SCiO

Building viable organisations

Viability Today

summer 2014

Editorial

Stigmergy is the word

Stig- *what*? I hear you say....

The indirectly coordinated emergent behaviour exhibited groups of independent agents such as birds in flight, colonies of ants and people in crowds.
It is a powerful reminder of the nature of emergent properties in systems which cannot be predicted but which are caused by the application of a set of very simple rules.
Stigmergy raised its head in one of the open day talks at the April meeting. In the write up of that meeting we also have a consideration of the problems associated with the application of VSM modelling to differnt types of organisations as well as how sociological factors in basic human interactions influence the behaviour of the actors. There are many experiments that show how if you tell people they are something, they will behave in that way. I am always amazed by how many people will actually deny this, preferring to think that people are rational. For me, this is the elephant in the systems approach room.
What else?
We have a contribution from the Southern Hemisphere - many thanks to Alfredo del Valle who has provided an article about a program design workshop using a particatory innovation model.
We also have an article on mergers and acquisition as a strategy. I suppose it is, but the evidence suggests that it destroys value. The recent Pfizer attempt to take over Astra Zeneca is a typical example.
We also have a short memorial notice for the Simon Beer (son of Stafford Beer) who recently passed away, And a note from Tony K about CIGs (no, we aren't talking about cheroots)

Have good summer.

Gordon

This Issue

M&A as strategy....

"Crisis? What crisis?"

"So what are the synergies you're after?" He looked back at us blankly – this was one of those tumbleweed moments – we'd asked a question to which there was no answer. We were there to help the Merger and Acquisition (M&A) "manager" for a global player who had just acquired a company for a 10 figure sum which – according to the manager - was four times the capital value. "We've not been told about any synergies… just to integrate the two companies and drive out costs." I didn't even ask how you can cut anything enough to save more than three times its value, there didn't seem much point.

Although this true story has a slightly surreal quality - and it is easy to dismiss it as unrepresentative - it has within it many of the elements of why M&A is so problematic at the level of strategy, not just execution. Lest we think this is a one off, the statistics on the $2 trillion + M&A industry are …. dismal. Surveys vary, but none are flattering: a KPMG survey shows 85% "failed" and AT Kearney report 58% reduce shareholder value rather than increasing it. Given the scale of the M&A industry, such failure rates are bad enough on their own, but of course the real story is much worse than that. At the human level, we're talking careers and businesses wrecked. At a strategic level this represents a failure of corporate strategy on an epic scale.

So what is going on?

It is of course tempting to lay the blame for M&A failures at the door of greedy boards and their advisors. In the story I started with, one of the big name consultancies had advised and presumably been well rewarded for the fiasco. It's tempting, but it's hardly an explanation – after all, how can it be in their interests for an M&A to fail – surely success would fuel the M&A industry even more and they'd earn even more? So whilst greed undoubtedly plays a role and may distort judgement at critical points, for me it doesn't stand as a general explanation for failure.

I think there are two classes of failure that we commonly see in M&As: failures of strategy and failures of execution. Of course the two are linked..

Failures of Strategy
Often deciding on an M&A appears to be a substitute for strategic thinking. For many cash rich boards, choosing a target that allows them to grow, is a short cut that avoids having to either grow organically or actually moving into a new area of business. Buying capability, or market presence looks easy, but this is of course an illusion. To know enough to run the acquisition well, we need to know almost as much as we would need to build it – the apparent short cut leads us into a situation where usually we don't really know enough to make the M&A work. So many acquisitions end up in the hands of boards that don't know enough about how they work to run them effectively.

Then there is the vexed issue of synergy. M&As are supposed to increase shareholder value. There are two ways to do this, the first is to cut costs whilst still delivering equivalent value and the second is to deliver more value from combining the merged companies than they had whilst apart. This 1+1=3 effect is synergy – the ability to do something together that the two companies couldn't do apart.

Strategically, these approaches are diametrically opposed. Synergy is about doing something extra, something new, something different: "if we take your product X and run that through our channels into these markets we'll have a value proposition that neither of us had alone" That's synergy and strategically it's an expansionist move. Cost cutting on the other hand is simply about doing what we were already doing, but doing it cheaper through economies of scale. Strategically this is a defensive move – it doesn't propel us into new markets, it doesn't offer any new value proposition. The two approaches represent very different strategies. Unfortunately, M&A practitioners tend to treat them both identically. There are three consequences: first, the M&A can be conceived as an expansionist move and yet practiced as a defensive one – a disconnect of strategic intent, second it tends to make the strategic intent of the move incoherent to those delivering the M&A and third, because cost cutting appears a faster way to recoup an inflated purchase price (inflated to take into account assumed synergies) cost cutting tends to take priority and synergies get abandoned.

