Leading the process

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Towards the process centered
developing of work community

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

FOR ANNUKKA AND MIIKKA

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

Each one of us wants to work in a good work community. A good work community gives support, motivates and gives strength even in difficult working conditions. A bad work community deprives motivation and strength that otherwise could be used for working and for developing one's work. A good work community can be described for instance with the help of communal self-esteem. The self-esteem of an individual reveals how much he trusts himself in different situations and how well can utilize his personal resources to cope with the demands made upon him by the environment.

Communal self-esteem correspondingly reveals how well the community members recognize the various needs of the community as needs, hopes and expectations of the community, groups and individuals. Moreover, communal self-esteem tells about the members' feelings towards the community: do they feel comfortable in the community, do they identify with the fates of the community, with its successes and failure. Do they feel pride or shame for belonging to the community.

Belonging to a work or study community respected by oneself and by others increases an individual's self-esteem whereas belonging to a community with poor appreciation may threaten or decrease it. Even personal failures like failing in an exam can be compensated by emphasizing the standards of the school or university (Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992).

The prerequisite for good self-esteem is that each member has a realistic idea of what the community expects of him and of others, and that the members have a chance to express their feelings, needs and thoughts connected to the community. The materialization of these prerequisites in the daily life of the community lay a foundation for a sense of solidarity, for realistic communal self-knowledge and for responsible action. If an individual is not able to respect, or feels that others don't respect his work community, he can actively try to strive for heightening the

appreciation of his community, or he can change jobs, and if that is not possible, he can console himself with the thought that things are much worse in another community (Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

Communal self-esteem is a quality that can to a great extent be perceived by feelings, but is hard to measure. Luhtanen and Crocker (1992) have developed a meter for communal self–esteem, but everyone can make a quick estimate of his own community by considering the following questions:

– What kind of mood am I in when I go to work?
– Do I feel welcome at the working place?
– Do my superiors and colleagues appreciate my work?
– How do I think that my own occupational category is appreciated in my work community?
– What do I think that other units or companies in the same line think about my work community?
– How do equality and justice materialize in my work community?
– Am I familiar with the financial situation and future prospects of my organization and work community?
– What are my chances to influence my work and my work community?

As an example of a bad work community and its effects I shall quote a description of a Finnish insurance company by Katriina Perkka–Jortikka (1992, 116):

"Keeping back information and the exercise of power connected to it, had in a contradictory way something to do with the system of control in the community. Statistics were kept because the superiors did not trust the clerical employees. Especially the division heads did not give information, because they did not want the clerical staff to know "too much", for knowledge is power. The superiors talked about things only to those employees they trusted. It was up to the activity of the employees how they were able to cope with this "Wild West". There were no alternatives, people did not know what else to do so they surrendered to rivalry. And all unfairness, hardness and distrust was masked under seemingly polite, nice and clean, but busy clerical work, in an important service organization with quality responsibility. The

clerical employees themselves had to use their activity, enthusiasm and lives to stand all this and to cope with it, and they even saw their own important meanings in their action. But the strength for logical collective control of things or even common understanding was in that reality beyond their strength ...".

The work community can be described as the intervening variable between the worker and his work. At its best it supports, encourages and inspires, at its worst alienates and discourages its members.
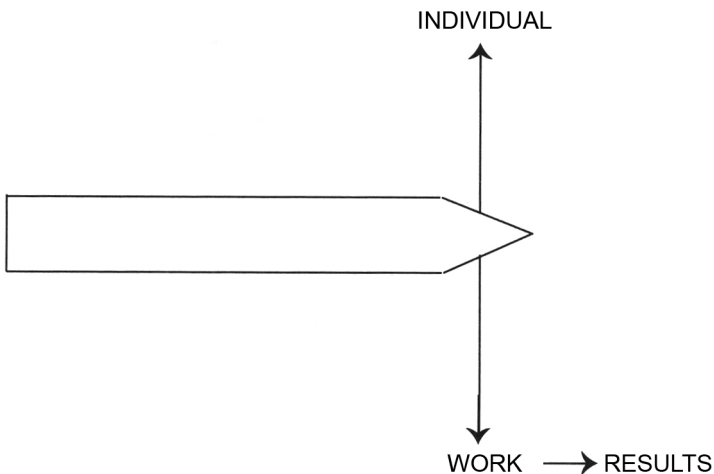
Figure 1. The work community transmits the individua's relation to work.

In a bad community human resources are wasted to mutual tensions, unresolved conflicts and distrust. Disappointments and frustrations are unloaded in groups of trusted workmates, which generates cliques, and destroys community´s atmosphere. While a bad community takes peoples´ energy away from work, good work community and atmosphere gives energy to community members, helps them cope, supports the motivation and learning.

The working community and its atmosphere have decisive impact on the qualitative and quantitative results of the work.

The working community is not only a physical and social entity. The most important community is a subjective community in the minds of the community members, their unique understanding of the working community, and their own position in the communities´ hierarchy. If one feels not being respected or trusted professionally, it weakens his or her commitment to work and undermines his or her work motivation.

Persons´ subjective perceptions are not created at random. The man´s position in a community seems to have an impact on his perception. The top managers seem to experience their organization or community more positive than their staff whatever is being asked (concerning communication, career development, atmosphere, incentive systems etc) in the organization surveys. The goal of organization development should be everybody´s wellbeing and a positive attitude towards the organization and community.

I shall not draw a line between the concepts community and organization because they overlap to a great extent. I see organization as an official system, the size of which can vary a great deal. Within a large organization there can be several work communities, but an organization in its entirety cannot always be called a community. As opposed to the membership of an official organization, the membership of a community may be impossible to define precisely. Without trying to define the concept of community unambiguously and extensively, I do associate at least the following elements with it:

1. The members know each other well and have an opportunity to relatively regular, personal interaction.
2. A sense of solidarity so that the members themselves and most of the other members are somewhat unanimous in their perception of who belongs to the community and who doesn't.
3. From the standpoint of the community's basic task, the members have sufficiently common social reality

in essential questions.

4. We can discern circles in communities in accordance to how tightly the members belong to the community. A community can naturally have even several core groups. This is illustrated in the following figure.
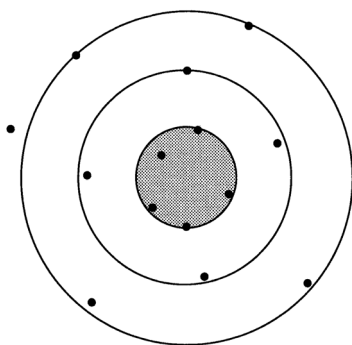
Figure 2. The core group of a community and the members gathered around it.

The innermost circle stands for the core group of a community the members of which are in intense interaction with each other and share the largest amount of common social reality. Situated on the outermost circle are the borderline cases, who identify themselves poorly with the community or whom the majority of the members don't perceive as belonging to the community. People's location on the circles can be very shifting. During certain periods of time someone is a part of the core group, but can shift to the outer circle for example due to a removal or a crisis in the community and vice versa.

A community and a clique differ from each other in the fact that a community has got common objectives and norms with the larger organization or community. The objectives and norms of a clique deviate from or are even contrary to the ones of the surrounding community.

The objective of this book is to portray a development strategy for communities that would in the best possible way support the development of a work communi-

ty so, that it would become community conscious, that it would establish a strong communal self-esteem, and that it would support and encourage its members. A community like this also has got the best chances to implement its basic task.

2. DESIRE TO DEVELOP AND FEAR OF CHANGE

Most organizations and work communities wish to develop because things can always be better than they are at present. At a time of crisis the sole motivation for development can be the fear of a worsening situation and the need to preserve at least the level that has already been attained. The development of a community draws its strength from the contradiction/conflict between the present and the desired.

Examples of external contradictions:

– conflict between the goals and the present state of the community,

– conflict in external administration, for instance between elected officials and public servants in municipal administration or

– conflict between an external financier and the community administration.

Internal conflicts may concern the relationships between

– different hierarchical levels of the community

– different professional groups,

– cliques within the community or

– individuals.

Conflicts may arise from different interests, power struggles or differences of opinion, and they may concern for example goals, resources, working methods, work arrangements or human relations. If several kinds of conflicts start to pile up in a community, they will find themselves in a situation that can be called a crisis. It is typical for a crisis that you can not get out of it with old means and methods.

If a company repeatedly misses its profit objectives, it may generate a conflict between the management and the workers of how to solve the situation. External administration, for example the board of directors or the trust, before long gets worried about the state of the company and offers its own methods to get over the difficulties. If they

fail to find a working solution, the financier is about to intervene.

When the situation has developed from a conflict into a crisis, the amount of alternatives to act will have diminished, and the financial, social and mental costs will rise.

The way how an organization or a work community can solve its internal conflicts and crises will determine whether or not it can attain its objectives. Solving internal conflicts can be hindered by the formation of cliques, or blaming the difficulty on another clique, department, the management or someone or something outside the organization. In that case you do not have to face the internal problems of the community or the organization. Resorting to this kind of a communal defence mechanism, where the scapegoat phenomenon also belongs, weakens and distorts communication in the community and leads to a worsening of the situation, ultimately to a crisis.

A survey on the top management of Finland's state administration in the early 1980s showed that about every third representative of the top management considered that his field of activities was in an obvious crisis or poorly manageable. Then again the top management estimated that problems are manageable more often than did the ones working on lower levels of the organization. It was, however, worth noticing that the awareness of the crises did not lead to changing the adopted routines and working practices (Kivinen, 1986).

Quick and unpredictable social changes impose continuous change and development pressures on organizations and communities, and adapting to them is not easy. That is why it has become a popular development practice to produce development plans rather than to bring about concrete changes. This has been attained by simply shifting the responsibility of development to distinct units. The task of the unit is to produce development plans based on different kinds of surveys.

In their book on tarok leadership, Henri Broms and Vesa Paavola (1991) equate the production of these kinds of plans and their handling in development meetings and seminars with ceremonies and rituals the task of which is

to strengthen the sense of security rather than to lead to the execution of plans. Often, fortunately or unfortunately for us, the development remains on paper without any perceivable changes in the daily actions. The ritual does, however, sustain an illusion of development.

Training is extensively used as a mode of development. In its traditional form it is well suited to be a reinforcement ceremony of the illusion of change. You can see the contradiction of change and preservation in the actual training occasion if you try to change the very occasion. On behalf of the impact of training, more important than what is being taught is how you learn. Thus you can learn more about the community and its process of change by examining the training situation together with the students than by lecturing about it.

I often start training by asking the participants how they feel and what they expect from the training. These are typical answers:

- I'm in a good and expecting mood,
- I expect something new, new thoughts, motivation to work, or
- I can't say, let's see what comes up.

These typical, vague expectations raise many questions. Are we dealing with indifference, passive adjustment, or lack of interest towards one's own work or towards the training? Have the participants come to training against their free will? Or haven't they learned to examine their own needs and to express them? An explanation can also be found in the role differentiation learned at school, where the teacher is active and chooses the methods and contents, and where the student is a passive receiver of knowledge with little chance to influence on the teaching or the schedules.

The traditional view of education and learning can also be seen in the sitting order: the students sit in lines one behind the other facing the teacher. The arrangement tells about a learning apprehension according to which the students have nothing useful to give each other. Everything worth hearing and learning comes from the teacher.

Sometimes I ask if the participants find the sitting ar-

rangement good. Sometimes one of the participants brings up the issue. When we talk about it, opinions seem to be divided so that the ones who have gotten the back seats are satisfied and don't want any changes, and the ones in the front speak for the change. They would consider small groups or a semicircle where they could see the others. I usually don't take charge of the situation. Every now and then we end up with an altered sitting arrangement, but sometimes regardless of the discussion people stay in their original position.

Whatever the end result, I used the incident as learning material for communal dynamics. I ask the participants to describe what happened as if they were witnessing a crime. Who brought up the issue, how did the others react to that, who were in favor of it and who objected to it, who made the move from words to deeds, who changed his place and who stayed in his original place?

If the change remains on discussion level, we analyze it in the same way, and at the end we evaluate the process and the end result: Is the present sitting arrangement better than the original one? Would someone like to go back to the former arrangement? Is everyone satisfied now or would someone like to have an even better arrangement? Even if some participants weren't completely satisfied with their places, they usually settle for a partial improvement of the situation without daring to propose further changes.

The process can altogether take from half an hour to half a day. But it does offer a concrete common experience of the process of change with all its nuances of the idea, planning, realization, resistance and evaluation. But it is just in the subjectivity of the experience and in confronting one's own feelings and behavior on an open forum, where the risk lies. By risk I mean confronting strong emotions. They can make some participants angry or locked up, and distress others. To express one's feeling openly is a good starting point for learning, but it takes time and skill to turn the experience to learning. I shall come back to these questions in the sections on leading a process and process centered development. It is just that

starting the training in a "different" way reveals the contradiction and scariness of the change process that concerns our daily lives.

When the world changes quickly and uncontrollably, people start to talk about control of change. The Finns were led to this word magic in the late 1980s by talks about controlled change of societal structures, which in the following decade quickly turned out to be an uncontrollable crisis. In organizations and communities, even on the government level, people have insisted on having strong leaders to control the change. Consults with their divers development models have offered to act as guides.

To bring about change is easiest when everyone profits relatively quickly from the change. At the moment development and changes of the private as well as the public sector are carried out with diminishing resources. Giving up acquired benefits as far as being threatened lose one's job naturally causes strong resistance. Antti Karisto (1992) states that the cutting phase requires far more careful planning than the growth phase. About the social sector he writes:

"Now it is time to think about the whole and to analyze the welfare effects of the cutbacks, for otherwise they will strike those areas where they are technically easiest to perform or where the resistance is weakest." (Karisto, 1992, 15)

In decision-making to think about the whole and to analyze the effects requires cooperation and personal interaction between the decision-makers and the ones that will be affected by the decisions. Otherwise the overall view will remain imperfect and the knowledge of the effects of changes superficial. Development of societal institutions and organizations as well as the private sector need new kinds of models for organization and community development and cooperation.

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 re-
sult units, when their self-regulation chances are limited
and often unclear. In the end, control of setting the over-
all objectives and of choosing the operations strategies
has been left to the supreme leadership. The following
figure illustrates the model.
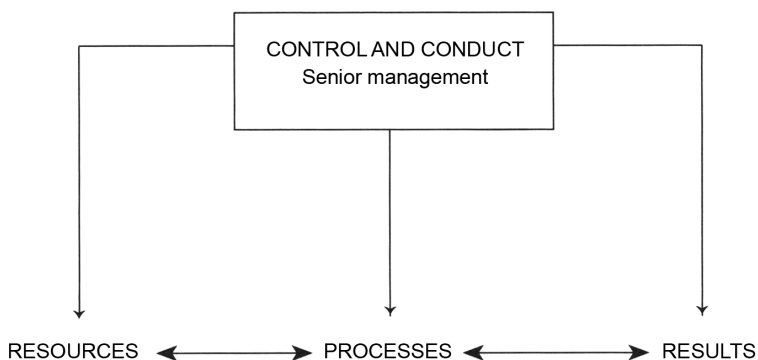
**Figure 3. In resource and result based conduct the supreme
management of the organizaton is in charge of conduct and control.**

The latest phase in organiztion development thinking
is represented by process centricity that can in this con-
text be called **process based conduct.** The development
in process centered development is conducted primarily
from the bottom upwards and holistically. In large organ-
izations 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 man-
agement 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 tradi-
tionally been the management's task, because it is sup-
posed 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 preceeded 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 theraputic 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 neglections 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.

4. THE PROCESS CENTERED DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY OF A COMMUNITY

4.1. Starting points and principles

The emphasis of process centered development lies in studying the everyday life of a community on all of its levels. A community should primarily be developed **from below upwards**, because the main task of both public administration and organizations of the private sector is to respond to the needs of their clients. Were the clients school children, health care patients, nursery school children or customers of a social welfare office, it is always the staff working on the basic level that has the best expertise in knowing their needs. For an organization or a work community to really be led by the needs of its clientele, and to be able to respond to them, listening to the basic level staff and guaranteeing them a chance to influence are the essential prerequisites for succeeding.

However, it is clear that not all the knowledge and experience needed in a community has accumulated in the basic level only. The success of a community requires utilization of the views, knowledge and experiences of all its members, the leadership, superiors and workers. That is why it is essential in development and in daily actions to see the overall situation of the community and the advantage of wholeness. The second principle in process centered development is thus **holism**. We can, of course, state that all models for organization development are holistic. In Management by Objectives, for instance, holism is realized so that all levels and sectors are surveyed in a programmed manner according to a plan that the management has worked out beforehand. In Process Centered development holism means continuous interaction between

the various units and hierarchy levels in the whole community. The starting point is always an open situation, where the objectives of the whole community are worked up by fitting together the objectives and wishes of the various units and the management. The same applies for strategies as well. Process Centered Development is by no means action without objectives. But both the objectives and the strategies are under constant surveillance and treatment, and the whole community takes part in it.

4.2. Applying Process Centered Development into practice

It is typical for the development of both an individual and a community, that when new skills and practices have proved useful, they are established as habits and routines that we are not necessarily even conscious of. The longer and better a routine has worked, the more difficult it is to give it up, even if circumstances should change and routinized action were ineffective or even harmful (cp. Kortteinen, 1992). Kimmo Kevätsalo (1992) notes that employers and a trade union kept to established routines even at the expense of financial profit:

> "...the management's possible attempts for change are conveyed very poorly to the factory floors. On the other hand, the trade union is hardly striving for any changes in the work organization. ... ...

> Both parties are loosing and are fully content with the situation.
> Both could do better, but they prefer to go on as before. The traditional thinking patterns that guide the actions are even stronger than pursuing financial profit in the long run."

On each individual work community level the established and security promoting routines go on from day to day unless serious conflicts or crises arise.

Not only an individual, but also a community has to stop to think the lived and the done, when it is no more possible to go on as before. Individual crises could, for

instance, be death in the family, a divorce, the burning down of one's home, or becoming unemployed. Economic recession, organizational changes, or crises within the community may force the community to stop and to clear the situation and find new solutions together, often with the help of an outside expert. According to the survey at a supervisor training seminar by Risto Hynynen (1992), economic recession has forced the work communities in social welfare and health care fields to reconsider the crux of their work, and to adjust the division of tasks, and to try new working methods.

But is crisis the only way for an individual or a community to learn and to develop? What is it that in normal conditions hinders conscious and regular stopping and examining together one's own work, the state of the work community and its everyday life?

