

IMAGE

AN ACTION RESEARCH JOURNAL
ON
PERSONAL AND ORGANISATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

THE INSTITUTE OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS and LENS INTERNATIONAL

**AN ACTION RESEARCH JOURNAL ON
PERSONAL AND ORGANISATIONAL TRANSFORMATION**

The Action Research Journal is written to communicate designs, formats and ideas of transformational processes which promote the human factor in private and public sectors. It is published by the Corporate Services Division of The Institute of Cultural Affairs: India for distribution through the Asia Network of ICA and LENS International organisations. These include ICA: India (Bombay, Panvel and Pune), LENS Services Pvt. Ltd. (New Delhi), LENS International Malaysia Sdn. Bhd., ICA: Australia, ICA: Philippines, ICA: Taiwan, ICA Associates (Hong Kong) and LENS International Japan.

The Action Research Journal draws on a variety of sources including other ICA world-wide offices and affiliated professional consulting organisations to provide a spectrum of practical tools and constructs that facilitate individual and organisational transformation. We welcome comments and articles from our readers.

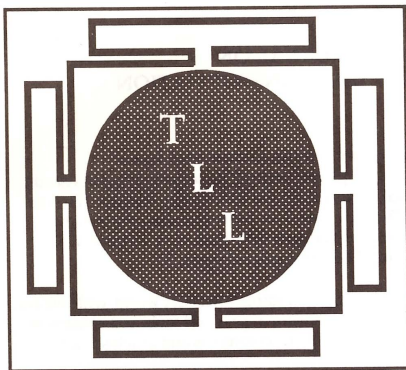
ISSUE EIGHTEEN AUGUST 1993

"THE TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP LAB"

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JOURNAL OVERVIEW



When a facilitator designs a programme there is creative process involved that is not easy to explain. It is a constant dialogue between the desired results and the processes that are being used, between content and flow, and between theory and practice. The Transformational Leadership Lab (TLL) has been such a creative process.

The Image Journal # 10, February 1991, reported the design and results of the first TLL, held in late 1990 in India. Since then, four more cycles have been held. The programme has evolved into a clearer design with many new components added to the original design, replacing parts that were less effective.

What is transformation? Nobody really knows, but a few criteria must be present. First of all it is a change, a change in attitude and behavior, a change in approach and effectivity. But it is more than this, for not all change is transformational change. First of all, the change needs to be radical in nature. It must feel like a 180 degree shift, not a slight adjustment. Secondly, it is foundational change. That is, it touches the very depth or essence of the person or organisation. It shifts the operating paradigm. Finally, it tends to be irreversible; there is no going back to the old ways.

But most of all, transformation is a process, a journey, courageously embarked on without clear demarcation points. It requires what is referred to as the three B's. First, one believes it is possible, and has faith that even the most entrenched patterns can be shifted. Second, the change begins with the individual, the person guiding the transformation. And third, one needs to build a Core, other people working towards the same results. The job is far too big for a single individual.

The same criteria applies to those of us conducting the TLL. Our team consists of four people. Jack and Judith Gilles of the ICA, and Homayun Taba and Marguerite Theophil of ORIENTATIONS. Together we have forged a synergistic team that has developed and nurtured each other in this task. Each has strengths that complement the others. It has truly been a test of love and patience. Often we find ourselves doubting whether the participants will become authentic change agents. There are no guarantees. We offer no certificate upon completion. What we offer is an opportunity for decision - a decision to embark on a journey and join with unknown numbers of others who are trying to bring humanness into the work environment.

We have no real control over who a company selects for the programme. In more than one instance the company has chosen representatives that they feel needed a jolt, some change in their leadership style and thinking. We have had to encounter the problems these people have. Three four-day modules are not always enough to shift people's perspective, but we try. That is why we call it a Lab. It is an experiment with unknown results.

What has given us courage in this quest is the knowledge that we are not alone in the task. Not only are there numerous individuals working toward the same ends, but many organisations are boldly experimenting with new and exciting designs, processes and techniques. The current literature is filled with articles espousing participation, empowerment, self-managed teams, learning organisations and a host of other radical shifts in the way companies operate their processes and cultures. Several Indian companies are embarking on changes that are challenging traditional modes of operating and are getting dramatic results. But the pace is still not fast enough. We hope to provide a more systematic and comprehensive way for this to happen.

Tom Peters, in a talk he recently gave in Kuala Lumpur, said, "what is happening throughout the world is a result of forces being unleashed that are changing all of us; and it's just beginning. What does this mean for our organisations? They are hopelessly out of touch with what's required ahead." Peter Drucker says, "Every organisation has to prepare for the abandonment of everything it now does." There are no other options for survival of any company than to undergo transformation.

It would be incomplete if we did not thank these champions of change along with a network of colleagues who have supported the TLL work with ideas, feedback, guest facilitation and encouragement. We owe a special acknowledgement of gratitude to those Indian companies who have participated in several of the TLL cycles. These

include Widia (India) Ltd., Kirloskar Brothers Ltd., Crompton Greaves Ltd., Voltas Ltd., Wipro Ltd., PMT Ltd., Banswara Syntex Ltd. and Hoechst (India) Ltd. We have enjoyed the journey with them.

This Issue

This issue begins with an overview of the design and processes of the TLL as it is presently being conducted. If you compare it with the original design outlined in Image Journal #10 you will see that very little is the same. The TLL itself has been transformed in the process of conducting it five times. We apply *kaizen* to it. And we know that there is room for a lot more improvement. What we present is a current snapshot of the TLL, not some final form. What is not reported is the continuing relationships and programme we have had with the participating companies. The TLL does not stand alone, a support strategy is included for all participating companies. In fact, we now only work with organisations that are part of the TLL journey.

The second article is a comprehensive picture of **The Transformation Task**. This contextual talk is presented at the beginning of the TLL programme, which enables the participants to grasp the need to undertake desired change in the context of a 'whole systems' perspective. The presentation describes the transformation needed in a company's Enterprise, (what they make and/or service), Operations (how company processes need to change) and Culture (the environment that supports and guides the changes).

About 35-40% of the time spent in the TLL is focused on the task of individual transformation. This is informative both for the participants themselves as well as for their role in working with the internal Core of change agents of their companies.

Judy Gilles outlines a recent exercise we have included called **The Signs of Life**, adapted from the book of the same name by Angeles Arrien. Participants engage in a deep personal dialogue into the life changes they are engaged upon in their lives at this moment. The journey of change is an ever-evolving one, and when a person understands one's own struggles one learns to appreciate and guide others' journeys.

The management of energy is key to being a change agent. Marguerite Theophil covers one aspect of this in her article, **Stuff of The Same Substance**. Based on the five disciplines of a Learning Organisation as outlined by Peter Senge in his book, **The Fifth Discipline**, it gives an eastern perspective to what is involved in designing and operating in a Learning Organisation.

Homayun Taba shares with us the role of body work as a foundational component in individual

empowerment and personal mastery with his article entitled, **The Value of 'One'**.

To further explore an understanding of the role of human energy management is an edited article by Margaret Wheatley from her book, **Leadership and the New Science**. Her work represents some of the edge thinking that is guiding an understanding of transformation today. The chapter is titled **The Creative Energy of the Universe—Information**. Our regret is that we had to edit out so much of this chapter. We would recommend the book as foundational to understanding the transformation task and process.

Finally, there is an article describing the **Change Project Work** and an example of what each TLL participant designs and initiates in their workplace. This is the organisational transformation component - the very heart of the TLL - and represents perhaps the greatest shift from the first TLL held. It is only in the engagement task that the creative process happens. And in this task, both the organisation and the change agent experience transformation.

Jack Gilles
Editor

TLL Participating Companies

Banswara Syntex Ltd.	Kirloskar Brothers Ltd.
Bharat Electronics Ltd.	Larsen & Toubro Ltd.
BFW Ltd.	MICO Ltd.
Crompton Greaves Ltd.	PMT Ltd.
Deejay Enterprises Ltd.	Vivekananda Centre
Greaves Foseco Ltd.	Voltas Ltd.
Hind. Ciba Geigy Ltd.	Widia (India) Ltd.
Hoechst (India) Ltd.	Wipro Ltd.
Indian Organic Chemicals Ltd.	

Participating Facilitators

Jack & Judith Gilles - Institute of Cultural Affairs
Homayun Taba &
Marguerite Theophil - ORIENTATIONS
Cyprian D'Souza - Lens Services Pvt. Ltd.
Vinod Parekh - Human Development Services
Dileep Nath - Kanbay
V.S. Mahesh - University of Buckingham (England)
T.A. Sadasivan - METASYS Consultants
Mr. Gupta - JK Fibre

THE TLL DESCRIPTION - Jack Gilles

The Transformational Leadership Lab (TLL) is designed for the purpose of equipping senior managers with the understanding and skills to lead their respective organisations in making the transition into dramatically new forms of operating. At the same time it is designed to enable the participants to begin a self-conscious journey of discovery about their own personal transformation. These two: organisational change and individual change, are seen as two sides of the same coin, namely whole systems transformation.

What is important to understand about the TLL is that it is not just three modules. It is three modules plus the time in between. This makes the TLL twelve weeks rather than twelve days long. We have learned that unless there is time to digest and apply the learnings of each module the impact is much less. This involves more than just the assignments that are given to develop a company "Core" group that will work with them on their change project. It involves beginning to take seriously one's own "Personal Mastery" (Peter Senge's term) development. The participant's task is to begin to apply the disciplines of regular physical care for the body, to establish an ecological balance in time commitments to self-work-family etc., and to develop an appreciation for keeping current with edge thinking in the field of transformation. In other words, the task is to become 'change agents', masters of the transformation process.

