

Developing future employees for new and emerging constructs of business: Are current educational models of teaching business up to the task?

JENNIFER K. BOWERMAN
RHONDA L. REICH

School of Business, MacEwan University
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

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On a recent trip to Brazil, one of the authors encountered a different model of recruitment and organizational development for an emerging startup software company called Chaordic. The author was impressed with the passion and excitement of the company spokesperson, Anderson Nielson, who explained the model they were using as founded on ACDC - Amore, Consciousness, Discipline, and Commitment (ACDC). Company founder Joao Bernartt, a student of artificial intelligence and his colleague Nielson developed these concepts because they saw them as having great significance for achievements in human history including but not limited to human endeavour and great accomplishment. Bernartt and Nielson were then successful in building them into the foundation of their company through teams, shared goals, learning leadership and accomplishments, all directed towards a common good. Authors Simon Robinson and Maria Morales have expanded on ACDC and developed them within their theory of Holonomics. In this paper, the authors explore these concepts as increasingly relevant for today's global business world, contrary to the usual managerial and dominant way of thinking about business. If organizations are actually using this philosophy and process as a means of recruitment and simultaneously building their business success, then how should business schools respond, especially when their basic teaching philosophy has as its foundation a framework of traditional managerialism? We suggest that if companies such as our Brazilian company wish to hire employees for their passions, so that they can better contribute to their success, then business schools need to recognize this and provide a new kind of business education, especially as it pertains to a different way of thinking and working.

Introduction

ACDC, an acronym that has become a component of holonomic thinking, runs counter to the normal quantitative based logical, deterministic, and analytical view of the world that forms the foundation for everyday usual business analysis. The latter, known as managerialism, has its historical roots in Descartes, the French philosopher and mathematician. In 1637, he proposed that the world and the living beings within it were like machines, to be dis-assembled and then re-assembled at will. Newton later developed his mechanistic methodology as a foundation for science, building on the work of Descartes. Frederick Taylor then applied the scientific method as a means of bringing about efficiency in manufacturing. Together these theories have built on one another and reinforced the idea of traditional managerialism as something external to

human beings, and built into the way we structure our organizations and the world of work. It is a machine model where humans are little more than resources, and structures become the equivalent of parts. Such a view of managerialism is powerful, representing a model that is external to us, and is difficult to shake. We may be aware of its limitations but at the same time it would appear to be our fall back view of our world and how to build it.

In contrast, ACDC is a holistic philosophy that celebrates the notion of relationships with the knowledge that one part of a system is inter-connected to and nurtures other parts in a never-ending continuum. ACDC stands for Amore (love), Consciousness, Discipline, and Commitment (ACDC) and is being applied by theorist Simon Robinson (2014), as building a bridge between economics and ecology. Economics, having its origins in the work of Adam Smith in 1775, is the social science that explains how operatives come together in the market place to create an economy. The metaphor of an invisible hand explains how the exchange of monies determined by self-interest of the actors allows the market to achieve certain goals. Ecology, on the other hand, is the study of ecosystems and involves the relationships between living organisms including humans, and their environment and their relationship to each other as they share an environment. For a business, it means that the determinism inherent in the economic system and replicated in managerialism and economics, is married with the systems thinking relationship orientation of a biological and ecological system.

For Brazilian Chaordic Company founders, Joao Bernartt and Anderson Nielson, the concepts of ACDC were developed through their conversations about great figures of history and their historical significance. As they examined great figures from the past such as Ghandi, and Mandela, and considered leaders of historical movements who had been models for good, they were able to identify ACDC and the meaning behind the concepts as having common themes. They saw them as being in part rational and logical but also representing spiritual, emotional, feeling and sensing capacities. These capacities build a powerful form of leadership culminating in amazing breakthroughs in progressive thinking in the view of Bernartt and Nielson (April 2016 - personal correspondence). Accordingly, they built a company using these concepts as its foundation.

ACDC represent four powerful words with their power first emerging in individual thinking, and then transferring into an organization through the power of relationships. The interaction between the love and devotion (amore) generates a passion for doing which multiplies through action. The consciousness with which the skill adapts, the discipline to keep going, and the overall commitment to the practice simultaneously interact to create an organization where individuals will be highly sensitive and attuned to change. It will simultaneously capture the essence of being, doing, and knowing, and hence continuously evolve as the context in which it operates, evolves. The paradox in our day-to-day world is that although we may aspire to this fluid holistic view of organizations and people, all too often we live the mechanistic one.

In this paper, we acknowledge that the concept of Amore is interchangeable with passion. While recognizing that the two concepts are not identical, and that one can experience passion without necessarily feeling 'amore', love and passion here refer to the power of emotion

akin to deep love. Bernartt and Nielson saw Amore as the foundation for Consciousness, Discipline and Commitment, perhaps reflecting that both these individuals have as their native tongue a Romance language (Portugese). For the purpose of this paper, while acknowledging that passion and amore are somewhat different from each other, their meaning refers to an overarching emotional driving power that positions action and learning together.

