

A Human Technology of Integration

1. OVERVIEW

*Glen Lauder
Global Learning
Friday, December 23, 2005*

Context

As part of the Motueka Integrated Catchment Management Programme led by Manaaki Whenua (Landcare Research), CommonGround/Global Learning is a research partner with a specialist focus on the human dimensions and process of integration.

This short research note presents elements of a “Human Technology of Integration”, of general applicability to resource management settings and cross-sectoral process.

The specific origins of this research were in a research theme focussing in Institutional Learning, with a focus on the interface between environmental research and resource management agencies, especially at the local government level in New Zealand.

A programme of Action-Research involved participants from the research agencies, the Tasman District Council and other regional stakeholder/partners, and community representatives.

Purpose

The generic purpose of the Human Technology of Integration is to provide an accessible and replicable set of tools, skills, and capacities to a wider range of people involved in sustainable development-related programmes in New Zealand, and globally, which involve the integration of multi-disciplinary science, multiple stakeholders, and active programmes of environmental management and community governance; and where long-term environmental and community well-being are at stake.

This technology focusses on the meta process dimensions which underlie human interaction. Attention to meta process allows stuck processes to be unstuck, without force or manipulation, by paying attention to the factors which give rise to the conditions which create the barriers to effective integration. Barriers, “stuckness”, busy-ness, frustrations are recurrent patterns across many programmes. The intention of meta-process research and practice is to identify the systematic factors – personal and transpersonal – which lie at the heart of these dysfunctions, and to provide both theory and practical tools and practices which, integrated into the design and execution of programmes, will significantly reduce barriers to effective collaboration and the factors which prevent science being effectively used in practical settings.

This research is complementary to other social dimensions work being undertaken in the Motueka ICM programme, and more widely in the human dimensions space. Meta process is a specific dimension of “human technology”. This research is also complementary to other integration and modelling work being undertaken in the programme, and has specific contributions to make to other workstreams.

Research Context

This research is being progressed in partnership with a number of New Zealand partners within the ICM programme, and with international partners including Otto Scharmer at the Sloan School, MIT, Boston Mass. For background on Otto Scharmer, see www.ottoscharmer.com. These are the main theoretical research partners for the work, although the work draws widely on research within human practice fields.

Field research

The field research for this work includes, but is not limited to, the action-research Institutional Learning stream of the the Motueka ICM programme. This technology has been operationally tested in a number of New Zealand and Australian projects.

Practical field partners in the work include Oberon Partners, Sydney; Global Learning, Canberra; Generon Consulting, Boston; and a network of other practitioners loosely associated as the Presencing Research Institute (in formation).

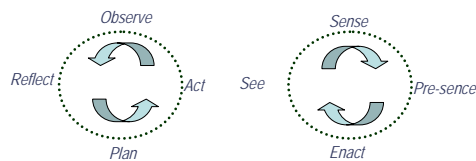
Theoretical framework

In separate papers, the underlying theoretical framework is developed. The relationship to this theoretical work to the emerging “Theory Of U” is explained in a separate paper.

The theory extends the standard Kolb learning cycle with a “future based” learning cycle developed by Scharmer.

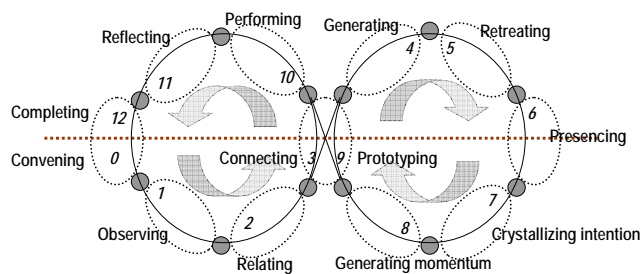
Learning from the future

- “Kolb”-type learning cycle (learning after action)
- Learning from the future (learning in action)



This includes the 12-stage “Global Learning” model and its underlying theory.

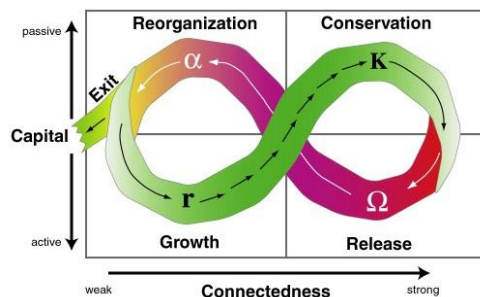
Twelve stage cycle



The resultant “figure eight” model bears some similarities to the adaptive cycle developed in Resilience Theory.

Natural resilience

- A similar pattern can be observed in the transformations of energy in a natural ecosystem. This adaptive cycle is used to describe the development of *resilience*.



Its principal contribution to learning theory is the access the model gives to new distinctions and points of bifurcation in the pathways of individual and group learning process – incorporating a new future based cycle that gives operational access to the deeper levels distinguished in the Theory of the U. It incorporates the distinctions of explicit and tacit knowledge drawn by Nonaka, and the distinction “self transcending knowledge” developed by Scharmer.

It integrated the four levels of corporate action identified by Scharmer, and by implication, his 12 part typology of knowledge. It relates these operationally within the model, and distinguished content, process and meta process levels of knowledge transfer, creation and transformation.

