

Organization Identity Profiles –Old and New Economy Indian Organization Profiles Through the Graves - SD Lens

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Introduction:



The authors had the opportunity to work with tools based on Clare Graves Levels of Existence Framework developed by Ashok Malhotra, an organization consultant based now out of Bengaluru (Bangalore), India. The tools are the Organization Identity Mapper (OIM) and the Existential Universe Mapper (EUM) This paper relies on the experience of applying these tools in Organization Development consulting work.



The profiles shared are of real organizations with names changed for obvious reasons.

The paper seeks to throw light on the differing organization profiles of New Economy and Old Economy businesses of India that the tools vividly map, and ways in which the unraveling of the profile offers the organization significant cues for inquiry and new directions for action. While the purpose here is not to detail the design elements of the tools themselves, or their psychometric properties, one hopes that the reader will find sufficient information on the tools to apprehend the thrust of the main plot without getting sidetracked by doubts about the robustness of the tools themselves.

“Old” and “New” Economy organizations:

A brief note on references to the “Old” and “New” Economy organizations is in order. The latter are businesses that were unleashed in the era of liberalized India starting from the early 1980’s, a point in time that is associated with the dismantling of licensing and controls tied to socialist ideas of centralized planning. The IT and IT enabled services sector, telecom, financial services, and the services sector-at-large were the signposts of this new mood of de-control, competition, entrepreneurship, foreign investment, and innovation. The Old Economy organizations were those that insulated themselves from the heat of intense competition/market forces through expert manipulation of the quotas and licensing machinery.

The socio-cultural context of India provided an interesting backdrop to the predicament of the Old Economy organizations with their accumulated history of policy sponsored protection as it woke up to the realities of market competition. The New Economy organizations did not necessarily have the baggage and the drag induced by organizational history, but nonetheless had to contend with the socio-cultural coding that went well beyond its colonial past and centuries of social

organization that placed a premium on the spiritual over the material, sacrifice over self gratification, and the community as the center of human affairs over the individual.

Indian psycho-socio-cultural context – Looking through the Graves – SD lens:

The authors were introduced to the Graves framework in 1998, and to the OIM and EUM referred to in Y2K. Consulting experience in the first half of this decade involving work with cross cultural groups, notably mixed groups of Indians and Americans in environments alien to each group's culture pointed to significant underlying basis of difference in their respective cultures. Our hypothesis was that the origins of such difference lie in ways the respective societies have evolved leading to differences in behaviors emphasized/valued. The Graves–Beck framework was handy in exploring these differences as we saw it then. In doing so, it was possible to also see the manifestations of the evolutionary trajectory of the Indian more clearly. This exploration is intimately connected to the social cultural context referred to and to the Old–New Economy predicaments and dilemmas. The reflections that followed the consulting experience are shared here first as a necessary context to explicate the Indian socio–cultural legacy/context from the evolutionary framework's perspective.

The SD framework's use of colors to denote various levels is retained here in the initial discussion that follows. Labels used later will be referenced to the SD levels as appropriate.

We have held the view that a healthy, evolved Blue is a pre-requisite for civilization as is generally understood. It is the rationality of Blue, the method and the rules that a Blue mandates, that provides the basis for science and for the awakening of interdependence and emergence of networks that characterize the next level, Orange.

Our Life conditions as experienced are a product of geography and history. Our hypothesis is that the West has evolved its Blue by transiting through the externally focused Red while the East, more internally focused, has sought to “skip and leap” to the Blue by ignoring/underplaying/disowning the Red. The Blue universe of values, behaviors, concerns, expectations and resultant culture arising from these different origins have similarities but significant differences. These differences show up in the East –West encounter when it applies to work place interactions, the stance towards tasks and people, towards rules and roles, towards power and authority. Our experience with the group we worked with on this issue during consulting leads us to be increasingly certain of this.

The following table sets out what appeared to us as shades and nuances in Blue based on where it emerges from:

Table1

No.	From RED to BLUE	From PURPLE to BLUE
1.	The apprehensions of anarchy, chaos, destructiveness and aggrandizement ("each to his own", "me for myself, damn the rest" ...) associated with rampant Red individualism leads to a Blue to <i>contain</i> and <i>regulate</i> unabashed individualism.	Collectives remain the basic unit and Blue can be expected to <i>preserve and maintain status quo</i> relationships of collectives. Ethnic identities, caste groupings, communities, etc can be expected to preserve their status and the patterns of relationships, spill over into various spaces and seek co-existence through stated rules and unarticulated norms.
2.	Blue seeks to <i>balance individual rights / freedoms and obligations</i> with the former zealously protected against infringement, and carefully counterbalanced with the latter.	Blue here seeks to <i>balance clannishness and interdependence</i> , accentuating the tension between "inner-us" and "outer-others", dependence on one's "niche" and access to other "niches".
3.	<i>Explicit Rules</i> are emphasized / published to establish order, <i>ensure predictable / reliable behavior</i> and minimize individualized, idiosyncratic behavior in public spaces and social settings.	" <i>Oughts</i> " and " <i>musts</i> " are often informally held and passed on; they often hold sway and shape behavior rather than the rule of law. <i>Roles</i> are emphasized to let the individual understand what part of the self can be deployed or ought to be withheld – undifferentiated according to the context. Task role, social status, etc. tend to be fused and stability of the social order is thus maintained.
4.	Deployment of the self is in response to "what the task is and what my part in it is."	Deployment of the self is largely in response to the question "what is appropriate to my station?"
5.	Blue fosters civil liberties, spawns <i>civil law</i> and contracting.	Blue underlines duty and social norms, invokes <i>moral law</i> and spurs sacrifice.
6.	The task is the relevant context for hierarchy; accepting and acting in accordance with the hierarchy is restricted to the task context;	There is an overlay of social hierarchies on task realities; social hierarchies are imputed on task related hierarchies making it difficult for people to cross different levels to engage with each other as equals outside of the task context, too, thus ascribing to seniors more power than what the task/structure mandates, and submitting to expectations that go beyond what the terms of engagement call for.
7.	People express themselves in order to ensure that there is clarity of expectations.	People assume rather than express, fearing judgment and exclusion from authority, act from their sense of duty and over-extend themselves in order to please higher ups.
8.	Security flows from structure. Structural authority is relied upon to enforce the law; the guilty are punished through a codified system provided by the law.	Security flows from shared beliefs and norms and collective commitment to it; the law provides scaffolding. Punishment meted out beyond what is meted out by law is by moral censure evoking shame, guilt and judgment on worthiness (to belong).
9.	There is emphasis on "adherence for coherence."	There is an emphasis on "conform to belong."
10.	Blue manages the boundaries of "what I can/cannot do."	Blue shapes and informs "who I am and can be."

