THE FUTURE OF HR

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Understanding Knowledge Management for Motivation, Negotiation, and Influence

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Preface

This is a textbook in management and leadership courses. In this book we have developed 74 student reflection tasks followed by some case letters to help students understand the material in the book, and hopefully become better leaders. The student reflection tasks are based on process pedagogy.[1] This means here that the students learn by working in teams with the reflection tasks in the book.

Due to the student reflection tasks and case letters in the book, it is suitable for use in online courses, where students work in groups and meet on campus for discussions, guidance and presentation of the student tasks in the book.

This book focuses on key elements of positive psychology and how these can be used in positive leadership. It also explores how positive leadership can be used in situations where negotiation and influence are important aspects of leadership.

Positive psychology is the theoretical foundation for the new positive leadership. Positive psychology is already used in organisational psychology. Some researchers state that classical psychology no longer has anything to offer in the field of leadership and organisational psychology.

Notes

1. Process pedagogy is explained in the Appendix.

Chapter 1

An Introduction to the Book

1.1.   Learning Goals

- How leaders can improve organizational performance by applying positive psychology.
- Facilitate leaders' application of positive psychology in their leadership practice.
- Evaluation of learning goals through the student tasks 1–11.

1.2.   Introduction

Classical organizational psychology has been criticized for no longer having anything to offer to organizational change projects (Burnes & Cooke, 2012). According to Lewis, this is a situation where positive psychology may assist and have new knowledge to offer for a new era (2015, pp. 329–338). According to Cameron (2013, p. 149), positive psychology is about implementing various practices that will help individuals and organizations to achieve optimal performance.

The question is why don't all organizations apply positive psychology, if it has proved to be so effective in practice? There are two reasons:

(1) People have a tendency to focus more on negative factors of an organization than the positive ones. This is because "bad is stronger than good" (Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Finkenauer, & Vohs, 2001, pp. 323–370).

(2) In academic milieus, within which leadership training is conducted and among the leaders who should be applying organizational psychology in practice, there is little or no competence in the area of positive psychology.

The everyday activities of many organizations are dominated by crises, hazards, threats, challenges and problems; as Cameron explains (2013, p. 149), businesses are preoccupied with problem-solving. Accordingly, they focus on weaknesses and threats, which means that organizations view possibilities and opportunities from the perspective of being under threat. These everyday problems in turn focus attention on negative factors. This can be one of the reasons why the importance of positive psychology is downplayed.

Some of the consequences of applying positive psychology in an organization are the increased abilities of individuals to master their roles, and their attitudes, moral courage, enthusiasm and curiosity become more focused. In order to achieve these outcomes, it is crucial that leaders learn to give negative feedback in a positive manner. Helping others to master their roles is thus an important function in this new kind of leadership. Mastering a role also has an effect on the individual such that he/she dares to stand up for his/her moral values and takes moral responsibility. The consequences of applying positive psychology in an organizational context include recognition of the moral courage and self-belief of the individual. The fact that the individual stands up for his/her values in this manner also has an effect on their attitudes. This focus on role mastery, moral courage and attitudes, along with the growing demand for creativity and enthusiasm to foster innovation within an organization, means that organizations need to develop a new type of leader role.

1.2.1. *Student Reflection Task 1*

1.2.1.1. Case Letter

The new leadership role should have an understanding of how to lead members of Generation Y. Generation Y is made up of people, also known as "millennials", who were born around the turn of the century (Espinoza & Ukleja, 2016). These new people in the workplace can be described, quite simply, as digital anarchists. For this generation, creativity and innovation are not just goals but necessary criteria for work (Martinson, 2016). Some of the content of this new leadership role in relation to Generation Y is a growing demand that employees exercise autonomy, self-management and self-organization, together with growing demands in the surrounding world that leaders must be "authentic". To achieve this "authenticity", the new leader must restructure his or her organization in a way more like a frontline organization than a classical hierarchical organization. In practice, this means that those employees who are in contact with the customer, user, patient, student, etc. are given more attention, decision-making authority, information and remuneration (Reinmoell & Reinmoeller, 2015).

> **Student task:** Develop a step-by-step strategy of how to handle Generation Y.

1.2.1.2. How to Make a Difference

Since the beginning, positive psychology took the strengths of the individual as its starting point, and then built further on what the individual had already successfully mastered (Seligman, 2003). Accordingly, positive psychology will harmonize well with the demands that members of Generation Y place on workplaces and business leaders.

It can often be difficult to know – both for the individual and for the person(s) responsible for leading them – where an individual's strengths lie. As a rule of thumb, an individual may be more likely to succeed in activities at which he or she excels and has a burning desire to make a difference (Lewis, 2015, pp. 332–333). Successful identification of these areas will improve the performance of both the individual and the entire organization. Leaders who understand this small point will be able to transform their organizations from "good" to "outstanding" and will also bring out the best in Generation Y, because these people are motivated by the results that they can create in a freely anarchic digital universe

(Espinoza & Ukleja, 2016; Martinson, 2016). Generation Y can be characterized as an extremely creative generation whose members are motivated primarily by new things they can bring to the world: new concepts, creative solutions and innovations. If one is to lead these people, classical organizational psychology, classical motivational psychology and hierarchical leadership models all represent very poor choices (Martinson, 2016).

The development of positive psychology from 1998 onwards has created many areas of application, tools and techniques. We discuss some of the areas here. In this introductory chapter, we focus on how business leaders can come to terms with the following question: *how can I improve organizational performance by applying positive psychology?*

Before we answer this question, we have to focus on four sub-questions.

(1) How can *I* apply *mastery* among employees in order to improve organizational goal achievement?
(2) How can *I* apply *attitudes* among employees in order to improve organizational goal achievement?
(3) How can *I* apply *enthusiasm as motivation* in order to improve organizational performance?
(4) How can *I* apply *mindfulness as motivation* in order to improve organizational performance?

The main question and the five sub-questions are illustrated in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1: Aspects of the Positive Psychology of Leadership.

Figure 1.1 also shows how this chapter and the rest of the book are structured. We begin with a brief description of classical workplace and organizational psychology. Next, we describe, analyse and discuss positive psychology in relation to workplace and organizational psychology. We move on to consider mastery, attitudes, enthusiasm and mindfulness as motivational factors in relation to the positive psychology of leadership.

1.3.   Reflections Upon Classical Organizational Psychology

The majority of people spend their working lives in an organization, company or institution. How they are managed, how they work together and how the work is structured will have an impact far beyond the organization, company or institution's boundaries. Society and families are greatly affected by how organizations perform. For instance, take the case of a hospital. If the hospital is not organized and managed well, it will negatively affect the individual patients and their families, as well as

society. Consequently, it is not inconsequential how we organize and manage people, rather, this has huge social consequences far beyond the walls of a particular organization.

Organizational psychology deals with the study of the organization and management of organizations. It focuses on understanding the behaviour of individuals and teams in an organization (Jex & Britt, 2014, p. 1) with the aim of increasing the efficiency so that the organization performs better. When an organization is more productive, it also has an improved working environment, but this is not necessarily the case and the reality could be the other way around (Espinoza & Ukleja, 2016). We are accustomed to thinking that the work environment affects the performance of an organization or business. Although this may often be the case, it may be equally correct to think that if productivity, performance or earnings are increased or the quality of service is improved, then the work environment may also be positively affected. In other words, no matter how one views the relationship between the working environment and performance, everybody wins by improving both the elements. There may not necessarily be a linear relationship between the work environment and organizational performance. It may rather be circular or interactive; for instance, you could start with improving performance by introducing new technologies. Such relationships involve work and organizational psychology, and can be approached through systemic thinking (Johannessen, 2016).

This book provides students with an understanding of how the new organizational and leadership psychology can contribute to improving how organizations are managed and organized without ignoring the importance of classical organizational psychology. Both the classical and new organizational psychologies can make important contributions in this context, which we should reflect upon and apply in practice.

A classic and ground-breaking book on organizational psychology, *The Social Psychology of Organizations*, was written by Katz and Kahn (1966). The development of organizational psychology in the 1900s and twenty-first century can be briefly described as follows.

In the early 1900s, "scientific management" evolved as a dominant theory of management aimed at improving labour productivity and efficiency by analysing workflows, among other things; scientific management is also referred to as Taylorism, and is also related to Fordism.

Since the 1920s and till the early 1930s, productivity received even more emphasis. The classic Hawthorne studies showed that workers are more productive when they are given more attention. This can be described as management theory's first rule: employees want to be seen. The managerial consequence of this rule is that managers need to provide continuous feedback to employees so that they feel that they are valued.

In the 1960s and 1970s, there was a greater focus on stress in the workplace, and the relationship between home and leisure.

Globalization, which began around the time of the 1980s, led to a new understanding of what constitutes work. Greater emphasis was given to results and less to how activities were performed.

After the turn of the new century and towards 2010, the use of new information and communication technology (ICT) led to a greater focus on the work and home situation.

Since 2010, organizational psychology has paid more attention to the age and ethnicity of employees, the consequences of globalization and the impact of internet on work practices.

After the economic crisis of 2008, job security gained much interest in organizational psychology theory.

After 2016, Generation Y or the "Millennials" gained more attention (Espinoza & Ukleja, 2016).

1.3.1. *Student Reflection Task 2*

1.3.1.1. Case Letter

The main difference between classic and the new organizational and leadership psychology can be expressed as follows:

(1) Classic organizational psychology focuses on removing negative conditions.
(2) The new organizational psychology focuses on strengthening the individual and the team in what they are good at and passionate about.

Student task: Discuss the difference between classic organizational psychology and the new positive psychology of

leadership. Name at least five points which make a difference.

1.4.   Positive Psychology: The New Organizational and Leadership Psychology

Classic psychology uses "the big five" to measure the strength of personality traits. These five factors are: emotional stability, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness. Each of these factors is composed of six components (Carr, 2011, p. 50).

Positive psychology has developed what is called "values in action" (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). The focus here is on the virtues and strength of character. While classic personality psychology has a history dating back to Gordon Allport's *Personality: A Psychological Interpretation*, published in 1937, the research on "values in action" was mainly done in the 2000s. The "values in action" that positive psychology emphasizes are the following (Peterson & Park, 2011, p. 28):

- Wisdom: acquisition and use of knowledge. Characteristics: creativity, curiosity, open-minded to new ideas and perspectives, learning;
- Courage: strength of will and perseverance to complete work and projects that have been started even when met with problems. Characteristics: authenticity, tenacity, perseverance, desire;
- Humanity: understanding other people. Characteristics: kindness, love, emotional and social intelligence;
- Justice: the strength of one's social involvement. Characteristics: fairness, leadership, teamwork;
- Temperance: avoiding extremes. Characteristics: forgiveness, modesty, caution, self-regulation; and
- Transcendence: extending oneself beyond one's personal limits. Characteristics: recognition of excellence, gratitude, hope, humour, spirituality.

Among other things, positive psychology focuses on the kind of society we want to live in, and the kind of organizations and institutions we want to work in. It also provides us with a deeper understanding of the impact other people can have on your life. This idea was expressed succinctly by (late) Chris Peterson, one of the founders of positive psychology, when he said, "Other people matter" (Joseph, 2015, p. xi).

Burnes and Cooke (2012, p. 1416) raised the question of whether classic organizational psychology has any relevance today when examining organizational development and change processes; this applies particularly to the new generation of this millennium (Espinoza & Ukleja, 2016; Martinson, 2016). Lewis (2015, pp. 329–340) states that positive psychology offers a new perspective for understanding organizational development and change processes that can help managers to cope with increasing creative diversity in the workplace.

The application of positive psychology in organizations can promote a positive climate that focuses on the development of well-being and the good working life in organizations (Csikszentmihaly, 2013). This can develop positive spirals, which help to shape positive networks within and outside the organization, says Meadows (2015). Such a development opens up the possibility of understanding that job satisfaction, well-being, engagement and the good working life can exist in the organization you work in (Seligman, 2003). This understanding, however, assumes a new leadership role (Reinmoell & Reinmoeller, 2015) referred to here as positive leadership. It does not focus on crises, threats, dangers and problems, but emphasizes mastery, attitudes, engagement and mindfulness to promote creativity and innovation, among other things.

1.4.1. *Student Reflection Task 3*

1.4.1.1. Case Letter

In classic organizational psychology, optimism is viewed as a sign of immaturity, naiveté and a weakness of character, and is associated with cultivating illusions (Carr, 2011, p. 83). By considering the optimistic person sceptically, one may create an image of his/her positive optimistic

behaviour as something that threatens the fundamental working norms and values of the organization. The optimistic "illusions" and the positive belief in the future could also threaten the established power structures. On the basis of this understanding, one may argue that classic organizational psychology served as a balancing mechanism for the status quo, so that behaviour was channelled into accepted forms.

Student task: Discuss the implication of the case letter.

1.4.1.2. Optimism

The negative view of optimism was thoroughly challenged by positive psychology. Seligman's book *Learned Optimism* (2006) particularly gave impetus to the debate about whether optimism was something that implied naiveté, or something that could be associated with improving working environments.

However, there was also a great deal of research on cognitive psychology before Seligman's book, which changed views on optimism as being something associated with immaturity and naiveté; for instance, Martin and Stang's (1978) review of research in this field. They showed that our thinking is basically optimistic. It is often the case that those people who are consistently pessimistic suffer from anxiety and depression (Tiger, 1979). Empirical studies have also shown that optimism positively correlates with a good immune system, which in turn positively affects attendance in organizations (Seligman, 2011, p. 5).

1.4.2. Student Reflection Task 4

1.4.2.1. Case Letter

Optimists have been shown to make an extra effort and fight for their own and organization's future because they believe things can improve as long as they are enthusiastic, dedicated and creative. Based on this research, it seems reasonable to argue that optimism is strongly linked to a positive belief in the future. Optimism in the context of leadership is related to the belief that you can create your own and the organization's future, instead of

adapting to what others have designed. An expression for a new understanding of optimism could be: "Plan your own future, or be victim of someone else's plan."

Student task: Discuss the two statements:

(1) "Plan or be planned for."
(2) "Create your organization's future."

1.4.3. *Student Reflection Task 5*

1.4.3.1. Case Letter

Positive psychology led to a greater focus on emotional and social skills. In positive psychology, an important research direction is related to the question: how do supportive social relationships facilitate an individual's mastery skills? (Bono, Krakauer, & Froh, 2015).

Goleman (1995, 2007) is credited with making the concept of "emotional and social intelligence" more widely known, largely by popularizing the research on the subject by Mayer (Mayer, DiPaola, & Salovery, 1990), Salovey (Salovey & Mayer, 1990) and Gardner (1983). Bono and Ilies (2006) refer to several empirical studies substantiating the claim that leaders who express positive emotions encourage the same behaviour in their employees. Other studies show that this behaviour also promotes increased productivity among employees (Fry, Vitucci, & Cedillo, 2005).

Emotional and social intelligence, and consequently emotions, have become important elements of leadership. Rationality and professional experience have traditionally been important characteristics of leaders. However, this has been modified with the new focus on emotional and social intelligence. Now leaders' ability to understand other people and take on their perspectives has been put on the agenda. Goleman's books (1995; 2007) considers empathy, emotional and social intelligence as key characteristics of a leader. Goleman's main argument is that in order for leaders and others to function well in work situations, emotional and social

intelligence are just as important as traditional intelligence (as measured in IQ tests). Another point made by Goleman is that while IQ was largely related to genetic factors, emotional and social intelligence could be taught because it is acquired through socialization, education and experience. In the context of leadership, it can therefore be said that emotional and social intelligence can be developed through training. We have taken this as our starting point, and consequently many of the exercises in this book are designed to reinforce learning through practice.

Student task: Discuss the meaning of the two concepts:

(1) social intelligence; and
(2) emotional intelligence

1.4.3.2. Job Satisfaction and Well-being

When Seligman wrote his book *Authentic Happiness* (Seligman, 2003), "happiness" was a key term. However, he later replaced the term happiness with "flourishing" and "job satisfaction" (Seligman, 2011, pp. 1–10). He points out that the word "happiness" is so overused that it has little meaning now.

Seligman's (2011, p. 13) positive psychology has well-being at its core. He believes that well-being can be measured in terms of "flourishing", both in private life and at work. The aim of positive psychology, in other words, is to increase well-being. Seligman calls this logical sequence his well-being theory (Seligman, 2011, pp. 13–30). He contrasts this theory with his earlier views in the field of positive psychology, as expressed in his book *Authentic Happiness* (2003).

1.4.4.   Student Reflection Task 6

1.4.4.1. Case Letter

Flourishing in our work and private life is a prerequisite for well-being and "the pleasant life". In this way, one can say that "flourishing" is the first

step on a path towards an overall well-being (Seligman, 2011, p. 2).

According to Seligman (2011, p. 11), flourishing and well-being are related to how we feel and experience joy, enthusiasm, engagement, etc. It is also related to the fact that we show the best side of ourselves, or at least make an attempt to (Linley, Joseph, Maltby, Harrington, & Wood, 2011, p. 35).

If a leader can "see" the employees (i.e. takes notice of them), then this will promote good working conditions. The experience of "being seen" is one of the main motivators a leader should be aware of. This is especially true if the leader focuses on the areas the employee excels in and not the areas where he/she does not perform so well (Clonan, Chafouleas, McDougal, & Riley-Tillman, 2004, pp. 101–110).

> **Student task:** Discuss the meaning of the statement: performance increases when employees experience being seen.

1.4.4.2.   Meaning

Meaning in our context is closely related to well-being (Steger, 2011, p. 679), and consists of the following elements: the ability to perceive oneself and one's surroundings, and to create and be guided by a purpose. The ability to perceive is closely related to being able to uncover and see patterns, to recognize consistency and coherence, as well as being able to extract what is perceived as essential in the events one experiences (Baumeister & Vohs, 2002, pp. 608–618). If you manage this, then it is also likely you are closer to understanding what really drives and motivates you. If you know this, it becomes easier to opt out of what is not essential to your well-being and select what is. If you understand what drives you and gives your life a meaning, it becomes easier to manage adversity because you can understand it in a larger context.

Meaning here refers to motivation linked to long-term goals. These goals are what you are really passionate about. It is in this context that you show your passion, engagement, enthusiasm, rage, indignation, anger, desire, etc. Meaning is closely associated to what the individual experiences in relation to why they live their lives the way they do.

1.4.5.　　*Student Reflection Task 7*

1.4.5.1.　Case Letter

Seligman (2011, p. 10) states that everyone seeks to clarify the meaning and purpose of their lives. He writes that a meaningful life involves belonging to something bigger than oneself. This may be in the areas of religion, politics, trade unionism, grassroots movement, family, sports, etc.

> **Student task:** Discuss the concept of meaning in an organizational context. How can meaning effect performance?

1.5.　Description of the Aspects of the New Leadership Psychology

The following section discusses the four elements shown in Figure 1.1: mastery, attitudes, enthusiasm and mindfulness. They will be briefly explained in this chapter, and then explained, analysed and discussed in greater detail in their respective chapters. A manager may apply these four elements while aiming to motivate employees, which is the main theme of the book.

1.5.1.　*Mastery*

Mastery, as defined here, consists of the following elements: self-image, strength and stamina. Several studies also show that when you have a positive behaviour, your mastering ability are enhanced (Achor, 2011). Our identity and perhaps our performance also are strongly related to our self-image. Thus, self-image can be viewed as sustaining self-fulfilling prophecies; that is, a poor self-image leads to poor performance and vice versa. If this is correct, or even partially correct, it means that self-image and the feeling of being able to master skills and competences is of great

importance in an individual's life as well as in the organization in which the individual works.

If you relate your self-image to your job, you will be in danger of limiting your opportunities in the sense of, "cobbler, stick to your trade" (i.e. stick to what you know, and don't try anything new). Thus, you may find it difficult to move from one job or profession to another. In the Middle Ages your identity (read: self-identity) depended on your position in society and your family. However, if you have such a "medieval" attitude regarding your identity in today's society, you risk your self-image becoming fixed and consequently restricting your behaviour. In the chapter where we describe, analyse and discuss mastery, we will show how positive psychology can be used to develop your self-identity and -esteem.

1.5.2.   Student Reflection Task 8

1.5.2.1. Case Letter

Positive psychology is the study of an individual's strengths, that is, those areas where he/she has good skills; and how to further enhance and strengthen those skills. The alternative is to try to improve those areas where the individual does not excel.

Resilience is important when mastering skills and competences. Resilience is defined as an individual's ability to adapt to situations, especially where he/she experiences great difficulties (Masten, Cutuli, Herbers, & Reed, 2011, p. 117). Resilience can also be understood as courage – determination to succeed despite a poor outlook, that is, being able to demonstrate robustness in spite of the circumstances. An apt metaphor here is the resilient dandelion that survives despite all the efforts of the gardener to exterminate it.

Since classical antiquity, people have been fascinated by characters in literary texts, myths and stories who despite facing great hardships have persevered and succeeded against all odds. The earliest works of Western literature, such as *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*, dealt with this phenomenon. Myths often focus on human characters who struggle against dragons and other fabulous monsters with stupendous powers, who despite the unequal

match nevertheless overcame the dangers. In modern times, we read about people who have done the most incredible things, although rationally it seems impossible. One such example was the deaf and blind Helen Keller. In all these stories, fictional and real, resilience and perseverance have been essential for mastering the situations.

Research on resilience in children was first carried out around 1960–1970 (Masten, 2007). In the concept of mastery, resilience is closely related to other qualities, such as strength, meaning and self-image. It is also related to moral courage.

Resilience, courage, "dandelion children" and other words related to the same phenomenon incorporate fundamental drivers that cause individuals to endure and fight for something qualitatively better. It is these drivers we are concerned with here, because we assume that the drivers can also be used by leaders to increase the individual's motivation and thus improve an organization's performance.

The kind of attitude a leader shows in terms of his/her confidence in an employees' ability to master a situation will most likely affect their ability to succeed. This is shown by Dweck's research (2012), where it is demonstrated that self-efficacy is crucial for success.

> **Student task:** Discuss the concept of mastery related to personal performance.

1.5.2.2.   Attitudes

According to a study by Caza and Cameron (2008), problems may occur if the manager or leader only focuses on well-being and positive aspects in the workplace. Their rationale is that the realities of the workplace are often characterized by resistance to change, conflicts, tensions, etc., that is, not positive but negative conditions. The point being made here, however, is how you cope with conflicts, tensions, etc., instead of whether they exist or not. Regardless, for a manager or leader, it is important to take into account both positive and negative attitudes of the employees. Negative attitudes can be changed by positive behaviour (Cooper, Blackman, & Keller, 2016). This concerns identifying factors that promote well-being, while the manager or leader must keep in mind that employees are often averse to

change, and that they often experience conflicts, tensions, challenges, etc. (Adriaenssen & Johannessen, 2016; Kahneman & Tversky, 2000).

