



Understanding the “Learning Organization”: A Program of Research

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The Learning Organization

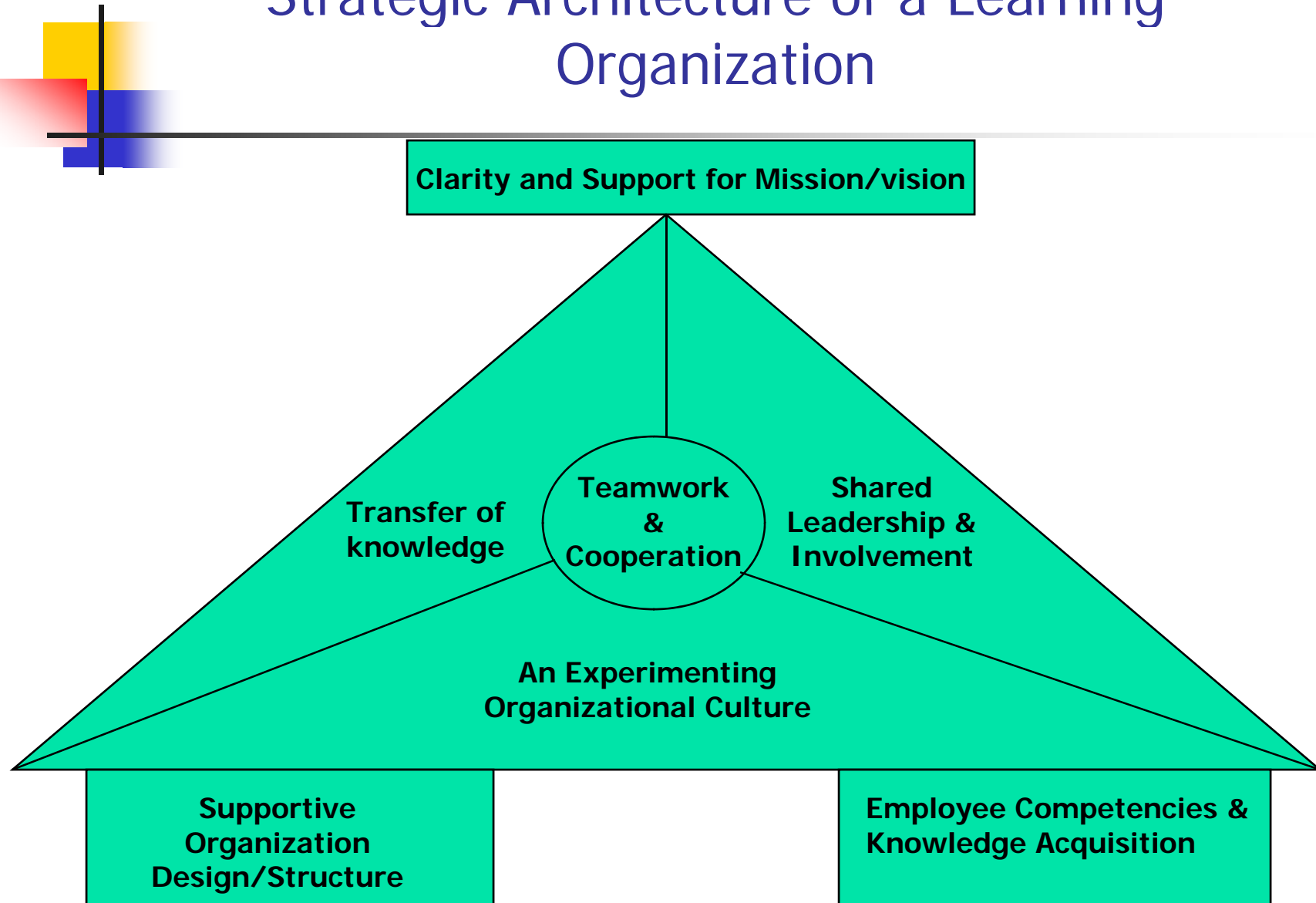
- What is a learning organization – cohesion or confusion in the debate? (Shipton, 2006)
- Definition: A learning organization is an organization skilled at creating, acquiring and transferring knowledge, and modifying its behavior to reflect new knowledge and insights (Garvin, 1993)
- How to become a learning organization?



