

PAPER
22

A diagnostic model

Tim Dalmau and Bob Dick (1991) *A diagnostic model for selecting interventions for community and organisational change*, second edition.¹ Chapel Hill: Interchange.

Overview

As the title suggests, this document describes a diagnostic model: a four-dimensional framework which can be used for diagnosing the effectiveness of organisations and other social systems, and can then be used to select an appropriate intervention.

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1. First published 1985 by Dalmau & Associates Pty. Ltd. Copyright © Dalmau and Associates 1985, 1986, 1990, 1991. The forerunner of this document was based on two previous papers written by Tim Dalmau: *Organisational life cycles* delivered at Seminar 83 of the Melbourne Organisational Development Network, Melbourne, Australia, May 1983 and *Training and motivation: an alternative perspective* delivered at the 1984 National Conference of the Institute of Mercantile Agents, Brisbane, March, 1984. It also draws on two papers written jointly with Bob Dick in 1984: *Promoting and marketing internal consultancy services in the Australian Public Service: lessons from the private sector* and *The dimensions of change — a consultant's perspective*.

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Before we get down to business, as it were, perhaps we should explain what we mean by an intervention. An “intervention technique” (or just “intervention”) is a step by step procedure by which community or organisational change may be brought about.

It is, if you like, a recipe for change. As an internal or external consultant or change-agent, you are often called upon to make interventions. You have to decide what is the real nature of the problem with which you are dealing and what type of intervention is appropriate to bring about the desired change.

There are many interventions which have been described in books and articles. In fact there are recipe books for organisational change and community change. They often have titles such as “organisational development” and “community development”. Not all of the recipe books let you know when to use a particular recipe. Even fewer tell you how fail-safe the recipe is. Some recipes turn out well in the hands of a casual amateur. Others depend on the expertise of a *cordons bleu* chef. The recipes themselves are usually good, but less often easy to use.

This paper describes *how to choose an intervention*.. It gives you a set of questions to ask yourself. Your answers will tell you the type of intervention you need. Later documents will describe the interventions themselves in more detail.

The model outlined below has arisen from our thinking and work with a number of clients in which questions of corporate identity, culture and mythology have been important. It seems to us that interventions designed to work with these aspects of organisational life are in short supply in the literature and practice of consulting, process design and change management.

There is a body of literature and knowledge from the field of anthropology which does address issues to do with ritual, symbolism and mythology. It does not always marry this adequately with the more “rational” aspects of ideology, belief and normative systems in organisational life. Hence, we have been concerned to develop diagnostic models which achieve this sort of integration. Their intention is to point to appropriate intervention strategies for managers, consultants and change agents.

Like all models, the diagnostic framework outlined below is in a state of continual development and modification in our minds and in the way we use it in practice. Consequently, we would value any comments and suggestions from the reader.

This paper is divided into three parts:

Part 1 Life and Death In Organisations. As an introduction and context to Part 2, this part outlines a model which seeks to describe long-term growth and decline of groups and organisations. The model is most applicable to macro views of organisations, although it can also be used to explain system behaviour in smaller groups and has been used with family systems.

Part 2 Maps For Diagnosis. This part guides the reader through a series of questions about why change is needed, what sort of change is required and who are the people to be involved in the change and where are they.

Part 3 Selecting Interventions. This part discusses the use of various change and consulting intervention strategies in the light of the diagnostic framework outlined in Part 2.

Part 1

Life and death in organisations

Beginnings and endings are important. For the person, birth and death are fundamental boundaries. Similarly, every aspect of a group comes into existence and develops; and every development is bound for decline. Paradoxically, decline also carries within it the potential for renewal.

Further, no group can remain ever unchanging—any effort to keep it that way will ultimately destroy it. Even in the short term it will render the group ineffective.

These are some basic assumptions for what follows. They apply to an organisation or group in its entirety. They apply also to any of its organic parts: its goal system, its programs, its structure, its roles, and so on...

Organisational and group decline

The decline of any organisation (or a sub-unit, aspect, function, or the like) can be regarded as a series of steps related to *increasing doubt*.

At times the general functioning of a group may be highly acceptable to all. This may be indicated by high morale; the people involved are likely to be cohesive; there are common goals and congruent structures, and so on. We then say that the group exists in a state of *suspended doubt*. It is not that the group is functionally perfect. Rather, its members have for the time being unconsciously agreed to withhold doubt and scepticism. Everything is fine, or seems to be.

The first sign of decline appears when members start to tell leaders widely that things are not functioning as well as they might. Some doubt begins to be expressed. Colloquially, we might describe someone as saying: "We've got a problem here". The first and most typical response is denial: "No we haven't; everything's fine; let's not fiddle with the system, it's working well."

The doubt is about the operations of the group—plans, decisions, coordinating mechanisms, policies, procedures, budgets, structures. It is called *operational doubt*. During times of suspended doubt, people’s comments about the group are positive and characterised by enthusiasm and commitment. Operational doubt moves to a position in which the operational norms are questioned or challenged.

If such challenge continues, it is likely that leaders will ultimately accept the problem to some extent. They then attempt to institute changes designed to address the “problem.” Their intention is to return the system to a state of suspended doubt. Colloquially, we might typify this response by: “Yes, we agree. But we’ve spotted the problem and we’re working on it. All we need to do is fix up the system”. Such attempts may involve setting up a committee, doing a needs analysis, undertaking an organisational diagnosis, hiring a management consultant, or the like ... all expected to establish accurately the nature of the problem and the most appropriate steps to get things “back on track”.

Such attempts, in the long term, tend not to resolve the increasing doubt. In such cases, more often than not, the underlying goal is to “manage the person” asking the question rather than the question itself. The result is often that nothing is really done about the concerns of the members raising the questions. In turn, their questioning becomes more serious and their doubts deeper.

We now begin to see them questioning the purposes and goals of the group and seeking rational responses rather than the “standard party line”. Their own conviction of belief is in doubt and it no longer undergirds their practice. Typically, members might say things like: “All this patching up is worthless; the whole system is bankrupt and we need to renew the whole lot; we no longer know why we are in this business.”

Such doubt is termed *ideological doubt* for it questions the basic purposes and goals of the group. It is typically met by leaders with an ideology-based

response through recourse to the group's charter or such attitudes as are exemplified in the comment: "That's the way we've always done it and we will continue to do it that way".

The seeds of alienation are now setting in. The leaders tend to adopt progressively defensive responses to the increasing doubt. This period is characterised by rational argument and debate; conventional wisdom is challenged and the assumptions which underlie the group are critically examined.

If the group remains unresponsive to these concerns, doubt intensifies yet further. Alienation is widespread. The group may be viewed by many as oppressive and uncaring of such things as basic working conditions. Questions about moral or ethical values implicit in the group's goals or practices are now raised.

The situation reaches a point characterised by the response: "All this renewal is getting us nowhere; the whole system is losing its meaning for us." Leaders take up increasingly defensive and retrenched positions in the face of such doubt and tend to revert to highly arbitrary and autocratic management styles. Widespread commitment is lacking throughout the group. The general systems for communication and coordination break down very easily or become inoperable. The state is called *ethical doubt*. It is the last stage before ultimate breakdown or *absolute doubt*.

When absolute doubt is present there is widespread cynicism and despair. The system is barely workable. It may even cease to function, although this is not always the case. An organisation or group can still continue to exist when there is widespread absolute doubt, but will be very ineffective and inefficient. Its members get no rewards for their participation and contribution to common goals. There is widespread breakdown of basic management principles and practices.

In other words, people are saying, "What's the use — there is nothing at all in it for me". In times of high unemployment and uncertainty, such people in such

organisations have fewer options for going to other organisations. They may therefore suppress such doubt. It manifests itself in various forms of covert fight and flight behaviour (*cf.* Dick: 1979, p.4).

These various stages of doubt are represented in Figure 1.

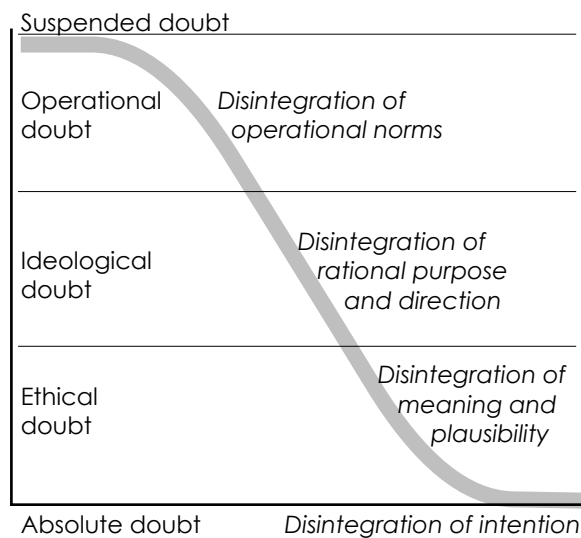


Fig. 1

Stages of doubt

Organisational growth

In order to grow, an organisation has to answer three basic questions:

- 1 Who are we? — What is our identity?
- 2 Why are we here? — What is our purpose?
- 3 How will we give expression to our response to the “who” and the “why”? — What processes will we use to achieve our goals?

