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## Definition of **Learning Organisation**

A Learning Organisation is one where people continually **expand their capacity** to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where **collective aspiration is set free** and where people are continually **learning how to learn together**.

~ Peter Senge

## Definition of **Organisational Learning**

Organisational learning is the **intentional use of learning processes** at individual, group and system level to **continually transform the Organisation** in a direction that is increasingly satisfying to its stakeholders.

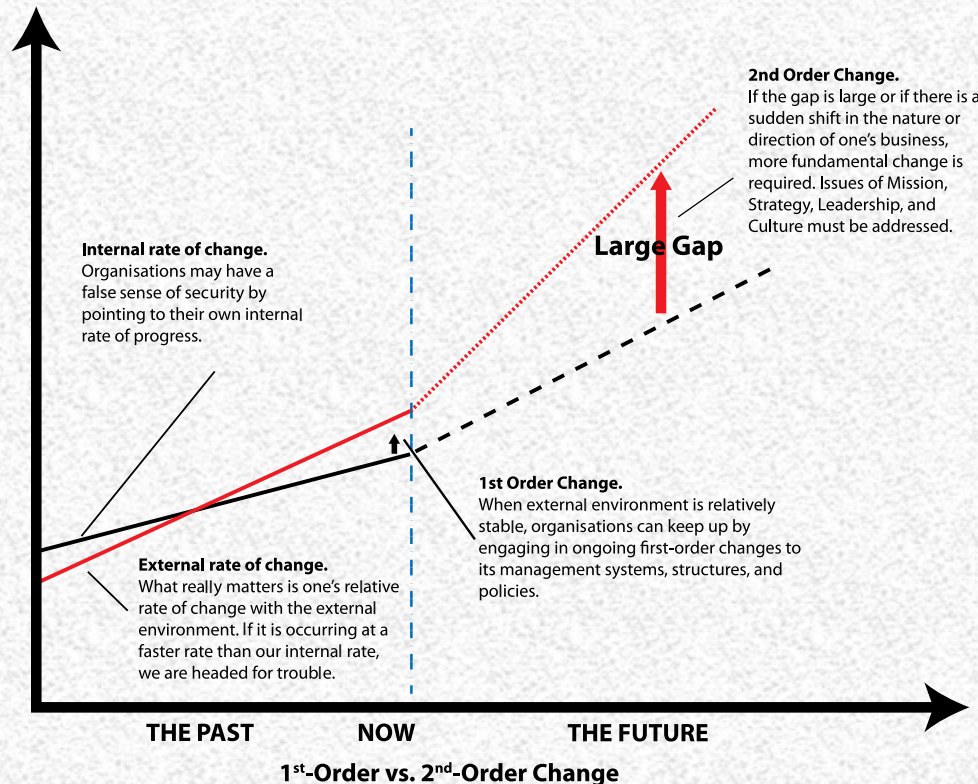
~ Nancy Dixon

# The 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Order Change



There is no doubt that the SAF has been changing and learning over its entire history. So, the question here is not whether SAF has changed or not, nor is it about whether SAF should continue to change in the future, for the answer to both is quite clear. The relevant questions to ask now are:

- **Has the SAF been changing as fast as its external environment?**
- **Does it have the capability to change at a rate faster than the external environment in the future?**
- **What capacity must the leaders have to lead change?**



## 1<sup>st</sup>-order Change

vs.

## 2<sup>nd</sup>-order Change

If the SAF has changed at a rate that is more or less on par with the external rate, then the change that is required may be of the 1<sup>st</sup>-order where changes in structure, management practices, and systems are sufficient for addressing any gaps. According to Burke and Litwin, **the primary goal of such 1<sup>st</sup>-order change is to affect the Organisational climate** (i.e., people's perceptions and attitudes about the Organisation—whether it is a good or bad place to work, friendly or unfriendly, hard-working or easy going, etc.). Organisational climate is relatively easy to change because people's perceptions are based on employee's experience of current managerial and Organisational practices. By changing current policies, structures, and procedures, we can quickly affect people's perceptions.

On the other hand, if the gap has been widening due to a steeper change in the external environment, then the SAF must go beyond incremental change and engage in more fundamental or 2<sup>nd</sup>-order change. **The primary goal of 2<sup>nd</sup>-order change is to affect the culture of the Organisation** (i.e., deep-seated assumptions, values, and beliefs that are enduring, unconscious, and difficult to change). Organisational culture tends to be much more difficult to change.

“If the rate of change outside your organization is greater than the rate of change inside your organization, the end is in sight.”

*Jack Welch  
CEO of General Electric between 1981 and 2001*

## Transactional Leadership vs. Transformational Leadership

Transactional leaders lead by guiding or motivating their followers in the direction of established goals and by clarifying role and task requirements. This type of leadership requires motivating people to meet established targets through first-order changes (in structures, systems, policies, and procedures). Transactional leadership embodies a fair exchange of tasks completed and compensation paid between leader and follower. This normally leads to performance “To standard”.

This kind of leadership inspires followers to transcend their own self-interest for the good of the Organisation. These leaders are people who are capable of having a profound and extraordinary effect on their followers by inspiring them to achieving performance “Beyond expectations”.

There is no advocacy made here that one type of leadership is better than the other nor are we suggesting that one must be either one type or the other. **In fact, both types of leadership styles are required to successfully lead any Organisation over a long period of time and both types can be developed within one person.** The value of making such a distinction is to know when it is appropriate to use which type of leadership.

Source: Burke & Litwin	1 <sup>st</sup> -Order Change	2 <sup>nd</sup> -order Change
Other Names	Transactional, evolutionary, adaptive, incremental, or continuous change	Transformational, revolutionary, radical, fundamental, or discontinuous
Focus of Interventions	Structure, management practices, and systems (policies and procedures)	Mission and strategy, leadership and organisational culture
What is Changed	<u>Organisational Climate</u> People’s perception and attitudes about the Organisation - whether it is a good or bad place to work, friendly or unfriendly, hard-working or easy going, etc.	<u>Organisational Culture</u> Deep-seated assumptions, values and beliefs that are enduring, unconscious, and difficult to change.
Leadership Required	<u>Transactional Leadership</u> Guide or motivate their followers in the direction of established goals by clarifying role and task requirements. Embodies a fair exchange between leader and follower that leads to performance “To standard”.	<u>Transformational Leadership</u> Inspire followers to transcend their own self-interest for the good of the Organisation and have a profound and extraordinary effect on their followers. Embodies inspiration which leads to performance “Beyond expectations”.

Transactional vs. Transformational Leadership

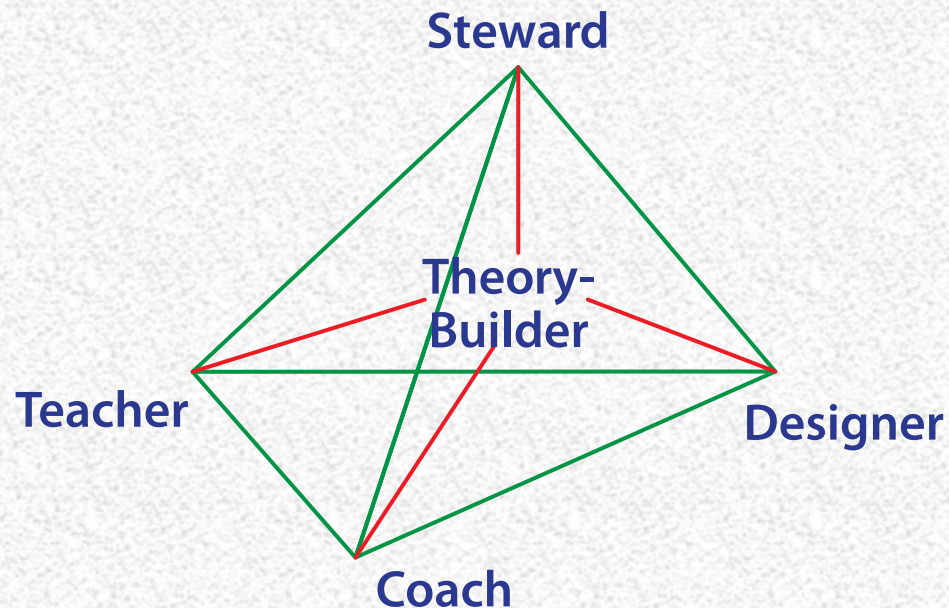


**FIVE NEW  
LEADERSHIP  
ROLES**

To address the new challenges ahead, what is needed may not be a change of action, but a change in perception. How we think and act are all associated with our particular view of reality. In order to create a new reality, we must discover how our current worldview affects the way we perceive and respond to problems. The leverage lies in going to a more fundamental level, looking beyond the problems themselves and re-examining the paradigm that gave rise to them. **In the current environment of 2<sup>nd</sup>-Order changes, a leader must be at the vanguard of Organisational change, questioning long-held Organisational beliefs and assumptions, asking new questions, not just seeking new answers.** Becoming a catalyst of paradigm shifts means more than acquiring new skills; it requires assuming a whole new way of being.



## Five New Leadership Roles



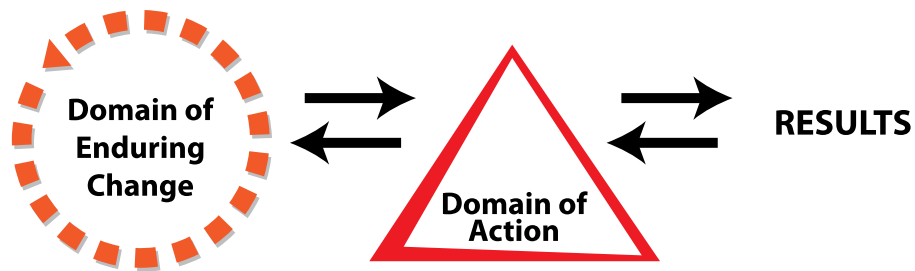
- The role of **Steward** requires the leader to look beyond what is being done today and ask the question “*What will I leave behind long after I am gone?*” It is about the legacy of one’s tenure rather than just the measure of day-to-day performance.
- As a **Designer** of the Organisation, a leader needs to understand the Organisation as a whole system (rather than a collection of parts) and continually refine its design so that those who are “operating” the system can focus on the areas of highest leverage.
- As a **Teacher**, the leader must model the desired behaviors for the Organisation so that they are teachers first by example, and second by instruction.
- The role of **Coach** is becoming ever more critical for tapping the full potential of every person in the Organisation by focusing on the development of each individual’s capabilities.
- As **Theory-Builders**, leaders must develop a deeper understanding of why their Organisation functions the way it does and have the capacity to formulate and test alternative theories of intervention in a continuous process of learning.



# Architecture and Essence of a Learning Organisation (AELO)

At its essence, every Organisation is a product of how its members think and act. The primary leverage for any Organisational learning effort lies in us. A learning Organisation is a place where people are continually expanding their capacity to create the results they desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together. **The five basic learning disciplines – Systems Thinking, Personal Mastery, Mental Models, Shared Vision, and Team Learning – activate this deep learning cycle.**

~ *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook: "Strategies and Tools for Building a Learning Organization"*

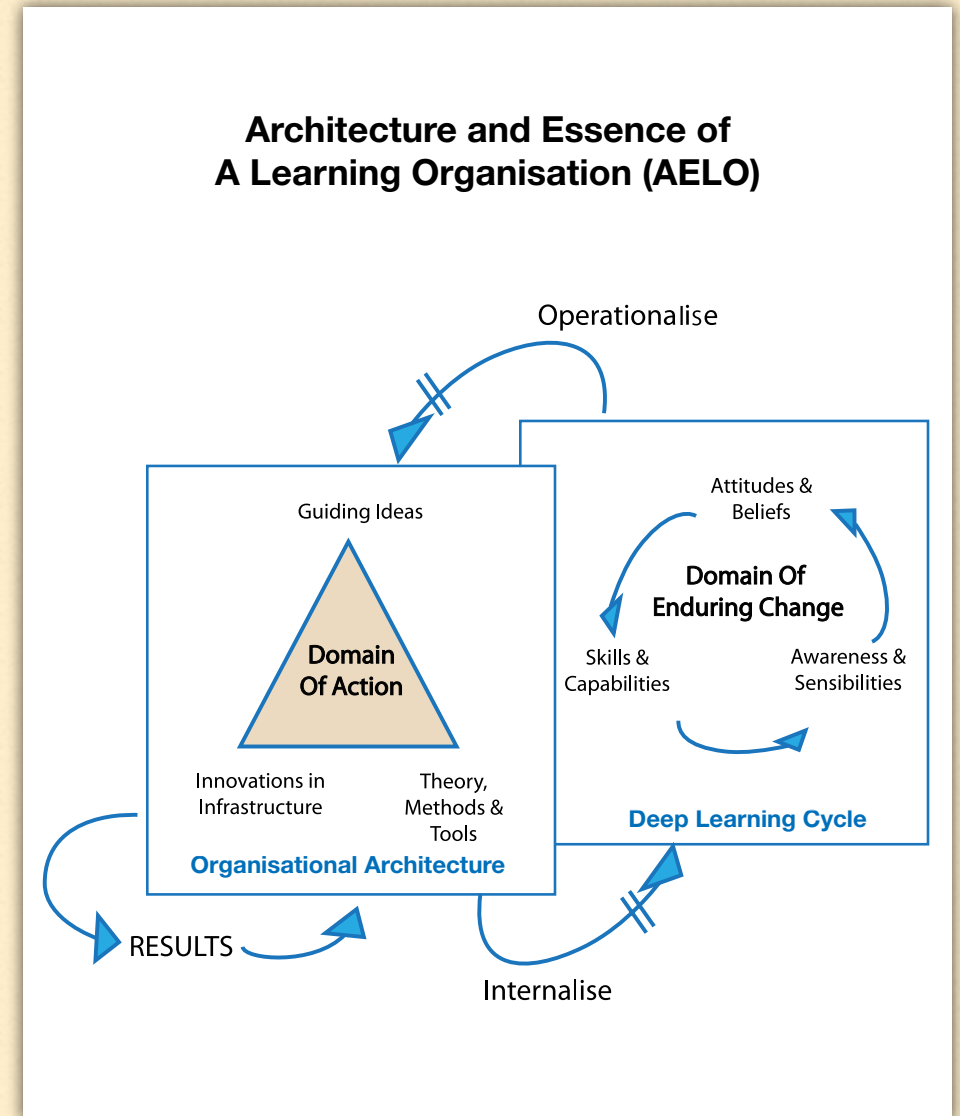


The framework suggests there are three domains that create Organisational learning. The first, at the far right, is Results. This domain addresses the question "*Why bother?*" What are the measurable and observable outcomes the Organisation wishes to create?

