

Influence, power, and change

The Change Leaders Oxf16 conference SPREAD paper

ABSTRACT

This paper details the key points from the Oxford 2016 conference on “Influence, Power, and Change” and charts how the subject matter was subsequently ‘unfolded’ into more detailed discussions using the unconference framework. This engagement framework enabled participants to put more contextual sense and meaning around the topics using a community approach, and generated a further set of learning outcomes.

As the conference unfolded, a number of observations emerged that illustrated the timelessness of power constructs:

- From the first session we witnessed the eternal struggle to empower the disadvantaged and mitigate their positions in global structures which effectively bypass them.
- We then looked at the time-bound myth that power is the possession of the privileged few, and considered power as a pervasive and multi-dimensional property of wider human interconnectedness and relationships.
- Using an artifact introduced from a seventies TV satire, we analysed the endless political ecosystem, and the struggle that leverages influence, rhetoric, and resources associated with power. Elements and examples of power were surfaced in such a way as to finally illustrate the many components and states of ‘power’ as it exists in the real world.

Based on the presented subject matter and participants’ observations, an unconference was orchestrated. This created further knowledge around the most popular topics based on both consensus and participants’ volunteering ‘passion’. The unconference proved to be highly rewarding, and the opportunity to reflect in common interest groups generated further detailed insights and learning outcomes.

ABOUT : The Change Leaders is a Community of Practice created by the alumni of the University of Oxford Saïd Business School / HEC Paris master’s programme in “Consulting & Coaching for Change”.



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1.0 Executive summary

At our Oxford September 2016 conference, we examined the relationships between influence, power and change, and their overall role in change processes. The conference was an interactive event aimed at developing a better understanding of the topic through a fusion of presentations from acknowledged subject matter experts with further deep reflection and dialogue.

As power is a critical resource for every actor, be it in organisations or in society as a whole, the conference was intended to help us understand how some individuals acquire power while others do not; why some individuals retain their power once they have attained it; and why others fall from their lofty positions in spite of the political advantages power provides. Given the role of power in organisational and societal processes, it is important to understand how the dynamic of power changes and how power can inhibit or enable change.

We started by sharing our first thoughts on power: the taboo, the negative connotation versus power as a positive concept, the different types of power, the origins of power, and the unavoidable presence of power. The questions that we had going into the conference mainly focused on how to better understand power and how to apply power within organisations.

Our first speaker Phil Wall is a “Consulting and Coaching for Change” graduate and the founder of WeSeeHope, a charity enabling children isolated by poverty to create a better future. He introduced the notions of the power of purpose, the power of courage, the power of vulnerability and the power of responsibility. Wall helped us see how the powerless and underprivileged can be viewed through a new lens and be empowered and inspired to create better futures.

Leading the second session, Martin Herrmann a physician by training, focuses on implementing complex change in global health and development. He contrasted individual knowing, certainty, and control with not knowing, uncertainty, and lack of control, in relation to the group. Western society is moving from the first notion towards an acknowledgement of the not knowing, and that opens up the space to recognise (the feeling of) powerlessness, and the notion of power between – the power that emerges within a group. Being able to exist with powerlessness, at the edge of chaos, enables miracles to emerge.

Herrmann’s interactive session helped us to re-evaluate the time-bound myth that power is the possession of the privileged few, and to analyse the pervasive and multi-dimensional property of wider human interconnectedness and relationships.

Our final presenter, Stewart Clegg is an Australian professor in the field of Organisational Studies and the author of many books, including the “Sage Handbook of Power”. He presented an overview of different aspects of power, starting with surveillance, different bases of power (such as love, fear and money) and multiple power concepts (power over, with, to and against). Then he took us to [Lukes’ power structures](#): the first dimension that incentivises someone to do something (e.g. rules and norms), the second dimension that controls the decision making (agenda setting), and the third dimension that produces willing compliance (culture and values).

Leveraging a seventies TV political satire and multiple images and metaphors, Clegg created a frame of reference which illustrated different aspects, bases, and concepts of power. This frame highlighted the endless political ecosystem struggle that leverages influence, rhetoric, and resources in pursuit of political agendas. Clegg's insights helped to surface and illustrate the many components and states of 'power' as it exists and influences the real world.

Dorthe Sørensen prepared and orchestrated the unconference. In this dynamic process, surfaced knowledge was subsequently 'unfolded' into more detailed discussions. The unconference was a powerful engagement framework which facilitated deep discussion of the topic and allowed attendees to create even more detailed insights and learnings.

These conversations included widespread themes such as powerlessness, empowering, scorecard as a vehicle for purpose, power between, changing power, relationships, courage, discursive power, and man versus machine. Using a consensus-based approach and activity-based engagement, the unconference generated a further set of learning outcomes.

Additional learnings included many interesting questions and different ways of looking at power in organisations and broader society: questions such as 'how is power transferred in the context of social development?', 'how can the person in the street mobilise in the power dimensions of corporate multi-nationals versus sovereign states?', 'what is going on in cyberisation, and how to engage in these new power relations?', 'what about groups that are left behind with regards to technology?'.

Of the many conclusions drawn from the information presented, three stood out as powerful tools for change agents working in organisations:

1. Power as a taboo: mobilising people to hold conversations about power can be the first step to breaking down taboos and, in the process, addressing the negative and positive outcomes of power.
2. Power demystified: by using these new lenses to look at change, the change agent is better able to bring substance and meaning to the confusion caused by power.
3. Power and timing: by being aware of power, and understanding the associated cycle or timing, change agents can avoid swimming upstream. Understanding that power is always in flux helps the change agent to reflect upon the current situation and pull the target community along to more meaningful and productive work. This focus also includes a wider perception of the individual's role in the dynamics of power.

The comprehensive worldviews that emerged demonstrate how tCL has evolved both as a reflective community, and as an enabler of meaningful conversations within a diverse group of people.

2.0 Power, influence, and change...Phil Wall

Phil Wall introduced us to the guiding principles of his theory: -

- Community ownership
- Innovation
- Knowledge sharing
- Replication
- Sustainability

In coaching situations Wall uses a framework that focusses on one question: ‘what things need to be true, present or absent in your life to be at the top of your game?’. He also redefines the key concepts of power and influence in the context of creating real outcomes as follows: -

Legacy definition	New definition
Influence The capacity to have an effect on the character, development, or behaviour of someone or something, or the effect itself.	Powerful Influence The capacity to have an effect on the character, development, or behaviour of someone or something, or the effect itself – maybe <i>Powerful influence is the capacity to have an effect</i>
Power The ability or capacity to do something or act in a particular way. The capacity or ability to direct or influence the behaviour of others or the course of events.	Influential power The ability or capacity to do something or act in a particular way. The capacity or ability to direct or influence the behaviour of others or the course of events – maybe <i>influential power is the ability to do something.</i>

Maslow’s hierarchy of needs is relative not absolute. It has different meanings, for different people, in different communities. In Maslow’s theory, self-actualisation is only relevant if the basics are met, so that fundamental needs have to come first. Wall joked that young people think their first need is batteries for their gadgets, followed closely by Wi-Fi and then the rest. In modern society many people seem to focus on this outward actualisation (the things you have and show); but in reality it’s an actualisation of the self in the digital ecosystem as articulated by Newday:-

“The world is blurring and blending, morphing and fusing in the post-modern soup of our digital age...”