There is something really quite strange here – synergies tend to be assumed and yet there is no standard way of modelling them. There is lots of methodology on how to value companies for M&A, but very little on how to value synergies and the confusion between cost cutting and synergy may be enough to explain most of the failure of M&A at a strategic level. It's a bit like the sub-prime issue that kicked off the credit crunch where risks were sold as assets. Here, defensive cost cutting is sold as expansionist synergy.

Failures of Execution

There are many failures of execution in M&A. One, which we have seen repeatedly in M&A failures, follows directly on from not being clear on synergy and how that is supposed to work. Synergy relies on difference. It's in exploiting the differences between the two companies that the opportunities for synergy lie. Often, partly because synergies aren't clear, partly because the acquirer doesn't understand how the target's business works and partly because of the drive to recoup costs quickly, those differences are driven out. Cost cutting often means the elimination of difference and again and again this means the destruction of the very uniqueness that made the target attractive in the first place.

When you look at the way the M&A industry deals with – or fails to deal with, that elusive and creative essence of M&A – synergy, is it any wonder that the failure rate is so high?

Patrick Hoverstadt

Territorial management of insect populations with agricultural relevance in the Valparaíso Region, Chile: A program design workshop using the Participatory Innovation Model

Horticulture in the Valparaíso Region faces two complex challenges related to insect populations that have significance at the territorial scale. One is the expansion of greenhouse whiteflies (Trialeurodes vaporariorum) from one greenhouse farm to the next, which surpasses the control capacity of the agrochemicals that are applied at the farm scale. The other is the well-known Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD): the disappearance of whole honeybee (Apis mellifera) populations as a consequence of the widespread use of some agrochemicals. Both “good” and “bad” insects are involved in this situation.

The CERES Centre has initiated the design process for a research and innovation program that will face these challenges systemically; its title is the one that heads this note and its leader is Agr. Eng. Gustavo Briones. A half-day workshop was held on 29 January 2014 in Limache, to exchange professional views about the above challenges and to take a first step of conceptual design from a systems perspective. Its 27 participants involved farmers, input suppliers, technical advisors, researchers and public officers; two of them participated online, from Canada and Sweden. The professional exchange involved 11 short presentations and discussions, and raised a broad range of issues that need to be addressed by the program. The workshop concluded with the design activity, which I conducted by applying partially the program design tool of the Participatory Innovation Model (see Viability Today, Winter, December 2013, p. 13) that is called Potentiality Profile; the conceptual design will be completed in a subsequent workshop.

Following is the Requirement of the program under design, i.e., the definition of the regional and societal need from which the program objectives will be derived, as agreed by the participants (my translation from Spanish):

"To achieve a competitive and high-yield agriculture, which provides the region with quality jobs and an attractive identity, which generates positive impacts on health, soils, water and the biosphere, and which protects the labour of honeybees and other beneficial organisms, by means of: (a) the generation of alternatives to the use of agrochemicals that make use of the natural capacity of ecosystems to sustain themselves, (b) the generation of new perceptions and attitudes among people towards the insects, as components of ecosystems and territories that have spatial, temporal and biological-complexity components, and (c) the invitation to a wide diversity of actors (public, private, civil society and knowledge; local, regional and national) to get involved in this process and to enrich its action prospects."

Alfredo del Valle, Ph.D.
Valparaíso Regional Centre for Horticultural Innovation – CERES: Pontifical Catholic University of Valparaíso,
Quillota, Chile, adelvalle@ceres-cr.org

SCiO Open day Meeting – Monday 7 April 2014, Manchester

Session One: Deciding how to restructure an Organisation using experiences from 7 restructuring projects. Patrick Hoverstadt – patrick@fractal-consulting.com

- Highlighting the complexity drivers that needed to be addressed.
- Highlighting the engagement approach.
- Highlighting the method used.
- Highlighting the lessons learned.

When an organisation is facing challenges restructuring can be one of the most powerful tools. These were seven sample restructure projects from the last 20 years of consulting where a Company faced challenges and wanted to understand how changing the way that the staff are structured could improve their situation.

