



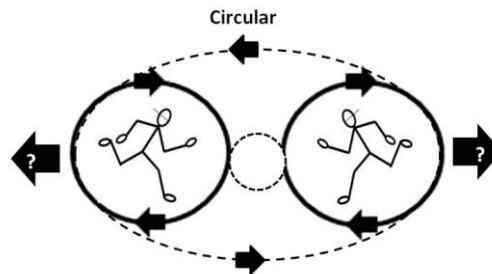
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## **Why it Works Continued:**

### **Central to Why it Works is a Systems Approach**

In this model, we view an organization as a "Human System" or Circular Interactions among the people who make up the team or Organization. There are many kinds of systems in our world with different kinds of parts and ingredients. But no matter how different these systems may appear, they are all assembled according to the same general rules of organization. Those general rules are called General Systems Theory. All the common system attributes like: feedback, interaction, interdependency, circular causality, boundaries, delay, complexity, stability, goal-seeking, environment and adapting are present in Human Systems. The one system attribute that distinguishes a Human System from all other systems is that its parts are human beings. Understanding General Systems Theory and using it to help conceptualize Teams and Organizations as Human Systems provides a way to see and to effectively improve performance.



*(Note: Go to You Tube and access R. Ackoff's videos on Systems Thinking)*

### **Key Factors to a Systems Approach:**

1. Understanding how the player's in the organization conceptualize or view their organization will control how they interact with it.  
*Example: if an organization is viewed as if it were a machine, its parts will most likely be treated as machine parts and eventually become disposable.*
2. Understanding how a system works starts with a definition of what a system is.  
*Example: A system is made up of parts which interact to function as a whole.*

3. Understanding that how the performance of a system is evaluated will determine what gets observed.

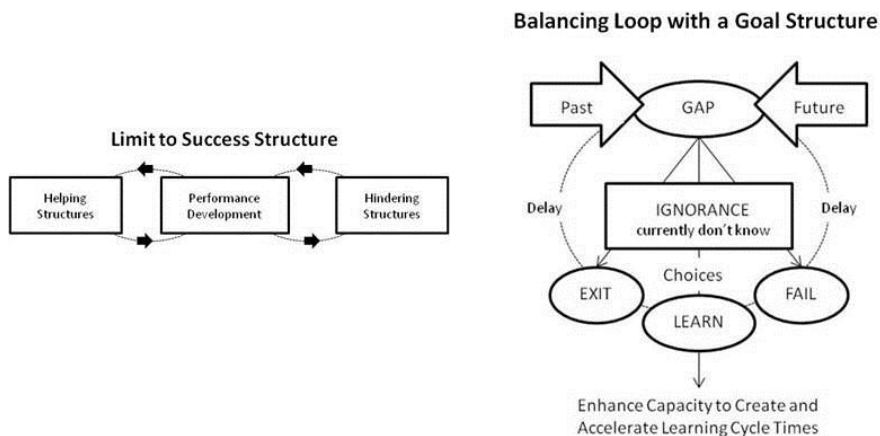
*Example: If the performance of a system is not the sum of the parts taken separately, but instead, the product of their interaction, then it is the parts' "Interactions" that must be observed.*

4. Understanding that how the different players believe change works in a particular system will control what they target for change and how they go about changing it.

*Example: How a system behaves is controlled by its structure. If one rearranges the structure of the parts to alter the parts interactions, the system will change.*

Therefore, we help you construct a staged intervention practice model that targets the structural interactions that both strategically help and hinder performance at all levels. At all the intervention stages we are enhancing your capacity to create change beginning with the nature of structures in your "face to face relationships."

The Helping-Hindering Structure and the Capacity to Create Structures we use are displayed below:



### What evidence can we offer to explain why it works?

As we build this intervention model together, there is a shift from us asking strategic question, to you asking yourself and others important model building questions.

You ask: How do we think change works and why? Specifically, you reveal how you think change work in yourself and then, how you think change work in the entity or "Thing" you are targeting for change.

This is your "Theory of Change." Having a change theory and building it into your specific intervention practice models gives direction, power, transparency to your model. It will also give you valuable

feedback signals that indicate if your Theory of Change is working or not working. This feedback loop is vital to successful Model Building.

Just imagine your team wanting to change something without testing to see if you all have the same Theory of Change...you typically don't check. If you did, you would discover vastly different change theories in the team which produce frustrating team ineffectiveness.

