Yin and Yang of the Self-Managing Organization
A New Role for Management and Leadership

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Agile2019
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Three Questions

What is the nature of the “Self” doing the managing?
What is the nature of that which is being “managed”?
What are the roles and how do they balance each other in the process of that “management”? 
The “World” As We are In it*

* Thank you Dave Snowden

Complicated

- Understandable
- Predictable
- Linear
Today’s Session
There are four territories we could look at.

- Human Development
- Team Practices & Roles
- Organizational Culture
- Organizational Structures & Systems
A Story

Proprietary → Cloud

Customer → Whole

Waiting → Acting
What Happened Next?

Define Strategic Roadmap

Communicate the Roadmap

People Don’t “Get” It

Waiting for Clear Direction
People behave as if the old order is still in place.

What is the nature of the shift that needs to happen?
“The irony, we’ve found, is that building a culture focused on performance may not be the best, healthiest, or most sustainable way to fuel results. Instead, it may be more effective to focus on creating a culture of growth.”

Tony Schwartz
Harvard Business Review, March 2018

What do we mean by “growth”?
Our inner meaning-making not only colors our experience, and what we perceive...
...it generates it.
That Inner Meaning-making Has a Certain Complexity.

What can it Sense?
What can it Respond to?
What can it Take Responsibility for?

Sometimes, it needs to Grow.

The ability to see the ‘conservation of matter’ constitutes a significant developmental shift for the seven year old.
What is the nature of developmental shift we need to see within today’s companies?

“From…”

“Socialized Mind” *

- I am shaped by the definitions and expectations of my social environment
- I rely on recognized authorities to inform my thinking and action
- It’s hard for me to stand in my own authority
- I tend to attribute the cause of problems outside of myself
- I can only pay attention to those things which immediately impact me

*Drawn from the work of Robert Kegan
• I am shaped by the definitions and expectations which I myself create
• I am open to others’ perspectives; but in the end I myself hold the authority for my thinking and action
• I am able to recognize and take responsibility for the impact of my behavior and action
• I am able to fully operate to a vision, without being told what to do
Socialized Mind

- I am shaped by the definitions and expectations of my social environment
- I rely on recognized authorities to inform my thinking and action
- I don’t naturally stand in my own authority
- I tend to attribute the cause of problems outside of myself
- I can only pay attention to those things which immediately impact me

Self-Authoring

- I am shaped by the definitions and expectations which I myself create
- I am open to others’ perspectives; but in the end I myself hold the authority for my thinking and action
- I am able to recognize and take responsibility for the impact of my behavior and action
- I am able to fully operate to a vision, without being told what to do

What Is the Job of Management?

To cultivate the growth of “Self-Authoring” capability throughout the organization.
People everywhere grow themselves developmentally through deliberate practice.

Management creates conditions which support and promote people’s developmental growth.

Practices are oriented around...

- Developing **Self**
- Developing **Other**
- Developing **Relationships**

These Practices Have a **Synergizing** Effect.
Two Sample Practices

- **The Deliberately Developmental Conversation**
  - Specific Listening and Conversational Skills, Practices
  - Designed to help another increase awareness, meaning-making complexity

- **Shared Sensemaking Conversation**
  - Specific Group Process and Awareness Skills, Practices
  - Designed to increase awareness of shared assumptions, beliefs and habits which limit our effectiveness

That was the **Yin**
Now here’s the **Yang**

Management creates **conditions**
which support and promote people’s developmental growth.
**Conditions** are created in order to...

- Connect growth and performance
- Catalyze developmental learning through *embedded practice*
- Bring about organizational congruence

**Two Sample Conditions**

- **People move toward their developmental edges**
  - Roles which stretch
  - Coaching to help people reflect and grow

- **Organizational incongruities are resolved systemically**
  - Courageous and collaborative management action
  - Revealing and dealing with the deeper systemic incongruities
A Different Story

This Catalyzed a **Collective** Developmental Shift

- Being Told → Participating in
- Waiting → Acting
- Clueless → Savvy
- Outside → Inside
- Apart → Part of
From Management by Direction...

A New Orientation

Direct

Behaviors and Actions

To Produce

Results and Outcomes

... To Management by Indirection.

Catalyze growth of meaning-making complexity

Which Generates

New Behaviors and Actions

To Produce

New Results and Outcomes
The Yin/Yang of the Self-Managing Organization

Establishing the institutional conditions that empower and enable those practices

The everywhere practices of growing agility and agility that happens across the organization

Just with differing roles

Thank you
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