Narratives in communication – a change manager tool

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In this paper I outline from three different action research (Greenwoos,&Levin 1998) studies an alternative method for a leader to drive a change management work, based on the use of a myth as a metaphor for the change.Action research promotes testing a theory or a method on a real case to understand the practical implications and to provide a solution to a specific problem.(Levin 1998). The approach described in this paper is how can we create a method where the use of narratives will be a tool to create a creative and dynamic organizational culture during a change project.

1. Introduction

Change projects put a high demand on people's ability to change mindset. (Kotter,1998; Mc Lennan,1998). Metaphors are seen as important organizing devices in thinking and talking about complex phenomena (Alvesson 1993). It seems that this can be a good tool when you want to explain a complex change management process. A metaphor is created when a term is transferred from one system of meaning to another (Brown, 1976) or whereby A is seen as B (Morgan, 1996).

In this paper I outline from three different action research (Greenwoos,& Levin 1998) studies an alternative method for a leader to drive a change management work, based on the use of a myth as a metaphor for the change management journey.

The approach described in this paper concerns the use of narratives as drivers in three different case studies where the organizational change project itself is seen as being equivalent to a myth, tale, or story. The purpose behind using narratives in this way is to give the change management work a more solid existential base and allow the participants to see their contribution in a larger context. This will increase motivation to change, as well as the acceptance of new roles and ways of thinking.

Human systems, like organizations have a special character in that they are able to reflect on their identities and on the processes and practices that sustain them. In doing so, they can often initiate meaningful patterns of change. By learning to "see themselves" and the way they enact their relation with the broader environment they create new potentials for transformation. (Morgan 1996). This perspective gives a light to the importance why you could use narratives as a tool to create meaningful change management process for the members in the organization.

Even though there is by now a rather substantial literature on narratives in organization theory (e.g. Czarniawska, 1998; Boje, 2001; Gabriel, 2000) little research has focused on narrative as a tool for a change manager. Myths are interesting for a change manager and organizational development because of its three basic functions. According to May (1991) they 1) serve as a tool for formulating and recapturing a world view; 2) they integrate people into culture; 3) they can guide people in their individual psychological development.

Even if a myth is old, it can still be used in modern organizational change work. The symbolic dimension of social activities is quite easily related to symbols used in myths. Symbols in myths

have been discussed in a wide variety of research contexts, such as linguistics, philosophy, anthropology and semiotics (e.g. Levi-Strauss 1966, 1995; Barthes, 1997).

Myths seem to address archetypical human cognitive patterns. Campbell (1973) argues that a person often can relate to a myth even if he is not previously familiar with it. Anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss (1995) even suggested that myths talk through man without him knowing it.

The paper is outlined in the following way: first I briefly describe change and change management; then I introduce the concepts of myths and narratives as means for driving organizational change; then account for the methodological approach; after this I present the cases, followed by conclussion.

2. Change Management

Change is a vital part of most theories, methods and approaches dealing with organizational development. It is addressed under different names, such as organizational restructuring, transformation and development. Despite this central role of the change concept, several authors have reported on the high percentage of failure (more than 70 % according to Boonstra, 2004) in change projects to achieve their intended goals. Among the most important reasons for this are, according to Kotter (1993), lack of visions, failure in communicating the vision and failure in making the employees committed. Other reasons are for example (Boonstra 2004):

Existing organizational structures, power and politics in organizations, individual uncertainties and psychological resistance to change and organizational culture

Also Kotter (1993) notices the tendency to underestimate the role of diversity in organizational culture as a hindrance towards reaching change goals in organizations. In this paper I focus on organizational culture. By taking a social constructivist perspective it becomes possible to take into account the whole organizations' beliefs, interpretations and opinions. Here focus is not on the employees' behavior per se, but on language, or what Morgan calls management of meaning (Morgan, 1996). The cultural perspective is one of the most important when improving the creativity in a change management process, because the standards and values within an organization influence the course of action for change and the ways problems along the way are addressed and solved. Culture organize behaviors and hence the members' of the organization ability to change (Schein1992; Cummings & Worley 2001; Morgan 1989). Social relationship builds on the rules, habits, language, communication, symbols, and definitions of reality that groups use as starting points for mutual interaction. In this perspective change managers have a lot of difficulties in changing

People's motivation is important for change efforts to succeed. How do you motivate people in a change process? Motivation is the driving force that is supposed to make individuals act and behave in a certain way. There are a plethora of theories of motivation. Some of the most well known are Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1970), and Herzberg's (1966) two factor theory. Herzberg's two factor theory relates intrinsic factors to job satisfaction and extrinsic factors with dissatisfaction. Intrinsic factors are achievement, recognition, acknowledgement, responsibility,work itself if it is stimulating, and self-actualization. Extrinsic factors are company policy and administration, management, work conditions, production arrangements, salary, relationships with management, peers and subordinates. In change management approaches, a focus on extrinsic motivation is the most common. However, extrinsic awards for behavior tend to decrease motivation, especially if the behavior was previously rewarded intrinsically.