Two restructuring projects were delivered for the same organisation.
All the companies faced working with limited resources and needed to respond to customer needs while addressing change in their markets.
This presentation will highlight some of the differences between the organisations and the way they approached potential restructuring and its impact on the outcomes achieved.
The principle behind restructuring is to select the most appropriate basis for dividing the organisation; typically the first division will be based upon geography, customer/product type, service, time, function. Getting this right is the biggest lever an organisation has to increasing its viability. One Organisation improved operations productivity by 40% within 1 week just by changing its top level structure.

Improving the structure of the organisations
The interventions showed how the different complexity drivers, levels of engagement of

management influence the modelling process and the outcome in terms of uptake. Some of the organisations were similar in that they needed to restructure towards a cellular manufacturing operation. Each manufacturing cell would be aligned with delivering customer value. The resulting model was very technical. In this case the technical model had flows, variety equations and a map of the operational structure and this engagement was expert led and resulted in a technical consulting led model. The variety calculations were needed to prove that this design resulted in improved organisation.

Typically, the approach taken was a low engagement engaging with a single person to capture the current state. Overt conversations about the new operating model would have been difficult and technically demanding. This was deliberately below the radar and the process of modelling was very difficult. Sharing the the model with the management team was very hard because they were not used to thinking about the number of possible states of the system and the impact of the way the jobs flowed through the organisation. Scheduling complexity results from the high number of possible combinations. Restructuring reduces this variety and simplifies the scheduling.

In this case the VSM was applied to Value Stream Mapping which is concerned with mapping how the organisation delivers customer value as a chain or network of activities that includes process flows and value added time differentiating value from waste. It was noted that while ERP promises to manage the flow of work through an organisation, group experience suggested that ERP/MRP does not improve complex systems

Session2 – Conflict in complex systems: Ash Moran (ash.moran@patchspace.co.uk)
Ash described the session as resolving conflict methodically with the conflict resolution diagram from the Theory of Constraints.(Eli Goldratt).

Ash described how The Goal (Goldratt) was the first systems book he had read and how it had influenced him in terms of addressing all sorts of barriers such as policy-based barriers, or indeed barriers in peoples' heads. The Goal talks mainly about physical (process) constraints – most of the discussion of policy constraints and associated logic diagrams can be found in Goldratt's sequel, It's Not Luck. Drawing on his software developer perspective, Ash had found the conflict resolution diagram useful as an approach to examining conflict scenarios and seeking to resolve the conflict as far as is possible. The general methodology is to move through the four stages …

Identify conflict   Express conflict clearly   Surface assumptions   Find creative solutions

Ash took us through the structural logic of linking Goal/Objective to 'Necessary conditions/ Requirements ', to identifying 'Action pre-requisites', and identifying conflicts in the action pre-requisites. The key stage was to surface assumptions around the logical links between the Goal/Objective and a Necessary condition, and also assumptions around which actions may promote each necessary condition. Ash gave us an illustration linked to running a successful business and the various key tasks, sometimes performed by management and sometimes performed by support staff. He illustrated how the very process of challenging the necessary conditions and linked assumptions, and challenging pre-requisites and their assumptions, provided two types of insight … identifying false and confirmed assumptions on the one hand, and stimulating creative solutions as a further outcome, perhaps through identifying new necessary conditions, and/or by formulating modified/innovative actions.

Ash adds that while you are looking for actions (called 'injections' in TOC jargon), generally you're not looking for new necessary conditions when you resolve the conflict, although you'll have to give them some thought to frame it. It is possible (just less likely) you'll discover a necessary condition is invalid, but this is an atypical case.

At the end of the session, working in groups, Ash had prepared a few short scenarios to experience the approach in action. Friday at Phil's presented the conflict of Billy's parents wanting Billy back from a party at Phil's by 10pm compared with Billy's view that the party will start to get into gear after 10pm and most people will only leave the party after midnight. The atmosphere in the house is tense, Billy shouting at his parents and his parents feeling Billy is being unreasonable. Using the above methodology, some assumptions were surfaced and alternative actions and modified behaviours were identified which suggested some resolution of the conflict eg keeping contact (texts?) during the evening to communicate enjoyment and likely return time.

This was of course only an illustration but the process of formally surfacing assumptions could be seen as an inroad to addressing actions and behaviours contributing to conflict and giving the opportunity for find creative and innovative ways forward that might seek to reduce or illuminate the conflict.

