

Chapter 8

How to Find Organisational Greatness

Manage the energy field

The purpose of this Chapter is to show leaders how to increase the levels of *power* (Courage, Trust Optimism, Forgiveness, Understanding, Love, Joy, Peace, Enlightenment) in the organisation and release goose-bump levels of Organisational Greatness.

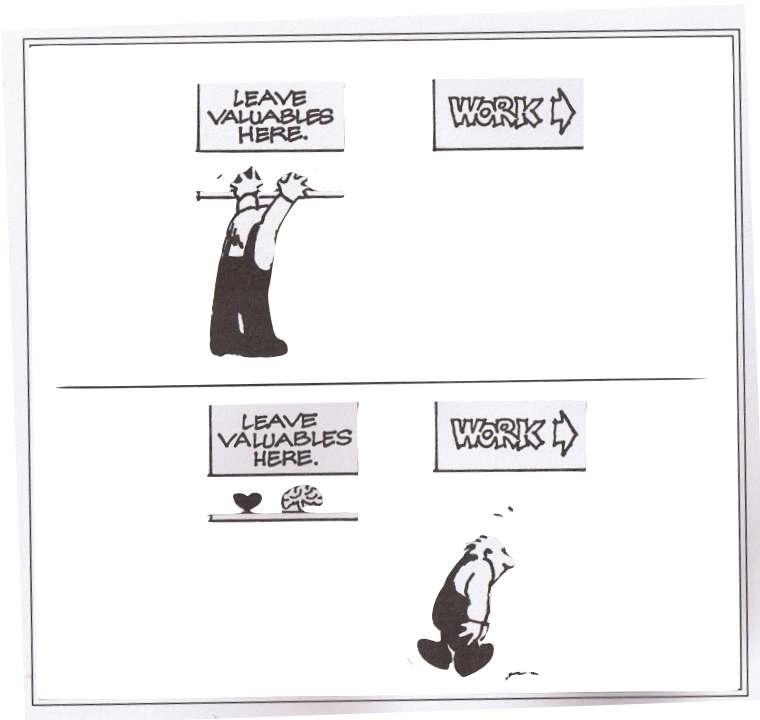
In most organisations, managers see themselves as managers of assets. In my experience, a few people (about 5%) are extremely busy, sometimes frantically busy. These are the Tops (senior managers). They are often so busy they don't see that the other 95% (Middles and Bottoms) are frustrated because they know they can contribute more than they do.

In organisations that achieve Organisational Greatness managers see themselves as managers of energy. When managers see the organisation as an energy field much of the work that Tops traditionally do just melts away. They no longer have to solve every crisis (and detail) because it is transferred to the people who actually do the work, and as a consequence, contribute more and are more fulfilled without being overworked or under pressure.

Use the whole person (body, head, heart and soul)

Cracking Great Leaders see people as energy fields: body (physical energy), head (intellectual energy), heart (emotional energy) and soul (spiritual energy). To build goose-bump-type differentiation they nourish the whole person. Although they focus on heart and soul; they also know the body and head must be nourished before people will give the extraordinary gifts of heart and soul.

Other managers spend most of their time focused at the body level; on the external, physical world, thinking about results, structure, technology and processes. But the physical world is just the manifestation of the internal world. By the time you see it, it's too late to change it. Real external change happens because of changes in the internal world of thoughts, emotions, beliefs and dreams.



People have gifts to give in four areas. In reverse order of powerfulness, these are: Body, Head, Heart and Soul.

Body

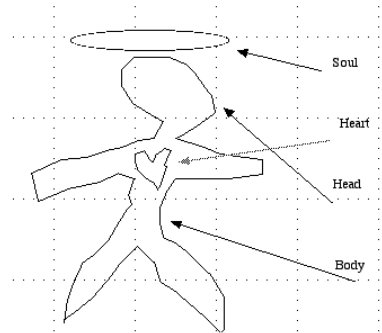
This is physical energy including health, safety and security. Although body is the least important area, it is important because the body needs to be satisfied before people will give gifts from their head, heart or soul. Reach the body and you have helped the person become richer, safer

and more secure. However, even at the physical level many organisations fail hopelessly. Their key business transaction: the exchange of time for money is a thin and mean incentive. Cracking Great Leaders teach their people how to renew their energy through relaxation, focus, exercise, breathing and eating.

Head

This is mental energy or brainpower. Reach the head and you have helped the person become wiser and more knowledgeable. Most organisations operate on a 'needs to know' basis and even when they provide information, they deliver it in only one way.

Cracking Great Leaders know that people learn in different ways and want to know far more than most managers think. Also, when people are trusted with extra information it gives context and meaning to their work. It's about understanding that people are like 'learning machines'. They love to explore. They love to play. They don't like to be boxed in. So Cracking Great Leaders open the books and think seriously about how they structure work; knowing project teams are far more liberating than jobs.



Heart

This is emotional energy. It comes from belonging, esteem and knowing that you fit with the values and culture. Reach the heart and you have helped the person's sense of belonging, connectedness, reputation, self worth and respect.

According to David Rock²⁷ there are five domains of social experience: Status, Certainty, Autonomy, Relatedness and Fairness. He calls it the SCARF model. He says SCARF is so powerful that the brain reacts to it in the same way it reacts to threats to survival. In some ways social pain is even worse than physical pain because it comes

back again when you think about it, whereas physical pain doesn't. Cracking Great Leaders use SCARF deliberately to increase energy and understand issues that people feel subconsciously without being able to put into words.

Status is important to people, especially at work. They can spend significant amounts of time and effort trying to become more powerful than others. Tiny increases in status can strengthen the heart and small decreases can weaken it. Cracking Great Leaders find ways to build people up by recognising them as people and understanding their needs, hopes and feelings. In the process they make themselves stronger also. Other managers seem to take delight in attacking people in public or making them feel small under the mistaken belief that if they make others small they will feel bigger in comparison.

Cracking Great Leaders try hard to provide *certainty*. In part this is about being open and accessible and providing people with clear expectations and all information likely to impact on them.

Cracking Great Leaders increase *autonomy*, knowing it is critical to the heart. With autonomy people are able to make more decisions on their own, so they feel in control of their destiny, free to express themselves and do things their way. Micromanagers do the exact opposite.

Relatedness is a basic human need - to connect. Evolutionarily, the worst punishment was to be banished from the tribe, yet this is the way many organisations make their people feel. Cracking Great Leaders know about the importance of bringing people together, social activities, common tearooms and being face-to-face.

Fairness is far more important than many managers realise. Even though it was many years ago, I still remember the pain I felt when my manager made a totally rational decision that I saw as unfair. I was working for an engineering organisation and got along well with my manager and my peers; I was enthusiastic, worked hard and achieved significant results. One day my manager called me in to tell me that the Board had put restrictions on salary increases. He said he had found a special fund to pay a small increase to an engineer who had started on the same day as me but he could not give me anything. He said I deserved it more than the engineer but rationalised that it

was better to pay one of us than none of us. My head had to agree but it broke my heart!

Soul

This is spiritual energy. It comes from knowing who you are, why you are here, and doing something bigger than yourself; something really worthwhile. It provides the spring in the foot and the gleam in the eye. It is the spark which if created can turn an average team into a great team capable of extraordinary feats. Reach the soul and you have helped the person leave a legacy and provide meaning to their life. In their report, “*A Spiritual Audit of Corporate America*”, Ian Mitroff, a professor at the University of Southern California, and Elizabeth A. Denton, an organizational consultant, write that employees hunger to bring their spiritual values, their whole person and not just their (left) brain to work. They also found that companies that acknowledged spiritual values and that aligned them with corporate ones, outperformed companies that didn’t.

