# Conclusion

## Some Reflections and Perspectives on
## Organizing, Changing, and Learning

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This final chapter reflects on theories, methodologies, and practices which have been presented in this book on the dynamics of organizational change and learning. In the Introduction to this book it was stated that almost three-quarters of all change efforts fail to achieve the intended result. The authors of this book wish to contribute to achieving better results in changing organizations. We want to understand the dynamics of organizational change and learning, untangle the mysteries of change processes, and we would like to share our knowledge, experience, and reflections. This book offers no clear set of 'rules of thumb' or 'best ways' to change organizations effectively. Together we present theoretical insights, implications, methods, and critical reflections. We strongly believe that the presentation of divergent perspectives in this book may be useful in developing new knowledge and new perspectives. By doing so, we hope to encourage practitioners, scholars, and scientists to reflect on their own practices and theories, to elaborate on their own fascinations, and to develop and explain their own methodologies.

This chapter starts with reflections on the dynamics of organizational change and learning. It compares multiple perspectives on change and learning, and explores tensions between the perspectives. The second section summarizes change methods presented in this book, and links them to assumptions and values in organizational change. The third section focuses on specific issues in organizational change and learning. This chapter concludes with opportunities and questions the dynamics of organizational change and learning.

## DYNAMICS IN ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE AND LEARNING

There is no consensus on a workable set of principles in organizational change and learning. Theories and practices of change and learning are rooted in deeply held assumptions and values. This means that it is useful to make the values that underlie different approaches to change and learning explicit and the subject of discussion.

### MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES ON CHANGING AND ORGANIZING

The first Part of this book focuses on Organization Development (OD). Several definitions of OD have been presented, but there seems to be no accepted general definition, although some distinctions are recognizable (see the chapters in Part I).

- Basic values in organizing are a strong belief in human potential, participation in the workplace, and interpersonal relationships based on trust and openness.
- Basic values for change are employee participation in the change process, and learning through feedback and collective reflection by all actors.
- Human beings are seen as being inherently good, creative, and searching for new experiences to develop their potential.
- Human beings are open, purposeful people who use conversation in preparation for concerted action and constructing realities.
- Organizations are seen as purposeful, social, and technical systems in interaction with each other.
- Organizations are seen as open systems in interaction with their environment.
- Change is aimed at enabling organizations to be effective in their relations with their environment, and to contribute to the quality of work life.
- Change is treated not as discrete events, but as a process with phases and logical flows.
- Change practices and interventions are based on the application of behavioural science.
- Change practices rely on knowledge about individuals and their relationships in organizations, the division and coordination of labour, and organizational strategies.
- Learning is a collective, ongoing, and cognitive activity of all participants in change and is fuelled by experimentation in and reflection on practices and methodologies.
- Knowledge of organizing and changing is gained through the collaboration between practitioners and researchers in change processes, and through action research using local knowledge.

A key issue for OD is to integrate the interests and needs of individuals with the collective interest of organizations. OD consultants prefer cooperation to conflict, self-control to institutional control, and participative leadership to autocratic management (see also Buelens & Devos, Chapter 4).

Part II centres on planned change. The focus of planned change is on realizing competitive advantage and stakeholders' value. Basic values of planned change are less pronounced; nevertheless, some distinction can be made (see the chapters in Part II).

- A basic value in organizing is the need for organizations to adjust to environmental changes and market demands by implementing new organizational arrangements based on the customer value stream.
- A basic value for change is an integrated approach steered by management which pays attention to business strategy, corporate structure, management processes, technology, and social capital.
- Human beings are seen as the social capital of the organization with skills and capabilities to perform objectives and contribute to the value stream.
- Human beings are motivated by challenging jobs, and are willing to change when they see advantages for themselves.
- Organizing is a primary business process in terms of a horizontal stream of value-added activities focused on customers and clients.
- When organizing, the boundaries between the organization and the environment are blurred, due to external networks with suppliers and customers, and strategic alliances with competitors.
- Change is induced by market demands and changing environments, and is aimed at achieving performance measures in order to realize competitive advantage.
- Change takes an organization-wide approach and attention must be given to broadening and mobilizing support for change by bringing the key stakeholders into line.
- Change practices and interventions are based on economic reasoning to create credible measures of performance, and on behavioural science to realize commitment to change.
- Change practices rely on knowledge about competitive advantage, the structuring of organizations, and developing new skills and capabilities of human resources.
- Learning is primarily a process of change managers reflecting on change experiments, and on the failures and successes of earlier change efforts.
- Knowledge of organizing and changing is obtained by the way in which we operate and capture the results of the use of applied techniques.

**TABLE 21.1**  Planned change and OD

| Planned change (Theory E) | OD (Theory O) |
| --- | --- |
| Organizations as adaptive systems to market demands | Organizations as purposeful socio-technical system |
| Human beings as social capital to perform objectives | Human beings as creative and collaborative people |
| Employees motivated by personal advantage | Employees motivated by developing human potential |
| Managers using position power in steering changes | Managers using personal power in mutual collaboration |
| Consultants as knowledge-driven experts | Consultants as process-driven facilitators |
| Organization life as source of shortcomings | Organization life as source of experience |
| Focus on economic measures of performance | Focus on improvement of effectiveness and working life |
| New design of business processes | Improvements based on the existing organization |
| Top-down steering of change process | Utilization of knowledge and insight of personnel |
| Solution-oriented based on value chain | Problem-oriented based on working experiences |
| Episodic change with stable end situation | Continuous improvement |
| Single linear change process | Iterative change process |
| Techno-economical process rationality | Socio-political process rationality |
| Strict norms and planning in change process | Regard for ability to change in emergent change process |
| Start with abstract business models | Start with concrete working experiences |
| Emphasis on expert knowledge | Application of operational knowledge |
| Separation of design and implementation of changes | Smooth transition between phases in change |
| Learning as reflection by change managers | Learning as a collective and ongoing activity |
| Knowledge development by using techniques | Knowledge development by action research |

A key issue for planned or market-induced change is to achieve competitive advantage in a competitive world by organizing work processes around the value chain, developing the skills of human resources, and realizing commitment to change by bringing key stakeholders in line. The values of planned change are rooted in organizational behaviour and economic approaches (see also Buelens & Devos, Chapter 4). Organizational behaviour scholars emphasize that change will not be sustainable if it is not embedded in the development of human resources. The economic approach focuses on shareholders and customers as the most relevant stakeholders, and implies goal congruence in effective, credible, and accessible performance measures presented on a common platform.

It seems that two dramatically different approaches to organizational change are being employed, guided by very different assumptions on organizing, changing, and learning. This observation was also made by Beer and Nohria (2000). They refer to these approaches as Theory E and Theory O (see also Walton & Russell, Chapter 7). The purpose of Theory E is to create economic value. Its focus is on formal structure and systems. It is driven top-down with extensive help from consultants and financial incentives. Change is planned and programmatic (see also Ghoshal & Bartlett, 2000; Jensen, 2000). Theory E is comparable with the design approach described in the Introduction to this book. The purpose of Theory O is the joint optimization of social and technical systems, and the simultaneous development of organizational effectiveness and the quality of working life. It is based on collaboration in the change process of managers and employees facilitated by consultants. Change is emergent, less planned, and programmatic (see also Senge, 2000; Weick, 2000). Theory O is comparable with the development approach contained in the Introduction. The practices and theories in use for both approaches are summarized in Table 21.1.

The question that arises concerns the possibility of using the tension between Theories E and O in organizational change and learning, and minimizing their negative consequences. Mixing the

approaches without being aware of the inherent tension between them leads to tensions in the change process itself as well as to negative outcomes for the transparency of the change process and negative results for commitment of those participating in change.

Beer and Nohria (2000) plead for the integration of the theories and approaches to change. They suggest two possibilities. The first possibility is sequencing change strategies, starting with Theory E followed by Theory O. Theory E focuses on rapid, dramatic, and painful changes that may be required to increase economic value, which cannot be achieved through a long-term Theory O strategy. Theory O strategy focuses on building new trust and commitment and the development of human competencies. Switching strategies seems to be difficult because change managers are unable to alter their style and thinking, and find it difficult to change employee opinion that they are ruthless and cannot be trusted. The second possibility is to integrate both theories and keep the tension between the two approaches. This requires simultaneous and equal emphasis on optimizing shareholder value, developing organizational capabilities, and improving the quality of working life. A synthesis requires that change managers mobilize energy for performance improvement, but also that they enable managers throughout the organization to lead a process of innovation and change, and invite employees to participate in the change process.

Another possibility, suggested in the Introduction, is to choose a change strategy based on contingency factors. Planned change seems suitable when the problem is known, not too complex, and a solution is within reach. The approach is mandatory when the organization is in crisis and quick action is required. Planned change also seems more appropriate when no reasonable degree of consensus about the nature of the proposed change can be reached or a sizeable reduction in personnel is expected. OD appears to be more suitable in the case of complex issues for which no evident solution is at hand. OD is preferable when gradual and incremental improvements and innovations can be effected, and value is placed on enhancing the organization's ability to innovate. Marc Buelens and Geert Devos elaborate on this contingency position in this book (Chapter 4). They argue that one of the major problems obstructing the further development of change theories is the desire to develop a general theory that can be applied to all change efforts. In their view, a clear understanding of the specific situation and complexity of organizing and changing is essential when selecting an appropriate change strategy.

## OD, PLANNED CHANGE, AND CONTINUOUS CHANGING

Reflecting on the assumptions of OD and planned change we see fundamental differences in basic values pertaining to organization, human beings, organizational change, and learning. The differences between change practices are quite clear. Nevertheless, there are similarities as well. Both approaches see organizations as an entity, and more or less as a combination of people and resources to be optimized in a structure which is used to take decisions to achieve defined purposes. Both distinguish between organization and environment, agree on the need for adaptation to environmental developments, distinguish between persons and organizations, focus on the organization of work processes and organizational strategy, and distinguish between change agents and employees.

