

To enable development – how to move on when the move is on?

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Apparently, we are in an age of change. The frequency of events is increasing noticeably. The revolts in Arabian countries, the nuclear disaster in Japan, the hunger crisis in north Africa, the financial crisis in Europe and a lot of others provide evidence that we can't move on we are currently. Our ways of living as well as our economic behavior lead to natural depletion and in consequence to economic and social crises. The complexity of the problems, calls for an inventive economy in which creative energy can develop. The goal is to explore domains in which substantial new ideas can rise, where creative people can find themselves and where they can contribute to solving dynamic and complex problems together with others.

Dealing superficially with creativity is not the goal to aim for; neither is developing illusions of innovation or cultivating the present state. We need new ways of providing answers to the fundamental questions that are being asked from a technological point of view, but also in areas of changing behavior and development of future sustainable ways of life.¹

Most of the solutions to technical and social problems have already been developed. The object is creating novel ways to apply them. The aim is to touch on the consciousness (including the subliminal) of people in a communicative and inventive way that also includes new points of views and a change of behavior. To me this seems to be the central point: how to stimulate people despite their differences, their individual cognition and potential, their different experiences and cultural imprint?

All companies and institutions are regarded as social systems which constitute themselves out of communicative actions. These communicative actions give shape to the culture of the system. People behave in relation to their social context²; this is why environmental effects have an influence on behavior. The different ways of organization determine the means of communication that are allowed and tolerated by the system as well as in determine who can talk to whom. In very authoritarian system lateral and spontaneous communication are prohibited altogether in order to ensure the absence of disruptive factors within the assignments. Everyone works and no one speaks up or the people upstairs work while talking about the workers downstairs. The systems grow and work in a "speeding standstill". Nothing new and different develops. The repertoire of possibilities doesn't expand. That way we can get the tasks at hand done efficiently but we cannot take on new challenges.

Management is to give impulse, to be proactive, to develop a framework together with others that creates a cooperative culture to enable everybody involved in the system to learn. In this way the whole system can also learn. An indicator for good management is that is hardly noticeable.³

If you want to get a system moving and incorporate changes, to encourage invention and enable development, this all can be achieved by the means of communication. While more of this is provided by the process itself, the other has to be provided by a different agent. Only in a stable environment can the efficient organization prevail. However, this trivial situations can rarely be found. In situations of structural uncertainty,

¹ Cf. H. Welzer 2008 (climate wars); referring to new ways of life H.P. Duerr 2010.

² Cf. especially Akerlof/Shiller 2009, Zimbardo 2007.

³ Cf. Bergmann 2001; Bergmann 2010a/b.

this means complex dynamic realities aren't trivial nor can they be calculated or predicted.⁴ Classic planning approach and management schools assume that you have clear goals which you can reach by the right means. That is the means-end orientation. But with that the approach is *sub-complex*. It can't be determined which goals can be achieved and by what manners.

Different views exist on goals which change during the course of action just like the initial situation. It is unlikely to uncover the right means.

Therefore it seems to be necessary to choose a systemic-relational approach which means trying to relate the system to protagonists and other systems in order to contribute to the capacity to act. In turbulent environments means and methods have to be developed on a common basis because there is no standard solution and the conditions change constantly. By linking collective intelligence and linking together free spirits a higher complexity can be matched. Dialog, self-organisation and contribution by many actors constitute a resilient and robust system.⁵

Attributes of inventive spheres:

The results of applied research on creative acting are in agreement about different factors that form an inventive and developable culture:⁶

- Diversity

Diversity of people, competences, cultures and methods forms the basis for knowledge and learning.

Diversity creates differences which can be seen as the source of information that leads to more abilities and ideas. Diversity doesn't come into existence by itself; in fact it decreases over time because people tend to imitate each other (issue of sympathy). The other, the new, the strange appears non-conversant which can lead to a subconscious downsizing of diversity. In this context a gentle force towards diversity is required.

Community is successful if the access to it is self-determined and if all members are in agreement on it. A community can be seen as a "dissipative structure" (Prigogine) in which existence is constituted by constant change.⁷

- Equality of opportunities and rights

Equality follows diversity, which seems to be confusing. However, there is no understanding intended that has the assimilation of people in thought, but rather the equality of opportunities, rights, assets, income and status. More equality relieves stress within society. Equality can help to reduce violence and benefit physical health as well as sanity.

⁴ Cf. Bergmann/Daub 2008.

⁵ Resilience means the capacity of people to resist stress and/or situations of adversity. For more informations: www.resalliance.org

⁶ Cf. Bergmann 2010a,b, where I have described the attributes in detail.

⁷ Cf. Rosa 2010.

In this case equality doesn't mean the complete removing of all differences, but that in differences like, for example, income there are comprehensible relations present that have their origins in contributions to society (outstanding performance, responsibility, social competence).

There is a tendency in societies with big differences between people to behave unfairly, to evoke violence and to have a general loss of prosperity.⁸

- Manageability and closeness

A big quantity of social responsibility and cooperation establishes itself in small social systems because people are getting feedback regarding their actions. This can be attributed to the so called "magic number 150", which was introduced by Robert Dunbar. He has made clear the issue of complexity and the manageability of complexity with this number. The human neocortex is not able to handle unlimited exchange between people. Depending on individual cognitive structures humans are only able to have interactions with some level of deeper relationship with 150 up to 250 people. Regarding bigger social systems, the coherence of interactions as well as the responsibility is decreasing rapidly.

