

Foreword by
Daniel Mezick

Silke Hermann | Niels Pflaeging

OpenSpace Beta

A handbook for organizational
transformation in just 90 days

From the authors of
Organize for Complexity
and *Complexitools*

Silke Hermann | Niels Pflaeging

OpenSpace Beta

A handbook for organizational
transformation in just 90 days

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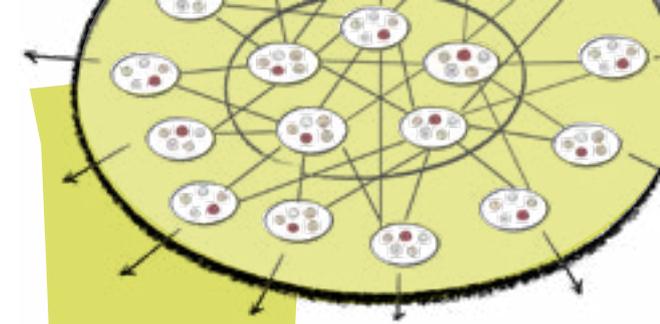
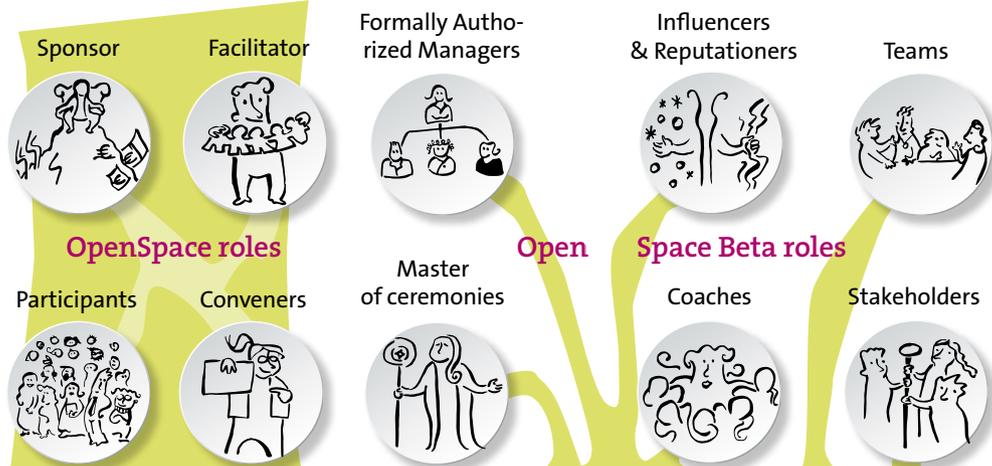
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OpenSpace Beta timeline



60 days

OpenSpace meeting 1

90 days

OpenSpace meeting 2

30 days

Build-up (Set stage!)

Beginning (Prepare!)

Practicing - flipping - learning (Do!)

Ending (Check!)

Quiet period (Level up!)

Preparing executives



Socializing the invitation (45 days)



Theme crafting



Coaching role begins



Draft & send invitation



Day 1:
Opt-in meeting



Day 2:
Prep day



Proceedings OS 1



Practicing Beta team patterns



BetaCodex constraints



Value creation strengthening



Time-boxed flipping



Learning acceleration



Proprietors of power in action



Deliberate storytelling



Theme & invitation



Day 1 & 2:
Opt-in meeting



Proceedings OS 2



Coaching role ends



Chapter debrief



Recurring OpenSpace



**“Without passion, nobody cares.
Without responsibility, nothing gets done.”**

Harrison Owen

Contents

Acknowledgment: Daniel Mezick & OpenSpace Agility	14
Foreword - by Daniel Mezick	16
How to use this book	18
Origins of OpenSpace Beta	19
The Why of OpenSpace Beta	20
Part 1. Conceptual background to OpenSpace Beta	22
Self-organization and assumptions on human nature	24
Org Physics: The 3 structures of organizations	25
Decentralization & team autonomy	27
Learning, change and the neutral zone	28
Work as a game	33
Terminology	35
Part 2. OpenSpace Technology: Roles & key ideas	40
About OpenSpace Technology	42
A brief user's guide to OpenSpace Technology - by Harrison Owen	43
Authority and self-organization in OpenSpace	48
OpenSpace roles	49
<i>The Sponsor</i>	50
<i>The Facilitator</i>	52
<i>The Participants</i>	54
<i>The Conveners</i>	55
The four principles of OpenSpace - and the one law	56
Part 3. OpenSpace Beta: Roles & key ideas	58
OpenSpace Beta: Summing it up	60
Key elements of OpenSpace Beta	61
OpenSpace Beta roles	65
<i>The Formally Authorized Managers</i>	66
<i>The Influencers & The Reputationers</i>	67
<i>The Teams</i>	69
<i>The Master of Ceremonies</i>	70
<i>The Coaches</i>	71
<i>The Stakeholders</i>	73