The Domain of Action is the next area. This is where much Organisation theory is focused. It addresses the question "*What will we do, or put in place, to achieve the results we desire?*" Anything you can plan, do, or see is in the Domain of Action. People and groups who focus most of their energies here may find that they can indeed produce their desired results – but not for long. Over time, motivation and ability to sustain the changes will lag.

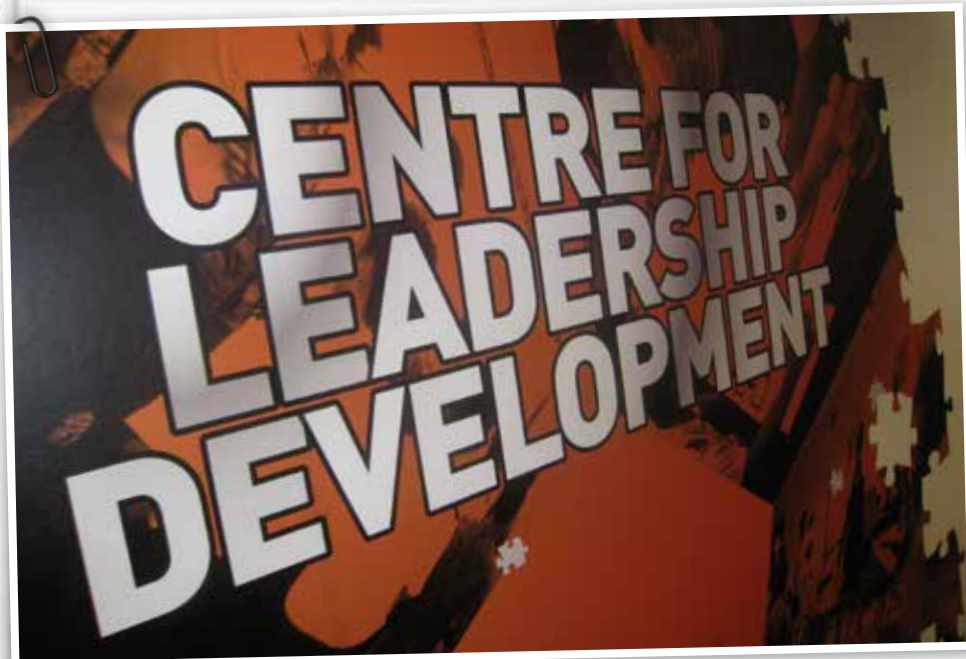
~ *Outlearning the Wolves: "Surviving and Thriving in a Learning Organization"*

# Architecture and Essence of a Learning Organisation (AELO)



## **Organisational Architecture and the Domain of Action**

Attending to the three vertices of the Triangle (Guiding Ideas, Innovations in Infrastructures, and Theory, Methods, and Tools) is very much about the vision creation and transforming structures. This is the domain of creating visions (and vision statements), re-engineering Organisational structures and processes, and training people in new theories, methods, and tools. All of this requires a lot of visible activities, hence, it is referred to as the Domain of Action. Many change efforts start and end with the Triangle, which is essentially focused only on phase II work, with very few efforts producing significant and enduring change.



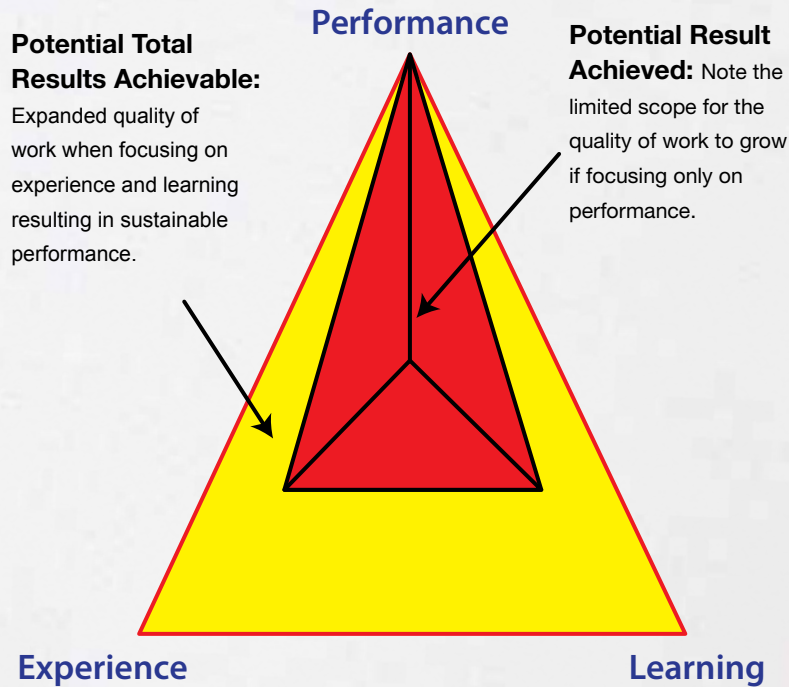
## **Deep Learning Cycle and the Domain of Enduring Change**

Engaging people in their own Deep Learning Cycle (the Circle) is perhaps the most important thing one can do in terms of attending to the Phase I work of building the container for change. Transformational change almost by definition will require new skills and capabilities because we are attempting to change in ways that are beyond our current capabilities. This means that the new theories, methods, and tools introduced in the Domain of Action (Triangle) must be translated into a process for developing people's Skills and Capabilities. Then, as their Skills and Capabilities increase, their Awareness and Sensibilities expand as they become more able to see more than they were able to see before. This expansion leads to a shift in Attitudes and Beliefs that "transforms" an individual's, a group's, or an Organisation's way of seeing the world. When people get engaged in their own Deep Learning Cycle, the possibility of creating enduring change emerges.

## **Operationalising and Internalising for Results**

Even if we have the Triangle and the Circle active in the Organisation, we still will not be able to produce better results if the two domains remain disconnected. This can occur when individuals are personally engaged in their own deep learning cycle, but for whatever reason, fail to operationalise their learning into the Organisational architecture. Conversely, the Organisation could have addressed the Triangle aspect very thoroughly, but if the guiding ideas, innovations in infrastructure, and the theory, methods, and tools are not internalized into people's own deep learning cycle, there will also be a disconnect. **What is needed for effective Organisational change is for both the Triangle and Circle to be active and for those linkages to be strong and healthy. To do this well requires the development of key leadership skills and capabilities.**

# PEL Total Results Triangle



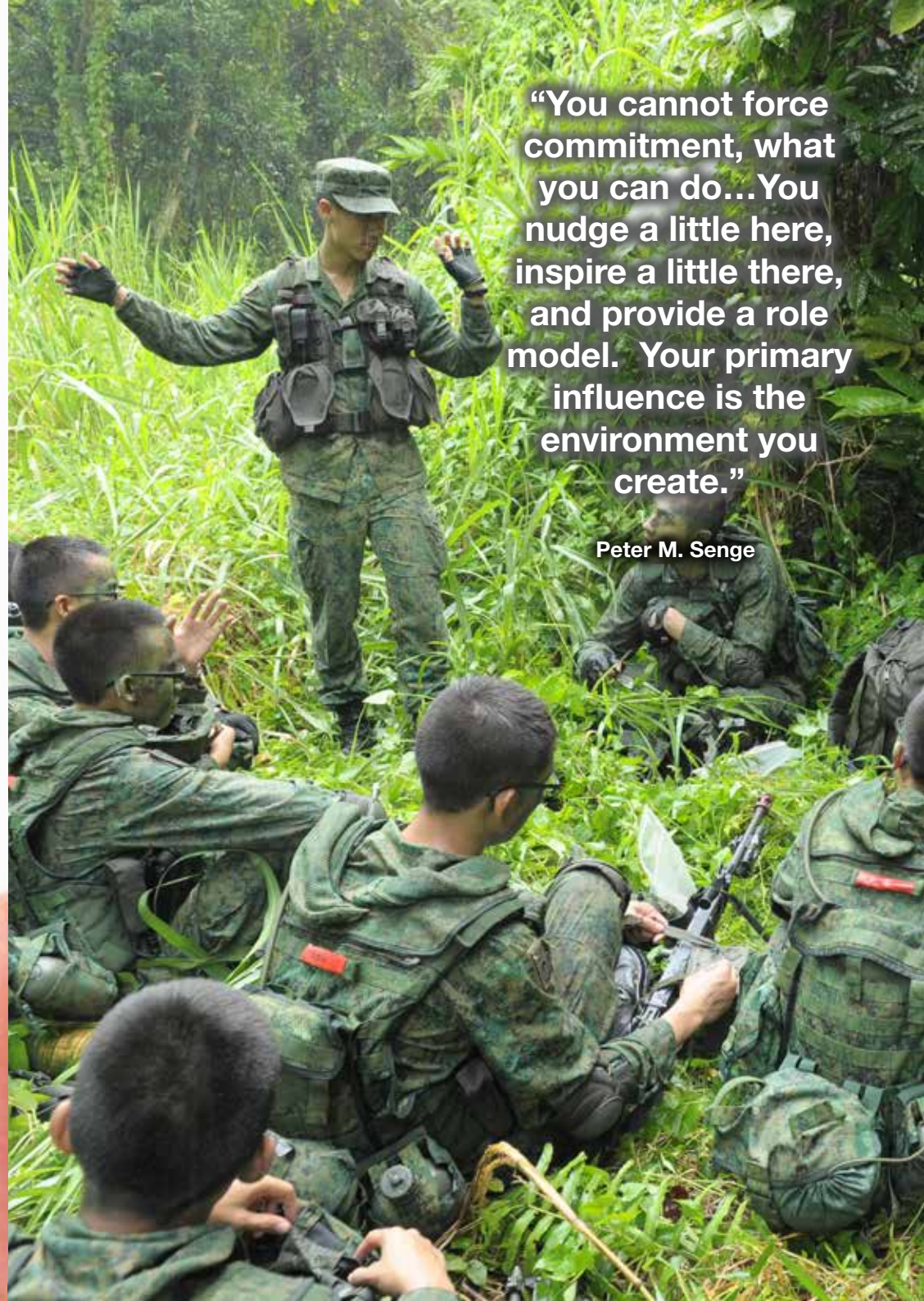
Adapted from Tim Gallwey "*Inner Game of Work*"

The fundamental results of WORK – **Performance**, **Experience**, and **Learning** – are interdependent. If individuals aren't learning, their performance will decline over time; if their predominant experience of work is boredom or stress, both learning and performance will suffer.

*The Systems Thinker, Volume 8, Number 6 August 1997*

"You cannot force commitment, what you can do... You nudge a little here, inspire a little there, and provide a role model. Your primary influence is the environment you create."

Peter M. Senge





## Core Theory of Success (CTOS)



As the quality of relationship rises, the quality of collective thinking improves, leading to an increase in the quality of actions and results. Achieving high-quality results has a positive effect on the quality of relationships, creating a virtuous cycle of success.

Source: *Organizing for Learning*, Daniel H Kim

## Core Theory of Success (CTOS)

Responsible leaders should ask themselves, “*What good theories do we have that provide practical guidance for ensuring our Organisation’s future success?*” The more clearly you can articulate your Organisation’s theories about what leads to success, the more deliberate you can be in investing in the elements that are critical to that success.

One such core theory will be based on the premise that as the *quality* of the relationships among people who work together increases (high team spirit, mutual respect, and trust), the quality of thinking improves (people consider more facets of an issue and share a greater number of different perspectives). When the level of thinking is heightened, the quality of actions is likely to improve (better planning, greater coordination, and higher commitment.) In turn, the quality results as a team generally has a positive effect on the quality of relationships, thus creating a virtuous cycle of better and better results.

The most important point about this kind of systemic theory is that the success is not derived from any one of the individual variables that make up the loop, but rather from the loop itself. All of the variables are important for the theory to work properly, because if one of them isn’t functioning, the reinforcing process doesn’t exist.

~ Source: *Organizing for Learning*, Daniel H Kim

## Organisational Learning Disabilities and Learning Disciplines

# 1

“I AM MY POSITION”

We trained to be loyal to our jobs- so much so that we confuse them with our own identities. When asked what they do for a living, most people describe the tasks they perform every day, not the purpose of the greater enterprise in which they have little or no influence. They ‘do their job,’ put in their time, and try to cope with the forces outside of their control. Consequently, they tend to see their responsibilities as limited to the boundaries of their position.

