

SYSTEMIC CONSULTING



ORGANIZATIONAL CONSTELLATIONS

**“A New Methodology to approach
Business World issues”**

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TALENT MANAGER

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INTRODUCTION

Some times, **Organisations** and **Companies** face different problems: the company does not have an adequate development, the clients disappear, it is not possible to innovate the products, the employees are in permanent conflict, the merger of two companies does not allow the business to develop, the employees leave without any real reason, etc.

What might be wrong? A rational analysis can give us trails or can indicate part of the problem, but never an overall view. Systemic (Organizational) Constellations can give us the missing link. The success of this method within companies such as **Daimler-Chrysler, IBM or BMW** contributes to a growing interest of this methodology all over Europe.

Recent investigations and developments in this field allowed us to discovery new ways analyse how organisations evolve and develop with **success**. Through a skilful use of Organizational Constellations, it is possible to discover hidden dynamics that are in operation in the organisations and companies. This is carried out in such a way that, in a **simple and direct way**, everyone recognises it that works for the company.

Complex problems, such as organizational structure, leadership or the appropriate recognition of employees, can have very simple solutions. Businessmen, managers and consultants have a great curiosity with the solutions found, when Organizational Constellations and **systemic thinking** are used.

The original technique of a system “**Constellation**” consists that the client chooses “not known people” to represent his employees, the company, departments, clients, suppliers, products, etc.

The client places these “representatives” in a position he feels it is adequate, in an intuitive way. Subsequently, those “representatives” say what they feel, what movements they would like to do and if they feel that someone or something is missing. The representatives change positions until they feel they are in an “adequate place” and that all the system finds its own **quietness**.

In situations that require **confidentiality and privacy** it is possible to use this methodology only with the presence of the client and replacing the representatives by objects, figures, stickers, etc.

The solutions found with “real” representatives has more strength and impact, but this more private approach is very interesting as a **diagnosis** or at the beginning of a project, or when it is not possible to do it in other way.

The real interesting feature of this methodology is that the client remains with a clear image of the present situation, the eventual solution and the process that he has to do. Everything is done in an **intuitive and flowed** way, so the solution remains totally integrated by the client and allows an easier application.

Any person in a position of responsibility, in the industry, commerce, services or government, in a health or educational organisation, can benefit from this methodology and can find worthy solutions in a very **short time**.

WHAT IS SYSTEMIC CONSULTING

What is a system

“A System is a number of elements that are connected to one another in a continuously changing relationship”. In other words, a system is any group of people who regularly work, learn or play together. So it includes owners, founders, boards of directors, employees, companies, departments, products, market, clients, teams, etc. within companies, sports clubs, schools, hospitals, local authorities etc. The common denominator of these organisations is that they are made up of human beings. Systemic behaviour occurs when humans operate in a group.

Our first system

Our first system is our family and so we start to learn how systems work immediately as we are born. This knowledge is so automatic that most of the time we are not aware of it, just as we are not aware of our breathing.

We take this understanding of **systemic behaviour** with us into all the other groups that we belong to throughout our lives. Instinctively we feel that it is the “proper behaviour” in such groups without having to think about it.

Others do not always share our instinct about what is “proper behaviour” and so there is scope for misunderstanding and confrontation whenever we join a group.

The instinct to belong

One of the strongest human instincts is **to belong** to whatever group we are associated with. We feel comfortable if we are fitting in, but uneasy if we don't. This loyalty to the group is what enables organisations to work.

The Culture of a system

Each system develops its own pattern of behaviours and routines (**the way we do things around here**) and this is what we call the Culture of the organisation. New people joining the system become aware of it unconsciously, and there are always members of the group, that remind each other, of the expected behaviour if it is not being followed. For example, if the normal working hours are 9.30 to 18.00, but everyone has got used to stay on until 19:00, those who leave on time may attract such comments as “part-timers!”.

Conscience

Human beings have an “**internal monitor**” called conscience, which tells us whether we’re doing the right thing by the group we belong to. Conscience is a manifestation of our instinct to belong. So, if we are going against the culture of the system we feel uneasy (i.e. guilty); for example, going home “early” in the above example. Whereas fitting in with the culture makes us feel relaxed (i.e. innocent) and at home.