When managers have a positive attitude and treat employees decently, then employees will also manage to show more resolve when they meet resistance, and demonstrate more persistence, finding solutions to difficult problems (Gittell, Cameron, & Lim, 2006; Kahneman, 2011; Wegge et al., 2010). This may result in employees demonstrating greater ability to complete tasks (Gittell et al., 2006).

1.5.2.3.   What Is an Attitude?

Attitudes have social consequences. When German mothers protested against the Nazi programme for eliminating children with disabilities, they achieved a breakthrough. When Martin Luther King opposed segregation in the United States in the 1960s, it had enormous social consequences for the good. When Nelson Mandela opposed apartheid in South Africa, it also had major social consequences. When Mahatma Gandhi led the nonviolent movement in India it had major implications far beyond India's borders. When many of the priests in Germany during World War Two failed to act and obeyed the Nazis, this too had far-reaching consequences. Attitudes have effects!

Thus, attitudes and moral courage are closely related. People's perceptions influence the development of their attitudes, but attitudes also affect their perceptions in turn. Our ideologies and ways of thinking also affect our attitudes and vice versa.

There are many fields that scientifically examine attitudes, ranging from social psychology, anthropology, economics and literature studies to marketing. Social psychology emerged as a distinct discipline in the early 1900s (Thomas & Znaniecki, 2015). Perhaps it was the field of social psychology that first examined attitudes?

The meaning of the word "attitude" may be traced back to its use in the 1600s (Cooper et al., 2016, p. 2). At the time, and later, it was used to describe people's physical attitude, that is, their physical postures. In the mid-1800s, attitude was used in relation to posture, but also to mean perception or opinion of something. Currently, attitude largely refers to a mental state in relation to something or someone (Effron & Miller, 2012). However, influencing people's mental state is a much older phenomenon

than the term attitude. For instance, in classical antiquity, around 800 BC, Homer wrote about influencing people's perceptions of moral courage, ethical choices, etc. In ancient Athens, the Sophists, among others, spoke and wrote about influencing and changing people's perceptions. Aristotle wrote his treatise on rhetoric about how to influence people's opinions.

1.5.3. Student Reflection Task 9

1.5.3.1. Case Letter

Our attitudes affect our values and what we perceive (see, hear, understand). Our values and perceptions also influence our attitudes, which in turn affect our behaviour. In practice, this means that our behaviour can affect our attitudes as much as the attitudes affect our behaviour. Thus, if you wish to change your behaviour, you need not necessarily start with attitudes. For instance, it is possible to start with values and perception; or you can start with behaviour. The latter can be done by, for instance, adopting a law, which states that it is forbidden to smoke in public buildings. Such a law was passed in Norway, and after a period of time people's attitudes to smoking also changed considerably.

In the 1990s, sociologists and psychologists who studied individual differences started using the term "attitude" instead of a more biological, previously used term, instinct.

This brief historical introduction has suggested that some attitudes of an individual are more stable than others; that is, some attitudes may be more difficult to modify or change than others. An individual's ideological beliefs are most likely highly placed in this hierarchy of attitudes, that is, ideological beliefs remain stable over time. Ideological beliefs may change, but then this would perhaps represent a total change of character of an individual, which Bateson (1972) calls calibration. Moreover, it seems reasonable to assume that an individual's values and norms also have high stability. On the contrary, attitudes regarding social relationships can be more easily modified than, for instance, the individual's values and norms. It also seems reasonable to assume that attitudes to material elements can be changed relatively easily.

Student task: Develop a step-by-step strategy to change employee attitudes for change.

1.5.3.2. Enthusiasm

In our context, enthusiasm and engagement can be defined as the degree of commitment you have to a particular job. Seligman (2003, 2011) describes enthusiasm and engagement as elements closely related to flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 2002, 2013). It is perhaps more relevant to say that enthusiasm and engagement are social mechanisms that can lead to flow, but not necessarily so. The point here is that there is a close relationship between flow, enthusiasm and engagement.

Empirical research shows that the feeling of social belonging is closely associated with an employees' enthusiasm and engagement (Stairs, 2005). The application of positive psychology, according to Stairs (2005), leads to a greater degree of emotional commitment at work, which can positively affect the organization. Empirical research has also shown that the employees' enthusiasm and engagement is positively correlated to organizational performance. There is also a clear correlation between enthusiasm, engagement and absenteeism, and increased customer satisfaction (Harter, Schmidt, & Hayers, 2002; Harter, Schmidt, & Keyes, 2003).

In positive psychology, flow, a term used by Csikszentmihalyi (2002, 2013), is considered essential for job satisfaction, mastery and performance. A pertinent question for managers and leaders in this context is: what conditions lead to flow, and what characterizes the flow?

When you're engaged in a task that is challenging, but can still be successfully completed, the *necessary condition* for flow is present. However, the *sufficient condition* must also be met, that is, you must have an inner desire and motivation to complete the task (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2009).

1.5.4. Student Reflection Task 10

1.5.4.1. Case Letter

In order for the flow to occur, you must feel that you're able to master the task. In addition, the task should be so challenging that you are pushed towards your limits of competence in order to complete it. At the precipice of this competence, you balance between the fear of not being able to complete the task, and the joy of being able to (Csikszentmihaly, 2013). Sometimes our skills on the borderline of this limit have been automated, not unlike the development of tacit knowledge.

Clear goals and immediate feedback also constitute the conditions to get into the flow zone. This means that the feedback must be designed so that it is received/given during the work process, and not only when the objective has been achieved (Csikszentmihalyi, 2002).

Flow is a personal condition or experience, that is, the feeling of being totally immersed in what you're doing. You become one with the task (Seligman, 2011, p. 11). In this state, you to some extent "forget" time and the outside world (Csikszentmihaly, 2013). You also forget yourself, and your life situation. Research on the subject reports that people experience well-being when they are in a state of flow. You feel that you're in control, and that you have no fear of losing control, even though actions may be risky. On one hand, you lose yourself in the actual task, while on the other, you experience a stronger self-awareness when the task is completed (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2009).

> **Student task:** Discuss the relationship between enthusiasm and flow.

1.5.4.2. Mindfulness

Mindfulness in the context of leadership is often known as "mindful leadership". Although some authors have written about mindfulness, little research has been conducted in this field. This has been confirmed by Professor William George of the Harvard Business School: "Current literature on this subject is limited because the ideas are still in the early stages of development."

The paucity of research is one of the reasons why we have developed a mini-theory about the relationship between leadership and mindfulness in this chapter. In this context, we use the term "theory" to mean a system of management tools (Bunge, 1974, p. 4).

In this chapter, we use the term "mindful leadership" to describe ways in which business leaders can promote mindfulness among employees for the purpose of improving organizational goal achievement and profits. The opposite of mindfulness is mindlessness which imposes costs on individuals and businesses.

Mindfulness is assumed to promote organizational goal achievement, or as Professor George (2012) puts it:

> People who are mindful—fully present and aware—can become more effective leaders. […] Leaders who are mindful tend to be more effective in understanding and relating to others, and motivating them toward shared goals.

1.5.5. *Student Reflection Task 11*

1.5.5.1. Case Letter

There seem to be three factors that are significant for the development of psychological problems: inflexibility; lack of self-awareness; and extreme narrowness of perspective. These factors can be summed up in one word: mindlessness.

We can explain mindlessness by considering three factors.

(1) We live in relation to the concepts we use, instead of relating to experiences and senses that these concepts cover.
(2) We are being controlled by our automatic behaviours.
(3) In general, we see the world from a single perspective.

These three factors cause us to develop a kind of blindness of perspective. We abstract, categorize and make distinctions between categories. In this way, we order our lives, but at the same time, we distance ourselves from the world of experience. Although there is nothing wrong in categorizing, it is unsatisfactory if we only depend on categories when interpreting what we perceive (see, hear, smell, feel). Using categories and distinctions to guide us may rapidly result in our behaviour being controlled by them.

By being clear what our intention is when doing something, we maintain focus on our goal. By being attentive, we can focus on the present moment. By having considered attitudes that are generous, empathetic, accepting and inquisitive, we will become more sensitive to what is happening around us, which may help resolve many tensions and conflicts both at home and the workplace.

Mindfulness can be considered as a kind of intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation can be defined as being engaged in an activity because one derives interest and enjoyment from the activity itself. The point is, however, that mindfulness and intrinsic motivation are two distinct but related concepts.

Student task: How can mindfulness increase performance?

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Chapter 2

HR and Managers' Handling of Employees' Attitudes

2.1.   Learning Goals

- How to change the attitudes of employees.
- Develop a toolkit that can be used to change employees' attitudes.
- Evaluation of learning goals through the student tasks 12–25.

2.2.   Introduction

There is no consensus on how attitudes can be defined (Fabrigar, MacDonald, & Wegener, 2005, p. 79). Baker, who takes a practical and realistic approach to understanding attitudes, says that they are constituted in relation to how we think, communicate and act (Baker, 1995, p. 154). She further explains that it is these three elements that should be considered when attempting to influence the change of attitudes. This is also the structure we adopt in this chapter. Majority of definitions also consider evaluation, that is, attitudes are evaluations in relation to something or someone along a scale from positive to negative (Fabrigar et al., 2005, p. 79; Cooper, Blackman, & Keller, 2016, pp. 4–7). Moreover, attitudes are

also directed at something or someone. Thurstone (1946, p. 39) says that attitudes are "the intensity of positive or negative affect for or against a psychological object". Thus, the point here is that it would make little sense to denote an attitude by using a single index; this would be analogous to using a single numerical index in an attempt to describe an object, such as a kitchen table (Fabrigar et al., 2005, p. 79).

Attitude, as the concept used here, includes a tendency to act in certain ways in relation to a psychological object, with which we associate certain positive or negative effects. Thus, the definition we use in the chapter can be summarized as follows: *attitudes are defined as our way of thinking, communicating and acting (behaving) in relation to a psychological object, with which we associate certain positive or negative effects.* This definition is thus based on both Baker's and Thurston's definitions of attitudes. It primarily consists of three elements that work together to constitute and change attitudes: thinking, communication, and action (behaviour); another element, effects, is an intrinsic dimension of the other three elements. The definition we use does not say anything about an attitude's stability or possibility of change. However, the definition says something about the activities that create and change attitudes about people, psychological objects, problems and challenges.

How attitudes are formed seems to have a bearing on how stable they are (Cooper et al., 2016, p. 24). The constitution of attitudes can be divided into biological, social and experiential components (Tesser, 1993; Tesser & Martin, 1996). It seems reasonable to assume that attitudes that have a biological and evolutionary anchoring are harder to change than those constituted through socialization processes. Moreover, it also seems reasonable to assume that attitudes constituted on the basis of an individual's experiences can be changed more easily than those that have roots in biological and socialization processes.

An attitude's stability is largely related to how it has been constituted, which is indicated by Cooper et al. (2016, p. 24). Although the influence of genetics on attitudes has been discussed by theorists, knowledge in this area is uncertain (Tesser, 1993). However, Tesser and Martin (1996) say that genetic inheritance directly influences attitudes in the following cases.

- When we are unable to relate an attitude to an empirical basis. For example, the new-born child's attitude to various facial expressions,

such as the mother's.

- When we cannot relate cultural influences to an attitude.
- When the attitude relates to the theory of evolution. The new-born child's response to the mother's various facial expressions (Cosmides, Tooby, & Barkow, 1992), could indicate an evolutionary survival strategy where the child, through evolutionary processes, has adapted to the facial expressions that have led to improved survival.
- When the attitude is consistent with biological factors, as in the case of positive attitudes towards calorie-rich foods. The consumption of food that provided a surplus of carbohydrates and fat was important in pre-historic times because this offered a greater chance of survival. This is an example of an attitude that once had a clear function that continues to exist, although its function has become void in a different context.

Tesser (1993) and Tesser and Martin (1996) indicated that genes evolve and change through evolutionary processes. Although there are clear indications that biological factors play a role in constitution of certain attitudes, there is no unambiguous correlation (Yu & Sheppard, 1998).

In several studies of twins, researchers have discovered a factor they call "inherited attitudes" whose relatively high probability (50 per cent in some studies) makes it important (Robertson & Cooper, 2011; Tesser, 1993, pp. 9–10). The biological make-up of an individual can provide him/her with certain advantages that others do not necessarily possess. An example of this might be dispositions that influence personality and abilities, which can be instrumental in the development of certain attitudes. In other words, research indicates the importance of biological factors with respect to the attitudes we develop, albeit indirectly.

2.2.1.   Student Reflection Task 12

2.2.1.1.   Case Letter

Some attitudes can be biologically determined, directly and indirectly, whereas others can be the result of social inheritance. Attitudes can also be acquired through an individual's experiences. However, it must be noted

that although attitudes are developed through our experiences, there are also certain dispositions, both biological and cultural, that influence the attitudes an individual develops through their experiences (Bajani, Lemm, & Carpenter, 2001; Zajonc, 1968, 2000). If one has personal experience of the attitude's object, then it is highly probable that the attitude becomes stable and durable (Regan & Fazzio, 1977).

Biologically inherited attitudes, directly or indirectly, are more stable than socially acquired ones, and those based on the individual's experiences. This can be understood as an attitude hierarchy in relation to the degree of stability versus possibility of change. Another aspect is whether an attitude has a strong or weak positive valence relative to an object (Cooper et al., 2016, p. 23). In other words, the weaker the valence, the easier it is to change an attitude, and vice versa. Valence is related to the engagement one has with a positive or negative object. It is also the case that an attitude with a strong valence is easier to recall from memory than an attitude with a low valence. A strong attitude also has greater influence on how we process information about the attitude's objects than a weak attitude (Holland, Verplanken, & Van Knippenberg, 2002). This has implication for how resistant the individual is to being persuaded to change his/her attitude.

An attitude's stability versus its possibility of change is also related to the attitude's permeability in the individual's world. The stronger valence an attitude has towards an object, the greater the likelihood that other objects are considered in light of the strong attitude. The same applies to extreme attitudes (Bassili, 2008). Another insight regarding extreme attitudes is that the more extreme an attitude is, the greater the likelihood that the individual acts on the basis of this attitude (Petersen & Dutton, 1975). In addition, extreme attitudes often result in the individual being the victim of a false consensus effect. This effect makes the individual think that more people are in agreement than is actually the case (Allison & Messick, 1988).

In the following section, we discuss the stability of attitude versus change of attitude in relation to the definition established in the introduction. This definition consists of three main elements: thinking, communication and behaviour.

The problem approach we are investigating is the following: how can managers change the attitudes of their employees?

We have developed three questions on the basis of our definition of attitude.

Question 1: how can managers change employees' attitudes through the way they think?

Question 2: how can managers change employees' attitudes through the way they communicate?

Question 3: how can managers change employees' attitudes through behaviour?

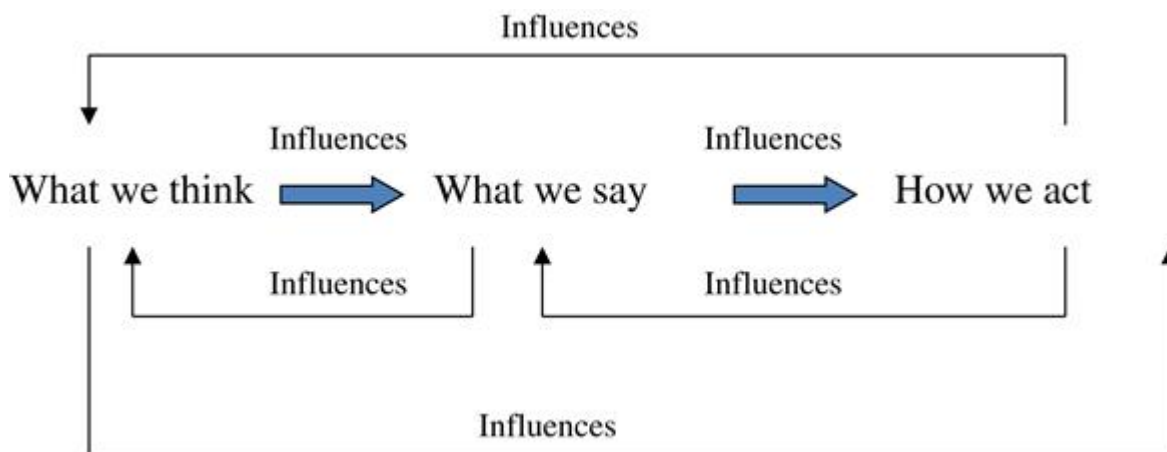The introduction, problem approach and questions are summarized in the model in Figure 2.1, which also shows how the chapter is organized.

Figure 2.1: Structuring of Attitudes: A Systemic Model.

Student task: Reflect on Figure 2.1. What happens when what we think is different from what we say? What happens when what we say is different from how we act?

2.3. How Attitudes Change Through How We Think

The question we examine in this section is: how can managers change employees' attitudes through the way they think?

Our way of thinking is closely related to our "belief system" (Wyer & Albarracin, 2005, pp. 273–322; Fishbein, 2008, pp. 137–142) and our information processes (Wegener & Carlston, 2005, pp. 498–499). Our "belief system" can be understood as a coherent system of assumptions and perceptions. This "belief system" comes into play when we evaluate something or someone (Eagly & Chaiken, 1998). The system of assumptions and beliefs is partially constituted by lack of reliable information (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993, pp. 257–305; Wyer & Albarracin, 2005, p. 273).

2.3.1.   Student Reflection Task 13

2.3.1.1.   Case Letter

An individual's perception of an object also affects his/her actions regarding the object (Fishbein, 2008, p. 137). Fishbein points out that although the individual may have various perceptions of an object, it is his/her final evaluation that represents their attitude. This attitude will also very likely emerge in future meetings with the object (Fishbein, 2008, p. 137).

Perceptions that are based on one's own experiences are often considered as if they are factual knowledge in memory (Wyer, 2004). In this way, experience-based information about a psychological object is often interpreted as a "truth" (Wyer & Albarracin, 2005, p. 274). When we convey this information further or use the information when making a decision, it is often considered a "fact" (Schwarz & Bohner, 2001). Experiential knowledge has a high degree of influence, according to Wyer and Albarracin (2005, p. 281) when it is:

- newly acquired;
- used in practical situations earlier;
- used often;
- associated with other knowledge that supports the experiential knowledge; and

- related to general knowledge ideas about the object.

As early as 1935, Allport noted that attitudes determine what we "see" and what we "hear" (Allport, 1935, p. 806). This underlines the importance of attitudes with respect to information and knowledge processes. Although Allport's perspective has been criticized by many scientists over the years, most of them agree that there is a strong relationship between attitudes and the way we process information regarding an object (Wegener & Carlston, 2005, pp. 498–499). This is especially the case if an attitude is related to fact-based knowledge (Wood, Kallgren, & Preisler, 1985).

The attitudes we have already activated will also affect the information we seek and how we evaluate it (Fabrigar et al., 2005, p. 101). A majority of empirical research suggests that the acceptance of new information is influenced by attitudes we already possess.

New information is often shown to be distorted with respect to the motivation one has in collecting the data (Marsh & Wallace, 2005, pp. 376–377). One might say that this helps to reinforce the resistance to change in the cognitive system, or as Abelson (1986) puts it: one treats one's attitudes as one's own property, and protects them in the best possible way.

The attitude one has before an event, situation or action affects the evaluation of the end result. One could say that we tend to consider "facts" through our "coloured glasses", or that our subjective evaluation prevails in relation to objective facts. Similarly, Marsh and Wallace (2005, pp. 376–379), say that our evaluations are motivated by our "belief system".

Student task: Discuss statements 1 and 2:

(1) Managers who take employees' experiences into consideration may contribute to changing employees' attitudes. (2) Managers who use factual knowledge contribute to changing attitudes among employees.

2.4.   How Attitudes Change Through What We Say

The question we examine in this section is: how can managers change employees' attitudes through the way they communicate?

Information's cognitive authority is the term we use here to describe, analyse and discuss the changes in attitudes related to how we communicate when trying to influence attitudes. Wilson (1983, p. 13) emphasizes that information's cognitive authority is connected to a relationship between two people, and that the cognitive authority will vary. Further, he emphasizes that it is related to areas of interest, and why we tend to believe more in one type of information than in another.

The fact that we prefer to believe in one type of information over another, and that we manage to convince others to believe in the information is directly linked to how we communicate to influence others. Lasswell (1948, p. 37) was the first who asked why we believe more in one type of information than another from a social-psychological perspective. He asked the following: who says what to whom, through which channels, and with what effect? If we divide the question into several sub-questions, the following elements emerge:

- the sender of a message;
- the message;
- the media being used; and
- the receiver of the message.

The sender has certain personal characteristics that influence us, and *the message* also has certain characteristics that affect us. The *receiver of the information* ascribes both the sender and message with certain characteristics.

In the following section, we will structure the description, analysis and discussion in relation to the sender, message and receiver. We choose not to focus on how the choice of channels may affect the information's cognitive authority.

2.4.1. The Sender

Why do we have more confidence in what one person says than another?

Several studies report that our confidence in the information communicated by someone is determined by their appearance (Dermer & Thiel, 1975; Dion, Berscheid, & Hatfield, 1972; Rucker, Taber, & Harrison, 1981). However, it must be emphasized that the results are not entirely clear. We also have a negative bias towards people who are physically attractive. This applies to both men and women (Hatfield & Sprecher, 1986; Kleinke & Staneski, 1980)

The courtroom provides an example of a situation in which our credibility certainly is at stake. However, even here, where one would presume that law and justice prevailed, research has shown that a person's appearance, dress and behaviour are important and can affect the outcome of a case. This has been thoroughly documented by Hatfield and Sprecher (1986) among others.

2.4.2. *Student Reflection Task 14*

2.4.2.1. Case Letter

An important point here is not only how someone presents himself/herself, but how we feel we present ourselves with respect to that person (Ross & Salvia, 1975). Self-understanding and status act upon each other, where self-understanding refers to how do we perceive ourselves in relation to others and status means how do the others perceive us. In a situation, if a person signalizes that he/she is above an assumed average in a situation, the person's information will have less cognitive authority than if he/she signals that he/she is at an average level compared to colleagues in the same situation (Hatfield & Sprecher, 1986). This may seem paradoxical. Although we may have confidence in the people who are themselves, we would not have full confidence in them if they were themselves but appeared to be above us. This can be explained by the fact that we have a built-in aversion to arrogance and condescension.

