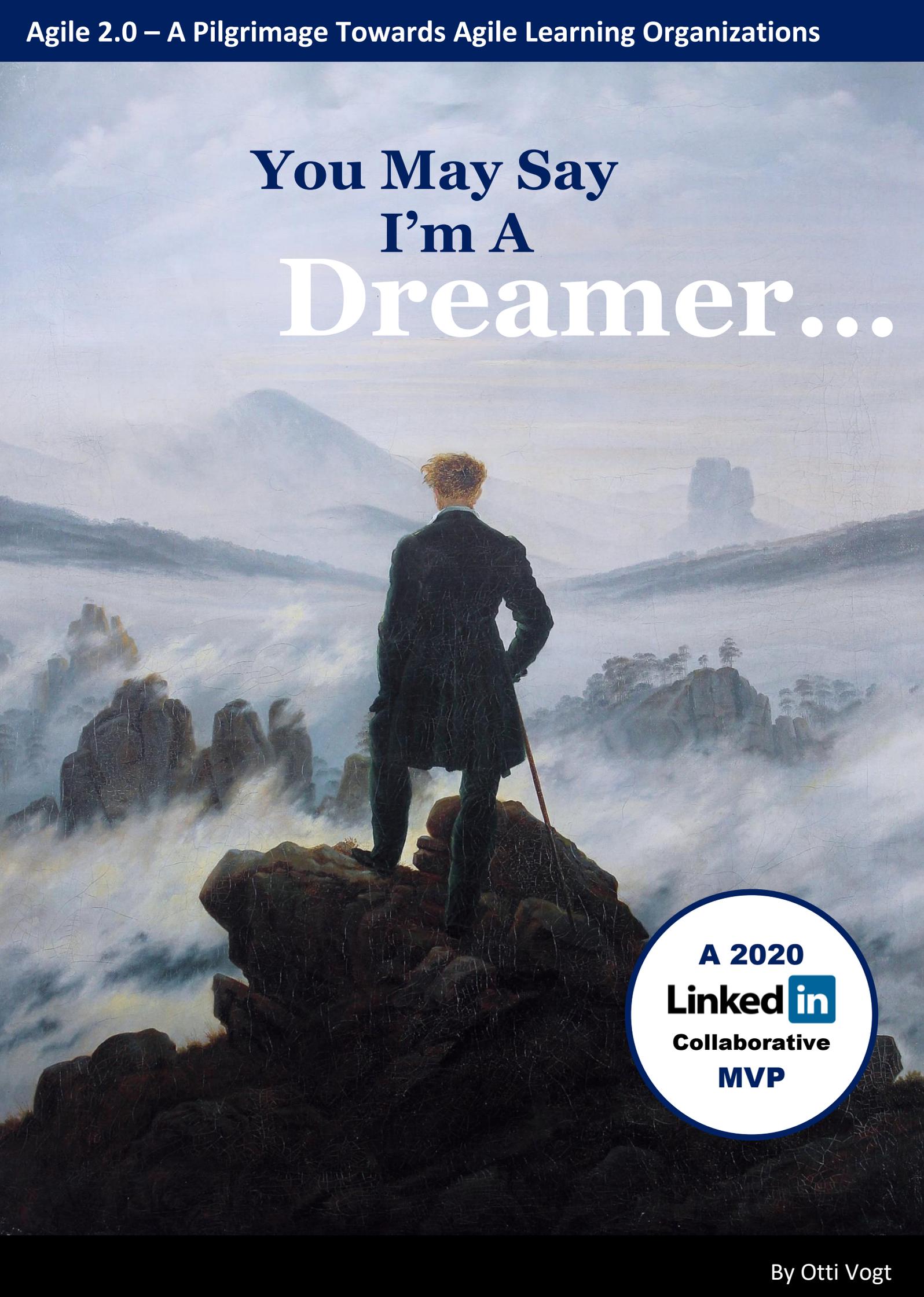


You May Say I'm A Dreamer...



A 2020
LinkedIn
Collaborative
MVP

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This is an evolving transcript of a presentation first offered at the Digital HR Innovation Week #DHRIS2020. Links to the recording will be provided shortly. The presentation incl. all “diary notes” is available [here](#). Any opinions expressed are solely those of the author.

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You May Say I'm A Dreamer...

An Arduous Pilgrimage Towards Agile Learning Organizations



For those of you who don't know me, I am passionate about individual and organisational transformation and I imagine that's why you're here too. During the last 25 years, I have worked in non-profit, start-ups and major global companies and I have made it my purpose to create better organisations. And I do feel there is still a lot for us to do.

- Whilst the so-called Fourth Industrial Revolution is “taking the world by its ears”, our organisations have collectively produced numerous outcomes that nobody really wants —

hunger, inequality, burnout, diseases, fear and loneliness, and ecological collapse. And by some estimates, more than 7 trillion dollars are wasted every year, globally, due to employee disengagement. If that wasn't enough, more than 52% of Fortune 500 companies have disappeared during the last 20 years.

- But I believe there is also hope. Today, as Yogi Barra once maintained “our future ain't what it used to be”. The winds of change have started blowing forcefully. The current crisis is bonding us together, maybe like never before, and is allowing us to collectively reflect. This is why I am especially pleased to be here together with all of you today.