There are other perspectives on organizing, changing, and learning. Luc Hoebeke (Chapter 8) gives another view of organizing when he describes how he, as a practitioner and scientist, was confronted with loosely coupled networks of smaller or bigger groups, with lobbying and manipulation, with the creation of 'facts', with many interpretations and realities, with a plethora of voices, silences, and exits. It seems there is no such thing as an organization as an entity. People working together and relating to each other create processes of organizing, relating, and sense-making. This perspective corresponds with the view of Léon de Caluwé and Hans Vermaak (Chapter 10) when they describe organizations as loosely coupled systems and networks of autonomous centres that interrelate in performing activities and are continually searching for identity in an ambiguous world. André Wierdsma (Chapter 11) calls

**TABLE 21.2** Continuous changing and constructing realities

Continuous changing and constructing realities (Theory C)

Organizing and changing is an ongoing process of inter-activities, sense-making, and self-making

Human beings construct organizing and changing as social realities by multiple interaction and sense-making

Employees, organizational leaders, and consultants interact and work together in a non-hierarchical manner

Changing and organizing are processes of endless modifications in work processes and social realities

Changing and organizing are rooted in multiple realities to facilitate ways of relating that are open to new possibilities

Changing and organizing become continuous and interrelated processes in which all participants are involved

Focus on agreements and modifications based on interweaving activities, interrelations, and sense-making

Involvement of all stakeholders as participants in a joint interaction process of creating new realities

Searching for new possibilities in a continuous process of transformation and learning

Continuous changing with no end state; accumulation of endless small agreements

Cyclical process of changing and equilibrium seeking between stability and change: freeze–rebalance–unfreeze–freeze

Social constructionist rationality in which relations and realities are constructed as real in their consequences

An ongoing process of improvising, sense-making, and agreeing

Concrete inter-activities in multiple, local–historical, and social realities

Changing is a collaborative approach in which everyone contributes as an expert

Inquiring, intervening, and changing stay joined

Learning and knowledge development as process of interaction, reflection, and sense-making by all participants

this transactional organization in which the performance of activities, maintenance of relationships, and creation of meaning are interwoven. From these perspectives, organizations are seen as cultural artifacts where people make choices in dealing with complexities and with each other. By making choices they create a subjective reality. The contribution of Dian Marie Hosking (Chapter 12) gives a critical perspective on organizing, changing, and learning. She distances herself from organization theory and organization psychology that separate the organization from people as a context for individual activities, satisfactions, and inter-group relations. In her view, the relation between person and organization is seen as one of mutual creation: through their interactions people construct an organization as a social reality, which in turn reflects and influences interactions. Language plays a key role in constructing these social realities. To understand processes of organizing and changing, attention is paid to multiple, local–historical, and social realities that are constructed in relational processes and through interaction. These interactions are processes in which realities are constructed, actively maintained, and changed.

When organizing, changing, and learning are seen as interactive processes in which people construct their relationships, activities, and meanings, the basic assumptions and methodologies of organizational change are constructed in a new way (see the chapters in Part III). This way of looking at organizing and changing might be helpful in understanding the tensions between OD and planned change; it provides ways to understand our own bias in dilemmas of organizing and changing, and helps to choose a position between the two sides of these dilemmas. Perhaps it is useful to construct this perspective as Theory C (see Table 21.2).

Changing becomes a continuous process of constructing and reconstructing realities. To illustrate this process of continuous changing, Karl Weick and Robert Quinn (Chapter 9) turn Lewin's three-stage change model of unfreeze–change–refreeze around in an equilibrium-seeking cycle of freeze–rebalance–unfreeze–freeze (see also Cummings, Chapter 1). This cycle is constructed and emerges as the change process unfolds. Freezing makes patterns visible through narratives, metaphors, causal

loop diagrams, cognitive maps, and schemes. Rebalancing is a process of reinterpretation, re-labelling, and re-sequencing patterns to reduce blocks and to open new possibilities for interaction and sense-making. Unfreezing resumes improvisation, translation, and learning in ways that are more mindful.

Changing is a continuous activity at local levels where people interact and make sense of their own social reality. On this local level, histories, narratives, practices, and multiple realities may be voiced and contribute to small-scale changes. These small-scale changes can be decisive if they occur at the edge of chaos or in a context of rebalancing and unfreezing. In their chapter, Léon de Caluwé and Hans Vermaak (Chapter 10) relate to chaos theory to understand how large systems become innovative and adaptive systems. Small changes can have large consequences because of self-reinforcing feedback loops and relations in a social network. In interconnected systems, small changes emerge through the diversity and interconnectedness of many micro-conversations (Ford & Ford, 1995). Micro-level changes provide a platform and a context for transformational change at the macro-level.

Continuous changing is a collaborative approach in which everyone contributes as an expert (see Emery, Chapter 2; Levin, Chapter 3; Hosking, Chapter 12). This means that everyone is included who has an involvement in change issues, enabling multiple local realities in different but equal relations. Of course, several roles can be played in this process of interaction, and in attempts to understand how things are really going on here. In processes of interaction, to understand social realities and construct new multiple realities, organizational leaders, employees, consultants, and change agents contribute different knowledge and experiences. Organizational leaders may introduce the voice of shareholders, present their perspectives of global developments, and express their concern about conti-nuity. Employees may express how things are really going on, explain processes of inertia, share their experiences with customers, competitors, and market developments, and express their relationship with colleagues and managers. Consultants and change agents may share their experience with changing and organizing, contribute to reframing current patterns, introduce new language, unblock improvisations, facilitate dialogues, and open up new possibilities. These ways of relating that are not based on hierar-chy or expertise make space for sustaining multiple interdependent ways of organizing and changing, and give free play to multiple local realities. Continuous changing is focused on interweaving activities, interrelations, and sense-making. Working with what is valued as being positive invites participants to learn better how to improvise and stimulate the exchange of experiences. Small-scale innovations spread naturally and contribute to large-scale change. Creating new possibilities strengthens a holistic vision of social reality and allows scope for intuiting, improvising, imagination, and the desire for better futures.

Inquiring and intervening stay joined in a continuous process of transformation and reconstruc-tion. Inquiring may articulate multiple narratives and relations, and it supports searching for patterns of inertia, understanding multiple relationships, exploring new ways of carrying on together, and experimenting with new ways of organizing and changing. In this sense, inquiring is a process of deconstructing and constructing social realities and an ongoing process of intervening.

Continuous changing is connected to learning as a collective process. Changing and learning on the level of principles mean that people reorder relationships and activities, and deconstruct and reconstruct meanings together (see Wierdsma, Chapter 11). Learning is seen as a change in routines, response repertoires, and basic assumptions about social realities and interrelations. A range of skills, rules, insights, principles, and knowledge is altered in an interactive process of relating, acting, reflecting, interpreting, and sense-making.

## TEACHING, LEARNING, AND INTERACTIVE LEARNING

This book presents several perspectives on organizational learning. These perspectives are related to the paradigms on organizing and changing as discussed in this book and reflected upon in this chapter. Several authors distinguish between first-, second-, and third-order learning (see the Introduction; Cummings, Chapter 1; Wierdsma, Chapter 11; Smid & Beckett, Chapter 19).

First-order or single-loop learning focuses on changing rules, practices, and competencies. It is a passive internalization of an existing culture in which the learner copies correct behaviour that is readily available in an organizational context. Learning is knowledge acquisition and the application of the rules of action based on an acquired store of knowledge and experience. The acquisition and improvement of skills and competencies are important.

First-order learning is related to the grammar of behaviourism and the cognitive school of thought (see Sauquet, Chapter 17). It corresponds to Model I theories-in-use as described by Chris Argyris (Chapter 18) and the ideas of positional organization presented by André Wierdsma (Chapter 11). This type of learning is congruent with a design principle which Merrelyn Emery calls redundancy of parts, according to which people are seen as parts and human resources (Chapter 2). First-order learning is based on explicit knowledge and connected to embrained and encoded knowledge as described by Alice Lam in her critical reflection (Chapter 20).

First-order learning takes the form of learning by conditioning, learning by imitation, or learning by teaching. Training programmes are provided to impart skills and basic competencies or to change human behaviour. This kind of learning is often visible as a specific phase in planned change programmes which teach employees new competencies, helping them to operate in new contexts. The learners are seen as objects and as human capital, and teachers are the ones who know.

Second-order or double-loop learning focuses on changing rules and insights. It is an active adaptation in finding out how correct solutions can be produced when the context does not provide for copying existing rules of action and known solutions no longer work.

Second-order learning is related to the cognitive school of thought and to pragmatism (see Sauquet, Chapter 17). In the cognitive school, learning is understood to be the proper connection between values, thoughts, actions, and outcomes. Knowledge can be transformed and managed as any other resource, and new routines and insights can be shared with others. It corresponds to Model II theories-in-use (see Argyris, Chapter 18), the design principle of redundancy of functions (see Emery, Chapter 2), and ideas of transactional organization (see Wierdsma, Chapter 11). Second-order learning is connected to embodied knowledge which focuses on practical and individual types of knowledge that is developed through experience and reflection (see Lam, Chapter 20). These perspectives on organization and learning influence learning programmes which have attempted to move beyond conceptual transmission through teaching. Learning is associated with purposeful action and it is close to adaptation as it involves replacing current values and insights by new ones. The learning process is basically individual but it takes place in a social context and affects social organization through the exchange of new insights.

One form of second-order learning based on the cognitive school is problem-solving through experimentation and the exchange of successful practices through the use of knowledge systems. The pragmatic school of thought on learning proposes action learning programmes in which participants confront actual problems in small learning groups with the purpose of solving them and learning at the same time (see also Revans, 1998). Individuals learn to explore different perspectives on problems and issues, and to link their exploration to the development of the organization, their relationships with others, and to reflection on their own insights and assumptions. Experimental learning and action learning are often visible in OD practices. Learners play and explore in a purposeful action to develop their own individual competencies and the competencies of the organization to cope with environmental changes. The role of consultants and trainers is beyond teaching and closer to facilitating learning processes on individual and organizational levels.

Third-order or deutero learning is initiated by interactions in organizational networks and reflections on principles of organizing and changing. Learners question the validity of activities, relationships, and meanings posed by context and interactions. During organizing, changing, and learning, contexts and principles are inquired, deconstructed, and reconstructed. Existing cognitive maps and competencies are destroyed and new competences, activities, relations, and meanings emerge in a process of acting, reflecting, and relating. Knowing and learning exist as engaging with others in a context of organizing and changing.