These questions can be examined in reverse order...

The most obvious components of a group are its normative procedures. These include such things as its programs and actions, its roles and the relationships among them, its policies, its communication patterns, and its treatment of members. In other words, they are its standard operating procedures: what it does and how it does it. These components are collectively termed the *norm* level or element of the system.

The second element or level is *belief*. By this we mean the group's rational statements of what it hopes to achieve. They are embodied in documents and through key people as statements of purpose or mission, broad aims, goals and objectives. At a more basic level they are the "credos" of the group.

The third element is that of *myth*. This has to do with the unstated values and assumptions which are at the heart of a group. It is from these that its statements of purpose and its goals derive.

By the word myth we mean an essential "core of truth" or basic sense of identity which a group possesses. This should not be confused with more common understandings of myth as fairy tale or unsubstantiated story.

Myth is a collective phenomenon residing in the group or organisation, beyond articulation by any one individual. It is concerned with the fundamental assumptions we use to order the variety of our experience and give it meaning. It precedes rational statements of purpose, and is composed of largely unconscious values and processes. Though pervasive it is yet elusive in the rational world; it deals with time yet is outside of it; it is passed down through the organisation from one "generation" to the next. It is essentially non-rational or, as Egan defines a similar concept, arational. (Egan, 1983, p. XIV-1)

It contains the collective dreams of the group's members, their fears, hopes and visions. It is expressed in ritual, ceremonies, humour, traditions and stories of the past (Peters & Waterman, 1982, pp: 75-78). It is historical: an organisation gathers from its history its meaning of the present and its vision of the future.

What we are dealing with here is the unconscious corporate life of the organisation or group as expressed through symbol and the use of ritual. As Turner (1970, p. 33, p.39 and p. 146) puts it...

“... ritual symbols are partially shaped under the influence of unconscious motivations and ideas. Emotions are portrayed and evoked in close relation to the dominant symbols of cohesion and continuity, often by the performance of instrumentally symbolic behaviour. Such emotions and acts of behaviour obtain no place among the official, verbal meanings attributed to such dominant symbols. Ritual tends to assert the higher unifying values of the widest effective congregation”.

This is represented in Figure 2.

<p>NORM What do we do and how do we do it?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decisions • relationships • communic'n • organisation • activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • budgets • policies • plans • roles
<p>BELIEF Why are we here?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">RATIONAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • objectives • goal statements • mission statements • belief statements • ideological rationale 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • broad aims
<p>MYTH Who are we?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">NON-RATIONAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assumptions • intuitions • traditions • fantasies • feelings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rituals • visions • hopes • fears • dreams

Fig. 2

Norm, belief and myth

The healthy group, well-designed and functioning effectively, has a congruence between its myths, beliefs and norms. It is in touch with its myth. It has articulated its purpose and formulated its goals based on the myth (its identity) and is engaging in practices which dynamically express its purposes and goals.

If there is incongruence (acknowledged or not) among its myth, belief and norm then the group will be characterised by confusion, lack of commitment, conflict and decline.

Issues of change

This view of systems embodies a crucial assumption about system maintenance. In order to remain healthy and effective a group must from time to time make contact with its myth, and reformulate its beliefs and behaviours.

A common response to threat is to try to restore the status quo. Yet deviations from the status quo within systems can be the source of new beginnings. John Sherwood of Management Design Incorporated (MDI) talks of “management by strategic surprise through attention to weak signals.” In other words, it is one of the responsibilities of leaders to nurture and foster what might be called deviant thinking. Its fruits can then be subjected to scrutiny so that new forms and expression of the myth and belief of the group can be realised in new ventures, new programs, new goals and new directions.

It is also important to realise that many older forms, practices and traditions of group or organisational practice may no longer be consistent with either the belief or myth of the organisation. They may need to die (indeed, to be “buried” with appropriate ritual and celebration). This is particularly true of larger bureaucratic organisations. Over time they often generate departments, sections, and units which become ends in themselves and no longer fulfil critical organisational functions. We expect the incidence of such groups to rise in the future, with increased technology and rate of change in the work place.

We can distinguish between *incremental* and *radical* change. Incremental changes are designed to return the system to a state of suspended doubt. As such they are almost always new ways of expressing old purposes and goals. However, much organisational change needs to touch the myth, particularly when it involves the reformulation of purposes and goals. This is radical change. It is rooted in the group or organisation’s myth. It develops new beliefs, new purposes, new goals, different roles and norms.

It is unfortunately true that many problem-solving approaches to radical change are often inhibited or even doomed to failure. Problem-solving as conventionally practised is essentially a tool for incremental change, intended to return things to a predetermined state or condition.

If there is a breakdown of the belief or myth systems within the group, conventional problem solving is not enough. By itself, it may well cause problems to multiply at a rate faster than they can be solved. As a consequence, an apparent paradox results. The more skilled the group *apparently* becomes at solving the problems, the more complex the problems become.

Rational means of group or organisational change cannot meet non-rational doubt and needs. Social technologies that directly address the myth and belief systems of the group are needed in such cases. Unfortunately, such technologies are as yet mostly underdeveloped. They are therefore not widely practised by the mainstream of management consultancy or change agency.

This is not surprising given that we are “dealing with” highly complex and bizarre unconscious corporate phenomena in the lives of human groups and organisations. Discussions with Vin Ryan of Melbourne have suggested to us that the work of anthropologist Victor Turner may give the consultant or change agent some ideas about what are the major issues facing her at such a time.

Turner speaks of the importance of *liminal periods*. A liminal period is a period of marginality. It exists between structures, between situations. It is a transition between an existing order of things and one yet to be born (Turner, 1970, pp.93 - 111). Within such a period, one is likely to find “transitional-beings” or “liminal personae” who seem necessary to the transition. The liminal persona is defined by a name and a set of symbols which give an outward and visible form to an inward and conceptual corporate process.

The organisational analogue of such persons seems to be the “innovator” and/or “early adopter” spoken of in agricultural extension models of organisational

change (Dalmau & Dick, 1984a, p.24). However, it is unfortunately true that most organisations give little thought or energy to developing symbols around such persons, let alone rituals designed to express new corporate myths. Peters and Waterman (1982) do point out the value of such practices, particularly as they pertain to “skunk works”, the sites of new and innovative developments and thinking in organisations.

The liminal period is also likely to be characterised by “structural invisibility, ambiguity and neutrality” (Turner, 1970, p.99). In an organisation or group there are many different kinds of privileges and obligations, many degrees of superordination and subordination. However, in the period of change such distinctions and gradations tend to be eliminated producing a “scarcity of jurally sanctioned relationships and...emphasis on axiomatic values expressive of the common weal” (Turner, 1970, p.101). In such a period people confront one another, as it were, integrally and not in compartmentalised fashion as actors or roles. The person emerges from behind the mask. (In a sense, there is no mask left to hide behind.) Although it is a period of structural simplicity (or a relative absence of structure) it is nevertheless also one of cultural complexity.

Managing change at such times is not easy: the corporate unconscious life is too complex. Turner (1970, p.108) suggests the need to find symbols and rituals. These allow the organisation’s members to engage with their own corporate reality and experience. They can thus be taught to “think with some degree of abstraction about their cultural milieu and given some ultimate standards of reference.” John Sherwood and his colleagues have described techniques for uncovering the corporate myth, and so to address this purpose.

The non-rational in organisations

The notion of a non-rational or arational component worthy of direct intervention for change has received interest only in the recent past. Three approaches, in particular, are worthy of more scrutiny: the ideas of John Sherwood and his col-

leagues at MDI, those of Gerard Egan, and those of Chris Argyris and Donald Schön.

For Sherwood, the non-rational is located in the myth of the organisation or group. It is usually covert and pervades both the formal and informal systems. It is a collective phenomenon and is beyond articulation by any one individual, as has been elaborated earlier. It is the *source of power*.

According to this view, leaders do not use their own power given them either by virtue of their charisma or role. Rather it is the group or organisation which empowers the leader or manager.

This is done in order that coalescing and utilisation of the power may allow the group to realise its identity (myth) and its purpose (belief) effectively, efficiently and sensitively.

The group gives power; the process begins in the group and the group possesses its power through *shared meaning* at the non-rational level. This shared meaning arises from corporate efforts in the past and a common vision of the future.

For any given group this power of shared meaning provides the base for corporate action of the group. Without it, entropy ensues.

It is expressed in the idiosyncratic stories, rituals, habits, symbols and traditions of the group. Sherwood and his colleagues have developed a number of technologies for uncovering, articulating and consolidating the myth of a group or organisation using structured inductive processes for medium and large groups (Sherwood, 1977). The work of Ira Progroff and his colleagues at Dialogue House is more suited to small group and individual foci (Progroff, 1975).

