. When one informs and mediates something in a way that should be understood by another person, it is not sure that the other person will understand or accept what is mediated. According to N. Luhmann (1990), one is always selecting what one wants to have as premises for ones actions.

The process of communication regulates the structure of the social and organisational systems. Whenever communication is successful, the job will be carried out successfully, and maybe more efficiently. Whatever the case, the decision will be taken, communicated,

and the job will be done, perhaps also efficiently. This brings us to the process of production.

The process of production is based on two pillars. The fist is quality assurance of products and services offered. The second is intern control of work conditions and security of the employees. During production, a need for change may arise, for example to create better and more efficient work routines. With this, we move to the process of innovation.

The overall two objectives of the process of innovation are to meet demands, efficiently and effectively, and to realise conformity between the external and internal realities and changes implemented inside the organisation. During the process of innovation, the agent of change puzzles outs and plans renewal, while the leader keeps the overall responsibility for implementation.

The three processes of decision-making, production and innovation are inbuilt in the responsibilities of a manager. However, this is not true with the fourth process, i.e. of communication, the most complex one.

Whenever information flows in a one-way direction, a discrepancy is probable between the process of decision-making and that of production. Orders are carried out without necessarily being understood. Whenever two-way information sharing – i.e. communication – is the rule, discrepancy is less probable because of the communicative bridge that connects decision-making to production. One understands what one produces.

The four processes of leadership and organisational behaviour: 1) Decision-Making (PDM); 2) Communication (PC); 3) Production (PP); and 4) Innovation (PI) refer both to the current state and desired state, the present and the future. They are encountered in almost all activities, including those in private life, often in the above numbered sequence.

In the specialised literature, I did not come across these four processes, either connected to one another, collected in one place, or in the same order; although they stand as an independent system apart. I have earlier explained the natural sequences of these processes through an example of a person travelling by train.

Let us here simulate another example, this time imagining the operation of baking bread. Try to find the four processes in the same sequence mentioned above. First you decide that: "today you are going to bake bread" (decision-making). You communicate this wish first to yourself, read the prescriptions on the package of flour and visualise in your head (communication) what you need of materials and utensils. Then you start baking your bread (production). Once the bread is out of the oven, your daughter tastes a slice of bread

and if she was not satisfied, you may reflect, possibly with daughter, about what went wrong, the time of fermentation etc. and how to better the procedure for next time (the process of innovation). Communication takes place with others, but it could also occur as an inner reflection.

In the Octograph, the four processes describe how activities are initiated, carried out and/or improved. In this concern, the Octograph stands as a unique organisational model, both in form and matter. To grasp the logic behind its content, one first has to understand the form, and this is what I have tried to explain in chapter three entitled "The organisational system - The Octograph".

There are four partial models in the Octograph to explain the abovementioned four processes of leadership and organisational behaviour. Hereafter, I will look a bit closer at each of these four partial models.

We will envisage the components, lines, ethical lines, The actor-perspective and relevant themes particular to each partial model as well as how to undertake measurements using a partial model isolated or when considering it as an integrated part of the Octograph.

3.2 The structure of the partial model of decision-making

The main components of the partial model PDM:
- Distribution of authority, resources and roles
- Objectives, priorities, plans and follow-up procedures
- Leadership and leader's platform of responsibility
- Satisfaction of needs through wages, welfare and economic results (reduction of losses)

The components cover the distribution of authority, resources and roles, the implementation of objectives, plans, priorities and control systems, the exercise of leadership, based on a selected platform of responsibilities, and the promulgation of welfare and achievement of economic results.

The components of the partial model could be read as follows: objectives, plans, priorities and follow-up procedures ought to elicit how authority, resources and roles are normally distributed; which platform do mangers base their responsibilities and practices

on; and how satisfied and engaged are the employees that they manage to reason economically.

<u>The three lines of the partial model the PDM</u> that connects these components together is:

- Line 1: System loyalty and managerial responsibility
- Line 2: Norms, rules and control systems
- Line 3: Participation and involvement (the ethical line)

An important question that could connect together the three relations of the model is the following: In which way could involving others in decision-making (line 3) become dependent on norms, rules and control systems (line 2), as well as on the loyalty of the decision-maker (line 1)?

<u>The actor-perspective in the partial model the Process of Decision Making</u> is composed of:

- Managers
- Planners
- Role holders of position in an organisational chart
- Creator of economic results

<u>Themes within the partial model the Process of Decision Making:</u>
The best way to study this partial model is to support it by old and modern theories of participation in decision-making, as for instance, Mary Parker Follett 1926; Tannenbaum, 1950; Vroom & Yetton 1973 and the like. Widening participation in decision-making may demand differentiation between the categories of potential decision-makers. From Ibn Khaldun's theory of thinking, we deduce two types of decision-makers:

- The DE-sensors: those who primarily, and often subjectively, use the discerning and the experimental intellect. They remind of Charles Lindholm's model of "Muddling through" decision-makers (Lindholm 1959). They are more dependent on experimentation.

- The DET-thinkers: those who, often objectively, use all three stages of thinking in decision-making: the discerning, the experimental and the theoretical intellect. Those

decision-makers are able to furnish a structured list of which decision they have taken in which moment and on which subject.

Before moving to the other three partial models, I raise some important questions in connection with the Process of Decision-Making (PDM)
- How to discuss themes using such partial models with their components, lines and ethical line(s)?
- How to relate the partial models of the Octograph to the entire model?
- Is there a scale of measurement or a methodology that suits the partial model and how could this agree with the model in its entirety?

Suppose that you want to study the relation between the distributions of roles among managers in an organisation and contrast it to all relevant components of the Octograph by using the cube in figure 10 below.

You start with asking yourself the following question: Has distribution of roles among leaders a *direct relation* to "input & demands"? Your answer will be either "yes" or "no," depending on reasons and arguments that only you have awareness of. You repeat the question above until the last component in figure 10 is covered. Each component generates its associations. Your associations with "yes" or "no" can end as in the table below:

Simplified and abbreviated components (see figure 13 for non-abbreviated components)	YES	No	Acronyms
Input & demand		No	DID
Distribution of authority & roles	Yes		DAR
Objectives & control systems	Yes		OPF
Leadership platform	Yes		LPR
Group status & cohesion		No	STI
Welfare and economic results	Yes		WER
Resources & outputs		No	RTM
Development of resources		No	DOR
Conformity & outcomes		No	COW

Figure 3: a simplified example

The Organisational model, The Octograph: © A. M. Al-Araki.

Let us assume that the reasons and arguments you have in mind when reaching the answers in the figure above enabled you to extract the partial model in figure 4 below from the body of the Octograph. *No causal arrows* and lines names where consciously thought of when you were brainstorming by yourself.

The partial model is suitable for your arguments and answers the question: "Has distribution of roles among leaders a *direct relation* to "input & demands?" and thus is localisable under the partial model the process of decision-making (PDM).

(ethical line)
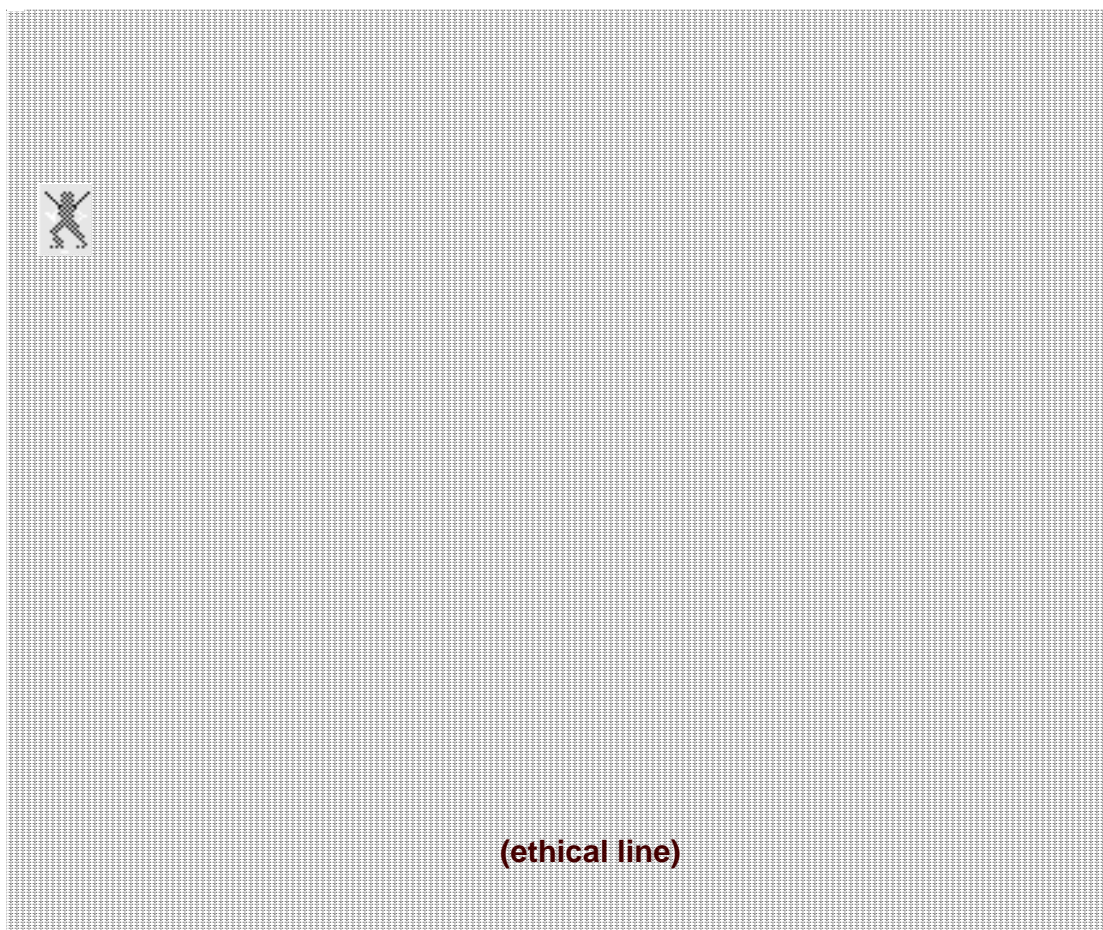
Figure 4: Distribution of roles among leaders, related relations and the Process of Decision Making

The main relations plotted in the partial model above made it easier to isolate, locate and discuss the theme related to other adjacent variables in the Octograph.