Contents (continued)

Part 4. 60 days: Build-up (Set stage!)	74		
Concepts, context, tasks	76		
Power of invitation	77		
Opt-in participation	78		
Preparing executives	79		
Coaching role begins	80		
Game mechanics	81		
Setting the stage (60 days)	83		
Theme crafting	84		
Draft & send invitation	85		
Socializing the invitation (45 days)	87		
Part 5. OS 1: Beginning (Prepare!)	88		
Concepts, context, tasks	90		
Day 1. Opt-in meeting	91		
Proceedings from OS 1	92		
Day 2. Prep day: Setting up time-boxed flipping	94		
Part 6. 90 days: Practicing - flipping - learning (Do!)	96		
Concepts, context, tasks	98		
Practicing - flipping - learning (90 days)	99		
Value-creation strengthening	100		
Time-boxed flipping	102		
Learning acceleration	104		
Practicing Beta team patterns	106		
The BetaCodex	108		
Laws of the BetaCodex	109		
BetaCodex constraints	110		
Disciplined practice	112		
Direct experience	113		
Proprietors of power in action	114		
Deliberate storytelling	116		
Part 7. OS 2: Ending (Check!)	118		
Concepts, context, tasks	120		
		Theme & invitation	121
		Second OpenSpace meeting (OS 2)	122
		Day 1 & 2. Opt-in meeting	124
		Proceedings from OS 2	125
		Part 8. 30 days: Quiet period (Level up!)	126
		Concepts, context, tasks	128
		Quiet period (30 days)	129
		Energy, action and increased momentum	130
		Coaching role ends	132
		Higher performance	134
		Chapter debrief	135
		Recurring OpenSpace	136
		The rest. Additional resources & more	138
		Recommended reading	140
		Complementary online stuff & video content	142
		Other books by the authors	143
		About the authors	144
		Acknowledgements	146

Acknowledgment:

Daniel Mezick & OpenSpace Agility

Only a couple of months have passed since our first encounter with Daniel Mezick, in May 2018. It is hard to come across a fresh, sophisticated concept that is as well fleshed-out, and as well-explained as Daniel's *OpenSpace Agility*. When we met Daniel, and got talking about inviting, non-coercive approaches to change, we immediately sensed the potential of his core approach for what we call Beta transformation.

OpenSpace Agility has been a booster to our creativity: It kick-started the development of OpenSpace Beta. Thanks to the creators of OpenSpace Agility and the handbook that accompanies it, we were able to conceive OpenSpace Beta and this handbook in just a few months, from idea to market.

We borrowed a lot from the wonderful book by Daniel and his co-authors; we modified a lot of details, took out a few things, and added roughly 30% of Beta-related stuff. Through remixing & tweaking, we transformed Daniel's original concept to serving transformation of entire organizations, regardless of size.

We are thankful to Daniel for his radically open-source approach to innovation, which we share and cherish! Daniel's generosity, and his willingness to share experience and conceptual insight have been unusual. We think that his spirit of radical sharing is exemplary for a new era of collaboration that we all long for. It is this spirit of all-in collaboration that we urgently need, if we want to shape the future of work, together.

What's so cool about this:

While the overall approach of OpenSpace Beta is new (it blew our minds quite a few times while we figured it out for ourselves!), all the concepts within the approach are research-based and practically tested. Everything we present in this book has been tested and done, by ourselves throughout our 15 years of working on Beta organizations, by Daniel and by the other OpenSpace Agility creators and practitioners.

Our special thanks go to all the authors of The OpenSpace Agility Handbook, a rich and innovative resource that has been the foundation of the book you are holding in your hands. *The OpenSpace Agility Handbook* proved to be such a great resource that we were able to use it as a model for several of the sections of this book, and tweak other parts, in order to make them fit for Beta-style, full-fledge, organizational transformation.

Thank you for letting us use the OpenSpace Agility Handbook and web text as a baseline resource: **Mark Sheffield, Deborah Pontes, Harold Shinsato and Louise Kold-Taylor.**

For more about their work, visit www.OpenSpaceAgility.com

Foreword - by Daniel Mezick

Silke and Niels are doing something remarkable with this book: they are spreading an idea whose time has come. And that idea is a very simple one: the idea that it's the passionate and responsible people that create real change. It's the idea that willing people actually make everything happen. The people who say "yes" to an invitation.

