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Impact of Organisation Ontology

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Context

We find ourselves at a unique point in history. A moment in time when new technologies are emerging at an unprecedented pace, governance and regulation becoming more rigorous, and sustainability action taking priority to tackle climate change. Between various financial crises, a global pandemic health crisis, energy crisis, and continued armed conflict and seemingly further more challenges around the corner. As the various crises overlap and reinforce each other, humanity has sensed the massive 'polycrises'.

Global risk landscape: An interconnected map:
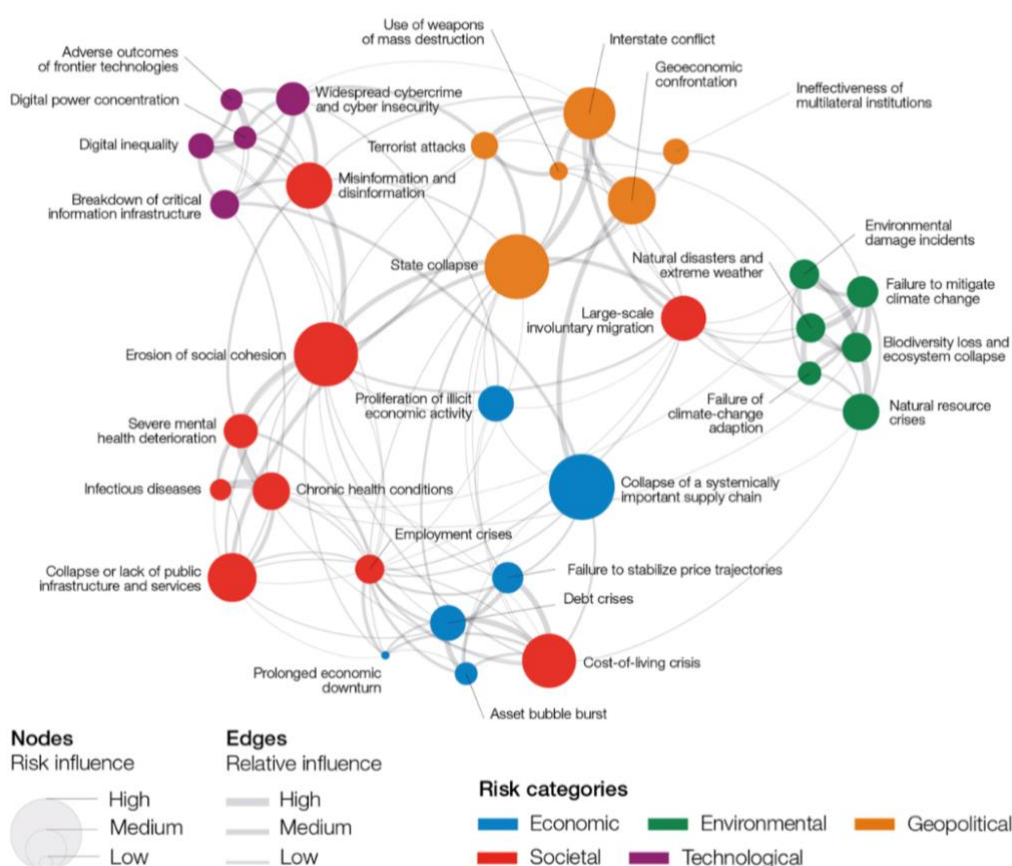
Source: Global Risks Report 2023. World Economic Forum, Global Risks Perception Survey 2022-2023[1]

Evolutionary history teaches us that human-beings often use painful experiences of crises to evolve to a new level. So far, more complex challenges always led to new solutions sooner or later.
To move forward, we need courage to experiment with new cognitive and psychological perspectives. People have to let go of old certainties and be ready to fail and learn, before they develop a new way of thinking and can evolve further. At each stage of evolution, humanity has grown in consciousness and then lives according to a new worldview.

To master the biggest challenge humanity ever faced, the current massive polycrises, it looks like the next evolutionary leap is necessary. We can only collectively navigate through such a complex megachallenge. Business leaders, politicians and environmental activist all need to be open to think differently. Latest during the pandemic everyone understood that economy, society and environment are not separate systems, but one interdependent ecosystem.

The Role of Business Organisations to Master the Polycrises

The true strength of organisations is, that they can lift groups of people to punch above their weight, to achieve outcomes they could not have achieved on their own.

Business Organisations will play a major role in the next evolution leap of Humanity. They are very powerful institutions, which normally have the necessary resources and the structures, often even across country borders, to make a difference in a big way. The collective intelligence of alliances of organisations around the world will be necessary to shape a sustainable future and create common wealth. Historically, the word corporation comes from the latin "corporare" - meaning "to combine in one body". Our first recorded example of a legal entity by the Ancient Romans, who created an entity, separate to a person, to manage funds to service the needs of the public. At its core, the purpose of the business corporation is to serve the needs of the public, and leaders are inevitably responsible for the further development of themselves and their organisation to secure their future and quality of life.