When people in organisation focus only on their positions, they have little sense of responsibility for the results produced when all positions interact. Moreover, when results are disappointing, it can be very difficult to know why. All you can do is assume that “ someone screwed up”.

# 2

“THE ENEMY IS OUT THERE”

There is in each of us a propensity to find someone or something outside ourselves to blame when things go wrong. Some organisations elevate this propensity to a commandment.

The “Enemy is out there” syndrome is actually a by-product “I am my position,” and the non systemic ways of looking at the world that it fosters. When we focus only on our position, we do not see how our own actions have consequences that come back to hurt us and we misperceive these new problems as externally caused. Like the person being chased by his own shadow, we cannot seem to shake them off.

# 7

## ORGANISATIONAL LEARNING DISABILITIES

(Adapted from “The Fifth Discipline, Peter M. Senge)

# 3

## “THE ILLUSION OF TAKING CHARGE”

Being “proactive is vogue”. Many mistakenly perceive the speed of action means achieving results. Managers frequently proclaim the need for taking charge when facing difficult problems. What is typically meant by this is that we should face up to difficult issues, stop waiting for someone else to do something, and solve problems before they grown into crises. In particular, being proactive is frequently seen as antidote to being “reactive” - waiting until a situation gets out of hand before taking a step. But is taking aggressive action against an external enemy really synonymous with being proactive?

All too often, “proactiveness” is reactivity in disguise. If we simply become more aggressive fighting the “enemy out there,” we are reacting – regardless of what we call it. True proactiveness comes from seeing how we contribute to our own problems. It is a product of our way of thinking, not our emotional state.

# 4

## “THE FIXATION ON EVENTS”

Focusing on events leads to “event” explanations. Such explanations may be true as far as they go, but they distract us from seeing the long term patterns of change that lie behind the events and from understanding the causes of those pattern.

Our fixation on the events is actually part of our evolutionary programming. The irony is that today the primary threats to our survival, both in our organisations and in societies, come not from sudden events but from slow, gradual processes: Generative learning cannot be sustained in an organisation if people’s thinking is dominated by short-term events. If we focus on events, the best we can ever do is predict an event before it happens so that we can react optimally. But we cannot ever plan for the long term when our focus are fixed on resolving day-to-day events.

# 5

## “THE PARABLE OF THE BOILED FROG”

Mal-adaptation to gradually building threats to survival is so pervasive in system studies of corporate failure that it has given rise to the parable of the boiled frog.

If you place a frog in a pot of boiling water, it will immediately try to scramble out. But if you place the frog in a room temperature water, and don’t scare him, he’ll stay put. Now, if the pot sits on a heat source, and if you gradually turn up the temperature, something very interesting happens. As the temperature gradually increases, the frog will become groggier and groggier, until he is unable to climb out of the pot. Though there is nothing restraining him, the frog will sit there and be cooked alive. Why? Because the frog’s internal apparatus for sensing threat to survival is geared to sudden changes in his environment. Not to slow, gradual change. Learning to see slow, gradual processes requires slowing down our frantic pace and paying attention to subtle as well as the dynamic signals.

# 6

## “THE DELUSION OF LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE”

The most powerful learning comes from direct experience. What happens when we can no longer observe the consequences of our actions? What happens if the primary consequence of our actions are in the distant future? We each have our learning horizon, learning from direct experience is not always immediate. Herein lies the core learning dilemma that confronts organisations: we learn best from experience but we never directly experience the consequences of many of our most important decisions. The most critical decisions made in organisations have system-wide consequences that stretch over years or decades. Given the turnover of personal and 2-3 years’ job rotation system, organisations must put in place robust systems to capture the knowledge and lesson learned. Traditionally, organisations attempt to surmount the difficulty of coping with the breadth of impact from decisions by breaking themselves up

into components. They institute functional hierarchies that are easier for people to “get their hands around”. But, functional division of labor mutates into the “stovepipes” that will fail to see complicated problems and issues that cross functional lines, that give rise to other problems.

# 7

## “THE MYTH OF THE MANAGEMENT TEAM”

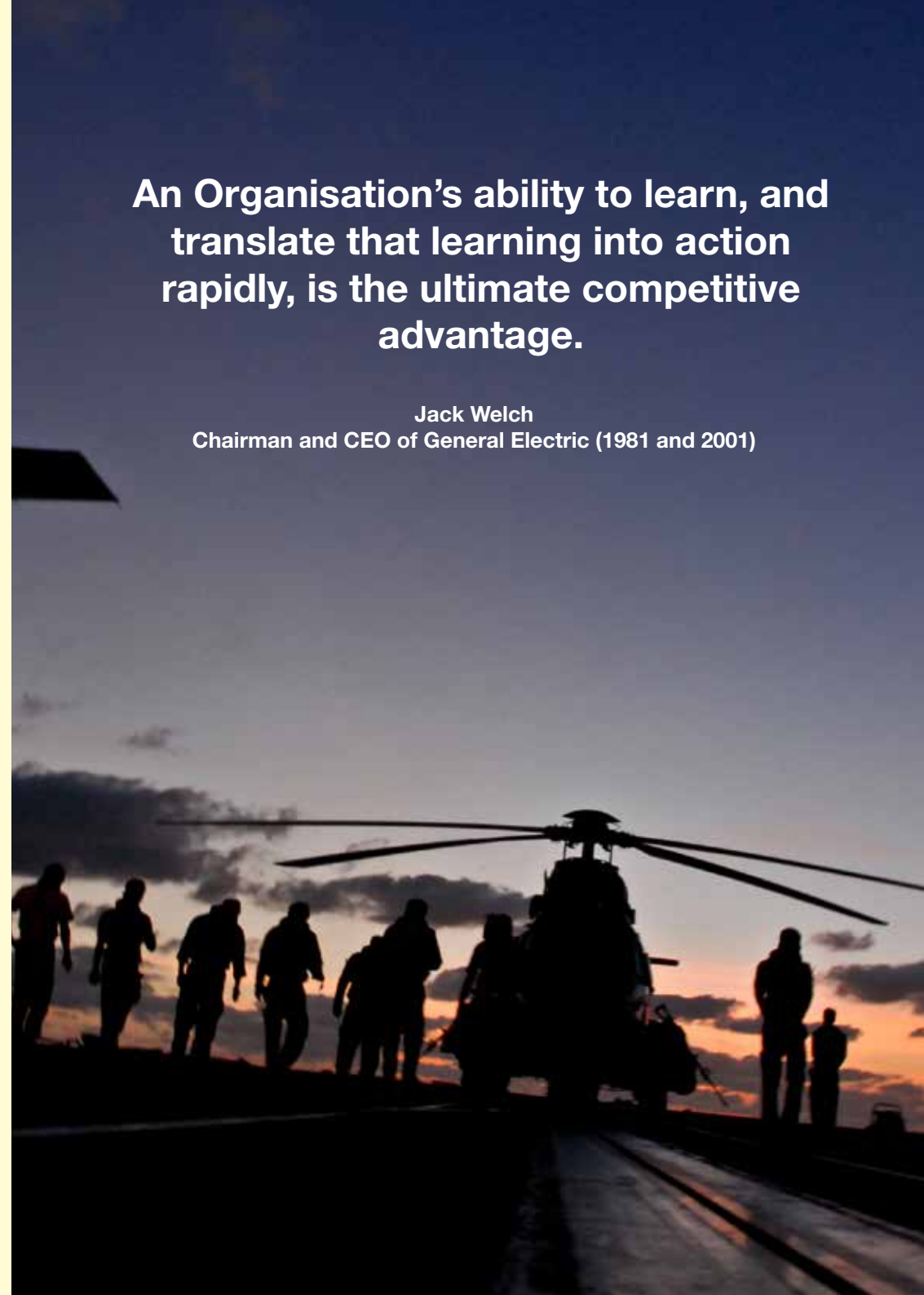
All too often, teams tend to spend their time fighting for turf, avoiding anything that will make them look bad personally, and pretending that everyone is behind the teams collective strategy - maintaining the appearance of a cohesive team. To keep up the image, they seek to quash disagreement; people with serious reservations avoid stating them publicly, and joint decisions are watered down compromises reflecting what everyone can live with, or else reflecting one person’s view forced on the group. If there is disagreement, it’s usually expressed in manner that lays blame, polarises opinion, and fails to reveal the underlying differences in assumptions and experience that the team as a whole could learn.

“Most management teams break down under pressure,” writes Harvard University’s Chris Argyris - a longtime student of learning in management teams. “The team may function quite well with routine issues. But when they confront complex issues that may be embarrassing or threatening, the ‘teamness’ seems to go to pot.” Even if we feel uncertain or ignorant, we learn to protect ourselves from the pain of appearing uncertain or ignorant. That very process blocks out any new understandings which might threaten us. The consequence is what Argyris calls” Skilled incompetence” -Teams full of people who are incredibly proficient at keeping themselves from learning.

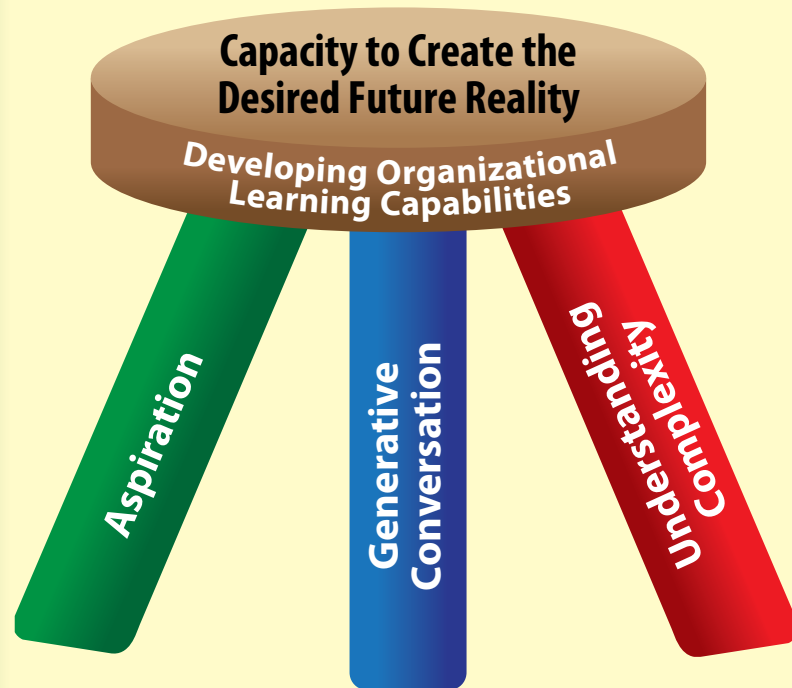
We live in no less perilous times today, and the same learning disabilities persist, along with their consequences. The 5 learning disciplines of Organisation Learning can act as antidotes to these Organisational learning disabilities.

**An Organisation’s ability to learn, and translate that learning into action rapidly, is the ultimate competitive advantage.**

**Jack Welch**  
Chairman and CEO of General Electric (1981 and 2001)



# 3-LEGGED STOOL



- Personal Mastery
- Shared Vision
- Mental Models
- Team Learning
- Systems Thinking

Kim Daniel H. (2001). *Organizing for Learning*.  
(Citing Society for Organizational Learning)

The stool represents the interdependence of three core capabilities to support organisational learning (Aspiration, Generative Conversation, and Understanding Complexity) that will help an organisation build the capacity to create the future or results it truly desires. The core of learning organisation work is based upon the five “Learning Disciplines” (Personal Mastery, Shared Vision, Mental Models, Team Learning and Systems Thinking).

## Aspiration

## PERSONAL MASTERY



Learning to expand our personal capacity to formulate a coherent picture of the results we desire as individuals and having a realistic assessment of the current state.

“The essence of Personal Mastery is learning how to generate and sustain creative tension in our lives.”

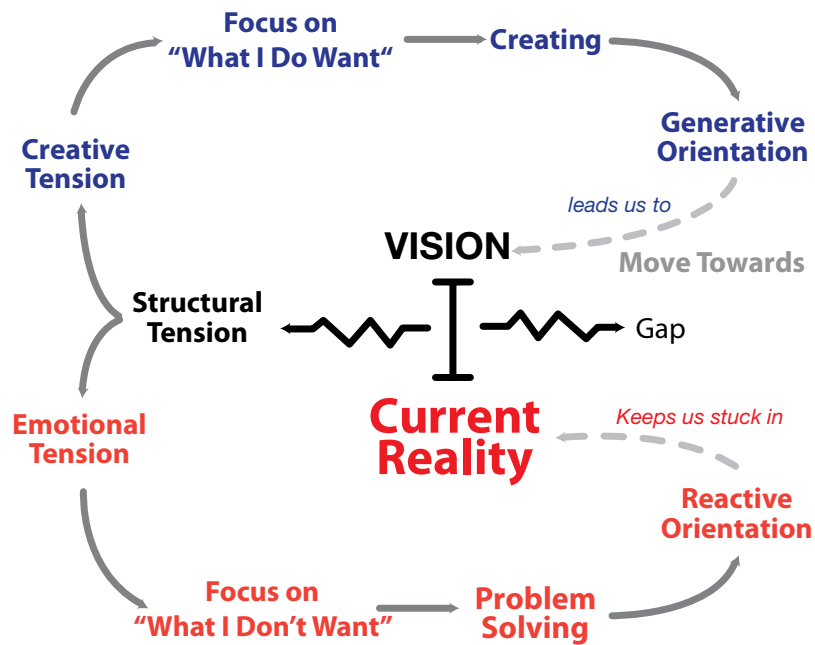
### *Principles and Practices of Personal Mastery*

- Personal Vision
- Seeing Our Connections to the World
- Holding Creative Tension
- Compassion
- Commitment to the Truth
- Commitment to the Whole
- Using the Subconscious
- Integrating Reason and Intuition



~ Source: *The Fifth Discipline*, Peter M. Senge

# Creative Tension Model (CTM)



Daniel H. Kim and Diane Cory. (Adapted from Robert Fritz, 1989, *The Path of Least Resistance*)

The principle of creative tension is the central principle of personal mastery. When we hold a vision that differs from the current reality, a gap exists (creative tension). In other words, creative tension is the gap between what you want (vision) and what you have (current reality). It can be a powerful force for creating what you want in your life and your organisation.