Session3: Navigating Complexity - Arthur Battram – Arthur.battram.plexity@gmail.com

While at the Local Government Management Board 15 years ago, Arthur wrote intended to help Local Government understand and work with increasing complexity.
Six principles from his eclectic toolkit are the beginning of the journey to navigating complexity:

1. More-than-one thing can be true at once
2. And-not-but
3. I'm smarter when I talk to you
4. The pace of change and connectedness leads to a whole range of effects [like network effects, small worlds, wisdom of crowds, tipping points, chaos, complexity...] that are part of our everyday lives
5. Science is a defence against believing what we want to
6. Why is the gravy lumpy ?

Arthur explored why Birmingham City Council Meals on Wheels service was apparently providing lumpy gravy to its clients which led to a consideration of system boundary. The example of the aquarium provided food for thought leading into how we define system boundaries.

Possibility Spaces
Arthur described 'Possibility Space' workshops that take advantage of the difference between dialogue(used a lot) and discussion(actively avoided). These workshops use post-it notes (and large writing) to capture (and share) the ideas generated by the participants who all sit in a circle. At these events the first minute is crucial as systems dynamics theory tells us, the final outcome is sensitive to initial conditions and the workshop continues as a series of conversations in the round which creates a space with the right people where 'whatever is needed' emerges.

'Stepping stones' as Adjacent Possibles
Arthur introduced the idea of phase space as a way of looking at dynamic systems. In phase space, the field of actions is constrained so that an agent can only move to a small number of possible neighbouring states called adjacent possibilities.

The difference between throwing birds and stones is clear if you represent them both in phase space. Stones behave like stones and follow Newton's laws. Birds behave like birds and will choose their own path. Arthur uses a 'stepping stones' model of strategy which is like crossing a river using stepping stones in fog where the destination cannot be seen. You do not know what will happen after the next stone. Thus we must choose a few adjacent possibles using a simple heuristic – for example, 'will this take us in the right direction'?

MLTQ [many little things quickly]
Finally Arthur talked about the need to constantly asses the steps taken. He used ants as an example of emergent "intelligent" behaviour. While each ant lives for only three days, colony persists, because its adaptive behaviour emerges from many tiny interactions which are governed by simple rule-bound foraging behaviour:

1) Go randomly
2) Follow the pheromone trail of previous ants (if there are none, see rule 1)
3) Lay a pheromone market ('found food') on your return with food

The emergent behaviour is incredibly effective and is now being studied to improve traffic management. The quick feedback drives the 'rapid prototype and safe-to-fail' exploration for optimal adaptation (and for an extreme example the African driver ants do not create a stable anthill. Note also that there is a strong link to the Lean Start-up philosophy here which proposes rapid cycling through PDCA cycles,)

The Pirate Review - AAR
A terrible pun introduced the last part of Arthur's talk which considered the nature of the feedback for a group of people. The US Army has a practice called AAR After Action Review (also from Lean-ed) this was formalised in the 1970s from the earlier de-briefing to maximise the learning and improvement following action. Arthur's version is conducted as a round and involves considering:

- WWW – 'what worked well ...' (continue)
- EBI – 'even better if...' (improve)
- DD – 'or differently ...' (change)
- NTWW – 'next time we will ...' (action)

In general, the conclusion is that Managers need to apply the ideas from complexity to those parts of the organisation that are complicated and unpredictable.

Suggested Readings:
M Mitchell Waldrop – Complexity (1994)
Kevin Kelly – Out of Control 'the new biology of machines'(reprint 1995)
Lakoff & Johnson - metaphors we live by(2003)
Douglas Hofstadter – Gödel, Esher, Bach: An eternal golden braid(1979) [also known as GEB]
Gareth Morgan - Images of Organisation (1986)
Fritjof Capra – Web of Life (1996)

Session Four: Systems Blindness and Systems Sight – Ben Taylor
(ben.taylor@redquadrant.com – RedQuadrant http://redquadrant.com/)
Organisational and social patterns that control us.

Ben has a passion for using systems principles and insights to provide a practical science of social system life and has been much involved in designing experiential learning events over many years, and now at RedQuadrant. Ben is accredited to run the Power+Systems Organisation Workshop and Merging Cultures workshop and this talk was inspired by the work done by Barry Oshry through the Power Lab Organisational Workshop venture.