4.2.1. Examining the everyday life

As was stated above, the starting point of process centered development is examining the everyday life of the community. The examination is carried out by the community members themselves. The most important examination method is discussion both while working and in meetings and conferences specially arranged for that purpose. This may sound simple. After harsh experiences, facing the realities, the most advanced business managers even in Finland gradually start to step down from their heights and managers' mutual circles towards the foundation of production, the everyday life on the floor level. As an example Jorma Ollila,the fomer CEO of Nokia, whose interview in Suomen Kuvalehti of April 30, 1992 is partly quoted below:

"I don't believe in slogans. The world changes so fast that declarations and slogans very quickly go out of date. ...

I find it important, that each central business defines its know how factors, and knows how to form them into competition factors in order to make money with them. ...

This is much more trivial than any solemn declaration. Concepts and strategies often simplify matters, they cover up the everyday life.

> Important customers do not ask for declarations. They want to visit the factory, they want to see how it is lead, what kind of people lead it, what is essential in product development. The questions are commonplace. ...
> This is about going back to basic issues, to the fact that every oak has been an acorn. ...A diligent and well motivated person does ten times, maybe a hundred times more (in brainwork/K.M.) than a badly motivated and organized person.
>
> ...
>
> How you motivate him to make profit is tremendously interesting. It does not come about through declarations, it requires you to go to the factory floor and talk to people.
>
> I think it is far more important than for instance talking to reporters."

Examining everyday life together with the staff is talking to people on the "floor level", but it is not **only** walking and talking when you meet with individuals and groups. Regularly organized meetings and conferences, where the community meets to deliberate together questions concerning their work and work community, are necessary.

Discussion and talking are two different things. Most of us have learned to talk in our second year. The sense of hearing is an inborn ability. Community development, however, calls for **open** talking and **responsible** listening. For most people this is not a problem as long as the group is small enough and the people reliable. Problems start to arise only when you should talk as openly in the presence of the whole work community, and when you should also listen to those people of whom you already know what they are going to say, and when you should even listen to them who you don't think have anything reasonable to say or who always make resistance! How often does it happen in large company meetings, that it is the same 20 % of the participants that talk, and the other 80 % are passive or, at the most, whisper to their pals during the meetings. This is, unfortunately, the case with most nov-

ice or otherwise incoherent communities.

Setting aside common time for discussions is difficult for many reasons. Laying off personnel, which has only been augmented by the recession, has increased the staff's amount of work. Everyone can immediately say what he could do with the time used for the meetings, but it is much harder to see and to believe in the good that common meetings and conferences can bring along. The faith is hardly strengthened by the first common meetings, where most people may sit without uttering a single word, and even the most active lot is divided into defenders and oppose of the meetings. The situation is suggestive of a former postman, who complained his haste because of a long route and had therefore no time to learn how to ride a bike. Well, he did once try, but since he happened to fall, he figured that the riding skill would be of no use anyhow. The responsibility of arranging and developing meetings and conferences lies in the beginning almost completely on the faith, skill and perseverance of the manager or the superior.

What should we then talk about? Everything concerning work and the work community. People in training often ask, whether home affairs belong to work. When they oppress or delight us strongly, they will come to work whether we want it or not. That is why talking about them should not be avoided, even though the work community is not the staff's therapy community. However, it would be good, if the community had a therapeutic effect that could support the members' self esteem. Reciprocally work matters end up at home as burdens of the family members the more often the less there is room and chances to talk about them in the work community. Unfortunately bringing home worries from work does not develop the work community.

In common meetings all matters brought up by the community members should be discussed: the good and the bad sides of work and the work community, successes and failures, positive relationships and disagreements, the past and the future. Traditionally it is the manager or the superior that draws up the agendas, and the staff has a

chance to bring up their matters in the section "other matters". If the meetings are meant to create a **means to develop the community**, then all members of the community should have a chance to bring the matters they are interested in to common discussion. It has proved useful to have at an agreed place a conference notebook where anyone can immediately write down the matter he wants to be dealt with in the common meeting. Decisions can also be recorded in the notebook, when they will remain and anyone can read them at any time. At the same time the notebook becomes a "diary" or a "chronicle" of the community, where you can afterwards track the community's development in all its stages.

Another tricky question is how often it is necessary to have unit or community meetings. A couple of meetings a year will do to fulfill the requirements of industrial democracy, but they are of no remarkable importance from the point of view of community development. In principle, the more frequent the meetings are, the more effective means of community development they will become. In the Dingleton Hospital therapeutic community developed by Maxwell Jones (1982) in the 1960's, the staff and the patients gather daily to a common meeting that lasts approximately an hour. These meetings are attended by 50 - 100 people (in the recent years the number of patients has been fairly small), who after 30 years of experience really openly discuss all matters concerning the hospital. In Finland there is very little experience of meetings in institutions of the corresponding size. Meetings for the whole community or administration have hardly been arranged at all. Whenever a meeting is summoned, it is an information meeting arranged by the management.

The Central Finland federation of municipalities for social affairs started in the late 1980's meetings for the whole district, at first a few times a year. Motivated by positive experiences the leadership together with the staff has seen it necessary to have meetings more frequently. It is remarkable that the meetings that take place in the central institution are attended by representatives from other institutions around the county of Central Finland. It is

significant that the attenders are not always the same representatives of work communities, since that would turn the meetings into traditional forums of representative democracy, where knowledge, skill and power conglomerate on a small group of people.
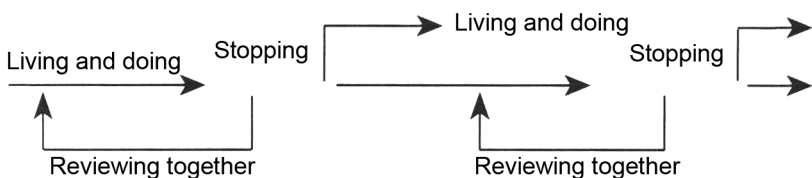
4.2.2. Living and learning

In the course of technological development it often seems as if people identified with the machines they work with. A machine is effective, because it runs continuously at maximum revolutions. It seems that modern man is expected to do the same: to be quick and to be continuously on the move.

The rationalization of working life has aimed at and by far succeeded in the elimination of unnecessary movements and pauses, and has thus reduced the use of expensive labor. That is why those who remain are in a hurry. Work often allows only minimal brakes, and there is hardly time for conversation between the workers. Undeniably, the action does seem effective.

The effectiveness of work can not, however, be estimated by the amount of haste. Through haste it is possible to move towards objectives in the direction of the basic task, or away from them. That is why there has to be time to stop and examine together where you are, what you are doing and how, and what is achieved and what is not. Let us for a while consider a farmer driving at full throttle with his tractor. He drives so fast that he cannot look back every now and then. Even if he were able to turn the field quickly, the result will not necessarily be acceptable. But it will not bother the farmer as long as he has no time to discover that. However, the truth will come out at harvest time at the latest.

Maxwell Jones (1968, 1976) called learning through the everyday life of a work community 'living and learning', and later on 'social learning'. Because of the extensive use of the concept social learning I will rather use here the concept living and learning. It requires regular stopping and studying what has been done and lived through.

Figure 4. "Model" for living and learning, where lived and done are continuously reviewed together through discussions and which provides the basis for the direction of coming actions.

It is possible to describe self-regulating organizational learning, often called double-looped learning through the model of living and learning (Morgan,1986; Argyris et al, 1985).

The starting point in the traditional organization development thinking is a survey of the community's present state usually done by questionnaires and/or interviews. Based on the outcome, the most central problems and development needs are located. Another part of the strategy of action research is that the survey results are given to the community's disposal. After the consultant has presented the results, the community members choose the development areas and consider means of development. This is often done in small groups. Afterwards the groups' achievements are summoned, and the community members together agree upon practical development measures, people in charge, schedules and follow-up. Many development projects follow the development of the community's state with the help of annual situation surveys.

This kind of a survey – planning – realization – follow up -model is slow and does not function in swiftly changing circumstances. It does help to bring up problems, but the strategy is inadequate in creating a high standard community that can effectively solve problems. That is why it has quite often happened that the community has used up it resources already at the stage of considering the results and the means. There has not been enough consensus and energy to carry them out. The initial enthusiasm and great expectations turn into collective dis-

appointment. The results of change strategies that have been planned in advance and programmed to be carried out in stages, have even in the light of research turned out weaker than had been expected (Beer & Walton, 1987).

According to study results, change does not comply with plans that have been worked out in advance. McLean et al (1982, 87-89) have found following weaknesses in the change strategies that have been planned in advance:

> 1. The functional model (agreement – gathering information – analysis – giving feedback) does not produce enough information from the point of view of action, and leads to gathering additional information.
> 2. The training scheme, meant to precede the change, becomes detached from the objectives, and instead of being a means it turns into an end in itself.
> 3. The control group of change becomes involved in analyzing its own processes, and fails to carry out its actual task and problem solving.

Schlessinger and Ostry (1984) as well as Jick and Ashkenaskin (1985) emphasize the fact that in order to bring about long term changes you have to start with little changes, the success in which should be connected to a wider change in systems and structures. This approach is very close to the idea of the process centered development strategy, where the basis of change is constant examination of the staff's everyday life and experiences. To link up little changes with wider connections requires, however, that the staff has an updated overall view of the organization, i.e. common social reality.

To stop constantly and regularly to discuss together what has been done and lived through means **constant self-evaluation and change** for the community. Traditionally evaluation and planning have been detached as separate activities that should establish the basis for change and development. In process centered development, systematic and wide-ranging evaluation of the community's state and its results is an important instru-

ment for change **follow-up**, but it is not adequate enough to maintain the process of change nor to direct it continuously.

Companies that go on to result responsibility emphasize the meaning of setting the objectives and planning expressly in view of the control needs of the administration and the leadership, but from the point of view of internal development of communities the most important factor is that all members of the community together examine their own actions. For example in schools, teachers and students assess their own community, their learning results, and together plan and decide on matters that concern their work and their community. External assessment studies give each unit essential feedback of their rating in relation to other schools on various dimensions.

External assessments can hardly change the concrete interaction and atmosphere between the teacher and the student group, which, however, are crucial from the point of view of learning results and motivation. It is hard to imagine how for instance an index of students' responsibility assessed through questionnaires could help the teacher or the students to grow in responsibility. But if the community has got time to agree on the division of tasks and on common rules, and to handle their violations and neglects, then the processes of assessment and education are organically connected in the community's everyday life and serve the basic task of school education (Kaipio, 1977; Kaipio and Murto, 1980).

In the examination of everyday life carried out together, the action - what has been done and lived through - is evaluated in relation to the **basic task** of the community. In the whirls of societal change each organization has to define its basic task over and over again: Why does our community exist? Whom should it serve and how? In relation to our basic task, are we doing the right things in the right way? How does the course of action and the functional structure that we follow help the realization of our basic task?

In addition to evaluation, the process centered development strategy also approaches **planning** from a new point

of view. Traditionally planning in communities and organizations has been a part of the leadership's tasks. Normally the management decides on the annual objectives and outlines the strategies to achieve them. After that they are introduced to lower superiors and the staff, who can tell their opinions of them. For practical action, the responsibility areas are divided and the follow up methods and schedules are agreed upon.

The shift over to result responsibility has led also the public administration communities to act as described above. It is, of course, positive if the staff two or three times a year thinks over its work, objectives and results. But from the point of view of community development it is not enough to achieve real changes. At worst you can end up with a dispassionate ritual that is **performed** on account of an external demand. People pretend to develop, but instead of enthusiasm most of them experience boredom and alienation.

Planning itself can be inspiring. The management or the staff can reach very impressive common visions, especially if the environment is comfortable and far from the place of work. But this means looking at the future only, and the forgotten daily grind strikes back the minute you should move from visions and strengthened will over to concrete action. **In the process centered development strategy you move from the concrete over to the abstract, from today's reality into tomorrow with the aid of yesterday's experiences**. Wider, long term visions and objectives will arise and formulate gradually as the communal self esteem grows. The continual, regular participation in examining one's own and the others' actions - the lived and the done - will gradually cause each member of the staff to **commit him- or herself to common objectives and courses of action**.

Developing one's own actions

The model for living and learning can also be applied to the development of an individual's own actions. In practise this could be done for instance by writing a diary of one's work. We have used the diary as a part of training

on both leaders and nursing staff. Even though learning this kind of a line of action has proved difficult, the ones that have succeeded in it have reported only positive experiences.

To end a working day by writing down in free form his or her experiences and feelings helps the individual to take distance to the lived and the done, when it is easy for him or her to see

– on what kind of things he/she spends his/her time and how his/her time employment responds to his/her idea of his/her basic task or

– what kind of things have proved difficult or problematic, and how he/she copes or tries to cope with them.

A leader, a teacher, a nurse, as anyone of us will at some point get into a conflict situation. In such a case we usually act - quite unnoticed - according to certain routines that we have learned in our early years. If the end result is what we expected, we don't have to stop to think over our line of action. But if we experience failures, we either stop to analyze those situations, or reject them, and try to explain them to ourselves the best we can, and thus deprive ourselves the chance to learn.

If keeping a regular diary seems insuperably difficult, another effective way to learn from your own experiences and to develop your work is to write about, and thus to analyze, problem situations and emotions connected to them. This kind of analysis provides the basis for trying out and evaluating new kinds of courses of action.

Alan Mumford's (1991) study on management practices showed that managers are concerned solely of making profit. They attach learning to training which is often carried out as an undertaking detached from the everyday life. They see learning from one's work and experiences as the most important source of learning, but in most cases it turns out to be a haphazard side product of making profit. However, one of the best ways to increase the profit is to consciously pay attention to one's own learning. One of the managers told that in the mornings he

thinks over and writes down what he wants to achieve during the day or what his aims are in the day's meetings. In the evening he estimates how well he has succeeded, and what was the share of his own contribution and that of the others.

Mumford sees this kind of learning as the best since it makes it possible to attach learning consciously and systematically to everyday activities. It is possible to intensify learning by seeing situations confronted at work or outside work as learning situations, by evaluating them afterwards alone or together with work mates, and by making conclusions of them for the future.

4.2.3. Learning a common language

When we talk about things and experiences connected to work and the work community we can recognize also differences in language use between community members from different organization levels or professional groups, and the misunderstandings and problems caused by them. According to each individual's life experience, concepts have different meanings than in the work mates' or the superiors' language use.

If a community starts to discuss for instance the need and arrangements of common meetings, people's varying experiences from meetings can cause strong disagreements of their usefulness, and even thwart the creation of basic requirements for development. Most of us have more than enough experience of formal inflexible meetings. If there are no other kinds of experiences, it will be hard to understand why you should have even more of such "silent treatments", where it is the few and always the same who talk and the majority sits still. The time comes off a person's actual working time which is scarce enough as it is. In a case like this it would be wise to start in a more unofficial way, for instance by extending the coffee breaks and by using them to discuss matters concerning the staff. Based on the gathered experiences people can then analyze and evaluate what functions well in the meetings and how they could improve the use of common time.

If you start to develop a community basically by talking about general objectives and principles, you may reach consensus, but that in turn may prove to be an illusion. Because of verbal misunderstandings and misinterpretations it is easy to end up in conflicting practices. In process centered development you don't start out by learning a new language introduced by a consultant, but instead people learn the common language as a result of daily interaction, in common meetings and conferences.

4.2.4 Creating common social reality

In their behavior and actions people tend to take into consideration circumstantial and situational factors. However, two people may interpret the same situation in a different way. From the point of view of our behavior, the crucial thing is most often not what a situation 'objectively' is like, but how we interpret it in our minds, i.e. our subjective view of reality.

When we get into new kinds of situations we try by asking others to find out what is going on, what people expected from us, what our position and role in the situation are. If there is no chance for discussion, we try to determine the same things on the basis of previous experiences by interpreting non-verbal clues. Sounding out a colleague's moods or the spouse's feelings may sometimes take a lot of time and energy if communication does not work.

Erving Goffman (1963, 24) writes in his book on stigma about the effects of social isolation:

> "If one is isolated, does not receive healthy feedback on his daily interaction with the other people, he starts to get paranoid, depressed, hostile, anxious and confused."

Since man always tries to cope in the best possible way both in his physical and social environment, he replaces and completes lacking social reality with his imagination. Imagining and trusting one's own fantasies may seem more secure in a work community than entering into open interaction, which is a realistic way to fix the shortcomings of common social reality. On the other hand, to build common social reality requires common time and common discussion forums that usually only the organization management is authorized to arrange. Nevertheless, there are very few organization managements that are interested in creating common social reality with their subordinates within the framework of the whole organization or the work community.

In representative democracy people that represent different interest groups create common social reality

among themselves since they are in continuous interaction with each other. The fact that representatives become estranged from their voters and the ideological differences between them become obscure, can partly be explained by their close mutual interaction. In direct decision-making situations, ministers and representatives may depend more on the views of their colleagues than those of their voters (Moring, 1989). This seems to happen also to people that have worked as shop stewards in labor unions for a long time, since they have to negotiate continuously with the employers. They have more common reality with their opponents than with the workers they represent:

> "The longer they have worked as shop stewards, the more
> common and easier it is for them to integrate to the line
> organization and get the status of the superiors working there. The
> shop steward negotiates continuously with the management, and if
> their cooperation goes smoothly, identification with the superiors
> is very likely to happen." (Perkka-Jortikka, 1992, 136).

The representatives of labor unions and their central organizations are in a similar situation, but the distance to the field they represent is considerably longer than on shop stewards. The management of central professional organizations has more interaction with the employer organizations and political leaders than with workers on the grass-root level. The leaders develop a common language and common social reality even though they represent different interest groups.

It is very difficult to define the concept of common social reality. There are some viewpoints in the following:

> 1. It is a part of reality that together with the physical reality controls the behavior of the individual and the group.
> 2. In some respects it is relatively stable, as concerns the community's official and unofficial values, norm, customs, attitudes and beliefs. Berger and Luckmann (1967, 65-109) talk about objectified social reality when they refer to written laws and rules, and of

    non-objectified social reality such as oral agreements, customs and habits.
    3. It also includes situation bound opinions, interpretations and emotional reactions (Schutz, 1975).

From the point of view of behavior, the immediate situation is decisive, since the way we interpret that will define which aspects of social reality, for instance values, norms or customs, are valid. A thrifty person can on vacation or in the presence of certain people be very extravagant. A person that among colleagues is known very radical behaves himself conservatively in the presence of his superior, if he interprets that social reality (his views of the superior's authority and attitudes) calls for it.