Some implications for members in organizations:

Invoking metaphors of the family in relation to the work place, feeling “at home” as important, curiosity about ethnicity, religion, family, marriage, etc. are possible consequences of the Purple–Blue complex. Equally, the fear and submissiveness to authority, the willingness to sacrifice, go the extra mile even at great personal cost, the hesitation to assert and negotiate could stem from not adequately engaging and integrating the Red. Ahimsa (nonviolence) has been central to the idea of righteous conduct in India especially from the time of the Buddhist ascendancy. Celebrating the Red has for long been seen as undesirable in the popular Indian way of thinking; “service before self” as a credo was echoed in the last 100 years by Indian greats such as Mahatma Gandhi and Vivekananda. It is pertinent to remember also that the history of India is not the history of wars though India has been invaded and occupied; inner struggle and the power of self-restraint and self-denial have been valued more than raw prowess, conquest and expansionism.

Managers caught in this Purple–Blue cinch can be expected to encounter difficulties when dealing with Western counterparts and team members. It would come easy for the former to consider the latter as not pliable, difficult, too questioning, not working hard enough (when actually what is meant is, not working *long* enough...*like me*), too demanding, pushy, not sufficiently deferential to authority, brash...

Likewise, for the manager, representing a healthy transition from Red to Blue, when engaging with Indians might comment about the lack of spine and willingness to surface issues, dealing with them rationally and dispassionately. He is also likely to be disapproving of the inquisitiveness that borders on invasion of privacy, the propensity to cling together amongst their own kind and lack of adventurism, the propensity to silently suffer rather than work the channels to mitigate misery, the fearfulness when dealing with law enforcement officials, and turning pink and purple in the face of criticism.

Ostensibly both work in a Blue environment. However, it must be evident that there seems a whole world of difference in the experience of it depending on the path to our own evolution. This opens up a huge challenge in evolving structures/hierarchies that can co-hold both these strands in a way that allows for meaningful deployment of the self, recalibrating the meanings held of authority, power, rules and roles.

We have till this point clarified the idea of Old and New Economy organizations in India. A brief exposition of the Indian psycho-socio-cultural profile aided by some distinctions drawn between the East and West’s paths of presumed evolution followed. The SD level- color references were used to make the distinction. It has been suggested that the larger cultural context of evolving India was an important backdrop for organizations—Old and New Economy—as they have grappled with their own evolution and growth. Their stories are the subject of the succeeding sections through illustrations drawn from client systems.

The Tools: EUM and OIM

Ashok Malhotra had worked with the Gravesian model in the 70's for looking at organizational Value orientations when he was teaching at the Administrative Staff College, Hyderabad, India. In the late 1990s Ashok and Raghu Ananthanarayan worked with a large corporation and its leadership team on helping them anchor their governance on a strong values base. They used the Gravesian framework for a week long workshop. This triggered a fresh look at the framework and available tools. Ashok Malhotra went on to design the Existential Universe Mapper (EUM) and Organisational Identity Mapper (OIM) directed at individuals and organizations respectively and based on the work of Graves. Organizations and for that matter all human collectives are living systems and the OIM is thus relevant to organizations—business and non-corporate.

What follows are OIM and EUM profiles drawn from the consultation along with anecdotal and some interpretive notes to point to the application and efficacy of the tools in diagnostic processes and creating of a road map. Before taking the plunge, a short detour to get a sense of the tools—OIM and EUM—inspired by Graves/Levels of existence theories, may be informative.

The OIM has been used to assess the organizational processes in over 100 organizations. In many organizations, they have been used in conjunction with the EUM to explicate the organization context and how the organization's collective psyche impacts the organization context, and is in turn shaped by it.

The predictive values are quite strong when accompanied by the standard caveats of stable and status quo life conditions. What is perhaps more significant is the instrument's utility in the hands of a trained practitioner to describe the existential life space of the respondent, facilitate reflection, and dialogue.

Ashok Malhotra has used labels to describe levels in the EUM and OIM that correspond to the Levels in SD as follows:

SD Levels	EUM (and OIM) Levels
Beige	See note below*
Purple	Mechanistic (Same in OIM)
Red	Individualistic (referred to as Opportunistic in the OIM)
Blue	Conformistic (referred to as Systemic in the OIM)
Orange	Aspirational (referred to as Purposive in the OIM)
Green	Humanistic (referred to as Ecological sometimes in the OIM)
Yellow	Holistic (referred to Institutional in the OIM)

* The designer believes that the first level is largely overcome for most of mankind and we are dealing with respondents who are "aware" beyond the Automatic level of existence. Likewise, it does not map the eighth level as in his judgment it is largely in the realm of the spiritual and where the "individual self" has little meaning.

The OIM maps organizations rather than individuals. The underlying assumptions/ axioms are common to both. In the case of the OIM, a broad framework has been worked out that describes the voices of wealth, technology, customer and employees corresponding to each level of existence:

LEVELS	CUSTOMER	PEOPLE	TECHNOLOGY	WEALTH*
Mechanistic	Distant	Dependency	Threat	Anxiety
Opportunistic	Extraction	Counter-dependency	Quick Fix	Consumptive
Systemic	Contractual	Role	Relevance	Prudence
Purposive	Investment	Competence	Futuristic	Optimization
Humanistic	Relational	Belonging	Facilitative	Well being
Institutional	Mutuality	Dignity	Contextual	Potential

* Ashok referred to it as "Money" in his formulation

EUM and OIM – The perspective and design premises:

Conceptually, the underlying perspectives are of human beings and organizations as holons. All holons have an inside and an outside. Also the inside and outside can be viewed from within the holon or from an external location. This can be visualized as follows:

Object of view Location of subject	INTERNAL	EXTERNAL
	SELF-CONCEPT	WORLD VIEW
INSIDE		
OUTSIDE	PATTERNS OF RELATEDNESS	OBJECTIVE CONTEXT

Self Concept: This is derived essentially through a narrative of the self

World View: This is the story of the world derived from one's interpretation of one's experience of the world and has the quality of looking at the world

Patterns of Relatedness: This is understood through exploring the image of

Objective Context: The context in which the living system is located comprising systems, technology, structures, and the broader macroeconomic and sociocultural trends.

