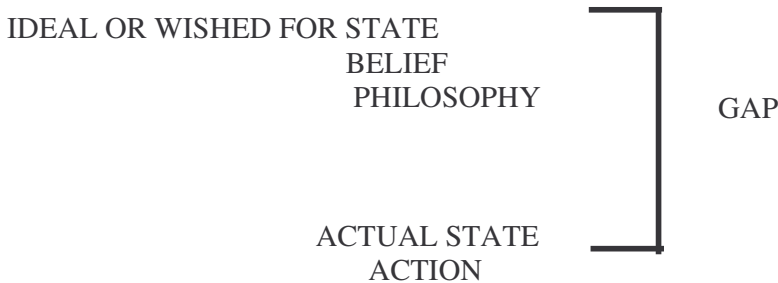


Totally Aligned Organisation - A Foundation for TQM

The human mind is capable of envisioning possibilities. Most employees possess an idea of their ideal or "wished for" organisation. However in actual experience, a different form of organisation may emerge and the gap between the ideal or wished.

For "organisation and actual experience of it is bridged by the adoption of various role stances or role metaphors.

Figure 1:



The identity of a person is also shaped by his or her particular background experiences, assumptions, conclusions beliefs etc. that cause a 'perception' and this contributes to shaping of individual's vision or idea of the organisation and also to the particular way in which the gap between "wished for" and may then adopt role stances or role metaphors that would to bridge this gap. The primary alignment that needs to be achieved in organisations is therefore, of the "wished for organisation on the one hand and reality appraisal of the actual on the other hand.

While dealing with this gap between the "wished for "organisation and the actual, one witnesses the paradoxes that are inherent in managing groups in the organisation. These paradoxes represent the realities that exist on two ends of a continuum such as:

- ◆ Self-System
- ◆ Short term survival - Long term strategy
- ◆ Planning - Uncertainty
- ◆ Expectations from self - Actual performance
- ◆ Control - Autonomy
- ◆ Detail and routine - Creativity
- ◆ Reality Appraisal - Forecasting and Scenario building
- ◆ Cost control - Investment
- ◆ Individual freedom - Group Interdependence
- ◆ Destruction - Construction
- ◆ Action - Enquiry
- ◆ Stability - Risk Taking
- ◆ Conformity - Individuality
- ◆ Past(History) - Future (Forecast)

Organisations must develop an "Appropriate Culture" - a culture where the differences and dilemmas arising out of the paradoxes can be resolved creatively. This will lead to an internalisation of implicit rules of choice making or role taking that takes both realities, simultaneously into consideration and not an "either-or" kind of framework. It is easy for both

individuals and groups to polarise the two realities within themselves and take stands which are reflected in the roles they take or choices they make. All events in the organisation are seen in this "either or " or confrontationist mode. The conflict within the individual gets pushed outside the person and those who identify within opposite views, see one another as antagonists. Conflict generated within the individual thus results in an external conflict multiple, often conflicting, realities together while making pragmatic and growthful choices. This has been the essence of Indian philosophy and tradition and forms the basis of the TAO framework. The dilemma of such choice making is called dharma sankata where one must choose between alternatives that have equal validity but from different points of view.

The paradigms, principles and models that exist in an organisation are the basis by which a person deploys his energy in the organisation. These can convert paradoxes into conflict which would result in internal waste. They can also, on the other hand, ensure that the inherent or latent creative energy that lies in a paradox are channelled through a framework of mutual co-holding towards a combined search for the truth and continuous learning. This is the difference between debate (vitarka) which adopts a confrontationist attitude and dialogue (Vichara) which seeks to hold multiple realities, perspectives and vies through a discussion by those unified by a quest for the truth (Sakala with all one's faculties, Sahridaya - with a meeting of hearts, Samvada - dialogue). The "Appropriate Culture" would then, have to perform two functions. It would have to first evoke passion and energy in the individuals and secondly, channelise and systematise this energy through appropriate paradigms, models and principles, thereby creating alignment. Organisational culture that depresses a persons innate ability to envisage a better or more ideal way of doing things destroys human energy. The urge to grow gets thwarted and often turns into anger and resentment.

Achieving Self-System Simultaneity

Developing an alignment between self and system would mean encouraging. Role taking that is centred around teams and organisation building and not just self centred and job-centred. Organisational synergy is achieved as a result of an alignment between individual role playing and organisational design. A pyramidal structured organisation is designed on principles that promote role playing of individuals. that are job or self-centred. Control is top down and this seems to encourage the following types of paradigms :

Judge-defendant-accused;
Oppressor-victim-saviour

These archetypal role models are inherently destructive of human potential. The context they create is one of tension, fear and submissiveness

A more benevolent form of organisation designed on classical principles nurtures the role models of the following figures.

Healer-patient-nurse; patron-seeker-helper, father figure - don/daughter - uncle/mother figures

What we require today are organisations where the context affords plenty of opportunities for each individual to grow, contribute and actualise their potentials.

