

## **Jung and Healthy Organizations: A Powerful Model for Change Agents**

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I got off the phone with an organization development (OD) consultant. He asked me about an upcoming workshop being offered in Ottawa (Ontario, Canada), entitled, The Individuation of the Organization. "I would like some more information," he said.

I get this request a lot. For the past two years, most of my work has had something to do with the model described in my book, *Organizations Alive!*, and how it can be used to create more vibrant and remarkable organizations. I love to give more information! I am an introvert, who has spent years studying and working with organizations, using the lens of Jung's four mental functions. Having gone very deeply into the subject, I am happy to tell more!

Somewhere in these conversations, you may hear me say, "If Jung were alive today, he'd probably be an OD consultant." And I strongly believe that. I think he would have a great deal to say about people – in relationships, in teams, in organizations, and in society. I think he would be encouraging us to value differences, to seek understanding, to work well together, and to prosper.

Many events of the past few years -- terrorist activity, wars, environmental crises, insider trading, whistle blowing, high tech crashes -- have shown us that we need a new way of thinking about organizations. Managers, leaders, and other champions of change, are being blind-sided at every turn. The things that we believe could never happen do happen.

How is it that some organizations succeed so well at accomplishing their mission, while, for others, success remains an elusive dream? Why are our fine, traditional institutions – schools, hospitals, governments, etc. – struggling so? How is it that on one day a company can demonstrate to stakeholders that it is in the black, and the next it is in the throws of scandal and bankruptcy?

Carl Jung gave us the building blocks for understanding what is going on.

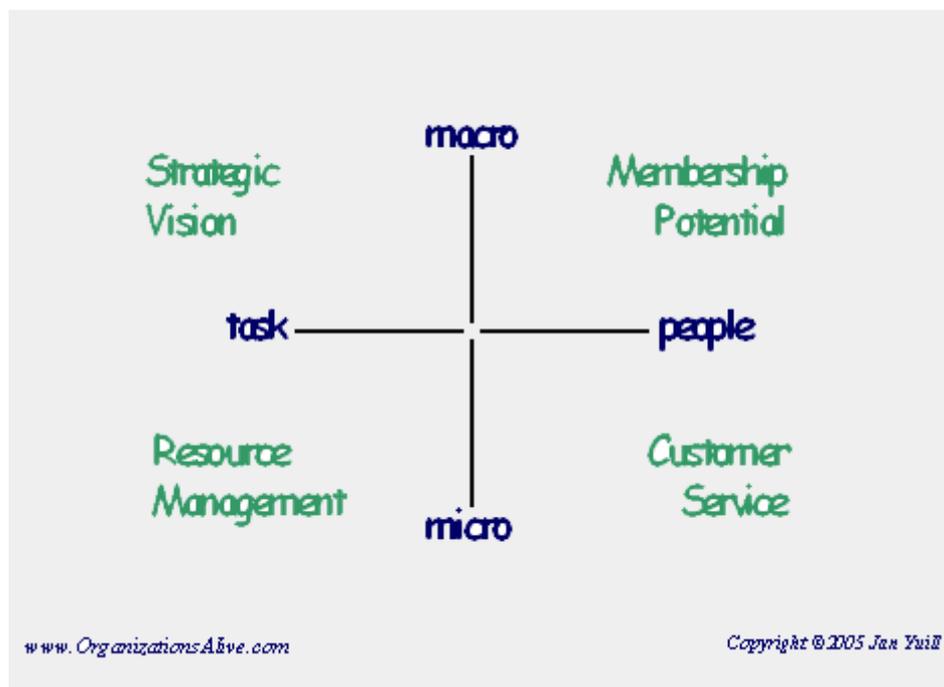
## A Quick Tour of Organizations Alive!

The Organizations Alive! model uses familiar business terms, rather than those of personality type. For the professional who uses personality type, the parallels to Jung's theory will be obvious. But it makes good sense to those who know nothing of typology or temperament, as well.

Information gathering and decision-making are two fundamental processes of organizations, as well as people. They are as constant as breathing.

- The information may be of a **macro** or big picture nature (Jung's Intuition), or **micro** and specific (Sensing).
- Decision-making may be objective and **task**-oriented (Thinking), or subjective and focused on **people**(Feeling).

These four functions can be arranged in Jung's '+' shape as shown in the diagram below.



The combinations of these create four very distinct functions in organizations. They are domains that are hugely important, but tend to compete, even negate the importance of the other, unless there is a consciousness about those dynamics.

- I call the **macro-task** quadrant **Strategic Vision**. It is the broad brush strokes (macro) of the work (task) of organizations, and includes such things as mandate, mission, the business plan, long-range goals, its agenda (political, financial, social, etc.), the principals that it operates under, legislation and bylaws, and the latest trends, research, and theory that concern the work of the organization.
- The **micro-task** quadrant is called **Resource Management**. It is the specific handling of details (micro) associated with the work (task) of the organization and includes:

-**inputs** (raw materials, buildings, vehicles, equipment, supplies, money, technology, knowledge, documents, communications media, etc.)