Egan, on the other hand, talks of an arational covert culture within groups. (Egan, 1983, Chapters II and XIV). He suggests that the design and functioning of systems is determined by both rational and arational factors: he speaks of the *logic* and the *literature* of the organisation. The organisation's logic refers to the

designing, planning and systematic coordination of the organisation's operations. The literature is asystematic and unpredictable. It is expressed within the stories of what "it is really like to work (and live) here."

In contrast to Sherwood and his colleagues, Egan suggests that the informal organisation is the covert culture with both rational and non-rational elements. Sherwood seems to view the myth of the group or organisation as pervading both the formal and informal systems. Egan suggests there is an over-emphasis on the rational aspects of systems and pleads for a more balanced view of the role of the arational.

His work is particularly useful for it contains a comprehensive framework of overlapping and interacting categories for understanding the arational covert culture of a group. (Egan, 1983, p.XIV-2). Each category contributes in its own way to the total culture of the group...

Beliefs. These consist of the beliefs, values, assumptions, understandings, and dogmas of the group or organisation.

Ways of viewing the past. These include the history, the stories, the critical historical incidents and the myths of the organisation that shape the present. Included also are the founders, the heroines and heros, the exploits, the folklore, and the traditions of the group.

Aspirations. Included here are the dreams, hopes, fears, visions and the longings of the members of the group and of the group itself.

The "oughts", "shoulds", "musts". Here are the norms, standards, policies, rules, laws, and taboos, mostly unwritten, which govern the behaviour of the members.

The language. The components include the kind of speech, the verbal and non-verbal language, the symbols, the slogans, signs, songs and metaphors. They say something about the priorities and values of the system.

On closer examination, the two approaches complement each other nicely. On the one hand, Egan offers a richer understanding of the non-rational in systems. He goes on to explain how the categories outlined above interact dynamically with one another. On the other hand, Sherwood has developed a number of processes for change agents and managers to tap and articulate the non-rational in groups and organisations.

Egan suggests that the belief and aspirational components of organisational culture maintain the norms and standards of the present. He gives these two components (beliefs and aspirations) a good deal of importance and suggests that they are significant foci for change efforts.

The work of Argyris and Schön (1974) is relevant here, for they talk of the belief components of culture as being *governing variables*. They also suggest that certain sets of governing variables are more common in the covert culture of groups, institutions and communities than others.

This set of more common governing variables is called Model I. Some examples follow...

"I am the one who is to define unilaterally the purposes of this organisation."

"Winning in this system is to be maximised and losing is to be minimised."

"Reason is to be extolled: emotions, especially negative ones, are to be ignored."

Governing variables are chosen, inherited or absorbed from the surrounding culture. They generate action strategies designed to achieve the desired governing variable. The choice of governing variable then has consequences for the actor, for other people in the group and for the group itself.

As Egan points out:

"For one person the value of winning may be very important (governing variable)... I will hesitate to cooperate with others if this means that they might win instead of

me (action strategy). ... The person bent on winning is viewed with suspicion. The legitimate needs of other people are pushed aside and the goals of the organisation become secondary to winning (consequences for system, for self, and others) if this can be done without blowing his or her cover. In Model I systems "cover your arse" is a standing injunction (another governing variable)." (Egan: 1983, p.XIV-5)

Learning is inhibited in systems operating on Model I governing variables and such systems are probably never as effective in achieving their goals as they might be. This lack of effectiveness is usually masked in several ways.

By examining the history, assumptions, aspirations, principles and patterns of behaviour, and the language of a group or organisation, one can discover its governing variables. In most organisations many of these governing variables will have a Model I quality about them.

On the other hand Model II systems operate on different sets of governing variables. In turn this produces different action strategies and different consequences for the system and self.

Examples of Model II governing variables are...

"Free and informed choice on the part of the members of an organisation is important."

"Cooperation and collaboration is desirable."

"Valid and timely information is important for effectiveness, efficiency and quality of life."

Argyris (1982) and Argyris and Schön (1974) develop these concepts extensively. They provide some technologies for uncovering the governing variables in groups or individuals, with a view to moving systems from Model I to Model II styles of operating. Whilst there are no such things as pure-form Model I or Model II systems, Model II behaviour by individuals, groups and organisation is seen as preferable.

It is not our intention to explain the work of Argyris and Schön in depth. Rather, we wish to consider it in relation to that of Sherwood et al and Egan in so far as it deals with the non-rational in groups and organisations.

Argyris and Schön provide concepts and technologies for tapping some of the covert culture or myth of the group. However, their approach is very cognitive in style, and as such tends to miss some of the more “intuitive” aspects of design, process, underlying ideological norms, and modes of inquiry. (Mitroff & Kilmann: 1978). Furthermore, it is limited in that it tends not to highlight the idiosyncratic aspects of culture for any given particular organisation or group.

As Egan points out:

“Most of us have adapted to Model I systems. We have been born into them; we think, feel and act Model I.” (Egan: 1983, p.XIV-6)

The Argyris and Schön work is very useful in tapping general Model I culture or myth in an organisation. It does tend, however, to concentrate on the belief aspects at the expense of the history and language of the system.

Facilitating change in the cultures of both systems and individuals is an arduous process: the interactive web of traditions, hopes, beliefs, norms, behaviours and language is not easily changed. But understanding is increasing. We now know a lot more about how central the non-rational is to the effective functioning of organisations. We also now have technologies for tapping much of the idiosyncratic myth of a given organisation. We have methods for working with those parts of the myth that come from the more general culture (Model I myth) in order to make systems more congruent and effective (move them to Model II behaviour).

However, we still do not have the technology for dealing with an organisation in which there is quite dramatic and substantial disintegration of corporate myth; in other words, which has reached a state of ethical or absolute doubt.

Sherwood and his colleagues seem to suggest that the uncovering of an organisation's myth (particularly through its corporate history and language) is a consolidating process of itself, particularly in the liminal period as discussed above. This is true in many cases. But we have also come across instances where the disintegration is so bad that such techniques simply do not work.

This is particularly the case with some large government bureaucracies and quasi-autonomous agencies. It may well be that the larger the organisation, or the more goal-oriented rather than product-oriented it is, the greater the difficulty. Perhaps the corporate body finds it hard to "contain" the boundaries of its symbolic and ritual-based life. Hence, the more difficult it is for such organisations to maintain their unconscious corporate identity (myth) or to form and develop new expressions of identity and unity.

Part 2

Maps for diagnosis

This part of the paper describes *how to choose an intervention*. It gives you a set of questions to ask yourself. Your answers will tell you the type of intervention you need.

You will be guided through three sets of questions. The first of them asks you *why you think change* is needed. The second asks what *sort of change* is required — is it to do with the jobs that individuals do, or is it more about coordination between individuals, or is it a matter of their liking or disliking for each other? The third asks *who are the people* to be involved in some way in the change, and where are they?

For each set of questions there will first be an overview, to give you a feel for the approach. This may sometimes be followed by a more detailed set of questions for the actual choice of intervention.

Why intervene?

As has already been demonstrated, organisations, communities and other social systems proceed through a cycle of growth and decline. All being well, there is a peak of existence when most things go well. The further a social system is from that peak, the greater the depth of change that is required. As a change agent or consultant, your first task is to establish the depth of the change process you are contemplating.

The possible depth of intervention varies. A relatively concrete and superficial intervention may be adequate. At the other extreme you may require a complete reworking of what the system tries to do, and how and why it tries to do it. On this continuum, three points can usefully be distinguished.

Some interventions need only be reasonably shallow. Their main purpose is to “fine tune” the social system. Done well, they lead to changes to actual operating procedures, and other minor improvements in the way things are done.

They are appropriate when the system is not very far from its peak of performance.

Almost all the people in the system are agreed on what the system should be doing. They are also agreed that the system almost always succeeds in doing it. But they think it could do even better.

This can be described as a level of change in *procedures and practices*.

As an example, consider a group of travellers about half-way through a long journey. Their tour is at level one if they are agreed on why they are travelling, where they want to go, and in general terms the route they want to follow. There may be some debate, however, about which airline to choose, and about who ought to look after the tickets.

They probably find such debates reasonably easy to resolve. All that is required is that they give time to doing so, and are willing to listen to one another in the interests of the journey as a whole.

Another way of thinking of level one is in terms of the time perspective of the problems. The issues and improvements are all immediate. The intermediate and long-range goals of the people are not in question.

At a second level, interventions focus on a revision of the long term goals and directions of the system. Such interventions are appropriate for systems where the doubts go beyond concern about mere procedures. There is uncertainty about what the system should be doing. A lot of people may still be committed to making the system work. But they may be working at cross purposes. Or they may believe that a lot of what they do seems distant from the real purpose of the system.

When a second level intervention has succeeded in its purpose, and the people in the system are agreed on their long-term goals, it is then usually appropriate for the change to proceed at level one, refining operating procedures.

This second level can be described as one of *purposes and directions*.