2.1 Power of purpose

The increase in depressions and burnouts in the western world is aligned to the lack of purpose and meaning in our lives. Therefore, Western children need to be provided with a more meaningful cause than simple consumption.

According to Nietzsche, a man who has a ‘why’ can live with any form of ‘how’. Viktor Frankl, in his book “Man’s Search for Meaning” shows the importance of dedication to a greater cause than oneself. Price Pritchett supports this view by stating that people don’t care about working for a company; they want to work for a movement.

Purpose gives a focussed direction for power. Without a purpose, power becomes chaotic and can be wasted or even destructive, opening a space for ‘an evil presence’. This evil presence always seems bigger than ourselves.

2.2 The power of courage

The power of courage mainly lies in the courage to get through the first 30 seconds. In the video [“leadership lessons from a dancing guy”](#) one can see the courage of the first dancing guy, and also the (perhaps even greater) courage of the first follower. He dances along with the first one on his own for 30 seconds, probably thinking “Do I look stupid? Will my friends still talk to me? ...” He needs the courage to get through these initial 30 seconds.

Wall uses an instrument called the Risk Type Compass, a questionnaire to assess risk type, risk attitude and risk behaviour. He links it to the expression “If you’re going to be brave, be really, really brave!” and also to a mind-set for positions of power – don’t cover yourself with an umbrella, rather invert the umbrella and catch everything (which takes courage).

2.3 The power of vulnerability

Change often produces a common side effect – a feeling of helplessness. One’s responsibility can be to restore power to its proper owners. When your default leadership style does not work, you will need a different approach, instead of doing more of the same. Brené Brown in her famous [TED talk](#) underlines that “Vulnerability is not weakness, and that myth is profoundly dangerous. Vulnerability is the birthplace of innovation, creativity, and change.”

In his book “The Ritual Processes”, Victor Turner explains that rites of passage make up a transitional space for change. He interviewed men going through rites of passage in African tribes, who claimed that “afterwards, everything changes”. This change is both a result of the actual rite of passage process, and also that people in their environment treat them differently afterwards.

Based on his knowledge, Wall reates rites of passage in the context of his leadership coaching. He creates scenarios where leaders’ skills and abilities are not relevant, and where they must behave differently and in more innovative ways.

2.4 The power of responsibility

WeSeeHope has a Village Investors Program, where they train people in a community for different financial roles, such as banker or treasurer. People in the community can then save money, share their savings goal with the community, or put in their loan request to the community – creating a village bank. It is different from micro financing, because the village runs its own bank with its own money. This gives them responsibility and power, as well as a way to co-create together using fundamental community values and relationships.

When organisations change, some people quit and move, while others quit and stay. You need to make people (feel) responsible. Wall works with three questions that help people move to responsibility:

- 1) How can I be of best support to you? - *support*
- 2) What expectations should I have of you? - *responsibility*
- 3) If I’m concerned you are falling short of those expectations, what would you like me to do? – *accountability*

If you give people responsibility, they will behave accordingly. Two examples from WeSeeHope illustrate this. Firstly, ‘The Undugu Society’, a glue sniffing gang, becomes a successful car washing company. They set up their own rules, one of which is ‘no glue sniffing on the job’. Secondly, to generate fundraising for WeSeeHope, Wall gives people ten pounds and three options: -

- 1) Give it back, because you don’t want to be involved;
- 2) Use it for yourself, if you think you need it more than the African orphans;
- 3) 10/10 challenge: turn the ten pounds into one hundred pounds.

2.4 *The power of responsibility* - *continued*

One young man asked Wall if he could keep the money. Wall said he could if he thought he needed it more than the African kids. The young man then said that he would go and raise money for WeSeeHope; but that he wanted to put this ten pound note up on his wall. No one had ever entrusted him with money before. The fact that Wall did made him proud and he wanted to use the ten pound note as a reminder. He went on to raise a lot of money for WeSeeHope.

2.5 *Summary*

WeSeeHope's story painted a dark landscape of extreme underprivileged conditions and various types of child violence. Against this backdrop, Wall created a picture of how power and influence can be leveraged to enact real and positive outcomes. These engagements were tough for the change leaders involved, and required greater sensitivity, use of psychotherapy, and strong counselling skills to be successful. This skillset requires in-depth training and defined rites of passage so that when leaders engage with such a sensitive community they can use both technical and adaptive skillsets.

3.0 Sources of power...Martin Herrmann

“Power is in our very nature. It is not some resource found outside of ourselves!” says Martin Herrmann, a consultant with the World Health Organisation (WHO). Herrmann is piloting a 3-year project aimed at educating and empowering vulnerable populations such as refugees.

The conflict that most people feel about power has its very root in our experience of power from an early age, and is also influenced by our perceptions and assumptions regarding power. Power is the cause and effect of almost any world / community order and when asked, people usually use descriptors that illustrate the external and negative view most have of power. Even executives, whom others considered to be powerful, will assign an ‘external location’ (up there, out there) to power.

Because power is ubiquitous, we see it everywhere and it is unavoidable (see [types of power](#)), so to understand power in all its dimensions, Herrmann challenges us to see power for what it truly is: a personal resource that is neutral. We are powerful from birth to death and even beyond. Power is not positive, nor negative; it is influenced by your perspective, intention, and how you use it.

The real learning comes in allowing yourself to see the potential and the source of power, and to be able to reside in the space between power and powerlessness where all have a voice and can influence outcomes. Many people shy away from power and the messiness associated with power in our day-to-day lives; but power can be channelled if it is recognised and understood. Many people also want to exert as much control over each aspect of their existence as possible to provide the illusion of power; but in the end most realise that all power is shared and will always be distributed unevenly.

What would happen if we stepped away from our need for control and from grasping power? What if we allowed ourselves to be vulnerable and to use this vulnerability as a basis for building a relationship? This is not something we learn or are taught in school. It is missing from how we organise and institutionalise communication, but as much as the ‘game of power’ is a turn-off for most people, opening yourself to the possibilities that arise from vulnerability can be enlightening.

If power resides with the wrong person or institution, it can lead to manipulation or coercion (for example in extreme cases of dictatorships, etc.). By residing in powerlessness, one works with all actors on an equal footing, and therefore it is easier to achieve a state of heightened connection and awareness within the framework of common enquiry. Our understanding of power, and its influence on our community interaction, can afford us the chance to place power in the right hands for a specific instance or issue. We can distribute power according to where it should logically reside and not based upon our flawed understanding of our environment or community. By residing in powerlessness, you become aware of when, and where, power is needed and this is how the resolution emerges for wicked problems.