Ben described how the Lab project had experimented with the assigned role given to stakeholders as either Top – Middle – Bottom or Elite – Middle - Immigrant in a variety of organisational and social scenarios and the predictable behaviours which resulted. The essential conclusions were around the extent to which power structures lead to predictable instinctive behaviours, which turn out to exacerbate the conditions of the position and have negative consequences, and the need to draw on reflective actions. This is to recognise that organisations are made up of people and that it is possible to share power across the conventional organisational boundaries – and necessary to recognise the 'dance of power' if you want positively functioning organisations and societies. Ben described characteristics of so called 'normal conditions' in terms of familiar realities and predictable reflex behaviours. and the ability of the various roles to influence events; top positions often exhibit overload behaviour (burdened by circumstances), bottom positions suffer neglect in terms of their needs, and middle positions experience a crunch between top and bottom. While blaming these familiar disempowering results on the conditions, individuals recognise neither the systemic drivers which bring them about, nor the critical role of their own reflex response in bringing about the results. The payoff, however, is that the reflex response is instant, painless, accepted, and, while organisational purpose and positive outcomes are not achieved, the individual is rewarded with a story in which their part is either as victim or hero.

The conclusions from the Power+Systems power lab experiments were some principles to avoid system blindness and provide system sight (in short):

- See the system and facilitate reflective action – recognising actions by all stakeholder players including customers and drawing on reflections of the outcomes together.
- Recognise current roles where there is involvement but no opportunity for discussion around contributions (surface peoples' rights and feelings)
- Increasing agency through discussion across roles and boundaries.
- Seek to avoid spatial, temporal, relational, and process blindness.
- Power is emergent from the system and so it is healthy to design roles in terms of value-added contributions.

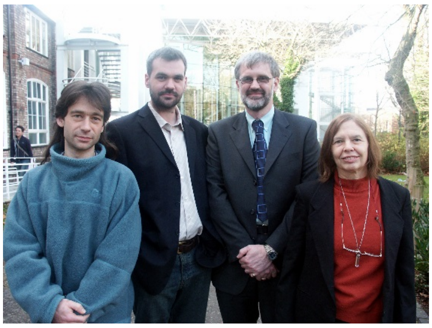
The systems contribution appears to be 'sense making' for all participants in an organisation, aimed at describing rather than controlling individual roles and activities, and an awareness of the value-added contributions all participants are making. This approach is about hitting some of the norms of culture head-on and believing in the potential available through human possibilities, recognising and releasing peoples' talents and ensuring there is both engagement and empowerment.

Simon Beer – In Memorium

Simon Beer, Stafford Beer's son, passed away on Sat. 31st May 2104, aged 63.

He was Stafford's oldest son and had a very successful career as an electronics designer and entrepreneur. He built up his own communications company in London, which specialised in designing communications infrastructures for whole buildings.

Simon was full of colour and fun, enthusiastic and sensitive, with a lively interest in the world, presumably kick-started by growing up with Stafford (Father) and Cynthia (Mother). Many of us in the Stafford Beer Cell were present when Stafford Beer's family visited the Stafford Beer Collection in 2003 at Liverpool John Moores University soon after Stafford's death.
Simon was fascinated to be reunited with some of the machines in the Collection that he had built in his youth under the direction of Stafford.



John, Harry & Simon Beer & Allenna Leonard on the visit to the Collection

Artefacts in the Collection at LJMU

Simon says of his Dad, "He was a brilliant academic, but ask him to put a screw in and he was buggered! I must have been 12, in Sheffield, but by then I'd already well outstripped him – I was the one who took over the screws and the soldering iron and wired up all his creations under his direction. I think it was a reaction to Stafford which made me go off in the electrical direction!

It's stunning to see them again – absolutely stunning."

Simon was a great supporter and encourager of those seeking to understand and utilise the wisdom from the cybernetics pioneers, his Father being a key founding father.

Denis Adams & Doug Haynes

PS If you would like a copy of the DVD highlighting the Beer Family visit to the Stafford Beer Collection, I can provide you with a copy (delay of several days)

Common Interest Groups - CIGs

Common Interest Groups (CIGs) are integral to developing and disseminating systems practice; they recognise that learning how to BE a systems thinker, as well as how to DO systems thinking, benefits from reflective conversations in a safe environment with people willing to share their experiences and test others' ideas. CIGs can also create Outreach groups that go beyond SCiO's membership, to expand the scope of systems practice and grow SCiO membership and participation.

