

“We never reach the truth but we can get closer...!”

Organizational Role Analysis (ORA)

- provides a professional context for leaders, managers and staff:

to examine and articulate their current working experience

to analyze it in its organizational setting to sharpen up the meaning of that experience in terms of purpose, systems and boundaries

to grasp opportunities to find, make and take up their organizational roles more effectively

to transform their contribution towards achieving the corporate aims of their institution

The ORA is influenced by system thinking that is holistic and sees a system as a frame within which behaviour is contained. It examines the containing frame, how the container influences what is contained and the other way round. It does not examine what is contained (as psychology does).

The goal of the ORA is not to solve a problem, *it is to identify what the real issue is and to understand how the individual takes up her/his role in the system. We use this method/model as a try/ ambition/ attempt to develop a way of working in organisations that ensures that participants will transform ideas into action.*

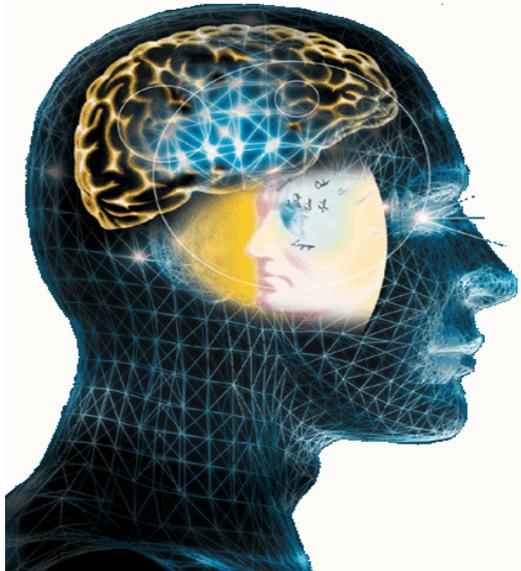
A role in a business is always temporary. The key issue in this systemic influenced work is *to change the role not the person.* Changing the role can theoretically bring almost instant change in behaviour when an individual has accepted her/ his new role.

A role is *to see as a link between the individual and the organisation* and is a main factor in managing change which involves three major factors: the individual, the role and the system.

The ORA is structured around the development of hypothesis, not opinions. Working with hypothesis is a way of treating information as temporary, not permanent, and this helps introducing ideas without creating conflict.

From beginning to end the ORA requires one *to ask questions and to provide a hypothesis* for each question. The challenge is to help in discovering the underlying nature of the system not to explain or advise.

ORGANIZATION IN THE MIND



CREATE AN IMAGE OF YOUR ORGANIZATION

Sit quite for a while and imagine the system your work in- what happen there, what is the tasks and the context for your work, how does it feel....

Draw a picture of the system and place yourself in the picture. Try to find a picture that shows relationships and emotions from your perspective, and try to make it clear where you are in the picture....

Use colors to illustrate emotions and differentiate aspects....

Do not use any text or words - you will later tell the story and explain...

Be courageous and honest!

Use only 5-10 minutes,

“CRITICAL INCIDENT” - a way to identify the forces and factors which affect the way one can find, make and take a role for the benefit of the system.

Finding the role

As a start the Presenter is here asked by the Facilitator to imagine the system in which he or she works and to draw a picture of the system - what happens there, what are the tasks, roles, dilemmas and so forth. (see page 2) Then the Facilitator interviews the Presenter and together the two explores the parts and pieces in which the Critical Incident Case Study happened. A group of analysts are listening.

Making the role

After the interview the aim is to get to the realities by developing and testing hypothesis given by the Analysts about the Presenter’s experience of the external and internal forces and factors which affect the way the Presenter makes the role.

What is really going on in the system? Pressures, feelings, conflicts?

Analysts shall focus on one aspect of the situation to develop a hypothesis.

What is the evidence?

Why is it happening?

Developing a hypothesis and testing for reality is now a work done again and again by the Analysts together with the Facilitator.

The steps:

- 1) Listen to the information from the Presenter and try to find out *what is really going on?*
- 2) When you think that something is emerging, state which system or subsystem you are focusing on, and form a hypothesis to express what it is. Say: *My working hypothesis is.*
- 3) **Give the evidence** which you suppose might back up the hypothesis to make it convincing.
- 4) Say *why* you think this is happening.
- 5) Try to **find a question** to test your hypothesis - do this through the Facilitator - which can provide fresh evidence which tests the hypothesis.
- 6)
 - a) What additional information would provide further evidence for your idea about what is going on or show it is not the case?
 - b) Open ended questions. No yes- or no-questions!
 - c) If the hypothesis is confirmed, whatever happens it can encourage learning and you can move on further to more hypothesis.
 - d) Does the Presenter’s response confirm, disconfirm or modify the hypothesis?

Taking the role

The Facilitator now asks the Presenter about what possible actions she/he can take which will benefit the system, taking account of the pressures and factors identified. If the Presenter wants to give an answer the Analysts will be invited to reflect on the proposed action and give feedback to the Presenter.

What is a likely response to the proposed action? What are the risks?

Review and Debrief

At the end, the group reflects on their experience in their various roles as Presenter, Facilitator and Analysts.