In most organisations, soul is the biggest desert. Cracking Great Leaders work to help people understand who they are and why they exist, then they help people use this understanding to make the organisation stronger. They also help people to think about how the work they do adds value to the world. The key comes from constantly discussing the meaning of the work and tying it to a higher purpose. Nearly everybody wants to be part of something that is bigger than themselves. Like the gravediggers, they want to make the world a better place. They want to leave a legacy. Talk in these terms and the Sun starts to flare. The following table shows where the inner resources of body, head, heart and soul come from.

Where is the person I have in my head?
Love, Truth and Beauty the basis instead.
Where am I hiding I want to be whole
Bringing together Head, Heart and Soul.
Bruce Holland.

Self-concept	Soul	Heart	Head	Body
Archetype	visionary	healer	teacher	warrior
Quality	clarity	compassion	wisdom	courage
Path	perception	love	knowledge	action
Function	insight	feeling	thinking	sensation
Training	discernment	motivation	attention	behaviour
Processes	witness	catharsis	insight	ethics
Source of power	intuition	emotion	reason	willpower

Let go and hold the space

The importance of leadership as usually defined is overstated; however, the importance of moral leadership is understated. One of the hardest things for a senior manager working towards Organisational Greatness is overcoming the all too human desire to make decisions, take control and make things happen. Self-sustaining systems as we will see in Chapter 10 cannot be directed, they can only be let free to unfold or emerge. Perhaps their major role is to hold the space, especially when things go wrong and there is pressure to revert to traditional control and structural solutions. Managers need to be *human beings*. Being is the important part. Too often managers are *human doers*.

Protect and provoke

Cracking Great Leaders are managers of human energy. Probably 'managers of energy' is the wrong way to think about it. Human energy cannot be bought or controlled, it can't be managed. It can only be given, encouraged and set free.

As I have listened to the hundreds of stories in my workshops, one characteristic of Cracking Great Leaders is spoken about more than any other: they both protect and provoke their people. Sometimes they are mentors sometimes tormentors. But they always make it safe to be risky.

Cracking Great Leaders protect their people. They know themselves deeply and what matters to them. They have a deep, calm power that people feel. They are accessible if needed. They don't cut themselves off by appearing too busy or important. They are not buffeted by external circumstances. Because they have provided themselves with the space and time to understand who they are and what they stand for, others feel the right to do the same. In the safety of this environment people feel courageous enough to explore and develop their own Greatness.

At the same time, Cracking Great Leaders provoke their people. They believe in their people more than the people believe in themselves. They believe that everyone has a Greatness and deliberately encourage them to crack off mud.

People have an amazing ability to live down to low expectations, or to live up to high expectations.

Many managers have low expectations of their people. They act like babysitters by checking attendance and dress code. If managers act like babysitters, people will respond in kind.

Cracking Great Leaders have high expectations of themselves and those they work with. I'm sure you have heard about the studies where two teachers have been allocated children on a random basis, but one told that their children were geniuses and the other told that their chil-

dren were low-achievers. The researchers found that by the end of the year the expectations that the teacher had of their class was reflected in the exam marks. Leaders do the same every day. They create geniuses because they believe in their people more than the people believe in themselves.

Cracking Great Leaders put processes (like those in Chapters 6 and 7) in place that help their people see their Greatness and believe it. They provide tangible opportunities for risk-taking. They actively provoke their people with challenges they did not think they were capable of achieving.

Work with human nature, not against it

Cracking Great Leaders know that under our veneer of sophistication we are quite primitive animals. For 99.8% of our history we have been tribal hunters and gatherers so it's no wonder it is hardwired into us in so many ways. We still have the same human nature that existed 250,000 years ago when people first emerged on to the Savannah Plains, both the strengths and the weaknesses. This is important to remember because the world we evolved to be part of is profoundly different from the environment we now find at work.

One of the strongest drives we have built into us is the drive to belong. It is primal. Yet many managers seem to do their best to separate and control. To be efficient it's tempting to eliminate meetings, lunch rooms, coffee breaks, conferences, Christmas parties and other face-to-face interactions, forgetting the missed opportunities to get closer to the people we work and interact with.

We are hardwired to feel strongly about a few people. This is why we still thrive in social groups of no more than 150 people and work groups of 10 to 15 people; yet many managers justify mergers, takeovers and expansion through 'economies of scale' and the benefits of bigness.

We are hardwired to connect with and trust people who work within a short distance of us. This is why short dis-

tances, even a few metres, make a big difference to who we are likely to be friends with; yet many managers separate themselves and others behind desks, walls and doors that are seldom open.

We are hardwired to be needed, included and to cooperate, yet many managers behave as though we were selfish and only out for ourselves.

We are hardwired to be concerned about relatively brief intervals of time. This is why it's so difficult to get senior managers focused on long-term planning and why it needs to be scheduled into the processes of the organisation.

We are hardwired so our emotions rule but many managers overvalue the intellect and 'hard' processes.

Treat people differently from each other and the same>

Cracking Great Leaders understand that people are different from each other in many ways. They have different dreams, different experiences, different talents, and different ways of thinking different needs and wants.

Most managers design jobs then try to find people who will fit into the job, like replacement parts. Cracking Great Leaders discover greatness and design work (usually in project teams) to utilise the talent they have.

It's like Marcus Buckingham says in his March 2005 HBR article: "What Great Managers Do," they play chess while other managers play draughts. In other words great managers know what unique plays each of their people can make and use them deliberately and skillfully, while others assume that all their people have the same skills and can only go in one direction.

Cracking Great Leaders focus on each person's strengths and manage around their limitations. They don't try to fix these. They don't try to perfect each person. Instead, they do everything they can to help each person cul-



A story

There was once a poor woman who lived in Samoa. She scrimped and saved so she could educate her three sons. The three sons did well in life and decided to honour their mother by giving her a gift to show how much they cared.

The first son gave his mother a chauffeur driven limousine. The second son gave his mother the biggest mansion on the island. The third son searched all the known and unknown world to find the legendary bird known for its great powers.

The mother wrote to the first son saying: "Thank you for the car; however I'm scared to get in it be-

tivate their talents. They help each person become more of who they already are.

People have different talents. These are things that they are born with. With Herrmann, we now have the technology to test for these talents. This removes trial and error and the associated costs and mistakes.

Just imagine the power of being able to put each of these people to work on your problems that need their Greatness. Also imagine the costs of putting the wrong person on the job!

If the organisation cannot use the Greatness of the individual it would be better for the organisation and for individual if they moved somewhere else that could use their Greatness.

The great paradox of leadership is that while Cracking Great Leaders know people are different from each other (as shown by Herrmann), they also know that at a deeper level people are the same. Jesus was right when he said the 'Golden Rule' is to treat others as you would like to be treated.

Some things you simply must get right because they are based on our common humanity. We all need love. By 'love' I mean, being appreciated for who we are and included. Cracking Great Leaders care deeply about helping others find their uniqueness. They help people be the best they can possibly be. They help others make a contribution, bigger and more significant than they thought possible. When they are not sure, they follow their heart. When they do this people want to follow them.

**We all want to be loved,
appreciated and included.**

Know themselves and are vulnerable enough to show it

Cracking Great Leaders know themselves deeply; they know they are not perfect but they accept themselves as they are and are vulnerable enough to show themselves fully (including imperfections). They think: "I am worthy. I am enough." Interestingly, it is their imperfections that other people see and love, because it makes them 'real.'