Thus, to motivate people to take active part in a change process, and to change their own behavior, both intrinsic and extrinsic factors for motivation are important. Despite this, in most change processes it is mainly the extrinsic factors that are focused. Because of this people do not become deeply engaged. To achieve commitment and engagement from people in change projects one need to focus much more on what motivates people intrinsically.

The change management processes must therefore inspire and create the intrinsic motivation among people by building on their own values. This requires three things (Kotter, 1993): *first* to be clear about the expected results and values in the change project; *second* to have a clear and understandable change vision; *third* to be aligned with the values of the people to be lead. To understand individuals' values and attitudes is important in order to create a positive change climate.

People's values and the culture are important factors in the resistance or engagement to change. Individual norms, work practices, dress code, attitudes to customers and the company are all part of the culture of a company. Organizational culture is often a"function" of the history of employees and leaders. Company policies and strategies are ways by which management try to communicate what they regard as "good" values. Symbols, metaphors and narratives could also communicate these values. An important difference between traditional corporate communication and story telling is that stories are more dynamic and open for the individual to engage in and relate to personal experiences. Myths, stories and fairy tales can therefore be important instruments for change facilitators because they embody value systems and norms in a narrative form (May, 1991).

The role of metaphor in creative imagination and science has been treated in a number of popular and academic works. Koestler (1969) and Miller (1978) are both outstanding in combination these dimensions.

3 Narratives

According to Paul Ricoeur narratives must split against a chronological report of incidents. Stories as activity consist not only of putting together one episode to another. Narratives are also a question of constructing meaningful units of disconnected events/situations.

Narratives seem to be a universal human activity (Ricoeur, 1985). It is fundamental for all human thinking and creating of knowledge. When telling stories we create meaning based on our experiences. Through narratives we also construct and communicate our opinion of the world, to others and ourselves. We make moral values formulate judgment and ethic rules. Our stories will then be the keys to cultural as well as personal worlds of meaning. Narratives create structure, connection and meaning to our experiences, something we create daily to make the world around us more comprehensible. (Czarniawska 1998).

During the last decade stories and storytelling have become more accepted in scientific contexts as a form of knowledge. Social life is today being more recognized as discursively constructed. Through language as a social activity, identities, relations, values, and organizations are constructed. (Gabriel 2000) This construction of social reality is a complex process, which takes place on an institutional level as well as between people in everyday interaction. Since middle of the 80:s a new cross discipline research field called narrative studies has emerged. Narrative theory and analysis is today to a great extent developed, used and discussed in anthropology psychology and organization theory. Narratives in organizations can be perceived in at least three ways: Organizational research paraphrased in form of a tale ("tales from the field"); Organizational research collecting stories from the organization ("tales of the fields")

and organizational research looking at organizational life as storymaking and also organizational theory literature critique (Czarniawska 1998).

3.1 Myths

Myths, tales and stories are recognized in all societies and times as bearers of wisdom as well as norms and values. They are often understood as bearers of almost archaic knowledge about the human psyche. Myths, tales and stories can also be seen as an active intermediary for analyzing and reflecting over situations. A myth or a tale can create meaning in a situation that otherwise might seem meaningless. (Gabriel 2000; Czarniawska, 1998)

 It has therefore been natural to connect myths and stories to processes of change. Myths are story-patterns that can guide groups and individuals in times of change..(Lévi-Strauss 1995)

This has made myths interesting for scholars dealing with organizational issues. A myth can be seen as a drama that starts with a historical event and advances into a new character as a method that guides coworkers and help them orient themselves in the world. From an organizational point of view myths have been seen as a way to promote the organization's values and norms and also as a way to tie workers to the organization and its goals and values by providing a sense of identity and connectedness with the organization (Snowden 2002).