In the example of the travel group, the travellers are still agreed why they are travelling. There are strong differences of opinion, however, about the route they should follow, and the destination might even be under question. There is little point in discussing details about airlines until they are agreed on their destination and route. Once agreement is reached, however, they will probably find it useful to give some time to the day-by-day trifles as well.

You will notice that the time perspective is intermediate or long term.

You will notice, too, that there may be many immediate issues and concerns. Indeed, there usually are. But many of these cannot be resolved because the intermediate or long term goals of the group are unclear.

The third level of intervention is intended to help systems which are in deep trauma. They have lost their way entirely. Most of their members have given up trying. Those who still persist are frustrated by their inability to secure any help whatever from most of those in the system. In reality, the system no longer exists. The people are separate entities, going through the motions, but with no real interest in the system or its behaviour. An intervention for this level must help a system rediscover its identity, and become a real system once more instead of an accidental collection of individuals.

If an intervention at level three is successful, it is usually followed by further change at levels two and then one.

This third level may be described as one of *identity and unity*.

The travellers of the example used earlier are now in doubt about the reason why they travelled. Some have probably left the group. They probably no longer

travel as one party; or if they do, it is more from force of habit than from desire. Some of them probably show behaviour quite at variance with their presence in a travel party: for example reading fiction when travelling through interesting scenery or meeting interesting people.

The time perspective has become irrelevant. It is the very existence of the group which is the issue.

The three different depths of intervention may be visualised as three “cards” stacked one behind the other (see Figure 3) and your task as a consultant is to establish which of the “cards” you should “pull from the pack”, so to speak.

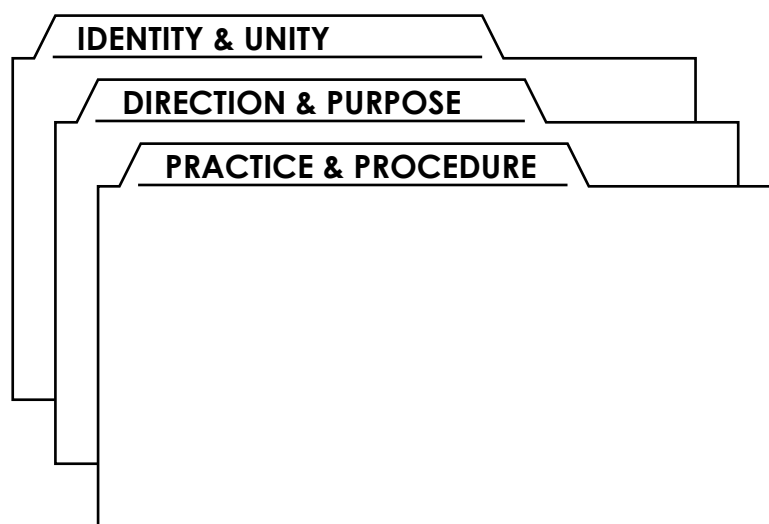


Fig. 3

Each card represents a depth of intervention

By now you have probably formed a rough idea about the level at which any intervention into the social system should begin. Now follows a more detailed approach to the same issue.

Below is a set of statements. To use them, decide on the social system you will consider — your organisation, your community, your family, or the like. Choose a group of people who are reasonably self-contained in most respects, or who have a common goal not shared by others in related systems (like the group of

travellers, for example). Read through the statements from start to finish. As you read each statement, ask yourself how true it is of the system you are considering. (*Note:* In practice we have strong reservations about a change agent answering these questions “alone”, without the involvement of those affected by any contemplated change process.)

A word of caution. These questions are not easily answered on someone else’s behalf. The problems that people complain about to others are often at level one, concerning operations and procedures, even when they arise from a profound malaise and a sense of isolation and futility.

You will probably find a band of two or three adjacent statements that are a more accurate description of the group or organisation than are the other statements in the list.

- 1 We are an effective system. We function well. There are probably some minor improvements we could make if we looked for them. But there is no urgency about doing so.
 - 2 We are doing well, though we could clearly do better with a little “fine tuning” to some of our day-by-day operations.
 - 3 We are doing a worth while job, and doing it reasonably well. But our real aims are sometimes frustrated because we often go the wrong way about handling the details.
 - 4 We are enthusiastic people. But a lot of our effort goes into trifles which don’t have a lot to do with our real aims.
 - 5 We know what we are trying to accomplish in the long run. If we are to achieve it, though, we will have to reorder our short term priorities, perhaps substantially.
 - 6 We have a fair idea of what we’re trying to accomplish. But we have little notion of how to go about it.
-

- 7 A proportion of us are still in there, working away eagerly. But a lot of the time we seem to be pulling in different direction, and a large number of us have given up entirely.
- 8 We often do things very badly. But that doesn't matter, because the things we do well are usually futile anyway.
- 9 System? What system? We are just an accidental collection of individuals waiting for an opportunity to leave.

If the responses of you and your colleagues clustered mostly around statements 1, 2 and 3, this probably indicates level 1 as the most appropriate starting point for any change.

If the responses clustered around statements 4, 5, and 6, level 2 interventions are probably indicated.

Responses clustered around statements 7, 8 and 9 are indicative of level 3.

If your responses to these statements reinforced the decision you had already made, then you will have no difficulty in choosing the level. On the other hand, if this decision differs from the earlier one, your best strategy is probably to start at the deeper level of the two.

Some other dimensions are still to be considered. For now, remember the depth of intervention for later reference.

Level 1 *Practices and procedures*

Level 2 *Directions and purpose*

Level 3 *Unity and identity*

Intervene at what?

The second dimension to be considered identifies the type of problem the intervention will focus on, and the type of information that will have to be consid-

ered. Again, there are three levels. The labels used for each are derived from the type of information appropriate to that level.

An overview of the three levels is given immediately below. This is followed by a more detailed description of each.

Level one is that of primary information. Primary information is concerned with the actual job that people are required to do.

If a person's work is mainly clerical or administrative, primary information is the information needed to handle what happens between the in-tray and the out-tray. If the work is mainly practical, primary information is the information needed in the performance of the actual physical task. In addition to information, this level includes material physical resources.

In both instances, the physical resources are those used directly in the task. They might consist of pencils, paper and telephone, or tools and equipment and sheet metal, for example. The information includes instruction on how to do the work, and (for an administrative task) the actual information incorporated into a task by writing it into a report or building it into a design or record it on a form.

This level of primary information is also called the *task* level of intervention.

At this primary level the central problems and concerns often arise directly from the technology and equipment used. A frequent expression of the problems is in the form of low motivation, and sometimes high levels of monotony and boredom.

For example, imagine you are one of a number of cooks in a large hotel or restaurant. If intervention is required at the primary or task level, this may be because the ingredients needed to prepare the meal are not available.

Level two consists of the information needed to coordinate the first level. At the primary level, people exchange information and materials which are incorporated into the job they are doing. The secondary level, on the other

hand, consists of information which is not included directly in the job, but which influences what is done at the primary level. It might also be called management information.

Note that both primary and secondary levels involve a traffic between people. But where the primary traffic is for incorporation in the job, the secondary traffic is about such things as when to do the job, and who to do it for.

If I give you information you need to write a report or to enter onto a form, that is primary information. If I give you information about when the report is required, or what order to do the tasks in, or who to get information from, that is secondary information.

Another title for the second level is the *role* level of information.

Where there are problems at the secondary or role level, they are often expressions of the structure of the social system.

The secondary level is often less obvious than the primary level, and therefore more often overlooked. Truck drivers, for example, think that their contribution to their company's profits comes from the goods they shift from point to point. But for each transfer of goods, several transfers of coordinating information is needed. Truck drivers sometimes do a better job of shifting goods than of filling in forms and notifying the office of their progress. They are then neglecting the secondary information, even though the company's profits depend as much on accurate information as on the successful transfer of goods.

For the cooks we considered earlier, secondary information might include information from one cook to another that the main course will be ready by half past six, so a good time to have the soup ready for serving might be about a quarter past six.

Level three information is the information about our attitudes towards or liking for each other. It is often not given in so many words, but has to be

assumed from the way in which we give people the primary information and materials and the secondary information.

Although this tertiary information may be carried by other information about the task, or about coordination, it is not directly related to either of them. It may be thought of as the information which has psychological effects.

The tertiary level of information is therefore more about the management style or communication style people use. It can be called the *style* level.

When its origins lie in the larger organisation or social system, it is often related to what people call the “climate” or “culture” of a system.

Take cooks again as an example. It may be that the hotel is a very busy place in which people don't have much time to talk to one another. But because of this, people feel neglected. If some of the cooks barely talk to each other because they dislike the way orders are given, this is an example of the results of a tertiary flow of information.

To summarise the three levels of information at individual and at system level —

1 <i>Primary</i>	information	is	about	task	and	technology
2 <i>Secondary</i>	"	"	"	role	"	structure
3 <i>Tertiary</i>	"	"	"	style	"	climate

To help you make your final choice of the level of information on which change in the social system might focus, here is a summary of the characteristics of the three levels.