We are often asked to describe the TLL and

although the content and flow are easy to show, the complex chemistry of the three modules combined with the interactive role which the participants play is not so easy to describe. I will first give the objective part, the three module content, then I will try to describe the various interactive components of the TLL. Finally I will try to answer some of the most often asked questions and point out where improvement is needed.

The TLL Three Module Design

Below is the rationale of the three modules. Each module follows the same basic pattern. The first day is devoted to presenting the concepts and objectives of that module. The second day has a major component devoted to the application of the principles involved. This includes a 'live' case study in which a person is brought in to share their work and understanding focused on a particular arena of transformation. In the First Module, the case study presenter highlights an organisation which is actively developing the disciplines of the Learning Organisation. In the Second Module, a speaker talks through his organisation's experience of what it takes to create an environment for transformation, namely the change in the culture of the organisation. Finally, in the Third Module, there is someone who can share what a 'change agent' is and how one operates effectively within an organisation to bring about change.

THE TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP LAB - CYCLE V			
MODULE I - DESIGNING LEARNING ORGANISATIONS			
PARADIGM CHANGE AND WHOLE SYSTEMS TRANSITION	LEARNING ORGANISATION JOURNEY PROCESS	TRANSFORMATION PROJECT DESIGN	EXPLORING THE LIFE JOURNEY
MODULE II - CREATING TRANSFORMING ENVIRONMENT			
CORPORATE CULTURE AND THE POWER OF SPIRIT	CULTURE CHANGE AND TQM IMPLEMENTATION	CHANGE READINESS AND STRATEGY	PERSONAL MASTERY LAB
MODULE III - EMPOWERING CHANGE AGENTS			
VISION AND THE PROCESS OF CHANGE	MOTIVATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT	STRATEGIC THINKING AND THE METHODS OF IMPLEMENTATION	THE THRESHOLD PASSAGE

Module 1-Designing the Learning Organisation: Module One begins with an overview of the programme and introduces the whole systems approach to change. (See the following article.) Here, the journey towards being an active, self-conscious Learning Organisation begins. Two major resources are used: a video by Tom Peters on Germany's Quality Obsession and the five disciplines of a Learning Organisation as described by Peter Senge in his book, The Fifth Discipline, the Art and Practice of a Learning Organisation. These concepts are grounded in the participating companies as each one assesses to what degree their own company is practicing the five disciplines. The day concludes with an exercise in Daily Reflection in which participants take time to personally appropriate what has been the significance of this day for them. This practice is done every day, and different ways of reflecting are introduced in subsequent modules.

The evening is used for individual reading time. For each module an on-site library is organised with books in the general field of the module theme. Many of these books are not available in India, giving the participants an exposure to new thinking in the field. Participants are actively encouraged to take books back with them for their own study between modules. In addition, each module has a set of articles that are provided to the participants pertaining to the topics being covered.

Early on the second day, the Personal Mastery part of the transformation process begins. It starts with Body Work. (See the following article by Homayun Taba.) This hour is followed by another hour devoted to Stephen Covey's Seven Habits of Highly Effective People. Upon return from breakfast, process time is given to reflecting on these habits.

At this point in the module, specific time is focused on the Change Project work of the individual participants. Before coming to the TLL, each participant was given a questionnaire to assist them in selecting an area of their responsibility for which they could initiate a transformation project. Small group work during the TLL results in participants sharing their ideas for projects in light of the Transformation Task Triangle. Participants are encouraged to dialogue with others who have similar project areas. After lunch a guest facilitator presents an active case study of the development of a Learning Organisation and interacts with the participants through discussion of the practical means of achieving it.

The day concludes with an evening showing of the movie, Cung Ho, a Hollywood comedy film about the mixing of Japanese work methods and an American automobile work force. The movie shows that transformation is rarely an easy road to travel!

The third day is focused on detail work on the

Change Project design. It concludes with a self-organised celebration. Each TLL has developed uniquely different celebration themes. What is common is the participant's amazement that they can quickly create a meaningful event together that signifies three days of hard work.

Finally, as in all the modules, the fourth day is devoted to some dimension of in-depth personal introspection. For this module we used the Signs of Life exercise. (See the article by Judith Gilles.)

Module 2-Creating Transforming Environment: The first day, again, outlines the module's focus, which is about corporate culture. In addition, time is allotted for sharing in small groups the work they have done in the time between modules on developing their change project concept and their Core team. Participants bring with them examples of company mission statements, values, creeds and purpose statements which illustrate how the company wishes their culture to be. Family pictures, core team pictures and company logos begin to create a sense of the personal dimensions of each culture.

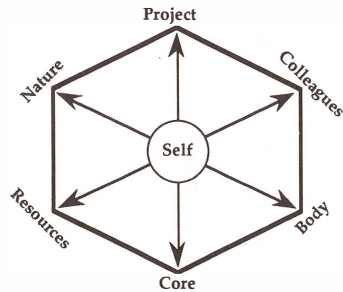
Again, we begin each of the four days with Body Work and Covey. The Personal Mastery emphasis is now focused on interpersonal skills for working with others. On the second day a case study guest facilitator shares how the change of corporate culture enables transformation to happen. The movie for this module is The Doctor, a film about both individual and organisational transformation and how the two are inseparable. The third day's focus is on project work, which this time assesses the organisation's readiness for change, including its value system. It concludes with another celebration. The fourth day is designed to deepen one's commitment to sharpening Personal Mastery skills.

Module 3-Empowering Change Agents: This module brings all the learnings of the first two modules together to develop the strategy for change. Strategic thinking is the key to change, and this module equips the participants with ways of initiating and developing the change process. Here, the need to develop ways of empowering the ethos of the organisation, understanding what the strengths of the Indian ethos are and how it is crucial to develop for transformation, are presented. In all cases the emphasis is on the practical dimension rather than just theory. The highlight has been a guest facilitator who illustrates how change agents catalyse the change process.

Preparing oneself for launching real change is the focus of the last day. As in all the modules, time is devoted to feedback on what has been most helpful and suggestions for improvement. All the significant changes in the TLL have resulted from this feedback process.

The TLL Dialogue

The experience of the TLL can be seen as a series of dialogues, beginning with the self. Each adds a dimension to the comprehension of transformation.



Project-Core: This dialogue takes place between the organisation's need to change and the people taking responsibility for the design and implementation of the change. Throughout the TLL the change project undergoes modification and focus. As the core team analyses the local situation they discover what really needs to happen and what role they can play in its success.

Colleagues-Resources: The TLL is a learning process. It is designed to illustrate how a Learning Organisation functions. Participants dialogue with resource people through videos, articles, books, facilitators and guest case studies. Perhaps the most helpful dialogue is with other participating colleagues who bring to the discussion their own insights, struggles and wisdom. A deep appreciation develops for each person's unique gifts, often unrecognised, in the creative process of learning.

Body-Nature: This dialogue is the most illuminating of all, because it involves an internal dialogue of profound dimensions. Most participants arrive with only a minimum appreciation of the relation of the body to the learning process. Caring for the development of one's physical well-being opens the senses to the rich and fertile life of self-actualisation. A new appreciation of how tonality enhances the learning process is grasped. But it is more than this. Singing, role playing before the group and even dancing(!) allows for kinesthetic learning to happen.

On a more subtle plane is the dialogue with nature. We select the sites for the TLL on the basis of their ability for the participants to have an active interface with nature. We have alternated the twice

yearly TLL between the mountains of Lonavala in which the dialogue is a dramatic encounter with the monsoon rains, clouds and waterfalls, and the seashore in which the reflective and awesomeness of the ocean is encountered. Participants often comment in evaluations that this 'intangible' dimension was most appreciated.

TLL Questions

Perhaps the most asked question is "Why can't we do a TLL in-house?" Probably we could, but we feel the value of having different companies interacting with one another is extremely important. It adds a richness and diversity that would not be present, no matter how diverse an individual company may be in its various divisions or multi-company makeup. In addition, it is not helpful to have to include possible 'political' relationships that often govern action within a given company. We do insist that each company send at least two participants to their first TLL and encourage additional representatives to attend future TLL sessions. We want to develop a catalytic core within a company. But active 'networking' with other participants has spontaneously taken place as well.

"What is the success rate?" This is difficult to assess. Many of the participants have reported a real change taking place as a result of their change projects. Almost all have reported a shift in their own thinking, style and behavior. Since we are actively involved with many of these companies on a long-term basis, we can see transformation happening. But each company is unique, and each journey progresses at different speeds and in different ways. Finally, we offer no guarantee that the participants will become true change agents; that is a decision only an individual can make.

"What about follow-up?" Often there is a strong desire for a 'reunion' of the participants. We offer to coordinate such gatherings to present new, helpful inputs. But we leave the initiative in the hands of the participants.

"What is not included that may be necessary for transformation?" The most important ingredient, not part of the TLL, is learning the skill necessary for practical facilitation. This is an area that requires at least a two day programme to introduce the basics. We are offering, both in-house for Cores (plus others) and regionally for several companies at a time, our basic facilitation course called Facilitation Methods 1 (FM-1). Participants learn how to hold effective discussion, workshops and action planning.

THE TRANSFORMATION TASK - Jack Gilles

Organisational Transformation can be seen in a 'whole systems' way. Every part of an organisation is subject to change. Where to begin and how to proceed will vary from situation to situation, but what is necessary to understand is that one must always consider the change in corporate culture as foundational to lasting change. The culture governs the ability of an organisation to adapt new ways of doing things.