If an organization is regarded as a process, change work becomes sub-processes within the overall organizational process. Myths and stories can be used as a way to express experiences and thereby help members of the organization think, feel, become conscious and react on the change, coworkers and their own role in the process. Even if a myth is old, it can still be used in modern organizational change work. As stated in the introduction myths seem to address archetypical human cognitive patterns (Campbell, 1973) based on the argument that a person can relate to a myth he is not previously familiar with it, and that myths, like other discourses, seem to talk through man without him knowing it (Lévi-Strauss, 1995). To that we can add that myths, even ancient Greek myths or variants of them, still are retold or referred to in everyday situations, which seems to be an expression of their relevance. This does, however, not mean that they are interpreted the same way today as in history. On the contrary, myths are reinterpreted on the basis of actual circumstances, which also is important for explaining why they still are relevant. We have to think about myths as tools for making sense of the world based on generally accepted concepts like "the hero" or "the enemy".

Myths and stories have an important role in the social construction of reality and the social construction of change and incitements for change. It is therefore not surprising that scholars such as Paul Ricoeur (1985, 1988) who discusses literature, and Barbara Czarniawska (1997, 1998) who discusses organizations, understand stories and myths as a way to recognize social life in itself. Myths create both familiarity and distance.

In today's organizational work, teamwork and continuous learning is important. Single persons do not make decisions: teamwork is the common way to make evaluations and solve problems. The myth of Protheus is an example of a myth that addresses modern firms and their dependence on change as well as consequences of change for the members of the organization. The Greek god Protheus represents the myth of change. Every time Protheus enters a difficult or dangerous situation he alters to another shape that gives him protection – a tree, an animal or an insect. Based on this myth one can talk about a Protheus-like way of dealing with change, threats and complexity. The plot in a myth can be organized around three stages: "separation", "initiation" and "return". Typical roles are prince, king, queen, princess, trickster, guardian and helper. The roles support the plot that is moving through the three stages: the hero gets a call; he

has a helper at hand; the hero is tested by having to solve a number of tasks. Campbell mentions dragon-fighting, crucifixion, finding the elixir. At the end the hero returns and saves the princess. Such a myth can be used in an organizational context to raise consciousness about strategies to solve problems, showing best-practice, i.e. to organize change work. By using myths a creative situation can be established that will help team members to deal with old problems in a new and unexpected way. Establishing a mythical way of organizing people can be a way to reduce immediate and practical problems, and thereby opening up for possible solutions. (Alvesson 2001).The symbolic dimension of social activities is quite easily related to symbols used in myths. Symbols in myths have been discussed in a wide variety of research contexts, such as linguistics, philosophy, anthropology and semiotics (e.g. Levi-Strauss 1966, 1995; Barthes, 1997).Using a myth as a metaphor in a change management project is a new way of seeing, thinking and acting. Metaphor encourages us to think and act in new ways. It extends horizons of insight and creates new possibilities (Morgan 1996).

4. Method

4.1 Using narrative in action research

Levin (2002) describe action research as a way to increase the knowledge about social systems by trying to change them. This is done through systematic attempts to develop organizations and decrease the distance between theoretical knowledge and practical work. Action research promotes testing a theory or a method on a real case to understand the practical implications of the theory or method and to provide a solution to a specific problem.

Producing knowledge about practice demands distance. There are three ways to keep distance to the practice: through self-reflection, dialogue and research. These three ways were in the study implemented in three scientific tools used: diary, observations, and interviews guidance in the research sessions.

An important step in action research is to establish cooperation with the members of the team that is built on mutual trust and exchange of reliable information. The researcher encourages members' gathering and analysis of information. The choice of action research as the main method was thus based on the facilitator's belief that this change project needed drive on the conjunction of three elements: research, action and participation.

4.2 The first setting

During 2003 the consulting company A acquired company B a similar but smaller consultant company. Both firms were known for being strong brands and having competent and professional consultants. It was seen as important to merge the two companies in a way that made the company B personnel feel really welcome to company A. Therefore a special unit with 35 persons was set up to work with the integration process. 16 people in this new unit came from company A and the rest from company B.

The two companies were quite similar; however, the core business idea was different. Company B was used to short projects, teamwork and in house jobs, while Company A usually created long term recurring relationships with their customers and worked with the customer at their site. At company A there was a focus on creating dynamics, working with responsibility and having "fun at work". Company B had focused on entrepreneurship and theoretical work in developing methods. The idea was to merge these two organizational cultures into one that integrated the best practices from both.

