September 1988

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Russ Holloman
Augusta College

June B. Kelly
Middle Georgia RESA

Recommended Citation

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Throughout the ages we have searched — for Camelot, for the Golden Fleece, for Eldorado, or for the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. No matter what name we gave the quest, it ultimately meant a search for meaning in our lives. Our search continues today with a new focus and an enlarged sense of urgency. Encompassing both our personal and professional lives, it is a search for a mutuality of interests at the places where we work. With the technological advances of the twentieth century contributing to the impersonality of the workplace, we hunger even more for proof that the intervention will not master the inventor.

The relationship between organizations and their employees has always been a marriage of necessity. Although dissimilar in their economic and social heritage, each has needs which can be satisfied only by working with the other. While this relationship has often been characterized more by suspicion and adversarial calculation than by cooperation and mutuality of interest, it remains in a process of adjustment and change. The convergence of several trends — economic, social, and political — is today forcing both organizations and employees to further examine and make adaptive, normative changes in their traditional ways of relating to each other. No description sums up this imperative better or indicates more clearly the direction of the sought-for changes than the phrase "user-friendly organizations" — a description given to computer software to indicate its ease of usage. If organizations can be likened to a microcosm of intricately complex computers, employees who operate the computers want to be able to put their hands on the organization's keyboard and have it respond with acceptance, trust, and respect instead of distrust buttressed with whims and caprices. Employees want to be assured that they are more valued than the machines they operate.

This paper discusses the philosophy and the processes by which an organization might become user-friendly, an organization in which people and not machines become the driving force. It begins with a rationale on which the search rests and follows with an analysis of five core characteristics of user-friendly organizations (UFO's).

A Rationale for User-Friendly Organizations

A major breakthrough in understanding **The Human Side of Enterprise** came with McGregor's (1960) declaration that man is not lazy, passive, or insensitive to the needs of the organization; that, indeed, man needs only to have the organization arranged in such a manner that these positive characteristics are allowed to flourish.

People can best accomplish the organization's and their own goals by becoming self-directed. That people need to have some control over their work

environment was stated more recently by Peters and Waterman (1982) in their descriptions of companies which are excelling. People are creatures of their environment, they assert, and are "very sensitive and responsive to external rewards and punishment." They are also "strongly driven from within, self-motivated." (p. 56). But more importantly, Peters and Waterman found that people need meaning in their lives and will sacrifice a great deal to the organization if it will provide that meaning. In order to have employees reach this commitment stage, however, the organization must give them some independence — some feeling that they are controlling their own destinies.

There must be a conducive atmosphere for people to find meaning within their jobs. It must not be autocratic and steeply pyramidal in structure; nor should it be a laissez-faire, disordered, permissive one. Instead, it should be a flat organizational structure based on democratic principles of personnel management. Democracy in the workplace is not an idealistic conception, but a real necessity in adapting to the ever-present changes in the modern environment. Only with a democratic system of governance can there be an employee-centered, participatory type of organization in which employees are emotionally involved and vitally interested in the welfare of their organization.

Another compelling reason for the establishment of a democratic organizational philosophy is that today's employees are better educated and are more aware and assertive than were their counterparts of yesterday; thus, they need jobs which are more psychologically rewarding and offer greater opportunities for decision making. A corporate democracy is the only suitable framework in which people may grow personally and make meaningful contributions to the organization.

Congruence

Rogers (1961) uses the term congruence to define a state of being in which there is an accurate matching of an individual's experience, awareness, and communication. Although he presented his theory as a way of determining the authenticity of a counselor-client relationship, it is beneficial to apply it to organization-employee relationships. The essence of Rogers' theory is the idea of equality which exists between each of the three states of being. Perhaps his theory can best be understood by observing an infant who is experiencing hunger. Since the infant accepts hunger pains as being natural, he immediately accepts them into his awareness and, almost simultaneously, communicates them to any available person who can furnish him food. With his accurate matching of experience (hunger), awareness (hunger), and communication (hunger), the infant is seen as being congruent, honest, authentic, etc. One of the reasons that we respond to infants is that they are so genuinely honest or congruent about whatever they are experiencing. As Rogers might suggest, "An infant is his experience."