Although the culture plays this critical acceptance role, it is rare to bring about a successful transformation by working on changing the culture alone. Radical improvement in performance ... parameters should accompany any attempt in establishing a better work culture.

The Transformation Task Triangle

We are presenting the following triangle to enable the participants in the TLL to grasp both the comprehensive task required of change agents and to see where their own change project and strategies are focused. It is not an attempt to be exact in outlining each task arena. Rather it is designed to show what seem to be the critical factors that are being talked and written about by those who are describing aspects of the radical nature of change companies are undergoing. What it does do is take many of these isolated ideas and put them into a relational context.

To understand how this description operates you need to know how the triangle expresses dynamic interaction. The sub-triangles are holographic, that is, they follow the same dynamic principle as the large triangle does.

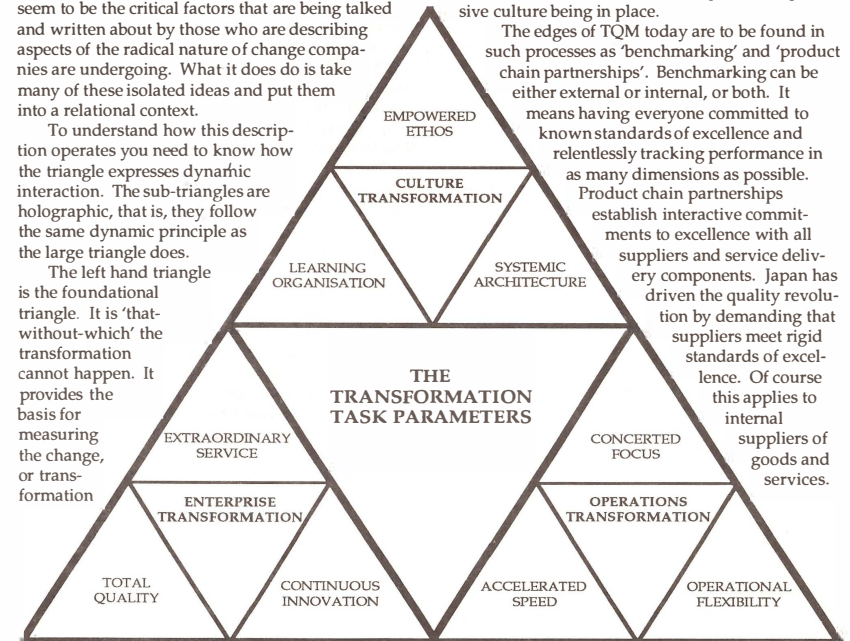
The left hand triangle is the foundational triangle. It is 'that-without-which' the transformation cannot happen. It provides the basis for measuring the change, or transformation

process. The right hand triangle is focused on the process or 'organisational' component of the change process. It, more than any other triangle, will reveal the 'form' or structure required for transformation. The top triangle provides the guiding principles and tends to direct the transformation task. In each case, the triangle needs to be seen as a description of the whole organisation, not any single part. For example, total quality is needed as a foundation for all operations, not just those that produce the end product or service.

Enterprise Transformation

The three dimensions of the Enterprise Transformation may seem obvious, but in each there is an edge that is driving organisations today for improvement. Too often organisations focus on only one, or sometimes two dimensions of their enterprise. Here in India there is a rush to qualify for ISO 9000 certification. Companies are trying to institutionalise TQM processes, but often fail to see the need to improve service and innovation. Worse yet, they are often blind to the fact that TQM requires a responsive culture being in place.

The edges of TQM today are to be found in such processes as 'benchmarking' and 'product chain partnerships'. Benchmarking can be either external or internal, or both. It means having everyone committed to known standards of excellence and relentlessly tracking performance in as many dimensions as possible. Product chain partnerships establish interactive commitments to excellence with all suppliers and service delivery components. Japan has driven the quality revolution by demanding that suppliers meet rigid standards of excellence. Of course this applies to internal suppliers of goods and services.



Everyone needs to know that there will be rigorous enforcement of norms and standards.

Those that succeed best at TQM are aware that without developing an intrinsic desire to produce quality by everyone, no set of standards or enforcement procedures will give the necessary levels of quality. This only comes when each person is driven by a self-actualising desire. And from this flows quality.

Continuous Innovation is the 'life-blood' of survival for an organisation. It means unleashing the brains of everyone to try things differently. Today an organisation cannot afford to have two classes of workers, those that think and those that do. But it is more than this that gives continuous innovation. The edge today is to be found in synergy, which results when people operate in self-managed and often, multi-disciplined teams. Stimulation of new ideas often comes from sources outside one's own field of expertise or responsibility. But it requires what one author calls the "management of creative conflict". Creativity happens when conflicting viewpoints engage in constructive dialogue.

Previously, companies measured their strength in tangible assets. Now, they need to measure their strengths in collective knowledge and 'brain-utilisation' capacity. Companies do not know how to manage intelligence. It can't be touched. Managers and engineers know what to do with things they can touch. But that's trivial in value in today's economy. A few years ago, IBM was THE model of a company. Now they're laying off 1/3 of their workforce. Why? We found out they're a material company. We thought they were an intelligence company because they make computers. But we found out they're really just interested in the boxes. This year Ntendo of Japan will be the 3rd most profitable company in Japan with just 892 employees. That is an average of \$5 million revenue per employee!

Extraordinary Service guides the way for the entire enterprise. It is giving the customer more than he expected and still more. It is fostering a sense of delight, both in the receiver and the giver of the service. The edge today is getting everyone related to the customer, preferably directly, if at all possible. It's bringing the customer into your operations and creating active interfaces of improvement. Most of all it's cultivating an attitude of *sewa* (service without expectations) within the workforce.

Operations Transformation

Today organisations are re-examining and reinventing practically every operation they are engaged in. The literature is full of examples of how traditional ways of doing things are being replaced

by revolutionary approaches. At the top of the list is a shocking understanding that **Speed** is money. Not just getting to the market first, but measuring and eliminating as much as possible the time when nothing is happening to a product or process. JIT (just in time) was the start of this transformation, which has moved into every dimension of a company's operations. Companies are re-engineering production or service delivery systems. They are instituting parallel execution for optimum critical paths. They are adapting *Kaizen* everywhere. The edge in this field is eliminating layers of bureaucracy and empowering people directly involved with decision making.

Every organisation would like to think it is **Flexible**. But the Japanese are taking the challenge seriously. In a recent *Fortune* article the stated aim is to achieve a position where: Anything, (what ever the company makes) can be produced Anywhere, (no 'dedicated' factories or lines) Anytime, (customised production of everything) by Anybody (completely interchangeable work force). It is estimated they have a 10 year lead on the rest of the world in this dimension!

The edge today is designing operations to a manageable scale. Companies are creating entrepreneurial units wherever they can, produced by teams of 2, 5 or 25. There seem to be natural laws of effective size. Units of more than 250 or so seem to lose flexibility. This is a tremendous challenge to companies that thought that size alone was strength. Now large size is as much a liability as an asset.

The whole operations dynamic is driven by the ability to create and direct a **Concerted Focus**. This is the management of energy, human energy. Most organisations can get things done in a real crisis. People can rise to extraordinary levels of performance, often producing minor miracles. However, not only does performance slip back after the crisis, but the cost in human terms can be extremely damaging. Microsoft boasts about its intense work team culture. But the cost in broken family relationships is high. It also can produce 'burn-out' and deep alienation. Organisations need to find ways of achieving high levels of performance in more natural ways.

The key to concerted focus is to understand how to mobilise, direct and sustain efforts by paying attention to time patterns and rhythms. Creating a different time sense for various activities can turn routine into eventfulness. Establishing 'projects' can give people a sense of completed mission. Marking beginnings and endings with ceremonies and celebrations can signify efforts; especially those employees who are playing a supportive role.

Perhaps the entire transformation in Operations

can be likened to that of a marshall arts master. Speed and bodily flexibility are critical skills, but the master knows it is the ability to bring to bear all the energy of his whole being to one critical focus that makes the difference.

Culture Transformation

Directing and guiding the other triangle's more 'visible' transformation is the organisation's culture. The transformation of the corporate culture therefore goes hand-in-hand with any substantive change in the Enterprise or Operations triangles.

There is no 'one' culture that is best. A lot depends on the type of business one is in and how the company evolved. Culture derives its uniqueness from its purpose, mission, core competencies and value system. Two companies having similar dimensions of these can still have quite different and effective cultures.

But what is common in transformation is that every corporate culture grows toward a sense of being a **Learning Organisation**. David Garvin of the Harvard Business School, in a recent article in the *Harvard Business Review* (July-August 1993) titled, "Building a Learning Organisation", gives the following working definition of a Learning Organisation. "A learning organisation is an organisation skilled at creating, acquiring and transferring knowledge, and at modifying its behavior to reflect new knowledge and insights." He goes on to say that, "these organisations are skilled in five main activities: systematic problem solving, experimenting with new approaches, learning from their own experience and past history, learning from the experiences and best practices of others and transferring knowledge quickly and efficiently throughout the organisation."

The key to this effectivity is based upon the ability of individuals to be equipped with these skills and then to apply them in a systems understanding of disciplines as outlined by Peter Senge in his book *The Fifth Discipline*. Guiding the whole Learning Organisation is the evolution of the environment to what Roger Harrison characterises as a "mutuality culture". Here, genuine care and love for each other and the task at hand creates the climate for the learning and applying to take place.