Yet, rather than polished slides with “total truths” I want to share with you a few unassuming reflections from the many, many pages of personal diary notes that I have written over the years — with a few pointers and considerations. Like small and innocent breadcrumbs left behind in the miraculous forest on an arduous but exhilarating pilgrimage of learning; reflecting on my own experiments, struggles and lessons learned; often facing the powerful forces of the old structures seeking to prevail over those delicate seeds of the new. And from those hundreds of passionate meetings and discussions with esteemed colleagues, labouring enthusiastically in organisational transformation efforts all over the world. I wish these may provide you with food for thought for your own journeys and maybe allow us to join forces in re-imagining our organisations and building back better.

Now, without further ado, let us head off together into the wonderful world of organisational change, and like humble pilgrims, march towards six emblematic “stations of reflection” along our way. These relate to: Values, Strategy, People, Structure, Culture and Leadership.



Our Adventure Commences In The Mists Of Dawn...

	From Profit to Purpose	Value
	From Efficiency to Learning	Strategy
	From Control to Co-creation	People
	From Pyramids to Self-organising Networks	Structure
	From Fear to Love	Culture
	From Hero to Alchemist	Leadership

Please do bear in mind this is MVP #1 (minimum viable product) and as we typically say in Agile: “If you look at your first MVP and you are not sincerely embarrassed; you are doing something wrong!” So please be forgiving, and do connect and add your thoughts to help me make it better.

Station 1: Purpose



SDGs: A "blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all" by 2030

**Capitalism as
we know it is
dead.**

#wef20

Alas, before we even really got going, we are already at our first junction! As Simon Sinek always suggests: "Start with why". Surprisingly, I very often encounter people who tell me very earnestly that they deeply desire to become Agile or "Teal", without ever asking themselves the question *why* (they really want it). Similarly, over the last thirty years we have created a seductively materialistic and individualistic narrative in our western society, where self-interested growth, productivity and stock prices have become ends in themselves. But free markets are not moral per se, and prices do not necessarily measure value.

So: Why are we *really* here, and whence are we *really* going? These questions are both existential and fundamental. Organisations are normative. We create organisations for a

precise purpose, to achieve something together which individually we could not achieve. Yet, we live in a world where ever more people work very hard, but nonetheless get lost in their search for meaning. We have often succumbed to the hedonistic treadmill of money for money's sake, in a “pandemic of busyness”, where people work ever longer hours to attain status and wealth, just to find out that it does not really make them happier. As a result, the number one source of depression by 2030 is going to be work-related stress. By the same token, we have often ignored ecologic externalities in creating ever greater riches, for far too few, just to discover that our mother planet is at the brink of bankruptcy and the collapse of global climate will threaten the livelihoods of millions.

Therefore, I strongly believe that organisational purpose and meaning must transcend a quest for profits and shareholder value.

- As Colin Mayer maintained at the WEF this year, the true purpose of organisations is to “solve the planets problems, profitably”. Businesses need to start serving a purpose broader than just revenue generation. It is not just about dividing up the pie differently, but about creating a better pie for all stakeholders (within a healthy economic “doughnut”, as Kate Raworth advocates). We must stop believing that “more” is always better!

- Not only as a question of marketing or charity, but as a matter of morality and justice. Exploitation and inequality are not economic laws, but inherent failures of our economic system.
- Moreover, in our world where traditional communities of churches and neighbourhoods have been eroded, where scientific management has filled gaps of meanings with a gospel of growth, and where work has become so central in our lives, I believe we as business leaders have to step up. As Immanuel Kant warned us already a century ago: “human beings must always be treated as an end in themselves, never as means”, never as cogs in a machine. Today we urgently need human-centric organisations that provide a place of meaning and community, where people can grow and flourish. Business is an essential element in a unifying cultural narrative that has to be re-written if the limitations of our current social materialism shall be overcome.
- Finally, we need more holistic success measures than GDP growth, shareholder value or profits-before-tax to reflect a richer view of societal and organisational well-being.

Hence my personal North Star in the quest for better organisations has always been the creation of greater value, attaining both collective purpose and individual development, profitably.

Station 2: Strategy

Companies will increasingly need to compete on the rate of learning.

#presidentsummit

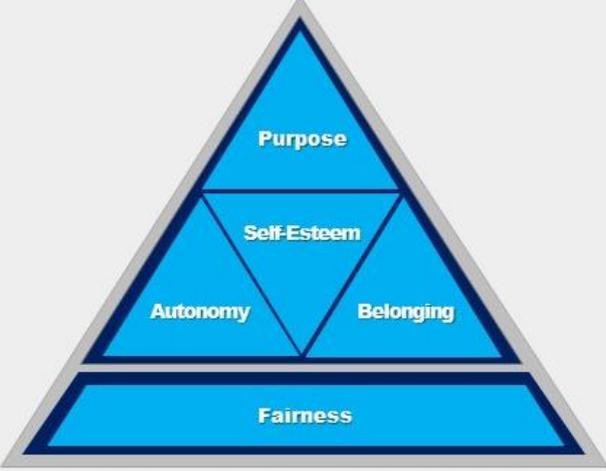
Source: BCG <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/what-take-businesses-thrive-20s-martin-reeves/>

Now that we have decided which mountain to climb, so to speak, the question becomes of course: how. What is our strategy? We live in an ever more complex world with constant change where the days of 5-year forecasts are long gone. Strategy becomes continual adaptation, harnessing ideas from everywhere. As BCG suggests, the companies that will win in the 2020ies are those who can “compete on learning”. From a paradigm of “scalable efficiency” that has dominated our businesses since the industrial revolution we need to transition to a new world of “scalable learning” and development, as John Hagel explains. Where people can make a difference and where organisations continuously adapt to achieve their purpose. From competitive to “adaptive advantage” and from closed systems to boundaryless ecosystems.