> **Student task:** Discuss the following statement: the manager can change employees' attitudes by presenting themselves as being on the same level as the employees.

2.4.3.   The Message

Message is the smallest unit in a communication process. We choose to divide the message into two parts (Bateson, 1972; Luhmann, 1989):

(1)   the informational part; and
(2)   the communicative part.

The informational part relates to what is said and the communicative part to how we say it. An essential part of changing attitudes is oriented around information exchange. However, we have a tendency to overestimate information that supports our attitudes and assumptions, and underestimate the one that opposes them (Raiffa, 1982, p. 338). We rarely actively seek information that goes against our existing beliefs or attitudes; this view is supported by Pruitt and Carnevale (1993, p. 84) and Grzelak (1982). The fact that we tend to search for information that supports our established attitudes, instead of searching for information that could change our perceptions, is also an important point made by Wason (1960, 1968a, 1968b); Frey (1986) and Marsh and Wallace (2005, p. 377). We also seek to avoid situations where our views can be exposed to pressure to change. In this way, the information process is affected by our motives when collecting information.

Information that goes against our beliefs has little cognitive authority. We find partial support for this statement in Bazerman (1994), Thompson (1991), Zubek, Pruitt, Peirce, McGillicaddy, and Syna (1992). We give priority to what we already know, and thus we also economize our information processes, although this may lead in many cases to systematic fallacies (Fisher, Ury, & Patton, 1991; Lax & Sebenius, 1986, p. 31). Perhaps the most provocative results regarding this phenomenon can be found in Tversky and Kahneman's work on prospect theory (1971, 1973, 1974, 1983; Kahneman 2011).

2.4.4.   Student Reflection Task 15

2.4.4.1.   Case Letter

Information, Nisbett and Ross (1980, pp. 45–51), stimulates and holds our attention when it:

- appears emotionally interesting;
- is specific and provocative; and
- is close to us in time and space.

It is reasonable to assume that a link between the three types of information will have a greater effect than if there is only a single link. Furthermore, it is reasonable to assume that the longer we manage to direct people's attention to the information we present, and especially the three types of information, the greater cognitive authority the information will have, and the greater the likelihood that we can change people's attitudes. This is consistent with Tesser (1978) who explains this phenomenon by the fact that the memory thus becomes more active. It must also be emphasized that it is not only accurate information that has this effect on us. Discuss the following statement: managers who use information related to emotions, can contribute to changing employees' attitudes.

> **Student task:** Discuss the following statement: managers who *use information related to emotions, the specific and that which is close* can contribute to changing employees' attitudes.

2.4.5.   Student Reflection Task 16

2.4.5.1.   Case Letter

The *expectations* we have of a person will affect how we react to their behaviour. If we trust them, our behaviour towards them will reinforce this impression. However, if a different impression is created of the person, through rumours, gossip, or the like, then our behaviour towards them will also be different. Consequently, our attitude towards the person concerned will reinforce the behaviour we expect of them.

Student task: Discuss the following statement: the manager's *expectations* contribute to changing attitudes among the employees.

Take into consideration employees' typologies.

Thus, we gain confirmation of what we expected to know beforehand. This applies even when there is no truth value in the expectations we have. This phenomenon in human interaction was first pointed out by Kelley (1950). Thus, attitudes towards another person have a force in themselves.

According to the expectancy-value model of Fishbein and Ajzen (1975), we ascribe the reference object a certain expected subjective probability so that the expectation occurs. A reference object is something the information relates to. We also attribute characteristics to the reference object, that is, specific values, positive or negative. Our attitude to the reference object is then the sum of our expectations multiplied by the values we attribute to it (attitude = sum of expectations × value).

It is reasonable to assume that information regarding reference object that supports our attitudes will have greater cognitive authority than information that goes against our attitudes. This view is supported by Sheppard, Hartwick, and Warshaw (1988). Thus, information that supports our attitudes and beliefs would seem to have greater cognitive authority than information that goes against our attitudes and beliefs.

2.4.6. Student Reflection Task 17

2.4.6.1. Case Letter

An essential point in the relationship between attitudes towards the reference object and reliance in the information regarding the object is that the two elements can vary independent of each other. The attitude will vary in different contexts and at different times, but reliance on the information regarding the reference object will still be constant.

Our attitudes towards other people sometimes hinder the other person from communicating in a situation. We use past experience of similar types, and then we judge the person concerned on the basis of our own typology. In other words, there are other people that we've had some experience of, which determines how we behave towards the person we possibly know nothing of. Once a person has been registered in our type-registry, he/she is pigeon-holed, that is, we have had experience before with "his/her type". The result is that our type-registry creates a picture of the person from the type-registry. If the person behaves differently than our typology would suggest, we react with anxiety, uncertainty and express a negative behaviour towards the person (Garfinkel, 1967, pp. 42–44).

> **Student task:** Discuss the following statement: managers who *take into consideration employees' typologies* will contribute to changing employees' attitudes in the desired direction.

2.5.   How Attitudes Change Through What We Do

We will examine the following question: how can managers change employees' attitudes through behaviour?

Attitudes influence behaviour, but behaviour also influences attitudes (Fazio, 1986). We will describe, analyse and discuss this systematic relationship.

2.5.1.   The Relationship: Attitudes–behaviour

Can attitudes predict behaviour? The interesting issue related to the question is that people who demonstrate the same attitudes may have a high degree of variation in their behaviour.

It seems probable that neo-liberalists would support free competition with an absence of monopoly and other factors restricting competition.

However, is the relationship between attitudes and behaviour so simple? Research shows that a more pertinent question is: under which conditions can attitudes predict behaviour? Early research on the subject (Wicker, 1969, p. 75) has shown that attitudes can only predict two per cent of variation in behaviour. Later research by Kraus (1995), in a larger meta-analysis of empirical research, found that the correlation was 38 per cent. Regardless of whether one can explain the differences in various ways, use of methods, etc., the fact remains that there is no simple relationship between attitudes and behaviour. There is much research that suggests that the relationship is stronger under some conditions than others. We will investigate and systematize some of these conditions here. The relationship between attitudes and behaviour will always be influenced by issues of measurement. We refer readers to Maio and Haddock (2015, pp. 68–72) who discuss in detail issues related to choice of methods. In this systematization, we will not concern ourselves with how the choice of measurement indicators affects the outcome. We will also limit ourselves to attitudes that are related to behaviour, and not choose attitudes related to physical objects, such as the Eiffel Tower, Big Ben, the Twin Towers, the Statue of Liberty, the Little Mermaid.

We will examine the following two categories of condition: situational conditions and personality conditions. We will further divide these condition categories into different types of conditions.

2.5.2.   *Student Reflection Task 18*

2.5.2.1.   Case Letter

Condition category I: situational conditions

We will examine two types of conditions here. We term one main type, theme, and the other context.

Condition 1: theme

Research has shown that the theme one investigates will affect the outcome of how much one can rely on whether an attitude will predict the behaviour. It is when one relates the theme to a person's values that one can infer something about the prediction strength of an attitude, because the

value hierarchy may be related to an attitude's strength (Eagly, Chen, Chaiken, & Shaw-Barnes, 1999; Effron & Miller, 2012). Empirical research confirms that the stronger an attitude is, the greater the likelihood that the attitude will predict behaviour, and vice versa (Maio & Haddock, 2015, pp. 154–179; Cooke & Sheeran, 2004). One can imagine that one's values can be structured in a hierarchy; values that are lower in the hierarchy are not that important to the person, while those at the top are extremely important.

The attitude towards a political candidate and the likelihood of voting for this candidate are relatively great (Kraus, 1995); empirical measurements have shown that the strength of this relationship attitude-behaviour (voting for political candidates) ranges between 63 and 78 per cent, which is very high (Fazio & Williams, 1986). This may indicate that ideology lies high up in the value hierarchy.

> **Student task:** Discuss the following statement: managers who take into account *the strong attitudes of employees* will contribute to changing the attitudes of employees in the desired direction.

2.5.3. *Student Reflection Task 19*

2.5.3.1. Case Letter

Condition 2: context

The context an attitude is played out in has importance to what extent we can predict behaviour. If the context is related to social pressure, then it is highly probable that there will be consistency between attitudes and behaviour (Maio & Haddock, 2015, pp. 82–83).

If we expect our behaviour will get the desired result, then it is likely that our attitude corresponds to our behaviour. If we do not see any connection between attitude and behaviour, then it is less likely that our attitude predicts our behaviour. For example, if we see that the plastic waste we collect helps the environment, then the probability is great that our attitude towards a better environment will lead to positive actions towards the environment.

Student task: Discuss the following statement: managers who use *social pressure* from other employees in an organization to change the attitude of the employee in focus will contribute to changing the employee's attitude in the desired direction.

2.5.4.   *Student Reflection Task 20*

2.5.4.1.   Case Letter

Condition category II: personality conditions

In addition to situational conditions, an individual's personality is also important. We will examine two condition types: self-correction and time for reflection.

Condition 1: self-correction

Empirical research shows that the attitudes of people who largely modify their behaviour in relation to the context and circumstances (high degree of adaption) have low prediction value of their behaviour. Those persons who do not modify their behaviour in relation to the context and circumstances (low degree of adaption) are highly predictable regarding their behaviour (Snyder & Kendzierski, 1982).

Student task: Discuss the following statement: managers should base their efforts on employees who are flexible (high degree of adaptability) because these more easily will be able to change attitudes, and may be used later to exert social pressure on other employees.

2.5.5.   *Student Reflection Task 21*

2.5.5.1.   Case Letter

Condition 2: the need for reflection time

Need for reflection time is another personality condition that has proved to be important for an attitude's prediction value regarding behaviour. It has been shown that people who have a great need for reflection time before they act have a strong correlation between attitude and action (Cacioppo & Petty, 1982). The explanation seems obvious. Those who have a great need for reflection are most likely thoughtful and reflective about their attitudes. The people who need reflection time before they act also spend more time thinking through the consequences of their actions.

> **Student task:** Discuss the following statement: in a campaign aimed at changing attitudes managers should limit employees' time for reflection.

2.5.6. Student Reflection Task 22

2.5.6.1. Case Letter

The relationship: behaviour–attitudes

It is not only the case that behaviour can affect attitudes that is of interest, but also that behaviour does not need to conform to the attitudes we have. An important point is that people's attitudes can be changed by putting constraints on their behaviour. We will examine the following three conditions.

> *Condition 1: social response*
>
> Asplund's motivation theory (Asplund, 1970, 2010) can be briefly summarized as: *people are motivated by social responses* (Asplund, 2010, pp. 221–229). The following can be said to be central to Asplund's theory: *when people receive social responses, their level of activity increases.*
>
> **Student task:** Discuss the following statement: managers should provide positive social response in the direction they wish to change employees' attitudes.

2.5.7. *Student Reflection Task 23*

2.5.7.1. Case Letter

Condition 2: the institutional framework

Asplund's motivation theory is consistent with North's action theory. North's theory can be expressed in the following statement: *people act on the basis of a system of rewards as expressed in the norms, values, rules and attitudes in the culture (the institutional framework)* (North, 1990, 1993, 1994, 1996, 1997).

Student task: Discuss the following statement: managers should reward desired changes in attitude.

2.5.8. *Student Reflection Task 24*

2.5.8.1. Case Letter

Condition 3: social comparisons

In addition to Asplund and North, Festinger, before he developed the theory of cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957), developed a theory that people's behaviour is to a certain extent controlled by comparisons with others' attitudes (Festinger, 1954).

Student task: Discuss the following statement: managers should get employees to compare themselves with groups who have the desired attitudes.

2.6. Conclusion

The problem we have examined in this chapter is: how can managers change *the attitudes of employees*?

We first examined how attitudes are constituted. This process can be divided into three parts. First, there are attitudes that can be said to be biologically related. In practice, managers can do little to influence this type of attitude. Second, there are attitudes that are formed through socialization. This type of attitude is also difficult for management to change. Third, there are attitudes that are constituted through an individual's own experiences. Management has the possibility of influencing this type of attitude. What needs to be done is to first uncover an individual's attitude hierarchy. The attitude hierarchy can consist of attitudes of different strength and intensity. The attitudes at the top of the hierarchy have the greatest strength and intensity, while those at the bottom the least. The greater the strength and intensity an attitude has, the greater the likelihood is that managers cannot change the employee's attitude; the less the strength and intensity, the greater the likelihood a manager can change the employee's attitude. It is therefore critical that managers become aware of the individual's attitude hierarchy.

Managers can also utilize the structuring of attitudes, as discussed in the chapter, when attempting to influence employees' attitudes. In this context, three categories can be used: thinking, communication and behaviour.

For the category, thinking, managers must first deal with the employee's "belief system". To do this, it should be established to what extent the attitude is related to factual knowledge. Two strategies the managers can use are developed in the chapter in relation to the category thinking.

The category communication was divided into sender, message and receiver. To tackle the change of attitudes in this category, managers can analyse and use how the employee presents himself/herself, what he/she says, how they say it, and what expectations the employee has. We developed four strategies for the category communication in this chapter.

2.6.1. *Student Reflection Task 25*

2.6.1.1. Case Letter

Category behaviour was divided into two types. The first type concerns how attitudes can predict behaviour. The second type is how behaviour can affect attitudes. The first type was divided into two conditions, situational and personality conditions. In the chapter, we divided situational conditions into theme and context. In order to deal with "theme", it is crucial that the manager is able to discover the strength and intensity of the attitude (attitude hierarchy) that is connected to the actual theme. We have chosen to divide personality conditions into self-correction and time for reflection. Three manager strategies have been developed regarding the two personality conditions.

How behaviour can affect attitudes has been divided into three conditions: social response, institutional framework's reward system and comparison with others. Three manager strategies have been developed regarding this category.

The discussion and analysis has been represented in an analytical model, which is a revised representation of Figure 2.1.

> **Student task:** Develop a step-by-step methodology to change employee's attitudes based on Figure 2.2.
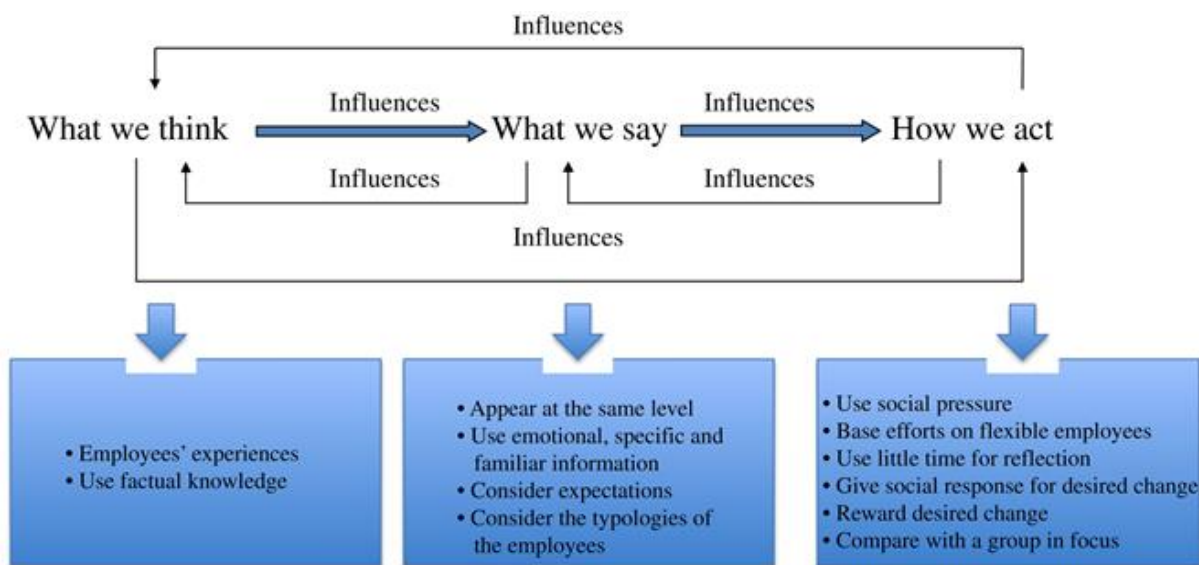
Figure 2.2:   Analytical Model: Changing Attitudes.

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Chapter 3

HR and Enthusiasm as Motivation

3.1.   Learning Goals

- How managers can promote job satisfaction with the help of enthusiasm?
- Develop an action plan for enthusiasm.
- Evaluation of learning goals through the student tasks 26–34.

3.2.   Introduction

According to Wright (2006), one of the criteria for a company's success is the extent of job satisfaction its employees have. Job satisfaction is, however, a complex construct, which does not have a single unambiguous definition. Contentment, fulfilment and well-being are the words used in the attempt to encompass something one is trying to get a grip on when referring to the term job satisfaction (Seligman, 2011, pp. 5–26). Job satisfaction has been a focus area in positive psychology (Seligman, 2002) and positive leadership (Cameron, Dutton, & Quinn, 2003) for a relatively long time.

   Significant changes are happening to the design and context of jobs in the global knowledge economy (Grant & Parker, 2009). The type of

behaviour demanded of employees is also changing (Griffin & Parker, 2007). In addition to high levels of expertise, companies are seeking positive employees who are committed and optimistic (Kesebir & Diener, 2008; Peterson, Park, & Seligman, 2005).

Many of the classic research studies have been oriented around the question of what job characteristics motivates employees (Grant & Parker, 2009, p. 318; Grant & Ashford, 2008). Positive psychology is concerned with the personal characteristics that will promote job satisfaction and accordingly motivate employees. Proactive behaviour (Grant & Spence, 2010) and pro-social behaviour appear to promote job satisfaction. Advanced reasons to explain this fact include the idea that these types of behaviour transmit to other employees, creating enthusiasm and commitment, which generates positive reinforcement (Grant, 2007).

How employees are treated decides whether a workplace becomes a place that induces sickness among employees, or a place where people develop job satisfaction and well-being, which they take with them beyond the workplace (Robertson & Cooper, 2011, p. 3). Job satisfaction is linked to many factors, both within and outside the workplace (Danna & Griffin, 1999). These factors can be classified into four categories:

(1) *Social factors*: meaningful relationships, the ability to manage stress, commitment, curiosity, amiability, a sense of well-being, etc. (Bruke & Cooper, 2008; Dewe & Cooper, 2012, p. 4; Boxall & Purcell, 2010; Robertson & Cooper, 2011, pp. 4–10).

(2) *Political factors*: involvement, participation, co-determination, employee consultation, etc. (Beach & Connolly, 2005; Gardner, Wright, & Moynihan, 2011; Wegge et al., 2010).

(3) *Material factors*: financial factors, physical health, access to technology, competence, etc. (Adler, Goldoftas, & Levine, 1999; Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2014; Innerarity, 2012; Robertson & Cooper, 2011, p. 11).

(4) *Cultural factors*: meaningful work, organizational norms and values that accord with the employee's own norms and values (Alveson, 2000; Godard, 2010; Kehoe & Wright, 2013; Luthans, Youssef-Morgan, & Avolio, 2015).

In this chapter, we will focus solely on the social factors. Within this category, we opt to examine in greater depth the impact of an enthusiastic

employee on job satisfaction and well-being in the workplace.

Envisage a future workplace where all the employees are inquisitive, very committed, good humoured, help each other and experience satisfaction in their everyday work. Cameron et al. (2003, p. 3) contrast such an organization with a workplace that is characterized by greed, egoism and manipulation and where the main focus is on the financial bottom line. Which of these organizations would you want to work for?

In future, working life will be characterized by a battle for talented people. In all probability, such people will choose to work for businesses with high levels of job satisfaction (Compton & Hoffman, 2012; Danna & Griffin, 1999).

A large-scale empirical study on job satisfaction showed that people who were uncertain as to whether their job was secure showed lower levels of satisfaction, commitment and responsibility in their current jobs (Sora, Caballer, & Peiro, 2009). Among other things, this means that the trend that we are seeing in the global labour market towards reduced job security is affecting workers' commitment and is accordingly affecting companies' performance indirectly (Standing, 2014).

A characteristic feature of organizations in the global knowledge economy is the fact that they are undergoing constant processes of change (Kehoe & Wright, 2013). These processes are often experienced as threatening and negative (Harter, Schmidt, & Keyes, 2003). In this context, it may be important to focus on the positive aspects of continual change processes (Liker & Ross, 2016). This is one of the areas where positive psychology may have a contribution to make (Dewe & Cooper, 2012, p. 6). Employees who feel that they are noticed, who work largely autonomously, and who have the opportunity to experience well-being and satisfaction in the workplace, will be more engaged and perform better (Oswald & Wu, 2010).

The problem investigated in this chapter is as follows: how can managers promote job satisfaction with the help of enthusiasm?

The introduction is visualized in Figure 3.1, which highlights the association between enthusiasm and organizational goal achievement to underline that enthusiasm and job satisfaction have clear organizational functions. First, we describe the concept of enthusiasm. Thereafter, we analyse and discuss enthusiasm in a broader context.
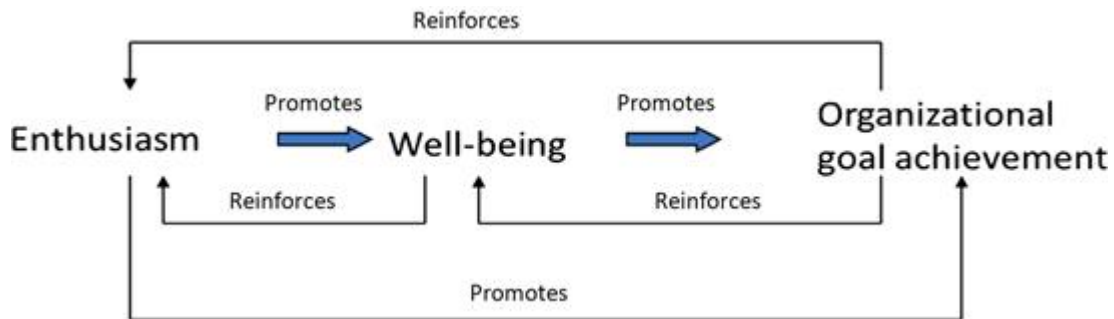
Figure 3.1: Enthusiasm, Job Satisfaction and Organizational Goal Achievement.

3.3. Enthusiasm

3.3.1. Description

Commitment and enthusiasm are closely related concepts (West, 2012). For pedagogical reasons, we make no distinction between these two concepts, but use them interchangeably.