Systemic Architecture is understanding and applying living systems thinking to an organisation. When the organisation is appreciated as an 'organism', both processes and structure take on new meaning. One can begin to take discoveries recently recognised in the human brain and begin to apply them to the organisation. The revolutions in science dealing with quantum physics, fractals and holograms can all give new ways of understanding how the organisation functions. One of the best sources for

this is Margaret Wheatley's book *Leadership and the New Science*, (Berrett-Koehler, 1992).

Systemic Architecture involves appreciating 'whole systems' dimensions that make any organism work well. The design of space, colors, ambiance and natural surroundings complement the environment and can add or subtract from an organisation's effectiveness. This area is not often appreciated as people tend to adjust to 'normal' or standard environments. But really effective companies carefully monitor and pay attention to these less obvious dimensions. These become key factors in getting the most out of employees.

This entire area of organisational architecture is just beginning to be understood and represents perhaps one of the most critical and necessary dimensions of corporate culture transformation.

Finally, what is considered to be the key to the entire transformation process is the **Empowered Ethos**. This is the least understood and the most difficult to explain. Perhaps the place to begin is in Japan where so much of the revolutionary change seems to be emerging. Those that have tried to 'transplant' Japanese methods often find less than optimum results. It's as if the 'soil' in which it emerged is a vital part of its success. For instance, facilitators are often asked in India to help develop team work in the organisations we work with. For the Japanese, team work is a natural outgrowth of the culture. Japanese find it difficult to operate any other way.

Each part of the world has similar 'natural' ways of doing things. The key to transformation is to not only appreciate these innate gifts, but find ways to tap the power they can release. Two sources can be helpful here. One is Dr. Ronnie Lessem who has authored a book called *Global Management Principles*, (Prentice Hall, 1989). He carefully documents the gifts of management styles developed in different parts of the world and relates them to deep foundational roots in their respective heritages. For India, Dr. S.K. Chakraborty of IIM, Calcutta has written many articles and books on the Indian ethos and its application to business management.

Today, the edge is in not only exploring these principles and their application, but going beyond to a truly global dimension. It means grasping the gifts of humanness in all of its fullness and applying them to empowering the organisation. The Japanese need the gifts of the American spirit as well as those expressed in China, India and Africa. There are vast universes yet to be explored and the adventure is barely beginning. It is in the frontiers of human consciousness, as Dr. Willis Harman points out, that the full transformation process for our organisation and our people will be discovered.

SIGNS OF LIFE - Judith Gilles

Angeles Arrien in her book, *Signs of Life*, describes her lifework of more than twenty five years as exploring the meaning and significance of symbols, myths and human values from a cross-cultural perspective. In her research she discerned that five basic shapes appear in the art of all cultures: the cross, the triangle, the square, the circle and the spiral. Her study also confirmed that people of different cultures give similar meaning to these shapes. In essence, these are five universal shapes. It became evident to her that the meaning attributed to each shape stood for a process of human growth. Furthermore, she discovered that each shape carries the process within itself.

She developed the Preferential Shapes Test as a tool to determine the connection between a person's preferences for certain shapes and the person's inner state of development. To test the viability of the tool for self-discovery, Ms. Arrien gave the test to over two hundred graduate students at the California Institute for Integral Studies and subsequently presented the material and the test to over six thousand workshop and conference participants. Over ninety percent of all students and workshop participants confirmed that there is one positional choice that is a relevant tool for assisting transformation in current life situations. Results from the test also revealed that shape preferences are a good measure of the inner journey process. She writes, "The five shapes, I concluded, are indeed external symbols of internal psychic states." The sequence in

which someone places the shapes when taking the test is most important in showing which of the five universal processes of change and growth is being experienced most intensely by that person at that time.

According to Carl Jung, the powerful forces of the unconscious appear, not just in clinical material, but also in mythological, religious, artistic and in all other activities humankind uses to experience itself. Jung advocated the symbol as the psychological mechanism that transforms energy.

EXERCISE: THE PREFERENTIAL SHAPES TEST (by Angeles Arrien, 1992)

Step 1: Draw the following shapes on a sheet of paper: a circle, square, equidistant cross, spiral and triangle.

Step 2: Number the shapes 1 through 5 in the order of your preference. Number 1 will be your most preferred shape and Number 5 will be your least preferred shape. **Please make your preferential choices before reading further.**

Step 3: Now, redraw the five shapes in order of your preferences in the 5 boxes below. To interpret your test results, read further to understand the meaning of each position and the meaning of each shape.

THE MEANING OF THE POSITIONS

The first task is to understand the meaning of the positions you have chosen. Your preferences for Numbers 1 through 5 can provide you with a map of your inner landscape, giving you an overview of your aspirations, needs, fears, and resources.

Position 1	Position 2	Position 3	Position 4	Position 5

Pos. 1: "Where You Think You Are"

- in the most preferred position
- signals the process that now has your attention
- describes the part of yourself of which you are most aware

• indicates your idea of the future, your current source of inspiration

• BUT it is not the most accurate indicator of where you actually are right now

- it only shows where you think you are, or would like to be
- you may notice this shape in your environment - or be strongly attracted to it

Position 2: "Your Strengths"

- the shape exhibits an inherent strength predominant in you at this time

• you demonstrate this strength to other people without effort

• shape indicates areas of your nature that are currently fluid, strong, and resourceful

- reveals innate talents you are using to assist growth occurring in Position 3
- recent positive feedback from others may correspond to qualities of this shape

Pos. 3: "Where You Are"

- though third, this shape is the most significant
- shows your true current growth process
- stands for the work really going on right now at core of your being

• very often this process is unconscious or overlooked

• yet you must be aware of it in order to manifest the potential it represents

• it indicates where your own gifts can be used correctly now

• can be source of unlimited

creativity/healing when you support the process

• now that you acknowledge it, you'll see its visual presence/significance in life

• you may be surprised to find this shape all around you, not noticed before

Pos. 4: "Your Past Motivation"

- points to past challenges, tests, circumstances that motivated current change - discloses the motivation that triggered your

move into core work to be done (Position 3)

• gives information on underlying incentive that provoked you to do things differently now

• may also describe situations you have resolved or moved beyond

• you may notice this shape only occasionally, reminds you of where you've been

Pos. 5: "Old Unfinished Business"

- least preferred position, identifies a process you've outgrown, dislike
- you may be still resisting or judging - unfinished business

• is associated with unresolved issues you now wish to put aside


• carries a process you will reclaim, integrate at a later date

• it is not work you should attend to in the present

• shows areas of boredom, patterns of denial, disowned parts w/in yourself


• when you see this shape you may feel disinterested, even irritated

THE MEANING OF THE 5 UNIVERSAL SHAPES




CIRCLE
"Wholeness"

Symbolises unity
Individual self identity
Independence
Need space to develop
Hero's journey




CROSS
"Relationship"

Process of integration
Need for connection
Collaborative work
Balance important
Fear loss, abandonment




SQUARE
"Stability"

Solidity, security
Strong need for consistency
Ready to build, implement
Want results
Fear nothing accomplished



TRIANGLE
"Goals & Dreams"

Self discovery, revelation
Pursuing a goal is important
Innate gift of vision
Need support of family, friends
Need to follow their dreams



SPIRAL
"Growth & Change"

New perspectives
Need variety, novelty
Dread routine
Creative, ingenious
Handle many things at once

PROCEDURES: Integrating the information to your own situation.

Analyse your Position 3 choice using the information about the meaning of the shapes. For example, if you chose a triangle as your Position 3 preference, look at the data on the triangular process and explore your own need to envision, follow your dreams, perseverance for goals that is (or needs to be) your current work right now. What are you aware of now that is central to your current development? In what ways is it essential for you to honor the goals and dreams that are important for you? Interpreting for yourself your preference for the triangle will clarify your relation to the gift of vision you carry, and you may understand better your response to the process of setting and achieving goals.

STUFF OF THE SAME SUBSTANCE -

"Thus, as a quantum self I have a basis of commitment to the whole world of nature and material reality. We are all, basically, stuff of the same substance."

Danah Zohar, The Quantum Self

When I first read Peter Senge's book, The Fifth Discipline, I went "Ah!", just like so many others that we introduced the concept and ideas to. After many such intakes of breath, I realised that the " _Ha!" that tells of the complete cycle of inhalation/exhalation, comprehension/action, was a long way from happening.

Reduced to its basics, the idea presented in this book is, as the subtitle tells, us, the art and practice of the learning organisation. This 'Learning Organisation' refers to a place where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free and where people continually learn to learn together. This happens through the understanding and application of five 'disciplines'. Simple though this sounds, what makes it hard to set in place is the fact that from an early age, "... we are taught to break apart problems, to fragment the world." While this may make complex tasks easier to tackle the price we pay is losing the connection to the larger whole. The tools and ideas offered by Senge "... are for destroying the illusion that the world is created of separate, unrelated forces."

The term 'discipline' has much the same connotation here as in the learning and practice of Yoga, Tai Chi Chuan, or any of the martial arts - or of any whole-hearted learning of a skill or sport for that matter. It is the involvement in the technique and spirit of the chosen field, it is the repeated gestures and movements with awareness and understanding of underlying principles that inspire one to make it a way of life. A discipline only appears effortless because of the constant 'mindfulness' involved.

The five disciplines presented are Personal Mastery, Team Learning, Mental Models, Shared Vision, and the fifth - Systems Thinking. While it is vital that the five disciplines develop as an ensemble, it is this one, Systems Thinking, that performs the integrating function, keeping the others from being separate gimmicks. Without a systemic orientation, "there is no motivation to look at how the disciplines interrelate. By enhancing each of the other disciplines it constantly reminds us that the whole can exceed the sum of its parts."