Any SCiO member can start a CIG and only members can join, unless it's an Outreach CIG. Open membership encourages cross-fertilisation and diversity of thought, promotes fairness, and equality of opportunity to participate, but should be balanced with considerations around creating an atmosphere of trust and security.

CIGs that work best meet face-to-face and are geographically co-located. Successful CIGs may wish to share knowledge and experience with the SCiO community through newsletters and Open Days. There are 21 CIGs and Outreach activities currently in progress, with status monitored periodically by the SCiO board.

Managing a CIG

a) At least two SCiO members are required to set up a CIG. The stimulus may be emerging awareness of a shared interest, a desire to continue developing learning as a group after SCiO PDP activity, or a desire to explore systems practice opportunities in a new domain.
b) Members will agree how the group will operate, including levels of commitment and participation.
c) Each CIG should maintain a charter, describing its terms of reference and objectives.
d) Agree how members will communicate and what confidentiality principles should be applied.
e) Agree how the CIG will make decisions
f) Appoint one member to act as main point of contact with SCiO members and the board
g) Make requests to the SCiO board about support needed for the CIG to function healthily
h) CIGs are not commercial ventures; if these develop they are separate entities outside SCiO.
i) At least one member should check group dynamics and intervene if necessary.
j) Each member will be expected to:

- Create a friendly, enjoyable and productive environment.
- Be open to others perspectives and ideas, and to listen to others fully.
- Be open to exploring and questioning their own assumptions and ways of thinking
- Share ideas, thoughts and ask questions in a way that develops and opens up discussion
- Refrain from pursuing personal agendas not in the interest of the wider group.
- Treat all members fairly and with respect.

Guidance is available in the resources area of the SCiO website: http://www.scio.org.uk/CIGs
For further information and support please contact: tony.korycki@scio.org.uk
Give me a call if you have any queries; it's based on the new web site resource and will point direct to it.
Tony K

SCiO Open day - Monday 7 July, 10am-4.30pm BT Centre, 81 Newgate Street, London EC1A 7AJ

Special introduction to VSM at 9am - Steve Brewis will provide an introduction to the viable systems model through a live cae study of his work on improving the quality of decision making.

More details of speakers and sessions
This session is not themed, but coincidentally has three presentations from therapists of different stripes - family, psycho- and occupational therapy; all speakers are arguably interested in a therapeutic perspective on organisations. The presentations couldn't be more diverse, introducing four different systemic perspectives in practical contexts - systems theories of meaning, organisation, wellbeing at work, and adult development.

Session: Special 9am introduction to the Viable Systems Model' - this will be delivered using a 'live case study' by Stephen J Brewis, Chief Research Scientist at BT Innovate – on improving the quality of decision making in the creation & execution of BT's Network

This talk will look at the design of the new governance structure that has recently been implemented within a business unit of BT. The talk will focus upon the qualification of this structure using the VSM and the emotional and reasoning structures found in the human brain. The talk will also look at how the RACI responsibility assignment matrix and reward structures were applied as the formal 'emotional' engagement mechanism to improve the quality of decision making in the creation and execution of the business unit network operating plan.

Session: Co-ordinated management of meaning: a systemic framework - Christine Oliver
Christine Oliver, PhD, is a Systemic Psychotherapist, Group Analyst, Organisational Consultant and University Lecturer at the University of Bedfordshire, UK where she is co-course leader of the MSc in Systemic Leadership and Organisational Development. Her publications, particularly in the field of Coordinated Management of Meaning Theory and Appreciative Inquiry, contribute to the development of practical theory for guiding and sustaining dialogic processes in psychotherapy and consultancy. Information is available at http://www.christineoliver.net and http://www.taosinstitute.net/Websites/taos/Images/ProgramsPreviousConferences/Chris_Oliver_reflexive_coaching.pdf

She will present co-ordinated management of meaning as an ethical and practical frame for making sense of and orienting oneself within the system, treating 'the system' as constituting contextualised patterns of narrative and communicative interaction. Particular attention will be paid to our acts of interpretation within communication exchanges and their contexts of influence and consequence for the social worlds that we make.