One often hears statements of the type: "You can't be more enthusiastic than you feel." Of course, this is true, but you can become more enthusiastic than you are now, if you wish. Managers should be aware of this, because enthusiasm promotes goal achievement and increases the cohesion of the group (Lynn & Snyder, 2005). Peale (1994, p. 427) expresses this in the following way: "The important fact is that you can deliberately make yourself enthusiastic." This is Peale's "*As if*" principle (Peale, 1994, p. 428), which can be used to increase enthusiasm. This is also underlined by Kehoe and Wright (2013, p. 381), who also stress that acting as if you are enthusiastic, leads to you becoming more enthusiastic.

3.3.2. Student Reflection Task 26

3.3.2.1. Case Letter

Harter et al. (2003, pp. 205–224) conducted a major empirical study where they looked at the relationship between commitment, enthusiasm and job satisfaction. They found that where the relationship was very good, there was also a higher probability of customer and client loyalty, higher productivity, lower turnover rates and higher organizational goal achievement. This indicates that enthusiasm and commitment are the crucial factors that influence job satisfaction and organizational goal achievement. This has also been substantiated by Vogelaar (2010, 2016a, 2016b).

> **Student task:** (1) Develop a conceptual model of the concepts: commitment, enthusiasm, job satisfaction and organizational performance. (2) Develop a step-by-step strategy for increasing enthusiasm and commitment in organizations.

3.3.2.2. Becoming More Enthusiastic

One of the secrets to becoming more enthusiastic is to do more of what others don't do, that is, develop your uniqueness. This can be promoted by thinking differently than others in relation to strategy (Kim & Mauborgne, 2005). You can also connect themes and problem areas that have not previously been connected (Peale, 1994, p. 272), and consequently, create what is innovative and new.

To promote enthusiasm, you should say yes to fewer things. The reason for this action plan is that enthusiasm almost invariably leads to new opportunities. The explanation here is that the enthusiastic person attracts others who want to work with him. In such a situation, if he does not learn to say yes to fewer things, there is a risk of being enthusiastic one moment, and burned-out the next (Vogelaar, 2016b). Saying yes to fewer things is what we call flexibility here. The aim is therefore to seek a balance that enhances enthusiasm without becoming overworked (Vallerand, 2015).

Enthusiasm is also promoted when a person is authentic, someone who is the "real deal". The authentic individual stands by his/her values regardless of the situation; and creates enthusiasm in others by his/her manner (Boyle, 2004) and example. The authentic individual creates an aura of safety around himself, by not pretending to be something he isn't by putting up a false facade (York, 2014).

The enthusiastic person often focuses his awareness on the present moment, that is, he exhibits mindfulness (Karremans & Papies, 2017). One focuses especially on the present moment when one is in "the flow zone" (Csikszentmihalyi, 2002).

3.3.3. *Student Reflection Task 27*

3.3.3.1. Case Letter

The enthusiastic person not only focuses his awareness on the present moment, but he is also optimistic and has a positive image of the future (Seligman, 2006). An important point concerning optimism (Seligman, 2006) is that we can teach ourselves to be more optimistic, and managers can develop action plans to facilitate this. From a management perspective, this is important because the optimistic person engenders enthusiasm in others, which leads to better job satisfaction (Weich, 2016), which is directly related to increased organizational performance (Wright, 2006).

Figure 3.2 shows our explanation of enthusiasm. The model also shows how we have organized the analysis and discussion of enthusiasm in the following.
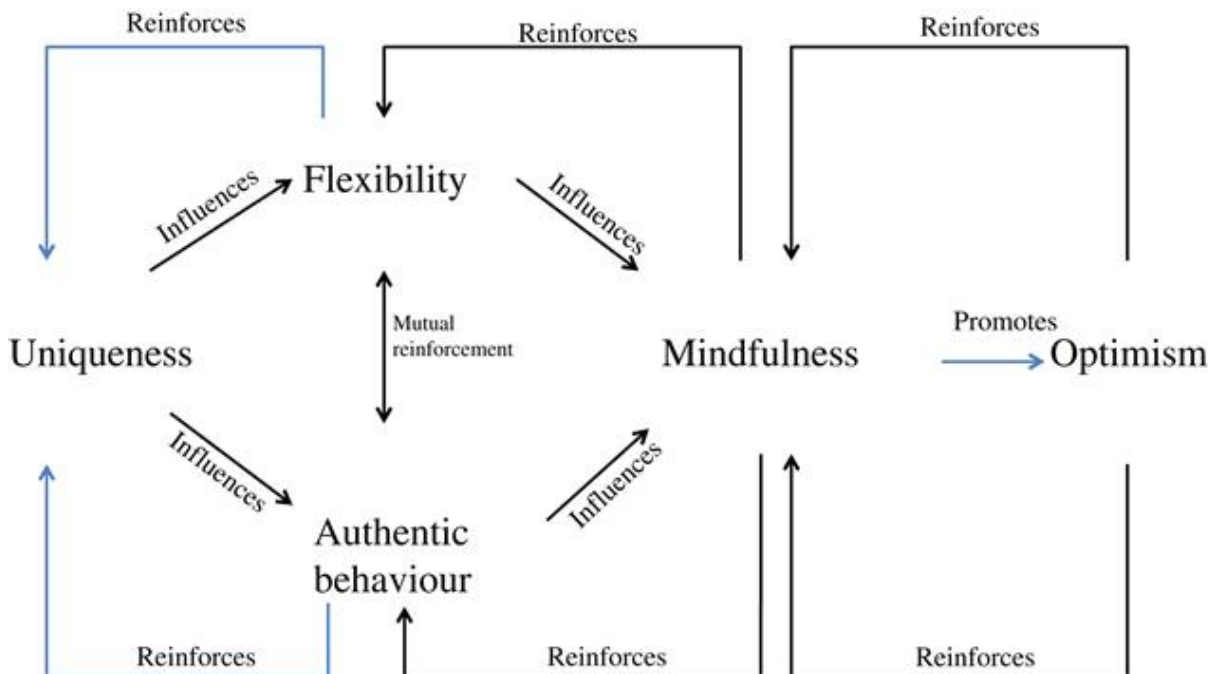
Figure 3.2: Enthusiasm.

Student task: Develop three steps at each concepts in Figure 3.2 to make the concept happen, for instance, which three steps constitute uniqueness?

3.4. Analysis and Discussion

We will examine the five elements in Figure 3.2 in the analysis and discussion.

3.4.1. Uniqueness (Doing What Others Don't Do)

When you notice that you continually have to do more to achieve desired results, then you should stop and change your perspective and working methods, because this is the moment you have the opportunity to do things differently (Scott & Hoffman, 2015). Doing what others don't do is a skill that can be developed and learned. At the organizational level, Kim and Mauborgne (2005) explain the strategy. At the individual level, one can use Leonardo da Vinci's seven principles (Gelb, 2004). These principles are to: develop an insatiable curiosity; learn from experience; focus on the present moment; embrace uncertainty; continually alternate between part and whole; keep yourself physically fit and search for patterns in everything.

To build uniqueness at both individual and organizational levels, you can deliberately put yourself in situations that increase the pressure to do things in a unique way (Habegger, 2016). Such situations make it possible to withdraw and reflect on your own reactions, as well as trying to do things different from the usual working methods. When increasing the pressure on yourself by becoming involved in such practical experiments, you will develop the expertise that will enable you to do things differently from others, which will promote success (Gelb, 2004; Kim & Mauborgne, 2005).

Thus, you'll manage to cope with pressure in a more adequate way (Habegger, 2016). By continually taking yourself out of the comfort zone and experimenting by reacting differently than you would normally do in such situations will take you up to a higher level of competence in relation to solution strategies (Dryden, 2012).

It is the attitude towards the challenges and problems that often separates those who succeed from those who don't (Abattzidis, 2015; Danna & Griffin, 1999). Some researchers claim that more than 90 per cent of the factors that are critical to success come from the attitude you have towards challenges, problems and phenomena (Peale, 1994, p. 312). The attitudes that stand out positively (Peale 1994, p. 312) are to:

- try, try, try;
- never give up; and
- persevere.

These are also what the psychologist Dweck (2012) found as important factors for being successful. Her research specifically shows that there are four factors that are essential for success: to have a clear burning desire, to persevere, to have moral courage and self-discipline.

Doing what others don't do, strengthens identity, attracts attention from the outside world, and fosters the presentation of oneself (Codol, 1984). Snyder and Fromkin (1980) have developed a theory explaining that people strive to be unique, because they feel uncomfortable being too similar to others. Enthusiasm is also reinforced when one experiences that one is unique (Snyder & Lopez, 2007).

A person can be unique in many areas, such as in relation to attitudes, creativity, personality, judgement, experience, belonging, consumption. Some researches highlight that belonging to smaller groups satisfies the need for uniqueness better than belonging to larger groups (Lynn & Snyder, 2005, p. 396).

People tend to seek to be unique within areas that are socially acceptable, and to a lesser extent in areas that are not socially acceptable (Ditto & Griffin, 1993). The explanation is that one is socially rewarded when one excels in the socially accepted areas, which reinforces enthusiasm.

3.4.2. *Student Reflection Task 28*

3.4.2.1. Case Letter

What we have described here with reference to empirical research can be expressed in the sentence: enthusiasm increases when you do what others don't do. Thus, based on this understanding, enthusiasm is not something you have or don't have, it is a resource that can be strengthened by striving to be unique. Enthusiasm can be understood as a social mechanism that "makes everything different" (Peale, 1994, p. 411), or as "the difference which makes a difference" (Bateson, 1972, p. 272).

> **Student task:** Develop a strategy in three steps to be perceived as unique.

3.4.2.2. Flexibility (Saying Yes to Fewer Things)

When you say yes to fewer things you increase your flexibility, because you can focus more on what you are really interested in, your burning desire (Dweck, 2012). This flexibility promotes creativity and increases enthusiasm, and results in a greater ability to solve problems (Isen, 1999).

When you have more flexibility, you have greater control over your own situation (Media, 2016). This in turn promotes personal mastery (Isen, 2005). If you feel that you are being controlled, this will reduce your level of performance (Bandura, 1997).

In order to say yes to fewer things, you have to withdraw from people that increase your stress level and fill you with negative energy (Isen, 2005).

Just as you should have a list of the critical activities that you have to do the following day, you should also have a list of those activities you should avoid, so you don't drain yourself of energy (Dweck, 2012). To draft such lists, the following questions may be of help. The list is analogous to Dweck's (2012) ideas concerning personal growth:

- What am I trying to achieve?
- Why I believe that what I am trying to achieve can be achieved?

- What makes me believe that it's not possible to achieve a specific goal?
- What can I lose and what do I gain by trying?
- Can I spend more time and more energy if I focus on other goals?

When you encounter opposition a good strategy is to give enough rope to those people who impede your way to goal, so that they reveal their intentions and plans (Media, 2016). Ask them for help, and you'll most likely change their behaviour towards you. Ask them for more help, and you'll have turned an opponent into a teammate (Syed, 2016).

3.4.3.   *Student Reflection Task 29*

3.4.3.1.   Case Letter
The key to enthusiasm is that you do what you really want to do (Dweck, 2012). You affect others with your behaviour, whether it is enthusiastic, critical or negative (Lewis, 2000). Just as the enthusiastic teacher inspires the students, the manager inspires the staff with his/her enthusiasm or lack of it. On the other hand, you are also affected by the enthusiasm of others or lack of it. However, you have control over how you react towards the behaviour of others. It is how you react to others' enthusiasm or lack of enthusiasm, which can change the development of a relationship and situation (Syed, 2016).

> **Student task:** Develop a conceptual model showing how to be more flexible at the workplace.

3.4.3.2.   Authentic (Being Yourself)
Being authentic means being yourself, and not using "brands, fakes and spin" (Boyle, 2004, p. 15). The authentic person doesn't hide behind a facade, and doesn't pretending to be something he/she isn't (York, 2014). This makes it easier for others to be open towards him/her (Joseph, 2016). The authentic person isn't manipulative or calculating in their behaviour

(Thacker, 2016), and express their own thoughts and feelings that stimulate enthusiasm and influence others.

Because of the need to act rationally, sometimes a person can be prevented from being authentic (Knapp & Hulbert, 2016). To an extent, rational behaviour negates feelings, while authentic and enthusiastic persons connect to their feelings (Joseph, 2016; York, 2014).

Today, the trend is that you present yourself in such a way that you gain acceptance by others (Boyle, 2004). However, this can easily undermine being authentic and enthusiastic (York, 2014). Thus, we present ourselves so others will believe we are competent (Joseph, 2016), and we try to gain respect by presenting ourselves the way others wish us to be and not necessarily how we are (Knapp & Hulbert, 2016).

Perhaps, it is the current trend that one presents oneself to seeks acceptance by others (Boyle, 2004). This behaviour can easily thwart being authentic and enthusiastic (York, 2014). We present ourselves in such a way so others will believe that we are competent (Joseph, 2016). We try therefore to win others' respect by presenting ourselves, as we wish to be perceived, and the way others want us to be, not necessarily the way we actually are (Knapp & Hulbert, 2016).

3.4.4.   Student Reflection Task 30

3.4.4.1.   Case Letter

Nowadays, it is not easy to be authentic when expectations are very demanding regarding the various roles one has to play (Thacker, 2016). However, being authentic does not mean that our behaviour will be the same in different roles and in different contexts. It simply means that one should distinguish between the roles in real life and the roles played in "life's theatre" (Boyle, 2004).

The term "role" is a metaphor derived from the theatre. Of course, your various roles in real life do not imply the theatrical use of the word. Such confusion would lead to high psychological stress levels, and ultimately to collapse (Joseph, 2016; Syed, 2016). You should be yourself in the various roles you take on (Thacker, 2016). It is when you confuse roles in reality

with roles in the dramatic sense of the word that authenticity is threatened (Joseph, 2016; Knapp & Hulbert, 2016).

Even when you are faced with different expectations in your various roles, this does not mean that you should act like a social chameleon. You may adapt to your different roles, but you should not change your basic values from role to role (Joseph, 2016). Your basic values act as your anchor and standing by them makes you appear authentic in your various roles (Knapp & Hulbert, 2016).

> **Student task:** Develop a step-by-step method for employees to be authentic.

3.4.4.2.   Mindfulness (Present-moment Awareness)

Being mindful can be understood and experienced in many ways. At the micro level, it can be the small moments of intensity and proximity to the matter at hand. Mindfulness can also be experienced in a conversation (Karremans & Papies, 2017); and it is often in dialogues we have present-moment awareness (Greenberg, 2016).

Csikszentmihalyi (2002) uses the expression being "in flow" when one is completely absorbed in what one is doing, so that time and place disappear. In this "flow zone", both boredom and anxiety disappear, and one becomes one with the matter at hand.

In the flow zone, challenges and problems are turned into opportunities where immediate feedback on performance is critical to remaining in the zone (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996, 1997). Continuous feedback on your performance is crucial, because you are focused on the present, and can adjust your behaviour immediately (Bell, 2017). This enhances concentration and sensibility in relation to the task you are performing (Greenberg, 2016). In the flow zone, you have a heightened sense of present-moment awareness. You let yourself go and your energy is transmitted to the present challenge (Karremans & Papies, 2017). Being in the flow zone is characterized by the feeling that you have control over how the situation will develop (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997), and time is perceived as going faster than normal (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2005, p. 90).

3.4.5. *Student Reflection Task 31*

3.4.5.1. Case Letter

It is not the goal in itself that is important when you are mindful, but the inner rewards of mastering a situation (Karremans & Papies, 2017). In such a condition, you perform at the very limit of your capacity. To be in a state of mindfulness it is important that your skills harmonize with the challenges. Nakamura and Csikszentmihalyi (2005, p. 90) comment: "If the challenges exceed skills, one first becomes vigilant, and then anxious." However, if the opposite is the case, "if skills exceed challenges one first relaxes and eventually becomes bored" (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2005, p. 90). Thus, to be mindful over time you must either lower your level of ambition or increase the challenges. In terms of management area this involves giving immediate feedback, and being aware of balancing a person's resources with the tasks to be performed.

Having present-moment awareness is similar to being in the flow zone. We are intensely focused on what we are doing. To remain in this condition it is necessary to limit the incoming signals to what we are focused on. All other signals will be perceived as noise, and can easily distract us and lead us out of the flow zone (Karremans & Papies, 2017).

Being in the flow zone, which is an aspect of being mindful, is perceived as a reward in itself, "and leads the individual to seek to replicate flow experiences" (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2005, p. 92). To move into the flow zone, it is essential that one's skills and interests match and are connected to a specific interest (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997).

Research indicates (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2005, p. 92) that students who experience being in the flow zone early in a course will perform better at the end of the course. The longer students are in the zone, the more this enhances their self-esteem and performance (Wells, 1988).

> **Student task:** Develop a plan for you to entering the zone at an early point in a course.

3.5. Optimism

Optimists are people who expect that good things will happen to them (Carver & Scheier, 2005). Optimism is thus related to future expectations (Seligman, 2006). In a research context, this may be related to expectancy-value models of motivation (Heinrichs, Oser, & Lovat, 2013). These models start with the assumption that behaviour is organized around the pursuit of goals, and the goals are related to values. The more important a goal is, the greater the value for the individual's motivation (Arnold & Klein, 2017). The second element of these models is expectations: the confidence or doubts related to whether the goals are attainable. Only those with a sufficient degree of confidence concerning the possibility of achieving the goals will take measures to accomplish them (Heinrichs, et al., 2013, pp. 45–47). The optimist has this confidence, the pessimist does not (Seligman, 2006).

Can you learn to be more optimistic? Yes, says Seligman (2006). One of the reasons why you should seek to be more optimistic is that the optimistic person is more motivated to achieve goals than the pessimist (Chase, 2016, p. 56), and, in addition, also has a greater experience of a more meaningful life (Seligman, 2006, p. iv).

It is largely how we relate to the challenges and situations we meet, which determines how we deal with them, not necessarily the challenges and situations in themselves (Arnold & Klein, 2017, pp. 13–15). While pessimism is closely related to a negative self-image, optimism is closely related to a positive self-image (Seligman, 2006, pp. 33–45).

There are some things we can control, and other things we can't. For instance, we have no control over how others will react in relation to us. On the other hand, we have complete control over how we react towards the behaviour of others.

We can do something about the way we think, speak and act, and thereby also affect or influence others. If we, for example, think that we have no possibility of changing others, then the chances are that this will become a self-fulfilling prophecy (Weich, 2016). However, if we think we can change people's behaviour by changing our own reactions to their behaviour, we will be able to change others.

Our habitual way of thinking, speaking and acting is not something that is a pattern carved in the stone. It is more like a pattern frozen into ice, and ice melts in *the sun*. The sun in this case being the smile and commitment that influences others (Chase, 2016).

Seligman (2006, p. 8) states that one of the clearest findings in psychology over the past thirty years is that individuals can choose the way they think and the way they react to others' behaviour. If we relate this to recent brain research (Kreiman, Koch, & Fried, 2000), it becomes apparent that how we think affects our behaviour, and we can freely choose to think differently (Greenberg, 2016). It is all a matter of wanting to be optimistic and framing the outside world from this perspective.

Heredity and environment impact on how we think. However, Seligman (2006), and Greenberg (2016) make the point that we can choose how we relate to our own thinking, which affects our behaviour. This insight reduces the importance of both heredity and the environment. The situation one finds oneself in at any given time, heredity and environment will be given quantities. On the other hand, we have a degree of freedom regarding how we choose to think which determines whether we frame the outside world from an optimistic or pessimistic perspective. By choosing an optimistic perspective, we change established patterns of behaviour, although this may take time.

A common belief is that achievement is a result of talent, desires, interests and goal orientation. However, Seligman (2006, p. 13) says that failure may also occur when the talent and a burning desire are present in abundance but optimism is lacking. Talent and a burning desire to perform at a high level are obviously important, but without an optimistic attitude then it can all be for nothing.

If you think that nothing helps no matter what you do then you have developed a basic pessimistic attitude, or what is called "learned helplessness" (Seligman, 1975). In other words, whenever you are faced with any difficulties you easily give up. You don't look for opportunities but only for limitations (Seligman, 2006, p. 23). Learned helplessness also leads to passivity (Seligman, 1975), and individuals tend to explain difficulties they meet as something they don't master.

3.5.1.   *Student Reflection Task 32*

3.5.1.1.   Case Letter

When individuals experience lack of control, they look for causes. They often find reasons that may differ considerably from the real causes why things went wrong (Linley & Joseph, 2004). This mistaken causality is thus "frozen solid", and is used by the individual to explain why things were unsuccessful. However, the truth is that one selects one or more causes that do not necessarily correspond to reality. When these faulty causes are established, they are perceived as "the truth" by the individual in question. However, if one learns that optimism can be an important factor, you can become immunized against faulty reasoning, passivity and learned helplessness (Weich, 2016).

Seligman (2006, pp. 44–54) has identified six elements that explain whether we have a basic pessimistic or optimistic attitude. A pessimistic attitude seeks permanent, universal and external explanations, while an optimistic attitude seeks temporary, specific and internal explanations.

It is how we think in relation to these elements that tells whether we have a pessimistic or an optimistic attitude. The good news, which cannot be said often enough, is that a basic pessimistic attitude can be changed, and changed so that it lasts. It is how we choose to think that determines how we feel, and affects the development of our basic attitude (Weich, 2016). A technique to change our basic attitude from pessimistic to optimistic is to perform an optimistic personal dialogue (Seligman, 2006). Another technique is to focus on a burning desire, develop perseverance in relation to this desire, work with moral courage in relation to the burning desire, and develop self-discipline (Dweck, 2012; Weich, 2016).

In practice, there is a clear relationship between people who think they can solve problems and challenges, and those who think they can't. In any work situation, you should try to be part of the solution and not part of the problem. The optimistic person is more likely to be viewed as part of the solution, while the pessimistic person is seen as being part of the problem (Arnold & Klein, 2017).

If you have to put together a really creative group, you should search for people who have a basic optimistic attitude and think they can solve the problem (Dweck, 2012). The explanation is that optimistic people are more likely to succeed because they don't give up, and keep going until the problem is solved, in spite of difficulties (Weich, 2016).

Student task: Discuss how to develop optimism in the workplace.

3.5.1.2.   How Can a Pessimist Become an Optimist?

Seligman (2006, p. 207) says that if you suffer a personal defeat you should carry out an inner dialogue with yourself and play it in your inner theatre from a more encouraging position, even if you do not feel like doing it at that moment in time. You need to look at setbacks as temporary and specific, not as permanent and universal. A universal attitude can be exemplified by statements of the type: everyone thinks that; everybody does it; it is something everyone knows; etc. Permanent attitudes can be described with statements of the type: that's just the way it is; it has always been like that; etc.