This layout of the disciplines and the 'connective' aspect of the Fifth, evoked in me a deep resonance from a rather different area of study and research - that of sacred architecture. Several years ago I had published a paper on the 'connective' as expressed in

Traditional Indian understanding, primarily through the Fifth Element. The five elements - *pancha-bhuta* - are given dynamic expression in the pilgrimage rite to five temples in South India, each dedicated to the god Siva in the aspect of one of the elements. The architectonic expression as well as the ritual pilgrimage that is the dynamic, 'alive' form, points to the deep interconnectedness of man, deity and cosmos, by virtue of all three participating (and made up of) 'stuff of the same substance'.

From yet another perspective, that of quantum physics, Danah Zohar writes of this connection and relatedness using the evocative term 'entanglement'. She says, "All quantum systems in the universe, including ourselves, are entangled (correlated and interwoven) to some extent. Even the quantum vacuum is full of correlations. Such basic entanglement is the essence of quantum reality."

The groups we work with are enamored with concepts; give them a new and exciting idea and they will overwhelm you with a genuine appreciation of it. But, we can get so hooked on how great this concept is and on trying to examine it in all its manifestations, that we can get stuck right there. Given the fact that this very examination could lead to a breakthrough for action, the facilitation task challenges us to find an intervening step that would not only involve a deep understanding from out of our own cultural context, but also spin us out into the next steps of planning and action.

In our Traditional understanding, the five elements unfold from out of the Supreme Energy Principle, Shakti, in a manner in which they are perceptible to our limited human experience. As emanations from this Energy, they contain in each one some of its dynamic aspect. Each element, therefore, is associated with a corresponding quality of energy. I spent a fair amount of time in study and in conversation with others interested in the five disciplines in exploring correspondences between the disciplines and the energies.

"What," we asked, "would it look and feel like to have these energies present in the workplace?"

The energy question helps articulate what we want to see and experience in an organisation that decides to begin this journey; for 'journey' it is. "You never arrive; you spend your life mastering disciplines."

EARTH - Personal Mastery

Earth energy is the energy of centering and foundational solidity; energy that suggests stability and a base of support.

The learning organisation rests on individuals who learn. This does not mean people who attend

Marguerite S. Theophyl

lots of training programmes, but those who embody two underlying movements; continually clarifying what is important to them, and continually learning to see their current reality more clearly. It involves "... living our lives in the service of our highest aspirations."

"In Earth we are 'at home' in our world and her qualities of security and stability are always stressed . . . Our earthy senses are the 'windows' through which we look out on our universe and make sense of it, and only through them can we think, feel, imagine, create, act."

Sheila Farrant, Symbols For Women

WATER - Team Learning

Water teaches of synergistic energy, of cohesive power and strength. Individual droplets come together in astounding persistence and strength. Team learning is vital because teams, not individuals, are considered the learning unit in modern organisations, and yet in these places we are most likely to find the kind of team "with individual IQs above 120, having a collective IQ of 63".

"... waterfalls form the structure of rocks. Some say that water is by nature weak, so how can it be described as forming structure? I say see how water strikes the mountain and pierces the rock; it has supernatural strength, nothing is stronger. It was for this reason that master Chiao Kung said that water is structural."

Mai Mai Sze, The Way of Chinese Painting

FIRE - Shared Vision

Fire energy is that of intensity, passion. It is both heat and light (enlightenment). Senge writes, "Visions are exhilarating. They create the spark ..." It is Shared Vision that gives room for personal visions to align with the larger purpose, and helps maintain the long-term focus.

Fire energy needs careful tending. Uncared-for fires die out or get too big to control, the result is burn out, or conflagration. After all, Hitler and the Nazis did share a vision!

"The fire clearly corresponds to the generative power, which is first aroused and then tamed in order to serve inward contemplation. From this it can be at once understood why the alchemists have always warned against a violent or unsteady fire."

Titus Burckhardt, Alchemy

AIR - Mental Models

The energy of air is best described as 'allowingness'. An Oriental proverb goes: "there is room in the sky for the crow and the cloud alike." Then too, as wind it has a blowing in /blowing out function.

The discipline of working with Mental Models starts, according to Senge, with "turning the mirror inward", examining our deeply ingrained assumptions, generalisations, images that influence not only how we see the world, but by extension, how we respond and act. It also involves making our thinking open to that of others.

*"... flowing edge to edge
their clear edges meeting
the winds of this northern March
blow the bark from the trees
the soil from the field
the hair from the heads of girls
and shirts from the backs of men
roofs from the houses
the cross from the church
clouds from the sky*

*...
crusts from scabby eyes
scales from the mind
..."*

William Carlos Williams,
The Collected Earlier Poems

THE VOID/ETHER - Systems Thinking

The 'quintessential' or most significant part of something refers to the fifth (quinta) element (essence), because its energy is that of all-embracing, all-pervasive connectiveness. We talk of this in terms of 'understanding' that combines knowing with caring. It is compassion as com - passion; the energy of integration.

"At the heart of the learning organisation," writes Peter Senge, "is a shift of mind - from seeing ourselves as separate from the world to connected to the world, from seeing problems as caused by someone or something 'out there' to seeing how our own actions create the problems we experience."

"People in this world look at things mistakenly and think that what they do not see must be the void. This is not the true void; it is bewilderment." ... "What is called the spirit of the void is where there is nothing. It is not included in man's knowledge. Of course the void is nothingness. By knowing things that exist, you can know that which does not exist. That is the void."

Miyamoto Musashi, A Book of Five Rings



Eastern understanding makes place for polarities, not in any judgmental sense of good and bad, but in ordinary acceptance of a reality that IS. This being so, each energy, it needs to be acknowledged, has both an 'enlightened' and an 'unenlightened' or 'confused' aspect. This is seen when the energy is significantly absent or overwhelmingly present. Our awareness needs to not only extend to whether an energy/discipline is present or not, but also to what degree.

While Earth energy represents stability, disharmonious function reveals insecurity on one hand and indulgence on the other. So too with water; the unenlightened manifestation would be aggressive force or GroupThink. Fire, out of hand will 'take over' and untended degenerates to apathy. Air energy not properly managed can result in fickle, quick changes, faddishness, or else to 'wanting a uniform world'. The confused manifestation of the energy of the void is understood as indifference or avoidance.

In the TLL and in some of our other programmes that deal with the learning organisation, participants, through a Change Project, identify an area through which they would like to introduce the concept and practice of the learning organisation. It is understood that a sensitiveness to the cultural environment of a particular organisation is a prerequisite to deciding the manner and extent to which the disciplines can be readily incorporated.

While it is clear that all disciplines need to function harmoniously, it is also clear that each organisation tends to give weightage to one or two at the cost of the others and thereby at the cost of systemic operating. We facilitate the process of creating an Assessment Screen that indicates areas of

high application as well as areas of neglect. This gives us a strategic entry point, though keeping in mind that attention too focussed on one discipline (even one that is not there!) throws the whole idea of Systems Thinking out of whack.

I am reminded of something that Lewis Thomas, one of my favorite writers, had to say in his piece entitled, "On Meddling". When you are confronted by any complex social system, "such as an urban center or a hamster," and there are things about it that you are dissatisfied with and are anxious to fix, instead of trying to move in and trying to change things around (since intervening is a way of causing trouble), Thomas suggests reaching in gingerly and simply extracting the intervener! While it is a method that could work in the business of modern medicine in the fixing of some diseases caused by identifiable micro-organisms, its efficacy in any other arena is questionable, to say the least. Yet we can appreciate that "you cannot meddle with one part of a complex system from the outside without the almost certain risk of setting off disastrous events that you hadn't counted on in other, remote parts. If you want to fix something you are first obliged to understand, in detail, the whole system . . ."

For the "What needs to be done" part of the process, we use the exercise of the Metaphor, which can briefly be described as beginning with extensive brainstorming of images, phrases, thoughts related to each element/energy that then moves to broad indicators and sometimes actual plans to implement in order to make this energy manifest itself as a dynamic force in creating and sustaining the Learning Organisation.

For more than ninety-nine percent of human history the world was enchanted and man saw himself as an integral part of it, writes Morris Berman in *The Re-enchantment of the World*. It has taken a mere four hundred years or so for a complete reversal of this perception. Not only has this destroyed the continuity of human experience, "it has very nearly wrecked the planet as well. The only hope, or so it seems to me, lies in a re-enchantment of the world."

A re-enchanted world for me is one in which Traditional Wisdom can be examined and interpreted constructively to 'inform' new directions for a world of participative consciousness. Making the Learning Organisation happen - not just in organisations, but as any 'place' where people are continually discovering how they create their reality, and how they can change it - would be a significant step in the creating of just such a world. The facilitation role needs to be one of inviting people to do this in a dynamic, joyful, creative and meaningful way.

THE VALUE OF 'ONE' - Homayun Taba

A young man named Charmides seeks a headache remedy from Socrates, who explains to him at length that such a remedy is not adequate since, "To treat the head by itself, apart from the body as a whole is utter folly." Ideally, Socrates advises an approach he learnt from a Thracian physician.

*You ought not to attempt to cure eyes
Without head,
Or head without body,
So you should not treat body
Without soul.*

Attention to the body, as I intend to clarify, is not a fixation or some kind of isolated, localised preoccupation for the body's sake. It is a comprehensive viewing of the psycho-somatic complex and of whole-systems interrelatedness. In this systemic exploration we begin with the body because it is tangible, its signals easily detectable, as against more subtle mental processes, and we flow back and forth between the *soma* and the *psyche*.