Ashok Malhotra argues that no living entity can be understood without having an insight into all four aspects of its existence. Also its movement from one level of existence to another necessarily involves a simultaneous change of all four ways of describing reality. "In a holistic perspective, phenomena are not categorized into a priori normative frames of good/bad, desirable/undesirable etc. Thus a holistic perspective is not problem centric. The assumption being that what may appear as a 'problem' at one level, may in fact be a necessary and even useful part of a larger whole. Thus, mere elimination of the so-called 'problem' can inadvertently destroy the fabric of the larger whole." (Ashok Malhotra in his paper on "Holism, Management and Consulting" available on www.sumedhas.org)

The essence of holism lies in the simultaneity of these four quadrants, their interplay with each other, and identification of leverages that can facilitate the movement of the holon to another level of existence. It is recognized that these movements are not always clean, clinical and complete leaps into another level of existence. If the impetus for movement is from the provocations the “individual” experiences, the possibilities are that the individual will carry along some unresolved issues/agendas of the earlier level. It is also our belief that any “skipping” of levels in the ordered hierarchy is likely to be unstable and transient as the resources and abilities/capacities/experience corresponding to the skipped level is an essential ingredient to traverse the journey through the level the individual has skipped to.

Essentially, while there is the objective world, every individual inhabits a personal subjective world that is shaped by the individual’s encounter with the world and the self. Thus the worldview is a derivative of the individual’s personal psychological world. This in turn shapes the descriptors of the self and the world.

Further, in this perspective, elements of all the levels are present in lesser or greater measure in an individual and *they come together in a configuration* that is unique with one or more levels being the dominant level from which the individual encounters himself and the world. All individuals operating from the same dominant level of existence are likely to have similarities in their psychological make up but could deploy themselves in distinct ways unique to them flowing from their identity processes. The movement sought by the individual is to discover a new configuration.

This movement of the individual can also be expressed in terms of the part–whole duality and the evolutionary journey of the individual at each stage to experience his part-hood or his wholeness, and the eternal quest as being essentially towards a experiential state where simultaneity of both can be possible, and not pre-occupation with one or the other.

An essential preliminary output of the EUM and OIM is thus a snapshot of the configuration of the Levels of existence pertaining to the individual and organization respectively. How does one get to this point?

The design of EUM and OIM

The EUM and OIM are designed on the premise that words evoke a world of associated meanings. Two related statements need to be made. *Firstly*, those words have their generally understood affinity to the life context of some levels of existence, rather than to some others. *Secondly*, the individual based on his level of existence ascribes meanings to words. It can be safely stated for instance that “fair” at the Individualistic level would carry little “weight” but would be loaded with meaning at the Conformistic Level

In the case of the EUM, the respondent ranks all 15 adjectives first as descriptors of self “current” (SC), assigning a unique rank to an adjective with rank 1 to the adjective that the respondent believes is closest to describing self and rank 15 to the adjective that describes self much less (relative to the 14 he/she has already ranked by this process). This process is repeated for self “ideal”/wished for (SI)).

Lastly the respondent does the ranking process drawing from the generalized conclusions held about people at large— other people (OP). This is the input for the EUM profile.

The OIM is similar to the EUM in design and construction. Whereas, in the EUM, 15 adjectives are used, in the OIM, the designer has taken recourse to 20. Furthermore, while in the case of the EUM, the respondent is the subject, in the case of OIM the respondent ranks adjectives in relation to the organization that he experiences/is a part of. The process of ranking is the same: first, the organization “current” (OC) then organization “ideal” (OI) and lastly “most other organizations” (MOO)

If one looks at the EUM closely and links back to the holon perspective, one sees that the individual’ self concept is understood through Self Current (SC) descriptors, an idea of the world view through rank ordering descriptors of “Other People” (OP). Patterns of relatedness and image are inferred through the analyzing the inter-relationship amongst the self-current, the self-ideal and the world-view. The “holonic” perspective is hard to miss in the OIM. too.

The OIM and EUM as OD tools

The OIM has been a powerful diagnostic tool in the hands of an OD practitioner and a basis for dialogue and convergence amongst members of a group. While the framework and the deployment of the tool offers rich insights for a group, it also allows for a quick understanding of what the imperatives are in terms of its ability to deal with its context and grow. The individual OIM responses have invariably been used to arrive at an organization’s profile across the Levels after a process of aggregation and re-ranking of these aggregates. Based on the profile, it has been possible to outline hypotheses, speculations, and conjectures on the *“context for the individual in the organization” and the nature of relatedness of the organization with its context.*

The individual’s EUM response has often been used to aid the respondent’s reflection, and dialogue around development directions/imperatives for personal growth. Aggregated responses of EUMs of members in an organization followed by re-ranking of the aggregates have offered opportunities for valuable hypotheses/insights into the *collective psyche of the organization and the energy deployment patterns.*

Seen in conjunction with the EUM, the aggregate EUM of the respondent group may be seen to indicate the pulls of the collective psyche and the aggregate OIM the pulls of the context. The dynamics of these two interacting forces offers possibilities of insights into the kind of issues that the organization and its people deal with, the organization culture, the role taking propensities, what will be valued, what will be accepted as legitimate, what the impetus for change are, whether there is enough energy from aspiration or dissatisfactions to mobilize the requisite energy to fashion a new configuration, etc.

Each individual’s EUM and OIM response offers possibilities of interpretation at the individual level in terms of the individual’s profile, the organization identity profile as held in the mind and, consequently, what of the self is brought in or

withheld, the role taking that the individual would feel at ease with, what organization realities will the individual be alive to or blind to, etc.

Case Illustration 1 (Old Economy Organization)

Background:

Lilavati Engineering (name changed) is a large Engineering company related to the textile industry. It came into existence in the early 1960s' with manufacturing facilities in South India. It had the benefit of a long-standing technical collaboration with one of the leading lights in its line of business for decades. Buoyed by this backing, and the protective umbrella of Indian industrial policy, the company enjoyed a dominant position in the Indian textile industry. This comfortable state was disturbed by many developments since the 1980s': the opening up of the economy to direct foreign investment, the easing of import restrictions, the end of technical collaboration that marked many past years of success, the arrival of an era of competition, customer choices, the advent of market/product differentiation, migration of talent to sunrise industries and many such. In terms of management technology, the lessons from the Toyota Production system articulated as Lean Management, Balanced Score Card and Six Sigma quality were significant attractions. There was also now a challenge of new product development that had to contend with world majors in a new world suffused with choice, to stay in business. In practice, its operating values of Excellence revolved around conformance to procedures rather than continuous improvement, integrity that was loaded with ethical and moral restraints specifically to do with financial propriety, learning and sharing that operated broadly on a "need to know" basis and was focused on job skill enhancement, as well as a contribution to industry and society that had a strong "welfare" connotation.