We belong to many systems

All of us belong to many systems and so it is not unusual for us to experience the **tensions** caused when one system’s needs pull against those of another. For example, I want to fit in at work and attend the departmental Christmas party but I also want to see my children in the school play: I can not do both and so I will feel guilt or unease in relation to the system that I “let down”.

Companies and organisations include many systems

Within businesses, the organisation as a whole represents a system. But there are usually different departments and divisions, which also represent systems within the whole; but, on the other hand, they are **sub-systems** that belong to the whole. For example, when talking to strangers, I am proud that I work for company XWZ Ltd but, when sales and production departments have their annual football match, I, as a salesperson, identify myself with the sales department.

Although the leaders of a company or organisation try to promote a shared culture throughout the organisation, there are instances of departmental culture and loyalties being stronger than that of the whole. Such tensions are not unusual and can be difficult to overcome.

Systemic Issues

Because we all belong to several and different systems, misunderstandings and conflicts between their various cultures can easily arise. In many instances such **conflicts** are relatively minor and are worked out instinctively within the system: a kind of self-healing and self-levelling process that goes on all the time. But, on other occasions this does not occur and some intervention is required.

The Systemic Principles

In addition to the ambiguities and conflicts caused by the different and incompatible needs from the diverse systems, also other questions arise when the Systemic Principles are not followed. The Systemic Principles are:

- **Respect** is the most important principle (what is, must be allowed to be)
- Everyone in the system has a right to his or her place (**right to belong**)
- There must be a **balance of giving and taking** between individuals, between individuals and the system and between different parts of the system.
- The system requires that certain priorities and **orders** of precedence should be observed. These include length of service, specialist skills, qualification, functional hierarchy, competence and particular stakes in the system.

It is important to emphasise that these **Systemic Principles** are not “laws” or “rules” because systems can ignore them and continue to operate: they are more like engineering principles which, if not followed, will put stress on the machine. Where Systemic Principles are observed, the organisation seems to operate more smoothly and comfortably; there is a sense of relaxation as they are acknowledged and everything goes to its right place.

Why might I need systemic consulting?

It would be natural to think that because human beings are systemic creatures, we all know automatically how to behave in systems and to respond to what is going on around us. But do we? Let's consider the following situations:

- We all belong to many different systems, so there is the possibility of conflict between systems; but **how** do we recognise when that is happening?
- When Systemic Principles have been overlooked the organisation will react unconsciously and powerfully; but **how** do we know which principle is involved and how do we put it right?
- Individuals also bring their family systems to work with them; but **how** do we determine whether issues arising from the family system are affecting the business organisation?

These questions can be impossible to answer unless you know **where and how** to look. Additionally to where to look, we also need a method that reveals what is happening, because information about systemic issues is held at a subconscious level in the organisation: nobody says to you “Things are not going well because a systemic principle has not been followed”! The method we use to bring this information to light is called a **Constellation**.

What is a Constellation?

A Constellation is a method of mapping/modelling the team or organisation so that information about systemic issues is brought to light. Using this information we can advise the client on potential solutions **to restore harmony and balance** in the system. The method is quick and moves in several steps from diagnosis to resolution. There is no need to disclose detailed information about the organisation and so confidentiality is guaranteed.

Who can use Systemic Consulting?

The use of this methodology applies to managers and other executives in order to discover the problems and their resolution in the organisation. This can be done for all the company, for a specific theme or even as “**coaching**” before an important meeting.

Most of systemic work is carried out with managers and companies or departments leaders where the discovery of systems **Hidden Dynamics** is fundamental for the company or organisation success. It is also used for **individuals** so they can recognize their position in the company, dynamics for an eventual change, etc. (see details in Applications section).

For what Organizational Constellations are used?

With Organizational Constellations we essentially try to make a correct **diagnosis** and to show the necessary changes into the problem resolution. Organizational Systems are a lot more complex than Family Systems, as they are in contact with a lot of sub-systems, including the individual family system and those of the co-workers.

Organizational Constellations are mainly used to **analyse** alternatives for a possible change, to study different possibilities, to diagnose problems, etc. in order to help the Client to discover better strategies to implement the solutions found.

