

From Ego to Eco: where are we, where are we trying to go?

Part 5. How we organise ourselves

Tom Boydell



"Change the Workplace, Change the World".

the title of a book by Alan Watkins and Nick Dalton¹. Although its subtitle is *The HR (R)Evolution*, it is rather more than a book for HR specialists and focuses, amongst other things, on many of the issues that I have been exploring in this series of papers. Supported by ideas and examples, they describe some of the challenges we are currently facing and say that "we have two paths ahead of us:

"One leads to 'back to the future': consolidation of industry, less employment, greater inequality, social unrest, and at worst a decimated ecosystem. The other leads to a new paradigm: a world where social capital counts more than financial capital, a world where sustainability matters, and potentially we can all enjoy an abundance and move beyond scarcity"²

or in the terms we have been using in this Journal, we can choose an ego- or an eco- route forward.

¹ Change the Workplace, Change the World, Watkins and Dalton, 2020

² Change the Workplace, Change the World, Watkins and Dalton, 2020, page 9

For Watkins and Dalton it is the path that businesses take that will determine the future of the earth and every-body, every-thing, that lives on it. In previous episodes of this serialisation I have given some examples of what we as individuals might do, and now in this final part I will look first at the evolution of how we organise ourselves in organisations, and then touch upon some similar moves in the field of politics.

I will start with Table 1, from Part I of this series.³, that shows, from an individual point of view, some aspects of the move from ego- to eco-consciousness. In table 2 I follow by looking at what this means for an organisation and in the world of politics, again moving from self-assertive separation and competition to integrated oneness and co-operation.

Here, then, we have what I am calling Organisational Stances. Equivalent to the individual Stances in Table 1, these are now the ways in which the organisation stands, how it perceives the world..

For some time I considered there to be three Stances⁴, but my current picture is that there are four,⁵ although as will be seen the last two have many similarities. I used to think in terms of identifying an organisation as.."being in" one or other stance - that is, "a Stance 1, 2, 3 or 4 organisation". I now see this as quite unhelpful - any one organisation will very probably do some things in a Stance 1 way, others in a Stance 2 way, still others in a Stance 3 way, and perhaps a few in a Stance 4 way. It may be that we don't do in the way of one or two Stances. Indeed I would suggest that this might be quite a common occurrence, with most organisations currently doing most things as in Stances 1 and 2.

Of course it's quite possible - indeed highly probable - that different stakeholders will have different pictures of the organisation's Stance profile, whether these be different people from within that organisation, or others from outside organisations.

The way we handle these differences will themselves be attuned to the Stance that we take to transforming our organisation. Thus a Stance 1 approach to such change might involve only the senior managers in giving their picture of how things are now and how they would like them to be, and then deciding what they think should be done as a result - possibly by the Stance 1 technology of reorganisation.

By contrast, a Stance 3 approach would involve many stakeholders in creating and sharing pictures of how they experience the organisation, how they would like to experience it, and how to move forward, how to make that transformation - perhaps. using one or more of the approaches shown in the table or adapting, designing, their own.

³ From Part I: Overview and Consciousness

⁴ Leadership Development; Current Practice, Future Perspectives, Burgoyne, Boydell and Pedler, 2005; 'The Learning Organization' - Drop the Dead Metaphor!, Blantern, Boydell and Burgoyne, 2013

⁵ Learning Company", Pedler, Burgoyne and Boydell, 2019; The Future of the Learning Organization, Boydell, Pedler and Burgoyne, 2019

In this series I have tried to indicate steps that we can do - individually and with others - to reduce Shiva and Shiva's⁶ separations between us and nature, between us and each other, between our selves and our Selves. In face of all the challenges that Earth and all of us who live on and in her this these may seem rather small steps. However, apart from the following tables, I will end with two - observations? slogans? exhortations? I'll say HOPES. The first is from Chapter 1, *Principles of Progress*, of Koch and Hooks' *Believe in People*⁷; the second is the title of a book by Servigne, Stevens and Chapelle⁸. Between them these give us a positive, optimistic message, namely.