Much was expected from the New Product Development (R&D group) process – a slew of products to signal the company's readiness to take on the market forces and move to higher levels of competitiveness, dependable concept-to-market time lines, customer retention and growth. In tune with the times, Design for Six Sigma was written into the Balanced Scorecard goals for R&D. The consultants were brought in to help translate this into team capability and operating processes.

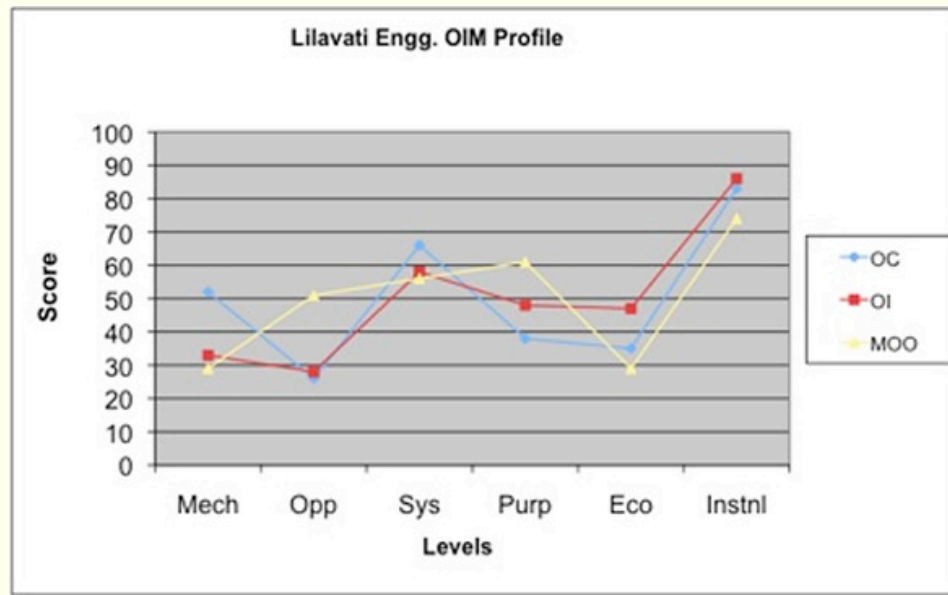
It was the consultants' belief that the mandate could not be realized unless one worked with the prevailing culture and ensured that there was movement on this front as an enabler to the specific mandate for New Product Development. The EUM and OIM were administered to the R&D group members and to select others from various functions who had an ongoing interface with the group.

In the workshop to share the initial findings of the EUM and OIM, the participants who were drawn from R&D and other functions were briefly introduced to the Evolutionary Framework and some of the elements of different cultures as below. In our experience the conceptual clarity of what these levels mean is fairly strong up to the Network Culture (Orange). Developing a realistic and working meaning, and implications of Ecological/ Institutional (green) becomes a challenge. A lot of fantasizing ensues. We therefore restrict ourselves to this set while working with organizations.

Mechanistic Culture (Purple)	Arena Culture (Red)	Machine / Clockwork Culture (Blue)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Clear lines drawn ... "us" and not "us" b. Safety and self preservation c. Tightly held boundaries...outside the boundary lies danger; therefore stick together d. Live by the "givens" of the past...governed by custom and precedent e. Reality interpreted and response mandated by "elders" wisdom..."fall in line or else..." f. Age=wisdom g. Unquestioned obedience and loyalty; adjust and accommodate h. Individuality shunned; Identity emphasized. i. Safety lies in numbers and keeping the flock together j. Fosters a context of safety and belonging, trust and tradition k. Tends to breed a closed inward looking orientation, denial of curiosity, and no real testing of environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> l. Might is right; Challenge and fight m. Kill or get killed...aggressiveness n. Competitive and polarizing... winners and losers, powerful and the weak, predator and prey o. Scanning and heightened vigilance; information as a source of power and survival p. Expansionism, opportunistic, unfettered expression and assertion of individualism q. Restless and impatient...drive for speedy and quick outcomes...life is short! r. Bravado and posturing; s. Lot of questioning of givens and testing of boundaries t. High energy, at times creativity u. Each to his own..."me for myself"...awakened personal power v. Fosters self reliance, dynamism, pride and self belief; w. Creates a context to learn and use personal power x. Can become anarchic and breed dysfunctional power politics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> y. Design...and therefore designer...who has a map of the whole z. Every part has a definite place and defined function; aa. Externalized power and authority...devolved; in of itself a part cannot function bb. Position determines power and authority... hierarchy and status cc. Each part in relation to its position has pre-determined degrees of freedom and tolerance limits dd. System, boundaries and rules (SOPs), hierarchy and roles... ee. Information on a "need to know" basis ff. Conformance, adherence, and maintenance... gg. Discipline lies in not straying from norms, the boundaries of one's position... and all that goes with it...emphasis on self restraint hh. Focus on job responsibility ii. Incremental improvement jj. Not very nimble and agile; everything through "proper channel" kk. Clarity of expectations order, and predictability therefore stability ll. Breeds silos, slower responsiveness, rigidity; can curb individual initiative
Network culture (Orange)	Ecological Culture (Green)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. "Intelligent" nodes, inter-connected, interacting b. Methods and protocols as enabling platform, and not seen as constraining c. Position and Function of nodes in dynamic synchronicity with other nodes d. Task defines power, authority and information requirements. e. Underlines sensing capabilities and autonomy of response at each node. f. Hierarchy of complexity g. Capability / Competence a pre-requisite...its development is to handle more complex tasks. h. Understanding of system dynamics, lead and lag measures; accent on empiricism i. Enhanced systemic response capability to environmental changes j. Fosters throughput orientation, link responsibility, teamwork and collaboration for task performance. k. Can tend to value people for their competence primarily, view them as resources to be optimized and neglect the human side 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> l. Inter-dependence not just for task needs but also as human beings. m. Human and instrumental side of people celebrated n. Valuing of differences...and diversity o. Compete and collaborate p. Invokes not just interdependence of self and system but self, system and the larger context; q. Concern for environmental consequences of systemic actions r. Work - life balance emphasized s. Fosters humanness, caring, social cohesion and socially relevant action. t. Can get carried away by a wave of romantic idealism 	

They were then asked by a show of hands to indicate the relative strength of each of these cultures as descriptors of their context. There was unanimity that their context reflected many elements of the Mechanistic and the Machine Cultures strongly and others much less.