Third-order learning is connected with some insights of the cognitive and the pragmatic schools of thought on learning, and with principles of situated learning (see Sauquet, Chapter 17). It is related to transformational organization (Wierdsma, Chapter 11), perspectives on organizing as relational construction processes (Hosking, Chapter 12), and to principles of interactive learning presented in the Introduction. The cognitive and pragmatic schools help in our understanding of how cognition and action are interrelated in a process of enactment and how people make sense in confusing and ambiguous contexts (see also Weick, 2001). The school of situated learning suggests that language and symbolic activities may transform principles of organizing and changing. Learning is an interactive process of people acting within social contexts. The social context forms a ground in which ideas, acts, and relations as well as learning contents and learning possibilities are constructed. In this sense, Alice Lam talks about organizational embeddedness of knowledge and learning which shapes and inhibits the learning and transformational capabilities of organizational communities (Chapter 20). The dynamics of participation in organizing, changing, and learning enables participants to acquire knowledge in an interactive process with other participants (see Emery, Chapter 2, and Levin, Chapter 3). Third-order learning is related to embedded knowledge, which is based on shared beliefs and understandings and rooted in communities of practice (see Lam, Chapter 20).

Third-order learning implies that meanings are constructed socially in interaction with others, and in dialogue that makes room for multiple voices and multiple social realities. In these interactive processes people try to make complexities and ambiguities clear by constructing a shared meaning to issues and new possibilities. By exchanging meanings, arguments, and ideas, participants mutually influence each other's perspectives, insights, and principles, which may construct new sets of values on organizing, changing, and learning. In third-order learning, people learn how to learn. This perspective points to the importance of social interaction, contexts, trust for learning, and development of knowledge. Knowledge is seen as being subjective and tacit, not easily codified, and difficult to transmit independent of the subject (see Lam, Chapter 20). This kind of learning and development of knowledge contributes to the accumulation of knowledge on identity formation, community building, and working principles in social realities. Learners, members of organizational communities, and people creating and holding social contexts are subjects in processes of self-making and world-making.

## DYNAMICS OF ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE AND LEARNING

Undoubtedly, theories and practices of organizational change and learning have become more elaborate, complex, and dynamic during the past decades. At the same time, people in organizations experience many changes in their professional life which are not helpful or successful. In many organizations change projects succeed each other, while the results of these change efforts are dubious. What are the reasons for the dynamics in the world of management and organization? How can we understand the increased interest in questioning existing theories and practices on organizational change and learning?

Of course, the dynamics in organizational change and learning could be explained because of an environment which seems less predictable, more turbulent, and more dynamic. The boundaries between organizations and their surroundings are becoming vaguer as a result of globalization, developments in communication technology, changes in distribution channels, growth in knowledge and exchange of knowledge, building of strategic alliances and networks, increasing interdependence between public and private sectors, and growing concern for good governance. Furthermore, market demands seem to be higher than ever with economic instability, more demands from shareholders, increased competition, and time-based competition.

The dynamics in organizational change and learning may be understood from the internal complexity of organizations. This complexity grew because of the expansion of organizations, the availability of new technologies, more attention for the customer chain, the diversity in cultural background of employees, increased alienation or increased structural tensions, conflicts, and political mechanisms.

The external and internal world of management and organization seem to be less structured, more dynamic, and more ambiguous. But I do not see this as a satisfactory explanation why tensions arise in theories and practices of organizational change and learning. The explanations so far distinguish between organization and environment, and see organizations as an entity separated from change managers. The reasoning goes outside in from the environment to the organization. The reasoning does not take the choices and principles of scholars and practitioners in organizational change and learning into account. It does not reflect on ways in which we construct dynamics in change and learning by ourselves.

To understand the dynamics of organizational change and learning, it is worthwhile to reflect on our own practices and thinking as scholars and practitioners in organizing, changing, and learning. The construction of our own framework has momentous implications for our actions and the choices we make. In my view, the dynamics we experience in theories and practices lie not in the changing environment or changing organizations, but in the conceptual frameworks and assumptions we ourselves use in organizing, changing, and learning. These assumptions lie behind the choice of frameworks, change strategies, and methods. To understand the dynamics of change and learning that we experience, it is useful to examine the ideas and assumptions that lie behind our practices. What does it mean to opt for a specific change approach? What are the implications of this choice? The distinctions we made between planned change (Theory E), OD (Theory O), and continuous changing (Theory C) may be helpful in understanding difficulties we experience in organizing, changing, and learning, and in constructing new realities and possibilities for organizational change and learning.

Perhaps the theory and practice of planned change underestimates value differences, creativity of people, how problem definition and problem-solving are interrelated, and principles of second-order learning. This may result in resistance and avoidance, superficial change, and management based on control and intervention. The theory and practices of OD may underestimate the importance of conflict, institutional control, and how values are embedded in autocratic management and positional organization, resulting in inertia during changing and learning, and failure in reaching sustainable changes. And perhaps theories and practices of continuous changing underestimate economic drives, power and politics, the dominant influence of traditional management practices, and difficulties in the diffusion of knowledge. Does this distinction in theories and practices mean that there is a need to develop an integrated perspective on how to manage change effectively and that we have to break the code of change (Beer & Nohria, 2000)? I don't think so. To avoid an unproductive discussion on effectiveness, and to avoid attempts to smooth over epistemological differences, I argue in favour of making clear differences between approaches that fundamentally differ in underlying values and principles. This can be helpful for scholars and practitioners to reflect on their own assumptions, fascinations, preferences, and values, and to position themselves in the dynamic field of organizing, changing, and learning. The reality of organizing, changing, and learning is a multiple reality full of tensions, conflicts, and dynamics, and we are well advised to use these dynamics in our professional learning and the development of knowledge.

Theories are conceptual narratives with underlying assumptions that provide us with views of the essence of reality, how we can understand reality, and how we can build knowledge to understand and change realities. Every theory has value as well as limitations as arbitrary views of reality. All theories provide us with methodologies that are applicable in specific contexts and of no use in other contexts. Therefore, a deliberate and conscious choice of change methodologies by consultants and change managers needs an extensive body of knowledge, reflection-in-action, and reflecting on the way in which we learn and develop knowledge. Debates between the different approaches and their working principles could attribute to our knowledge and the diffusion of knowledge as well as to the development of new theories on organizational change and learning. We ourselves created the dynamics of organizational change and learning by constructing theories, principles, methodologies, and practices, and by applying them in social realities of organizational life. These dynamics, which we create as practitioners and scholars, open up new perspectives in professional dialogues with all participants active in organizing, changing, and learning.

# INTERVENTIONS AND CHANGE WORK PRACTICES

Many interventions and change works are described in this book, although we do not provide a complete overview. This section gives a comprehensive overview and a reflection on the change methods presented in this book. There are many overviews of intervention methods and several ways to arrange them (e.g., Tichy, 1983; French & Bell, 1998; Schein, 1998; Block, 1999; Cummings & Worley, 2001; de Caluwé & Vermaak, 2002; Kubr, 2003). The arrangement here is on the primary pretext to act, and on a rough fit with assumptions and thought worlds of organizing and changing. The conceptual framework and the aim of the method place limits on relevant and useful methods, shape how methods are understood, and shape how methods are carried out (see Figure 21.1).

## BUSINESS PERFORMANCE

Several methods are proposed to improve business performance. Colin Carnall (Chapter 5) stresses the importance of 'reading' the environment correctly and putting a competitive business model in place. Future searches may contribute to rapid change by building a common data base, discovering the future in diverse perspectives, and creating commitment to action plans (see also Weisbord, 1992; Jacobs, 1994). Colin Carnall advocates that these searches are a process of building credibility and valid measures of performance focused on understanding how well we are doing, and how we compare to competitors. He proposes balanced scorecards, analyses of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT analyses) and the method of benchmarking to collected solid and reliable data



Benchmarking
Balanced Scorecard
SWOT analyses
Restructuring
Business Process Redesign
Total Quality Management
Time-based competition

Socio-technical work design
Simulations
Double-loop learning
Survey feedback
Team building
Group development
Cultural change programmes
Participative work groups

Appreciative inquiry
Naturalistic inquiry
Search conferences
Dialogue
Story telling
Collective learning
Action learning
Action research

Selection
Reward systems
Career paths
Leadership training
360° feedback
Coaching

Mutual gains negotiation
Third-party interventions
Process management

Episodic Change ◀————————————————————————▶ Continuous Changing
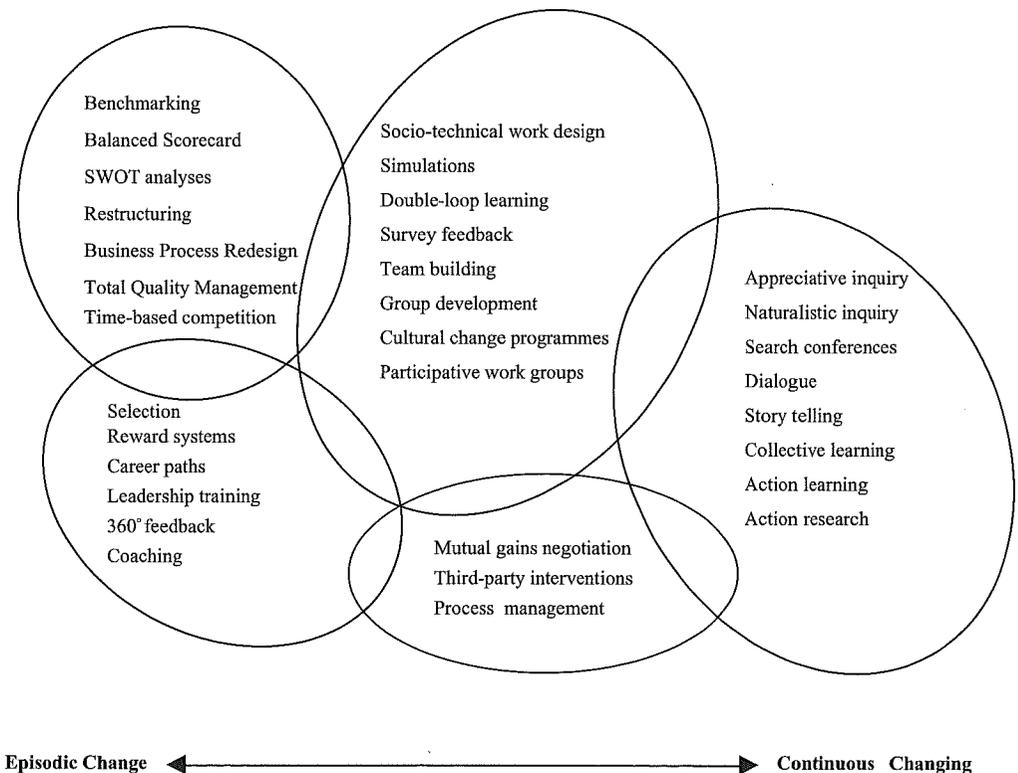
FIGURE 21.1   Interventions and change works

on market demands and environmental changes, and to contribute to measurement, accountability, transparency, and access to outcome measures. Benchmarking focuses on a comparison of one's own organization with the best competitors in the world and pays attention to products, product systems, business strategies, and business processes. A project for Business Process Redesign may start from these diagnoses for a breakthrough change and irregular leaps in performance (see Carnall, Chapter 5).