The idea of the invitational Open Space meeting and using it in organizations appeared in the 1980s. According to the tale often told, Harrison Owen "discovered it" while enjoying two martinis and reflecting on life. A little later on, he wrote his first book, entitled: *Spirit: Transformation and Development in Organizations*. Harrison always did his best to keep Open Space truly open and free. Good news travels fast, and thousands of Open Space events took place, worldwide, over the next 30 or so years.

Then I showed up. At the time, I was an "Agile coach" looking for a better way. By 2010, I was sure that "Open Space" was that better way. And I started experimenting. **I discovered that you can get very strong results if you arrange two Open Space events about 45 to 90 days apart, with some space in between, for the whole group to figure things out.**

And from that idea, "Prime/OS" was born: a method for creating an environment, in enterprises of all sizes, where rapid, authentic and lasting change can be achieved. I formalized the idea and started teaching it to people. I published all of it under a free, "open source" license to encourage people to innovate and improve on the basic idea.

Then Niels and Silke showed up. They immediately recognized the power of recurring and iterative Open Space events to manifest change in organizations. They asked for my permission and support with making use of Prime/OS and the OpenSpace Agility Handbook, and I gladly agreed. The result is this remarkable little book, and the free-to-the-world, "open source" licensing of their remarkable "OpenSpace Beta" definition, derived from Prime/OS.

Daniel Mezick is an author, executive and Agile coach, and keynote speaker.

He is the formulator of *OpenSpace Agility* and *Prime/OS*. He is co-author of *Inviting Leadership*, and the author of *The Culture Game*, a book describing 16 patterns of group behavior that help make any team smarter. The *Culture Game* book is based on five years of experience, coaching 119 Agile teams across 25 different organizations. Daniel's client list includes CapitalOne, Intuit, the Hartford, Cigna, Siemens Healthcare, Harvard University, and many smaller enterprises. Daniel is based in Guilford, Connecticut.

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The beauty of what Silke and Niels have done is profound.

First, they have created the conditions where the BetaCodex mindset will always stick, no matter what. That's because the Open Space "wrapper" encourages experimentation, innovation, and self-organization. Second, they are publishing the core ideas of OpenSpace Beta under a free "open source" license. This license allows you to innovate and create something new. They are literally inviting you to study their work, derive from their work, improve upon it, and make an all-new creation if you so choose.

We live in a time when we need more freedom, not less. More innovation, not less. More collaboration, not less. We need more progress, not less. More openness, not less.

So go ahead. Study this book.
Start with OpenSpace Beta. Try things. Take a shot.
Because you never know what might happen if you try.

Daniel Mezick,
August 2018

How to use this book

Welcome to the OpenSpace Beta handbook! The purpose of this handbook is to serve as a handy reference and as a pocket guide for those who are adopting the Beta organizational model or otherwise using OpenSpace Beta to bring strength and vitality to their Beta adoption efforts.

This book is for anyone who is interested in creating more rapid and lasting Beta transformations. This includes company executives, directors, managers, team managers and the consultants and coaches who serve them.

Throughout most of this book, **pages with white background** indicate content on roles and activities. **Pages with light green background** indicate more abstract, conceptual content.

You may prepare for using this book in several ways:

- **Have a basic understanding of the laws of the BetaCodex and how Beta can help your organization.** Part 1 of this book will provide you with *Conceptual background to OpenSpace Beta*: This is especially worth reading if you are new to Beta. Part 6 of this book, entitled *Practicing - flipping - learning (Do!)*, discusses the BetaCodex laws, or principles. The www.betacodex.org website provides many resources about this, too.
- **Have a basic understanding of the OpenSpace (OS) meeting format.** OpenSpace Beta® and the Prime/OS™ framework behind OpenSpace Beta are inspired by the work of Harrison Owen, specifically by his book *Spirit: Transformation and Development in Organizations*. It is a great work, full of keen insights and actionable ideas. It should be of strong interest to anyone who is serious about organizational systems, organizational dynamics and culture. The *Spirit* book is available online as a free PDF download at www.openspaceworld.com/spirit.pdf. Part 2 of this book includes a brief user's guide by Harrison Owen.
- **A bibliography of important books related to OpenSpace Beta** appears at the end of this book. The *Terminology* section in Part 1 will help you with key vocabulary. Visit www.betacodex.org for information about Beta certification and additional learning resources on Beta.

Origins of OpenSpace Beta - and what you can do with it

OpenSpace Beta® derives from Prime/OS™ - an open source culture technology which was developed by Daniel Mezick and published under the CC-BY-SA-4.0 license. More about Prime/OS™ can be found here: www.Prime-OS.com and www.OpenSpaceAgility.com/about

OpenSpace Beta® and Prime/OS are freely available, open-source, culture technologies: You are free to derive from OpenSpace Beta™ and create innovative new works yourself and share your innovations with others and even commercialize them.