PROGRESS HAPPENS FROM THE BOTTOM UP

and

ANOTHER END OF THE WORLD IS POSSIBLE.

⁶ Oneness vs the 1%: Shattering Illusions, Seeding Freedom, Shiva and Shiva, 2019: 22

⁷ Believe in People, Koch and Hooks, 2020

⁸ Another End of the World is Possible, Servigne, Stevens and Chapelle, 2021

Table 1: Four Stances of Being

	CAPRA⁹ Shiva and Shiva¹⁰	STANCE & Modes¹¹ and Torbert Action Logics	INCLUDED: in "My" Group	EXCLUDED: Others not in "My" Group
EGO	SELF-ASSERTIVE Separation Thinking Rational Analysis Reductionist Linear Values Expansion Competition Quantity Domination	Stance 1 Modes 1 & 2 Adapting, Adhering Action Logic 1 Opportunist	Me	Anyone not me: all of you, all of them
		Stance 2 Modes 3, 4 & 5 Accepting, Experiencing, Experimenting Action Logics 2, 3, 4: Diplomat, Expert, Achiever	Me and us - those whom I see as being in "my" reference group: some of you, the you who are the same as I am or I want to be	All others - those I see not as in my reference group: most of you, most of them
ECO	INTEGRATIVE Oneness Thinking Intuitive Synthesis Holistic Nonlinear Values Conservation Co~operation Quality Partnership	Stance 3 Mode 6 Connecting, Action Logic 5: Individualist/ Redefining	Me, us, quite a lot of you. As Stance 2 plus those from other diverse groups with which I'm prepared to associate, to appreciate, as joint members of a larger We, Us	Those others not in the groups with which I choose to associate, to appreciate: some of you.
		Stance 4 Modes 6 & 7 Connecting, Dedicating Action Logics 6 & 7: Transforming, Alchemist/Alchemical	Everybody and everything - WE	Nobody, nothing: none of you

⁹ *The Web of Life*, Capra, 1997: 10. The mixture of nouns and adjectives in the table is as in the original

¹⁰ *Oneness vs the 1%: Shattering Illusions, Seeding Freedom*, Shiva and Shiva, 2019: 22-31

¹¹ The Modes form a framework of individual development and are described in Part 2 - *Relationships With and Within Ourselves*

Table 2: Four Stances of Organising

CHARACTERISTIC	STANCE 1 IMPLEMENTING: Doing things well	STANCE 2 IMPROVING Doing things better	STANCE 3 INNOVATING Doing better things - together	STANCE 4 INTERTWINGLING Doing things that matter - to the world
Leaders and leadership	<p>"Leaders as managers": top management sets mission, vision, objectives for the organisation and may or may not inform others of these.</p> <p>Leadership style: <i>command and control</i></p>	<p>"Managers as leaders": top management "inspires" others who in turn "inspire" their subordinates and so on down the hierarchical chain, all managers creating enthusiasm and commitment from their teams - "delegated leadership"</p> <p>Leadership style: <i>Winning hearts and minds</i></p>	<p>Emphasis not so much on leader with a specific job title but on the <i>process</i> of leadership - the act of helping to make sense, make meaning together from what's happening in a community of practice¹² - which anybody may exercise in a given moment. This may be termed "distributed leadership".¹³ It requires an appropriate overall organisational climate or system, involving as it does "relational dialogue, having conversations across boundaries between different world views." ¹⁴ Such dialogue may call upon us to use <i>presencing</i> - "letting go [of the past] ... letting come the future that wants to emerge"¹⁵.</p> <p>Leadership style: <i>Making meaning together</i></p>	

¹² Making Common Sense: Leadership as Meaning Making in a Community of Practice, Drath and Palus, 1994; Distributed Leadership, Business Balls, 2022 <https://www.businessballs.com/leadership-philosophies/distributed-leadership/>

¹³ The term "distributed leadership" has many diverse meanings, some quite disparate. See for example Distributed Leadership, Bolden, 2007