Learner-co-owner-entrepreneur, coach-team player-leader.

These frameworks are described in many books on Transactional Analysis. The Organisational Design that affords self and system alignment is a holistic one. The simultaneity is achieved by

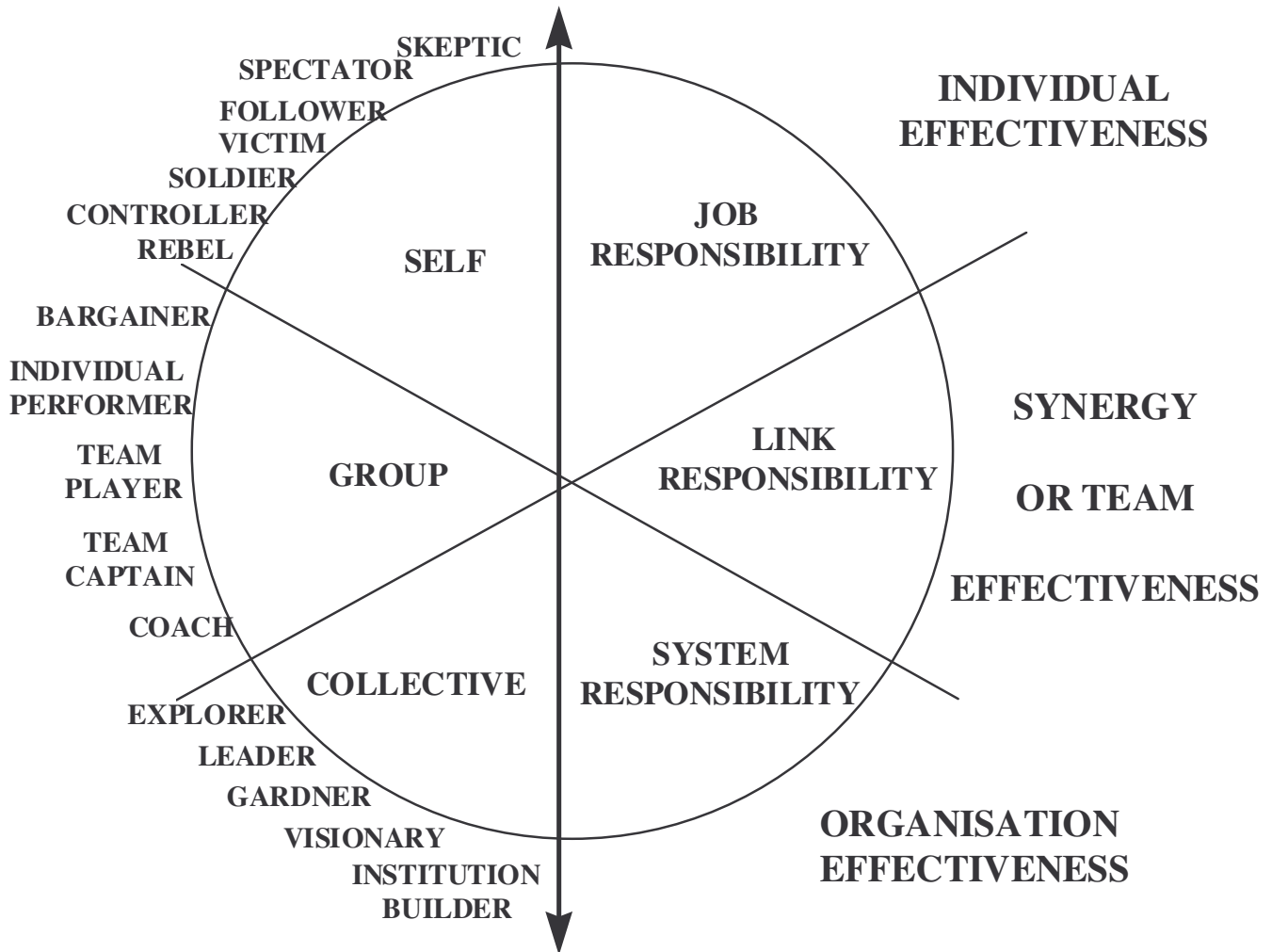
1. Translating the organisation vision into everyday work activity by defining each role in terms of its System Responsibility, Link responsibility and Job Responsibility - the three components of a holistic understanding of ones task in the organisation and its significance to the primary goals of the organisation and
2. Establishing parity between the efforts required for discharging one's responsibilities and the empowerment experienced by the person.

Each individual must locate his/her role as part of a subsystem and how that system forms part of the entire system. How the individual role relates to the subsystem would define the link responsibilities and how the role contributes through the subsystem to Organisational growth would define System Responsibility. This would bring to light several factors regarding the role played, viz. the level of co-ordination, the type of leadership, the boundary definitions, the operating cycle and the systems ability to adapt to external change.