-**throughputs** (systems and processes, methods, production, roles and responsibilities, policy and procedures, operations, etc.)

-**outputs** (goods and services for the customer/consumer/client)

In the **Resource Management** quadrant, activities and things are measured, counted, weighed, controlled, calculated, filed, maintained, monitored, manufactured, packaged, shipped, handled, protected, written, flowcharted, etc. etc.

- The third domain is about the **micro-people** combination, and is called **Customer Service**. It is the very specific details (micro) as they are received and perceived by the organization's customers (people). This is where a transaction takes place. Someone receives something, the details of which may include size, quantity, colour, timeliness, convenience, quality, value for money, features, etc. etc. And successful organizations know that it is, not their view of whether or not the customer has been adequately served, but the customer's own view that matters.
- I call the **macro-people** quadrant **Membership Potential**. It concerns the possibilities (macro) of the members (people) of the organization. It includes all the expertise, knowledge, gifts, skills, experience, motivations, desires, goals, beliefs, values, etc. that make up each individual. It is a huge reservoir of talent, energy, and ideas for organizations to tap.

Organizational success is determined by how well these four domains, which I call **Success Factors**, are understood and balanced, a process Jung may have referred to as organizational individuation. Difficulties arise when any of them are over- or underemphasized. And yet, balance is never a perfect or permanent state. It takes ongoing, conscious, and persistent effort on the part of leaders, managers, and every person in the organization who want to have a positive impact.

### **The Four Success Factors - Strategic Vision, Resource Management, Customer Service and Membership Potential**

The four Success Factors are well understood, having been the subject of much discussion, research, intervention, and study. Walk through any bookstore and you will find rows and rows of books, resources, and magazines devoted to understanding and improving the success of organizations in these four areas.

The mission and mandate, the handling of resources, the products and services offered to people, and the motivation and use of talent of members in organizations are of constant interest. But, all too often, these domains are treated a separate entities, and end up competing with each other for time and money. Organizations are often structured along these lines (Policy and Planning, Finance and Admin., Customer Service, and Human Resources), creating stovepipes that become mini-organizations fighting to survive against each other.

There must be some way of breaking down the stovepipes without breaking down the fabric and strength of the organization. Again, I think Jung had the answers. It is by understanding how each of these domains interact with each other that organizations can be understood.

### **The Six Interfaces**

Notice that there are six possible interactions, or interfaces, between the four domains. Because of the differences between the domains, there is tension, something that Jung spoke of (if I may put it into my own words) as the spice of life. The same holds true for organizational dynamics. It's the tension that creates conflict, energy, and creativity to strive, to continue, and to succeed.

Briefly, the six interactions are described here:

- In the interaction between **Strategic Vision** and **Resource Management**, the common element is the **task**. The tension is created by the differences between the **macro** and **micro** aspects. At this interface the vision becomes reality (e.g. project management), and the results of day-to-day operations are used to affect the vision (e.g. program evaluation). It is how the work gets done, and then how the results are interpreted and used to set new goals.
- The **micro** information is the common element in the interaction between **Resource Management** and **Customer Service**. The tension is created by the differences between the **task** and **people** aspects. At this interface the efficient, effective, and economical delivery of goods and services to customers is of utmost importance, and so the attention to, and continuous improvement of, details that meet their wants and needs is the focus.
- Between **Customer Service** and **Membership Potential**, the common element is people, and the tension is created by the differences between the **macro** and **micro** aspects. It can be said that happy customers make happy employees, and that happy employees make happy customers. This interface is about relationships, and the quality of those relationships is critical for organizational success.
- The common element between **Membership Potential** and **Strategic Vision** is the macro view, and the tension is created by the differences between **task** and **people**. The vision of the organization comes to life because of the people. Employees and other stakeholders put their hearts and souls into their work, not just their bodies and minds.
- In the interaction between **Strategic Vision** and **Customer Service**, there are no common elements. Very different domains, **macro-task** and **micro-people**, must work together to make things happen at this interface. Diagnosis of problems and finding solutions require diverse and persistent effort if success is to be achieved. How the vision of the organization is experienced and influenced by customers is the focus. Marketing, branding, and new products and services all spring out of this interface.
- As for the interface described above, the interaction between **Resource Management** and **Membership Potential** have no common elements either. **Micro-task** and **macro-people** are complete opposites. It takes

concerted effort to pay attention and take positive action at this interface as well. How the resources are managed will either enable people to do their best, or prevent them from doing their worst. Successful organizations strive for the former.

The power of the ***Organizations Alive!*** model, as in Jung's work, is in the raising of consciousness around tensions created by differing perspectives and preferences. People, who work to create positive change in organizations, use the model with clients to diagnose, understand, plan, intervene, and evaluate efforts in a more constructive, organic way.