OpenSpace Beta™, the open-source OpenSpace Beta timeline, events, rules, roles, meetings, consulting techniques and related documents are published under the Creative Commons Attribution Share-Alike license.

This license is an open source license: Under this license, you are strongly encouraged to innovate by freely developing applications based upon OpenSpace Beta.

About the license Attribution ShareAlike – “CC-BY-SA”: This license lets you remix, tweak and build upon OpenSpace Beta, even for commercial reasons. In so doing, you agree to:

- credit the original authors, Silke Hermann and Niels Pflaeging and
- provide our specified link to the source material, as listed below and
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Specifically, you must provide and **prominently display** the following link with any and all derived works and included as part of all related graphics you develop: “*This work is derived from OpenSpace Beta®, an open source culture technology published under the CC-BY-SA-4.0 license and found here: www.OpenSpaceBeta.com”*

OpenSpace Beta and the underlying Prime/OS are open source social technologies. Remix & tweak them. Build upon them! Then share again!

Bye-bye coercion, hello engagement!

The Why of OpenSpace Beta

Mandating reduces engagement. Invitation and opt-in participation increase it. Engagement is essential for rapid and lasting Beta transformation. OpenSpace Beta, consequently, is based on invitation, instead of mandating specific Beta practices.

Prescribing practices makes no allowance for what people want, what they think, or what they feel. Prescription reduces engagement: The intelligent and creative people who do the work “check out” and disengage.

People doing the work in organizations today are well-educated. They were hired for a reason - usually because they are intelligent, qualified and capable. Such people resist imposition of change (not the change itself!), but they often will not articulate their views. Instead, they may either ignore directives (“internal sabotage”) or walk away completely. Corrective notions of “improving communications” and “achieving better buy-in” completely miss the point: What is needed is to invite the relevant workforce to co-create the organization’s development together, as a collaborative iterative effort, with everyone’s perspective valued.

How can we invite a whole large organization to co-create change at scale? **It can only work through an approach based on consistent self-organization, within a framed structure of iterations and intentional intervention on all levels of the system, which fully engages the relevant workforce constructively throughout all of the work.** This is achieved by applying the principles of OpenSpace Technology at the beginning and the end of the timed iterations, combined with the principles of the BetaCodex.

The OpenSpace Beta pattern calls the Sponsor to:

- Explain the case for transformation, or for moving in the Beta direction. Explain the challenges the business is facing in terms of competition, pricing pressure, organizational effectiveness, etc.
- Make it clear the organization *will embrace Beta principles*. Explain that specific practices have *not* been determined.

- Invite everyone involved into the process of writing the Beta transformation story. Communicate clearly that the managers do not have all the answers and that they are looking for the very best ideas to make the move to Beta genuine, authentic, rapid and lasting.
- Make it plain that the organization will work with a wide array of Beta practices. The results of each intervention on the system (or “Flip”) will be inspected to determine whether to continue the specific practice. If a practice does not meet the needs of the team or the organization, it can be changed or discarded. The teams are even free to “roll their own” practices. The only constraint is that the practices must align with the BetaCodex.

By adopting Beta principles this way, the people doing the work have a strong sense of control, belonging and purpose. They engage.

You do not get to self-organization through method that relies on imposition. If you want to create a truly great and truly high-performing organization, there is no way around Beta, or disciplined self-organization. To get to Beta, in turn, you need an approach to transformation that itself is coherent with BetaCodex principles (page 109), too. Such an approach must be consistently self-organized and engaging.

OpenSpace Beta in itself is an invitation. It is based on invitations, personal responsibility and self-organization.

Part 1

Conceptual background
to OpenSpace Beta

(There is nothing as practical!)