The term 'business process re-engineering' (BPR) is often used when redesigning business strategy, information technology, and organizational processes (Hammer & Champy, 1993). In essence, BPR is a fundamental rearrangement of business processes enabling information technology to realize reduction of costs, increase of profitability, and an enhancement of performance in quality, service, and speed.

Other major change programmes, such as Total Quality Management and time-based competition, may contribute to major changes to improve business performance (see Carnall, Chapter 5). Applications of these major change programmes are widespread in industry and the service sector; nevertheless, their contribution to sustainable performance improvement could be doubted.

The methods for improving business performance are related to the assumptions of planned change. The change manager is a purposeful subject in the role of powerful agent or expert. The organization and employees are objects and the ones who undergo the change.

## STRUCTURING ORGANIZATIONS

Restructuring of organizations could be used to improve business performance, profitability, and competitive advantage. Business Process Redesign is an example. This book proposes other design principles and methods for structuring organizations (see Walton & Russell, Chapter 7). Organizing can be seen as balancing between the dilemma of differentiation and integration. Pressures for differentiation stem from a differentiated environment and market demands, while the need for coordination creates internal pressures for integration. Several organizational structures are suggested for better alignment with their strategy and environment. Thomas Cummings (Chapter 1) refers to borderless organizations and virtual organizations, and Elise Walton and Michael Russell (Chapter 7) refer to matrix organizations, networked organizations, and the strategic enterprise. These suggestions for organizational designs are based on organization theory and the design principles seem to be related to planned change.

Open systems theory recommends organizational design methods based on socio-technical work design (see Emery, Chapter 2). The aim of socio-technical work design is to improve organizational effectiveness, improve the quality of working life, and level power. In contemporary socio-technique, attention is paid to the relation between corporate strategy, organizational structure, the nature of the transformation process, the technology, and the work design. Socio-technical work design is definitely rooted in OD. Participation of workers is a principle and based on values of autonomy, self-regulation, and democracy. Besides this, there is the insight that participation of workers is necessary for creative design. Change agents and workers are participants in this method, who bring in different knowledge and experience. The methods for redesign could be applied in various ways depending on whether assumptions and values for change are rooted in planned change or in OD.

## EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION

Improving employee satisfaction and motivation is suggested in order to contribute to increased flexibility of the organization and business performance (see Carnall, Chapter 5). Many interventions to increase motivation are based on human resources management, and work organization.

Human resources management is traditionally associated with the personnel function in organizations. Based on motivation theories, it is assumed that reward systems can play a powerful role in promoting performance (see Walton & Russell, Chapter 7). This led to interventions aimed at making rewards more contingent on performance. One popular method is the implementation of gain sharing

(see Cummings, Chapter 1). In gain sharing, employees are paid a bonus based on measurable gains in performance above some baseline standards. The underlying belief is that people are motivated by external rewards and do things for which they are rewarded. Other human resource interventions are selection and career paths (see Walton & Russell, Chapter 7). One classic idea pertaining to selection is to put the right person in the right place, assessing skills and competencies needed for a specific job. Another idea is that the composition of teams, including the selection of members, is vital to group performance and organizational effectiveness. The introduction of career paths is aimed at developing employee goals, abilities, and skills to fit with the organizational strategy and market demands. It is supposed that career paths may increase the employee's ability to see a meaningful path forward and to feel a valued member of an organization. Interventions based on human resource management fit with the assumptions of planned change. The change manager is an active subject and a behavioural expert, and the employees are objects to be motivated by career paths and other forms of rewards.

OD assumes that new forms of work make work more motivating and fulfilling by improving the quality of one's professional life. Practices in OD of job enrichment and job enlargement resulted in work designs that enhance both productivity and employee satisfaction. The design principles are based on redundancy of functions and expanding jobs horizontally and vertically. The assumption is that improving employee motivation through work redesign may contribute to improved organization performance and reduces absenteeism and turnover (see Cummings, Chapter 1, and Emery, Chapter 2).

## LEADERSHIP AND CULTURE

The development of leadership is paid a lot of attention in behavioural science interventions. Theoretical perspectives on managerial traits and skills lead to a huge training industry for teaching individual managers how to become an effective leader (see Walton & Russell, Chapter 7). Coaching can help in individual learning and development. Individual feedback may help to understand the effects of one's own behaviour on others. Individual feedback can take many forms, such as personal feedback, norm-based assessments, surveys, 360° feedback, or even pencil tests (see Walton & Russell, Chapter 7). The use of personal feedback as a personal development tool is widespread, although it is hard to assess the long-term impact on behavioural and organizational change. The effectiveness of training programmes for managers is debatable. Therefore, other forms of learning are proposed, such as game simulation. Game simulation is an intervention which allows participants to experience first hand the systemic consequences of individual action and how structures influence behaviour (see Walton & Russell, Chapter 7).

Survey feedback is a classic intervention method and has become a major component of company-wide interventions based on OD. It involves systematically collecting survey data about the organization and feeding the data back to members at all levels of the organization so that they can discover sources of problems and devise relevant solutions (see Cummings, Chapter 1). Kilian Bennebroek Gravenhorst and Roeland in 't Veld (Chapter 15) consider survey feedback to be an active process of information acquisition and knowledge dissemination, with the explicit purpose of serving as a basis for action for all organizational members.

Culture has long been a domain for change practitioners. Scholars have prescribed corporate cultures best suited to specific business models and strategies (see Walton & Russell, Chapter 7). Implementation methods based on this idea of 'best cultural fit' are mainly in the form of large-scale training and communication programmes. Based on the values of OD, cultural change is a comprehensive intervention method which combines various intervention methods. In general, the first step is to assess the organizational culture by using survey feedback or by bringing groups together to identify espoused values and underlying assumptions. Various artifacts, theories-of-action, and designs-of-action are investigated. As this process proceeds, the facilitator begins to push for some of the underlying assumptions by

noting areas of consistency and inconsistency between espoused theories, actions-in-use, and artifacts. The next step is to identify cultural assumptions that will aid in getting to shared goals, and cultural assumptions that hinder goals being achieved. After this reflective diagnosis, an action plan is developed to determine what steps might be appropriate. The execution of the action plan is monitored by the members themselves with the help of the facilitator. Members of the organization are fully involved in owning both the diagnoses and the interventions (see also Schein, 1992).

The behavioural science interventions described above are rooted in assumptions of OD. The change agent is subject, takes a role as facilitator, and strives for involvement of other actors as participant.

In this book, Chris Argyris (Chapter 18) raises the question as to why so little learning occurs on individual and organizational levels. He believes that we must dig deeper into theories-of-action. The challenge for the intervener is to help individuals transform their espoused theories into theories-in-use by learning new sets of skills and new governing values. This whole process is the essence of double-loop learning. In double-loop learning attention is focused on changing the governing values and master programmes that produced the routines in question. Interventions to facilitate double-loop learning are researching the theory-in-use and the action designs of the client, the use of case studies to get at the theories-in-use and the organizational defensive routines, and the use of cases as an intervention tool in reflecting and redesigning actions (see Argyris, Chapter 18; see also Argyris, 1990).

## GROUP DYNAMICS, CONFLICT, AND PROCESS MANAGEMENT

Group dynamics have a long history in the theory and practice of OD. The earliest intervention methods based on OD principles focused on improving social processes in organizations. Team development is still a robust intervention method. Klaus Doppler (Chapter 6) states that to transform a group into a well-functioning team, it is necessary to create a common goal, mutual interests, and personal commitment.

In teams and organizations, the emergence of conflict is normal. Whenever people work together, different points of view, needs, and interests collide between individuals, in groups, or between groups. Klaus Doppler provides a method for conflict management (Chapter 6). In his view, an understanding of what has happened must be acquired, mistrust has to be broken down step by step, and trust has to be built up again. One important task is to re-establish a situation of direct communication. A neutral third party may be needed to monitor the interactions between parties and to facilitate conflict resolution. In communication, parties can learn about their differences and commonalities. Morten Levin (Chapter 3) describes a method for mutual gains bargaining. The core process elements are making a distinction between positions and interests, identifying conflicting situations, acknowledging the participants' conflicting interests as a natural fact, and designing a creative process in which conflict situations can be addressed, interests are made clear, and participants create new actions that would potentially fulfil their interests. The principles, method, and practice of conflict resolution are meticulously described by Kilan Bennebroek Gravenhorst and Roeland in 't Veld (Chapter 15).

Workshops and task forces are widely used in organizational change (see Levin, Chapter 3). Workshops are used to enable participative processes. Task forces may be used to support a participative change process and give room for collective interaction in line with the general values of OD.

Process management is an intervention method that regulates dynamic decision-making processes in cases of complex problems which need to be solved by a network of actors (see Bennebroek Gravenhorst & in 't Veld, Chapter 15). This intervention applies to situations in which no objective solution is available and tensions exist between the interests of the different parties. It involves different actors who need each other to solve problems while at the same time they pursue their own interests. The general principle is that an acceptable decision can only be developed if all the relevant stakeholders

are involved in all the phases of the process, from problem definition to deciding on a solution. Design principles necessary are openness, protection of the core values of stakeholders, continuity and speed, and substance and quality in the solution.

Group dynamics, conflict resolution, and process management are mainly related to the assumptions of OD. The change agent is the facilitator and subject and collaborates with the other agents as subjects in a pluralist world.

## INQUIRING, DIALOGUE, AND NARRATIVE

The view of continuous changing tells us that organizing, changing, and learning are ongoing processes of human interaction and communicating. This is congruent with the idea of appreciative inquiry. Appreciative inquiry is a theory of organizing and changing and a method for changing socially constructed realities (see Walton & Russell, Chapter 7). Working appreciatively means working with what is positively valued and appreciated by people in social realities (see Hosking, Chapter 12). The shift to possibilities, rather than problems, invites participants to learn how better to improvise, and helps participants imagine new ways of proceeding together. In general, the interaction process starts with grounded observation of the 'best of what is'. Through vision, participants jointly articulate 'what might be', ensuring the consent of participants to 'what should be'. Then, experimenting starts with 'what can be' (see Walton & Russell, Chapter 7, and also Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987). A nice example of appreciative inquiry is described by Luc Hoebeke (Chapter 8).