Unfortunately, the congruency we admire and reward in infants becomes a source of conflict and rejection for persons beyond the infancy stage. People learn to distort the reality of their experience — to deny, even to them-

selves, any experience which threatens their self-image. Let's look at some of the ways people learn to be incongruent before we apply Rogers' theory to organizations.

For an example of incongruency, let's consider the common case of a person who becomes angrily involved in a group discussion. His face flushes, his tone communicates anger, and he points his finger at the target of his anger. When he is admonished not to get angry over the matter, he denies being angry with evident sincerity. It is evident to others that at the physiological level he is experiencing anger, yet he denies it. At the conscious level, however, he is not experiencing anger. There is a breakdown in communication within himself between the experience level and the awareness level. He cannot accept into his awareness the fact that he gets angry. When he denies being angry he is arguably communicating his awareness. But it is not an awareness of anger; he has successfully repressed his anger.

One other example will complete our discussion of the construct of congruency. Again, a common example. A guest at a neighborhood party looks at her watch as she stifles a yawn. As she departs early she politely says to her hostess "This was a wonderful party. We must get together again." Here the incongruency is between awareness and communication. The guest was experiencing boredom, was aware that she was bored, but communicated enjoyment. When the incongruence is between awareness and communication, it is usually thought of as denial or dishonesty.

Although this construct of congruency has many complexities, all of us tend to recognize congruence (honesty and openness) or incongruence (denial and deceit) in individuals and organizations with whom we interact. We all felt that Johnson and Johnson was open, honest, caring, and acting in good faith when it removed Tylenol from the stores during the 1983 tampering case. The quick rebound of Tylenol after the company announced improved manufacturing safeguards was seen as a reward for being congruent. On the other hand, we tended not to believe the Pentagon when a whistle-blower's job was dissolved for reasons "unrelated" to the person's exposure of cost overruns on the Lockheed C5A aircraft. Likewise, we felt that Continental Illinois Corporation was being defensive and unwilling to face reality when it blamed three loan officers for the failure of its Continental Illinois National Bank.

Whenever organizations (managers as agents of organizations) communicate to employees, the communication is always perceived with some degree of congruence on the part of the organization. The greater the perceived congruence of experience, awareness, and communication in the reorganization, the greater the likelihood that employees will accept the communication as being open and honest. The greater the perceived congruence, the more willing employees are to act on the communication, resulting in improved cooperation and mutual satisfaction in the relationship. Conversely, the greater the perceived incongruence the more the ensuing relationship will be plagued with suspicion and distrust. If organizations are serious about improving communications with employees — becoming more user-friendly — there is no substitute for honest, open communication that reflects both the experience

and the awareness of the organization. Without this kind of honesty, there is no basis for building and maintaining a relationship.

The Legitimacy of Management

Power is the ability to control, which may be acquired and exercised in many ways: from its imposition through the use of naked force to its restrained action on the basis of a moral or ethical justification. The more organizations operate from a moral or ethical basis, the more legitimate they are in the eyes of society. (Legitimate power is called authority.) Fortunately, most of the key institutions of our society are by and large accepted as legitimate. Public, commonweal organizations and agencies such as governments, churches, and the Salvation Army enjoy legitimacy to a high degree, as do not-for-profit hospitals. Business organizations enjoy it least of all. One common explanation for the dilemma faced by business organizations evolves around the question of their power — where do they get it and to whom are they responsible for its use. Another explanation is that while other organizations are altruistic, business organizations are profit-seeking and materialistic. While there are counter-arguments to both these explanations (Drucker 1987), it must be remembered that legitimacy is not an objective set of conditions existing in the real world. It is, rather, a subjectively held perception of organizations.

For business organizations to enjoy legitimacy, while remaining private, they will have to recognize restraints in their use of power. The most effective restraint lies in the distribution of power so that there is a balancing of interests in the organization. This balance is best achieved through adoption of a system of governance which permits the participation of members through membership on instrumental committees and groups. Other actions and devices consistent with this proposal are due-process protections and a mechanism by which unjust or unfair directives and decisions can be appealed. Such a system of "checks and balances" is often referred to as pluralism. Pluralism both promotes and is promoted by organizations' acceptance of restraints on the use of power. The legitimate organization is pluralistic; the pluralistic organization is user-friendly. UFO's are both pluralistic and legitimate.