Self-organization and assumptions on human nature

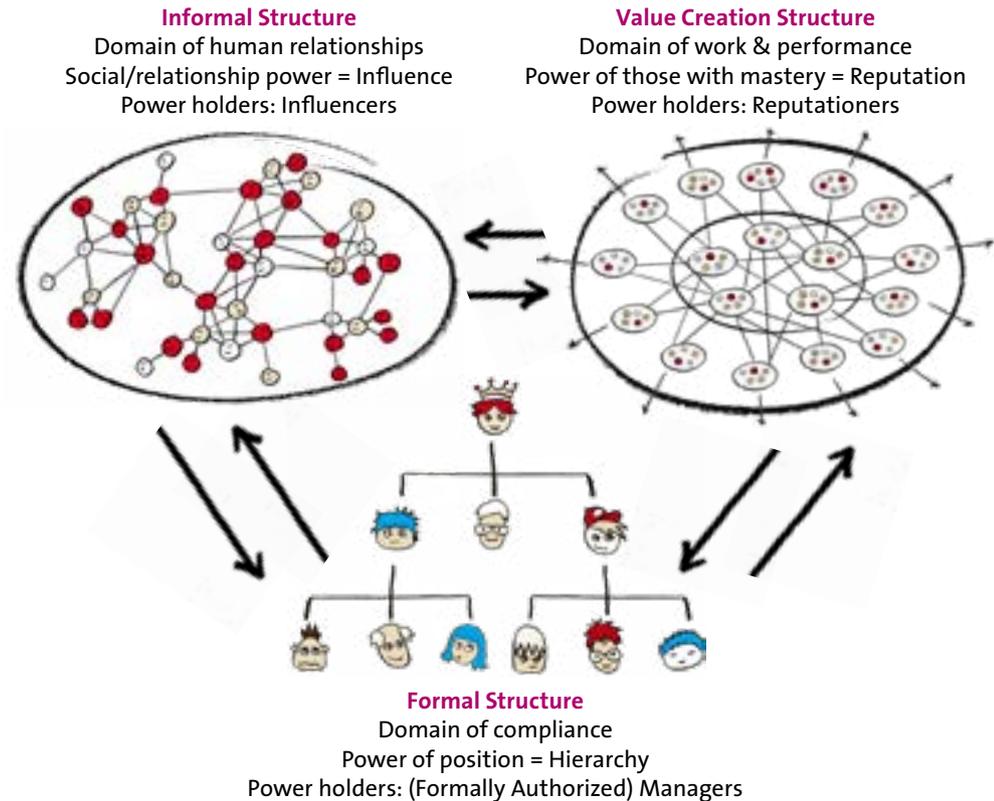
In his book *The Human Side of Enterprise*, published back in 1960, Douglas McGregor presented a key message: That we hold two images of human nature in our heads and in our hearts - Theory X and Theory Y. And that one of these images, Theory X, is a fraud. McGregor stressed, on every page of that book: Theory X people (which supposedly have to be motivated extrinsically) do not exist in the real world. They have never existed, do not exist and will never exist: They are merely a figment of our imagination. Theory X, by consequence, although common as an image of human nature we hold dear, is no more than an ugly prejudice about other people at work.

Even 60 years after McGregor's book, however, most people claim and firmly believe, that "Theory Xers" exist around them. Inevitably, they act accordingly, making the world a worse place than it could be. We stubbornly adhere to a myth that McGregor tried to dispel back in 1960; we apply method that would only work with Xers. We are stuck in a world of Theory X delusion. Most of us are guilty of perpetuating the Theory X prejudice.

The good news: 100% of actual people are Theory Y people. The world is full of them, and they long to be treated as the self-motivated people they are. They strive on engagement, which is the fuel of rapid and lasting Beta transformation. **Mandating of Beta practices, on the other hand, reduces the potential for genuine engagement, and it has the potential to ruin your Beta transformation. It is for "Xers".** Without an opt-in feature to the game, the game of transformation is not "well-formed" - which makes it less fun to play. Invitation is a far better approach, as it aligns with the BetaCodex laws, or principles. **Invitation increases engagement by offering options, as well as a sense of control and a feeling of belonging, which are sources of basic human happiness.** Opting in or out of an Invitation increases the sense of control. Accepting an Invitation increases the sense of inclusion.

OpenSpace Beta is a "good game", partly because of its opt-in nature. Invitation can engage the independent thinkers in your organization. They are the ones who help create traction for Beta.

Org Physics: The 3 structures of organizations



Every organization has three structures. There is no decision to make about having all three of these structures, or not: None of the three structures is optional, or nice to have. They are part of what we call organizational physics - universal laws that apply to every organization, large or small, old or new, for profit or social, everywhere in the world.

The three structures of organizations are carriers of three kinds of power, and three kinds of leaderships that are present in every organization.

- **Formal Structure is the domain of compliance.** Power held in this structure is referred to as hierarchy. This is the structure that is most

Org Physics: The 3 structures of organizations (continued)

commonly referred to as “our structure”, in most organizations. Sadly, it is often wrongly assumed that work or value creation can be organized, or improved, through formal structure. Even though this structure is useful only for organizing compliance, or “being within the law”. We call leadership in this structure “Compliance Leadership.”

