

Aspects of Exchange in Organizational Life



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What Kamyra did about special complex; it's a good example though if we just step back there for a sec because when there's lots of stuff units and there's lots of relationships between them you can't know. You can't predict anything. Anyone who says they can is mistaken. I mean as far as we know, no one has reliably able to predict the future of complex adaptive system.

More than three variables in fact - it's called the three body problem in physics, it means that it's almost impossible to predict too far in the future on what's going to happen. Probability works but the deterministic outcomes those are thing of the past sometimes it helps physics consider how the world works. That has to do with complexity. Let's get back over to process then Ben Scornish. If I do that, do you see the workbook? Or do you still see the matrix chart?

BEN & Kamyra: Matrix chart.

TIM: Ok let me try something here, still learning to drive apparently.

Ok, so if we look at the process pattern, the diagram itself helps express; it's really a sequence. Process pattern represents a linear stage by stage development through a sequence of steps. It illustrates the development of value through stages where an element is added to and transformed at each step. The amount of steps has been pointed out must be balanced with the amount of value being created and its goal is to create a value through sequential development.

So that's interesting. There's this aggregation that happens at each step, there's some kind of value transformation but there's also a building value. I think the question is: Is there any point in having a process or a step in a process if it doesn't add value? And that idea of adding value is a very, very interesting question. What exactly does that mean?

You know it's worth spending a bit of time talking about this concept of value in the exchange patterns because their almost all about how you build "value". Or however we might conceive of that but I think we should conceive of this in an exquisite way and we should talk about the meaning of that signifier.

So Ben, can you just give us a bit more insight into your world about process.

BEN: 'yea well, I guess I was going to go beyond just the idea of how we model these steps in the computer as instructive . The other thing is that you work in businesses of any sides or

government they say this too, they have business processes as well.

TIM: of course

BEN: And I think we probably all had experience of some probably pretty ordinary business processes, and I guess that will often come up; people will say this a terrible process and what do they mean by that? And I think that it's often that is the case that there's too many steps? Or it's figurely? Or repetitive? Or something like that. I guess that if maybe we try to get much of an example of a good process, I guess if I could just try to run one by the group at the moment we'll see if it fits by the number of steps fits. Yes? So it become popular these days the organizations lure an on boarding, off boarding process. Are you all familiar with that? A new hired staff never turns up and from day one they need to be registered in their email system, they need to get in their payroll system, they need to get a desk, and they need to get access to the building. All that kind of stuff they need to prove their qualifications within the learning management group. So, there's a quite a sense of quite of complex process that could go on there. I guess my experience with that when I see it done well the number of steps was kind of irrelevant if they were pleasure to use and work reliably, that's my sort of a little bit attention with the definition there.

And just a concrete example I can give you; this is from 1980's, there was an off boarding process where I work that was really just so thorough that from the time that that person actually finished on their last day. All their computer accounts had been disabled all that cards just stopped working. basically, just felt like a bullet proof process and the value that they added is that

sometimes people would lead in bad circumstances and have the potential to press do some damage to the organization if they left on bad terms. So, that was some of the value of some of having automated, well in fact there are a lot of steps there. The point is that they will automate it in a pleasure to use. So that explains a little bit of my verbal kind of tension I have bit of definition?

TIM: 'yea, it does for me. The major variable here or the major polarity that we talked about in PatternDynamics with regard to each pattern might be the number of steps in relation to the creation of value that you know; a lot of steps versus the little steps might not be the main polarity at work. It might be how effective each step is. Is that what you're saying?

BEN: 'yea, exactly and how the train of events goes through very well recognized states. And maybe I'd even look at it as being in terms of getting that state changed to be complete or for that to be done with little input effort as possible. May be something like that. And I guess this is because this is so close to my heart probably got a bit of a weird focus on it because I guess I'm a process -oriented guy and I worked in organizations that seem to me to have a lot of really inefficient and can be some processes. It can be more than just the steps to it for me. It's a specific problem I had is its in completing the steps even if the work that you actually got to do is boring or repetitive or mind numbing in some way people intend to not do it. Well to me a really good process is one that is kind of a pleasure to use.