Purpose and Methodology

ACDC as a business concept first came to the attention of Jennifer Bowerman, one of the authors, through a conversation with a business manager of a successful start-up company in southern Brazil in 2013. Anderson Nielson, the Customer Care Director of People ware, for the highly successful new software data mining company called Chaordic, had together with the company founder, developed and embraced ACDC as concept that could build a company with a difference to greatness. They were building the meaning of the concepts into the very being of the company as they went along. Anderson later pointed us in the direction of Professor Simon Robinson and his theory of Holonomics (2014). Back in Canada, the conversation with a colleague, Rhonda Reich became an excited exchange of ideas about the potential of ACDC as something that could be of value to business students preparing to enter this new and ever changing rapidly globalizing world especially since we as teachers both shared a deep and abiding interest in the idea of the learning organization. This, as a conceptual paper, explores the relevance of these concepts for today's rapidly developing and inter-connected global world of business and their implications for business education. Here, we describe the Chaordic business model, as we discovered it in Brazil. We provide examples of other organizations both in and outside Brazil with similar approaches to their organizational structure. We then examine some of the literature that helps to explain why such a model is current, relevant and necessary for today's global world. Finally, we discuss how our business classrooms can integrate some of the qualities of ACDC as a foundation for learning and life preparation.

The Challenge

The view of organizations as fluid, every-changing organisms is not new. Peter Senge, wrote about the learning organization as one "where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together" (1990, p.1). A learning organization is one that evolves and adapts as the people within it learn and adapt. This is a continuous process. Simon and Marie Moraes Robinson's (2014) work on Holonomy takes ideas from Senge's Fifth Discipline (1990), Argyris's ladder of inference and generative learning (1991), and Wheatley's work on leadership (2009) and interweaves them. The intent is to develop new mental models of organizations that transcend the traditional managerial top down approach to one where people are recruited to not only bring their passion for learning, their critical reasoning, and their skills to work but also to develop leadership that builds both people and the organization simultaneously. As business-school teachers then, we view the challenge as persuading students that this kind of subject matter is useful for them, and at the same time igniting their passions for learning

simultaneously so that not only is there an objective understanding of a learning organization but also a visceral comprehension of what it is to participate in one.

Holonomy or Holonomics refers to a dynamic way of seeing and thinking ...“a way of expanding our mode of consciousness from the analytical to the intuitive; one that not only is able to understand the parts of a system, but at a deeper intuitive level of perception, is also able to understand the relationships and processes within a system...” (Robinson & Moraes Robinson, 2014, pp. 14-15). This consciousness expands understanding, acknowledging and embracing intuition, feeling, and sensing to comprehend systems in their entirety (2014). It is in our words, holism at its best.

The managerial model of organizations is one of hierarchy, orderliness, structure, and separation (Collis & Messick, 2001). Its founding metaphor as the machine is one where all the parts work smoothly in perfect harmony. When one part breaks down, the answer is to replace either the part or the function. Both Mintzberg (1973), and Morgan (1986), early organization writers have written critically about organizations in this light. However, though the machine metaphor is old, it is still dominant. Kotter, (2014) argues that from an early age, there is an emphasis on breaking apart problems, and then reassembling them. Likewise, in a managerial environment, there is still an emphasis on command and control, leaders and managers still make the decisions, despite their lip service to teamwork, and empowerment, and transparency (the new organizational buzzword). The age-old problems of differentiation and integration still dominate our organizational thinking. Individually and organizationally, we seem to prefer differentiation. It is extremely difficult to develop shared meanings and to build increased capabilities for collaboration and learning when the organization remains structured into separate components, when managing is viewed as more important than doing, and when there is resistance to what is emerging.

In times of rapidly changing complex environments, this managerial approach, all too common, may no longer be appropriate for modern organizations. We would argue that the world really is changing, and that this means that companies with new and different ways of recruiting and working with staff are at the forefront of a new and emerging global business context. New philosophies, such as ACDC require a different mental model of the world, suggesting the need for a consciousness that actually engages in, and participates in the change in a significant manner. The model provides an opportunity for organizations and students to explore alternate learning states with the potential for greater involvement in the learning process, eventually integrating and contributing to solutions for societal challenges. Such a learning state requires new metaphors, new ways of thinking, and new ways of seeing.

The rapidly evolving global world places a sense of urgency for this requirement. Individuals, if they are to rise to the challenge, must develop a new lens through which to see work and their place in a different kind of organizational structure. The problem therefore for us as educators responsive to this changing world is the development of an appropriate learning context and appropriate pedagogical tools. We operate with the belief that learning is a powerful experience building resilience and confidence. It must provide ongoing opportunity for reflection and exploration of alternative actions in the face of new situations. This means that classroom relationships and interactions are a priority. We see an educational institution as a

garden, which, through the development of a rich learning environment, can lead to new capabilities and ways of thinking for those who will become tomorrow's employees and leaders.

ACDC in practice – Chaordic and others

The concept of Chaordic, first coined by Dee Hock, views living systems as being on the edge of chaos (1999). Hock's philosophy was developed over years of professional and life experience as he struggled to answer three key questions; why institutions everywhere are increasingly unable to manage their affairs, why individuals are increasingly in conflict and alienated from institutions they are part of, and why are society and the biosphere increasingly in disarray (1999, pp. 2-3). His journey for answers leads to a different understanding of how chaos, order, purpose and principles can reshape organizations. Dee Hock was clear when invited to the Chaotic Visa symposium in the late 1990s that the managerial days of command and control bureaucratic styled organizations had had their day. We are at a point in time when a 400-year-old age is dying, and another is struggling to be born; a shifting of culture, science, society and institutions, enormously greater than the world has ever experienced" (Hock as cited in Waldrop, 1996, p. 1).

