

Structural and Instrumental Interventions

Structural and instrumental interventions take action on the organization's structure and technology. Changes to the structure and the technology result in changes to how the work is performed. These changes put existing patterns of cooperation under pressure and that creates space for cultural change. People who have a fair amount of influence on the change process can use structural and instrumental interventions.

In this chapter, I first examine interventions that intervene directly in the structure and technology of a company and in the arrangement of the work process. One specific structural intervention is building up a breeding ground for young talent in which the desired culture can flourish. The three structural interventions are followed by six instrumental interventions. The interventions – providing risk capital, changing reward systems and setting up monitoring systems – try to effectuate a change in behaviour directly. Presenting indisputable facts is an indirect way to change people's behaviour by showing that things can no longer continue the way they are, or by seducing them with what could be possible. Formulating rules for behaviour is also an instrumental method of influencing behaviour. The rules for behaviour often stem from the introduction of a new working method. I conclude by examining cultural programmes that concentrate on behavioural change.

Intervening in Structure and Technology

Changers at the Rabobank want the customer comfort of their financial service to stand out. That means changes need to be made to its culture, structure and systems. Customers must be able to choose the channel they want for access to the bank, regardless of the time of day or their location. Properly recording the contact history with the customer means that bank employees are able to continue the dialogue smoothly with the customer at every moment of contact, regardless of the chosen channel. Instead of the banking product, it is the customer experience that must be the central point in the thinking and acting of management and employees of local banks. It is about creating a different culture of cooperation between customer and organization. The change is tackled first through the structure and technology. Local banks merge to create larger units that can afford to have specialisms in house, close to the customers. This leads to a decentralization of expertise. The Rabobank also tackles the technology. The information systems have to be simpler so that the staff can quickly obtain an overview of the relevant information for a customer contact. Simplification through the use of standard software packages results in increased system stability, lower administrative costs and a clearing out of old, inflexible systems. After the interventions in structure and technology, the Rabobank starts a learning process to get the new method of working to really engage. This gets the cultural change going gradually. It speeds up once it is evident that the local banks with the new working method are booking much better results than before.

The structure of an organization reflects the implicit ideas about organizing. A tight, hierarchical structure emphasizes the meaning of a leader who takes decisions and bears the responsibility for them, while a decentralized structure reflects the importance of individual initiative and shared responsibility. The structure of an organization links up with underlying value systems.¹ Changing the structure thus also illustrates the departure from old values and shows that new values are important. Changing from a functional structure to a customer-oriented structure

makes it clear that the customer comes first and one's own specialty is no longer leading. Interventions in the structure of an organization have more than just symbolic value. A structural change means that the way work is distributed also changes as do the methods of cooperation and reporting, the communication patterns and the work processes. This creates new cooperative arrangements and different work practices.² The culture of an organization gradually changes along with the new structure and work practices. The existing technology structures the work in a certain way. By changing that technology, the work can be given shape in a different way and different work practices arise. Information systems allow people to store knowledge, make it accessible and share it. This speeds up work processes and allows the customer to be served better. The customer becomes even more strongly the first consideration. Changing the culture requires extra effort in the meaning of the work, the patterns of cooperation and the underlying values that give direction to the behaviour. The intervention is far reaching, costs a lot of time and energy from management and employees and success is not guaranteed.³ If an organization realizes the change to strategy, structure, technology and culture in conjunction, we can speak of an irreversible change in the meaning of the organization.

Structural interventions for cultural change consist of a number of steps⁴:

- Analysis of the environment and customer needs and formulation of what the organization stands by and goes for.
- Establishment of the customer value and customer strategy and checking the possibilities that new technology offers to fulfil this.
- Fundamental reconsideration of how the work can be organized differently through the use of new technology and with the customer value in mind.
- Formulation of performance objectives, translation of these objectives into concrete working methods and redesign of the work process and the technical systems.
- Setting up a change organization that gives shape to the changes to work processes, technology and organizational structure and supervises their introduction.
- Establishment of new task structures and work descriptions, setting up of teams focusing on customers or work processes and development of monitoring systems to measure results.

- Creation of teams and development of teams in their transition to a new method of working.
- Support of managers in a transition from task-oriented to result-oriented leadership.