The goal was to make the two cultures act as a team in order to generate synergy effects by creating a new work atmosphere that was characterized by creativity. This was done by focusing

on the development of a new price model for projects using action research as a main method. Action research pays attention to analysis on an individual level as well as the relationship between individual and group levels and theories about organizations. In this study, such course of action proved vital since an important task was to be able to promote creativity among the members of the team. Problem solving was a shared goal both for the researcher and the practitioners.

An important step in action research is to establish cooperation with the members of the team that is built on mutual trust and exchange of reliable information. The researcher encourages members' gathering and analysis of information. The researcher uses participant observation, interviews, questionnaires and exercises of different kind. The result consists of problem solving that is of use for the whole social system, in this case the integration unit. Since the team with a limited amount of participants should establish new knowledge under time pressure, it was seen as necessary that the facilitator took an involved and participating role.

In this action research case myths, tales, and stories were used as *triggers* on group level in workshop situations as a way of creating a creative and dynamic atmosphere in which change management work could be conducted;

By listening, describing and analyzing myths and stories to challenge the old mindsets By using myths and stories as a form to describe problems and challenges the organization is struggling with. By visualizing myths and stories in the form of drawn pictures.

The goal was to achieve an iterative process where storytelling and reflections about myths were related to a specific problem, challenges and goal concerning price setting in a consultant company. While the first four occasions dealt with learning how to tell stories and how to write good stories, the last four occasions dealt with setting up a relevant consultant scenario were narratives could be used to promote change. The scenario was built around a pricing model and a specific client.

The pricing model was decided to be a fixed price to the client. The customer was decided to be the City of Gothenburg to whom Company A was to arrange a service in the form of a role model for the process of developing a new city plan. This process is characterized by many involved actors and delegated decision making on a number of different units in the city administration. The concept was to present the service to the client in a narrative form.

In the group it was discussed in what manner it was possible to use a tale or myth to describe and sell a commission to a client. Suggestions with proposals of different stories from personal experiences were suggested. Group members told stories from company A that could be good metaphors for this kind of assignment. It was finally decided to use an internal company A story about a comical situation happening at an Italian restaurant because of uncertainty in the communication between "client" and "supplier". The story was named "Lennart and the peas"

4.3 The second setting

The second study was conducted in a multinational company that five years before the study merged with another multinational company. A challenge was that both companies had unique processes and IT solutions. 2005 a project started with the mission to create centralized common core business processes and common core IT-system, infrastructure and approach. Decisions were taken to adapt best practice within the companies. An implementation and change management plan was developed. The project involves approximately 11000 people on different levels and from different countries.

The challenges for the project was to create a shared interpretation of the project objectives and a common strategy to reach them; to ensure that the project members share the same values, attitudes and behaviour; and to motivate end-users to adopt processes and new IT- systems.

One challenge was how to get 80 project members (different countries, different languages, internal and external consultants and own company employees) to act in a holistic way, to share the same attitude and behave so that the project reached determined objectives. One success factor was people's involvement and theirs opportunity to use their experience, knowledge and personal skills. Values are then a very important factor.

In the Business/IT change project it was decided that four core values was desired : *Passion* - to work in the spirit of enthusiasm and joy which creates energy; *Creativity* - to be open minded and drives to see if there is other ways to solve problems or find new solutions; *Goal oriented* - to focus on common goals and less on own individual goals: and *Teamwork* - to collaborate and work holistic.

The case was conducted according to the following scheme:

Commissioning the search: Every member of the project team was personally asked if he or she wanted to participate in the group. They were informed about what the project was trying to achieve, both on a concrete level and about the new method of using myths, stories and tales as an approach. It was seen as very important that the members of the project group felt motivated for the task.

Identifying the participants: The group consisted of three persons from the change management team (one manager and two consultants). The number of meetings where set to 7 occasions and a total of 40 hours.

Searching a structured change process: The first meeting alerted the change work and its focus on discovering a new creative way to find forms for driving the change management process.

First all participants gave their personal and professional view on how they perceived the project scope and how to drive the change. This gave everybody a good understanding of the others' presumptions about change management. For the facilitator this was a way to create a shared history and letting every participant understand how the world looks according to the other participants.