Vulnerability is not a weakness. Indeed whenever we see someone vulnerable enough to show their human limitations we see it as pure courage. Think of anyone you re-

spect and I bet they know their limitations and are quite prepared to laugh at themselves about them.

**This above all: to thine own self be true
And it must follow, as night the day
Thou canst not then be false to any man.
William Shakespeare, Hamlet**

Other managers don't know themselves as well. It's not 'managerial' to be introspective. When I profile the managers of an organisation I usually find 'doing' is a far stronger characteristic than 'being.' When this is discussed everyone understands what 'doing' is, but not everyone understands what 'being' is. 'Being' is a 'human doer' rather than a 'human doer'.

These managers think vulnerability is a weakness. They prefer to stay in control, by a means of what managers should be. They are highly competitive, in pursuit of success, but their success is inevitably colourless. Everyone else is a 'human doer' because there are no imperfections.

Here are some ways to show vulnerability to those who you think you should be. Have the courage to ask for help. Say 'I don't know' when you don't know. Say 'I'm sorry' when you make a mistake. Say: 'I don't know' when you don't know. Say: 'Mary is better at this than me, when she is. Let go of control. Have the courage to show your imperfections. Laugh at yourself and others will laugh with you (not at you).



Andrew Froggatt
Horse whisperer
Talking Horses Limited

I am dyslexic. As long as I can remember I've got words mixed up. I push doors that says, 'Pull' and pull doors that say, "Push." During my university English examination I wasted valuable time trying to work out how to spell 'who'.

My wife tells me I am the only person she knows who has had to renew a library book on speed reading. All of



this is potentially problematic since much of my work is based on words. I often find myself in front of senior managers writing their brainstormed ideas on a flip chart. I find it far easier to warn them of my 'creative spelling' before starting by telling them one of these stories. They laugh with me, but it never feels vindictive and they always end up on my side.

Use body language deliberately

Body language is critical to your success as a Cracking Great leader. We all have an uncanny ability to read each others body language. This is not a conscious thing, it happens much deeper at a subconscious level.

Recent research²⁸ by Alex “Sandy” Pentland²⁹ showed it’s possible to predict which executives will win a business competition based solely on the social signals they sent. Pentland was able to predict who would win a business plan competition with 87% accuracy even though he made the predictions without hearing or reading their presentations. Pentland outfitted executives at a party with devices that recorded data on their social signals, such as tone of voice, gesticulations, and proximity to others. Five days later the same executives presented business plans to a panel of judges in a contest. Without reading or hearing the pitches Pentland correctly forecast the winners, using only data collected at the party. The most successful people were the most energetic. They talked more but they also listened more. They spend more face-to-face time with others. They picked up more cues from others, drew people out and got them to be more outgoing. It’s not just what they projected that made them charismatic, it’s what they elicited.

Human language is fairly new. Studies show it may be as little as 500,000 years old. Long before we had language, we could hunt, move and survive in teams. It makes sense that the communication signals we used for millennia would be so powerful.

Our body language is a reflection of the thoughts in our heads. If our thoughts are weak, our bodies will show it. To change your body language, change your thoughts. It also works the other way, to change your thoughts, change your body language.

Recently I was discussing these matters with a group of managers with a background in teaching. They said that it was possible to identify within minutes of the start of a new year, which children would be bullied. It was all to do with their energy levels, the way they held their bodies and other social signals they sent.

The best proof I had of this was through an experience with a horse whisperer, Andrew Froggatt, of Sudbury Leadership³⁰ at Peka Peka.

Horses, like people, can pick up and read body language. Every gesture you make is instantly interpreted by the horse and his reaction will expose exactly what you are really communicating NOT what you intend to communicate. The beauty of working with horses is that they give you instant and honest feedback. People are just as skilled at reading the tiniest gesture but they are clever enough to cover up their opinion, so, often you don't know how they feel about you.

It was a fascinating day. During the day each of the eight participants were videoed. When the videos were re-played it was quite clear that some people had real issues that their horse picked up immediately. For example, one person's body language communicated 'bully' and his horse constantly backed away. Another person's body language communicated 'weakness' and her horse walked all over her.

I found I had to work on my energy levels. To get my horse, George, to stop, I was taught to put my hand up like a traffic cop. To start with I did this with insufficient energy and intention. George just kept on coming towards me. However after I increased my level of energy and intention

George stopped immediately. For me, the big lesson was to be more deliberate, mean what I say and communicate it with sufficient energy levels with my body language.

The other big lesson from the day was that we all can increase and magnify our energy levels and this was immediately picked up by the horse. I came home and practiced on my three-year-old granddaughter Isabella. To start with I asked her to stop being noisy in my usual manner. As usual she totally ignored me. Then I said, “Stop Isabella!” with more meaning and intention. She stopped immediately much to my amazement.

Use words carefully

Actions speak far louder than words, but the words we use are very important too, especially words from the heart and soul!

Traditional Management (With power over people)	Cracking Great Leaders (With power from within people)
You must ...'	I believe ...'
We will ...'	My preference is ...'
The team has to ...'	My position is'
Do A. Do B ...	I think.'
Your problem is ...'	My problem is ...'
Yes, but ...'	Yes, and ...'
No, you're wrong.'	I disagree because ...'
This is the way we are going to do it.'	I may be wrong but it seems to me ...what do you think?'
You stuffed up, what are you going to do to fix it?'	We've stuffed up, what can we learn from it?'
You.' 'They.' 'Theirs.'	We.' 'Us.' 'Ours.'

The most important words in the English language:

The 6 most important words: I admit I made a mistake.

The 5 Most important words: I am proud of you!

The 4 most important words: What is your opinion?

The 3 most important words: If you please.

The 2 Most important words: Thank you.

The 1 most important word: We."

Patricia Fripp.

Organisational purpose

In Chapter 6 I discussed the importance of finding your personal purpose; it gives you meaning to live for, and once you have found it, life seems to provide opportunities to bring it about. In the same way, organisations that are clear about their purpose are places people feel are worth working for, and opportunities open up almost miraculously to bring the purpose about. An energy field opens up that people can tap into

Instead of trying to invent a new purpose, I have found it's often more productive to "dis-cover" the original dream of the founders by remembering why they wanted the organisation to exist, and what truly mattered to them.

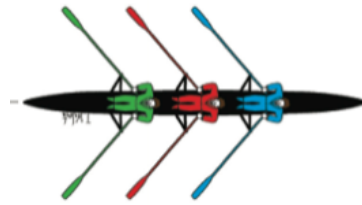
Organisational design

When people don't pull together, many managers assume it's because of lack of will or workers just don't care. However, in over 20 years working in business strategy, I've yet to find an organisation where people don't want to do a good job. If they don't do a good job it's nearly always because of poor organisational design.

Organisational design is like a boat with three rowers. The names of the rowers are: Culture, Brand and Service delivery. To be successful, the Culture, Brand and Service delivery need to know where they are going and they all need to be pulling together in the same direction. In many organisations the three rowers pull against each other like the first boat.