If we use the analogy of biological system, it would make the concept of alignment and individual role taking more clear. Healthy organisms are composed of millions of cells that work in absolute harmony with each other. Their activity level controlled minutely through in built systems of alignment between individual cells and the whole organism. A virus on the other hand resembles a cell in many ways, but, it is totally focused on its own survival and growth with no relationship to the organism it lives off. Thus the virus generates sickness.

Individuals in organisations can choose to behave like the virus or the cell depending upon the role they choose to play. Cell like roles are played by individuals anchored in collective processes. They see organisations as communities of individuals striving for growth and well being. They are concerned about the Effectiveness of the whole organisation and understand System wide responsibilities. They align their choice of role of role playing based on this understanding. On the other end of the spectrum are individuals anchored in self centred processes. Their concerns are with individuals effectiveness only. They seldom exert themselves beyond the Job Responsibility they must generate. The middle ground between these two ends is occupied by individuals who are group centred and themselves to the effectiveness of the team they belong to. They extend their focus on to the responsibility they hold for all individuals they are inter-linked with. The following schematic diagram illustrates this idea :

'VIRAL PARADIGM'



'CELL PARADIGM'

Role Definitions :

Skeptic : Negates the ideal, is convinced and convinces others that nothing can change. Locates himself / herself in the negative arguments, and doubts all efforts towards changes in the status quo.

Spectator : Sees the gap between the ideal and the real, but, is not moved to express / say anything about it. Locates himself / herself in a neutral stance and remains untouched.

Follower : Sees the gap between the idea and the real, feels moved to act, but, feels inadequate to take any responsibility for the action. He / She will go along with any action suggested by persons taking charge of the situation.

Rebel : Feels strongly about the gap, emotionally charged and highly motivated to act. Gets caught with an adversarial mode of action. Often the action is based on a counter dependent stance vis-a-vis authority figures.

Bargainer : Firmly anchored in a stance of “What’s in it for me”. Actions are calculated from an extractive point of view. What is given is based on the power and ability of the organisation to drive a good bargain.

Individual Performer : These are individual performers who act from a strong motivation of excellence for the self. The meaning and consequence of the action for the other members of the group are not part of his / her decision making. Appreciation and recognition are strong motivators of the action.

Team Player : These are individuals who understand a mutuality between the self and the system. Initiatives are taken, alternatives negotiated and action choices are based on an alignment between the needs of the self and the system.

Team Captain : Team Players who are adept at handling authority play ‘captaincy’ roles. They are oriented towards constant innovation and are capable of anticipating the future. They are also focussed on group processes as well as on the ways in which resources are deployed and infrastructures are built.

Coach : Persons who take on the role of a coach are individuals with a high level of skills and capabilities. They are capable of role modelling. They inspire the group to high levels of commitment and action through processes of facilitation and creation of strategies. ‘Action learning’ captures the essence of their role location.

Explorer : Individuals who passionately question the given and stretch the boundaries of thought, feeling and action. They step into new areas and learn new skills and ways of doing business beyond the limits of existing knowledge often at considerable personal risk.

Leader : Individuals who combine the characteristics of the explorer and coach play leadership roles. They give new direction to the organisation and extend its capabilities. Leaders constantly ensure growth in all aspects of work and living.

Gardener : Individuals with an enduring passion for the growth and development of the organisation. They are highly responsive to the processes of context creation, break new ground in action, foster and nurture the positives of the organisation and ensure a deep unfolding of the potentials of the organisation.

Visionary : Individuals having an acute perception of reality and committed to take the system into future. They fit the potentials of the system with the changes in the environment, shape investments of the system and envision it’s future form.

Institution Builder : Individuals who not only lead the organisation into new directions, create a new and a positive culture but also ensure that the positives become enduring values. The new practices and culture become part of the organisation’s way of life and outlive its creator.

A very strong determinant of the roles people play is the organisation processes like the performance appraisal systems and job descriptions. Most organisations focus on the job performance as the central reason for being a person in the organisation. Performance appraisal is done by one's boss. Pyramidal organisations nurture these processes. For an organisation to become a TQM organisation, the job description has to give way to internal customer based task definitions and performance being reviewed by one's customers. The organisation design forces him to be aligned to his customer and not his boss. His source of authority is his task and not his position. The framework through which the persons tasks require skills, resources, infrastructure and authority. These can be studied carefully using this framework. Organisation based on a study

of processes and value chain can be dovetailed into this framework. Understanding of the Internal customer concept will be very important. Therefore, customer feedback can be easily obtained and studied.

Alignment is achieved by working at two levels. One, the internal processes of an individual to help him deal with paradoxes of organisation life in creative ways. And secondly, organisation design that will encourage and nourish "Cell paradigms" of choice making and role playing. Totally Aligned Organisation is the source of energy and power for TQM efforts.

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