COGNITIVE DIVERSITY IN LEADERSHIP TEAMS: A DEEPER EXPLORATION

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IN THE CONTEXT OF WORK, WE ARE EACH AN AGENT OF CHANGE AND PART OF A TEAM(S)

So, have you ever worked to solve a problem with someone who:
- Had vastly different ideas than you?
- Was more or less concerned with the details than you?
- Seemed to view guidelines or rules differently than you?
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

• Differentiate between adaptive and innovative preferences for generating ideas, utilizing structures, and responding to rules and group norms.

• Compare agent of change groups within organizations and teams to identify consensus groups and outliers.

• Define precipitating events, pendulum of change, and spiral of change.

• Value cognitive diversity to lead and manage change.
LEADERSHIP Food for Thought

VALUES
Provide the motivating factors for each of us and influence the decision-making process for each person.

VISION
Desired, ideal, or expected outcomes pending barriers.

COMMUNICATION
Clarity around accurate and appropriate identification and agreement upon the problem.

TRUST
Cognitive differences are valued with an acknowledgment of perceived challenges.
INSTITUTIONAL CORE VALUES

- Collaboration
- Courage
- Commitment
- Compassion
- Curiosity

- Collaboration and Excellence
- Innovation and Discovery
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Humanism and Compassion
COGNITIVE FUNCTION SCHEMA

COGNITIVE FUNCTION
I THINK = I AM

COGNITIVE RESOURCE
I KNOW
Through what means

COGNITIVE AFFECT
I WANT
(I NEED - I LIKE - I OUGHT)
Through what Outlet

COGNITIVE EFFECT
I PLAN
(In what way
Through what steps
At what level)

BEHAVIOUR
I DO
(Including coping behaviour
With effort, I can)

PRODUCT
(Idea, artefact)

ENVIRONMENT

SOCIAL EFFECT
(Social evaluation)
My World
Interacting through
what steps

KEY LEARNING POINTS:
All the elements interrelate in problem solving & creativity. (The operational elements are in blue text.)
Adaption-Innovation continuum (KAI)

- **high**
  - strong preference
  - more adaptive
  - Solves problems by making things *better*

- **high**
  - strong preference
  - more innovative
  - Solves problems by making things *different*

- **moderate**
  - preference

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Style of Originality</th>
<th>More Adaptive</th>
<th>More Innovative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sufficiency of ideas within an existing framework</td>
<td>Produce proliferation of ideas whether or not they are needed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immediately plausible and expect high rate of success of ideas</td>
<td>May be more radical or tangential, and tolerate some failure of ideas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style of Efficiency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More Adaptive</td>
<td>More Innovative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thoroughness and attention to detail, precise and methodical</td>
<td>Think tangentially, approach tasks from unsuspected angles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welcome change as an improver (do better)</td>
<td>Welcome change as a mold-breaker (do differently)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style of Rule &amp; Group Conformity</td>
<td>More Adaptive</td>
<td>More Innovative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenge rules rarely and often with support of group consensus</td>
<td>Challenge rules, customs, and consensual views often</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solve problems by making use of rules (may alter them as a result or outcome)</td>
<td>Alter rules in order to facilitate problem solving</td>
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PROBLEM A & B IMPLICATIONS FOR GROUPS

We must agree on the problem in order to solve it – and be able to manage cognitive diversity to do this well!
WHAT ARE AGENTS OF CHANGE

• All people problem solve and are creative – AC1
• An individual contributing to team problem solving from within its climate core (establishment) is described as AC2 or AC3.
• Adaptor establishments are likely to anticipate precipitating events deriving from within the system. Innovator ones are more likely to detect those emerging from outside the system.
• AC2 and AC3 can complement each other’s strengths and cover each other’s weaknesses.
• Each sub-group has a similar style, so readily form cohesive in-groups that may clash rather than collaborate with the needed out-groups.

DETERMINING THE AGENT OF CHANGE GROUPS

- \( AC_1 \) : The Leader/Mean
- \( AC_2 \) : within 10 points more adaptive/innovative
- \( AC_3 \) : >10 points more adaptive/innovative
# Corporate Event Production Company

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internal Working Team</td>
<td>81-144</td>
<td>104.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEO &amp; Founder</td>
<td>144</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President &amp; Executive Producer</td>
<td>122</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COO &amp; Executive Producer</td>
<td>108</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Account &amp; Business Manager</td>
<td>101</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event Production/Marketing</td>
<td>99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Producer</td>
<td>86</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designer</td>
<td>81</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Agents of Change (normal distribution example)

AC1: each of us
AC2: +/- 10 points of the group mean
AC3: >10 points more A or more I than the mean

Bridging

range: 55-140  mean: 95

Coping

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COGNITIVE CLIMATE

\[ N^P \times S^P = CC \]

Power of Number \( \times \) Power of Status = Cognitive Climate
COGNITIVE CONFLICT

$N^p \text{ vs. } S^p = CC$

Power of Number $\times$ Power of Status = Cognitive Conflict
A Case Example

Range 62-128, Mean 98
Pendulum of Change

The “in group” and “out group” may disagree

• The Precipitating Event
  o Devil’s Advocate
  o Status of the Originator (from Management Initiative)

• The new group may shed old group’s disadvantages, but also some of it’s advantages

• We need to know where to stop!
Understanding our style as Agents of Change allows us to better understand ourselves and others as members of a group.

Intact teams may leverage individuals that are part of AC2 or AC3 groups to foster useable ideas and structures while gaining consensus for delivery.

Working across groups to maximize bridging and mitigate coping is depending on communication, working together, and trust.

Respect and compassion for one another is still critical to the success of the team and project.

IMPLICATIONS FOR GROUPS/TEAMS
THANK YOU!
QUESTIONS?

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