I strongly believe that in these New 20ies we need to let go of the illusion that work can be predicted or planned in detail.

- Today, we are facing ever-faster changes and continuous advances in technology and data, shortening half-life of knowledge, and ever greater interdependencies. As they say, “today is the slowest day you will ever experience” — from now on.
- In order to attain organisational learning and flourishing at scale we need to understand the intricacies of organisational systems, and how to enable them to continually sense opportunities, experiment fast, and embed continuous collaborative growth into the very fabrics of developmental organisations and ever broader ecosystems. Not only learning within the structure, but also continuously adapting the structure itself. Not only optimising opportunities for growth, but also for individual and team development. Not only led by financials, but by purpose — moving from centralised and “extractive” to generative and “distributive” organisational designs.
- And with the increasing frequency of crises, like the current pandemic, we need to push our ability to carefully balance adaptability and resilience.
- Finally, with equal urgency, we must re-think the future of work — some researchers maintain that “65% of the future professions of people entering primary school today do not even yet exist”.

Station 3: People



Four plus one basic human needs to enable organisational flourishing and performance

It is not because we have value that we are loved, but because we are loved that we have value. Our value is a gift, not an achievement

#billsloanecoffin

All this will require changes in the way we organise people, structures and culture — which are at the core of agility. In a human-centric organisation we will always focus first on its members, the individuals and teams. “The business of business is people.” Hence, this is the first true peak of reflection on our journey: our people. For decades, we have been trained to see humans as strictly rational consumers in economic markets, fully satisfied by an endless choice of material goods in our modern temples of sales. Today, from treating people like easily replaceable human “capital” or as exchangeable “resources” to be controlled, we must re-learn to cherish the uniqueness of our people and design our organisations to fulfill their human needs.

Throughout my career I have experienced that in our change programmes we very often spend substantial energy on business cases, milestones, KPIs, GANTT charts etc, yet the most vital success factors are emotional. It is no great surprise that over 70% of organisational transformations fail. As neuroscience confirms, the desire for orientation and purpose, the need for self-esteem, belonging and autonomy, and the importance of organisational fairness are fundamental to unleash human energy.

Therefore, in deliberately developmental organisations we seek to enable individuals and teams to flourish and self-actualise, by growing their ability to work with others and generate meaning and value in service of the community.

- Firstly, by becoming self-aware of their own biases and needs, anxieties, attachment styles, defense and copying mechanisms — in order to progress their own development. Our “inner game is our outer game”. Only if we are able to accept, understand and assert our own selves can we foster resilience and agency to fully contribute our ideas and creativity, in relations with others. *Nasce te ipsum*. “He who looks outside, dreams. He who peers inside, awakens.”
- And, secondly, by matching desires and competencies of individuals and teams with meaningful activities, generating “flow” and learning.

Still, in my experience, scaling organisational learning remains intricate and difficult, and I am searching new ways and insights all the time myself -

- Organisational learning requires both order and freedom — Bill Torbert speaks of “liberating structures”, like principles, roles, routines, rituals, methodologies — to enable and host generative involving as many people as possible, supporting both single and “double-loop” learning. And to systematically select and scale ideas from “ideation” to “industrialisation”.
- Continual learning also needs the integration of “action and inquiry” in everything we do, to always keep sensing and exploring whilst we are moving — in collaborative cross-stakeholder, cross-cultural “peer communities” of learning.
- And it entails mechanisms to manage tension — the creative destruction of innovation always creates conflict and change often implies navigating paradox — “I vs Us”, “Us vs the Organisation”, “Our business vs Society”, “Short-term vs Long-term” etc. By its very nature, total consensus would overwhelm complex systems and we need procedures to attain not consensus, but consent.
- Technology is a powerful enabler, and can support co-creation at ever greater scale, but as we often note in transformations: the golden recipe is almost always “70/20/10” — 70% people, 20% process, 10% systems. Our challenges might be caused by technology, but they are seldom resolved by it.

- In this context, careful attention needs to be paid to decision-making and distribution of information and power — self-generative systems need boundaries but will be stifled if positional power is imposed or information is untransparent. Contrary to what some people may think, Agility does not mean chaos — it always balances autonomy and alignment: “we earn autonomy by aligning ourselves with the wider system.” And control is relinquished in line with the growing ability in a team to embrace ownership.
- In the future, I hope many more people will be able to become their “own CEO”.