Relations not contained (cf. answers with "no") in the figure above were likewise important when reasons and arguments were needed to support discussions within the delimited partial model.

There are causal relations (one-way or two-ways), relational lines connecting causality and an ethical line in the partial model above (Ethical line 3: Participation and involvement).

The ethical relation is associated to welfare and economic results. Distribution of roles among leaders (cf. the question raised above) will undoubtedly influence the satisfaction of needs, wages, welfare, & economic results (cf. figure 13 for non-abbreviated acronyms)

Distribution of roles among leaders (cf. question above) also certainly has a direct relation to input & demands, being causally dependent on it. However, the inverse relation is rather weak. As an individual my input and demands (microeconomics) do not influence the distribution of roles and tasks among leaders in an organisation. From a macro-economic perspective and in monopolistic situations things may be different.

As we see from the discussion above, brainstorming using the entire Octograph yields more information. One can therefore envisage themes within their probable partial models and their contexts (the Octograph) or depart from themes and use the Octograph to brainstorm oneself and create partial models that may fit in the four partial models of decision-making, communication, production and innovation.

However, brainstorming:
1) Yields voluminous data that has to be classified and categorised. Here we could use the earlier discussed degrees of thinking, typologies and instruments (cf. PEAK, SETS above)
2) Generates causality relations: Examination of causality (one-way two-ways arrows) (cf. figure 11 below) expands and consolidates generated arguments, and may pave the way for more explicit hypothesis and research plans within the partial model and its vicinities or within the Octograph.
3) Requires a methodological approach to localise themes where they belong, identify their components, compare them to others and analyse them etc. Here we could use the methodological approach embodies in LICAC AIE (cf. above)

The Organisational model, The Octograph: © A. M. Al-Araki.

4) Requires a scale of measurement applicable within the partial model and within the Octograph. Within each partial model, there is an ordinal scale of measurement composed of "Low", "Middle" and "High" that create three triangular geometrical scales as in figure 1 above. The scale of measurement covering the whole Octograph is visualised in figure 1 above. All methodological approaches are contextual and have to be conceived for their concrete purposes. Cf. Eoyang's method of "qualitative intervention assessment" discussed above.

This is how to discuss themes using partial models with their components, lines and ethical lines, relate these partial models to the Octograph in its entirely and whenever necessary measure the components of the partial model isolated or in relation to the Octograph.

The partial model above is in fact that of the process of decision-making (PDM). It also shows the causal relations, the name of lines, the scale of measurement and the area occupied by the model in the entire Octograph.

2.3 The structure of the partial model of communication

The main components of the partial model PC:
-   Leadership and leader's platform of responsibility
-   Supportive groups, teams and individualists
-   Satisfaction of needs through wages, welfare and economic results (reduction of losses)
-   Development of output and improvement of human and material resources

The above components cover the leader's platform of responsibilities, the employees and followers as supportive groups, as team-constellations and individualists, the spread of welfare achievement of economic results, as well as the plans of the organisation concerning the development of human and material resources.

The components of the partial model could be read as follows: As our leader, you have to explicitly choose your platform of responsibility, observe and care for our socio-psychological constellations, spread welfare among us that we manage to reason economically to the benefit of the whole organisation. However, do not forget that both we and the clients of organisation are in continuous change. Therefore, human and material resources, as well as services and products offered, must be developed in tact with this law of change.

The three lines of the partial model PC that connects these components together are:
-   Line 4: Personnel responsibility
-   Line 5: Economy and the satisfaction of needs
-   Line 6: Co-operation, development and co-existence (the ethical line)

The actor-perspective in the partial model PC:
-   Manager
-   Socio-psychological actor or colleague
-   Creator of economic results
-   Maximization of utility

The Organisational model, The Octograph: © A. M. Al-Araki.

Themes within the partial model PC:

An important component of the four components mentioned in the model above is "supportive groups, teams and individualists". The relations created by the lines of this partial model could shed some light on the constellation of these supporting groups or followers. The three relations have to do with the exercise of power ("Personnel responsibility"), with gains and losses ("Economy and satisfaction of needs)" and with knowledge and know-how ("Cooperation, development & co-existence"). An awareness of the psychological concepts of W. Bion ("Pairing group", "Dependent group" and "Fight-flight group") (Bion 1961) will here be beneficial for the manager who aspires to understand the psycho-sociological implications of the group status & cohesion, their support to management and to each other, constellations and the individualists among them.

According to Niklas Luhmann (1984) there are three systems for maintaining communication: the biological, the psychic and the social systems.

The first one maintains life; the two others create and maintain consciousness (thoughts, feelings, perception, memory etc.) The social systems, or the basis of contact between people, have to do with interaction, organisation and society (Luhmann 1984).

Society, says Luhmann, is neither a gathering of individuals, nor conglomerate of social interactions. Society is communication. Luhmann says that communication requires the synthesis of three selections: Information, utterances (Mitteilung) and "a need to understand it all" (Luhmann 1990: 3). Information and utterances originate from the mediator (Ego). The need to understand is up to the receiver (Alter).

We have two-ways and one-way contact with each other, information and communication, formal and informal, written and verbally. In written communication form and content are of bigger importance for understanding than in verbal communication. This is since written communication does not imply mediation of feelings the same way verbal communication does. In its essence, communication is the enjoyment of social gathering. Many theories of communication and notions of communication-levels and task difficulty can be used here.

The partial model "the process of communication" is, in its entirety, in line with these reflections. To discuss its components through, manager's responsibility for personnel and for the dual-cognitive-existence of the individual raises the following interesting question:

would communication function properly without certain coherence between the outside and the inside life of the individual?
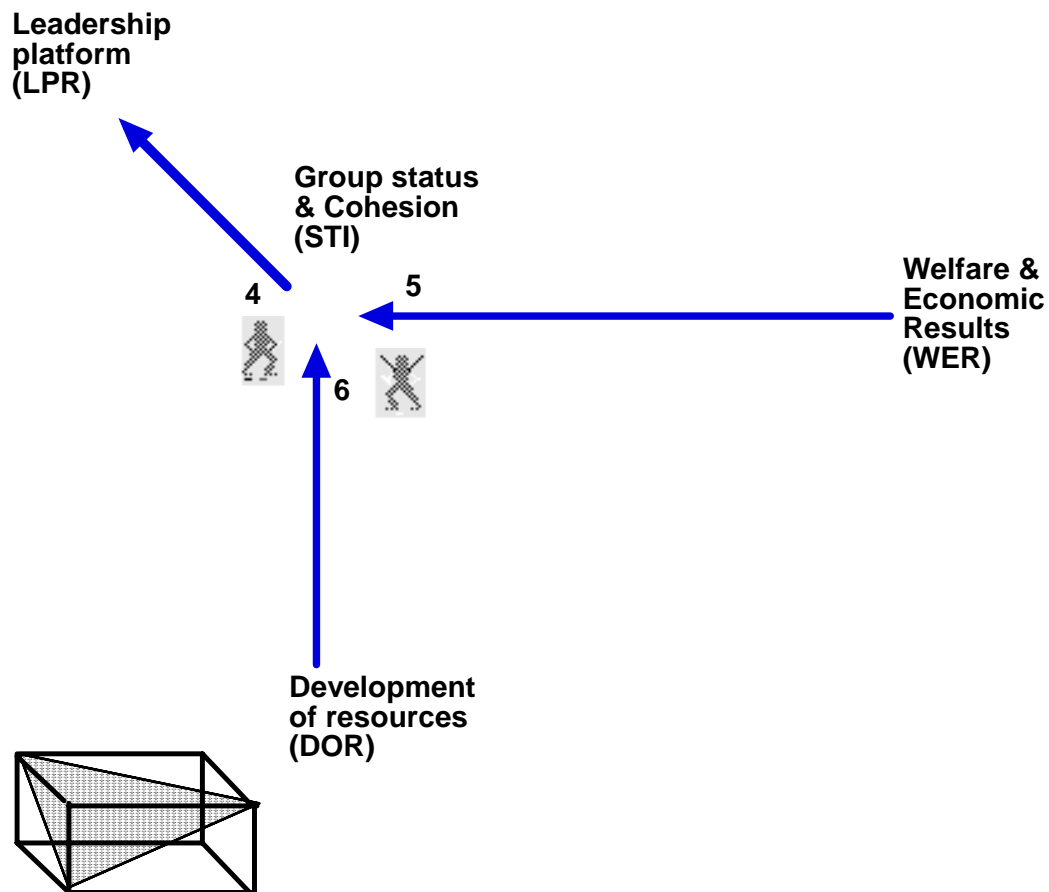
Figure 5: the partial model the process of communication (PC)

3 The Octograph: theoretical foundation

The idea of the whole and the parts of the organisational system of the Octograph is borrowed from Aristotle. If you try to imagine your dream house, you will look upwards and your mind will imagine the outer form and roof, the wholeness. If you can ever afford to build the house, your attention will be on the building site, the foundation, walls and the interior or the parts. The construction works always start from the ground up, after the

architect has finished the concept. The Aristotelian adage is: think before you act, and when acting, remember both your anchors, visions, ideologies and policies that you want to put into practice. And first of all, remember where you stand.

Below I shall first explain how the concepts of the organisational system, the Octograph, are conceived. Thereafter, I shall show how to use them for puzzling out problems.

3.*1 The conception of the components of the Octograph*

My thinking around the Octograph is inspired from eight philosophical sentences (Ibn Khaldun, vol.1: 81-82) cited by Ibn Khaldun. He ascribes them to different philosophers as far back as the 6th century. I have related and adapted these sentences to organisational life as follows:

1. *Differentiated input and demand* from the clients and users justify the existence of an organisation.

2. However, an organisational system *cannot exist* without objectives, priorities, plans and follow-up systems.

3. Objectives, priorities, plans and follow-up systems are the primary responsibility of leadership, the platform on which the organisation builds its functions.[11]

4. To meet organisational responsibilities, the leader needs the *support of the employees*, which depends on their groups' status and socio-psychological cohesion.