3.1 Building Awareness & Clarity

It is difficult to begin a conversation if you focus on the topic of power. Power flows from values, but sometimes values are not transparent. People tend to 1) lack confidence to express their beliefs and values about power clearly, 2) lack clarity about their values and beliefs when it comes to power, 3) resist understanding or enquiry around the base or source of power.

Stacey's research on power dynamics shows that power is integral to our daily lives and conversations. Tension and being overwhelmed are part of our learning process around power and its different groupings: -

- 1) Inclusion and exclusion (who deserves to be included and who is not accepted into society) - for example children in schools, refugees, etc.
- 2) Leaders and followers - in reality both sides have power
- 3) Categorising other people such as by gender or race, and also enforcing this on ourselves by our personal story
- 4) Gossip and imagination - the more we talk about something, the more real it becomes, e.g. conspiracy theories.

Using simple active learning techniques, Herrmann surfaces inherent values about power and creates a concrete understanding of them. With 4 questions aimed at capturing snapshots of people, or experiences of power during childhood, participants discover the beliefs they hold about power and how their adult perceptions of power are shaped by their values. Strangely, despite the activity requiring fact-based answers, the experience becomes immediately emotional.

Once values are clear, it becomes easier to have a conversation about how we teach them, what the experience of these values might be for others, and the interface between different cultural values. The technique of using active learning pairs or partnered exercises, followed by a plenary to discuss the experience, and then returning to a deeper active learning exercise, allows participants to rapidly gain understanding of power dynamics and to become aware of the power of powerlessness.

As we drift between 'not knowing' and 'knowing' during the exercise, our experience is similar to the one we have in school and other institutions. However, one significant difference is that during the exercise we have time to reflect. In the context of institutions, we do not have the time to think about the experience of 'not knowing' vs. 'knowing'. This causes confusion when we begin to question where we are and what is happening in the context of the situation. The first step to becoming truly aware of power, is to create an environment where it is safe to just reflect upon the experience.

Once you begin reflecting upon power and your relationship with it, you can distinguish between different types and 'locations' of power, but you will never be able to control the power structure in relationships due to their intrinsic complexity. Since we can only be individuals through our tribe or social environment, we must observe both sides of power to truly understand our place.

Power is intrinsic to relationships and our personal perspective. For example, if you are successful in being powerful to turn things around in a challenging situation, others who feel less powerful can be resistant to you and your ideas. We see this clearly in the failure most companies experience when trying to transition from design to implementation.

3.1 Building Awareness & Clarity - continued

We can look at best practices; but that does not guarantee success or greater understanding because every element of the 'best practice' will never exist in exactly the same way, with exactly the same people again. The process of building, managing and maintaining relationships is very complex and therefore is largely uncontrollable. There is never great certainty in the 'human domain' (action), only in 'engineering' (work). Since power always has this personal dimension and as our understanding of ourselves, and our relationship to power evolves, the field of discourse becomes richer. And with reflection comes greater precision, understanding and clarity around power. This richer discussion and understanding of power enables us to expand the discourse to include a wider brief, leverage new ideas, and consider solutions for chronic issues. When coupled with organisational change management, it empowers us to work together to affect change instead of it being an outside factor to which we are submitted.

3.2 Types of Power

The following types of power were discussed / described during the workshop...

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vulnerability<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Ruling and being ruled (most common unconscious construct around power)○ The spectrum of influence○ Restriction of freedom• Force and manipulation<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Relationships with & within manipulation○ Abuse for personal benefit○ Coercion - power and fear• Person or position<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Out there, not in here○ Gender: soft / hard = female / male○ Your birth still influences your future power and influence○ Power addiction• Control over resources<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The power of money | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hierarchy<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The power of authority○ Competition○ Race – entitlement• Positive power<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Confidence○ Weakness as a strong power in organisations○ Everyone has power - even the dead <p>Power Transitions</p> <p>Knowing – not knowing</p> <p>Certain- uncertain</p> <p>Control – not in control</p> <p>Individual – group</p> |
|---|---|

3.3 Power in organisations

Herrmann uses a four-step logical framework in his work with groups and organisations.

Step 1: *What are the dominant notions on power (and powerlessness) in organisational settings and beyond?*

The following three points were distilled from hundreds of engagements with participants across a diversity of settings, though primarily from the European Union and the USA: -

1. Power has negative connotations
2. Power is projected outside
3. Reflection on power is a taboo

Power is perceived as a dynamic of ruling and being ruled, where the powerful have power over the powerless. This implies the use of force and even violence to push through interests. As [Hannah Arendt](#) articulated: “If we turn to discussions of the phenomenon of power, we soon find that there exists a consensus among political theorists from Left to Right to the effect that violence is nothing more than the most flagrant manifestation of power”. In addition, [C. Wright Mills](#) stated: “All politics is a struggle for power; the ultimate kind of power is violence”, echoing as it were, Max Weber’s definition of the state as “the rule of men over men based on the means of legitimate, that is allegedly legitimate, violence”.

Unconsciously we distance ourselves from this dynamic. This leads to our inability to explore and reflect on power in matters most relevant.

Step 2: *Power dynamics are an integral element of our daily lives and conversations.*

[Ralph Stacey](#) builds on the work of [Norbert Elias](#) and states: “.... Power is not a thing that someone possesses and is not simply force or violence but, rather, power is a structural characteristic of all human relationships in that it reflects the fact that we depend on each other and so enable and constrain each other”.

He introduces four power dynamics: Inclusion and Exclusion, Leading and Following, Categorising, Gossip and Imagination. When involved players start to identify and reflect on these four dynamics in a concrete challenge it provokes rich conversations and surprising options for actions. It will also transform the hidden assumptions described in step 1. People realise how they co-create existing power dynamics in their daily lives and conversations. This creates the ‘base-camp’ from where power and powerlessness can be explored as a group and individually. It is not relevant if the four power dynamics chosen by Stacey are the ‘right’ choice, but they provide a good enough lens to come to the realisation that power and powerlessness are at the core of all human relationships and are always playing out; enabling and constraining, constructive and destructive, never neutral. It is interesting to note that whereas human relating is power neutral, how it plays out in a particular context is not neutral.

Step 3: Hannah Arendt's and Martin Saar's "positive" perspective on power.

Most of the literature on power consists of variations on the 'power over' theme. Hannah Arendt is the first political philosopher who has come up with a very different and positive perspective. In ["The Human Condition"](#), published in 1958, seven years after ["The Origins of Totalitarianism"](#), she explores human acting beyond what can be controlled and engineered. Dealing in the open with the real and complex challenges of the community creates the space where power emerges between the players. Only when we continue to care for the public institutions, and when we find spaces where we can participate in a meaningful fashion beyond representation, can the public space flourish.

