



Adaptive Culture & Resources for Change

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Guiding Questions

- What if everything is a **resource**?
- How do I think about the **social architecture** of my organization as a resource for change?
 - Am I harnessing energy in networks?
 - Are we creative in making roles work?
 - What key routines could make a big difference?
 - Are we living the values we need?

A note on adaptive culture & strategies of change

- One view of culture is a composition of practices and recurring action that we can pick up and put down, like a “toolkit.” We have to perform these practices in order to be the people we want to be or do what we want to do. (Anne Swidler, Culture as Toolkit, or her book *Talk of Love* (2001))
- Unsettled times prompt us to learn new ways of being by trying out new possible selves and new cultural repertoires (Swidler, 2001).
- Daily conversations develop a deep cultural taken-for-granted “common sense” that colors our reality. If we are disconnected from others, we develop incompatible views of common sense without being aware of it.
- Changing culture involves changing repertoires of **doing** that feed into new repertoires of feeling and being.

What if everything
is a resource?



For further reading: Feldman & Worline, 2011, Oxford Handbook of Positive Organizational Scholarship



Three key questions for resourcing:

1. What can we do with this?
2. How can we connect things to generate new potential?
3. Are there practices we can borrow and adapt?

For further reading: Feldman & Worline, 2016, The Practicality of Practice Theory

Four resources for change:

1 Harnessing Networks



For further reading: Dutton, Worline, Frost, & Lilius, 2006, Explaining Compassion Organizing

Harnessing Networks

- “Webs of affiliations”
- Energy, emotion, information, and advice travel through these webs
- To resource networks as a lever for adaptive culture change, map who is included vs. excluded and connect the energizers to the issues

For further reading: Dutton, Worline, Frost, & Lilius, 2006, Understanding Compassion Organizing



Four resources for change: 2 Roles & Role-Making

For further reading: Wrzesniewski, Berg, & Dutton 2010, Job-crafting & Meaningful Work



Roles & Role-Making

- Expected patterns of behavior
- Identify us to others and signal our zone of responsibility
- Flexible role-making to incorporate new tasks, relationships, meanings
- Emergent role-making

For further reading: Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001, Job Crafting



Four resources for change:
3 Key Routines

HIRING NOW

For further reading: Feldman & Pentland, 2003, Routines as sources of stability and change



Key Routines

- Recurrent, interdependent ways of accomplishing work
- Taken-for-granted patterns means small changes have big effects

For further reading: Lilius, Worline, Dutton, Kanov & Maitlis, 2011, Creating Compassion Capability

Four resources for change:
4 Lived Values



For further reading: Worline & Dutton, 2016, Oxford Handbook of Compassion Science

Lived Values

- Deep assumptions about what is good and appropriate
- Not necessarily amenable to espoused change
- Symbolic modeling and stories reveal lived vs. espoused values



For further reading: Worline & Dutton, 2016, *Awakening Compassion at Work*



Discussion Questions

- How can I treat everything as a **resource for change**?

- How do I think about using the **social architecture** of my organization to resource change?
 - Networks – connections & structures
 - Roles – existing & emergent
 - Routines – small change, big impact
 - Values – what is lived vs. espoused

Further discussion of social architecture and design principles for adaptive culture change in our forthcoming book: ***Awakening Compassion at Work***, February 2017



thank you