Primary: The problems relate to the tasks of the people rather than to the coordination of those tasks.

Where there are problems in the traffic between people, it interferes with the transfer of materials, or information needed for building into the task itself.

Where the problem arises beyond the people concerned the origin is most likely to be the technology used.

A common manifestation of the problem is boredom and low motivation.

Secondary: The problems relate not so much to the tasks as to the coordination and management of those tasks.

Where there are problems in the traffic between people, it interferes with the transfer of the information needed for coordination and management.

Where the problem arises beyond the people concerned the origin is most likely to be the structure of the social system.

A common manifestation of the problem is uncertainty about who is to do what, and conflict about priorities which differ from person to person or section to section.

Tertiary: The problems relate more to the relationships between people as people than to their formal relationships or their tasks.

Where there are problems in the traffic between people, it is because of the attitudes they read into each others' words and actions.

Where the problem arises beyond the people concerned the origin is most likely to be the climate of the social system.

A common manifestation of such problems is high levels of personal dislike and antagonism.

As with the cards before, as a consultant it is possible to visualise this stage of the diagnosis as deciding upon which "row" of the chosen card the problem or contemplated change now resides within (see Figure 4).

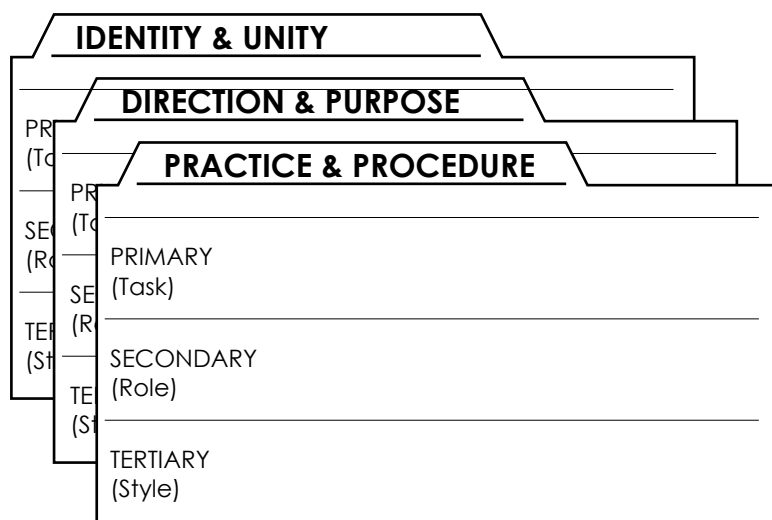


Fig. 4

The rows represent different types of information

You should now have made a decision about the type of information the intervention will focus on —

Primary, to do with tasks and jobs

Secondary, to do with roles and coordination

Tertiary, to do with attitudes and “personalities”.

It is likely, by the way, that these three levels are all present to some extent. The question to ask yourself is this: Of the three, which is the one which seems to be the major focus of people’s dissatisfactions? Which seems the most promising starting point if people’s major concerns are to be addressed? If you are in doubt, we suggest the second level.

Intervene where, and for whom?

The third dimension concerns the location of the intervention. It is to do with where within the social system the problems mostly occur. It is also concerned with identifying the people who are affected to any important extent by the

problem, or would be affected by the change or the way in which it is carried out (the “stakeholders”, to use the common terminology).

Think of a continuum which ranges from a single person to well beyond the normal boundaries of an organisation or social system. Some of the points along this continuum are listed in the box below.

Individual	e.g.	Clerical officer
Pair	"	Pair of technical officers
Group or team	"	Section or branch
Intergroup or interteam	"	Sections, brances, divisions
Organisation or community	"	Department or organisation
Wider environment	"	National community

Examples of the continuum
individual to environment

There are other points which could have been identified along the continuum. In an organisational setting they include divisions, branches, and the like. Most interventions, however, are designed for one of the points identified above.

This is usually an easy dimension to settle. There are two questions to be answered.

- 1 Who are the people affected by the problem in a direct or fairly direct manner, and who are in a position to begin to resolve the problem?
- 2 Who are the people not directly affected by the problem, but who have an important influence on the nature of the problem and its solution?

The problem solving will probably begin with the group identified in your answer to question 1; but you will most probably also need to consult with those identified by question 2.

The people you identified in question 1 may be a suitable starting point for an intervention. There is a simple method you can use to check if this is so. You probably began this exercise with some idea about which problems need attention. We will now consider the group of people you have chosen, and see how many of the important problems do lie sufficiently within their area of responsibility.

Any person or group has some freedom to decide what to do. The limits to this freedom are influenced by the links between the person or group and the rest of the social system of which they are part. For example, consider a group with a group task to perform — a team playing some competitive game, perhaps.

The team is probably expected not to exceed a certain amount of use of resources. There may be only X dollars available, for instance, to cover travel and refreshments. Think of these resources as inputs.

The team is probably also expected to achieve a certain level of performance. It might be something like finish in the top quarter of the premiership table.

There may be many different ways in which the team can achieve that standard of performance within those resources. If the team can change its approach to the game without increasing its use of resources or lowering its performance, it probably need do no more with people outside the team than consult with them.

Now apply a similar reasoning to the group of people you have selected. Of the presenting problems, how many can you and they together remedy without adversely affecting the resources they use or their standard of performance? If you can address most of the problems without adversely affecting resources or performance, you can probably proceed on that basis. On the other hand, if most of the problems cannot be remedied without changing the resources or performance, the group of people you selected is probably too small.

If the problems you are considering originate in the technology or structure or climate of the wider social system, you may have to begin at organisation level. If the depth of intervention you have in mind is at the level of directions and purposes, or unity and identity, and if these problems are not localised within the group you have selected, this too suggests that you might have to choose a larger group of people to start with.

To return to our card system, it is possible to visualize the third dimension of our diagnostic model as choosing a “column” within the selected card (see Figure 5).

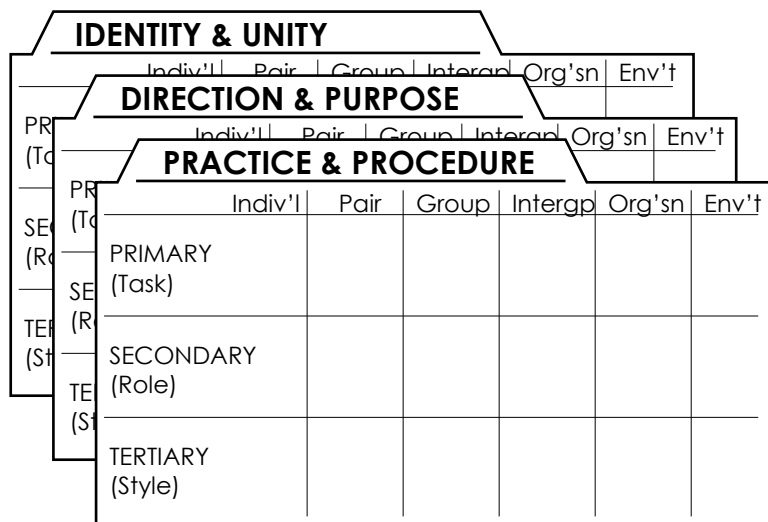


Fig. 5

The columns represent the scope of the intervention

The diagnostic model outlined is just that: a model. Like all models of human behaviour it gets a bit blurred at the edges when compared with reality.

It is highly unlikely that all important and relevant aspects of a problem or contemplated change process will fit neatly within one of the “boxes” on one of the cards. Put another way, it is rare that an issue boils down to, say, simply one of direction and purpose related to role relationships for a particular workteam.

However, using the model it is possible to build up a “map”, if you like, of the important aspects. You can begin from there to develop a contingency-based step-by-step process.

The same model can also be used for choosing the most appropriate intervention or interventions with which to address the problem or change process. An introduction to this use of the model is given in the next part of this document.

Part 3

Selecting interventions

Issues and considerations

This part of the paper is designed to illustrate how to use earlier material. It discusses how the diagnostic framework outlined in Part 2 can select the most appropriate intervention or interventions with which to bring about the desired change. However, we feel it is salient to highlight some considerations which we believe pertain to managing change, no matter what the type of intervention chosen.

We are reminded of the statement... “to every complex problem there is a simple solution and it is always wrong”!

Put it another way. We hope that the reader contemplating using the diagnostic framework already described, understands that things are never as simple and straightforward as they seem. In order to cope with the complexities of choosing appropriate interventions, a number of factors need to be considered.

The first issue is one to do with *uniqueness and multiplicity*. We have a strong sense that a consultant or change agent almost never in practice uses a single strategy or intervention. For example, it is often equally possible to approach a problem to do with interpersonal conflict in the workplace using either conflict resolution, role negotiation or team-building strategies. Furthermore, it is often likely that having chosen one of these strategies with which to resolve certain difficulties there will be a need to use one or more similar strategies at a later stage in the change process.