It is interesting to verify that, in many cases, Constellations without an apparent visible solution can finish to have **surprising effects** in ones individual life, in the company or in the organisation.

As a guide, subsequently are detailed some examples of different themes already experienced by the use of the Organizational Constellations: organizational structure, leadership, companies merge and acquisitions, employees recognition, strategic development, preparation of negotiations, conflicts management, project analysis, family companies dynamics, brands and products, supervision tool for consultants, recruitment, executive search, etc. (see “Applications” section for more examples and possible applications).

Why use this methodology instead of others?

It is important to say that there are no **miraculous solutions**. This methodology is very fast and efficient, but the client should always choose freely the methodology that makes more sense to him.

It is not possible to say that this methodology substitutes others, but that is **complementary** to other forms of consultancy, support, diagnostic and solutions analysis.

The Client has always the solution and it will be always the Client who knows and decides the methodology that better fits his case, his problem, his company, and his issue. This methodology will only be able to help, never to solve or to resolve.

WHAT HAPPENS IN A CONSTELLATION

The Workshop

Normally, Constellations take place in a workshop setting, attended by people who are not connected with the Client and know nothing of his business. These people have agreed to act as resources for the **Client** to model his organisation. Some of these delegates will have seen Constellations before while others will not. This does not make a difference, as delegates do not need knowledge of the process to participate.

The Client and the Facilitator

The Client describes the situation of his organisation, team, department or his personal issue with which he is concerned. After discussion they agree on which parts of the **organisation** will be modelled.

Choosing Representatives

The Client chooses people and asks them to represent the parts or elements of the organisation or problem that are to be modelled. Generally we recommend that men should be chosen to represent men, and women to represent women. For the system it is not important who is chosen, but it is easier for the Client and it helps in order to have a better **perception** of all contexts. The Client also chooses someone to represent himself.

Setting up the Constellation

The Client sets up the Constellation by moving each representative into a position that he chooses. This is not done in accordance with any preconceived ideas but is based on where the Client feels that the representatives need to be in relation to each other using his own **intuition**). Having done this, the Client sits down and observes the process along with the other attendees who have not been chosen as representatives.

Creating the Field

In setting up the map of his organisation in such a way the Client activates the Field, which provides the **information** that the representatives will report to the Facilitator.

Role of the Representatives

The Representatives have no knowledge of the Client and his organisation and often are not told the issue that is being considered. They are asked to clear their minds and allow themselves to experience how it is to stand in this Field with the other representatives. When the Facilitator asks them, they report what they are experiencing in that position and at that moment.

They may experience bodily sensations (e.g. hot, cold, or ache), thoughts about others in the Constellation (e.g. interested in him/her but not interested in anyone else) and emotions (e.g. warmth, anger, sadness). The Representatives may also feel an impulse to move in a particular direction.

Role of the Facilitator

The Facilitator observes the Representatives, asks what they are experiencing and uses this information to diagnose what is happening within the organisation (Client system). In making this diagnosis he will have in mind the Systemic Principles, which affects the **harmony** within organisations.

While working with the Constellation the Facilitator may move representatives to different positions to reflect changes the Client is considering or to identify more harmonious locations for them. He may also ask representatives to speak to one another and include more representatives, if necessary.

The Facilitator will consult the Client during this process and, at some stage, may invite the Client to take his place in the Constellation.

Ending the Constellation

In consultation with the Client, the Facilitator ends the Constellation when an **optimum situation** has been reached or it appears that the Client's enquiries have been answered as fully as they can be. When the Constellation finishes, the Client thanks the Representatives, for their availability. In some cases, it is possible to comment or to say something that has not been said and that it could be important for the Client.

It must be a short moment, so the Client can take advantage of everything that was seen, sensed, perceived and learned during the Constellation that, surely, it will be very useful to him.

USE / APPLICATION AREAS

The Constellations can be applied practically for all areas and type of business, individual subjects, micro-companies, family companies, organisations, etc. What is really interesting in this methodology is that the Client remains with a clear image of his real situation, of the possible solution and the way that must cross to find the solution. All of this is done in an intuitive and fluid way, which causes the **solution to be totally integrated** by the Client and of easier application. You can find some of the possible applications in the text below (see more details in section Diagnosis).