Mastery of creative tension transforms the way one views "failure." Failure is, simply, a shortfall, evidence of the gap between vision and current reality. Failure is an opportunity for learning – about inaccurate pictures of current reality, about strategies that didn't work as expected, about the clarity of the vision.

~ Source: *The Fifth Discipline*, Peter M. Senge

"The most effective people are those who can "hold" their vision while remaining committed to seeing current reality clearly".

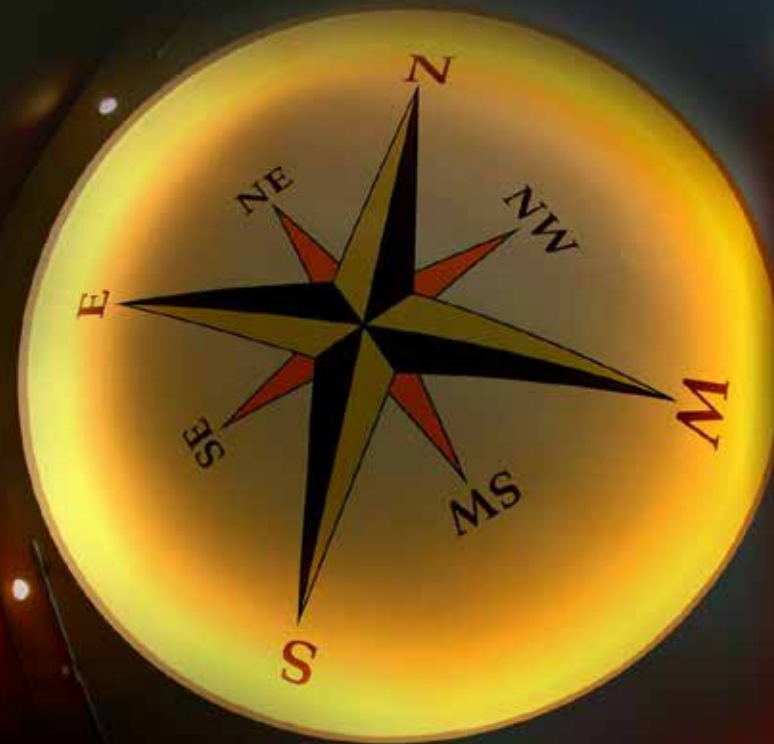
~ Peter M. Senge

# Three Insights – by Robert Fritz

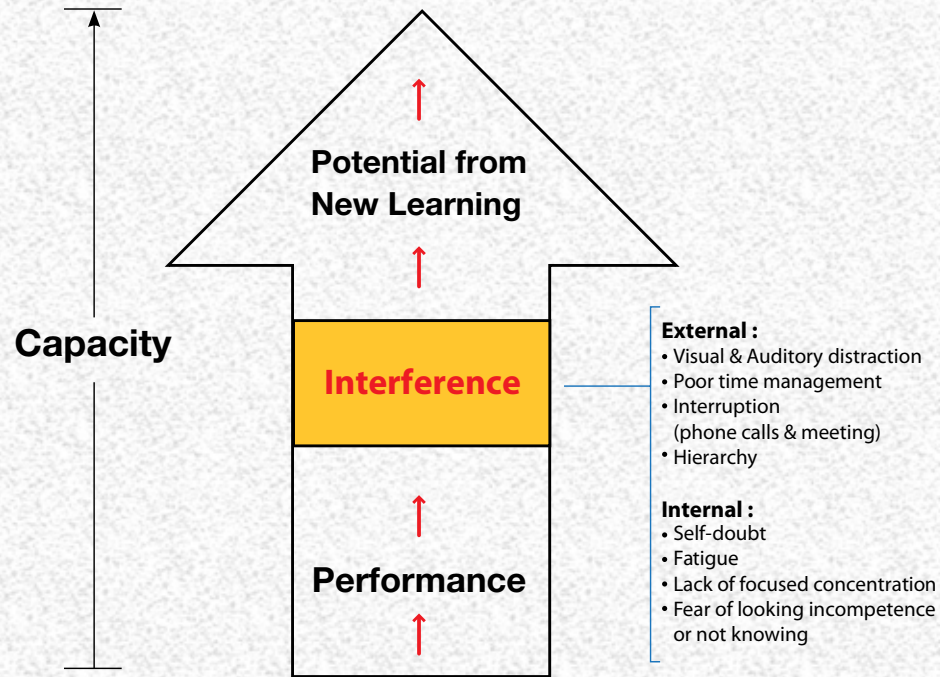
1. You go through Life taking the path of least resistance.
2. The underlying structure of your Life determines the path of least resistance.
3. You can change the fundamental underlying structures of your life.

"If you limit your choices only to what seems possible or reasonable, you disconnect yourself from what you truly want, and all that left is a compromise."

~ Robert Fritz management Consultant,  
Author of "The Path of Least Resistance"

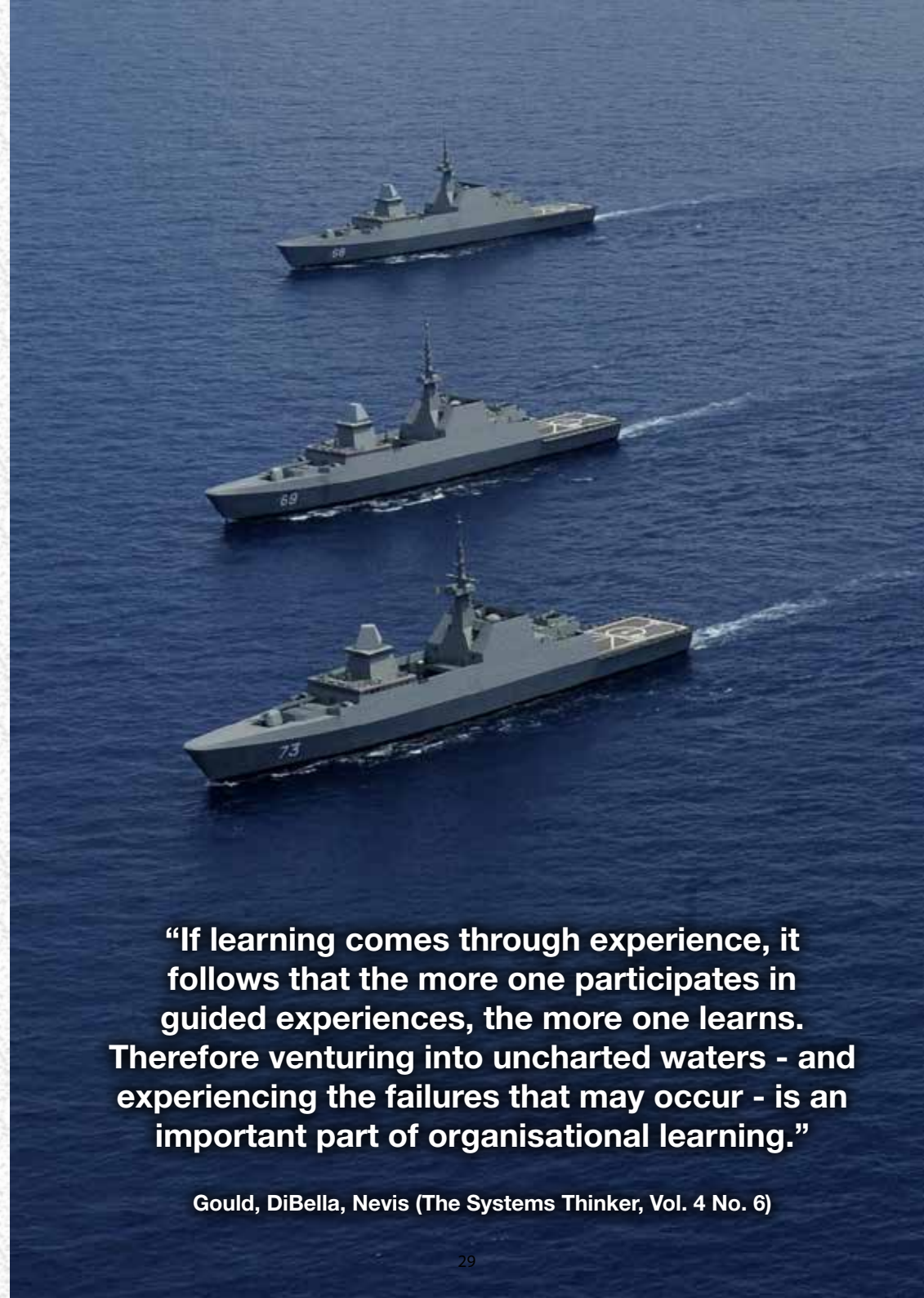


## Interference Model



The interference Model shows how, by reducing interference, individuals can dramatically and immediately improve their performance without learning any new skills. In an interference-free state, new learning is natural and easy.

*~ Adapted from the work of Timothy Gallwey*



**“If learning comes through experience, it follows that the more one participates in guided experiences, the more one learns. Therefore venturing into uncharted waters - and experiencing the failures that may occur - is an important part of organisational learning.”**

Gould, DiBella, Nevis (The Systems Thinker, Vol. 4 No. 6)

# Reflection & Journaling

## What is Reflection?

- ☑ “Active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or working assumptions and conclusions.”  
~ Dewey, J., *How We Think*, New York: D.C. Heath, 1933
- ☑ “Slowing down of our thinking processes to become aware of how we form our mental models.”  
~ Peter Senge, et al. *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook*, New York: 1994
- ☑ To reflect is to think critically and respond to what experience has to teach us regarding one’s attributes, one’s purpose and role in the context.

## What is Journaling?

Journaling is the personal recording of occurrences, experiences and reflections kept on a regular basis.

## Why Reflect and Journal?

- ☑ It is an essential element of learning and development.
- ☑ Effective learning will not occur unless you reflect.
- ☑ Reflection and Journaling:
  - Core practice skill in leader development.
  - Related to Conceptual competency in Leadership Competency Model (LCM).
  - Essential for developing the Self Meta-competency in LCM and the SAF 24-7 Leadership framework.

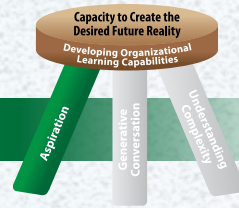
## How to Reflect?

- ☑ To do this, you must think of a particular moment in time, ponder over it, revisit it and only then will you gain new insights into different aspect of that situation.
- ☑ Template of Questions for Reflection
  - What was intended? What happened? What did not happen?
  - What went well for you? Why?
  - What did not go so well for you this time? Why?
  - What might you do differently the next time?
  - What insights did you have regarding the SAF 24-7 Leadership framework.
    - ➔ Your own leadership style, competencies and values?
    - ➔ How you lead others?
    - ➔ Your assumptions regarding leadership
- ☑ Who else needs to know about your insights and learning?



# Aspiration

## SHARED VISION



### Building a Sense of Commitment

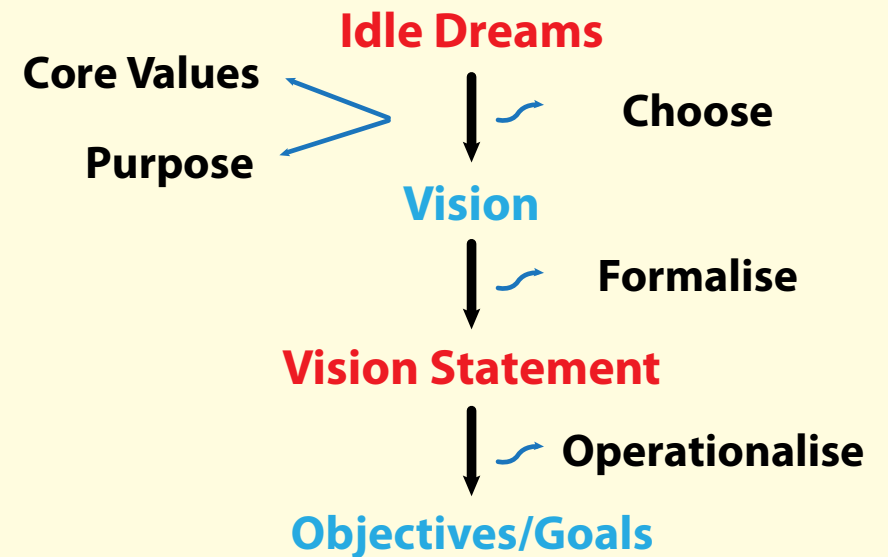
By developing shared images of the future, we seek to create the principles and guiding practices by which we hope to get there.

