The Mindful Mobilising of Maps, Masks and Mirrors:
Shifting the Rhetoric of Organisational Change

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> *"So now I know that everything is change,*
> *change is complex and I need to practice.*
> *That was not worth $4,000."*
>
> Evaluation, MBA Student,
> Managing Change Class, 2004

Abstract

Despite the emergence and diffusion of behavioural, sensemaking practice and process approaches to change within organisational studies, these have been less effectively translated into rhetorical vehicles for management education and practice. This paper introduces a dramaturgically informed framework developed for this purpose, a framework conceptualising managing change in dramatic terms as the mindful, mobilising of maps, masks and mirrors. This framework is designed to lead managers from an uncritical and rationalistic management *of* change to a critical and pragmatic focus on managing *to* change. The paper outlines the framework and offers suggestions for future research and development.

Introduction: The Rhetoric of Managing Change

In recent years, the view of change as planned linear, episodic, N-step staged process has been supplemented by more pragmatic processual, symbolic, discursive and practice based approaches (Badham, Antacopalou & Mead, 2012; Collins, 1998; Jabri, 2012; Weick & Quinn, 1999). There is now more widespread understanding and recognition of the chaotic, contested and emergent nature of how change gets done in organisations, a challenging process of managing *to* change rather than a controlled managing *of* change. Despite the emergence and diffusion of such ideas in organisational studies, however, their impact on management education and practices has been less less extensive. This impact has been held back by two factors. Firstly, in Buchanan and Boddy's (1992) terms, proponents of such views often provide 'No checklists!' As illustrated by the above quote from an MBA student, are commonly perceived as not having contributed to 'useable knowledge'. Secondly, the dominant rhetorics and rituals of modern organisations remain rationalistic in character. As March (1994, p. 216) has observed:

> In a society based on reason, rationality, and a conception of intentional human control over destiny, decision-making is a sacred activity. The world is imagined to be produced by deliberate human action and responsive to human intention … choice is imagined to be guided by reason. These traditions of rationalism and anthropocentrism find mythic and ritual manifestation in the idea of decision making. As a result, the process of making a choice in a modern setting is surrounded with as much symbolic and ritual paraphernalia as the diving of God's will in the Middle Ages.

In such a situation, a rational critique of overly-rational views of change is restricted in its impact. Formal discussion and planned consideration of the messy, political and often ineffective nature of change remains a common 'undiscussable', an 'elephant in the room' (Zerubavel, 2006). Moreover, as Argyris (2010) has repeatedly observed, the fact that this is undiscussable is, at least in public and official forums, itself undiscussable!

The 5M change framework has been designed as a rhetorical vehicle to help address this phenomenon. At the level of academic theory, it has been developed as a method for developing upon and adding to practice and process approaches to change by capturing, integrating and making accessible the insights of what is commonly termed 'dramaturgical' approaches to organisations (Badham et al., 2012). As an educational vehicle, however, it has also been designed to support organisational studies academics educating managers in change management. It does so in three ways.

Firstly, it incorporates, integrates and makes accessible behavioural, sensemaking, practice and process studies of organisations, using this to shift the discussion of managing change from an uncritical and rationalistic management *of* change to a critical and pragmatic focus on managing *to* change.

Secondly, it incorporates the insights of both 'strong' and 'weak' views of organisations-as-drama, combining Goffman's dramaturgical view of organisations as 'like' drama, with Burke's dramatism view of organisations 'as' drama as a basis for capturing what is required to 'perform' change (Goffman, 1959; Burke, 1969). While Goffman's dramaturgy provides an accessible introduction to the 'impression management' required in the management and leadership of change, Burke's dramatism is employed to extend this into providing more fundamental insights into the inherently performative nature of all dimensions of the 'change drama'.

Thirdly, it combines these views in uncovering the central role of formal rhetorics and rituals of rationality in modern organisations, and drawing on the work of Burns (1961) and Buchanan and Boddy (1992) in exploring the key significance for change management of both 'frontstage' rationalistic public and official performances and 'backstage' activities handling the politics and emotion prevalent in change programs.

In this form, the 5M framework has been designed as a rhetorical 'Trojan Horse' for introducing critical and constructivist thought into mainstream change management discourse and practice. The purpose of this paper is to outline the theoretical and conceptual structure of the 5M framework, the manner in which its different elements are combined to achieve its rhetorical effect, and elaborate and illustrate for how the framework may be evaluated and assessed.