Station 4: Structure

**Stone Walls Do
Not A Prison
Make, Nor Iron
Bars A Cage.**

#richardlovelace



Tombstone of Max Weber, inventor of modern hierarchical management structure

The next conundrum is how such agility can be supported by organisational structures, our fourth junction. And it's curious how quickly — in most transformations I have seen — people have rushed to design sophisticated org charts, dividing up the turf, or sometimes moving the proverbial “deck chairs on the Titanic”.

The truth is that our world has become complex and cannot be controlled through bureaucracy anymore. You cannot “stand on a mountain and preach strategy down the hills” to achieve successful execution. And we can't specialise and compartmentalise labour anymore like in Adam Smith's pin factory. Today, we need to embrace uncertainty and our structures must reflect and enable ruthless experimentation and collaboration, tearing down ivory towers and those hierarchies in

our minds, so that information, knowledge and power can flow freely. In every transformation I have led, the inherent power of the existing structures, and the clinging of individuals to hierarchical roles that often have become profound part of their identities, has stifled change. In the future, we must seek to enable continuous readjustment of existing structures as soon as they become obsolete.

I believe traditional hierarchies will, more and more, be replaced by increasingly fluid and modular structures.

- We need “ambidextrous” organisations that can enable exploitation of the existing and exploration of the new, as complex adaptive and developmental systems. In ING, we were one of the first banks to roll out Agile at scale, globally and beyond IT across most functions. Agile organisations have provided more flexibility within the pyramid, enabling self- organisation and cross-functional flows of information and decision-making.
- But it won’t stop there. We are already seeing experiments with meshed and adaptive networks of teams and market-oriented ecosystems, and interconnected circles in holacracy and sociocracy. Zhang Ruimin, CEO of the Chinese white good manufacturer Haier, claimed that “the future will hold only two types of organisation: online platforms, and those that rely on them”.
- At the same time, our organisations will become boundaryless — however many smart people we can organise inside a

company, there will be many more smart people who we can connect and add value outside. As Otto Scharmer suggests, we are masters at competition yet we still lack a global “infrastructure for collaboration and innovation”.

- Finally, I am convinced that “dialogic” and generative organisational capability building will become a critical success factor in this decade. The evolution of structures will be ever adaptive to enable an emergent purpose, involving the teams bottom-up. As Kurt Lewin said: “We cannot understand a system, unless we try to change it”. I am watching this space closely.

Station 5: Culture



Below the surface: Emotional Life of Organisations

**Until you make the
unconscious
conscious, it will
direct your life and
you will call it fate.**

#carlovgustavjung

Marching on, even more important than structure is certainly the culture of our organisation — our next station of reflection. Culture in my experience is like a “force field of energy” — energy that tinges and influences every interaction and transaction in an organisational system.

The proverbial iceberg of the organisation, its “inner theatre” of underlying beliefs and values and assumptions needs to be explored and aligned. As Peter Drucker once said: “we cannot motivate others, we can only create an environment for others to motivate themselves”.

And culture is deeply emotional — every system, even us on this call, cannot be fully understood just by our minds, it needs also

the comprehension by our hearts. Being aware of and understanding these underlying emotions and tensions, and fostering psychological safety and trust is fundamental in an agile organisation. “It is not that people don’t want to change — they do not want to BE changed.”

My training in systems psychodynamics has sharpened my antennas and I have been baffled by how much anxiety there is in every human system. It is clear to me now that if we are unable to sense and integrate and nudge this anxiety “towards purpose”, it will surface in many other ways that are not conducive to the system’s success.

More simply said: fear kills creativity. When people are happier, they “don’t just act smarter — they are smarter”.

- Reinforcing transparency, openness, trust and embracing failures can spark higher energy. Unitedness around purpose can enable people to leave their individual fears and anxieties behind to join the community, bringing in their whole authentic self. Gratitude, compassion and kindness reinforce happiness and resilience.
- However, we must remember that culture is a derivative property of a system — and whatever some consultants might claim, it can never be changed directly. It is not about long “wish lists” of desirable attributes that we attempt to enforce through internal marketing campaigns or behaviourist nudges. Culture can be supported by structures and symbols,

and ING's "Orange Code" is a great example, but it is primarily the result of how we collectively behave and decide, day after day after day.

- Any incongruency will drain the system's energy. If we continue to praise and promote the firefighting heroes, we will have more fires. If we give our people outdated tools, they will feel undervalued. If we continue to avoid conflict and shy away from radical candour, we will be "ruined by empathy". In this regard, every practitioner knows: a key success measure for Agile organisations is how fast bad news travels.

Station 6: Leadership

**The woman
who most
needs liberating
is the woman in
every leader.**

#billsloanecoffin



Gaia is the ancestral mother of life. "Anima" is the unconscious feminine side of men

This is why I believe leadership is so fundamental for our journey towards learning organisations. In my experience, change is always leader-led. Leaders create culture, with every move they make and every word they say. For most employees, their leaders *are* the organisation. Hence, at all times, an organisational transformation mirrors the individual transformation of its leaders. It is the forgotten SDG #18, our final peak.