Again, quoting from Hannah Arendt "The Human Condition", Herrmann states: "Power is what keeps the public realm, the potential space of appearance between acting and speaking men, in existence. The word itself, its Greek equivalent 'dynamis', like the Latin 'potentia' derivatives or the German 'Macht' (which derives from 'mögen' and 'möglich', not from 'machen'), indicates its potential character. Power is always a potential and not an unchangeable, measurable, and reliable entity like force or strength. While strength is the natural quality of an individual seen in isolation, power springs up between men when they act together and vanishes the moment they disperse".

The intellectual understanding of her writing is insufficient. It takes both the experience of 'power between', and a deep understanding of her project, to fully recognise the radical nature of this distinction. Being grounded in the possibility of power is a precondition of confronting the destructive mode in which power oftentimes presents itself. Put in a musical context, only when one knows when music is performed well can one identify a poor performance, and start to improve one's own music.

Arendt's distinction is very fruitful for a richer understanding of the many current global phenomena; hence Herrmann's use of small experiments in organisations as illustrated in the sessions during the Change Leaders' Oxford conference.

[Martin Saar](#) is building on the work of [Baruch Spinoza](#). He points out how power is constitutive for who we are – our being. Power does not necessarily refer – as in contemporary usage – to relations between persons or institutions in which someone has or holds power over another. It is rather a concept that defines or specifies being as such. Spinoza implicitly claims that talking about the being as something, involves talking about its power, about its capacity to do or effectuate something. Therefore, power is always plural: it is power of something (its powerfulness, its capacities) that is also already in relation with the power of another thing (and its capacities).

This constitutive nature of power, as well as its relationality, points to how we are permanently (co) – creating 'power fields'. The power of the state and of the political community ultimately rests upon the power generated and enacted by the multiplicity of political subjects, the 'multitude' as Spinoza calls it. But what this means is that the power of the multitude is a power *between*, not *of* subjects. "

Different power fields can be neutral to each other, they can enable or constrain. This invites a phenomenological analysis of the different players, the different power axes and the different effects. This analysis and its reflection are itself acts of power. Martin Saar refers to the closeness of his ideas to the power concept of Hannah Arendt; but the differences are even more important. Using both texts in an ongoing dialogue during Herrmann's 'power field research' is and has been very fruitful.

Step 4: *Taking power and powerlessness seriously in relevant concrete settings.*

Concrete players working on a concrete and difficult challenge will both experience, and also be powerful and powerless with regards to, different aspects of the challenge.

Creating the space to identify, experience and reflect upon the factual power and powerlessness is an intervention into how things normally are (see step 1).

The bigger the challenges are, the more we will encounter periods of being powerless. Megumi Hirayama from Japan is currently working on stopping the killing in Syria and related to that, the larger question of world peace. She is an example of someone who is very clear on the immenseness of the challenge, yet is not being limited in her exploration and search for improbable coalitions and actions. She is a master of being confident that possibilities will emerge where currently there are none.

Finally, Herrmann captures the essence of Hannah Arendt by stating: “When men act in concert, miracles can be expected”.

3.4 Summary

Herrmann’s interactive sessions challenged taboo and superstition, and allowed participants to engage in reflection and dialogue around sensitive topics. The overall framework and activities were highly productive and insightful, and presented yet another opportunity to look at power through a different set of lenses.

4.0 Power processes in change management...Stewart Clegg

Stewart Clegg initially positions us to observe that everyday language is often misleading with regards to power. The semantics of 'having power' suggests power as a thing, something that you have or do not have, something that you possess or do not possess. Power therefore is often assumed to be something that people have, and having power is seen to follow from having resources. But power resources are always contextual. In the appropriate context, actors can use unlikely and seemingly insignificant resources to transform situations.

Power exists in, and has existed in, many guises since our early ancestors who survived using their innate skills and abilities in tight communities that exercised situational power and leadership. Power at a very basic level is closely linked to the drivers of love, fear, and money. Modern leaders therefore still need to understand power relations and manage them to be successful. A lot of what consultants and managers do is power steering - that is getting people to do what you want them to do.

In reality, we can introduce power as a concept: -

- It is not a thing
- It is not something that you have
- It is always relational
- There are no secure bases of power; no resources that by definition are VRIN (valuable, rare, inimitable, non-substitutable)
- The most mundane resources can be powerful in particular contexts.

4.1 Power fundamentals

Those in a superior position in the organisation who are opposed in what they want to do by others who are at the same or a lower level, regard themselves as having *legitimate authority* when they want to do something against the *power* these others exercise.

Authority is what managers are supposed to have; *resistance* is what employees do when they do not comply with what authorities want them to do. In management, managers' power is usually seen as *legitimate*; the power of those that resist it seen as *illegitimate*.

From the perspective of the organisational elite, politics are usually defined as the unsanctioned or illegitimate use of power to achieve unsanctioned or illegitimate ends. The semantics of language constitute what is taken to be authority and authoritative, legitimate and illegitimate, power and resistance. In essence, whoever defines the semantics defines the *power relations*. *Power relations* play out on a pervasive and daily basis.

There are five key power relations that we need to acknowledge: -

- Power 'over'
- Power 'with'
- Power 'to'
- Empowerment / disempowerment
- Power 'against' – resistance

Power over is the most basic causal concept premise, that is A getting B to do something that B would not otherwise do. From the very early principles of Newtonian mechanics the power of A is the efficient cause of the movement of B in a direction determined by A. This equation of power and causality has become the predominant worldview. Power over is rarely useful in complex organisational situations. The use of *power over* by leaders is more a sign of weakness than of strength. Establishing *power over* can often be the end of a complex process of bargaining with, interpreting and using multiple resources.

4.1 Power fundamentals - continued

Power with is relevant to groups, and was first highlighted by [Mary Parker-Follett](#). Different actors exercise power with different interests in change. Common 'with' groups are managers and employees, strategists and managers, consultants and executives, and suppliers and customers.

Power to is the positive phenomenon to achieve something, as described by Parsons and Foucault.

Empowerment/disempowerment is a key part of legacy systems and their loyalties and empowerments. While transforming these organisations and structures, we need to clearly understand whose interests are being advanced or threatened.

Power against or resistance often manifests itself as resistance to change. When people seek to do something against superordinate will, it is usually considered to be resistance to authority. Authority is seen as *legitimate*; resistance is seen as *illegitimate* – although both are actually just different cases of power relations in play.

4.2 Power and Change

Power and change are interconnected and multidimensional.

Table 4.2 Power and Change

Dimension	Opportunities for change
One-dimensional power <i>A getting B to do something that they would not otherwise do</i>	New rules and norms enforced
Two-dimensional power <i>The power of non-issues and non-decision making</i>	Introducing different and new types of people and their issues to organisational agendas Introducing new committee members to existing committees or new committees
Three-dimensional power <i>Hegemony: values; deep seated assumptions; deep structures of tacit meaning; dominant cultural assumptions</i>	Changing values and assumptions through actions that make the deep and buried acknowledged and acted upon

We can drive a one-dimensional power change simply by enforcing new rules and norms.