From Thin to Thick Change Management

The mainstream literature on the management *of* change is part of what Burns (1961) characterises as the frontstage public performance of organizational life, reflecting the legal-rational legitimation of modern bureaucratic domination and control (Weber, 1947). In contrast to what Geertz (1983) describes as the necessary 'thick description' of life and change, rhetorics and rituals of the modern rational organisation present a 'thin' view of change programmes. Change programs are viewed in narrowly rationalistic terms as planned interventions, with defined strategic goals, and pursuing the goal of improving organizational 'health'. This is the foundation of the classical Organization Development approach (Beckhard, 1969; Bennis, 1969; Schein, 1969, Walton, 1969) and 'N-step' models of managing change as following a sequence of planned stages (Collins, 1998). Yet, as widely recognised, within mainstream as well as critical literature, the application of such approaches has failure rates as high as 70% (Isern, Meaney & Wilson, 2009; Keller & Aiken, 2009).

The 5M framework dramatises this failure rate presenting its first rhetorical image, using a picture of a loaded gun in 'Russian Roulette', with the caption 'You are 2.5 times more likely to survive Russian Roulette than a change program!' (Figure 1)

Figure 1: Russian Roulette
Source: Badham, R. (2014). *Inspiring Change*. Sydney: MGSM – Macquarie Graduate School of Management. (MGSM866 – Managing Change 2014, Term 1).

In explaining and addressing this 'problem', the 5M framework seeks to provide the kind of cultural analysis recommended by Geertz (1983). In his explanation of 'thick description', Geertz (1983) draws on Ryle's (1968) illustrative example of the difference between a 'wink' and a 'blink'. As Geertz, and Ryle, observe, a thin description merely captures a one-dimensional 'blink', a physical contraction of the eye, whereas a thick description explores the meaning of the 'wink' as a multi-dimensional form of communication, collusion, caricature, or some other kind of meaningful interaction. If we adapt this contrast to a discussion of rationality in general, and in change management in particular, thin views of what it is to be 'rational' present it as a kind of knee-jerk or reflex reaction to objective data and decision-rules. Rationality is viewed as applied technique, a matter of applying logical rules, collecting and evaluating evidence, making decisions on the basis of these rules and data and so on. In contrast, the 5M framework provides a 'thick' view of the practices and processes of managing *to* change (Badham et al., 2012). It surfaces the 'predictable irrationality' of individual and organizational decision-making (March, 1981; Ariely, 2008), the ambiguity and chaos in individual and organizational behaviour (Stacey, 2012; Weick, 2001), and the tacit, messy and emergent nature of the practice of getting things done (Pfeffer, 1994: Weick & Quinn, 1999).

In the 5M framework, this is communicated through the use two key rhetorical 'pictures', illustrating an alternative 'thick' approach to managing change: the 'organizational iceberg' and the 'death valley' of change. The first image, popular in organizational behaviour texts and consultancy culture literature, portrays much of organisational life as the 'informal', frequently tacit and often undiscussable world of emotion, politics and custom that lies 'beneath the surface' of espoused formal structures, systems and procedures. This metaphor is enhanced in three ways: by linking change failures to a 'Titanic' hubris, that mindlessly rushes change; flipping the iceberg, so that the substantial 'submerged' mass is placed on top, and made the central focus of attention; and raising the 'undiscussable' nature of the organizational 'backstage' that contradicts and may support or undermine 'frontstage' performances (Buchanan & Boddy, 1992).

The second image is that of the established 'iceberg' model of change, as three stages of 'unfreezing', 'moving' and 'refreezing' (Lewin, 1964). Again, the impact of this metaphor is enhanced in three ways: firstly, by using 'death valley', and associated 'rollercoaster' imagery to emphasise the difficulty of energising the initial 'unfreezing', coping with the trauma and complexity of 'moving' when in the depths of the death valley, and establishing a sustainable 're-freezing' that allows the climb out of the death valley and prevents a treacherous 'slipping back'. Secondly, showing the universal presence of this 'three-stage' image in widespread 'transition rituals'; and, thirdly, showing the post-enlightenment origin of this 'three-stage' view in reaction to the social chaos created by rationalistic 'two-stage' views of historical enlightenment, and its contemporary managerial Nike style 'Just-Do-It' variations. This latter two-stage perspective is difficult to describe in a few sentences, but

involves the view of knowledge as applied technique, change as the planned implementation of strategic objectives, and transition as a simple move from a past disorderly and irrational state to a new progressive and rational state.