Other more recent writers echo Hock's call for new forms of organizational structure and new types of leaders in an increasingly chaordic age. Hjalmarson (2013) notes that in chaordic times such as those we are experiencing, "the best capacities of people are engaged when they participate, when they have a voice, when they are valued as partners, and when they see that their work has meaning" (n.p.n.). Certainly, for the Brazilian company Chaordic, just starting out and wanting to make a difference in a global market, Hock's idea and the concept of holism have helped translate Holonomics into a human resource practice, where people, their skills and passions, and their inter-relationships form the parts that make up the whole (Hock, 1999; Robinson & Moraes Robinson, 2014). The company partners, John Bosco, John Bernartt and now Anderson Nielson developing and implementing their ideas and putting them into practice, have succeeded in developing a purpose for the company believing "with technology and innovation, we promote the meeting between people and what they'll like" (Chaordic.com. Home page). They achieve this by human resource principles that empower employees to develop a new and exciting form of Holonomic leadership. Those hired to work in Chaordic demonstrate the four qualities of ACDC, especially those who are talented and passionate about what they do with software. Amore becomes the driving catalyst for the other concepts:

Amore → Consciousness → Discipline → Commitment

This development process evolves over a number of interactive stages, linking both the company's goals and employees' goals and career journeys and synchronizes personal passion for IT and organizational development simultaneously. Currently Chaordic serves 15 of the top 20 online retailers in Brazil (Chaordic.com. You'll Like It), further demonstrating how the organization and their employees have jointly achieved success through philosophy and process. As Robinson quotes co-founder John Bernartt and Peopleware director Anderson Nielson, Chaordic's process of recruitment and selection of employees is very collaborative:

"Since the description of a new wave until the final decision, many people participate in the process. There is a lot of dialogue with the candidates that we may know them and

they may know us. Besides being technically able to do what needs to be done, we believe there must be alignment with our purpose and suitability to our principles and values. The dialogues between candidates and Chaordic over a seven stage predetermined recruitment and selection process helps those parties to see if they want to and should be together on the same journey". (*Harvard Business Review*, 2014, April)

Employees at Chaordic, initially selected for their passion in IT, (and often traditionally viewed as geeks), participate as team members, represent the company, and undertake informal and formal leadership roles. There are many brainstorming discussions to encourage conversations with others, the intent being to build a capacity for personal influence so that a natural form of relational leadership emerges. Employees, in their work capacity, must think critically and feed forward what they believe is working in the organization with their suggestions for improvement.

Another successful Brazilian company that is famous for breaking many of the traditional rules is Semco. Ricardo Semler, the CEO describes how he changed Semco from a traditional rule bound company with a traditional pyramidal structure and a rule for every contingency into one of Brazil's most successful business stories (Semler, 1995). He has built a company where people want to come to work, and where change is relished which he says is the "only antidote to the corporate brainwashing that has consigned giant businesses with brilliant pasts to uncertain futures" (p. 289). Perhaps there is something in the Brazilian climate and culture that makes such companies successful. Brazil also appears to have a highly energized entrepreneurial culture. In worldwide comparison, in 2014, Brazil stands out with the highest entrepreneurship rate, nearly 8 percentage points ahead of China with a rate of 26.7 per cent (The BrazilianS, 2016, p. 7). Henry Mintzberg, one of Canada's premier management and organizational scholars, notes in his recent book *Rebalancing Society* (2015) that Brazilians have a "Why Not" attitude. Could it be this attitude that makes organizations such as Chaordic and Semco, and other smaller companies operating as incubators in places such as Santa Caterina, so successful despite the country's recent political and monetary troubles?

Other companies, not as large or as powerful, and not necessarily in Brazil, have also been successful in making the transformation from managerially based to participatory and relationship based. These include the SAS Institute, one of the world's largest privately held software companies - an example of a successful boundary less organization. SAS strives for an environment where workers are not distracted or left confused by bureaucratic demands. (Osland, Kolb, Rubin, & Turner, 2010, p. 287). Google also boasts of its boundaryless structure (Girard, 2009). Holonomic thinking companies mentioned by Robinson and Moraes Robinson (2014, pp. 179-199), include Kyocera's Amoeba Management Systems, Gore Associates' Lattice Organization and Genie Internet, Toyota's Dynamic Way of Seeing, Puma's Environmental Profit and Loss Accounts and the Balanced Scorecard, and DPaschoal Authentic Business Ecosystem. There are likely many more. The business environment is constantly changing as the full impact of technology and its global impact make their way through our world.

These models are familiar to organizational theorists. DeMarco and Lister (2013) acknowledge that enhancing the human resource experience for employees allows a stronger and richer work environment for growth thus overcoming the alienating features of modern

work by encouraging individual participation and helping to drive innovation. The implementation of ACDC as a work philosophy in a culture that celebrates entrepreneurialism, has undoubtedly helped to make Chaordic a successful and energized organization. The success for Chaordic required employees who can demonstrate a passion for the work they do, and then a corresponding structure to translate their technical skills into the fast, nimble, customer focused and creative organization they need to be in a competitive global market. To adhere to slow bureaucratic processes was to run the risk of failing.

The need to stay competitive

Because we are unfamiliar with the way companies like Chaordic work, it is simple to view them as anomalies. They certainly use very different modes of recruitment and employee/organizational development than those with which we are commonly familiar. For those who have studied the learning organization, they are not odd. Rather they offer a refreshing model of what we believe will be much more common as we inch our way toward the beacon of light in a somewhat depressing and all too often traditional model of organizational life. They provide a means of building profitability and growth **with** people rather than because of them.

How to stay competitive and grow profitably amid the increasing turbulence and disruption is a fundamental question for businesses today (Kotter, 2004, p.1). The very foundation of organizational behaviour as a business topic in the classroom is that of change, how people and organizations shape and grow to meet the requirements of a modern global environment while at the same time building and developing the adaptability, integrity and capability of their workforce. This requires organizations to not only see the big picture of their operational context early enough but that they formulate the necessary innovative strategic initiatives fast enough (Handy, 1995).