However, there are some situations where a basic pessimistic attitude can be used to advantage. Such situations include when one plans and acts in risky, uncertain and ambiguous situations. The same applies if one wants to seem polite in situations where others are in great difficulty. In such situations, one should try to understand the other's perspective and the situation the other is in, and not adopt an optimistic attitude (Seligman, 2006, p. 207). To start with an optimistic attitude in such situations would be counterproductive. On the other hand, at a later point, one can use simple optimistic techniques to show the other that there is light at the end of the tunnel.

When we meet opposition, we often react by letting our thoughts revolve around the problems we encounter. Our thoughts freeze relatively quickly to a particular perception of the situation, which in many cases can be characterized as an automatic process triggered by habitual thinking linked to similar situations we have encountered. This has consequences for both our emotions and our actions (Seligman, 2006, p. 211; Dweck, 2012).

To escape from this negative spiral, the first step is to reflect on the link between the opposition we face, the judgements we automatically choose to make, and the feelings and actions this leads to, as well as the consequences this has for us. Thus, every time we meet opposition, we should separate the problems we encounter from our "automatic" thoughts and behaviour patterns (Weich, 2016). Doing what others don't expect us to do is an aid in achieving this, because others expect us to do what they have experienced

we've done before. The point of this method is to make a counterfactual intervention, to change other people's expectations (Watzlawick, Weakland, & Fisch, 2011).

3.5.2.   Student Reflection Task 33

3.5.2.1. Case Letter

To find out how the opposition we meet triggers thoughts, perceptions, emotions, actions and consequences, a simple strategy can be of help. This involves writing a diary in which, over time, you will be able to see a pattern of how you think and act in different situations. After two or three weeks, a pattern will be revealed. You will then be able to attempt to disengage your automatic responses in such situations. This is a technique strongly recommended by Seligman (2006, p. 213). The point is to change your automatic response into a deliberate and thoughtful action.

The pessimistic explanatory habit will often seem passive in its social consequences and the person will often withdraw from the situation. The optimistic explanation method will, as a rule, energize the situation (Seligman, 2006, p. 216; Arnold & Klein, 2017).

Basically, there are two main ways of promoting a transition from a pessimistic to a basic optimistic attitude (Seligman, 2006, p. 217):

(1) *Distraction*. When a sequence of pessimistic thinking and actions start, distract it automatically by deliberately framing the situation differently.
(2) *Arguments*. Carry out an "inner-argument" against your own thoughts in relation to the situation.
   - Check the facts.
   - Identify options.
   - Examine the consequences.
   - Find out how useful any action may be.

   Student task: Develop a step-by-step method for turning a pessimist into an optimist.

3.6. Conclusion

The problem for discussion in this chapter was the following: how can managers promote job satisfaction with the help of enthusiasm?

The enthusiastic person will tend to influence others with their enthusiasm, thus intensifying enthusiasm in work situations.

3.6.1. Student Reflection Task 34

3.6.1.1. Case Letter

There are five areas we have focused on that encourage enthusiasm: uniqueness, flexibility, authentic behaviour, mindfulness, in the flow zone as well as optimism.

We have explained three subgroups within each of the five areas. We have systematized the three subgroups within each of the five areas in Figure 3.3. Figure 3.3 can also be understood as an overall action strategy that responds to the problem we have discussed in this chapter.
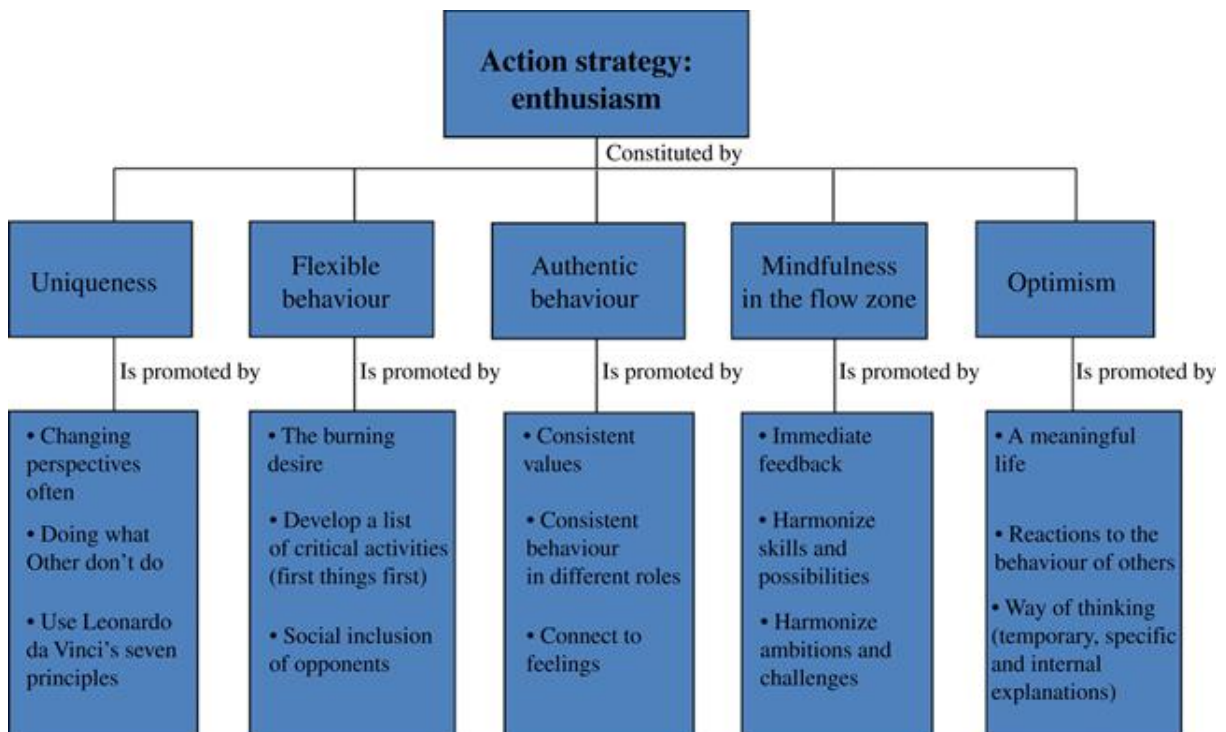
Figure 3.3: An Analytical Framework Representing an Action
Plan for Creating Enthusiasm.

Student task: Based on Figure 3.3 discuss and develop a strategy for creating enthusiasm in the workplace. Discuss also the consequences of being enthusiastic in the workplace, both at the individual, team and organizational level.

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Chapter 4

HR and Mindfulness

4.1. Learning Goals

- How leaders can promote mindfulness among employees in order to improve organizational goal achievement.
- Develop mindfulness tools, so that leaders and employees can improve organizational goal achievement.
- Evaluation of goals through the student tasks 35–55.

4.2. Introduction

Historically, mindfulness can be divided into Eastern and Western traditions. The Eastern tradition is largely linked to various meditation techniques and to Buddhist, Hindu and Chinese philosophies (Christelle, Le, Ngnoumen, & Langer, 2014a, 2014b, p. 1). The Western tradition is rooted in social psychology (Langer, 2014a, pp. xii–xxvi). Both traditions seek to promote a situation whereby the individual is able to be "present in the moment" (Germer, Siegel., & Fulton, 2005). Both traditions also share the goal of enhancing the individual's health and well-being (Dunning & Balcetis, 2013; Ivtzan, 2016; Neff & Davidson, 2016). Both traditions focus on freeing the individual from incorrect assumptions, fixed patterns of

thought, and self-imposed limitations (Greeson, Garland, & Black, 2014, p. 533).

4.2.1.   Definitions of Mindfulness

Mindfulness is defined by Piet and Fjorback (2014, p. 472) as "a particular way of being attentive that is characterized by an ability consciously to observe experiences in the present, without judging or evaluating them". In practice, mindfulness can be thought of as a particular way of being present in the moment (Germer et al., 2005). If one manages to develop this ability, one also develops the capacity to self-regulate and manage their own reactions to other people's behaviour (Hassed, 2013). It is precisely this ability to self-regulate one's attention that promotes the development of inquisitiveness, openness and acceptance (Bishop et al., 2004). One's presence in the moment can be measured subjectively by noting how often one's mind wanders away from the problem at hand (Siegel & Siegel, 2014, p. 21).

Being present in the moment is also about not reacting spontaneously to the behaviour of other person (Christelle et al., 2014a, 2014b, p. 1). The idea is that one deliberately allows some time to elapse before one reacts. The purpose of allowing time to elapse before giving feedback is to live up to the saying: changing another person's behaviour can be achieved best by changing one's own reactions to that other person's behaviour. In this way, it is possible to reduce organizational conflicts and tensions (Balcetis, Cole, & Sherali, 2014; Malinowski, 2013) and will also be easier to achieve the organization's goals (Djiksterhuis & Arts, 2010; Dweck, 2012; Kabat-Zinn, 2005; Langer, 2009; Ngnoumen & Langer, 2016). The opposite of being present in the moment is to allow one's thoughts, attention and focus to continually change focus (Kabat-Zinn, 1994, 2003). The surroundings will determine how a person exhibiting such "mindlessness" will orientate him/herself (Langer, 2014b, p. 2; Bishop et al., 2004). In the Western tradition, mindfulness has nothing to do with being relaxed and achieving a particular mental state (Niemiec & Lissing, 2016, p. 15). A mindful person can be characterized as a person who is actively present in the moment as the events unfold.

4.2.2.   *Student Reflection Task 35*

4.2.2.1.   Case Letter
Langer (2014a) lists four factors that promote mindfulness:

(1) *Being sensitive and open to things that are new*. This promotes creativity and innovation.
(2) *Awareness of distinctions*. This has to do with remaining focused on a goal, and maintaining the force of an action.
(3) *Sensitivity to different contexts*. This promotes empathy, generosity and a basic attitude of acceptance.
(4) *Aspect-perception*. This promotes an understanding of the part in relation to the whole, which enables us to be aware of different perspectives, and enables us to see patterns where others see chaos. This boosts our ability to self-regulate, and simultaneously generates direction towards our goals.

Student task: (1) Discuss how the four factors listed above can be implemented in organizations. (2) Develop a step-by-step methodology for this to happen.

4.2.2.2.   The Purpose of This Chapter
Kabat-Zinn (2005) says that mindfulness has a great potential to affect an individual's well-being, health and goal achievement, if he/she uses mindfulness in a conscious effort to understand him/herself in relation to the surrounding world. On the contrary, if we are locked into our psychological perspectives, this will limit our well-being, health and goal achievement (Noelen-Hoeksema, Wisco, & Lyubomirsky, 2008).

4.2.3.   *Student Reflection Task 36*

4.2.3.1.   Case Letter

The goal of mindfulness is to achieve a shift in perspective (Suzuki, 2010) or a kind of rotation of consciousness (Kabat-Zinn, 2011). This can also be understood as aspect-perception (Asplund, 2010). If we manage to shift our perspective to the present moment, for example, when we are confronted by a situation, we will see that more options are open to us than we initially believed to be the case (Miller, 2004).

The Western orientation, which we investigate here, is largely designed to boost an individual's creativity and goal achievement (Langer, 2014b, pp. 7–20).

Mindfulness and motivation is particularly expressed in Deci and Ryan's self-determination theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2000). In brief, the theory is structured around three elements. First, autonomy: it is important that we have control over our work and future. Second, it is important to possess the necessary skills to master the tasks we encounter (self-efficacy). Third, relational closeness is important, that is, we need close relationships we can rely on. We will elaborate on this theory in relation to the element "well-being". On the basis of self-determination theory, we have developed a management tool regarding employees in today's organizations.

> **Student task:** (1) Discuss the following statement: employees are motivated by autonomy, self-efficacy and close relationships in the workplace. (2) Develop a strategy for the implementation of the statement.

4.2.3.2.   Strategy

There is always a strategy, Langer (2009, p. 35), which brings us from where we are to where we want to be. However, we should be aware of the fact that when we select one strategy, we also neglect or reject others that could have been chosen. Selection always means that we reject other options.

4.2.4.   *Student Reflection Task 37*

4.2.4.1. Case Letter

In several studies, mindfulness has been shown to improve performance by reducing stress, pressure and anxiety in competitive situations (Gardner & Moore, 2012). The importance of mindfulness for performance has also been stressed by Moore and Gardner (2014, p. 991), and shown in a meta-analysis by Mann, Williams, Ward, and Janelle (2007).

In the research on mindfulness and goal achievement, the focus has mainly been on the performance of athletes (John, Verma, & Khanna, 2011). The reason for this can be that it has been easier to conduct scientific research in this specific field (Pineau, Glass, & Kaufman, 2014). Mindfulness and performance is closely associated with "flow". Therefore, one can assume that mindfulness and performance can also be used in contexts other than sports and elite athletics. On this basis, we have developed the following management tool.

> **Student task:** (1) Discuss the following statement: there is a close relationship between mindfulness and goal achievement in organizations. (2) Develop a research strategy for the validation of the statement.

4.2.4.2. Questions to Be Discussed in This Chapter

The main question and the sub-questions developed below are formulated based on the two management tools as mentioned above.

The main question we address is: how can managers promote mindfulness among employees in order to improve organizational goal achievement?

The sub-questions we will address, analyse and discuss are as follows.

(1) How can managers apply mindfulness among employees to foster well-being and thereby improve organizational goal achievement?
(2) How can managers apply mindfulness to develop flexible management, and thereby improve organizational goal achievement?
(3) How can managers apply mindfulness among employees so they are able to understand creative chaos and thus improve organizational goal achievement?

Figure 4.1 is a visualization of the introduction. It also shows how the chapter is organized.
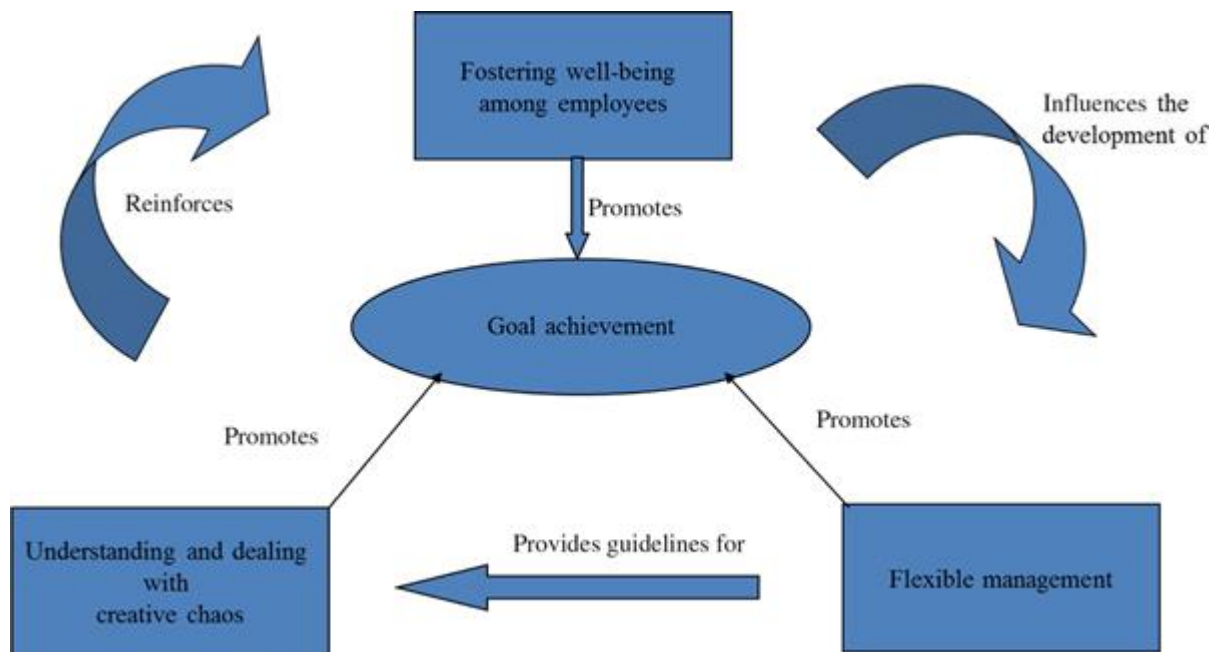
Figure 4.1: Mindfulness and Management.

4.3. Well-being

Large meta-analyses have found a clear relationship between mindfulness and well-being (Sedlmeier et al., 2012). Brown, Ryan, and Creswell (2007) also found a clear correlation between mindfulness and well-being. Several findings from empirical research have confirmed a clear correlation between mindfulness and reduction of chronic pain (Kabat-Zinn, 1982), depression (Teasdale et al., 2000), anxiety (Bishop et al., 2004), a greater degree of empathy (Neff, 2003), as well as greater perceived happiness. Park and Biswas-Diener (2013) suggest the following mechanisms lead to increased well-being: hope, meaning, appreciation, self-acceptance and autonomy.

4.3.1.   Student Reflection Task 38

4.3.1.1.   Case Letter

A good deal of research reports major health benefits from applying various types of mindfulness training, both individualized and general (Vøllestad, Nielsen, & Nielsen, 2012). Amongst others, the health benefits include reduction in pain and anxiety (Gaylord et al., 2011; Hoffmann, Sawyer, Witt, & Oh, 2010), and cardiac benefits (Shigaki, Glass, & Schopp, 2006). The training programs in mindfulness used in the West to promote people's health go under various names such as: mindfulness stress reduction (Kabat-Zinn, 1990), mindfulness cognitive therapy (Segal, Williams, & Teasdale, 2002), acceptance therapy (Hayes, Strohsahl, & Wilson, 1999) and dialectical behavioural therapy (Dimidjian & Linehan, 2003).

> **Student task:** (1) Discuss the following statement: if employees develop mindfulness, it is highly probable they will experience greater job satisfaction, which will advance organizational goal achievement. (2) Develop a research strategy for the validation of the statement.

4.3.1.2.   Mindfulness Training

When we are present in the moment, we are more aware of what is happening when we experience an event. If we simultaneously practice observing our own reactions to an event, we gradually develop what is called decentration. This is a state where we reduce our automatic and habitual behaviour (Kabat-Zinn, 1982, 1990).

4.3.2.   Student Reflection Task 39

4.3.2.1.   Case Letter

If an individual continues this process, it appears that a condition occurs where he/she will be able to uncover positive and negative internal signals between what he/she experiences and the reaction selected. The more aware

he/she becomes of these signals, the more likely it is his/her reactions will be adequate, which will promote their well-being (Linehan, 1993; Shapiro, Carlson, Astin, & Freedman, 2006).

An important consequence of this process is what in mindfulness training is called "acceptance". One accepts one's own signals and responds without evaluating them (Hayes et al., 1999), and without becoming immersed in the emotions that emerge in the process.

If one manages to decentre, that is, insert a time-lag between an event and one's reaction, and uncover one's own experience of the event while accepting what one experiences, then this will develop one's cognitive, emotional and behavioural flexibility (Shapiro et al., 2006). In this way, mindfulness can help an individual disconnect from automatic responses that stem from past experiences. Past experiences tend to condition one's behaviour (Ryan, Kuhl, & Deci, 1997).

Mindfulness is a condition where one is fully attentive, receptive and open to the outside world. People often report a feeling of well-being when they are in this state (Rigby, Schultz, & Ryan, 2014, p. 216). Mindfulness means we perceive the world around us without reaching hasty judgements about the information received. Metaphorically, we allow ourselves to let the experiences and thoughts that arise pass through our inner theatre without letting our "inner critics" evaluate them. In this way, we enhance our well-being and develop our self-control (Brown et al., 2007).

> **Student task:** (1) Discuss the following statement: if employees develop decentration (a time-lag between incoming signals and their response), then it is highly probable they will increase their well-being and promote goal achievement. (2) Develop a personal strategy to make the statement happen.

4.3.2.2. Self-determination Theory

An important aspect of SDT (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2000) is that you "actively reflect in a curious and non-defensive way upon a selected phenomenon". To achieve a high level of attentiveness, it is essential to practice acting without going into a self-defensive mode. Once you have mastered this, you will increase your sense of personal well-being (Brown & Ryan, 2003). An important point here is that the more mindful a

person is when measured according to a mindfulness-attentiveness scale (Brown & Ryan, 2003), the more he/she will experience that their actions are autonomous and governed by their own volition (Levesque & Brown, 2007, pp. 284–299; Rigby et al., 2014, p. 218). Indeed, the greater their degree of autonomy, the greater will be their perceived well-being and positive results (Reve & Jang, 2006; Ryan, Patric, Deci, & Williams, 2008).

One of the basic assumptions of SDT is that humans are motivated by certain basic psychological needs, just as they are driven by certain physiological needs such as food and water. When people participate in activities and relationships that satisfy their basic psychological needs they experience greater integration and well-being (Rigby et al., 2014, p. 225). When these needs are not met, their motivation, energy and well-being are reduced (Ryan & Deci, 2008). SDT emphasizes the following three psychological needs that promote well-being: *competence, autonomy and relationships.*

Competence, the first basic need of SDT, is related to our need to master what we are doing (Adriaenssen, Johannessen, & Johannessen, 2017; Harter, 2012). The feeling of mastery is strongly related to the feedback you receive on your achievements. This has clear managerial implications. According to Asplund's Motivation Theory, people wish to "be seen" and *they are motivated by social response* (Asplund, 2010, pp. 221–229). Central to the theory is that people's level of activity increases when they receive social response.

Asplund's Motivation Theory is consistent with North's Action Theory. North's Action Theory can be expressed by the following statement: *People act on the basis of a reward system that is expressed in the norms, values, rules and attitudes in the culture (the institutional framework) they are a part of.*

4.3.3.   Student Reflection Task 40

4.3.3.1.   Case Letter

The feeling of "being seen" promotes goal achievements. The greater the degree of mindfulness a person experiences, the greater the likelihood is

that the feedback received will be used as a basis for competence development. The opposite often happens if the feedback is perceived as a form of control. In such a situation, information in the feedback is filtered out in order to protect the ego and self-worth (Rigby et al., 2014, p. 226).

Student task: Discuss a strategy for leaders to "see" employees.

4.3.4.   *Student Reflection Task 41*

4.3.4.1.   Case Letter

Autonomy is the second basic need postulated by SDT. In our context, an individual is autonomous when he/she is fully responsible for any task they perform. The opposite occurs when they feel they are being controlled. However, it is important to make a distinction between autonomy and independence. Independence is understood as not being dependent on others. However, the point of autonomy is linked to whether the person regulates the process they participate in. He/she may well be "dependent" on others, and yet still feel autonomous (Ryan, La Guardia, Solky-Butzel, Chirkov, & Kim, 2005). In the context of management, the feeling of autonomy can be promoted by how the leader communicates and how he/she presents goals, strategies, plans and guidelines. The greater degree of control a leader employs, the greater the likelihood is that the motivation of the individual will be reduced. On the other hand, the hypothesis here is that motivation increases when a leader supports an individual's perception of autonomy (Baard, Deci, & Ryan, 2004). In addition to the individual's motivation increasing, he/she will also enhance their well-being (Jang, Reeve, Ryan, & Kim, 2009).