The 5M framework deploys this counter-imagery as part of its aim to provide a 'thick' view of what is involved in a 'rational' approach to managing change. As illustrated in Figure 2, the 5M framework characterises this approach as one involving a more 'reasonable' view of the nature of change intelligence, change agency and the change journey.
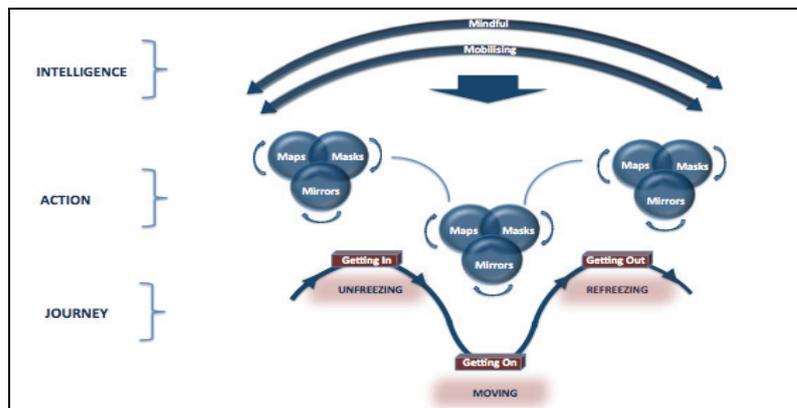
Figure 2: The 5M Framework
Source: Badham, R. (2014). *Inspiring Change*. Sydney: MGSM – Macquarie Graduate School of Management. (MGSM866 – Managing Change 2014, Term 1).

Within the 5M framework, managing *to* change is about developing change intelligence in conditions of uncertainly and conflict (Buchanan & Badham, 2008; Stacey, 2012; Weick & Sutcliffe, 2001). It involves being Mindful of (careful with) the gaps, barriers and complexity of change, and Mobilising (proactively acquiring and deploying) resources to overcome such problems. It comprises the exercise of this mindful and mobilising intelligence in taking the required actions of: Mapping (creating and deploying maps or guidelines for the proposed change journey); Masks (exercising influence through effective social performances); and Mirrors (establishing and using effective reflection and learning learning spaces) (Badham, 2014).

To be mindful implies learning to accept that the organisational world is not as rational, reasonable and responsible as we claim, expect or hope for. It involves being wary and living within the frequent but disregarded gaps between strategy and implementation, prescribed rules and situational demands, espoused theory and actual practice (Badham, 2006). Minding the gap involves expecting the unexpected, being attentive to it, and addressing problems before get out of control (Heath & Heath, 2001; Weick & Sutcliffe, 2001). Being mindful about barriers to change involves recognising the range and depth of forces that hinder change and, as Lewin (1964) stressed, working at reducing them. Cultivating a mindset that recognizes the existence of such barriers involves overcoming the tendency of organisations to neglect or repress the role of emotions, politics and competing commitments (Kegan & Layey, 2009). Being mindful about complexity involves encouraging a collective mindfulness that is more open, attentive and vigilant in identifying sources of unpredictability and handling emergence (Langer, 1990; Weick & Sutcliffe, 2001). In these various forms, mindfulness requires discipline, training and experience in the areas of thinking, feeling and doing.

Managing *to* change also requires the proactive mobilization of people and resources to ensure that there is sufficient energy and support to enact change. This incorporates the adoption of an entrepreneurial mindset that works the bureaucracy to get things done, and is ready to question and break established frames (Bruch & Vogel, 2011; Covey, 2005, 2009;

Kanter, 1983; Kotter, 2012; Weisbord, 2011). It involves seeking positive win-win solutions, and creating coalitions to maintain and sustain the energy, resources and intelligence required to overcome inertia and resistance (Buchanan & Badham, 2008). It also involves understanding and using rhetoric and rituals to create engagement (Turner, 1982), understanding our own sources of motivation and resistance as well as those of others, and effectively addressing emotions and interests in handling the frustrating ups and downs of the change rollercoaster.

