

**Kari Murto**

# **LEADING THE PROCESS**

**TOWARDS THE PROCESS CENTERED  
DEVELOPING OF WORK COMMUNITY**

LEADING THE PROCESS. TOWARDS  
THE PROCESS CENTERED  
DEVELOPING OF WORK  
COMMUNITY

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**FOR ANNUKKA AND MIIKKA**

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# CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION
2. DESIRE TO DEVELOP AND FEAR OF CHANGE
3. **ON ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES**
  - 3.1. **From resource based conduct to process based conduct**
  - 3.2. **From the strategy of development to the development of a strategy**
4. THE PROCESS CENTERED DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY OF A COMMUNITY
  - 4.1. Starting points and principles
  - 4.2. Applying Process Centered Development into practice
    - 4.2.1. Examining the everyday life
    - 4.2.2. Living and learning
    - 4.2.3. Learning a common language
    - 4.2.4. Creating common social reality
    - 4.2.5. Creating open forums for decision-making
    - 4.2.6. Creating functional structure
5. LEADING A PROCESS
  - 5.1. Leading the process in an organization
  - 5.2. Leading the process in units
  - 5.3. Handling conflicts in a community
  - 5.4. When common meetings do not work
  - 5.5. Developing the meetings
6. DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNAL SELF-ESTEEM AND IDENTITY
7. TANGLES AND OBSTACLES IN LEADING THE PROCESS
8. AND ONCE AGAIN
9. REFERENCES

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## 3. ON ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

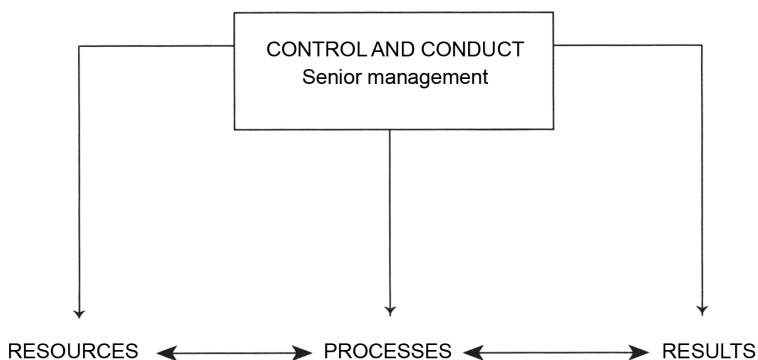
### 3.1. From resource based conduct to process based conduct

In public administration, development has traditionally been done with long-term plans and quantitative measures. This development method can be called **resource based conduct**. Relatively more funds and other resources are appropriated for those pursuits and activities that are considered important and worth developing, when at the same time less important pursuits have to manage with the existing or even smaller resources. Instead of evaluation, this method exercises tight and detailed control over the use of the appropriated resources. It is a common belief that additional resources used on the appropriated purposes will automatically produce more and a better, desired "outcome".

In the 1970s the rapid growth of public expenses started to make people worried. The most dissenting critics demanded evidence of the results achieved with the resources. The ideas of management by objectives gradually spread from private businesses to the decision-makers and leaders of public affairs. In 1987 Finnish business consults were granted a national award for developing a model for management by results, which is based on management by objectives. Organization development had started to apply **result based conduct**.

In public administration organizations, the result based conduct represents a transition phase in the development of self-controlling, autonomous units that have formerly been conducted from above. The principle of self-control and self-regulation has proved to be the basic principle of individual as well as of communal development. Result

based conduct includes establishing semi-independent result units, when their self-regulation chances are limited and often unclear. In the end, control of setting the overall objectives and of choosing the operations strategies has been left to the supreme leadership. The following figure illustrates the model.



**Figure 3.** In resource and result based conduct the supreme management of the organization is in charge of conduct and control.

The latest phase in organization development thinking is represented by process centricity that can in this context be called **process based conduct**. The development in process centered development is conducted primarily from the bottom upwards and holistically. In large organizations the emphasis lies on the internal development of the units and on the equal cooperation and interaction of the independent units. The task of the organization management is to organize and coordinate the cooperation.