Searching for new ways and new futures can be stimulated by bringing participants together in a conference, usually for more than one day. A search conference is a joint visioning and planning conference of which the outcome is concrete working plans initiating change activities (see Levin, Chapter 3). The idea is that participants can construct visions of a desired future and a joint under-standing of what to do. Guiding principles for designing and facilitating conferences are provided by Kilian Bennebroek Gravenhorst and Roeland in 't Veld (Chapter 15).

Appreciative inquiry and search conferences are related to the theory and method of dialogue. Dialogue encourages people to explore their interactions, their different ideas about reality, and to generate new interactions and ideas by constructing new realities from their interactions and dialogue. A design principle in dialogue is to clarify a set of rules that guides the process and secures participation (see also Gustavsen, 1992). An outside facilitator usually takes on the policing role, while participants take initiatives and control the process. One specific dialogue approach is focused on networks of organizations that try to learn from each other's experiments. Based on shared experiences, and mu-tual definition of problems or desirable states, experiments are carried out simultaneously within each organization.

Narrative change works have become increasingly popular in recent years. The idea is to work with how people talk with, to, and about one another and construct their wider realities and relations. Narrative inquiry often proceeds through open interviews. The interviewer encourages a conversation of equals by being relationally responsive and leaving room for the other to tell his or her story. Analysing the narratives is an act of deconstruction of the story by searching for dualities, denying the plot, finding the exception, tracing what is between the lines, and other cognitive activities (see Hosking, Chapter 12). Several stories can be brought together for deconstruction by multi-voicing, and reconstructing by making new stories and opening up new possibilities.

## LEARNING AND RESEARCHING IN ACTION

Continuous changing cannot be separated from learning. Second- and third-order learning are related to continuous changing and constructing realties. In this book, two methodologies for organizational learn-ing are elaborated. Gerhard Smid and Ronald Beckett (Chapter 19) explain design principles to create

an extended space for learning that enables emerging relationships and creates innovations. A method for collective learning is provided by André Wierdsma (Chapter 11). The method provides a temporary context which offers conditions in which stakeholders can reflect on their relationships, activities, and meanings. This reflection supports dialogue on how the organization of work is constructed, and in which the rules, insights, and principles underlying organizing, changing, and learning can be discussed. Both methods for collective learning are connected to the tradition of action learning. Action learning sees organizing and changing as a continuous learning and transformation process (see Cummings, Chapter 1). Action learning involves interrelated actions that comprise an iterative learning process in which participants learn to reflect on their values in changing, organizing, and learning. Double-loop learning is possible when actors learn how to confront value inconsistencies and conflicts and modify values accordingly. Action learning may involve deutero learning or third-order learning when participants start learning how to learn.

Action research can serve as a methodology for action, changing, and learning. Principles for action research are a collaborative relationship between researchers and actors. Researchers become actors and actors become researchers. They have a mutual responsibility for exploring, interacting, experimenting, and enriching knowledge. Accepting this mutual responsibility does not imply that the parties do not have specific responsibilities and contributions. Researchers have their own specialist knowledge, usually in social science, and in designing and facilitating processes of action research and action learning. Actors have first-hand ecological knowledge of their own social reality and the interaction patterns in which they are involved. In action research, the action researcher may add value by sharing his or her specialist knowledge of organizing and changing, while organizational members are credited with having specialist knowledge of the social reality of organizing and changing in their local contexts. Collaboration means equality in an inter-subjective relationship and working in mutual agreement with the activities in the progression of researching and learning (see Cummings, Chapter 1; Emery, Chapter 2). In the Introduction, a methodology of reflective action research is proposed in which participants act, reflect on their actions, and pay attention to the way in which they learn and generate knowledge.

## ISSUES IN ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE AND LEARNING

In the previous section, different theories on organizational change and learning were presented based on multiple perspectives presented in this book. This reflective overview may be helpful in reflecting on one's own theories-in-use and choosing and developing one's own methodologies. This section reflects on some issues in organizational change and learning that are discussed in various parts of this book. These issues seem to be main themes and offer possibilities for the development of practices and the construction of knowledge.

### FAILURES AND SUCCESS

There are many explanations for failures in organizational change. The strategic management perspective looks for the cause of failures in problems with implementation, lack of sufficient support, or technical and political factors that hinder the implementation of the strategic policy by those implementing it. The structural perspective suggests that technologies in place and the division of labour are the main reasons for difficulties in realizing effective change. The view of power and politics attributes the failures in organizational change to existing power relationships and agents defending their interests and positions. The cultural perspective seeks the reasons for barriers to change in rules, habits, institutional arrangements, and values within the organization limiting the ability of people to develop alternative behaviours and interaction patterns. The psychological perspective attributes problems encountered in change processes primarily to lack of employee motivation and people's desire for certainty, security, and stability (see also the Introduction). These perspectives seek obstacles for

change in the existing organization and the behaviour of people in this organization. Many intervention methods are suggested to overcome these barriers, i.e., interactive policy development, redesigning business processes, breaking politics by using legitimate power, broad cultural training programmes, game simulations, conference methods, large group interventions, reduction of uncertainty through teaching, and good communication concerning the change. Reflecting on these explanations and interventions, we can see how a distinction is made between the organization, people, and the change managers. Aspects of the organization and people in the organization are seen as things that have to be changed as objectives by change managers as knowing subjects. Failures are not explained by the change process itself, the choice of frameworks, the choice of change strategies, the assumptions and behaviour of change agents, and the interactions of people involved in change.

There are also many explanations for failures that reflect on the change process itself. Attention is given to a perspective based on change management practices, a perspective rooted in values and basic assumptions, and an interactive perspective.

The change management perspective proposes that ineffective change management stems from the fact that the environment, the organization, and the change strategy that is chosen do not fit. Marc Buelens and Geert Devos (Chapter 4) present some generic failures in change management, i.e., failing to see that the environment of the organization is changing, choosing and applying an ineffective change strategy, and a one-sided implementation of change strategies. Furthermore, they call for attention to a lack of vision for change, a lack of accepting goal discongruence and value differences, a lack of creativity and poor decision-making, and a lack of understanding the change strategy and the progression of change. The failure of not reading the environment correctly is supported by Colin Carnall (Chapter 5). Other failures he proposes are a one-sided, human behaviourist approach to change, ineffective leadership of change managers, the absence of an integrated approach, and the implementation of change in only one part of the organization. Klaus Doppler (Chapter 6) adds several failures connected to the change manager's actions, namely, lack of clarity as to the reason and purpose for change, top-down steering and control of change managers, not involving those who will be affected, too many change projects at once without a clear necessity, no thought for vested interests, insufficient communication as to the purpose of change, and the continuation in change projects. Kilian Bennebroek Gravenhorst and Roeland in 't Veld (Chapter 15) state that obstacles in change should be understood as being a response to a chosen change strategy by change managers. Change strategies often focus on single issues and on implementing solutions as identified and formulated by change strategists and top managers. In their view, change processes are underestimated or neglected too often.

The perspective focusing on assumptions about change managers suggests that managers use a traditional, positional, or episodic view of organizing and changing. These assumptions influence the purposes of change and how the change processes are managed. Merrelyn Emery (Chapter 2) believes the traditional view of organizing is reflected in the use of a closed system framework, an organizational design principle based on redundancy of parts, and a lack of interaction between subject and object. Klaus Doppler (Chapter 6) refers to old concepts of leaders as heroes, organizations as clear structures with division of functions, personnel as reproducible objects, and planning as a procedure to ensure accountability and steadiness of purpose. André Wierdsma (Chapter 11) explains how the model of positional organization focuses on external control and programmable behaviour with functional and cognitive barriers between managers, professionals in staff departments, and employees. Positional organization assumes that there is consensus on the aims of the organization, that organizational culture is a binding force, and that hierarchal structures contribute to control and clear responsibilities. In these organizations, there is a strong internal focus on stability and change is seen as an episodic implementation process for a new design.

The interaction perspective considers organizing and changing as an ongoing process of interaction, sense-making, and self-making. Failures of organizing, changing, and learning have to be sought in these processes of interaction and sense-making. During interaction and sense-making actors have a certain amount of freedom to interact. At the same time, interaction and sense-making are restricted

**TABLE 21.3** Success factors in organizational change

| Success factors in organizational change |
| --- |

*Principles:*
There is no one best way in organizing and changing
Human beings are motivated by meaningful work
Organization is a process of interaction
Participation of stakeholders in changing contributes to involvement and engagement
Learning is an ongoing process of reflecting and interacting
Knowledge construction is an ongoing process in which every member has a voice

*Insights:*
Concentrate on accelerating diffusion and incorporate practices with positive effect
Realize genuine participation of all people and actors involved in organizing and changing
Design and execute methods with genuine collaboration in active and adapted change
Opt for flexibility rather than mechanistic order in terms of fixed designs or steps
First, concentrate on design of social systems, and, second, on adaptation of technological systems
Create a joint and reflective learning process for all participants involved in organizing and changing
Continually monitor change processes to reflect on the process and the outcomes in order to make
conscious decisions on how to advance
Deliberate the involvement of outsiders and external stakeholders in organizing and changing
Give strict attention to the horizontal work processes oriented towards clients and customers
Ensure active, multi-sided communication and dialogue

by institutionalized contexts and assumptions that are taken for granted and, as such, are embedded in existing distinctions, technologies, and routines that were constructed in earlier interactions (see also Lam, Chapter 20). It is not unusual that open interactions and dialogue about principles of organization and changing never start because of the dominant values based on positional organizing and Model I reasoning (see Argyris, Chapter 18). Defensive routines may develop during interaction processes in organizing and changing. These routines prevent people from experiencing embarrassment and, at the same time, prevent them from discovering the causes of embarrassment. As a result, there is a growing misunderstanding and mistrust which, in turn, inhibit interacting, changing, and learning. If interactions about these principles do start, people could create contexts at the edge of chaos and may no longer be able to find a new balance in organizing and changing. As a result, conflicts may arise which cannot be overcome, interaction stops, and the process of organizing and changing comes to an end.

Practitioners and scholars looking for failures in organizing and changing may reflect on the different explanations provided above, and ask themselves: 'What did I do wrong, that the other person is behaving so oddly, and that changing and learning are blocked?'