The second dimension is where power is applied according to what is on or off the agenda, and how decision-making occurs. It's not about who wins the issues. It's about controlling what issues are visible in the first place, the definition of non-issues, and what non-decision-making is acceptable. In the second dimension, we can introduce different and new types of people and their issues to agendas - those who are the 'other' in terms of the decision-makers. In organisations, this could be the stratification of age, or the boomers hanging onto power. As millennial issues appear and new types of people come into play, the agendas will change.

Second dimensional power can be used divisively in organisations through restricting issues and agendas to the approved topics of the 'organisational elite', creation of non-issues, the practice of non-decision-making, and the restriction of committee membership and consultation practices.

The third dimension is the radical view of power. In the third dimension, desires and culture are shaped to produce willing compliance. Thoughts and beliefs are influenced without the subjects being aware of the processes they are being subjected to. In essence it is insidious. "'People' accept their role in the existing order of things, either because they can see or imagine no alternative to it, or because they view it as natural and unchangeable, or because they value it as divinely ordained and beneficial", (Lukes 1974: 24). It can also be defined as hegemony – the consciousness of subjects is colonised by the assumptions of a ruling culture. This strays towards the theory of non-consciousness. Third dimension power is the hardest thing to change because it is premised on values. We can challenge existing assumptions by senior leaders in order to show that it is no longer appropriate to behave in the same way.

Third dimensional power is so subtle and so constraining that we wouldn't necessarily be aware of it.

The various dimensions can operate simultaneously, and when the hegemony breaks down, the one-dimensional aspect can take over to try and redress the balance of power.

4.3 Managing power relations in a change context

Envisioning: ‘Power over’ requires the change leader to manage conflicting requirements from different interest areas which will include strategic, operational, functional, and external power interests as a minimum. The change leader needs effective strategies to deal with these conflicts, while at the same time maintaining the effectiveness of the legacy system under these transformation conditions.

Engaging: ‘Power with’ requires the change leader to determine who is crucial to the success, whose opposition it is crucial to overcome on a change project, and how to build commitment to the proposed change processes.

Transforming: ‘Power to’ requires the change leader to take relational positions that build support and dialogue. As part of this dialogue the change leader will build an inventory of change items that spans culture, identity, processes, and organisational structures.

Optimizing: ‘power against’ is an inevitable consequence for the change leader, and surfacing and learning from resistance is a critical skill. Most importantly this learning must be institutionalised for this specific change as well as at the wider organisational level. The change leader must also ensure that the transformation sponsors are actively driving from a position of understanding and informed reality.

These four key processes make up the “Managing power relations” cycle: -



4.4 Transformational ‘power leaders’

Transformational change approaches that seem rational are less so if you look at them from a power perspective. Therefore, transformational leaders need to have additional qualities: -

- Creativity
- Curiosity
- Open-mindedness
- Listening

To expand on this in more detail ‘power leaders’ need a wide range of adaptive skills that build on the immortal virtue of wisdom.

Table 4.4a Transformational leaders

Display the following qualities	Add to these the following Aristotelian virtues of ‘wisdom’
Charisma	+ <u>Creativity</u> : Active recognition, pursuit, and regulation of one’s experience in response to challenging opportunities
Confidence	+ <u>Curiosity</u> : An intrinsic interest in incessant experience
Respect & loyalty through listening	+ <u>Perspective</u> : The ability to approach life objectively, resulting from knowledge and experience, and is more than accumulating information
Express praise	+ <u>Love of learning</u> : The positive motivation to acquire new skills and knowledge or to build on existing skills and knowledge
Inspire	+ <u>Open-mindedness</u> : Willingness to engage in a search for evidence to which one will give fair consideration even though it might invalidate one’s beliefs – inspiring and being inspired by others

Furthermore, these leaders need to ask much further-reaching questions that address the wider technical and adaptive perspectives. In the following example of an enterprise-wide platform implementation (Table 4.4b Transformational leadership in Enterprise Resource Planning), a wider worldview examines both the implications of power and the operating mode, in addition to the visible technical dimension: -

4.4 Transformational 'power leaders' - continued

Table 4.4b Transformational leadership in Enterprise Resource Planning

Old approaches to technology change	New approaches to processual change	What are the power issues
Technology delivery	Benefits delivery	<i>Who benefits?</i>
Value for money – low level task monitoring	Value for money – benefits tracking	<i>What benefits?</i>
Loose linkage to business needs	Business case - integrated with business drivers	<i>Who defines?</i>
IT implementation plan	Change management plan	<i>Who changes, what changes?</i>
Business managers as victims	Business managers involved and in control	<i>Power over presumed: what about 'power with' and 'power to'?</i>
Large set of unfocused functionality	IT investments that are sufficient to do the job	<i>Who defines the job?</i>
Stakeholders 'subjected to'	Stakeholders 'involved in'	<i>Which stakeholders? Why?</i>
Trained in technology	Educated in exploitation of technology – talent harnessed	<i>What resistance to harness?</i>
Technology & project audits	Obtain business benefits – leverage learning	<i>How is learning defined, legitimated, by whom?</i>

4.5 Power and organisations

Organisations are often seen as stable systems at rest. Another metaphor for an organisation is an assemblage of power processes and relations - power flows through different *circuits of power*. Any organisation is the result of power relations and processes that are *more or less* stable and integrated, *more or less* solid or liquid. Organisational outcomes are produced by relations among persons and objects.

Power relations come in three distinct and interrelated circuits of power: -

- 1) Causal – episodic circuit of power: *power over*
- 2) Dispositional – circuit of social integration: *power over + power to*

Social integration occurs when change processes implemented by management are considered to be legitimate by the user group. The circuit of social integration is composed of two main concepts: -

- Rules of meaning – closely related to the power of discourse – how we interpret events and what is defined (by whom) as 'true' and legitimate
- Rules of membership – authority relations defining legitimate and illegitimate actions for organisation members.

4.5 Power and organisations - continued

3) Facilitative – circuit of system integration: when positive = *power over + power to + power with*

System integration – tighter coupling of processes and routines occurs when there is a high degree of cohesiveness in an organisation. This is achieved through the development of positive power that does not amplify negative resistance; but rather positive engagement and energy. System integration can leverage: -

- The material means and procedures that the organisation controls: *Techniques of production*
- Measures and methods used to ensure compliance to organisationally imperative commands: *Techniques of discipline*
- The circular flows of power through the circuits is manifested when compliance becomes institutionalised and integrated into the *circuits of social and system integration*.

Frictions in the circuits can arise from: -

- 1) *External contingencies – events – and their impact on the circuits*
- 2) *Contradictions and tensions within and between the circuits of social and system integration.*

These frictions can reconfigure ‘obligatory passage points’ in the organisation: for instance, the introduction of change can disempower some extant skills and knowledge and empower others, changing the organisational routes through which power flows.