The following diagram entitled *3 Horizons* which shows three curves, H1, H2, and H3 mapped against a horizontal line representing time and a vertical line indicating prevalence.

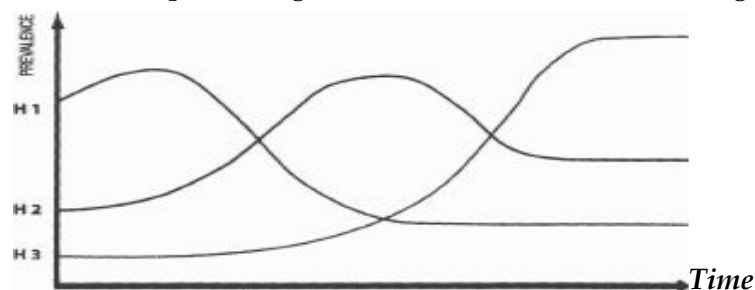


Figure 1: a simple framework featured in *Transformative Innovation in Education: A playbook for pragmatic visionaries*, by Graham Leicester, Dennis Stewart, Keir Bloomer, and Jim Ewing (2009), *International Futures Forum*, Scotland

H1 - It shows the dominant system representing business as usual - - the S curve on the way down. As the world changes, the usual ways of doing things no longer work and the trajectory declines over time. This is also known as the S curve or sigmoid curve.

H2 is the second horizon. It demonstrates innovation and how the curve rises as the innovations become more effective than the original system.

H3 is the third horizon. H3 is the long-term successor to business as usual – the product of radical innovation that introduces a new way of doing things

In this diagram, the authors Leicester, Stewart, Bloomer, and Ewing state that all three horizons are always present in any organization, (although we would argue they are not always recognized). It demonstrates the ‘innovator’s dilemma,’ representing how to protect the mature business while at the same time investing in the innovation that could replace it. The authors call it redesigning the plane while flying it! (p. 16-17). It is reminiscent of Christensen’s notion of a disruptive technology explaining innovation as a dynamic progression that will create a new market, eventually disrupting and even displacing existing business relationships (Christensen, 1997).

Undoubtedly, changing times require changing modes of thought, even though aspects of what is required now and in the future, will likely have their roots in that which has passed. Some argue that all organizational forms, no matter how radically new, are merely combinations of that which went before (Padgett & Powell, 2012). Drucker (as cited in Laloux, 2014) states “the greatest danger in times of turbulence is not the turbulence – it is to act with yesterday’s logic” (p. 5). The need to accommodate and integrate organizational and societal change simultaneously resulting in human and social cost places a huge innovative challenge on organizations to survive. Laloux (2014) believes that society is shifting to a new stage of consciousness in our global awareness of what it is to be human and connected. He argues that the typical bureaucratic pyramid (the current managerial paradigm), must give way to self-managing teams, necessitating community, collaboration and learning so that important decisions can be made closer to the issue. This reflects a need for peerogy – groups of peers to question and learn as they go along. Laloux (2014) further notes that historically organizations, and their products come and go. They either die or are consumed by newer organizations. In many ways organizational life cycles are similar to the human life cycle. There are many factors which can impact them at any one time, from competitive edge and profitability, growth potential, capacity to adapt to crisis, to constant pressures arising in the global market economy.

These parallels between the life cycle of the individual and the life cycle of the organization are found frequently in business literature. Change and conservation go together as successive phases emerge to transform what already exists. Change is not a smooth and easy process. Each part contains the seeds of what has passed in a new combination to create what is yet to come. As Pedlar, Burgoyne, and Boydell (1997) suggest, as organisms change over their life cycle, they seek to preserve and maintain important aspects of themselves. In an organization, both individuals and the organization together provide the space for capacity and emergence. Individuals through their skill and devotion to their work, their ongoing participation and interaction make this process possible.

The paradox for academic students is that the pressures of dominant managerial business models may run counter to the potential of Holonomics as an alternative model. Work in profitable goal oriented companies needs people who provide direction rather than seek it, especially in the face of pressure for innovation and greater production. A different response

may not only be necessary, but may be more productive. Psychologically, students may understand the sigmoid curve (Handy, 1995), but cognitive knowledge of the rise of the curve, and the courage and capacity to move onto another rising curve when all appears to be going well, is an essential skill, not easily taught.

Consider the following table demonstrating the conflicting ideologies aroused by the H1 curve – representing business as usual, and the H3 curve representing radical innovation as new ways of doing things.

H1-the usual way-managerialism as a powerful attractor	H3 -radical innovation -an energized risk taking attractor
What we know- safety and predictability	What we don't know- uncertainty – could be dangerous
Order and control – the system has safe boundaries, administration is important. One can rise in the ranks. Living with power	Freedom – accepting paradox, boundaries are fluid. Work is more important than position. Building equality because we are all learners together.
Discipline –doing what you are told, bosses are important to tell you the way	Working it out as we go along. Teams of peers – working stuff out, trying new things
Education is completed. Learning is done. We do what we have to. We learned from the book and passed the test.	Ongoing lifelong learning – understanding the concept of emergence –we have to work with the unexpected. Action learning at its best
Work is a job – then we play (if we are not too exhausted!)	Work is a passion that we identify with – energizing our lives and our relationships.
Short-term goals and victories and measures of success which are easily defined.	Long term evidence that what we are doing makes a difference – planting trees not annuals
Good money if you wait long enough to rise in the ranks	Work and the relationships it generates are fun. Money is just one of the many rewards generated.
Evidence based policies that prove what we are doing works. Gold watch retirement stories	Inspirational stories and narratives of transformational practice that can be seen as making a difference

Table 1: adapted from *Transformative Innovation in Education: A playbook for pragmatic visionaries*, by Graham Leicester, Dennis Stewart, Keir Bloomer, and Jim Ewing (2009), *International Futures Forum, Scotland*. p.33

The table represents the extremes as individuals and organizations constantly shift between the two. There is not necessarily a right way. Often we crave the H3 route but because of feelings of insecurity, we live the H1 route. We do need the order that H1 represents, but equally if not more so, we need the freedom that H3 represents. This is because we live in a rapidly changing global world where yesterday's order is no longer applicable to today's situation. Amore as passion, commitment, discipline, and consciousness allows a company to transcend the divide because it synchronizes who we are as people with what we do as an organization.