Organizational Governance

No aspect of organizational management is more crucial to its perceived legitimacy than its system of governance. As technical systems, organizations must have rules governing the work situation. As rationale systems, questions about organizational design and the allocation of work and resources must be resolved. As political systems, decisions about organizational justice, e.g., who gets what, when, where, and why, must also be made. The rationality of these systems, along with the authority and power which supports management's right to make these decisions, is a fundamental problem of all political systems, both public and private.

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The making of these decisions by management is a problem for employees, not because of management's right to manage, but because of the lack of clearly stated goals and values to guide managers in making decisions. When management's decisions are made unilaterally and do not reflect either the explicit or implicit values of the organization, they are not perceived as being legitimate. Organizational governance gains legitimacy of these decision-making domains and processes by, first, sharing the decision-making power with employees through various participatory mechanisms, and, second, providing due-process protections for persons affected by these decisions. By seeking consensus on critical decisions the organization also establishes the legitimacy of its structures and processes. Thus, according to Scott, Mitchell, and Bernbaum (1981), consensus and legitimacy are closely related. This interdependence suggests, for example, that participatory decision making and due-process protections cause employees to see their organization as less adversial and more caring and trusting.

Fusion

Since organization is a human activity, it is easily seen as having two elements: the organization and individuals. Both elements can be viewed in highly dynamic terms as they seek to express themselves and accomplish their stated goals. Because the needs of individuals and the goals of organizations are not always compatible, two behavior processes are operative. First, there is the process by which the organization seeks to socialize its members. This process involves the learning (by members) of the values, beliefs, and attitudes, as well as information and skills the organization demands of its members. In short, it is the process by which organizations prepare people to respond to organizational expectations. Secondly, there is a personalizing process through which individuals seek to make the organization aware of and responsive to their needs and desires. The goal of the personalizing process is to make the organization more user-friendly.

With both processes operating simultaneously, it is important that they be fused into a compatible, win-win relationship (Bakke, 1953). If individuals gain satisfaction from work but give nothing to the organization, the socialization needs of the organization are not met. If the expectations of the organization are being met but there is no satisfaction for individuals, their personalizing needs are not being met. A state of fusion exists when both socializing and personalizing needs are simultaneously being actualized.

Rousseau's doctrine of the social contract, according to which people voluntarily exchange some of their individual rights (or expectations) for the benefits of social cooperation, partially explains the fusion process. People conform to the organization's socialization processes when they accept generalized obligations to comply with organizational demands. UFO's respond to the presonalizing processes of individuals when the organization's demands are congruent with the needs of psychologically healthy persons.

Organizational Justice

The word "justice" is used here to refer to an aspect of organizational life that still lacks agreement as to what it will be called. Some refer to it as "employee rights"; others have referred to it as "due-process" or "constitutionalism." Although the semantic difficulties abound, this concern has credence because of the fact that every managerial decision or action rewarding or penalizing individuals or groups has the potential for being labelled fair or unfair. French (1987) uses the term "organization justice" to refer to this concern. He views the seeking of organizational justice as encompassing a "complex flow of events that allocates rewards and penalties. . . in some relationship to perceptions of fairness or equity, and that corrects such (prior) allocations" (p. 128). The problem of justice or fairness is a problem that confronts all organizational managers. As Chester Barnard (1938, p. 280) wrote, "There is no escape from the judicial process in the exercise of executive function."

Ewing (1977) enlarges and extends this concept of organizational justice by describing what happens when an employee steps through the plant or office door at 9 A.M. As a U.S. citizen outside the organization, this person enjoys freedom of speech, press, assembly, due-process, privacy, and other important rights. These rights are enjoyed by people in their homes, churches, political forums, and social and cultural life — but not at work. Here, Ewing argues, people, as employees, are nearly rightless. Employees do have political freedoms, but these are not significant rights when considered in terms of organizational justice as being something organizations provide. While at work, the important relationships are with bosses, associates, and subordinates. Inequalities in dealing with these people are what really count for employees.

To this generalization there naturally are some exceptions. In some organizations, generous, benevolent managements have seen fit to assure these rights to employees. In other organizations, union agreements provide similar guarantees. But there is no guarantee that the enjoyment of these rights will survive the next change of chief executive. As former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark once said, "A right is not what someone gives you; it's what no one can take from you" (quoted in Ewing, p. 3).