In companies and organisations

- Definition of a **strategy**
- Verification of the **coherence** of the structure of the company
- Preparation of **negotiations**
- Integration after **merger** or **acquisition** of a company
- Project management
- **Brands** and products study
- Family Companies **dynamics**
- **To test** new projects or a new company
- Operation **diagnosis**
- **Conflict** management in the organisations
- To analyse the process of **decision making** in all business areas
- As a **method** to investigate organizational structures with malfunctions.
- In order to see "interactive" **systemic effects** in the different departments of a company.
- To test the **effectiveness** of important steps or changes in a company
- To test **different possibilities**: "I must do this, or that, or perhaps another different thing?"
- As **supervision tool** for consultants: focus essentially in the consultant, so he can deal easily with the Client request.

For individuals

- **To stay or to leave** the company
- Decisions
- To work **by own** or other people's account
- To answer to personal questions, such as "I must remain or leave?"
- To clarify its own **position** within the organisation / company
- Conflicts
- To find a **good place** in the company
- Supervision
- To clarify objectives
- To find the **balance** between private and professional life

CONFIDENTIALITY

This is an obvious concern, as some issues and questions are confidential or with reservation, so it is not advisable to treat them in public. In these cases, several techniques can be applied, so the Client **feels safe** and the issue with confidentiality and privacy are guaranteed.

This methodology can be used in such a form that, nor the Facilitator, nor the representatives, nor the assistants know what is the problem. It is also possible to make a constellation with no information or only with the non confidential information.

Another alternative is to work only with the presence of the Client and replacing the representatives by objects, figures, cardboards, etc. This methodology can be used individually or as **systemic coaching**.

Certainly the solutions found with "real" representatives have more strength and impact for the Client. In any case, working in a private environment is very interesting as a diagnosis or beginning of a process, or when it is not possible to do it other way.

HISTORY AND SOME BASIC IDEAS

Family Constellations

Bert Hellinger

After different experiences and other forms approaches, **Bert Hellinger** developed Family Constellations methodology that was the base for the Organizational Constellations. Born in Germany - 1925, he studied philosophy, theology and pedagogy. His religious background took him to enter in a catholic religious order. Later, he worked as a missionary in South Africa. At the beginning of the seventies he left the religious catholic order and dedicated to psychotherapy.

Bert Hellinger rediscovered throughout its own work with hundreds of family systems, that the recognition of love that exists in the families affects the people and changes its lives; an interrupted love in previous generations can cause sufferings in later members of a family. The treatment process demands that the previous must be remembered.

Brief historical review

The work with Family Constellations, in its present form, was developed by **Bert Hellinger**, twenty years ago. It was based on the systemic thinking that began with **Gregory Bateson**, thirty years ago and that was put in practice and developed by other therapists. For a client having therapeutic treatment it is necessary to take in consideration his family and the system in which he is connected.

In psychodramas, the American psychiatrist of Rumanian ancestry, **Jakob Moreno** discovered, through the theatre, the meaning of their client's social connections. He recognized that the problems and psychic disturbances of the human being have relation with their ambiance.

The family reconstruction and the family sculpture (that is not identical to Bert Hellinger Family Constellation) come from the American Virginia Satir, social assistant in Palo Alto: all family members work altogether their connection to the chain of generations and they can be released of the loads assumed by the family.

At the same time with these developments, Bert Hellinger works with each client, with its internal family image and as this image appears in the perceptions of the representatives who have been placed in the Constellations. Bert Hellinger says that it is fundamental the position and the therapeutic procedure that it is developed from there, he calls as phenomenological.

It is only possible to learn the reality, deeply stirring, of this work through their own participation in family constellation. There are some authors who explain this phenomenon as being based on the morphogenetic fields defined by the English biologist **Ruppert Sheldrake**.

Some basic ideas / principles

There is a conscience that we feel and functions in order to maintain the system. It is, mainly, the bond to the group; the regulation between the need of giving and taking, the advantages and losses and the imposition of laws to the group.