- Exchange and contribution

Innovative thinking and a higher level of tolerance can be achieved by creating multiple channels of communication which also leads to random exchange. Models of Open Business, Open Innovation⁹ and free transfer of knowledge are the goals for future economics. To integrate the largest possible number of different protagonists which expands the field of actions can be distinguished as a central point. User driven innovation can be transferred to many categories of action. It is not only about developing products it is about the participation of citizens in a town and the workers in a company. It is about democratization of all areas of life in order to increase the level of acceptance and engagement which can lead to better decisions as well.

- Access to resources

Creativity arises where the access to resources is the same for everybody and where the basic resources are available to all people.

- Free space for *exnovations*

The new arises where it has space to expand. Thus there have to be free rooms in a physiological and mental manner because only here lies the chance that something new can develop far from the normal way of doing things. If people engage themselves with their fantasies and ideas apart from their effective way of managing their existence, *exnovations* can take place

⁸ Cf. Wilkinson/Pickett 2009, Gleichheit ist Glück; Siegrist/Marmot 2008, Soziale Ungleichheit und Gesundheit.

⁹ Cf. Chesbrough 2003.

and new ways of thinking and acting which could not have been developed through the usual order of life can arise.

- Ecological and economic scale

There is the ability to be prepared for future events in society, if a society creates more added value as bad value. Excessive debt and exploitation of nature are a waste of the resources of future generations. Systems with a level of sustainability make fair use of environmental resources and limit the use of these resources to a sustainable scale.

The previous attributes can be seen as indicators which can be used to raise an institution, an organization or a company to a higher level of development. They can also be distinguished as possible means of intervention. The degree of diversity can be accurately determined and extended through labor policy and, in a certain way, the creation of contexts. There is no way to effect development in turbulent environments by classic planning approach and instructing, also the objective, the instruments, the methods and the way to do things the right way remain unclear. In situations with substantial uncertainty the course of action develops in the process of development itself. Planned and intended action are not possible because of the different perspectives of the situation and possibilities on the one hand. On the other hand reality is in a state of permanent change. Regarding these aspects you need a way of acting that is not focused on a special object and where you are free to move to new ways anytime.

We create resilience and robustness if we give basic frameworks to protagonists and the entire system that generates more possibilities. The six fields of attributes of an inventive sphere are used to add *response-ability* to a system, thus to give more answers to future questions above.

The system can be turned into something better if you extend the number of possibilities in certain areas. From my experience there is no change for the worse. If diversity is increased (example: if a company hires and promotes more woman) the system gets more competence. The same is observed with alternative methods or integration of people with different cultural backgrounds. There is a way to achieve equality by lowering hierarchy and status, but equality can be also forced by trivial things like clothes and fair payment of the contributing protagonists. An open space workshop constitutes a low level of hierarchy and provides exchange and new relationships between protagonists. More exchange is easy to achieve with installation of a forum or places to meet others like, for example, a street café. More free space can be created by building experimental rooms or innovative reservations as well as implanting creative work times. People get the opportunity to engage themselves doing something creative during their regular work time. Such an organization can provide new ideas and exchange of knowledge and experience can take place. If there is no room for that, nothing new can be developed and the number of opportunities will remain constant.

Solutions can be found where problems are being created – the relationship between people. The subject is to make people work together, to enable them to support each other and to stimulate a good level of inspiration. If that happens, everybody and the whole

system can learn something new which can produce a stock of skills and views that are needed when a point of no progress appears.

It can be seen as a form of art to get the right protagonists and boards to give up short-term orientated thinking and acting, economization and aiming to increase productivity in a change for something different. A stock of solutions is accessible. It is to search without focusing on a specific result, to ask questions and to create free rooms where fantasy and creativity can flow. It is the opening of the system for development instead of negative economic growth.

We have reached the central point now: the question about power and interests. Those on top do not like freedom and independence, they are anxious to maintain the status quo and dependency. They follow this strategy as long as the system remains in a stable condition because, from their point of view, there are no alternatives. Therefore there are no new ideas evident, there is no basis to meet a challenge and the motivation of the people involved approaches zero.

Because of this, the most important task is to develop opportunities and ideas on how to get the system moving with a marginal number of interventions and irritations. Another goal is to maintain the independence of every protagonist involved in the system by adverse conditions and to try to form something different and good with others involved.

There is no need for appealing when we try to establish scaled acting. Less is more; reduction and relinquishing are not very popular. But there are ways besides linear and economical profit orientated thinking. We need a way of life that is not as reflationary, crowding and consuming as the current state of living. Shaping things together with others, having exchange and supporting each other are keys for change. Everybody can do so with the aforementioned attributes of inventive spheres – it is up to you to behave in that manner and to multiply individual skills that can be transferred to unknown areas, like associating with somebody you dislike, new methods, or different cultures, for example. The biggest potential for development lies in things you disapprove of. We can break hierarchy and status by equal treatment, opening room for others, giving respect to others and integrating them into the system. We can also increase the level of exchange and participation and care for people.

Very important about that issue is will to set up individual playing fields and to work for adding more free space in order to be independent. Behaving in this way you make decisions out of happiness and you get access to dreams, fantasies and passion. That means adding more opportunities for yourself and others in the end.

Viable systems can develop themselves on all layers if the right contexts which support the emergence creation of resilience are created. Thus to allow heterogeneous and multifaceted experiences in learning, where *exnovations* are an experimental part of the organization of the system and where people are connected through modern networks¹⁰ that support cooperation.

In this way people can manage all challenges together and a way of living as well as a new economic paradigm can rise out of it – to serve all people.¹¹

That's the way to go...

¹⁰ Christiakis/Fowler 2009.

¹¹ A. Edwards 2010.

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Everything flows



Impulse for movement



Also small brooks go into the ocean