In this context it is easily overlooked that in an Agile system, and with increasing complexity and urgency, leadership becomes more difficult. Business schools have for decades been training generations of managers and leaders in the seductive and simplistic logic of principle-agent theory. By that model, a

leadership elite — who has the power — instructs the masses of reluctant workers — who have little power — on what to do. Deploying sticks and carrots as necessary to adjust their behaviours, and trusting that free market forces would right individual wrongs. Let me be very clear: in the learning organisation of the future, such a model is unsustainable.

In a world of self-organisation, there is no place anymore for patriarchal Commanders in Chief, narcissistically ruling by positional power and dominance.

- Agile leaders “set destination, not direction”. They focus on the *why*, not the *how* — as Steve Bungay describes in his stimulating book “The Art of Action”. Decisions are always made at the lowest possible level, closest to the customer.
- Rather than telling people what to do, leaders today need to become experts in building, sensing, caring for and influencing human systems, both emotionally and rationally; coaching individuals and teams; and enabling the co-creation and emergence of shared purpose. In an agile learning organisation, the quality of relationships, of connections, *must* have the same importance as the quality of outcomes. As John Quincy Adams once said: “If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.” Ben Zander, Chief Conductor of the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra, even more simply asserts that the only true measure of successful leadership is “shining eyes”.

- In such a new world we need Chief Connectors who can create that “maternal holding space” for “liminal” conversations, “presencing” the emerging future; and Chief Communicators who earn the respects of their people by making personal sacrifices to serve and progress collective purpose. Bill Torbert calls these new leaders “Alchemists” — leaders who can access the magical mutual power of transformation.

Source: John Knights / LeaderShape ©, Leading Beyond The Ego

**Seek wisdom,
not knowledge.
Knowledge is of
the past, wisdom
is of the future.**

#lumbee

Such a new “transpersonal” leadership paradigm is more than just EQ — it integrates intellectual, emotional and spiritual intelligence. The simple truth is: before you become a good leader, you have to become a “good” human being first.

- Agile leaders truly understand, with heart and mind and soul, how all hangs together in a “web of life” including their own self. They “lead beyond the ego”, as John Knights writes.

Allowing time for awareness and reflection, rather than jumping into action. Letting go to become vulnerable “imperfectionists”. Hearing their “soul knocking at the ego’s door”.

- For traditional leaders who have risen the corporate chain by being in control, this is a difficult challenge: “what brought us here, won’t bring us there.” Development requires “vertical” development of consciousness and facing our own shadows, not horizontal skills trainings. And progress is hard work: as Manfred Kets de Vries maintains, transformational leaders are not only born, they are “re-born” through a painful process of individuation. Every victory of the self will feel like a “defeat for the ego.”
- Such evolution is critical as the maturity of an organisation can never transcend the maturity and consciousness of its leaders. “We need the hierarchy to tear down the hierarchy”. Eventually, in a truly developmental learning organisation, leadership is not a set of traits, or “top 5 this and top 3 that”, and not even a role, but an inter-relational “eco-centric” process; collective energy inspired by common purpose and embedded throughout the learning organisation. We are not “empowering” people, we are enabling transformational power to emerge.

For me this passage has probably been the most difficult, but also the most eye-opening part of a continuing journey. My job is not to be a hero, or the person with all the answers, but to “develop people to think more completely and to have more self-mastery”.

Creating an environment, where — as Jean-Baptiste Derroncourt says — co-creating “good decisions that fit the company’s purpose is always the easiest route.” — or, simply put, where the “organisation does not need heroes”. Today, when lying in bed at the end of each day, I only ask myself two searching questions: have I grown today, and I have I grown someone else?

Returning Home: A New Paradigm



So here we are. We have surpassed six stations of reflection. Having pondered hard and contemplated deeply, we are finally returning home from our pilgrimage towards better organisations, to the very place from where we started.

And if you are like me you are beginning to see our organisations with different eyes. With a growing realisation that organisations of the future require a new paradigm: from analysing and optimising organisations as “deterministic machines”, we are starting to acknowledge organisations as a “living organism”, with minds and hearts and souls. Where individuals and communities experience and develop together, where wonder and love have their place as much as science and efficiency. Where leaders are able to grasp all the colours of life’s “spiral

dynamics” and spark and integrate all the energy and creativity and beauty that organisations can generate, becoming themselves part of an interconnected evolutionary system. And where profits rather than a solitary goal become a dynamic feedback mechanism to nudge such an ever-evolutionary system towards its emergent purpose.

Let us pause here together for a few seconds, and just breathe and sense. Let us hold this image in reverence for a few instants, trying to visualise us being on that mountain top where the sun slowly rises up, showing us all her colours. So that we may truly understand the depth of interconnectedness in all human life.

You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete.

#buckminsterfuller



Evolutionary Paradigms of Organisations. Towards Teal

As Oscar Wilde once wrote: “A map of the world that does not include Utopia is not worth even glancing at, for it leaves out the one country at which Humanity is always landing.” Are we landed

there yet? Certainly not. I am not even certain Agile 1.0 has arrived in every boardroom.

But does that mean we cannot or should not try to build such utopian organisations? I do not think so. On the contrary, I am certain that if we collectively believe in the power of such a new model, and if we are willing to become part of its evolution, it will arise like the sun above those peaks. Our energy follows our attention. Like a torch. Wherever you as a leader focus your attention on, that's where your energy goes. If you align your energy and your intention you will become vessel of your purpose and transformation will commence.