The social reality of a group or a community is created continually. Everyone contributes to it by bringing his or her views, opinions, feelings and experiences. An example of the quick change of common social reality is a ward in a big central hospital. In the morning the atmosphere and mutual relationships between the staff members are fine, work goes well and the patients' needs can be met very well. After lunch break the head nurse arranges a briefing and tells to whom the personal bonus was awarded this time.

After the briefing the atmosphere is very tense, free discussion has dried up to taunting and carping: let those do the work who now how to and who are paid for it! The ward's social reality has changed within an instant.

Common social reality is created with the aid of interaction. It comprises opinions and beliefs that have been formed together about the environment, other people and ourselves. Physical reality comprises the objective reality which can be seen and which exists regardless of our opinions and beliefs. It is much easier to agree on: Where is the door to this room? Where is the window, the table or the chair? Social reality is constantly recreated. It is subject to change and it is difficult to measure or define objectively. What is the atmosphere in the group or community like or what are the mutual relationships like?

In these questions the opinions of the community mem-

bers may differ from each other a great deal.

Constructing social reality is taking off masks both from ourselves and the others. They are often masks that we have not even been aware of.

Common social reality does not mean that the community members think or react in the same way to work and the work community, but that they through sharing their own views and opinions become aware of each others' views and opinions. This promotes mutual understanding, interaction and confidence.

The importance of common social reality
Since common social reality is created in continuous interaction, it is clear that individuals and communities that have little mutual interaction also share little common social reality. Thus the highest hierarchy level in an organization has usually the smallest amount of common social reality with the basic level.

A good description of the state of common social reality in a Finnish insurance company is found in the dissertation of Katriina Perkka-Jortikka (1992, 108-109):

"Department meetings; those present were the department manager, the division manager and the clerical employees; in principle they met once a month, in practice whenever there was something to discuss; the manager was present when needed ...

The principle of information flow was that in the unit's management group meeting the department managers told the division managers the matters concerning them, and the division managers then told the employees the matters concerning them. Since the departments had common discussions very seldom (more seldom than once a month), and since there was no structure for the department managers and the division managers to form common views, the clerical employees received at least seven different official information versions (from two department managers and five division managers).

... ...

... in practice he (the department manager/K.M.) hardly knew very much of what was going on in his community."

It is clear that common social reality on the department level in the described insurance company was rather weak, and hindered the profitable actions of the community in many ways.

Then again, inside the departments some divisions might have had plenty of open interaction and common social reality, but even some of them were cliquish and incapable of open communication (Perkka-Jortikka, 1992, 87-91, 102).

Setälä's (1988) study on services showed that those working on the highest level of an organization systematically estimated the level of services better than the basic level staff who provided the services. When the estimates were compared to the customers' estimates, it could be seen that the estimates given by the basic level staff were closer to the customers' estimates than those given by the highest level.

Insufficient common social reality and scanty interaction between the management and the basic level staff always impede the realization of the basic task of an organization. The ill-effects only become emphasized in circumstances with scarce resources, when economic viewpoints become overemphasized in the management's decision-making and in the reduction of operations. The staff sees and experiences the human effects without having much of a chance to interfere.

In the decision-makers' social reality the effects can be seen as statistics and figures from which the distress and anxiety of the staff, patients, customers, students or children has been eliminated. From the basis of cooperation and common social reality between the decision-makers and the people affected by the decisions, much better and more responsible solutions could be achieved both for the organization as a whole and for the individuals.

Common social reality may also be missing between managers and their immediate subordinates, which can be seen in a study conducted by Chris Argyris (1981), a well-known American organization researcher. The supreme management characterized the atmosphere as friendly, genial, relaxed and sincere. When their subordi-

nates, the assistant managers, were asked the same question, they estimated that the managers repelled unpleasant information and were very careful in taking risks and in putting themselves at stake, that they were unable to trust and to handle conflicts openly, and that they were very inclined towards conformism.

In one of the organizations Argyris studied, the supreme management did not know that

– 71 % of the middle management could not define their relationship to their superiors. They were also unable to say how their superiors evaluated them.

– 65 % of the middle management did not know which factors affected advancing in the organization.

– 87 % felt that conflicts in the company were very seldom cleared up, and even when there was an attempt to clear them up, it was inadequate.

– 65 % of the middle management thought that the most important unsolved problems of the organization had to do with the inability of the supreme management to help them in coping with competition situations between groups, with lack of cooperation and with weak communication.

– 59 % estimated the efficiency of the supreme management as average at the most.

– 82 % of the middle management hoped for greater respect for their work, but did not have the courage to express their hopes to the supreme management.

Argyris states that at least at those meetings of the supreme management and the middle management he attended, the middle management did not bring up a single one of the above mentioned problems. Instead, the kinds of problems most often brought up were that there was too much work and that more personnel should be hired,

there should be fewer meetings and reports, and schedules should be loosened up. As we can see, no common social reality was established since they were not able to discuss the most important issues. The less there is discussion in a community, the more there are illusions, and the smaller is the domain of common social reality.

By discussing their work and work community people share their opinions, thoughts and feelings creating thus common social reality and collective experience. The chance to have influence on the community, to be able to create common reality motivates, promotes commitment to the community and creates common overall view. The overall view helps the running of things by opening up choices to the members. Knowledge of the overall situation supports the communication of each member with the environment. Like this the members get a reliable picture of the community, when one member does not say one thing and the other another thing.

In a community with little common social reality there is no basis to attain common objectives. The superior can of course conduct discussions about the objectives, but if the personnel lack a common and uniform view of their work and work community, the realization of the objectives lacks a firm basis.

A small amount of common social reality may also be due to neglecting the taking of communal responsibility as shown by the studies of Stanley Milgram, a well-known social psychologist. In the 1960's Milgram conducted empirical research on obeyance and authority dependence. His findings, according to which 60 % of the average American testees were ready to give a deadly electric shock to their "pupils" at the experimenter's command, startled researchers and the public opinion. Milgram explained that to learn the tendency to obey was necessary for the uniformity and efficiency of an organization. The one working on the lower level has to surrender power to his superior (Argyris et al., 1985, 105-117, 197-198).

According to Argyris, Harmon (1981) posed the question in a new way. Milgram had started with a situation

where the decision-makers and the executors are separated and where the decision-makers have the power, but where responsibility is very indefinitely divided between the decision-makers and the executors, which is a very common situation in larger private and public administration organizations. Harmon suggests that decision-makers and executors should not be kept apart, because then the consistency of operations and the sustenance of the feeling of personal responsibility for decisions could be guaranteed (Argyris et al., 1985, 199):

> " His own invention is a consensus rule under which participants must bilaterally negotiate their different views and interests, with no one person unilaterally imposing decisions on others. Under these conditions, he hypnotized that it woukd be less likely for one to act without feeling both personally responsible and accountable to others."

The model presented by Harmon deviates crucially from today's organizational decision-making structure, where the decision-makers, for example under cover of economic recession, make decisions that affect administrative sectors apart from those who carry out the decisions. The number of pupils in a class is increased at schools, fewer tests are made in health care, food costs are cut at day care centers, and personnel is reduced almost everywhere. But do the decision-makers confront those workers or their clients, who have to bear the consequences? Or will the decision-makers be brought to court for having caused damage or injury with their decisions?

4.2.5. Creating open forums for decision-making

To fulfill the lack of common social reality between the decision-makers and the executors, Anton Makarenko and Maxwell Jones, both independent of each other, developed a same kind of solution: open forums for decision-making (Murto, 1991, 177-178).

Traditionally both private and public administration organizations have emphasized the limits of exercising power. With a special earnestness they have kept guard over the issue, who is allowed and who has the right to participate in, for instance, the meetings of the management or the board of directors, who is allowed to make proposals in them and who is not. In recent years there has been, now and again even heated discussion of the right of the staff's representatives to attend meetings of the decision-making bodies.

Giving information of decisions or matters in preparation is seen as a question of power: who is allowed to give information, and of what matters, inside and outside the organization. The public administration has had the practise not to give information of matters in preparation, even though the municipal law already has a different content. As the basis of planning, statements are asked from chosen interest groups. Decisions prepared like this are often followed by a spiral of complaints, which may slow down the execution of the decisions and raise their costs. This kind of emphasis on hierarchism and the control of limits alienates the members of an organization, creates mistrust and insecurity, and promotes the formation of cliques. It is hardly difficult to find examples of cases like this. And there is nothing to be wondered at the fact that the flow of information is seen as the central problem of almost every organization and working place.

C. P. Alderfer (1976), an organization researcher, has described how the vitality of an organization depends on the openness of its limits. The dependency can be described as the letter U turned upside down as seen in the following figure.

The vitality of
an organisation

The openess
of limits
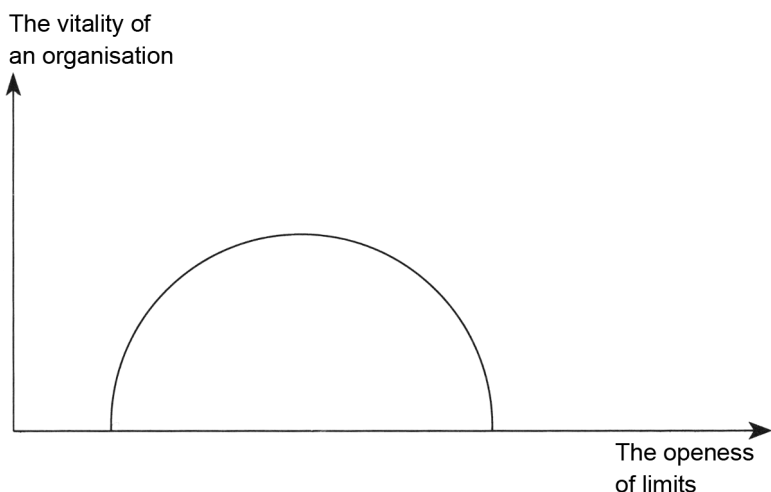
Figure 5. The connection between the vitality of an organization and the openness of limits (Alderfer, 1976).

Alderfer emphasizes that concrete existing limits create subjective limits in people's minds. Those who belong to the management group, the board of directors or the administration are seen as a separate caste in the minds of those who have been left outside. This leads gradually to the diminishing of interaction, increasing of distance, and differentiation of the groups' social realities. The same phenomenon applies to other hierarchical limits. In the dining room of a hospital or an institution you can with a quick glance detect the invisible limits between the dining people: the tables of the management, the nurses and the patients can certainly be discerned.

Each one of us can study these limits inside our minds for instance by imagining that you go and sit down at the management's table when you are not "a member of the gang". What kind of feelings and thoughts are aroused? Have we internalized the limits of hierarchy as norms that direct our behavior? Similar invisible barriers are likely to be found in most of the work communities.

According to Alderfer, inflexible limits within an organization also characterize its relationships to the environment. If an organization can not utilize its inner re-

sources, it has usually also closed itself from the outside world. But an excessive openness of limits is not good either. It reveals that the community has a weak identity, that it lacks policy lines and willpower. The openness or 'closedness' of an organization is determined by the policy lines chosen by the management and the administration. If the plans and decisions concerning the organization and the work community are made behind closed doors, it will arise insecurity and, in the personnel, the need to defend themselves in every possible way. Distrust, fed by weak flow of information, leads to the formation of closed cliques which compete with each other, and from which the community as a whole will suffer.

The internal openness of an organization is connected to its ability to cope with its problems. Groups and communities that have open and reciprocal relationships between their members cope better with new and surprising situations, with problems that can only be solved with creativity, than communities where there is little openness and reciprocity between the members (Alderfer, 1976).

The figure below depicts a model of an organization with open decision-making and exercise of power carried out by Makarenko and Jones.
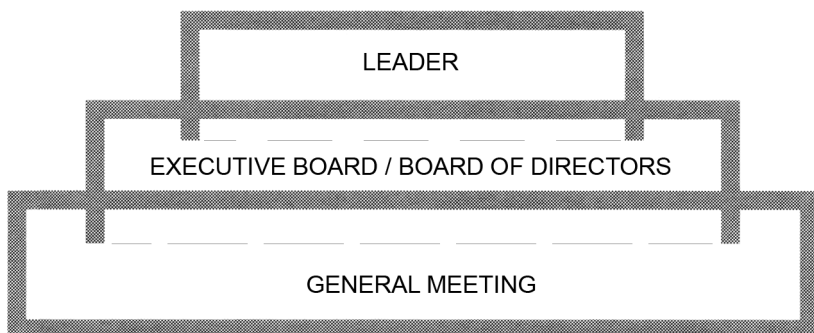
Figure 6. A model for open decision-making structure, where the decision-making forums are open for any member of the organization (Murto, 1991, 178).

Even though Makarenko and Jones as leaders of their communities had formal decision-making power in many questions, they did not use it over the decisions made in the general meetings. The same applies to the decision-making bodies that equal to a board of directors, where the will and decisions of the general meeting were complied with. In both communities it was remarkable that the leader was available at any time for anyone who wanted to meet him, and prepared to talk about any questions whatsoever; meetings of the management group were open for anyone willing to attend; the general meeting was held every day and it factually had the highest power of decision. Since the internal activities of the communities differed from the official rules and practices of the environment and the society, it naturally caused many problems. They were, however, not able - perhaps because of critical conditions in the societies - to hinder the development of the mentioned communities.

   To open up the decision-making forums in public administration might be the way in which the creative resources and activity of the personnel and even of the clients could be awakened and the faith in societal democracy restored.

   Jonathan Boswell (1990), a British economist, looks at the ill-effects caused by the lack of cooperation on societal level. According to him, the cooperation traditions of companies, the state and the labor unions create the basis for the taking of responsibility for the condition of the whole nation. Boswell shows how such states where cooperation between the above mentioned sectors has worked well, have got over their economic troubles better than other states.

   In Finland the cooperation between the employer and the employee organizations has always been reluctant. The results can be seen in the personnel's poor chances to participate in the decision-making of companies and public administration. The centralized incomes policy agreement got the most negative response from the Confederation of Finnish Trade Unions and its suborganizations. The most positive reception it met with the labor unions and central organizations of civil servants and especially of the upper

clerical personnel. Sociologically the situation can be understood as a result of the small amount of common social reality between the basic level workers and the employer sectors, and the weak mutual trust that results from it.

The less the employers and their representatives have interaction with the personnel on the organization level, the less common social reality they will have, and the weaker will the preconditions to understand and trust each other become. Clerical employees and especially upper clerical employees and civil servants have more, and more regular, cooperation with the employers than the workers, which has led to the development of greater common social reality and mutual understanding. Thus it has been easier for these groups to understand and trust each other in economic crises and to reach an agreement on the basis of general interest than what it has been for the employee organizations. The same applies also to the relationships between the employers and employees in the organizations of the state and the municipalities.

The less there are forums for cooperation and interaction between different sectors, the more prejudice and distrust will be created. During economic booms the gaps of confidence and cooperation can be filled with money, but during depression the gaps will grow into abysses and fill with distrust, envy and hatred. To build bridges over these abysses is even later on a slow and painful process. That is why, to prevent these conflicts, it would be necessary to create cooperation forums between and within the sectors, and to support their activities.

With special urgency these forums are needed in the cooperation of the employers, the management and the workers. They should promote direct, regular, and continuous interaction. Cooperation between the organizations or representative cooperation is not enough. Common social reality can only be created in direct cooperation that has to be continual in order to destroy the substrate of suspicion and distrust. Common forums are also needed badly for the utilization of the creative forces in organizations, and for the proactive adjustment to quick changes in the environment.

Keskisuomalainen (28.4.1992), a Finnish newspaper, published an article about Antero Kiviniemi, a managing director, who has an apt view of the future of the Finnish banking world and the political economy.

> "Our problem is that no one controls the whole with a firm hold. The limitation of liability between the state, the financiers, the companies and the unions is unclear. These groups hold to their camps that each have contrary objectives. ... ... An economic spin can, according to Kiviniemi, be avoided with cooperation. One has to acknowledge the economic realities and to plan in cooperation a development program and its realization as projects. ... New large investments are not necessary, instead we need determined development and cooperation ..."

We can add to Kiviniemi's views that each person working in the various sectors should have an overall view, not just the strong leader. We should also adopt a reserved attitude towards strong leaders and disposable development programs and projects. The cooperation between the state, the financiers, the entrepreneurs and the unions should be continual interaction reaching from the management to the basic level of the organizations in order to establish and preserve common social reality.

From these national perspectives I shall return to the creation of internal common social reality in communities and organizations, where the functional structure of the community has a central role.

4.2.6 Creating functional structure

Organization development and research has paid a lot of attention to the social structure of an organization. Sometimes organization development has been seen merely as changing the social structure, as the rearrangement of the "organization boxes" and as a new division of tasks.

The unpredictability and speed of social changes has led organization researchers to see development as continual action. This requires the creation of 'mechanisms' within an organization and a work community that guarantee continual change and development.

Confronted with such a challenge, to use an outside consultant as a reorganizer is not enough. In the future the leader of an organization and a work community has to master and adopt the roles of consultant and developer. Also the community has to organize into its own daily routines the elements that enforce development. Development oc-curs through action, and continual development is based on proper functional structure.

How can we fit together daily routines and creative community development? The starting point is to distinguish between two kinds of routines: harmful and useful ones. Harmful are such individual and communal routines that are remains of former times but do not serve the community operation in the present environment and in the basic task. Useful are the routines that support predictive proactive adjustment to the functional environment and continuous re-evaluation and realization of the basic task. A harmful routine can be distinguished from a useful one by carrying out the model for living and learning as described above, by creating time to pause together to examine one's own and the community's actions on the basis of its basic task. This kind of pausing is a useful routine in every community.

If we as individuals or as a community have no time to stop and examine what has been lived through and what has been done, we will blindly repeat previous courses of action and routines, we will not learn from experiences nor will we develop. By functional structure I mean the

entirety of all the actions of a community. Which could be described for instance as a school schedule. In a dormitory type community or a hospital it covers 24 hours, in a school for instance 6 - 8 hours a day.

In a factory or a store the functional structure could be 8 hours for the workers and possibly 24 hours a day for the owners.

These functional structures should include room for regular common meetings where the realized action and the experiences derived from it could analyzed and evaluated together, and based on that the action could be altered and developed. Anton Makarenko and Maxwell Jones realized daily common meetings in their communities (Murto, 1991).

For an institution mainly for psychopaths, established in 1947, renamed as Henderson Hospital in 1959, Jones developed a functional structure where each morning commences with a staff meeting followed by a common meeting for the staff and the patients. In these meetings they go through the events of the previous night and the programs for the day. In addition to this, the meetings of therapy, activity and work groups, that are part of the treatment, all end with a common review of the lived and the done. This functional structure has guaranteed exceptionally good results in the treatment of difficult patients, and the survival of the therapeutic community for almost fifty years now.