The OIM and EUM profile were then presented to the group. Predictably, the profile that emerged from the data was as follows:



Note: Mech: Mechanistic (Purple); Opp: Opportunistic (Red); Sys: Systemic (Blue); Purp: Purposive (Orange); Eco: Ecological (Green); Instnl: Institutional (Yellow)

The dominant Levels in the organization – current (OC) are Mechanistic (Purple) and Systemic (Blue) ...and Institutional (Yellow). Outwardly focused Opportunistic (Red) and Purposive (Orange) are underplayed. There is little to suggest that the Ecological (Green) has significant strength. Before we get to the findings, it is important to clarify the Institutional (Yellow) scores, as it can be misleading:

High “Institutional - Yellow” scores are not automatically interpreted as organizations with a strong or dominant “Institutional – Yellow” characteristics, particularly, where the pattern of the levels preceding have peaks and troughs like we see here. When the Institutional – Yellow scores are high as in the present instance, the experience with such systems has been typically a collective delusion around the correctness / worthiness / wellness of its current configuration; in some sense, systems carried away by the “positives” and blind to the “downsides” of the configuration. Low “Institutional – Yellow” scores have indicated low wellbeing, fragmentation, instability and stress in the system.

In our experience, most organizations score high on the Institutional – Yellow, often in the Organization – Current, and almost certainly in the Organization Ideal. However, while working with the scores, we find that this is held as a desirable, moral imperative. Often, the entrenchments in the other levels shown by

the peaks and valleys in the Levels' scores makes any realistic action from this (Institutional – Yellow) value meme weak at best. We therefore, do not discuss this during our assessment workshop since it leads to a flight from the real issues to be confronted. We instead focus on the virtuous and vicious cycles that help / hinder the organization. to evolve to its new configuration.

Based on the data analysis, the following were some of the key reflections, hypotheses and questions that were offered to the group:

1. That the profile was consistent with an organization context indicative of a protected, sheltered, and insulated environment.
2. That the context is likely to have a fairly strong paternalistic flavor, steeped in heritage, lineage received wisdom and schooled/steeped in inherited norms, “oughts” and “shoulds”;
3. That the organization has a counter point location vis-à-vis the environment; would the group examine its location: was it that of an island? An ostrich? Or perhaps more likely sheltered in a cocoon, in apparent equilibrium vis-à-vis its context? Was it occupying a righteous high ground (we are not like “them”!) vis-à-vis other organizations, out of sync with the world, and living with untested assumptions about itself and the world?
4. That there appeared a stance of underplayed “come and discover me,” rather than asserting its identity on the grand stage...or a deceptive contentment.
5. That it was likely to be a context that was risk averse, inward looking, precedent led, and procedure driven. It was also likely that the company would have to contend with strong forces that were preservative (Staying within the givens; “don’t rock the boat”) rather than transformative.
6. That it was a context that was likely to generate and keep up dependency and direction seeking rather than self-initiative, direction setting, autonomy and empowered action; that it showed a preference for clarity, certainty and guarantees rather than curiosity, challenge, inquiry, and experimentation as a way of discovering the new.
7. That the context is likely to have hierarchical structures, with people having a job focus, leaving it to some one else (above) to hold a map of the “whole.”
8. That significant unarticulated rules likely are: conform to belong; always agree in public; disagree in private (if one must); sacrifice self for system goals; offer devotion and dedication and not passion (deny self rather than express self); be steadfast for sure if dynamic you can’t be.
9. That it is a context where “Who says what” is important...where all the analysis is to support a view already taken? Furthermore, often the first line of response to issues may be structural.
10. That it is a context where one could expect deference to authority, private crib clubs [Certain people frequently come together informally to ventilate, air grievances, and simply express their displeasure about various aspects of the organization. This we refer to as private crib clubs. What seems to be a “glue” for such

groups is that all members have cribs, sharing is in confidence, and it would appear that all feel helpless or feel powerless to change their situation.], corridor chatter, silent judgments and passive resistance/aggression.

11. That perhaps unarticulated expectations will be held that the system is expected to decipher and act on; that which is safe will be articulated and real issues/“holy cows” worthy of challenge will remain in the background.
12. That one can expect the system to operate as silos, a culture of follow up, waiting and hoping that “someone else” would act. Link responsibility components of a role that is derived from work flow will be weak.
13. That heroism in the system is likely to be marked by qualities of self-sacrifice, hard work, loyalty, observable piety and conformance to norms/moral standards.
14. That energy flow in the system is likely to be congealed, and reined in and that it was possible that there was withheld aggression and ambition, unexpressed/ withheld anger, envy and jealousy...a level of helplessness. Togetherness was likely to be experienced less in celebration and more in bemoaning.
15. That the system’s ethicality would be experienced as a constraint/restraint...a matter of pride and pain, a source of stress and coping; the hope is likely for pragmatism rather than entrenchment in frozen meanings.
16. That connecting and caring is likely to be essentially on the basis of groups one belongs to and owes allegiance, and the status that one’s place in the pecking order allows. Interfaces are likely to be role based, safe and on the basis of live and let live so that the social fabric is not threatened.

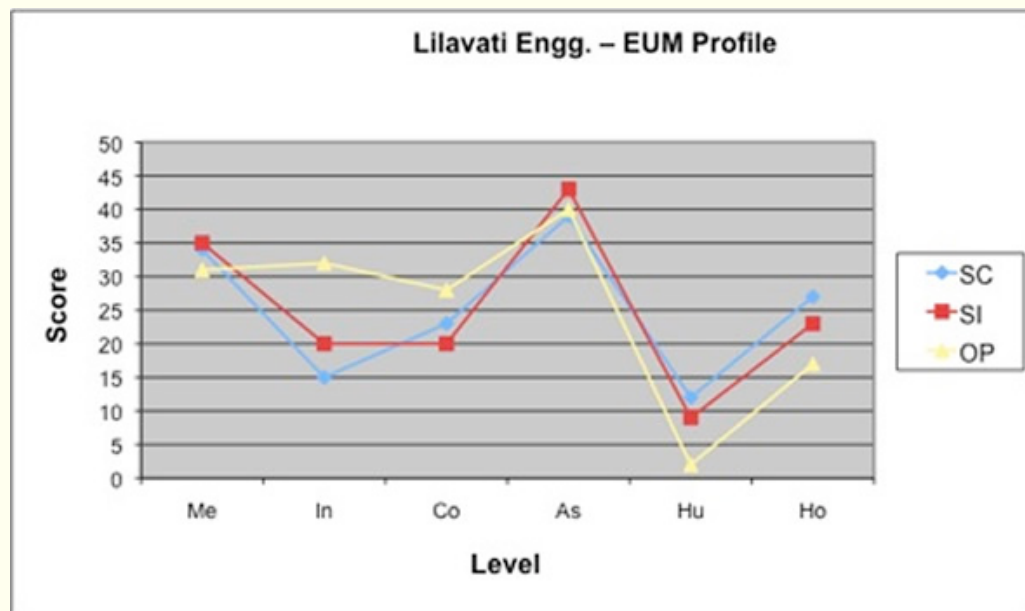
The OIM profile (MOO – Most other organizations) suggests that the business context is quite competitive – a reality that Lilavati Engineering cannot ignore.