The Role of HR

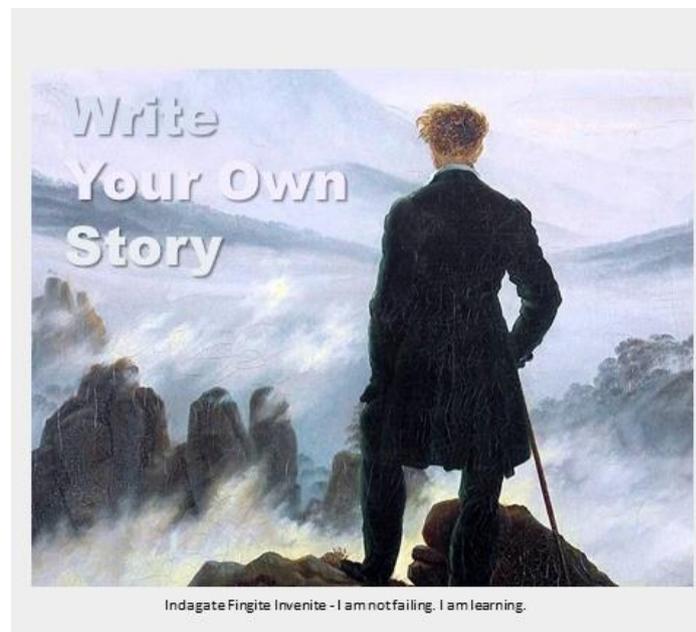
But, of course, we shall need a lot of help. I had promised some reflections on HR: I could say that we should install agile routines, and tribes and circles and CoEs also in the HR function; and digitise HR process journeys and leverage data and analytics; and support remote working. Don't get me wrong: all that is true. And I have a few other ideas for you on my notes in the appendix.

- But even more than that, my plea today is for HR colleagues to stand firmly at our side in this crucial transformation. I was privileged to have worked with many outstanding HR leaders who have helped me on my journeys. Yet, I have also watched with anguish during the last decades that we have sometimes forced HR functions to become entirely focused on transactional, administrative, or auditing activities — depriving our HR colleagues of the very soul of their work.
- We need you back with us, as chief people or chief purpose or chief learning officers, to join our movement towards better organisations. We need your help to battle the existing forces of inertia. We need you to speak truth to power and to fight for a different mental paradigm in organisations.
- We need you as business partners, but also as dreamers, as architects, as engineers, and yes also as coaches and controllers where necessary. And collectively we need to revise sometimes anachronistic and counterproductive HR processes, where they exist, around recruitment, talent,

recognition and reward, org design, learning, and leadership
— which come into the way of evolution.

If over 70% of employees are disengaged and our underlying system is stuck in the industrial age, installing meditation and yoga classes for the over-stressed will not be enough.

What would you do if you weren't afraid



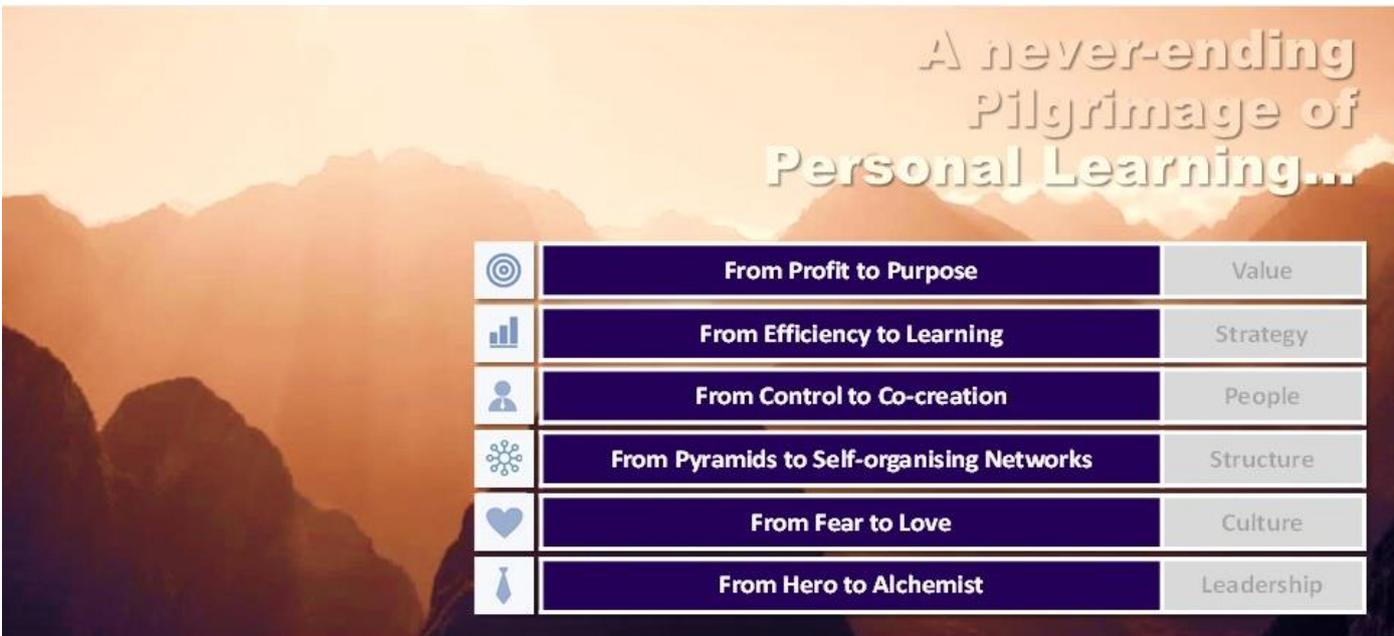
**What would
you do if you
were not
afraid.**