Secondly the group agreed on a shared view on the change management process. It was seen as very important to find alternative way to motivate and engage people in the project. The purpose of this exercise was to create a shared vision about what is a desirable future or solution to the focal problem of the group.

Thirdly the group had to take part in a number of exercises to find solutions to problems related to the change management project and come up with solutions to these problems. The purpose with this exercise was to identify action plans for addressing the focal problem.

Fourth and last the group ran through the solution and gave suggestions for how this new solution should be presented internally in the company. In doing so, a concrete change activity was initiated to structure a follow-up process aimed at sharing achievements and learning.

This exercise integrated five processes described by Greenwood and Levin (1998), namely: create a discourse aimed at sharing different company views, and interpretations of history; develop a common vision for the future; engage the participants in creative activities; searching for action plans to reach desired goals; facilitate a collective prioritizing among action issues.

A series of six meetings were then set up. The first three occasions dealt with the basics of myths and narratives, and with practicing how to tell and write good stories. The purpose was to develop personal skills in a narrative way of thinking. During the following three occasions, narratives were used to reach the change management project goals through narratives. The purpose was to develop the talent to analytically analyze and reflect on a myth, tale or a story into a change management perspective.

In this session the facilitator went through the values in the Business/IT-change project: passion, creativity, goal focus and teamwork. The group could not by themselves find a narrative for the change project, so the facilitator suggested a myth and a tale to inspire group.

One myth and one tale were proposed that the facilitator considered were communicating the values passion, creativity, teamwork and goal focus. These stories also included the typical narrative phases and roles. The examples were "The Trojan Horse" and "The Hare and the Snail".

The group members read and discussed the narratives by themselves. The group then choose "The Hare and the Snail" to be used in the change project. The task was to choose the narratives with most relevance for the change project, but the group was not satisfied with the stories in their original form. The "Hare and the Snail" was chosen, but the group also reworked the original narrative into a version that according to them better suited their goal.

4.4 The third setting

The third study was conducted 2005 in a 100-years old brass orchestra. The organization included 30 employees. Roles in the organization was twenty-four musicians, one concert leader, one artistic leader, one managing director, one marketing director, one producer and one financial manager. It was a conflict between the financial and marketing visions and the artistic way of thinking. The challenge for the organization was to move the orchestra from an

According to Schein 1986 it is a number of general criteria for making decisions about the setting in an action research study. 1.) The choice of what and when to observe should be worked out collaboratively with the client.2.) The setting chosen should be as near the top of the organization or client system as possible. 3.) The setting chosen should be one in which it is easy to observe problem- solving, interpersonal, and group processes.4.) The setting chosen should be one in which real works is going on.

After the researcher had been appointed facilitator for the team, the case was conducted according to the same scheme as for the above case 2:

Commissioning the search*:* The members in the management team was personally asked if he or she wanted to participate in the group. *Identifying the participants:* The group consisted of four persons from the change management team The number of meetings where set to 7 occasions during a 6 months period.

Searching a structured change process: The first meeting alerted the change work and its focus on discovering a new creative way to find forms for driving the change management process.

A series of seven meetings were set up. The first two occasions dealt with the basics of myths and narratives, and with practicing how to tell and write good stories. The purpose was to develop personal skills in a narrative way of thinking. During the following five occasions, narratives were used to develop a change management plan for the orchestra . The purpose was

to develop the talent to analytically analyze and reflect on a myth, tale or a story into a change management perspective.

Session 1 and 2: Introduction of the theory of narratives

The facilitator started the meeting with a three minute long speech trying to catch the interest of the audience by reciting an abstract of Homers' Odyssey about "The Trojan horse":

This introduction was successful. The group was attentive and engaged in their listening to the story. With this introduction the facilitator wanted to engage the group by catching their interest at a more unconscious level than what is usually the case when speaking about change management. The facilitator then related the myth to small selections from her experience as change manager. This myth shows many characteristics of change processes that were similar to those in the organization: change takes time (ten years in the myth); a strong change manager is needed who able to motivate and engage his subordinates; participation and cooperation from everyone is required in order to reach the goal (e.g. Sinon); creativity is required to reach the goal (to build a wooden horse); something or someone has to die in order to create new points of view (the old king is strangled).

Another exercise was about listening to the narrative about "The wild boar and the tiger". The purpose here was that the facilitator wanted to see if the participants could get an insight that an organization and its threats and possibilities can be described and understood based on a narrative written thousands of years ago.