The OIM profile seemed to indicate that the “wished for” organization directionally would:

- Not stay a prisoner of the past.
- Be less internally focused...it would engage more with the outside world, pragmatically.
- Be a bit more strategic.
- Become a bit more agile and negotiable.
- Shift from a bounded job/craftsperson focus to the conception of roles as part of a network, and as a part of the supplier – customer chain along a throughput.
- Become a bit more results driven.
- Review what kind of caring is desirable and how will it be expressed.

The group's reaction to the presentation was an immediate unqualified endorsement that their context was described quite vividly and accurately, and that it captured the essential elements of not just the R&D group but of the organization at large. The other reaction that quickly followed was that while the content of what was presented was unpalatable, it had to be owned up. This was followed by a surge of voices that called for change.

It was evident that the kind of change that might make the group's wish a reality was intimately connected to their own readiness of change, role transitions their energies for change. The collective EUM profile pointed to the collective's entrenchment in the "safe haven", a performance orientation that ensured their security of belonging and a terror of any adventure. It was questionable whether the goals that were being pursued were really its "own" or were derivatives of dreams that "significant others" held in which one subserviently offered oneself as undemanding instruments. High dependency was indicated, a comfort with routines and an unwillingness to challenge, question the status quo. It appeared that the collective perhaps held dreams but was clueless about what it takes to act, afraid to make departures from the known and familiar, found itself weak and unprepared to enter a predatory and self-seeking external context, and perhaps wary about the price it had to pay for ambition.



Note: Me: Mechanistic (Purple); In: Individualistic (Red); Co: Conformistic (Blue); As: Aspirational (Orange); Hu: Humanistic (Green) and Ho: Holistic (Yellow)

In light of this, the EUM profile of the collective was shared and the group was invited to ponder over the following questions:

- a. What will be carried forward? What will it let go? How much of it is reactive...what of it is driven by the energy of its vision? Would it seek to emerge from the shadows and shape own destiny?

- b. Would the group like to revisit some fundamental questions, such as: Who does it wish to be? (Identity); What is its path? (values, practices...); Who should answer these questions? (Legitimacy); Should it at all try and answer these questions? Was it equipped to answer them? Was it willing to own up and be willing to pay the price for choices it made?
- c. Is there enough awakening and energy to give it a thrust? What will awaken and energize?
- d. How does the group wish to kindle passion? What forums for expression need to be designed? What does “fit”?
- e. Is the group willing to examine its convictions, act on them and not rely on structural / systemic authority? What was it willing to stake?
- f. What rigidities must be addressed?
- g. Is the group willing to co-create the future? Be willing to fail and be accused?
- h. Who will be the new hero?

The diagnosis and the explorations that followed from the questions above obviously did not conclude in one sitting. It, however, was clear to all that from then on, it could not be just “business as usual”. The group explicitly stated its desire to transform its operating culture to one that was in line with the Network culture. The development agenda that it stated for itself at the outset was to foster practices that engendered:

- Pride and wider ownership
- Throughput orientation
- Learning and development focus
- Experimentation and continuous improvement
- Professional Excellence

That the outcomes for an R&D group could not rest on technical know-how alone and that its culture steeped in a Purple-Blue complex was as much a part of the problem that cannot be ignored any longer in an increasingly Orange-Purposive context is a lesson one can take for a wider audience of organizations flying the flag of the Old economy organization! Indeed, the Network culture is in our view the Aspirational next step in evolution of many Indian organizations.

Cultures tend to be stubborn and aren’t transformed very quickly. That has been our experience with this client, as well. In following through with the mandate to help usher in the new culture, we started with internal communication that we thought would link their operational reality to the desired culture thus:

What is shared below is a snapshot of what was presented as the key features of a Network culture. It is important that all stakeholders have a shared understanding and a commitment to creating this culture. The benefits of such a culture need little reiteration: speed, responsiveness, disciplined action, and focus on improvement at the systemic level and capability building, professional pride, empowerment and autonomy of action at the individual role holder’s level. The transition will require courage to trust and the courage to fail. In an organization’s evolution, this threshold needs to be crossed.

The Networked Culture:

Features	Enabling Systems / Processes	Key values and behaviors
a. Shared purpose as glue b. Every member has a map of the whole, his part and his role linkages c. Recognition of Hierarchy of tasks and capabilities rather than positions d. Expertise and capability driven e. Disciplined Experimentation (Adhere-Analyse-Improve-Standardize) f. Coordination – Facilitation (rather than directive – control)	g. Process / Value Stream mapping h. Goal Alignment i. Customer – Supplier alignment (Internal and external) j. Team Charter k. Team Process reviews l. Team Workflow review m. Visual Management and Collective Dashboards n. Personal Development Planning o. Capability enhancement <i>and</i> results linked performance rewards.	p. Anticipation q. Questioning r. Dialogue s. Negotiation t. Collaboration u. Continuous Improvement v. Self empowered action w. Shared Boundary management

Consistent with the above, in terms of way forward, the next set of steps that were articulated by the group were:

- a) Strengthen Cross Functional Teams (CFTs') through focused input on CFT effectiveness and self review tools;
- b) Extend the Team Charter process to include all members and not just CFT;
- c) Build capability for process reviews in addition to task reviews;
- d) Build on the People-Process matrix to create a Systems picture of each member's role: Goals, outputs, inputs, and customer-supplier definitions;
- e) Ensure that every member has a committed Personal Development Plan that has a suitable output built in; and
- f) Consider a 2-3 days off-site (not necessarily outbound) team building event .“

We will leave the story of the Old economy organization on the threshold of change and transformation, growth and evolution...here...and consider the second case illustration...

Case Illustration 2 (New Economy Organization):

“Integrated Computer Solutions (ICS), (name changed) is a leading global provider of IT services, with focus on verticals like Telecommunications, Media, Manufacturing, Healthcare and Infrastructure verticals. Within a short span of time since its inception, it came to be counted amongst the best employers, won

industry awards and was generally bracketed with the rising stars in the Indian IT scene. It was also an SEI-CMMI Level 5, ISO 9001:2000 certified company. The company had a presence in 20 transcontinental locations across the US, Europe and APAC countries. The company sought to press on aggressively with its growth plans and had made a big investment in office infrastructure to support the growth envisaged.