In community development it is important to examine the actions also as a whole, for instance from a therapy group meeting to a daily, weekly and yearly period. By proportioning larger functional periods to the basic task of the community we have a chance to estimate and develop the community from a new point of view or from a new level. In the figure below, the examination of the functional structure is attached to the model of living and learning.
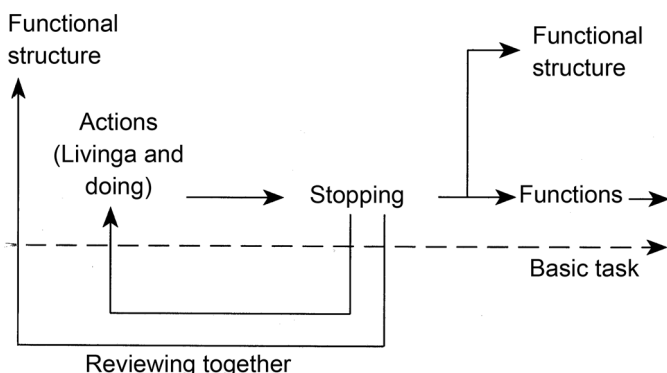
Figure 7. The basis of community development is regular and often occurring review of actions and the functional structure starting with the basic task of the community. Reviewing provides the basis for looking forward, for planning, for the revision of actions and the functional structure.

In changing the general structures of actions we are often confronted with the community's social structure and its effects.

By social structure I refer to both official and unofficial groups and relations. The official social structure is expressed in the organization chart and in various rules (laws and service regulations among other things). It includes the divisions of tasks, power and responsibility relations, and other obligations that also direct the community's functional structure. If you want to change the functional structure for instance in regard to power relations or the decision-making system, you will come up against the restrictions of the social structure.

In an institution, it could be substantiated to move the choice of the leader and the superiors to the staff of the units, but it is usually not possible owing to the restrictions placed by the social structure, for instance the service regulations. In practice it is usually very distant for the basic level staff to start perceiving, from the point of view of the community's basic task, the role and importance of the various levels of a large organization. The same applies to the leadership, for it is not easy for them to see the real effects and meanings of their actions in the community's daily interaction, as shown above by the

analyses by Harmon and Boswell.

To sum up, it can be stated that from the point of view of process centered development the role of functional structure rises to a central position between a community's daily actions and the social structure as a construction that conveys change. From below it is defined by the actions and routines of the community and its members, from above it is affected by social conditions and requirements reflected by the social structure as shown in figure 8.
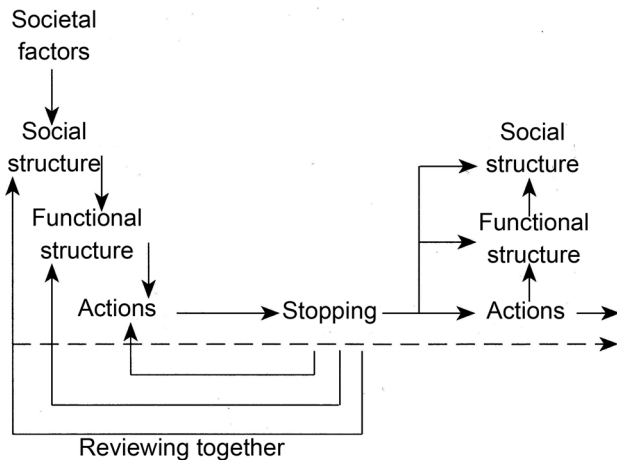
Figure 8. The actions and the social structure of a community are controlled by its social structure and societal regulations and decisions, the meaning and effects of which can be analyzed by stopping and reviewing together. This provides the basis for continuous evaluation of the basic task and for repairing the defects that hinder its realization.

To examine and evaluate the functional structure is a part of examining the everyday life. To examine the functional structure is by no means something new. It has been examined - though not from the point of view of process centered development - for instance in a health center's bed ward (Leino, 1992) and in a psychiatric hospital (Karterud, 1989). In the following I shall try to give an example of how we in training have learned to exam-

ine a community's functional structure and its meaning to the realization of the basic task.

The functional structure of one day in a psychiatric hospital ward could look like this:

In the same way we can map together the functional structures for a day or a week of the various staff groups and patients. When we start to examine the meaning of the functional structure from the viewpoint of the realization of the basic task, I have asked the trainees to consider each form of action as minutely as possible: What is going on there? What are they doing? What kind of interaction is there? What kind of relations and **roles** do people settle in?

In regard to their position, people in a hospital community are divided into staff and patients. There are of course many roles within the staff, such as the cleaning women, nurses, head nurses and doctors. Then we can examine for instance the staff's interaction and division of tasks, and consider it from the perspective of the realization of the basic task. A concrete analysis of the individual parts of the functional structure from the point of view of the staff's and the patient's functional roles has proved very revealing. The result may look like this:

A patient can, of course, actively or passively oppose instructions, advice, demands or orders, but it will not affect his role. Certainly other kinds of role differentiation do exist, but the one presented above is not rare no matter if we are dealing with the wards of an institution for the disabled or a psychiatric hospital. If we instead of staff wrote down teachers, and substituted patients for students, the role differentiation would not seem impossible.

When we have been pinning down the general appearance of the role representation in various training courses, we have become aware of the well-known fact that the staff is <u>active and giving</u>, the patients <u>dependent, passive and receiving</u>.

Well then, what is the **meaning** of this kind of role differentiation from the standpoint of the basic task of for instance a ward of a mental hospital? If the basic task should include activating the patients, and supporting in-

dependence, initiatives and self-esteem, does the perceived role differentiation support the realization of the basic task?

The next question to come up is what should be done. How could we develop the functional structure so that it would offer the patients roles that would be suitable for them in respect to their rehabilitation? Could we change the prevailing actions so that the patients would get new roles? Confronted with such questions some people become frustrated:

"They (the patients) don't learn anything!" "I can't think of anything."

Heavy work, constant feeling of busyness, and pressures from constant organizational reforms wear out the staff's resources and suppress creativity. What remains, is routine work and an attempt to somehow make it from one day to another. The "reforms" that are conducted from above paradoxically push the basic level staff into the passive role of the receiver and alienate them from the basic task.

Those who have preserved their optimism and faith will start to give ideas to new functional models and actions:

– Could the patients go for a walk together? Could they learn how to make beds or to how to lead singing?

– Could we choose a host and a hostess for each ward for a certain period of time?

– Could the patients arrange a family festival with the staff's support?

– Could we arrange a thinking day for the staff and the patients, when mixed groups could discuss all the matters that could be different in the ward?

– Could the members of the staff and the patients review together the lived and the done after each activity?

When we think about reforming actions and new forms of actions like this, we often come up against the staff's role differentiation and division of tasks. In regard to the basic task it would sometimes be expedient to redivide the tasks in accordance to the inclinations and interests of

the staff members. Evaluation of actions carried out afterwards usually reveals surprising things concerning the quantity and quality of interaction, which will help both the staff and the patients.

When we change the functional structure, we will confront the social structure of the organization. For example if one ward in an institute for the disabled would like to change its eating hours or to have a special worker like a music or a physiotherapist in the ward, it would require alteration and flexibility of the actions of the central kitchen and the special workers in question. Then again, financial regulations have proved to be a problem when the people in the ward together with the staff wanted to organize a bazaar for their own products to finance their own recreation activities. Even if these kinds of matters were negotiable and agreeable, in practice they seem to stumble over the weakness of cooperation, since regularly assembling cooperation forums are missing. Even if the wards had acknowledged the need for cooperation forums and there would be willingness to have meetings for, for instance, the whole institution, it is the management who decides if the staff may assemble. Here we meet with the obstacles and chances of the organization's social structure (the staff's representation in the management group) as well as with the effects of social legislature (the staff's representation in the government).

Power relations in an organization's social structure may prevent the realization of the community's basic task, as can be seen in the following examples. In an institution for the disabled it was decided that a ward would start baking in order to teach the inhabitants independent living skills. However, the head cooker refused to give flour from the kitchen. In a school, the appropriation for repairing and painting the desks was insufficient. The teachers and the students decided to fix the desks together with the aid of neighborly help. The real estate office of the city refused to purchase paint and forbid the whole undertaking.

In a factory the manufacturing of men's suits was based on production line work. Nearly all the workers were

women, and they competed with each other for the most profitable work phases, and thus for the biggest profits. A male foreman was responsible for the division of tasks. Among the sewers there was one lady who was clearly faster than the others, and earned constantly more, at times even more than the foreman. As a consequence, the foreman displayed discrimination tinged with envy towards the fastest worker, who was deeply offended by this. It was hard for her to get support from her work mates, since most of them were envious and enjoyed the foreman's discriminatory behavior. The foreman's superiors were seldom seen among the workers, and were so distant that an ordinary sewer would not venture to turn to them. Also in this case the social structure of the factory with its hierarchies and power relations acted against the basic task of the factory: profitability and efficiency.

If the hierarchy in the factory had been lower, the sewer in question could have sought justice from the superiors of the foreman. If the functional structure of the factory had included a common forum and regular meetings for the workers, superiors and the management, she could have brought this up there. The foreman's actions could have been evaluated with regard to the general interest of the factory, and most likely a change would have taken place. Essential for the prosperity of the factory would of course have been to examine the reasons for the superiority of the one sewer. The working methods she had composed and developed, and little tricks like self-made simple accessories for the sewing machine that the others had not thought of, would with the aid of different kinds of social and functional structures have come to everyone's disposal and they would have improved the productivity remarkably. Now the mutual rivalry between the workers and the power centralized to the foreman together with his envy acted as an invisible hindrance to effective production - invisible at least to the factory management working in their own circles.

The examples I have given you above show how the positions and power relations related to the social structure of organizations are connected to the development

of the functional structure of everyday life, and to the re-
alization of the basic task. That is why the developmen
of organizations ans work communities from bottom up-
wards and holistic requires interaction process manage-
ment.

5. LEADING A PROCESS

At first I shall deal with leading an interaction process on the organization level, when the leader's main responsibility is to lead the interaction and cooperation between units. The objective is to find a solution to leading independent units that have been created through decentralization. The utilization of the independence relating to units in a larger organization does not work by itself, but requires talent, skill and courage from the leader in leading the interaction of the cooperation forums that work on the basis of openness and equality. To establish cooperation forums usually requires agreement and support from the supreme management of the organization. I shall handle these questions towards the end of this chapter.

5.1. Leading the process in an organization

One of the most important tasks of a manager is to create a well functioning work community. Research concerning work communities and organizations has ever since the 1930's showed that the delegation of power to the basic level is an effective factor in increasing work motivation. Later studies on organizations emphasize the effectiveness of small independent units in producing new ideas and in adjusting to changing circumstances. Managers that are used to the traditional line organization are in a puzzling situation: How can you lead an organization if you delegate the power to the basic level, and the units are allowed to work independently?

I shall try to describe the situation with the figure below.
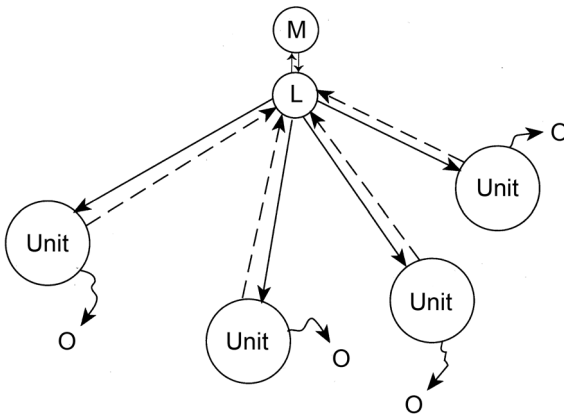
Figure 9. Traditional model for management and control from above. (M = management/managers; L = leader; O = objective; -> = control; - -> = reporting)

The core in the traditional management model is the control that the managers exercise from above. The control concerns the objectives, strategies as well as the follow up of the results. In practise the control is carried out by putting the basic units under the obligation to report their actions and results to the management. By means of the reports the management follows how the units develop and how the objectives are attained, and interferes with the units' work when necessary. The problematic nature of this kind of centralized exercise of power and its ineffectiveness in a fast changing environment has forced to look for new forms of organizations and exercise of power.

In any case, the task and the responsibility of the manager or the management is to pilot the whole organization towards the objectives. How should they then clear out the paradoxical situation where they for one thing should control the unit, and, on the other hand, where they should let it control itself? How can you control the direction of the organizational ship, if each unit is allowed to choose its own course?

The solution for the manager is to move from leading the organization and people to leading an interactional process. A manager's task is to create a functional struc-

ture that makes it possible to continuously examine the internal structure of the unit and to continuously follow the direction of the whole organization without the manager interfering one-sidedly with the units' autonomy.

A solution based on the foregoing calls for the creation of cooperation forums that function in each organization within and between the units (figure 10).
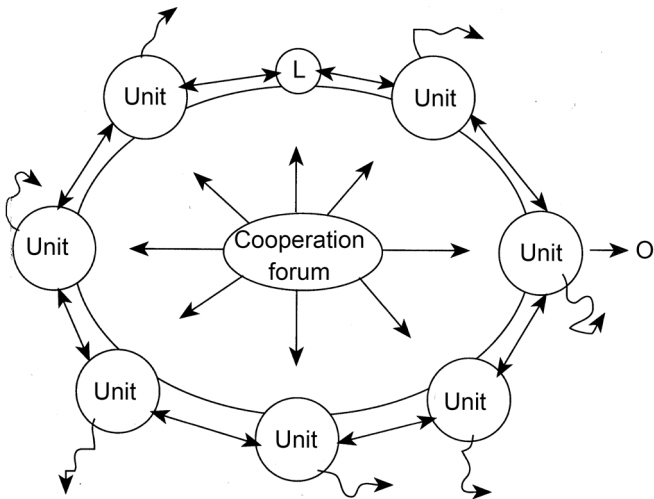
Figure 10. The cooperation forum for organization management and various units. L = leader; O = objektive.

A common meeting for the whole organization is the forum to which also other permanent or temporary groups report their plans, proposals and decisions in the same way as the units. This guarantees that the overall picture of the organization is always updated and that principally all members of the organization have a chance to sway. An organization that functions like this resembles a self-organizing network.

To develop the forum is a difficult and time-consuming task. The technical and practical problems deal with finding suitable time and premises for the meetings. From the financial point of view you will have to assess the

cost - benefit relation of the meetings, where the costs are easy to calculate, but where the benefit is acquired more slowly. The delay of the benefits brings up a third and perhaps the most difficult problem: how will the managers, the superiors and the personnel learn to use the common forums as an instrument for developing their work, the work community and the whole organization?

A forum consisting of the unit representatives of the whole organization is usually large, including tens, even hundreds of people. Very few of us have ever had a chance to get used to talking and acting in groups as large as these. That is why learning and adjusting takes a lot of time and practice. The development of skills and courage does unfortunately not guarantee the working of a large group in the direction of the basic task. Many phenomena connected to large group dynamics affect the members' behavior.

A large group
- strengthens the members' dependency on the leader,
- causes clustering and polarization,
- arouses strong feelings,
- may weaken communication between individuals and increase the feeling of isolation,
- may provoke people into exaggerated and extravagant reactions in order to become seen and heard,
- makes some people experience uselessness or impairment of the feeling of existence, because in a large group you do not speak to each other but to everyone present, especially if those present do not comment or react in any way.

On the other hand, a cooperation forum for the units offers many positive opportunities:

1. The management and each unit has a chance to tell each other about their own situation, their problems, courses of action, plans and ideas, and to get feedback. This is how everyone can get an updated view of the overall situation of the organization and its future prospects, and to think about the actions of the whole organization, its objectives, relations to the environment, to the

collaboratives, to clients or to outside administration.

A forum of this kind also helps each person to link the needs, objectives, accomplishments and problems to the whole. Participation and an overall view gradually develops an identification with the organization as a whole and an extensive sense of responsibility.

A reliable overall view is essential in regard to work motivation and to meaningful work experience. Traditionally the starting point has been that it is sufficient for the organization management to have an overall view, which its decisions can be based on. If there are no common forums, also the reliability of the management's overall view is questionable. This is not to say that the managers could not be subjectively convinced of the reliability of their personal views, but the views of their subordinates may be quite different, as organization research have consistently revealed (Perkka-Jortikka, 1992, 108-109; Argyris, 1981).

The management's and the subordinates' diverse views of the organization and its state do not mean that one them would be wrong and the other right. Both can be just as right, like Edward de Bono (1981, 7), a researcher of thinking and organizations, illustrates with an apt example:

"There is a story about a man, who painted the one side of his car black and the other one white to have an opportunity to enjoy contradictory testimonies of the witnesses in case of a car crash."

The core of the story is that the people who have seen the car from different sides are both right, even if one claims that the car was white and the other claims that it was black. In order to create common social reality, "to see both sides of the car", the management and the subordinates need a working cooperation forum (figure 11).
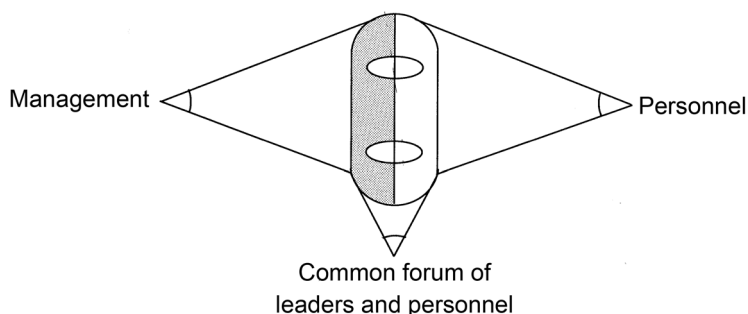
Figure 11. Diverse views (social realities) of the management and the personnel, caused by different organizational positions, meet in common forums, where common social reality is created.

When conflicts are brought to representative organs to be solved, the connection to the concrete situation, to the starting point, is lost. The representatives "know" that the conflict parties usually see the situation exasperatedly, black and white and only from their own point of view. This is known to apply to one's own lot as well. That is why it is easier to reach compromises on the representative level, even if it does not correspond to the original circumstances at all: the representatives of the employers and the employees may agree that the car is gray, when each party has met halfway with the other! On the basic level it is, of course, hard to accept a compromise like this. This is how taking conflicts out of the organization or the work community, and letting representative organs solve them, prevents the creation of common social reality between various interest groups on community and organization levels.

