

A Constructive Confrontation Approach to Managing Organizational Culture

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Abstract The goal of this paper is to present the constructive confrontation approach to management of organizational culture. The approach provides for transformation of confrontation caused by differences between the new values of a declared organizational culture and the current values of employees in constructive process. Constructive confrontation allows for the concentration of energies and capacities of employees induced by confrontation in their productive adoption of new organizational cultural values. The approach development intends planning of organizational cultural change, and managing the adoption of new organizational cultural values by employees. Planning involves: building a structure of desired organizational values, setting the order of adoption of the new values, and determination of interrelated actions of employees generated by the new organizational values in accordance to the set order. Managing the adoption of new values involves forming a dynamic managerial team, receiving feedback on value adoption as a result of determining value adoption measure, and responding to feedback through complex and flexible use of the constructive confrontation tools.

Keywords: *constructive confrontation management, organizational culture change*

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1. Introduction

Attaining desired results in an organization requires changing its culture, which determines the way employees think and act [1]. Organizational culture has the following levels: shared assumptions, cultural values, and cultural symbols [2,3,4]. The values represent a central level of organizational culture [5,6,7]. They are based on shared assumptions, cause shared behaviors, and serve as the standards shaping organizational behavior [8,9]. "Values can be discussed in terms of content and process. Content concerns what values people hold. Process concerns how values impact choice and behavior" [8]. Therefore, a top-priority challenge of organizational culture change is changing cultural values [10,11].

The organizational culture's values are implicit essences of organization and cannot be directly manipulated [6]. These values are constituted by the shared cultural values of employees. The individual values guide behavioral actions of employees. Such actions characterize the manner of work performance. Changing organizational culture values consists in removal of the unproductive organizational values, determination of the new values, and the adoption of the new values by employees. The new organizational values have been adopted by employees if their behavioral actions correspond to these values.

Most of the strategies for organizational culture change revolve around how to manage changes in employees' behavior [2,9]. Management of changing organizational culture values should involve two stages: planning for the change of cultural values, and management of adopting the new cultural values by employees. At the first stage, the new results to be achieved by an organization are stated, actions of employees providing attainment of the results are determined, the new organizational values guiding employees' actions are identified, and experiences presenting behavioral patterns that instill in employees the new organizational values are formed [1]. An experience determines some new situation in an organization [12]. At the second stage, management of the adoption of the organizational cultural values by employees is realized by a manager of an organization and a dynamic managerial team. The team members serve as change agents [6,10,13]. It leads to change in individual values.

The need for the new behavioral actions corresponding to the new organizational values engenders employees' resistance to change [14,15,16,17] and provokes confrontation between the new organizational values and the current employee values. Value confrontation creates an obstacle in moving the individual cultural values towards the new organizational values. Management of the adoption of the new organizational values by employees should provide elimination of the obstacle. It can be attained by creating and sustaining constructive confrontation. In present explorations, constructive confrontation is represented by different confrontational

styles and serves as an approach to decreasing conflicts during the interaction between the managerial team and employees. It fosters empowerment, recognition, and accountability in an organization [18,19,20,21]. The goal of this paper is to present a constructive confrontation approach to management of organizational culture, thus providing for the productive adoption of new organizational values by employees.

2. Literature Review

Research leading to the attainment of the aforementioned goal of this paper is examined. It involves: developing, changing, and managing organizational culture, and creating and sustaining constructive confrontation in an organization.

Kraemer [22] defined the principles of values-based leadership. The principles outline leaders' ability for self-assessment, self-confidence, system analysis of different situations, and respectful attitudes towards the staff of an organization. The author was allowed to determine the essential elements of a values-based organization.

Keyton [9] affirms that an organizational culture emerges from the communication among members of an organization. The author ascertains the role of communication in developing, managing, and changing organizational culture.

Rhoades, Covey and Stephenson [23] described a process of changing organizational culture values involving determination of the desired values, and development and implementation of a plan for changing employee behaviors based on these values. They assert that the most critical element of changing organizational values is helping employees adopt the behaviors corresponding to desired values by inspiring and rewarding them.

Cameron and Quinn [6] presented a strategy for changing organizational culture and personal behavior. A step-by-step process is represented for realization of the strategy. The authors emphasize the need for and the possibility of investigating organizational cultural change by means of quantitative methods.

Connors and Smith [1] created the Result Pyramid Model, shaping the culture change process for attaining the desired organizational results. The authors developed a strategy of conducting organizational culture change based on the model. At first, the strengths and weaknesses of the existence organizational culture are revealed. Next, the experiences, beliefs, and actions corresponding to a new organizational culture are determined. The new culture should provide the opportunity to attain the desired results. Finally, the new culture is integrated into the existing organizational system and processes by using the created tools.