Success in organizational change and learning depends on the purposes or the perceived outcomes of organizing and changing. Assessing success is difficult because different actors might pursue different purposes, start from different value systems, and might give different and conflicting interpretations to the same events and outcomes. Therefore, I choose to reflect on principles, insights, and methods that may contribute to success. Based on the contributions and descriptions in this book, success factors can be identified that contribute to successful organizational change and learning. This is not an easy task, given the different approaches to change. Some success factors we can agree on, others are conflicting. Success factors in this book that we agreed on are listed in Table 21.3. The insights and use of methods are embedded in the values underlying the change approaches described in the previous section. This means that the methods can be applied in very different ways depending on the epistemological framework chosen. The epistemological frameworks contribute to different perspectives and practices in organizational change and learning. Grounded in these differences, there appear to be debates on success factors in organizing and changing.

One ambiguous issue is the importance of taking horizontal work processes and the customer value stream as a point of departure for organizing and changing. From the perspective of planned change and Theory E, this statement is quite obvious. But, from the perspective of OD and continuous changing, there are also reasons to consider this insight carefully. Scholars in OD see the workplace and self-steering groups as the most important units in designing and changing organizations, and these units are related to horizontal work processes. Scholars and practitioners in continuous changing refer to activity systems, work systems, or communities of practice as groups in which interaction, sense-making, and organizing are most profound. This means that groups in the value stream are the most obvious points of action. Besides this, focusing on the value stream proves opportunities for relating the world of customers, suppliers, and competitors with organizing, changing, and learning.

Reflecting on the chapters, in this book we can see opposing views regarding success factors. These opposing views correspond to the values behind the change approaches as discussed earlier. From the perspective of planned change, success factors are:

- Create problem awareness and awareness of the need for change.
- Build a system of credible and valid measurements of performance aimed at understanding how well we are doing as compared to competitors.
- Opt for an organization-wide approach and implement change in the whole organization.
- Get people and departments in the organization in line with the objectives and directions for change.
- Broaden and mobilize support for change, raise commitment and resources.

From the perspective of continuous changing, these insights are doubtful because they suppose an active change agent as the subject who manages other people as object. Second, measurements of performance assume that there is an objective reality that can be measured; the questions are, whose performance criteria are to be measured? and whose purposes are to be ignored? Third, the aim of alignment and commitment ignores differences and conflict, while the expression of differences is perceived as being a contribution to changing and learning from the perspective of continuous changing. Again, it appears that the application of insights and methods is rooted in the values of change approaches.

## POWER AND EMPOWERMENT

For many years, little attention has been paid to the issue of power in theory and the practice of organizational change and learning. And even today, publications on the power issues lag far behind in numbers as compared to publications of empowerment, change strategies, and interventions. OD used to be blamed for the neglect of power and politics (see Bradshaw & Boonstra, Chapter 13) and planned change was criticized because of the implicit use of power by managers and change agents (see Hardy & Clegg, Chapter 16). In Part IV, we turn our attention to power in processes of organizing and changing. Patricia Bradshaw and Jaap Boonstra (Chapter 13) present four perspectives of power from a dynamic view, based on tensions between personal vs collective power, and manifest vs latent power. The four perspectives are related to perspectives on organizational change and change strategies.

The paradigm of personal–manifest power states that power is a force that can be attributed to a person as the potential ability of an agent to influence others. The potential power is grounded in sources of power that can be attributed to specific persons or groups. Cynthia Hardy and Stewart Clegg (Chapter 16) refer to power as domination when only the legitimate position of management is taken into account. This paradigm can be seen in coercive and expert approaches to change. It presumes an active subject using power over other persons (see Hosking, Chapter 12). Power can be used to define objectives for change, control the change process, design new structures with expertise, break through vested interests, align people to change, and realize commitment. This paradigm is especially related

to the perspective of planned change whereby top management initiates and steers the change process. This perspective becomes more interactive when attention is given to interpersonal power and the use of power by people or groups in interaction. The chapter by Gary Yukl (Chapter 14) is one example of this interactive perspective.

The paradigm of structural–manifest power attributes power to positions of specific groups in the structure of the organization or to relational networks. In the view of Cynthia Hardy and Stewart Clegg, this kind of power is derived from owning and controlling the means of production and is reinforced by organizational rules, procedures, and structures (see Chapter 16). In many organizations, the distribution of power is characterized by stability. Sometimes this stability is disrupted by conflicting interests and controversies in decision-making. However, some variants of OD are also related when attention is focused on collaboration and solving conflicts, on structural change to realize empowerment, or on alignment of technical, structural, cultural, and political systems.

The paradigm of personal–latent power raises the question of how individuals come to limit themselves in behaving, relating, changing, and learning. Cynthia Hardy and Stewart Clegg pass on disciplinary practices and the formation of dominant ideologies restricting people to develop their identities and activities (Chapter 16). On the other hand, the question is raised as to how individuals can become active agents in empowerment. Based on this paradigm, one can understand how one's own values and beliefs constrain acting and interacting by latent control mechanisms in contexts which are embedded in dominant discourses and internalized by people. The idea of Model I reasoning presented by Chris Argyris (Chapter 18) is partly related to this perspective. This paradigm could be recognized in the perspective of individual learning and deep reflection as approach to change.

The paradigm of cultural–latent power assumes that organizing is a process of interaction and sense-making, creating social realities that are reflected in values, principles, rules, institutions, and dominant discourses. The use of power could be prevented by shaping people's assumptions and values (see also Hardy & Clegg, Chapter 16). This paradigm is connected to OD efforts that strive to achieve commitment, adaptation of a new organizational culture, and a harmonious development of new meaning. In general, these efforts take the existing power relations for granted. When the existing power relations and assumptions of those participating in change are taken into account, the perspective of continuous changing emerges, giving space to dialogue, interaction, deconstructing and reconstructing, organizing, and changing. Non-hierarchical ways of relating can construct power to sustain multiple independent, local ways of proceeding in different but equal relations and can give free play to multiple local realities (see Hosking, Chapter 12). Many of the ideas on changing in Part III and learning in Part V are related to this paradigm, although the issue of power is not always discussed explicitly.

This reflection on power teaches us that organizing and changing inevitably involve power. Ignoring power games may result in excluding voices, ignoring identities, avoiding conflict, denying ambiguity, neglecting the rules of the game, overlooking the roles of different players, and closing space for changing and learning. This may result in conforming existing order and putting aside possibilities for transformational change.

## RESISTANCE AND COMMITMENT

Contrary to the limited awareness of power relations, resistance has been given a lot of attention in theory and practice of organizational change. This seems strange from the perspective that there is no resistance without force (see Hosking, Chapter 12), and from the view that resistance and power comprise a system of power relations in which both domination and liberation are possible (see Hardy & Clegg, Chapter 16).

In their contribution, Kilian Bennebroek Gravenhorst and Roeland in 't Veld give an overview of perceptions on resistance to change (Chapter 15). The traditional perception in management literature states that resistance is illegitimate, dysfunctional, and self-interested behaviour that has to be beaten.

This reasoning implies that if there is resistance, there is a justification for the use of power on the part of managers. In mainstream change literature, resistance is seen as an inevitable and natural behavioural reaction to organizational change. This behaviour has been explained by individual psychological factors such as fear, low motivation, preference for stability, self-distrust, and insecurity. Another more political explanation for resistance is found in the behaviour of people defending their own interests. Resistance may also be perceived as a misunderstanding of the change and its implications, or employees doubting the objectives or feasibility of the change. From this perspective, resistance is seen as an expression of concern that has to be taken seriously. In these explanations, resistance is attributed to people as objects for change, and resistance is seen as a barrier that has to be recognized and responded to in the right way by change agents as purposeful subjects. One of these right ways is to show a sincere interest in the individual situation and personal opinions, and to build trust and an atmosphere in which fragile ideas and emotions can be voiced. Another possibility is active communication between change managers and the people affected to get things in motion as required (see Doppler, Chapter 6).

From an OD approach, resistance is allocated more to ongoing social processes in organizations creating driving and restraining forces that affect change (see Cummings, Chapter 1). The backgrounds for resistance are existing work habits and routines, cultural values developing over time, group thinking in teams, decision-making in organizational strategies, and the application and use of technologies. Driving and restraining forces shape how social processes evolve over time creating a quasi-stationary equilibrium. To change organizations, driving and restraining forces must first be identified. The strengths of these opposing forces can then be decreased or increased to achieve desired change. The underlying assumption is that effective change strategies face less resistance when restraining forces are reduced and driving forces are promoted. If the assumption is made that people are open to purposeful systems that have the potential to look for the ideal, sufficient conditions for motivated actions lie with the people and their interactions with others. Motivation to change can be increased by changing the nature of their interactions and transactions between subject and object (see also Emery, Chapter 2).

Another interactive view on resistance is put forward by Kilian Bennebroek Gravenhorst and Roeland in 't Veld (Chapter 15). They state that change approaches that exclude relevant stakeholders are the main reason for resistance. Resistance is not seen here as an entity of a person or a group, but as a purposeful action of an actor in reaction to an action of another actor. Their explanation of resistance is sought in the traditional top-down management of change processes, and in the exclusion of relevant stakeholders. Resistance is now an indication of bad change management and managers can prevent resistance by choosing a change approach that allows for cooperation and involvement of relevant stakeholders. Interventions to support this change strategy are survey feedback, conference methods, process management, and third-party interventions. This interactive perspective on resistance and commitment is supported by Gary Yukl (Chapter 14). He shows that the use of consultation, collaboration, and inspiration is effective in realizing commitment, while pressure by means of threats and rewards, and legitimating the need and approach for change, are likely to result in compliance or resistance.

The interactive perspective on resistance is revisited by Cynthia Hardy and Stewart Clegg (Chapter 16). They make clear that the strategy of involving different stakeholders is close to a unitary view of management to give meaning to ambiguous situations by giving attention to different points of view, facilitating interactions, consulting people in defining problems and directions for improvement, and inspire people to contribute to change and collaborate in organizing and changing. Undoubtedly, an interactive change strategy and many of the suggested interventions result in commitment for transitional or second-order change, although their contribution to transformational or third-order change is uncertain. This reflection on resistance makes it clear that the underlying values and assumptions on human beings, power, organization, and change shape our ideas about the reasons for resistance and affect the choice of interventions or acts of people involved. The questions remain as to whether we want to bring the content, the rules, and the players of the game under discussion, and to what extent we consider change strategies and interventions to be ethically acceptable.

## PERSUASION AND COMMUNICATING

Many chapters in this book pay attention to communication processes, but the approaches differ. Is communication the vehicle and propellant for change? Is it close to persuasion? Could communication be used by change agents to generate and sustain new conversations that contribute to shared visions and commitment? Is communicating a necessary condition for people to act socially? Or is communicating equivalent to organizing, changing, and learning?