Turning to the areas of action, mapping change is necessary in order to provide some orientation, confidence and guidance, and support reflection. Even though change is emergent, chaotic and unpredictable, mapping is necessary. Mapping is deliberately employed as a looser term than 'planning', as the term gives greater recognition to the fact that the map 'is not the territory', and is only an artificial tool used by the map-reader (Weick, 2001). What is mapped is often uncertain and ambiguous, involving exploring the implicit assumptions, fluctuating emotions and frequently hidden politics that exist below the 'tip' of the iceberg. The tools used are those often promoted by more 'thinly' rational perspectives (e.g. gap analysis, forcefield analysis, identifying stages of change etc (Bridges & Bridges, 2009; Gallos, 2006; Kotter, 2012; Lewis, 1964; Palmer, Dunford & Akin, 2008). However, it is recognised that the data collected and the process of use is a complex and challenging social practice (Jabri, 2012; Weick, 2001).

It is one thing to map out how to change, however, and quite another thing to put it into operation. This is highlighted within the 5M framework by viewing the process as one of adopting and handling Masks in creating effective social performances. If mapping provides us with some guidance and orientation, what is also required is the ability to perform the identified and required activities. A key feature of such performances is handling contradictory interests and perspectives, as well as inherently paradoxical issues. The subsequent performance goes beyond cognition, or even emotional awareness, to include the social and behavioural complexity required to handle multiple roles, and put on and take off a variety of masks (Brown & Eisenhardt, 1998; Burke, 1969; Goffman, 1959). As authenticity and credibility are commonly identified as a key component of effective leadership (Alexander, 2012, 2004), the ability to adopt multiple masks and also to be perceived as genuine and trustworthy is a crucial requirement for effectively leading change. In terms of established paradoxes of change, it involves an ability to be ready to plan and improvise, to manage and lead, and to be both coercive and participative (Buchanan & Badham, 2008). It also involves the ability to search out and adopt useful tool and techniques (Beer & Nohria, 2000; Fuda, 2013; Kotter, 2012), yet also be capable of interpreting, adapting and deploying them in particular and often confrontational contexts (Grint, 2001; Huczynski, 2004).

A final action in managing *to* change is the ability to deploy Mirrors, providing multiple sources of reflection, evaluation and feedback. This involves capturing and reflecting on practical knowledge, 'know how' as well 'know that' (Argyris, 1990, 2010; Ryle, 2000; Shön, 1983). It involves surfacing knowledge that is often tacit, based on intuition and grounded in particularistic and complex experiences (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). It also has multiple dimensions, incorporating thought, emotion and action, stimulating emotional as well as intellectual intelligence, and practical wisdom (Covey, 2005, 2009; Goleman, 1995; Kotter, 2012). Finally, the creation of suitable mirrors, involves the establishment of open learning environments (Argyris, 2010; Senge et al., 1999; Sense, 2008), with the space, time and political support required to enable meaningful reflection (Buchanan & Badham, 2008).

As summarized in Figure 3, the 5M framework integrates these elements as the mindful mobilisation of maps, masks and mirrors – a framework directly contrasted to a traditional thin view of managing change as the application of technique and designing of roles in the planning, execution and evaluation of change

	Traditional Thin	5 M Thick
Change Agency	Applying Technique	Acting Mindfully
Change Roles	Designing Roles	Mobilizing Energy
Planning Change	Planning Projects	Mapping Journeys
Leading Change	Executing Tasks	Wearing Masks
Learning to Change	Evaluating Outcomes	Looking in Mirrors

Figure 3: Rational Approaches to Managing Change
Source: Badham, R, Mead, A, & Antonacopoulou, E. (2012). Performing Change: A dramaturgical Approach to the Practice of Managing Change. pp.187-205. In: Boje, D. M., Burnes, B., & Hassard, J. (eds). *The routledge Companion to Organizational Change*. London/New York: Routledge.

In each of these areas, 'thin' views of the management *of* change as a formally rational process of applying techniques, allocating formal roles and responsibilities, planning change, executing it and evaluating progress are replaced by 'thick' views of managing *to* change as involving being mindful of complexity and barriers, mobilising energy and support, mapping out directions, skilfully putting on and taking off masks to ensure an effective performance, and creating and using mirrors in a way that overcomes the cultural and political factors that obstruct the giving and receiving of information.