I'm not sure if I come on up to your normal at nub young through their timid definition major, minor an example and so forth. I think I'm somewhere close.

TIM: I think this is interesting because of the chart position between how do you process and how PatternDynamics process. So, Kamyia do you have a comment?

Kamyia: Yea, I just wanted to, remember one of the Melbourne Level 2s we did; around process that one of the discussions was about the value adding the value in each step. I made this little notes because I remember one of the, if anybody can see them, I'm holding them up to the camera. It is about putting each of the things: so you start with the circle and then the circle is in a triangle because you're adding a depth or value -- so you're taking along with you. And I think one of the things about that diagram we talked about was that maybe it looked too much like it was transforming into something else and it wasn't acknowledging the thing that came before in a kind of almost iterative way. Anyway, I just wanted to share that. I don't know if anyone feels that about the diagram but I think there is for me something around process that is about adding value from one step to the next step, taking each step along with you.

STEVEN: I like what you just did Kam, and I'm just saying you know and it's transcend and include. So perfect example and I love the way you diagramed that.

TIM: So were starting to interpret, were starting to bring meaning to the symbols -- that is the signifier: the symbols. We're starting to craft what were signifying and that's just the important part.

Brent?

BRENT: Kamyia I really like what you did there. I written it into my book as well. To me, it's about getting to attend to your question: What is value in this context and what do we mean by

value in patterns? Over all I'm thinking about conversation I think you and I Tim had at some point about generativity.

TIM: --yea, read my mind. Go ahead.

BRENT: The system is to become more valuable, what that means in this context (PD context) is that it becomes more generative. It generates other systems and it generates more complexity. And its ability to create more complexity is that it's increasing value for me. I'm curious about your thoughts about that.

TIM: --yea so, this goes right to the heart of what PatternDynamics is about and what source actually means. And I'm going to put up a copy of the Holarchy Chart here. Just give me a moment because I think this will better illustrate. So, if we look at the Holarchy Chart this is a different perspective on the PatternDynamics system, and part of that perspective is that source is in the middle and source has this meaning of the origin and evolution of a system, something that exists and it's a bunch of parts that have things that they do and they're in some kind of dynamic relationship. There's a why question. Why are they in some kind of dynamic relationship? The why has to do with this idea of generativity. And now I think we can see the whole chart. So implicit in the PatternDynamics system is that there's something going on, there's something rather than nothing. The universe is configured to hold value or to be generative that is to put things to continue to exist and not only continue to exist in their static form but to actually have processes. So where there's an aggregation of value in each step, there's a bunch of states that are transcended and included and that something happens and this something that happens this generativity or this creation of value is really interesting. It really goes back to the cosmology that

we talked about last time, the view within PatternDynamics of being related to sort of energetic singularity that is expansion from nothing that allows everything to manifest and continue to unfold in levels of hierarchy of multiple complexities. It's sort of energetic, and I explain that energy is a curious automotive status it's neither fully material nor fully kind of alive you might say, subject-object sort of idealist materials split and how that relates to exchange. You notice that if we go back to the Holarchy or the Matrix chart, the trade is right in the middle of the chart; it's smacked in the middle and the whole thing turns around in fact. If we look at the second order pattern and you look at the matrix.

STEVEN: Excuse me ben? Could you turn off your mic, there you go, thank you.

TIM: Ok can you all hear me reasonably clearly?