Thus, an **unconscious conscience** exists that connects the system members and imposes inside it, the following orders or laws (dynamic hidden of relations):

- Need / right **to belong** (excluded, deficient, bad, etc.). Many times, the loss will be always compensated in a following generation.
- Need / right to preserve the balance between **given and taken**. Advantages taken on behalf of others will be compensated in a following generation.
- Need / right of **order**. Previous members have precedence on the subsequent.

Based on the previous ideas presented, **Family Constellations** bring to light where and how we are **entangled** and which are the steps that conduct to undo the knots and to arrive at the solution.

Organizational Constellations

Beginning

It all began in **Austria** in the year of 1995: two business consultants invited Bert Hellinger to make a work in an international company. It was a very convincing work, but less emotional than in the Family Constellations.

At that time, Bert Hellinger was not very interested in this thematic so he told **Gunthard Weber** to continue that work. At the beginning, he was not sure if he wanted to do it, but working with companies, he began to have some experiences with excellent results. He is considered the “father” of Organizational Constellations.

In 1998 the first Congress was carried out, where the first bases were established. At the beginning, the first facilitators were therapists. They worried more with psychological and social dynamics than to explain the business context through a family viewpoint.

The systemic thinking is related to the context, to the processes, how they are mutually influenced, how the collective conscience is formed and how the observer influences the observed, all of this as a whole.

At the same time, an university teacher, **Matthias Varga von Kibéd** developed an Organizational Constellations theoretical presentation and various types of Constellations, more known as Structured Constellations. This professor considers this technique as if it is a “**transverbal**” language that is spoken by the group through Constellations methodology. The great challenge is to discover the “grammar” of this language.

Some **validation studies** of the results are just initiated as well as the first statistical analysis. In Italy, a brand study using Constellations was presented in the University of Milan: 24 brands were studied; in six cases, the Constellations were repeated and the conclusions obtained were very similar. The results were surprising, mainly as they have been carried out with marketing people, which had no prior knowledge of Systemic Work.

The principles

There is no list of Organizational Constellations principles, as they are inside us: it is a healing process and it is not a descriptive process (the aspirin removes the headache, but the cause of the headache is not the lack of aspirin).

Main Organizational Constellations **principles**:

- The **existence** of the problem
- What is, has to be recognized (**respect**)
- Showing the **change** and what has to be **preserved**
- The right to **belong**
- Balance of **given and taken**
- Need of **order** (hierarchical, antiquity, competence, etc.)

Differences between Family and Organizational Constellations

- We belong to a family since we are born until after our death. Belonging to an organisation is a **choice** and it is **temporary**, so these systems are much more complex.
- The **function** of a member is less defined and can be changed.
- In Organizational Constellations we **test solutions** and various settings.
- In Organizational Constellations the **view of the solution** leads to a faster resolution.
- The Organizational Constellations are **less emotional** than Family Constellations.
- The language used in Family Constellations is not adequate in business environment. It is necessary to use a **specific language** when we work with companies and organisations.
- The experience has taught that it is not very important to finish an Organizational Constellation until it is found a solution, like in most of Family Constellations. Organizational Constellations works more as an **impulse** that develops later: it is like the beginning of a change.
- Constellation work is not the solution, but it is a **method** to show and to find the right way where to go.
- Only the Client is able to find and to build the solution.

Some key phrases

- The **whole** is more than the sum of its parts.
- A company has a **collective unconscious**.
- Within the system we are all **connected** to one another.
- There are always simultaneous and reciprocal **effects** in systems.
- Assigning guilty does not carry us anywhere (**symptom**).
- The **obvious** is very difficult to see.
- **Systemic images** instead of analytic descriptions make solutions clear.
- Human systems functions according to powerful **unconscious laws**.
- When **information** from the system is inactive, only vague feelings are available.
- System laws are **simple** and sensible.
- System conscience gives directional **orientation**, not moral judgment.
- **Belonging** at all cost
- System laws work **invisibly**.
- Without system support, financial reorganisation rests on a weak foundation.
- Balance is essential for **success mergers**.

DIFERENTS FORMATS FOR CONSTELLATIONS

Types of Constellations

There are different types of Constellations developed by several authors. They are used according the cases, the issues and the sensibility of the Facilitator. At this moment, the **growth** in this area is huge. Often, many techniques arise that help the facilitator to do a better work with lots of resources.