~ Source: *The Fifth Discipline*, Peter M. Senge

### Principles of Building Shared Vision

- ☑ Anchoring Vision to Mission / Purpose and Core Values
- ☑ Personal Vision
- ☑ Spreading Vision to enhance ownership:
  - Enrolment
  - Commitment
  - Compliance

## Four Faces of Vision



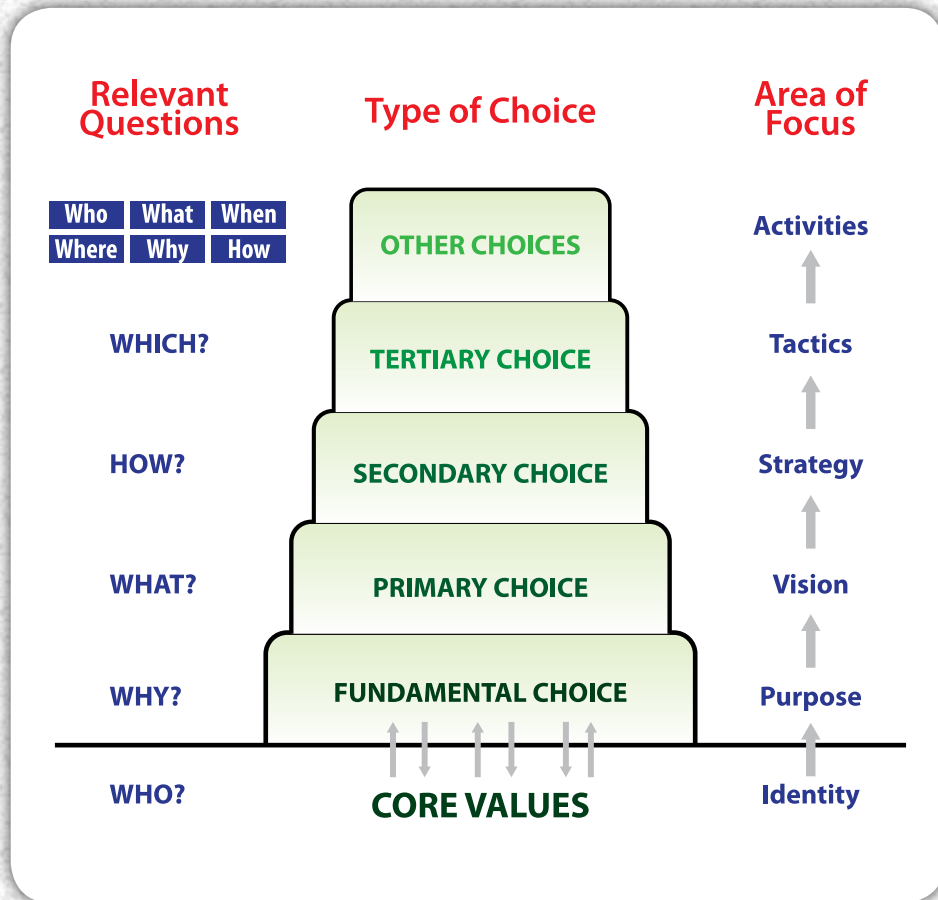
Unfortunately, vision has become such an over-used word that it has lost its meaning in many organisations. It has become a jargon that everyone recognizes but most don't quite seem to know what it means. When people talk about vision, they are often talking about its close cousins - Idle Dreams, Vision Statements, and Corporate objectives. These distinctions are more than just a different approach for guiding people's actions and they are related to each other in a particular way.

~ Kim, Daniel H. (2002). *Foresight as the Central Ethic of Leadership*

**“Vision without action is merely a dream.  
Action without vision just passes the time.  
Action with vision can change the world.”**

~ Joel Barker Futurist, Scholar, Author, Film Maker

# Hierarchy of Choices (HOC)



Choice plays an important role in vision. If we never exercise choice, we will stay in a state of wanting things without ever taking steps towards attaining them. It is the conscious choice to bring something into reality that transforms an idle dream into a vision that has the power to tap into people's energy and commitment.

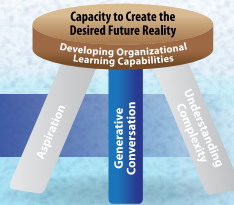
Hierarchy Of Choices (HOC) framework highlights a logical order inherent in making choices, starting from the fundamental choice of Purpose. At the foundation, Fundamental Choice addresses the issue of Purpose (why we exist as an organisation, team or individual). Core values are intimately linked to Purpose. For the individual, personal core values give rise to Purpose but for the organisation, Purpose gives rise to organisational core values.

Next tier is the Primary Choice, Vision, "*What do we want to be?*" The vision is a tangible manifestation of the Purpose. Followed by Secondary Choice, Strategy of how to achieve the vision and Tertiary Choice of which Tactics can be used to operationalise the strategy. Finally Activities answer the questions of the 5Ws and 1H in support of the tactics.

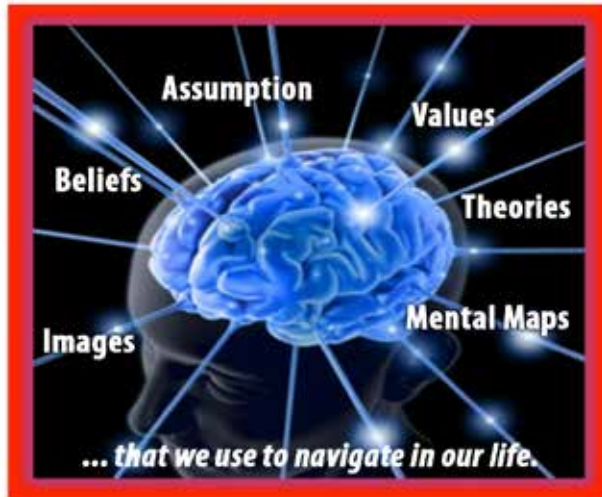
The framework clearly depicts that the lower levels are more foundational and it will be difficult to make choices at one level if we are not clear about the choices below it. When organisations do not agree on the strategy, they tend to go higher to seek a compromise on the tactic to be used. Instead, they should go down the HOC to clarify on the Purpose, Core Values and Vision first.

When every member of the team (or organisation) has internalized the core value and Purpose of the team and has a clear picture of the result they are striving for, they will be guided every step of the way by the clarity of these choices at the fundamental levels.





### **Mental Models are...**



Mental Models are deeply ingrained assumptions, generalisations or even pictures or images that influence how we understand the world and take action.

The discipline of working with the Mental Models starts with learning to unearth our internal pictures of the world, to bring them to the surface so as to examine and change them if necessary.

~ Source: *The Fifth Discipline*,  
Peter M. Senge

### **Managing Mental Models**

- ☑ Skills of Reflection
  - Recognizing Leaps of Abstraction.
  - Recognizing Left Hand Column.
- ☑ Inquiry Skills
  - Balancing Inquiry and Advocacy.

*Our Mental Models determine not only how we make sense of the world, but how we take action.*

*Always Surface, Suspend and Test your assumptions/ beliefs.*

*Understand that two people with different mental models can observe the same event and describe it differently.*



### **Principles of Mental Models**

1. Everyone has Mental Models.
2. Mental Models determine how and what we see.
3. Mental Models guide how we think and act.
4. They lead us to treat Inference as facts.
5. They are always incomplete.
6. They influence the results we get, reinforcing themselves.
7. They often outlive their usefulness.

~ From *The Shadows of the Neanderthals* by David Hutchens

## 4 Effects of Mental Models

**Generalisation** - Tendency to generalise our responses, a reactive orientation to something that seems familiar.

1



100KG  
WOMAN

Most tend to generalise 100kg woman to be fat & ugly, but that is not always true.

**Construction** - Tendency to add on to what we saw because our minds image/memory constructs or connects with other images/knowledge that are supposed to be linked. Our mind constructs beyond what we saw or actually happened.

2

<b>Slumber</b>	<b>Pillow</b>
<b>Dream</b>	<b>Night</b>
<b>Bed</b>	<b>Blanket</b>
<b>Quiet</b>	<b>Pyjamas</b>
<b>Nap</b>	<b>Snooze</b>

Given 8sec to memorise as many words as possible. Most are likely to have the word "Sleep" constructed in the list.

**Distortion** - Our tendency to distort what we are seeing and disagree with the visible data and prefer to come to our own comfortable conclusions that are contrary to the actual event.

3



"Say ...what's a mountain goat doing way up here in a cloud bank"

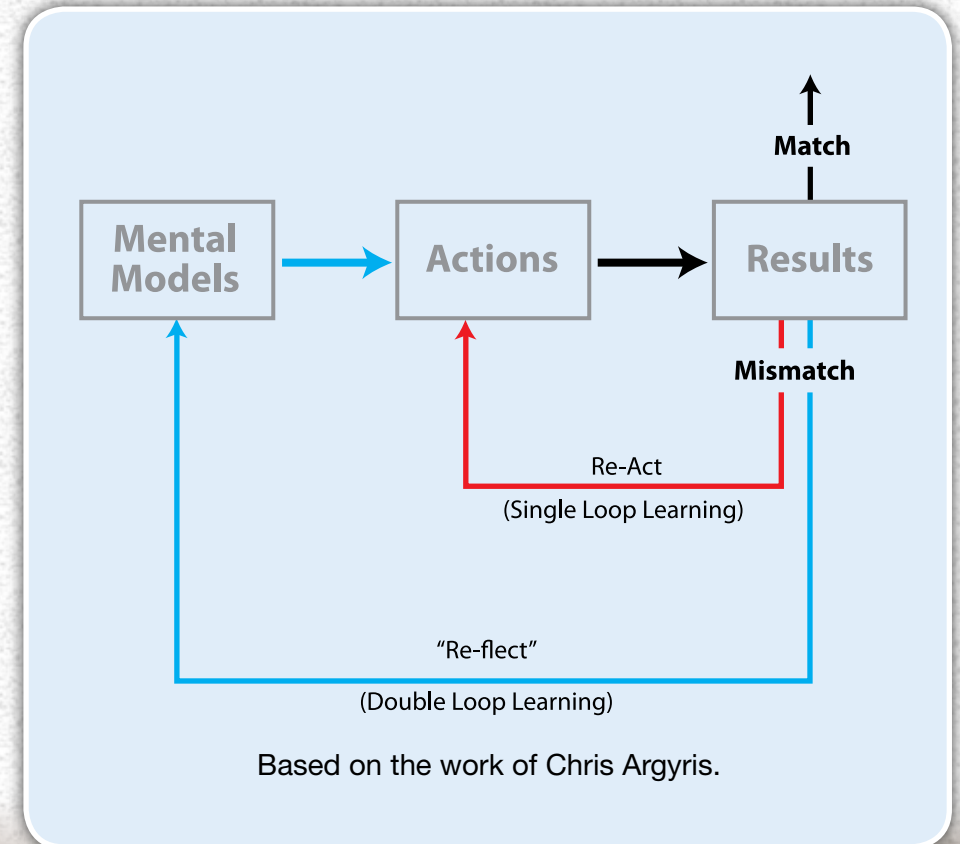
**Exclusion** - Our tendency to exclude some data conveniently because it conflicts with our experiences and our HABITS that have taken over without our explicit awareness.

4



When reading fast and a loud, most are likely to exclude one of the word "THE".

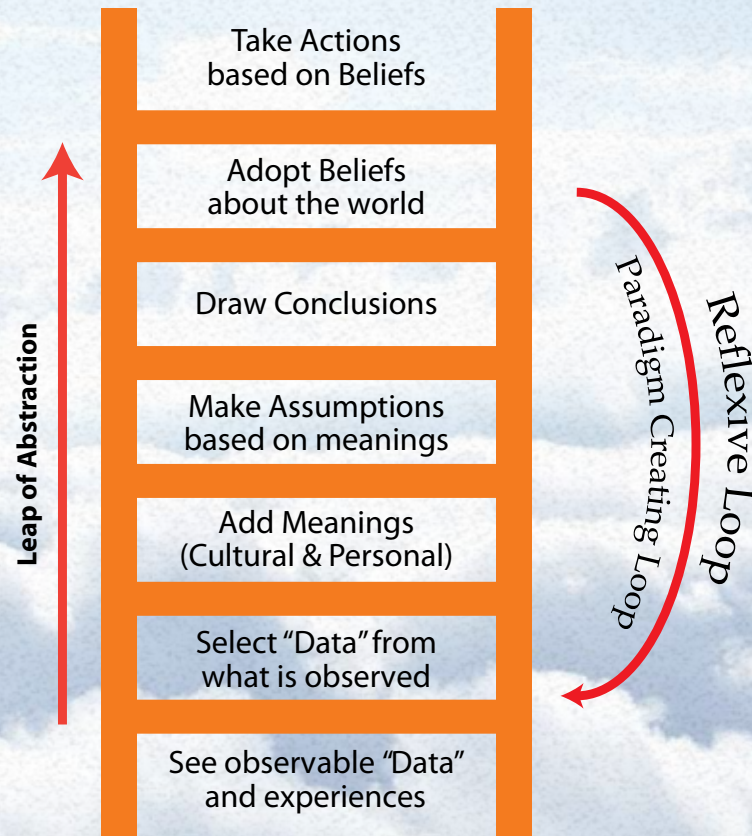
## Single Loop and Double Loop Learning (SLL/DLL)



Humans usually focus on their actions to achieve the desired results. When the results do not match, we may be tempted to work harder with the same actions, hoping for the results to match.