Frictions causing resistance do not have to be negative – they can be positive – example of French bankers.

From the perspective of the echelons of an organisation’s elite, *organisational politics* are usually defined as the unsanctioned or illegitimate use of power to achieve unsanctioned or illegitimate ends. Organisational politics can arise from many different scenarios: -

- 1) Structural divisions between different identities and values, and the affective, cognitive and discursive styles associated with these - for example creatives vs. controllers; doers vs. direction-setters
- 2) External pressure from stakeholders in the environment. If important people externally are pushing an issue, those within who can resolve it will become more empowered
- 3) Disciplinary mechanisms – especially their unanticipated effects. Most power is impersonalised in routines
- 4) Events – unexpected and non-routine events can disrupt organisational order
- 5) Change programs that deliberately aim to create a new target state
- 6) The history and outcomes of past politics in the organisation.

The application of *Positive Power* therefore becomes a holistic and pivotal organisational capability, and must address the following key dimensions: -

- 1) To manage positively with power, it is not enough to be a transformational leader
- 2) A diversity of interests must be recognized, diagnosed, and respected *creatively, with curiosity, open-mindedness, a love of learning and perspective*
- 3) This means listening to what others say, modifying one’s position accordingly, choosing appropriate strategies and tactics to accomplish whatever is chosen, as informed by positive power.

4.5 Power and organisations - continued

Pragmatic guidelines for enacting positive power will include wider community and stakeholder engagement. Firstly, the organisational leader needs to decide what the goals should be and what they are trying to accomplish, in consultation with direct stakeholders in the organisation. Once these goals are agreed, the next step is to diagnose patterns of dependence and interdependence. As part of this activity, it is essential to identify which individuals, both inside and outside the organisation, are influential and important to achieving the agreed goals. To be successful, you need to analyse both your own and the important people's power bases, and identify who are the most influential players in the decision. Part of this activity includes assessing what the points of view of the important people are likely to be, and how they might feel about what you are trying to do. In addition, it is important to understand your personal bases of power and influence, and what you can do to gain more positive control over the situation.

4.6 Summary

We concluded that power is more than simple mechanics and is intrinsically relational. We also need to recognise that social and political skills are vital to success in both leadership and change roles - roles which exist in internal contexts and external environments where: -

- Power is constantly shifting
- Power is not rational, but experiential
- Power is contingent on what's in play in the moment
- Power is always relational – it's not something that you have; it is not a thing
- Actors can use unlikely resources to transform situations.

Power dynamics can also be event-driven, and events can be unintended and unexpected. For example, after 9/11 there were changes to power relations in many countries resulting in new institutions, new rules, new norms, new friends, and new enemies. This key event also destroyed a number of existing mental models with regard to power relations.

Managing with power therefore becomes a critical skill of the modern organisational persona. The word persona is used here consciously, as we have seen that power is relational, pervasive and present in both leadership and followership. So, some common observations around how these organisational personae actually execute power are: -

- Legitimate the ideas, values, and demands that you espouse while simultaneously denying or decrying those you seek to oppose
- Power is ultimately deployed in games of organisational symbolism. It is wrapped up in myths, beliefs, language, and legend – the stuff of organisational culture – stories, narratives
- Managers in organisations who are not politically skilled will fail.

Power is tied to knowledge and spatial relations as well as to the semantics of language. We need therefore to be able to distinguish legitimisation from justification, especially in the world of politics.

These perspectives raised new reflections on power and question whether the concept of powerlessness really exists.

Finally, we concluded power works best when it is least seen.

5.0 The unconference

Hanne Dorthe Sørensen is an experienced change leader, and used her two decades of experience to shape and orchestrate the unconference around this year's theme.

The unconference gave alumni the opportunity to select and participate in further discovery around key conference themes. It also nudged the participants into discussions on personal experiences with regard to influence, power, and change and how they framed and related to these concepts. Most importantly, it created deeper awareness and understanding of how participants handled and reflected on power - or not - as many people realised. Most deliberation revolved around power as a tangible concept and asset, versus a negative emotional state, and how these perceptions impact people's personae and psyches.

Powerlessness is relative to the specific persona, and to the specific aspect of that identity that is not verified. It also produces the paradoxes that a stronger 'phoenix can develop and arise from the ashes'; that we are at our most powerful when we are most vulnerable; and that power and powerlessness are not an either/or; but can be situationally interconnected and interchangeable.

Temporally, power in relationships can change dramatically and quickly in both the personal context and in the wider environment - some of these being natural human triggers; others the result of tipping point phenomena. Either way, they are needs-based, and going with the powerlessness flow and journey can often end in a position of power. Even more paradox....

Power is cumulative and relational. This construct proposes that even from a low base of helplessness, one can come to terms with that state and the feeling of 'unfelt', such that power can be built on top. By exploring new relationships, sourcing new knowledge, and opening our minds to new possibilities, power can be generated. However, new outcomes can also be generated from the sum of the parts. Music is an appropriate metaphor for real relational power in action, in terms of the power of the whole working together by leveraging relationships.

Tacit and implicit knowledge will be important in building relations and getting to know one another in power relations.

Power and powerlessness can be intrinsic and narcissistic. They can open the door to wider relations that leverage the human aspect of vulnerability such that a shift from self to others occurs. In this complex process the self can engage, help others, and create strong associated feelings; but we must stay with the journey and let creativity emerge.

Power, on the other hand, creates uncertain outcomes. Does it really create happiness and a better future as intended? Is power really the result of the powerless seeking someone or some entity to be in control? Can the butterfly really flap its wings in Brazil and cause a hurricane in China? Socialism, for example, was intended to liberate all people and create equality and freedom. However, in another bizarre paradox, it ended up creating more power silos, rules, controls and constraints than it replaced. Ultimately, it created more isolation for both individuals and states than the envisaged power of the connected whole. Power had taken its own path and journey and powerlessness was the result.

Of great significance are the roles of the media, regulators, sovereign states, and global multi-national corporates who enact legitimate power. They form relations in various versions of the power equation such as *power to*, *power with*, *power between* and impact enormous numbers of people. They form those relations based on knowledge, policy, laws, and the utility of their products and services.

5.1 Key themes

Managing contradictions of power

Power generates contradictions. When you work within specific situations - such as the influence of fear and crisis, changing behaviour from the top, focusing on a better future - the contradictions become even greater. Both centralisation and decentralisation are required at the same time and in different moments. For example, in medicine the doctor is the lead actor. The next moment it's about lifestyle, and the patient becomes the leader. Directive power is not disempowering. You cannot take decisions in a room with 500 people – it doesn't work. There is no right way – because there are no holistic criteria by which you can determine what to do and when to do it.