Designing New Ways of Working

The new management at Philips Recruitment observes that all recruiters interpret their work in their own way. This makes it difficult to exchange experiences and to work on the quality of the service. More uniformity in the method of working can reduce the costs and help the quality. Management decides on an unambiguous recruitment plan that indicates for every job vacancy what the request is from the customer, which recruitment period is agreed, what is expected of the candidate and how many interviews are agreed. The desired approach is laid down in clear steps and discussed. The intention is for all recruiters to follow the “Way of Working.” This is not successful in the first instance. Only once the advantages for the customer have been discussed and the recruiters provide some input themselves, does any support arise. The recruiters are challenged to come up themselves with an elaborated working method that describes the steps of the work process that can be used for quality management and is easy to communicate to the clients. This challenge and the dialogue about the work make the recruiters feel they are the owners of the new method of working and they do not object to this being set out formally. The “Way of Working” provides customers, candidates, recruiters and management clarity about process steps and progress. The new working method ties in with the need of customers to have some insight into the recruitment process and allows space for the recruiters to bring in their own professional knowledge. The “Way of Working” is schematic and worked out in steps. Every step is kept up to date.

Setting up a work process influences the organizational culture indirectly by changing work practices and routines. This involves realizing a high quality of service and productivity and high work satisfaction at the same time.⁵ It is striking in the example that the first attempt to streamline the

work gets stuck due to the professionals who do not want to cooperate because this undermines their autonomy. In the second instance, the work processes are streamlined successfully because a customer perspective is chosen and space remains for the professionals to interpret the work as they see fit. Streamlining work processes anchors a specific work practice and can thus lead indirectly to different behaviour and a different work culture. Excessively inflexible work processes obstruct personal initiative, flexibility and entrepreneurship and this can be at odds with the desired cultural values and attitude of the people who perform the work. Setting up new work processes takes time. One condition of this intervention is that the employees understand the usefulness of the change to their work.

When setting up work processes, it is relevant to pay attention to:

- The meaning of the work for customers, the desired quality of the delivered work and the speed at which that quality can be delivered.
- The meaning of the work for employees: this concerns the impact of the work on others, the possibility of identifying with the work because it is a self-contained whole and the variation that the work offers.
- The autonomy in the execution of the work: the freedom that people have to perform the work as they see fit and the possibility of influencing the results of the work themselves.
- A view of the effectiveness and results of the work and the opportunities the work offers for improving one's own work process.
- Commitment by professionals in designing their own work process so that the work process fits the meaning of the work for customers and their own professionalism.

Life Cycle Management for Sustainability

3M was one of the first major manufacturing companies to address environmental issues actively. Already in 1975, the company got employees involved through a programme for social responsibility called 3P: Pollution Prevention Pays. From that time, respect for social and physical environment and environmental sustainability has been connected with the three business values: openness, honesty and integrity. The health and safety of one's own employees is one driver

for social responsibility. A second driver for social and environmental sustainability are the customers who have told sales staff that environmentally responsible products are important for their reputation. A third driver is optimal efficiency in manufacturing and logistics and thus cost savings. Corporate social responsibility and sustainable development are included in the business strategy of life cycle management (LCM). For social and sustainable development, LCM is a tool for managing all potential risks associated with a product, whilst identifying opportunities at all stages of its life cycle from research and development, sourcing of materials, manufacturing, operations, customer use to ultimate disposal. The four particular areas of risk that LCM deals with are the potential risk of certain materials in their products, the safety and environmental risks in manufacturing and sourcing the product, the risks to customers in using the product and the risks both current and future in terms of forthcoming legislation in disposal of the product. It assesses the impacts of the product in the following categories: environment – air, water and solid waste; energy; resource use; health – chemical, physical and biological; safety – chemical, electrical and mechanical. This structural method for social responsibility and sustainable development provides benefits in enhanced reputation and strengthened brand names. It helps to improve relationships with customers because risks have been reduced and customers can rely on products without the threat of damage to their own reputations. The methodology has led to a reduction of environmental risks and improved efficiency. Lastly, it has been a source of innovation as the LCM reviews have led to new market opportunities for customers and 3M products.⁶