Problem-solving is an example of single-loop learning. You identify an error and apply a particular remedy to correct it. Real learning involves an extra step in which you reflect on your assumptions and test the validity of your hypotheses when the results do not match what is desired. Achieving this Double Loop Learning is more than a matter of motivation - you have to reflect on the way you think.

## Ladder of Inference (LOI)



~ Adapted from Chris Argyris, *Overcoming Organizational Defenses and Senge, et al, The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook*

One good framework for the interpersonal toolbox is the Ladder of Inference (LOI) so that you can catch yourself before you over-react or "Climb the ladder" too quickly. The Ladder of Inference provides a framework for exploring mental models. The reflexive loop illustrates how our mental models can influence the way we view reality. We make leaps up the Ladder of Inference from data to values and assumptions, and then operate based on those assumptions as if they are reality. It can also be called the paradigm – creating loop, because it is the process through which, over time, we develop a shared set of cultural assumptions and values about how we view reality.

The reflective loop illustrates how we need to reflect to look for other raw data that we may be systematically blind to. To be able to take reflective actions to surface, suspend and test our deepest beliefs and theories about the world (as in Double Loop Learning ).

- Source: *Organising for Learning, Daniel H. Kim*

Our ability to achieve the results we truly desire is eroded by our feelings that:

- Our beliefs are the truth.
- The truth is obvious.
- Our beliefs are based on real data.
- The data we select are the real data.

~ *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook: "Strategies and Tools for Building a Learning Organization"*

On our day to day work and personal lives, we constantly carry on two dialogues - one public and one private. The public dialogue is the one we share with others - including all that we express verbally and non-verbally. The private dialogue, however, is filtered - we say only what we assume other will hear, what will not upset anyone, what will get us what we want, and so on. If we keep our private conversation to ourselves, we hinder learning and decision-making. But if we say what we are thinking and feeling, we may make things worse by upsetting people, by putting ourselves in a vulnerable position, and so on.

~ *Private Conversation: The Left-Hand Column, Pegasus Communications*

## A Simple Case

An R&D project manager (Jim) assumes his supervisor (Todd) feels harshly about him. In the right-hand column, Jim writes down his last conversation with Todd. In the left, Jim recalls his thoughts.

### LEFT-HAND COLUMN

What I thought or felt, but did not say

We're two months late, and I didn't think he knew, I was hoping we could catch up.

I need to make it clear that I'm willing to take responsibility for this, but I don't want to volunteer for more work.

He never offers this help in the planning stages, when I could really use it. It's too late now to bring that up.

The changes he keeps making are the real reason we're late. He must have another one.

It's shame that I can't tell him that he's the cause of the delays. If I can hold him off two more weeks, I think we'll be ready.

What was actually said

TODD: Jim, I'd like to come down there next week. We're a few weeks behind, and I think we might all benefit from a meeting at your office.

ME: I've been very concern about this deadline. As you know, we've had some tough luck here, and we're working around the clock. But of cause, we'll squeeze in a meeting at your convenience.

TODD: Well, It's occurred to me that we could use better coordination between us. There are probably some ways I could help.

ME: Well, I happy to talk through any changes you have in mind.

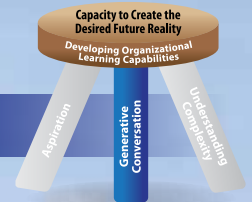
TODD: I don't have anything specific in mind.

ME: I'd like to have a prototype finished to show you before you come down. What if we set up something for the twenty-seventh.

~ Based on the work of Chris Argyris and Senge (1994). *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook*

## Generative Conversation

### TEAM LEARNING



**Team Learning** is the process of learning how a team can learn together. It is also the process of aligning and developing the capability of a team. Central to Team Learning is the use of reflection and inquiry skills and the practice of dialogue.

### Discipline of Team Learning

- Dialogue and Discussion
- Dealing with "Current Reality"
- Practice

~ Source: *The Fifth Discipline*, Peter M. Senge





## Conversational Guidelines



Conversations are the richest source of learning for any team. The more effective every team member is at helping the team have effective conversations, the greater the chances are that the team will learn together. The more effective the team is in learning together, the greater will be the chances of team success.

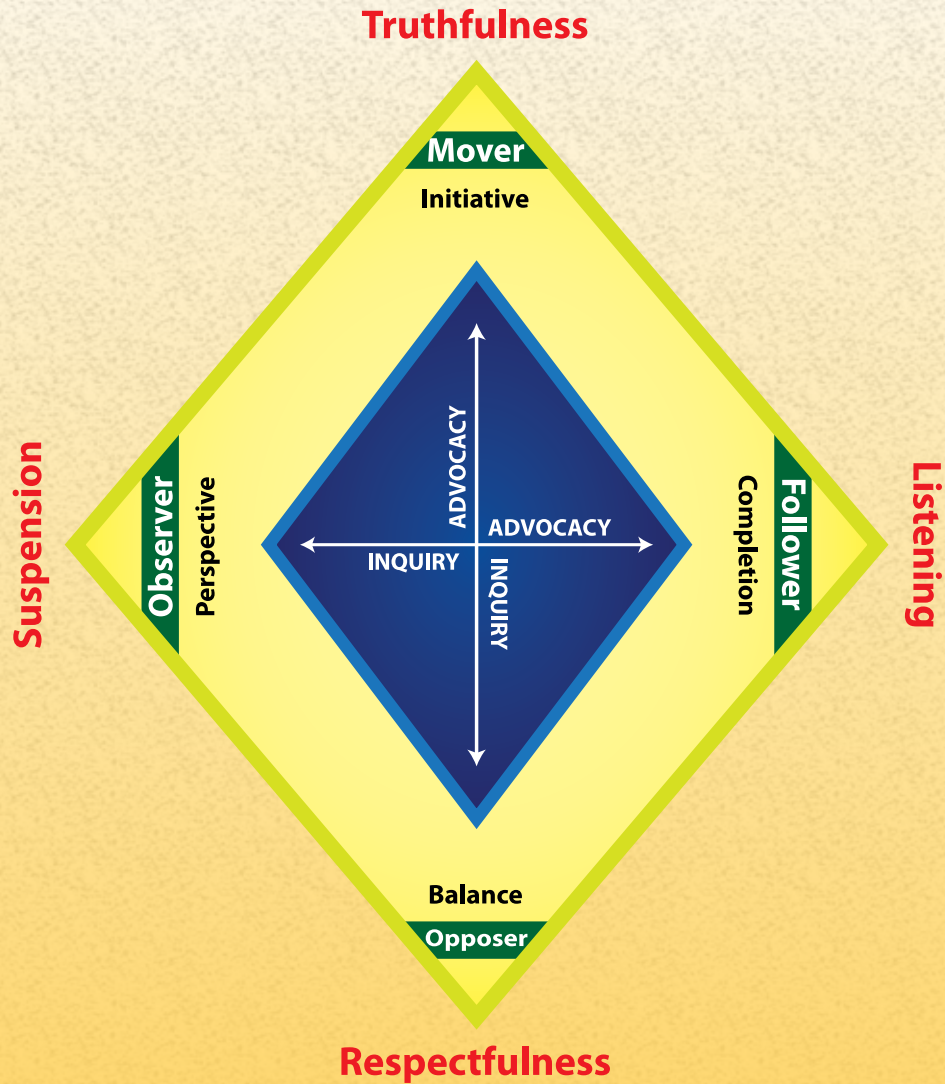
Conversational guidelines provide a structure for effective communication. Participants are to be mindful of the guidelines during dialogue or discussion to enhance learning.

## Conversational Guidelines





## Four Player Model



~ Daniel H. Kim and Diane Cory. (Adapted from William Isaacs, 1999. *Dialogue and the Art of Thinking Together*)

The Four Player model is a practice in creating more productive conversations.

It can deliver these benefits:

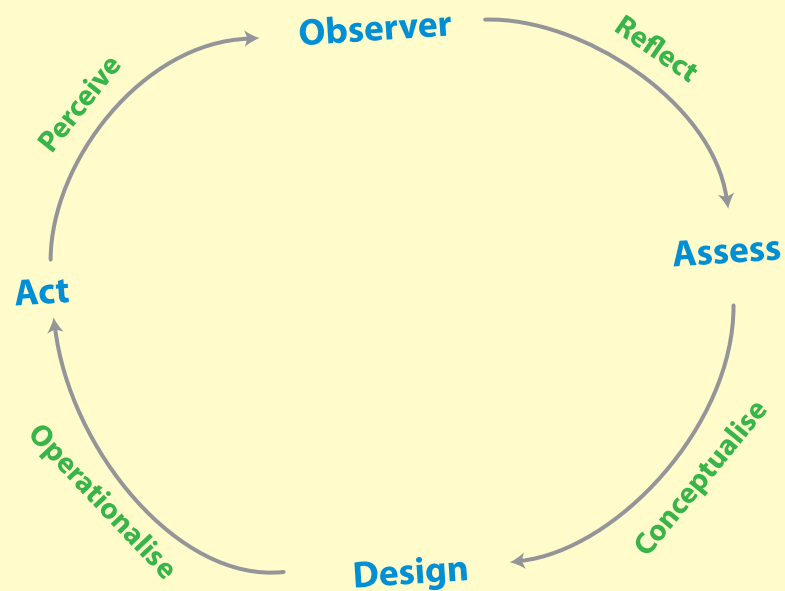
Helps us understand the tendency of groups to take action that their individual members do not support.

Helps us see the consequences of mismanaged agreement.

Helps us learn to work toward consensual group decision-making - an exchange where communication is open and the climate is supportive, so everyone feels they have a chance to influence outcomes.

~ *The Road to Abilene Leader's Guide*

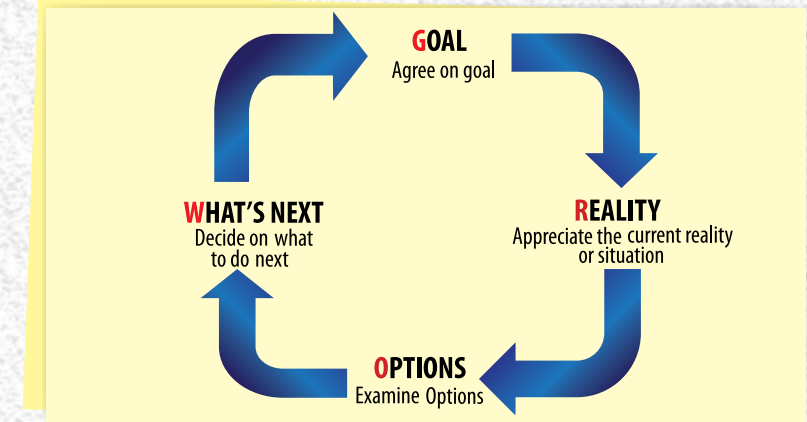
## Learning Cycle



A critical challenge for a learning Organisation is understanding the transfer process through which individual learning and knowledge (mental models) become embedded in an Organisation's memory and structure. Once we have a clear understanding of this transfer process, we can actively manage Organisational learning to be consistent with an Organisation's goals, visions, and values.

~ Daniel H. Kim, *Organising for Learning*

## GROW Model

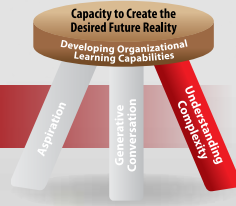


Goal	<b>Agree on Goals</b>	What would you like to achieve over the long term? For today? Why is this important to you? On a scale of 1 to 10, how clear are you? Where would you like to be at the end of this session?
Reality	<b>Appreciate the current Reality</b>	What is the situation now? What has worked/not worked? Is your goal still realistic?
Options	<b>Examine Options</b>	What possibilities can you think of? If you had the budget/time/information, what can you do? If you were your boss, how would you handle this?
What's Next	<b>Decide on what to do next</b>	What will you do from here onwards? What challenges or obstacles might come your way? How will you know you have achieved your goal?

Coaching involves shifting one's mindset from teaching, training, and controlling to asking coachees for their desired outcomes and ideas for achieving them; reducing coachees' interference; and learning to give useful, actionable feedback. All these elements are woven into a process for conducting a successful coaching session. "GROW" model can help guide coaching conversations to more meaningful and realistic resolutions.

# Understanding Complexities

## SYSTEMS THINKING



**Systems Thinking** is the discipline concerned with shifting minds from seeing parts to seeing wholes. It is a framework for seeing inter-relationships rather than things, for seeing patterns of change rather than static “snapshots.”

~ Source: *The Fifth Discipline*, Peter M. Senge

*The essence of the discipline of systems thinking lies in a shift of mind:*

- ☑ Seeing interrelationships rather than snapshots
- ☑ The practice of systems thinking starts with understanding “feedback” that shows how actions can reinforce or counteract each other.