2. In the organization meetings everyone has also the chance to ask for reasons or an explanation for an individual's or a unit's actions or plans, and to comment on them. The threat of having to give reasons for one's actions as an individual or as a group, prevents already in advance unjust and selfish solutions, which will increase the morale of the whole organization (cp. figure 10).

When the control function moves from above to the units and becomes working on the same organizational

Kari Murto: LEADING THE PROCESS

level, it means that the exercise of power becomes more democratic and that communal expertise can be utilized. The control that has traditionally been the responsibility of the management has motivated and made possible many kinds of individual and unitcentric selfish operations, which have contradicted the general interest of the organization (e.g. Virkkunen, 1990, 99-104, 109-110). The need and chances for these kinds of operations diminish decisively when the control becomes more democratic and the sense of responsibility grows. The best way for the management to support the control between the units is to direct its attention to the basic task of the organization. With new proposals and ideas the management's task is to ask over and over again: **How do they better than before help the realization of the basic task of the organization?**

3. It is important to have a chance to handle the relations between individuals and especially between the units, matters like cooperation, competition and envy. In meetings for the whole organization the stress lays naturally on the relations between the units, and in meetings of the units on the relations between groups and individuals.

In a situation where units that are independent and have result responsibility and at the same time are dependent on each other and on the entirety, many kinds of conflicts and tensions are certain to arise. If no common forum is at hand, it will be the management's task to face and solve these tensions. I don't think it is hard to imagine how effectively the management group and superior level conferences succeed in it.

Human relation skills are unfortunately not part of the strongest features of the Finns, and that is why we either try to pass over conflicts - or if it is necessary - the management resorts to administrative solutions.

4. Organizational forums offer an effective solution to many problems of information flow. From the point of view of the managers' schedules, it is hard to think of a better chance to get versatile, updated and reliable information of various units and people. Respectively, the

managers' views and attitudes of matters that the units and the personnel are interested in can be brought up here. It is possible to check them immediately with questions.

Every member of the organization should be able to attend these meetings freely in accordance to his interests and within the limits of the situation in his own unit. if you choose permanent or temporary representatives, it will lead to representative democracy, which will not promote the establishment of common views and social reality on the level of the whole organization. **However, the management should be present in its entirety principally every time**. Their absence for light reasons will soon be interpreted as underestimating the forum. If this kind of an attitude spreads among the personnel, the forum loses its significance.

In the model for open decision-making, the organization meetings represent general meetings, which are the **most important** instrument in the development of decision-making, personnel commitment and the organization, when they are made efficient. The efficiency and benefit of the organization meetings depend decisively on the state and level of the basic units. If the basic units operate on the level of a unit without identity (see p. xxx), their personnel and management lack common courses of action, views, objectives and common social reality. The members of these kinds of units are not able to represent the views and aims of their unit in the organization meeting since they do not exist. If there are several units of this kind in the organization, it is not possible even in the organization meetings to create agreements and common lines that would persist on the basic level. The prerequisite for organization development and efficiency is the efficiency of the basic units and high level of the community.

The forums are also a practical solution for the management of information flow between the units. When R. J. Magjuka and T. T. Baldwin (1991) studied factors that affect the productivity of team work, they analyzed 78 teams in two organizations. The efficiency of the teams was estimated by both the superiors and the team

members. Three factors that most affected the productivity were

    1. openness of information available for the group,
    2. heterogeneity of the group's tasks and
    3. size of the group.

The teams' free access to information was connected to good results. It improved the teams' decision-making and narrowed the gap between the management and the workers. Information was the key resource for the working of the teams. Securing free access to information caused at the same time additional requirements for other units.

The heterogeneity of the tasks and of the members' professions also increased the efficiency of the group, because versatile knowledge and skills helped to solve complicated problems. The size of the teams varied from 8 to 46 members. Unlike in previous researches, the efficiency of the group did not suffer from the growth of its size. Large teams were found to be administratively advantageous because the coordination of their cooperation took less energy, fewer group leaders were needed and to 'target conduct' the groups was not so difficult.

The researchers paid attention to the fact that financial rewards were not among the three factors that most affected efficiency. The team members received a 3.5 per cent bonus from the base salary. From the practical point of view it is noteworthy that the three factors are easy to regulate.

In public administration, to form profit units and to go on to profit salaries may even within a single administration lead to a competition between the units for resources, rewards and markets. In this competition the general interest of the organization or the administration suffers. Morton Deutsch (1985, 266), an American social psychologist, who has studied work communities that are founded on cooperation and rivalry, states that rivalry causes the following kind of effects on the relations between people and groups:

    - Resort to tactics based on force, threat and deceit.
    - Attempt to enlarge power differences in relation to other parties.

- Weak communication.
- Pass over common values and emphasize the opposing ones.
- Suspicious and hostile attitudes.
- Emphasis of questions that cause conflicts.

While relations based on cooperation lead to
- emphasizing the similarity of beliefs and attitudes,
- willingness to help,
- open communication,
- confidence and friendly attitudes,
- sensitivity to notice common interests and to leave opposing interests to the background, and
- increase of mutual resources rather than of power differences.

Deutsch claims that the operations models described above also generate rivalry or cooperation.

Leading the process in an organization that undergoes decentralization

Economic recession together with reforms in the legislature have speeded up the winding up of large public administration organizations like the federations of municipalities. To break off a federation of municipalities leads to the breakup of the traditional cooperation forums between the municipalities. The need for cooperation has, nevertheless, not diminished, but it is rather growing.

Now we need new kinds of cooperation forums where independent municipalities can develop and coordinate bi- or multilateral service or production activities possibly together with the private sector. To learn new kind of cooperation it is hardly sufficient to meet every now and again or when the need arises. To establish mutual trust, to learn a common language and to create common social reality require forums that meet often enough and regularly.

The main reason for breaking off the system of federations is probably their expensiveness. However, high costs are only a symptom that conceals certainly many reasons. I would presume that the closed representative model of the administration and management systems of

the federations is one of the reasons in the background. When new models for the cooperation of the municipalities are being established, openness and democracy of the cooperation and decision-making forums should be guaranteed.

To change just the structures will not ensure the desired end result. The cooperation forums should be created into organs that are capable of open communication, open interaction, and of developing their own actions. Thus the role of the chairperson becomes central.

Not only does the administrative level need cooperation, it is also needed on the basic level of the decentralized federations of municipalities. The cooperation between the units within the federation has to be reorganized both inside the municipalities and between them. Traditionally decisions have been based on the negotiations between the elected officials and the civil servants. The basic level has only had a nominal chance to influence. At the same time when more contribution, responsibility and commitment is expected from the basic level, their chances to influence have diminished. This leads to deteriorating trust between the administration and the basic level.

Inadequate information tends to increase insecurity and distrust in the personnel, which will unavoidably affect their work with customers, patients, disabled, students or children. To control the process of change would require open flow of information, regular common discussion forums for the administration, management and the personnel, where they can analyze the situation and seek working solutions. This is how process centered holism would be realized, and it would guarantee that each member of the community would be able to form an updated overall view and that the knowledge, skills, and experience, that is, the creative capacity of each member would be utilized in the change process of the organization.

To keep power and responsibility with the administration and management is, of course, based on legislature. Legislature does not, however, form any impediments for the management to organize the cooperation fo-

rums described above, and to exercise the power granted by the legislature to carry out the plans and decisions that have been worked out together. In common forums the grounds for plans and decision-making become larger and more versatile: money is no longer necessarily the only, and by far not the most important criterion. Even though to use large cooperation forums takes time and causes expenses, the benefits they produce through the personnel's motivation, creativity, and commitment to even painful solutions, may prove greater than the expenses.

Leading the process of change

To lead a change is a current and expansive topic. Here I shall view it from the standpoint of personnel's participation and in the light of an empirical study made already in the 1940's. The study was made in a little town called Marion in Virginia, USA. Lester Coch and John R. P. French, Jr. (1968) studied (1) why people so strongly resist change, and (2) how you can win the resistance towards change. The subject of the study was the main plant of Harwood Manufacturing Corporation that manufactured pajamas and other garments by the piece. The workers were women aged 23 on the average. When the tasks were changed, a temporary loss of earnings was requited a hundred percent. Irrespective of this, the change of tasks increased the number of those who resigned to threefold in comparison to those who continued in their previous tasks.

The resignations occurred either right after assuming the new tasks or just before reaching the norm that would entitle full pay in the new tasks. Consistency of the group was found to affect the performances and the resignations. In a consistent group people ventured to express the annoyance caused by the changes more openly than in an incoherent group, but resignations were also fewer in the consistent groups. Moreover, a consistent group set a norm for the upper limit for individual performances, and that was not to be exceeded. The researchers stated that change resistance was the joint result of individual frustration and group influence.

In the change they tried to utilize the group in handling change resistance. in the experiment they formed three groups that all had to go through a similar change in the working tasks. The groups were following:

1. **Group that did not participate**. The change that had already been planned was presented and explained to the group before the realization of the change. In a common discussion the group members' questions were answered.

2. **Group that participated through representatives**. The change was discussed with all the members of the

group, and the need for it was convincingly explained by the necessity of decreasing production costs and increasing competitiveness. After that, some members of the group were included in the planning of the change and in training. The whole group was convinced of the necessity of the change and accepted the plan. The group was right from the beginning interested in the change and willing to cooperate.

3. **Groups where all the members participated**. All the members of two groups participated in the planning and realization of the change. The groups were motivated in the same way as the group that participated through its representatives.

In relation to both work performance and resignations, the two groups where all members participated reached the best results, as shown in figure 12.
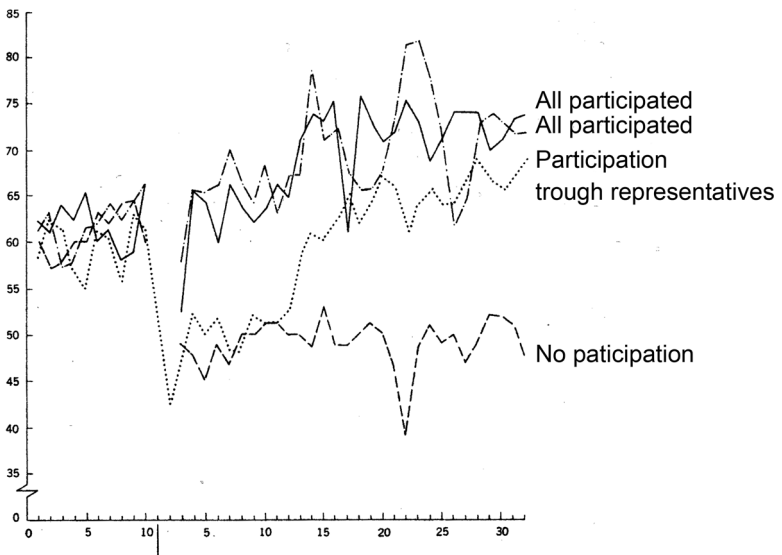
Figure 12. Work performances by groups before and after the change. (Coch & French, 1968).

The work performances of those who did not participate did not rise after the decline following the change.

Instead, the resistance to change was manifested in aggression towards the management, in conflicts with working methods, in anger towards the foremen, in intentional slowing down of the production and in lack of willingness to cooperate with the superiors. During the days that followed the change 17 % of the workers resigned.

The work performance of the group that participated through representatives rose after the decline following the change to the previous level in 14 days. The members had a positive attitude and were willing to cooperate. That is why cooperation with the superiors was smooth. No one resigned during the 40 days that followed the change.

The groups where everyone participated were the fastest to reach their previous performance level in the new tasks and even exceeded it by 14 percent. Cooperation with the superiors was smooth, there were no signs of aggressiveness, and no one resigned during the 40 days following the change.

Those members of the non-participating that stayed in their jobs were dispersed to different tasks, and after two months they were gathered to a group again for another experiment. The group was transferred to new tasks, but this time the model of full participation was applied. Now the results were completely contrary to the first results of the group (the non-participating group). The group's performances returned quickly to the level they had been prior to the change and exceeded it as the first fully participating groups had done. There was no aggressiveness whatsoever, and no one resigned during the 19 days following the change.

From the point of view of the factory costs, the fact that the groups where everyone participated reached the previous performance level quickly and exceeded it as well as the continuation of the employment meant indispensable savings and success in improving the competitiveness, which were, indeed, the aims of the changes. In particular the second experiment with the non-participating and dispersed group showed that the different results of the groups were not caused by differences in skills or personalities, but they were the result of differences in

chances to participate. The essential meaning of group pressure became apparent in the abrupt decrease of individual differences in performance after the change. Even though the performance differences decreased in all the groups, it was most abundant in the non-participating group. In practise it meant that group discipline and control were tightening, which was to prevent the increase of performance level of individual group members.

The two groups where all members participated, assumed new tasks on the same day, and they started to compete with each other. The competition probably caused the improvement of performances to a higher level than previously by raising the performance norms of the groups.

This study by Coch and French shows how important in planning and realizing organizational and communal changes it is to negotiate with **all** those individuals and groups that will be affected by the change. It is paradoxical that facts that have been verified half a century ago, and many times after that, are not yet a part of everyday life. The most common model in the public sector is probably cooperation based solely on informing or representative participation, where people think they can control change only by the expertise and overall view of the management.

5.2. Leading the process in units

The task of a unit leader or superior is to create a well functioning work community. He usually has sufficient authority, even the responsibility, to do that. But how is it done in practise? Since community development has been described in another place (see p. xx-xx), I shall concentrate here in the methods that serve to create a good community. The first requirement is to **organize** common **forums** (meetings and discussions). It is not enough if the manager himself has got good relations to each member of the staff, if the relationships between the staff members are in a bad way or cliquish. That is why it is necessary to take time regularly and often enough, once a

week for example, to stop to examine and discuss together what has been done and lived through. This is the most important part of developing the functional structure of a unit, a structure that guarantees open communication and emergence of conflicts that bring forward the community development.

To support open interaction in these meetings and discussions is what the manager has on his responsibility. People's ability and courage to talk and act in a large group is very modest. They need time, practise, and most of all, the manager's active encouragement to venture to participate and to bring up difficult topics. Since we are dealing with a very demanding task, it is necessary to set aside time to learn it. Sometimes the commencement is burdened by previous negative experiences, as the personnel in an insurance company reports in a study by Perkka-Jortikka (1992, 124-125).

> "The clerical employees had, however, a reserved attitude towards open and confidential discussion with the superiors, because the negative feelings caused by previous discussions were still on people's minds."

Then again, the clerical employees did believe that regular work community meetings and discussions would be a useful way to influence interaction, management, and haste control, and to promote social well-being.

The manager needs knowledge, skill and courage, and especially in the beginning, support and encouragement in maintaining the process. We have not, either as managers or as subordinates, learned a creative and equitable meeting practise. We have grown on to bureaucracy and the routines it calls for, but not on to examining group processes. We look upon quick decision-making as efficiency. True discussion, examination of conflicts, motivating different opinions, and expression of feelings have been seen as phenomena that disturb meetings rather than advance them. Is it then a wonder that so many of us feel that meetings are a ritualistic compulsion and not a forum where you go into real problems. Usually it is only the

liberation of 'compulsion' after the meeting that loosens the tongues and brings up emotions.

A new kind of meeting practise has to be learned. That is why regularity is needed and that is why continuity is needed. The spirit of today calls for quick results, but personal development and learning a new kind of meeting practise take time. The yield from this kind of a process is, nevertheless, creative capacity, the value of which is very much on the rise. The contribution is worthwhile to the one who has got courage. Courage is most of all required of the managers, who will have to be prepared to step down from their top floors and from behind red lights to the presence of their subordinates.

To lead an interaction process requires group and community dynamic skills and knowledge of the manager, but most of all, good self-reliance and courage to put himself at stake. Manager training and election will pay more attention than before to these characteristics. "Big time managers" are not needed for they are known to have tender toes.

When a manager starts to conduct common meetings regularly and with the aim to develop the community, it should be done in an atmosphere that is as natural and informal as possible. For quite a long time the interaction will be starlike, communication flows between the manager and individual subordinates. Communication between the subordinates is relatively scarce. Well learned conventions and social pressure tempt the manager to manage in the accustomed way by making decisions, giving orders, and assuming responsibility when the subordinates ask and require. To learn new kind of interaction, and for the subordinates to learn to assume responsibility, requires from the manager conscious restraint from one-sided decision-making whenever there is no compulsion to do that. Community interaction in an early stage is described below in figure 13.
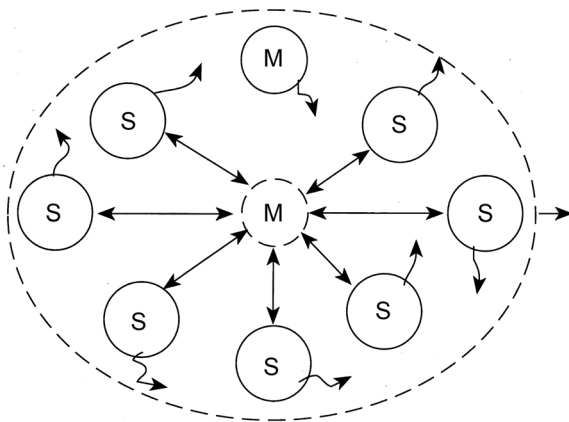
Figure 13. In the early stages of communal development, interaction mostly goes through the manager. Psychologically the manager is the center of the group, even if he actually sat in his own place in the circle. The objectives of the individuals and the community can in actuality point at different directions. M= manager; S = subordinate

If the manager genuinely wants to support the communal interaction process, he should determinedly but discreetly show that the bringing up of the participants' own views, opinions, experiences and feelings is valuable even when the criticism is directed towards the manager himself. To establish a confidential and secure atmosphere is slow, but to destroy it takes only a split second. The easiest way to destroy the dawning confidence is to punish the critic, who is taking a great risk, or not to carry out a decision that has been made together.

In the early stages the subordinates may be insecure and nervous about the meetings. Then the criticism is easily aggravated and exacerbated. If the manager or superior feels that the criticism is unfair, he may defend himself with a counter attack, and at that very moment he loses his chance to create a secure community. In order to avoid this, it is wise to be prepared to the outbursts of the early stages, and - if possible - seek work counseling. Whether the criticism is justified or unjustified, the manager should be able to take it and to make constructive

use of it. If the manager has a chance to go through his own feelings and experiences in work counseling, it will benefit both the manager and the work community.