Key Questions we consider:

1. *How do you describe your general Theory of Change? Is change evolutionary, revolutionary, crisis triggered or what?*

2. *How do you build this Theory into your Practice Models? Do you have something specifically and typically you target for change.*

3. *Do organizations change?"*

4. *What is it that brings change about? Is change the natural order of things? Or does organizational change only occur through designed human intervention—internal and or external?*

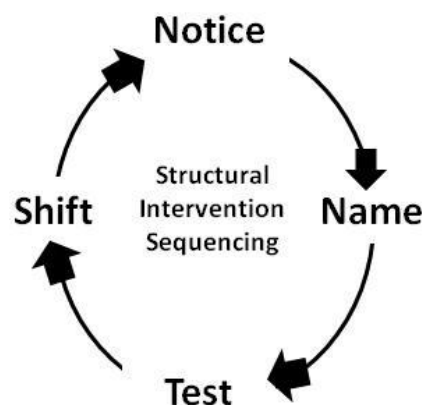
5. *Have you ever encountered a theory of change from any source whatsoever that sticks in your mind and 'makes good sense' to you? Can you describe this theory?*

6. *If you were called upon to come up with a theory of change all your own, what would it be? If words fail you, can you conceive an image of metaphor to represent your own theory?*

7. *As a leader, how would you describe how change works in your Model for Leadership? If you like your answer for that question, how would you describe your Model for Leadership to your team? If you have done this, congratulations!*

*See the Lewin Change Model in the Learning Links for an example of a Change Model*

**The directly observable evidence we predict you will see!**



In the early Stages of this Model participants will be able to first **"Notice"** or be more **"Aware"** of structures that are impacting their interactions. They will then progress to being more able to **"Name"** those structures and how and why they are impact performance. Following the "Naming", comes knowing how to **"Shift"** to more effective structures in order to correct dysfunctional patterns. We call this developing the ability to read-the-room. The entire Team will learn to read-the-room. They will continually become more competent in identifying surface structures, particularly those that are blocking the group's progress. They will achieve this by consciously stepping back and asking, "What happening in here or there or in me? What's needed here? Why is this happening? This skill, once

learned, is known as Bystanding. Usually, when a meeting deteriorates seriously, it is because the Bystander function is inoperative or has been actively silenced. Good active bystanding that can see the both enabling and disabling structure is vital to a team's performance.

From the very start, team members will join forces in an effort to establish subjective, qualitative, and quantitative indices for measuring outcome, that is, increased productivity. No member leaves a meeting in which vital work is done without exercising positive and negative judgments. The important conversation can now happen "In the Room" instead of "Around the Water Cooler."

Meeting "Check Ins and Check Outs" will produce new insights and make undiscussables now discussable:

*What is needed here and why?*

*What are we doing and why are we doing it?*

*How will we know we are being successful?*

*Was my time well spent?*

*Was I engaged? Was I stuck? Was I silenced?*

*Did "stuff" get in the way of our achieving what we could? Did we reach or not reach closure on our strategic issues?*

*Did the typically dominant people dominate? Why?*

*Was "I" effective? What do I need / want to work on?*

*Were "we" effective? What do we need / want to work on? How will we support each other while we are learning?*

*Did we interact to achieve something no one of us could have done on their own?*

*Did I /we learn something new? Did we create something none of us could have done alone?*

*What did we miss?*

*Are we really expanding our behavioral repertoires or, in the least, reducing those negative inputs we tend to express when stakes are raised?*

*What causes the stakes to go up and do we Notice, Name and Shift them? Is this discussable or undiscussable?*

*Can group members monitor each other's progress? Where interventions made that increased the number of "successful sequences and patterns managed by the group? Or, are we just "Spinning" the same old stuff and not reaching closure?*

*Did collective intelligence click in? Few lessons are more vital than this one. When members can recognize and more and more quickly intercept and correct dysfunctional communication patterns, productivity speeds up.*

Also at an early stage, each individual's behavioral propensities, including gaps in his or her current repertoire, will have been identified from already gathered data. In addition, individual and the balance of the team are aware of their own, each other's, and the group's collective strengths and gaps. Each individual is encouraged to strive for a more expansive behavioral repertoire. This is the key to acquiring a high level of fluency in profiles and communicative competency. Communicative competency does not expect perfection in all circumstances. At some point the community will come

to know the gaps in each member's repertoire. Working together, the team assists each individual in setting their structural goals and achieving team objective in a far more effective way.