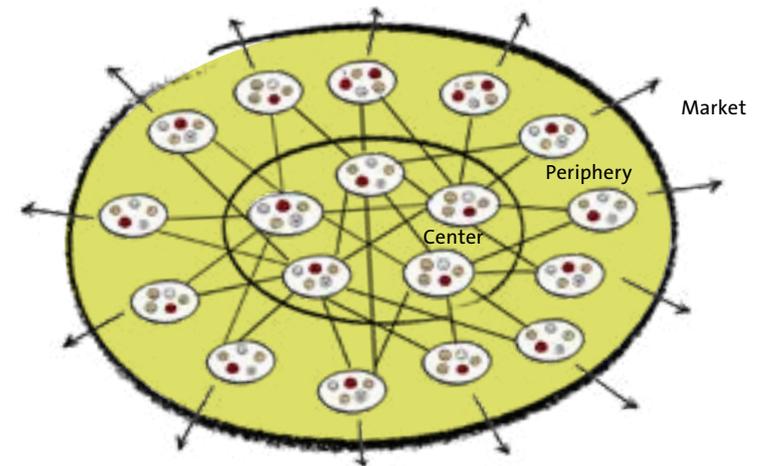
- **Informal Structure is the domain of the social within the organization.** Power held in this structure is commonly referred to as influence. It is social power held by those with social relationships inside the organization. Informal Structure is neither good, nor bad. It is. We call leadership in this structure “Social Leadership.”
- **Value Creation Structure is the domain of work, performance, competitiveness, and innovation.** Power held in this structure is referred to as reputation. It is the power of those with mastery. Organizational performance can only emerge from this structure with its outside-in/inside-out relationships, and team constellations within Periphery and Center. It is here where “flow” happens. It is here where value creation can be strengthened, and waste fought against. We call leadership in this Structure “Value Creation Leadership.”

The three structures of organizations are interdependent. Every member of an organization is present in all structures. In Formal Structure, every person typically holds one position. In Informal Structure, that person operates a personal web of social relationships. In Value Creation Structure, that very same person holds several roles, within one or more team or cell constellations. Effectiveness of interventions within an organization’s system can be increased by examining in advance the structures in which these interventions will interfere, and by examining what reactions within the three structures are likely to occur. It is also useful to ask, for every flip, or intervention in the system, who from one or more structures is needed to increase the likelihood of a certain desired outcome.

{ Interventions in the system, or flipping, may impact one or more of the three structures - or none. }

Decentralization & team autonomy

In complexity, organizations must be federative, or decentralized. When outside markets reign, it is the organization’s periphery that necessarily earns the money, learns from the market and adapts quickly and intelligently to external market forces. The center - isolated from the market by the periphery - loses its knowledge advantage. In these conditions, it can rarely give useful orders and the steering collapses. The linkage between periphery and center must be designed accordingly, so that it becomes possible to assimilate and process market dynamics. **For that, the periphery must steer the center through internal pull, or demand-supply relationships. The periphery must be sovereign of the organization’s resources.**



In “decentralized mode”, the need for having a middle management disappears entirely. Here, self-organization and leadership from the outside-in become possible.

{ In the principle of decentralization, the devolution of autonomy and decision-making power to the periphery goes on and on. Decentralization never ends. }

Learning, change and the neutral zone

Profound change is a transitional state of being for an individual. William Bridges called this transitional state the Neutral Zone. It cannot be skipped.

Even though there might be a heightened sense of awareness, and lots of energy, it is a no-man's land of transition, confusion, stress, and vagueness. It lacks definition. No longer where you were, and not yet where you will end up, the Neutral Zone has the potential to drive people crazy.

Because learning in Beta is constant, Beta transformations generate a steady stream of stressful "in-between", or Neutral Zone experience. That may generate a lot of stress in the organization. Learning is change, and change is stressful because it triggers Neutral Zone experiences.

The Neutral Zone is a stressful state of being that occurs in transitions. Beta transformation requires everyone to adopt new ways of thinking and acting - pretty much at the same time. This intertwined individual experiences of the Neutral Zone can cause considerable worry and anxiety. As a solution, OpenSpace Beta uses a well-understood cultural device called the Rite of Passage, to channel actions in the Neutral Zone and reduce stress.

Adopting Beta always means lots and lots of new learning. Learning itself can be perceived as de-stabilizing and stressful, because it means going through transition. All genuine learning in adults creates instability and stress, until that learning is integrated.

Mental models

We know the world through our models. Mature adults hold millions of models of reality, and genuine new learning challenges the validity of at least some of these models. This invalidation of previous assumptions produces an unstable state (often referred to as "cognitive dissonance") until the new understanding is integrated.

The adoption of a Beta organizational model definitely creates cognitive dissonance, and the need for executives, directors, managers, and Team members to step into the Neutral Zone. The introduction of Beta is usually a trigger for most Participants. This "triggered" behavior may be based on all kinds of emotions, including excitement and fear - and is a natural reaction to entering the unstable state of the Neutral Zone.