Operating System Model: Impact of Organisation Ontology

At the base of our micro- and macro- cultures, as individuals, and as organised collectives of human-beings, there are core system agreements that are automatically, consistently and continuously fulfilled. These fundamental life operating principles, is the set of ideas and practices about what the basic constituents of the world are, and the relationships between the different things that the world is made of. The organism's ontology, or way-of-being, is often described as an Operating System.

To forge new ways of economic engagement, and a mechanism for these new ways of thinking to take traction, Otto Scharmer, and his colleagues at MIT, noted frameworks to link variables, or 'leverage points'. Scharmer, et al. developed existing models, rooted in economic focused organisational structures, to incorporate a health medical systems approach to frame the health of a business organisation, proposed in "Theory U"[2][3]. This approach moves focus directed towards factors that cause diseases (*pathogenesis*), to the origins of health and disease (*salutogenesis*).

4 Operating Systems (OS) were noted as:

- OS 1.0 - Input driven
- OS 2.0 - Efficiency driven
- OS 3.0 - Stakeholder driven
- OS 4.0 - Ecosystem driven

Each stage of an Operating System represents a different evolutionary stage of an organisation. There is nothing inherently "better" or "worse" about each OS level. Each Operating System has its own advantages and disadvantages. The relevant question is whether that stage of evolution of an organisation is an appropriate fit for the task at hand.

Organisations as Sustainable Systems

When we examine the average life-span of companies listed in the US stock index S&P 500, we discover a clear trend. The average tenure significantly decreased from 36 years in 1980 to 21 years in 2020. The prediction even is, that company longevity will be down to 16 years in 2027[4]. It seems that many companies lack the ability to master the coming mega-challenges. In McKinsey's "The State of Organizations 2023" survey only 5% of respondents say their organisations already have the capabilities that they need.[5]

Change is a constant, and an organisations agility and adaptability ensures that the organisation is evolving and co-evolving with their ecosystem, partners and predators. With the current polycrises of challenges, leaders will be required to transform and evolve the operating system of their organisations in order to sustain its existence.

Organisations are dynamic systems that run in complex environments and need to react to changes, by increasing its self-awareness and its ability to transform and adapt. Failure to adapt can lead to

disruption. Adaptation mechanisms need to consider the wholeness of the organisation to maintain its viability and performance. When an organisation encounters obstacles to grow further, it either evolves to the next higher operating system and overcomes the limiting challenges, or it starts to disintegrate over time.

The more the organisation evolves their capabilities to master complex challenges, to make smart decisions without unwanted side effects and to use collective intelligence across the entire business alliance for joint innovations, the more it is prepared for successfully navigating the current and future turbulences and use them as growth opportunities, at the same time.

As Scharmer noted that "the capacity to lead transformative change, by shifting the level of operating from 1.0 and 2.0 to 3.0 and 4.0" by developing (both individual and collective) self-awareness, accessing curiosity, compassion and courage, deepening our listening capacities, shifting governance models from centralised towards ecosystemic, operating from the whole, and learning to hold space.

The Torrey Project[6] analysed the long-term stock price of companies, comparing the S&P 500 average, to ethical and stakeholder-focused capitalism approaches.
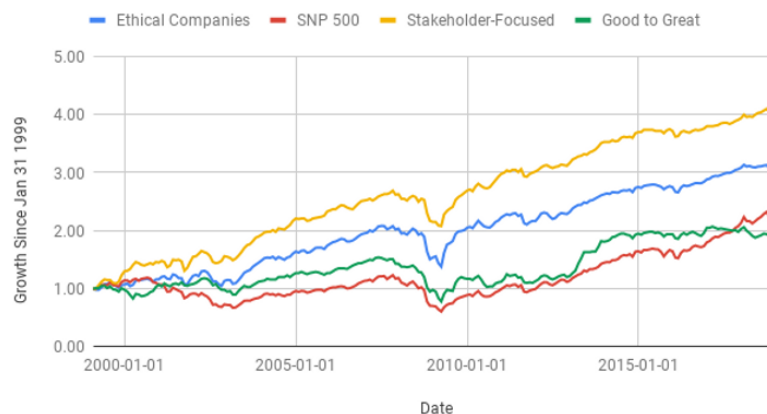
Source: Torrey Project, 2022[5]

Scharmer's theoretical framework can be applied to the Torrey Project analysis, assigning Operating System levels OS 2.0 to businesses following Jim Collins' "Good to Great" philosophy, and OS 3.0 Raj Sisodia's stakeholder-focused "Firms of Endearment" and Ethisphere's 2019 "Most Ethical Companies."