The digital world

One of the major drivers of change is the reality of digital innovation. But perhaps even this has reached the top of the sigmoid curve for organizations. In a recent article issued by the

World Economic Forum, James Moody (2015) queries the use of digital innovation and suggests that society may have reached a tipping point in technology to the point where the impact may be beyond our ability to contemplate or to understand the implications on the world. Margaret Wheatley said something similar over a decade ago: “our digital world has increased the speed of life for many of us, and led to paradoxical feelings of connection and alienation” (1999, p. ix). Technology can be an amazing tool for connection. It can also be a huge distraction from the job at hand. That need for digital connection is an essential part of today’s living. It is not going to go away. Technology is the very foundation for the world of work. Indeed, organizations such as Chaordic and SAS have their very *raison d’etre* in the global availability and requirement for technological and digital connection. The paradox however, is that technology can become so distracting that work, organization and human relationships can suffer. It was not for nothing that Steve Jobs, founder of Apple, allowed his children only two hours a week to play with their cell phones and iPads (New York Times, Sept 10, 2014).

Schmidt (2009) believes that organizational decline and corporate turnabouts are at the height of current interest, both theoretically and practically. In an Economist article, (2007) he writes about how Apple and its then cofounder Steve Jobs reinvented the company as a consumer electric company that faced bankruptcy only a short decade previously. GE is an example when Jack Welch in his tenure as CEO between 1981 and 2001 was able to increase the market value of the company from 14 billion dollars to 410 billion dollars (Bradly, 2012). Guy notes the symbolism of the phoenix rising from the ashes. The Phoenix Syndrome is a “virtual dissolution, followed by transformation and renewal... “rising from its own ‘ashes’ to thrive again” (2009, p.1). Management is the ability to bring another organization back from the edge of decline to one that is even stronger and ever more successful. This interpretation is a decisive moment for the organization, advancing versus merely survival. As Porter says “the reasons why firms succeed or fail is perhaps the central question in strategy” (1991, p. 95). It is perhaps more complex than the existence of foundational values as Collins originally suggested (Porras, 1994; Collins, 2009). Senge (1990) confirms that the organization transforms from one of simply acknowledging and coping to one of learning. He suggests this renewal and the application of “survival of the fittest” is akin to a biological turnover of the economic soil, redistributing a company’s resources to new ones with different cultures. For Senge, the mortality rate facing organizations may be a symptom of a deeper issue, indicating a failure to learn.

The explosion of knowledge management, a component of big data has persuaded organizations of the usefulness of looking inside as well as outside as they feel the need to go beyond their traditional sources of information. Michellone believes there is a perceived requirement to be creative in organizational learning and adaptability to “observe the world from different perspectives, to exploit internal variety and solicit individual initiative” (as cited in Landol & Zollo, 2008, p. 11). “We have shifted from the pursuit of excellence, towards organizational learning where our goals are to be flexible, nimble, intelligent and responsive” (Pedlar, et al., 1997, p. 8). Perhaps one could go further and argue that more than goals, these are in fact non-debatable essentials for survival.

Landol and Zollo (2008) believe that even after more than a decade of the knowledge revolution, there is no common agreement on what it means for organizations to manage

learning and competencies strategically. Chandler and Hwang (2015) note that this could be in response to (the complexity of) learning from the organization's own experiences, experiential learning, or vicariously from the success and failure of others. A learning organization or Learning Company will have stages, which are unpredictable, "a dynamic process of becoming versus only in transition - birth, growth ages, stages and possibly death" (Pedlar et al, 1997, p. 2). If this is true, then just as Hock cited earlier in his venture with Visa, and as Kiechel believes:

The old bureaucratic command and control model, even in its current decentralized supposedly lean and mean version won't be up to the challenges ahead: it won't be fast enough...keen enough...smart or sensitive enough...we need a new kind of organization that accommodates radical change, indeed that builds on the capacity to thrive on change. (as cited in Pedlar, et al, 1997, pp. 11-12)

In this rapidly changing global and organizational environment Robinson and Moreas Robinson (2014) emphasize the necessity for thinking differently, particularly around the importance of relationships and integrations and wholeness. They point to the need to move from actually seeing objects to the very act of seeing; to develop an awareness of the impact of our mental models on how we know what we see. Argyris says "although people do not [always] behave congruently with their espoused theories [what they say], they do behave congruently with their theories-in-use [their mental models]" (as cited in Senge 1990, p.175). Awareness of our mental models is a huge step in personal and organizational transformation. Even Deming believed that in a rapidly evolving world individuals and organizations need to think differently, ask better questions, and seek new knowledge (The W. Edwards Deming Institute, n.d.).