Yauch and Steudel [24] examined the qualitative and the quantitative approaches to assessment of organizational culture. It allowed development of a mixed qualitative-quantitative approach to assessing culture.

Hultman [8] offered criteria for assessing values, value assessment tools, and the motivational model that allows one to change personal, interpersonal, team, and organizational behavior. The author examined the balance

between individual and organizational values, and explained how to develop and implement values.

Schabracq [10] created an organizational culture change model combining functional and structural approaches. The functional approach allowed for understanding of cultural functions and what can be attained by the culture. The structural approach deals with relationships among the layers of organizational culture. The author asserts that the need for balance between an organization and its employees should be provided by change agents realizing joint optimization of outcomes for an organization and for its employees.

O'Reilly et al. [7] described the method of calculation of conformity between personal and organizational culture by comparing the organizational values profile with the individual preferences profile.

Endsley and Garland [12] suggested using situation awareness analysis for management of the employee behavior during adoption of the desired organizational values.

Schein [25] developed a conceptual model for managed culture change based on the analysis of the psychosocial dynamics of organizational change. The author presented a mechanism for culture assessment.

Schwartz [26] specified different types of values and the dynamic relations among them. He determined a dynamic structure of values, which is built owing to analysis of the probability of conflict or compatibility between each pair of value types.

Hellriegel and Slocum [2] examined confrontation as a cultural value, providing deeper analysis of interpersonal problems. Burgess and Burgess [18] suggested a constructive confrontation strategy for resolution of intractable conflicts. Magee [21] defined the skills needed for guiding conflicts through positive confrontation. Hoover and Disilvestro [20] presented the constructive confrontation approach to decreasing conflict and increasing accountability.

Essawi [27] created the structured dynamic value confrontation leadership model, shaping the leadership process of changing organizational culture while aimed at engendering constructive confrontation between desired organizational values and current employee values. *Dynamics of the model* express dynamics of the leadership process. Structure of the model sets interconnections of its components: Lead, Confront, Enable, and Result.

The analysis of the above publications shows that the authors do not attempt to create an approach to management of employees' behavior directed towards effective adoption of desired organizational values. The suggested value structure does not take into account the interrelations among the values that determine the logical order of value adoption. A mechanism of embedding the new organizational values in an existing set of values has not been built. A quantitative measure, which would allow assessment of adoption of the organizational values by employees has not been introduced. Coordination of composition of the managerial team to the process of adopting the values by employees has not been provided. A mean allowing for decreased resistance of employees to adopting the values has not been represented. Management of adoption of organizational values by employees based on measurable results through complex

use of the constructive confrontation tools has not been developed.

Hence, development of a new constructive confrontation approach to management of organizational culture change is needed. The approach should shape management of the dynamic process of organizational values adoption by employees.

3. Constructive Confrontational Management of Organizational Culture Change

The goal of this research is to develop an approach to management of organizational culture through engendering and sustaining constructive confrontation between the new values of an organization and the existing values of employees in order to provide effective organizational performance over the long term. Such management allows the energies and capacities of employees to be directed towards productive adoption of new values of organizational culture. It persuades and inspires employees to take part in adopting the new organizational values as well as stimulating and facilitating this process. According to the approach, constructive confrontation management of organizational culture change is realized by planning organizational culture change and through management of the adoption of new organizational culture values by employees.

3.1. Planning Organizational Culture Change

Revelation of desired organizational culture values is needed in order to plan organizational culture change. These values are revealed during diagnosis of current organizational culture, and as a result of the creation of a vision aimed at providing required organizational change [6]. The desired values involve some current organizational culture values, which can be used by a new organizational culture, along with new values. Diagnosis allows for definition of current values and employee actions affected by these values. Creating the vision intends: stating the new results to be achieved by an organization, determining actions of employees producing the results (these actions include some of the existing actions along with new actions), and identifying desired organizational values that generate the needed actions of employees.

Establishment of a conjunction of the required organizational results with the needed actions of employees and the desired organizational values empowers the planning of organizational culture change. Planning involves: building a structure of desired organizational values, stating the order of adopting the new values by employees, and determining actions of employees generated by the new organizational values.

The cultural values of an organization are interdependent. A relationship between values v_i and v_j exists if value v_j depends logically on value v_i . It means that adopting value v_j requires prior adoption of value v_i . Therefore, there is a possibility for building a value structure stating logical relations among values. Building value structure of a new organizational culture is realized by removal from the value structure of the current organizational culture of the values preventing from

attaining the new organizational results, addition of the new values in the value structure, and stating relations between the new values and as well as relations between these values and the saved current values.

Example 1:

The three-level value structure of current organizational culture is represented by Figure 1.