You'll notice the trade is right in the middle, because PatternDynamics is a systems thinking view, so everything is viewed as a system. A mostly physical thing or a mostly kind of a non-physical thing let's say. Trade is at the part of it because any system is a bunch of unique parts that come in to some kind of relationship and those relationships are all about exchange; they're all about trading one thing for another. And in systems with many different sub components, they all do different things and they all enter to an exchange and the reason is because "that gives you a generative advantage over competitors." If you want to exist in a universe you have to hold your flow, you have to hold your place in the flow stream of energy, and in the case of life on earth, it's the flow is either the heat of the earth or the energy from the sun. And incidentally, it's about a 50/50 split in terms of the gross amount of energy that's available to us at the surface of

the earth. But half of it comes from the heat of the earth itself and its called core and about half comes from the sun. Both those things drive life possesses. There's a deep ocean vent where there's life that form, grew and evolve as far as we know on the energy of the core of the earth coming up to those volcanic vents and then there's lots of life on the surface of the earth which evolved into mostly predicated on the energy of the sun. Both of those came from the cosmic source, you know some sun that blew up and created high elements which was in fact condensate out of a gas cloud which was a feature of the energetic expansion called the Big Bang.

Everything kind of work its way back and you can ask yourself a question about value or generativity. That question is: ok well, for instance, why do I want a job? I want a job so I can make money. I don't really want a job but I do need to make some money. Why do I need to make money? Because it makes me happy. Why does it make you happy? Because I have a place to live. Why is that important? Well, if I don't have a place to live, I'm outside. And so what? Well if I'm outside I might be cold or die at exposure. Okay, then were getting back to existing. If you ask yourself the question enough why, why am I doing this? Why is this important? Why is this valuable to me? Almost always you'll come back in the series of questioning to the question of existence. In the PatternDynamics view, being this kind of energetic semi kind of view is that the conversations, where the exchanges that would take place in the universe and this is a general pattern are all based on the idea of existence that is you need to be in conversation cause it need to be in a system to have the productive capacity to hold your energy flow in order to exist. Because if you don't then you're very likely to be out competed

then your parts will broke down and you will substrates but you won't exist in time. So this trade being in the middle of the chart is really, and if you can see above exchange as a productivity function and if you read the definition of exchange its very much aligned with how systems become productive, a bunch unique specialists in relational exchange that gives that system a productive advantage over a bunch of generalists for instance.

The very formation of life on earth and the advent of the evolution of the caryote itself, this is more advanced than just a simple cell. It's actually an assembly of bunch of a different bacteria and a bunch of different elements that create quite complex cell and there's relational exchanges between the elements of that cell, the nucleus does those job, the core passes through the job the cell membrane does the job the micro tubules do a job. All of those elements are in some kind of relational exchange so that those kinds of cells would have an advantage were in fact when those cells get together and they do different jobs within an organism which allows organism to exist but if we're really looking at exchange, I think it's about productivity, it's about the ability to create value and be generative and therefore to hold the knish.

Do you have any comments about that? Even in terms of organizational life or ecological? Aiden?

AIDEN: Hi, so sorry I disappeared, my connection completely dropped out it seems to have restored itself now. So sorry about that, I wasn't just disappearing. I just wanted to share just a little story, was recently doing work with a client one of Australia's largest banks, the topic of diversity and we were actually working with the head of leadership in talent she was initiating a big project on diversity within the organization and I talked to her a

little bit about why diversity was important and what kind of diversity that we'll prioritize and as it happened we really focused on gender diversity. You know which of course a critical topic but its only one of many ways to think about diversity. I was asking them why it is important for them to have under this work force, both in the leadership team but also in staff. It never been cleared why there's almost a thought like kind of a tick the box exercise, not really entirely short reasoning was having diversity until she twist the talking little bit about systems principles on how a systems become complex that the system actually relies upon greater specialization in the system to perform specialize functions but because you have great specializations you actually require more diversity. So, complex systems like organizations actually necessitate things like diversity in order for a complex system to run and I think that having this kind of perspective really help them to shift their views around either the necessity of a work force and it became more than just gender diversity to actually being about diverse perspectives that they require within the organization to support the outcomes of businesses.

TIM: --yea, and what's really interesting for me about that Aiden is that you did what I call the subject-object move. So, what was something that was subjectively important to them? Was emotionally important probably, intellectual important, it was probably cultural important? Was that a fair assessment? Yea, ok.

