Visualizing Change
in Organizational Arenas

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Visualizing Change

Research Background: The Expert Project

Visualizing Change

Difference: Social Worlds

Visual Representation of Arenas

Organizations as Signs

25.02.2004 - v4
Research Background: The Expert Project

Ordered by BiBB
Type of Consultant
Erich Latniak,
Christa Eberle
Ulrich Mill

Visualizing Change
Difference: Social Worlds
Visual Representation of Arenas
Organizations as Signs
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expert 1</th>
<th>Expert 2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Erich Latniak, Christa Eberle</strong>&lt;br&gt;21 interviews with&lt;br&gt;- Consultants&lt;br&gt;- Internal organizational developers&lt;br&gt;- TBS-Consultants&lt;br&gt;- Vocational Training Institutes</td>
<td><strong>Ulrich Mill</strong>&lt;br&gt;6 case studies&lt;br&gt;- 3 SMEs&lt;br&gt;- 3 Corporations&lt;br&gt;- Production&lt;br&gt;- Energy economy&lt;br&gt;- Group interviews&lt;br&gt;- Personal interviews with consultants</td>
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<td>Report to BiBB</td>
<td>Report to BiBB&lt;br&gt;<strong>Second look:</strong>&lt;br&gt;1. Social world perspective&lt;br&gt;2. Semiotics</td>
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Visualizing Change

An Image of Change
- A Standard!
- Why Visualization?
- Role of Visualization?
“What I still see in front of me (...) – the change event had been performed in a sports hall – and I still see hundreds of charts and pin boards hanging there with: Where are we good already and where is there still need of improvements, which then in the end had been doted by all participants there. There were hanging then also thousands of dots probably and from this then emerged the things, which Ms. F. did mention already.”
Visualizing Change

“And today, in the conversation with you, we talked precisely about these three respects. So – in the project team we would of course do it with Metaplan in a more structured way – and here we have a tape recorder, and (...) we will receive a result somehow.”

(Head of the department organizational development, TRACTOR, group interview_§ 508)

A Standard!

“But if you have to carry your own pinboard to the factory, than … all is there not so carried through. (...) You really have to include the environment conditions. It is deep Bavarian forest and these are [just; UM] trained housewives. They are not used to it....

(Consultant, FRAME case, personal interview_§§ 81, 83)
Visualizing Change

*Why* does visualization play such an important role in processes of organizational change and involvement of consultants and *which* role does it play?
Difference: Social Worlds
Social Worlds

<table>
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<th>Shibutani, 1955:</th>
<th>Limits of effective communication</th>
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<td>Strauss, 1978:</td>
<td>Evident primary activity</td>
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<td>Activity sites</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Technology</td>
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<td>Organization</td>
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Social worlds at SPARK

We... the department for vocational training
the SPARK factory site Death City
the vocational trainers at SPARK
factory site Death City
as apprentices

I... am an apprentice industrial
electronician
am trainer in metal working

They... the industrial mechanics
from the group of supervisors
from the group of young skilled
workers
Social Worlds at ENERGY.COM

“Always heard: they get paid better and feel like better people. And at the electricity supply system side they recognize the same.” (Group interview, ENERGY.COM, § 45)

They: Department for electricity supply
We: Department for gas and water supply
Visual Representation of Arenas
Arenas

“The concept of arena will refer here to interaction by social worlds around issues” (Strauss, 1993, p. 226)

• Issue identification:
  - What is first: Problem or solution?
• Representation of social worlds in arenas
Background of visualized discussion methods

- The 60th
- Social movements
- Planning euphoria
- Participation
- Metaplan/ Neuland

Image from www.metaplan.com
Articulation

“Articulation stands for the coordination of lines of work. This is accomplished by means of the interactional process of working out and carrying through of work-related arrangements.” (Strauss, 1993, p. 87)

- Articulation process
- Articulation work
- Invisibility     Creating dialogs
Charts that serve many

Change Event at SPARK

- **Summarize the discussion of a subgroup**
  - Audience: the subgroup
  - Composition: Maximum diversity

- **Representation of this discussion**
  - Audience: the hole group

- **Part of the documentation**
  - Audience: Management, steering team
Control

- Moderation
- Stay in the frame
- Schedule
- Deliverables
  
  Visual representation of project progress

- Power at the backstage
Organizations as Signs

- Research Background: The Expert Project
- Visualizing Change
- Difference: Social Worlds
- Visual Representation of Semes

- New Definition of SI
- Semiotic Definition of Organizations
- Final Interpretant
- Semiotics and Social World Perspective are very well worth considering
New Definition of SI

• Social interaction between signs (E. Houlton)
Semiotic Definition of Organizations

• Organizations are signs, which are valid because of contracts
• These signs signify men, things & procedures
• Several types of signs
• Net of interpretants
  ➢ Legitimate interpretants
  ➢ Working interpretants
  ➢ Hidden interpretants
Semiotic Definition of Organizations

- Social worlds
- Semiotic division of work
- Relations of power
Final Interpretant

- Negotiated order (Strauss)
- Institutionalization (Mead & Peirce)
  - Social objects & Generalized others (Mead)
  - Habits (Peirce)

Organizational Change

- The sign-process (semiosis) starts again
- As a semiotic drama
  Visual representation
Concluding Remarks

A marriage of

the semiotics of pragmatism
&
the social world perspective

may result in a healthy offspring
in the field of organizational analysis
and even consulting