The 5M Framework: Combining Strong and Weak View of Change-as-Drama

What we will term below, the drama approach to organisational change provides a valuable counter to a thinly rational approach to the management of change. By focusing on organisation-and-change-as-drama, it provides a useful 'perspective by incongruity' (Gusfield, 1989) on the traditional view of organisation-and-change-as-aligned/misaligned systems. Even more importantly, it provides both insights on leadership and impression management as a key component of managing change, as well as the dynamics of situational encounters, and how these are, and should be, handled in practice. The 5M employment of a change-as-drama approach combines what has been commonly described as a weak Goffman's (1959) view of organizations as 'like' drama and a strong Burke (1969) view of organizations 'as' drama.

This comparison between Goffman and Burke's analyses of human interaction goes beyond the label: variously termed as the dramaturgical and dramatistic approaches, respectively (Gusfield, 1989). The fundamental difference refers to Goffman's emphasis on stagecraft and art of illusion, capturing the strategic surface of organisational life. Dramaturgy, in this sense, is impression management, frontstage and backstage performances are used as a metaphor, but it is assumed that social reality and the theatrical stage are different things. As Kärreman (2001) highlighted "human interaction is not identical with drama, but rather something that is, from an analytical viewpoint, usefully viewed *as if* it was dramatic and theatrical". Goffman (1959) has developed his framework as a metaphor for analysing the mechanics of human interaction and performance, rather than interpreting its meaning, therefore offering what Alexander and Smith (2004) term a weak view of social life as performance. On the other hand, Burke (1969) does not use drama as a metaphor for human action but as a metonymy (Czarniawska, 1997), viewing drama as inherent to human action, as a central component of meaning, motivation and what it is to be 'human'. Social life is analysed as a drama in literal terms (Brock, Burke, Burgess, & Simons, 1985). The organisation as drama metonym offers what Alexander and Smith (2004) term a strong view

of social performances, analysing the rhetoric and rituals of organisational life as what organisations actually are.

For Goffman (1959), and the weak view of change-as-drama, each setting has different audiences, and the actor has to modify his performances due setting and audiences. Performance is constructed developing physical, verbal or mental elements to give the correct impression out to others, what he termed 'impression management'. Goffman (1959) analyses of social interactions as impression management implies recognizing and delimiting different regions: the front region, where the performance is given, i.e the stage where occurs the play; and the backstage, the scene behind the public performance. On the frontstage the actors uphold the standards and the politeness, playing their roles in front of other people. On the other hand, at the backstage, functions such as construction of illusions, rehearsing and training take place.

Drawing on this view, the 5M framework is able to provide practical advice on how managers should handle the impression management challenge of intertwining the frontstage and backstage performances in change management (Buchanan & Boddy, 1992). On the frontstage, managers present the formal and public performance (Burns, 1961), required by the legal-rational ethos of modern organizations (Weber, 1997), executing tasks and designing roles to achieve the change goals – participating in a 'rhetoric of rationality' (March & Olsen, 1983). On the other hand, they also address the informal backstage often remarked upon by more distanced, critical and reflective commentaries – the arena characterised by March and Olsen (1983) as the rhetoric of realpolitik. Using the 5M framework can, in this sense, help managers to create what Alexander (2004) characterises as the 'challenge of re-fusion' in modern society i.e. creating performances that resonate with diverse and fragmented audiences.

Going one step further, however, Burke (1969) argues that life and society is a drama in literal terms (Brock et al., 1985; Gusfield, 1989). For Burke (1969), social life is inherently dramatic, embracing conflict, uncertainty, rhetoric and choice. He studied the ways humans organize their experiences and make them understandable for themselves and for the others. Dramatism "invites one to consider the matter of motives in a perspective that, being developed from the analysis of drama, treats language and thought primarily as modes of action" (Burke, 1969, p. xxii). He argues that the reasons people act, the motives they gave for them and for others are based on how they perceive or frame what is relevant, possible and appropriate for a given situation.