Statement: The greater degree of autonomy employees experience, the greater the likelihood of goal achievement.

Student task: Develop a research strategy to validate the statement.

4.3.5.   Student Reflection Task 42

4.3.5.1.   Case Letter

Relationships

Relationships are the third basic psychological need postulated by SDT. Real relationships are important to give meaning to one's life (Ryan, 1995). Today, personal relationships are increasingly conducted via social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, Skype. There may be nothing intrinsically wrong with using such technological platforms for networking, but they often support relationship-building rather than replacing personal relationships. The relationship needs as proposed by SDT refer to more substantial, deeper and lasting relationships, rather than the mass communication relationships typified by Facebook and Twitter. Obviously, relational depth has nothing to do with the number of relationships and "friends" one can refer to on Facebook, for example. It is rather the quality of relationships that is the essential point in SDT. It is the mutual feeling of being of importance to others, and that other people matter to oneself. These are relations based on a fundamental understanding and mutual support and care for one another (Rigby et al., 2014, p. 227). To develop such relationships, you must be emotionally available to others (Deci, La Guardia, Moller, Scheiner, & Ryan, 2006; La Guardia & Patric, 2008). You must also take part in and show commitment to what others are interested in (Weinstein, Przybylski, & Ryan, 2012).

Statement: Close relationships in the workplace promote organizational goal achievement.

Student task: Discuss how to make the statement happen.

4.3.6.   Student Reflection Task 43

4.3.6.1.   Case Letter

In Figure 4.2 we have compiled the basic psychological needs according to SDT, and developed three focal points that leaders can use to promote

employees' well-being, thus increasing organizational goal achievements.
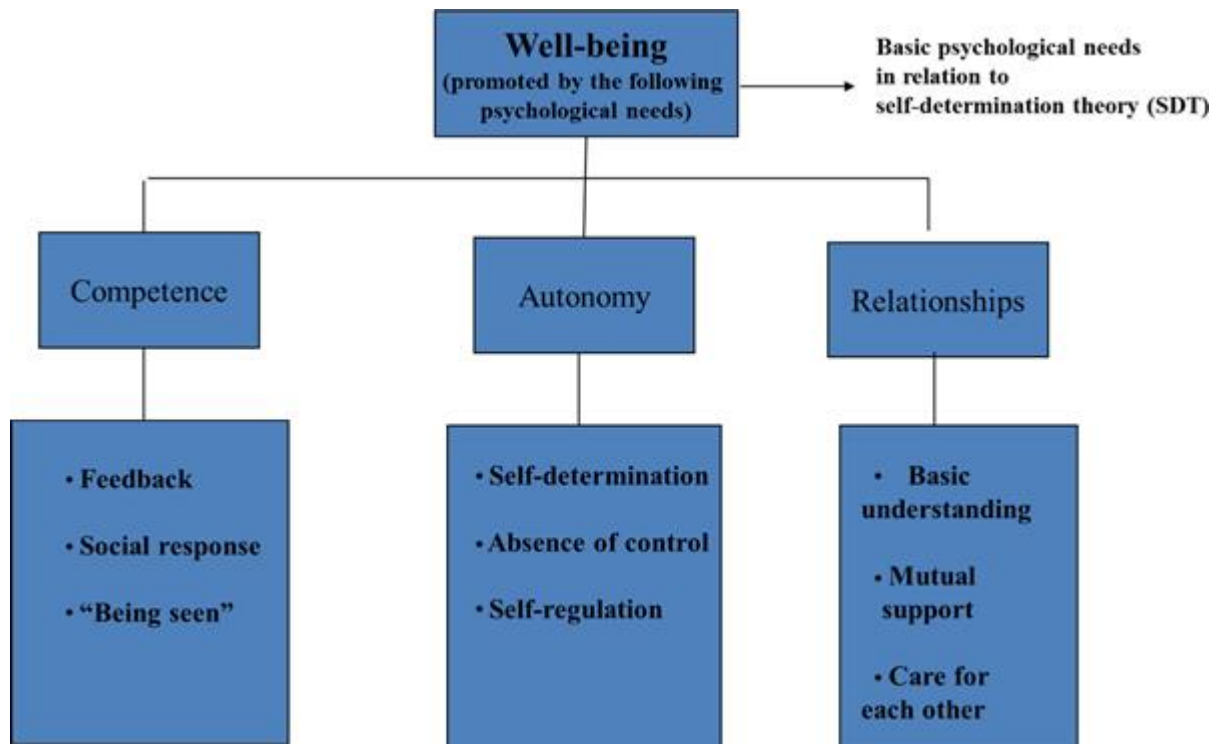
Figure 4.2: Management Tools for Promoting the Well-being of Employees.

Student task: Develop a concrete method for well-being in organizations based on Figure 4.2.

4.4. Flexible Management

Langer (2009, pp. 32–34) writes that leaders should pay attention to the following points:

(1) We see what we expect to see.
(2) What we have learned to look for in one situation will determine what we see in similar situations.

(3) If we are looking for one particular thing, we may overlook many other things.

(4) Our expectations help us to stay on course toward a goal, but expectations also blind us to what we ought to have seen coming.

Although the flexible leader may keep these insights in mind, he/she avoids being inhibited by an excessive awareness of them. The flexible leader is also aware of the fact that he/she only sees aspects of a whole, and that when they select something in a decision process they reject or neglect many other possible choices.

Empirical research shows that the lower the quality of our concentration, the more likely it is that we will adopt a defensive position (Niemiec et al., 2010).

4.4.1. Student Reflection Task 44

4.4.1.1. Case Letter

One can distinguish between two categories of attentiveness. One type can be designated as perception, pure and simple. This is a situation where one is open to all impressions, internal and external, without focusing specifically on what passes by our consciousness. Brown and Ryan (2003) call this "awareness". It may be similar to watching the sunrise and just sensing all the colours, sounds and smells without focusing on anything in particular; just letting one's thoughts float with the rising sun. The second type is termed "focused perception". This can be understood as selecting one aspect of the phenomenon one is observing and just focusing on that. In focused perception, one actively takes part and directs one's attention. In the field of research, this is referred to as "interest-taking" (Weinstein et al., 2012).

> **Statement**: The more a leader is trained in mindfulness, the greater the likelihood is that this will lead to organizational goal achievement.

Student task: Discuss the statement, and develop an experiment for validating the statement.

4.4.1.2. Mindfulness Training

By taking part in mindfulness training, the leader will initially find that uncertainty increases, because it opens up many new perspectives and choices. However, uncertainty can also be said to open up opportunities for change (Kabat-Zinn, 2005). In this context, Thich Nhat Hanh says: "[…] we have more possibilities available in each moment than we realize" (cited in Miller, 2004). In other words, in the management context, the leader should acquire insight into the opportunities that exist to provide the organization with sufficient variation ("requisite variety") in relation to the outside world (Ashby, 1961).

Participating in a mindfulness training programme will promote personal growth and open up the opportunity for what Langer (2005) denotes "personal renaissance". This can be explained by the fact that the choices available to leaders are often limited because they are locked into a single perspective, leading to inflexibility and few new challenges. The possibility of developing self-knowledge in such a situation is small. However, if we are able to "see" that we are locked into a single perspective, then we can open up the possibility of freeing ourselves from these constraints (Hanh, 1998).

One of the limitations the leaders might be exposed to is the desire to win regardless of the cost. If such a thought pattern is pursued without the leader allowing alternatives to compete with the extreme desire to win, then severe losses may be imminent. When leaders of the nations make this error in judgement, it can be detrimental to the nation. This was the case in Napoleon's invasion of Russia, Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union, and the Kennedy-led US government's planned invasion of Cuba ("The Bay of Pigs Invasion"), although no comparison is intended between the latter and the former two examples. Similarly, when business leaders are locked into a single perspective, then companies may go bankrupt or suffer severe losses; Kodak and Nokia are two such examples.

4.4.2.   *Student Reflection Task 45*

4.4.2.1.   Case Letter

As part of mindfulness training, if leaders follow Langer's three processes (1997), they will be able to re-evaluate their way of thinking and win where they otherwise might have lost.

Langer's three processes are as follows:

(1) continuous development of new categories;
(2) openness with regard to new information; and
(3) openness with regard to new perspectives.

> **Student task:** Develop a research strategy to validate the implication of the case letter.

4.4.3.   *Student Reflection Task 46*

4.4.3.1.   Case Letter

New categories

If we are unable to structure our perceptions and experiences using concepts, it will be very difficult to transfer learning to other people and other contexts and situations. However, if you use "old" concepts in new situations, you risk trying to solve new problems using old tools which may damage the organization. This may quickly lead to loss of position. For instance, when Napoleon attacked Russia, General Kutuzov created a new category of warfare: retreat and wait for your strongest "ally", in this case the Russian winter. When Napoleon's soldiers captured Moscow, little was gained because Kutuzov's soldiers had employed scorched-earth tactics when they retreated, leaving the city desolate and of little use to the French. When Russia's powerful "ally", the Russian winter, arrived in full force, Napoleon's troops were devastated. When the French troops tried to withdraw, Kutuzov's soldiers struck using pincer movements. A similar scenario occurred almost one hundred and thirty years later when Stalin

commanded General Zhukov to lead the defence of Moscow against the invading German army. The strategies of Kutuzov and Zhukov were not to win all the battles, but to win the war. To this end, they used new categories that advanced this goal.

> **Statement**: The more a leader manages to change habitual thought patterns when an emergency or danger threatens, the greater the likelihood of goal achievement.

> **Student task:** Discuss the statement and develop an experiment to validate the statement.

4.4.4.   *Student Reflection Task 47*

4.4.4.1.   Case Letter

New information

When you are present in the moment, you are also open to new information. Every leader knows that new information is the basis for being able to lead the company towards organizational goals (Miller, 1978). If the leader cannot access or be open to new information, the organization could quickly be at risk. Lack of information on an individual level quickly leads to many negative psychological processes (Miller, 1978). Same is the case if there is too much information. In such a case, eight negative psychological processes are triggered according to Miller (1978), each of which may cause a reduction in an organization's performance. If we are exposed to information that follows a repetitive pattern, we often disconnect our sensory system because no new information is received (Langer, 2014a, p. 69). An effective way to deal with these information challenges is to design a system that constantly gives new information to the leaders about the internal state of the organization and the outside world. Itbalances between too much and too little information, within the limits of between five and nine units of information (Miller, 1956). If the information is structurally similar to what we are used to but slightly changed without notable differences, we interpret the information as if it is the same as the information we have already received (Chanowitz & Langer, 1980, pp. 97–

129). Information that is not critically assessed or subjected to the scrutiny of "the devil's advocates" will easily lead the individual leader and operations into a negative spiral, where "groupthink" (Janis, 1982) can develop. This happened in the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in 1961 when Kennedy had no advisors that actively opposed the information he had received from the military and the CIA (Janis, 1982).

> **Statement**: Leaders who make sure they receive information from sources that have different views and perspectives promote the organization's goal achievement.

> **Student task:** Develop a strategy to make the statement happen in organizations.

4.4.5.   Student Reflection Task 48

4.4.5.1.   Case Letter

New perspectives

When we become aware of perspectives other than our own, we open up to reflection and alternative thought patterns which give strength to action (Janis, 1982). Openness to new information and perspectives is essential for flexible management (Sushil & Chroust, 2015). To achieve this, one technique is to view the world as consisting of various aspects that together provide a more comprehensive picture, that is, a constant part-whole rotation. This can be done by imagining that a problem or phenomenon consists of various aspects, and that one must look at it from different sides. If one does this, it opens up a wide diversity of perspectives, which provides flexibility and strength to the leader and employees. This makes the leader able to understand viewpoints that different employees may have, and opens up a broader understanding of the outside world and possible future scenarios. In this way, the leader develops a special version of "The Law of Requisite Variety" (Ashby, 1961).

Leaders and employees will often have different perspectives. If the leader is to make optimal choices in different situations, it will be advantageous if they have an insight into the diversity of employee's

perspectives. The quicker a leader is able to consider the numerous employee perspectives in relation to events, actions, etc., the more likely it is that he/she will achieve flexible management, which is a prerequisite for advancing organizational flexibility (Nandakumar, 2016). This will free them up for other purposes, so that the leader can use their energy more efficiently.

Statement: Leaders who use continuous variation in how they view the outside world will promote organizational goal achievement.

Student task: Develop a research strategy to validate the statement.

4.4.6.   *Student Reflection Task 49*

4.4.6.1.   Case Letter
The flexible leader

In Figure 4.3, we have compiled the psychological mechanisms of flexible management that we have reviewed here. We have developed three focal points the leaders can employ to promote flexible management, thereby increasing the organization's goal achievements.
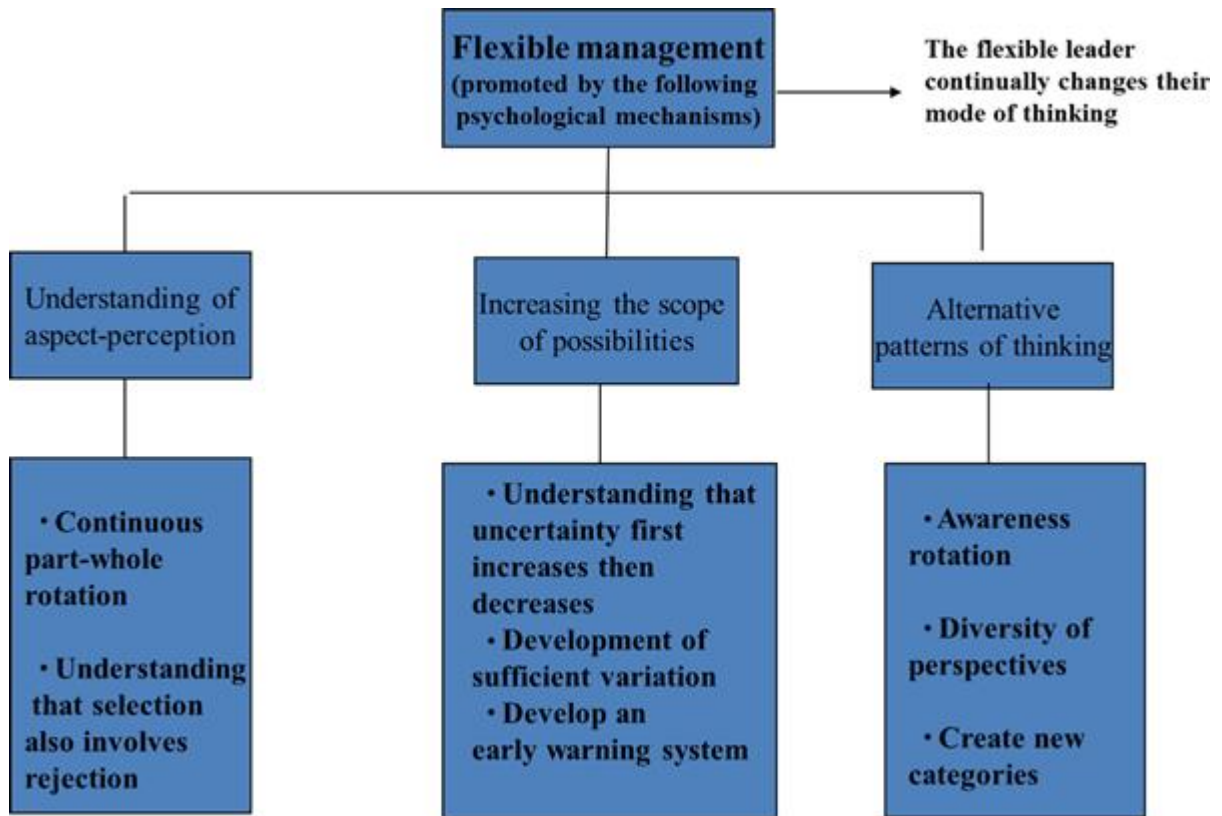
Figure 4.3:   Leadership Tools for Flexible Management.

Student task: Develop a method for flexible management to happen, based on Figure 4.3.

4.5.   Creative Chaos

When you are present in the moment, you are also open to new experiences. In such a situation, almost invariably, a kind of creative chaos will occur. In the literature, this process is also called "creative ideation" (Carson, 2014, p. 328) and creative uncertainty (Langer, 2014a, pp. 113–129). Creative chaos means that you become confused, frustrated, and partly lose faith that the process can be successfully completed.

The experienced individual knows that if you are persistent, passionate about what you are doing and extremely disciplined, you will come out on

the other side with something innovative (Dweck, 2012). In this context, one should be aware of the fact that creative chaos precedes what is creative and new.

Creative chaos is a type of state one must learn to live with, if you wish to be innovative. There is a close relationship between mindfulness and creative people (Langer, 2014a, p. 113).

4.5.1.   Student Reflection Task 50

4.5.1.1.   Case Letter

If one gives up during the stage when chaos occurs then nothing innovative will emerge out of the process. Creative chaos is thus understood here as the process leading to the new and creative, which occurs as a rule when the person is in a state of mindfulness. In such a situation, associations can lead to new ideas, new products, new discoveries and innovations (Carson, 2014, p. 328). If, however, one is in a state of mindlessness then what could have been a new discovery will be lost forever, or potential innovation will see the light of day at a much later stage.

Creative chaos is part of the creative process, where the ability to discover new things is emphasized. In the creative process, one is very receptive to random occurrences. Randomly emerging events and situations characterize creative chaos; being able to relate to this situation may result in breaking through to the other side with something creatively innovative. This process of randomly emerging elements leading to something new and creative can also be found in the history of innovation. For instance, consider innovations in the field of medicine that were discovered randomly, such as penicillin, Viagra. The individual can develop this ability to make discoveries, where no one expected anything innovative would emerge. When developing this ability, the individual should be curious and attentive to everything that may unexpectedly appear in the process of creative chaos. Something that others may consider an error in the process (because it was not planned) is seen as having potential for creative innovation by those who have developed mindfulness.

Statement: Mindfulness promotes innovation.

Student task: Develop a research strategy to validate the statement.

4.5.1.2. The Technique of Creative Chaos

The technique of creative chaos is being observant of what happens from one moment to the next because being present in the moment is the key to overall well-being, physical and mental health, as well as tackling the creative chaos (Siegel & Siegel, 2014, p. 21). It is a form of self-efficacy where the individual knows he/she can manage to complete the task no matter how complex it may seem initially (Adriaenssen et al., 2017). Self-efficacy promotes creative mindfulness but requires cognitive flexibility.

4.5.2.   Student Reflection Task 51

4.5.2.1. Case Letter

Creative chaos can be understood in the following section as a process where self-efficacy, creative mindfulness and cognitive flexibility are related to each other, as visualized in Figure 4.4.
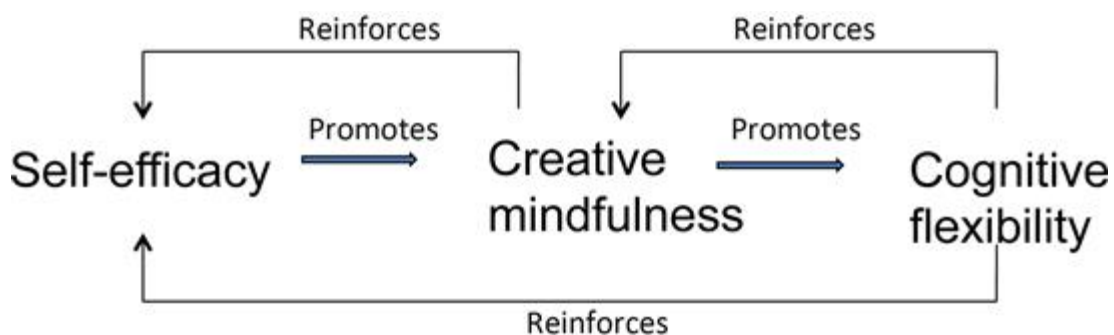
Figure 4.4: The Elements of Creative Chaos.

Self-efficacy can be understood as a complete acceptance of a state in which you do not have full knowledge of a situation and context (Adriaenssen et al., 2017). Self-efficacy is also related to Dweck's (2012)

findings that a person with a burning desire to make a difference, a high degree of perseverance, moral courage and self-discipline will most probably be able to master what they set out to do (Adriaenssen et al., 2017). Self-efficacy first appears in a situation when you are in a position where you do not know exactly how to act in order to reach the goal. However, what you do know is that you can manage to complete the task successfully, if you persevere and have self-discipline (Dweck, 2012). Self-efficacy is experienced when the individual thrives on this kind of uncertainty (Siegel & Siegel, 2014, p. 22).

Statement: Self-efficacy promotes goal achievement.

Student task: Develop a strategy to make the statement happen in organizations.

4.5.2.2. Creative Mindfulness

Creative mindfulness is characterized by a special kind of attentiveness; one is not judgemental regarding what one observes. One accepts what one perceives without evaluation. By "judgemental" we mean that you do not evaluate an event or action as good or bad, desirable or undesirable, important or trivial, and so on (Germer et al., 2005). By "acceptance" we mean that you are open to all experiences: those that fill you with pleasure, those that do not, and neutral experiences, without trying to change, control or avoid them (Kang, Gruber, & Gray, 2014, p. 171).

4.5.3.   Student Reflection Task 52

4.5.3.1. Case Letter

Not being judgmental but accepting is probably the hardest part of mindfulness because we all have social baggage while meeting others. This social baggage tends to interfere in our observations and bring in an element of assessment in relation to what we observe. When we observe without judging, both our health and welfare are strengthened (Chambers, Gullone, & Allen, 2009). We also experience greater creativity because we do not

invest so much energy to the assessment process (Kang et al., 2014, p. 171). However, if we overlook some of the phases in mindfulness, such as non-judgmental observation or acceptance of a condition or situation, this can easily cause us to develop mindlessness instead of mindfulness (Langer & Piper, 1987).

Creative mindfulness is the result of many interacting factors. These factors may include openness, flexibility, adaptability and inner motivation (Amabile, 1996). Being open to the outside world and having a curious attitude, while one is accepting and non-judgmental, are the individual factors that weigh heaviest in many research results related to creativity (Baer, Smith, Hopkins, Krietemeyer, & Toney, 2006; Bishop et al., 2004; Feist, 1999). These factors are also directly linked to mindfulness (Langer, 1989, p. 68).