5. *Followers' support* to their leader, especially in the form of economic results (read: reduction of losses), is usually rewarded through wages and welfare considerations.

6. *Wages, welfare considerations and economic results* affect the outputs of the system.

7. The organisational system will stagnate without internal *developments* and improvement of output to clients and users.

8. An organisation that wishes to exist and develop in harmony with its surroundings ought to observe *justice* in all that relates to the above statements.

The concepts embodies in the eight axioms above could also be encountered in many other models developed by organizational specialists like Leavitt (1965), Kotter (1978),

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[11] The power dimension, the "core apex" (Mintzberg, 1979) or "dominant coalition" (Beer, 1980:102), is envisioned from within this higher level.

Mintzberg (1979) and Beer (1980). However, the way these statements are conceived, arranged and plotted on the cube, as well as their ideological weight, makes the Octograph unlike other models and organisational systems.

Based on these principles, I have created an organisational system (the Octograph) with partial models, processes and areas of responsibility that are logically coherent. My aspiration is to make organisational understanding more dynamic and causal than static and descriptive.

Axiom No. 1, for instance, means that input and demand from various (demographic) segments of society influence the organisation and cause structural reshuffling. Organisations that do not grasp such differentiations may be doomed to failure. I have thus created the sentence: "*Differentiation of input & demands in accordance with demography & local interests*" (abridged with: Input and demand).

Another simpler abbreviation using only letters gives the acronym IDOLSEODO. In this manner, all the concepts of the Octograph are conceived and simplified as meaningful abbreviations. They are created using the PEAK typology and the SETS instrument of evaluation.[12]

The order in which the concepts are plotted throughout the corners of the Octograph, illustrates the process of task performance from start to end (See sequential steps and the arrows in the table above):

A demand is put in motion (Input & demand) to a responsible person in the organisation (*Distribution of responsibilities, resources & roles*). This person is supposed to work according to certain internal plans and priorities (*Objectives & follow-up systems*) and under the guidance of those who are responsible for these plans (*Leadership*). Together with colleagues having their status and patterns of cohesion (*Teams, supportive groups & individualists*) and their remunerations (*Welfare and economic results*), they use available materials and human resources (*Resource output and mastery of tasks*) to produce goods and services. Their offer to customers and their competency is subject to development (*Offer to customer and development of human and material resources*). Thus, the

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[12] The letters in PEAK stand for: Power or empowerment (P); Earnings or losses and gains (E); Activities or behaviour (A) and Knowledge or know-how (K). The letters of the SETS-instrument of evaluation stands for: Strength or solidity (S); Extent or significance of size (E); Type, sort or properties (T) and Segment or branch of classification (S).

organisation aspires that its production will conform to reality (*conformity of outcome to outside needs*) and satisfy clients or customers.

This is how the concepts of the Octograph are conceived. However, it is unpractical to illustrate a model using long sentences or only acronyms. Therefore, I build a simplified version of the Octograph in figure 10 below. However, the concepts, as explained in their entirety in figure 13, must be kept in mind to permit appropriate associations. The expression: "*Differentiation of Input and Demand in accordance with Demography and local Interests*", as in figure 13, renders more information than the abbreviated concept *"Input and demand*".

3.2 Optical illusion and the structures of the Octograph

The figure below generates an optical illusion. This is initiated when the perceptual properties of the person who observes meets the structural properties of the cube.
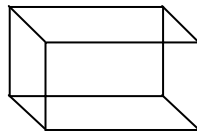
Figure 6: The phenomenon perception

Focus on any of the corners of the cube in Figure 6 for about 3 seconds, and "pull" that corner towards you, and then back in place. You will switch from one optical illusion to another as you watch the cube.

To stabilise the parts of the cube, imagine yourself holding a matchbox in your hand. Each group of three lines that meet at a corner constitutes a partial model. This gives eight interwoven partial models. None of them contains the cube as a whole. Another way of controlling the optical illusion is to distinguish between the floor, the ceiling and the walls of the cube.

To stabilise the whole cube, you have to extend some of its lines or draw a background that stops the optical illusion. But, how could this dynamic of an optical illusion be useful in organisational life?

The illusory phenomenon simulates the uncertainty of throughput or the operational processes that take place within an organisational system. Therefore, it is sometimes difficult to assess an important event by relating it to something in continuous change.
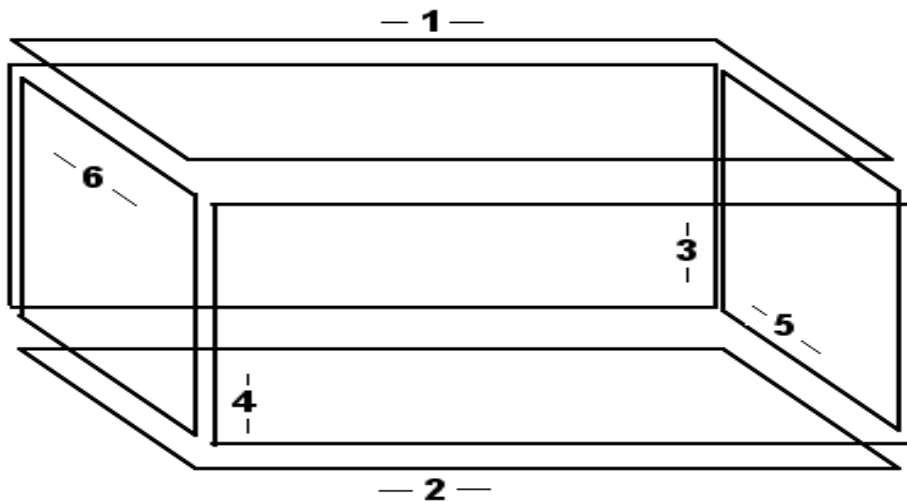
Figure 7: Foundation, superstructure and walls

Based on the Aristotelian adage mentioned earlier, the roof or ceiling in the figure above symbolises the *superstructure*, i.e. policy and guidelines, goals, plans, norms, regulations and control systems, etc. They represent the top of the iceberg.

The area under the iceberg is the floor. It refers to the *foundation* where activities and operations are carried out in different "departments" and according to prescribed guidelines and policy measures.

- The back wall in the above figure, or department no. 3, refers to top-management's Platform of Responsibility. From our discussion in the previous section, the corners of this wall are composed of: DID, SDR, OPF and LPR.
- The front wall, or department no. 4, refers to the Followers Platform of Production.
- The sidewall to your right, or department No. 5, refers to exchange between managers and followers.
- The sidewall to your left, or department no. 6, refers to Exchange between internal and external actors.

When there is a problem on the roof (leadership, policy and welfare issues, and employees' cohesion), we will most likely have problems on the floor, and vice versa. An organisation that does not harmonize between its policy and performance is detrimental both towards itself, its surroundings and followers. Such an organisation could, for instance, change strategy on an ad hoc basis without considering the economic or socio-psychological impact of its decisions.

3.3 Puzzling out problems through brainstorming

Form and matter are tightly related in the Octograph.
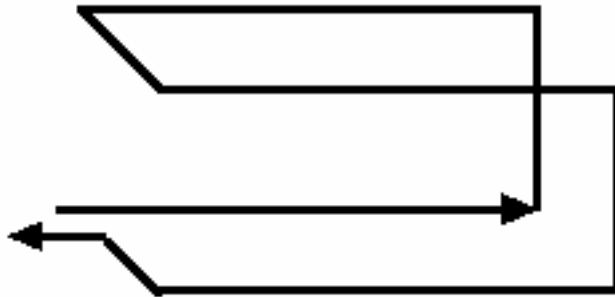
Figure 8: Sequences when drawing the Octograph

To draw the Octograph, I use eight movements without lifting the pen off the paper, as in the figure above. Thereafter I add four lines to complete the shape of the cube (the line are not included in the figure above). Why?

"Geometry enlightens the mind", says Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406). But geometrical reasoning is no longer a daily undertaking, especially when it comes to three-dimensional figures.

To use the model as an associative device one should be used to draw it quickly the way I do above. Each time the model is drawn, the starting point and the end point will remind of Systems Theory, i.e. input, throughput and output.

The lines that complete the shape of the cube, tell about four ethical dimensions that also bind the parts of the cube. They concern involvement in decision-making; organizational learning; development and competency; and conformity of outputs to actual demands.

When we wish to puzzle out a problem using all the components of the Octograph, we first relate the problem to the whole model for a general brainstorming. Thereafter, we localise the problem under one or more of the four processes of the Octograph, or under a specific geometrical construction we have reached. This gives delimited identification of

the problem in question, and thus, reduces the quantity of produced data. Lack of localisation and of identification of a problem, may conceal comparison with similar problems and potential analysis.

To conduct the general brainstorming, it is eventually important to:

1) Remember on which corner of the cube each of the eight concepts is placed.

2) Keep in mind the division of the cube into geometrical parts and partial models of decision-making, communication, production and innovation, as well as different departments.

3) Have an understanding of the complete Octograph as in figure 11.

The above requirements remind of a teacher who memorises the names of all her students depending on where they often sit in the classroom. Remembering the eight concepts makes thoughts and ideas move rapidly from one corner to another of the cube. A cube with concepts plotted on its corners would also do the job.

A very simple exercise is to place your pencil on one of the concepts of the Octograph and then choose a topic you would like to reflect on. From this placement you move your pencil on a round tour to cover all the others, while asking yourself the following question: Does this affect my topic in one way or another? If yes, how and why? There is no limit for how many rounds you do the exercise to produce your own associations.

Imagine yourself attending a seminar on "Exchange of feedback between managers and staff". You have drawn a sketch of the Octograph as a cube without much details placed on it. Each time the speaker mentions general policy concepts, like involvement in decision-making, you will be able to note this beside "*Objectives, priorities, plans & follow-up systems*" (OPF) or just put a mark there. Responsibility for one's employees would be placed under "*Leader's platform of responsibility*" (LPR). By the end of the lecture you will find yourself sitting with a mind map showing each component of the Octograph with details beside it. The components, which were not covered by the speaker, could permit you to put questions or elaborate further on the topic.

Suppose now that your general brainstorming resulted in many details under each of the eight concepts of the Octograph. The data under each entry could be sorted out and prioritised. The final clusters of data could, for instance, reveal the partial model "The Process of Decision Making" as in figure 9, or an altogether different geometrical shape

dissimilar to any of the basic partial models of the Octograph. The remaining data could either be neglected or used for situational arguments.