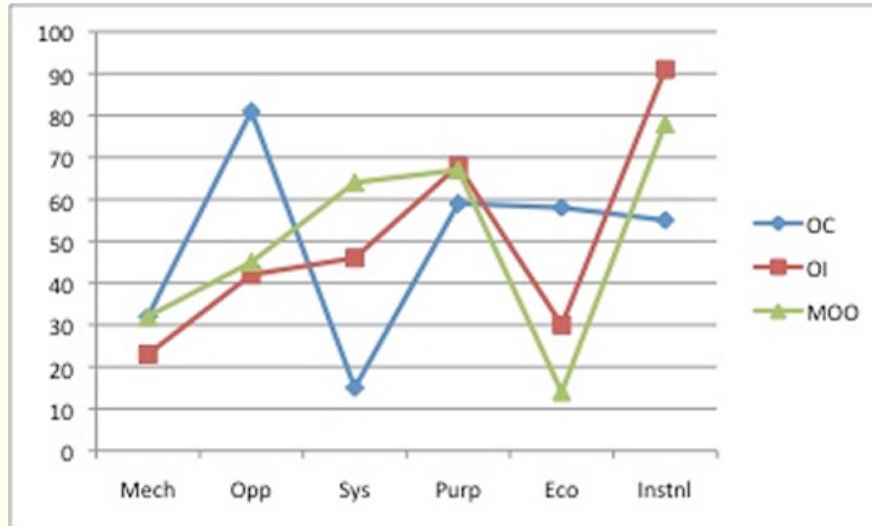
ICS's espoused values:

Igniting thought leadership, passion and innovation;
Nurturing "...holistic development of human capital"
Fostering freedom of thought, expression and action;
Inspiring integrity and strength of character in
interactions with customers
Challenging the individual and the team to achieve
excellence;
Supporting social causes through compassion and
collaboration

The company's website is racy, replete with action, proclaiming, and unequivocal. The website has many more claims and still more promises. It is a company no more than a decade old, riding the IT wave. In many ways, it is a fair representative of many New Economy organizations—organizations that have come up at a time when globalization is not a threat but an every day experience and computers technology have come to shape our thought processes, our ways of relating and connecting to others, and our lives in myriad ways. It is also representative of a way of working, managing and organizing that mimics the Red and Orange of the West but doesn't value the Blue enough.

ICS invited the authors to work with its Leadership team on Organization Alignment. As part of the initial data collection and diagnostic work, the OIM and EUM were administered to the team. As has often been the case with such assignments, the team met offsite in a workshop format to receive the diagnostic findings from the author and dialogue on the issues that emerged.

If the preceding descriptions weren't a give away in terms of the OIM profile one might expect, this is what we found:



Note: Me: Mechanistic (Purple); In: Individualistic (Red); Co: Conformistic (Blue); As: Aspirational (Orange); Hu: Humanistic (Green) and Ho: Holistic (Yellow)

The OIM profile indicated that ICS's context as:

1. Characterized by high energy, high excitement and high entropy, aggression, speed, nimbleness, and a "fix it" approach; no time to lose...everything is "now" as if there is no tomorrow;
2. Very externally focused almost to the near neglect of the internal organization, its people and systemic issues;
3. Valuing the predation of the opportunistic and it was likely that the basic approach would be to grab business (almost as if it were operating in conditions of scarcity as opposed to abundance), and then challenge people to somehow deliver;
4. Attempting to be different things to different people; a context where it would be difficult to say "no" and be discerning about what it will say "yes" to;
5. Being much "in the world" out there with a strong comparative frame, keen on "best practices" and benchmarks...as a way to motivate and drive; however, the organization is likely to fall short on patience, putting the building blocks, and allow things to take root and grow;
6. Lurching from crisis to crisis, and where fire fighting to deliver is the way;
7. Life for the member likely to be described as "If you can't run, step aside"; "If you can't fight, be walked over"; "Can't deliver, be dismissed or left behind"; In such a context, the hero was likely to be one who runs faster, trouble shoots smarter, never says "not possible" and does not advise caution or time consuming processes;
8. It is a context that prompts a collection of individuals to a game of one-upmanship, bravado, grandiose claims...;

however, it fails in creating the necessary systemic infrastructure for consolidation of experience (and based on it), learning and sustaining growth;\

9. Therefore, the organization was likely to be just a rabble where only the strong, assertive, vigilant, self – preserving and self promoting can hope to survive;
10. One can expect a fair bit of personalizing, charisma, power play, posturing and put-downs. Owning up vulnerability is not possible and will be construed as weakness;
11. It is a context that can overwhelm the “weak”; it is perhaps seductive for one who has stepped into the ring;
12. Those on the front line...who “hunt” would be seen as value adding; the rest, who manage the ambience and deal with the fallouts and casualties are liable to be taken for granted.

The current configuration of the organization also suggested dissipative and fissiparous tendencies, possibilities of camps, and islands of possessive power lords with their minions. It was not surprising that one saw at least two other clusters with some differences *at the level of detail* in the descriptions of organization context.

Most other organizations (the external context) were perceived as:

- More evolved and “settled;”
- Well oiled, focused and performance driven;
- Having a strong base of systemic infrastructure;
- Having the human dimension under-invested; essentially a view of organizations as purposive instruments.

The OIM profile seemed to indicate that the “wished for” organization directionally would:

- a) Be more focused around strategy and have a systematic approach to organization goals with due thought to the price – implications and consequences;
- b) Perhaps be more data based rather than personalized;
- c) Have structures and systems as a basis to regulate rather than power and influence;
- d) Have an accent on infrastructure creation, consolidation, greater order and predictability as a *platform* for growth; it would mark a shift to investment in preparedness and organization building...from a guerilla outfit fighting to survive and be counted to a more disciplined army perhaps!
- e) Avoid confusing the human context with “being nice”; learning valuing through systemic processes.

The essential questions for the group were to explore how to get a “jockey used to riding the horse to start the process of breeding/creating racehorses and creating a

winning team.” A lingering question for the team was also whether ICS had become the refuge for those who have disliked the ways of organization systems they have belonged to—in particular the clannishness of the Purple or the oppression of the normative Blue—and ICS was a wish to create one after their dreams? And is it the case that this wish is not being translated into a *shared vision*? Further, having come together, is there a realization that some of the elements of other organizations are essential building blocks, however unpalatable they may be? The group also asked itself whether *there was indeed a shared view of the external context and the customer world*.