LCM is about making life cycle thinking and product sustainability operational for businesses that are aiming for continuous improvement. 3M strives towards reducing its footprint and minimizing its environmental and socio-economic burdens while maximizing economic and social values. KLM follows a similar approach. KLM takes a leading role in the industry, setting an example as the most sustainable airline. KLM initiates a wide range of measures and innovations. Key aspects include an intensive fleet renewal programme and modification of the existing fleet. KLM's operations are already more sustainable than those of other airlines. KLM's

environmental management system includes CO₂ reduction, sustainable biofuels, sustainable catering and optimizing airspace and flight procedures which coordinates connecting flights with great efficiency and minimal transit times. KLM can simply transport more passengers using fewer flights. These companies understand how LCM can be used to make value chains more sustainable and they are applying it to create value.

Social and sustainable LCM is a structural management method that decreases footprints and makes value chains more sustainable. Elements of this intervention are:

- Partnering with customers and suppliers to achieve minimum negative impact on environment and society within the complete value chain creates value and benefits society at large.
- Taking direct as well as indirect effects into account, LCM helps not only to provide this overall benefit but also delivers positive bottom-line results for each company involved.
- Cooperation can reinforce gains achieved through process and technical solutions within production and distribution cycles.
- Adopting a sustainable value chain approach will allow businesses to meet challenges ranging from poverty, climate change, resource depletion and water scarcity to globalization and demographic shifts, to name just a few, and help them reshape the world and the way business is done.
- Integrating sustainability aspects into research and development and subsequent engineering and maintenance processes from a business and engineering point of view, as a means of improving the product development processes across the value chain to deliver enhanced business value.⁷

Supporting Young Turks

The municipality of Amsterdam wants to be an attractive employer for highly trained young talent. To be able to do this, they start with the Consultancy Group. This consultancy group is commissioned to build up a breeding ground for young talent and be a source of inspiration for older employees. The Consultancy Group supports municipal services and districts with project supervision and advice. They select

employees for their pluck and flexibility and thus create a breeding ground for young civil servants. Personal development, innovation and mobility are central to the company philosophy. The breeding ground consists of teaching people in the space of three years to look beyond boundaries, think corporate-wide, be creative and get others involved in the work process. Besides breeding ground, the Consultancy Group is also a mobility office for employees in the municipalities who are tired of their job. To prevent knowledge from leaking out and employees from leaving, the group is an intermediate station where talented employees are given the opportunity to orient themselves widely and at the same time become more professional. The advisory, breeding ground and mobility functions not only exist alongside each other but reinforce each other and also contribute to a renewal of the culture of cooperation within the Municipality of Amsterdam.

Building up a breeding ground for young talent is an intervention to make the employer attractive to young and highly educated staff and to provide for the staffing needs in the future.⁸ What is fascinating about this example is that this ambition of attractive employer is linked to attracting new people who are fresh in the world, have different ambitions, want to work across boundaries and thus fulfil an exemplary role for older employees. People with career anchors like security, stability and technical competences are challenged by people with career anchors like entrepreneurship, challenge, adventure and friendship.⁹ By ensuring cross-pollination and knowledge sharing between older and younger employees, space is created for new values in the work. Setting up a breeding ground for young talent, or supporting young Turks, is a structural intervention that helps to introduce new values and work practices to an organization and thereby change the existing culture. The danger of the intervention is that if there is insufficient support, the younger people feel lost, enter too much into competition with the values of existing generations¹⁰ and leave the company after developing their talent.

Elements that contribute to the success of a breeding ground as cultural intervention are¹¹:

- Giving space to young talent whereby pluck is a part of the subculture of the breeding ground and where young talent experiences support to be allowed to be different to the prevailing culture.

- Appreciating diversity and variety whereby diversity in age, origins and cultural background is viewed from a perspective of differences and similarities.
- Encouraging a proactive attitude to respond to contemporary issues or tasks without identifying with a fixed location, a fixed task or a specific job description.
- Integration of work and life by calling on ambitions and talents and using them in the work.
- Steering by co-responsibility in organizing, exchanging and learning in the department.