Once localised in a partial model, or in other geometrical constructions, the knowledge generated from your associations, could further be discussed as earlier (main corner OPF, the extremities, internal dependency relations and external lines of impact), or worked out through comparison and analysis against other partial models.
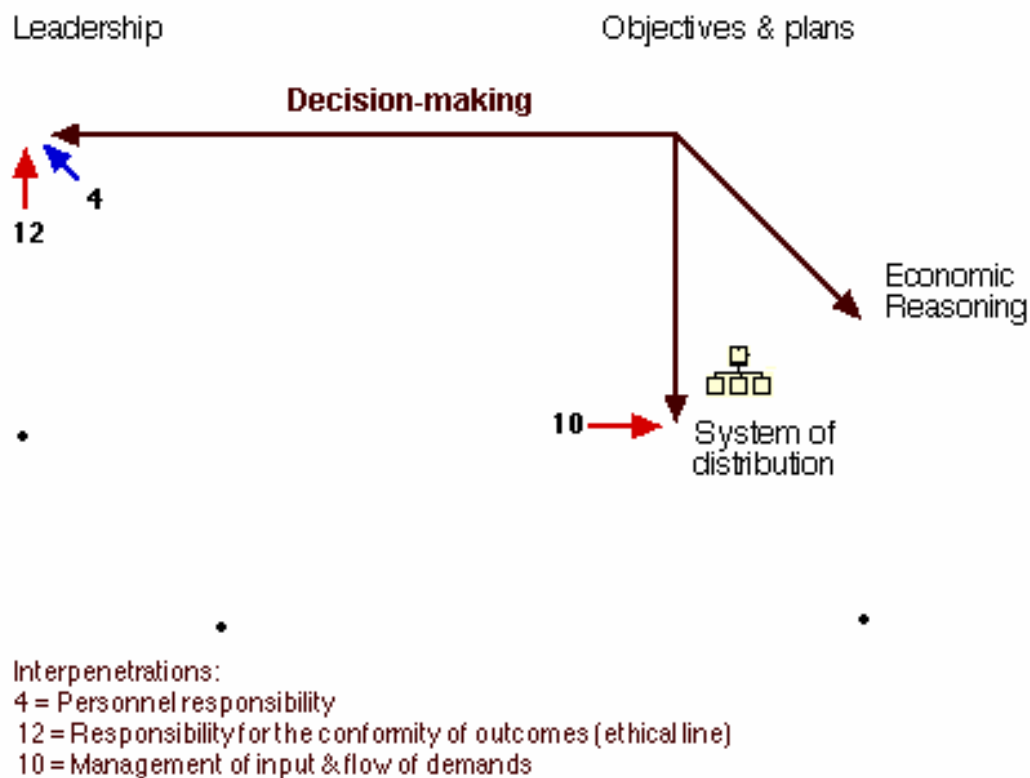
Figure 9: The partial model of decision-making with internal dependency relations and external lines of impact

3.4 The entire Octograph: causality, roles and processes

Causality in the Octograph: Our actions are not arbitrary. Even though two persons influence each other, there will always be different degrees of influence caused by measurements like the strength, extent, type and segment of influence.

When such measurements are considered, they may tell us something about the direction of the influence implied. To "receive an arrow" means to be influenced by the "sender of the arrow". To understand how the "receiver of the arrow" is influenced, one has to understand the sender's motives and influential power.
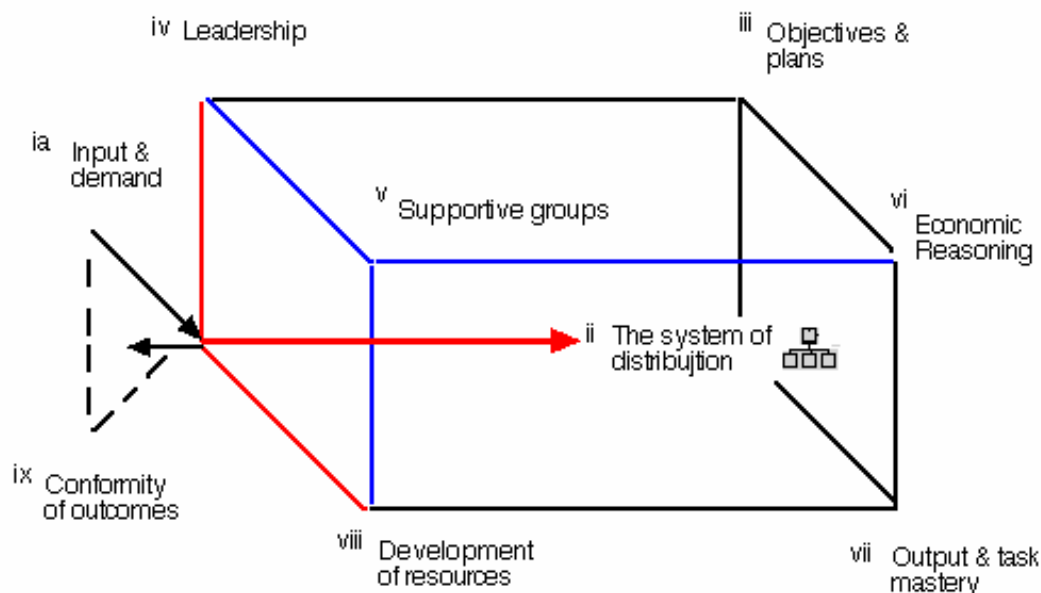
FIGURE 10: The Octograph with simplified concepts

In the figure above the "system of distribution" (D) "receives" an arrow or becomes dependent on "input & demand" (I) where the arrow comes from. As a rule of thumb, the rest of the "fixed" one-way causality in the Octograph could be visualised as follows: The two independent concepts, "Objectives & plans" (O) and "Development of resources" (D) send three arrows each. "Leadership" (L) and "Output of resources" (O) receive three arrows each. "Supportive groups" (S) receives an arrow from "Economic reasoning" (E). Plot the arrows in place in the figure above and control with figure 11 below.

When explaining the Octograph, I concentrate on arrows in one direction, since I wish to illustrate a particular logic. After getting acquainted with the causal dependencies between the components of the Octograph, the reader can later adapt the direction of arrows to individual and situational arguments.
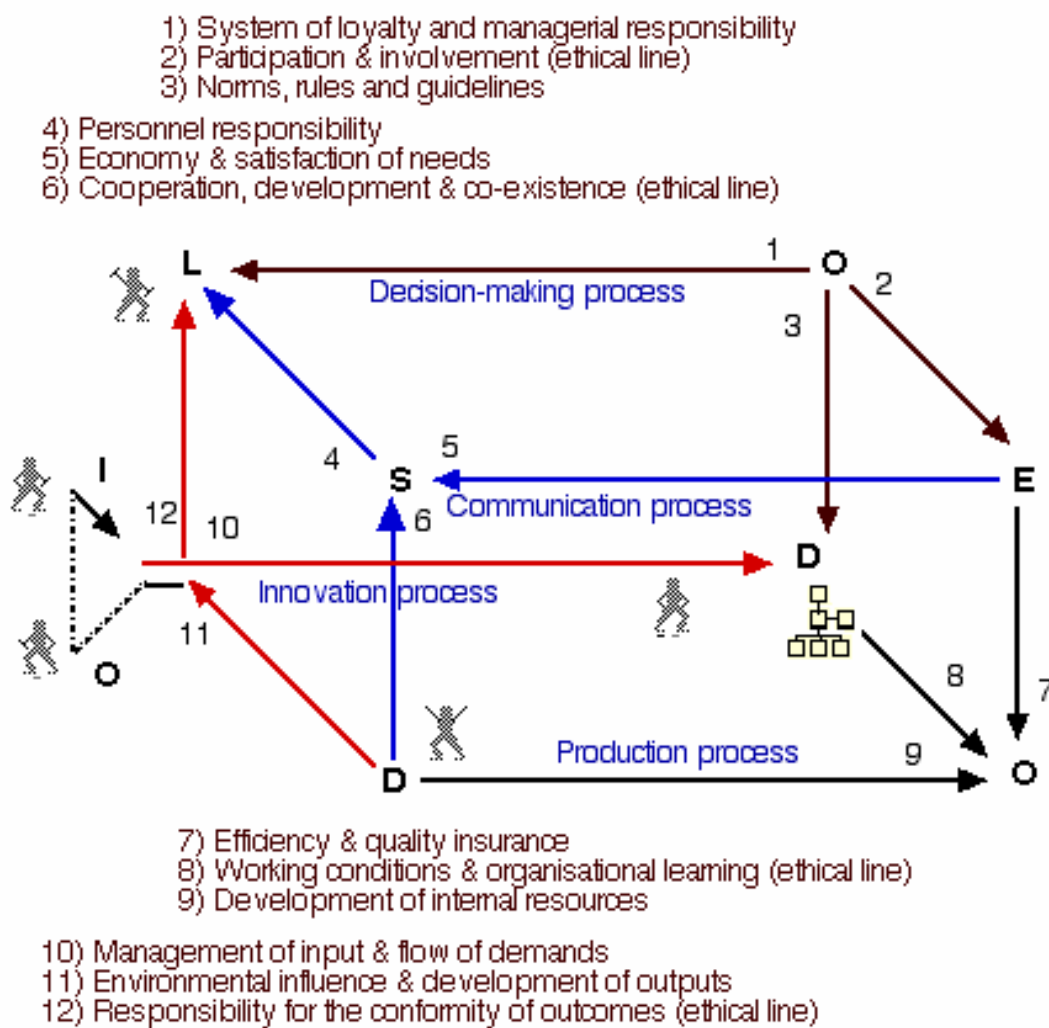
Figure 11: A complete Octograph.