Consequently, we find it helpful to think in terms of a *lead strategy or lead intervention*. By this we mean the approach which the diagnostic framework indicates may be an appropriate *beginning* to the change process.

This then leads to a second consideration: *review and redesign*. You have to develop some understanding, some "maps" of what you are doing. But it is our experience that the beginning of change in an ordered and intentional manner usually surfaces information which will not readily be incorporated into the initial maps.

For this reason we suggest the use of the diagnostic framework on a number of occasions throughout a change program. The iterative use of the framework should lead to better and more refined diagnoses. The result will be more relevant and timely interventions. Such later interventions are consequent upon repeated use of the diagnostic process, and so we can talk of *lead and consequent interventions*.

Furthermore, to reiterate something we pointed out in Parts I and 2 of this paper: there is an implicit hierarchy in the nature of interventions, depending upon the

nature of the problem to be addressed. The use of strategies appropriate to Card 1 (practices and procedures) is inappropriate if the root of the difficulty lies in Card 2 (directions and purposes) or Card 3 (identity and unity).

Say, for example, that there is evidence to suggest widespread decline of the corporate myth among the group or organisation members. Myth-building is indicated as the lead intervention. It may be followed, perhaps, by consequent interventions to do with common goalsetting or strategic planning. These may then be followed by interventions to do with practices and procedures, such as role negotiation, action-planning, budgetting, or the like.

Needless to say, we don't recommend introducing interventions at the level of Card 3 (identity and unity) without also planning to intervene at Cards 2 and 1 also. There may be some organisations which exist solely for the good and satisfaction of their own members, or for the expression of a common mythology or belief system (for instance religious organisations). But in most organisations there is more to it than this. Insight and good feeling among people in the workplace are likely to be regarded, of themselves, as indulgent and pointless unless they lead to other things. Increased productivity, better quality of work life and more effective corporate strategic action are likely to be desired. And all of these involve action at Cards 2 and 1.

It is perhaps worth noting at this point a comment concerning the independence of the various dimensions of the diagnostic framework.

The framework is designed to be what Gerard Egan calls a "working model": a set of relatively abstract constructs which are intuitively satisfying and allow the user to understand "enough" of what is going on. They will guide her in deciding upon appropriate action that is *relevant, timely and effective*. The model implicit in Part 2 of this paper has yet to be subjected to any form of empirical test of its validity (and we are not sure how one might go about doing so).

The reader may have noticed that whilst the variable to do with the *scope of an intervention* (individual through to environment) is almost certainly independent of the other two, there may well be some dependence between the other two variables of *depth of intervention* (identity and unity through to practices and procedures) and *type of information* (primary through to tertiary). Despite this, we have found the variables discrete enough in practice to allow their use in the diagnostic framework in relevant and effective ways.

There are also some broad and more general issues which need to be considered. Bob Dick and Hollis Peter in their workbook *Implementing participative personnel practices* (available from the Work Organisation Branch of the Department of Industrial Relations) spell out some of them (pp. 1.1 - 1.3)...

Participation: To what extent do people have opportunities to influence the decisions that affect them, their work and their environment?

This issue has to do with the way decisions are made and the way people who work together relate to one another.

Communication: To what extent does the quality of face-to-face contacts and other interactions among people help or hinder the attainment of group goals?

This issue is to do with the interdependence between the nature and quality of people's relationships and the efficiency and effectiveness of the work they undertake together.

Flexibility of choice: To what extent are the formal and informal practices of a group flexible enough so that choices will be made in different ways about different issues to serve the different needs of different people?

This issue is to do with the fact that the type and amount of choice exercised by people in their day-to-day experience is profoundly important for their satisfaction, mental health, creativity and well-being.

Contingency: To what extent are variable norms, structures and procedures used by a group of people to meet some common goal?

This issue is to do with the fact that there is no one right way to organise and structure the work and relationships of a group of people. Just as people have personalities, so do groups. As with people, the observed behaviour of groups belies a hidden complexity of commitments and assumptions; and members of the group themselves may not be aware of many of them. Organisations and groups are each unique; what works for one will not necessarily work for another.

Competence: To what extent do the leader and others charged with overseeing the conduct of policies and procedures have the necessary skills and abilities to do so effectively?

This issue is to do with the fact that the successful implementation of any system depends more on the skills of the people involved (particularly the skills of communication and problem-solving) than on any formal structure of the systems themselves.

Shared meaning: To what extent do the members of a group or work unit possess a common sense of who they are, why they do the work they do, and how they go about things the way they do?

This issue is to do with the fact that the sense of identity and experience in a group of people is their richest resource for change. Ways need to be found for working with and supporting a group of people so that this is taken into account. People themselves need a sense that the means used to organise practices are consistent with their sense of group identity and common purpose. More will be said of this later.

Intentionality and purposiveness: To what extent does the manager, consultant or change agent go about sustaining present practices and introducing new ones

with clear ends in mind, with perseverance and courage in the face of resistance, and in ways consistent with the basic purposes of the group?

This issue has two aspects to it. One is to do with the fact that the larger the total organisation, then the less clear the intent and purposes behind various ways of going about things. In other words, the means become the ends; and it is then much easier for conflict to develop about policies, procedures and changes. The other issue is to do with the fact that a leader really needs three different sets of skills. As Ed Schein describes them, they are the technical skills of management, interpersonal skills, and emotional skills. This latter group consist of such things as perseverance, courage, risk-taking, ability to stand alone in the face of resistance and so on.

Organisations exist essentially to accomplish work that cannot be performed by one person alone. At the same time they provide a forum in which a number of individuals can come to share meaning through the doing of this work. In so doing they also provide a service to society and a source of livelihood, career opportunities, social interaction, security and self-fulfilment for their members.

In order for all this to occur there need to exist systems which integrate and manage the relationship between the individual and the organisation. They go by various names, but they are often collectively termed the personnel function. It cannot be stressed too much that such systems ideally are intended for the benefit of the members *and* the organisation in which they work.

Unfortunately, it is our experience that many members of large organisations feel as if these systems exist for the organisation but not for them. We suspect that there is some validity at times to this perception. The reasons seem to centre on the breakdown of a some important principles related to participation and equity. The principles are...

- 1 that the quality of work done by members of group or organisation is dependent to a large extent on the quality of information and decisions received from others,
- 2 that therefore a higher level of participation in decision-making is usually desirable,
- 3 that this is particularly the case where decisions can only be implemented with both the understanding and the acceptance of the people involved,
- 4 that practices and procedures directly affect the welfare of an organisation's members,
- 5 that decisions which affect an individual's welfare are likely to be the source of strong beliefs and feelings which will colour both understanding and acceptance, and
- 6 that the practices and procedures of change management used should therefore be highly participative in nature.

However, there are also some other factors which come into play at this stage. The degree of participation allowed members of a group or organisation in decisions which affect them is largely determined by managers above them. It is dependent on several things: the roles and responsibilities assigned to them; their capabilities as perceived by management; the manager's preferred style; and the perceived costs and benefits to the manager and the organisation as a whole.

The costs include the time and energy taken to provide information and to organise participative processes. More especially, the key issue in the manager's mind is often the perceived risks in sharing with employees more information than they strictly need to know to perform their jobs. At the heart of these and other perceived costs is often the question of control and power. Information is often a very useful source of power. The sharing of information may appear to involve the devolution of too much power.

However, there are risks in operating out of such a world view. The consultant or manager who does so is more likely than not to trigger a host of defensive responses by her subordinates. The result may be the creation of more problems with which she will need to deal.

The benefits of developing and sustaining participative change management practices can be quite substantial. Where a change agent uses and fosters high levels of participation, subordinates are likely to be more highly motivated to work. They are likely to use much more of their knowledge and skills in problem-solving, and to seek to acquire additional ones. The quality of decision-making within the work unit is likely to be better. Most importantly of all, members are likely to develop a much stronger sense of group identity and a coherent understanding of their basic directions and purposes. That is, participation helps the development of consolidated and coherent myth and belief systems; and these are pre-conditions for greater group and organisational efficiency and effectiveness.

Card 1 interventions: Practices and procedures

The interventions appropriate to Card 1 are often the most used by consultants and change agents. They are usually the easiest group to legitimise with manager clients, for they relate to the most visible aspects of organisational life and problems. They often become lead interventions, with other interventions appropriate to Cards 2 and 3 becoming consequent interventions, although if this does happen it usually leads to the need for recontracting by the consultant or change agent at a later stage in the change process.

They also pertain more to primary and secondary information issues than tertiary data. Indeed, as one moves through the cards one finds the range of “available” interventions tends to shift in emphasis from the primary through to the tertiary level. This is to be expected given that interventions designed to enhance the identity and unity of a group or organisation are tapping into the

unconscious life of the group. As such, they are often the source of many people's reactions to primary and secondary phenomena.

Card 1 interventions at the primary level (job-related and pertinent to practices and procedures) include such things as: job rotation, job enrichment, work simplification procedures, time management training, job-related problem-solving counselling, semi-autonomous work groups, technological change, research and development activities and some interventions designed around futurology.