I started body-work sessions during the recent Transformational Leadership Laboratory with an invitation to participants to hold the images of 'Remember and Embrace' throughout our time together. By re-member I meant to emphasize the bringing together of consciousness of one's various physical parts, as well as joining our psyche and soma to a point of *at-one-ness*. By embrace, the intention was to hold our physical self in fondness and lovingness.

To do this I have found it helpful to have childhood memory activation - to go back to a period in our lives when we felt a wonderful sense of delight in our bodies; a time of creative interaction, a reaching out to grasp, even taste, of all that happened to come within our purview.

As against this, today we find that our sensing of our bodies is caught in loops of awkwardness, lethargy and hyperbusyness. We seem to be spending a lot of energy but getting little accomplished. And our bodies are either trying desperately to fulfill our achievement plans or desperately recovering. A general feeling is one of depletion and worn-outness. In this exploration of where we were and where we are now, we further discover that our earlier delight, our sense of possession of and ease with our bodies has gradually diminished as the process of becoming social has taken hold. "As you became more and more channelled in your activities, as your outlook and attitudes narrowed, you began to use your body, rather than be it." (Brusseau, p.12)

The body does try to warn us. It signals *distance* and *isolation* hoping we will stop and respond. If we allow the distancing to broaden, we are almost certain to get ill. Most of us will not accept that we have chosen to feel unwell, but in fact in refusing to

listen, we *have* made the choice.

If we were to have a mechanic's examination of our 'vehicle' we will see how our personal pipes and flues have been allowed to get furred up, how our internal waste-disposal systems are clogged. We have let our motor units run down, our fuses blow, our fuel pumps to start spluttering and our ventilation to continue wheezing. Our storage-depots get overloaded, our boundaries become stretched, corroded, discoloured and aged. Instead of truly *living* we are stumbling towards senile decay and premature death. All because we are "unthinking, neglectful, self-indulgent and grossly ignorant of our bodies' functions." (Roy, p.3) This picture, vivid as it is, is a mechanistic, fragmented view; the holistic movement holds that human beings are not an assemblage of bone, flesh and blood but a combination of subtle energy pathways, intricate electro-chemical networks and a host of various forces and systems.

Coming back to the exploration of childhood years, we realise that our being was joyously and inextricably bound to our bodies, but now we feel things have changed. Since those early days, we seem to have 'unplugged' some connections. In the TLL our efforts are geared towards 'plugging' the body to the person, not only to *recover* the joy of childhood days (I keep on thinking of this as 'singing with the body'), but also to discover and uncover and activate hidden energy sources. The idea is to create opportunities for coordinated working and help to render a new quality of living. We achieve this through a wide range of movements, exercises for evoking serenity (these include deep relaxation with guided imagery); heightened awareness, kinesthetic experience of concepts and brief contextual explanations. We then let the participants enter into dialogue with their bodies and feel the new sense of poise and 'centredness' in addition to the energy and exuberance revealed to us in numerous and frequent occasions for laughter.

I have witnessed a series of transformations in my own life. These have come about as a result of my getting acquainted and later deeply engaged in yogic-tantric traditions, Buddhist meditation of Vipassana and several other techniques. These disciplines continue to shape, heighten and give direction to my life and to my sense of being with myself.

I began to put my learning into practice and realised as I went on conducting workshops on Managing Stress Effectively that care of our bodies is our prime responsibility. An increasing number of people are refusing to become passive recipients of paternalistic medicines given by doctors. To take responsibility and become actively involved we need

to learn to stop *abusing*, *mis-using*, and *not using* our systems.

I have seen the benefit of regular exercise and wholesome diet on my digestive-eliminative systems, overcoming a family tendency to piles as a result of chronic constipation. I continue to experience a renewed sense of energy and vitality becoming available through my daily practices.

Intelligent effort and self-discipline to prevent sickness represents only one side of the total health equation. This needs to be linked with the promotion of positive health strategies. Doctors have acknowledged that 'will to live' continues to save lives, however 'will to live with vitality' still remains as unexplored frontier for many. Awareness of this reality and the realisation of the relationship between a systematic programme of full exercise and the affirmative emotions (that enhance body chemistry) helped Norman Cousins to overcome a disintegrative disease. His experiments gave us the insightful book, *Anatomy of An Illness*, a powerful reminder of the benefits of self-investment.

Our whole attitude to our bodies needs to undergo a change from expectation of never-failing service to us in spite of our treatment, to one of full collaborative partnership. We are now coming to terms with the fact that being dominant over our own bodies is a dead end. You can only push and force your bodies so far and then they rebel. There is now a growing shift toward a "co-creative relationship with our bodies." (Connolly & Einzig, pp. 53-54). It is in this connection that we invite the TLL participants to view their bodies as a *vahana*, a powerful vehicle image in Indian mythology.

Collaboration involves on one hand an awareness of the physical environment.

- Are our working/living spaces well-ventilated?
- Do we have an access to natural lighting?

On the other hand, it is concerned with the human milieu.

- What type of people do we associate with?
- How does our internal chemistry respond to them?
- How do we deal with residues of our interactions?

The next collaborative attempt is to get in touch with the internal ecology - a consciousness of needs and demands. Our bodies require:

- wholesome diet
 - efficient elimination
 - adequate rest
 - recreation
 - relaxation, meditation
 - comprehensive exercise
- (items here are by no means exhaustive)

To introduce participants to physical exercises we begin by practices that involve stretching, twisting, reaching and bending in order to increase the movement radius of various parts, as well as enhance flexibility and elasticity.

To get the drudgery out of exercises we provide different types to select from and encourage them to choose ones they find personally enjoyable and can be willingly integrated into their routine and lifestyles. We also highlight the twofold actions of warm-ups and cool-downs, sympathetic and parasympathetic functions of the central nervous system.

All along, the focus is on 'tuning in', to get in touch and get a feel of internal happenings. With this mindfulness, every experiment with the body turns to an experience, and every invitation to explore results in discoveries which participants often eagerly relate, not without some element of surprise.

The whole experience helps to have a fresh look at oneself and a new way of organising oneself. This encompasses wellness awareness, personal responsibility and health facilitation.

Kinesthetic experience involves the sensing of quality and poise when performing a certain movement. It is this kind of awareness plus the getting in touch with the energy levels and currents within that seems to have been a central focus with most of such traditions as yoga, tantra, tai chi and several martial arts. Awareness here is progressively deepened to finally lead one to thresholds of psycho-spiritual transformations.

Due to the inextricable links between soma and psyche, as we experience greater physical strength, improved flexibility and suppleness, more poise and balance, better circulation and neuro-muscular coordination, our perception of our ability to act within our world will improve. In a sense, making conscious choices - in this case, taking up a psycho-physical discipline - enables a person to align his/her actions with his/her unfolding purpose.

According to an ancient Arab Proverb, health should be assigned the value of 'one', while love, fame and future should each be valued at 'zero'. With the 'one' of health beside the others, a person is rich, but without the 'one' of health, everything else is 'zero'.

The Transformational Leadership Laboratory is about change at deep levels, this requires a relentless work on oneself. I have found and continue to explore relevant metaphors and images to facilitate a fresh understanding of what transformation entails through the most visible and accessible - the body vehicle.

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SONGS OF THE TLL

Singing is part of the TLL. This is a song which participants wrote to the tune of "I am I Don Quixote" which is taken from one of the movies viewed in each of the modules.

SONG (TUNE: I AM I DON QUIXOTE)

Hear us now, all ye thresholds that pull us away,
Your strings have no power at all
You control all our people with visions of wealth,
But we all intend to grow tall!

Chorus:

We are we, new change agents,
The teams of tomorrow,
Our companies call and we go.
And the transforming vision
Will carry us onward,
No matter how heavy the blows.

Hear us labour and management locked in your wars,
Your battle is senseless and kills.
You will find deep within the intrinsic desire,
Transcend and discover your wills!

Coda:

No matter how heavy the blow,
Onward to glory we go!

CREATIVE ENERGY OF THE UNIVERSE --

Why is there such an epidemic of "poor communications" within organizations? In every one I've worked in, employees have ranked it right at the top of major issues. Indeed, its appearance on those lists in the past years became so predictable that I grew somewhat numb to it. Poor communication was a superficial diagnosis, I thought, that covered up other, more specific issues. Over the years, I developed a conditioned response to "communication problems" the minute they were brought up. I disregarded the category. I started pushing people to "get beyond" that catch-all phrase, to "give me more concrete examples" of communications failures. I believed I was *en route* to the "real" issues that would have nothing to do with communication.

Now I know I was wrong. My frustration with pat phrases didn't arise from people's lack of clarity about what was bothering them. They were right. They were suffering from information problems. Asking them to identify smaller, more specific problems was pushing them in exactly the wrong direction, because the real problems were big - bigger than anything I imagined. What we were all suffering from, then and now, is a fundamental misperception of information: what it is, how it works, and what we might expect from it.

The nub of the problem is that we've treated information as a "thing," as an inert entity to disseminate. Things are stable; they have dimensions and volume. You can get your hands around a thing. You can move it, track it, pass it back and forth. Things can be managed because they're so concrete. This "thing" view of information arose from several decades of information theory that treated information as a quantity, as "bits" to be transmitted and received. Information was a commodity to transfer from one place to another. The content, meaning, and purpose of information were ignored; they were not part of the theoretical construct. Information theorists also focused on "noise" - those interferences that prevented smooth movement of the bits. Ideally, it was felt, information moved virginlike through the system, untouched by anything.

I believe it is information theory that has gotten us into trouble. We don't understand information at all.