## **OPTIMIZING SYSTEMS** (by Daniel H. Kim)

The goal of every leader should be to optimize the performance of his or her Organisational system. Pursuing such a goal is not easy especially when your efforts are subject to the following systems axioms:

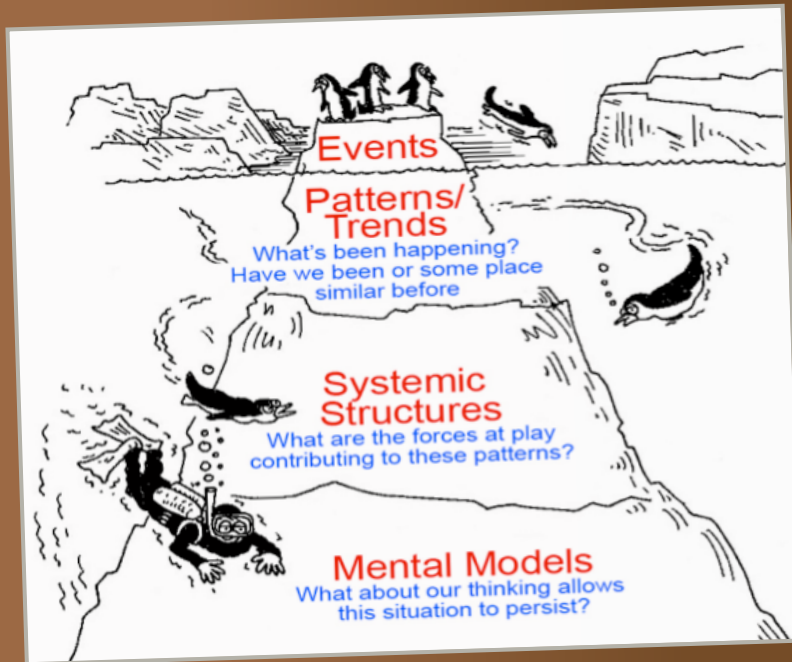
### **Systems Axiom 1**

Everything is connected to everything else.

### **Systems Axiom 2**

If you optimize the parts of a system, you are guaranteed to suboptimize the larger system. If we optimize the larger system, we are guaranteed to sub-optimize (or re-optimize) some of the parts some of the time.

SAF Leaders need to take a Systems view of things around them in order to understand Complexities. This requires a fundamental shift in perspective to deal with complex and recurrent issues in the operating environment of the SAF.



The Iceberg Model, introduced as metaphor to explain the hidden force and structures working within System, allow for the development of appropriate intervention strategies.

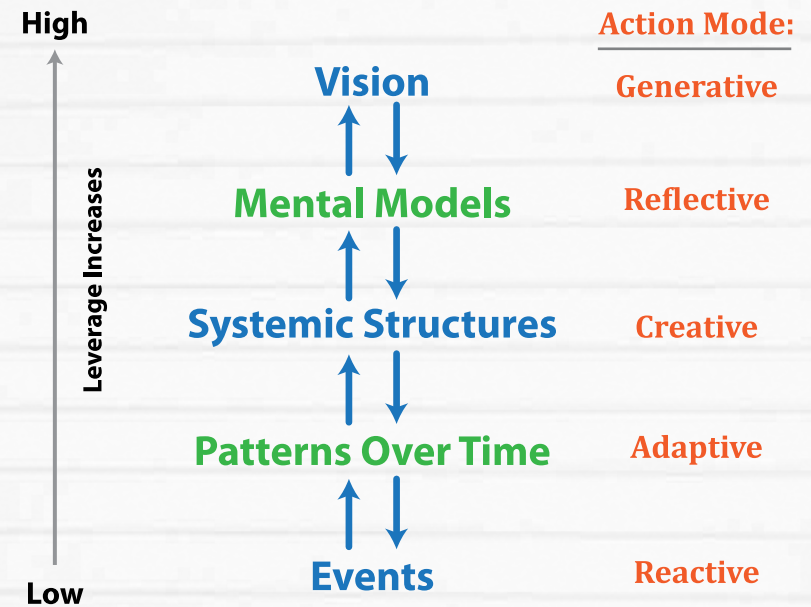
## What is a System?

In the most basic sense, a system is a group of interacting, interrelated, or interdependent parts that form a complex and unified whole that has a specific purpose.

## Characteristics of Systems

- Systems have purpose.
- All parts must be present for a system to carry out its purpose optimally.
- The order in which the parts are arranged affects the performance of a system.
- Systems attempt to maintain a certain "balance" (in pursuit of its purpose) through feedback.

## Levels of Perspective (LOP)



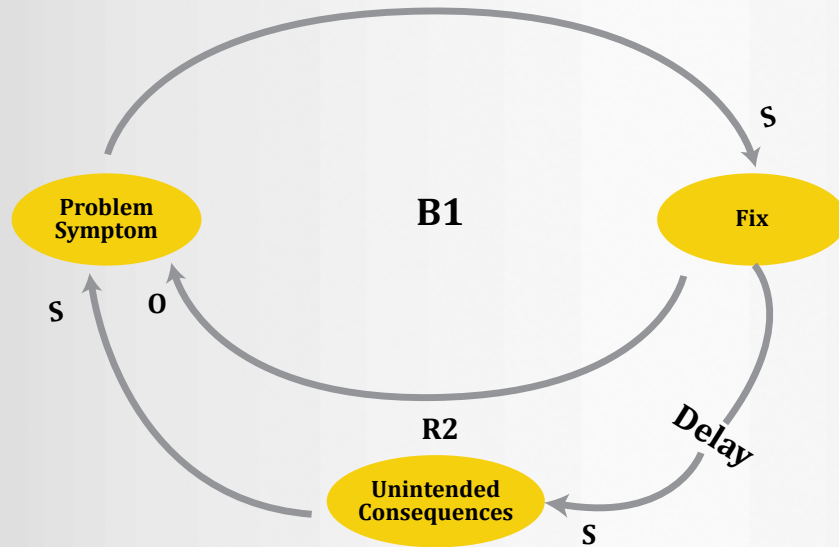
~ Daniel H. Kim, (2002) *Foresight as a Central Ethic of Leadership* and adapted from Senge, et al. (1994)

One way of expanding our awareness and perception is to broaden the ways in which we see the world through the Level of Perspective framework. Although there are multiple levels of perspective from which we can see and understand the world, most of us tend to inhabit only one or two levels. In order to have a lasting effect and greater leverage, one needs to learn to operate at higher levels (Systemic Structures, Mental Models and Vision) to maximise leverage and develop the capabilities to be more creative, reflective and generative.

Archetypes are accessible tools with which managers can quickly construct credible and consistent hypotheses about governing forces of the systems. Archetypes are also a natural vehicle for clarifying and testing mental models about those systems.

~ Peter M. Senge, et al, *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook*

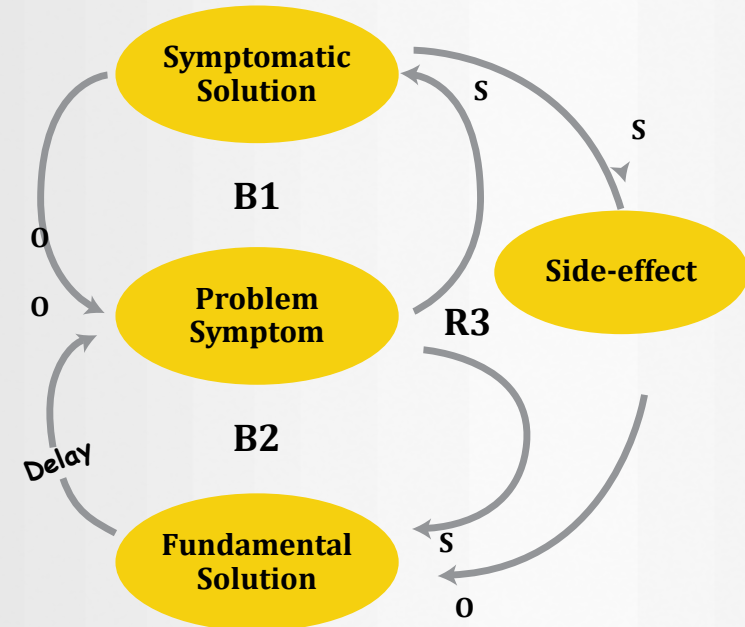
## Systems Archetypes: Fixes That Fail



In a “Fixes That Fail” situation, a problem symptom cries out for resolution. A solution is quickly implemented, which alleviates the symptom. However, the solution produces unintended consequences that, after a delay, cause the original problem symptom to return to its previous level or get even worse. This development leads us to apply the same (or similar) fix again. This reinforcing cycle of fixes is the essence of “Fixes That Fail.”

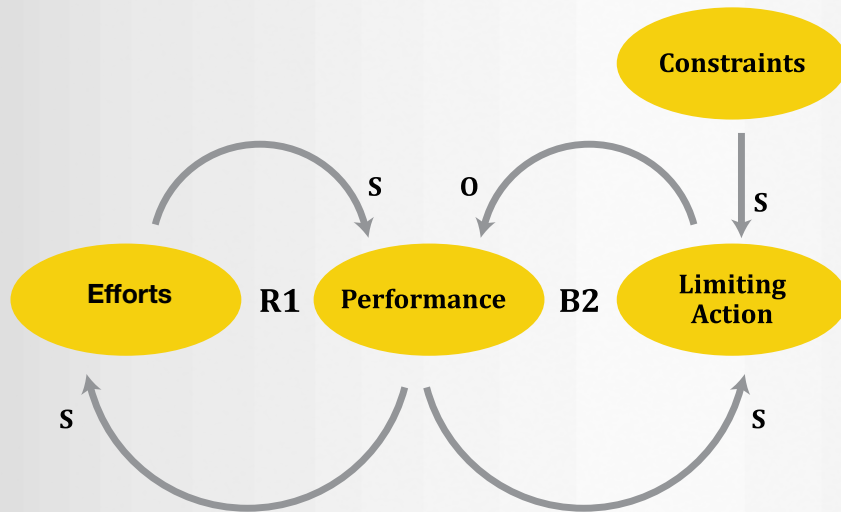
~ Daniel Kim and Virginia Anderson

## Systems Archetypes: Shifting the Burden



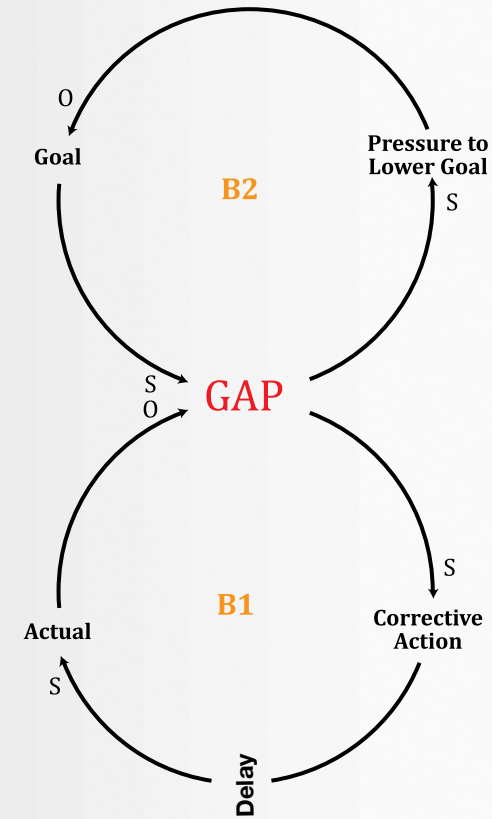
In a “Shifting the Burden” situation, a problem symptom can be addressed by applying a symptomatic solution or a more fundamental solution. When a symptomatic solution is implemented, the problem symptom is reduced or disappears, which lessens the pressure for implementing a more fundamental solution. Over time, the symptom resurfaces, and another round of symptomatic solution is implemented in a vicious reinforcing cycle. The symptomatic solutions often produce side effects that further divert attention away from more fundamental solutions.

## Systems Archetypes: Limits to Success



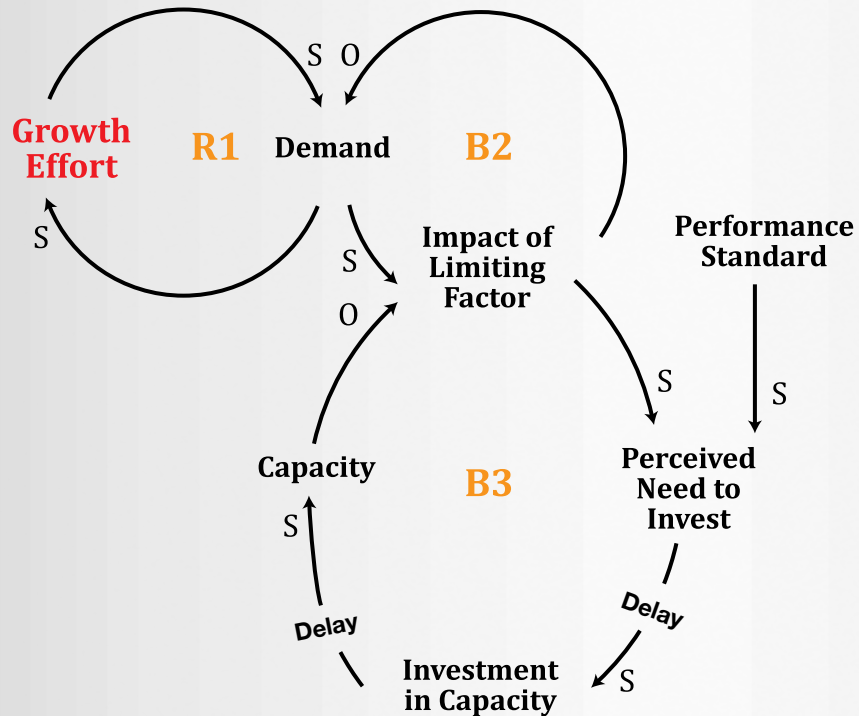
In a “Limits to Success” scenario, growing actions initially lead to success, which encourages even more of those efforts. Over time, however, the success itself causes the system to encounter limits, which slows down improvements in results. As the success triggers the limiting action and performance declines, the tendency is to focus even more on the initial growing actions.