As OS 4.0 ecosystem-driven organisations are a young and rare species, there is currently insufficient data available to analyse long-term application. OS 4.0 could be paired with the "teal" level of Frederic Laloux's "Reinventing Organizations"[7], described as an organisation operating from wholeness", where a workers "self-awareness" precedes their professional persona, and on an "evolutionary purpose", viewing an organisation is similar to a biological organism.

The above findings strongly indicate that longevity and performance are correlated to the operating system of an organisation. But what is the most effective way to upgrade an operating system?

Transformation of Consciousness: From theory to practice

In order to assist leaders and organisations along a path of evolution and growth, the theoretical framework of effective, sustainable structure of organisms requires a practical application. By identifying layers of expression of the human consciousness, the Conscious Leadership Academy developed a roadmap for organisations to, first, understand their current Operating System, extract key areas of focus necessary for the preservation of the organisation, and engage organisations in various segmentations to transform the cumulative consciousness of the organisation.

The six domains of Expressed Consciousness seen through a four stage Operating System model provides a utilitarian matrix for an organisation's way-of-being.

6 Expressed Consciousness Domains are:

- Consciousness – expressed worldview
- Communication – knowledge/information shared
- Collaboration – touchpoints
- Contribution – impact/influences
- Innovation – growth/evolution
- Governance – direction/management
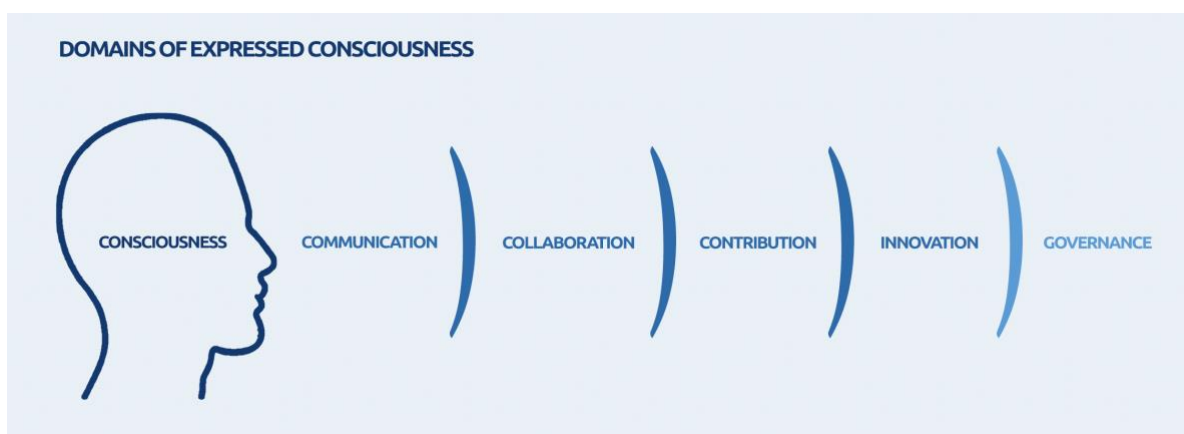
Source: Conscious Leadership Academy, 2023

Underpinned by the context of an organisation's Consciousness, the inner state in which workers experience and navigate the content domains of Communication, Collaboration, Innovation and Governance, ultimately Contributes to the success or failure of an organisation, in the same way that the inner state of a human-being determines how one can wield a hammer. In furious rage the hammer (tool) could be used to destroy, and in a creative state that tool could be used to build. The outcome has less to do with the tool itself, but rather with the inner state from which people operate.

Engaging at the level of Consciousness is the most effective catalyst for systemic transformation, clarifying and aligning purpose to vision, and reshaping the experience of reality.

Finding an effective starting point for growth would be to ascertain the current standing of an organisation.

Organisation Operating System Assessment

As every human-being is unique, so too is every organisation, occupying its own space and time, challenges, opportunities, internal and external dynamics. The Organisation Operating System Assessment provides an understanding of the current workable and unworkable variables experiences at all available cross-sections of an organisation, i.e: business units, departments, teams, professional communities, demographics, etc.

Once blind spots have been detected and an awareness of the organisation's belief, attitude, thought and behaviour patterns brought to light, only then can an organisation grow beyond limiting subconscious autopilot reactions, and enhance constructive conscious responses. Measured on the Organisation Operating System Matrix, result reports, development step recommendations and training, is custom developed and presented for each organisation's ontology. The operational assessment of the organisation immediately empowers people to start the transformation with a generative dialogue by asking the crucial questions that have never been asked before.

About the Conscious Leadership Academy

The Conscious Leadership Academy was created to impact purpose-driven, vision-focused leadership and organisations to produce breakthroughs in their way-of-being in order to sustain and achieve a life experience that is extraordinary, outside of what's predictable.

Assessment and training methodologies have been meticulously designed to avail new thinking and action beyond existing views and limits. Developed with models of transformative learning that provides an awareness of the structures in which we know, think, and act. From this awareness comes a fundamental shift that aligns people with their own possibilities and those of others.

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