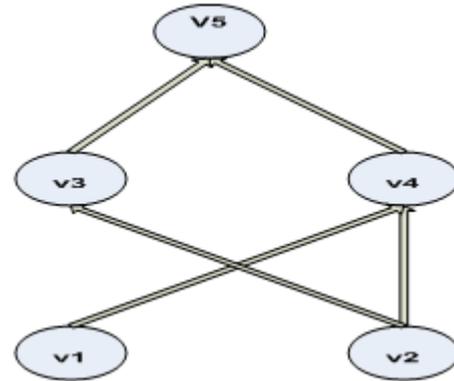


Figure 1. The value structure of the current organizational culture

The value structure of the new organizational culture is built as a result of the removal of the current values v_4, v_5 , addition of the new values $v_6, v_7, v_8, v_9, v_{10}$, and stating relations between these values as well as relations between them and the retained current values v_1, v_2, v_3 . The resulting value structure is represented by Figure 2. The retained current values are marked in red.

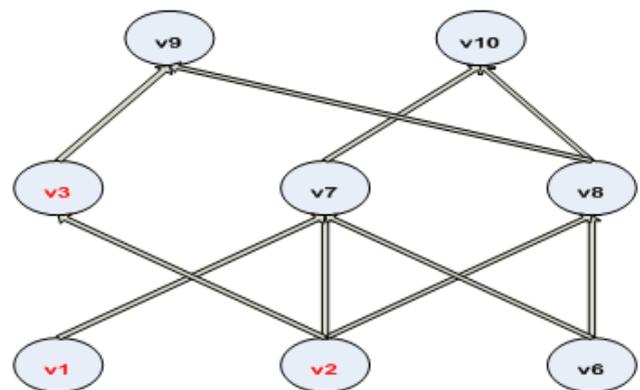


Figure 2. The value structure of the new organizational culture

According to the above, the value structure of the new organizational culture states the order of adoption of the new values by employees. It empowers the introduction of a concept of the structural complexity of adopting the new values. Structural complexity of adopting a certain value is equal to the quantity of the new ways leading to that value. A new way is the way created by the new values.

Example 2:

The structural complexity of adopting a new value v_6 at the lower level of the desired organizational values structure (Figure 2) equals zero. Structural complexities of adopting new values v_7, v_8 of the next level are equal to 1, and 1, accordingly. Structural complexities of adopting new values v_9, v_{10} that are placed on the top level are equal to 1 and 2, accordingly.

Stating the order of adopting the new organizational culture values requires dividing the value structure of the new organizational culture into a number of substructures

relative to the new values replaced on the top level, and determining a weight of each substructure. The weight is equal to the sum of structural complexities of adopting the new values contained in the substructure. The stated order intends adopting at first the new values contained in a value substructure with less weight. It provides reduction of resistance of employees to changing organizational culture. Since different substructures intersect relative to new values (i.e. the substructures have common new values), then as a result of the preferable choice of one substructure the initial weight of another substructure is reduced.

Example 3:

The value structure G of new organizational culture (Figure 2) can be divided into two substructures G_1 and G_2 relative to the new values v_9, v_{10} of the top level. Substructure G_1 involves values v_9, v_3, v_8, v_2, v_6 . Substructure G_2 involves values $v_{10}, v_7, v_8, v_1, v_2, v_6$. The sub structures have common new values v_6 and v_8 . The weight of substructure G_1 equals 2. The weight of substructure G_2 equals 4. Consequently, the order of adopting the new values is as follows: first, the new values v_6, v_8, v_9 from substructure G_1 are adopted; next, the value v_{10} from substructure G_2 is adopted. Preferable choice of substructure G_1 reduces the initial weight of substructure G_2 from 4 to 3.

Actions of employees generated by the new values are determined according to the stated order of adoption of these values. The new actions are embedded in a set of current actions retained from the previous organizational culture and are planned for use in a new organizational culture. Usually, some interrelated actions correspond to the value. Owing to that, an action structure determined on the aggregate of subsets of interrelated actions corresponds to the value structure of the new organizational culture.

3.2. Management of Adopting Organizational Culture Values

Aspiration of providing effective adoption of organizational culture values by employees entails the necessity for management realizing: adjusting organizational structure to adopt the values according to the planned order, receiving a value adoption feedback, and responding to feedback.

Adjusting organizational structure to the process of adopting organizational cultural values is provided by forming a dynamic managerial collaborative team [28]. The manager of an organization forms the team and delegates accountability for changing organizational culture values to the team members [1,29]. The collaborative members of the team serve as change agents guiding change of the organizational culture values. Thereby, actions of the team members should correspond to the new organizational values. The managerial team involves representatives of all organizational subdivisions. A manager and an employee of a subdivision may be the representatives. Some representatives from one subdivision can be the team members. The managerial team is formed for providing adoption of the new values of a certain value substructure. Hence, the composition of the team should be dynamic. It is changed as a result of a transition from adopting the values of one substructure to

adopting the values of another substructure. In other words, the team dynamics are guided by the order of value adoption. The team is complete if it involves representatives from each subdivision. The number of team members depends on the above- introduced weight of a substructure. Adopting the values from a substructure with a bigger weight requires a bigger number of team members.