¹⁴ Leadership Development; Current Practice, Future Perspectives, Burgoyne, Boydell and Pedler, 2005:19. See also Creating Leaderful Organizations: How to Bring Out Leadership in Everyone, Raelin, 2003

¹⁵ Theory U: Leading from the Future as it Emerges, Scharmer, 2007: 366

<p>Purpose</p>	<p>Decided or assumed by owners, national or local government policies, top managers</p> <p>Commercial Sector: profit; survival</p> <p>Public Service: meeting specific user needs and statutory obligations; pleasing legislators and voters; survival</p> <p>NGOs and Voluntary Organisations: meeting the needs to which the organisation is dedicated; survival</p>	<p>Decided or assumed as in Stance 1 but now explicitly competitive, moving from Stance 1's surviving into winning - beating the internal or external opposition, "beating" our own previous performance, being the best in the business.</p>	<p>Purpose as in Stances 1 and 2 - profit, statutory obligations, meeting specified needs - but with the proviso that we don't damage the planet and may indeed regenerate damage already done.</p> <p>In so doing it is appreciated that many diverse stakeholders want to achieve things together, to participate in the creation of an unknown future.</p> <p>At the same time it is recognised that all stakeholders have their own legitimate, diverse, traditions, histories, purposes and aspirations and that these need to be incorporated as far as is possible into the overall purpose of working together</p> <p>Stance 2 emphasis on competing and winning shifts to become co-operating, although as a collective we may still want to do better than before, better than other collectives</p>	<p>Converse of Stance 3: now we want to heal the world, make it a better a better place - doing " the good, the true, the beautiful, the heroic" 16 - without making a financial loss, without failing to meet our statutory obligations, without failing to meet our specified needs</p> <p>Tackling issues of separation from other humans (injustice, inequality, racism, sexism, slavery) and from nature [See Parts III and IV of this series]</p> <p>NB: there are many government agencies and not-for-profits who have this as their stated purpose but actually operate with Stances 1 and 2 ways of doing things</p>
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¹⁶ Conscious Capitalism, Mackey and Sisodia, 2014: 59-67

<p>Recognised stakeholders - i.e. those whose views are listened to</p>	<p>Commercial sector: owners, investors, senior managers. To a limited extent, customers - e.g. through marketing surveys</p> <p>Public service, NGOs and Voluntary Organisations: legislative and regulatory bodies; senior managers; to a limited extent, voters and public in general - e.g. results of opinion polling</p>	<p>As Stance 1 plus all internal stakeholders (e.g. employees), customers, suppliers</p> <p>Much consultation, survey feedback, evaluation,</p>	<p>Owners, investors, employees, suppliers, customers, neighbours, interest and pressure groups, government departments and agencies, regulatory bodies, local communities, competitors, future generations</p> <p>Also awareness and acknowledgement of human, natural, environmental, ethical "stakeholders" such as those represented by The United Nations 17 Goals for Sustainable Development¹⁷</p> <p>More than just consultation - stakeholders are actively engaged, involved, working together with us</p>	<p>We want to make the World our prime stakeholder - a better place.</p> <p>Stance 3's awareness and acknowledgement of human, natural, environmental, ethical "stakeholders" now become a priority.</p>
<p>Distribution of power</p>	<p>Held according to position in hierarchy - the more senior you are, the more power you should have</p> <p>In practice there is often unofficial power, e.g. due to specific expertise or influence</p>	<p>Strategic power held by those at top of hierarchy. Power delegated to employees to make operational improvements - thus I am empowered to meet your objectives -, "I empower [want] you to do better that which I want you to do"</p>	<p>The diverse stakeholders have legitimate strategic and operational power within the overall community of practice - and can use this to make things happen as well as not happen</p>	

¹⁷ See Part I: Overview and Consciousness in this series. Also 17 Goals for Sustainable Development, United Nations, 2019