The goal here was to show how an animal story from India can give an explanation to how social organizations function, and that problems and challenges found in all organizations regarding power and co-existence can be described and conveyed in an old story.

After listening to the story the group discussed and reflected about the tale. They also compared situations in the story to situations and the challenges in the organization.

Through the discussions an insight evolved in the group, when they realized that through this story they could discuss the kind of "law of the jungle" practices that existed in the organization. The story drew attention away from their' own company, creating a fictive arena that could be used for reflection.

Session 3: How to write stories

The next session, were introductions on how to write a story. First there was an individual exercise to write a story about something that was perceived as significant for that individual. Then each person presented the story for the group followed by a discussion about the individual story.

The idea was to learn how to write and present a story and to reflect on ones story together with others.

Session 4: Find the change management plan – How to act as a professional organization

The session started with an introduction of the steps in a Hero´s Journey (Campbell, 1973).

The first exercise for the group was to define *The Ordinary World* in the organization. The process started in a narrative way to identify the present culture and the desirable professional organization.

In The Hero with a Thousand Faces, Joseph Campell describes the beginning of the typical hero´s journey." A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder…"

"World of common day" or the Ordinary World is here equal to the present situation in the organization. The group describe the culture in the orchestra in the following way: The musicians act in a critical and suspicious way when new proposals of performances occurs. The organizational atmosphere is familiar, emotional thinking and warm. The employees are not interested in marketing and financial issues. All focus is on present situation. The musicians are not interested to listen about the future .For the members the past is also already forgotten. Typical for the employees is that they don´t like written agreements. Theirs attitude is that "voluntaries contribution" are more difficult to rule"

The director of the orchestra designate the musicians as "the being" and the administrative employees as the "doer". This two different occupational groups only work together when they meet each other in planning meeting, cooperation meeting and staff meeting which occurs every second week.

Reflection from this session was that the group had a clear view over the organizational problem the orchestra was struggling with

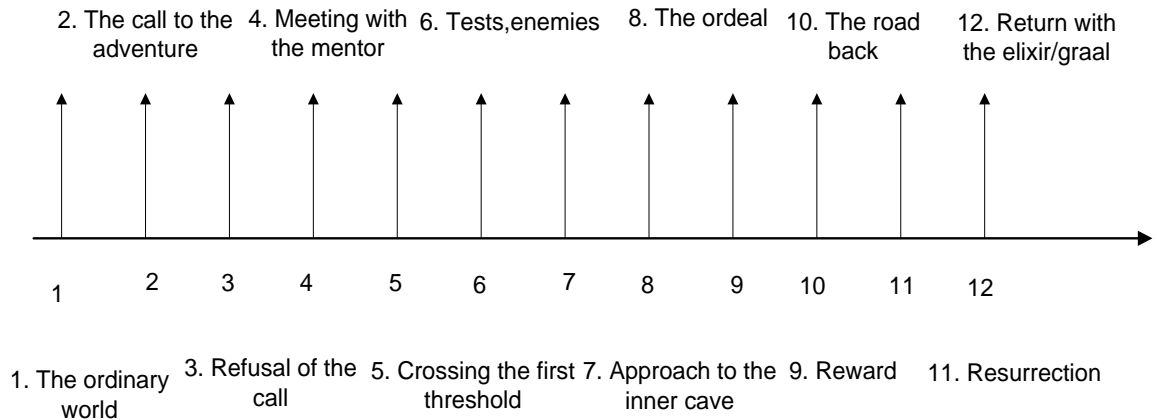Next step was to define The Special World equal to the desirable condition for the organization

Regarding to Joseph Campbell the Special World is called" a dream landscape of curiously fluid, ambiguous forms where the hero and in this case the organization must survive a succession of trials".

The group discussions resulted in following desirable variables in the culture: Clear roles, respect for different occupational groups in the organization. Not undermine another professional skills, less struggle for power. To cooperate with new customers and partners. The employees should act in a more extrovert way than today

It was not easy for the group to define what the meant by a professional organization. First the group discussed future expectation from the board concerning marketing and new financial demands on profit. Next step was to discuss how the organization must work internal and external to supply this new demands.