Information: Dynamic Process & Structure

In the universe new science is exploring, information is a very different "thing." It is not the limited, quantifiable, put-it-in-a-memo-and-send-it-out commodity with which we have become so frustrated. In new theories of evolution and order, information is a dynamic element, taking center stage. It is information that gives order, that prompts growth, that defines what is alive. It is both the underlying structure and the dynamic process that ensure life.

Information organizes matter into form, resulting

in physical structures. The function of information is revealed in the word itself: *in-formation*. We haven't noticed information as structure because all around us are physical forms that we can see and touch and that beguile us into confusing the system's structure with its physical manifestation. Yet the real system, that which endures and evolves, is energy. Matter flows through it, assuming different forms as required. When the information changes (as when disturbances increase), a new structure materializes. Even a large structure like an ecosystem has been described similarly, as "an information system which manifests itself in the organization of matter," evolving as it accumulates information.

In a constantly evolving, dynamic universe, information is the fundamental ingredient, the key source of structuration - the process of creating structure. Something we cannot see, touch, or get our hands around is out there, organizing life. Information is managing us.

For a system to remain alive, for the universe to move onward, information must be continually generated. If there is nothing new, or if the information that exists merely confirms what is, then the result will be death. Isolated systems wind down and decay, victims of the laws of entropy. The fuel of life is new information - novelty - ordered into new structures. We need to have information coursing through our systems, disturbing the peace, imbuing everything it touches with new life. We need, therefore, to develop new approaches to information - not management but encouragement, not control but genesis. How do we create more of this wonderful life source?

Information is unique as a resource because of its capacity to generate itself. It is the solar energy of organization - inexhaustible, with new progeny emerging every time information meets up with itself. As long as there are senders and receivers linked together in a context, fertility abounds. All that is needed is freedom of circulation to guarantee new births. In fact, the greatest generator of information is chaos, where so much spawning of information goes on that researchers feel obliged to monitor every moment of the system's activity lest they miss something.

Of course, this is exactly what we fear. We have no desire to let information roam about, to let it procreate promiscuously where it will, to create chaos. Our management task is to enforce control, to keep information contained, to pass it down in such a way that no procreation occurs. Information chastity belts are a central management function. The last thing we need is information running loose in our organizations. And there are good reasons for our stern, puritanical attitudes toward information: Misplaced information seems to have created enough horror

INFORMATION - Margaret Wheatley

stories to justify our frequent witch hunts.

But if information is to function as a self-generating source of organizational vitality, we must abandon our dark cloaks of control and trust in the principles of self-organization, even in our own organizations. Information is the source of order, an order we do not impose, but an order nonetheless. All of nature uses information this way. Can information, therefore, be used as an ordering mechanism for humanly-created organizations?

Information can serve such an organizational function only if organizations are living entities and respond to the same dynamics as open systems. A well-ordered system is defined not by how many brain parts it has, but by how much information it can possess. The greater the ability to process information, the greater the level of consciousness.

With this definition, organizations qualify as conscious entities. They also meet Gregory Bateson's criteria for "Mind." They have capacities for generating and absorbing information, for feedback, for self-regulation. In fact, information is an organization's primary source of nourishment; it is so vital to survival that its absence creates a strong vacuum. If information is not available, people make it up. Rumors proliferate, things get out of hand - all because people lack the real thing. Given the need for constant nourishing information, it is no wonder that "poor communication" inevitably appears so high on the problems list. Employees know it is the critical vital sign of organizational health.

Information - Our Key Ally

We have lived for so long in the tight confines of bureaucracies - what Max De Pree, former CEO of Herman Miller, describes as "the most superficial and fatuous of all relationships" - that we need to learn how to live in a conscious organization, how to facilitate its intelligence. This requires an entirely new relationship with information, one in which we embrace its living properties. Not so that we open ourselves to indiscriminate chaos, but so that we facilitate aliveness and responsiveness. If we are seeking resilient organizations, a property prized in self-organizing systems, information needs to be our key ally.

Think about how we generally have treated information in the past. We've known it was important, but we've handled it in ways that have destroyed many of its life-giving properties. For one thing, we've taken disturbances and fluctuations and averaged them together to give us comfortable statistics. Our training has been to look for big numbers, important trends, major variances. Yet it is the slight variations - soft-spoken, even whispered at first - that we need to encourage. (Some of the recent

work with statistics used in quality programs does emphasize the detection of these slight variations.)

Or we've taken conflicting information, rich with the possibility of moving us to new levels of understanding, and, instead, felt the need to play Solomon, to decide which piece of information or which position was correct. "Let's get to the bottom of this," we say, pointing our efforts dead into the ground - away

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from the conflicts that can move us toward the light, toward new, more complex understandings. We've been so engaged in rounding things off, smoothing things over, keeping the lid on (the metaphors are numerous), that our organizations have been dying, literally, for information they could feed on, information that was different, disconfirming, and filled with enough instability to knock the system into new life.

We do not exist at the whim of random information; that is not the fearsome prospect which greets us in conscious organizations. Our own consciousness plays a crucial role. We, alone and in groups, serve as gatekeepers, deciding which fluctuations to pay attention to, which to suppress. We already are highly skilled at this, but the gate-keeping criteria need revision. We need to open the gates to more information, in more places, and to seek out information that is ambiguous, complex, of no immediate value.

Information is always spawned out of uncertain, even chaotic circumstances. This is not a reassuring prospect. How are we to welcome information into our organizations and ally ourselves with it as a partner in our search for organizational order, if the processes that give it birth are ambiguity and complexity? In a profession that has raised the practice of "no surprises" to a high art, sponsoring such processes reads like a macabre prescription for self-destruction. Few things make us more frantic than increasing complexity. And although we say we've come to tolerate ambiguity rather well over the past years (because we had no other choice - it wasn't going away), it often appears that we don't tolerate it as much as we shield ourselves from it. We have a hard time with lack of clarity, or with questions that have no readily available answers. We quickly find our way out of these discomforts, focusing on one

element, coming up with a solution, and pretending not to notice the questions we've left hanging. We feel safer with blinders on, fearing that unimpaired vision will only add to our distress.

We fear both ambiguity and complexity in management because we still focus on the parts, rather than the whole system. We still believe that influence is a localized event, where we must directly touch what we seek to affect. We still believe that what holds a system together are point to point connections that must be laboriously woven together by us. Complexity only adds to our task, requiring us to keep track of more things, handle more pieces, make more connections. As things increase in number or detail, the span of control stretches out elastically, and suddenly, we are snapped into unmanageability.

Sensitivity to Whole Systems

But there is a way out of this fear of complexity, and we find it as we step back and refocus our attention on the whole. When we give up myopic attention to details and stand far enough away to observe the movement of the total system, we develop a new appreciation for what is required to manage a complex system. A whole-system view requires very different management expectations and analytic processes. Rather than creating a model that forecasts the future of the system, nonlinear models encourage the modeler to play with them and observe what happens.

A system's perspective can handle complexity because it does not need to deal with it in a linear fashion. We don't need to make point-to-point connections among separate things; we don't need to move information along linear pathways. Managers have long treated information this way, guiding it through channels, passing it onto the next point. We've been inspired in this by mechanistic models of brain function, believing information is assiduously moved along neural pathways, passed from one neuron to the next.

In a hologram, every part contains enough information, in condensed form, to display the whole. "The part is in the whole and the whole is in the part . . . ; the part has access to the whole," writes scientist and science commentator Ken Wilbur in The Holographic Paradigm and Other Paradoxes. When light is reflected from an object, it creates wave patterns based on the light scattered by the object. These wave patterns are stored on a photographic plate as interference patterns. The image looks blurred, even random. But when a laser light is shone on the image, the original wave pattern is regenerated and what emerges is a three-dimen-

sional image of the whole object. The image of the whole can be reconstructed from any fragment of the original image.

Holograms create wonderful images for the distribution of information in organizations. In fact, we already have an experience with organizational holograms in our current approach to customer service. Most organizations acknowledge that when a customer comes in contact with anyone from the organization, no matter his or her position, the customer experiences the total organization, for good or ill. Under the laser light of these "moments of truth" (Jan Carlzon of SAS's phrase), the organization becomes visible. We can improve the image that is regenerated by the glare of customer scrutiny only if we understand that every employee has these holographic qualities and truly is capable of reflecting back the image of the total organization. We improve customer satisfaction when we recognize and support organizations as holograms. Just like an actual hologram, if we distribute information broadly across the organization, we strengthen its image.

We have other models in our experience that teach us about the benefits of creating complex levels of information in organizations. The literature on organizational innovation is rich in lessons that apply here; and, not surprisingly, it describes processes that are also prevalent in the natural universe. Innovation is fostered by information gathered from new connections; from insights gained by journeys into other disciplines or places; from active, collegial networks and fluid, open boundaries. Innovation arises from outgoing circles of exchange, where information is not just accumulated or stored, but created. Knowledge is generated anew from connections that weren't there before. When this information self-organizes, innovations occur, the progeny of information-rich, ambiguous environments.

As a consultant, the most important intervention I ever make is when I feed back organizational data to the whole organization. The data often are quite simple, containing a large percentage of information that is already known to many in the organization.

But when the organization is willing to give public voice to the information - to listen to different interpretations and to process them together - the information becomes amplified. In this process of shared reflection, a small finding can grow as it feeds back on itself, building in significance with each new perception or interpretation. As with the creation of fractals, the simple process of iteration eventually reveals the complexity hidden within the issue. From this level of understanding, creative responses emerge and significant change becomes possible.