Thus was the process of alignment triggered through the deployment of the OIM and EUM. A variation attempted here was to follow up the workshop on alignment with individual coaching sessions with the leadership team members to help them re-anchor and design personal development directions or next steps in light of the alignment dialogue, the overall context, the direction for movement collectively sought and one’s own propensities, entrenchments and aspirations evidenced in their individual EUM. This was necessary because the individual EUM profiles showed a great variance. Individual heroism was not the natural propensity of many of the top management team. It was the central characteristic of the entrepreneur promoter of the organization who was a non-resident Indian. Each member of the team had got entrenched in coping strategies that precluded dialogue and teamwork. The pre-requisite for a dialogue on how each one would initiate change in themselves first and therefore in the organisation was a series of individual coaching sessions through which each of them would awaken their own dreams and aspirations. Without this energizing at a personal level, all organizational initiatives would have to be driven by the promoter, defeating the very purpose of the culture change initiative.

The case of ICS in Illustration 2 has strong parallels with many New Economy organizations. They are often marked by greater play of the Red and Orange levels where instant gratification and instant success are the extolled. The struggle that follows is to create the Blue platforms and processes for growth and sustaining of the initial gains. It perhaps points to a Western slant in the march to globalize—a preference for individualism, enterprise and materialistic and tangible barometers of success, but sadly with a certain blindness to their pre-existing Blue structures, systems, and regulations that ensure essential conditions for order and predictability. For many of those in New Economy organizations born into the boom era of a globalizing world, the vestiges of a socio-cultural history are sometimes a curiosity and other times an irritant when they come in contact with it elsewhere or in themselves. For those who have made the leap from Old Economy organizations into the New, there has been the struggle to shrug off the Purple-Blue cloak and embrace the Red-Orange.

The entrepreneur promoter often sets up a strong polarity with the managers from the more traditional mindset. A strange love-hate dynamic is set up, the ability of the traditional Indian manager to accept role bound self-sacrifice and organizational commitment is used. But, a collective hype is created that worships the hard driving extractive “get on to the growth path and make your millions” ideal. The individual adjusts and accommodates to this willy-nilly, and pays a huge price at a personal level. Soon the stress and internal conflicts saps the individual energy, the person’s performance stagnates, the organization hits a plateau. Both

the individual and the organization face a double bind. The individual has invested his time and is poised on the edge of realizing his dream; the organization has invested in the individual who is by now a holder of great knowledge. “ I am damned if I leave, I am damned if I stay” was the common dilemma of the individuals in ICS. “I can’t bet my future on these guys; if they go I can’t run the operations,” was the promoters lament.

Green remains insufficiently understood and sadly also inadequately valued. While the humanistic values of the Sociocentric are recognized at best, the ecological values of inter-dependence remain elusive in practice. The wish for a human touch remains alive but is postponed. It often gets expressed as the collective dream of the management... “we will soon go in for an IPO and we will hand over the reins to a younger lot, and invest in building the institution.”

To the extent that our psycho-socio-cultural history is rich in the valuing of community, balance, and harmony with the external context and is not “lost” to us, we believe that individuals and organizations will find ways to evolve and include the Green in due course.

The EUM and OIM as tools have been handy and a handful. This paper wasn’t to be a “how to” manual in the use these tools and therefore the analysis tables and ways to glean meanings have been kept out. Walking through the case illustrations would hopefully have offered a glimpse of the possibilities for application, and triggered curiosity in the way it has evolved from the Grave’s frame and been deployed at individual and collective levels.

The Leader’s Challenge:

The corporate world has over the years characterized just about anyone who has a team responsibility as “leader.” The IT industry for instance gave us “team leader, module leader, project leader” and the like...glorified job titles that fed the illusion of leadership across the organization and vested a certain aura of potency and significance in them. Many organizations loved calling their senior managers “business leaders” and dealt with them with a certain deference, adulation and sometimes even unqualified (and mostly undeserved) reverence. This was no different in Lilavati Engineering or ICS.

No improvements in titles could possibly alter or diminish in any way the challenges to the “leader” or to the “leadership team” in the organizations discussed here. From an evolutionary perspective it is evident that Lilavati Engineering and ICS, given their different configurations, call for some key shifts, but of significantly different kind. Given their context, both organizations could ignore the pulls to take some bold steps in its evolution at their own peril!

To the extent that the leader, while being a part of the collective, is also able to take a stance apart from it, he can be in touch with but not subsumed by the collective; he can bring and foster an “outside in” perspective/impetus without losing touch with the proclivities, apprehensions and aspirations of the collective. This is a delicate tight rope that rests on the ability of the leader to manage the proximity-distance axis along with a bi-focal view that takes in the inside and the outside of the system.

How did Lilavati Engineering and ICS fare? In the former, the salaried manager-leader at the helm was home grown, steeped in the culture of the organization over 20 years, more at ease with maintaining the status quo rather than altering it, preferring incremental improvement to step-changes, and faithfully furthering goals that those above him in the structure (promoter-directors) mandated. His own EUM profile would have made for an interesting study of conformance, and driving performance in the name of lord and master. Needless to say, culture change could only be subversive, and the systems and processes to support the ushering of change threatening, and anxiety generating. It was apparent that the evolutionary journey could not take a firm next step merely by embracing next generation technologies without correspondingly engaging with the overt and latent tensions in the human context. The leader in this instance was hopeful of dramatic results through the former and sidestepping the latter.

In the case of ICS, it emerged that the “leader” who was also the promoter-CEO had created the organization after his own image. The search to create a viable organization that will endure and sustain was for him at once also a search for a new location from which to view the world and to reflect on one’s own life—to discover a new equilibrium—a search that was for him and the organization, a source of pain and hope, a groping for an alternative configuration to morph into.

Leader induced or enabled evolution of the organization met with limited progress in both cases.

We suggest that apart from a context that can provide the essential triggers for movement and change, a certain creative tension arising from the organization and the leader being at different points on the evolutionary journey is an important necessary condition too. In its absence, as both case illustrations pointed to, the entrenchment of the status quo can be so over –powering as to counter, negate or nullify the nascent, or emerging impulses of the system to evolve and grow

Notes:

1. Quotes / extracts are from an unpublished paper on “Holism, Management ”by Ashok Malhotra, made available for limited circulation.
2. The authors acknowledge that the tools used here – EUM and the OIM – were designed and owned by Ashok Malhotra. The authors have his permission to use these tools.

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