Sessions 5 and 6: Scenario planning- in a narrative context

The Change Journey by G Orchestra

| 2. The call to the adventure | 4. Meeting with the mentor | 6. Tests,enemies | 8. The ordeal | 10. The road back | 12. Return with the elixir/graal |

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10   11   12

1. The ordinary world   3. Refusal of the call   5. Crossing the first threshold   7. Approach to the inner cave   9. Reward   11. Resurrection

Model 1. summarizes the step in the change management plan in a mythic structure to find the way to solve the challenge to act as a professional orchestra

In the following text we will account for the creation of the different parts in the model.

1. The ordinary world:

The present situation is an organization impressed by that the musicians act in a critical and suspicious way when new proposals of performances occurs. The organizational atmosphere is familiar, emotional thinking and warm. The employees are not interested in marketing and financial issues. All focus is on present situation.

2. The call to the adventure:

The way to move the orchestra from an amateurish way of acting to a professional organization.

This phase is about threat. For the orchestra one threat today is internal conflicts between the musicians and the administrative employees

3. Refusal of the call:

This step is about feelings of fear. The employees in the organization have not really understood the new demands from the board. The musicians hesitate to be involved in the process to become a more professional orchestra. It's hard for them to understand the profit. Why rehearse more often, why have a permanent appointment instead of independent musicians etc.

4. Meeting with the Mentor:

A wise person help the organization to prepare themselves against the unknown. In this case to become a professional organization/ orchestra. The help is for example to show in different way the importance to treat everyone with respect. To create comprehension for different functions and tasks within the organization. Inspire trust in the contact with new customer. To communicate and keep the vision alive.

5. Crossing the first threshold:

 The employees take the consequences of working with new customer and act in a more professional way. For example travelling to Norway and have a lunch concert

6. Tests and enemies:

The organization get experiences of what the special world consist. For example to perform with a jazz musicians

7. Approach to the inner cave:

Here the organization have a meeting with the great enemy. This test is to find the answer on an important question/ task for the organization. For example; when the regular planning meeting occurs the marketing department and the musicians in the orchestra work together to find a new customer and create a new concert form and the employees cooperate in a professional way.

8. The ordeal:

In this step the orchestra have a direct confrontation with the fear. Here the orchestra expose themselves for the new task. For example a new performance.

9. Reward:

The orchestra celebrate that they outlive the new form of acting. They get new knowledge which

conduct them to new comprehension

10. The road back:

Confrontation with the new consequence. For example the orchestra have to rehearsal more hours

in the concert hall and not as they used to in theirs own home.

11. Resurrection:

Final test. Old routines are not valid any more and the employees are satisfied with the new

routines

12. Return with the elixir: The organization get the elixir, the Graal. In this case the organization

has a professional orchestra with professional musicians.

The process for the group to solve the task to create a change management plan in this narrative

way was a challenge for theirs mindset. It was difficult to think in a mytic structure.

5. Conclusions

In this paper I have described three action research cases in which myths and stories were used as triggers and drivers in order to facilitate change work on both individual and group level. The first part in the method dealt with the basics of myths and narratives, and with practicing how to tell and write good stories. The last part focused on the help of the mythic structure as for example the Hero's Journey to find a narrative that could be used as a metaphor for the entire project. The narrative included similar challenges hinders, possibilities, roles etc as the change project itself but in another context. I transfer one idea from one area to another area

Even if I cannot draw any bold conclusions from the results so far, some issues have been raised.

Using a method like this requires that the facilitator or change leader have the ability to find appropriate narratives and myths and also have the ability to see the connection between a

concrete change process and the similarity in a tale, myth or story. The facilitator also must be able to communicate this to the group and use various forms of exercises to make the group enter a narrative mode of thinking.

Talking about the myth and its actors helps people not to be stuck in their prevailing mindsets, linked to the current state of affairs in the organization. Using myths and narratives seem be a possible way to communicate and infuse the values inherent in the narrative to the change project at hand. Narratives makes it possible for members of the organization to embrace the change work according to their own cultural preferences, as a way of coping with organizational cultural diversity that has been addressed by the literature as a recurring problem.

Using narratives was completely new in the studied organization. By using this approach, the group has worked in a completely different way than they are used to. It did, however, work well as an enabler for creating an inventive environment.

The purpose behind using narratives is to give the change management work a new approach and stimulate the participants to see their contributions in a larger context. This can increase their motivation to change, as well as increase their willingness to accept new roles and ways of thinking in a changing organization.

Using a myth as a metaphor in a change management project is a new way of seeing, thinking and acting. Metaphor encourages us to think and act in new ways. It extends horizons of insight and creates new possibilities

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