That's often how these assertions come up people will assert that diversity is a good idea but then it's really useful to make object the principle behind that assertion. What I was saying is that there's a tactic here that we should put on place a very specific thing we can do. Lets treat male- female gender diversity by doing this strategy. Tactic A, then I think it's really useful to be able go

on what's the principle behind that? Because that makes it an object and when you're operating on a principle it's much different than you're operating than perhaps talking about a tactic. But I'm interested in hearing more from you about why your client found it useful to be able think about or make objects or lead it to make object the principle behind it and explain it.

AIDEN: Yea, I mean I think there were two things. One was they were clear about they had a much stronger rationale for why focusing on diversity was actually important strategic priority rather just being told by the CEO to focus on it they actually had a clear rationale from a systems perspective around diversity actually fostered the effectiveness of the organization, I think that's one thing. Secondly, I really have to broaden their perspective around what kind of diversity they were looking for? Not just how many men? How many women? But actually whole bunch of different diverse ranges of individuals, different perspectives, and different ways of working which felt far more integrative than just focusing on gender as an isolated issue.

TIM: That's very interesting. I found this in the sustainability world as well, that because society is not used to or were not used to necessarily thinking about the principles of how whole systems work. We tend to default to tactics that you've seen work somewhere else or to would I refer to as cultural norms. In certain cultures it becomes normal and normative to value male-female gender diversity where in fact there are other cultures where the exact opposite is true. They value only, for instance the masculine perspective and this is called patriarchy it's well on the stiff. But certain cultural groups nearly resonate with these patterns -- the hierarchy pattern, with no uniqueness. So they value uniformed masculine views, they're not interested in diversity and it's a

cultural norm; when you go to other organizations and they value diversity specifically but particularly gender diversity or race diversity but in both cases the principle the higher principle that give you a better rationale for adopting one or the other of those strategies doesn't seem to be as pronounced, like I said I think that's a feature in fact that just don't have a history and a tradition of this holistic understandings while working with the principles of how whole systems work. That's what pattern dynamics is all about its very, very powerful functional tool. I think Kamya did have this experience, Brent you had this experience and Aiden you're relating experience in a organizational environment as a professional where we do the subject – object move.

--Cass?

CASS: Yea I also just wanted to mention I noticed all organizations ran talent strategies; often it is about growing more generalists. What I'm saying happened is you'd identify talent and they constantly move them around into different parts of the business so they become more generalists, and often they get them out or the talent ways? The talent is really focus on just developing leaders who can manage across all different parts of the organizations and without recognizing the necessity to have that progressivity in terms of specialization and perspectives .

TIM: --Aiden?

AIDEN: I was going to say what's very interesting by that, be very interesting to get Cass's and other peoples feedback on that. And where I've seen organizations do that around trying to build generalists, what they often seem to do is put people in specialist's roles in a sequence so even thou the people might be becoming

generalized the roles that they're performing are actually incredibly specialists or at least be in my experience.

TIM: --yea and then the pattern that's at work here for me as I listen to Aiden and Cass, is that we are talking about uniqueness now. Uniqueness is over here is something like this; it's purely the specialization of different roles or elements that processes and how different they are and how unique; another word for uniqueness is specialization but with this spectrum the primary polarity in uniqueness is between the specialist and the generalist. So, on the spectrum of uniqueness where you sit, you know, are you the CEO?, and have done many, many of these specialized roles therefore you have a very generalist capacity or had just been someone who's worked in HR a specific role and burrowed down really, really deeply into that role for 20 years. And again its context dependent as we know in PatternDynamics the context is always changing and so to think about what is appropriate at the time. It's not that a lot of uniqueness or specialization is good or bad or a lot of generalized experience is good or bad. It really depends on what you want to achieve or what context in this world you want to achieve at.

I'd like to get back a little bit more to..