The main types of Constellations are:

- **Normal** (initially developed by Bert Hellinger).
- **Blind or hidden** (in which there is no information about the issue or theme).
- **Structured** (developed by Matthias Varga von Kibèd, that includes some of the followings and they are predefined formats of Constellations for specific type of questions).
- **Problem** (can be done hidden, with representatives for the resources, the obstacles, the solution/objective and focus (Client); it is also possible to include a representative for a medium term objective and for the hidden interests).
- **Diagnostic** (useful when there is not a specific question or to see the dynamics or to get an organisation diagnosis).
- **Project** (for project analysis, quantifying feelings and sensations).
- **Tetralema** (very useful for dilemmas or when it is difficult to decide between two alternatives or solutions).
- **Value Triangle** (separating the individual main values and making an independent analysis for each one, in order to get to its integration)
- **Butterfly** (project study and its evolution).
- etc.

Forms of Constellations

As well as there are an infinity number of questions/issues that can be analyzed through this methodology and with so many types of Constellations, there are also many forms of Constellations. All of this enriches the number of tools that are at our disposal in order we can best serve the Client.

So, we have Constellations:

- With **representatives**: the initial form, the most used and known.
- With representatives, but with **different types and levels** of representatives: it is extremely efficient, as it simplifies the Constellation and it is possible to introduce complexity progressively, testing the strength and the importance of each of the representatives inside the system.
- With **pasteboards**: that represent the various elements of the system; it can be done individually or in group.
- With **stickers** (post-it): ideal for complex organizational structure analysis, as a diagnosis and eventually “coaching.”
- With **organizational figures**: a set of plastic figures specially designed to work in organisations.
- With **human figures**: there is a set of Playmobil figures used for family dynamics; some times they are very efficient in organizational dynamics.
- With **objects**: that can be found in Client’s office.
- In individual sessions: with some of the previous formats, and others.
- etc.

CHARACTERISTICS TO BE A FACILITATOR

Along years of training in this area, we have asked to different trainers, which are the main characteristics they consider that should have a Facilitator to work with Systemic Constellations. As a resume from the various answers, we built a list. The number of items of this list will continue to grow function of the new guidelines that will arise:

- **Maturity** (more than 28 years, been a father/mother is more convenient, as well as to have worked his/her own insecurities).
- Life and professional experience, preferably in **different areas**.
- **Convinced** that this is an important work.
- To have “**systemic view**”.
- To have capacity to bear the clash.
- To have **leadership** skills.
- To have some **ability** for this type of work.
- To have no opinion; if possible, to make an “**empty middle**”.
- **Humility**.
- To have **observation** skills.
- To have **intuition**, inner images and to have the courage to follow a different way.
- To have a good family balance and **stability**.
- To speak with the **heart**.
- To have an absolute **respect** toward the client, its history and its system.

DIAGNOSTIC

In this section, **two lists** are elaborated so it will be possible to verify Organizational Constellations and Systemic Consultancy can help you. The first list serves so that any person, company or organisation can make a simple analysis and verify if there is any **systemic theme** that it needs some special attention. The second contains a list of possible **applications** that could be adapted to your case. In any case, these lists do not try to be exhaustive, but only to give some indications about the versatility of this methodology and how results can be obtained using this methodology.

Systemic checklist (*)

What is, must be allowed to be

- Is the financial situation of the company known to the employees?
- Is the reason for the company (which products/services) explicit and known to everyone?
- Are crises spoken about openly?
- Are mistakes admitted?
- If there have been dismissals or a high employee turnover. Are the former employees well spoken of?
- Are performance and success recognised?
- Are customers spoken of with respect in the company?

* From Invisible Dynamics, a Klaus P. Horn & Regine Brick Book

A balance of giving and taking

- Are the employees committed to the success of the company?
- Do they sometimes work more or longer when there are tight spots?
- Do the employees consider their pay reasonable?
- Do they feel recognised by their bosses?
- Are they happy to take responsibility in their areas?
- Is the workload in groups and teams evenly distributed and fair?
- Do management show concern for the needs of their employees?
- Do they give clear tasks and instructions?
- Are evaluation meetings experienced as fair by both sides?
- Do the company executives also take personal risks for the firm?
- Do the owners or majority shareholders feel a duty to the company?
- Are the owners or majority shareholders acknowledge or respected by the employees?
- Are profits partially invested in the company?
- Are the customers seen and recognised as partners?
- Is the relationship between price and performance right for the customers?