When the security increases in the community, interaction starts to spread more evenly among the participants. We are moving from the starlike interaction model to a netlike model, as can be seen in figure 14.
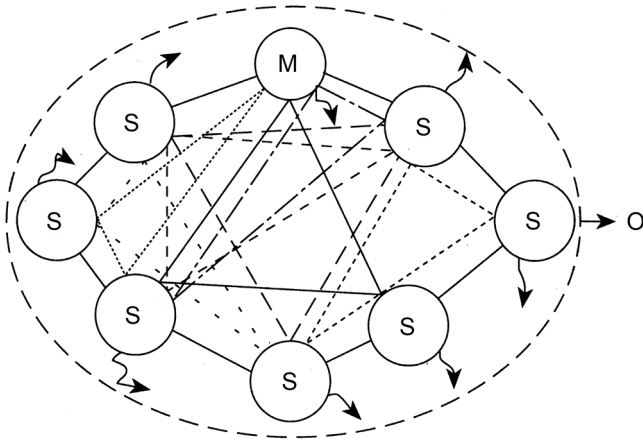
Figure 14. The security of the community shows itself in netlike interaction. As a result of interaction, the objectives of the individuals and the community become closer. M = Manager; S = subordinate; O = objektive.

The psychological position of the manager has changed from the center of interaction to an equal member of the community. In a community like this, communication is usually not very much dependent on the presence or absence of the manager. The community is able to make decisions and bear the responsibility for them. This does by no means diminish the importance of the manager to the community. The concrete value of the manager is, however, determined by his ability to support and maintain open communication and functionality in his community. It is especially demanding in conflicts and critical situations. In the following chapter I shall deal with how to handle them in a community.

5.3. Handling conflicts in a community

Conflicts between people are most harmful to the community, and at the same time the most difficult problems to deal with.

When Chris Argyris (1981) studied American companies of different sizes, he found that there is regularly discrepancy between what the managers say and what they do. According to the upper managers, the efficiency and productivity of decision-making depend on the amount of creativity, the ability to take risks (putting oneself at stake), flexibility, and mutual trust. They emphasized repeatedly how important it is to bear the responsibility for full-bodied development of their own as well as of their colleagues' abilities. They considered interpersonal problems as most difficult ones. Even though the managers in their speaking regarded the maximization of creativity, risk taking, flexibility, and confidence as most important, they seldom acted according to these principles.

When he studied the cause of contradicting speech and actions, Argyris found out that the company managers comply with the following three basic values in their decision-making:

1. Concentration on finishing the task only, on getting the job done. Seldom, if ever, did they pay any attention to the analysis of the group's actions and efficiency. This was not done even when the efficiency of operations suffered from conflicts between the group members.

2. Emphasis of intellectual rationality and rejection of emotional expressions. The managers regarded only intellectual conversation as "real work", whereas expressing feelings or talking about them was regarded as immature or as something else than working. This came up in utterances such as "let's stick to the point" or "let's not get personal".

3. Control that comes from above seen as the most efficient means to influence human relations. Respect for control is implicitly included already in the hierarchy and authority relations of the organization structure.

The importance of the values Argyris described, is remarkable to the operation of an organization. If individuals internalize the values of intellectual rationality and getting the work done, they consciously emphasize the intellectual side of problems. More or less consciously they repress interpersonal and emotional sides, especially those that seem less important as regards to performing the task.

If conflicts between people are put aside, the problems connected to them will come up elsewhere, for instance as intellectual or technical problems. Under these circumstances, individuals will not learn to handle their emotions and mutual relations in an open and constructive way. They rather learn to develop personal and organizational defense mechanisms, that will suppress emotional expressions of their own and of the others. This leads to the rejection of also such ideas and thoughts that might bring up the repressed emotions.

The rejection of interpersonal conflicts probably impedes the utilization of the community's creative capacity. People learn to stick to safe limits, which reduces their openness towards new ideas and values. They do not dare to try anything new nor to take risks. The fear for putting oneself at stake grows. Unnoticed they will end up in a vicious circle, which suppresses creativity and vitality.

Well then, how should we handle conflicts and problems between people in a work community? Traditionally their handling is the manager's job when the parties are unable to solve them themselves. The superior has to intervene at least when the conflict seriously starts to harm the whole community. Conflicts can take various forms, but in the following I shall deal with it with an example of a conflict between two workers, and how it was handled in a superior-centered and community-centered way.

Let us presume that there are conflicts and tensions between work community members A and D, and as they continue they start to come to a head and harm the actions of the whole community. If there are no regular common meetings in the community or if they do not work, there is no chance to handle the conflict together. When the situation culminates, both parties usually start

to recruit supporters behind them. The community be-
comes cliquish, and communication between the cliques
diminishes and distorts. In this stage at the latest, the su-
perior is forced to intervene in the situation. He can ask
the parties to come over to him to discuss and clear the
situation (figure 15).
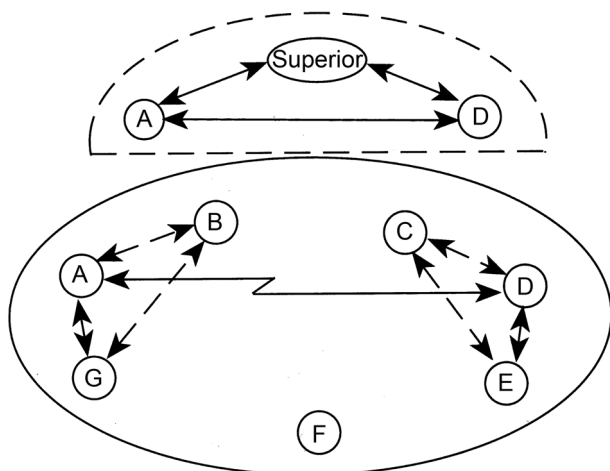
**Figure 15. Conflict between A and D has lead to the formation of
cliques (A, B and G vs D, C and E), only F has been left outside. The
superior is trying to clear the situation by discussing with A and D
outside the rest of the community.**

In a culminated conflict situation and in a clustered
community, the discussions with the superior seldom
solve the situation permanently. If either one of the par-
ties feels defeated, he and his supporters will bring the
matter forward in the official way, to his superior's supe-
rior, to the management board, or they will leave it in the
hands of the trade union. This kind of handling estranges
the conflict from its original context and expands it by
bringing in new interest groups. At the same time, chanc-
es to genuine conciliation become smaller, gaps between
the clusters become deeper, and economical and psycho-
logical costs of the conflict increase. Individual and com-
munal costs will increase also, if the defeated party starts

to proceed with the matter in an unofficial way, for example acting behind people's backs and making threats.

I am by no means saying that discussions between superiors and the parties of the conflict could not ever produce a working and lasting solution. But I do think that the community centered model for settling conflicts would be more certain in attaining settlements that would satisfy the parties and the community, and, in addition to that, in attaining a more secure work community. The starting point of communal handling of conflicts is the principle that conflicts have to be solved there where they have arisen. However, the communal settlement model is no miracle cure that would help to settle all conflicts.

In practise communal handling requires the existence of a cooperation forum and experience in using it. If common meetings are summoned only when problems occur, people do not feel them safe and they can not take advantage of them. Mutual trust and cooperation skills have to be established in a persevering manner, preferably starting with peaceful conditions. If the work community is used to common meetings, it is natural for anyone to bring the conflict between A and D under discussion. The parties of the conflict as well as other community members can present their opinions and views of the situation and its background. The importance of the conflict and its effects on the parties and on the whole community become apparent.

In the open discussion the parties have to reflect their views and interpretations to the views of those who are outside the conflict, and thus they get educational feedback. A settlement that has been reached in open common handling leaves very little room for speaking behind people's backs and for the formation of cliques.

The real reasons for personnel conflicts do, however, not always

arise from the work community, even though they appear there. Each member of the community in his personality brings his own human relations models to the work community, and implements them also when he drifts into conflicts. Settling conflicts that are connected to these

kinds of transference relations rather that to objective circumstances, can be very difficult. I shall try to describe a conflict that is primarily based on transference relations with a simple example. Transference here refers to transferring earlier emotional relations that have been experienced in earlier important relations (to one's parents, to brothers and sisters, to teachers and so on), to present relations for instance at work.

> Designer Paul N. was the oldest of the three children in the family, and the only son. Paul's father was very stern and demanding towards Paul, but he hardly ever gave him commendation or acknowledgement. Instead, Paul felt that he pampered the two younger sisters. They had always had it easier, the parents did not expect as much from them, but they had nevertheless always got a "bigger piece of the cake". The mother was in a submitted position in the family and she did not have the courage to defend Paul in the father's presence, even though she behind his back had tried to make it up to Paul in different ways.

Due to his family background, Paul has not learned to trust in the impartiality and fairness of authorities. He has had repeated conflicts with his teachers and superiors. Since Paul is constantly suspecting that his superior is partial, especially that he favors female colleagues, he is constantly driven into conflicts. Discussions with the superiors and the colleagues have not been able to convince Paul. He is not able to take an objective stand to proposals that come from his superior. That is why superior-centered efforts to settle the conflicts have not been very helpful.

Community centered handling of conflicts also gives Paul's colleagues a chance to see and to get to know the situation from different angles and not only as Paul himself describes it. Paul also has to accept correcting feedback from his work mates, who until now have only heard his version of the story. Gradually he will have to start checking his own views and interpretations, since no one is supporting them anymore, not even behind backs. This kind of confrontation that comes from the community and from the peers works in the long run in an educa-

tive and therapeutic way and also brings up positive features in Paul. However, a work community is not a treatment community and its resources are not adequate to help with more difficult personality disorders. That calls for outside expertise.

Offhandedly it is, however, difficult to say when conflict situations in a work community are caused by someone's personal pathology or transference relations, when by objective defects. In the scape goat phenomenon the point is in placing communal pathology or evil in an individual or in a group, and then you try to protect yourself from it or attack it by different kinds of maneuvers. In the foregoing I presented an individual's inability to recognize his own pathology, whereas the scape goat phenomenon manifests a community's inability to do self-examination and to face its own pathology. In both cases, to make a diagnosis and to fix the situation call for objective outlook from outside. To assist communal pathology you can use an outside consult or personnel from different units that can give objective feedback to individual units in the organization meetings.

In order for communities to work with such efficiency and responsibility they need to have well working communal forums. To develop these cooperation and discussion forums requires skill and perseverance, as I so many times have said. Moreover, their efficiency has to be under constant surveillance, because even a well working community meeting can in an instant go astray from its basic task or gradually become a spiritless self-repeating ritualistic routine. How could we guarantee that the forums will not become spiritless ritualistic routines, "bad kind of routine"?

5.4. When common meetings do not work

In the starting stage of common meetings it often happens that people feel, especially in larger groups, as if they were restrained by the group. Instead of being able to act and speak freely, people are nervous, distressed, they monitor themselves and the others, and they are afraid to open their mouths. According to an observation by Wilfred Bion, a British group analyst, in any group whatsoever, 20 % of the participants are active and talkative, and 80 % are more or less passive, acquiescent and silent. Instead of acting as a tool for the present community members, the group seems to form functional chains.

The following example describes the phenomenon, even though it actually does not come from a working place, but from an evening get-together of a two-year-course, and the analysis of the evening. The participants and the teachers had agreed to have a get-together during a training period that took place halfway through the course. Some participants had prepared themselves by making agreements for food and coffee with the kitchen personnel of the training center, and by arranging program for the evening. The majority came to a "prepared meal". The evening commenced with eating and having coffee. The program with community singing and small scale performances followed. During the program there was an atmosphere of gaiety, but right after that it started to fade. Some participants started to tell jokes to warm up the party. But it was like giving artificial respiration. The situation was made even worse by another get-together within earshot: THEY seemed to be having much more fun. Not even the blaze of the fire and the otherwise cozy setting could warm up the atmosphere. People sat on their chairs that were arranged in a V-shape towards the fireplace, and they mainly talked to those who sat next to them. Only a few had brought a bottle or two of beer with them. Gradually some started to complain weariness, and they went to their rooms. The party ended in a lifeless spirit.

The following morning we analyzed the party of the

previous night in a common meeting, and the discussion lasted up to the lunch break. In the beginning of the conversation someone stated that the atmosphere had been quite lifeless. Most of us agreed. Then we discussed the reasons for the lifeless atmosphere, and considered proposals for improvements. The following points were brought up:

1. Lack of booze.
2. Lack of snacks.
3. Sitting arrangements were poor.
4. Preparations were inadequate. Even the copies of the lyrics for the songs were made in the last minute.
5. Weariness after a long day of training.
6. The topics of the day were still on their minds.
7. Family background.
8. Congregational premises - uncertainty about bringing alcohol.
9. Long time since the previous meeting.
10. Not knowing each other yet.
11. The "other group" that had more fun.

Remarkable in this situation was that most people wanted some change, but nothing happened. One of the hindrances to change was of course the newness of the situation. This was the first get-together of the course. The participants' behavior was on the one hand directed by an "internalized formula", i.e. how one normally acts in a situation like this (booze, snacks, etc.), and on the other hand by the active group that was expected to organize the whole evening and to arrange entertainment to others. Even though everyone was not having fun, no one had the courage to say it out loud or to make suggestions to the group - there was no risk taker.

I asked the course participants to think about what could have been done in the situation that would have helped. Among other things they proposed:

- each one could have brought his chair where he wanted to sit;

  - games where everyone would have been able to participate.

A female participant stated that they should just have started to talk about their experiences and feelings. And that's right. We had come to the conclusion that games, eating and singing had only brought a temporary lightening to the situation. More games and similar activities would hardly have helped the situation any further. We should have started to talk about what we had experienced and lived through together, to really talk about feelings.

 Psychiatrist R. N. Hinshelwood (1987), a British therapeutic community researcher, has analyzed community meetings from the point of view of a psychodynamic frame of reference. According to Hinshelwood, the treatment of fantasies and anxieties that arise in a large group and often remain unconscious belongs to the aspect of verbalization and dramatization. By dramatization Hinshelwood means treating threatening emotions and fantasies with the aid of collective, functional defense. This means clothing individuals' fantasies in 'drama', in which they get involved without their noticing it, without a conscious decision. Since what we have in question is a defense mechanism, dramatization does not bring a solution to a community's problems, but it most often makes them worse.

 Adapted from Hinshelwood, the relationship between verbalization and dramatization can be presented in a simplified way as follows:

 Individuals' threatening, often unconscious emotions and fantasies
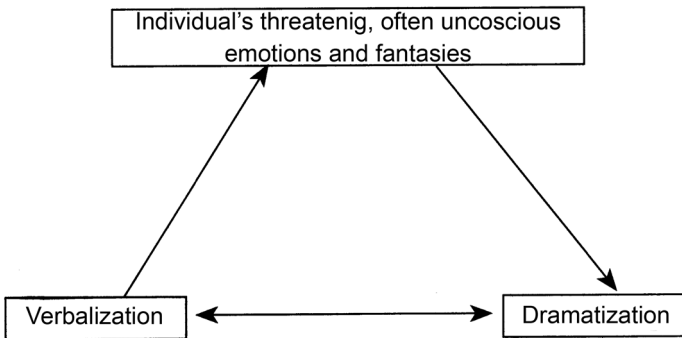
Figure 16. Threatening, unconscious emotions and fantasies can be treated with the aid of verbalization or dramatization.

The get-together described above illustrates how the course participants 'become drawn' to a situation where feelings of anxiety and dissatisfaction (hatred) are dramatized (games, songs, jokes). In the meeting of the following morning (review) it was possible only through discussion to get away from the suction of dramatization and to see that through clothing the emotions in words (verbalization) they could have been able to free themselves from the bond of the situation and to change it. This kind of ability to verbalize the feelings and experiences aroused by a situation requires not only courage but also ability to detach oneself from the suction of the situation, to see it from a distance, from outside, listening to and understanding one's feelings. It is good to notice that dramatization also comprises talking like telling jokes. Verbalization means talking expressly about feelings and experiences aroused by a situation. (Hinshelwood, 1987, 245-251).

Chris Argyris pays attention to the same fact by using the concepts reflective and defensive strategy when he talks about an individual's behavior. His starting point is the thought that when people have to interpret and to react to a new situation, everyone tends to make use of their previous similar experiences and the theory-in-use they have taken in from them. Resorting to this kind of an

interpretational frame of reference happens mostly automatically, without our noticing it. When we are not conscious of the theory we are using, we consider our conclusions as self-evidently true. A person not knowing that he is wearing green glasses believes that reality is green. Just as well the interpretational frame of reference we have adopted directs our conclusions of ourselves. When two people have made the same mistake, one blames the circumstances, the other concludes that the fault was his: I was stupid. The common thing for both is that they consider their conclusions as true because they have internalized their own interpretational frames of reference early in their lives and are not aware of them.

The theory-in-use Argyris describes controls our observations, conclusions and reactions/behavior. It is in the background of our daily habits and routines. In order to become aware of them and their effects, we have to stop to study our reasoning and interpretation processes stage by stage, as if from a slow motion picture. To learn new kinds of acting models we need alternative interpretation models. Facility and courage to try out new interpretation and acting practices separate the individuals' adopting strategies: the defensive strategy that hampers learning, and the reflective strategy that encourages learning.

Reflective strategy
Typical for the reflective strategy is that interpretations and conclusions of situations are made openly and aloud. This way mistaken views, conclusions and things that have gone unnoticed can be seen and corrected. Open discussion of the relations between people and of each one's reactions to other people makes self-examination and noticing one's own distortions possible. An essential part of the reflective strategy is the learner's/participant's active role and readiness to try out and evaluate new courses of action. Attitude towards mistakes and failures is positive. They are seen as challenges and chances to learn.

Problems and conflicts are studied together and openly, as well as the responsibility of oneself and the others.

Defensive strategy

The defensive strategy is characterized by the learner's/ participant's passive role of a receiver, which reduces the risk of failure and wounding, but at the same time prevents the questioning that promotes learning. Withdrawal is typical to behavior as well as calling others to account for the withdrawal: "I don't get a chance to talk since the others talk all the time." "What's the use of my talking since you never listen to me anyway." This is how one tries to avoid mistakes and failures, which are seen as causes for blame and as faults that have to be concealed.

Negative feelings like disappointment or anger are concealed, for it guarantees that one can keep his own opinions and courses of action without the chance to study them together. One defends his behavior and attitudes tightly and one-sidedly. The defense often takes place on a very abstract and general level. Whatever, even a momentary explanation serves to support one's own opinion. When the individual is asked to give reasons for his opinion, he will jump to another one. When this comes under surveillance, he will jump to a third one, which can even contradict the first one. To save one's face one is careful not to give concrete and unambiguous feedback to others. Criticism is presented so softly and discreetly that the target of the criticism will not find out what he was criticized for. This will not, however, help the person who is being criticized, but it can even make the situation worse. He may start to wonder if he has made such a bad mistake that the others do not dare to give direct feedback. Criticism can also be clothed as self-criticism through which others are criticized in an indirect way.