Within this view, managing *to* change is an inherently unpredictable dramatic encounter, wherein motives, intentions and causal explanations are all uncertain, equivocal and intertwined, in conditions that are not given but enacted (Weick, 2001) in more or less meaningful negotiated social interactions. Managing to change is understood "as situated social interaction, occurring within interaction rituals as enacted narratives, and involving more or less purposive and reflective human agency" (Badham et al., 2012, p. 197). The complex situational performance intertwines the participants' 'self-interaction' (in an 'internal' conversation) and 'social-interaction' (in an 'external' conversation) (Denzin, 1992). Strategic impression management, in this sense, occurs within embedded cultural contexts that include the narratives offered, the plots elaborated and the motives/characters identified as appropriate and meaningful (Czarniawska, 1997). Managing performances, in this sense, extends well beyond the enacted stage performances of actors and audiences.

As the word dramaturgical is traditionally associated with Goffman's view of organization-like-theatre, and we want to combine both Goffman and Burke's view, we characterize these two traditions as the 'weak' and 'strong' views of a general 'drama' approach. Uniting both variants is a common view of managing change as a social performance in achieving cultural resonance (Alexander & Smith, 2004). Figure 4 outlines the

differences between these two approaches as variants of the 5M 'thick' rational view of managing change.

	5 M Thick Rationality	Like Drama Weak Approach	As Drama Strong Approach
Change Agency	Acting Mindfully	Improvising Theatre	Rhetorical/Ritual: Awareness
Change Roles	Mobilizing Energy	Producing Plays	Rhetorical /Ritual: Motivation
Planning Change	Mapping Journeys	Staging Performances	Rhetorical /Ritual: Preparation
Leading Change	Wearing Masks	Employing Stagecraft	Rhetorical /Ritual: Enactment
Learning Change	Looking in Mirrors	Rehearsing & Reviewing	Rhetorical/ Ritual: 'Toggle'/'Liminal'

Figure 4: A Drama Approach to Managing Change

Acting mindfully about change requires sensitivity to gaps between intention and actuality, to take into account the barriers to change and also to admit its complex character. In accordance with the Goffmanesque weak approach, this is a discipline that has many similarities with improvisational theatre, a creative ("making do") and spontaneous process ("letting go") (Kanter, 2002; Vera & Crossan, 2004). Improvising means to be aware about the unexpected rather than applying techniques, resembling musicians playing jazz (Weick, 1998). As Mangham and Pye (1991, p. 79) stated "Like jazz musicians, managers simultaneously discover targets and aims at them, create and follow rules, and engage in directed activity often by being clearer about which directions are not right than about specified final results. Their activity is controlled but not predetermined". In the terms of a strong drama approach, acting mindfully means being aware of rhetorical and ritual dynamics, sensitive to the expressive characteristics (Edgley, 2003) of homo performans (Turner, 1985), and able to reflective monitor performances during action and change (Harre & Secord, 1973). As Edgley (2003, p. 7) stated "Human beings are not only expressive, but often aware of their expressiveness". It means to be aware about the powerful mythologies that structure our expectations of organisations and how they perform (Meyer & Rowan, 1977).

Mobilizing energy, people, and resources to overcome the gap that often occurs between required and given resources for change, is regarded in the weak view of drama as akin to the production and direction of stage plays. The production of a play implies complex interactions between playwrights, producers, directors, and actors, in the context of negotiations to get funding, address theatrical agents, create distribution channels, arrange releases to the press and so on (Mangham, 1978; Overington & Magham, 1983, 1987). Mobilisation, as drama in the strong view, is about the character and use of rhetorically and ritually constructed motivations. It requires an examination of the power and practices involved in energising participants through their identification with symbolic objects and rituals (Alexander, 2004), understanding and capturing situational 'vocabularies of motive'.

The mapping of change as a journey is, in terms of the weak view of drama, similar to the staging of performances i.e. it involves the creation of scripts and the required components of a mis-en-scène that will result in a successful theatrical performance. For the strong view of drama, the mapping of change is, in a fundamental sense, nothing more than preparing the rhetorical and ritual dimensions of 'transition rituals', the initial 'separation' of the ritual and the initiates from everyday life and their previous existence, the guidance of people through the 'liminal' phase, and the demarcation of a successful change through 're-incorporation' of people into a new structural and cultural frame (Turner, 1982).