3.5 Roles and processes

The roles and responsibilities that one receives when being accepted for a job in an organisation are often different from the flexible roles one commutes between when executing different tasks. The Octograph differentiates between static and dynamic roles.

| Acronyms | Role change in accordance with process | | | |
	Decision-Making	Communication	Production	Innovation
I				Economic actor citizen/voter Client/user
D	Empowered individual		Official in charge Problem solver	Resource persons in change
O	System analyser Planner Plan interpreter			
L	Decision maker	Mentor Conflint manager Information bearer		Responsible for change
S		Socio-psychological individual Supporter		
E	Individual eligible for participation	Sosially mature individual	Economically reasoning individual	
O			Specialist, production force	
D		Interested in development and competency	Loss-reducer	Creative thinker consultant change agent
O	Feedback agent	Feedback agent	Feedback agent	Feedback agent

Figure 12: Roles change according to processes

The Organisational model, The Octograph: © A. M. Al-Araki.

Cases in Organization Development and Project Management, Leadership and Human Resource Management

Introduction

The essence of all change work is organizational understanding. Because organizational development implies a collaborative effort between the organization and the change agent, the diagnostic phase will be characterized by mutual "testing" of their respective organizational understanding.

This means that the agent of change not only seeks, but also gives information on the various ways to look at the problem. At the centre lies the need to reach a common understanding of the complexity of the problem, and thus also realistic expectations about what intervention through OD can achieve.

Change is a process, not an isolated occurrence. To work for change is to think big, start small and have a clear objective; methodically, creatively, with clear-cut questions and an evolutionary plan.

Change comes through continuous measures. It can also be planned through semi-large and large projects. A successful transition from the current situation to the desired situation is based on a mixed strategy of "evolution" and revolution", which is implemented from top-down and from bottom-up.

The main objective behind all change activities must be to ensure productivity, good working conditions and to develop human and material resources.

Anyone involved in work for change must possess good knowledge of problem solving methods, project organization and organizational understanding. The quality of the work is documented through regular evaluation of results and the final evaluation. Work for change should, if necessary, be viewed in relation to other additional/supplementary tasks and problems.

How to study a case:
Cases included in the booklet must be studied as follows:

1) Find central elements in the case
2) Formulate a problem for discussion based on these elements.
3) Discuss your proposal with the tutor and agree on a supervision timetable.
4) Your discussion has to refer to techniques, methods and theories in the syllabus, but also from outside the syllabus.
5) Refer to the Internet (scholar.google.com), to the library or other sources so as to find data that could support your conclusions.
6) Other information will be given in the classroom in connection with each individual case.

1. Cases in Organisational Development and Project Management

1. 1 Hoeysletten municipality, Technical Division:

The technical division in Hoeysletten Municipality is a busy place, and time to take a little extra break seldom occurs. "Our director defines what's important, how we are supposed to do things and which tasks are the most pressing", says an official in charge.

The director is task-oriented. He has become something of a permanent fixture in the technical division, having worked there for 30 years. He keeps work and private life strictly separate. He never initiates social activities in the work place, and takes no interest in Christmas parties or other celebrations.

There's a destructive turnover in the division. Older staff and office personnel get compensatory time off for the overtime hours. However, they are increasingly dissatisfied as young and ambitious engineers, who are paid for overtime work, only stay a short time with the department. Those that remain spend quite a lot of their working hours training the newcomers.

There are few part-time positions; the director prefers a full-time staff. This is one of the factors that make young female engineers resign once they decide to establish a family.

Other employees are more stable, as it is difficult to find new jobs, and they have become a tightly knit group over the years. They cooperate in the work place and also get together in their free time.

Everyone has clearly defined tasks, the division of labour having been set by the director. When at work, work! No extra breaks are allowed. The director is in control. The technical equipment is always in order and everything's in stock in the storerooms at any given time. Delegated tasks are regularly controlled by the director, and the division seems to be running smoothly.

Assignments:
- Draw a sketch of the situation above.
- Think about methods and theories that could be applied to the above case.
- Other assignments will be given in the classroom.

1. 2 Sunnyside nursing home

Sunnyside nursing home consists of three wards: the senile dementia ward, the nursing ward and the short-term nursing ward. Each ward has approx. 30 patients, two nurses and seven assistant nurses. Two ergonomists and physiotherapists are responsible for all three wards. The institution also employs a housekeeper; three cleaners, three kitchen staff and two who are responsible for the laundry. The administrative staff comprises three persons. In all, 43 persons are employed in Sunnyside, including the leader Ms Svendsen and deputy leader, Ms Eriksen. Some assistant nurse posts are filled with temporary staff. They carry much of the work. Many of the employees have been working in Sunnyside for 15 – 20 years.

A source of frustration that has built up over the years is the disparity/imbalance between services rendered by the staff and the services required by the residents, in addition to the nursing staff's own demands as employees. Work in the institution is

undetermined and unstructured, and not stimulating, neither for the staff nor for the patients. There is little room for professional development.

The leader, Ms Svendsen, has learned through literature and reports that the re-organization of nursing services according to "the principle of primary health care" has rendered good results. Such organization means that the nursing staff is in contact with a limited number of personnel for as long time as possible, thus performing better integrated tasks, and the residents receive care of a more individual and personal nature. However, the system has to be locally adapted.

The workforce situation in Sunnyside calls for a modified system of primary health care. A system of partly autonomous groups with full responsibility for a number of residents on a 24-hour basis is being planned.

The deputy leader applauds the principle of primary health care, and is enthusiastic with regard to the implementation process. She knows that new ventures will always be met with resistance from some people, and that it is best to avoid frustration and scepticism during the implementation period.

Assignments:
- Draw a sketch of the situation above.
- Think about methods and theories that could be applied to the above case.
- Other assignments will be given in the classroom.

1. 3 Strategies and measures/means:

Peter Festervoll, the IT manager in Lavsletten municipality, is not happy. "I don't agree with the way the municipality has organized and developed its IT." Equipment, software and suppliers are not coordinated. Software is still purchased from the same suppliers, although experience with their services has been negative, and the employees find the software unsuitable.

Allocation of economic resources is not based on means tests. Only one employee has Internet access, an incomprehensible decision for the others. The municipality has no definite competence plans.

"The municipality could have saved a lot if I had full responsibility for the IT strategy. As IT manager I am placed under the personnel manager. My position would have been more effective in the administrative department" says Peter Festervoll.

The personnel manager does not see any problem with the present organization, and cannot see any gains in moving the position to the administration department.

Assignments:
- Draw a sketch of the situation above.
- Think about methods and theories that could be applied to the above case.
- Other assignments will be given in the classroom.

1. 4 Resistance against change:

In section X of the Health and Social Welfare Department in a Norwegian municipality, the employees have agreed that computer equipment worth millions will be left unused. The new technology was meant to increase efficiency at work. The health director's action is a violation of the system of agreements, says a spokesman for the employees. The director dismisses the criticism and points out that the computer equipment had been purchased in other departments without the direct involvement of employees. Other departments in the municipality have found the same equipment satisfactory, and you are called in as a consultant to help find the reason behind the opposition in section X.

Assignments:

- a) Discuss factors and motives that may have caused the opposition in section X.
- b) You have found that the resistance against using the computer equipment can be tackled by establishing consensus in a diagnostic seminar. How will you organize the seminar to ensure adequate follow-up?
- c) Chart factors and relations concerning resistance against change.
- Visit and consult useful sites on the Internet to find appropriate resources. Do not forget to cite the source in a complete manner.

1. 5 Resistance against change:

Because organizational development implies a collaborative effort between two parties; the organizational and the consultant, the diagnostic phase will be characterized by mutual "testing" of their organizational understanding. This means that the consultant not only seeks, but also gives information on the various ways of looking at the problem, the importance of regarding it as a question of interaction. At the centre lies the need to reach a common understanding of the complexity of the problem, and thus also realistic expectations towards the results of an organizational development can render". (Fischer & Sortland, 2001, p.152)

Assignment:

- Discuss the previous quote under the heading The significance of the diagnostic phase in change work.
- Visit and consult useful sites on the Internet to find appropriate resources. Do not forget to cite the source in a complete manner.
- A change agent must have a solid theoretical knowledge of organizational understanding to undertake a process of inducing change. Discuss whether and to what extent their organizational understanding will differ if the change agent trained as an engineer, an economist, a psychologist and a sociologist.

1. 6 Sun Splash nursing home and day care centre

Sun Splash nursing home has been rehabilitated and expanded with a day care centre (with a staff of 11) and a residential unit for the elderly (6 employees). The idea is that the staff in the residential unit can get help from the nursing home staff if and when necessary. The day care centre, organized directly under a director, also employs its own physiotherapist, ergonomist and chiropodist. They are in the centre two days per week and attend to residents in the nursing home and in the residential unit, as well as to patients in the day care centre when needed.

The nursing home and the residential unit employ a senior nursing officer jointly. She is in charge of the kitchen, which serves all three units. The institution has been run traditionally, and formal meetings have been rare. Work in the institution is not goal-oriented and the patients/residents are understimulated to a large extent.

The staff in the nursing home is unstable. They are often on sick leave, and many quit after a short period of time. The problem has increased after the residential unit opened. The nursing homestaff feels neglected, while too much focus is on the residential unit. They also complain that the other units are better served by the physiotherapist, ergonomist and chiropodist.

The head of the kitchen unit has voiced complaints over too much food being returned from the day care centre and about receiving extra orders at too short notice from the other units. It is difficult to control the kitchen's budget under such circumstances. The delivery schedule in the day care centre differs from the other units, thus reducing efficiency. The head of the kitchen wants the senior nursing officer to discuss the problem and possible solutions with the director.

The relationship between the director and the senior nursing officer has deteriorated after the nursing officer brought back new ideas on patient rehabilitation from a course she had attended. The municipality has granted money for a project to study the work situation in the institution. The board cannot agree on an organisational model or who should head the project. The difference in opinion is so big that they need to call in external help.

(Figure : Organisational structure)

Assignments:
- Draw a sketch of the situation above.
- Think about methods and theories that could be applied to the above case.
- Other assignments will be given in the classroom.

1. 7 Lavsletten municipality

Lavsletten, a medium-sized municipality, has invited all leaders and employees to a two-day seminar on modernization of the municipal activities. As an external consultant, you are invited to the second day of the seminar to introduce a prospective organizational development plan. The feasibility study carried out by the internal consultant has been sent to you in advance. From the documents you have selected a number of statements and impressions around the situation in the municipality:

- It is the objective of most public offices and divisions in the municipality to satisfy the political leadership and to meet users' needs.