Two Complementary Processes

Our search for organizations that are well-ordered by open and flowing information leads to two complementary processes and tasks: those that create new information, and those that feed existing information back on itself. We already know many of these processes; we just need to emphasize them differently or give them more freedom in their workings. For example, information can be created every time we bring people together in new ways. Activities that create circulation and movement, even the old chestnuts of work teams, job rotations, and task forces, are all potential creators of information. We often limit their potential because we circumscribe them with rules and chains of command or give them narrow mandates or restrict their access to information. But if we liberate them from those confines and allow them greater autonomy, constrained more by purpose than by rules or preset expectations, then their potential for generating information is great.

We also create order when we invite conflicts and contradictions to rise to the surface, when we search them out, highlight them, even allowing them to grow large and worrisome. We need to support people in the hunt for unsettling or disconfirming information, and provide them with the resources of time, colleagues, and opportunities for processing the information. We've seen the value of this process in quality programs and participative management. In such companies, workers are encouraged to look for fluctuations, and processes are in place to support discussions among many levels of the organization. Through constant exchanges, new information is spawned, and the organization grows in effectiveness. I am intrigued by the thought that these programs work well, not simply because they support employee contribution and involvement, but because they generate the very energy that orders the universe - information.

We can encourage vital organizational ambiguity with plans that are open, visions that inspire but do not describe, and by the encouragement of questions that ask "Why?" many times over. Jantsch asks managers to be "equilibrium busters." No longer the caretakers of order, we become the facilitators of disorder. We stir things up and roil the pot, looking always for those disturbances that challenge and disrupt until, finally, things become so jumbled that we reorganize work at a new level of efficacy.

We are coming to understand the importance of relationships and non-linear connections as the source of new knowledge. Our task is to create organizational forms that facilitate these processes. Gore Associates, manufacturers of GoreTex, models one such structure with its open "lattice organiza-

tion." Roles and structure are created from need and interest; relationships, exchanges, and connections among employees (almost everyone bears the title associate) are nurtured as the primary source of organizational creativity and success. One observer noted that the issue was not who or what position would take care of the problem, but what energy, skill, influence, and wisdom were available to contribute to the solution.

Slowly but perceptibly, other organizations are moving into the realm of increased consciousness. Thinking has become a precious resource, and not just at higher levels of management. We now recognize that many workers need to be trained to interpret the interactions among complex variables. "Intellectual capital" is on the rise, a phrase that tells of the new value being placed on the capacity to generate knowledge. More and more, there is an openness to inter- and intra-organizational exchanges, to decreasing layers of hierarchy, to smart machines, and to the flow of information among all levels. Learning organizations are taking hold. Consciousness is growing.

This is an intriguing image for organizations. It is not difficult to recognize the waves we create in organizations, how we move, merging with others, forming new wholes, being forever changed in the process. We experience this when we say that a team has "jelled," suddenly able to work in harmony, the ragged edges gone, a pleasurable flow to the work. We all have experienced things "coming together," but it has always felt slightly miraculous. We never understood that we were participants in a universe that thrives on information and that will work with us in the creation of order.

Much of the present thinking about organizational design stresses fluid and permeable forms that can be resilient to unending change. These ideas have sparked both hesitation and curiosity. Perhaps if we understand the deep support we have from natural processes, it will help dispel some of the fear. It is not that we are moving toward disorder when we dissolve current structures and speak of worlds without boundaries. Rather, we are engaging in a fundamentally new relationship with order, order that is identified in processes that only temporarily manifest themselves in structures. Order itself is not rigid, but a dynamic energy swirling around us. Relational holism and self-organization work in tandem to give us the living universe. Two dynamic processes, fed by information, combine to create an ordered world. The result is evolution, the organization of information into new forms. Life goes on, richer, more creative than before.

THE CHANGE PROJECT - Jack Gilles

The Change Project journey starts before the participant comes to the first Module of the TLL. A questionnaire has them determine what the 'vision' of their company is (or their part of the company), what are the major issues it faces in accomplishing that vision, and what needs to happen to overcome these obstacles. As the TLL progresses through the three Modules, the Change Project becomes clarified, refined and eventually formulated into a strategic plan of action.

The plan often undergoes considerable change in the process. Some participants discover a completely different area needs to become the starting point to change. All begin to see the need to take into account the culture of the company in their Change Project. But for any change agent the task is the same: to enable the organisation to become a Learning Organisation; to provide the nurturing environment for the change to occur; to develop a core of people within the organisation who will meet the organisation where it is and facilitate its growth through transformation.

Change Project Journey Map

To guide the journey process we follow a map developed by Roger Harrison, a consultant and friend from northern California. We have modified his original work to more adequately reflect the Indian business climate.

Step 1: Organisational Culture Scan: This is a comprehensive questionnaire in which the type of corporate culture that exists is discerned. This provides a base for understanding to what degree the culture will support the desired change.

Step 2: Analysing Your Transformational Project: A force-field analysis is done of those factors assisting and resisting the desired results.

Step 3: Working with Your Project Core Group: A set of procedures to work with a group of co-workers in further refining the change project including; a) Variance Analysis, what is working and not working, and b) Stakeholder Analysis, to what degree the various stakeholders are being cared for.

Step 4: Statement of Change Goals: A restatement of the Change Goals in light of the work of Step 3.

Step 5: Organisational Change Readiness Questionnaire: A comprehensive analysis of the factors that indicate an organisation's readiness to change. It begins to reveal the necessary starting points and strategy.

Step 6: Organisational 'Stresstionnaire': Organisations change best when the level of stress they are experiencing is balanced. Too much or too little will retard change.

Step 7: Working with Your Project Core Group:

This work is done between Modules 2 and 3. It involves choosing a change strategy.

Step 8: Tactics for Managing Change: Healing: A change agent must care for, what Roger calls, the "Castle" time. This refers to providing structure and opportunities for people to adjust to the change activity.

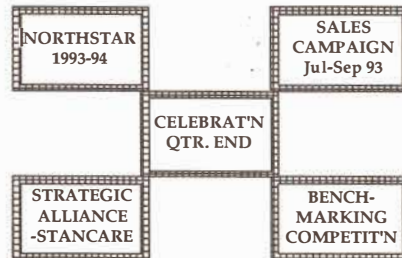
Step 9: Tactics for Managing Change: Action: A guided process for determining effective change action.

Step 10: Building Your Support Structures: Each change process needs to have a high degree of support. This section helps determine the level of that support and who will provide it.

The following is an example of a Change Project undertaken by Sunil Mirchandani, Manager, North Zone, of Hoechst (India) Ltd. It is in the form of a plan that was worked out with his team of Area Managers (his Core Team). He incorporates in it many of the ideas and language of the Change Project development process.



The 'Panchsheel' of the NORTHSTAR Project



Project North Star

Drive No. 1 - Market Share

Goal a: Improve market share of TARAVID

Goal b: Embark on the journey to make ROTANE a blockbuster

Mission: i. In our overall REAP for priority products, we need to focus on TARAVID and ROTANE market shares to enable the frontliners to know when they have arrived. ii. To increase the noise levels of Ofloxacin and Roxatidine in the challenging Quinolone and Acid Peptic Ulcer markets respectively. There is a need to have a Regional Strategic Alliance with Stancare.

Drive No. 2 - Customer

Goal: To maintain favorable Secondary: Primary sales ratios for priority products with distributors located in Area Managers' headquarters.

Mission: When service is the purpose for which we are here, then a win-win alliance with distributors can bring about: i. secondary sales generation resulting in their increased R.O.I. and, ii. resolving their inventory norms conflict entailing reduction in our inventory costs.

Drive No. 3 - Productivity

Goal: To achieve team building, integrating work simplification and developing 'user friendly' systems at O.E.G. and F.F.E. meetings.

Mission: Northern Zone team can become a powerful one when our officers and staff are also aligned towards the common purpose, which is why the need to re-define the frontliners as their first customers. When the frontliner wants to give good service, he needs to be facilitated to deliver quickly and accurately the information and material he needs.

Drive No. 4 - Profitability

Goal: To attain assigned G.P. contribution for 12 priority products.

Mission: Although profit is important for the fate of Hoechst, it is really a text needing the support of a context. It follows that any profit orientation needs a contrasting orientation to make it work effectively. Delhi and Lucknow are therefore, cost centres for the first three drives: enlargement of market share, improving customer satisfaction and increasing the productivity of employees.

Coping With Change

We have visualised a resistance to change in 'win-win alliance with our distributors. Let us work on a model called 'The Castle and the Battlefield'. The Castle represents accustomed behaviour. For our purpose, it is our distribution drive i.e., primary sales drive. The Battlefield represents the arena of change and challenge. For our purpose, it is our market drive i.e., secondary sales drive for priority products.

The loss of Castle can be overcome by listening to the frontliners without being judgemental and gently introducing as much reality as they are ready to hear. If Battlefield is valued by them through reinforcement of distribution network, please examine it. It is recommended that Customer Pulsars (small stars of NORTHSTAR) are set up in Area Managers HQ's. They need to be comprised of influential representatives.

Celebration

As PCM for cycle I will be the kick-off meeting for NORTHSTAR, a celebration is recommended to raise the energy levels of the frontliners. This will perhaps give an opportunity for them to retreat to their Castle, be refreshed and launch into the Battlefield.

For Northwest region, the celebration could be a picnic during the day on account of constraints of evening get-togethers. For others, it could be the wives joining the team and made aware that 'small change is Big Money' (through incentive earnings).

At Delhi and Lucknow, it is recommended that Office Executives and Staff are also invited to the celebration. The essence of the approach is to identify and celebrate publicly what people in the organisation are doing that represents excellent performance or caring for the customer. This will create pride and confidence in Northern Zone and its people.