BRENT: --Tim, just one thing before you get on the slide, when we started talking about diversity that's kind of over my head when it's stuck on the line of PatternDynamics , Aiden is talking about what people generally say is diversity and I thought, Aiden something you said was really interesting about your argument that to your client that diversity would cross their effectiveness in particularly diversity of thinking is oppose to just gender and I had this idea about, perhaps the why of that being that greater

diversity creates better adaptability in a range of responses available for change whether that's internal or external change and so if there's a further argument to be made about what's the value of having uniqueness or diversity it could be about that adaptability piece. So just a thought I had.

TIM: Yea, one interesting development in modernity has evolved I forgot where I read this. But the amount of specialized trades or professions in the yellow pages has grown at a certain rate as industrial society had evolved. And back in 1900's there are only several hundred different roles in society and now there are hundreds of thousands. Those specialized roles that are continuing to grow and it's about this idea of, we go back to structure the hierarchical complexity. The idea of that hierarchal growth, complexity grows hierarchal and that you get a lot of unique arts or elements come in to relational exchange and then they form a system and that becomes a sub system at the next level of the hierarchy of complexity. So our society for better or for worse is now at a point which requires a great deal of complexity. In fact if you're going to existence in this world especially in the post modern western world you probably would have to have a very unique talent which you can integrate and go into exchange with other parts of the very complex world. So, you know the days of being that kind of ultimate generalists is not a whole lot of call for that but I don't know, maybe someone could challenge that. Yes, I think both things are happening at the same time.

—Erkki?

PatternDynamics is in a sense is a general way to understand how the world work.

ERKKI: Yea I guess, you don't have really broad on to tutor, I was just thinking about my own profession or my former profession about being a project manager and in some sense like a project manager is it tries to be in this general role whether a unique projects and at the same time is somebody who's able to manage it more of course it doesn't really say that much if this role diversifying or not, or becoming more unique over time or not. I guess the case could be made but there are actually different brands, different styles of project management now. But I was just thinking that, that's sort of the generalized role still in the society and make sure there are other examples as well.

TIM: As you we're saying that I was just reflecting, you know there is a requirement for people to understand the whole system where in fact that's what PatternDynamics is and I've always been generalists and I think PatternDynamics is my attempt to make a specialization other than being a generalists.

Kamya?

Kamya: I just wanted to add to what Erkki was saying in this conversation about specialists and generalization and reading Sir Ken Robinson's book which probably many of you read the element and it's very particular to me and my life around education systems. So, this idea OF you know how we are educating our children to enter the world that is before us and you know, we're using a kind of primary and secondary education system that's out of the industrial age and our treasury education has traditionally become more and more specialized. But I think there's a big question about what are we specializing for? Because the world, the complexity, the hierarchy of complexity and our world is changing so much we don't actually know what we're able

to specialize. So many universities are going backwards in generalizing. Did that make sense? There is an old friend in universities to do more general courses rather than specialized courses, that's what I was sharing.

TIM: Yea and I think the interdisciplinary degrees that you can do now are a feature of that but Gary Hamsen, who did the last level 2 online training, he brought up this really important point, a really interesting point for me about the idea of the baroque not only is it a period in architecture or its expressed in music and so that, but I didn't really understand what baroque meant., I thought it was a moget architectural style but Gary pointed out that it's both things at once, like there's a polarity between a centralized theme very strong centralized theme and then all of this kind of , all of the flourishments, kind of you know complex expressions of it there is always a unifying theme that the baroque is quite different from say a plagiaristic post modern world where there is no unifying theme. Where in the baroque you can have both a very strong central theme where you have all this gourmet kind of ornamentation around and build that theme, build on that thing with all that ornamentation. But the baroque was not just about the ornamentation it's based on the centralizing theme. So, this idea there's a tension and all its utility between the polarity of the generalists and the specialists and in fact if you think about complexity they probably need both, they probably need to hold both at the same time; PatternDynamics is way, a literacy to gain some generalize understanding of how any system works. But we have to be specialists it's kind of ironic and it's kind of a useful insight that PatternDynamics is an extreme specialization in an extreme generalized way of understanding the world, right? And there's something about that that's important and this idea of the

baroque you know the neo-baroque kind of mentality or understanding that's really, really important.