Distribution of knowledge	<p>Assumed that the more senior you are the greater knowledge you have. In practice, many employees have considerable knowledge but this is often ignored or rejected</p>	<p>It is recognised and appreciated that all those stakeholders who are involved - such as employees, customers, suppliers - have much significant knowledge. They are consulted and involved to determine the best way of achieving the hierarchically determined purpose</p>	<p>As Stance 2 but with more diverse stakeholders who are now engaged and involved rather than just consulted. This involvement includes jointly determining our purpose.</p>	<p>As Stance 3 and now with wider range of stakeholders as described above</p>
Organisation structure	<p>Designed for central and hierarchical control. Clear lines of authority and accountability</p>	<p>Designed for central control of direction and local empowerment of operations. Overarching hierarchy which attempts to retain clear lines of authority & accountability whilst recognising practical limitations e.g. "dotted line" relationships, matrix management, teamworking</p>	<p>Designed to support the co-operation of communities of practice. Different structures for specific purposes - meeting legal regulations, implementing and improving (Stances 1 and 2) within the overall context of doing better things and things that matter</p> <p>Structures may take any number of forms - hierarchy, lattice, matrix, flexible network of local organisations, groups and teams, forming and dissolving around changing business and community needs and corporate relationships</p>	
Decision making	<p>By the leader and top management</p> <p>Others' decisions are about how to carry out the rules and procedures that we have been taught</p>	<p>Policy decisions made by senior managers, after consultation and discussion with others.</p> <p>Operational decisions made by those who will implement them - in line with policies from above - as in Stance 2 Organisation Change and Development Programmes below</p>	<p>By many stakeholders, using various processes of working together, as in Stance 3 and 4 Organisation Change and Development Programmes below</p>	

Picture of people	"Hands", human resources,	Resourceful humans	Resourceful, purposeful, co~operating humans	Resourceful, purposeful, co~operating, committed humans
Focus of training and development	Individual competence	Individual and team competence	Individual and team competence plus cross-boundary working with a number of stakeholders with whom we feel related	As Stance 3 but with a wider range of others with and to whom we now feel related, connected
Organisation change and development programmes	Restructuring, reorganising; Quality Assurance	Briefing groups; teamwork development; Business Process Re-engineering; Deming approach to continuous improvement and Statistical Process Control; Lean thinking; Six Sigma; Balanced Scorecard	Action learning; actor network mapping; ante-narrative; appreciative enquiry; Bohm dialogue; collaborative enquiry; complexity mapping; critical conversation; cross boundary working; customer and supplier mapping; design thinking; empathic listening; forum theatre; future search; generative dialogue; Goethean Conversation; large group/whole system development; network analysis; non-violent communication; open space; presencing theatre; problem wickedness monitor; Quaker method; relational action learning; relational practice; story telling; talking stick; theatre of the oppressed; Transformations cards; U-process; Visual Explorer; World Café.	
Organisational metaphor	Machine, to be run smoothly and efficiently	Organism, a living problem to be solved	Network of conversations to explore a mystery and create a story together	
Underpinning disciplines	Engineering. Behaviourism	Humanistic psychology. Statistical Variation	Systems Theory. Social Constructionism. Adult Development. Pragmatics. Anthroposophy	Threefold Social Order. Posthumanism

<p>A somewhat prejudiced and selective sample of underpinning influencers</p>	<p>Taylor 1911;¹⁸ Fayol 1949;¹⁹ Skinner 1971²⁰</p>	<p>Maslow 1954²¹ McGregor 1960²² Rogers 1969;²³ Deming 1982²⁴</p>	<p>Follet 1918;²⁵ Bateson 1972;²⁶ Rorty 1979;²⁷ Senge 2010;²⁸ Gergen 1994;²⁹ Scharmer 2007³⁰</p>	<p>Steiner 1917;³¹ Douglas 1920;³² Perlas 2000;³³ Scharmer 2007;³⁴ Large 2010³⁵; Braidotti 2013;³⁶ Latour 2018³⁷</p>
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¹⁸ Principles of Scientific Management, Taylor, 1911

