

MODELS OF CHANGING ORGANISATIONAL CULTURES ADEQUATE TO THE REORGANISATION OF THE HUNGARIAN DEFENCE

TIES BETWEEN ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE AND CHANGE MANAGEMENT

Organisational and management expectations, the behaviour of the organisational members and the values they follow are crucial factors of the culture of that organisation. However, it is difficult to determine what kind of interrelationship there is between the successful change and the culture of the organisation. When analysing culture, it is a dominant viewpoint if it is a strong or a weak culture that exists in the organisation. In case the organisational culture is weak, it is highly possible that the subcultures, i.e. the cultures of organisational units become strong. In case of a strong culture, members will accept its basic values that will trigger their everyday activities. Whether it is the culture of the whole organisation or that of its parts that is dominant, it will strengthen the need for stability on the organisational or sub-organisational level. In that respect, either of them can be a hindrance to the success of organisational change. Many think organisational culture represents an important power in the organisation (see e.g. Kotter 1996). In their opinion, this power has three sources:

- the existence and workings of the selection and socialisation subsystem;
- the fact that it works through people's actions within the organisation;
- the fact that it is subconscious, therefore it is difficult to influence.

Within today's dynamically changing environmental conditions, the capability for change (that is, for development or, at least, for adaptation), can be decisive to survival. It is no simple task for the manager to build the need for change and renewal into the organisational culture. The acceptance of innovative behaviour on the organisational level can only be the result of a combined modification of a number of cultural characteristics, such as risk-taking, the endurance of conflicts, control, and so on.

Models of cultural change of organisations offer two major lines of action for the manager beside the partial modification or radical change of processes: the wide utilisation of communication channels and human resource management tools helping change. These two areas have the most substantial impact on the members and help form their attitudes towards the change to the more positive.

THE UTILISATION OF COMMUNICATION CHANNELS IN THE MANAGEMENT OF CULTURAL CHANGE IN THE ORGANISATION OF HUNGARIAN DEFENCE

The change of organisational culture within the process of organisational restructurisation is a strategic issue. The furthering or hindering effect of culture can be decisive for single actions as well as for the whole of the process. Grove (1998) states that success may, in many cases, depend on accurately communicating the managerial decision concerning the change. Kotter (1996) expresses the same opinion and offers a wide range of communication channels (from posters through the media to round-table discussions) as tools to be used by management.

The acceptance of change requires the building of an organisational culture that accepts, on occasions even requires the renewal of the organisation. To reach such an attitude, a wide range of communication is needed. As the change is of importance for the managers too, it can be helpful if they find personal contact to the employees of the organisation. The individual opinions and attitudes of the members, as a result of the socialisation process, influence the organisational culture. Therefore, it is of primary importance for the manager to get first hand information at the start of the change, that is possible only by way of direct communication.

The steps towards changing organisational culture of the Hungarian Defence have not been backed up by the necessary communication in the course of the recent reform actions. The communication activities of the Hungarian Defence was limited to a rather ineffective statements targeting the society. Under the first two governments after the political changes, the external communication of the Army concentrated on (rather painful and weak) commentaries and explanations concerning scandals in and around it and the shortening of the service time of the enlisted soldiers, and practically that was it. Neither the professional nor the popular military magazines and journals enjoy much reputation with civilian readerships. The posters, television, radio and newspaper advertisements recently seen have been serving exclusively the purpose of recruiting contractual soldiers and have nothing to do with the formation of

culture. A positive internal communication supporting the cultural change of the organisation is lacking.

Neither the communiqués of top military leaders announcing the abolition, rationalisation or dislocation of various units can be taken for communication aiding the cultural change of communication - they were restrained to the dry facts without trying to show a way for the remaining or encouraging them. Not even they did not help start a healthy change of culture, but also destroyed the still existing positive features of the culture of the military units. The leaders of the Hungarian Defence did not make use of the opportunities offered by communication to form the Army's organisational culture.

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AS A SUPPORT OF CHANGE MANAGEMENT IN THE HUNGARIAN DEFENCE

In the course of the past ten years of military reform, pompous slogans like “our people are the key factor to the future” and others were aired in each stage of the organisational change. Reality, however, showed something different. From documents dealing with human resources in the Army and opinions set forth at various platforms it became clear that it is difficult to do more than uttering such statements in an organisation where its peculiarities allow only a slow pace for changing operational processes and organisational culture. If there is no dominant culture in the Army, if the rapid change of values is a main quality of the age we are living in, if it is impossible to directly measure organisational effectiveness and have no well-formed system of budgeting and control, development will be slow whatever environmental coercive factors are in effect. Values dumped on army members by expectations based on nostalgic memories of officers of the Second World War, emigrants returning home, reactivated officers, etc. led to resistance or indifference in the organisation.

NATO requirements and internal auditing showed that the management of human resources of defence is especially weak. Professionalism in this field cannot dominate due to the counter-selectivity of the decision mechanism. The analysis of social consequences has usually been missing. A further source of problems is that central human resource planning has not covered the strategic issues of the revitalisation of the remaining staff.

The lack of comprehensive analytical and evaluation systems and the repeated failure to set them up are responsible for the fact that there is no feedback pool for information on the capabilities of the personnel. Therefore there has been no

chance for giving a realistic assessment of the effectiveness of the whole organisation or individual parts of it.

This has influenced on the changing culture of the Army as well. Social impacts (unemployment, economic instability, the lack of political endorsement) wiped away positive features of the character of military culture, while negative social influences (fear of losing the job and/or social status, excessive concentration on individual financial interests, egotistic introversion, etc.) have found an easy way into it.

Human resources management in the Army has not yet got over the level of personnel administration. Personnel offices do not have an integrated information database on the staff. Decisions in this field are born on the basis of relationships and power. The human resources subsystem that should intensively support cultural change in the organisation of Hungarian National Defence does not exist.

STRATEGIES OF ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE IN THE HUNGARIAN NATIONAL DEFENCE AND THE CHANGE OF CULTURES

The army reforms of the past decade brought forward a quantitative reduction of the organisation. Operational processes speeded up both in the Army and in the society. Shortage of resources became the representative feature of all parts and sections of the military. The Army has used up its reserves - there is no fuel for flying, no replacement for wrong parts, pilots feel stranded as a sea captain in harbour service.

As mentioned above, social impacts demolishing cultural values have reached the organisational culture of the National Defence in abundance after the political changes. Neither the political, nor the military leadership has taken steps to revitalise it. Spontaneous processes of cultural change and the alteration of values forced by various power groups have led to a distortion in the military culture. The military leadership of this era has not been able to create a new cultural value system that would positively influence the functioning of the organisation. The "Socialist" value system was torn out of the culture of the defence forces and its replacement with a "Democratic" one has been without success. The values and norms present in the organisation, however, are blocks that should be used to form a new culture. Forming and managing organisational culture is a management task that is by no means impossible. There exists a pretty rich management literature on cultural change that is taken for a long-term strategic issue of organisational leadership. Nowadays, when in all modern

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armies of the world it is the human individual (and not the technology) that is held for the key factor of effective military operations, the Hungarian Defence Forces have no other way to go.

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