A Normative Perspective

- Has a certain set of organizational level characteristics and management practices to promote learning
- Requires sustained management attention, commitment and effort to build
- Results in competitive advantage and performance
- An organizational archetype (Goh, 1998)

Strategic Architecture of a Learning Organization





Benchmarking the Learning Capacity of Organizations

- Developed a survey (OLS) that measures the constructs in the previous conceptual framework -5 dimensions and 2 support structures (Goh & Richards, 1997, Goh, 2001)
- Private and public sector organizations
- Implications for change and interventions in building more effective learning organizations (Goh & Richards, 1997)
- Re-evaluation of the OLS – unidimensionality (Goh, Quon & Cousins, 2007)



Building Learning Organizations

- Longitudinal study – Two private sector organizations (Goh, 2003)
- Efficacy of interventions
- Managing change implications
- Effective knowledge transfer seems to be the most problematic and difficult (Goh, 2002)



Organizational Learning and Performance

- Canadian study of publicly listed companies
- OLS and link to financial performance and job satisfaction (Goh & Ryan, 2002)
- Not linked to financial but to non-financial
- Learning companies and market and accounting financial performance – longitudinal study (Goh & Ryan, 2004, 2008)
- A review of the empirical literature (Elliott & Goh, 2007)



Evaluative Inquiry and Organizational Learning Capacity

- A review of the empirical literature (Cousins, Goh, Clark & Lee, 2004)
- A study of Manitoba schools – tested a conceptual model, EI & OLC (Goh, Cousins & Elliott, 2006)
- Link OL to capacity to DO and USE evaluation – government and non-profit sectors, survey and multiple case studies, ECB & OLC (Goh et al, 2007)



Current Research

- A meta-analysis of the empirical research – link between OL and financial and non-financial performance (in-progress, Goh & Elliott, 2008)
- Proposed conceptual model linking organizational learning capacity and teamwork to patient safety climate and employee outcomes in health care institutions (grant application, Goh, Chan & Kuziemsky, 2008- 2011)



Current Research

- Organizational learning, innovation capacity and performance management in small to medium companies – international study (in-progress, Richards, Goh and O’Sullivan, 2008-2009)
- Further testing of the refined unidimensional OLS scale (anticipated, Goh & Quon, 2008-2009)



Publications

- **Swee C. Goh and Peter Ryan (2008).** The organizational performance of learning companies: A longitudinal and competitor analysis using market and accounting financial data, The Learning Organization, Vol. 15, No. 3, 225-239.
- **Swee C. Goh, Tony K. Quon & J. Bradley Cousins (2007).** The organizational learning Survey: A re-evaluation of unidimensionality, Psychological Reports, Vol.101, 707-721.
- **Swee C. Goh, J. Bradley Cousins & Catherine Elliott (2006),** Organizational learning capacity, evaluative inquiry and readiness for change in schools: Views and perceptions of educators, Journal of Educational Change, Vol.7, No. 4, 289-318.
- **J. Bradley Cousins, Swee C. Goh, Shannon Clark (2006),** Data use leads to data valuing: Evaluative inquiry for school decision making. Leadership and Policy in Schools, Vol. 5,
No.2, 155-176.
- **J. Bradley Cousins, Swee C. Goh, Shannon Clark & Linda Lee (2004).** Integrating evaluative inquiry into the organizational culture: A review and synthesis of the knowledge. Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation , Vol. 19, No. 2, pp. 99-141..
- **Swee C. Goh. (2003).** Improving organizational learning capability: Lessons from two case studies. The Learning Organization, Vol. 10, No. 4, pp. 216-227.
- **Swee C. Goh. (2002).** Managing effective knowledge transfer: An integrative framework and some practice implications. Journal of Knowledge Management, Vol. 6, No. 1, pp. 23-30.



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- **Swee C. Goh. (2001).** The learning organization: An empirical test of a normative perspective. International Journal of Organization Theory and Behavior, Vol. 4, Nos. 3 & 4, pp. 329-355.
- **Swee C. Goh. (1998).** Towards a learning organization: The strategic building blocks. SAM-Advanced Management Journal, Vol. 63, No. 2, spring, pp. 15-22.
- **Swee C. Goh and Gregory Richards. (1997).** Benchmarking the learning capability of organizations, European Management Journal, Vol. 15, No. 5, October, pp. 575-583.
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- **Swee C. Goh, Robert E. Lahey, Catherine Elliott, Jill Chouinard & Keiko Kuji-Shikatani (2007).** Evaluation capacity across organizational contexts: What are the patterns. American Evaluation Association Annual Meeting, Baltimore, Maryland, November.
- **Catherine Elliott & Swee C. Goh. (2007).** Organizational learning and performance: A review of the empirical literature and measurement of the construct. Administrative Science Association of Canada (ASAC) Annual Conference, Strategy Division, Ottawa, Ontario, June.