Interventions on the same card at the secondary level (to do with roles and relationships and pertinent to practices and procedures) include such things as assertion training, interventions designed to alter the role-expressed aspects of personality, role negotiation processes, the use of search methodology for team-building outcomes, organisational restructuring and organisational mirroring.

Tertiary level interventions on Card 1 (to do with people's reactions about normative practices and procedures) often include the use of personal reframing using the principles and techniques of neuro-linguistic programming, conflict management strategies, team-building processes, facilitated confrontation meetings, inter-group image-exchange processes, and organisational mirroring.

The place of these various strategies and interventions on Card 1 are outlined in Figure 6. As can be seen from this diagram, any given intervention does not necessarily fall into one single "neat and tidy spot" on the card. Vertical and horizontal arrows indicate an intervention may be appropriate for different scopes of change or for different types of information issues. Oblique arrows indicate it may be appropriate on more than one card.

Card 2 interventions: Directions and purposes

Card 2 interventions are often more strategic in nature for they concern the belief system of the organisation or group. They are used often in group settings rather than with individuals, and are sometimes more difficult to use as lead interven-

tions, for the average manager or client is usually engaging in a change process in order to “fix up” some visible, immediate and hurting “problem” and therefore may be reluctant to take the time out which is commonly necessary for many Card 2 interventions. For example, we are reminded of the chief executive officer of a large highly career-oriented bureaucratic work environment. A number of senior managers within the organisation had just been told that their future career development was to be halted due to major “downsizing” and restructuring.

The officer concerned was offered the opportunity for the managers to come to terms with what the changes would mean for their own future purpose and roles within the organisation, and to experience new images of their place in it. She refused and insisted instead that what was needed was straight “input” for the managers concerning the actual tasks and day-to-day responsibilities they would face in their new roles.

This was certainly a necessity. But her response failed to recognize that the managers had very strong feelings and beliefs about the changes and the effects on them personally. This tertiary level data about secondary level changes to purposes and directions led to a great deal of organisational confusion and loss of corporate identity—it promoted ethical doubt.

Card 2 interventions at the primary level (i.e. job-related and pertinent to directions and purposes) include such things as use of adult-learning strategies for improving the strategic understanding of jobs, climate-setting, strategic planning, management by objectives and the use of programs, plans and budget systems.

Interventions on the same card at the secondary level (to do with roles and relationships and pertinent to directions and purposes) include such things as personal career and life planning processes, goal-setting techniques, search methodologies, LENS (leadership, effectiveness and new strategies), nominal

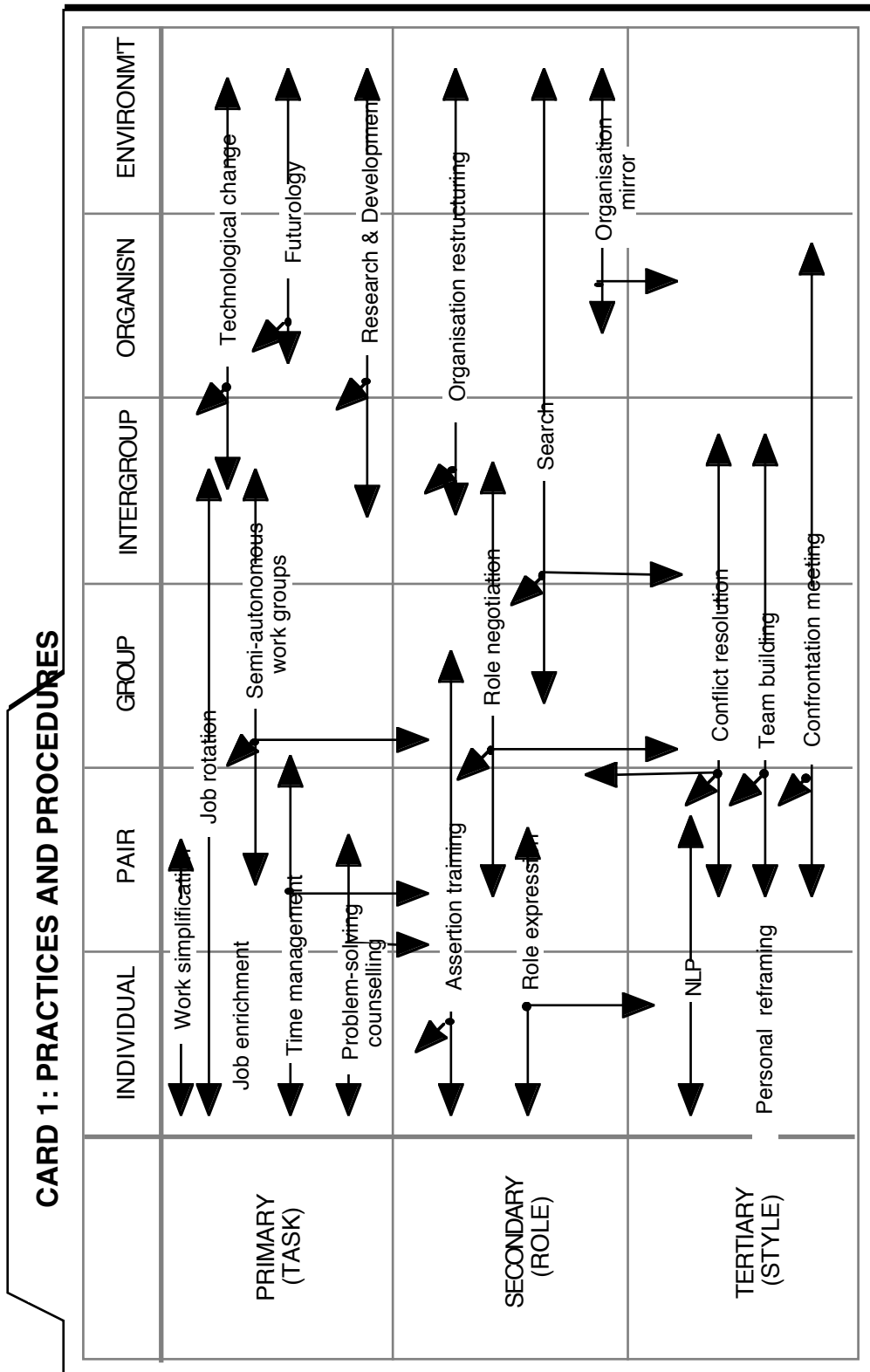


Fig. 6 Card 1 interventions

group technique, belief-based conflict resolution strategies, delphi techniques, assumption analysis and image-exchange processes.

Tertiary level interventions on Card 2 (to do with people's reactions about directions and purposes) often include the use of more personal forms of counselling, psychotherapy, the use of training in contingency and situational leadership strategies.

The use of interventions which address directions and purposes at the tertiary level seem to pose some special difficulties, particularly in organisational and environmental arenas. They tap into people's beliefs about organisational and social norms and their reactions to them. In Part I of this document, mention was made of the work of Argyris and Schön. In particular, we mentioned their proposition that in western cultures we tend to be "reared" in a Model I culture with its prevailing set of competitive and exploitive social norms and governing variables. It is as if we only have one set of organisational and social beliefs within our "societal repertoire". It is hence very difficult to initiate change when most people have not experienced alternative realities.

It seems to us that strategies based on the work of Argyris & Schön offer some promise here. The notion of the "second watershed" (see Dick, 1984b) provides a framework for discovering the rationale behind existing beliefs in this area. It can help groups and organisations to discover alternative options.

Furthermore, we have a sense that one cannot rashly intervene only at the tertiary level on Card 2 in the organisational and environmental arenas. It seems to us that some parallel Card 3 intervention is also needed.

As an example, consider the implementation of equal employment opportunity legislation by the federal government. We believe that this implementation is unlikely to lead to radical change in the lived experience of women and other "minority" groups — not unless it is accompanied by wide and far-reaching changes in people's beliefs about equity generally. This is unlikely to occur until

new and salient images and symbols are developed. Alternative visions of relationships between men and women, blacks and whites, able and disabled, and so on, are needed. These are Card 3 changes.

The place of these various strategies and interventions on Card 2 are outlined in Figure 7.

Card 3 interventions: Identity and unity

Interventions on Card 3, as has already been mentioned, are designed to work with the unconscious both individually and corporately. As such they tend to focus most on tertiary level phenomena, and we find it difficult at this stage in our thinking to imagine interventions on this card appropriate as lead interventions to primary or secondary information issues.

The difficulties experienced by many consultants and change agents in having managers engage with Card 2 issues which have been already noted are magnified substantially when it comes to modifying the corporate unconscious reality of identity and unity. However, we have found that community, educational and religious organisations tend to be more open to this form of change than do public and private sector organisations.

The design and conduct of interventions for Card 3 must necessarily place a large emphasis on issues pertinent to the particular organisation or group under consideration. The particular “corporate personality” of any organisation is paramount. Such interventions, more perhaps than others, need to be “custom designed”. Such a condition necessitates the use of creative and non-intellectual approaches to intervention and process design. Nevertheless, it is possible to place a number of the more commonly used strategies on Card 3.