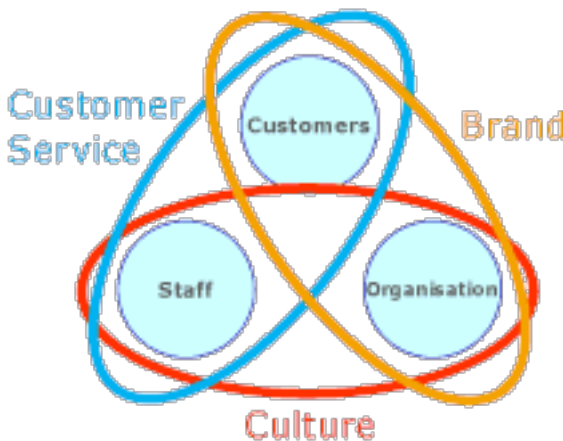
What we want is for all three rowers to pull together like the second boat.



Cracking Great organisations know that service delivery is a direct reflection of the culture; if staff don't feel valued, neither will the customer. Also the brand is built from the inside out; the culture and service delivery determine how people on the outside see the organisation.

The next diagram shows how the rowers are related:

1. Culture is the relationship between staff and the organisation
2. Service delivery is the relationship between the staff and people they serve
3. Brand is the relationship between the organisation and the people it serves.



In business, there are really only three directions (Designs) your boat can go:

1. Intimate Organisations where we know the business of the people we serve better than they know it themselves (e.g. IBM in the 1960s),
2. Innovative Organisations where we are constantly redefining the state of the art in product design and innovation (e.g. Apple), and
3. Operational Organisations where we closely follow the system and processes to produce good quality at a reasonable price (e.g. Toyota).

The direction the rowers row is very different depending on which Design is chosen. For example, if the boat is aiming to be an Innovative Organisation, the rowers (Culture, Service Delivery and Brand) all need to be entrepreneurial, individual and exciting. However, if the boat is aiming to be an Operational Organisation, the rowers all need to be more structured, disciplined and measured. This is why I have shown the Innovative Organisations boat going in almost the opposite direction to the Operational Organisation boat in the diagram below.



Innovative Organisations



Intimate Organisations



Operational Organisations

Reduce organisational layers

Parkinson's Law shows how layers make work. In 1944, Major Parkinson was working in a joint army and air force headquarters in England, dealing with a flood of vital paperwork from on high that threatened to engulf him. Then disaster struck. The chief of the base, went on leave. His deputy, an army colonel, fell sick. The colonel's deputy, an air force wing commander, was called away on urgent business. Major Parkinson was left to soldier on alone. At that point, an odd thing happened - nothing at all. The paper flood ceased; the war went on regardless. As Major Parkinson later mused: "There had never been anything to do. We'd just been making work for each other."

There are three main benefits from reducing layers: layers make work, layers increase internal competition, and layers increase bottlenecks and these are the main reasons why people feel stuck (see Chapter 5).

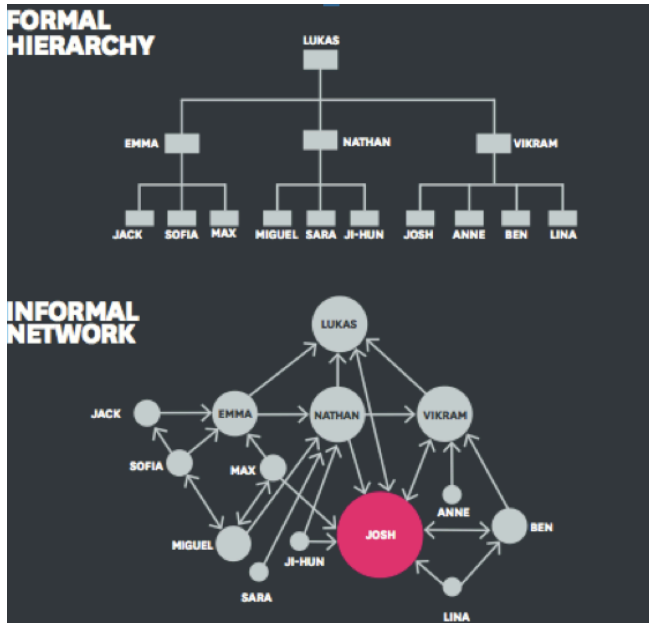
When B and C report to A it immediately creates internal competition between B and C for the attention of A. B and C also compete for resources, budgets, prestige, power and decisions that favour them. It increases politics, mistrust, fear and greed. It leads to silos that B and C build to protect themselves. This is unnecessary because, with training, most teams can self-manage. Chapter 10 has guidance on creating a self-sustaining system.

It is important to increase reciprocity. Remove buffers that make us self-sufficient. Excess resources only create dysfunctional self-sufficiency.

Reward those who cooperate. Blame those who do not cooperate. Blaming is not for failure, it is in failing to help or to ask for help.

Networks not organisation trees

Organisation Greatness is easier to see in a chart of the informal network than the formal organisation tree.



Many managers think they are managing a hierarchy (organisational tree) and act accordingly; but, many of the people who have critical process and delivery knowledge, and add the most value to the organisation are way down the organisational tree and not even known to the management team. In my experience, the informal connections made by your people are more important than the formal channels in getting the job done.

This is shown by Josh who is at the bottom of the organisation tree but central to the informal network.

Fix the workplace, not the work

Cracking Great Leaders make it easy for people to be successful. They never forget that it's their responsibility to create a great place to work.

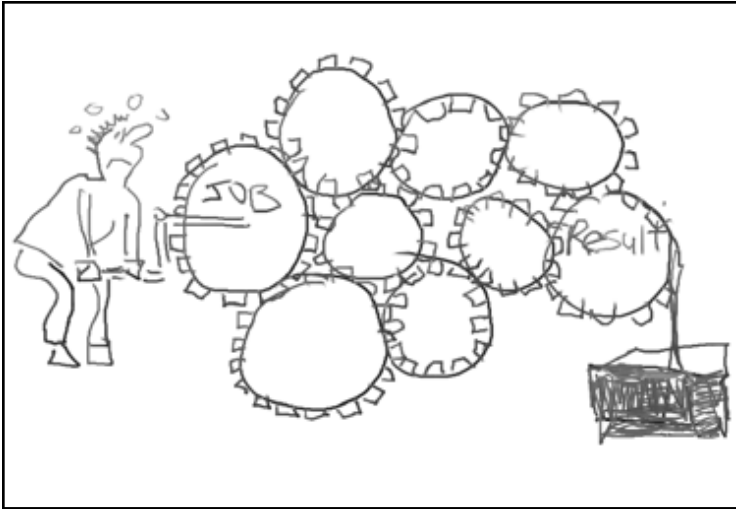
This is why they focus on the workplace not the work. They know that people thrive in workplaces that encourage connecting (reducing silos, increasing project teams), communication (up, down, across and outside), freedom and autonomy, movement (exercise, yoga, music) and creativity (all ideas are welcome), colour, fun and social events). Other managers tend to do the opposite. Peter Drucker said:

“So much of what we call management consists in making it difficult for people to work.”

Likewise, Edward Deming pointed out that managers usually focus on the wrong things:

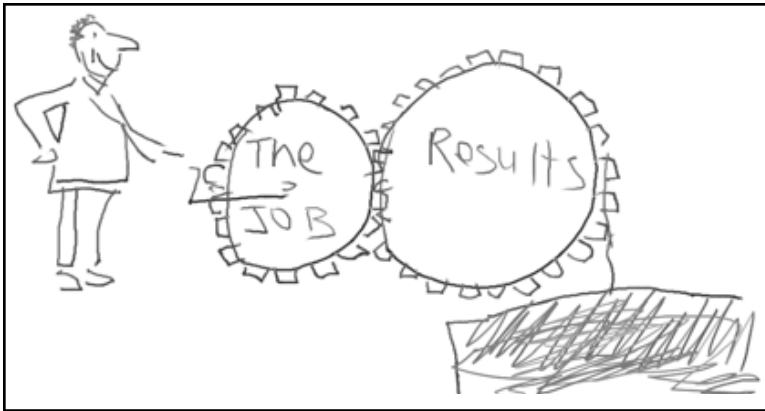
“Coming together is a beginning;
"I should estimate that in my experience most troubles and most possibilities for improvement add up to proportions something like this: 94% belong to the system (responsibility of management), 6% special.”