The Organisational model, The Octograph: © A. M. Al-Araki.

- The work pressure is considerable.
- More than 50% of the employees claim that they have never participated in a meeting where their tasks and routines were on the agenda.
- Requests for competence building or in-service training for the individual employee has been given low priority.
- The strategic plan lists objectives in the areas of organizational development, in-service training, division of tasks, etc.
- According to the employees, this part of the plan has been more or less overlooked.
- Increased efficiency and improved routines have only been discussed in connection with EDP routines and reorganization.
- A considerable number of employees are dissatisfied with the physical conditions in the workplace, mainly the Computer Park, Internet access and impractical office facilities.

Assignments:
- Draw a sketch of the situation above.
- Think about methods and theories that could be applied to the above case.
- Other assignments will be given in the classroom.

1. 8 The agent of change (the consultant)

You have been engaged as change agent in a municipality administration with 4 divisions. After two years on the job you have fairly good overview of the production of services in the municipality. One of the divisions has introduced a routine of complete casework procedure, the other three are planning to follow suit. But, the picture is marked by inconvenient routines in all for divisions. Internal administration and problem solving are taking up too much time. Disclaiming responsibility is also a daily routine: "Don't ask me, that's not part of my job". Your preliminary impressions include the following:

- Users are dissatisfied with case work procedures, which are too slow.
- The quality of the case work does not match users' expectations.
- Files disappear, or appear on the caseworker's desk before other files are executed.
- Conflict between the archive and other divisions.
- The manager of the division that has introduced the complete casework. procedure has signed cases without reading the documents.
- Complaints are filed continually.

Chaos rules and no one seems to know where and how a change can be made.

The administration manager and the four division managers have met to discuss the establishment of a citizen's service office where the public can get advice and information on the spot. They know that the neighbouring municipality has practiced this since 1992. In a citizen's service office, professional competence is better utilized and the time spent on casework is reduced. Which municipal services that are to be moved to a service office are not yet settled.

You know that your municipality, in spite of chaotic circumstances, does not waste resources. You also know that the present situation has to be improved before a public service office can be established, and you have to convince the management of this. They have invited you to a meeting where you will present your suggestions for improvement. In

this meeting, you plan to discuss a method or a combination of methods you think will be useful to clear up the mess.

Assignments:
- Draw a sketch of the situation above.
- Think about methods and theories that could be applied to the above case.
- Other assignments will be given in the classroom.

1. 9 Saudana municipality

Background**:** One year has passed since Saudana municipality opened its nursing home operations to competition. Home care services are still run by the municipality. The following are statements from a user survey carried out after a private enterprise took over the institutions.

"Those in the home care service don't have time to sit down and talk when they visit, but I doubt whether it will be any better when in private hands." (Lene, 71 years old)

I don't know what a private takeover will entail, but I am impressed with the municipal service." (Ivar 79 years old)

The user survey shows that the municipality, the operators, the employees and the users are satisfied with the way the nursing homes are run.

"I like it here, and the staff is wonderful. I can't say that private operations have reduced the quality of the services" (Anne-Lise, 80 years old). "The staff takes really good care of my mum. They take her for trips to town and to the park. The most important thing is that the medical services are good." (Eirin, 45 years old).

"We are user-oriented and respond to feedback both from residents and relatives. Assistant nurses are given full responsibility, from A to Z, four to three patients at a time. When the employees don't have leaders who tell them what to do all the time, they work more efficiently and with no reduction in quality. Representatives from the municipality make regular unannounced control visits to check that the new operators are running the nursing homes in accordance with the contract," says one manager.

Based on this experience the municipality is now planning to open more of its services to competition. In the eyes of the employees, the municipal politicians are gambling when they are building future plans on what is clearly insufficient grounds. There is considerable opposition among the employees, especially among those in the support services. The public sector should be able to run municipal services just as well as the private sector.

"We are sceptical towards private operators. Our workplace is secure under municipal wings. We need time to sit down and talk to our users. Maybe Mrs. Olsen is more in need of personal care instead of having her house cleaned? Perhaps we need some sort of competition, internally or externally. Our monopoly has become institutional and we have only limited knowledge of new developments", says Sigrid, assistant nurse and union representative.

Assignments:
- Draw a sketch of the situation above.
- Think about methods and theories that could be applied to the above case.
- Other assignments will be given in the classroom.

1. 10 Efficiency plans on the desk

S. Eie has a degree in organization and management, and has practiced in the private sector. He is newly employed as a division manager of the central administration in Lavsletten municipality. S. Eie is efficient and eager to do a good job. He is eager to succeed as he takes on his new position.

The situation offers a good many challenges that is looking forward to dealing with. He immediately notices a muddled role distribution when it comes to the tasks in the division, slack budget management/control and a lack of clear-cut administrative routines and objectives.

The employees complain about a lack of space, outdated computer equipment and little support when the computers don't work. Caretaker services are also problematic.

S. Eie has a number of efficiency plans on his desk. But his ideas on improved budget management and new budgetary routines, and overall improved efficiency are met with hostility and frustration. "His only concern is better management systems, and he has his own ideas about productivity. He spends too much time on this instead of his management tasks. He creates more bottlenecks instead of eliminating them", says a union leader. "Although we work here, we are also users of municipal services".

The conflict is growing, and the personnel manager has to be involved. S. Eie reacts by working even harder, also at night and on weekends. The personnel manager cannot handle the situation and calls for external assistance.

Assignments:
- Draw a sketch of the situation above.
- Think about methods and theories that could be applied to the above case.
- Other assignments will be given in the classroom.

1. 11 Competitive exposure

The Data Plant is a municipally owned company with 24 employees. The company adapts various software packages and creates tailor-made computer concepts for the public sector.

For the last two years, the company has been in financial straits. The manager, Arvid Almaas, was looking for cheaper housing, but the plan was shelved as the employees, and the programmers in particular, were strongly against it. Almaas worries about the long-term development of the situation.

You have been recommended as a consultant to The Data Plant and you have had one meeting with Almaas. You have noted the following points during the meeting:

1- A genuine interest in the customers
2- A lopsided distribution of roles, authority and responsibility between the programmers and the other employees
3- A concern for the relationship between efficiency and effectiveness
4- A concern for the culture of collaboration in the organization. Almaas feels that a culture that may be detrimental to efficiency is developing.

The company has planned a boat trip to Denmark for all employees, for both business and pleasure. This trip was booked before you were called in.

Prior to the trip, a meeting is organized in the workplace between you and the employees. However, this meeting is changed to a 4 hour session and moved to the conference room of Colour Line on the day of departure. You will then have two 4-hour sessions with them upon the return from Denmark.

You outline your plan for the management, and the job is yours. You will deliver a proposal to a solution that will appeal to both management and employees on day 3.

Assignments:
- Draw a sketch of the situation above.
- Think about methods and theories that could be applied to the above case.
- Other assignments will be given in the classroom.

1. 12 RISK-analysis

You are the chief administrative officer in a small Norwegian municipality with approx. 10 000 inhabitants. The municipality is organized along traditional lines with a local council, executive committee, and a main committee for each department, such as the Technical Division, Department of Health and social services, etc. Each department is headed by a chief municipal officer. The departments are further divided into sections, with a head of section and group leaders.

The financial situation in the municipality has deteriorated over the years, and the politicians are greatly concerned. As a consequence, they ask the chief administrative officer to present a proposition for a renewed political and administrative structure.

The executive committee asks specifically that the chief administrative officer outline a new political and administrative structure. The local council asks for an assessment of a model where departments and sections are replaced by activity areas. The council also wants suggestions for a visible reduction of the distance between the chief administrative officer and those who have daily contact with the public.

The executive committee believes a program for renewal should be organized as a project and asks the chief executive officer to draw up a proposal for organization and implementation of such a project. As chief administrative officer you know that this is a conservative municipality with a strong organizational culture and little propensity for change. Your assumption, therefore, is that the proposal will be strongly opposed.

Assignments:
- Draw a sketch of the situation above.
- Think about methods and theories that could be applied to the above case.
- Other assignments will be given in the classroom.

1. 13 A prosepctive reorganisation that went wrong

Mr. Stokke, head of the Technical division, finds that the division is in need of a new organizational structure. His motto for this is "Innovation through team spirit".

Employees complain about lack of communication and vague authority lines, and call for a review of the internal structure and the contact with other departments and divisions.

A planning committee is set up, with Mr Stokke as leader, and both external and internal representatives as members.

During the planning stage, Mr. Stokke is active and ensures a swift procedure. He has frequent discussions with the employees. In a short period of time, the planning committee has drawn up a proposition, but a majority of the employees (outside the planning committee) does not agree with it. In their comment they propose an alternative work schedule and a new organizational structure.

The alternative proposition is based on the original, and states that it does indeed lay the groundwork for a better organizational structure. However, the following issues should be examined closer:

- More decentralization
- A smoother transition to the new structure
- Improved internal representation in discussions prior to decisions

The proposition is discussed at the planning committee's next meeting, but is rejected on the grounds that it is "unrealistic". This leads to frustration and loud debates. Many feel that Mr. Stokke's ideas about "innovation through team work" are only a manner of speaking and without practical consequence. And when Stokke realizes that the new "team spirit" is more discord than accord, he seeks an informal meeting with the head of administration. At the next meeting in the division, a letter from the administration asks for a postponement of the work on the new structural plan.

Assignments:
- Draw a sketch of the situation above.
- Think about methods and theories that could be applied to the above case.
- Other assignments will be given in the classroom.

1. 14 The first strike in space

Read "The first strike in space" and come with your comments

The first strike in space broke out on Friday 27 December 1973, when astronauts on board the last Skylab ferry refused to carry out the assigned tasks. Their workplace was one of the costliest and most complicated in the world (or rather, outside it!). This voyage was the last one planned for the Skylab. Important scientific investigations were to be carried out. The objective, which the astronauts surely agreed on, was to get the most out of their time in space. But how?

Billions and years were spent preparing the project, where a number of people were assembled to carry out given tasks. How were these tasks to be coordinated, organized and managed?

NASA's response was based on extensive hierarchical and minute control. Decisions were made without consulting the crew, as if they were robots on remote control. This was according to the general view of organization and management in NASA, and it had worked without problems – until now.