Providing Risk Capital

InAxis provides risk capital to initiators for renewal in public administration. InAxis covers a maximum of 50% of the costs. In exchange, the experimenter is obliged to cooperate with the transfer of experiments. Experiments have to take place in the area of management development, human resources, changes in work processes, application of new technologies or the cooperation between companies. Another criterion for funding is that the approach is innovative and relevant to others. The employees also have a third criterion, especially if it concerns ideas that have not yet been fully worked out: the twinkling in the eye and the energy of the applicant to really make something of it.

Providing risk capital is an instrumental intervention for encouraging people to take risks and stimulating people to take the initiative themselves to innovate. One specific form of providing risk capital is the innovation patent and the learning circles linked to it. This intervention was developed in the work practice of InAxis as a response to the laborious diffusion of innovations. The innovation patent encourages innovators to share their knowledge and experience, as they receive financial payment for each organization that adopts the innovation and tailors it to their own situation. The innovation patent came into being from the realization that innovations are not “best practices” or ready-made products but semi-finished products that require adjustment to the context of the company.

The instrument is as simple as it is effective. One condition is to keep the subsidy arrangement as simple as possible and aim the subsidy at specific themes and issues.

The active ingredients of the innovation subsidy and the innovation patent are:

- Minimal requirements for subsidy provision. To be eligible for a subsidy, it is enough to have a good idea for an independent committee to evaluate. For the innovation patent, there is a requirement that the innovation is introduced in an introduction meeting.
- Offering professional support to sharpen up an innovative idea and the preconditions for it to be successful.
- Maximum openness about the honoured applications, the successful innovations and experiences with failed innovations.
- Discussing the lessons learned from failed experiments and the entrepreneurship of the people involved in a positive way.
- Speaking to people in many different ways and offering various possibilities for joining in and taking innovative initiatives.

Changing Reward Systems

The reward policy at Arcadis was not performance driven nor did it target international cooperation and exchange of knowledge. The old reward policy reflected the traditional cultural values: responsible, respectful and reliable. Someone who simply did his best received a bonus with his evaluation. When the organization introduces international knowledge exchange as a strategic spearhead and entrepreneurship as a core value, it is time to change the reward system. The bonuses in the new system are linked more directly to performance. Besides the financial bonuses, an evaluation is also given for the cooperation with colleagues in other countries. The contribution to the strategic goals also counts. The emphasis in the evaluations on cooperation started at the top and is implemented one layer down each time. In the promotion policy, the core values are also important reference points and worldwide cooperation has an important position.

A reward system can put the spotlight on specific cultural values of a company. This makes it an instrumental intervention that provides guidance for behavior.¹² To be effective as a cultural intervention, the system needs to correspond with other organizational systems such as the structure, technology and the desired culture. The reinforcing effect of these systems ensures unambiguous messages about the desired values. Rewards can consist of money, flexibility in working hours, extra development opportunities or facilities. This intervention is not without risk. The reward system must match the things that motivate employees and the cultural values of the organization. It takes a great deal of energy and time to develop and introduce a new reward system, and in a few cases, it will come up against resistance from people who feel their interests are being harmed. If there is a lack of clarity about the reward system, dissatisfaction can arise, unfairness is perceived and trust diminishes.

Criteria for a reward system as cultural intervention are¹³:

- that the reward is linked explicitly to the cultural values and the current performance that these values confirm,
- that the reward is proportional to the performance and is experienced as fair in comparison with rewards in the past and rewards of other people,
- that the reward is predictable and consistent with the prior expectations, so that people know what they can expect,
- that the reward confirms the cultural values and is available in a form that appeals to the people involved and
- that the reward is visible for others and is linked directly to the desired cultural values.

Developing Monitoring Systems

A common theme in Amazon's development is the drive to use a measured approach to all aspects of the business, beyond the finance. Amazon has a highly customized inventory tracking system to keep track of books moving from the publisher or distributor to Amazon's warehouse and then to the customer. The information is used to promise the customer when a product will arrive and also for internal use to optimize distribution and handling. Amazon has a culture of

metrics. Amazon developed internal tools to support this “culture of metrics” because actual consumer behaviour is the best way to decide upon tactics. There are metrics like revenue per click or revenue per page turn and metrics for customer behaviour. The web-based business gave Amazon an amazing window into the needs and behaviour of their customers and potential customers. The company recorded every move a visitor made, every last click and twitch of the mouse. As the data piled into virtual heaps, hummocks and mountain ranges, Amazon was able to draw all sorts of conclusions about the customer and their own performance. Amazon is not only a store but also an immense repository of facts. The company is continuously looking at how they could better use measurements to improve their performance.

