

The Parallels between Reengineering and Script

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In this paper I will explore the link between reengineering and the concepts of physis, autonomy, and transformation in TA.

I will also explore the link with the concepts of ego states and script cure.

Organisational TA has a lot to offer industry. Just as clinicians need to be able to talk 'turkey' with medics, organisational Transactional Analysts need to be able to translate our work into other languages in order to be able to work alongside others. Reengineering has been a much-used term in industry and has received a great deal of publicity, both positive and negative. This paper explores how Organisational Transactional Analysts can enable organisations to change and use both reengineering and TA concepts to promote this change.

Reengineering is the:

"fundamental rethinking and radical re-design of business processes to achieve the dramatic improvements in critical, contemporary measures of performance

(M. Hammer & J. Champy 1994)

A key word in this statement is 'fundamental'. In reengineering companies need to ask themselves the basic questions: Why do we do what we do? and why do we do it the way we do? These fundamental questions enable people to look at the rules and assumptions that underlie the way they conduct their businesses. Often these rules turn out to be obsolete or inappropriate.

Champy and Hammer note another key work is 'radical'. Radical redesign means getting to the root of things, not making superficial changes.

These definitions and questions by Champy and Hammer are consistent with TA concepts, including fundamental change. There is also a clear link with Berne's creative force Physis, the force of nature, which strives to make things grow and for these to be more perfect. Physis is the mechanism of change and is spontaneous. Organisational change is with us for good, and the concept of Physis is one way of understanding this process.

Berne also outlines script cure as being when a person puts 'his own show on the road with new characters, new roles, and a new plot and payoff. Such a script cure, which changes his character and his destiny, is also a clinical cure, since most of his symptoms will be relieved by his redecision' (E Berne 1972). He also considered that these fundamental changes would enable the person to continue their development into autonomous, intimate, spontaneous and aware individuals.

Hammer and Champy state that American managers must throw out their old notions about how businesses should be organised and run. This can be likened to a child, who when born is given a pair of coloured glasses through which to look. The child, not knowing that they can take their glasses off, believes that this is how the world actually is. The process of development, like the process of reengineering, is about enabling people, and organisations to think differently about themselves, others and the world. The way a business is organised, which may be fragmented, can be likened to how we organise our sense of self, which too may be fragmented. All of this is affected by the messages (script) which are handed down by the founding fathers (parents and significant



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others).

At the heart of business reengineering lies the notion of 'discontinuous thinking' (Hammer and Champy) - identifying and abandoning the outdated rules and fundamental assumptions that underlie current business operations. They go on to say that fundamental changes in business processes have implications for many other parts and aspects of an organisation - every part of it in fact. We can see here how this links with Clarkson's ideas about transformation:

'The change that is referred to in a Metanoia is for all practical purposes a permanently transformed state of being, whether it is a spiritual or psychological transformation. Such turning points in life and in psychotherapy are often revolutionary, but may equally be the result of evolutionary processes

(Clarkson 1989)

The key words used in reengineering also fit within TA script theory, namely 'fundamental; radical; dramatic; processes'. In TA we talk about fundamental change and redecisions, these can be seen to link with the words 'radical' and 'dramatic'. Erskine (1980) considers that behavioural cure is not only when script actions stop but also when the content and active processes of dreams and fantasies are no longer determined by script beliefs. This is similar to the concept of 'processes' in reengineering.

Hammer and Champy note that when a process is reengineered jobs evolve from narrow and task-oriented to multidimensional:

'people who once did as they were instructed now make choices and decisions on their own instead. Assembly line work disappears. . . . Managers stop acting like supervisor and behave more like coaches Attitudes and values

change in response to new incentives. Practically every aspect of the organisation is transformed often beyond recognition.'

(Hammer and Champy 1994)

Surely, this is the same as fundamental change for the individual. When we no longer use our script beliefs in a way which narrows our frame of reference we are acting autonomously. We are also able to operate in the here and now, using all ego states appropriately and effectively, we develop a firm, structuring and caring Nurturing Parent ego state, similar to a coach, and our attitudes and values change. We too can be changed beyond recognition. In order to fundamentally change we need to look at our basic premises, just as organisations look at theirs. For example, when Henry Ford broke down each part of the car production and had each person working on one small part of it, the work was fragmented, but production increased. However, management of the process was more difficult. If an individual is fragmented then our internal management of our own processes is more difficult.