Before Beta, roles and methods of interaction were well understood. New roles and new ways of interacting require a new mindset. The process of learning can be stressful. When faced with an uncomfortable transition, the natural and safe thing to do is turn around and go back. People in organization routinely do or try exactly this. They may backslide on Beta and (try to) return to where they came from. This "going back" in the short term reduces worry, fear and anxiety, some of the core emotions evoked by the Neutral Zone.

Rites of passage

Rites of passage are cultural rituals or games. A rite of passage is a ritual whose structure defines a beginning, a middle and an end of a transitional experience. Rites of passage have been enacted for thousands of years to deal with stressful transitions of human experience. OpenSpace Beta employs a rite of passage that begins and ends with an OpenSpace meeting event. This, plus the other mechanics of the 90 days, brings structure to the chaos associated with integrating new learning.

Tribal societies, as well as modern societies throughout the world and accords different periods have reached the exact same conclusion: The Neutral Zone must be framed and handled carefully. The best way to handle it is with a rite of passage. **The purpose of such rites of passage is to ease, not to eliminate, the transition from one state of being to another.** In the modern day, we routinely introduce change into organizations, while bliss-

Learning, change and the neutral zone (continued)

fully ignoring the essential human dynamics of the Neutral Zone. This is a serious error - one that we are keen to avoid in OpenSpace Beta.

Designing a rite of passage is an exercise in experience design. Rites of passage serve as containers that reduce the highly destabilizing feelings of the Neutral Zone. This matters, because stress can lead to all sorts of problems, including deep anxiety, fear, even panic.

Rites of passage usually include at least one rather scary experience. For example: A member of a tribe going through a rite of passage from boyhood to manhood might have to kill a dangerous animal, or prevail in the wilderness by himself for a while. You might be wondering if such a notion of a passage-rite is a good idea for an organization: Do we really want to put people through potentially dangerous experiences? But rites of passage are not an end: They are a means, or cultural responses, to the reality that highly stressful transitions exist and must be dealt with intelligently, in the context of a society or an organization. The rite of passage serves to contain the already-scary experience of transition. They are established by social groups in response to the need to deal with highly stressful Neutral Zones. Transitions are part of our reality - the rite of passage is not an option, but a cultural mechanism for dealing with the transition. The stressful and necessary transition - for example, the transition from childhood to adulthood, is present before the rite of passage was instituted.

In other words, a rite of passage itself does not produce stress. Instead, a rite of passage structures the Neutral Zone that arises through key transitions in the life of individuals, or throughout the existence of a group, or organization. The rite of passage structures the unstructured and thus provides some comfort in difficult times. The primary task of a Beta transformation is to produce organizational transformation for high performance. This is a profound transition that - in theory and in practice - never ends, because it is focused on continuous, never-ending learning and improvement. It is perpetual Beta.

Framing these highly complex transformations and the arising dynamics within them is challenging. Which is why OpenSpace Beta must acknowledge these dynamics, and employ rites of passage, to help people, Teams and the organization to make the transition to a new state. The rite of passage must be designed with clear objectives, clear boundaries (or principles), rich feedback and Opt-in participation.

Robustness in the Neutral Zone

A hypothesis of OpenSpace Beta is that introducing Beta into a typical organization induces Neutral Zone experiences at the individual, the Team, and the organizational levels. If this Neutral Zone is handled with a rite of passage, there is potential for a rapid and lasting Beta adoption.

A core idea behind OpenSpace Beta is that recognizing and addressing the Neutral Zone smartly reduces the worry, anxiety, and fear associated with Beta adoption. The rite of passage creates a structured experience for Participants with a beginning, a middle and an end.

OpenSpace Beta is a repeatable technique for getting a rapid and lasting Beta adoption. It works with what you are currently doing and can be added at any time. It incorporates OpenSpace, rites of passage, Game Mechanics, Deliberate Storytelling and more, so your Beta transformation can take root.

Spirit of community

Beta transformations thrive on strong feelings of “spirit of community”. When the spirit of community is “up”, the space is open. When the spirit of community is “down”, the space is closed. Example: If you love going to work, the overall spirit at work is probably “up”. If you cannot wait until Friday, the overall spirit in that workplace is probably “down”.

Learning, change and the neutral zone (continued)

With respect to Beta transformation, this spirit of community is essential. It comes from clearly understood and uniformly applied principles (not: rules). It comes from a sense that everyone should be engaged. It comes from a sense that “we are all going through this together”.

During Beta transformations, everyone is being triggered. What is my role? What are the principles, or the “rules of the game”? When does this end? What does this mean for my status in the group? Executives and managers are triggered. Team members are triggered. In the Neutral Zone of new principles, new roles and unfamiliar ways of working, is it any wonder that Beta transformations have been hard to achieve?