¹⁹ General and Industrial Administration, Fayol, 1949

²⁰ Beyond Freedom and Dignity, Skinner, 1971

²¹ Motivation and Personality, Maslow, 1954

²² The Human Side of Enterprise, McGregor, 1960

²³ Freedom to Learn, Rogers, 1969

²⁴ Out of the Crisis, Deming, 1982

²⁵ Mary P. Follett: Creating Democracy, Transforming Management, Tonn, I 2003

²⁶ [Steps to an Ecology of Mind](#), Bateson, G, 1972

²⁷ Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature, Rorty, 1979

²⁸ The Necessary Revolution. Senge et al, 2010

²⁹ Realities and Relationships: Soundings in Social Construction, Gergen,

³⁰ Theory U, Scharmer, 2007

³¹ Towards Social Renewal, Steiner, 1917/1999; Common Wealth, Large, 2010; Free, Equal and Mutual, Large and Briault, 2018

³² The Clifford Hugh Douglas Institute for the Study and Promotion of Social Credit, <https://www.socred.org/> accessed 28.02.22

³³ Shaping Globalization: Civil Society, Cultural Power and Threefolding, Perlas, 2000

³⁴ Theory U, Scharmer, 2007

³⁵ Common Wealth, Large, 2010

³⁶ The Posthuman, Braidotti, 2013

³⁷ Down to Earth: Politics in the New Climatic Regime, Latour, 2018

Approximate date when actively practised or emphasised in organisations	Since the Industrial Revolution. More consciously from about 1918 to present ³⁸	From about 1965 to present	From about 1995 to present	From about 2000 to present
Related Political Governance Systems	Autocracy, Tyranny, dictatorship from time immemorial to present	Democracy - universal suffrage.	Holacracy, Crowdocracy ³⁹	Green parties may promote Stance 4 policies but operate mainly in Stances 1 and 2 ways Financial System: Universal Basic Income and Universal Credit ⁴⁰

³⁸ In 2017 Fayol and Taylor came first and ninth respectively in 12 Manage's list of "Ten Top Management Concepts". The following year Fayol remained at number one and Taylor was promoted to third, on his way down as he doesn't feature in the 2020 list at all - unlike the unassailable Fayol who was still hanging on in there at number one. Plus ça change. 12 Manage's list of "Ten Top Management Concepts", https://www.12manage.com/description_top10.html accessed 28.02.22

³⁹ Crowdocracy: the End of Politics, Watkins and Stratenus, 2016

⁴⁰ Where do we Go from Here? Chaos or Community? Martin Luther King Jr, 1967; The Politics of Money: Towards Sustainability and Economic Democracy, Hutchinson, 2002; Universal Basic Income, Peters, 2021;

Organisational and political examples/ experiments in practice	Many world-wide, e.g. currently Syria, Saudi-Arabia, Russia, North Korea	Many world-wide, Finland was the first in 1917. Some countries profess to have it but with rules that appear to make voting difficult for certain sections of the population (e.g. some States in the USA are alleged to make it difficult for Black Americans to vote ⁴¹	Mondragón Co-Operative, Spain ⁴² WL Gore ⁴³ The Irish Citizens' Assembly ⁴⁴ Iceland Constitution ⁴⁵ Preston, UK ⁴⁶	SEKEM - sustainable development in the Egyptian desert ⁴⁷
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⁴¹ Why It Is so Hard to Vote If You're Black, Poor or Elderly in America, Gidda, 2017

⁴² Mondragón Co-operative Corporation: Participatory Business Management, Participedia, nd

⁴³ Workplace Democracy at W.L. Gore & Associates Inc, nd >2019

⁴⁴ The Citizens' Assembly, Government of Ireland, 2022

⁴⁵ Will Iceland Get a New Constitution? A New Revision Process Is Taking Shape, Hudson, 2018

⁴⁶ Preston Model: Community Wealth Generation and a Local Cooperative Economy, Cannon, Thorpe and Emili, 2020

⁴⁷ Sustainable Development Since 1977, <https://www.sekem.com/en/index/>

Tom Boydell writes

When I turned 80 I was advised to go part-time. So I'm now a part-time management development consultant, a part-time writer, a part-time actor, a part-time singer, a part-time poet, a part-time weaver and a part-time gardener. I'm glad I'm only a part-timer, otherwise I'd be worn out.

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