The right to belong

- Are the founders of the firm known and recognised?
- Is their history known?
- Do former employees still belong in spirit?
- Are bosses and colleagues talked about with respect in the company?
- Do all employees have the same right to belong?
- Are weaker persons or groups seen as having the same right to belong?
- Do the owners/majority shareholders/board directors/top executives feel as if they belong, and do the employees see them as belonging?
- In a crisis, are the employees and management loyal to the company?

Those who came earlier have priority ranking over those who came later

- On companies that are more than 20 years old: Are there traditions? Are they upheld?
- Is long-term involvement honoured (for example, with anniversary celebrations, recognition, or mention in the in-house newspaper)?
- Does the experience of long-term employees have a certain status?
- Do the later arrivals in management or amongst employees utilise the experience of those who came earlier?
- Following modernisation or technical innovations, are the old procedures/old products still recognised?
- Do long-term employees/management work constructively and cooperatively when there are innovations, changes and restructuring?

Priority ranking for higher investment on behalf of the whole, and for competence

- Are the bosses aware of their leadership task regarding the employees?
- Are they taken seriously and respected by the employees?
- Are the decisions of management recognised by the employees?
- Are the company leaders aware of their responsibility for the whole company?
- Do they make visible efforts for the common goals?
- Do they stand by their company and its products in public?
- Are their public statements well received by the employees? Are they seen as believable?
- Do the firm leaders see themselves working in the service of the company and the employees?
- Do the employees speak about the firm, their products and their managers in a positive way?
- Are higher qualifications and competence respected by less competent employees?
- In teams, are the responsibilities of team leaders and team members clearly defined?

Checklist for possible applications

Gathering information about important personnel and economic decisions

- Is applicant A or B suited to us?
- How can a team structure function in our organisation? How does it have to be set up so that projects run smoothly?
- Is a cooperative effort possibly with company ABC?
- Can we rely on our foreign partner if we alter products?
- Are the areas of competence and responsibility in the company clearly defined?
- Have we got the right number of people working in department X?

Checking out and optimising the leadership functions in the company

- What is going wrong between deliveries and purchasing?
- Why does development have such a poor image in the company?
- Why is the position of sales manager such a hot seat?
- What is blocking the flow of information in a company?
- Why do people keep quitting in department A?
- Why is everybody complaining about quality control?

Checking out and optimising the leadership functions in the company

- What is the position of the new managing director in the company?
- How can cooperation between branch managers be improved?
- How can we integrate up-and-coming leaders in a good way?
- What would bring clarity to our leadership structure?
- What effect do the interests of the shareholders have on our company culture?

Recognising which resources are needed and where

- What is preventing us from being successful in market segment K?
- How can we strengthen our core capabilities?
- How can we improve our internal procedures between X and Y?
- What is behind the sluggish sales of product AB?
- What would improve contact with our customers?
- How can we get our goals back in sight?
- Recognising which resources are needed and where

Developing a company culture

- What role do values, visions and goals actually play in our company?
- How do the employees view management concepts?
- Who formally runs the business? Who runs it informally?
- What would it take to weld our team together?
- What is the basis of the conflict between new employees and old-timers?
- What is the status of trust and loyalty in the company?
- How attractive is this company for new employees?

Finding the right place as an outside consultant

- What is my place as a consultant in this company?
- What is blocking progress in my consulting?
- Am I allowing myself to be pulled into the company? Is my task clearly defined?
- What do I need to be accepted by my customers?
- How can I successfully expand?

Attaining personal goals

- What do I need in order to attain my career goals?
- Am I in the right place in my company?
- Should I be considering changing companies, or should I be thinking about becoming self-employed?
- What would bring my personal goals into line with my professional goals?
- How can I successfully and fairly mediate conflicts?
- How can I make compatible my professional and my private life?

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