In December of 2015, the Economist ran a lead article entitled "Reinventing the Company." It referred to innovative entrepreneurs with start-ups such as Uber, and Airbnb who are changing the face of the public company. While noting that public companies always have their place, these companies, better suited to virtual networks, are assuming a distinct profile reshaping business innovation and strategy for the future. These examples point to organizational models unpredicted even ten years ago. They demonstrate the speed of change and the need for different thinking patterns and corresponding action patterns, calling for new models of leadership and individual involvement.

The Future, ACDC and the Role of Learning in the Classroom

Together, the growing number of organizations risking to be different, and the rationale for why their risks make sense, raise the questions of how to approach learning, particularly in both undergraduate and graduate business schools. Traditionally, university education has been knowledge and concept driven. Universities are supposed to be at the forefront of discovering knowledge, providing a forum for current trends, with constantly updated curriculum to advance new knowledge in fields including the arts, the sciences, applied disciplines and business among others. Academic applications translate from research into curriculum changes, new programs and new courses and, allow for the disbursement of relevant and dynamic material to the student learning experience. Universities should also be practice leaders for important societal and academic trends.

Universities as institutions are not necessarily themselves models of dynamic learning organizations. They are sometimes criticized for their failure to promote real learning and for the grade inflation that is now a component of their educational results (Srigley, 2016). Ironically, the growth in administration of universities has grown exponentially in recent years compared with teaching faculty. Figures cited in a recent article published in the *Walrus*, (Srigley, March 2016) point to the fact that central administration and staff have ballooned by three and a half times while the size of teaching faculty merely doubled (p. 14). This is hardly the model demonstrated by ACDC. It is a model of managerialism however, creating a bureaucratic environment where the institution itself, or the people in it, favouring the status quo, may act as brakes, slowing the progress of new ideas in favour of the safety of former curriculums and practices. Sir Ken Robinson in one of his TED talks (Brain Pickings, September 18, 2014) suggests that modern educational institutions were conceived in a different age based on the economic requirements of the industrial revolution. The separation of studies into distinct departments, especially in business schools, and the huge growth in university administration suggests how dominant the framework of managerialism still is. None of this is sufficient reason to hold back on teaching innovative and powerful concepts that are not part of the traditional university curriculum, but it does suggest that change is necessary both in the administration and in the curriculum.

Apps notes that an apt and common metaphor for students is that of “empty vessels”, the job of faculty in the classroom is to pour the information into those student vessels, so they might repeat both memory and contextual application. There is an unspoken assumption that the teaching and the process of learning will be useful to the student for an indefinite period. However, as Apps cited above, notes, for students “the future is now” (1991, p. 43). If this is true, then it is not the subject itself, but rather the process of learning how to learn which is the most important. An essential aspect of learning is being in the classroom – especially in a digitally connected world inundated with a never-ending non-stop flow of information and noise. Hence business subjects such as sense making (Weick, 1995), knowledge management, systems thinking, the learning organization, and the related field of Holonomics are becoming increasingly essential although they are not always found in business and management texts. Indeed, in two new organizational behaviour texts reviewed by one of the authors, there was no mention of the learning organization, chaos theory, or theorists such as Hock, Senge, or Argyris. While sometimes, two modes of thinking about the world –managerialism and sustainability are juxtaposed next to each other, how to create paradigm shifts or the move from one to the other, are not discussed.

Leicester and O’Hara (2012) consider in today’s turbulent world of crisis and disorganization, the world of 20th century competence no longer serves organizations well. These writers are important because their perspectives on competency were developed solely from a future perspective of change, in their work with the International Futures Forum. They write that the opportunity for growth is present but in a world dominated by uncertainty, we must learn to play this uncertainty as “trumpet like virtuosos” (p 142). They go on to say that in their learning forums, there are always “elephants in the room that are not spoken of, values that are in dispute, and unintended consequences are (always) likely” (p. 127). We are not

skilled, nor are we good at teaching the importance of surfacing such matters so that important conversations can begin.

They suggest that the competencies for the 21st century must most of all, be acquired through doing, (i.e. action) and above all in connection with others. We would call this action learning. For Leicester and O'Hara (2012), learning through action is an essential mechanism for ascending the learning cliff- where action and reflection feed on each other to create new knowledge, new skill, and new awareness. This requires learning spaces and the appropriate cultural leadership to support it. Relating what happens in the classroom to the concepts of ACDC may be awkward, as many students, in our experience, appear to enter the classroom with a passive attitude toward learning - waiting to be fed and lead - hence our empty vessel metaphor cited previously. Students rarely in our experience articulate what it means for them to learn. A major challenge is the changing the dominant model of learning to a more dynamic and energizing process of learning - especially for business students who are studying business as a means of obtaining a practical and rewarding career in a market driven economy.

Finding the catalyst to explode the flame of Amore will always be difficult, especially since Amore is an emergent phenomena and therefore not at all predictable. Often we think we have to search for love or passion. Mark Manson, a blog writer, argues convincingly that if you have to search for passion, "it's not your passion." Passion is what you do when you are not doing anything else. The problem is not the subject, the problem is "perception and acceptance" (Manson, 2015, n.p.n.). If Manson is correct, then students will be uncomfortable acknowledging their passion leading to discomfort and ambiguity, feelings that are frequently not our friends. Many students and professors require defined frameworks that they perceive as predictable and safe, as do business schools themselves. In our opinion, new and trendy subjects such as property management and entrepreneurialism although interesting conceptually, are hardly the stuff for a university degree unless they include the bigger economic and social context in which such practices occur. Endowments from particular interest groups to emphasize particular subjects can be ethically questionable and run the risk of emphasizing flavours of the day.