One of the practices of the defensive strategy is that own views are expressed in the form of feelings and that counter-arguments are rejected: I do have a right for my own feelings. The feelings of another person are, according to Argyris, the sacred cow of our culture, and no one should question them. Another part of the defensive strategy is seeking support from and giving it to the defensive behavior of other members of the community. A passive person thinks that it is the others' responsibility to give him a chance to participate and to guess when he needs

it even when he does not say anything. An active person may feel guilty about his activeness, and he starts to help the passive ones by acting as a moderator or by asking them for opinions. This kind of help may, however, prevent the passive ones from learning to take responsibility for their own participation on their own initiative.

If withdrawal or concealing negative feelings prove to be mistakes that have to be avoided, resorting to these strategies has to be disguised by a new kind of defensive behavior.

Based on the strategies described above, we could make the simplified conclusion of the learning of an individual and of a community, that by teaching reflective strategies we best promote learning to learn. In practise this teaching has proved very problematic. Conscious control of reflective strategies is not automatically transferred to people's actions, to their theory-in-use. By knowing reflective and defensive strategies we can see defects and faults in other people's behavior, but at the same time we remain blind as regards to our own behavior. We can consciously aim at using reflective strategies, and inadvertently pass on to defensive strategies. This is especially likely to happen in situations we find threatening.

Expansive discussions and massive training have led to the fact that for example superiors and managers already stand by open, democratic and human centered management style on the attitude and opinion level, but the everyday actions are still far from that (Perkka-Jortikka, 1992, 109-112). In an illustration of foremen's actions on a construction site it could be seen that the foremen used only 27 % of their working time on actual supervision of work and on talking to their subordinates. A typical feature of the discussions was that the foremen gave very little feedback to the performances of the subordinates, and when feedback was given, it was positive only once out of four occasions (Hyttinen, 1991). It is likely that the managers and the superiors consciously aim at democratic and rewarding management, but that they in practical situations drift to other kind of behavior without noticing it.

According to Argyris, if our own theory-in-use does not

work, it is revealed when the end result is contradictory to our aims. When we try to settle a conflict with a colleague, it only seems to get worse. When we try to criticize a subordinate in a constructive way, he takes offence rather than heed of it. The defects of our theory-in-use are revealed more clearly to the other members of the community than to ourselves. Giving mutual feedback is another way to become aware of and to study our theory-in-use. Awareness in itself is not an adequate prerequisite to learn a new kind of course of action, the reflective strategy. It also calls for practise for instance with role plays. By role-playing difficult and problematic situations and by discussing them with the work mates we can assess our own actions and try out alternative forms of behavior. (Argyris, 1985).

Well then, how can the community meetings be successful in the midst of uncountable factors (brought up by Hinshelwood and Argyris among others) that threaten the development and change of a community, and how can the desired change be realized? I have emphasized that the most important prerequisites for the development are the common forums and meetings, but aren't they threatened by the same routinization as all individual and communal actions? To depict this kind of harmful routinization and to examine the community dynamics that control the meetings I think it is absolutely necessary to study the meetings together.

5.5. Developing the meetings

An experience that is probably known to most of us from meetings at the working place is that especially in larger groups there are only a few that address the meeting while the majority is silent and passive. After the meeting people gather in pairs and in small groups, and very fluent and lively discussion commences. The progress of the meeting, the addresses, and the decisions are commented on and evaluated. Differing opinions and even dissatisfaction are regrettably often brought up only afterwards. This kind of review that is done afterwards in small groups, a postmortem, cannot, however, change what has been done undone nor can it help the community as a whole to learn from its experience. As for the individuals, letting the feelings out even afterwards has got therapeutic meaning that decreases frustration and pressures. That is why it is essential as well.

In order to make the meetings work most efficiently as forums for ideation, discussion, decision-making and evaluation, as many participants as possible should be able to feel secure and that their opinions are valuable. Moreover, when we are talking about a meeting at the working place, the community or the group should feel that it has value and abilities as a whole. In the foregoing I have already emphasized how important, as regards to interaction skills and the security of the community, it is that the meetings are regular, that they meet often enough, and that the manager has an active, encouraging attitude towards open talking and responsible listening. In addition to these requirements, communal learning requires examination of what has been done and lived trough. That is why each discussion and meeting should be closed twice (Murto, 1989): first after the actual matters on the procedure, when the examination of the meeting, the review, starts by discussing, by exchanging experiences and by evaluating (figure 17).
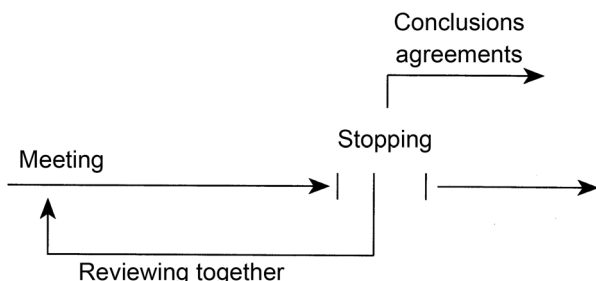
Figure 17. Development of meetings based on the model for living and learning. At the end of the meeting there should be sufficiently time for reviewing and making conclusions together.

In his writings on the operations of the therapeutic community, R. D. Hinshelwood (1987) has suggested that work meetings and meetings that analyze the state of the community should be separated from each other. Based on my own experiences, it seems that the review at the end of the meetings offers a chance when we can, or have to, face and evaluate the state of the community every time, if we can ask the right questions and answer them honestly.

These kinds of questions could be for example the following:

    1. Did we handle the right things? If not, then why not?

    2. What did we, then, talk about? Why?

    3. How was the atmosphere of the meeting?

    4. Did we decide something, did we agree something? What?

    5. Was everyone able to say what he had wanted? If not, then why not?

    6. Was everyone listened to? If not, then why not?

    7. Did we fail to handle an important matter? If we did, then why?

Did we handle the right things?

Sometimes in a meeting you get a feeling that you should be talking about something else, something more important. It is sometimes hard to say what that more impor-

tant thing is, and that is why it is hard to make a proposal. The same feeling can trouble you even after the meeting, although outwardly everything seems to be all right. When the meeting is reviewed, it is possible to talk about the feeling and to learn if someone else has had the same experience. Through examining together what had been talked about and where this kind of feeling might have come from, it is possible to get hold of questions concerning for instance cooperation or the personal relations of the participants.

If you follow the procedure of the meeting, it is hard to bring up problems concerning cooperation. While handling the items, the problems can be disguised in divergent opinions and disputes that arise from trivialities.

How was the atmosphere?
This has proved to be a good question in getting hold of problems that deal with human relations in the community and with cooperation. If people dare to agree that the atmosphere was tense, nervous or strained, the next thing to do is to think about reasons for it. Usually at this point people start to bring up feelings of disappointment, unfairness, offenses, rivalry, or symptoms of a power or authority battle. To handle these matters usually takes more time than what has been reserved for reviewing the meeting, but everyone seems to find time to go on or be willing to make an appointment for the next meeting as soon as possible, so that these crucial conflicts concerning the community and cooperation could be dealt with.
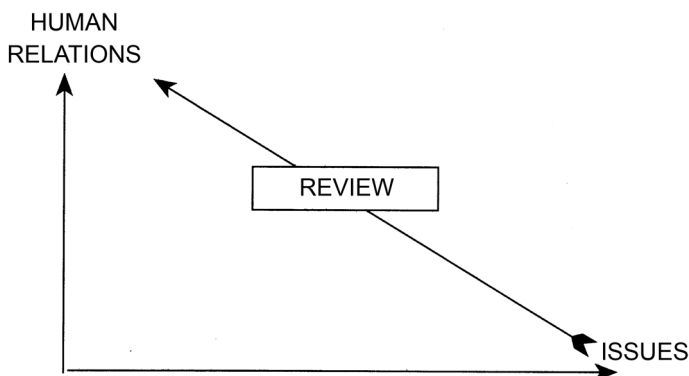
Figure 18. Closing the meeting by reserving time at the end for reviewing it offers a chance to start analyzing the state of the community, its human relations and cooperation.

The following example tells about the importance of review. The participants of a five-day course planned to have a farewell party on the night before the last day of the course. The issue was brought up in the common meeting, where no one objected to the party. The place, time, dining and other arrangements for the party were agreed upon together. At the end of the meeting we had a review, where the participants unanimously concluded that the atmosphere had been dull, not excited. When we started to think about the meaning of the atmosphere and the reasons in the background, very strong feelings of insecurity and fear came up:

- "How is it going to turn out, how should we behave ourselves there?"
- "Shall I have to do something that I don't want to?"
- "Can we still call having the party into question?"

The discussion revealed that behind the dullness and indifference of the meeting there was suspicion, fear, feeling of pressure and a taste of forcefulness, which they now could clothe in words. This led us to consider, what a "party" meant for each one of us, and what kinds of images and feelings based on earlier experiences were con-

nected to it. During the couple of hours spent in the meeting and the review, we saw that the course community did not yet have a common language in this issue and not very much common social reality. The decision concerning the party was moved to the following day, when it was made smoothly, and had the same content as the decision made in the original meeting.

Unlike the party described in the foregoing, this party had a relaxed and forceless atmosphere, as we stated in the review of the following morning.

I still want to point out that before the discussion of the party described here, I had told the example of the earlier party when I had been talking about verbalization and dramatization. Knowing the theoretical side of the matter would, however, probably not have saved the party from becoming dramatization, if we had not been able to analyze together the fantasies and feelings behind the meeting atmosphere - and it is expressly the review that deserves the credit for it.

Did we decide something and did we agree on something?

It has proved worthwhile at the end of a meeting or a discussion to ask about agreements or decisions that have been made. When I have been consulting work communities, I have noticed that people who have been in the same occasion see and interpret the events in very divergent ways. When I have met the group again, maybe after only a few days, I have asked if we made an agreement on something the previous time. The group is often divided to those that think we had made certain agreements, and to those that remember that we had talked about them but not that we had made an agreement on something.

When I ask the first group what we had agreed, the group is divided again to smaller groups in accordance to what each one thought we had agreed.

The fact that people are left with divergent opinions of decisions and agreements, shows of course in the way they are complied with, and leads to quite conflicting practices. The compliance or non-compliance with agree-

ments, which is based on the differences of opinions and interpretations and depends on the person, is naturally reflected to the relations between people, and it is the cause of many kinds of tensions. That is why discussing in the review the things that possibly were decided or agreed on, can save us from many conflicts.

Did you get it out and were you listened to?
Committing to common lines and agreements is directly connected to a person's chances to influence them. The mere right to be present in a decision-making situation can not be interpreted as an adequate guarantee for a chance to influence. Established roles and positions in the operations of groups and communities can maintain inequality among people: the opinion of certain people is listened to more carefully, and it weighs more than others in decision-making regardless of its content. It can be the opinion of a superior, his right-hand man, or a person that otherwise is powerful and expresses himself with ease. Just as well, a proposal made by a participant, who is formally in a lower position and maybe quiet in nature, can be repeatedly passed over without careful consideration.

This is how work communities waste their creative human potential without even noticing it. Just like all individual and communal activities tend to become routinized in the course of time, so does the interaction pattern of community meetings: the same people keep talking, and certain people are listened to more carefully. This creates predictability and security, maybe speeds up the handling of matters, and gives an erroneous impression of efficiency, but it does not guarantee the best results or the emergence of the most creative ideas. The way in which those who are quiet and have been left aside commit themselves to decisions and agreements, may leave a lot to be desired for. Why don't the decisions materialize in the everyday life, even though they are made 'together'?

When we talk about open communication, the meaning of listening goes easily unnoticed. In the background of the quietness of the quiet people in the community there may be experiences of lack of listeners. Most peo-

ple get tired of talking if no one is listening. Listening is not just being politely quiet while someone else is talking. Responsible listening means that the listener tries to put himself in the speaker's place and to understand what he is saying. In practise it often entails encouraging the speaker and asking specifying questions. Active listening described by Thomas Gordon (1979) illuminates well the skill of listening and its meaning in the communication between people.

Did we fail to handle an important matter?
Sometimes things that seem small and insignificant may take an unreasonable amount of time. The meeting got stuck with them even though everyone felt it was frustrating. Respectively, an important issue on the procedure may therefore remain untreated or receive too superficial handling. In the meeting review it is therefore important to consider why it happened. Did they fear, and why, to handle the important matter? Was the reason in a too tight procedure? Did the meeting start late for some reason, which?

Difficulty of examining the meeting
Experience has showed that examining the meetings at the end has led to a more efficient utilization of the meeting time. For example, people are not anymore late, or not nearly as often as previously, for the meetings since they know that in the review they have to acknowledge publicly that their late arrival caused the delay of the meeting. Especially if important matters are therefore left without handling, the feeling of guilt heightens the morale and guides to punctuality. It has turned out to be more difficult to hold on to the examination. The issues on the procedure take easily more time than had been reserved for them at the cost of the time that should be spent on examination. I wonder if it were useful to set the alarm to go off when the time for the examination should start? At least it would force to make a conscious decision on whether to stop to examine and review the meeting, or to go on with the issues on the procedure. If the examina-

tion, intentionally or unintentionally, is not carried out, it can be a symptom of the critical state of the community, which people are afraid to face.

Examining and reviewing the meeting have to be learned just as any other new thing. In the beginning it easily happens that the participants go on talking about the issues of the meeting without being able to detach themselves from them and to take their own behavior and the actions of the group during the meeting under examination. In a situation like this, the superior or the chairman of the meeting should bring the discussion back to the review of the meeting that has just taken place.
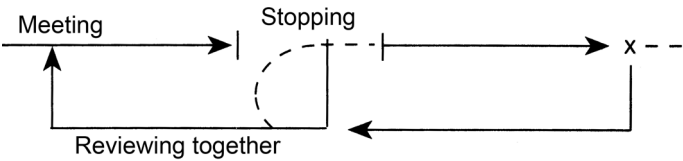
Figure 19. In the examination stage the task of the superior or of the chairman is to bring the discussion back to the review of the actual meeting (point X), if people continue talking about the issues on the procedure.

When the necessary cooperation forums included in the functional structure of the community, and when the leader or the superior of the community is able to lead the interaction process and to support the actions of the forums, the preconditions for the community's inner development have been created. In the following I shall describe the development of communities chiefly from the point of view of communal self-esteem and identity.

6. DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNAL SELF-ESTEEM AND IDENTITY

When we discuss and solve the problems of everyday life together, when we agree on common rules and principles of actions, and when we make plans and set goals, gradually the members start to form a common view of the community, of its strengths and weaknesses, of the basic task as well as of mutual relations and of the division of tasks. This kind of a common view of the community and its state can be considered a result of the development of communal identity. I have in my former works (Kaipio & Murto, 1980, 15-16; Murto, 1991, 17-18) described the development of an educational community from the standpoint of social norms and the quality of interaction, when we were able to discern four levels of communal development:

    I An incoherent group with no common norms or goals.
    II Outwardly coherent community.
    III A social community.
    IV Community-educational community.

   Moving from the first level to the fourth required regular meetings of the whole community, assembling at least once a week for three to four years. Especially during the first two years the meetings could assemble daily. The central features in the community's development from one level to the next were

    - increasing communication between the charges and the educators,
    - gradual growing of mutual trust,
    - learning a common language and finding common norms and goals,
    - rise of the community's self-esteem and requirements for both the charges' and the educators' actions,

- dramatic improvement of educational results.
(Kaipio, 1977; Kaipio & Murto, 1980).

Based on experiences from various communities, I shall in the following try to describe the development stages of communal identity, whose central features seem to repeat themselves in very different kinds of communities. The most central area of communal identity is the amount of common social reality. The more incoherent the community is, the less common social reality is shared by its members. A community without an identity, a defiant community, and a community with identity describe cer-tain kinds of ideal types between which most communi-ties can be placed.
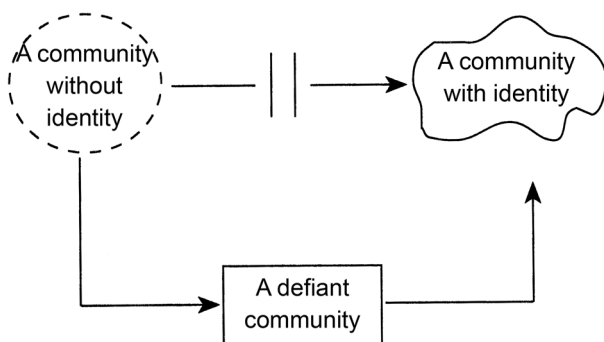
Figure 20. The development of a community's identity goes towards the community with identity often through a defiant, introvert stage.

A community without identity

A community without identity normally does have some kind of a physical identity like a room or a building, where it is situated at, and a relatively permanent membership. Instead, the social identity is very weak since there are few common discussions and little common time.

The common view of the community's goals and basic task is vague, the sense of solidarity is weak, and the staff has a detached and estranged attitude towards its work. They are physically present at work, but their hearts and

thoughts are far away. Each one of them tends to use the time and resources at work chiefly to their own selfish purposes. One takes care of the finance and membership matters of his sports club during working hours using the employer's telephone, the other uses the company car and time to transport building materials to his summer cottage that is under construction, someone else looks for a new house in the newspaper advertisements at the working place and makes phone calls for more information on them.

There are not necessarily bigger open conflicts in the community, because the staff's mutual communication is rather superficial and it sticks to practical matters. With the aid of cliques and speaking behind backs they let out the things that have caused irritation. It is a part of the established and unexpressed culture that each one is equally allowed to take care of their own affairs at the employer's cost. Only excessive selfishness causes grudge!

A community like this is controlled from the outside, and safe and carefree from the point of view of the management: it will not stand up to resist any undertakings if they do not threaten the members' own interests. It is adaptable and easy to manipulate. The superior of the unit is the only one who has, in accordance to his position, some kind of overall responsibility for meeting the forms of bureaucracy, for writing the reports and for having enough personnel at work. The turnover of the personnel does not very much sway the community, whose communal limits, self-knowledge and sense of solidarity are weak. It is enough to manage from one day to the other. The real results of actions are naturally very modest, but if we assess them with superficial and performance-centered criteria, the community is usually not different from other respective ones. It may be wise to emphasize that I am now referring to units and communities in the public administration, and it is hard to measure their results objectively.

A defiant community
From the stage of having no identity, communities do not seem to develop straight into communities with an iden-

tity. According to my experiences, their development seems to through a stage of defiance as if resembling an individual's development phases.