Cultural anthropology holds that people going through a rite of passage do in fact have the same status *during* the passage, while Participants have widely varied statuses *going in*. While all are coming from diverse, known places and going to an unknown place, all of them make the difficult and even dangerous passage together. And after it is over, all have changed from what they were to what they now are. All of the individuals go through the rite of passage experience with its beginning, middle and end. They experience it together, regardless of level of status or authorization. Everyone is learning.

Rites of passage such as OpenSpace Beta are intentionally designed cultural experiences, or cultural experience designs, designed to invoke feelings of community.

Work as a game

Work and organizations can be viewed as games: If the core requirements for self-fulfillment are not present, then people will likely disengage and check out. If the core requirements are there, people are likely to experience fun, satisfaction and potentially a deeply engaged sense of well-being. **OpenSpace Beta delivers organizational models, or systems, apt for human self-fulfillment through the intentional design and implementation of good Game Mechanics.**

Work is “broken” when it is not fun to play. Deliver self-effectuation, or self-fulfillment at work by injecting good Game Mechanics into the structure of work and meetings. That in short, is a way of describing Beta.

The core requirements for good Game Mechanics, or self-organization:

- A sense of control.
- A sense of progress.
- A sense of belonging and membership.
- A sense of wider purpose and meaning.

When viewed in this way, it is possible to more fully design the interactions, meetings, and work itself so that participating is optimized toward a satisfying, fun, and naturally productive experience.

OpenSpace Beta employs Game Mechanics to the change experience itself, to make Beta transformation itself as enjoyable and fun as possible.

Games have four basic properties. When values for each of the properties are “well-formed”, then the game is enjoyable, fun, and satisfying. When the four properties are not “well-formed”, the game is not fun, and people either opt-out, or, if this is not possible, they disengage (“check out”) almost automatically.

This disengagement is often tagged “resistance to change”, in conventional change management. It is not a resistance to the change itself, though, but a logical consequence of bad Game Mechanics.

Work as a game (continued)

The four basic properties of a good game are:

- A clear goal
- A clear set of principles that are uniformly applied
- A clear way to get feedback and to track progress
- Opt-in participation

Well-executed Beta patterns and practices are usually (but not always) well-formed games. Well-formed games associate with satisfaction, happiness, and even joyfulness; poorly defined games associate with disengagement, low levels of learning and a distinct lack of enjoyment.

OpenSpace Beta makes organizational change easier by making it a good game. The key gaming component is the Invitation, which is used instead of a mandate. Participants are invited to practice Beta patterns, instead of being forced to use them without being part of the decision-making.

Work and organizations are games, and in Beta, this spirit is devolved to them. Beta transformation itself is a game, too. To make Beta transformation fun, we must tune up the four properties above. In OpenSpace Beta the constant focus on Game Mechanics (as opposed to coercion) is essential.

OpenSpace Beta frames the Beta experience as series of interrelated games. It supports and strongly encourages practicing and genuine playfulness. What is really going on is play, and play is fun.

Terminology

OpenSpace Beta is built on a couple of core ideas from sociology, psychology, cultural anthropology and organizational sciences. These concepts cannot be described in detail in this handbook, and they have been elaborated well in the works from the Recommended Readings section.

These are some of the terms that appear in this book.

Alpha. The opposite of *Beta*. Also commonly referred to as command-and-control, or pyramid organization. Alpha is based on the assumption that organizations can and must be steered from the top down, dividing between thinkers at the top and doers at the bottom. Governed by management the social technology, Alpha worked well enough in the industrial age, but ceased to work in the higher complexity of the knowledge age. The overwhelming majority of organizations is still in Alpha mode. Just as the Beta mindset, Alpha can be articulated through an indivisible set of 12 laws or principles.

Authority Projection: The almost automatic characterization of the OpenSpace Beta coaches and consultant (acting as Master of Ceremonies) as an authority figure, often leading to various impediments to progress within the client organization.

Beginning OpenSpace. An OpenSpace event that begins a Chapter of Learning. The beginning OpenSpace is also known as OS 1.

Beta, or BetaCodex. Beta is the organizational mindset that is fit for complex markets and fit for human beings. The Beta mindset is articulated through the BetaCodex - an indivisible set of 12 laws or principles.

Chapter, or Chapter of Learning. A unit of organizational learning with a clear beginning, middle and end. In OpenSpace Beta, a Chapter of Learning happens between two OpenSpace meetings (OS 1 and OS 2) and lasts 90 days.

Coach(es). An external person to assist in learning Beta principles, methods and practices. A strictly temporary role in OpenSpace Beta.

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