Cracking Great Leaders align systems and work processes so they assist people rather than hinder achievement. Too often organisations introduce systems and processes haphazardly. They pick up the latest fad. They introduce processes that benefit one part of the organisation but cause problems elsewhere. They introduce processes that they know worked well in their last organisation without understanding that the needs of this organisation are different.



And sometimes they introduce processes just to appear busy and to justify their position. Over time these processes make the organisation highly complicated, like the first drawing below, where people are busy but struggle to produce useful work.

Cracking Great Leaders know that removing even a small number of variable or rules in a process can have a dramatic and nonlinear affect in reducing the complexity of the process. The result is like the drawing below where people can produce useful work without unnecessary effort.



Create callings

Cracking Great Leaders know that everyone has a calling and they work to structure the organisation so, as people achieve their calling, the organisation also benefits. Other managers structure work into jobs.

In a job ‘we are defined by our boundaries.’ These are described in our job description, and the rules we agree to follow; both of which were written by someone else. In a calling ‘we are defined by our horizon.’ These are described by our dreams, our hopes and our purpose in life, creating something of meaning that endures after we have gone.

In a job ‘we play within boundaries’ and stay inside the fence. The best strategy for success is to stay put, to do our best, and to wait for our box to move up the chart. In a job, ‘fit in, even if it hurts.’ In a calling, ‘make waves, even if it hurts.’

In a calling ‘we play with boundaries.’ Move outside the fence. The best strategy is to step out, challenge the system and hope others catch up.

In a job the aim is to satisfy as many people as possible. In a calling the aim is to delight the people who care. People with callings don’t make everyone happy; otherwise they would be average.

In a job we compete with each other and we play to win. Defend the box, defend the system, and make sure you keep your guard up. In a calling anyone who is working broadly towards the same ends is a friend so we play to bring as many people onboard as possible. If we compete with anyone ‘we compete with ourselves.’

In a job it’s about ‘follow the leader.’ In a calling it’s about ‘be the leader.’

Many managers don’t believe that each of the people they manage has a calling. Yet, my work with hundreds of people, shows me that every one of them has a deeper purpose, a reason for being. It’s just that we don’t believe in ourselves enough to go looking for it and our managers don’t believe in us enough to encourage us to. Can you imagine a world where everyone used their genius to work on their calling? The answer is to parcel work into bigger pieces that are done by ‘whole-brained project teams’ working together with fewer boundaries and a bigger horizon than can ever be achieved using jobs. This is discussed more fully in the next section on using genius.

I predict that jobs will eventually disappear because people will want answers that jobs don’t usually provide; things like:

1. Will I experience joy in my work?
2. Will others experience joy as a result of my work?
3. How will my work connect to the great work of the universe?
4. What will I learn at work?
5. Will I become more energised each day?
6. What is sacred about the work I will do.

I've got just the job for you!

"I've got just the job for you! Come and join us," she said pointing to the organisation chart filled with boxes connected by lines. "It has a great salary and benefits." "But I'm a star!" he protested. "Stars don't fit into boxes; and if I did, you'd lose the pointy bits of me that shine brightest. For me, it's not so much 'what I get' as 'what I give' that matters. Also, my autonomy, ability to follow my passion and have more control over my destiny matters far more than money."

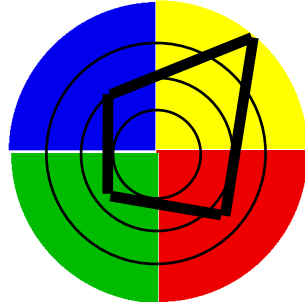
Organise Genius to work together

Cracking Great Leaders encourage their people to work close to their Greatness. They know that it is more productive, easier and cheaper to design positions to utilise the Greatness of their people than it is to find people that exactly match the requirements of a prescribed job. They focus on each person's strengths and manage around their limitations. They don't try to squeeze the person into a job; instead, they do everything they can to design work in larger project teams that helps each person use their talents and become more of who they already are.

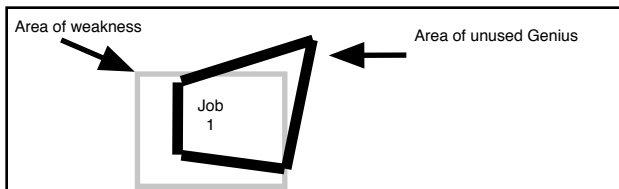
Cracking Great Leaders know that individuals can be extraordinarily clever in some areas and remarkably limited in others. They know one of the most important ways to improve the workplace is by recognising that we all have strengths and we all have limitations, and that our current practice of putting someone into a job and expecting them to excel in all aspects of the job (innovation, analysis, or-

organisation and relationships) is unrealistic and wasteful because it forces them to do things they are not good at and makes little use of things they are brilliant at.

For example, let's say someone has a Genius for creative thinking and a Herrmann profile like the chart on the right.



When we try to squeeze this person into a job it looks like the chart below. In the chart the job is represented as a box that clearly defines what the person can do and what they can't do.

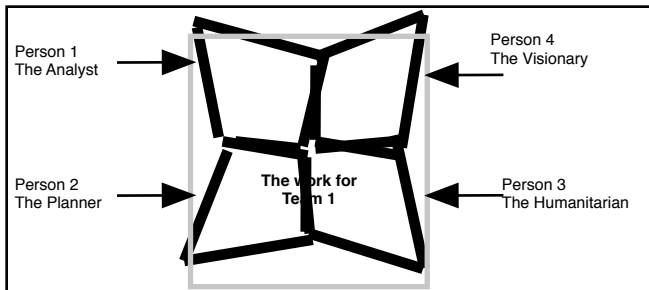


Inside the box is their responsibility; outside is not. They are not expected to go outside the box even if that's where their Genius would be most useful. In the chart the person is represented by the kite shape taken directly from their Herrmann chart above.

When we try to squeeze someone into a job there will always be lots of unused genius and other areas of the job where they don't have the skills to excel. If we squeeze this creative thinker into a box (job) they probably won't be able to fill it all. They will struggle with those parts of the job that require analysis, organising and relationships. And large parts of them will be wasted.

Instead, Cracking Great Leaders divide work into bigger pieces that are done by whole-brained project teams working together. By organising work into larger parcels, we can put whole-brained project teams to work with almost no wasted Genius and no areas of weakness. The

project team should contain people with a Genius for innovation, others with a Genius for analysis, others with a Genius for organising and others with a Genius in relationships. As shown below.



Just imagine a workplace where every person worked in areas that maximised their Greatness and teamed up with others who were strong in areas where they aren't. This is the vision I have: a team of people doing the same work overall but with everyone focused on doing the work that they do best.

The steps are:

1. Analyse the work to be done into larger parcels so it can be done by whole-brain project teams rather than individual jobs
2. Put together whole-brained project teams and allocate the larger parcels of work to the teams
3. Each person in the project team does more work in activities that make them strong
4. Each person in the project team does less work in activities that make them weak.