> **Statement**: Being accepting and non-judgmental when encountering what is new promotes organizational achievement.

> **Student task:** Discuss the statement, and develop a method to make this happen in organizations.

4.5.4.   Student Reflection Task 53

4.5.4.1. Case Letter

Divergent thinking

In addition, research shows that divergent thinking leads to more creative results than convergent thinking (Carson, 2014, p. 334). Divergent thinking involves a process where creative ideas are generated by exploring many possible solutions. This facilitates cognitive flexibility as different possibilities emerge about how to tackle a problem. Divergent thinking expands attentiveness while convergent thinking focuses attentiveness (Fredricson & Branigan, 2005; Martindale, 1999). By expanding attentiveness, and thus increasing the scope of possibilities, one becomes aware of new things. This will in turn promote creative flexibility, the emergence of something creative and new. Research also shows that

divergent thinking promotes mindfulness (Colzato, Ozturk, & Hommel, 2012).

In addition to divergent thinking, cognitive flexibility also promotes creative mindfulness (Dietrich, 2004). Cognitive flexibility is the ability to adapt cognitive processes to changing conditions in the environment (Scott, 1962).

Cognitive flexibility also opens up the possibility for creative chaos; one has to go through creative chaos in order to come out on the other side with a creative new product, which is one among various purposes of practicing creative mindfulness. To achieve this, the individual should practice seeing new objects, ideas, events, etc., from different aspects (Asplund, 2010). This exercise enhances the individual's creativity, and he/she gains a greater understanding of the perspectives of others (Langer, 2014a).

Cognitive flexibility enables us to be open and willing to change when we encounter new experiences. When we are open to that which is new, new things will turn up (Langer, 2014a, p. 115). Those people who can develop cognitive flexibility and see different aspects of a problem or a challenge will be able to find creative solutions.

> **Student task:** Develop a step-by-step strategy to promote cognitive flexibility among employees in order to improve organizational goal achievement.

4.5.5.   Student Reflection Task 54

4.5.5.1.   Case Letter

If we ask the question "What is stable in a process of change?", one of the answers is the way we think. However, if we only think rationally and logically, the change process will only have one path to develop along. If we allow ourselves to think intuitively then the change process may follow a different course. If we allow ourselves to think intuitively, and then rationally and logically, the change process will find yet another path to follow. The way we think can be said to be the stable element in any process of change, but we must know how we think before we can find the stable element in the change process. If we look for patterns, those that

connect in a creative process, it is highly probable that a pattern will emerge; however, it is unlikely we will see such patterns if we are not attentive (Bateson, 1972, p. 137). For instance, if we seek solutions to a problem by asking questions about the causes of the problem's emergence and maintenance, then the past will impinge on the future in a strange way because causes are always linked to something in the past. Langer (2014a, p. 116) stresses that if we manage to free ourselves from our habitual way of thinking for a moment, it is highly probable that creative and new ideas will appear in our consciousness. Intuition, mindfulness and creativity are connected through cognitive flexibility.

Cognitive flexibility is important for the leaders and staff of an organization, as it facilitates the development of new ideas that can provide a basis for innovation and secure the organization's future survival. Innovations can alleviate the dangers that have not yet revealed themselves, such as declining sales of existing products. Cognitive flexibility will also enable the individual in the organization to "see" the signals of a future crisis. In this way, the information can be uncovered before the condition becomes a serious problem for the organization. This can be done in practice by designing and using an early warning system. This is a system that reveals signals and information about the outside world which have a bearing on the organization's future. The person in the organization who has developed mindfulness will be able to see the first signs of change that may negatively affect the organization in the future. The person who has developed mindfulness will be able to "see" these potential pitfalls before a crisis manifests itself.

> **Statement**: A leader who continually changes his/her way of thinking promotes organizational goal achievement.

> **Student task:** Discuss the statement. Develop also a research strategy to validate the statement.

4.5.6.   Student Reflection Task 55

4.5.6.1.   Case letter

Creativechaos

In Figure 4.5, we have compiled the processes that promote creative chaos that we have reviewed. We have developed three focal points leaders can employ to promote creative chaos, thus increasing the organization's goal achievements.
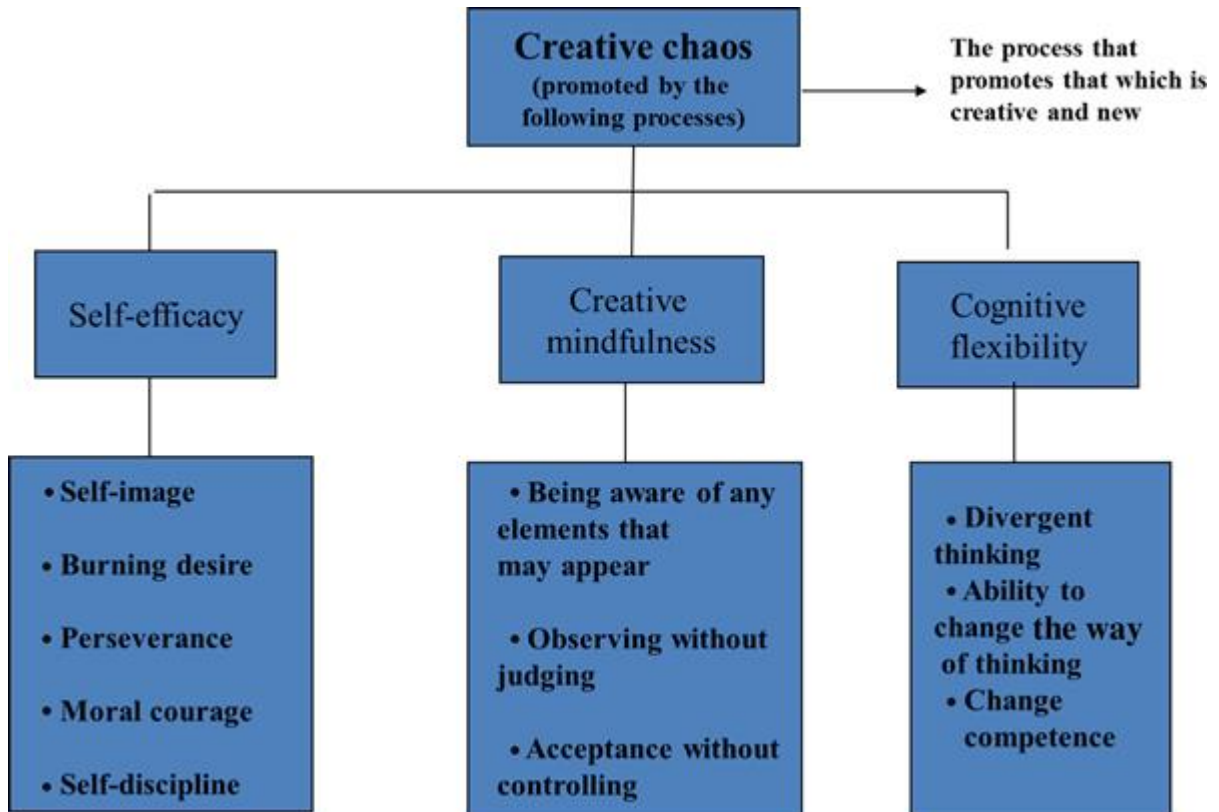
Figure 4.5:   Creative Chaos.

Student task: Discuss why creative chaos is important to understand in organizations. Develop a concrete step-by-step method to enhance creative chaos.

4.6.   Conclusion

The main research question we investigated in this chapter was: how can managers promote mindfulness among employees to improve organizational goal achievement?

We have answered this question by developing a general conceptual model. This model involves three elements on which a leader must focus: fostering well-being among employees, applying the principles of flexible management, and developing the ability to understand and deal with creative chaos.

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Chapter 5

HR and Influence

5.1. Learning Goals

- How leaders can influence people.
- Facilitate leaders' application which information to use, when influencing people.
- Evaluation of learning goals through the student tasks 56–74.

5.2. Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to contribute to a perspective of information systems often neglected in leadership literature, that is, why we believe in one type of information than another. Believing in one type of information over another, and making others also believe in the information, is linked to the act of influencing (Bro, 2018).

This phenomenon has a direct impact on management, as it has an effect on the information we exchange, how we interpret the information, and how the information is transformed into knowledge and used in making strategic decisions (Hristova, 2017).

The communication here means the exchange and sharing of messages between two or more parties. The connection between communication and

information can be expressed by saying that information is the smallest unit in a communication. It is the contents of the latter which constitute the object of transmission to the other party. However, the message also consists of a relationship part and a hierarchy part. The relationship part says something about our relationship to the other(s) whom we are transmitting to, or receiving information from. The hierarchy part expresses the rank or level in terms of social standing or prestige on the part of the person sending or receiving information. In order to fully understand a message, it is therefore important to be conscious of all three components of the message, that is, the relationship part, the hierarchy part and the information part (Kim, 2018).

Most of the time people working in organizations generate and use information unreflectively, without regard to how and why the information impacts us and the environment. This will create problems, successes and threats in an unreflected way for the organization. Strategies and plans can be created on the basis of this information, sometimes resulting in biases for those who are to operate the strategy. Strategies and plans can be modified as a result of action feedback. A more economical management of company resources would be to judge why we use some sort of information and knowledge developing the strategy, and how this affects the organization and the environment (Maciaszek, 2017).

Organizations are problem solvers, but they may also create more problems for themselves using knowledge without judging it for its pragmatics.

It is the search for possible problems impacting managers when gathering and using information and creating knowledge which constitute the focus of this chapter.

It may not be irrelevant or misinformation which is the greatest problem for managers gathering and using information, rather the effect the relevant information has upon the managers and the receiver of this information. Relying on the company's information system may on some level equal relying on the management mis-information system, when information pragmatics is not reflected upon neither in the information system nor by the user of that system.

People easily mix data with facts and facts with information, and information with knowledge, and seldom ask why they are more inclined to believe in one type of information or knowledge rather than other types.

However, they certainly can answer why they believe in a fact. Using information seems to be a sort of spontaneous activity, whereas using facts is not (Maleki, 2018).

People react quite differently to information, but there can be some general patterns of information which have an effect upon all of us. It is these general patterns we will try to uncover in this chapter.

We may filter information, but we cannot filter the pragmatics of information, we can only reflect upon it and react according to our reflections. It is the criteria which are fairly stable from situation to situation we try to uncover, not the variations information pragmatics has upon different people. We believe that reflecting upon these criteria may help managers be a little bit conscious about information pragmatics and not immune to its effects (Gill, 2018).

Perfect planning would imply perfect information, but if we had perfect information the planning would not be perfect, because the pragmatics of information is nearly never considered in the concept of perfect information. Perfect information as a concept is connected to what that information represents, not the pragmatics of the information itself. And if the pragmatics of information is not taken into consideration in the concept of perfect information (whatever that may be) perfect planning cannot be reached even with perfect information (Eastwood, 2016).

The organizations gather, process and use information, but it takes the responsibility only for the semantics and content part of it, and not the pragmatic part, which may have a demential impact on the system as a whole. The strategy process itself will be affected by not making this distinction clear, and not taking responsibility for the pragmatics of information. Information affects the internal state of the system, and the strategy is supposed to affect the environment. If information pragmatics is not considered carefully, the internal state as well as the strategic effects upon the environment may get out of control (Cameron & Spreitzer, 2013).

The organizing idea behind the model (Figure 5.1) is that the cognitive authority of information is constituted by an interpreter making use of certain cognitive processes and cognitive principles determining his information assessment, in addition to certain heuristic principles also in operation. The very message in communication is subject to certain information processes which are all of importance to a potential decision-

maker. Finally, characteristic features of the speaker or sender will impact the cognitive authority of the information (Burg, 2013).
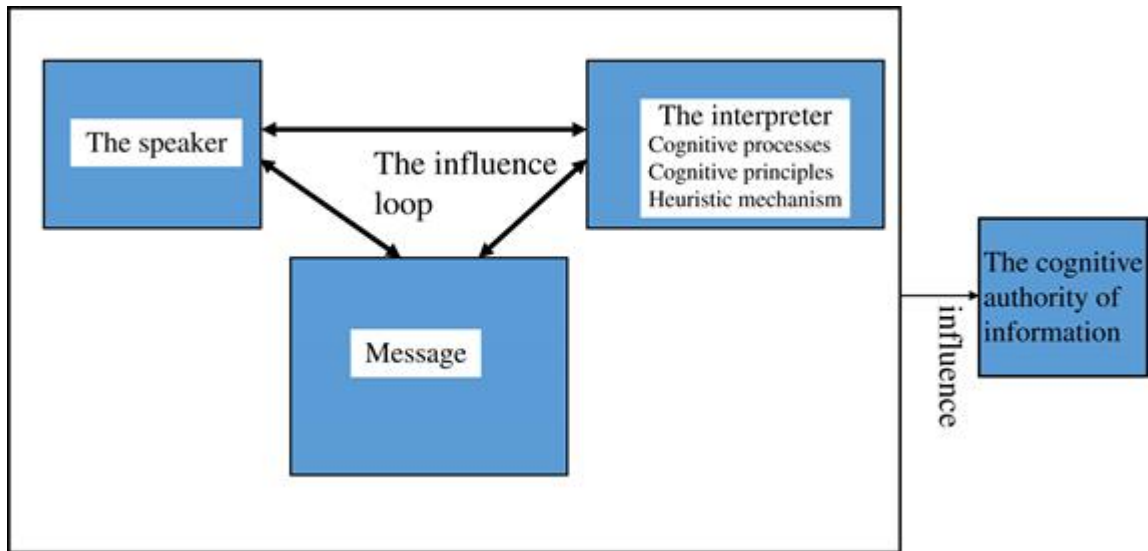
Figure 5.1: A General Model of the Cognitive Authority of Information.

We use the concept interpreter, and not receiver, as interpretations refer to an active process, whereas receiver has connotations towards a more passive mode.

Figure 5.1 can be framed in the following way: the speaker, or the sender, has certain personal characteristic features which influence us. The message has certain properties which affect us. We, as interpreters of information, are instrumental in attaching certain characteristic features to the speaker as well as the information itself, which are not to be found with either.

Figure 5.1 is also the way we have organized this chapter around.

5.3.   Interpreter

5.3.1.   Cognitive Processes

Two cognitive processes will henceforth be subject to discussion. These are expectation and typologies.

5.3.2.   Expectation

Expectation can here be seen as an attributing process, where certain boundaries with regard to possible outcomes are closely linked to a selection in a future situation.

Our expectations about a person will impact our reaction to his behaviour. If our impression of a person is that he should be trusted, our behaviour towards this person will reinforce this impression. If, on the other hand, another impression of this person has been created through rumours etc., our behaviour towards this person will be completely different. However, it is even more serious. Our behaviour towards the person will also reinforce the behaviour to be expected from this person. Rumours and prejudices in this way become mechanisms conducive to the realization of the expected behaviour, and thus we in a sense get our notions "confirmed". This applies even if there is no element of truth in our expectations. The first person to report this phenomenon in human interaction was Kelley (1950). Thus, expectations regarding other persons are intrinsically powerful, and rumours are more than just harmless information. Rumours and expectations are both instrumental in creating the person in the image preceding him through the rumour.

5.3.3.   Student Reflection Task 56

5.3.3.1.   Case Letter

According to the expectation value model of Fishbein and Ajzen (1975), we are supposed to attach a certain expected subjective probability of occurrence to the object of reference. A reference object is one to which the

actual information is related. At the same time, we attribute certain values to the object of reference, positive or negative. Our attitude to the reference object is then the sum of our expectations multiplied by the values attributed to it (attitude = the sum of expectations × value).

The point in this context is that it is fair to assume that information supporting our attitudes to the reference object will have more cognitive authority than information going against our attitudes. Sheppard, Hartwick, and Warshaw (1988) support this conclusion.

> **Statement**: Information supporting our attitudes and notions has more cognitive authority than information going against our notions and attitudes.

McGuire (1985) criticizes the expectation value model, and states, among other things, that it may be guilty of considering only a few properties of the object of reference. However, this does not affect the notion that there is a strong connection between one's attitudes and the cognitive authority on the part of information pertaining to the object of reference to us. What we do with this information is a different matter, that is, to what extent it induces action on our part. In this context, the topic of discussion is the cognitive authority of information, not how we act in relation to information, and then McGurie's criticism is only interesting insofar as it is capable of changing the attitude value itself, not the statement as such.

One major point in the relation between one's attitudes to the object of reference and the confidence in information regarding this object is that the two entities can vary interchangeably. The attitude may vary in different contexts and at different times, but the confidence in information pertaining to the object of reference may remain constant. For example, for some reason we may have changed our attitudes to alcohol, in the way of reproaching alcohol. Our confidence in information expounding its harmful effects in terms of physical and social consequences has then taken on a certain cognitive value for us. However, in certain contexts and at certain times it is conceivable that we consume considerable quantities of alcohol. In these contexts our attitude too will be a different one, and probably more positive in terms of value. Our trust in information about the harmful effects

of alcohol will still have the same cognitive value to us, even in situations when our attitudes to alcohol are changed.

Student task: Find at least five examples that support the statement above.

5.3.3.2. Typologies

Typologies here mean any expectation a perceiver has about how information may go together. Typology is aimed at guiding information processing and pre-processing, helping the receiver to fill in missing information and quickly identify the appropriate information configuration (Nahum, 2018).

5.3.4.   *Student Reflection Task 57*

5.3.4.1. Case Letter

What applies to expectations and rumours also applies to previous knowledge about a person. We have an inclination not to let the person expose himself to the situation. We make use of previous experience about similar types, and then we make our judgement on the person in question on the basis of our own typologization. In other words, it is other persons, with whom we have had some kind of experience at some time, who determine how we are going to behave towards a person we know nothing about. Once a person has entered our typology files, he is captured in an information enclosure, where the dominant logic operates. The result will be that typologization creates a person in the image we have in our typology file. If the person behaves contrary to our typologies, our reaction will be unease, uncertainty and a negative behaviour towards the person will ensue (Maciaszek, 2017).

The consequences for the development of strategies and dominant logic is that communicatively we have increased our awareness of typologies in our possession. Otherwise our evaluations of other people and information presented by them might easily be biased.

Once we have formed an opinion about a person through our typologies, we are inclined to overlook information contrasting this opinion, and will deliberately look for information supporting our established typology files (Kim, 2018).

> **Statement**: Information supporting our typologies has more cognitive authority than information which does not support our typologies.

> **Student task**: Find at least five examples that support the statement above.

5.3.4.2. Cognitive Principles

Principles to be discussed in the following presentation are: the contrast principle, mutuality principle, consistency principle, publicity principle, charisma principle, authority principle, scarcity principle and the principle of cognitive reflex. We will briefly make a survey of these principles insofar as they are relevant for the cognitive authority of information, and dominant logic.

5.3.5.   Student Reflection Task 58

5.3.5.1. Case Letter

If a piece of information which alone would have a negative effect, follows another piece of information which is not suitable for us, we have a tendency to overestimate the last piece of information. This principle can be used in many contexts to make one piece of information presented after another look better than would have been the case if presented first or alone (Hristova, 2017).

> **Statement**: If we present negatively slanted information irrelevant to the actual situation prior to negatively slanted information relevant to the actual situation, the negative relevant

information will be inclined to instil a sense of relief in the receiver and thus have more impact than if presented alone.

Student task: Find at least five examples that support the statement above.

5.3.6. *Student Reflection Task 59*

5.3.6.1. Case Letter

If we receive something before having to give away something, we are more likely to give back. This principle is in literature often referred to as information without cost (Kunz & Woolcott, 1976; Riley & Eckenrode, 1986).

Statement: If we receive information free of charge, which would normally not have been, or been inaccessible, we are more inclined to give information which would normally have been reserved for the person supplying us with information in the first place.

Student task: Find at least five examples that support the statement above.

5.3.7. *Student Reflection Task 60*

5.3.7.1. Case Letter

Once we have made a choice, or taken a stand, we will experience personal mental pressure, and also pressure from the environment in the direction of behaviour consistent with the choice or position we have taken. This has, among other things, been reported by Rosenfeld, Kennedy, and Giacalone (1986).

The explanation, on social psychology part, to the consistency principle, is obligation, that is, if we are to oblige someone to take a loose position, we will tie them up in the consistency principle.

Statement: If we can make someone vaguely and suggestively make a commitment by giving information, this will next induce the person to give information which otherwise would have been withheld.

Student task: Find at least five examples that support the statement above.

5.3.7.2. The Consistency Principle

In social psychology, the consistency principle has been developed as a theory by Festinger (1957). The basic premise in this theory about cognitive dissonance is that individuals strive for consistency in cognition. What statement 5 expresses is that this also applies to information.

Several techniques are used to obligate people, for example, to start slowly and build on the previous obligation. To make people say "maybe" in an interview may be the first step in an entire research chain relative to a problem area. For the person being asked, this implies: if you do not feel like being interviewed, do not commit yourself to the more trivial requests.

Another technique is to make the person write down some of his requests himself, or make a non-binding agreement. We tend to live up to what we write ourselves to a greater extent than what others do, even if it is by no means more legally binding.

A third technique is to make the persons expose their views to others. As soon as this is done, the person will have a tendency to have more consistency between his actions and/or standpoint.

A fourth technique is to make a person feel that the proposal really came from them, while in reality it was somebody else's original proposal.

The relevance of the strategy process and dominant logic can be to establish contact with people potentially averse to the strategy at an early stage, and thus obligate them through the consistency principle.

The consistency principle can, however, lead to a situation where the issue behind the decision is not subject to critical scrutiny, that is, the action sequence can easily become automatic.

5.3.8.   *Student Reflection Task 61*

5.3.8.1.   Case Letter

The publicity principle expresses that we perceive something as correct because other people deem it correct. If we succeed in expressing the fact that it is a public truth we present, the other party will be inclined to agree to "this public truth".

The publicity principle has the strongest effect on people who have low self-confidence, find themselves in an ambiguous situation, or are overcome by uncertainty.

In the strategy process and for dominant logic, the critical element in reducing the impact of this special effect is for special information gatekeepers to take on the task of pointing out the social impact of the information cognitive authority to people with a high status or rank in circles emulated and admired by the company. Otherwise, the ensuing strategy might easily turn into what the mainstream follows, and competitive edges will be easily lost when all use the same information source (Bro, 2018).

> **Statement**: Information brought forth as a publicly accepted truth has high cognitive authority.

> **Student task:** Find at least five examples that support the statement above.