#attheedgeofcourage

On that note, please allow me one final reflection. I have learned over the course of my career that transformation is always extremely personal. Through this arduous journey my relationships became richer, I am more at ease with myself, I have accepted fear and I have grown. But I also had to learn that true purpose is not only beautiful poetry, but also what we are personally willing to give up, or to struggle and to suffer for.

It is about how much we dare to hope and how far we decide to push ourselves beyond our comfort zone. As St. Augustine said: “Hope has two beautiful daughters; their names are Anger and Courage. Anger at the way things are, and Courage to see that they do not remain as they are.” And if you are already courageous, but still feel comfortable, make another step!

Mahatma Gandhi taught us: we have to “become the change we want to see in the world”!



This truly completes our short journey together. In conclusion, I believe that future agile organisations will be more human-centric with higher purpose, competing on learning, enabling co-creation in more adaptive and fluid structures, with a fearless culture and transformational leaders. Where exactly we land on these dimensions will of course depend on our context. Like people, all companies are unique. (And rather than thinking about opposites, it is about integration — both purpose and profit, both freedom and order, both leadership and management.)

Personally, I was already convinced before this crisis that we had arrived at an existential moment and it was urgent to act. With

the current pandemic, I do believe the urgency is even greater. The virus lays bare the frailty of our social contract and the economic lockdowns shine a glaring light on existing inequalities — and even create new ones. And we will only have one attempt at building back. Today is a time where we have to occupy the “front rows of our lives” and make choices. Let us together show the spirit of pioneers and adventurers and stride forward on this quest to create better organisations for a better future. You may say I’m a dreamer, but I hope not the only one. I hope I have inspired some of you to pack your virtual rucksacks and join us on this adventure!

Thank You

Thank you

Dave Ulrich, Amy Edmondson, Gianpiero Petriglieri, Rita McGrath, Simon Western, Antoinette Weibel, Michael Gelb, John Knights, Julian Birkinshaw, Bill Torbert, Otto Scharmer, Emanuele Quintarelli, Ben Zander, Sesil Pir, Don Beck, Mihaly Nagy, Manfred Kets de Vries, Sergio Caredda, Ville Pellinen, Dave Logan, Frederic Laloux, Jon Ingham, Yuri van Geest, Justin Hughes, James Hollis, Nora Bateson, Margaret Wheatley, Bob Kegan, Daniel Pinchbeck, Celine Mullins, Karen Tobiasen, Bryan Ungard, Vitaly Geyman, Corporate Rebels, Danah Zohar, Srikumaro Rao, Norman Wolfe, Marielle Mooijekind, Carlo Giardinetti, the whole ING Team & many more...

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[linkedin.com/in/ottivogt](https://www.linkedin.com/in/ottivogt)

Finally, a big thank you to all those who have stimulated and influenced my journey to date and to Mihaly Nagy and the whole Hexa team and partners for organizing a wonderful digital conference. And, of course, to the over 2000 participants — in case any of my thoughts resonate with you, please do connect online and take my thinking apart, steal it proudly if you like it, and take it further. Let us together re-imagine and renew our organisations, and #buildbackbetter for a more sustainable future. If not us, then *who*, if not now, then *when*.

Good luck and be safe! Thank you.

For further information: please visit
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Please join our ongoing discussions -



https://www.linkedin.com/posts/ottivogt_you-may-say-im-a-dreamer-activity-6669115580185882624-9Uwq



<https://medium.com/@otti.vogt/you-may-say-im-a-dreamer-9f7adbb3a6aa>



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Appendix: Diary Notes



From Profit to Purpose

- ❖ **Organisations will shape our emerging future**
 - ❖ Epidemic of busyness (“Busy is the new stupid”)
 - ❖ Social and business value (“solving the planets problems profitably”)
 - ❖ Stakeholder Capitalism and Business Roundtable
 - ❖ Sustainable Balanced Scorecard beyond GDP/PBT
- ❖ **People require meaning and purpose to flourish**
 - ❖ Businesses as the “churches of modernity”
 - ❖ Bold Morality (“Justice, not charity”)
 - ❖ Humanity (“Human beings are always ends, never just means”)

GROWTH
+
PURPOSE
=
VALUE



From Efficiency to Learning

- ❖ **From “Scalable Efficiency” to “Scalable Learning”**
 - ❖ Half-life of knowledge and predictability
 - ❖ Information and data. Big Data and AI
 - ❖ Digitisation and technology
- ❖ **Organisational capability as “adaptive advantage” in a broader ecosystem**
 - ❖ System Thinking (“probe, sense, respond”) and Optimising “Energy”
 - ❖ Science of Change and Organisational Learning
 - ❖ Ecosystems and platforms
 - ❖ Deliberately Developmental Organisations
- ❖ **Agility and Resilience**
- ❖ **Future of Work**