Mapping journey will not, however, lead to change, unless managers/practitioners perform change in practice, which means to influence people in interpersonal situational encounters. In terms of the weak view of drama, this is akin to employing techniques of stagecraft, putting on and taking off costumes and masks, in order to effect a meaningful impression on an audience (Weick, 1995). This performance is required to provide the

audience with an impression consistent with the desired goals of the change (Goffman, 1959), and the actor/manager has to be aware of the impression management he is using and the impression he is creating. For the strong view of drama, this process is not so much similar to a theatrical performance as it is, in essence, the enactment of rhetoric and ritual. It involves the conduct of more or less resonant performances characterised by the fusion or 're-fusion' of an emotional connection between audiences, actors and text (Alexander, 2004). While overlapping strongly with the weak view of this performance as being akin to theatre, what the strong view adds is a recognition of the ways in which the fragmentation of a complex modern society makes it difficult to achieve resonant transition rituals, and it explores the institutional context as well as interpersonal interactions involved in making possible a successful 're-fusion' of scripts, direction, actors, backstage and frontstage regions, mis-en-scène, and audience (Alexander, 2004).

Finally, looking in mirrors, creating and using them to provide useful reflections on managing change, is regarded by the weak view of drama as akin to rehearsing and reviewing a theatrical performance. It involves setting up rehearsals, monitoring the responses and reactions of audiences, and shaping, obtaining and adapting to reviews (Clark & Mangham, 2004; Overington & Mangham, 1982). For the strong view of drama, as Freire (1987) puts it, what is involved is the basic social process of having to "learn how to write your life, as author and witness of history". In this sense, institutional change is inevitably dominated by established and emergent rhetorics, and involves liminal spaces in-between more-or-less orderly social environments (Turner, 1982). The effective use of mirrors in the change process is, within the strong view, regarded as part of what McCloskey (1994) and Lanham (1993) characterise as general rhetorical processes of 'toggling' between 'looking through a text and looking at it'. It also draws on the cultural freedom made possible by 'liminal spaces' to creatively and proactively influences the transition process (Turner, 1982).

Further Research: Evaluation of the 5M Framework

The origin of 5M frameworks lies in a twenty years period of theoretical reflection and action research on the management of change (Dawson, 2003). Over the last ten years, however, it has been developed and refined in an MBA Managing Change subject and Executive Development course at the Macquarie Graduate School of Management. During this time, it has informed over 1000 change action research projects undertaken by experienced senior managers working in, predominantly, large Australian service companies.

As part of the MBA subject, the student-managers keep a Learning Diary, capturing their experiences of course delivery and application of its key concepts in an individual change action project undertaken in their workplace. In addition to this, they also create a collective group Learning Diary sharing and capturing the experiences of themselves and a small-group of fellow students. What these learning diaries provide is a qualitative data base for exploring the effect of the 5M framework on the student-managers, in particular its degree of success in causing a shift in mindset towards a thick view of managing change, and the incorporation of strong and weak drama insights into how they perform and reflect upon change.

This method has already been trialled (Darief, 2011), using student learning diaries and group discussion from two deliveries of the subject over a 12 months period. This pilot focused on the use of Brechtian Verfremdung techniques as part of the Masks section of the course. It was discovered, however, that it was neither possible nor sensible to isolate the effect of specific pedagogical techniques in sections of the course from the overall impact of the course. What Darief (2011) uncovered was that while the general response to the course was overall positive (70% stating 'good', and 30% 'excellent), there were three clear types of

student response to the course: responses characterised as those of an 'uncritical group', a 'selective group' and a 'reflexive group'.

Each of the groups expressed some degree of shock and criticism of the open and flexible format of the course, and the lack of focus on the provision of methods and 'tools' for managing change. The uncritical group was, however, more prepared for the 'different' type of class, as a result of talking to other students and their pre-reading, and expressed some appreciation for the course re-affirming what they already knew, at least tacitly, and providing them with some addition 'tools' (especially Mapping tools, represented by a computer simulation methodology and the organizational iceberg analogy) – all of which enhanced their confidence in their ability to manage change. The selective group was more shocked by the course format, also highlighted the value of Mapping tools, but showed signs of applying the course concepts to their everyday experiences. They were, however, neither deeply engaged in the content and their overall confidence in managing change was slightly diminished rather than enhanced. The final, reflexive group, approximately half of the student numbers, was shocked by and critical of the format of the course, but indicated that they engaged with the material, and had deeper learning experiences. While they also praised some of the tools, they showed greater recognition of the interdependence of personal, interpersonal and organisational dimensions of change, the uncertain and complex nature of both change processes and their performance, and a recognition, as one student-manager put it, that "[k]knowledge of change strikes me now as a wise man's art".