5.3.9.   *Student Reflection Task 62*

5.3.9.1.   Case Letter

Persons of great physical attraction tend to generate more agreement on our part than people who are less physically attractive (Benson, Karabenic, & Lerner, 1976). These people will thus get an edge also in terms of relaying information to others, even if their knowledge within the actual field is not particularly deep. This principle also applies to qualities beyond physical ones; talent, friendliness, honesty and intelligence (Eagly, Ashmore,

Makhijan, & Longo, 1990). By possessing, or appearing to possess, some of these qualities, these persons will find it easier to influence others by their views and to change our attitudes.

Another factor supporting this principle is knowledge and contact with the persons in question. In the extension of this principle, it also follows that if we can make the largest possible number of people identify with the thing or person to whom the information is related, it might be easier to pave the way for the message. To establish a strategy which will be met by a certain amount of opposition within the company, this principle can prove fruitful (Burg, 2013).

> **Statement**: Information stemming from persons with physical charisma and who are held in high esteem by their peers has great cognitive authority.

> **Student task:** Find at least five examples that support the statement above.

5.3.10. *Student Reflection Task 63*

5.3.10.1. Case Letter

Requirements from authorities have a direct impact on why one type of information has a stronger impact than others. The Milgram studies (1974) indicated this quite clearly. Milgram's studies explained that persons used for experiments inflicted on other persons what the persons used for the experiments took to be physical pain inflicted on the other person. In most cases the results of these studies implied that, by means of pressure from imminent authorities, the persons used for the experiment would put the other person through what they mistook for physical pain. In reality no pain was inflicted on the other person by the persons used for the experiment.

Milgram's explanation is that pressure from authorities exists in a systematic process of socialization in our society.

Symbols of authority further have a certain impact on our thinking. Some research has indicated that titles (see Peters & Ceci, 1982; Ross, 1971), clothes (see Bickman, 1974; Bushman, 1988), and objects generating

an aura of status and position (see Doob & Gross, 1968) have a strong impact on our faith in persons who legitimize themselves through these symbols of authority.

For the strategy process and dominant logic, it becomes important to reflect on the contents of this principle, as automatic interpretation processes might easily occur.

> **Statement**: Information endorsed by people with a high social status and prestige in our society has high cognitive authority.

> **Student task:** Find at least five examples that support the statement above.

5.3.11.   *Student Reflection Task 64*

5.3.11.1. Case Letter

The scarcity principle expresses the following idea: various entities appear to be more valuable to us if they are less accessible. Tversky and Kahneman (1983) express this principle as people's inclination to be more motivated by the fear of losing something than the thought of achieving something at the same price.

Scarce objects are also perceived as qualitatively better than objects readily available (Lynn, 1989).

Limitations imposed on our freedom, and particularly the freedom we have managed to achieve, tend to be targets of fierce reaction. The psychological reactance theory, first developed by Brehm (1966) and further developed by Brehm and Brehm (1981), provides an extensive explanation of people's reaction to the loss of personal freedom, and why we react so strongly to what we experience as a limitation imposed on our freedom.

If limitations are imposed on our access to information, it is fair to assume that our reaction will be similar to our other restrictions on various types of freedom achieved. We will want more of this type of information, and we are inclined to believe more firmly in it, even if we are deprived of access to it.

A strategy to make people request and believe more in one type of information could be to have it censored one way or the other, for example, withheld from the public, and then make it publicly known that it has been subject to limited access. The same thing happens if public institutions elect to withhold information from public view. We are then inclined to regard this as more valuable information, and should something seep out behind closed doors, the verity of this information tends to be subject to less critical judgement than if it was presented to us instantly. This could be one explanation why rumours and gossip have such proven impact.

For the strategy process and the dominant logic, it is important to be aware of this phenomenon as the acquisition of information in the strategy process can easily be biased if others are making conscious use of this principle (Eastwood, 2016).

> **Statement**: Information which is somehow "classified" and then made available has high cognitive authority.

> **Student task:** Find at least five examples that support the statement above.

5.3.12. Student Reflection Task 65

5.3.12.1. Case Letter

It is very difficult to disprove a line of thinking where the chain of argument is logically consistent, but where the conclusion is not in accordance with the premises of argumentation. In the same way, erroneous statements can be created on the basis of a logically sound and coherent chain of argument because of an erroneous basis for premises. We use the expression *because* consciously in the preceding sentence as it has turned out that this expression elicits a positive response to a wish, irrespective of whether what follows the because sentence gives any explanatory or elaborate information or not.

Several studies done by Langer, Blank, and Chanowitz (1978) and Langer (1989), among others, substantiate the statement. One example shown by Langer is that in a line in front of a Xerox machine, a student

utters: excuse me, can you please let me pass the line, because I have a lecture to catch. This generated 94% positive responses in several tries. When the because sentence was omitted, the rate of positive responses was 64%. When the because sentence provided no sensible additional information, for example: excuse me, can you please let me pass the line, because I have to copy, there were 93% positive responses. Intuitively, this appears to be wrong. The explanation is that the word *because* appears to elicit an automatically positive reflex in most of us. It is arguably a cognitive reflex, where the message linked to the explanatory category (here: *because*) has more cognitive impact than a message not linked to an explanation category. An explanation to this cognitive authority of information can be our socialization into the linear-causal thought patterns, where the word *because* elicits the cause component in a linear-causal chain (see Fiske & Taylor, 1984, pp. 58–60).

In the presentation of a strategy this principle will be crucial, particularly if what follows the sentence is linked to the aforementioned principles in this part of the chapter.

Statement: Information which contains because sentences has great cognitive authority.

Student task: Find at least five examples that support the above statement.

5.3.12.2. Heuristic Mechanisms

In our evaluation of what information is most suitable in a situation, we often use heuristic evaluation mechanisms. The problematic aspect of heuristic evaluation mechanisms is that we are not conscious that we use them, (Bazerman 1994, p. 47). The heuristic mechanisms can further lead to systematic errors in our evaluations.

There are four heuristic evaluation mechanisms often used on an everyday basis. These are as follows.

(1) We use information available at the moment (information at hand).
(2) We use what is most distinctive in memory.
(3) We use an initial mooring point as our basis.
(4) We make comparisons with similar cases.

5.3.13.   Student Reflection Task 66

5.3.13.1. Case Letter

We have a tendency to use information available at the moment and ignore critical basic information. Critical basic information appears to be used when no information seems to be available (Kahneman and Tversky report 1972, 1973). It can appear as if the most conspicuous information is given most emphasis and is most frequently used (Alba & Marmorstein, 1987; Gill, 2018).

A possible explanation can be that a survey of critical basic information is time-consuming and includes "boring" procedures with collection of basic data, among other things. In the strategy formation process and for the dominant logic it is critical to be conscious of this mechanism, as critical basic information can easily be lost if we do not reflect on the consequences of using information at hand.

> **Statement**: Information available in a situation (information at hand), for example, rumours have great cognitive authority.

> **Student task:** Find at least five examples that support the statement above.

5.3.14.   Student Reflection Task 67

5.3.14.1. Case Letter

According to Tversky and Kahneman (1973, 1983), we have a tendency to emphasize information which is easily retrieved from memory.

As a rule, we are not so good at recalling how an uncertain situation was perceived by us prior to the available results of our decision. That is, we have a tendency to let the results strongly influence what we originally believed, prior to the results. This has been documented by Fischhoff (1975a, 1975b, 1977).

Fishhoff's interpretation results unambiguously point to the fact that results increase the belief, on the part of individuals, that it is exactly these

results they would have predicted, even if they did not have access to the results. One explanation of this phenomenon is that from a purely cognitive perspective, knowledge of result is prominent in memory, and is instrumental in guiding our presumptions regarding our opinions prior to an event.

> **Statement**: Information which is easily retrievable from memory has great cognitive authority.

> **Student task:** Find at least five examples that support the statement above.

5.3.15. *Student Reflection Task 68*

5.3.15.1. Case Letter

The size of a selection is fundamental in statistics, but the size of the selection does not seem to be an essential part of our intuitive understanding, according to Tversky and Kahneman (1971, 1974) and Dawes (1988) among others. The extreme case is of course when we generalize from a few single incidents, and pass it off as a general truth.

We seem to be frozen in our own experiences based on a small selection. "I have personal experience", seems to have more impact than a submitted research finding flawlessly executed.

Studies by Slovic and Lichtenstein (1971), among others, have indicated that we are easily caught up in perceptibly irrelevant information, and use this as a basis for further evaluation. In most cases the final decisions are systematically drawn towards the initial information presented to us, according to Tversky and Kahneman (1973). Unfortunately, it is so that when people's knowledge about a field decreases, their confidence in their personal sense of judgement does not decrease accordingly (Maleki, 2018).

> **Statement**: Information to which we have a personal relation in terms of experience, even if the basis for experience is scanty, has great cognitive authority.

Student task: Find at least five examples that support the statement above.

5.3.16.   Student Reflection Task 69

5.3.16.1. Case Letter

We have a tendency to evaluate all information in the light of previous results, and expect these results to continue to apply. This has been indicated by Kahneman and Tversky (1973), among others. We also have a nasty habit of overestimating correlated events (see Bar-Hillel, 1973) and underestimating events which are independent of each other (see Tversky & Kahneman, 1974).

When two events are linked, the presumed probability of their occurrence is greater than if they were not linked. Two examples from Tversky and Kahneman (1983) shed light on the statement.

Example 1:

In an investigative study it was found that experts presumed (asked in 1982) it to be less probable that

(1)   diplomatic relations between the USA and the Soviet Union would be broken in 1993, than that
(2)   a Soviet invasion of Poland would sever diplomatic ties between the USA and the Soviet Union.

NB: it would be conceivable that the Soviet Union could invade other countries than the Soviet Union, and thus effectively break off diplomatic relations, and this implies that (1) is more probable than (2), even if (2) turned out to have more cognitive authority.

Example 2:

(a)   A great tidal wave afflicting North America sometime in 1989, killing 1,000 people, was estimated to be less probable, than
(b)   An earthquake in California, eliciting a flood wave, effecting the death of 1,000 people.

Elementary reflection should imply that there is a greater probability for (a) to occur than (b), since (b) is a component in (a), and many other events could lead to (a).

> **Statement**: Information linking two or more events has more cognitive authority than information which does not link the events.

> **Student task:** Find at least five examples that support the statement above.

5.4.   Message

We have chosen to include all information processes in this part of the chapter, even if it might have been even more correct to discuss information sharing and information analysis under cognitive processes. It is more a structural issue than an analytical distinction which explains this choice.

5.4.1.   Information Processes

The purpose of information processes in strategic management is regarded as:

- information sharing (exchange of information);
- analysis of information, making it suitable for our quest for the desired result; and
- choosing type of information.

The basis for the selection of these information processes can be found in Miller's (1978) theory.

5.4.2.   *Student Reflection Task 70*

5.4.2.1.   Case Letter

An important part of the strategy process is centred around exchange of information. We have, however, a tendency to overestimate the value of information supporting an attitude, notion, etc. which we already have, and underestimate information not supporting these attitudes, suppositions, etc. (Nahum, 2018).

In a way we give priority to what we already know, and in this way we also economize with both information-seeking processes and information analysis, even if this on many occasions leads to systematic erroneous inferences. The most provocative findings with regards to this phenomenon can be found in the works of Tversky and Kahneman (1971, 1973, 1974, 1983).

> **Statement**: Information clashing with our previously established attitudes, suppositions and notions, has little cognitive authority.

> **Student task:** Find at least five examples that support the statement above.

5.4.3.   *Student Reflection Task 71*

5.4.3.1.   Case Letter

In information analysis we have the information which is available, in addition to relevant information, and we know the goal. What we have to do here is to transform what we know in order to reach the goal. If we have made a commitment to a strategy, we will have a tendency to make a positive evaluation of information supporting this strategy (see Staw & Ross, 1980). It is important to realize that the basic position, which corresponds to a fixed strategy, strongly influences the perception of possible results. A great deal of research supports the hypothesis that the basic position is critical for the final outcome (see Bazerman & Neale, 1992, p. 179).

It is the already established seeking patterns which will decide where to pursue further information. For example, we have a tendency to seek information within the areas where we already have plenty of knowledge, and not in the areas where our knowledge is deficient, that is, it may seem like availability precedes relevancy.

> **Statement**: In the strategy process, when we have set a goal for ourselves and we see that the goal cannot be reached, we have a tendency to still cling to the original goal, that is, information supporting an established goal has great cognitive authority.

The statement is contra intuitive and therefore needs further elaboration. Here are some explanations supporting the statement.

- We have difficulties in distinguishing between earlier decisions and future decisions related to the former. This is particularly the case when negative signals about the previous decision are presented (see Northcraft & Wolfe, 1984).
- We have a tendency to actively seek positive information in support of a decision already made by us (see Caldwell & O'Reilly, 1982).
- We have a tendency selectively to filter out information which does not support an initial decision (see Caldwell & O'Reilly, 1982).
- We have a tendency to relay information supporting our decision to other people (see Caldwell & O'Reilly, 1982).
- We have an inclination to try to appear as consistent (Staw & Ross, 1980).
- We have a tendency to reward leaders on a steady course with positive feedback, and, to a lesser extent, leaders who are inclined to do the opposite (see Ross & Staw, 1986).
- We are controlled by psychological investments laid down in a project (see Dawes, 1988, p. 22; Arkes & Blumer, 1985).
- A long-time perspective in several studies (see Smith, Pruitt, & Carnevale, 1982; Yukl, 1974) is found to correspond to sustaining the original goal.

> **Student task:** Find at least five examples that support the statement above.

5.4.4. Student Reflection Task 72

5.4.4.1. Case Letter

Information, according to Nisbett and Ross (1980, pp. 45–51), weakens and sustains our attention:

- when it appears to be emotionally interesting;
- when it is concrete and provocative; and
- when it is close to us in time and space.

It is fair to assume that a link between the three types of information will generate a stronger effect than used separately. It is further likely that the longer we manage to direct people's attention towards the information we present, and particularly the three former types of information, the greater cognitive authority can be attributed to the information. This is in accordance with results from Tesser (1978), who explained this phenomenon by pointing to the ensuing activation of a memory.

It should further be underlined that not only correct information has this effect on us. Misinformation, linked to the emotional, concrete and immediate, appears to have an equal importance, and we have difficulties in protecting ourselves against both the information presentation and our own reactions to it.

> **Statement**: Information which creates concrete mental images have great cognitive authority.

> **Student task:** Find at least five examples that support the statement above.

5.5. The Speaker

5.5.1. Characteristic Features of the Speaker

5.5.1.1. The Appearance

Why do we have more faith in one person than another? Does our appearance and how we appear before others mean anything to their confidence in information presented by us?

Several studies report that our confidence in other people's information is determined by their outer appearance. It should, however, be underlined that the results are not wholly unambiguous. We are also negatively prejudiced towards people with an attractive outer appearance. This applies to both men and women.

5.5.2. Student Reflection Task 73

5.5.2.1. Case Letter

The courtroom is an example of a situation where credibility is definitely at stake. Even here, where law and justice should take centre stage, it appears that, according to substantial research, how a person looks, dresses, or otherwise appears has major impact on the outcome of the case.

An important point is naturally not only how the other person appears before us, but how we feel that we appear in relation to others. Self-realization and status impact each other reciprocally. Self-realization here denotes how we experience our relationship with others. Status, to a certain extent, is a by-product of self-realization. Quite often self-realization and status will constitute our basis for evaluation.

> **Statement**: If a person signals that he/she is above or below a supposed average relative to peers in a certain situation, the person's information will have less cognitive authority than if he/she signals that they are on an average level in relation to their peers.

> **Student task:** Find at least five examples that support the statement above.

5.5.3.   Student Reflection Task 74

Wilson (1983, p. 13) underlines that the cognitive authority on the part of information is linked to a relationship between two persons, and that there will always be various degrees in terms of this authority. He further points out that the cognitive authority is linked to the areas of interest. By the information cognitive authority (ICA) he means exactly the question linked to why we are inclined to believe more in one type of information than another.

 If we look at ICA linked to competence and confidence, the typology in Figure 5.2 can illustrate the relation.

Figure 5.2: Confidence and Competence.

 This typology indicates that if we have little confidence in a person, but the person has great competence in the area in focus, the person's information will only have medium cognitive authority in relation to us.

 If, on the contrary, we have a great confidence in the person, and he has great competence within the particular field, the person's information will have great cognitive authority in relation to us.

 If we have little confidence in the person and his competence within the field is limited, the person's information will have little cognitive authority

in relation to us. If, on the contrary, we have great confidence in the person, and his competence within the field is limited, the model presupposes that the person's information has medium cognitive authority in relation to us.

> **Statement**: Competence within a given area, and our confidence in the person are positively correlated to information cognitive authority

> **Student task:** Find at least five examples that support the statement above.

5.6.   Conclusion

The realization of why we are more easily influenced by one type of information and one type of person than the other could put us in a position to shield ourselves from this influence in a strategy process, and also have a positive impact on reflection around dominant logic. This knowledge can further help if we want to influence others in the same strategy process.

Knowledge of how information influences participants in a strategy process, and how they deliberately or accidentally influence other by their information and manner, could have a major effect on the outcome of the strategy process. There is a clear connection between the cognitive value of information and our application of this information. If we do make no reflections on this context, systematic erroneous inferences could occur, detrimental both to the company and the surroundings.

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Appendix: Process Pedagogy

Process learning aims to develop students' action competence and their ability to reflect on their own learning.

The purpose of process learning is to develop the students' ability to act, reflect and communicate, as well as their social awareness, as is elaborated as follows:

Ability to act: students are able to prioritise their work tasks, take initiatives and make decisions – even when they have limited time. Students will acquire the ability to know when they need information, and how to find, evaluate and use that information.

Reflective action: students will gain knowledge, be able to use and find knowledge, reflect upon and discuss knowledge, gain self-insight and reflect upon it.

Communicative action: students can present their views, cases and ideas, and can lead and participate in debates.

Social awareness: students can take responsibility for others, both in close relationships with colleagues and also for others in a global perspective. They can understand the usefulness of networking relationships and are able to work actively in an ethical manner.

This teaching method aims to provide students with the opportunity to work with real cross-disciplinary issues and challenges. On the basis of the relevant theory, students will collaborate in teams, with close follow-up by the teaching staff, in order to solve various problems.

Process learning will also provide students with a working method that will give them the opportunity to learn skills so they can become attractive workers of tomorrow in the business world, the public sector and even in areas of research. This teaching method emphasises on active participation and knowledge sharing rather than passive learning through lectures.

Herein, students involve with cases, case letters,[1] and projects that use real situations corresponding to what they will experience in future workplaces.

Students will be instructed regarding the following:

- training to lead and be led by others;
- how to present and gain recognition for one's ideas and views;
- how to give and accept criticism in public forums;
- the approach towards maintaining responsibility for results;
- the method to establish and utilise networks;
- how to learn to adapt to new situations and any rapid change; and
- the strategy for practice reflection upon one's own learning and development.

Process learning is an educational method that will activate and engage the student through various methods, such as interdisciplinary project assignments, problem-based learning and 'key lectures'. The teaching method involves students working in fixed groups (teams); they will be guided individually and in teams through the entire study period. The students should reflect on their own learning, collaborative skills and their ability to act. The teaching method will enable students to acquire theoretical knowledge, as well as knowledge regarding working life. This will provide students with the skills and abilities to become proactive and engage themselves as employees in the future.

An overview of the categories of process learning is detailed in the forthcoming text and the content described in Figure A1.

Process aims:
- Personal development aims
- Development aims of the team
- Development aims for transfer of experience between teams

Learning aims:

Professional competence

Relational competence

Communication competence

Action competence

Content: projects, cases, case letters

Tools:
Project diary
Reflection upon project diary
Continual guidance
Lectures
Exercises, assignments
Class presentations

Figure A1. Process Learning.

A.1. Projects and Cases

As part of the process learning, students will work on various projects and cases.

- The cases are presented by the teaching staff (not the business-related cases). The cases may be problem-based learning cases or smaller cases, which will give students practice in case-solving and the applying of project methods.
- Projects involve students working with real businesses and organisations. The students will independently attempt to find problems, solve them using theory and possibly find better solutions for the 'client'.

A.2. Tools

A.2.1. *Project Diary*

For each assignment, students will keep a continuous journal of the work process in their project diaries. This should include reflections on their own learning, team collaboration and collaboration between teams, and also reflections on their own learning in relation to lectures, the syllabus and projects. The project diary should include questions and a summary of the discussion with their supervisor. The student must submit their project diary together with the mandatory project assignments. The project diary constitutes an important element in the guidance process.

A.2.2. *Guidance*

Students and teams will be given guidance, which will take different forms. It may take the form of direct guidance of a student in relation to a problem or assignment. Groups (teams) will also be given guidance. It may also involve taking responsibility for panel discussions in the class and giving feedback on panel discussions.

A.2.3. *Lectures*

Every subject will include key lectures. These will mainly be given in 'blocks' and will be related to ongoing projects. The purpose of the lectures is to provide students with an introduction to topics, focus interest on a subject area, provide a summary of a subject area and illuminate or present current research in a particular area. However, the main emphasis of the teaching is guidance-based. Please refer to the overview of ECTS and lectures.

A.2.4.   Exercises and Presentations

All the major projects should have a written presentation. However, the students will also present the projects in other ways. For instance, it could be an oral formal presentation, such as a report to a board. Other types of presentations could be creative presentations such as giving a performance, making a video film, a dramatic presentation, creating a visual experience, etc. The objectives of the projects may be to get media coverage, a non-profit project to help others and so on.

Process learning views the student as a whole human being, where the intellect is stimulated by artistic experiences, physical pursuits, altruistic experiences, etc. All projects of the students should include aspects of these elements.

The students will be given clear assessment criteria for those assignments that will be assessed (which will be handed out together with the assignments).

A.3.   The Working Methods of the Teams

The students will mainly work in teams consisting of five to nine students. A plan for the team's work must be prepared. The plan will specify who is the team leader, the expectations of the individual participants, the project 'milestones', the team's working methods, the team's development goals and development goals for the transfer of experiences between teams. The following is an account of the teams' working methods:

- The teams will work together for a single semester.
- The leaders of the teams will meet and exchange experiences concerning professional development and regarding the challenges related to the team's work and composition. The team leader will be chosen for each new project.
- The team leaders will have regular meetings with the semester teams of the respective study programmes.

- A quality manager should also be selected for each team, who should focus on the professional aspects. They will have regular meetings with study programme coordinators, where they will provide feedback in relation to the quality of the learning process and learning outcomes of the subjects.
- When submitting compulsory projects, the teams will be divided into three (the teams can alternate regarding division within the team). Submission at the end of the semester will be individually, although the students work in teams.

Notes

1. Case letters are brief statements about a theoretical or practical phenomenon.

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