### **3.2. From the strategy of development to the development of a strategy**

Inventing organization development strategies has traditionally been the management's task, because it is supposed to have the most reliable knowledge of the overall situation in the organization and its development needs,

and the best expertise. Change strategies that have been planned and led by the top level have proved difficult to carry out and scanty in regard to their results in a quickly and unpredictably changing operations environment (Beer & Walton, 1987).

According to professor Burgelman, the strategies planned by the management do not materialize as such. The materialized strategies have been established from the ideas of the basic level staff and from the management's plans as a result of mutual interaction (Virkkunen, 1990, 173-174). A study by G. R. Bushe (1988) supports Burgelman's view. In his study on the development of five factory units, Bushe discovered that the cooperation bodies of the units did not define clear objectives. Even those units that did set objectives had different opinions on them. In two of the most prosperous units no objectives were set and the strategies were not planned, but development took place through daily interaction, based on the experiences of the people struggling with the process of change.

It seems that strategy has to be created continually. We are dealing with a process, where, according to Minzberg (1987), the strategies go through different kinds of phases following cycles where the objectives become "scattered" and coherent. Coherent objectives and lines of action are followed by a simultaneous occurrence of several objectives and differing ambitions until, in the course of time, they can be integrated. On the development of strategies Minzberg states that

(1) they develop like weeds in a garden. They can not be cultivated like tomatoes in a greenhouse. It is better to let the models develop freely than to control them too much.

(2) Strategies may develop anywhere where people have the ability to learn and resources to support the learning.

. . . . .

(5) Breakthroughs of new courses of action occur during special periods of differentiation of the activities,

which are preceded and followed by a period when the courses of action become standardized.

(6) To lead this process does not mean defining the strategy in advance, but it means noticing the new, developed courses of action and, when necessary, interfering with their development. (Virkkunen, 1990, 172-173).

Stanley M. Davis (1988, 38) sees creating and leading a strategy like Minzberg does when he describes the strategy of a person establishing a company:

“The founder’s strategy came out of his actions. Although today we can state the specific elements of the founder’s strategy, he was nowhere so analytical. He was a proverbial man of action, a great visionary... Subsequent management stood the relationship on his head, believing that their action should come out of their strategy. The result was bureaucracy ...”

The strategy of entrepreneurs is established on activities and is a summary of what has happened, Davis states.

My own experiences from different work communities and organizations, especially from the boys’ reformatory of the city of Jyväskylä led by Kalevi Kaipio (1977), which developed from a scattered, asocial institute to a high standard community-educational community, confirm the views of Minzberg, Davis and Burgelman. So does the development of the education collectives developed in the 1920-1930s by Anton Makarenko, a Russo-Soviet pedagogue, as well as the development of the therapeutic communities that Maxwell Joens, a Scottish psychiatrist, developed in Britain in the 1940-1960s, which I have analyzed in my research “Towards the well functioning community”, and based on which I have arrived at the process centered development strategy for communities (Murto, 1991).

In the process centered development strategy I have aimed at outlining those practical community-related operations models, with which it is possible for communities and organizations to learn to learn from their own ac-



tivities by continuously evaluating and directing them together. Gareth Morgan (1986, 91-95), an organization researcher, defines the organizational preconditions for learning to learn (double-loop learning) as follows:

1. Accepting mistakes and insecurity as necessary features of life in complicated and changing circumstances. This is a fundamental condition for people to learn to face change and insecurity in a constructive way. It is naturally necessary to differentiate between mistakes that are due to the unpredictability of circumstances or to insecurity, and those that are due to neglects and irresponsibility.
2. That kind of way to analyze and solve complicated problems, which emphasizes the importance of different points of view. From the management this requires trying out different kinds of alternatives and allowing debates and conflicts between people that represent different views. This is how it is possible to study and redefine the problems, when they can be solved in a new way.
3. Restraint from bringing prearranged operations models from the outside to the organization. This is connected to cultivating the culture of questioning. As opposed to traditional planning where aims and objectives are given to the unit, in learning to learn it is crucial that creativity and direction germinate from the continual process of the organization. It is essential to continuously question the given marginal conditions and that the basic level participates in planning. This is how the activities take shape in a continual learning process, and they are not determined from the outside.
4. Learning to learn is facilitated by creating the structural preconditions for the realization of the principles described in the foregoing.

Based on practical experiences, the process centered development of a community aims at delineating those structural and functional models of a community, that would promote the community's learning to learn.