There may be critical aspects of employment however, and these should be developed through action learning on the job. Action can build love and passion, critical thinking and a propensity to continue building knowledge. Business Schools could become places to support such programs with professors playing the role of action learning set advisors. What makes a university is the students and the drive with which they participate in the learning process. Students who can think critically, are innovative, confident, and capable of leading the charge, will take the world where it needs to go. Educational environments in this context, and their professorial faculties, can act as drivers of thought and action.

The most important component of ACDC is the first element - Amore which leads to passion. Recognition of Amore (Passion) becomes the driving catalyst for the other concepts, Consciousness, Discipline, and Commitment. There is a common expression that if you find your passion then the money will flow. Dee Hock believes "money motivates neither the best people, nor the best in people" (1996, pp. 37-41). However, it could be that finding one's passion leads to deep engagement and involvement, to such an extent that the money is merely a by-product. This is the ultimate acknowledgement of money as simply one currency among others.

If passion and natural talent can come together, then the potential for profound personal change and leadership is exponential.

Ken Robinson cited earlier, gives examples of Paul McCartney, Gillian Lynne and Arianna Huffington who succeeded in finding and living their passion (2009). Passion, finding something deeply soul satisfying, it is argued, will bring about consciousness of the driving force in one's life, the discipline and need to continue, and a commitment to ongoing pursuit of learning. It is not something that happens only for the lucky ones, everyone has the potential to uncover it. Furthermore, it is not about results. It is about enjoying the process, even though the process can lead us to a very different outcome from the one originally intended. Furthermore, it is not about following the dream; it is about pursuing the interest at the time - with enthusiasm. The classroom can be a vehicle to show the way - to bring about the awareness of what is possible and the discipline and commitment to achieve at first what appears impossible. Discussing and applying ACDC in the classroom is an opportunity to influence work/life and educational awareness both inside and outside the classroom, requiring a different set of competencies and skills than those traditionally taught. Such a model requires a change dynamic that is inherent in a model of learning, as opposed to a model of instruction.

The Learning Environment - as it can be.

There are various ways of creating a learning environment in the classroom. Some business schools use a system of professional skills built into their curriculum. These professional skills include skills such as public speaking, team presentations, and critical thinking (Emberg & Benson, 2010). We would go further and **insist** including meta competencies, is the kind of competency that allows you to acquire other competencies or to get the best from these (Cheetham and Chivers, 2005, p. 235). Perhaps an important competency of this kind is that of ethics. Cheetham and Chivers cite that in a survey of six professions, Dentists, Surveyors, Accountants, Trainers, and Civil Servants, there is a high knowledge competency. The picture changes however for ethical competence, where clergy lead, followed by dentists, with surveyors, accountants and trainers and (in particular Civil Servants), lagging behind (p. 129). Knowledge alone then does not equate with ethical thinking and practice. These findings have serious implications for the kind of instruction necessary to develop our future business and political leaders. There are also many currencies in the world beside money. These include relationships, happiness, joy, well-being, and the thrill of discovery and learning with others. Money has its place but if pushed to the margins, then there is more room for these other more fulfilling aspects of life.

Such skills go beyond a traditional managerial mindset, providing students with a taste of what it could be to build a passion for a potential component of a business career. Advancing beyond the traditional textbook true-false, and pre-developed static case study content, they may help to build some of the foundational requirements for ACDC. For example, they may build passion in the forums where they can enjoy the various opportunities to demonstrate their competence. Students also develop consciousness as they become more confident in and aware of, their personal limitations and strengths. Skill development opportunities allow students to demonstrate discipline through ongoing practice. Students build a strong sense of commitment as

they find their voice through the various opportunities provided. Each step can help students peel away another level of discernment as their capabilities increase. There is ongoing exploration, within the safe environment of the academic context, and its direct application to the world of business, and their professional and personal lives. With the appropriate support, and the instructors who 'get it,' they may learn, in effect, through action and reflection. In doing so, they may build a rich portfolio of experience, developing a love for an activity and a propensity for risk that leads them to either create or more readily become a part of companies of the future such as Chaordic.

Learning as Integration

A framework of professional skills and or meta competency programs however are not in and of themselves sufficient for students to understand ACDC as a learning tool primarily based on emotion as a means to growth. The perspectives require integration. Learning is after all "one of the most basic feedback loops in living. It is systems thinking and one learns best in one's own way - by reading, listening, talking and doing" (McDermott, 1997, p. 119). ACDC requires a strong sense of awareness to understand learning and its impact on a person. It assumes the requirement to expand ways of knowing so that one can understand and make meaning in the things we take for granted, from new perspectives. It requires recognition of an identified driving force or passion, commitment and dedication to a desired outcome, and a desire for a process that builds continuous learning. As Argyris (1991) suggests, the defenses that create the resistance to move from single loop or adaptive learning to double loop or generative learning are all too real. Emotional defenses may prevent learning even when the evidence is overwhelmingly front and centre. The crutches of textbooks and the power of past managerial knowledge and practice we hold dearly may well prevent us from taking risks in our educational institutions. There is a need to be aware of the power of our mental models, to use them to build competence in "holding our truths lightly" even as worldviews change around us. Correspondingly, our paradigm transformations take courage, strength and resilience. They are an essential part of living today and should be incorporated into the classroom and university experience in any way that works.