Setting goals and measuring results is one way of emphasizing what is important in the organization. Formulating goals motivates people to achieve goals. Measuring results contributes to insight into the effects of your own behaviour. This instrumental intervention guides behaviour, influences what gets to be discussed and puts specific values in the spotlight.¹³ One thing that can be considered is not to impose the goals unilaterally from the top down but to set them in consultation with the people involved. The discussion about the goals provides the opportunity to clarify the backgrounds and cultural values behind the goals and allow them to have better effect. One danger is that the monitoring systems become too complicated and too many variables are created. The means overshoots the end and winds up separated from the desired cultural values. Linking the monitoring system to individual performance measurement, reward and evaluation also leads to the cultural meaning disappearing to the background and makes it difficult to hold a conversation about the relevance of the goals and the means by which they can be achieved and improved.

The following steps can be helpful in setting up monitoring systems:

- Establish goals that match the mission of the company, the business strategy and the desired culture.
- Articulate goals and make them measurable, goals that are challenging and realistic and whose results the people involved can influence.

- Implement a clear, operational translation of the cultural values and measurable goals into concrete behaviour.
- Communicate about the goals and desired results, monitor the progress in reaching goals and make milestones visible.

Presenting Facts and Figures

To contribute to the future of KPN, the Human Resources department chooses a method of working that ties in with the business and the questions of business managers. First, an effort is made to get hold of huge amounts of information and data. From the analyses, a sharp picture is created of the tasks HR can contribute to strengthening the market position and profitability of KPN. On the basis of the analyses, KPN chooses four spearheads that are further elaborated in concrete projects and activities. The question is whether it is possible to make sufficiently robust projections of the future with the projects as a starting point. On account of the spearheads being solidly substantiated, a good discussion of contents arises in the Board of Directors. The spearheads are translated into financial revenue for the business. By handling leave days differently, for example, a cost saving of €2.5 million is possible. It is also demonstrated that internal recruitment of managers is much cheaper and more successful than external recruitment. This argument convinces the Board of Directors to invest in leadership development. HR no longer needs to convince others of the added value of its tools but shows in concrete effect reports where the contribution of HR results in optimization of the work processes and cost savings. HR thus contributes to the market position of KPN and strengthens its credibility and legitimacy.

Systematically collecting and presenting facts provides insight into the state of a business or department and into the ways people can contribute to the objectives of the enterprise. The facts help reveal why things can no longer continue the way they are or help concretize the possible returns of a change of focus and working methods. In this case, it is a process of rational persuasion.¹⁴ Convincing people rationally consists of hard facts and logical arguments to show that a proposal is desirable, important and feasible and will offer advantages to the people to whom the proposal is

made. Rational conviction is a style of influence that works well in a business environment. The style of influence can also be used in less businesslike environments if the conviction strategy is combined with an inspiring story and consultation of others about how they think the activity can deliver the best result. One danger of rational conviction is that listeners experience little space anymore to make their own contribution. This danger increases if the rational conviction goes together with an appeal to rules and procedures and an appeal to people higher in the hierarchy. The risk of resistance increases in that case and the arguments disappear into the background.

The following handholds are useful with rational persuasion:

- Gather hard figures and logical arguments that make it clear why the proposal is important and necessary.
- Make clear how the proposed activity can help to achieve a joint goal such as improvement of the quality, increased service or productivity or reduction of costs.
- Think like the other person and look for expressions that clarify how others can profit from the proposed activity.
- Provide evidence that the proposed activity is workable and that the presented advantages can also really be realized.
- Make it clear why the proposed activity is better than competing ideas or proposals.
- Present possible disadvantages and limitations in the proposal and show how these disadvantages and limitations will be tackled.
- Conclude the proposal for an activity with an inspiring argument that touches upon the business strategy, the cultural values and show enthusiasm and commitment.