Create the perfect Leadership Team

Some leaders feel they have to transform themselves into a vision of perfection and they become disillusioned or angry at themselves when they fail, as they inevitably will.

Cracking Great Leaders know there is no such thing as a perfect leader, they know they have strengths and limita-

tions like everyone else; however, Cracking Great Leaders try to build a leadership team that provides near perfect leadership to their people.

I know a successful senior manager who has come up through the ranks based on his financial skills. He is relatively weak when it comes to people. He is not what most people would call a Buddha Hunter yet in many ways he is. He has very low turnover within his team and whenever they are surveyed, they are the most positive within the organisation. His success is his self awareness. He knows where he is strong and where he is weak. He is big enough to talk about this openly with his people. At their annual conference, when it comes to publicly recognising individuals for their achievements, he does not make the speech, his Personnel Manager does. He hands over the prize and shakes the hand. Some people would say that this is a copout. I don't think it is. What's more important, his people don't either. Everyone knows who insists that good performance is recognised.

Lessons:

1. Know your strengths
2. Know your limitations
3. Build a leadership team that uses your strengths and counters your limitations.

Use the frontline

One of the joys of my work is that I get to work with people right at the frontline of the organisation; often in gumboots and overalls, and often in large groups of 200 or more, using “Open Space Technology³¹”. Each time this has happened, I have been delighted by the contribution they have made to complex, strategic organisational thinking; and what is more important, the managers of these people were so surprised they could hardly believe what they were seeing.

Over the years there have been so many magical occasions that I have no doubt we have a wealth of untapped Greatness hidden beneath the mud. I'll share just one example to make the point.

In 2010 I worked with a small (30 person) food manufacturer on a program (based around 8 half-day workshops) designed to put the customer at the centre of the company and empower the people. It was not until the second workshop that I met Jerry (not his real name), because, during the first workshop, he was in court on some charge. Jerry was one of the scariest looking people I have ever worked with. Everything about his body language and the tattoos on his fingers and neck screamed, "Stay away, I'm dangerous!" When I saw Jerry I thought, "If we can make progress with this guy, the program will have been a success."

As the workshops progressed the trust levels increased and ever so slowly Jerry started to speak up. It turns out his father had been murdered, his brother had committed suicide by hanging himself and Jerry had been in trouble with the law nearly all of his life. By the end of the program this man had grown such that the owners of the company made him a supervisor of one of the production areas. Trapped within a rough and scary exterior was a man of enormous leadership potential. Cracking Great Leaders know about this potential and deliberately go about trying to discover it.

Jerry-type changes will not just happen on their own. Often people have a lifetime of put-downs to overcome before they start to believe in themselves again. They need to be reminded of their Greatness by someone who deeply believes that something inside them is special.

When Jerry-like changes start to occur, others in the group notice and confidence starts to reinforce itself throughout the whole front-line like a large flywheel on the move and almost anything is possible, including front-line decision making.

Frontline decision making


The reason for accessing the frontline is not just to liberate buried human spirit, even though this is worthwhile in its own right; it's to increase organisational speed, knowledge and flexibility, by pushing decision making down to the frontline where it can make a difference to the person being served.

At the food manufacturer, I worked with all 30 people to identify the 37 major decisions the company had to make, including: Hours worked, Pay rates, Overtime, Holidays, Clothing etiquette, Recognition, Discipline issues, Dismissal, Recruitment, Performance evaluation, Team leadership, Team conflict, Repairs and maintenance, Production scheduling, Production team make up, Selection of suppliers, Product reliability, Rework, Quality inspection, Process improvement, Safety equipment, and Safety inspection.

Then we analysed these 37 decisions into four categories:

1. Givens (Decision made by top managers and communicated to frontline)
2. Consult (Decision made by top managers but only after consultation)
3. Negotiate (Equal power, decisions made by negotiation)
4. Self-manage (Decision made by frontline and communicated to top managers).

At the start of the process almost all decisions were “givens,” made 100% by management. During the process managers and staff considered each decision and reconsidered who should make it. The objective was to make the organisation faster, more flexible and focused on the customer. We found that nearly all the decisions could be pushed down to the “self manage” category; one or two stayed in “consult” until people developed new skills, and a few went in to “negotiate.” At the end, the only thing left in “self-manage” was a new statement that said: “Set us up to succeed!”



“Set us
up to
succeed!”

So what were the advantages? Management won because they had more time to make the few, long-term strategic decisions that only management can make. Staff won because they saw that management was really serious about them and they became determined not to let this trust down. The customer won because everything sped up, while at the same time, quality increased. Win, win, win!

Establish a Creativity Process

Often organisations fail to innovate, first, because they don't discover the genius in their people; second, they don't organise this genius to work together and; third, they fail to adopt an end-to-end innovation process. An innovation process has three distinct phases and problems can be in any one: idea generation, idea conversion and idea diffusion.

Idea generation

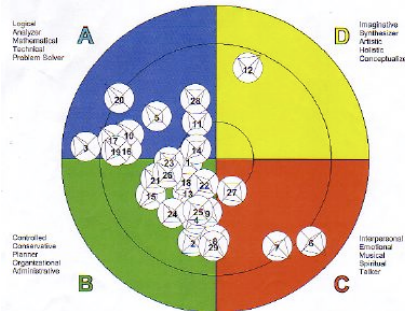
Most organisations are too left-brain, logical, rational and analytical. While this is necessary it is insufficient be-

cause to be strong, they need to use both left and right-brain, ‘this-and-that’ not ‘either-or’, embrace ambiguity, see patterns that others miss and live with complexity.

When I first went consulting in 1992 the company I established had a modified Yin Yang sign as its logo. This was intended to show that left *and* right brained approaches are necessary in business. The Yin Yang was modified into two kiwis cuddled up together with the slogan: “Together Kiwis Can Do Anything.”



Innovation usually emerges when diverse people collaborate. Thankfully we already have the tool to create diversity, it is called Herrmann’s Brain Dominance Instrument. For example the left-brain organisation shown in the following HBDI chart would struggle to generate ideas.



Cracking Great Leaders know the rewards for developing creativity are enormous and can be developed surprisingly easily with deliberate techniques. Things to encourage include exploring, brainstorming, music, colour, seating arrangements (circles nearly always work best), secondment, meditation, relaxation, and laughter. Often other managers discourage these.

Idea conversion

If ideas are not being converted into services it is often because management is too left-brained (can't generate the ideas) or too right-brained (can't apply the ideas). We need managers who can flex between left and right-brained approaches as required.

One of my clients is run by a highly innovative man who has gathered around him a top team of similar people. Their problem is too many ideas and too few stick because the top team gets bored before the ideas are converted into anything workable. People underneath them just raise their eyebrows as just another madcap idea that will go nowhere.

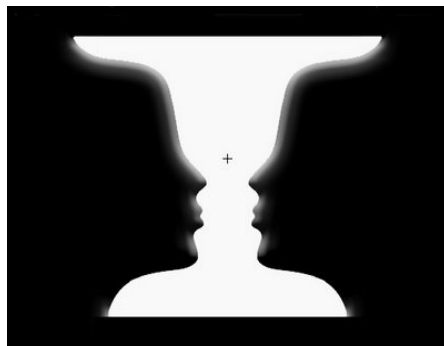
Sometimes conversion is limited by lack of budgets for product development, or funding criteria that are too strict. Other times ideas go nowhere because they languish in a part of the organisation that is too busy doing other things, or fail to see the potential or suffer from the 'not invented here syndrome'. Mostly the problem is lack of good processes for screening and developing ideas into products and management commitment to apply the ideas.