Powerlessness as power

We all have choices - to transition from powerlessness to power - or stay with powerlessness. Do people actually choose powerlessness or, as we return to the real world from our reflective state, do we forget about power and return to our daily business paradigm? Regardless, there are many tools and approaches we can leverage to surface conversations around power - such as reflecting, building bridges, bringing it to others, acting into the unknown, setting boundaries, being comfortable with the state, knowing what is the right thing to do, revitalising relationships, defining roles and expectations, and using anger as a driver.

Empowering those who need to but don't want to take power

Modern management speak about empowering; but we haven't talked about the people who might want to stay in a situation of powerlessness. The people who may actually lose benefits by obtaining more power. Even in empowered teams that can take decisions, there seems to be a need for others to take control of some decisions. To enable empowerment, we can set up opportunities for co-diagnosis, co-design conversations to give people a voice and a different vantage point, share values and create common meaning, and leverage the power of convening and setting the agenda.

The multi-capital scorecard as a vehicle for purpose and values

The multi-capital scorecard is both context-based yet shaped in the environment. It embodies a process to make acceptable norms and evaluate trade-offs. It takes into account the trends, history and can leverage these observations in scenarios to encourage and empower change. The scorecard charts are a powerful visual symbol and tool to drive progress. Dialogue and conversations are just as important as the final scorecard structure. They help people understand their current values and what is important to them. Critically, they help to envisage the possible future states and degrees of focus and concentration of various components.

Power between

How do we unfold the 'magic' and 'power' of collaboration? It is important to realise we are all the same in order to be relaxed with the diversity, the flow and the no-flow of working together, as well as the role of anxiety and risk-taking. To make 'music' together we need to know how to become known to one another, and understand what is at stake for the group in the room. The pivotal questions are how to stay with what is important; how to focus on the important work; and lastly how to cultivate a beginner's mind.

Power in a bubble organisation

In many organisations, people focus on the upper echelons and strata of power and don't understand the cross-sections of power – tones in a colour scale. To work productively with power, one needs to be able to understand and assess all aspects of power in an organisation – the colour palette of power in an organisation. When business units are set up as autonomous units, different skills and mental models are needed in order to collaborate and create relationships. We need to better understand the power dynamics and look at multiple new images such as who the owner is, what transitional power and leadership we need, how to be powerful to empower, and if human power is actually going to reduce.

5.1 Key themes - continued

Changing power is also an outcome not just an intervention

People often take authority when they want something to change. They need to be honest about the challenge and be clear about the process. They are not in control. Younger people are taking authority. They can influence by searching for the stakeholders of the decision, and creating new rules to get authorised. Influence without control happens through dialogue. It's also about making a judgement call in the open. You do the analytics but this is not the only input. You need to analyse the data and make a judgement call. We need to have a dance between the content and the relationship.

Organisations of relationships and power – how to talk about the taboos

Courage is key in this context. If necessary, we can use outsiders to create the conditions where people feel courageous. As part of that incubation environment, we need to plant the ideals and model behaviour. If we can recognise the behaviour we want, we can build effective actions on top - such as 'If you name it you can address it', and practise detachment.

Managing power relationships: The cycle of envisioning, engaging, transforming, optimising

It's a process cycle with different people at different stages. It's both planned and emergent. This cycle eases the patterns of domination which normally happen where someone doesn't feel empowered to speak or is dominated by the other members of the group. To facilitate this process cycle, it is essential to have a shared language.

There is a fatigue that sets in when you are trying to change a power structure through any cycle or framework. When you talk about organisational change and change the way power is distributed, the leaders need to have the opportunity to take a break and then go back and 'have another go'. The leader wants change, the front line wants change, and the middle management stops it. An emergent cycle will help to mitigate this.

However, it is critical to understand that it is a question of timing and you need to both stay patient and stay focussed. You cannot have the conversation if the time is not right – you cannot force it. If you do, both the experience and the outcome might be painful and destructive.

Power of courage

As stated above, courage in many dimensions and contexts is needed for change. But how and when we become courageous depends upon many different scenarios. These scenarios can include finding courage in action (vs. inaction); surfing the edge of the unknown, where courage can be found; but there can be a fine line between when to stand up and when to fit in. In essence, courage is about risk assessment and selecting the appropriate approach. A consultant, for example, may be expected to challenge the status quo when an insider cannot. However, it also takes courage to work from the inside and give up independence.

Discursive power

There is nothing obvious, static, or Newtonian about power. Power is perceived and constructed – so let go and find the freedom. Less power can mean more power – so choose your grail carefully. One can become empowered by detaching from power – so reframe the situation to see different outcomes. 'I am a God in the depths of my thoughts' – so destroy that psychic prison. Power is always present – so never swim upstream; there are times to just go with the flow.

5.1 Key themes - continued

Man vs. Machine – who has the power?

Even in this era, many decisions are made by, or aided by, machines - often at the strategic level. How do we live with this phenomenon if 50% of jobs will be automated in 20 years? What are we going to do with our time when machines are doing our jobs? Who controls the machines and how do we ensure that machines are not being abused by the wrong people? Artificial Intelligence can potentially create beneficial effects; but how do we prevent actors from using it for their own gains? Legislation needs to catch up; but the humanitarian impact in terms of depression or break-downs also needs to be carefully considered.

The World Economic Forum and similar platforms talk about the transformative potential of technology. It's even a populist Hollywood theme – Skynet and what if the machines take over; but there is not much discussion about the pace of technological change. A pace that is moving faster than the related changes on the socio-political front, which would allow us to manage the impact on society. For example, the future of energy: in the next 20 years, we'll be in a world where energy won't be a constraining factor – look at the potential. There is nothing being analysed about countries whose domestic economy is totally dependent upon oil and gas, like Nigeria, Iraq, etc. We have evidence that most of the socio-economic implications of technological development are ignored by the companies whose primary motivation is to push their solution.

Cyberisation is going to become increasingly important. This is not going to disappear; only intensify. We all have the potential to become more cyberised. We will have chips implanted to monitor things. In “Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man” a 1964 book by [Marshall McLuhan](#), the author saw the future media as an extension of the central nervous system. We already know the colossal risks of this path; our experience with machine-based intelligence has not been very successful – such as the dysfunctional algorithms in the finance sector, which escalated into a vicious cycle of market deviance and value destruction. There are papers produced on the impact of different technological developments. Like business review articles, article acceptance is dependent upon providing a technical solution. So, we need to open the space in order to have meaningful discussion around these topics.

6.0 Summary

In summary, power and powerlessness comprise multiple dimensions of emotions, narcissism, relations, knowledge that combine in complex ways. However, these are not static moment-in-time constructs; rather situational and interconnected drivers that co-exist in ever-shifting cycles of power and powerlessness.

Power and its unintended consequences are closely related. The reflexivity involved, and assumptions of linear cause and effect, produce risks that power players frequently fail to manage. This phenomenon is further muddled by treating power, leadership, and charisma as being one and the same.