It is recommended, and planned, that future evaluation of the 5M framework will draw on the insights of this pilot and seek to overcome its main weaknesses. There are some limitations to this data, involving, as it does, reports prepared for the lecturer, undertaken only a few weeks after the completion of the course. The interrogation of the learning diaries can, however, be accompanied by an independent researcher attending the small-group meetings discussing their common experiences, as well as supplementary interviews by the same researcher with individual student-managers. The focus should be on operationalising and assessing the degree to which students move from think to thick views of managing change, and draw on the insights of both weak and strong drama approaches. The characterisation of different group responses can be improved by a rigorous analysis of individual, organisational and intellectual factors influencing individual reactions. This can be assisted through the use of leadership mapping tools, as well as student data, generating information about the personal characteristics, styles and organisational location of the participants prior to the course. In the case of the MGSM Managing Change course, this is made possible by the now routine use of a 360 degree L-MAP leadership mapping tool by all students prior to the course delivery.

Any such evaluation is hypothetical in nature, as there will inevitably be problems in separating the effect of content from pedagogy, the impact of different aspects of the course, the influence of the presenter and so on. However, given the lack of established frameworks for fulfilling the rhetorical functions intended by the 5M approach, and the absence of empirical investigation of their actual or potential effects, such a study would be valuable in not only evaluating effects but also providing a suggestive basis for further theoretical/pedagogical development and refinements.

Conclusion

The 5M framework has been designed as a rhetorical vehicle providing a meta-language for shifting change management discourse and practice from a thin rationalistic management *of* change to a thick drama-informed managing *to* change.

The classical approach to managing change is the rational approach. As we have seen, however, this has thin and thick variants. The thin view assumes and seeks more or less clear goals and efficient means, and a unitary-rational motivation to achieve an optimal 'one best way'. This is premised on an idealistic, rigid, uncritical, universalistic and high modern view of rationality – and hence rational perspective on the managing *of* change. This view stands in stark contrast with thick views of rationality and change that assume the existence and emphasise the need to adapt to plural, conflicting and ambiguous goals, uncertain and fuzzy means for achieving these goals, and complex, shifting and diverse forms and levels of motivation ant attention within organisations. This approach makes an argument for a more multi-dimensional, situational and embodied view of a 'reasonable' rationality, and what is involved in managing *to* change. This view has received increasing recognition in recent decades, under the label of process, practice or sense making approaches to change.

Where the latter thick approaches are at their weakest, however, is in providing frameworks that are effective in rhetorically challenge the thin view of the rational approach and capable of informing and guiding a more pragmatic approach. What the 5M framework aims to provide is a rhetorical vehicle that seeks to play such a role. While the 5M framework presumes a thick-rational approach to change, it also seeks to inform and extend this approach by drawing on the pragmatic and reflective insights provided by views of organisational change-as-drama.

Weak views use the metaphor of organisations being like theatre, to throw light on the drama and performances involved in organisational change. The language, and ethos, that this introduces is, as we saw above, one of improvisation, production/direction of staged events, writing of scripts, enacting of dramatic performances, and rehearsing/reviewing performances. The strong view, however, regards rhetoric and ritual as what organisations *are*. In this view, all of organisational life is a social performance, a form of deep acting by individuals and groups whose motivations are rhetorically constructed and ritually enacted. Strategic impression management only captures the surface of a world that is inherently storied, dramatic and performative. Effectively managing *to* change involves a reflective awareness of the manner and degree to which all change, whether intended or unintended, favoured or opposed, is embedded in such a world, and the dramatic episodic events that make it up. The 5M framework seeks to combine both views.

As Badham et al. (2012) have outlined, and as confirmed by Darief (2011), the 5M framework is informed by an in depth dramaturgical approach to change and has been discovered, at least suggestively, to have had some significant impact in fulfilling the rhetorical educational role intended for it. As such, it has arguably begun to address an identified gap in academic perspectives on change management – the development of a framework that both captures latest research and is regarded as relevant and useful in practice. Research on further evaluation and development has been proposed to help extend this contribution.

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