Value adoption feedback reflecting the values' adoption state is received through evaluating the required actions of the employees. A state of action may vary as a result of performance of the action by different employees. Hence, a performance measure of an action can be introduced for characterization of its state. The action performance measure varies from zero (the action is not performed) to one (the action is performed completely). Since a set of interrelated actions can correspond to the value, performance of these actions characterizes the value adoption process. Hence, an employee has adopted a value if all actions corresponding to the value have been performed by that employee completely. Therefore, the state of adoption of the value by an employee is characterized by a combined measure of performance of suitable actions by him. This value adoption measure is determined as the sum of performance measures of actions corresponding to the value. The adoption state of values is determined by taking into account the value adoption measures.

Example 4:

Adopting a new organizational value v_i by an employee requires complete performance of three actions. The performance measures of these actions are 0.3, 0.7, and 0.6, accordingly. Then, the value adoption measure is equal to 1.6. It characterizes the state of adopting the value v_i . The measure of complete adoption of the value v_i is equal to 3.

Response to feedback is aimed at providing complete adoption of the new values by all employees. During organizational culture change, confrontation arises as a result of differences between the new organizational culture values and employee current values. Confrontation hinders adoption of new organizational values. Thereby, constructive confrontation between the new values of an organization and the current values of employees is engendered [27]. The objective of constructive confrontation is to channel the energy of employees towards value adoption. Constructive confrontation is engendered on different levels. Constructive confrontation on the first level is engendered between an employee and the managerial team members holding the new values. On this level the employee compares his current values with all new values that should be adopted. Constructive confrontation on the second level is engendered between the employee and his peers. On this level the employee compares his states of adopting the new values to the value adoption states of his peers. Constructive confrontation on the third level is self-confrontation. On this level, the employee performs a self-assessment of his states of adoption of the new values.

Constructive confrontation of aforementioned levels caused by a difference of cultural values and the states of adopting the new organizational values by employees empowers them to take personal accountability for suitable behavioral actions. Personal accountability creates

opportunity for self-management of the adoption process. Thereby, management of the adoption of the new values of an organizational culture by employees is realized by the managerial team and employees.

Facilitation and stimulation of the values adoption are provided by managing the constructive confrontation through using various tools, realizing: development of interpersonal relationships based on trust; balance between collaboration and competition among employees [29]; adjustment of the order of adoption of the new organizational values by employees for improvement in the quality of their lives; encouragement of employees toward excellent performance of the required behavioral actions with the help of a dynamic reward system [31], [30]; alteration of the nature of work by using a mechanism of rotation [32]; promotion of adoption of the new organizational values by employees by means of mentorship and workshops [33]; motivation of employees toward self-selection of required behavioral actions through use of focused storytelling and focused recognition [1].

As appears from the above, management of adopting organizational culture values by employees involves receiving feedback from a value adoption process through measurement of performance of the required behavioral actions of employees, and responding to feedback by means of managing constructive confrontation. First, an issue of adopting new values belonging to a selected substructure is created for every employee. The individual issue is represented by the list of the new organizational values together with corresponding actions and measures of their performance by employees. The issue allows evaluation of the states of adoption of the values through calculation of the value adoption measures. The members of the managerial team realize evaluation. As a result of evaluation, feedback on the process of adopting the new values is created. Next, management of constructive confrontation is realized in responding to the feedback. It facilitates and stimulates the attainment of the complete adoption of the new organizational values by employees.

4. Conclusion

An approach to management of organizational culture change through constructive confrontation between the new cultural values of an organization and the current values of employees is suggested. Management is realized by planning organizational culture change and by following the management of adopting new organizational culture values by employees. Effectiveness of the approach is provided as a result of:

- Building the value structure of new organizational culture and setting the order of adopting the new values by employees by dividing the structure into substructures based on the proposed concept of structural complexity of value adoption. It promotes a decrease in resistance to change from employees.
- Determination of the new actions of employees generated by the new organizational values, embedding of these actions in a set of interrelated actions retained from an old culture for use in a new organizational culture, and the congruence of the

order of performing the new actions with the established value adoption order.

- Forming a dynamic team of the change agents. The team composition is guided by the value adoption order. It provides for adjustment of an organizational structure to the value adoption process.
- Evaluation of the values' adoption states by the team members as a result of using the suggested action and value adoption measures. It allows for feedback from the value adoption process.
- Engendering and managing the constructive confrontation that allows for response to the feedback by complex and flexible use of the various tools providing facilitation and stimulation of adopting the new organizational values.

Further research will elaborate on the process of managing the constructive confrontation of cultural values that provides the most influence on organizational culture change.

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