Formulating Rules of Conduct

Proceeding from the vision of “applicant in central position,” the Immigration Service develops a new concept for its service. The project teams that are developing the service develop eight basic principles for the service. These principles should serve as a handhold for employees so they can put their service into actual practice. The basic principles are formulated as follows:

“I treat the customer the way I would like to be treated myself.
This means that I follow these principles in my work:

1. I am accessible.
2. I am professionally committed and friendly. The customer is more than just a file.
3. I approach the customer with respect. I think with the customer by listening, summarizing and asking more questions.
4. I display pluck, assume responsibility and work proactively on solutions.
5. I use the telephone if possible and write if I have to. The customer understands me.
6. I make clear agreements with the customer and honor them.
7. I steer by timeliness and keep the customer up to date.
8. I have an open, honest and unbiased work attitude.”

Rules of conduct give direction to behaviour. If management prescribes behaviour, it is generally not effective, unless there is a clear reward or sanction. There is only a small chance that this will lead to a cultural change. Usually, strict rules of conduct result in behaviour that on the contrary does not match the desired values. This includes conduct such as covering up mistakes, reducing flexibility and falling back on formal positions and job descriptions. I encountered very little in the way of formulated rules of conduct in the companies I studied, with two exceptions. In these two situations, it is the employees themselves who, on their own initiative, formulate principles as a concretization and handhold for behaviour. The rules of conduct are not compulsory but are formulated as a friendly guideline. Translating cultural values into rules of conduct, when done by the employees themselves, contributes to the cultural values coming to life in the organization. There are risks involved in formulating and sticking to rules of conduct, such as rigidity in the behaviour and resistance to the rules. For direct behavioural change from the management level, it is more useful to formulate what the leader or manager does not want.

Working with rules of conduct can contribute to cultural change if

- management or staff executives do not prescribe the rules of conduct as compulsory,

- employees themselves take the initiative to formulate rules of behaviour as guideline for their acting, on the basis of the strategic spearheads or cultural values and
- the formulation of rules of conduct results in discussions with employees about the business strategy and the organizational culture and how they can put that into effect.

Using Behaviour Programmes

From 1997 to 2002, the then board of Dutch Railways put the improvement of the service in combination with renewal of the company's own culture at the top of the agenda. It is the main issue, entitled "Destination: Customer," for getting to a new business model. The operational process has to be organized differently and the behaviour of management, staff and train personnel has to change. In the opinion of the board, the cultural change is a condition of making better service possible. A cultural programme is developed for management, called: "Destination: Customer in Company." The programme mainly targets improvement of the social and communicative skills. The introductory text says: "Let the message of Destination: Customer in Company really get through to you. That message is: you can change. It takes a lot of time and energy, but it is worth the effort. You can master new skills, strengthen your weak points. Learn to work together with your colleagues in different ways, and let your behavior be the example for your employees. Just show what you as manager have to offer". The programme is developed top-down, aims at cultural and behavioural aspects and uses the shortcomings of managers as the starting point. Together with a proposal for process simplification and timetable modification for train personnel, this cultural programme leads to a series of fierce conflicts between the board and the personnel. The new board reflects on these events at Dutch Railways and comes to the conclusion that they cannot enforce top-down cultural change and that it is a process of many small steps. It is about gradually developing a company culture in which attention for craftsmanship and respect for people returns and in which people are given the space to take initiatives and

use their creativity. The renewal starts with investing in the mutual communication and restoring confidence. The board no longer goes for large-scale cultural programmes that are imposed top-down and concentrate solely on behaviour. It starts with having the technical systems, the trains and the uniforms, back in order and renewed appreciation of professional pride.

Companies where people work successfully on cultural change do not choose extensive and organization-wide cultural programmes. Negative experiences with these kinds of programmes are a reason for the new board of Dutch Railways precisely to decide not to use such interventions. People who argue for organization-wide cultural change aim mainly at less in-depth cultural elements, such as symbols, artefacts and conduct. These elements seem to be easier to change than the identity of a company, the underlying values and the deeply rooted basic assumptions. Deep cultural change appears not to be possible with organization-wide cultural programmes or broad management training courses.¹⁵ Deep cultural change requires a more refined way of tackling the job.

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