



## CREATING WHOLE SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION FAST, WIDE, SUSTAINABLE CHANGE

*"An organisation's rate of learning must be equal to or greater than the rate of change in its external environment"*

The pace, scope & depth of change in global markets, societies, technology & environment today, requires every person, organisation and community to adapt.

Even when carefully planned by experienced managers & consultants traditional change initiatives no longer work.

- 66% of Mergers fail to realise their intended advantages
- 70% of Business Process Re-engineering projects fail to deliver savings
- 80% of Total Quality Management initiatives fail to deliver planned benefits.

Similar results emerge from a whole range of corporate, government and international initiatives that tackle a variety of issues.

### SLOW OR RAPID CHANGE?

Why do these conventional change programmes often fail?

- old ways of leading where change is imposed
- stakeholder involvement is narrow
- awareness of current realities is limited
- focus is on fixing existing problems
- vision is shaped by small top group
- communication is mostly one-way
- centralised control fails to adapt to unanticipated events
- predetermined goals & plans are implemented sequentially
- continuity is ignored - things remain much the same.

....which adds up to limited or slow change when real transformation is needed.

*Transformation creates a different way of being and results in fundamental shifts.*

What's the alternative?

*Whole System Transformations:* involve Whole System changes with a Critical Mass of participants, focusing on strategic issues involving a diverse mix of stakeholders and applying proven principles about change.

They are characterised by:

- contribution to Future Vision or Purpose naturally mobilises people into action
- members share a deeper understanding of the Whole System - action is based on awareness of multiple realities
  - openly shared information is available to all members - better decisions are made and agreed
  - the head, heart & spirit of people are engaged in the process, creating a high level of commitment
- The full potential of wisdom, knowledge and experience, enables the Whole System to discover opportunities and make choices
  - The creative power of people to contribute is unleashed
  - Transformation becomes a sustained, self managed process not an isolated event or 'initiative' that loses momentum.



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### PROCESSES & METHODS

We offer a variety of *Whole System Transformation* (Large Group Intervention) processes and methods. Some of the more popular are:

#### Future Search (FS)

A future search conference brings *the whole system into one room* - an organisation, community and stakeholders. Participants find new ways forward by working in mixed, self managed groups that identify a common vision, agree priorities and action plans. It unlocks creative energy and involves all parties, focusing on differences and shared values; identifying trends and implications for the present and future; then devising preferred scenarios and identifying consensus themes that lead to action.

#### Real Time Strategic Change (RTSC)

Dissatisfaction x Vision x First Steps > Resistance to Change  
RTSC is used to design and achieve rapid, sustainable, organisation-wide change. Specific outcomes are realised by engaging the entire organisation in ways that lead to ownership and alignment, with a shared purpose and direction. This fosters an environment where people work together as part of something larger than themselves that *they* create and believe in. This means a continual focus on the realities that exist in internal & external environments. A common understanding of strategic issues encourages wise decisions individually and collectively. A shared view of the future forms as the basis for action now.

#### Appreciative Inquiry (AI)

Appreciative Inquiry is the cooperative search for the best in people, their organisation and the world around them. The aim is to discover what gives a system life. It involves asking questions that strengthen the person's and the system's capacity to realise potential. It mobilizes energy and provides an opportunity for imagination and innovation; instead of negativity and criticism. It assumes human systems grow toward what they persistently ask questions about.

#### Open Space Technology (OST)

OST is a method for organising a self managed gathering, where participants create and manage their own programme of activities, linked to an explicit theme in simultaneous sessions. Large numbers of diverse people discuss issues and opportunities, share ideas and develop creative, collaborative action. This process is best suited to resolving complex or conflict-ridden issues quickly, particularly when innovation and ownership are the desired outcomes.

Participation is based on self organisation. Periodically there are large group, whole conference sessions to share outcomes and prioritise action.

#### Dialogue

Dialogue seeks to understand the meanings we share and the assumptions behind our decisions. Through a collective inquiry process, participants develop a deeper understanding of different points of view which allows new approaches to old problems.

#### Conference Method

The Conference Model method consists of 4 linked elements:

- a series of integrated conferences
- a 'walk through' process
- simple commitments
- supporting mechanisms.

Organisations that have successfully used *Whole System Transformation* processes:

3M, Boots, Dutch Railways, Guinness, Prudential Assurance, Shell, Smith Klein Beecham, United Distillers & Vintners, Microsoft, KPMG, Ford, Marriott Hotels, Boeing, Rockport (Reebok), Accor, Engineering Council, Edinburgh City of Lifelong Learning, GS Technologies, Marks & Spencer, US National Parks Service, UK Employment Service, Columbia National Electricity, Health Trusts, Local Government Staff Commission for Northern Ireland and many more.

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