

Culture and Competence

*No problem can be solved from the
same consciousness that created it.¹*

Einstein

The culture of a social system is significantly defined by its effective objectives. This concerns not only artistic creation, but may range from the normal course of life to specific problems.²

Value judgements as an expression of satisfaction levels depend on their cultural context. What is being judged positively tends to be strengthened, aspects that are found negative weakened; what isn't being judged at all usually goes unnoticed.

An organization's system of objectives is responsible for which problems get noticed; it has influence on which solutions come into consideration. This treatment is usually flawed.

Not everything that is effective is good, not everything, that is good, is effective. In analyzing a problem there can be misperception, or the wrong aspects are selected.³

Nietzsche even goes to such lengths as to characterise good results as rare and accidental events:

»And when truth has once triumphed there, then ask yourselves with good distrust: ›What strong error has fought for it?«⁴

Even when perceiving the biggest errors observers rarely come to the right results when thought reality and felt reality differ:

*»And he comes to the conclusion:
His mishap was an illusion,
for, he reasons pointedly,
that which must not, can not be.«⁵*

Cultures themselves can be deficient up to pathological; the respective organisational research speaks volumes.⁶

¹ in fact it depends on the problem definition, c.f. Glück, T. R.: Das Letzte Tabu

² objectives don't have to be given explicitly. It's quite obvious that the set of an individual's effective objectives has strong influence on his behaviour, therefore they affect his personality. Accordingly culture may be interpreted as an organisation's personality as well.

³ »not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted« (Einstein)

⁴ In testing scientific hypothesis there are two basic types of errors. A type I error occurs, if a true hypothesis is rejected. A type II error on the other hand means that a false hypothesis isn't rejected.

⁵ Christian Morgenstern, transl. by Max Knight

⁶ For a first approach to the topic I recommend the classic »Parkinson's Law«; alternatively you might choose »Dilbert« et al.

On closer examination most of the relevant problem areas can be put down to disinformation. Different cultures show different degrees of disinformation in various qualities. Special attention has to be paid to this fact: the higher an organisation's disinformation density, the lower its capacity of reaction when facing a changing environment (this capacity can be interpreted as its intelligence or its problem solving competence). Our substantial challenge lies not so much in implementing old-wine-in-new-bottles-fads, but in creating organizations that are robust against disinformation.

It's interesting that most organizations that are incompetent in solving problems have elaborate concepts of competence and methods for its development and evaluation. This saying gives a good impression of the issue:

*Those who can, do.
Those who can't, teach.
Those who can't teach, teach teachers.*

Not everything that is labelled "competence" is in fact competent. In this context institutionalised development of competence guides to core incompetence: this means a qualification for ineffectiveness.

In fact there is no alternative to developing pseudo-competence without consideration of knowledge quality aspects. The "implicit ignorance" of Passive Disinformation is tantamount to objectives for anyone concerned. It is nothing less than solidified incompetence, even if it might be interpreted as qualification in certain cases.

Effective organizational development that is robust against disinformation demands to break The Ultimate Taboo. Effective cultural improvement cannot be achieved by more of the same, but by breaking the »same«.

Knowledge quality orientation enables effective, dynamic competence development which is in balance with cultural concerns.

T. R. Glück: Das Letzte Tabu : Blinde Flecken, Passau: Antea

T. R. Glück: Blinde Flecken in der Unternehmensführung :

Desinformation und Wissensqualität, Passau: Antea

<http://www.knowledgequality.org>

<http://www.thought-parasites.net>

<http://www.das-letzte-tabu.de>