Every assignment and task was planned in detail and managed from Houston. NASA tried to press as many tasks as possible into the time available in space, and the time given to each assignment was reduced. Even the breaks became shorter. Time to prepare for experiments was shortened, and the most popular pastime – to gaze at the sun and the earth – was prohibited. NASA sent daily instructions on who was to do what, minute by minute. Which equipment should be applied for what task, when and how, were specified in painstaking detail. Endless yards of instructions were printed on the Skylab computer every day. Finally, the astronauts called a halt.

NASA could not predict everything, and that was a problem: the former crew had stored equipment in a way that delayed the start of the research program. Another surprise was unpredictable dependencies between independent tasks.

Mutual dependencies cannot be predicted. An astronaut's individual work plan from NASA could specify leisure time and exercise (which causes vibrations), while another astronaut's assignment was exact scientific measuring. NASA's one-sided/unilateral remote control, with no room for local management, spelled trouble.

Another organizational model was possible. NASA could have chosen differently. The astronauts possessed a combination of technical professional competence and situational understanding, a solid base for purposeful adjustments. They had what was needed to be autonomous, but were not given the chance. This is a classical problem in the organization and management of human resources.

What could NASA have done differently? Which knowledge, theories and concepts exist that could have been of help in the design of workplaces and forms of management? This book was written as an introduction to scientific disciplines (such as psychology, sociology, organizational theory, administration, ergonomics and labour research) which may provide answers to such questions.

The main purpose of this book is to provide insight into concepts, theories and knowledge of organization and management, and to be of use for future professionals. We are concentrating on social science topics, but our objective is not an abstract introduction, but rather to teach and inspire student in a professional course to be creative on the topic of management and organization of human resources.

[Source: Elden, Max et al. Mennesker i arbeid. En innføring i organisasjon og ledelse. Universitetsforlaget 1986: 15]

Assignments:
- Draw a sketch of the situation above.
- Think about methods and theories that could be applied to the above case.
- Other assignments will be given in the classroom.

1. 15 Figures, tables and graphics
Some of the slides and graphics used during the term are reproduced here to give an overview.

2. Cases in Leadership and *Human Resource Management*

2. 1 An exhausted man

I am a man, aged 45, employed at organization X in Oslo for more than 20 years. I started as an executive officer in the personnel department. I advanced, and after 5 years I got the overall responsibility for courses and in-service training. 15 years later I moved one step up the ladder, and became personnel manager, responsible for personnel policy, planning, etc. In the meantime, quality control systems and regulations for the working environment, occupational safety and health have entered the stage. The workload has increased manifold, and I had two months' sick leave after my first collapse. After two months back on the job, I had another breakdown, this time at home. My hearing has become impaired and I suffer from tinnitus.

I see myself as a charismatic person with strong opinions that I like to voice, perhaps sometimes to the detriment of others. I have always had sufficient power, I have enjoyed working with structured tasks and I have demanded respect from my employees. I am also a very social person, with a focus on the human capital, which is apparent in my leadership style.

However, the demands for documentation, annual job appraisal interviews, etc, have also brought conflicts. I have revised the situation, and I now distribute tasks according to the degree of maturity among my staff, both task- and relation wise. So far it has not brought notable improvement. The responsibility allotted to the leader and the processes at work in an organization have become too complicated. The aspect of pleasure that came with the job has decreased with my upward mobility.

Assignments:
- Draw a sketch of the situation above.
- Think about methods and theories that could be applied to the above case.
- Other assignments will be given in the classroom.

2. 2 Olsen's dilemma

A. Olsen has been head of internal control in district 30 for about 6 months. He obtained the position partly because of his positive contributions in the recent organization development process. His colleagues do in no way doubt that he is good for this position; however, they do not see why their colleague Iversen, the most competent person in the department, became second to an outsider.

One Friday morning, Olsen's boss, E. Berg, is on the line, asking for help for one month to assist in building an internal control system for the central administration, starting the following Monday. Olsen reviews his staff and decides that deputy head Iversen is the best man for the job. He invites Iversen to his office the same afternoon. "Iversen, our boss

needs a competent person to help out in the central administration. I think you have the best qualifications for the job. He needs you for one month and you are to start Monday.

"Why me?" Iversen responds. "I don't have the time right now. I prefer to finish the job I am presently doing with my colleagues before I take on new tasks somewhere else. Continuity is necessary in this job, and we are soon to present documents for internal control in our urban district. Are you not satisfied with my performance here?" Olsen shakes his head. "Oh yes, I am, but this is important. Sorry, I have to rush to a meeting now, and have no time to discuss this now. So, you see Berg in his office Monday morning."

Monday morning, Berg calls Olsen: "I thought you were going to send Iversen down to assist us. We're in a hurry to get started here, and he hasn't turned up yet. Tell him we need him now." "Well, he's not here – I told him on Friday that he should be at your place this morning. I'll send someone else down immediately". As Olsen prepares to give Iversen a call, his secretary comes in: "Iversen's wife just called. He is sick and he won't be back the first couple of days."

Olsen is heading a staff meeting on Wednesday morning when he has to answer a phone call. As he returns, a colleague with his back to the door says: "Iversen did a great job on the football field yesterday!" Everyone goes quiet as Olsen enters the room, and for the rest of the meeting they avoid meeting his gaze.

Assignments:
- Draw a sketch of the situation above.
- Think about methods and theories that could be applied to the above case.
- Other assignments will be given in the classroom.

2. 3 Technical Department

You are currently employed as head of division in the Technical Department in Hoeysletten municipality. The engineers in the division have the same professional background and more or less the same amount of work experience, and you can pick and choose among them for the various projects the division is responsible for. Yesterday the administration manager asked to see you as he had a request from a municipality further north, engaged in the same inter-municipal network. The municipality needed to "borrow" three engineers for a period of four months.

All your engineers have the knowledge and experience needed for the task. Looking at the current workload in your division, there is not one to be preferred over another. However, the request is complicated by the fact that the municipality in question is placed in what your staff would call "the bush". No one volunteers.

1) Is the problem you are facing an individual problem or a group problem, and why?

2a) Describe and explain how the decision tree of Vroom and Yetton can be used to reach a decision in this case.

2b) According to Vroom and Yetton, how decisive are criteria such as time, quality and acceptance in making decisions, and how can such normative models be applied?

(See Vroom and Yetton's decision tree and the categories belonging to it.)

The Organisational model, The Octograph: © A. M. Al-Araki.

Assignments:
- Draw a sketch of the situation above.
- Think about methods and theories that could be applied to the above case.
- Other assignments will be given in the classroom.

2. 4 Conflict in a nursing institution

The institution is located in a small town in Troendelag. It is a private nursing home, owned by a private organization. The nursing home has two wards with 40 patients in all. The institution also runs an arts and crafts workshop where the healthiest among the patients are active. Here they make carpets, tablecloths, pillows and woodwork that is sold at the local Christmas market, thus providing an extra source of income for the organization. Two local women manage the arts and crafts room. They have no formal training, but are very good at what they do. Their aim has been to produce as many products as possible, to contribute to the institution's economy and to work for their wages.

The organization is still the owner of the nursing home, but the municipality has taken over daily operations. Also, an ergonomist has been employed. Her objective is not to keep the arts and crafts room in full production, but to offer a broader scope of activities to as many patients as possible. She wants supplementary tasks on the wards included in the positions of the two local women, such as training the patients in how to dress and eat without assistance. The arts and crafts room should also be open for activities such as reading, conversation and social gatherings, or other practical things to help patients cope with their daily lives.

The two women in the workshop do not agree. They believe this will lead to fewer products and less income. Ailing patients with fewer resources should not use the arts and crafts room. And being in a ward to help with dressing and meals could prove to be an extra burden on the staff, who are busy enough as it is. The two women know how to run the workshop – haven't they been doing it for years? – and the perspectives of the ergonomist are new and frightening. Also, if they don't master the new tasks they may lose their jobs, with no new job opportunities in their small town.

So, they sabotage the implementation of the new ideas. The consequence is a deadlocked situation that is now taking its toll on everyone, patients included. Everyone expects that you as a leader will find a satisfactory solution. You have talked to all parties in the conflict and have formed your own opinion, but you want to make use of the decision tree to look for alternatives.

As you give answers from A to H (see illustration), comment briefly on the basis for your choices towards the final recommendation of the decision tree. Comment also on consequences compared to alternative recommendations.

(See Vroom and Yetton's decision tree and the categories belonging to it.)

Assignments:
- Draw a sketch of the situation above.
- Think about methods and theories that could be applied to the above case.
- Other assignments will be given in the classroom.

2. 5 Hoeysletten Municipality

Hoeysletten municipality has a centralized and quite large planning department. This is now being downscaled, and some of the employees are being transferred to other departments that will now have increased responsibility for planning their own activities. The administration manager has asked the heads of department to evaluate the need for increased staff, and the Department of Health and Social Services is provided with two new staff members. The head of department introduces them to the planning consultant and asks her to bring them up to date on their new tasks. First, she thinks this is a kind of a joke, but slowly realizes that the two new employees have been transferred without her being informed. It worries her, as she cannot see why they suddenly need three people to do the job she has carried out alone.

Discuss the questions below:

a) How can transfers like this be done differently – and better – in an organization?

b) Who do you think is responsible for the mistakes made in the situation above?

c) How would you evaluate this decentralization issue in a loss-gain perspective, short and long-term?

Assignments:
- Draw a sketch of the situation above.
- Think about methods and theories that could be applied to the above case.
- Other assignments will be given in the classroom.

2. 6 Fatigue

Fatigue, or the feeling of being burned-out, is defined as a temporary emotional or physical exhaustion. Symptoms are reduced work capacity and cynicism regarding oneself and one's surroundings. It is a form of depression. Warning signals are insomnia, tiredness, and concentration difficulties. Suddenly, you make mistakes you never used to make. Your desk is cluttered with unfinished tasks and works undone. You lack motivation; you're moody, short-tempered and depressed. Maybe you even need some time off work to recuperate.

"I started feeling uncomfortable. One day, I was just exhausted. I tried to talk to the management, but was turned down, as they saw this as taking sides in a conflict. The person I had a "conflict" with, is a mid-level manager, and in the reference group of the project I was heading. We were on good terms and agreed that participation from down up was a good thing. I fail to see how this can be interpreted as a "conflict". The end of it all was that I was taken off the job as project leader.