Defined according to Attorney General Clark, employee rights are rare in both private and public organizations. UFO's recognize that organizations cannot operate by a set of values which are incongruous with those of the larger society. UFO's also recognize that even though some progressive organizations — benevolent autocracies — do often grant such privileges, such organizations are still autocratic.

The administration of justice within organizations faces the same difficulties and obstacles faced in our judicial systems. (Consider the vast number of lower court decisions overturned by some higher court.) Organizations will also experience difficulties when faced by the cultural norm of "evenhanded" justice on the one hand and, on the other, the ideal conception of justice as giving to each person according to his due. As Thompson (1961)

reminds us, people want justice before the law in general, but individualized treatment in particular. While this paradox poses a problem for all organizations, UFO's do not retreat from it. Justice is not viewed as a vague, indefinable group of employees' rights but as an attitude and policy that governs the whole of its employee relations.

The Concept of Community

Ouchi (1981) has suggested that we have been too strict and narrowly focused in interpreting the interrelations between our economic and social lives. For the most part we still view them as being independent of each other. The notion that productivity and job effectiveness may be dependent upon family related values such as intimacy, trust, and belonging seems strange to most people. But Ouchi reminds us that an economic organization is simultaneously a social creation. Each person within an organization is like an organ in a body — a part of the body, performing an essential role in the effective functioning of the body. Individuals are, at the same time, members of both families and organizations — representing two aspects of the person. If the economic family fails to operate smoothly and nourish the member, then the social family is affected. Management in UFO's is a coordinating mechanism between social relationships and productivity on the job.

The most apt description of this perception of organization is **community**. According to Viola (1977), community is a central aspect of the common life of persons who share their lives between and are members of both economic and social families. Apart from the people who make them up, neither organizations nor families can exist. Since individuals join both organizations and families, both must nourish the individual or else one entity benefits at the expense of the other. People seek to become members — not merely employees — of organizations. They want to work for moral as well as economic reasons. They want to **belong** rather than **work for.** Rather than being simply the beneficiary of outside social relationships and nuturance, UFO's seek to provide an integrated and supportive work environment for community to develop.

Love and Work

"A man doesn't know what he has until he loses it" sings a character in the musical **Damn Yankees.** Although he is singing about love, the idea can also be applied to work. In fact, a famous quote attributed to Freud states that the two goals of love and work (leibe and arbeit) are the major props of our self-esteem. Freud saw **leiben and arbeiten** as core characteristics of a healthy personality; that is, our freedom to "love and work" and derive satisfaction from both involvements are of prime importance in promoting overall good mental and physical health. The quality of our marriages and other intimate relationships, our ability to love ourselves and others, and our physical and psychological well-being are influenced by the level of satisfaction we derive from our work. Conversely, creative and productive work is enhanced when our overall quality of life, including relationships, is high.

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Love and work: each affects and is affected by the other. This fact is of great importance to organizations. All organizations desire and actively seek and reward employees who work to achieve organizational goals. What is often overlooked, however, is the fact that employees can best serve organizational goals and needs when their own needs are well satisfied. Thus it is to the advantage of organizations to promote the happiness and well-being of employees. Problems arise when one of these needs is served at the expense of the other — most generally when employees are forced or persuaded to choose one over the other. The consequences of having to choose between these two needs are clinically, but painfully, described by Kofodimos (1986) in her story of Larry Grant, a young, highly-successful executive who was married to both his organization and to his wife and family. Larry's involvement in his organization — an involvement that was both encouraged and rewarded by his organization — left him little time to be husband and father as well. For Larry, the rewards of work were more important to his self-esteem than the relationships of spouse and parent. Under continuous, unrelenting pressures and expectations at work, Larry neglected love and family. But work did not fill the gap left by his abandonment of love. His inability (or was it unwillingness) to seek a balance between his work life and his private life had serious consequences for both his organization and his family.

Larry's organization no doubt felt it was fortunate to have someone as talented and devoted as Larry. But this single-minded concern blinded the organization to Larry's needs in other areas of his life. Larry desired and sought the rewards the organization had to offer, and its focus on work satisfied his need to achieve and appear competent in the eyes of others. As he became more and more emersed in his work, he became less and less attentive to his family. As emotion and intimacy became less familiar to him, they also became less rewarding. Larry had made a deal with his organization — success at work was paid for by failure at home.