Those who use a conceptual framework of planned change make distinctions between communication, organization, change, and people. To overcome problems in the structure of the organization it is important to have proper communication skills. Communication is helpful in spreading information, coordinating activities, and reducing conflicts in the organization. Proper communication in change programmes reduces uncertainties by informing people, introduces other courses of action by instructing, or contributes to successful change by enlightening and through empowerment. Many 'laws of good communication' are proposed, i.e., communication must be reciprocal, consistent, complete, authentic, based on data and shared goals, and repeated many times. The communicator needs to be credible, aware of the inner state of the addressee, and open to feedback (see Doppler, Chapter 6; Walton & Russell, Chapter 7). These ideas come close to persuasion. The change agent and communicator may use several influences or communication tactics in interaction with others, such as rational persuasion, inspirational appeals, consultation, and apprising. Gary Yukl (Chapter 14) provides guidelines on how to use these communication tactics to influence commitment in change. He discards pressure and legitimating as tactics which are not very successful in realizing commitment for change. Merrelyn Emery (Chapter 2) makes it clear that in organizations based on the design principle of redundancy of parts, relations are not symmetrical and lack the reciprocity of sender and receiver. In these organizations, there is an absence of discussion, a predominance of orders and instruction, and an autocratic style of management with persuasion, pressure, and legitimating as the main communication principles. Cynthia Hardy and Stewart Clegg (Chapter 16) discuss this perspective on communication and change in rational and unitary views on organizing, and criticize the idea that the application of communication strategies by change managers avoids resistance and stimulates change because the underlying value structure of the organization and its members is not changed.

OD scholars and practitioners emphasize participation, dialogue, collective reflection, and knowledge construction as critical processes of organizing and changing. Participation and dialogue create knowledge that is built on the experience of the actors involved, and is distilled through their reflection process (see Emery, Chapter 2; Levin, Chapter 3). Communication is reciprocal and almost equivalent to OD. In search conferences and dialogue conferences people develop a joint understanding of 'what is going on', 'what to do', and 'how to proceed'. The developmental process builds on collective interaction and communication leading to participative learning and experimentation. In these conferences, everybody has a voice and the obligation to judge arguments that are put forward (see also Gustavsen, 1992; Emery, 1999). In participative design workshops, conferences, and large group interventions, new forms of communicating take place when people from different hierarchical levels and units work together in mixed groups, diagnosing the existing situation and developing new futures (see Bennebroek Gravenhorst & in 't Veld, Chapter 15). The communication itself creates change in organizational arrangements and communication patterns, and opens up new possibilities for communicating and organizing. Cynthia Hardy and Stewart Clegg (Chapter 16) relate this perspective of communication to a humanist and unitary view of organizations in which common goals bind people to the organization, and caution us that this kind of communication may result in seductive change strategies and manipulation.

From the conceptual framework of continuous changing, communication constructs meanings which emerge from social interacting in ongoing processes of organizing, and changing. Communicating, organizing, and changing are interrelated. In organizing and changing, meanings that were formed previously may be destroyed and alternative and new meanings may be created. In transactional organizations people perform activities, form relations, create meaning, and construct social realities.

Meanings arise in language. Language is embedded in communities and becomes an interpretative framework for giving meaning to activities (see also Wierdsma, Chapter 11). The use of language in communication constructs social realities, and at the same time language is deconstructed and reconstructed in organizing and changing. Change works enable multiple-voicing, not to increase the likelihood of acceptance or the quality of solutions, but to include multiple local realities, to imagine new ways of going on together, and to construct new realities in organizing and changing (see Hosking, Chapter 12). In this way of thinking, communicating is organizing, changing, and learning.

## ROLES OF CHANGE MANAGERS AND CONSULTANTS

Change managers and consultants can take on different roles in organizational change and learning, namely, powerful change agent, expert, process manager, facilitator, friendly outsider, or active participant.

The role of powerful change agent refers to the existing organizational hierarchy that gives managers the ability to control the organization and the behaviour of others, and to change the organizational structure and processes. This role may be fulfilled by organizational leaders who feel responsible for effective change or by consultants who operate as interim managers. The powerful change agent sets the goals, imposes and declares organizational change, and leads and controls the change programme by using legitimate position power. This power stems from the formal position of the change agent and implies the use of positive and negative sanctions such as rewards, support, coercion, warnings, and threats. In order to employ sanctions, it is necessary to know how the change programme is proceeding and to what extent employees perform the required actions. Therefore, feedback and control systems are widely used. Other power bases could be used besides legitimate power, such as inspiring people and arousing enthusiasm by appealing to aspirations, using relationships to establish coalitions, using knowledge and information to persuade others, apprising others why change is beneficial for them, and legitimating the change by pleading scarcity and threats from the environment (see Yukl, Chapter 14). This role of the powerful and active change agent is related to positional organization (see Wierdsma, Chapter 11) and connects with what Patricia Bradshaw and Jaap Boonstra (Chapter 13) call manifest–personal and manifest–structural power. The approach to change is based on personal–position power. It fits with episodic change in which the role of the change agents is that of prime mover who creates change (see Weick & Quinn, Chapter 9).

The role of expert is connected to particular abilities, skills, and expertise of the change agent. These change agents use expert knowledge to assist groups in the organization in analysing and solving problems. The experts use their analytical and planning skills, and focus on knowledge and results (see de Caluwé & Vermaak, Chapter 10). This role can be carried out by professional staff members or external consultants who take on a role as adviser to management or as project leader. The change manager as organizational expert contributes to change through expertise in specific fields, such as information technology, business strategy, work processes, business design, or employee motivation. Business consultants usually start the change process by business and information analyses based on an economic technological rationality. The change manager as behavioural expert contributes to change by assisting managers with an efficient implementation operation mostly within the perspective and goals as defined by managers. Behavioural knowledge is now used to realize compliance with or commitment to the implementation of changes. In this situation, behavioural science and practice become a form of social engineering. The role of expert is related to manifest–personal power, and an expert-power approach to change (see Bradshaw & Boonstra, Chapter 13). This role is linked to blue-print thinking (see de Caluwé & Vermaak, Chapter 10), and fits in with episodic change in which experts, in collaboration with management, are prime movers and subjects of change.

Process managers depart from a pluralist perspective on organizational change. This view maintains that groups and departments are dependent on each other but on the other hand pursue their own interests (see Hardy & Clegg, Chapter 16). The change model is characterized by conflict management and negotiation and connects with surface–structural power relations (see Bradshaw & Boonstra,

Chapter 13). Process managers focus on preventing conflict in the change process by regulating the participation of groups involved by structuring the decision-making process, facilitating negotiations on the objectives of change and the way the change process is organized and managed. Negotiations are directed at smoothing opposition, tensions, and differences in opinion between parties. The objective is to accomplish agreement that does justice to the interests of all parties involved (see also Bennebroek Gravenhorst & in 't Veld, Chapter 15). The freedom of choice of parties involved needs to be taken into account, as well as the equality of parties, equal changes for alternatives, mutual control over decision-making, the majority of votes, and the preferences of minorities. Managing the process of policy formation and creating support demand certain political skills of the process manager, as well as the ability to operate in complex arenas of interest. Léon de Caluwé and Hans Vermaak relate this role to yellow-print thinking (see Chapter 10).

Facilitating can be conducted in many ways. It can be based in the application of behavioural knowledge and take on a form of management by seduction (see Bradshaw & Boonstra, Chapter 13). In this case, the facilitator is a purposeful subject in change and helps the organization and the employees by striving for commitment, harmonious development of new meaning, and adoption of new attitudes, organizational constellations, and cultural values. Change is implemented gradually and the process allows the participation of all people involved. In the red-print school of thought, the facilitator is there to change soft aspects of an organization, such as management style, competences, and cooperation (see de Caluwé & Vermaak, Chapter 10). This school of thought is focused on motivating the human factor and developing human competencies and talents by applying human resources management techniques and by teaching and training. This facilitating method verges upon episodic change because the change activities carried out by the facilitator stop when new human resources techniques are implemented or culture learning programmes come to an end. In the green-print school of thought, facilitators focus on setting up learning environments. The facilitator supports the development of continuous learning in collective settings and participates in action learning settings and co-creation for change and development (see also Wierdsma, Chapter 11). The contribution of the facilitator lies in the creation and continual monitoring of conditions to facilitate continuous learning processes. The facilitator is the friendly outsider as described by Morten Levin (Chapter 3). Morten Levin states that it is vital for the outsider to introduce a professional conceptualization of the principles of OD as it guides the structuring of change activities, makes the mutual roles of all people involved clear, and helps insiders understand the premises on which transformation is founded. In this kind of facilitating, action research could be used to generate a collective knowledge base, and to shape new relations and interactions. These new relation patterns may support the development of new activities, behaviours, values, and norms. This may help enhance the change and learning abilities of the organization and its members. The role of the facilitator as a friendly outsider is rooted in the paradigm of cultural–latent power (see Bradshaw & Boonstra, Chapter 13). This role of friendly outsider could be associated with continuous changing because the development and learning process is an unlimited sequence of action, reflection on action, mutual understanding, and new action.

The active participant in processes of changing and learning plays a specific role by sharing his or her experience and knowledge of changing and learning in a process of self-organization. The active participant becomes director, actor, and participating observer. The director creates a context in which the participants interact and, by doing this, becomes a player in the game. The participating observer is part of the process, follows the rules of the mutual game, and reflects on the game. The active participant is a friendly outsider and insider at the same time and balances between involvement and distance. The added value of the active participant lies in creating space for dialogue, activating stakeholders, building safe environments, offering scope to experiment, and appreciating positive strengths and capabilities of participants in interacting and self-organizing (see Wierdsma, Chapter 11). The importance of dialogue in changing and learning is underlined by Schein (1994). Genuine dialogue provides possibilities for exchanging ideas and cross-influencing attitudes and opinions of each other in a process of interacting. Such a process allows the development of new interaction patterns, multiple but shared sets of norms and values, and shared knowledge and language to understand events that occur in the change process. The

role of active participant in changing and learning is connected to white-print thinking (see de Caluwé & Vermaak, Chapter 10). Activities in this white-print thinking are observing what it is that makes things happen and changing, recognizing, and removing obstacles, clearing perspectives, supplying meanings, getting initiatives started, recognizing emergent activities, and making space for exploring and experimenting. These activities are related to continuous changing (see Weick & Quinn, Chapter 9).