Tertiary level interventions on Card 3 (to do with people’s reactions about corporate identity and unity) sometimes include the use of personal therapy based on the principles of depth psychology such as Jungian analysis. They may also

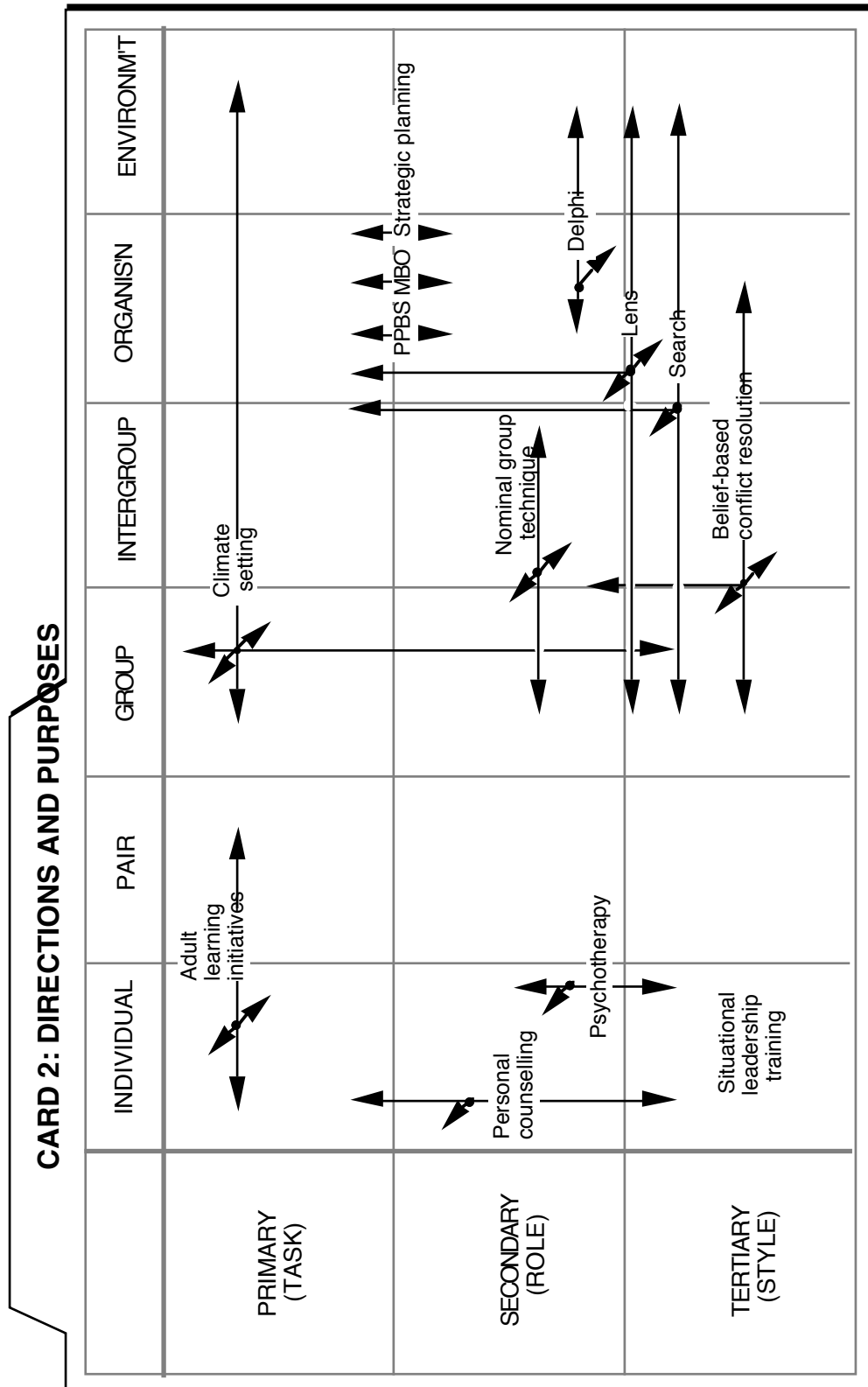


Fig. 7 . Card 2 interventions

include the techniques of neuro-linguistic programming and Eriksonian hypnosis, Progroffian journal workshops, values clarification strategies, history trips, envisioning interventions, the use of charismatic leadership strategies and the use of ritual and celebration.

The place of these various strategies and interventions on Card 3 are outlined in Figure 8.

Epilogue

This paper has attempted to describe and illustrate the use of a diagnostic framework for selecting interventions for change which incorporates some of the more non-rational, unconscious and underlying issues of corporate life in groups and organisations.

It is very much a framework on a journey. We hope that we and others who are interested will be able to take it, develop it further and make it more relevant to the various and sometimes perplexing issues facing anyone trying to decide on approaches to change.

We would encourage the reader to try it on real issues which she faces in the workplace and communicate with us about its efficacy and relevance. In particular, we would value any suggestions and comments.

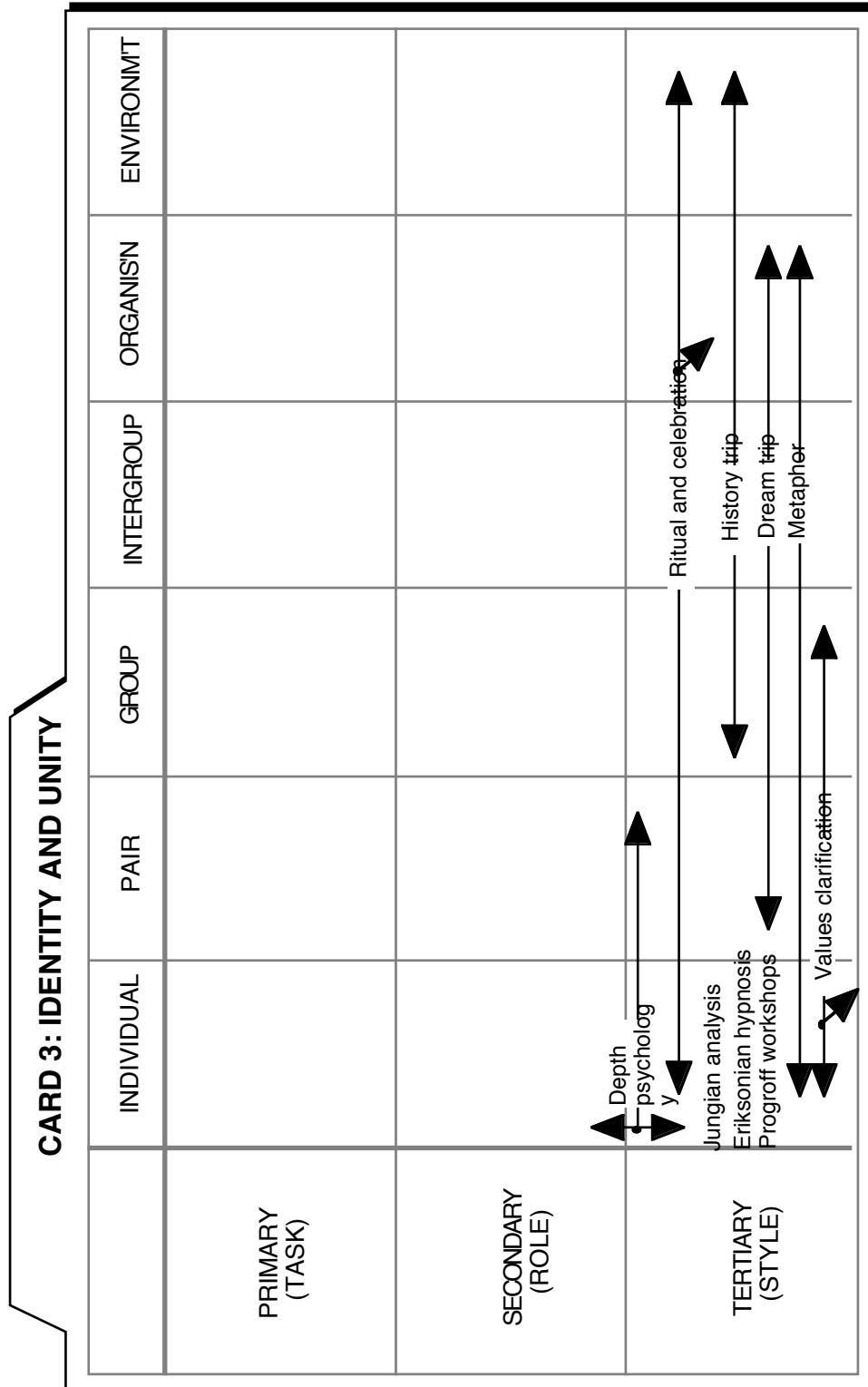


Fig. 8 Card 3 interventions

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