## Systems Archetypes: Drifting Goals



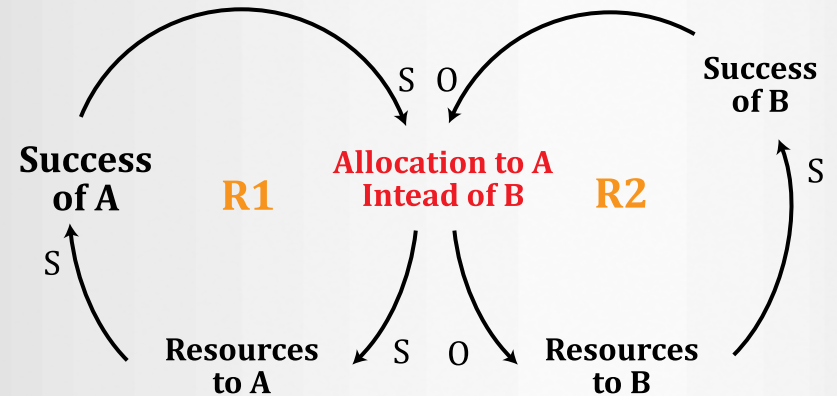
In a “Drifting Goals” situation, a gap between desired performance and current reality can be resolved either by taking corrective action to achieve the goal or by lowering the goal. The gap is often resolved by a gradual lowering of the goal. Over time, the performance level also drifts downward. This drift may happen so gradually, even without deliberate action, that the Organisation is not even aware of this impact.

## Systems Archetypes: Growth and Underinvestment



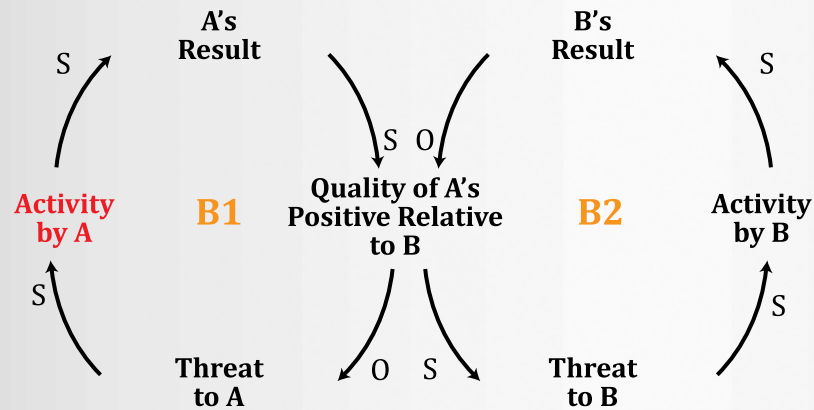
In a "Growth and Underinvestment" situation, growth approaches a limit that could be eliminated or postponed if capacity investments were made. Instead, as a result of policies or delays in the system, demand (or performance) degrades, limiting further growth. The declining demand then leads to further withholding of investment or even reductions in capacity, causing even worse performance.

## Systems Archetypes: Success to the Successful



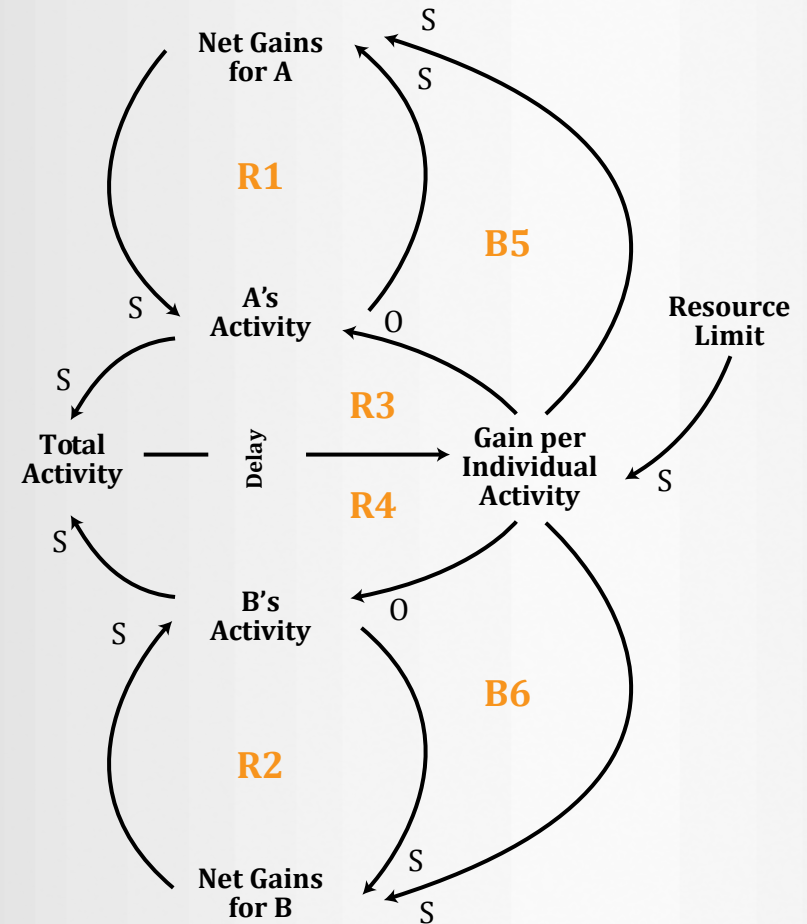
In a "Success to Successful" situation, two or more individuals, groups, projects, initiatives, etc. are vying for a limited pool of resources to achieve success. If one of them starts to become more successful (or is historically already more successful) than the others, it tends to garner more resources, thereby increasing the likelihood of continued success. Its initial success justifies devoting more resources while robbing the other alternatives of resources and opportunities to build their own success, even if the others are superior alternatives.

## Systems Archetypes: Escalation



In an "Escalation" situation, one party (A) takes action to counter a perceived threat. These actions are then perceived by the other party (B) as creating imbalance in the system that then make them feel threatened. So, B responds to close the gap, creating an imbalance from A's perspective, and on it goes. The dynamic of two parties, each trying to achieve a sense of "safety", becomes an overall reinforcing process that escalates tension on both sides, tracing a figure-8 pattern with two balancing loops in this archetype.

## Systems Archetypes: Tragedy of Commons



In a "Tragedy of Commons" situation, individuals make use of a common resource by pursuing actions for their own enjoyment or benefit, without concern for the collective impact of everyone's actions. At some point, the sum of all individual activity overloads the "commons", and all parties involved experience diminishing benefits. The commons may even collapse.



## Suggested Readings

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### 3-Legged Stool

- Kim, Daniel H. (2001), *Organising for Learning: Strategies for Knowledge Creation and Enduring Change*. Waltham, MA: Pegasus Communication, Inc.
- Kim, Daniel H. (1998, February), *Leveraging Competence to Build Organisational Capacity*, Systems Thinker Newsletter, Vol 9, No. 1, pp 1-5. <http://www.pegasus.com>
- Senge, Peter M. (1990). *The Fifth Discipline: The Arts and Practice of the Learning Organisation*. New York: Currency Doubleday. (pp 5-11 and Part III: The Core Disciplines: Building the Learning Organisation).

### Core Theory of Success (CTOS)

- Kim, Daniel H. (2001), *Organising for Learning: Strategies for Knowledge Creation and Enduring Change*. Waltham, MA: Pegasus Communication, Inc. Chapter Seven: What is Your Organisation's Core Theory of Success? , pp 69 – 81

### Creative Tension Model (CTM)

- Fritz, Robert. (1984, 1989). *The Path of Least Resistance : Learning to Become the Creative Force in Your Own Life*. New York: Ballantine Books.
- Senge, Peter M. (1990). *The Fifth Discipline: The Arts and Practice of the Learning Organisation*. New York: Currency Doubleday. (pp 150 – 155).

### Learning Cycle

- Kim, Daniel H. (2001), *Organising for Learning: Strategies for Knowledge Creation and Enduring Change*. Waltham, MA: Pegasus Communication, Inc.

### Hierarchy of Choices (HOC)

- Fritz, Robert. (1984, 1989). *The Path of Least Resistance : Learning to Become the Creative Force in Your Own Life*. New York: Ballantine Books.
- Kim, Daniel H. (2002). *Foresight as the Central Ethics of Leadership*. Voices of Servant – Leadership Series, Booklet 8. Indianapolis, IN: The Greenleaf Centre for Servant – Leadership. [Http://greenleaf.org](http://greenleaf.org)

### Quality of Conversation (QOC)

- Argyris, Chris and Schon, Don. (1996), *Organisational Learning II. Theory, Method and Practice*. New York, NY: Addison-Wesley.
- Argyris, Chris. (1993) *Knowledge for Action*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
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- Senge. P.M. Kleiner, A., Roberts, C., Ross, R. B., & Smith, B. J. (1994). *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook: Strategies and Tools for Building a Learning Organisation*. New York: Currency Doubleday. (Chapters on Systems Thinking, Personal Mastery, Mental Models, Shared Vision, and Team Learning).

### Ladder of Inference (LOI)

- Senge. P.M. Kleiner, A., Roberts, C., Ross, R. B., & Smith, B. J. (1994). *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook: Strategies and Tools for Building a Learning Organisation*. New York: Currency Doubleday. Section 35, pp. 242-246.
- Isaacs, William. *Dialogue and the Art of Thinking Together*. New York: Doubleday Currency. Pp 94-98, 408.

## Left-Hand Column

- Pegasus Communication Laminare: *Private Conversation: The Left-Hand Column* (copyright 1998 by Action Design. Based on the work of Chris Argyris).
- Senge, P.M. Kleiner, A., Roberts, C., Ross, R. B., & Smith, B. J. (1994). *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook: Strategies and Tools for Building a Learning Organisation*. New York: Currency Doubleday. Section 35, pp. 246-252.

## Four-Player Model

- Fritz, Robert. (1984, 1989). *The Path of Least Resistance : Learning to Become the Creative Force in Your Own Life*. New York: Ballantine Books.
- Harvey, Jerry B. (1996). *The Abilene Paradox and Other Mediations on Management*. New jersey: Jossey-Bass.
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- Senge, Peter M. (1990). *The Fifth Discipline: The Arts and Practice of the Learning Organisation*. New York: Currency Doubleday. (pp 150-155).
- Siobodnick, A. and Wile, K. (1999 November). *Taking the Teeth Out of Team Traps*. The Systems Thinker Newsletter, Vol 10., No. 9, pp 1-5. <http://www.pegasus.com>

## Architecture and Essence of a Learning Organisation (AELO)

- Pedlar, M., Burgoyne, J. Boydell, T. (1991). *The Learning Company*: McGraw-Hill.
- Belden, J. Hyatt, M., & Ackley, D. (1993). *Towards the Learning Organisation: A Guide*. St Paul, MN: Beckley, Hyatt, & Ackley.
- Senge, P.M. Kleiner, A., Roberts, C., Ross, R. B., & Smith, B. J. (1994). *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook: Strategies and Tools for Building a Learning Organisation*. New York: Currency Doubleday. Section 35, pp. 9-59.

## Single Loop and Double-Loop Learning (SLL/DLL)

- Argyris, Chris and Schon, Donald. (1974). *Theory in Practice. Increasing Professional Effectiveness*. San Francisco : Jossey-Bass.
- Argyris, Chris and Schon, Donald. (1978). *Organisational Learning: A Theory of Action Perspective*, Reading, Mass: Addison Wesley.
- Argyris, Chris, Putnam, R., & McLain Smith, D (1985) *Action Science, Concepts, Methods, and Skills for Research and Intervention*, San Francisco : Jossey-bass. [The entire book is available for download form: Action Design: [http://www.actiondesign.com/action\\_science/index.htm](http://www.actiondesign.com/action_science/index.htm)
- Senge, P.M. Kleiner, A., Roberts, C., Ross, R. B., & Smith, B. J. (1994). *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook: Strategies and Tools for Building a Learning Organisation*. New York: Currency Doubleday. Section 35, pp. 292-293.

## Characteristics of a System

- Anderson, Virginia and Johnson, Lauren (1997) *Systems Thinking Basics: From Concepts to Casual Loops*. Waltham, MA: Pegasus Communications, Inc.
- Aronson, Daniel. *Overview of Systems Thinking*. [http://www.thinking.net/Systems\\_Thinking/OverviewSTarticle.pdf](http://www.thinking.net/Systems_Thinking/OverviewSTarticle.pdf)
- Senge, P. (1990). *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organisation*. New York: Currency Doubleday.
- Wheatley, M. (1999) *Leadership and the New Science: Discovering Order in a Chaotic World*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.

## Systems Axioms

- Jackson, Phil (1996) *Sacred Hoops: Spiritual Lessons of a Hardwood Warrior*. New York: Hyperion.
- McNamra, C. *Introduction to Organisations*. [http://www.managementhelp.org/mgmt/org\\_thry.html](http://www.managementhelp.org/mgmt/org_thry.html)
- Wheatley, M. (1999) *Leadership and the New Science: Discovering Order in a Chaotic World*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.























*The illiterate of the 21st century  
will not be those  
who cannot read and write,  
but those who cannot  
learn, unlearn, and relearn.*

- Alvin Toffler

# ORGANISATIONAL LEARNING

## TOOLS AND FRAMEWORKS

**SAF Centre for Leadership Development**

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- not to be distributed externally

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