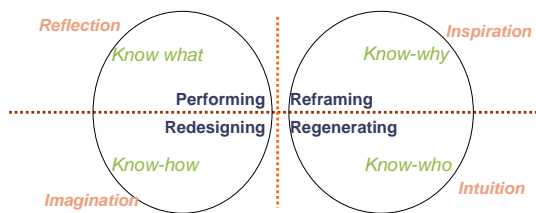
Four levels of corporate action

These four collaborative capacities reflect four levels of corporate action, distinguished by Otto Scharmer at the MIT Sloan School.

Level of corporate action		
Performing	<i>Know-what</i>	<i>Reflection</i>
Redesigning	<i>Know-how</i>	<i>Imagination</i>
Reframing	<i>Know-why</i>	<i>Inspiration</i>
Regenerating	<i>Know-who</i>	<i>Intuition</i>

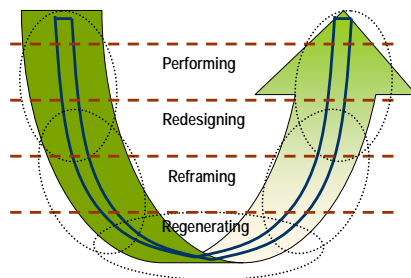
Four levels of corporate action

- Corresponding *knowledge* and *meta-knowledge* types.



Theory of the U

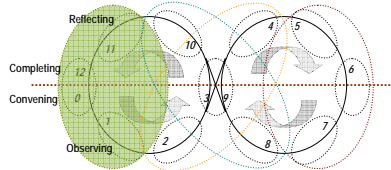
- Levels of transformation.



The theory distinguishes four main spaces, and developed operational pathways which bridge between them. These four operational pathways are outlined in four short research notes, developed as part of this research note series.

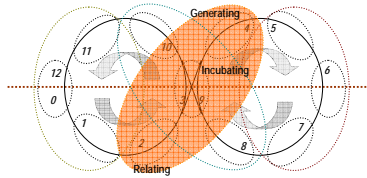
Seeing

Observe, observe, observe



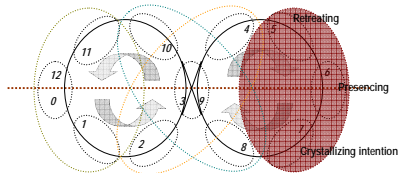
Sense-making

Co-sensing



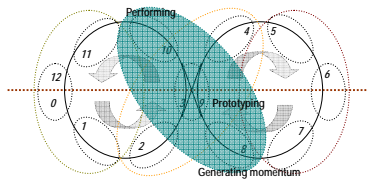
Retreat

Let go, still, let come.



Realising

Iterate, iterate, Iterate



Philosophical framework

The approach being developed requires a level of philosophical and ontological rigour; and while not limited to any one philosophical or cultural tradition, does require a commitment to developing deeper-than-ordinary awareness and ability to observe oneself and a group.

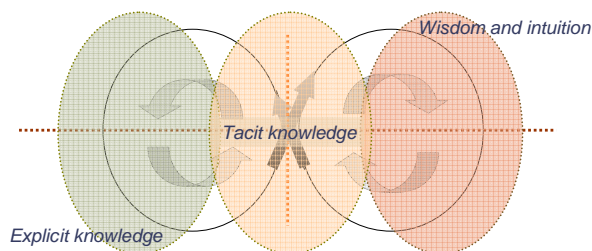
In developing this, it draws on both operational observations in this research, and the research undertaken in the www.dialogonleadership.org global interviews. This gave new insight to the emerging relationship between cutting edge practice in innovation and ancient wisdom.

Knowledge realms and infrastructure

The emergent opportunity in the research is a new pathways of access to integrating traditional, local and deep wisdom into the scientific and management process, without compromising the principles of sound and rigorous scientific inquiry. In particular, the theory and its practice shows how wisdom can be integrated with explicit and tacit knowledge in a research-and-management process.

Three realms of knowing

Integrating codified and experiential knowledge with “wisdom”.



This integration gives new insights into how a knowledge infrastructure could be built that supports not only explicit (codified) knowledge, but could also sustain and extend access to interpersonal and transpersonal knowledge in new ways.

The knowledge infrastructure is developed in a separate series of research notes. We will be collaborating in this work with Europe-based www.communityintelligence.com.

Practical tools

The technology includes a number of practical tools being developed as a field book and individual technologies. These are available as:

- Tools – specific resources which can be applied “out of the box” to relevant real world situations.

- Practices – specific activities which, if undertaken repeatedly, lead to a deepening of skill and access to new levels of expertise.

Skill development and capacity building

Most of the elements of the Human Technology of Integration require a level of experiential training or practice for their effective use. Part of the research is to develop a framework for skill development and capacity building. This is being progressed jointly with the Presence institute and a number of global partners including Global Learning, Oberon Partners, Generon Consulting and MIT; and other local and regional business, government and non governmental partners.

Online References

www.presence.net

www.ottoscharmer.com

www.generonconsulting.com

www.globalleadershipinitiative.org

www.dialogonleadership.org