## DELIBERATE AND CONSCIOUS ACTION

Based on the theories and practices presented in this book, several issues were described, and roles of change agents were distinguished. In practice, it is difficult to draw a sharp distinction between the roles of change agents. Some roles seem quite akin to management, like the powerful change agent, the process manager, or the project manager. Management literature includes behavioural expertise in change management. Theories and practices in organizational change take up an important position in MBA courses and training programmes for managers. This means that behavioural knowledge is included in the body of knowledge of management, and managers now perform activities that consultants usually used to perform (see also Walton & Russell, Chapter 7). The roles of consultants are not strictly defined either. Consultants may become temporary managers, interim managers, or project managers with delegated legitimate power and a clear position in the hierarchy. The role distinction between managers and consultants may blur when consultants practise collaborative consultation. The autonomy and credibility of consultants may come under pressure when they adopt unquestioningly the problem definitions and goal orientation of top management. Many experiences and techniques in organizational change have been standardized in models, products, and prescriptive rules. Applying these models, products, and rules turns the consultancy firm into a service factory and the applying consultant into a service provider who uses instruments, rather than an actor in changing and learning who uses methods by design. In any case, in practice, change agents and consultants will overlap several roles. What is the benefit of distinguishing the roles as described above? The first reason is that it may help to define one's own roles in change works. The second reason is that it provides the possibility of combining roles more consciously and deliberately. But most importantly, it creates a reflective framework for looking at and choosing one's own position in the epistemology and methodology of organizational change and learning.

Questions that arise are: What is my position in relation to top management? What is my relationship with different actors? Do I see change as an episodic change programme or as continuous changing and learning? What knowledge and added value do I have to offer? Do I work with standardized models and do I see change as an organized tour, or is changing similar to hiking, searching, and discovering? What does organization mean? How do I define people in change? How do I view power and resistance? What does communication mean to me? Who is subject and who is object in change, or are we all purposeful subjects in changing and learning? The answers to these questions reflect assumptions, and these assumptions lie behind the choice of conceptual framework and change strategies, intervention methods, and change works that ensue from that choice. Virtually every intervention method and all change works could be applied in many ways, depending on thought worlds and assumptions. Examining one's own assumptions enables one to enter into the practice of intervention methods and change works without making intervention rules and tools to convert an object, but creating a professional and personal change methodology.

## QUESTIONS AND POSSIBILITIES IN ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE AND LEARNING

The multiple perspectives presented in this book help to reflect on change works and may prove helpful in understanding complexity and dynamics in organizational change and learning. Such multiple

**TABLE 21.4** Professional questions in organizational change and learning

| Professional questions in organizational change and learning |
| --- |
| Why am I working in organizational change and learning? |
| To what purpose am I working on changing and learning? |
| How do I perceive human beings and define people in change? |
| What are my assumptions as to organization, change, and learning? |
| What kind of paradoxes and dilemmas do I experience in change works and how do I work with them? |
| What is my definition of failure and success in organizational change? |
| What is my own theoretical framework and what does it mean to me and others I am working with? |
| When is change episodic for me and others and when is it more continuous? |
| How do I relate myself to the different thought worlds of changing? |
| What are the principles that guide my choices and actions? |
| Who is subject and who is object in my change works, or are we all purposeful subjects? |
| What is my position in relation to top management? |
| What are my relations with people involved in changing and learning? |
| How do I work with participation in changing and learning? |
| What are my preferences regarding roles for change managers and consultants? |
| How do I view power and resistance in organizing and changing? |
| What is the power I have and will use myself, and what are the ethical values that guide my choices? |
| What does interaction and communication mean for me in organizing, changing, and learning? |
| Why do I choose some intervention methods more often than others? |
| How do I choose specific intervention methods and change works? |
| What are my assumptions as to the efficacy of specific interventions in context? |
| What knowledge and added value to professionalism do I have to offer? |
| Why should I contribute to the development of knowledge in organizing, changing, and learning? |
| How could I contribute to sharing insights and knowledge with participants, practitioners, and scholars? |

perspectives provide new possibilities in organizing and changing, and can be helpful in choosing a position from among multiple paradigms and dilemmas of organizing, changing, and learning. This final section begins with reflections on professional, epistemological, and research questions. This chapter concludes with possibilities for change works in organizing, changing, and learning.

## PROFESSIONAL QUESTIONS

Professionals in organizing, changing, and learning work in fields full of paradoxes, thought worlds, and arenas of actors with multiple ideas of what is going on. Hence, it is important to be able to make conscious decisions in these paradoxes, thought worlds, and arenas in order to contribute to organizational change and learning, and to create a participative collective reflection process. This conscious and informed decision-making may help to develop and explain one's own methodologies in interaction with others. Mixing change approaches without being aware of the inherent tension between them leads to tensions and less transparency in change processes themselves. It is useful to make the values underlying the professional choices explicit and a subject of discussion in order to be accountable to participants and other professionals and to contribute to collective learning.

The conceptual distinctions we made between planned change (Theory E), OD (Theory O), and continuous changing (Theory C) invite one to reflect on one's own assumptions and points of departure. They may help in choosing a position and constructing one's own frameworks for action and interaction. Reflective questions for professionals in organizational change and learning are summarized in Table 21.4.

Reflecting on these questions may help in the search for one's own professional assumptions, principles, and insights. Answers to these questions reflect assumptions, and these assumptions underlie choices of conceptual frameworks, change strategies, intervention methods, and change works ensuing

**TABLE 21.5**  Some research issues in organizing, changing, and learning

Some research issues in organizing, changing, and learning

Basic assumptions of planned change, the background for the dominant logic of this change approach in management and business schools, and the way this approach is related to the design principle of redundancy of parts and Model I reasoning.

Institutional embeddedness of business schools and consultancy firms, and the meaning of this embeddedness on espoused theories and theories-in-use in organizing, changing, and learning.

Relationship between organizational and institutional embeddedness, management education, action learning, action science, and practices of organizational change and learning.

The working principles in practices of OD and the development of new insights, methods, and principles to contribute to organizational change and learning.

The underlying principles and the dynamics in choosing change strategies with respect to contexts, assumptions, perceived problems, ambitions, and people involved in interaction.

Tensions, energies, interactions, and dynamics in continuous changing, and inertia in continuous changing from dynamic systems theory, chaos theory, and social constructionism.

Investigating failures and successes in organizational change and learning, and searching the principles and change approaches behind the effectiveness of change efforts.

Working principles in intervention methods and change works and their efficacy in organizational change and learning.

Roles taken by change managers and consultants, the process of choosing roles, and the interactions and dynamics that flow from these choices.

Paradoxes and dilemmas in organizational change and learning, and the art of choosing and holding balance in these dilemmas.

Dynamics of the dilemma between faith and ethics in organizing, and the meaning of this dilemma for change managers, practitioners, scholars, and scientists.

Dynamics of power and politics in organizational change and learning, and the willingness to exchange power positions and come to dialogue in order to create new possibilities for organizing, changing, and learning.

Sources and dynamics of defence mechanisms in organizational change and learning from a multidisciplinary perspective, and the development of methods of visualizing, vocalizing, and overcoming these defences.

Principles for designing learning support for people in contexts of continuous changing, and reflection on the efficacy of these design principles.

Ways in which people learn and act in ambiguous and conflicting situations by collective reflection on contexts, their actions, and their assumptions concerning social reality.

Principles and dynamics in processes of constructing, deconstructing, and reconstructing during interaction between people in organizing, changing, and learning

Development of communities of practice and their role in developing and sharing knowledge in organizing, changing, and learning.

Possibilities of bringing principles and basic assumptions of organizational change and learning into dialogue in theory and practice, and of finding new ways to work with multiple perspectives in development of practices, theories, and meta-theories.

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from that choice. Interacting with others on these assumptions, principles and insights may result in second- and third-order learning, and in positive contributions to our professional knowledge.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This book gives an idea of dynamics in organizational change and learning. It elaborates on various theoretical perspectives, practical implications, methods, and critical reflections. It reflects on basic assumptions and values in changing and learning which guide our actions as practitioners. Many new questions emerge from the chapters in this book. Some issues could be given dedicated attention in

research activities and knowledge development during processes of organizing, changing, and learning. A proposal for some research issues is made in Table 21.5.

## POSSIBILITIES IN CHANGE WORKS AND KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT

The social reality of organizing, changing, and learning is rather dynamic. It is a world of people interacting, practising, experimenting, and exploring. How can we get to know this social reality and develop new insights and knowledge? Possibilities for developments in the field of organizational change and learning have been presented in this book by academics, practitioners, scholars, and consultants. Based on the chapters in this book, this final chapter provides many possibilities for personal reflections, research activities, and knowledge development. Three more issues are added. First, new arrangements emerging between organizations require further development of inter-organizational analyses and change works. Collaboration between organizations provides possibilities for inter-organizational learning in organizing and changing. Collaboration often depends on trusting relationships. This raises the question as to how trust can be conceptualized and created as a communicative sense-making process. Another question might be how inter-organizational relationships affect the change of institutional fields, and how strategies of power are involved in these changes (see also Hardy & Clegg, 1996). Second, the perspective on language and communicating in organizational change and learning provides possibilities for change works with narratives, metaphors, story-telling, dialoguing, sense-making, and identity formation. This is still an under-developed field which seems to be very promising in a world in which people interact with each other to make sense out of ambiguous contexts. Conversation is inter-subjective, shared, and embedded within local practices. Therefore, postmodern theories and insights through social constructionism may be helpful in jointly developing new knowledge and practices in change works. Third, the development of new methodologies in action research reveals an emergent interactive social reality and a participative world-view (see also Reason & Bradbury, 2001). This raises questions concerning epistemologies of the various action research methodologies in practice, such as participative inquiry, appreciative inquiry, collaborative inquiry, democratic dialogue, and other large group processes, narratives, and critical change works. Related questions are how to integrate knowledge and action, and how to present new insights and knowledge which are grounded locally.

By sharing insights and knowledge, the authors of this book have provided a multiple perspective and given a topical representation of theories, implications, methods, and critical reflections. Together we have tried to give a better insight into dynamics of organizing, changing, and learning. We provided possibilities for collaborative action between practitioners, academics, and participants in organizational change and learning. By doing this we opened up possibilities for practitioners, scholars, and scientists to reflect on their own assumptions and theories-in-use, and we invite you to develop your own methodologies and make your own contributions to organizing, changing, and learning.

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