The defiant development stage is reached through the increase of common meetings and discussions. The change can be launched by a change of a superior or personnel. Temporary defiance and resistance can occur in any community due to requirements and pressures from outside without any change of personnel, but then we are not dealing with long-range development.

Regular and adequately frequent gatherings form a forum, where people can together consider the state of their unit, their work, their mutual relations, division of tasks, and the basic task of the community. Gradually they become able to solve problems and conflicts that trouble the community, and to conquer the difficulties they meet in their work, which strengthen the sense of solidarity give faith and confidence in one's own abilities and chances. Work starts to feel more interesting and to occupy people's minds even in leisure time. In a community without identity the personnel think about their personal things at work, whereas a defiant community is characterized by the fact that people also take their work affairs home in a positive sense. When the sense of solidarity starts to grow stronger, it is often not enough to meet during working hours, but the staff wants to spend time together and to talk about their work also on their own time. When in a community without identity the personnel's actions are controlled by pursuing one's own interest, in a defiant community the interest of the unit comes first and own interest only after that.

How should we call a community like this that is bubbling with enthusiasm, and that has found and identified with a certain (treatment, education, or action) ideology, defiant? Seen from the outside, the community looks clannish, because its interest is primarily limited to its inner affairs: human relations, problems, ideology of actions, and development of inner structure. These issues are not easy to solve, and therefore take a considerable amount of energy from the community members. Defi-

ance and self-centeredness shows in the community's attitudes towards the environment, like the other units and the management, that is automatically expected to exhibit attention and gratitude. Objectively thinking, the expectations are fully justified considering the personnel's manyfold contribution, as compared to earlier times, to their work and community.

Inside the community people are very aware of their own achievements, but they avoid communicating them actively to outsiders. That is what we Finns would consider as shameful self-praise. The fact that the community's inner processes are exhausting, and that the members have feelings of inferiority or fears that they will not be understood, leads to neglecting the relations to the outside world. The bureaucracy of public administration often fails to notice positive 'deviation', and that is why the community's achievements remain unnoticed until the community, due to its improved self-esteem, starts to show outwardly active and critical. Confidence in own expertise, desire to become independent and to control one's own limit can cause envy in the parallel units: what right do those have to choose their personnel, inhabitants, students or patients?

Before long the word of the unit reaches the management that is not equal to the occasion, and tries in the name of 'impartiality' or its authority to return the unit to the rank. Communities that have experimented with alternative pedagogy, treatment systems, or functional model, have regrettably often got into conflicts with the administration and/or authorities that represent traditional tendencies, and they have been fully destroyed regardless of their achievement. To avoid destruction would require more open and active relations to the outside, to the management and to other units.

Openness towards the outside and towards feedback that comes from the outside might save a developing community also from the dangers of apparent communality. When a community goes into examining and interpreting its inner processes, it can experience enlightenment and self-sufficiency, when it becomes blind to

its own community dynamics. Phenomena that are always lurking, are splitting the causes of problems and of 'all evil', and placing them outside the community: to the management, administration, or other units. Organizations often give these kinds of projections or projective identifications even realistic impetus. A part of apparent communality is suppressing individual differences and divergent opinions, especially if they criticize the community. They are taboos that you are not allowed to talk about, but it is also not allowed to talk about these 'talking prohibitions'!

In order to secure development towards a community with an identity, it would be appropriate to have community supervision from an outsider - it could reveal the pitfalls connected to outside relations and the inner dynamics of these communities.

A community with identity
A community with an identity knows its weaknesses and strengths.Goals, principles and practices of actions have been internalized, and the communal culture is established so far, that the community does not have to guard its limits as inflexibly and stiffly as a defiant community. The community members have a very strong and expansive feeling of responsibility. They do not feel responsible only for their own unit, but for the whole organization and, at best, for their whole line of activities. If the interests of the unity require, the unit is able to be flexible, but trusting its expertise it is also able to set its limits quite firmly if necessary.

The community makes high demands on itself and on its environment. It is active and accustomed to taking stands. Self-confidence shows in its ability to give critical feedback to other units and to the management, and in the facility to receive criticism of its own actions. The community is open on the inside and to the outside. It supports the open communication between its members and it can handle its conflicts and problems. Even though it is the duty of each member to adhere to common agreements, the community is tolerant and supports individual-

ism and diversity.

A community with an identity is by no means without problems and conflicts, but its members have courage, ability and skill to handle the difficulties they meet with, and they also have, based on experience, a confidence in getting over them.

Everyone feels comfortable with the ways and courses of action that have been sought to solve problems that are felt common, and committing to them is not a problem. If unanimity cannot be reached in important issues concerning the community, the issue is tabled rather than put to the vote, if the situation is not compelling. Voting can scatter rather than strengthen a developing community.

Successes in solving problems and overcoming difficulties strengthen communal self-confidence and lead to setting more demanding goals. Thus goals **rise from the communal process, from below.** Also mistakes and failures are shared, and their examination can be used as a source for learning.

The collective experience basis that gradually develops as a result of discussions and open communication, creates a firm foundation for a community that is becoming solid from below and setting goals independently.

The rise of communal self-esteem expresses itself also in the **rising of the level of goals**. More demanding goals that have been set from below, act as challenges and bring the development of the community forward just as the spikes of a mountain climber help him towards the top of the mountain (figure 21).

The level of communal development

Time
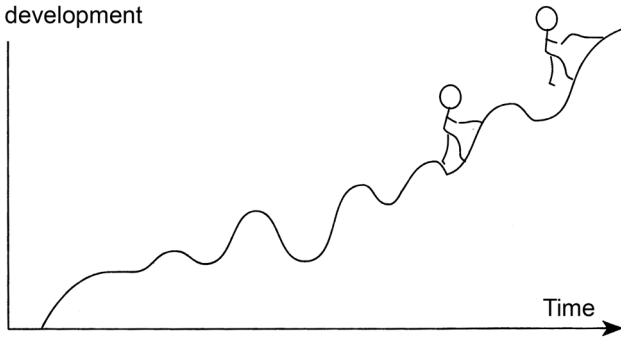
Figure 21. When the communal self-esteem grows, the community sets more demanding goals to itself, that in turn bring the development of the community forward just like a mountain climber climbs with his spikes and rope up the mountainside.

In the development of a community with an identity, the role of the manager or the superior of a unit is decisive. By means of his authorization, he has to be able to organize the cooperation forums and to support open interaction and communication: to lead a process. Based on everything that has been said so far, it has probably become clear that we are not dealing with an easy, quick and uncomplicated task. The most common "mistakes" in the development projects of work communities are the management's and/or personnel's expectations of quick results. Changes require time and patience. People have to be given time to learn. That is why we have to proceed with small steps.

7. TANGLES AND OBSTACLES IN LEADING THE PROCESS

Practical experiences from process centered development have also revealed many defects, limitations and problems connected to organization structures and people's personalities, and they can stop the development. There is plenty of material on the education and treatment communities that were developed under the leadership of Anton Makarenko, Maxwell Jones and Kalevi Kaipio (Makarenko, 1957, 1958; Jones, 1952, 1968, 1976, 1982; Kaipio, 1977; Kaipio & Murto, 1980; Murto, 1989, 1991), so that I don't think it is necessary to review them here. Especially interesting from the point of view of leading a process are the experiences described by Morton Deutsch (1985) from the cooperative companies owned by the workers or their communities (The U.S. Plywood Cooperatives in the United States, The Mondragon Cooperative System in Spain, the kibbutzim in Israel and the cooperatives of the former Yugoslavia). The experiences are of current interest also from the point of view of developing the institutions and organizations of the Finnish public administration. The dissolution and decentralization of centralized organizations and the formation of units with result responsibility means a shift towards a "market strategy" or "market models" (Julkunen, 1992). Instead of traditional privatization, a cooperative controlled by the staff or by a regional community could work as an alternative worth trying.

Based on parallel results of laboratory and field surveys, Deutsch states that organizations that are based on cooperation and equality are at least as efficient and productive as organizations that operate on the basis of hierarchy and inequality of the personnel. If efficiency and productivity require good cooperation, moving towards democratic and equal cooperation and breaking

away from the traditional hierarchic-authoritarian antithesis will increase productivity and decrease alienation. In practise this can be carried out in many ways:

- by moving from individual salary to a pay system for a group,
- by the workers' participation in decision-making and profit-sharing,
- by moving from outside ownership to workers' ownership,
- by applying democratic control instead of authoritarian control.

The changes do not imply a denial of individual performance or responsibility, but they emphasize how the dependence on the performance of others strengthens rather than weakens responsibility as well as motivation to work and to cooperate.

Despite their good results, the democratically controlled and led cooperatives have met with quite many difficult practical problems that threaten the survival of the principles of equality, democracy and cooperation when the community grows older. Democracy is threatened by the members' uneven participation, which on the one hand is due to structural obstacles in the community, and on the other hand to obstacles connected to the members' personality, interests and skills. The size of the community and the time reserved for the meetings are the most important structural factors. When the size of the community grows, the time needed for common meetings is longer. In larger communities also the proportion of those who participate actively is smaller than in small communities. Personal differences are connected to the intensity of commitment, educational backgrounds, knowledge, skills and thirst for power. The materialization of democracy calls for preventing power to be concentrated in the hands of a few.

Deutsch proposes the following measures to prevent oligarchy:

    1. Keeping the size of the groups small enough so

that the community members' direct participation and
direct democracy are possible.

2. Cycling the task of the participants, leaders and the
community so that power is divided to as many as
possible.

3. Removing privileges and bonuses connected to
leadership and authority positions.

4. Supporting the personnel's commitment to demo-
cratic values with the aid of education and training.

5. Practicing the skills required by participation and
giving the personnel information that is needed in
participation.

6. Developing the kind of procedures and using the
kind of technology that guarantees the personnel ex-
pansive chances to participate.

7. Following the materialization of the democrat-
ic process with regular and independent surveys, and
making necessary amendments. (Deutsch, 1985, 245).

The community's cooperation can be endangered by
such social psychological processes like **specialization,
attachment and accommodation to the group**. Spe-
cialization can lead to a formation of a group of special-
ists that concentrate on their own interests. People's at-
tachment for each other can create a system of special
favorites and cause cliques. Accommodation to the ex-
pectations of others or to the pressures of the group pre-
vents the utilization of individual creativity and causes
inner dissatisfaction. According to Deutsch, it is possible
to prevent cooperation from becoming endangered with
similar means as the deterioration of democracy:

1. The ill effects of specialization can be prevented by
cycling and enriching working tasks.

2. Supporting communication within and between
groups, which helps to discover common needs and
interest.

3. Community centeredness can be strengthened by
education and training.

4. The unity of the group can be strengthened by cre-
ating common symbols, rituals and occasions.

5. Cooperation can be promoted by creating coordinating cooperation bodies above the groups.
6. Conformity and accommodation to group pressures are prevented by respecting and emphasizing individuality and respect of diversity.
7. By emphasizing individual responsibility and by revealing "shirking" it is possible to take necessary measures.
8. By making regular and objective surveys of the functionality of the cooperation system, and by correcting discovered defects. (Deutsch, 1985, 246).

According to Deutsch, a community based on equality does not suit everybody. Some people find such communities too restricting. That is why the membership of these communities should be voluntary. In its purest form it would be most suitable for smaller communities the members of which have a chance to personal interaction.

The experiences from the cooperatives show that smaller cooperatives need a financial and expertizing support network in order to stay alive. The cooperatives also have to be able to take care of their inner coherence on the basis of common values. The leader's role in developing the ideology is decisive. However, the common ideology has to be subject to constant re-evaluation and correction based on experience. The collaboration of the cooperatives makes it possible to learn from others' experiences, but practise suggests that each cooperative has to "discover the wheel again", i.e. go its own way of trial and error. The fact that there is very little research material on the subject so far does not make things easier. (Deutsch, 1985, 248-249).

Alarming signs
The basic idea of the process centered development strategy is that each member should learn to take personal responsibility for himself and for his community. This requires activeness and courage. The superiors and managers of the work community are in a key position. Their self-reliance, knowledge and social skills decide to which

direction the community will change: whether it will develop or regress. In the following, some symptoms indicating regression.

1. Those who are in an authority position are afraid to be subject to examination

The starting point of development is that those who are in superior positions should be able to surrender themselves, with their comings and goings, to be subject of communal discussion, and to accept feedback from their subordinates and colleagues. This creates a secure communal atmosphere and provides the other community members with patterns of behavior. If the ones in authority positions venture to subject themselves to criticism and if they do not allow their actions to be analyzed and confronted, the community, not even as a unity, has not got chances to develop to a high standard work community.

Methods to avoid feedback of one's self or actions are for example:

– dominating the meetings by talking as much as possible,
- making the agenda and the procedure suitable for oneself,
- staying away from meetings under various kinds of pretexts, arranging other 'more important' occasions, forgetting the meeting, or being late for the meeting,
- a contradiction between verbal and non-verbal communication, for example encouraging open talking but communicating by gestures and facial expressions that someone is talking about something wrong,
- slipping from common decisions or hindering them by letting the personnel talk about the issue, but acting so that a clear decision is not reached, and the manager or the superior has a chance to act in accordance to his own will. If he is criticized, he can always cite that there was no common decision.
- shifting the common meetings "since there are no important issues", or suppressing the meetings altogether as unnecessary. Regardless of the work com-

munity, there are always common issues. This is a question of not venturing to take the issues to handling, when also the handling of other issues <u>seems</u> frustrating.

Giving up common meetings leads unavoidably to a breakup of common social reality, to cliques and to a decline of the community level.

2. Refraining from emotional expressions

Keeping to business and overemphasizing rationality lead to the fact that the feelings connected to them crop up indirectly, when the feelings are hard to get at. The crucial thing in the defense strategies described by Argyris, is that emotions connected to interaction are concealed, which prevents reaching the desired end result and the chance to learn. Most common is to hide negative feelings because of the insecurity of the community.

3. Difficulty to examine the actions of oneself and the group

This shows in reluctance to common meetings. People cannot find time for them, or issues that would be important enough. If arranging common meetings does come out, closing them with a review will not come out. Thus there is no chance to get at the things that hamper the meetings no more than at developing them.

4. Crumbling personnel community

The personnel's great turnover, increase of study leaves, sick leaves and absences are symptoms and consequences of a rapid deterioration of the state of the community. The abundance of new employees and substitutes crumbles communality, common social reality, and threatens the survival of the communal culture. If common forums are lacking or if they do not work, the downhill is really steep.

If not the superior, then who?

In the foregoing my starting point has been that developing a work community is primarily the responsibility

of the leader or the superiors. But if the leader or the superior is not willing or able to take responsibility for development, does the personnel have a chance to develop its work community? In that case it has, if the leader or the superior does not openly oppose. In each community there are active and responsible persons that can act as the core group of development. **The leaders' passive support and willingness to stand by common agreements already make development possible.** This does not mean apparent democracy, where the leader pretends to go along, but in actual fact does what he pleases. Even a leader that is passive and gives chances, is required to be open, reliable and brave to defend his community.

Risk taker

There is always someone in the community that is more sensitive than others to see conflicts and problems and has the courage to bring them to common handling. If it is about authority or exercise of power, the one who brings it up takes a risk. He may risk his chances of advancement, his raise in wages, his position or even his job. This can happen even if the personnel had been encouraged to express their feelings and opinions openly.

When difficult issues are brought to discussion, the rest of the personnel usually follow the events quietly and passively. Their later behavior is affected by the fate of the risk taker. Even if the problem or disadvantage were generally known and acknowledged, in a critical situation the risk taker is regrettably often left alone regardless of the fact that his friends support him off the record.

Whatever the risk taker's fate, he has done the community a favor by testing the consistency of the community's credibility, talks and deeds. Instead of seeing the risk taker as fouling his own nest or sowing dissension, the management should respect his courage and also show it openly. Otherwise it is probably idle to await more open communication or development of security within the organization. It would also be wise for the risk taker to secure his rear by making an agreement with one or two people that think the same way, that they would give their

open support when he brings up the issue.

An outside expert
Communities that function badly and struggle with their problems resort, either of their own will or under the management's pressure, to an outside expert to fix the situation. My own experiences from working as a consult and community work supervisor in weak (no identity) communities support the view that work supervision that takes place at long intervals, maybe once a month, has little chance to help a community if it does not have other working cooperation forums. The first requirement would be to create forums that meet more often so that the supervised units would develop into a community that could be work-supervised.

Education and consulting are the chances that an outside expert has at his disposal to support the community and its management in organizing the forums in question and to make them work.

A significant problem in the decentralization of organizations and in making the result units into working communities especially in public administration, is connected to concentrating power to the leader of the unit, who is responsible to upper hierarchy, not to his subordinates. The subordinates' chances to influence and the community's development chances are totally dependent on the leader: a good leader aims at strengthening them, a bad one at preventing them. In practise the bodies of elected officials that are based on representative democracy, seem to be quite unable to intervene with the actions of even a bad leader. To guarantee real development chances for work communities, in addition to guaranteeing their real independence, also the inner exercise of power in the basic units should be democratized.

8. AND ONCE AGAIN

The central elements of process centered development in a nut shell are the following:

1. A community is developed <u>primarily from below upwards</u>.

2. <u>Holism</u> means guaranteeing that the resources and creative capacity of each member of the community will have a chance to influence. In practise it means immediate, regular interaction of all levels of hierarchy and units on forums organized for that purpose, where the units' objectives and strategies are continuously fitted together.

3. The <u>overall objectives</u> of the organization shape on the basis of the basic task by continuously fitting together the objectives of the units and by respecting the independence of the units.

4. The operations of the units are controlled by the <u>same level</u> (by parallel units) in the common meetings of the organization, where the actions and plans of the units are assessed by the management as well as by other units.

5. The present state of the organization is surveyed by examining continuously and regularly the <u>everyday life</u> of the work community. The method of examination is open discussion, and the examination is performed by the community members. This does not exclude vast studies of the state of the community at regular intervals.

6. The core of development is to create that kind of a <u>functional structure</u> for the community that enables regular questioning and examination of the actions and routines of the community and its members and is carried out together.

7. <u>Leading a process</u> means supporting the interaction process of the group and the community as well as the members' open talking and responsible listen-

ing by organizing common forums and by taking part in their operations.

8. The <u>meetings</u> of the decision-making bodies <u>are open</u> to all interested members of the community.

9. The <u>common language</u> is learned and common views and common social reality are continuously created with the aid of interaction and examining the everyday life.

10. The basis of process centered development is individual and communal realization of double-loop learning (learning to learn).

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