However much we need to, exploring the topic of power from a strategic perspective is challenging. You can use the information to analyse situations. Machiavelli was an early ethnographer, who hung around the courts to observe what people did and wrote regarding his observations. The link to the practice of change agency is to become ethnographers – to look and listen more than reacting very quickly. As ethnographers, we must pay close attention to the observed; what categorisation they use; what pronouns they use; to whom they refer; what metaphors they like to use. This can be quite revealing, depending upon the different parts of the organisations.

Sometimes, in the process of diagnosis and analysis of any given situation, it may be appropriate to bring power up as a specific topic for intervention. Using the example of Machiavelli raises the problem of talking about power. As a conversation topic, it has very negative connotations.

6.1 The unfinished story

While we covered a diverse spread of topics, the theme of 'Influence, Power, and Change' is pivotal to our personal and organisational lives. Hence, it is fitting that, as part of the conclusion, we should also note the many outstanding considerations such as 1) How do we help groups that are left behind - for example, creating democracy in an authoritarian state? 2) The context into which one intervenes depends upon the developmental stage of the target community – how do we evaluate the challenges such as transference of power? 3) What are the real power dimensions of multinational corporates, global organisations, and sovereign states? 4) How do we bring up the subject of power within a consultancy intervention and how do we use it? 5) Cyberisation – what is really going on? 6) How can people engage in and influence these critical discussions?

6.2 Reflection

The content presented within the Consulting and Coaching for Change qualification and the Change Leaders Community of Practice are intended to help us to reflect upon and synthesise different knowledge-sets, rather than create definitive answers to all the questions we may have. Real change leaders don't just have one toolbox and one set of tools. In fact, the toolbox grows and changes as the challenges evolve.

There was a considerable shift within the tCL group during the conference. We acquired the ability to recognise the implications around power, and for some this triggered a quantum leap. One key question for our practice – do I do it implicitly or explicitly? If we have questions and concerns, these will stay vivid for the years to come. However, if we get a quick answer, we forget it. The more grounded we are in the question, the longer it will last and the more we can build upon it.

Going forward, rather than going deeper into the content, we can step back and recognise what progress has been made and the additional developments that can be made as a group. We can work with what we already have in the group and create a space where the 'power between' can emerge. While we didn't make this explicit, our objective as the conference unfolded was to distribute the power, to be able to determine the agenda as a group and diversify the input.

In that context - mission accomplished! In many others, journey started.....

Appendices

A1 Bio's

Phil Wall

Phil Wall is a co-founder and active volunteer for WeSeeHope. WeSeeHope is a partner-based charitable organisation that focusses on building long-term impact across over 200 communities, and six countries in Africa. The organisation's mission is to enable children who are orphaned, isolated, and dehumanised by poverty to see and have a future. By applying an asset-based mind-set that comes from positive psychology, focussing on what you have, as opposed to what's not there, it creates hope. It applies key actions in the form of restore, protect, educate, and equip to create empowered conditions for these communities. Most importantly, it looks to create sustainability in these communities such that they continue to move forward and benefit from the WeSeeHope projects.

Wall also works as a performance coach, helping businesses to facilitate change in and through their leaders.

Martin Herrmann

Martin Herrmann originally trained as medical doctor and has worked for two years in psychosomatic medicine. For twenty-five years Herrmann worked as a consultant focussing on global complex change, and for last five years in leadership education with blue-chip clients such as Airbus, BMW, Shell, and Novartis.

After finishing his medical studies, Herrmann started clinical practice and realised that specialised communication skills were missing from medical environments. For the next 25 years – Herrmann focussed on teaching and supervising on 'Palliative care in Bavaria' in institutions. Herrmann created a strong network of experts, and through his work helped organise and institutionalise methodologies aimed at improving sensitive engagements with patients.

Herrmann is currently consulting to the World Health Organisation (WHO), and is piloting a 3-year project aimed at educating and empowering vulnerable populations such as refugees.

Stewart Clegg

Stewart Clegg is a British-born Australian professor in field of organisational studies. He is a prolific author and editor. Notable works include the *Sage handbook of power* (2009), *Frameworks of power* and *Sage directions in organisation studies* (2009). Clegg's research interests include organisation and management theory and the theory of power, where he is a globally acknowledged guru. He sits on editorial boards for research journals and is editor of *Advances in Organisation Studies*, for Benjamins, the European and American publishers. Clegg has also acted as consultant to international newspapers, as well as to universities, business firms, and health services.

Hanne Dorthe Sørensen

Hanne Dorthe Sørensen is an experienced change leader and has worked with HR and leadership development for more than two decades at all levels of the Danish public sector. Most recently she held the position as CEO of the state agency for HR-development and she is currently working as an independent consultant and associated professor of Copenhagen Business School and University of Copenhagen.

Lisa Francis – Jennings

Lisa Francis – Jennings is an independent transformation consultant with over 25 years of experience. Lisa specialises in Organizational Transformation and Knowledge Transfer. Lisa's key strengths are her ability to recognise the essential qualities of a situation, and connect disparate pieces of information to help her clients find creative business solutions and overcome organisational challenges.

Eamon Mulligan

Eamon Mulligan is an experienced 'C' level executive and transformation leader with over 30 years of experience gained from working in global roles with leading financial, telecommunications, and educational organisations across Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. He is a delivery-focussed leader with a successful track record of shaping and delivering significant transformation agendas in different organisations, in diverse markets, and with varying levels of economic and organisational maturity. Eamon has recently enriched his career with assignments in consulting, coaching, and academia across Asia. Specifically, he delivers executive education modules for Singapore Management University as a trainer for working professionals.

Thea Hazel-Stals

Thea Hazel-Stals is an experienced change leader and director and has worked in organisational and social change for more than two decades, within business corporations and not-for-profit. Most recently she was the CEO of a not-for-profit start-up for youth financial capability in the Netherlands, applying co-creation and design thinking in working with multiple partners in this complex field. Currently she is working as an independent consultant and she is the events director for the Change Leaders.

Tom Miller

Tom Miller is a lifelong entrepreneur, teacher and coach. Tom began as a teacher and coach shortly after completing his B.S. from Baylor University. It wasn't long before he started his first company, Symbolist, which was consistently voted a top-12 recognition provider by HRO Today Magazine. He obtained a master's degree in Coaching and Consulting for Change from Oxford University and HEC Paris.

Tom is also the author of, LIFT – A New Paradigm for Building Influential Leaders. He has seen and believes that no matter who you are, you can make an enormous difference in your place of employment and in life. Tom is currently serving as an adjunct professor at Western State University in Gunnison, Colorado where he has observed and can uniquely speak about the post-millennials - your future employees – and how to guide them to become influencers in the workplace.

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Thomas Hobbes (1588 - 1679)

Jeremy Bentham (1748 - 1832)

Yes, Prime Minister is a satirical British political sitcom written by Sir Antony Jay and Jonathan Lynn

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