If there were an isolated case it would be tempting to think of it in terms of victim and villain. But Larry's story is indicative of a generalized phenomenon in which employees seek success at work by focusing on achievement to the exclusion of intimacy. Do we have to choose one or the other: can't we have both achievement and intimacy, work and love? The UFO's response is "We must find a way."

Emotional Expression

Ask people which is more important "What they know" or "How they feel" and they will invariably respond in favor of their feelings. Ironically, the dictates of organizational rationality view the affective component of a person's makeup as a detriment to effective job performance. But persons cannot be compartmentalized into a cognitive, rational, logical self and an emotional, affective, intuitive self. They are at the same time both Mr. Spock

and Commander McCoy[1]; they are both left-brain and right-brain person<
UFO's permit and encourage emotional expression as well as task-oriente
activity. Acceptance of emotional expression is evidence of an organization'
confidence in the total of human capacities and their trust of employees' reac
tions to all situations within the organization. In order to build effective wor
teams which benefit from individual efforts, in order to release potential
create opportunities, and encourage professional growth, UFO's actively as
sure and encourage people to openly express their feelings. Only when peo
ple have the freedom and the sense of psychological security to share all thei
feelings — not just those related to the job — will they feel that they are
part of a democratic family. There would be no whistle-blowers in UFO'<
because none would be necessary.

Leadership

Part of the difficulty in understanding the process of leadership is the ten-
dency to confuse it with other closely-related words such as management.
While both management and leadership are types of organizational behavior,
the distinction between them is best realized by looking at the effect each
has on the behavior of people. People comply with managers' directives be-
cause their (subordinates') job descriptions, supported by a system of rewards
and punishments, requires them to comply as a condition of continued em-
ployment. This relationship is not leadership. Call it domination, control,
or headship, but not leadership. In contrast, people voluntarily follow lead-
ers because they want to. Appointed heads may direct and control their subor-
dinates, but unless subordinates have some choice about why they follow
— or whether they follow — there is no leadership.

Management is not a synonym for leadership; people want to be led —
not managed. Since organizational effectiveness is highly dependent on the
ability of appointed managers to motivate subordinates toward high produc-
tivity, the willingness (and need) of managers to function as leaders is in-
creasingly being emphasized. When people perform a task because they have
to, there is no commitment, only compliance. When people perform a task
because they want to, there is commitment — there is high productivity.

To be accepted as leaders by subordinates (followers), managers must shift
from a relationship of authoritarian discipline and control to one of under-
standing, respect, and trust. Leadership involves instilling in followers the
desire, interest, and commitment to behave in ways that contribute to the
goals and needs of each. UFO's understand the difference between manage-
ment and leadership. Leadership does not involve coddling or soft manage-
ment; it is management of the highest order.

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[1] Both are members of Captain Kirk's crew in the television series **Startrek**.
In their roles as advisers to Captain Kirk, Mr. Spock argues logically, void
of emotion; Commander McCoy advances the humanistic, affective concern.

A Concluding Thought

What the idea of "user-friendly organizations" is all about is a relationship in which both the organization and its employees express an active concern for the welfare of the other. For a concern to be actively expressed there must be purposeful behavior directed toward increasing the social, psychological, and economic welfare of the other. Because organizations have the final say about how much and what kinds of active concern that will eventually be expressed, it is incumbent that they take the initiative in abandoning adversarial stances and developing new avenues and forms of user-friendly relationships.

Becoming user-friendly because they want to — because it is right — is a necessary first step for organizations in moving toward a system of organization — employee cooperation that serves their mutual interests. Along the way, UFO's will utilize state-of-the-art-technology in all their human resources relationships. They will insist that their programmers (managers) write software (policies) which do not cause their users (employees) undue stress. UFO's will employ this technology and make all decisions in terms of the values of congruence, legitimacy, justice, community, and leadership to transform the workplace into a worth place — a place where both personal and economic growth can coexist. People, not machines, will be in charge; dignity will hold equal importance to human invention; growth and self expression, not process, will glow; hope and contentment, not frustration, will prevail.

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Russ Holloman is the Maxwell Professor of Organization Behavior in the School of Business Administration, Augusta College, Augusta, Georgia. June B. Kelly is Director, Middle Georgia RESA, Ft. Valley, Georgia.