Idea diffusion

Even when the idea has been converted into a product or service, poor diffusion can mean that the organisation is too slow or can't capitalise on the innovation before others catch up.

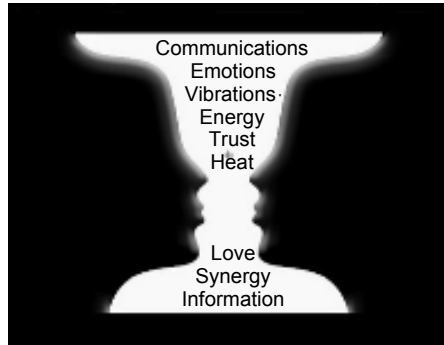
Connect more people

Cracking Great Leaders know that we are all part of the whole and the space between individuals is



largely an illusion.

Other managers spend most of their time focused on the individuals within their organisation (Peter, John and Mary). In the chart to the right they would look at separation and see the two faces.



Cracking Great Leaders know that there is no space in between people. Instead of seeing emptiness between people, they see energy fields of emotions, heat, vibrations, trust, information, communication, synergy and love.

Physicists used to see their science as the study of physical materials like solids, liquids and gases. They are now starting to see it as the study of how things are organised and relate to each other. In business, we need to see leadership as the study of how people are organised and relate to each other.

Most managers spend significant time and money selecting good people into the organisation without thinking much about the system these people are going to work in. There is no doubt that people behave according to the system they are placed in; therefore, it would be more advantageous if the managers spent more time and money designing the system into which the people are placed.

Ordinary people in a great system can produce outstanding results. Great people in a poor system quickly become angry, frustrated and leave. If your people are behaving badly maybe you should look at your system because the chances are they are behaving like the system (the organisation's culture) says they should.

In my workshops, often people don't believe they act according to what the system wants them to do. I use a simple exercise to help people see the truth in what I'm

saying. A small group of people are instructed to lower a hula-hoop, each using only one finger. Although they all know the objective (to lower the hula-hoop), and they all try to achieve the objective, the hula-hoop inevitably rises. It's just part of the hula-hoop system.

Silos to Beanbags

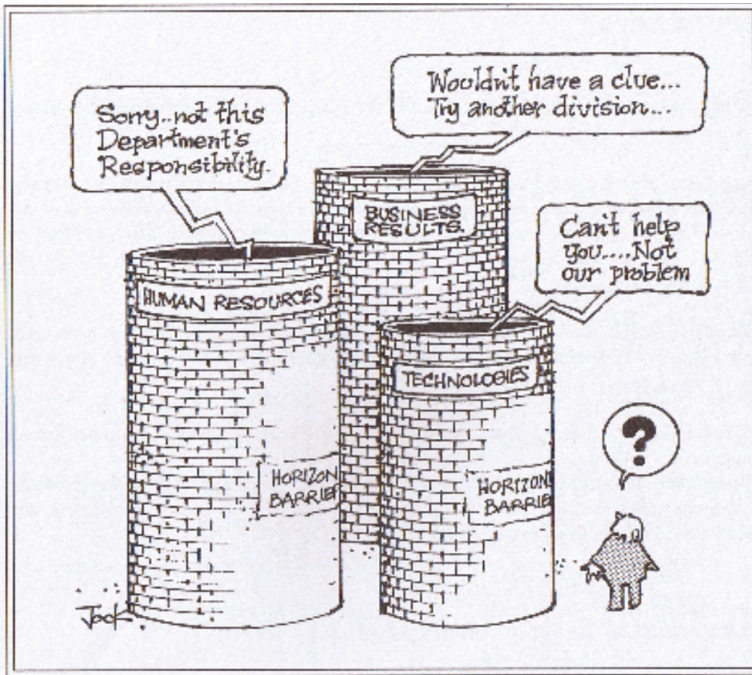
A Cracking Great leader has a totally different picture of how the business is organised and people relate to each other. Where other managers see silos Cracking Great Leaders see beanbags.

When I talk about beanbags, I have in mind 'a way of thinking' more than an actual organisational structure. I think silos are one of the worst aspects of business, but they are mostly "silos of the mind," the result of separation thinking (ego, fear and separation) more than structural issues.

Cracking Great Leaders know that silos are the biggest universal problem facing large organisations and they deliberately work at breaking them down and opening the organisation so it delivers seamless service.

Silos are nothing more than the barriers that separate departments within an organisation. They cause people who are supposed to be on the same team to work against each other, paralysing performance. These factions breed office politics and infighting that cause stress, exasperation and ultimately kills productivity and human energy. Where silos are strong I find infighting occurs to a high level and attention shifts drastically inward, away from issues affecting the people they serve and outcomes, toward battles over budgets, titles and responsibility for mistakes.

At the organisational level they separate work teams, departments and divisions. Silos make managers eager to defend their power, hoard capital and talent even when those resources could be better used elsewhere. Battles occur between the headquarters and the field office, between marketing and engineering. Even within engineering, re-



searchers and developers can be at war over who warrants more head count, budget dollars, and recognition for the success of products. All this is the opposite of releasing human energy.

When I speak about these issues people often assume I am about to recommend a restructure. Occasionally a restructure is necessary; however, I think managers focus too quickly on structural changes. Far more can be achieved by getting the culture right. This is a hard message to sell, even to good leaders. There seems to be an almost irresistible urge for a new boss to make a mark by reorganising.

Beanbag organisations are different from silos. Like a beanbag these organisations have porous, flexible walls; rather than the thick, impervious, solid walls of silo-like organisations. Like a beanbag these organisations fit exactly to their environment, no matter how much it changes;

unlike the silo which is inflexible and slow to move. Like a beanbag the individuals inside are free to move far more easily to whatever shape their environment becomes. They can easily move to where they can add the most value to the person being served, unlike silos where people are fixed in jobs and silos of power.



Most importantly, beanbags, like all complex adaptive systems, can emerge into systems that self-organise and take on all the characteristics of a living entity. This is quite different from silos or hierarchies that are deliberately designed to reduce variation and restrict self-organisation of change in favour of control and topdown, linear, no choices-allowed, power-based, mechanical change and processes.

A beanbag experiment

At a seminar on connectedness I randomly split the 60 participants into two groups.

The first group were asked to demonstrate what it is like to work in a silo. In their demonstration they were only allowed to use their bodies and were not allowed to talk. They formed into 5 small groups. In each group people stood in a circle without touching the next person. They all faced inwards with their backs to the other circles. Everyone was serious and static. The only movement occurred when occasionally a member of one circle reached out to pass some imaginary object to another circle.

The second group used their bodies to demonstrate what it would be like to work in a beanbag. They formed one big circle, with each person holding hands with the next person. Almost immediately and quite naturally the circle started to move, it surged in and around so that people changed position and everyone became all mixed up. Although it looked fairly chaotic there was also a sense of

pattern about it. There was an energy that simply did not exist within the silo. People laughed and smiled, they clearly enjoyed the experience.