Weick (1995) suggests that in order for organizations to stay current, they must make sense of what is new and exciting, although he acknowledges that there will be reservation and skepticism about those things not known or not understood. Today's alternative populist media is replete with narratives and advice that run counter to traditional and good science. Examples include vaccinations and their relationship to autism, or alternative treatments to cancer, or even the debate around global warming. It is easy to understand therefore why material - pertaining to business and based on something as ethereal as changing mental models, world-views or paradigm shifts, may be difficult to understand or support. There is however, the opportunity to experience it in both academic institutions and business organizations. It is a truism that one does not know what one does not know (Murray-Webster & Hillson, 2012). Even to understand opposing worldviews side by side requires a leap of faith and a willingness to accept and live with paradox. ACDC, born out of passion is most definitely on the former side once placed in the context of holism with its emphasis on systems, feedback loops, and interrelationships. It is a

bridge between what is and what can be. Once the power of Amore or personal passion is grasped as an approach to learning, the Consciousness that accompanies it, the Discipline to build it, and the Commitment to continue, then together these provide a potentially life changing aptitude. The potential is for satisfaction, and a sense of personal leadership in an increasingly chaotic and complex world. It offers students a lifeline to determine and pursue work aligned with their individual talents and values. It offers insight into life-long learning. It opens the door to a future that involves them. Where should one start with this journey? Both for the student and the teacher, we would say it does not matter, except to start!

Final Observations

All new ideas and philosophies require time and patience to evolve and take hold. Alvin Toffler writes, while the world is changing faster than ever, organizations, schools, and too often, our minds are locked in the habits of the past (as cited in Robinson & Aronica, 2009). This ongoing paradox between knowing better but doing business as usual is a powerful component of the cognitive dissonance we all live with. Peters and Barletta note, "no aspects of the way our institutions operate can be allowed to go unexamined. Or Unchanged" (2005, p. 6). Grasping the transformational power of passion, of deep learning, systems thinking, relationships, and the importance of feedback loops may be essential steps in bringing the awareness into our consciousness. It requires conversation, real dialogue and debate as part of mainstream academic education. This thought then leads to the following beliefs:

- The philosophy of ACDC with its emphasis on systems thinking, feedback loops, generative learning, and exponential change has a natural application in the formal world of organizations and markets. A model of Chaordic simply as a classroom case study allows its complexity and significance to be lost. Managerial ideologies of structure, power, silos, and politics in bureaucratic organizations including universities cause great harm. Many universities themselves, with their rigid departmental boundaries, top heavy administration, and traditional funding and staffing models, in our opinion, fail to pass the test of relationship building, knowledge bridging and knowledge creation.
- There is a need for more research on how organizations such as those provided by governments, and universities with their bureaucratic departmental structures, and rigid boundaries may be transformed using concepts such as ACDC and their real world application. Correspondingly, equally we recognize that there is a need for much more research on the emotional aspects of love and passion and their application to life and business.
- We note that many students aspire to working in these "safer" environments and fail to see themselves as playing active roles in change scenarios. The vision should be one of leading change. Educationally, we are doing them a disservice if we fail to grasp this, and fail to prepare them for the changes that are confronting us as a society.
- North American culture is increasingly singular and many of its students have a common goal - to succeed financially. Economic factors often play a role in their career choice. Financial success is success. There are other rewards than those purely financial,

as we pursue lifework. The value of innovative and ethical business models and a need for life-long learning are foundations for education.

Exploring change in the world of organizations and work in the academic environment where students learn is complex. It is much easier to teach from prescribed script, where students learn to repeat the theories but fail to see the real world connection. Mintzberg (2005) writes that when undergraduate students choose a business major, with an eye on management and then enter the university, what they need most of all as they prepare to enter the new world of organization, is thoughtfulness (p. 385). He suggests that rather than the traditional business curriculum, they can attain this through immersion in the disciplines that underlie business, such as 'psychology, economics, history, anthropology, philosophy'...amongst others (p. 385). In his later work, Mintzberg (2015) notes that the concentration on business and capital has created a society out of balance, where we are no longer free, and where money fails to serve but rules (p.11). Such an emphasis separates us from each other; it fails to note that small can be beautiful (Schumacher, 1975) and that workplaces can be where we discover real relationships for support and friendship. What would it take to put the human back into HR as a management discipline, and eliminate the resource aspect, something that our Brazilian company Chaordic has attempted to do?

In this context, the advent of holonomic thinking is profound, moving from the Descartes, Newton, and Taylor to an inspiration drawn from holism and from complexity sciences (Robinson & Moraes Robinson, 2014). The temporal environment of organizations and societal history give lessons for the future but not as something to be repeated. Bob Dylan sang, 'The Times, They are a Changing!' (1964). Any new ways of thinking and seeing must challenge the assumption that what was adequate in the past must continue working in the future. Recognizing our common humanity, innovated business structures are continuing to grow. ACDC, and in particular an understanding of the power of amore driving life and work has a necessary educational emphasis. Mintzberg (2015) suggests that we can transcend our current mode of managerial thinking but it takes consciousness and practice. "It is perhaps our greatest challenge, but yet at the same time our greatest opportunity" (Robinson & Moraes Robinson, 2014, p. 26). Our increasingly global environment makes the need for change in the delivery of business education urgent. Mintzberg calls for a radical renewal, beyond left, right, and center as a means of rebalancing society. He says, "It is amazing how few of us, including some of the most concerned, get it about our own behaviours. It's convenient to not get it" (Mintzberg, 2015, p. 72).

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Authors and submission details

Jennifer K. Bowerman

Assistant Professors: Department of Organizational Behaviour, Human Resources and Management, School of Business, MacEwan University, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada
E-mail: BowermanJ2@macewan.ca

Rhonda L. Reich

Assistant Professors: Department of Organizational Behaviour, Human Resources and Management, School of Business, MacEwan University, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

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