The Art of Succeeding
Systemic Management of Change and Improvement

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Management of change is not easy to achieve. Many branches like telecommunication, multimedia and even design industry operate in turbulent markets. Project teams are formed to implement change und to create new designs. The poor results often show that the culture is not conducive to communication and problem solving. It doesn't make change and improvement more likely.
There is no propper translation for the german word „Gelingen". The word comes from old german language and means make it happen. Let it be lucky. May be there is the same root of the words „luck" and „Glück". We can learn from this. It is not very useful to push the process. You have to evoke success. So Design is a process of dialogue between the stakeholders and the actors of the company.
Succedding becomes very likely, if you integrate the stakeholders in the process. Nobody knows, what good design is. Only customers decide about it. It has to tap customer needs.

Like cybernetik theorist Wiener said: You know what you have said, when you hear the answer. You know what kimd of design you offer, when you hear the customers talking about it.

Systemic Theory can help:
The systemic approach is a relational approach. The relationships between actors are the crucial clue.
Communication shapes companies and market relationships which in turn are changed by communication.
Companies, market relationships, brands and teams are social systems (chart 1.), which evolve out of communication. They are intangible. As components of the system we see not the individual people, but the interaction between them. That is the utterances, body language, symbols and verbal or non verbal communication. These utterances are individually interpreted by each individual person on the basis of different motives and personality. This creates subjective realities which lead to communication only in exceptional cases. All systems tend to preserve themselves, that is, all actors have the tendency to become accustomed to habits. Such problematic routines can be disturbed by targeted interventions, which initiate appropriate actions. The change is not in the people but in communication. An improvement of design or quality requires a change in communication.

Management of succeeding change
Management has the task to create a framework for learning and development, to build up an appropriate atmosphere and to give impulse.

We talk about an interface between actors which has to be shaped and developped. The interface could be a workshop meeting situation, the point of sale,a website or the counter. The interface describes the point of contact between actors inthe Company teams or between buyer and seller. All these interfaces are social systems which can be improved by systemic interventions.

Most companies find themselves confronted by three main problems:
- Dynamic, complexity
- Torpidness, uniformity
- Disembeddedness, misunderstanding

All solutions (like design, Products,etc) should be simple to understand. Selforganization and use of patterns help to handle complexity.

Unique concepts make the difference. They should underline and represent the core competence of the Company.

The integration of stakeholders and the creation of a communicative interface lead to flow and acceptance.

The Solution Cycle is a helpful process design
Every successfull process starts with the the sensation. The different perceptions of the actors should be integrated.
Before a problem can be adequately resolved, it must first be identified and described. Shared figures and a common ground
should be created out of the multiple realities (field detection).
Bonsiepe decribed the lack of relevant problems. Designers tend to create solutions for irrelevant or non excisting problems. A good solution needs a relevant problem. On the basis of kooperative problem and task description an independent and potentially successful vision can be formed. Once all players involved clearly realize the task a certain flow feeling develops.

The flow feeling mobilizes energy for the creative part. Problems are often complex, finding solutions is often simple The best way to get usefull ideas is to go away from the problem (lateral thinking, crazy walk etc.).
The psychological approach of steven Shazer might be useful for innovation processes. He called it brief solution making.
Looking for Best Patterns instead of explaining problems
Getting to the root of the problem and apportioning blame is very problematic and where does it lead to? It makes more sense to look for solutions instead of explaining problems historically. The search for solutions in ones own past or in different systems can facilitate and accelerate the way out. It must be viewed from a high level. The metasystemic patterns are required, not contemptuous copy.

Structural Innovation creates time and space:
In turbulent environments it is especially vital to establish project teams diagonally. The teams should be allowed to organise themselves autonomously. Multiple teams expand the spectrum of performance. In the teams a conducive culture for creative solution making and communication has to be created.

Communication is unlikely but possible
Niklas Luhmann once said: Communication is rather unlikely and very volatile phenomenon. We do not understand each other, we percieve autobiographically, we create our own view and we accept solutions on the ground of individual experience. However conditions can be created, which make communication more likely. We are able to vary technically, socially and culturally.

Interactive planning is crucial to prevent the implementation trap. Only customers decide about flow or flop. So it is very important to develop a communcative interface between supplier and customers. This interface could be influenced contextuell by changing the kind of talking, influecing the atmosphere, structuring the time and organization.
Usability labs and integration of customers needs and desires ca help to create succesfull products. Steven Reiss has extracted 16 basic desires. Succesfull design fits to these needs. Smart actors analyse customer needs and behavoir by oberserving. Paco Underhill has developped a science of shopping. His research teams have found a lot of patterns of behavior.

Learning to learn
The important reflection mode serves to observe change (contact). The experience becomes systemised to patterns and rules (Best Patterns). The learning is assimilated and the results are valued (closure).

With the Solution Cycle all kinds of processes could be effectively influenced. The knowledge of the method enables the players to coordinate and integrate even very complex social systems. Effective change succeeds, if the top management clearly supports the project, if a shared vision is developed, if sufficient space is created for the actors and if they are allowed to take possession of the project more and more.

The role of design managers is chnaging. He or she is no more the aesthetic or functional expert. Designers have to listen curios to the market, have to facilitate innovation processes and to give impulse. They have to leave the planet of knowing, creating and arrogance.

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