Session: Beer at work (how work can make us sick, and Beer can make us better) - Christoph Giagounidis
Dr Christoph Giagounidis is an occupational health doctor. Prompted by the rising number of stressed people he sees on a weekly basis, he is working on the connection between the health of workers and cybernetic deficiencies in their organisations, mainly through the writings of Stafford Beer. More and more, Beer's thoughts on systems 2 and 3 lead him to think that breakthroughs in 'sickness absence management' will only be achieved through a change in the way HR capture and value certain types of

information within organisations, and a different type of co-operation between HR and Occupational Health, probably by developing feedback loops that, at present, don't normally exist. A well-run organisation should have minimal sick leave/injuries at work, etc, after all; however, Beer's work might give a different outlook onto current, day-to-day operations in ‘sickness absence management’ and might help to develop practical tests or measures HR and occupational health could implementin practice.

Session: ‘A heretic's view of Deming and systems thinking’ - Alan Clark
The rapid change, chaos and complexity of today’s global marketplace demands more progressive management. Transformation of organizations to an optimum level of performance can only take place if such progressive management is able to take a balanced view of the whole situation. W Edwards Deming proposed that such a balanced view would comprise four disciplines that he called ‘A System of Profound Knowledge’. These four, interrelated disciplines are: Appreciation for a System; Understanding Variation; Theory of Knowledge, and, most importantly, Psychology. Alan will explore these along with two other elements that he suggests yield greater organizational effectiveness.

Alan Clark is a business and quality coach, author and speaker, and systems thinker. He is a Chartered Mechanical Engineer, Chartered Quality Professional, and was founding Chair of the Deming Special Interest Group at the Chartered Quality Institute; he is a member of the Deming Alliance; Programme Manager of a one-year part-time Management Development Programme for local government managers at the University of Birmingham; more recently developed a Service Improvement Green-Belt programme accredited by the Institute for Leadership and Management.

Session: Martin Egan - What is it like in a 'full-spectrum system'? The evolution of human values from survival to service
Martin Egan brings more than 15 years of corporate experience in life sciences and healthcare, and experience as consultant with leading international consultancies. Martin Egan manages assessment and diagnostics at Walking the Talk. In this role, he oversees all assessments conducted globally and is responsible for accrediting Walking the Talk practitioners in using the tools. He has been the lead developer of Walking the Talks evidence-based measurement tools.

Martin’s insights for organisations and individuals are influenced by his training in analytical science as well as in psychoanalytic, analytical, and group psychology. He gained a BSc in Analytical Sciences, a PhD in Bioanalytical Science and an MA in Analytical Psychology. His work on coaching for Integral Leadership was included with leading authorities on the subject in Leadership Coaching: Working with Leaders to Develop Elite Performance (Kogan, London). Martin is licensed to work both clinically and generally with psychometric tools ranging from personality type measures to the Hogan Development Survey.

He will talk about the work of Richard Barrett and his experience in applying it to organisational cultures, particularly the latest book The Values-Driven Organization: Unleashing Human Potential for Performance and Profit. Martin will also make connections and invite others from the group, from coaching supervision models to the viable systems model.

Cheers
Benjamin

Calendar 2014

Sun. 6th Apr. 2014 Development day - Manchester

Mon. 7th Apr.2014 Open Meeting - Manchester

Sun. 6th July 2014 Development Day - London

Mon. 7th July 2014 Open Meeting - London

Sun. 20th July 2014 Development day - Manchester

Sun. 5th Oct. 2014 Development day - London

Mon. 27th Oct. 2014 Open Meeting - Manchester

Sun. 25th Jan 2015 Development day - London

SCiO Board 2013

Chair	Patrick Hoverstadt	Webmaster	Trevor Hilder
Membership	Jane Searles	PDP	Steve Hales
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Treasurer	Steve Hales	Outreach	
Meetings	Ben Taylor	Non-Exec	Alex Hough
Dev.Days	Tony Korycki	Non-Exec	Doug Haynes
Newsletter	Gordon Kennedy	Non-Exec	Trevor Hilder

WANTED!

Book reviews,
Articles
Viewpoints
Stories from the field

Is it systematically systemic? Is it strategically stratified?

Send it in!

The SCiO Newsletter NEEDS YOU!

Seriously folks, this is a small opportunity to share something that you have or know with a bunch of people who are thinking along the same lines.

Website: scio.org.uk/systems
Membership enquiries: Jane Searles (jane.searles @scio.org.uk)
Newsletter contact: Gordon Kennedy (gordon.kennedy@scio.org.uk)
Open Meetings: Ben Taylor (Ben.Taylor@scio.or.uk)

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