From Control to Co-Creation

- ❖ **Great ideas are everywhere!**
 - ❖ People first. Uniqueness. Human needs. Neuroscience. Talent > robots
 - ❖ Self-awareness. Nosce te ipsum. The “hedgehog’s kiss”. Self-possession
 - ❖ Agency. “Our inner game is our outer game”. Self-actualisation
- ❖ **Organisational learning at scale requires “liberating structures”**
 - ❖ Generative dialogue and “presencing”. Single and Double loop learning
 - ❖ “Peer communities” of learning. Action Inquiry. Art of Hosting
 - ❖ Conflict Management. (“All problems are relationship problems”)
 - ❖ Technology to co-create at scale
- ❖ **Decision-making and distribution of power matters**
 - ❖ Balance of Power. Decision-making process (e.g. advice vs consent)
 - ❖ Agile Management. Obeya rooms. Alignment vs Autonomy



From Fear to Love

- ❖ **Emotions are fundamental. Fear kills creativity**
 - ❖ Psychological Safety (A. Edmondson) & Trust Your People. Care > Control
 - ❖ Radical Candour (K. Scott). Ongoing learning. Coaching
 - ❖ Joy, fun and play. Wellbeing. Kindness. Community > individual
- ❖ **Context matters. Think energy fields**
 - ❖ Transparency of information. Self-organising. Bottom-up and top-down
 - ❖ Growth mindset. Entrepreneurialism. Experimentation. Fail-fast
 - ❖ Wholeness. Authentizoic organisations (M. Kets de Vries)
 - ❖ Higher purpose and values. Integrity. Resilience. Diversity. Fairness
- ❖ **Culture is a “derivative” property**
 - ❖ Behaviours/decisions, systems, signature practice, hero stories, symbols
 - ❖ Incongruency is sensed immediately



From Pyramids to Networks

- ❖ **Organisations have become fluid and modular**
 - ❖ Role vs skill (purpose vs craft)
 - ❖ Ambidextrous organisations and internal marketplaces
 - ❖ Portfolio of de-centralised experiments. Continuous adaptation
 - ❖ Dynamic resource allocation (“kill the budget cycle”)
- ❖ **Collaboration trumps competition and boundaryless**
 - ❖ Orchestration of adaptive networks of players towards mutual goals
 - ❖ Market-oriented Ecosystems and Platforms
- ❖ **“Dialogic” Org Design to enable adaptive Self-Organisation**
 - ❖ Outside-in and end-to-end customer journeys
 - ❖ Cross-functional and self-organising teams. Sociocracy and Holacracy
 - ❖ Free flow of knowledge and power. Circles, tribes, guilds, chapters...



From Heroes to Alchemists

- ❖ **Principal-agent theory is (finally) dead. Leadership becomes more complex.**
- ❖ **Leaders delegate “radically” and relinquish power to become orchestrators of human systems**
 - ❖ Destination, not Direction. Art of Action (Steven Bungay)
 - ❖ Guardian of purpose and Architect of human systems
 - ❖ Coaching. Vicarious listening and Art of feedback (“The questions are the answers”)
 - ❖ Psychodynamics. Holding space for “liminal emergence”. Leading through context setting
 - ❖ Art of connections and peer influencing. Vulnerability. Satisfying “Imperfectionists”
- ❖ **Transformational leadership is always transformational for the leader**
 - ❖ Adult development stages. Consciousness. Alchemist archetype. Moral agency
 - ❖ Heroine’s Journey. Individuation. (Bob Kegan, Bill Torbert, Erik Erikson, Carl Jung)
 - ❖ Leading beyond the ego. Serving leadership. Letting go
- ❖ **Leadership is not a role but a capability of the system to generate focused energy**
 - ❖ Eco-leadership is fluid and lives everywhere in the organisation (Simon Western)
- ❖ **An organisation can never transcend the consciousness of its leaders**



Re-imagining Human Resources

- ❖ **“Human Resources”** – what’s in a name? (from “employees” to “members”?)
- ❖ **Outside-in** (helping the Organisation win) and **Inside-out** (higher consciousness & purpose)
- ❖ **Human-centric.** Treating unique employees like customers
- ❖ **Deliberately Developmental Organisations:** Sparking collective energy
 - Strategy: enable self-organisation. Embed learning and development at scale
 - Governance: radical transparency (“authority to information”). Massive co-creation
 - Role design: Skills > titles/roles. Design your own workplace
 - Recruitment and succession: hire for culture, train for skills
 - Talent: from focus on high potential to development of teams
 - Leadership Development: personalised and vertical, 50:30:20 (Dave Ulrich)
 - Less 360 Degree Feedback: from “socialised” to “transformative” (Carol Sanford)
 - Reward/Recognition: from control to enablement, awareness and agency > behaviours
- ❖ **Yes, Technology.** Yes, mindfulness, but not (just) more yoga and meditation classes...
- ❖ **And finally, protect your Transformers!**