I took sick leave, and when I returned to work I applied for a temporary position with less responsibility. When I later returned to my previous position I was met with resistance, supposedly due to my behaviour during the time before I was sick, and the conflict this had created in the department. I went on sick leave again."

One and a half year later, Knut Knutsen is diagnosed with burned-out symptoms and fatigue.

Assignments:
- Draw a sketch of the situation above.
- Think about methods and theories that could be applied to the above case.
- Other assignments will be given in the classroom.

2. 7 The vacancy or me

I was working in a temporary position and my efforts were appreciated. Collegial relations were good, says Andreas. However, there was a noticeable change of atmosphere, as it became known that I, and five others in the department, had applied for the vacant position as head of department. I got the position, and I was happy. I wanted it, as I could see the potential development of the department, and I was looking forward to working out planning documents and creating systems. Imagine the shock when I realized there was a group intending to make things difficult for me.

They did what they could to avoid me, and moved away during the lunch break. They were aggressive, internally backing each other, and communication was difficult. However, they were qualified people with a good grasp of their jobs. Then, a rumour surfaced: the previous leader, before he moved to another department, had promised one person in the group a promotion. I sent my credentials and documents back to the head office to have them evaluated again: had someone been passed over? The reply came back that no mistake had been made, and that I had the best qualifications for heading the department.

I told my superior the problems we were experiencing in my department. He knew about them, he said, but there was nothing he could do at present: he felt powerless in the face of this situation, and if I wanted, he could find me a suitable transfer position. If I'd felt that my performance wasn't good enough, it would have been an option, but I had applied for this job because I knew I could do it well. I refused the offer, saying no thanks, and insisted that something had to be done about the situation.

Assignments:
- Draw a sketch of the situation above.
- Think about methods and theories that could be applied to the above case.
- Other assignments will be given in the classroom.

2. 8 XY Consulting

You are the managing director of a well-known public consulting company (XY CONSULTING) specializing in organizational systems. The staff is made up of six consultants who are relatively independent in their work with clients.

Yesterday you received a complaint from one of your biggest customers, expressing discontent about the inefficiency of one of the company's consultants. To restore his confidence in the company, something had to be done.

The consultant with the assignment in question has been with the company for six years. He is an experienced systems analyst, and one of the best in his profession. For the first five years he did a fantastic job, and was a role model for the younger members of the staff. But lately his former enthusiasm seems to have been replaced by indifference, and his negative attitude has been noticed both by colleagues and clients. This complaint is not a first: a former customer reported that the consultant had come to work with an obvious and heavy hangover.

To improve this embarrassing situation is vital, otherwise XY CONSULTING will lose the customer. The consultant does in no way lack the necessary expertise – if he were only willing to use it!

As a manager, how would you handle the situation?

(See Vroom and Yetton's decision tree + decision categories)

Assignments:
- Draw a sketch of the situation above.
- Think about methods and theories that could be applied to the above case.
- Other assignments will be given in the classroom.

2. 9 The pipeline

- Vroom, V.H. and Yetton, P.W. (1973) "Leadership and Decision Making", University of Pittsburg.
- Vroom, V. H., & Jago, A. G. (1988) The new leadership: Managing participation in organizations. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

2. 10 Twelve engineers

- Vroom, V.H. and Yetton, P.W. (1973) "Leadership and Decision Making", University of Pittsburg.
- Vroom, V. H., & Jago, A. G. (1988) The new leadership: Managing participation in organizations. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

2. 11 Reporting to Vice-president

- Vroom, V.H. and Yetton, P.W. (1973) "Leadership and Decision Making", University of Pittsburg.

- Vroom, V. H., & Jago, A. G. (1988) <u>The new leadership: Managing participation in organizations</u>. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

2. 12 Error rates

- Vroom, V.H. and Yetton, P.W. (1973) "Leadership and Decision Making", University of Pittsburg
- Vroom, V. H., & Jago, A. G. (1988) <u>The new leadership: Managing participation in organizations</u>. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

2. 13 Rules to protect the quality of decisions

- Vroom, V.H. and Yetton, P.W. (1973) "Leadership and Decision Making", University of Pittsburg
- Vroom, V. H., & Jago, A. G. (1988) <u>The new leadership: Managing participation in organizations</u>. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

2. 14 The situation of Hans

During the first year in his new workplace, Hans makes some blunders that are noticed among his colleagues. He loses the keys to his office, causes important documents to disappear, and he double books appointments – at the same time. Perhaps the group has thrived on having a muddler in their midst, someone they take their irritation out on. From Hans' perspective, the blunders are a response to extreme demands which he also makes on himself.

   After around a year, as Hans started to feel more secure in his position, his behaviour changed. He still made the odd mistake – just like the rest of us. Still, after another three years, the group reacted strongly to even the most trivial mistakes made by Hans. If something occurred, they shook their heads and sighed – what a hopeless case he was! And Hans accepted his role as a scatterbrain. If something went wrong in connection with a task that Hans was involved in, his spontaneous reaction was "oh no, I did it again!" – even when it wasn't his mistake.

   His role filled an obvious function. he was an easy target for his colleagues' projection of their own weak points, which they did not have to be responsible for now that Hans was there. If they muddled up, it was just "trifles, compared to Hans' blunders!" – or they simply let him take the blame for their mistakes.

Assignments:
- Draw a sketch of the situation above.
- Think about methods and theories that could be applied to the above case.
- Other assignments will be given in the classroom.

2. 15 Figures, tables and graphics

Group Problems	Individual Problems
(AI) You solve the problem or make the decision yourself, using information available to you at the time.	(AI) You solve the problem or make the decision by yourself, using information available to you at the time.
(AII) You obtain the necessary information from your subordinates, then decide the solution to the problem yourself. You may or may not tell your subordinates what the problem is in getting the information from them. The role played by your subordinates in making the decision is clearly one of providing the necessary information to you, rather than generating or evaluating solutions	(AII) You obtain the necessary information from your subordinate, then decide on the solution to the problem yourself. You may or may not tell the subordinate what the problem is in getting the information from him. His role in making the decision is clearly one of providing the necessary information to you, rather than generating or evaluating alternative solutions.
(CI) You share the problem with the relevant subordinates individually, getting their ideas and suggestions without bringing them together as a group. Then *you* make the decision, which may or may not reflect your subordinates' influence.	(CI) You share the problem with your subordinate, getting his ideas and suggestions. Then you make a decision, which may or may not reflect his influence.
(CII) You share the problem with your subordinates as a group, obtaining their collective ideas and suggestions. Then you make the decision, which may or may not reflect your subordinates' influence.	(GI) You share the problem with your subordinate, and together you analyze the problem and arrive at a mutually agreeable solution.
(GII) You share the problem with your subordinates as a group. Together you generate and evaluate alternatives and attempt to reach agreement (consensus) on a solution. Your role is much like that of a chairman. You do not try to influence the group to adopt 'your' solution, and you are willing to accept and implement any solution which has the support of the entire group.	(DI) You delegate the problem to your subordinate, providing him with any relevant information that you possess, but giving him responsibility for solving the problem by himself. You may or may request him to tell you what solution he has reached.

Decision-making style taxonomy (level of participant involvement chosen by managers). Vroom, V.H. and Yetton, P.W. (1973) "Leadership and Decision Making", University of Pittsburg

Appendix
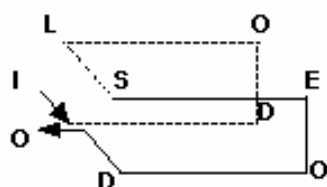
Acronyms		Complete and shortened sentences	Optional acronyms
I	(ia)	Differentiation of input & demands in accordance with demography & local interests [*Input & denmands*]	DID
D	(ii)	Distribution of responsibilities, resources and roles [*Distribution of roles*]	SDR
O	(iii)	Objectives, priorities, plans and follow-up systems [*Objecties & plans*]	OPF
L	(iv)	Leadership & leader's platform of responsibility [*Leadership*]	LPR
S	(v)	Teams, supportive groups & individualists [*Supportive groups*]	TSI
E	(vi)	Satisfaction of needs through welfare, wages, economic reasoning & reduction of losses [*Economic reasoning*]	WER
O	(vii)	Output of resources & mastery of task performance [*Output of resources*]	ORM
D	(viii)	Offer to customers & development of human and material resources [*Development of resources*]	ODR
O	(ix)	Conformity of outcome to outside needs [*Conformity of outcome*]	CON

The Organisational model, The Octograph: © A. M. Al-Araki.

Figure 13: Explanation of the concepts of the Octograph in non-abbreviated form

Another way of looking at the partial model "The system of Distribution", illustrated in figure 13 above is to envisage the four components of the model against the remaining components in the Octograph. In the table below, one can put the following question whenever two components intersect each other: In which way has "DID" something to do with "LPR", "STI", "WER" and "DOR"? The answer will be: "DID" has to do with "LPR" through, for instance, the flow of information inn to the organisation. It has to do with "STI" through the dual existence of the individual, outside the organisation as a client and inside it as an employee. It has to do with "WER" through financial input. It has to do with "DOR" through task performance, demographic data and flow of materials. In such a way one can produce simple associations. However, this will not permit the discussion of causal relations between the components of the model, nor would it.

Components of the partial model	Remaining components in the Octograph			
	Leadership (LPR)	Group status & cohesion (STI)	Welfare & economic results (WER)	Development of resources (DOR)
Input & Demand (DID)	Flow of information	Dual existence Adaptability Resolution of conflicts	Financial input	Task performance Demographic data Row materials
Distribution of authority and roles (DAR)	Power structure Hierarchical & horizontal relations Stability of norms	Unions Status & prestige Group trust Communication	Financial compensation Participative management	Personal growth Flow of information
Objectives and control systems (OPF)	Span of control Values Managerial competence	Shared expectations	Reward system Job enrichment Job redesign	Personal development plans Training
Resources & outputs (RTM)	Performance of tasks Mastery of task performance	Collaboration Interdependency Resolution of conflicts	Expected results Performance of task Job security	Innovation and creativity

Figure14: The partial model "The system of Distribution" related to other components from the rest of the Octograph

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