Reengineering, as with script cure enables both the behaviour and the processes to be flowing and cohesive.

I have brought together the kinds of changes that occur when a company reengineers its business processes and the changes Transactional Analysts consider with script cure.



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REENGINEERING

- ✓ Work units change - restructuring process teams work together to perform an entire process.
- ✓ Jobs change - simple to multi-dimensional
- ✓ People's roles change from controlled to empowered
- ✓ Values change - from protective to productive. Support of performance
- ✓ Managers change - to coaches

This comparison highlights the ability of the Organisational Transactional Analyst to use the concept of script when working in organisations to effect fundamental change.

The need for fundamental change can be seen through an example, which I hope will sufficiently span across the different fields of TA to promote understanding. I have an on-going consultancy contract with a Social Services Department of a young people's home. The fundamental premise on which the young people are accommodated is flawed. That is, the Department does not believe that attachment is good for young people. The fact that a person who has not attached cannot detach and achieve independence is not considered, and is outside the frame of reference. At a recent review for a young man S., the psychotherapist recommended that any adolescent placement be with a family where he can develop a relationship with the man of the family who would do things

SCRIPT CURE

- ✓ Ego state change co-operation and support from the intra psychic process
- ✓ ability increased to function outside the constraints of a narrow *frame of reference*
- ✓ moving from an adapted position to an integrated Adult ego state position - *autonomy*
- ✓ the development of here and now values and reassessment of old beliefs and values. *Decontamination.*
- ✓ development of an effective de-contaminated Adult ego state.

with him. However, the Adolescent Placement Team do not promote attachment as they believe this will prevent a young person becoming independent, and so had no such placement available.

This basic premise affects the whole organisation. Residential establishments do not work with concepts of community and young people are not encouraged to become interdependent. For example, when someone 'acts out', and perhaps requires restraining for their own safety the other young people are excluded from the process. This encourages denial of how the behaviour is affecting the community and the individuals within it. I do not consider that this is intentional but rather because this has not been part of their awareness or part of the Social Services culture and belief system.

Further, the Field Social Workers decide when it is time for a young person to move on to independent accommodation.



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Having left the young people are often not encouraged by their Field Social Worker to return for visits to the home. This discounts the attachment process and denies the young person a source of support.

The Adolescent Placement Team, the General Support Team, the Residential Social Workers and the Field Social Work teams, all operate in a fragmented way. The lack of attachment is paralleled in the competitive frames of reference adapted by each team. On the occasions when someone does take an overall perspective it is to problem solve within the current ability and frame of reference of the Social Services Department i.e. that attachment is bad. This is where the use of the concepts of script and reengineering are helpful. In order to effect change and for young people to get their needs met, the Department's frame of reference needs challenging. If the script belief that attachment and dependency are wrong were to change then the young people would be worked with within the developmental deficit and be able to move toward autonomy. Until this occurs many of these young people are unlikely to achieve their full potential and move out of script. This is likely to mean that they are a drain on resources. However, because of the fact that after the age of 18 they will not be a drain on the Children's Services within Social Services, they do not necessarily have the investment and the concern to affect change. Each authority department tends to look to protecting its own budget rather than considering the whole and what behaviours and processes need to change to enable the person or organisation to do more.

To quote Hammer and Champy: 'Reengineering can be thought of as replacing a diamond that has lost its lustre and brilliance with a new one'.

Transactional Analysts are more likely to consider that we are

all diamonds but life experiences have covered us with dirt and dulled us. If we are to relocate the diamond we need to enable the person to rediscover their core self and aspire to a fulfilled life - physis.

If Social Services Departments are to move toward health then they will need to replace the premise (the diamond which has lost its lustre) with a new one, based on need and effective ways of working. This will enable the young people, and the workers, to achieve a sense of fulfilment when fundamental change occurs through attachment and eventual independence.

References

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