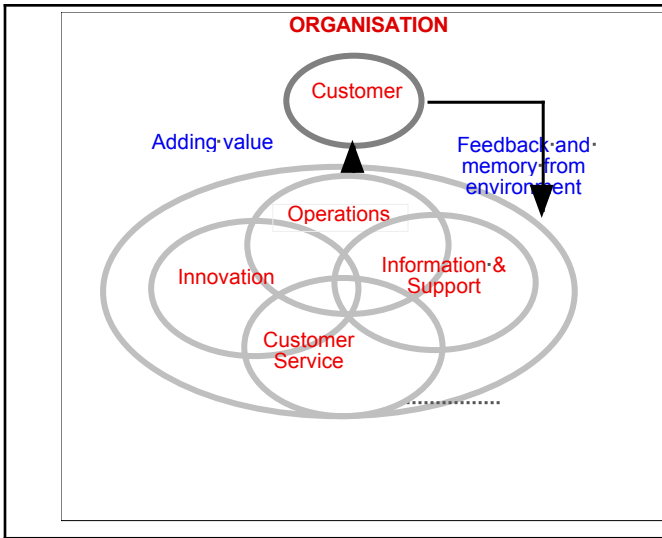
I think this is really important because if a people has a silo in mind they do certain things and if they have a beanbag in mind they do quite different things. And, if people are given permission to be a beanbag they will.

I love the cartoon below. It shows so clearly what happens when you remove the walls that separate people and allow them to connect. The frustration, anger and rage disappears. People can see the whole picture and get on with the work.

Walk into a silo and you walk into a dim, hushed, compartmentalised space. Immediately, you sense the heaviness, deadness and lack of energy, creativity and fun. They have thick impervious walls and little contact except at the highest level. Walk into a beanbag and you walk into an open, busy, highly energetic space where creativity and fun abound. Immediately, you pick up the energy and start to operate in the same way.

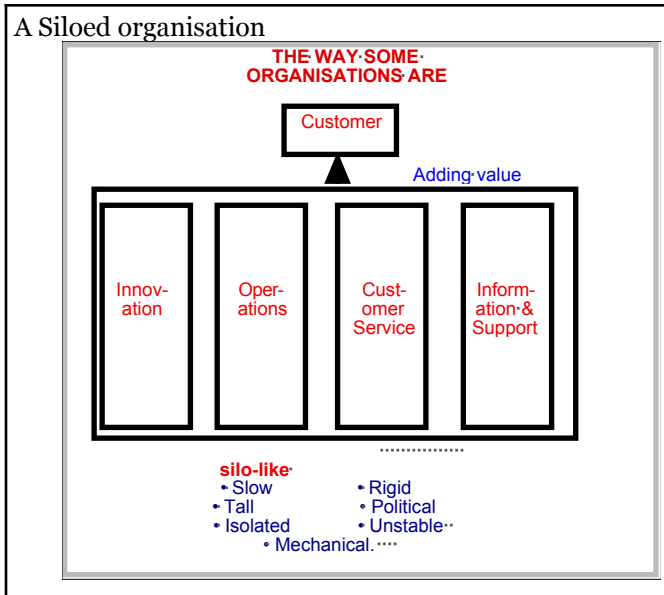
Beanbags focus on connectivity. They become a network of places, both physical and virtual, where staff can connect with each other and with people being served, suppliers and other external organisations.

Diagrammatically a beanbag looks like the chart below. It has open, porous, flexible walls that overlap and allow information, people and other resources to flow freely between centres of knowledge (operations, innovation, information and service delivery). It has a well developed feedback loop to the customer or people being served.



Can you see how this looks like a living cell? The membrane around every living cell is neither solid nor water? Rather it is a delicate balance between solid and water. It's just solid enough to hold some sort of form and liquid enough to allow movement in and out of the cell so the cell can interact with its environment. This is the image we need for business, just solid enough to give some sort of form/meaning and open enough to its environment to allow movement (of people, ideas and information) in and out.

Silos are closed and have thick impervious walls that stop people and information flowing freely. Beanbags have policies and processes to encourage information sharing because it's impossible to develop collaborative relationships with others without sharing critical information with those who need it to make key decisions. Beanbags look quite different from the typical siloed organisation that is shown below.



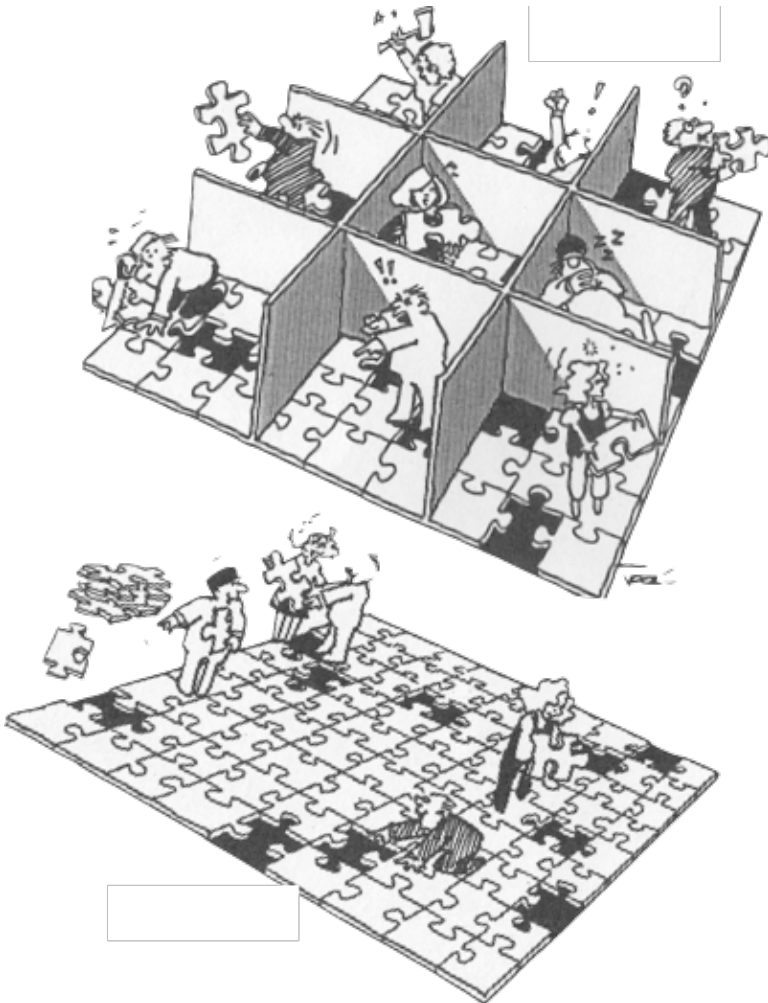
I was talking about these issues with my colleague Kris Coppieters and he said, "You are talking about the difference between Lego and Play-dough." I liked this image, not lots of bits clicked together, but an indivisible whole, constantly changing shape but with an integrity of its own.

How to create beanbags

Sometimes silos are designed formally; but, in most situations, silos rise up not because of what executives are doing purposefully, but rather because of what they are failing to do.

Silo managers fail to:

1. Encourage active relationships between key individuals across boundaries
2. Encourage joint visions, strategies and projects across boundaries
3. Measure success of strategic partnerships



4. Provide themselves and their employees with a compelling context for working together.

Without this leadership and role modelling, employees at all levels easily lose their way. Even the most well-meaning, intelligent people get distracted and confused. On the other hand when managers do these things beanbag qualities tend to emerge naturally.

Silos are mostly "silos of the mind," the result of separation thinking (ego, fear and separation) more than structural issues.

Become lifelong students of leadership

Cracking Great Leaders know that leadership is about some simple things like self-knowledge and self-mastery that are devilishly difficult to do consistently well, therefore, they see themselves as students of leadership on a lifelong journey towards mastery. I love the following story:

Cracking Great leadership is the same. It's a lifelong journey to understand and practice some really simple ideas that are devilishly difficult to apply. These are things like knowing yourself, knowing other people and constantly feeding your good dog.